

The role of domestic politics and national identity in EU actorness: a discourse-theoretical approach

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Abstract

Actorness in international affairs is traditionally held to be the preserve of states and based ultimately on the possession of military power. The EU challenges this assumption from two perspectives. Firstly, it is not a state and does not dispose directly over the conventional instruments of state power, but instead relies on cooperation among its member states. Secondly, the EU purports to be a different kind of actor, its power deriving from economic rather than military strength, and its approach to international relations based on the pursuit and transmission of certain norms of behaviour. To avoid a state-centric definition of actorness, this thesis focusses on the ability of the EU and its member states to reach consensus on external action issues, and uses this as the best measure of EU actorness. Existing theorizing on EU unity-formation is critiqued. Liberal intergovernmentalism assumes member states bargain over predetermined national interests that arise through a process of aggregation of sectoral economic interests, a shortcoming which is exposed in circumstances when economic outcomes are contested or difficult to predict, as is frequently the case for external action issues. Sociological institutionalism considers the socialisation of national political elites into common European norms of decision-making to be the driver of EU policy consensus-making, neglecting the significance of the Europeanization of national public spheres as a whole. To address these shortcomings an alternative theoretical approach is presented, derived from post-structuralism and discourse theory, which describes how EU policy unity is constrained by the interaction between domestic politics and public identity discourses at the member state level. This discourse-theoretical model is then tested on EU case studies representing a range of dimensions of actorness, including economic, environmental, military and normative actorness. The discourse-theoretical model is found to provide better explanations of the case studies than existing theories. The application of this model to the case studies yields a number of conclusions, including that EU actorness is hindered by the persistence of national constructions of economic questions, that EU actorness is often contingent on collaboration with the US, but that this is consistent with the key EU norm of multilateralism, and that the EU is potentially a more successful normative actor when pursuing norms of interstate relations, than regarding the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Declaration

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Parts of chapter 7 were presented in an earlier form at the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) Conference, Boston, 2015 under the title 'EU normative power and the Iranian Nuclear program'.

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To Henry and Zsiga

Introduction

The ‘actorness’ of the European Union is the measure of how significant an actor the EU is in international affairs. This property is, however, contested. Sceptics argue that actorness is something that only states possess (cf. Wong & Hill 2011, p. 3), that the power derived from a state’s special relationship with its population cannot be emulated by an international organisation (e.g. Smith 1995, p. 139). Others point to the EU’s lack of coercive power: as long as Europeans are dependent on the US for their territorial security, as long as many European states remain militarily weak, and as long as there is no European army, the EU will not be an actor on the world stage (e.g. Kagan 2003; 2002; Bull 1982).

Advocates of EU actorness counter that traditional definitions of actorness are too state-centric, and that there is no *a priori* reason why an organisation like the EU, with its mix of supranational and intergovernmental functions, should not possess significant actorness (Smith 2002, p. 9; Sjöstedt 1977, p. 13). For some the EU is a new kind of actor, a ‘civilian power’ (Duchêne 1972), benefiting from the goodwill arising precisely because of its inability to use coercive force, and with its large internal market as a bargaining chip (Meunier & Nicolaidis 2006, p. 907). For others it is a ‘normative power’ (Manners 2002), exerting leverage by power of example, providing an attractive model for a society based on democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, and a blueprint for successful interstate relations based on engagement, multilateralism and international law – the values on which the EU’s historic achievement of peace among previously warring states is founded.

Whatever its nature, this thesis asserts that EU actorness is principally a question of institutional and member state unity. Furthermore, it is argued, this unity is strongly influenced by the domestic politics and national identity discourses of the member states. It may even be enabled by European – or even nascent EU – identity discourses. This relationship between national politics, identity and EU unity may appear obvious to a layperson, however it is not represented in current theorizing of EU cooperation. While many theoretical approaches exist in this field, they typically relate EU consensus-formation either to the socialisation of national elites into EU norms of cooperation, or to interstate bargaining based on a rationalistic derivation of state

interests. The discursive role of domestic politics and national identity has been neglected. This thesis puts forward an approach drawing from post-structuralism and discourse theory which places these factors at the heart of a theoretical model of EU unity, and hence EU actorness in international affairs.

The development and nature of the EU as an international actor

The complexity of the question of EU actorness is related to the complexity of the EU itself. The international identity of the EU is influenced by its institutional make-up, as well as by the interplay between the EU institutions and the member state governments. The following section addresses this complexity by providing an overview of the development and nature of the EU as an international actor.

The EU is above all a work in progress, characterized as much by its continuous evolution as its exact form at any given time. The institutional origins of the European Union can be traced back to the European Coal and Steel Community, created in 1952, in which the signatory states ceded control of their coal and steel industries to a supranational High Authority. Its success led to the establishment by the Treaty of Rome of the European Economic Community in 1957, in which a supranational Commission shared power with an intergovernmental Council. In 1967 these two communities merged with the European Atomic Energy Community to form the European Communities (for a detailed account of the history of European integration, see e.g. Dinan 1999).

Attempts to create a European defence identity during this period were unsuccessful. A proposed European Defence Community, signed in May 1952 by the Coal and Steel Community members, which would have placed armed forces under a European central command answerable to a European parliament, was vetoed by the French National Assembly. Two more attempts to create a defence community via the Fouchet plans (1960 and 1962) were seen as attempts by de Gaulle to undermine the supranational elements of the European Economic Community, and the Atlanticism of NATO, and were rejected (Keukeleire 2010, p. 53; Smith 2008a, p. 31). Once the UK joined the EC (1973), the irreconcilable differences between the Atlanticist states, led by the UK, and the Europeanist states, led by France, ensured that no progress could be made on a European defence policy until the end of the century.

The development of a European foreign policy identity meanwhile proved more successful. By the late 1960s, economic success, détente with the Soviet Union, and a questioning of US leadership due to its military involvement in Vietnam created the appetite for a stronger European presence in international affairs (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 16). This led to the foundation of European Political Cooperation in 1970, comprising regular meetings of the foreign ministers, and foreign policy coordination among the member states. European Political Cooperation was purely intergovernmental in nature, and, until the Single European Act of 1987, outside the treaty structure of the European Communities (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, pp. 44-45).

The European Union came into being with the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993. This treaty established the (in)famous pillar structure. The first pillar, with ‘community’ decision-making (i.e. involving the supranational Commission), housed the existing European Communities. The second, intergovernmental pillar, expanded European Political Cooperation into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The third pillar, known as Justice and Home Affairs, also intergovernmental, incorporated the so-called TREVI network, set up in the 1970s to facilitate European coordination on police and justice questions. The Treaty of Maastricht also created the conditions for monetary union, which led to the introduction of the euro in 1999. A number of other treaties have marked the road to closer integration both before and after Maastricht, most notably the Lisbon Treaty of 2008, which officially abolished the pillar structure, though the Common Foreign and Security Policy remained essentially intergovernmental (Kurpas 2007, p. 2).

It was not until the St Malo Agreement between France and the UK in 1998, motivated at least in part by frustration over EU impotence in the face of the violent breakup of Yugoslavia (Aktipis & Oliver 2011, p. 74; Keukeleire 2010, p. 55; van Oudenaren 2010b, p. 198), that an EU defence identity could finally emerge, leading as it did to the creation of the Common (originally ‘European’) Security and Defence Policy, the EU’s military facility that forms part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In fact this new European defence identity has little to do with traditional defence tasks such as territorial security. Rather it is limited to a number of crisis management functions, often referred to as the (expanded) Petersberg tasks (after a 1992 conference), including humanitarian and peacekeeping missions, disarmament and peace-enforcing, and post-conflict stabilization (Wessels & Bopp 2008, p. 8). The Feira

European Council of 2000 also added civilian functions (e.g. police and justice missions) to the CSDP, in response to concerns expressed particularly by the neutral member states (Keukeleire 2010, p. 57).

Parallel to the CFSP, member states typically have their own policies on external action questions, which complement or coordinate with EU policy to a greater or lesser degree. There remain some *domaines réservés*, policy areas in which there is tacit agreement that certain members have a free hand. Examples include France's relations with its former African colonies, and a number of special relationships, such as that between the UK and the US, or amongst the Nordic states (Blunden 2000, p. 35; Manners & Whitman 2000, p. 266; Smith, M 2000, p. 616).

Europeanization scholars have sought to understand the complex relationship between EU and member state foreign policy in terms of 'downloading' and 'uploading'. 'Downloading' is said to occur when member states adopt EU foreign policy as their own. 'Uploading' is the reverse: when member states succeed in having a national foreign policy adopted at the EU level (Hill & Wong 2011, p. 219). Downloading is typical in the case of smaller member states which, on joining the EU, discover they need to build foreign policy capacity on areas of the world they had never before considered. Uploading may logically seem the preserve of large states, however it is widely acknowledged that even smaller states with a particular area of foreign policy specialisation are able to upload successfully to the European level (Hill & Wong 2011, p. 214). For example, Spain has been able to upload its priorities regarding South America and the Mediterranean to the EU level (Barbé 2011, p. 132), as has Portugal regarding East Timor (Wong 2011, p. 161).

Nevertheless, in general the larger states typically exercise more freedom of movement. The UK has traditionally considered the European Union to be primarily a trading bloc, with security questions the preserve of the trans-Atlantic alliance (Gross 2011, p. xviii). In terms of downloading, the UK has been 'remarkably stable in resistance to Europeanization over the past fifty years' (Risse 2010, p. 81). While there is only limited evidence of downloading, uploading is a different story:

Developments in European foreign, security and defence policy ... owe much to the UK, far more perhaps than most of the British electorate and political class

might be aware of, or prepared to acknowledge. ... For there can be no European foreign or defence policy without the UK; it is one area where the UK clearly leads in both capabilities and experience (Aktipis & Oliver 2011, p. 72).

French elites became interested in uploading to the EU in the 1980s, realizing that 'France had become too small, and its mission must be taken over by "Europe"' (Waeber 2005, p. 44). Since then France has viewed the European Union as the vehicle for the amplification of its national foreign policies (Irondelle 2008, pp. 154-156), the 'multiplier of French power' (Blunden 2000, p. 22). French downloading, on the other hand, has been described as 'reluctant' and based on the grudging 'recognition that French national capacities are inadequate' (Charillon & Wong 2011, pp. 20, 30). France has also been known to use common EU policy to attempt to distance the EU from the US and create a counter-pole, actions not always appreciated by other member states, in particular the UK (Charillon & Wong 2011, p. 27).

Germany is also an unenthusiastic downloader (Daehnhardt 2011, p. 40), perhaps surprisingly given the importance of European integration to post-war German identity (Risse 2005, p. 301), as well as the German foreign policy taboo of never going it alone (Welsh 2010, p. 218). This may be partly attributable to Germany's non-interventionist approach to crises (particularly in contrast to France and the UK). Germany's strong preference for non-military solutions has been noted by many (e.g. Brockmeier 2013, p. 67; Welsh 2010, p. 227; Aggestam 2000, p. 64). Despite Germany's firmly Atlanticist position (Aggestam 2000, p. 74), its pacifism is often enough for it to be categorized along with the neutral member states as a third group, alongside the Atlanticists, led by the UK, and the Europeanists, led by France (Toje 2008a, pp. 40-41; Bretherton & Vogler 2006, pp. 194-195).

For smaller member states, the Common Foreign and Security Policy provides an opportunity to 'pursue their foreign policy objectives at a more effective level than as lone actors' as well as, through the unanimity requirement for CFSP decisions, 'exercise a level of control over the policies of larger states that would not otherwise exist' (Tonra 2001, p. 46). A common European foreign policy also provides benefits to member states beyond mere instrumentality. Former colonial powers, for example, can pursue foreign policy regarding their erstwhile colonies through the more neutral channels of the EU's CFSP (Wong & Hill 2011, p. 7). One-time dictatorships may have similar motives: Spanish enthusiasm for the CFSP, for instance,

has been linked to a desire for ‘recognition of Spain as a full and loyal member of the western democratic community of nations’ (Barbé 2011, p. 134).

Furthermore, it has been observed that the large member states are also those most tempted to pursue separate relations with the major powers such as the US and China, running after ‘the chimera of a special bilateral relationship’, as Daehnhardt notes, ‘to enhance their own international status’ (2011, p. 43). From these few examples it can be seen that despite widespread recognition of the benefit of a united European foreign policy (Smith 2008a, p. 53; Hill 2004, p. 145), a number of issues stand in the way.

Finally, it needs to be observed that the potential for EU actorness extends well beyond traditional foreign and defence policy. The EU has been acknowledged as an actor in a range of areas including international trade (e.g. Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 62), the environment (Groenleer & van Schaik 2007, p. 970), and the provision of development aid (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, p. 210). On each of these issues the configuration of institutional arrangements and member state preferences is different. Trade policy, for example, the object of the Common Commercial Policy, is one of the most supranationalised competences of the EU (Jupille & Caporaso 1998, p. 216). EU aid spending is likewise a community function, but member states also have their own, parallel aid programs (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, p. 212). Environmental issues are still essentially decided intergovernmentally (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, pp. 16-107). And as already mentioned, the Common Foreign and Security Policy requires unanimity on all issues of importance (Kurpas 2007, p. 2).

The discussion above has touched on two issues on which opinion in the EU is likely to be divided, often along national lines: the divide between Atlanticists and Europeanists on security-related questions, and tension between the supranational and the intergovernmental aspects of the EU. The presence of such cleavages in the discourses surrounding external action is likely to influence the ability of the EU to reach a consensus on the appropriate response. For example, an issue with a significant trans-Atlantic element can be expected to reconstruct the Atlanticist versus Europeanist divide in the European discourses and make agreement difficult; an issue which potentially demands a military response will likely expose not just this cleavage, but isolate the neutral/pacifist grouping of states as well. The original European Community goal of increasing supranationalisation is also treated with mistrust by many new (and not so

new) members, with the UK perhaps most strongly opposed. Another expected line of cleavage can roughly be described as the free trade versus protectionism divide, with once again the UK championing the former, and France the latter tradition. In this thesis these cleavage questions are interpreted in terms of national identity: they find expression in the national discourses as statements of how ‘we’ are. Additionally, although this thesis is focussed on the period before the 2016 Brexit vote, the leadership role of the UK in these cleavage issues is of significance for the future of EU actorness after the UK departs: this question will be addressed in the conclusion of the thesis.

The research question

The contested nature of actorness has led to several attempts to define it. Proposals for what it is that constitutes actorness typically identify a set of prerequisites such as autonomy from other actors, access to capabilities, internal cohesion, as well as external factors such as recognition from other actors and opportunity to act (Bretherton & Vogler 2006; Jupille & Caporaso 1998; Hill 1993; Sjöstedt 1977). In this thesis unity of purpose across the member states and the institutions of the EU is taken as a proxy for EU actorness. It is argued in chapter 1 that whatever the definition of actorness, EU unity is the most important precondition.

There are a number of theoretical approaches to explaining unity formation in EU policy-making. One school is intergovernmentalism, which places the locus of consensus-making amongst the member states. The basic assumption of this approach is that states bring pre-established interests to the negotiating table, and essentially only lowest common denominator agreements are possible; institutions facilitate agreement but cannot influence preferences. The leading branch of this school, liberal intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik 1993), envisages national interest formation through a process of aggregation of the economic interests of social groups and industry sectors. Another broad approach to EU unity formation is institutionalism, which does attribute a consensus-making role to the institutions of the EU. In particular sociological institutionalism asserts that the Europeanization of national elites through collaboration in the various organs of the EU leads to convergence of national policies (Checkel 2003).

These approaches to EU member state cooperation can be criticized from a number of perspectives. Evidence suggests that significantly better than lowest common denominator

decisions frequently do occur, in defiance of intergovernmentalist expectations. Liberal intergovernmentalism's emphasis on economic instrumentality also calls into question its ability to explain decision-making on issues in which the economic outcome is difficult to foresee, or highly contested. It is suggested that liberal intergovernmentalism is, in fact, only able to explain a subset of decisions: those for which the precise economic outcome is clear. Exponents of liberal intergovernmentalism admit that in other cases government decisions are more likely to be driven by what they call 'ideology' (Moravcsik 1993, p. 495). Likewise, sociological institutionalism is weakened by empirical evidence. Examples of dramatic EU disagreements belie the expectation of ever increasing consensus between more and more strongly Europeanized national elites. Again, exponents recognize that in cases which are highly 'politicized' (i.e. enter domestic political arenas), the explanatory power of sociological institutionalism wanes. Once again it is suggested that sociological institutionalism is only able to explain a subset of decisions: everyday business, but not the big questions which come up for debate in the public spheres of the member states.

This thesis argues that major EU external action questions are by their nature both difficult to predict and highly politicized, and proposes an alternative theoretical approach. This approach places the nexus between member state governments and their publics at the heart of a model of EU consensus-making. It does this by adopting a mechanism developed by Hansen (2006), which models discursive constraints on the foreign policy-making of democratic governments. Hansen's mechanism, which will be explained in detail in chapter 2, is based on the post-structuralist observation that discourse about foreign policy necessarily co-constructs aspects of national identity. Governments prefer their foreign policy statements to be in harmony with strongly held national identity constructions in the public sphere, otherwise their position will be open to attack from opposition groups. What is more, if they find their position to be under attack, governments will tend to change their positions to be in harmony with national identity constructions.

Hansen's mechanism can be applied to EU external action policy-making by constructing a model consisting of a series of parallel Hansen mechanisms – one for each member state. EU policy unity will then depend on whether, on a given issue, harmony exists between the policy statements of each member state government and the respective national identity discourses that are co-constructed in the public debate. A number of unity configurations are possible:

similar national identity constructions across all member states being in harmony with a common policy, or even differing national identity constructions that are still all compatible with the EU-level policy proposal. In particular, to the extent that such a thing as European identity exists, the theoretical ideal case would be represented by similar enunciations by national governments of common EU policy being in harmony with common European identity discourses in each member state. These theoretical configurations are described in detail in chapter 2. The remainder of the thesis then tests this discursive theoretical approach on a series of case studies, and compares its explanatory power with two major existing theories, liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism. This approach necessarily focuses on the discursive construction of EU unity, rather than institutional or procedural drivers or constraints.

The research question investigated in this thesis is thus: does a discourse-theoretical approach based on the work of Lene Hansen (2006) provide a better explanation of EU unity-formation in external action questions (and hence EU actorness) than either of the two major existing theoretical approaches, namely liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism?

Significance of this research

European Union actorness is a major theme in the literature of European studies and international relations. This thesis seeks to fill a gap in the current theorizing on European Union actorness and member state cooperation. More broadly, the study of EU actorness is of interest because it addresses the question of whether Europe will continue to play a major role in world politics, a question of significance for the future shape of the world order. This thesis is also an attempt to demonstrate that ideas drawn from the fields of post-structuralism and discourse theory can be used to construct a parsimonious theoretical model that can be tested on real-world case studies.

The structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 surveys the current literature on the nature of EU actorness, in particular as a civilian or normative power. It then draws on a number of existing frameworks detailing the prerequisites for actorness to argue that long-term unity of purpose across the institutions and member states of the EU is the best measure of EU actorness. Finally it highlights the deficiencies of existing theoretical approaches to EU unity formation. Chapter 2 then argues the case for a new theoretical approach drawn from post-structuralist thought and discourse

theory, and develops the methodology through which this theory can be tested on the case studies. These case studies have been categorized according to five ‘dimensions’ of actorness: policy areas in which, according to the literature, the EU has at least some claim to actorness. In each dimension two case studies are investigated. Chapter 3 tests the discursive theory on the economic dimension of actorness. The first case study concerns the euro crisis of 2009-2012, which might be expected to have impacted negatively on EU economic actorness. The second deals with a trade dispute in 2013 between the EU and China over solar panel dumping, which led to an EU back-down, despite commercial policy being an area where EU actorness would be expected to be high. The topic of Chapter 4 is EU environmental actorness. The cases studied are two international climate change conferences: the 2009 Copenhagen summit, largely considered a disappointment for the EU, and the 2011 Durban conference, in which the EU was widely held to have been a more effective actor. Chapter 5 addresses international crisis management with a military component. The first case study looks at an early application of the Common Defence and Security Policy: the successful Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003. The second considers the implications for EU actorness of the 2011 intervention in Libya by a number of member states plus the United States. Chapter 6 looks at one aspect of EU normative actorness: its ability to transmit the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights to third parties. The first case study considers the enlargement of the EU to the former communist dictatorships of Eastern Europe, by focussing on the case of Hungary. The second case study appraises the EU’s human rights dialogue with China, by looking at European reactions to China’s crackdown on Tibetan protesters in 2008. The final case study chapter, number 7, looks at another aspect of the EU’s normative actorness: its ability to represent and transmit to other actors in the international system its own norms of interstate relations, based on engagement, multilateralism and respect for international law. The case studies are the EU-led negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program, and the EU’s response to Russia’s intervention in Ukraine in 2014. Chapter 8 then compares the explanatory power of the theoretical model put forward in this thesis with two competing theoretical approaches, liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism. The thesis conclusion argues that the discursive theory put forward here provides a better explanation for the case studies than these two theories, but not because they are invalid, but rather because they are limited in their application to special cases. Finally a number of conclusions are drawn from the application of this theoretical approach to the question of EU actorness. These conclusions are: that the actorness of the EU is limited by persistently national constructions of European

economic questions; that the existence of a sense of European identity is a benefit but not a prerequisite for European actorness; that a number of cleavage issues exist on which EU consensus is unlikely; that it can be argued that the EU is a normative actor, but only in certain cases; and that the partnership with the US is an indispensable element of EU normative actorness in international affairs, consistent with the key EU norm of multilateralism.

Chapter 1: Literature review

Introduction

At the heart of European Union actorness studies lies a fundamental paradox: the sheer size of the EU, its population, wealth, know-how, share of world trade, and structural position in international institutions give rise to expectations of global power. Karen Smith encapsulates this as follows:

The EU is the largest and richest trading bloc in the world and one of the largest aid donors, and its member states have some of the world's most capable military forces. It could thus exercise quite a lot of leverage in its relations with other countries (2008a, p. 23).

But the EU has a tendency to disappoint, and has long suffered unflattering attributions such as 'an economic giant [but] a political dwarf' (former Belgian foreign minister Mark Eyskens cited in Whitney 1991), as 'not punching its weight' (former Commission President Jacques Santer [1995] cited in Thomas 2012, p. 457), or as suffering from a 'capability-expectations gap' (Hill 1993). Such characterizations are still current today (e.g. Helwig 2013; Toje 2010).

In reply, EU advocates argue that the EU is a new kind of actor, which exerts influence through 'civilian' or 'normative' power, rather than coercion. The exercise of economic power derived from its huge internal market (Meunier & Nicolaïdis 2006, p. 907), and the pursuit of foreign policy goals through multilateral institutions, chief amongst them the UN, are held to be more appropriate (and ultimately more effective) ways of exercising global power in the early twenty-first century than military force (European Council 2003, p. 7). In turn, realists dismiss these arguments as fantasy:

Europe's rejection of power politics, its devaluing of military force as a tool of international relations, have depended on the presence of American military forces on European soil. Europe's new Kantian order could flourish only under the umbrella of American power exercised according to the rules of the old Hobbesian order (Kagan 2002, p. 25).

The question of EU actorness is thus complex, and raises questions about what defines an international actor, the extent to which a non-state entity can be an actor, and whether actorness necessarily entails the ability to use force.

EU actorness and related issues have given rise to a substantial body of literature. This chapter looks at this literature in three sections. The first covers scholarship on whether the EU is a new kind of international actor, a civilian or normative one. This discussion is important to ensure that the theoretical model put forward in chapter 2 is tested on the full range of actorness possibilities. The second section looks at definitions of actorness in terms of structural prerequisites. From this the conclusion is drawn that the most important condition for any kind of actorness is EU unity. The third section looks at theoretical approaches which have been devised to explain how unity between the member states and the institutions of the EU comes about. Existing theoretical approaches are critiqued and the conclusion drawn that a new approach is necessary, one that places member state politics and national identity discourses at the heart of a theory of EU cooperation (and hence actorness).

Non-traditional actorness

Wong and Hill note that ‘the dominant paradigm in international relations still conceives of foreign policy as essentially the *domaine réservé* of sovereign governments, and therefore exclusive to states’ (2011, p. 3). By this argument, the EU is only an international actor to the extent it is state-like (Kratochvíl 2013, p. 15; Čmakalová & Rolenc 2012, p. 262; Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 1). If this view is still prevalent, then it is despite several decades of arguments from Europeanists, going back to Sjöstedt (1977, p. 13), that EU (EC) actorness should not be discounted just because the EU is not a state. There have been a number of schools of thought which seek to characterize the EU as a new kind of actor. The two most important of these see the EU as a ‘civilian’ actor, or as a ‘normative’ actor, respectively.

The classification of the European Community as a civilian power first arose about the same time as the term was being applied to Japan in the early 1970s (Bull 1982, p. 149), and this perspective received renewed currency after the end of the Cold War, in connection with Germany as well as Japan (Maull 1990). However, far from endowing the concept of civilian power with a state-centric focus (cf. Manners & Diez 2007, p. 179), Maull’s argument was that by outsourcing their territorial security to the USA and focussing on trade, Japan and Germany were pioneers in a new era of ‘complex interdependence’ (Keohane & Nye 1977), characterized by greater regional economic integration and the relinquishment of sovereignty in exchange for greater prosperity (Maull 1990, pp. 101-103). The concept of civilian power is thus closely allied to the development and ideals of the EU.

Neither is normative power a new concept. Throughout history it is possible to find normative justifications for the exercise of power. In the twentieth century even a realist like Carr understood that '[e]very solution of the problem of political change, whether national or international, must be based on a compromise between morality and power' (Carr 1946, p. 209). After a hiatus during the behaviourist turn (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998), renewed interest in the role of norms in international relations emerged in the 1980s in the form of regime theory, which was developed to explain the continuity of cooperative state behaviour despite the breakdown of key elements of the post-World War II economic order in the early 1970s (Kratochwil & Ruggie 1986, pp. 759-760). Krasner (1982) defined 'regimes' as 'sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge' and posited that they have the potential to move international behaviour beyond short-term interest calculations (pp. 186-187). Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) sought to describe how norms influence international politics through a three-stage process of norm adoption, norm cascade (or tipping point) and norm internalization. While they identify states and international organizations as actors in the second phase (p. 898), the idea of describing a state or organization as a normative actor as such had still not emerged. Despite an awareness of the normative character of US behaviour for much of the twentieth century, in particular in the post-war era – Ruggie (1982) used the term 'legitimate social purpose' (p. 382) in this context, as something which counterbalanced US power calculations, and in 1990 Nye proposed the concept of 'soft power' to describe the non-coercive aspects of US foreign policy (p. 166) – it was with the EU that the term came to be associated (Manners 2002).

Civilian Power Europe

In 1972 Duchêne put forward the idea of what was then the EC as a civilian actor, which derived influence both from its economic weight and from the fact that it was *not* a superpower (1972, pp. 38-39). Duchêne argued that the EC's very lack of military power endowed it with unique influence it would not otherwise have possessed if it were able to threaten with the use of force (1972, p. 43). The idea of the EU as an economic or trade actor is by now well-established: Meunier and Nicolaïdis, for example, note that the EU uses access to its common market not only 'to secure concessions from others about market access' but also 'to achieve non-trade objectives', for instance in the social, political or security realm (2006, p. 910). The idea of power arising from lack of military options, though, is more contested. Bull, in another much-cited article, opposed Duchêne's idea of civilian power, arguing that military power would

continue to be the ultimate basis of international relations, and that therefore ‘ “Europe” is not an actor in international affairs, and does not seem likely to become one’ (1982, pp. 150-151).

Börzel and Risse argue that Bull misunderstood Duchêne, whose concept of civilian power was not the same as pacifism, and bemoan the fact that since then civilian power has often been misleadingly used as the opposite of military power (2009, p. 7). They argue this in the context of the debate which arose surrounding the advent of the EU’s military facility, the Common Security and Defence Policy. Some saw the CSDP as a betrayal of the EU’s civilian character. Karen Smith, for example, argued that ‘despite the obvious current weaknesses of the EU’s defence dimension, it is now abandoning its civilian power image’ (2000, p. 12). Smith attacks the assumption of the utility of military power from a number of angles, including:

Assuming that the EU will have a more effective foreign policy if it can wield military instruments overlooks other much more serious obstacles to a common foreign policy ... the member states themselves. If they cannot agree ... there will be no common foreign policy and no use of foreign policy instruments, civilian or military (2000, pp. 19-20).

Others saw the Common Security and Defence Policy rather as a completion of the EU’s civilian character (Sperling 2011, p. 34; Börzel & Risse 2009, p. 6). It was argued that military tools are necessary for combatting instability in many parts of the world (Börzel & Risse 2009, p. 32). This argument was motivated particularly by EU ‘failure’ in Yugoslavia in the 1990s (Alec de Flers 2012, pp. 115-116; Gross 2011, p. 5; Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 26). Even the definition of civilian power used by Karen Smith, that provided by Maul, does not rule out the use of military power – as a last resort (Maul 1990, p. 92). Sjursen argues that the EU appears to be maintaining its civilian nature, despite the advent of its military facility:

the EU does not seem to have abandoned the belief in civilian instruments even though its potential ability to do so if it wishes to is increasing (2006, p. 238).

For others the limits placed on the EU military facility are a point of criticism. According to Hill:

the moment the Europeans have to contemplate what is known as a ‘high-end Petersberg task’ (i.e. those implying the possibility of combat) they fall back either on unilateral member state decisions ... or on capabilities provided by NATO (2011, p. 87).

Gross also notes the limits to the applicability of the CSDP, concerning both geography and scale. She observes that ‘beyond the Balkans and sub-Saharan Africa, military operations have

not been launched and civilian crisis missions have tended to be small in scale', and that it is clear the CSDP is only perceived as appropriate for operations of limited scope (2011, pp. 171-172).

Normative Power Europe

The argument over whether the EU was still a civilian power, however, was soon taken over by a new terminology. In a 2002 article Manners coined the term 'normative power' to describe the EU as a different kind of actor. Manners proposed that the EU is in any case an actor, because by its very existence it influences 'what passes for "normal" in world politics' (2002, p. 236). Manners argued that the EU's actions, both internal and external, are determined by normative considerations, that is, based on norms of good behaviour. A third aspect of normative power is the exemplary aspect: the transmission of norms to other entities, whether states or organisations (2002, pp. 242-245).

There is some variation in the literature on the definition of normative actorness. Bengtsson and Elgström define a normative actor as one that 'influences the thinking of other actors in the international system rather than acting through coercive means to achieve its goals' (2012, p. 95). Both Karen Smith (2008a, p. 8) and Tocci (2008, p. 7) define normative actorness in terms of Wolfers' distinction between 'milieu' and 'possession' goals in foreign policy:

Milieu goals are of a different character [from possession goals]. Nations pursuing them are out not to defend or increase possessions they hold to the exclusion of others, but aim instead at shaping conditions beyond their national boundaries (Wolfers 1962, p. 74).

In some ways 'civilian' and 'normative' power can be difficult to distinguish. Duchêne had already identified the model power of civilian actorness, putting the EC forward as 'the exemplar of a new stage in political civilisation', which would 'have a chance to demonstrate the influence which can be wielded by a large political co-operative formed to exert essentially civilian forms of power' (1973, p. 19). Wright provides a distinction between civilian and normative power by arguing that civilian power is defined in terms of capabilities (i.e. economic and diplomatic tools in the absence of coercive instruments), whereas a normative power analysis:

regards the focus on capabilities as too narrow and looks instead at broader notions of values, principles and identity, arguing that what the EU *symbolises* is as important as what it does, with its impact as much through the example it sets as the actions it takes (Wright 2011, p. 9)

In this vein, Diez argues that civilian power ‘can be read as one specific form of normative power in that at its heart lie particular kinds of norms (namely civilian)’ (2005, p. 617).

EU norms

Aggestam notes that ‘[t]he ambitions of the European Union as a global power are explicitly made with reference to universal norms and principles’ (2013, p. 457). This is certainly clear in its founding documents. Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union puts forward supporting ‘democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law’ as among the key maxims guiding the EU’s external action (Treaty on European Union 2012). The European Security Strategy of 2003 also spells out key EU norms of international relations: ‘effective multilateralism’, ‘international law’ and ‘preventive engagement’ (European Council 2003, pp. 9, 11). The qualifier ‘effective’ attached to multilateralism is an acknowledgement that for ‘international organisations, regimes and treaties to be effective in confronting threats to international peace and security ... [they] must ... be ready to act when their rules are broken’ (p. 9). By preventive engagement is meant acting ‘before countries around us deteriorate, when signs of proliferation are detected, and before humanitarian emergencies arise’ (p. 11). These norms figure strongly in the discussion of EU normative actorness below.

The ethical aspect

For Manners, normative power also has an ethical component, related to the EU’s efforts to promote a ‘more just, cosmopolitan world’ (2008, p. 47). Others are more cautious. Bengtsson and Elgström, for example, surmise that:

An actor attempting to be a normative great power may hold a role conception as ethically and normatively superior, but this need not be mirrored by others’ role expectations (2012, p. 95).

Aggestam notes that a ‘common criticism of EU foreign policy is that it is inconsistent and exhibits double standards in the way norms are applied’ (2013, p. 462). Ferreira-Pereira also observes that ‘the lack of consistency and coherence regarding human rights policy sends mixed signals to other actors’, thus degrading the model-power of the EU (2010, p. 299). There are many examples of this: EU member states voting against UN resolutions aimed at protecting the rights of asylum-seekers for example (Gowan & Brantner 2008, p. 23), or its ‘modest’ contributions to UN peacekeeping forces (as opposed to UN mandated ones) (Fassbender 2004, p. 871). Even the EU’s environmental protection initiatives have raised suspicions that they are

merely ‘a veiled attempt to create advantages for EU enterprises’ (Chaban, Elgström & Holland 2006, p. 253).

Furthermore, research into external perceptions of the EU provides sobering results in this regard. Chaban, Elgström and Holland found that ‘the notion of the EU as a normative leader ... is in no way a dominant characterization’ (2006, p. 261). And Lucarelli concludes that the EU is ‘viewed as an actor whose policy is severely influenced by its own security concerns, a neo-liberal actor in its attitude to countries outside the EU and a protectionist power’, with not much evidence that the EU is considered a ‘“normative power” exporting values of democracy and human rights’ (2007, p. 269).

Quite often different ethical norms clash, as demonstrated by the case of Iraq in 2003, in which ‘the Blair-led belief in a new right of intervention’ clashed with ‘the concern of others for pacific methods of conflict resolution’ (Hill 2004, p. 155-156). There is also the problem that norms have different meanings in different contexts. As Bay Rasmussen notes:

Whereas free trade in the Common Market may have been a key in the economic development of the EU, the African experience with free trade suggests that it may not be the case for them (2009, p. 25).

Emerson also concludes that norms, far from being universal, are actually culturally dependent, and that ‘new powers who have in living memory experienced colonialism or humiliating defeats at the hands of the old democracies ... as a result give weight to the principles of non-interference’ (Emerson 2008, p. ii; see also Chaban, Elgström & Holland 2006, p. 261). While this thesis does not enter into a discussion of the ethics of the EU’s normative power, it must be accepted that ethical judgements do affect the EU’s potential to transmit its norms by power of example.

Multilateralism

The EU’s commitment to multilateralism is a defining characteristic of its claim to normative actorness, especially in comparison with US unilateralism (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 185). Critical voices, however, abound. The UN is central to the EU’s understanding of its role in international politics, even though because it is not a state it cannot be a UN member in its own right (Farrell 2006, p. 28). Instead the EU must act through its member states. While EU member state voting in the UN General Assembly is characterized by increasing unity (Jin & Hosli 2013, pp. 1282-1283, 1288), even on human rights issues there can still be disputes, for

example in 2007 when Poland and Malta obstructed a common EU position on the protection of reproductive rights (Brantner & Gowan 2009, p. 49). Even more troubling for EU normative power, Gowan and Brantner (2008) have described a significant drop in the EU's ability to attract support on human rights resolutions in the General Assembly. Between the late 1990s and 2008 support for the EU on human rights issues fell from 72 per cent to around 50 per cent, while China and Russia experienced increases of similar proportions (p. 2). In the Security Council, EU member states are also repeatedly reminded that their multilateralist approach is at odds with other members' understandings of the inviolability of sovereignty. For example the EU-US initiative to sanction Zimbabwe in 2008 was opposed on these grounds not only by China and Russia, but also by two of the three African states then on the Security Council as temporary members. This was described by Gowan and Brantner as 'not a one-off loss for the EU, but another explicit rejection of its vision of multilateralism' (2008, p. 52).

Neither is the EU's own commitment to multilateralism unconditional. Most obviously, there are cases of the EU simply not complying with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rulings, for example on removing restrictions on the import of hormone-treated beef (Costa 2013, p. 1221-1223) or Genetically Modified Organisms (Young 2011, p. 116). At times the EU's support of multilateralism is seen as instrumental, or even cynical. Young argues, for example:

that so few EU regulations have fallen foul of WTO rules could well reflect the EU's effectiveness in shaping the rules rather than the impact of those rules on the EU's behaviour (2011, p. 119).

Mortensen has furthermore observed that 'outsiders have little confidence in what the European Union does in the WTO, whereas the European Union sees itself as its most loyal supporter' (2009, p. 80). Blavoukos and Bourantonis refer to a common criticism that the EU is only interested in multilateral institutions 'as long as we control them in terms of membership and decision making rules and avoid harmful outcomes' (2011, p. 2). Too often, from the perspective of the developing world, EU actions look 'more like neo-colonialism and green protectionism than free and fair trade' (Mortensen 2009, p. 86). The EU is even thought by others to resemble the US in its behaviour at the WTO (Young 2011, p. 124).

Quite often the image of the EU in multilateral organisations is of an unwieldy, inflexible actor. Intra-EU negotiations can be intense and time-consuming, and even when a united EU position does emerge, the difficulty of the negotiations leading to it frequently means that it is offered

on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, with no room for compromise (Laatikainen & Smith 2006, p. 20). This not only ‘generates bottlenecks’ in multilateral negotiations, but signals a failure ‘to pay due consideration to basic principles of multilateralism’ (Blavoukos & Bourantonis 2011, p. 7).

Conditionality

Conditionality of trade, aid, and partnership agreements is one of the key mechanisms through which the EU strives to implement norm transmission. On the initiative of the European Parliament, since 1995 all agreements with other countries must contain human rights clauses (Smith 2008a, p. 56). Because the EU (together with its member states) oversees the largest aid budget in the world, the potential for significant actorship by attaching normative strings here is large (Grimm, Gänzle & Makhan 2012, p. 6; Orbie 2012, p. 17; Thomas 2011a, p. 3). However, the consensus of opinion is that conditionality has overwhelmingly been constructed by aid recipients as the EU protecting its own interests. Originally, under the Lomé Convention of 1975, aid was provided free of conditions. However this situation was revised in 2000 with the Cotonou Agreement, which included performance as well as need in the assessment of aid allocations (Carbone 2010, p. 240). This move to conditionality coincided not only with increasing concern with security issues such as combatting terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but also with growing interest in measures to prevent uncontrolled migration (Carbone 2010, p. 241; Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 183). Re-admission deals to return illegal immigrants began entering into aid agreements (Smith 2008a, p. 64). Such developments prompted ‘accusations that security concerns are being prioritized over development and, in particular, the eradication of poverty’ (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 183). Agricultural subsidies have also, for a long time, caused poor countries to question the EU’s commitment to broader development goals (Meunier & Nicolaïdis 2006, p. 920).

The EU has also made conditionality part of its neighbourhood policy. Accordingly, trade access is granted to the EU’s neighbours in exchange for improvements in democracy, the protection of human rights and the rule of law. It has been observed, however, that without the prospect of EU membership, such conditionality has very little leverage (e.g. Bindi & Shapiro 2010, p. 346). Furthermore, as the North African experience has shown, the asymmetric effect of free trade agreements on economies ill-prepared for competition means that ‘the EU is perceived in these countries as a force which, far from being interested in their welfare, contributes to the perpetuation of their underdevelopment’ (Darbouche 2008, p. 60). The EU

has also been accused of not following up on failure to implement democratic reforms under these agreements (Bay Rasmussen 2009, p. 24). While Karen Smith lists some 38 cases between 1988 and 2007 when the EU suspended aid or otherwise punished breaches of democracy and human rights clauses (2008a, pp. 244-250), this perception remains, and in the eyes of many 'has confirmed [the EU's] prioritisation of commercial self-interest over other considerations' (Darbouche 2008, p. 58).

EU enlargement itself is frequently cited as a norm transmission exercise that rates as one of the EU's most successful foreign policies:

The EU enlargement is the single most cost-effective tool that Western powers have deployed to spread peace and democracy since the end of the cold war (Moravcsik 2010, p. 208).

Vachudová (2005, p. 259) and Bretherton and Vogler (2006, p. 180) concur. The first of the two case studies examined in chapter 6, however, questions the degree to which enlargement has succeeded in transmitting norms by studying the example of Hungary, a member state which joined the EU only in 2004, but since 2010 has moved decisively away from European norms of democracy and rule of law.

Through its application of conditionality, therefore, the EU is frequently seen as self-serving, 'patronizing, condescending', 'clearly driven by commercial concerns' (Bengtsson & Elgström 2012, pp. 104-105), and 'more adept at securing possession than milieu goals' (Gomez & Christou 2004, p. 196). Gowan and Brantner note that of the 41 states which between the late 1990s and 2008 stopped voting with the EU on human rights questions on the UN General Assembly, 32 were parties to conditional aid or partnership agreements (2008, pp. 29, 32). These are damning assessments of what is often put forward as a key element of the EU's normative actorness.

Is EU normative actorness unique?

A number of writers argue that, far from being a uniquely normative actor, the EU is not so different from other actors:

contrary to what Manners argues, 'normative' power cannot be anything other than the EU promoting its own norms in a similar manner to historical empires and contemporary powers ... (Sjursen 2006, p. 247).

The EU is certainly not alone in claiming to export its norms, the US being the other prime candidate (Diez 2005, p. 614). Baracani warns that comparisons with the US only encourage the thinking that ‘rather than being a foreign policy objective in itself, [democracy promotion] is an instrument for achieving ... primary foreign policy goals, security and economic prosperity’ (2010, p. 303). Sjursen also sees comparisons with the US as a warning that ‘efforts to justify foreign policy with reference to norms often lead to suspicions of hypocrisy and hidden agendas’ (2006, p. 240).

By the same token there are those who argue that the EU is a different normative actor from the US:

the EU’s international actorness, and its existence as *different* to other actors, is generated internally through processes of co-operation and interaction that occur at multiple levels and across the whole range of policy areas (Wright 2011, p. 19).

Baracani argues that while the EU, like the US, makes use of a range of tools to transmit democracy, from diffusion to negative conditionalities such as sanctions, it differs from the US in never having used force (2010, p. 308). Sjursen notes, on the other hand, that the line between persuasion and coercion can be hard to define, and that ‘civilian instruments, although often referred to as “soft” instruments, are not necessarily benign and neither are they necessarily non-coercive’ (2006, p. 239). Meunier and Nicolaïdis concur:

It is no surprise that the incorporation of non-trade conditions in trade deals faces great resistance from developing countries, which simply see this as blunt coercion (Meunier & Nicolaïdis 2006, p. 920).

Burckhardt agrees that ‘[i]n the area of trade, the EU resembles more a ‘great power’ than a civilian power, with a wide range of instruments, which it employs coercively’ (2013, p. 284).

Tocci argues that only in the case of normative goals being pursued by normative means can an actor be regarded as normative, and concludes that:

the EU is not necessarily normative and that its internal actors are often driven by the very same set of interests and priorities that motivate other international actors (sole contribution in Tocci et al. 2008, p. 72).

The concept of normative actorness brings together the ideas that an entity such as the EU can be governed by norms of good behaviour, and that influence can be wielded by normative example-setting. Aggestam draws the conclusion that the ‘general picture emerging from

empirical studies of EU foreign policy behaviour is that it tends to be mixed in terms of normative and strategic considerations' (2013, p. 462). Thus the description of the EU as a normative actor, though corresponding closely to the vision of EU actorness expounded in its documents and by its officials, is not without significant controversy. This thesis does not take sides on whether the EU can be considered an ethical actor. But it does allow for the possibility that the EU may be a normative actor, adopting a definition of normative actorness as the modelling and transmission of the norms expressed in key EU documents and by European officials. The theoretical model developed in chapter 2 is therefore tested on a range of possible dimensions of actorness, including normative ones. For the purposes of the analysis, EU norms are divided into two groups: one containing the societal norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights; the other containing the international relations norms of effective multilateralism, international law, and preventive engagement.

Attributes of actorness

This chapter turns now from the nature of EU actorness to a number of definitions of the structural prerequisites for an entity such as the EU to be an actor on the world stage. From these definitions this section concludes that unity of purpose among member states and EU institutions over time is the most important prerequisite for EU actorness, and proposes EU unity as a proxy measure of its actorness.

Structural definitions

Sjöstedt (1977) was the first to propose a definition of actorness which was not state-centric. He described an actor firstly as an entity possessing 'autonomy', which he defines as being sufficiently separate or delimited, but also having a minimal degree of internal cohesion (p. 15). However, autonomy is insufficient by itself: an actor also requires 'actor capability', by which Sjöstedt meant 'the autonomous unit's capacity to behave actively and deliberately in relation to other actors in the international system' (pp. 15-16). In practice, this means meeting a set of 'structural prerequisites', which include 'basic requirements' such as common goals and resources for possible action, decision-making processes for both crises and day-to-day operations, and 'action performance instruments' (pp. 74-75). Significantly for this discussion, Sjöstedt was convinced that a key element of actorness was unity:

there seem to be good reasons to believe that if ... the internal cohesion of the EC is increased dramatically, this will influence the Community's actor capability in a significant way (p. 18).

Building on the work of Sjöstedt, Hill put forward three prerequisites for actorness: clear political ‘delimitation’ (part of Sjöstedt’s autonomy), ‘autonomy’ itself, and a set of ‘structural prerequisites’, such as the ability to conduct diplomatic relations (1993, p. 309). He also differentiated ‘actorness’ from mere ‘presence’, a concept used to capture the effect of the EU on the ‘psychological and the operational environments of third parties’ (1993, p. 309) that is nevertheless insufficient to be considered actorness. Hill took up the concept of presence from Allen and Smith, according to whom:

the presence of Western Europe on the international scene is indeed significant: it possesses relatively few of the credentials of a unified international actor, but it has considerable structure, salience and legitimacy in the process of international politics (1990, p. 36)

Hill also famously coined the term ‘capability-expectations gap’ to describe the puzzle of (the lack of) EU actorness: ‘the Community’s capabilities have been talked up, to the point where a significant *capability-expectations gap* exists’ (1993, p. 306). Hill suggests that ‘if the gap is to be closed and a dangerous tension relieved in European foreign policy, then either capabilities will have to be increased or expectations decreased’ (1993, p. 321).

This gap is a recurring observation in EU studies. After the Europeans had to defer to the US to bring an end to the violence that accompanied the break-up of Yugoslavia, Gordon reflected on ‘how far the European Union is from possessing the sort of unity, credibility and military power necessary to be an influential actor in global diplomatic and security affairs’ (1997, p. 75). Waltz opined that ‘[i]f Europeans ever mean to write a tune to go with their libretto, they will have to develop the unity in foreign and military affairs that they are achieving in economic matters’ (2000, p. 31). More recently Wong has noted that ‘the record of Community policies (mainly economic and trade policies) has generally been a success while the record of politico-security policies under EPC/CFSP has been mixed’ (2006, p. 3), and Toje has suggested that the capability-expectations gap has now become a ‘consensus-expectations gap’ (2008b, p. 122).

Jupille and Caporaso (1998) proposed a four-part definition of actorness that has been widely cited. For them, actorness requires ‘recognition’, ‘authority’, ‘autonomy’ and ‘cohesion’. ‘Recognition’ can be either formal (diplomatic, legal) or informal:

as the EU comes to interact with third states bilaterally, regionally, or globally, and as the number and frequency of these contacts increase, a process of socialization occurs according to which EU activity comes to be accepted and expected ... (p. 216).

‘Authority’ refers to the competences granted by the member states to the central organs. ‘Autonomy’ means the independence of the EU institutions from the member states, that is, the extent to which ‘these institutions ... make a difference, compared to the baseline expectation of a decentralized state system working on the basis of power and interest’ (p. 217). Jupille and Caporaso see the EU essentially as an agent and principal arrangement, according to which ‘[a]utonomy can be said to exist when decision-making latitude is wide, when agency slack is considerable’ (p. 218). Finally ‘cohesion’ measures unity of purpose between the member states and the various organs of the EU.

Drawing on the work of Hill and others, Bretherton and Vogler settle for a definition of actorhood as depending on the three variables of ‘presence’, ‘opportunity’ and ‘capability’ (2006, pp. 24-30). This definition is also adopted by Toje (2008a, p. 10). Presence has been defined by Hill as well as Allen and Smith above. Opportunity is related to freedom of movement to demonstrate actorhood, which depends on ‘factors in the external environment which enable or limit deliberate action’ (Toje 2008a, p. 10). Capability is understood as referring to the ‘internal context of EU action or inaction – those aspects of the EU policy process which constrain or enable external action and hence govern the Union’s ability to capitalize on presence or respond to opportunity’ (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 29). In particular, within the category of capability, Bretherton and Vogler include concepts they call ‘consistency’, by which they mean ‘the degree of congruence between the external policies of the Member States and of the EU’, and ‘coherence’, ‘the level of internal coordination of EU policies’ (2006, p. 30). Terminology can be confusing, however: Karen Smith, for example, uses the term ‘consistency’ to refer to ‘the making of policy which involves instruments from more than one pillar’ (2008a, p. 55). Keukeleire and MacNaughtan define horizontal, institutional, vertical and interstate inconsistency as inconsistency arising from disagreement between, respectively, the EU’s pillars, the Commission and the Council, the EU and its member states, and between the member states themselves (2008, pp. 121-122).

An empirical definition

These structural definitions of actorness will be considered critically below. However, before this, an alternative, empirically-driven definition of actorness, one that considers the EU from the outside, is discussed. Larsen proposed a conceptualisation of actorness such that the EU 'is an international actor if it constructs itself as one vis-à-vis the rest of the world and if other international actors conceive of it as such' (2004, p. 69). This is essentially a constructivist definition, in the sense that it defines actorness to be, to paraphrase Wendt (1992), what actors make of it. One way to investigate this is to look at the role of the EU in multilateral organisations. The EU itself is a member of relatively few international organisations (the World Trade Organisation being a notable exception), thus it is usually reliant on the coordinated efforts of its member states. A study of the literature on the EU in multilateral institutions reveals three main categories or modalities of behaviour.

The first modality is characterized by increasing member state unity, without this being translated into leadership. This appears to be the case at the UN General Assembly, where, apart from the low point in 2003-2004, the time of the Iraq crisis, member state unity has increased since the advent of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (Jin & Hosli 2013, pp. 1282-1283, 1288). However:

the EU tends to be 'reactive' rather than 'proactive' in the UNGA, allowing the agenda to be set by other UN member states rather than initiating new policy items (Hosli et al. 2010, p. 11).

This is presumably at least partly because at the UN the EU requires literally thousands of meetings between its member states each year in order to coordinate agreement on common positions (Farrell 2006, p. 33). It is a similar situation in the Bretton Woods institutions, where, despite being significantly over-represented through its member states, the EU is nonetheless unable to convert this advantage into agenda setting power (Gehring, Oberthür & Mühleck 2013, p. 860; Pisani-Ferry 2009, p. 28; Smaghi 2009, p. 61). Smaghi attributes this, at least in part, to a lack of EU coordination:

the current situation can be characterized as one of increasing cooperation on an *ad hoc* basis. There is no *ex ante* commitment to achieve and defend common positions (2009, p. 68).

Chaban, Elgström and Holland (2006) also observed this phenomenon in their study of three international negotiations involving the EU (two UN conventions and a WTO meeting). On the basis of interviews with officials they came to the conclusion that in all three cases 'the EU is

considered at least equal in influence to the USA' (2006, p. 252), but was 'hardly seen as a leader', instead perceived as a 'blocking power', meaning that:

without the support of the EU, nothing happens. The ability of the EU to ensure that its own policy proposals are adopted is much more limited (2006, pp. 251-252).

By the same token, the EU has displayed leadership on certain issues such as the Kyoto Protocol and the creation of the International Criminal Court, both of which fall under the aegis of the United Nations (Brantner & Gowan 2009, p. 38). This is the second modality of EU behaviour in multilateral institutions. Costa puts forward the intriguing proposition that participating in multilateral negotiations on these (and other) issues is precisely what enabled the member states to reach a common position themselves, which the EU then went on to champion. There was no *a priori* member state unity, rather '[i]t was only during international negotiations that member states' positions converged' (2013, p. 1224). Under the second modality, therefore, 'EU leadership of negotiations can be fostered by the adoption of norms developed in that same multilateral forum' (2013, p. 1224). This instrumental use of multilateralism has been observed by others as well. Varwick and Koops argue that the EU's relations with NATO are:

less an example of altruistic 'effective multilateralism', than ... the European Union's tendency to use cooperation with other organizations for the enhancement and development of its own international actorness, capacities and strategic identity (2009, p. 123).

Koops has also argued that particularly concerning the Common Security and Defence Policy, the principle of effective multilateralism has been important in providing a point of reference on which the big three, France, the UK and Germany, can all agree (Koops 2011, pp. 431-432). Multilateralism also allows the EU to articulate an international identity that is distinct from US unilateralism (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 185). Van Oudenaren goes so far as to interpret multilateralism as a deliberate strategy not just to confer the EU with actor identity, but to isolate the US. He refers to several instances in the 1990s of the EU 'making certain provisions in the treaty in question so onerous – either to overall U.S. national interests as defined by the administration or to key domestic interest groups and the Congress' that the US would be forced to renounce its support (2010a, p. 33).

A third and final modality describes situations in which both EU unity and actorness is low. Keukeleire and MacNaughtan find that:

Only in a limited number of cases do EU member states manage to agree to an activist EU approach. In some cases they are too divided to even agree on a common EU stance, as in the case of the nuclear non-proliferation regime (2008, p. 303).

The UN Security Council is a forum which is often beyond the influence of the EU (Fassbender 2004, p. 875), a circumstance which can be attributed mostly to the habit of permanent members France and the UK steadfastly defending their freedom of movement (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, p. 307). The most recent revision to the EU treaties, the Lisbon Treaty, even watered down the responsibility of EU members on the Security Council to represent a common EU position (Verola 2010, p. 44). It has also been observed that within the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe it is ‘at times difficult for the European Union to speak with one voice’ (van Ham 2009, p. 145).

Any kind of actorness requires unity

The structural and the empirical definitions of actorness outlined above have in common the requirement of unity (cohesion, consensus, consistency, congruence) as a necessary prerequisite for EU actorness. This comes as no surprise, for the tendency of the EU to display a distinct lack of unity in the face of many of its most significant foreign policy challenges is often perceived as its greatest weakness. Karen Smith asks whether ‘the EU can be effective at all if the member states and institutions can find it so difficult to agree and then maintain any unity achieved’ (2008a, p. 237). Bindi and Shapiro assert that the EU ‘will have to find a way to contain the divisions and the global aspirations of some of its member states’ (2010, p. 348), and Mayer argues that:

The oldest of its problems – not being able to speak with one voice and the widely perceived internal paralysis – has created long-standing images of tensions, rifts, dissent within its ranks and political diversity that have undermined EU ability and its role in global affairs (2008, p. 17).

Many other scholars come to the same conclusion for a wide range of issues relating to external action (Pavese & Torney 2012, p. 140; Kirchner 2011, p. 29; Schimmelfennig & Thomas 2011, pp. 187-188; Wright 2011, p. 28; Hosli et al. 2010, p. 4; Chaban, Elgström & Holland 2006, p. 255).

It will now be argued that not only is unity a necessary condition for EU actorness, it is also sufficient. Or, in other words, that EU unity is the best overall measure of actorness. The structural definitions of actorness described above typically include external factors, such as

recognition by other actors, and room to manoeuvre in a given foreign policy environment (sometimes termed opportunity); and internal factors, such as the ability to act autonomously, having the instruments or capability to take the desired action, and, finally, being able to act with sufficient unity of purpose. However, external factors are essentially beyond the control of the actor in question: the 'recognition' of Jupille and Caporaso (1998, p. 216) is something which is either purely formal or conferred by others; and Bretherton and Vogler's 'opportunity' (2006, pp. 24-27) is a constraint upon all actors (even the ambitions of the United States can be stifled by an unfavourable opportunity configuration). Furthermore, autonomy in the case of the EU is usually intended to mean the independence of the institutions of the EU from the member states (Jupille & Caporaso 1998, p. 217). However, as is argued in greater depth in chapter 2, it is simply not useful to consider EU foreign policy separately from its member states: the external action of the EU should be considered as the totality of actions taken by the institutions of the EU and its member states.

Insufficient capabilities clearly restrict actorness, but the whole basis of the capability-expectations gap is that the EU, through its member states, has very significant capabilities. The quandary rather concerns the political will to use them in a concerted way. This is a question of unity. Even on the issue of military strength, EU member states either possess military resources, or have the economic means to acquire them. Crises, such as the break-up of Yugoslavia or the euro crisis, have demonstrated that the EU is able to innovate institutionally to improve the provision of capabilities where it is lacking: creating the EU military facility, the Common Security and Defence Policy in the former case, and establishing the European Stability Mechanism, the EU version of the IMF, in the latter. This institution-building is also a question of member state unity: these developments are usually considered important milestones along the path of integration. It is thus argued that the capabilities component of actorness can also be reduced to unity over time.

A similar conclusion can be drawn from the empirical definition of actorness. The overview provided of studies of the EU in multilateral institutions demonstrated that EU unity is an important prerequisite for actorness, though in some cases unity does not translate into leadership. In these cases, however, lack of leadership was most likely due to intra-EU negotiating inertia. But this inertia is also a function of EU unity: the more the EU institutions and member states converge on substantive questions (even if this happens over time as part of

the multilateral process), the less energy that needs to be spent on internal negotiations and the more effort that can be devoted to building alliances and exercising leadership.

So actorness boils down to a question of unity? Before drawing this conclusion, there is one more field of scholarship that must be considered. A number of studies have argued recently that EU unity does not necessarily correlate positively to actorness. These studies typically make use of a parameter called 'effectiveness' to make this argument. Da Conceição-Heldt and Meunier (2014), for example, point to Putnam's two-level game theory (Putnam 1988) to argue that the very possibility of internal EU consensus breaking down can be used as a tactic to persuade negotiating partners that the deal on the table is the best offer available (da Conceição-Heldt & Meunier 2014, p. 961). Thus in some cases low internal cohesiveness can lead to high external effectiveness (p. 972). By the same token they still draw the overall conclusion that 'an internally cohesive EU is more effective in the international context' (p. 975). Delreux also suggests that '[i]n a negotiation situation where the EU has large relative bargaining power ... it can be beneficial for the EU not to dominate the international negotiations, and thus not to speak with a single voice or a single mouth' because other parties perceive unified action as antagonistic (2014, p. 1022). Laatikainen and Smith assert that 'a common EU stance can even spark the automatic opposition of developing countries, because they perceive the EU as domineering and neo-colonial' (2006, p. 18). Delreux does draw the conclusion, however, that '[c]ohesiveness does not seem to be a sufficient condition for effectiveness, but it might facilitate it' (2014, p. 1031).

Others have noted that unity can be inversely proportional to effectiveness because unity often comes at the price of a watered-down resolution (Smith 2008a, p. 75). Aware of this dilemma, Thomas studied the relationship between effectiveness, unity and what he referred to as policy determinacy, on the assumption that the fuzzier the determinacy, the less meaning can be attached to a unanimous adoption (2012, p. 459). In a case study of the US pressuring other governments for bilateral non-surrender agreements following the creation of the International Criminal Court, he found that EU effectiveness was low, even when unity and determinacy were high (2012, p. 471). As a result he concluded that:

The tendency of EU leaders to link the Union's frequent lack of coherence to its frequent lack of effectiveness on foreign and security policy is thus either misinformed or misleading, or perhaps both (2012, p. 472).

Thomas, like Delreux, nevertheless suggests that unity is a necessary though not sufficient condition for EU effectiveness (2012, p. 471). As a final example, Karen Smith has also noted that the effectiveness of the EU on the UN Human Rights Council is low, despite a high level of unity (2008b, p. 18).

Effectiveness is, however, a rather misleading concept. As used in the above-cited studies, it sometimes depends on the external opportunity structure, such as the relations between third countries and the US in the case of the non-surrender agreements, or the structure of the UN Human Rights Council in Karen Smith's example. This is usually what is meant when scholars conclude that unity is a necessary but not sufficient condition for actorness. It has already been argued above that a measure of the actorness of the EU should be independent of external opportunities. Other researchers, such as da Conceição-Heldt and Meunier, Delreux, and Laatikainen and Smith cited above, conclude that some internal disunity is useful during negotiations. But this does not detract from a fundamental correlation between underlying agreement on substantive issues and actorness. The argument that a unified position may be a weak compromise leading to ineffective actorness merely highlights the need to distinguish between formal unity and a more fundamental, long-term unity of purpose. It is only the latter which can be considered a measure of actorness. Finally, there can be an element of tautology to the effectiveness argument. Effectiveness is usually defined in terms of achieving pre-defined objectives (da Conceição-Heldt & Meunier 2014, p. 968; Delreux 2014), but if modest goals are easily accomplished is an unambitious actor more effective than if more challenging goals are not quite met? For these reasons, it is argued, effectiveness is not a useful concept when considering what defines actorness.

Therefore, the criteria that have been posited by various scholars for the EU to possess actorness either reside in the external environment, and hence are beyond the control of the EU, are linked to a completely arbitrary qualification such as 'effectiveness', and are thus impractical, or are related either directly or indirectly to unity of purpose among the member states and the institutions of the EU. In particular, issues of institutional capacity, in an entity characterized by ever closer union, are actually a question of long-term unity: lasting agreement on a particular issue correlates with the creation of policy procedures and instruments, as exemplified by the euro crisis which led to the creation of the Fiscal Compact, the bail-out fund (ESM), and the banking union, or the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy

in response to the failure to prevent the violence of the breakup of Yugoslavia. For these reasons EU unity will be used in this thesis as the best measure of EU actorness.

Theoretical approaches, empirical support

Attention now turns to EU unity formation itself, to understand what factors enable or inhibit the member states and the institutions of the EU from reaching a unified position. There are a number of theoretical approaches that explain this process; these will now be considered.

Neofunctionalism

Neofunctionalism is a theory to explain European integration. Its basic premise is that because all policy issues are interconnected in some way, integration of one policy area will produce the need for integration of closely related policy areas ('spillover'). If these new areas are also integrated then the process will continue, until at some stage in the future, full integration is achieved (Haas 1958). Neofunctionalism is, however, probably best known for its failure. Moravcsik concludes that '[d]espite the richness of its insights, neo-functionalism is today widely regarded as having offered an unsatisfactory account of European integration'. Neofunctionalism predicted integration would proceed 'quasi-automatically' and on the basis of 'incrementalism' (Haas 1968, p. xv), and increasing supranationalism, with political actors:

shift[ing] their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states (Haas 1958, p. 16).

Instead, '[c]ommunity-building has proceeded in fits and starts through a series of intergovernmental bargains' (Moravcsik 1993, pp. 476). Neofunctionalists 'systematically (and naively) underestimated the continued impact of sovereignty consciousness and nationalism as barriers to the integration process' and failed to take into account 'domestic political processes and structures' (Niemann & Schmitter 2009, pp. 52-53). Recently, a group of writers calling themselves the 'New Intergovernmentalists' (Bickerton, Hodson & Puetter 2014) have made the observation that supranational integration of the EU has been stalled essentially since the 1993 Maastricht Treaty, and that the major advances in integration since then have all been at the intergovernmental level (i.e. adding competences to the Council, rather than to the Commission). It has long been observed that nation states, in contrast to neofunctionalist expectations, have not only survived, but strengthened within the EU context (Milward 1992, p. 5; Hoffman 1982, p. 35). More recently Hillion (2010) has described how eastern enlargement, often cited as the 'the most successful EU foreign policy' (p. 6), increasingly fell

hostage to national rather than common European interests (pp. 21-22), and that the Council has claimed competences for itself that were designed in the treaties to be shared competences with the Commission (p. 24). Furthermore, the phenomenon of ‘renationalisation’ has entered the vocabulary of EU studies since the turn of the century. Irondelle has observed, for example, that:

After 9/11, the Iraq war and the French and Dutch rebuttal of the Constitutional Treaty in 2005, some have observed that EU member states have tended to de-Europeanize or renationalize foreign policies (2008, p. 153).

On the other hand, Hill concluded that ‘we are not witnessing a wholesale return to the national principle in European foreign policies’, but rather the continuation of ‘a dialectical relationship ... between the national instinct and the perceived need for solidarity’ (2004, p. 160). Despite its apparent failure, however, neofunctionalism remains the ‘quasi-official ideology in the Commission and other parts of the EC institutions’, according to Diez and Wiener (2009, p. 14). It also provides important context from which more recent theories of EU cooperation have emerged.

Intergovernmentalism

Intergovernmentalism is a rationalist approach to EU consensus-formation that focuses on member state agency. Accordingly, states are rational actors which ‘calculate the utility of alternative courses of action and choose the one that maximizes (or satisfies) their utility under the circumstances’ (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig 2009, p. 68). In particular, because external action policy is normally decided by unanimity (with each state effectively possessing a veto), agreement will be unlikely as long as any one state considers the proposal a worse option than unilateral action in the case of no agreement (Moravcsik 1998, p. 61). Intergovernmentalism does not grant the institutions of the European Union any special ability to influence the outcome of negotiations: they are assumed to be instruments of the states (Hoffman 1982, p. 34). Under these circumstances, agreement is expected to be a difficult process.

Intergovernmentalist assumptions are called into question by empirical evidence, however. Toje, for example, finds evidence of central organs influencing the negotiation process, noting that ‘the CFSP staff has played an important, if not widely acknowledged, role in setting the EU security agenda’ (2008a, p. 9). Keukeleire and MacNaughtan also observe that because CFSP issues are rarely put to vote, a range of consensus-building practices means that ‘EU foreign policy-making, in contrast to what is often asserted, is not necessarily subject to the

lowest common denominator’ (2008, p. 110). They also observe that many common EU foreign policies ‘go much further than a rational assessment of members states’ national interests would suggest’ (2008, p. 331). From a stocktake of EU common strategies, positions, and joint actions on external action issues, Thomas concludes that:

the empirical record is inconsistent with the sceptics’ portrayal of CFSP as a policy-area plagued by non-cooperation. When we consider other foreign policy areas that the EU classifies as ‘external relations’, such as enlargement, development cooperation, global environmental policy, and especially trade, the record of policy agreement despite divergent preferences is even more striking (2011b, pp. 11-12).

Sedelmeier found that EU enlargement in particular defies the logic of intergovernmentalism, in that it cannot be explained in terms of member states pursuing self-interest – many member states stood to lose EU resources – but rather:

the EU’s decision to pursue accession negotiations can largely be attributed to the collective identity that the EU created for itself and the regulative norms such an identity entailed (2000, p. 183).

Gegout also cites the St Malo agreement between France and the UK (described in the thesis introduction) as an example in which both countries ‘agreed on EU positions towards NATO, which was perceived by academics and the media as unexpected and as going against their own interests’ (2010, p. 121). In fact there is surprisingly little empirical evidence in favour of intergovernmentalism.

Liberal intergovernmentalism

Liberal intergovernmentalism is probably the most developed intergovernmentalist theory (Schimmelfennig 2015, p. 178). It explains agreement between member states in two steps. In the first step, ‘a stage explained by liberal theories of state-society relations’, state preference formation occurs through a process of ‘aggregation’ of the preferences of economic and social interest groups; the second step, ‘explained by realist and institutionalist (as well as liberal) theories of strategic interaction’, concerns intergovernmental bargaining at the EU level (Moravcsik 1997, p. 544; 1993, p. 481). The institutions of the EU themselves have only a limited role, serving to make negotiations more efficient, providing greater legitimacy to a government policy before a domestic audience, or serving the function of scapegoat for unpopular decisions (Moravcsik 1997, p. 544; 1993, p. 515-516).

National interests, according to liberal intergovernmentalists, are not permanent and unchanging (they can change when governments change at elections, for example), but by the same token they are exogenous to the process of negotiation:

National interests are ... neither invariant, nor unimportant, but emerge through domestic political conflict as societal groups compete for political influence, national and transnational coalitions form, and new policy alternatives are recognized by governments (Moravcsik 1993, p. 481).

The first step, interest aggregation, also incorporates transnational economic factors. As Moravcsik points out, decisions made by one government will often have economic consequences for neighbouring states. Stricter environmental controls on industry in one state will provide its neighbour with a possible competitive advantage, for example. The preferences of interest groups in one will thus often reflect decisions made by governments in other states. Therefore the forces that contribute to the 'aggregation' of interests into the state's conception of the national interest are both domestic and transnational (1993, p. 483).

The second step, interstate bargaining, is characterized by lowest common denominator decisions, though Moravcsik argues this terminology has often been misunderstood:

A 'lowest common denominator' outcome does *not* mean that final agreements perfectly reflect the preferences of the least forthcoming government – since it is generally in its interest to compromise somewhat rather than veto an agreement – but only that the range of possible agreements is decisively constrained by its preferences (1993, pp. 500-501).

Quite often, big states with less need for cooperation on a particular issue (such as Germany on monetary union, or the UK on common foreign policy) are able to demand more accommodation from the others, so that the final result is closer to their preferences (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig 2009, p. 71). Of course, side payments and package deals also serve to move the agreement further than the position of the most intransigent state (Moravcsik 1993, p. 504).

Nevertheless, the empirical evidence against intergovernmentalism in general, cited above, is still a challenge to the explanatory power of liberal intergovernmentalism. In addition, the assumption that national interests arise from the 'aggregation' of the demands of domestic interest groups can be questioned. On the one hand, liberal intergovernmentalism clearly acknowledges the importance of domestic politics in EU policy cooperation:

An understanding of domestic politics is a precondition for, not a supplement to, the analysis of the strategic interaction among states (Moravcsik 1993, p. 481).

This is because the ‘primary interest of governments is to maintain themselves in office ...’ (Moravcsik 1993, p. 483). This is in accordance with the stance taken in this thesis. However, liberal intergovernmentalism essentially focusses on transnational and domestic economic factors (Diez & Wiener 2009, p. 13), rather than taking into account the discursive nature of domestic politics. It assumes that the actors in domestic politics are rational actors, and decide on the basis of cost-benefit optimization.

There are two problems with this. Firstly, there are relatively few issues on which the economic outcome is perfectly clear. There is often a great deal of uncertainty or disagreement over the economic outcome of a given decision. John Kenneth Galbraith famously noted that ‘the only function of economic forecasting is to make astrology look respectable’ (1975, p. 13). Moravcsik is aware that on some issues there is a lack of predictability:

The more general and less predictable the implications of decisions ... the larger the space for leading politicians and partisan elites to act on the basis of ideological predilections (1993, p. 495).

He is also aware that this is particularly true for foreign policy issues, acknowledging that some EU policies:

cannot be interpreted as direct responses to policy externalities imposed by economic interdependence. Some, such as a common foreign and security policy, aim to provide non-socio-economic collective goods (1993, p. 494).

Moravcsik appears to treat such issues as outliers. This thesis asserts that in the area of foreign policy such issues are the mainstream, and any theory of EU foreign policy-making needs to be able to explain them. Secondly, even if the cost-benefit analysis is clear, such elements only form part of the political discourse, and must compete with constructions reflecting values and identity. Once again, Moravcsik is aware of this fact:

The most fundamental influences on foreign policy are ... the identity of important societal groups, the nature of their interests, and their relative influence on domestic policy (1993, p. 483).

And yet there is no room in the liberal intergovernmentalist model for such ideational issues. Such shortcomings are part of the motivation for the theoretical approach developed in chapter 2.

Institutionalism

Institutionalism asserts, in contrast to intergovernmentalism, that the institutions of the EU play a major role in bringing about agreement between the member states on foreign policy issues. It is argued that ‘institutions matter, in the sense of exerting an independent causal influence ... in international relations’ (Pollack 2001, p. 234). In particular, ‘institutions come to exert an independent effect on member states’ subsequent negotiating behaviour and policy choices’ (Thomas 2011b, p. 14). The major forms of institutionalism that are relevant to EU studies are sociological (constructivist), historical and normative.

Sociological institutionalism

Sociological institutionalism, sometimes referred to in the EU context as constructivism (Risse 2009, p. 14), expects that contact between national officials in EU institutions and in meetings at the EU level sets processes in train that lead to changes in the preferences, interests and even identities borne by the representatives of the member states (Checkel 2003, p. 227; Christiansen, Jørgensen & Wiener 1999, p. 529). This happens by:

a process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community. Its outcome is sustained compliance based on the internalization of these new norms. In adopting community rules, socialization implies that an agent switches from following a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness (Checkel 2005, p. 804).

This switch is also characterized by a change from norms of bargaining, which aim for ‘the satisfaction of *self-interests* through trade-offs over issues, or through side-payments to opposing parties’, to norms of problem-solving, which can be understood as ‘an appeal to *common interests* and the use of ostracism or peer-pressure to sanction potential defectors’ (Smith, M 2000, p. 615). We would thus expect observations of problem-solving behaviour to support sociological institutionalism as an explanation, in contrast to bargaining behaviour, which would support intergovernmentalism. Scharpf has defined problem-solving behaviour as seeking ‘voluntary agreement even when sacrifices in terms of individual self-interest are necessary and cannot be immediately compensated through “side payments” or “package deals”’, and linked it to groups who share a common sense of identity (1988, p. 261).

Others have pointed out the potential for normative arguments to be used instrumentally, making true internalization difficult to identify with certainty. As Checkel notes, ‘agents may

behave appropriately by learning a role – acquiring the knowledge that enables them to act in accordance with expectations – irrespective of whether they like the role or agree with it’ (2005, p. 804). Checkel distinguishes between what he calls type 1 internalisation (shallow, or instrumental) and type 2 internalisation, according to which ‘agents adopt the interests, or even possibly the identity, of the community of which they are a part’ (2005, p. 804). Checkel identifies a number of mechanisms by which national representatives may change their preferences: ‘diplomatic bargaining, persuasion/deliberation, and copying/emulation’, with a particular role for persuasion in the European context (2003, p. 221). From a study of a committee of the Council of Europe (admittedly not an organ of the EU, but assuming the results are generalizable), he concludes ‘there is clear evidence that social dynamics within the Committee contributed to the emergence of new shared European norms’ (2003, p. 223).

One criticism of sociological institutionalism is the observation that the socialisation of individuals is different from preference change in governments or states. Checkel notes in his study that in the final stages of deliberations, when member state governments become directly involved, there is a return to bargaining (as opposed to problem-solving) behaviour. He suggests that ‘politicization of the group’s sessions promoted this shift to a bargaining game’ (2003, p. 221). This implies that sociological institutionalism breaks down under conditions of politicization. This thesis argues that it is precisely the most important issues which will be politicized, that is, enter the domestic public sphere for debate. A theory of member state cooperation on external action issues should be able to explain intra-EU behaviour on the most important issues. Tonra agrees on this point, noting that:

This model’s preoccupation with elites is its ultimate downfall. ... In ... democracies, policy must be grounded in some level of public support ... (2001, p. 33).

A number of researchers have searched for evidence supporting sociological institutionalism. In a study involving a series of EU external action case studies, Schimmelfennig and Thomas found little evidence for socialisation processes (2011, p. 180). In the case of a new member state, Horký noted that ‘[a]t the documentary level ... there is no evidence of a transfer of EU values and norms to the Czech level beyond the acceptance of their existence’ (2012, p. 67). Hooghe (2005) concluded on the basis of surveys of Commission officials that there is little evidence to support elite socialisation. In fact she finds that:

while support for international norms is high, this is not primarily because of socialization in the European Commission. Top officials sustain Commission norms when national experiences motivate them to do so – when national political socialization [in particular identification with a federal system of government] predisposes them to embrace supranationalism, or when supranationalism appears to benefit their country (p. 862).

Contradicting the supposed blindness of the Commission to national loyalties, Hooghe cites a long-serving top official as saying: ‘nobody forgets his background, his nationality. ... Some [officials] are almost unashamed of it; they go straight for it and make it no secret’ (pp. 880-881). On the other hand, Juncos and Reynolds (2007) found significant evidence of socialisation in the Political and Security Council, a body which reports to the Council in its foreign affairs formation. They found that ‘Member State representatives sitting in the PSC routinely impact upon the definition of national interests and foreign policies, rather than simply bringing them to the table to be bargained over’ (p. 127). As evidence the authors cite one anonymous official from a large member state as saying:

it is ‘the most normal thing in the world’ to get on the phone back to his capital during a meeting to tell them what other Member States are thinking and what policy positions are and are not possible as a result’ (p. 144).

Furthermore, ‘the style of negotiation within the PSC can be described as problem-solving rather than bargaining’ (p. 141). This would appear to be clear confirmation of sociological institutionalist propositions. However, the authors also cite an official from a large member state as reporting that ‘his room for manoeuvre ... is often dictated by what has already been said publicly on the issue by his government’ (p. 140), a reference to the constraining effect of public discourses. Furthermore, similar studies of other EU committees have detected less evidence of socialisation (Juncos & Pomorska 2006; Lewis 2005). Lewis found that in the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the main preparatory body for the Council, ‘state actors’ range of motivations include a blend of appropriateness and consequentialist logics’, but with ‘bargaining behaviour’ less present in ‘everyday EU decision making’ (2005, p. 938). One interviewee noted the key to a successful agreement was to ‘keep it away from the press, where it would have been politicized quickly’ (p. 957).

A sizeable body of ‘Europeanization’ research has contributed to the sociological institutionalist argument. Europeanization is an empirical rather than a theoretical approach (Wong & Hill 2011, p. 11), and studies seek to observe the extent to which national foreign policies have Europeanized (i.e. converged on a common, European approach). One of its key

findings is the pervasiveness of what is known as the coordination or consultative reflex, according to which national officials consult with each other as a matter of course in the process of policy-making (Wong & Hill 2011, p. 10; Tonra 2001, p. 11). This is clearly a sociological institutionalist concept, which according to Tonra:

has led policy makers in all member states to qualify, adapt and in some cases recast, national foreign policies in ways which are inconceivable in a truly intergovernmental arrangement (2001, p. 3).

However, Tonra also notes that the consultative reflex ‘works best at times of stability rather than crisis’, citing one interviewee who acknowledged that the reflex ‘works (only until) there is a real conflict when higher politics destabilizes the framework ... [as] happened with Yugoslavia’ (2001, p. 12). Alecu de Flers concurs that ‘[w]hen foreign policy is not reduced to high politics, an increasing convergence in the foreign policy positions of the EU member states can be observed’ (2008, p. 97).

There have been many studies of the Europeanization of the foreign policy of individual member states which typically find evidence of increasing Europeanization of member state foreign policies, though usually in the context of national idiosyncrasies (for example for France see Charillon & Wong 2011; Gross 2011; Wong 2006; for Germany see Daehnhardt 2011; Gross 2011; Aggestam 2000; for the UK see Aktipis & Oliver 2011; Gross 2011; Jokela 2011; van Oudenaren 2010b; for Austria see Alecu de Flers 2008; 2012; for Denmark see Larsen 2005; Tonra 2001; for Finland see Jokela 2011; for Greece see Tsardanidis & Stavridis 2011; for Ireland see Alecu de Flers 2008; 2012; Tonra 2001; for Italy see Brighi 2011; for the Netherlands see Tonra 2001; Coolsaet & Soetendorp 2000; for Poland see Pomorska 2011; Bobinski 2010; for Spain see Barbé 2011). However, these positive results (in favour of sociological institutionalism) need to be treated with caution. Firstly there is a danger that these studies look too closely at purely formal Europeanization, and that Larsen’s critique of Tonra could have wider application:

Tonra’s work suggests a wide-ranging Europeanisation of *foreign policy procedures*. However, it could have been interesting if there had been more of a focus on *foreign policy substance* ... It cannot be taken for granted that the existence of common *procedural* understandings or socialisation leads to a particular fit between national and EU foreign policy in terms of policy substance (2005, pp. 32, 37).

Hill and Wong make the same point (2011, p. 230). Secondly, Europeanization studies are typically based on interviews with national officials, the objectivity of whom can be questioned

(see e.g. Wong & Hill 2011, p. 12; Howarth 2005, p. 338; Larsen 2005, p. 61). The results of these studies support the assertion of this thesis that while it is possible that socialisation of national officials occurs, it is usually only a significant factor for EU consensus-making on everyday issues that are below the radar of national political debate.

Historical institutionalism

Historical institutionalism focusses on the path-dependency of EU decision-making, observing that ‘institutional choices taken in the past can persist, or become locked in, thereby shaping and constraining actors later in time’ (Pollack 2009, p. 127), including ‘in ways that are unanticipated and/or undesired’ (Pierson 1996, p. 126). The classic example of this is the way the European Court of Justice has unilaterally expanded its jurisdiction:

During the 1960s and 1970s, the ECJ interpreted its competences in an integrationist manner unanticipated and initially undesired by governments (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig 2009, p. 75).

Such encroachment was unplanned, but difficult to undo, since ECJ rulings can only be overturned unanimously (Pollack 2009, p. 137). Historical institutionalism is clearly best suited to explaining long-term processes. Its effects will therefore be difficult to detect with the case studies in this thesis, most of which only cover a limited time period. On the other hand, Scharpf argues that the ‘joint-decision traps’ on which historical institutionalism is based can be overcome through problem-solving behaviour (described above) (1988, p. 239). Van Hoonacker and Jacobs also find evidence that ‘national political actors have the capacity to overcome institutional path dependency’ (2010, p. 564). Once again it is a question of the collective political will, or in other words EU unity.

Normative institutionalism

Sedelmeier has noted that presenting a proposal in terms of strongly-held EU norms can benefit from socialisation effects. He gives the example of the 1999 Kosovo intervention, about which many member state governments had serious reservations. He suggests it is possible that:

reluctant member states consented to the declaration endorsing the military intervention because this document justified such action with references to norms that are fundamental to the EU’s identity (2004, p. 134).

This phenomenon has been referred to as normative institutionalism by Schimmelfennig and Thomas (2011). Its defining feature is ‘normative entrapment’:

once member states have committed themselves to a particular set of norms and/or policy course, they are likely to find themselves constrained to take

further actions that do not reflect their original intentions and/or current preferences (Thomas 2011a, p. 6).

In contrast to sociological institutionalism, politicization of an issue is felt to reinforce the effects of normative institutionalism (Schimmelfennig & Thomas 2011, p. 180).

A number of examples of normative institutionalism are cited in the literature. Schimmelfennig (2011), for example, proffers the case of Turkish accession negotiations. He suggests that granting Turkey candidacy status in 1999 only occurred because ‘the constellation of member state preferences was particularly favourable’ (p. 128), after which the EU found itself ‘constrained ... to use the same criteria for Turkey that it had used for the Central and Eastern European countries’ (p. 123):

When Turkey – rather unexpectedly and rapidly – demonstrated its willingness to reform and make substantial progress, the member states, including those that were principally opposed to Turkish accession, found themselves entrapped (p. 126).

It was only Turkey’s continuing hard line on Cyprus that gave the EU the excuse to back down (p. 127). Youngs (2011) also suggests that normative entrapment was responsible for EU support for the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, despite significant reservations arising from the importance placed on good relations with Russia:

many member states had constantly made a rhetorical commitment to support Ukraine’s democratization without ever contemplating that this would involve proactive EU action in a moment of dramatic revolutionary change (p. 47).

This normative entrapment was not strong enough, however, to agree to Ukrainian accession, at which point ‘normative entrapment gave way to lowest common denominator’ (p. 31).

While the phenomenon of normative entrapment should not be discounted, it is argued in this thesis that a better explanation for the behaviour described above is in terms of European norms being expressed in identity discourses which are co-constructed in the political debates within the member states. Normative entrapment would only apply until member state governments were able to find an acceptable alternative discursive context within which to reframe their policy. For example, the exclusion of Ukraine and Turkey from consideration from EU accession would simply be a matter of reframing the discursive strategy in terms of European civilizational identity. In any case, because of the importance of socialisation effects, it is

suggested that normative institutionalism can be considered a sub-branch of sociological institutionalism, and will not be used as a separate reference theory in this thesis.

This discussion has identified liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism as the two main, competing theories which can be applied to EU unity formation on external action issues. In particular it has identified a number of weaknesses in these theories which justify the need for a new theoretical approach: the explanatory power of liberal intergovernmentalism wanes when outcomes are difficult to predict; sociological institutionalism fails when issues become politicized. Important foreign policy questions are usually characterized by these two conditions. The discursive theoretical approach put forward in this thesis is intended to meet these criticisms.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a discussion of the nature of EU actorness. It has considered the possibility that the EU is a new kind of actor, a normative one, and looked at how this has been defined, acknowledging the contested nature of this claim. The definition arrived at for the purposes of this thesis was that the EU is a normative actor to the extent that it models and is able to transmit its self-proclaimed norms of good governance and interstate relations. This discussion highlighted the need for the theoretical model developed in chapter 2 to be tested on case studies which include the normative dimension of EU actorness. Secondly, this chapter surveyed a number of structural definitions of actorness, and one empirical approach, and drew the conclusion that EU actorness is best measured by the degree to which the EU exhibits lasting unity on a given issue among its member states and institutions. The final section looked at a number of theories which seek to explain EU unity formation, and identified their deficiencies. Under liberal intergovernmentalism member states bring to the negotiating table preferences which have been decided in advance by a process of aggregation of input from various economic and social interest groups. Negotiating is then essentially a lowest common denominator process. Liberal intergovernmentalism's main weakness is its rationalist conceptualisation of national interest: it breaks down on issues where predictability of policy outcomes is low. Sociological institutionalism holds that socialisation of national elites leads to convergence on foreign policy. Its main weakness is that it fails to take into account national politics when issues become politicized. It is argued that most instances of EU consensus formation on external action will involve issues with outcomes that are hard to predict and

which are highly politicized. This thesis therefore proposes an alternative theory which will meet these criteria, and which will now be described in detail in chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Theoretical approach and methodology

The first half of this chapter provides a detailed derivation of the proposed new theoretical approach to EU actorness, drawing from post-structuralist and discourse theory. It shows that the main elements of this theoretical model are supported not only by empirical observation but also by the reflections of scholars adhering to a range of theoretical traditions. This demonstrates that the theoretical model developed here is not merely an abstract derivation from a specific (contested) ontology, rather it is consistent with the observations of a broad range of scholarly opinion. The second part of the chapter then elucidates the methodological approach developed to test the theoretical model on the case studies.

Theoretical approach

Discourse analysis has been applied to a number of aspects of European studies (see e.g. the summary by Diez 2001; see also the collection edited by Howarth & Torfing 2005; and that by Tocci 2008). In addition, a discursive approach to foreign policy analysis has been well established by the work of the Copenhagen School, including Larsen (e.g. 1997; 2005). In this context the Copenhagen School's Waever argues that:

It is indeed possible to develop a foreign policy theory from the surprising departure point of discourse analysis. The theory can explain why some options that seem obvious from abstract theory of abstract states are actually completely unrealistic (incompatible with national traditions of political thought) (2005, p. 59).

Discourse analysis, at least in its critical form, draws on the work of the post-structuralists. Seminal figures include Foucault (e.g. 1984, 1989), Derrida (e.g. 1981), Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and Fairclough (e.g. 1989, 1992). Post-structuralist approaches are often criticized by 'rationalists' for their unsuitability to practical application. In particular they are accused of lacking causal mechanisms, hence defying testability. Milliken notes that '[d]iscourse theory is regularly criticized as bad science, because of its lack of testable theories or empirical analyses' (1999, p. 227). Discursive approaches are disparaged as being merely 'thick descriptions of individual and collective meanings, beliefs, and traditions' in contrast to 'the search for law-like explanations of social phenomena' supposedly characteristic of positivist approaches (Glynos & Howarth 2007, p. 3). Diez concedes that discursive approaches to EU studies are 'not aimed at explanation, but at what one could call a "critical understanding" of European

policies' and are therefore 'unlikely to satisfy those longing for a "scientifically" more rigid approach' (2001, p. 30). Kurki bemoans a situation in which 'the so-called reflectivist "constitutive" theorists have maintained that causal analysis is neither a necessary, nor a desirable aim in understanding world politics' (2006, p. 189).

In fact, as Kurki points out, the claim that such approaches lack causality does them a great disservice. Rationalists typically consider causality only in a narrow, Humean sense, 'that causes should "temporally precede" and be "independent" of effects' (Kurki 2006, p. 208). The preoccupation with this restrictive definition of causality results in 'leaving conceptions of social ontologies, i.e. identity, community and collective intentionality, largely aside' (Christiansen, Jørgensen & Wiener 1999, p. 533). Drawing inspiration from the Aristotelian concepts of 'material cause' ('the matter "out of which" things come to be') and 'formal cause' ('that which makes or defines a given thing, its "structure", its qualities and its properties'), Kurki argues that 'causal analysis in the wider reconceptualised sense is, in fact, something that all IR theorists, including constitutive theorists, engage in' (2006, pp. 190, 206-207). A broader understanding of causality means 'accepting that social structures do not necessarily "push and pull", rather they "constrain and enable"' (Kurki 2006, pp. 204-205). In this broader sense of causality, discursive phenomena can indeed be considered causal.

A broader understanding of causality is all the more justified by advances in the natural sciences, on which positivism is so reverentially based. The study of complex systems in physics, for example, has uncovered the reality that linear systems (phenomena with simple causes and effects) are but a subcategory of the real world: most phenomena are in fact composite systems, subject to feedback loops in which effect also contributes to cause (Byrne 1998, p. 20). Calls for a broader conceptualisation of causality, and for the acceptance of the usefulness of post-structuralist theories, are therefore justified. This thesis seeks to demonstrate that a post-structuralist discourse analysis approach to EU actorness can indeed have practical application.

The application of discourse theory to foreign policy analysis

The approach of this thesis is based on the principle, drawn from post-structuralism and discourse theory, that meaning is not something that is neutrally transmitted via language; rather meaning is constructed in language (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 107). This is not to deny

physical reality; rather it means that everything, including physical reality, is only conferred social meaning through discourse. Thus ‘“reality” cannot be known outside discourse ...’ (Diez 1999, pp. 603), ‘[n]atural, physical and cultural objects are ... understood and acquire meaning in discourses’ (Glynos et al. 2009, p. 8), and ‘[i]t is through discursive practices that agents make sense of the world and attribute meaning to their activities’ (Risse 2009, p. 149). As a consequence:

[even] for a realm of study like International Relations ... it is no longer possible to innocently maintain the ‘objectivity’ of one’s scholarship by recourse to the ‘facts’ or the ‘real world’ (George & Campbell 1990, p. 281).

Above all, discourse is a social activity, governed by social rules (Fairclough 1989, pp. 28-31; Foucault 1984). These rules determine not only who has authority to speak on certain issues, but also what is considered right or wrong, what is logical, and what kind of statements have any meaning at all. Foucault takes the example of Mendel, the discoverer of the functioning of dominant and recessive genes. At the time of his discoveries he was ignored by the scientific community, because what he was saying fell outside its rules of discourse, therefore was simply unintelligible to his peers (1984, p. 119).

One consequence of this for the study of international politics is that the concept of ‘national interest’, so important in international relations theorizing, also needs to be understood discursively, as a ‘social construction’ (Weldes 1996, p. 276). Sedelmeier argues that ‘the very nature of [national] interests depends crucially on actors’ identities and social rules’ (2004, p. 125). Weldes reasons that national interests are determined by officials who are not ‘blank slates’ but rather:

approach international politics with an already quite comprehensive and elaborate appreciation of the world, of the international system and of the place of their state within it. This appreciation, in turn, is necessarily rooted in meaning already produced, at least in part, in domestic political and cultural contexts (1996, p. 280).

National interests are therefore, according to this understanding, not independently knowable exogenous facts – a definition which ‘rationalist’ approaches rely on – but rather discursive phenomena, which are subject to social rules.

Another important lesson from discourse analysis is that discursive phenomena such as interests and identity are not changeless or even quasi-permanent; rather their meanings in a given context depend on their current construction. This means that ‘discourses ... are not rigid. Their contents can thus only be approximated, and not be once and for ever determined’ (Diez 1999, p. 611). That is not to say that new and unconnected ideas can easily gain currency in a political debate: the instantiation of a political discourse at any one time builds on and cross-references countless past iterations. However it does mean that discourses are unstable, and that every (re)construction of a discourse is in some ways unique. As a consequence, identity discourses, a fundamental element of this study, are neither static nor exogenous, but constantly being reconstructed in actual communicative acts. As Siapera observes:

identities are viewed as being under continuous construction, since people are continuously involved in talk and conversation, and are thus better understood as fluid resources than as static possessions of individuals (2004, p. 131).

This is a crucial element of the understanding of identity adopted in this thesis, which will be addressed in more detail below.

One of the primary objects of discourse analysis in the social sciences relates to power: it is about understanding the discursive means used by dominant social groups to maintain their privileged position in society (Fairclough 1989, pp. 90-92). The ultimate aim of these groups is to cement their position of power by ensuring that the status quo achieves the standing of unquestioned ‘common sense’, simply the way things are, or to use the terminology of Fairclough, ‘ideology’ (1992, p. 86-96; 1989, pp. 92-93). The Essex School of discourse theory refers to social ‘logics’ that through their enactment reinforce the ‘grip’ of the dominant ideology:

Discourse theorists working within the poststructuralist tradition of thought ... focus their attention on the reproduction and transformation of hegemonic orders and practices. They develop the theoretical means to account for the ways in which subjects are gripped by certain ideologies or discourses (even if the latter are not necessarily in their interests, or indeed consistent with their beliefs) ... (Glynos & Howarth 2007, p. 5).

The struggle over ideology in this sense is the essence of political contestation. Drawing from Laclau and Mouffe (1985), the Essex School identifies two main ‘political logics’ which characterize this struggle: the ‘logic of equivalence’ and the ‘logic of difference’ (Glynos et al. 2009, p. 11). The logic of equivalence refers to the discursive means for uniting social groups under a common grievance or towards a common goal – social groups that are discursively

distinct under the existing social order. The logic of difference applies to the opposite phenomenon, in the classic way that the strategy of ‘divide and conquer’ is used to achieve political ends. Glynos and Howarth illustrate these logics with the example of apartheid South Africa, which defined the various Black African Nations as separate. Apartheid was overthrown when these ‘nations’ were discursively united into a single Black majority to oppose and eventually defeat the reigning political order (2007, pp. 141-145).

Political alliances are thus often created by discursively constructing sameness between otherwise disparate groups. This can be achieved by rallying different groups behind common points of identity. Frequently, however, the commonality of these points of identity is illusory, and based on different interpretations of certain key terms. Such terms are referred to as floating signifiers (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p. 113): they only appear to have the same meaning to different social groups, but in fact signify something different to each group. Hajer explains this phenomenon:

Very often, it is assumed that the meaning that the receiver ‘reads’ into a message is the same as the sender intended to put into the message. This assumption of *mutual understanding* is false. Discourse analysis brings out, time and again, that people often speak at cross-purposes. Interestingly, however, this can be quite instrumental towards creating a political coalition (2005, p. 302).

Political struggle involving the contestation or overthrow of dominant social groups is clearly not the subject of this thesis. However the same concepts of discourse fluidity, floating signifiers, and the logics of equivalence and difference remain relevant for the study of more mundane political contestation, namely debate in the public sphere over foreign policy issues. These concepts have been introduced here because they will prove useful in the analysis of the case studies that follows.

The nature of identity

Identity is clearly a key element in the theoretical approach of this thesis. The understanding of national identity used here draws on Anderson’s conception of the nation as an ‘imagined community’, the members of which ‘never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (2006, p. 6). Perhaps Anderson’s most powerful example of this ‘communion’ is the sense of simultaneity associated with the morning ritual of newspaper reading:

each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he [sic] performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose

existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion (2006, p. 35).

Above all, as mentioned above, it is argued that identity needs to be understood as a discursive phenomenon: 'national identities ... are produced and reproduced, as well as transformed and dismantled, *discursively*' (Wodak et al. 2009, pp. 3-4). The principles of discourse analysis discussed above therefore apply equally to identity. In particular:

there is – in an essential sense – no such thing as *one* national identity ... rather ... different identities are discursively constructed according to audience, setting, topic and substantive content (Wodak et al. 2009, p. 4).

In the empirical analysis chapters below, identity discourses will therefore be derived on a case by case basis: 'identity in use', to use Risse's expression (2010, p. 34). While recurring elements are expected, it can also be anticipated that particular identity constructions will depend on the context of the case study in question.

This understanding of identity is quite different from 'rationalist' conceptualisations, which see identity as exogenous, pre-existing and more or less permanent, and 'suggest that primordial, cultural or linguistic similarities *per se* constitute social community' (Kantner 2006, p. 6).

Wodak et al. criticize this understanding of identity:

Used as a completely static idea, the concept wrongly suggests that people belong to a solid, unchanging, intrinsic collective unit because of a specific history which they supposedly have in common, and that as a consequence they feel obliged to act and react as a group when they are threatened. Understood in this way, the concept is incapable of explaining why the social actors involved act in a certain way and how ... political and military conflicts could arise (2009, p. 11).

Foreign policy as the co-construction of identity

While governments are faced with the task of communicating policy to the electorate on a daily basis, it is foreign policy that is most strongly linked to national identity. This is because foreign policy, by definition, refers to external 'others', which trigger identity constructions of the self. The reason for this is the post-structuralist observation that identity is always defined relationally. According to Campbell:

the constitution of identity is achieved through the inscription of boundaries that serve to demarcate an 'inside' from an 'outside,' a 'self' from an 'other,' a 'domestic' from a 'foreign' (1998, p. 9).

Thus constructions of foreign policy are always co-constructions of national identity (Hansen 2006, p. 21).

In contrast to the Derridean formula of defining identity with respect to opposites (Derrida 1981), it has become clear that identity definition can occur on a graduated scale of difference (Hansen 2006, p. 37), and even encompass attraction to an ideal, or ‘paragon’ in the words of Campbell, a concept he illustrates with American examples:

The puritans invoked biblical scripture and its covenants; the American revolutionaries summoned their Pilgrim forebears and made them into demigods; and an endless array of modern political leaders have conjured up the Puritans and the ‘Founding Fathers’ to be protagonists of particular positions in contemporary controversies (1998, pp. 131).

This concept of paragon is of particular relevance for the present study of the European Union. The EU sees its normative power consisting in representing norms that others desire to emulate, evidenced for example by the influx of new member states after the collapse of the Soviet Empire, all apparently keen to adopt the western European model of society.

Another form of relational identification is the definition of the self with respect to an unacceptable past version, which can be referred to as temporal othering. Germany is the classic example of this: its Nazi past is still an important reference point for national identity discourses (Risse 2005, p. 301; Aggestam 2000, p. 66). But it is also true of the EU itself: to the extent that there is such a thing as an EU identity, the construction of the EU as having brought peace and prosperity to a region for centuries beset by ever more destructive wars is a key element (Waeber 2009, p. 176).

The link between identity and foreign policy is not merely an outcome of post-structuralist axioms, but is well-established across the discipline of international relations. Legro notes that:

national identities affect politics within, between, and among countries in ways that defy factors such as international balances of power, functional economic needs, and the desires of leaders (2009, p. 38).

Wallace has observed that ‘foreign policy is about national identity itself’ (1991, p. 65), while Tiersky concludes that ‘a state’s foreign policy is the international expression of the nature of its domestic society’ (2010a, p. 9), and Tonra notes ‘the centrality of identity to the shape and nature of foreign policy’ (2001, pp. 31). Tonra has also found numerous examples of foreign

affairs practitioners drawing the same conclusion. Foreign policy is ‘more than self interest ... it is a statement of the kind of people we are’ (an Irish government paper cited in Tonra 2001, p. 49) and ‘the heart of a country, your identity’ (a Dutch parliamentarian cited in Tonra 2001, p. 252). The case studies below bear witness to the complexity of identity constructions in actual examples of international relations. The identity constructions uncovered typically distinguish between the self, one or more (negative or threatening) others, depending on the context, and quite often also the idea of a paragon, an attractive other.

The Hansen mechanism: basic discourses and harmony

It has been argued that identity discourses will be evoked whenever a government enunciates a foreign policy position. Hansen (2006) asserts that governments will tend to avoid making foreign policy statements that clash with existing public identity discourses. The reason for this is that making such a disharmonious statement will leave administrations open to attack from oppositional groups in the parliament or critical groups in the media. Furthermore, if governments do find themselves under attack from oppositional groups under such circumstances, they are likely to change their discourse on the issue (2006, pp. 32-33, 146-147). This proposition by Hansen is the foundation on which the theoretical model developed in thesis is built.

The practical applicability of the Hansen mechanism hinges on the assumption that political discourses on particular foreign policy issues can be distilled into ‘basic discourses’, and that these discourses can be probed for ‘harmony’ with identity constructions simultaneously present in the public sphere (Hansen 2006, pp. 29-30). This concept of ‘basic discourses’ has been recognized by others, even though the terminology may be different. Hajer, for example, defines a ‘story line’ as ‘a condensed statement summarizing complex narratives, used by people as “short hand” in discussions’ (2005, p. 302). Diez describes a process of reconstructing the ‘metanarratives’ of a given discourse (2001, p. 21). Larsen refers to ‘discursive structures’ in a context in which:

language and discourse are always contested, always on the move. At the same time political discourse is seen as sufficiently stable for it to be interesting to study its constitutive role in relation to foreign policy. It is thus possible to present the discursive structures in a particular state relevant for foreign policy (2005, p. 48).

Hansen's concept of harmony between foreign policy and identity discourses is also not new, and has been referred to as 'discourse affinity' by Hajer (2005, p. 304), or 'resonance' between identity discourses by Diez (2001, p. 9).

Furthermore, the mechanism itself, though not necessarily in the precise articulation Hansen gives it, has been observed by many scholars in a range of theoretical and empirical contexts. Hill and Wallace describe the need for 'ministers to relate current decisions to familiar ideas', and 'the constraints [that] conventional wisdom about national interests sets upon acceptable choices' (1996, p. 8). Aggestam notes that 'policy makers draw on [the politics of identity] in order to mobilise a sense of cohesion and solidarity in order to legitimate the general thrust of foreign policy' (2000, p. 66). Bucher et al. also find that:

foreign policy decision-makers are ... subject to domestic inputs coming from the electorate, legislature, bureaucratic politics, interest groups, etcetera ... As a result politicians may sacrifice their individual policy preferences or what they consider is best for the country over re-election (2013, p. 525).

Finally, Koenig-Archibugi recognizes that '[p]olitical elites are constrained by public opinion, but the latter is malleable to the discourses propagated by the former' (2004, p. 147). The impact of public discourses on foreign policy has therefore been widely noted. Hansen's mechanism encapsulates this in a concise and theoretically derived manner.

Expansion of the Hansen mechanism to EU actorness

The theoretical model presented in this thesis consists of applying the Hansen mechanism to EU member state cooperation on external action issues. This expanded Hansen model consists of a series of parallel Hansen mechanisms, one for each member state, illustrated in figure 1. The basic premise is that in order for the member states to agree, each national government must be able to present a possible common policy in terms which are harmonious with the respective public identity discourses. This multiplicity of parallel Hansen mechanisms allows for a number of possible configurations in which EU unity is possible. One way to enable EU unity is for similar policy announcements by member state governments to be in harmony with similar identity constructions in each member state. The ideal case for this to happen is if policy debate is framed in EU terms and European identity discourses are co-constructed. This will be labelled configuration 1 (see table 1).

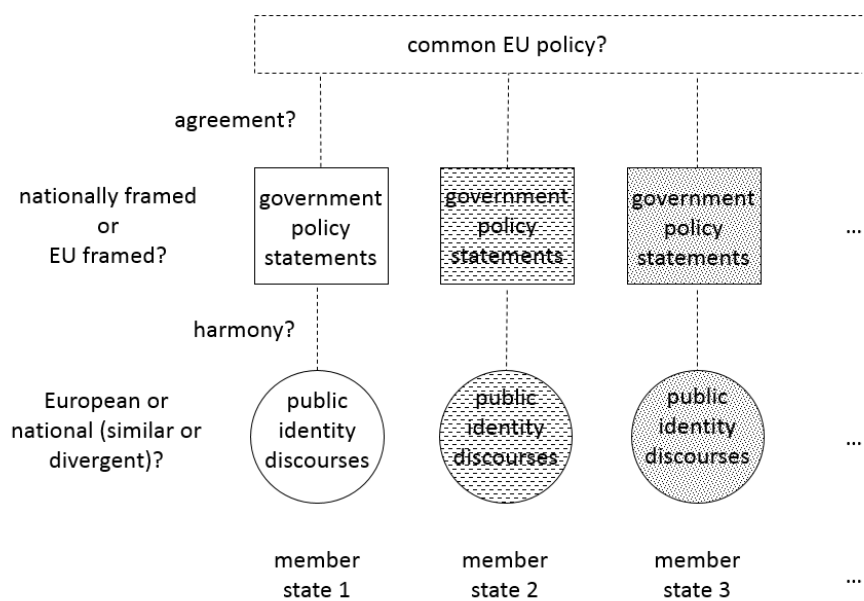


Figure 1. Representation of the discursive constraints on EU foreign policy formation as a series of parallel Hansen mechanisms.

Another possibility for EU unity is if policy articulations are nationally framed, but meet with similar national identity constructions in each member state. This will be labelled configuration 2a. The reason for the 'a' is that it is also possible that debate is nationally framed in each member state, evokes *different* national identity discourses, but is nevertheless still consistent with a common EU policy. This is because policy expressions can sometimes function as floating signifiers (discussed above), and have different specific meanings in different national contexts. For example, the discourse of environmental leadership in France is related to low carbon-emitting nuclear power, whereas in Germany this discourse is non-nuclear. This configuration will be given the label 2b. Finally, it is clear that in the case that divergent national identity constructions are incompatible with government enunciations of a common EU policy, there will be no EU unity, a situation described here is configuration 3. These configurations are summarized in table 1, below.

There are two more configurations that can be derived from this expanded Hansen model of EU cooperation. The first is when an external action issue does not enter the public sphere, (i.e. it is not sufficiently politicized to be subject to public debate). In this case the Hansen model does not apply, since national governments will not be constrained by public identity discourses, and other explanations for EU decision making must be sought. This is referred to

here as the zero (0) configuration. Finally, if there is *no* EU unity, but lack of action is inconsistent with member state identity constructions (national or European), then the Hansen mechanism could conceivably push member states towards common action, as governments seek to avoid the ire of their electorates caused by their failure to reach consensus. This has been labelled the minus (-) configuration. For completeness these last two combinations have also been added to table 1.

Configuration	Government policy statements	Public identity discourses	Common EU policy
(1)	EU framed	European	✓
(2a)	Nationally framed	National, similar across all member states	✓
(2b)	Nationally framed	National, divergent across member states, but still compatible with common EU policy	✓
(3)	Nationally framed	National, divergent	✗
(0)	The issue does not enter the public sphere, so government policy is not constrained by identity discourses.		not described
(-)	Where lack of common EU policy is not in harmony with common (national or European) identity discourses across the member states, the Hansen mechanism suggests governments will change policy under public pressure and move towards a common EU policy.		✗ → ✓

Table 1: The six configurations of the discursive theoretical model.

On the surface this theoretical model may appear to be intergovernmentalist, in that the only actors in it are member states. In fact interaction between the institutions of the EU and the member states is not precluded by this theory. Furthermore, institutional influence is incorporated into the model through its discursive impact on debate in the national public spheres. By the same token, it has already been observed that the Commission has only a limited role in common foreign policy issues (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, p. 92); additionally, the empirical studies below suggest that member state consensus can outweigh the Commission on important issues, even under communitarian decision-making rules.

As in the case of the simple Hansen mechanism, other scholars have observed the effects described by the expanded Hansen model. Within the discourse analysis tradition, Larsen for example has recognized that ‘different political discourses on a particular issue in two countries

can be an obstacle to cooperation, a source of cooperation or a source of strife' (1997, pp. 27-28), while Diez's observations on EU integration exactly mirror the expanded Hansen mechanism:

Member-state governments have to justify their policies to their national audiences, and they do so regularly in parliamentary speeches, election manifestos, interviews, brochures, or other public statements. It is thus not denied that governments do enter negotiations with a specific preference structure. This preference structure, however, is not the direct result of national interests or of a bargain between national interest groups, but is based on the discursively available horizon of future visions for European governance (2001, p. 10).

However, it is also true that scholars outside the discourse analysis school have noticed the link between member state identity and EU foreign policy formation. Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, for example, assert that:

It is because they are closely related to a country's *identity* that differences in world view and role definition can be considered more serious obstacles in defining EU foreign policy than differences in interests ... This points to one of the crucial weaknesses of EU foreign policy: the lack of a sufficiently developed common identity (2008, pp. 138-139).

Investigating the role of the UN in EU external policy, Jørgensen found that '[s]trong domestic forces – ranging from public opinion, political parties and shared images of world order – contribute to explaining the European Union's commitment to the UN' (2009, p. 193). Koenig-Archibugi also finds identity mechanisms at work in the process of European integration, which closely mirror the expanded Hansen mechanism described above:

Generally speaking, collective identities might affect government policies towards European treaty reform through two types of causal mechanism. In the first, members of the political elite make choices on European political integration on the basis of their identities. In the second, members of the general public form preferences on European political integration on the basis of their identities, and political elites engaged in political competition adjust their stance toward the EU to what they perceive are the preferences of their potential voters (2004, pp. 146-147).

There is no reason to assume such observations are not equally valid for EU external action policy.

Individual configurations of the expanded Hansen model have also been independently described in the literature. In particular the ideal case, configuration (1), in which EU consensus

results from the debates in the member states being framed in EU terms and co-constructing European identity, finds support from a number of scholars. Sedelmeier, for example, notes that:

a sociological perspective on the role of EU identity in EFP [European Foreign Policy] ... attributes to it a causal influence on EFP, independently from material factors (2004, p. 124)

Kratochvíl, Cibulková and Beník also note the effect of what they term EU framing power on domestic political debates, arguing that:

regardless of whether the Member States' governments agree or not, the EU can have substantial power in *a priori* limiting the choices available to these governments (2011, p. 397).

This power can be understood in terms of EU framing co-constructing European identity discourses. In a study of the Europeanization of Swedish foreign policy, Rolenc and Kratochvíl (2013) find ample evidence of the presence of the EU in Swedish foreign policy discourses, asserting that 'in all the cases [studied] the EU exhibited a vast framing power' (p. 132), and that '[n]o matter whether we speak about traditional security issues or humanitarian assistance, the EU remains the main actor in the discourse on Sweden's security policy' (p. 136). The strong presence of EU framing in Swedish foreign policy discourses provides support for the possible functioning of configuration (1) in practice.

The zero configuration also receives independent support. A number of scholars have observed that politicization of foreign policy issues leads to difficulties in EU unity formation (Groen, Niemann & Oberthür 2012, p. 181; Aktipis & Oliver 2011, p. 73; Young 2011, p. 120). The zero configuration expects that EU consensus-forming will be easier for non-politicized issues, as governments will not be constrained by public identity discourses. The fact that scholars working from different starting points and pursuing a range of approaches observe similar phenomena to what is expected by the expanded Hansen model provides a level of support for this model that at the very least justifies further exploration of its explanatory power, which is the object of the case studies in the chapters which follow.

European identity

Before moving on to the methodology section describing how the expanded Hansen model is to be tested on the cases studies, it is first necessary to consider the concept of European identity. It was claimed above that the ideal case for EU unity, according to the expanded Hansen

mechanism, is when a common EU position appeals directly to a sense of European identity in member state publics, thus ‘by-passing’ the potentially divisive effect of national identity. The strength of European identity, indeed its very existence, is contested, however. Margaret Thatcher, for example, asserted in 1988 that:

Europe will be stronger precisely because it has France as France, Spain as Spain, Britain as Britain, each with its own customs, traditions and identity. It would be folly to try to fit them into some sort of identikit European personality (cited in van Oudenaren 2010b, p. 192).

Furthermore, it is often assumed that ‘there is no European identity for which people are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice’ (Waever 2005, p. 38).

European identity has special significance in the context of European integration theory. Neofunctionalists once predicted that as citizens increasingly felt their needs being met by European institutions, there would be a gradual transfer of identity to the European Community:

As the process of integration proceeds, it is assumed that ... interests will be redefined in terms of a regional [i.e. European] rather than a purely national orientation and that the erstwhile set of separate national group values will gradually be superseded by a new and geographically larger set of beliefs (Haas 1958, pp. 13-14).

When lack of empirical confirmation led to disillusionment with neofunctionalism, interest in European identity also waned – unfairly, according to Risse:

Up to the early 1990s, the conventional wisdom simply held that European integration was somehow marching along without any noticeable transfers of loyalty from the nation-states to the European level (2005, p. 295).

Recently, Risse and others have argued in favour of the emergence of a European identity (e.g. Risse 2010; Wodak 2004; Citrin & Sides 2004).

In neofunctionalism, identity was perceived in zero-sum terms, such that European identity came at the expense of national identity (Herrmann & Brewer 2004, p. 1). This has been repudiated by Risse and others, who argue that European identity can arise alongside national identity (Gross 2011, p. 19; Risse 2009, p. 151; Citrin & Sides 2004, pp. 171,175; Herrmann & Brewer 2004, p. 12). Risse has pointed out, based on the findings of Hooghe and Marks (2005, p. 424), that the main cleavage is not between those who profess European identity and those who hold on to national identity, but between those who acknowledge both European and national identity, and those who claim an exclusively national identity (Risse 2010, p. 9; Risse

2009, p. 152; cf. Siapera 2004, pp. 139-144). A number of writers have highlighted the difficulty at times of even making a distinction between European and national identity. Risse argues that ‘the available data show the *Europeanization* of collective local, national, gender, and other identities’ (2010, p. 5), meaning that ‘references to Europe and the EU [are being] incorporated into national and other identity constructions’ (2010, p. 9). This incorporation of European identity into national identity is also noted by Wong (2006, p. 15) and Gross (2011, p. 19).

The concept of European identity also arises in discussions of the legitimacy of the European Union. According to Habermasian scholars, a government’s legitimacy derives from the consent of the public, established through debate in the public sphere (Kratochvíl 2013; van de Steeg 2003; Eder & Kantner 2000; Habermas 1989). A European public sphere is not only a precondition for EU legitimacy, according to this definition, but also a key forum for European identity to be enacted within (Risse 2010, p. 120). The growth of a European public sphere could thus be expected to go hand in hand with the development of European identity. As Risse points out, the problem for the EU from this perspective is that:

Conventional wisdom has it that Europe lacks a common public sphere, because Europeans do not speak a common language and common Europe-wide media do not exist (2010, p. 11).

It can be argued, however, that the multiplicity of languages and the national nature of media do not rule out the possibility of a European public sphere. Echoing Anderson’s concept of simultaneity as a component of national identity (described above), Risse elaborates on Habermas (1995, p. 306) and Eder and Kanter (2000, p. 315) to contend that for a European public sphere to exist, it is sufficient that:

the same (European) themes are ... debated at the same time at similar levels of attention across national public spheres, and ... similar frames of reference, meaning structures, and patterns of interpretation are used across national public spheres and media (2010, p. 11).

Other scholars argue along similar lines (e.g. Kratochvíl, Cibulková & Beník 2011, p. 398).

Empirical research has provided evidence of increasing simultaneity. Risse has found that roughly since 2000, ‘data show that European media have not only increased their coverage of EU policies and events, they are also by and large discussing the same issues at the same time’ (2010, p. 136). In a study of the enlargement debate in a number of EU member states, van de

Steeg found that although public discourse is clearly nationally oriented, with few other Europeans cited, ‘a considerable part of the reporting follows the same models’ (2003, p. 189). Meyer notes that one modality through which this happens is the socialisation of national journalists based in Brussels, such that a common, Europeanized conception of news content is transmitted through the media of the various member states (2002, p. 184).

Some scholars define EU actorness itself as arising out of its legitimacy. Čmakalová and Rolenc argue that ‘[t]o become and remain an international actor, the [European] Union has to be perceived to be legitimate’ (2012, p. 261). For these authors the post-Maastricht breakdown of the ‘permissive consensus’ (provided by a sceptical public to a pro-integration elite) is a threat both to EU legitimacy and actorness (p. 264). By the same token, legitimacy can be both internal (in the eyes of the EU population) and external (from the point of view of other actors). Effective international actorness can therefore also be a way for the EU to gain legitimacy in the eyes of its public (Kratochvíl 2013, p. 16). Because of the connections between EU legitimacy, a European public sphere and European identity, this school of thought effectively posits a close link between European identity and EU actorness, echoing the ‘ideal case’ of the discursive theory (configuration 1).

A number of writers have noted that European identity is frequently defined in relation to the American other. This is particularly true in the context of theorizing on the EU as a normative power (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, p. 43; Diez 2005, p. 621). Aggestam asserts that:

much of the conceptual thinking on NPE [Normative Power Europe] took place when George W. Bush was president of the United States. One can hence detect the underlying ‘other’ against which Europe’s identity and normative vision of world politics has been articulated in academic and policy discourse (2013, p. 462).

Wodak finds US othering typically occurs in discourses on the European social market model (2004, p. 111). Risse adds that the other main context is the ‘narrative about the EU as a “civilian” power in foreign policy [which] is constructed in opposition to the United States as a military superpower that prefers military over political means of conflict resolution’ (2010, p. 55). In an empirical study involving interviews with EU officials, Bretherton and Vogler concluded that ‘[i]nvariably, US ‘irresponsibility’ contributes to discourses of EU responsibility’ (2006, p. 26). Citrin and Sides also note that the ‘idea of a united Europe flexing

its muscles to limit American economic and diplomatic power has long held widespread support among elite groups' (2004, p. 161).

This phenomenon should not be overstated, however. Risse notes that 'dominant narratives in most European countries are ambivalent about the United States' (2010, pp. 54-55), and Waever finds that EU identity construction relies 'to a surprisingly limited degree' on processes of negative othering (2009, p. 175). American othering emerges as a factor in European identity construction in some of the case studies below; as expected, its presence and significance is very much dependent on context.

Conclusion to the theoretical approach section

So far chapter 2 has sought to describe and justify the theoretical approach of this thesis. A discursive mechanism identified by Hansen, which links foreign policy to national identity discourses through debate in the public sphere, has been expanded to form a decision-making model of the European Union on external action questions. This has enabled a number of configurations to be specified in which EU unity is possible. Moreover, both the Hansen mechanism itself and the expanded theoretical model were shown to be supported by observations and conclusions of theorists and empiricists from a range of international relations backgrounds. Because of its key role in the theoretical model, and its contested nature, a discussion of the nature and meaning of European identity concluded this section. The second part of this chapter will now describe the methodology which has been developed for testing the theoretical approach defined above on the case studies.

Methodology

A broad definition of EU external action

As a point of departure for the description of the methodology used in the case studies to test the theoretical approach developed above, a number of assumptions and definitions need to be clarified. Firstly, EU external action is here understood in a broad sense, namely as the totality of European actions and policies which have a possible impact on EU actorness: thus not merely the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, but also its trade, aid and other policies; and not merely actions and policies originating from the institutions of the EU, but also initiatives of the member states.

Considering EU external action as extending beyond the Common Foreign and Security Policy is in line with contemporary scholarship on the subject (e.g. Wong & Hill 2011, p. 3; Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, p. 4). Including member state foreign policy in an analysis of EU external action is also well-established, though more contested. Some writers, notably Jupille and Caporaso (1998, pp. 217-218), insist that EU actorness must be considered separately from the actions of its member states. Gehring, Oberthür and Mühleck have also noted that:

Current approaches to EU actorness ... spend surprisingly little effort on separating EU action from co-ordinated action of the Member States (2013, p. 850).

It is argued here that it is not meaningful to make such a distinction. Firstly, especially on Common Foreign and Security Policy issues, but in other areas as well, important EU decisions are taken by consensus among the member states. It is therefore simply tautological to treat EU agency as somehow independent of the member states. According to Schmidt, 'the EU *is* its member-states, and the two can't really be separated other than semantically' (2016, p. 22). Secondly, as Toje points out, the Common Foreign and Security Policy was never intended as a single point of EU authority:

the CFSP is frequently not a *common* policy in the sense indicated in the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU). It is a coordination mechanism in which input from the EU institutions feed[s] in alongside those of the member states. The member states pursue their parallel national foreign policies and maintain control over the fiscal, military and diplomatic resources that are to be mobilised in the context of the EU (2008a, p. 8).

Finally, to use a *reductio ad absurdum* argument, if the EU can be considered as separate from its member states' foreign policies, then it could be argued that the 2003 split over the US invasion of Iraq was not an EU failure, because in fact the EU never dealt with the question. For most observers however, the 2003 squabble represented a debacle for the EU, regardless of whether it was discussed by the institutions of the EU.

There is also considerable support in the literature for considering member state foreign policy as contributing to EU external action. Keukeleire and MacNaughtan argue that:

EU foreign policy-making is not only based on EU decisions, but also on *systematic cooperation between member states*, on their active support and on member states adopting complementary actions (2008, p. 111).

Furthermore they observe that 'in many foreign policy issues, political steering and operational action is provided by an informal self-selected group of member states' (2008, p. 113). Wessels

and Bopp refer to ‘traditional’ national foreign policy and EU external relations as ‘intertwining’ (2008, p. 1). Wong treats European foreign policy as the sum of national foreign policies, EU external trade relations and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (2006, p. 3). Kratochvíl argues for a conceptualisation of the EU as ‘a complex political system in which various competencies are distributed among the member states and institutions’, and stresses that ‘this entity cannot be simply disaggregated into member states plus a bureaucratic structure’ (2013, pp. 14-15). Blavoukos and Bourantonis also contend that EU actorness ‘incorporates the “presence” and contributions of individual member-states...’ (2011, p. 4).

It can therefore be argued that even member states acting outside of the institutions of the EU can contribute to EU actorness. Hill has observed that ‘Europeans also act variously as individuals, groups, and nations, and are sometimes taken by outsiders to be representative of Europe as a whole’ (1998, p. 36), while Larsen argues this may not just be a question of external perceptions, but that:

it may be possible that even if national foreign policy is conducted outside the EU, concepts of EU foreign policy might still be shaping national foreign policy substance significantly in some areas (2005, p. 6).

There are occasions on which the EU is clearly perceived to be acting through its member states. Schunz notes that in the case of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ‘[v]ia some of its active Member States, the EC already had some impact on the ... negotiations in the early 1990s, even before it was granted the status of a full member’ (2012, p. 209). From an empirical point of view, it is clear that member state officials sometimes conceive of non-EU actions as being in the name of the EU. Announcing France’s 2013 intervention in Mali, President Hollande concluded that ‘Europe must do its bit in the fight for democracy and human dignity – that is why I decided to intervene in Mali’ (cited in BBC 2013). And Belgium foreign minister Louis Michel once referred to the component of the NATO force in Afghanistan (ISAF) provided by individual EU member states as ‘an EU force’ (cited in Gross 2011, p. 45). The broad definition of EU external action adopted by this thesis is therefore justified. The most contentious case study in this regard will be one in chapter 5 which concerns the 2011 Libya intervention, mostly undertaken independently of the EU institutions by the UK and France (alongside a US deliberately underplaying its role). It will be argued that this, too, can be considered as contributing to EU actorness.

This argument is supported by discursive phenomena as well. It could be argued that a distinction should be made between textual formulations relating specifically to ‘the EU’ and those relating to more general understandings of ‘Europe’. In practice, however, it is observed that ‘Europe’ and ‘the EU’ are frequently used interchangeably (see e.g. Risse 2010, p. 128). From her textual analyses, Chaban observes that ‘the EU ... has become synonymous with ‘Europe’ (2009, p. 164). Risse and Grabowksy also argue that ‘[w]ith the EU’s expansion to 30+ member states, the boundaries of cultural and political Europe increasingly overlap...’ (2008, p. 2). Risse suggests that the EU ‘has successfully occupied the social space of what it means to be European’ (2009, p. 154). The lack of distinction between ‘EU’ and ‘Europe’ was confirmed in the empirical studies in this thesis. Therefore, both textual formulations will be considered as contributing discursively to constructions of EU actorness.

A discursive rather than an institutional focus

The focus of this thesis will not be on the decision-making procedures of the European Union, nor on how they may have changed under the Lisbon Treaty reforms. While it is clear that the institutions and treaty arrangements of the EU have a significant effect on policy-making, it is argued that even the smoothest-working institution cannot produce an EU policy if there is no member state consensus, and that member state unity on an important enough issue will (eventually) lead to an EU policy despite flawed institutions. This argument is supported by the reflections of EU observers such as Hill (2004, p. 150), as well as Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, who note:

developing EU foreign policy depends not only, or not in the first place, on the creation of an effective institutional framework, on acquiring foreign policy instruments, or even on defining common interests. Rather it hinges on the emergence of a shared understanding among EU member states’ elites and populations about what should be the EU’s role in the world and about what values it should sustain, promote and defend (2008, p. 333).

In the field of climate change policy, Pavese and Torney add that ‘in spite of legal and procedural constraints, the EU has been able to forge mechanisms that, in practice, support its unitary engagement in the international climate regime’ (2012, p. 140).

Neither will this thesis focus on the effect of enlargement on EU actorness, which most observers conclude has not been major. Karen Smith has noted that ‘enlargement has not gummed up the coordination machinery’ (2008b, p. 18). Keukeleire and MacNaughtan conclude that ‘enlargement of the EU did not lead to the anticipated deadlock’ (2008, p. 77).

Concerning UN voting patterns it has been observed that ‘candidate countries ... quickly adjusted to the EU positions’ (Luif 2003, p. 51) and after the 2004 and 2007 enlargements, there were ‘no statistically significant differences of mean cohesion levels’ (Jin & Hosli 2013, p. 1284). In international trade negotiations there is ‘little evidence that enlargement has altered fundamentally the EU’s overall position ...’ (Meunier & Nicolaïdis 2006, p. 909).

The case studies

A series of case studies will be considered to test the theoretical model proposed in this thesis. In order to accommodate a broad understanding of actorness, the case studies have been drawn from five ‘dimensions’ of actorness, by which is meant issue areas in which the EU has some claim to be an international actor. These five dimensions are: economic (chapter 3), environmental (chapter 4), international crisis management with a military dimension (chapter 5), and two dimensions corresponding to normative actorness. Normative actorness has been divided into two to better facilitate the investigation of this phenomenon: chapter 6 considers the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights; and chapter 7 the transfer of the EU’s norms of interstate relations: effective multilateralism, preventive engagement and respect for international law. This is in line with the distinction made by Finnemore and Sikkink, of the English School, between domestic and international norms (1998, p. 893). As it turns out, because of the nature of the EU’s norms of member state interaction, this last category is also an investigation of EU civilian power.

The table of contents of most volumes devoted to a study of EU actorness or EU foreign policy can largely be categorized under these dimensions. The main exceptions are aid and development policy, the effectiveness of the EU in international organisations, and possibly the power of the EU as a regulatory standard setter. The first two have been discussed at some length in chapter 1. The issue of the EU as a regulatory standard setter can be considered an aspect of the EU’s economic actorness, as its power arises from the EU’s ability to grant access to its vast internal market. The issue is addressed in the introduction to chapter 3 on economic actorness. While no selection of case studies in a study of this scope can be considered complete, it is nevertheless argued that this choice provides sufficient scope to test the discursive theory and investigate the phenomenon of EU actorness from a sufficiently broad perspective.

The following five chapters correspond to the five dimensions of actorness outlined above. For each dimension there are two contrasting case studies. The economic dimension is represented on the one hand by the euro crisis, and on the other by the 2013 trade dispute with China over solar panel imports, an issue involving one of the oldest and most communitarian competences of the EU, the Common Commercial Policy. In the environmental dimension the ‘unsuccessful’ Copenhagen climate change summit is contrasted with the ‘qualified success’ of the Durban conference. For military crisis management, the 2003 mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo, as the first fully NATO-independent Common Security and Defence Policy operation, is compared with the 2011 Libya intervention, which occurred largely outside the EU framework. For normative actorness in the realm of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, the two case studies are the questionable success of norm transmission through EU enlargement in the case of Hungary, and dialogue with China over human rights at the time of the 2008 Tibet crisis. Finally, for normative actorness in the field of international relations, the successful Iran nuclear deal is compared with the handling of the 2014 Russian invasion of Ukraine.

These examples were selected on the basis of recency, all falling within the dozen years 2003 to 2014. The case studies were also chosen to test the explanatory power of the discursive theory on a broad scale of actorness strength, ranging from recognized success as an international actor, as in the case of the Iran nuclear negotiations, to situations in which EU actorness failed, such as influencing China on human rights questions. A successful theory of EU actorness should be able to provide an explanation for why the EU is able to display high levels of actorness on some international questions, but only weak actorness on others. Scholarly and media assessments of the strength of EU actorness in each case study are discussed in the introductions to the empirical chapters.

The choice of case studies has also taken geopolitics and geography into consideration, with the US being a presence particularly in the two chapters on international crisis management (chapter 5 on military and chapter 7 on normative actorness) and to a lesser extent in the environment chapter (4). Russia is strongly present in the case study on its invasion of Ukraine, and to a lesser extent in the Iranian nuclear case study (chapter 7). China is the main object of two case studies, one on the solar panels trade dispute with the EU (in chapter 3) and the other on its human rights dialogue with the EU (in chapter 6), as well as to a lesser extent in the

environment chapter (4). From a continental perspective, only South America and Australia are not covered, where it could be argued links with the EU are weakest.

The choice of a number of case studies can also be justified as ‘hard tests’ for the discourse theoretical approach advocated in this thesis, with respect to the two standard theories with which it is being compared. For example, the economic dimension is one in which liberal intergovernmentalism can be expected to flourish (chapter 3); the Congo case study (in chapter 5), as an example of the implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy, should be an instance of where sociological institutionalism is at home. The case studies also cover a range of decision-making modes of the EU. The trade dispute with China, for example, falls under the community decision-making process (co-decision involving the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council), whereas the CSDP intervention in Congo is intergovernmental in nature. Environment policy (chapter 4) is an example of a mixed competence (Pavese & Torney 2012, p. 130; Vogler 2011, p. 352).

Choice of member states

Texts were selected from three member states, the United Kingdom, Germany and France. This selection was obviously made before the British referendum of 23 June 2016, in which a majority of UK voters cast their ballots in favour of leaving the EU. The prospect of Brexit does not mean, however, that the results obtained in this thesis should be treated with added uncertainty or scepticism. The case studies all took place well before the vote, thus the analysis applies to the European Union in its configuration at the time. Secondly, the full theoretical model actually pertains to all (at the time of writing) 28 member states: the ‘big three’ were chosen for practical purposes as an approximation which nevertheless takes into account the three most influential EU members. A larger-scale study could have incorporated more than three member states, and a similar study could be carried out in the future with a different combination of states. A British exit from the EU does not invalidate the discursive theory, though it might change the conclusions that can be drawn from it. A reflection on Brexit through the lens of the discursive theory can be found in the conclusion of this thesis.

The original choice of France, the UK and Germany was justified with the argument that essentially no common EU position can exist without the input of these three, and if these three are in agreement, that is usually enough to guarantee an EU consensus. There is significant

support for this assertion in the literature. The formation of *directoires*, or ad hoc small groups of member states to take the lead on particular issues, is a well-known phenomenon to scholars of EU external action. It has been noted that various *directoires* to deal with international crises have always included Germany, the UK and France (Hill 2011, pp. 79-81, Bretherton & Vogler 2006, pp. 174-175). Hill has also observed that:

The CFSP ... cannot do without the big three, both separately and together, even if the other member states are deeply ambivalent on the matter (2011, p. 92).

It has also been noted that 'Britain, France and Germany are the most influential member states when it comes to defense issues, because they have the largest defense resources (army, manpower, budget)' (Exartier 2013, p. 255).

Another justification for the choice of these three member states is, as Kratochvíl, Cibulková and Beník argue in their study of EU framing power, that because 'the three big EU Member States have a greater administrative and diplomatic capacity for independent external action' they also represent 'the least likely case' for conforming to an EU consensus (2011, p. 399), and thus a 'hard test' for theories of EU cooperation. In the case of relations with China, Stummbaum has also observed this fact:

the 'Big Three' are not only the most influential countries within the EU framework, but also the most active in China and those that face the strongest temptation to go their own way ... (2007, p. 59).

The exclusion of the other large member state, Italy, is justified by the low profile role usually played by Italy – and expected of it by the 'big three' – in external action issues. For example, Italy turned down the invitation from Iran to join the foreign ministers' mission to Tehran in 2003, and attempts to join the group later were rebuffed (Brighi 2011, p. 66). Hill has observed similar exclusions of Italy, despite protests, from other ad hoc groupings (2011, pp. 80-81). Gegout has also noted that the informal 'quad' meetings with the US to discuss Balkans issues and involving France, Germany and the UK were originally 'quint' meetings involving Italy, which was later excluded (2010, pp. 106, 153).

Choice of texts

The texts selected for the case study analyses are parliamentary debates on the issue in question, along with articles (including news, editorials and opinion pieces) from one left and one right-of-centre newspaper in each of the three member states: the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* in the

UK, *Libération* and *Figaro* in France, and *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Die Welt* in Germany¹. These sources were deemed sufficient for uncovering the basic narratives of government foreign policy articulations, and their constructions in the public sphere, along with relevant identity co-constructions.

This selection of sources is in line with the prescriptions of leading international relations discourse analysts. Hansen recommends ‘presidential statements, speeches, and interviews in the case of official foreign policy; parliamentary debates in the case of the political debate; and reportage and editorials in the study of the wider media discourses’ as well as ‘historical material’ and ‘key texts that are frequently quoted’ to provide important context (2006, p. 82). Milliken advises that:

a discourse analysis should be based upon a set of texts by different people presumed (according to the research focus) to be authorized speakers/writers of a dominant discourse or to think and act within alternative discourses (1999, p. 233).

And Waever recommends that:

When reading politicians, it is fruitful to select ‘difficult situations’: not negotiated, blurred statements like party platforms, but interventions in heated debates (for instance, in Parliament) (2005, p. 40).

Similar discursive studies have also drawn on comparable sources. Kratochvíl, Cibulková and Beník also take one left and one right-of-centre newspaper from each of the big three member states in their study of European policy on Ukraine (2011). Rolenc and Kratochvíl also looked at ‘the political debates in the parliament and in the government vs. the discourse in the printed media’ in their study of Europeanization of Swedish foreign policy (2013, p. 121).

The usefulness of studying parliamentary debates is also supported by non-discourse analysts. Kerremans suggests that ‘national parliamentary debates ... can be seen as proxies of domestic mobilization’ (2011, p. 142), while Keukeleire and MacNaughtan assert that, particularly in the UK:

Parliament becomes important where foreign policy decisions touch on fundamental issues of geostrategic positioning and identity in the world (for

¹The author’s institution did not provide access to *Le Monde* or *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, which would have been more widely accepted choices.

example, whether or not to use power, or whether the Atlantic, UN or EU framework is preferable) (2008, p. 128).

While parliamentary debate can be expected to be a primary source of the government's position, opposition questions and attacks will also reflect debate in the public sphere. Likewise, the media sources will show which government narratives enter the public sphere, and how they are reconstructed there, as well as what identity discourses are co-constructed.

One criticism of this selection of sources could be that broadsheet newspaper articles are a poor representation of public sphere discourses. Some discursive studies look to semi-public texts such as comments following online articles (see e.g. Bridge forthcoming) or interviews (Wodak 2004; Wodak et al. 2009) for wider access to the public sphere. Such alternative sources were rejected here, however, because of the difficulty of establishing their representativeness. Newspapers 'speak the language' of their readerships in order to sell their product, so can be expected to accommodate the identity discourses of their readers, and not simply dictate them. There is also evidence that, despite rapid changes in the way information is disseminated in modern societies, broadsheet newspapers remain a respected source (e.g. Bellut 2015). Siapera also argues that 'the voice of the EU and its institutions is transmitted predominantly through print media ... [as few] TV channels have permanent correspondents in Brussels', and that in fact 'the Brussels press corps ... constitutes Europe's "first public"' (2004, p. 133).

Another possible criticism of using only public texts as sources is that they might not reveal the government's 'true' intentions, only its communications. However, it is precisely public communication that is the basis on which governments are judged, and, ultimately, re-elected; any 'background agenda' is therefore irrelevant from the point of view of the Hansen mechanism-based model. As Waever has argued:

Discourse analysis works on public texts. It does not try to get to the thoughts or motives of the actors, their hidden intentions or secret plans. Especially for the study of foreign policy where much *is* hidden, it becomes a huge methodological advantage to stay at the level of discourse. ... What is often presented as a weakness of discourse analysis – 'how do you find out if they really *mean* it?', 'what if it is only rhetoric?' – can be turned into a methodological strength ... (2005, p. 35).

Larsen has also noted that in discourse analysis '[t]here is no social meaning beneath the text that cannot be reached. The analyst need not worry about what is "really" meant by a text' (2005, p. 48). In any case, while no selection of texts can be considered perfect, discourse theory

expects that ‘if discursive structures operate in a political space, they will show up in any text’ (Waever 2005, p. 40).

Finally, it should be noted that while this study draws from left and right-wing newspapers, it is not intended to be a sectoral analysis. Differences between left and right-wing news sources will be noted, but they do not form the crux of the analysis. In fact, as it turned out, there are few issues among the case studies which provoke a clear left-right split; indeed, government positions also often have cross-party support. The appendix to this thesis contains some quantitative details of the sources used in each case study. In all, well over a million words were analysed and coded for this study.

Details of methodology

In order to test the theoretical approach of this thesis, the basic discourses surrounding the following concepts needed to be determined:

1. The construction of the other(s) in the case of the foreign policy issue at hand

Sometimes there is a single ‘other’, in other cases the situation is more complex. Quite often there will be two main others, one occupying a divergent identity position to the self, and the other inhabiting a convergent position (when the self is constructed as a ‘paragon’).

2. The construction of the self

The constructions of the identity(ies) of the other(s) in step 1, are accompanied by the co-construction of the identity of the self. This can be either explicit or implicit. In the parliamentary texts there are nearly always explicit statements of self-identity. Politicians apparently feel the need to relate their positions explicitly back to fundamental values. French concerns with human rights violations abroad are frequently related back to the construction of France as the cradle of human rights, the *droits de l’homme*, for example. Media texts are less likely to include such examples of explicit identity constructions, but self-identity is also established implicitly, with respect to one or more other(s). The quality of the self or other(s) is determined in each case by the descriptors that collocate with them. These are coded, and the most frequently recurring descriptors are considered to be the basic discourses of the self and other(s).

3. The construction of the appropriate course of action

The appropriate course of action arises out of the constellation of the identity discourses. Government officials, opposition members of parliament, and newspaper journalists also frequently articulate an appropriate course of action, or comment on a course of action as appropriate or inappropriate, in the context of a particular understanding of the identity of the parties involved. Once again, the most frequently repeated elements are taken to be the basic discourses concerning the appropriate course of action.

These discourse constellations are then to be probed in two ways:

1. Testing the robustness of the government policy

If government explications of foreign policy are not in harmony with public identity discourses, then the government's position will be open to attack from oppositional groups. Such attacks can be identified in the texts, and an assessment made of their efficacy. Many of the actions proposed by governments in the case studies below had cross-party support, thus criticisms could be sidelined relatively easily. In other cases governments were able to deflect more serious criticisms by ensuring their policy statements co-constructed valid identity discourses. Sometimes, however, a government altered its position after initially miscalculating public identity constructions (e.g. the case of Germany in the Libya case study, chapter 5). Recurring attacks were coded as such, and the resilience (or otherwise) of government policy statements could be determined from the broader context of the debate as represented in the texts studied.

2. Determining the extent of EU framing

The degree to which national policy discourses are framed in EU terms is an important factor in this analysis. The ideal case for EU actorness, configuration 1 of the discursive model, is when EU unity is enabled through a combination of the appropriate response to the foreign policy issue being constructed in EU terms, and a common European identity being co-constructed across the member states. In order to measure the degree of EU framing, this study has made use of the discursive categories of policy Europeanization conceived by Larsen (2005; 2009). In a discourse analytical study of the Europeanization of Danish foreign policy, Larsen developed a ranking of discursive categories for determining the extent of Europeanization of a policy area according to how agency is constructed in relevant texts. These were adapted for the purposes of this study as follows, in decreasing order of EU framing:

1. agency = 'the EU'

2. agency = '[member state] and the EU'
3. agency = '[member state] through the EU'
4. agency = '[member state]' alone, or '[member state] and/through [another international organisation]'.

These agency expressions were coded, and the extent of EU framing determined by the distribution of these codes.

A qualitative not a quantitative study

It is important to stress at this point that this study is not intended as a statistical, corpus-based study. While texts have been coded and counts made of particular discourse formations, including the formulations of Europeanization discussed in the previous section, these counts are considered too inaccurate to provide more than a general indication of the predominance of a small number of discourse constructions (the basic discourses). Discourse elements are socially constructed objects which exist in communications of all types and at many levels. There is good reason to believe that the strongest discourses will be the most frequently reproduced. But repetition is not the only indicator. The authority and credibility of the source of the given fragment of text is important, as is the degree of penetration across many texts. Because such variables are difficult to incorporate, particularly quantitatively, the actual counts are not presented in this study. Rather, key results are summarized in qualitative terms. In the following empirical chapters, basic discourses will be described and individual examples given. In general only the examples will be referenced. The examples are intended to illustrate the type of discourse being discussed. Where more than one example is provided this is not intended to be an exhaustive list. All translations into English are the author's.

An acknowledged limitation of this study is the lack of moderation of the coding. In larger scale studies this is typically done by research team-members cross-checking at least a sample of each other's work in order to monitor consistency of coding. Because of the nature of a doctoral research project, such measures were not possible in this case.

Conclusion to methodology section

This section has outlined the methodological approach of the case studies. In each case, basic discourses will be distilled representing the identities of the self and the foreign policy other(s), and the appropriate response to the situation. This constellation of discourses is then probed

according to the Hansen mechanism, and the degree of EU framing. On this basis, the corresponding configuration of the expanded Hansen model can be identified, and the explanatory power of the theoretical model of EU actorness tested. The selection of case studies and texts, and a number of other methodological choices have also been justified. The following five chapters will apply this methodology to case studies representing five dimensions of actorness.

Chapter 3: Economic actorness

Introduction

It is in the economic dimension that the actorness of the EU is most extensively recognized (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, pp. 62, 65; Jupille & Caporaso 1998, p. 216). The economic strength of the EU is ‘widely regarded as both the main source and main expression of its international power’ (Wright 2011, p. 20). In particular the EU is an acknowledged heavyweight in international trade (Meunier & Nicolaïdis 2006, p. 907), with other major world actors such as the US and China recognizing the EU as an equal in the World Trade Organisation (Gehring, Oberthür & Mühleck 2013, p. 855).

Trade is not the only aspect of EU economic actorness, however. More recently the EU has exhibited ‘formidable’ international power in the field of competition policy (Damro 2006, p. 868; see also Peters & Pierre 2009, p. 99). The EU has demonstrated extraterritorial influence through its rulings on questions of market dominance by multinational companies, for example by setting strict conditions on mergers, such as between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas in 1997, preventing other mergers outright such as that between General Electric and Honeywell in 2001, and imposing significant fines for abuse of market position, for example on software giants Microsoft and Intel (Wright 2011, p. 23; van Oudenaren 2010a, p. 30). The opening of antitrust investigations against Google and Gazprom in mid-2015, potentially worth billions of euros in fines, indicates a continuation of this vigorous approach (Renda 2015, p. 1). This power is reflected internally as well, where ‘competition policy is an area in which the European Commission enjoys possibly its greatest discretionary decision-making authority’ (Damro 2006, p. 868).

Some have suggested that the EU has also become a ‘regulatory superpower’ (Reid 2004, p. 232), as noted in chapter 2. The EU is now a major determiner of international regulatory standards, by virtue of being the world’s largest single market and imposing the standards to be met for access to this market. In this way, international standards are often driven by EU decisions, ‘supplanting the United States in its traditional role as the global regulatory trendsetter’ (van Oudenaren 2010a, p. 30). By the same token, it is not clear how the ability to

set standards translates into actual influence. Bretherton and Vogler conclude, for example, that ‘no specific external actorness is involved’ in being a regulatory superpower (2006, p. 217).

The widely acknowledged economic actorness of the EU has, however, recently been tested by the euro crisis. Firstly, the intractable nature of the crisis and the apparent inability of the EU to react quickly to control it has called into question the construction of the EU as a successful economic entity. Secondly, the euro itself, once a very tangible symbol of the success of European integration, was suddenly revealed as flawed in its construction, perhaps fatally (Hall 2012; Lane 2012). And finally the apparent inability of Europe’s economies to re-emerge from the post-2008 world recession challenges the very basis of European social market economics, especially in comparison with a rapidly rising global east. In the first half of 2012, amidst a spiralling sovereign debt crisis and predictions that the eurozone would break up, the EU was finally able to implement a series of measures which led to the stabilization of the crisis. These measures form the subject of the first case study of this chapter.

The second study investigates the 2013 confrontation with China over solar panel dumping, at the time the largest trade dispute between the EU and China (Mével 2013). This is a case which falls under the Common Commercial Policy, which, as one of the most supranational competences of the EU, might be considered a guarantor of EU unity (Schmidt 2016, p. 35). In fact, as a number of scholars have observed and as this case study confirms, the member state governments still have significant influence over EU commercial policy. For example, although the Commission represents the EU at the World Trade Organisation, when WTO negotiations take place, representatives of the member states sit in parallel session (the article 133 committee), issuing negotiating instructions (Kerremans 2011, p. 135-136). Thus, as van Loon notes, ‘even though the Commission has legal authority over trade policy, it exercises this authority under the close scrutiny of the EU’s member governments’ (2013, p. 226). Woolcock concurs with this observation (2013, p. 326), and Bretherton and Vogler even assert that ‘where the national commercial interests of large Member States are severely at risk, a *de facto* consensus may be politically necessary’ (2006, p. 67). The second case study of the chapter represents just such a case.

Case study 1: The euro crisis

Background

The sovereign debt crisis in a number of eurozone countries, unleashed by the 2008 global financial crisis, became a major challenge for the EU as a whole towards the end of 2009. Large debts and sky-rocketing yields on government bonds were pushing afflicted member states towards default. Greece required its first bailout mid-2010, but that did not stem the crisis, with Ireland and Portugal also requiring bailouts within a year. By late 2011 it was clear that Greece would require a second bailout, and that the sovereign debt crisis was now beginning to threaten large EU member states such as Spain and Italy.

During 2012 the EU took a series of steps aimed at stabilizing the dangerously spiralling situation. The most important of these were the second Greek rescue, the creation of the European Stability Mechanism (a European version of the IMF), the signing of the Fiscal Compact enforcing budgetary discipline, and the creation of the Banking Union later in the year. Parliamentary and media texts concerning the first three of these reforms form the basis of this case study. The measures were characterized by an emphasis on budget austerity over economic stimulation. The second Greek rescue imposed severe conditions on the Greek government in return for the bailout, and submission to the strict spending rigour of the Fiscal Compact was a pre-condition for any bailout under the European Stability Mechanism.

As many member state spokespersons and commentators have acknowledged, the euro crisis posed a challenge to EU economic actorness. Angela Merkel spoke of ‘squandered trust in the Eurozone’ (2012, p. 19079). Journalists asked, ‘What is a bond investor in China, Japan, the US, Canada, or Abu Dhabi supposed to make of this interminable shambles?’ (Evans-Pritchard 2012a). French European affairs minister Jean Leonetti spoke of the need to ‘re-establish confidence’ (2012), and the head of the European Stability Mechanism highlighted the necessity of Europe regaining ‘lost trust’ (Klaus Regling cited in Gammelín & Hulverscheidt 2012). Zielonka noted that the euro crisis ‘has undermined the EU’s power in both material and ideational terms’ (2013, p. 1).

The very survival of the eurozone became an issue. The possibility of a Greek exit involved many unknowns, including the risk of a domino effect in which, one after another, member

states would be forced out of the euro. The wisdom of monetary union in the first place, supposedly one of the crowning achievements of European integration, came under challenge. Furthermore, the EU often appeared powerless to tackle the situation, with crisis summit following crisis summit without any apparent breakthrough. Finally, ugly nationalistic name-calling entered the public sphere, with Greek tabloids labelling German Chancellor Merkel a Nazi, and German tabloids responding with headlines about Greek laziness (cited in Steinbrück 2012, p. 19082). A north-south cleavage appeared to open up in the public discourses, with a hard-working, frugal north constructed in contrast to a lazy, profligate south (Zielonka 2013, pp. 4-5).

Before proceeding to the discourse analysis, however, it is necessary to justify the inclusion of this case study in a study of the external actorness of the EU. It may be objected that although the euro crisis clearly has an important bearing on the international actorness of the EU, it is not actually an external issue. It is nevertheless argued that because in the texts the cause of the euro crisis is typically constructed as external, the theoretical framework will still apply. Firstly, the immediate cause of the euro crisis was usually seen to be the American sub-prime loans debacle and the Lehman Brothers collapse (e.g. Asensi 2012). Secondly, one of the main elements of the euro crisis was the difficulty of servicing massive state debts. This became critical for those member states which could no longer afford to do so on the international markets, that is, externally. Finally, rising interest rates on state bonds were often constructed as the result of speculation by external financial forces attacking the eurozone as a whole, not just individual member states (e.g. Fillon 2012; Gabriel 2012, p. 22705). So there is a sense in which the euro crisis had to do with the EU's reputation in the rest of the world, as well as being an issue that was fuelled by external forces. It is therefore reasonable to expect the theoretical model developed in chapter 2 to be applicable.

Discourse analysis

France and Germany

The discursive construction of both the euro crisis and the measures taken in response to it were similar in France and Germany, though starkly different in the UK. For this reason the French and German discourses will be considered together, and the British discourses in a separate section below. The basic discourses of the French and German governments as represented in the parliamentary and media texts had a number of elements in common. Firstly, explicit

statements of European identity in connection with the fight to save the euro are to be found in the parliamentary discourses, for example from the German opposition leader:

In Europe we are fighting for the European idea of freedom and responsibility. This is our answer to globalisation. Neither the absolute freedom of the markets and the absolute individualism of America is our way, nor the state capitalism of countries such as China with its unbridled exploitation of people and nature. Freedom and solidarity, the capacity to make something of one's own life but nevertheless to accept responsibility for each other: that is what is special about the European idea. We shall only be able to defend this idea and offer it to the world if we are united. Alone we shall go under – even we Germans (Gabriel 2012, p. 22706).

Such explicit statements of identity are typical of parliamentary speeches, but less present in the media texts. In this text it is the concept of trans-European solidarity that is constructed as a key element of European identity. Because solidarity with other nationals is different from solidarity with one's fellow citizens this can be considered a specifically European identity element.

The euro itself was also explicitly constructed as a symbol of European identity, in particular in the German parliamentary debates. Chancellor Merkel was clearest about this with her oft-repeated mantra, 'Europe fails if the euro fails' (e.g. 2012a, p. 19078). For others the euro represented a 'symbol of peace and prosperity in Europe' (Brüderle 2012, p. 22708). In this context the euro crisis was frequently constructed as an existential moment for the EU, with the future of European integration at stake:

at a time when the threat continues to weigh over all European economies that the sovereign debt crisis will spread to all the states of the eurozone, it is the future of Europe in its entirety which is playing out before our eyes (de Courson 2012).

We are deciding today over no more and no less than the future of Europe (Enkelmann 2012, p. 22696).

For a broad spectrum of the French and German political elites the answer to the euro crisis was more Europe: the ESM and the Fiscal Compact were seen as the best defence against speculators' attacks on the eurozone. These measures were frequently interpreted as further milestones along the road to ever closer integration:

Europe is not the problem, but the solution to the challenges of globalisation (Poniatowski 2012).

with the creation of the European Stability Mechanism, the eurozone has made a major step towards integration (Lequiller 2012).

The strength of this faith in the European project among French and German political elites across the political spectrum is difficult to overstate. It was common in German discourses to equate Germany's future with the EU (e.g. Merkel 2012b, p. 22699).

As mentioned above, alongside this strong reaffirmation of the European project there is also the common identity element of solidarity. The responsibility to bail out stricken member states is justified on the basis of inter-European solidarity:

This accord ... is a moral duty: we will not leave the weakest behind on the side of the road. It is a political duty: we are defending Europe and the euro. Finally it is an economic duty: we are averting contagion (Leonetti 2012).

Solidarity is virtually the *raison d'être* of the EU. The whole EU is a model of solidarity (Willsch 2012, p. 19099).

However, solidarity comes with a proviso: the discourse surrounding the bailout of the southern states (in particular Greece) made it clear that solidarity could only be in exchange for fiscal reforms: budget 'solidity' (the German expression) or economic responsibility (the French expression):

Once more Europe demonstrates its solidarity with regard to Greece, but it demands more responsibility in its economic policy in return. Greece needs solidarity, but more solidarity demands more discipline (Gruny 2012).

aid from the European Stability Mechanism will only be provided if the Fiscal Compact has been ratified and later implemented by the country in question. There is therefore a legal linkage between solidity and solidarity (Merkel 2012b, p. 22699).

This discourse of European solidarity in return for domestic austerity was one of the prevailing discourses in the French and German texts, and represents a key discursive means for cementing the austerity-based approach to the euro crisis into EU policy. In particular the German government needed to demonstrate to its electorate that it had won trade-offs from the European south in return for supporting bailouts and the bailout mechanism. Ever since the Maastricht treaty the German public had been reassured that monetary union would not result in a 'transfer union', in which Germany would be liable for other member states' deficits (Article 125 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (2012)). The Fiscal Compact was therefore a vital

component of the bailout infrastructure as far as the German government was concerned, because it was needed to win support from the German people for the apparent move away from the ‘no transfer union’ position. The *Telegraph* even reported that this was the sole aim of the compact:

The German government is fiercely committed to the fiscal compact, not because it will solve anything, but rather because it is the only way it can sneak more unpopular measures (bailouts, chiefly) past the German public (Knowles 2012).

To soften the blow of underwriting bailouts, the German parliamentary debates also contained reminders of the benefits of EU membership to Germany:

it is wrong to describe Germany permanently as carrying the European Union on its back. We are not net contributors to the EU but net recipients. ... If we are now co-guaranteeing European safety nets, then we are returning only a part of what we ourselves have earned from European unification (Gabriel 2012, p. 22706).

There were a number of other specifically national elements within the French and German constructions of the euro crisis. A key identity construction in the German discourses concerned German leadership. As was described in the introduction to the thesis, German policy makers are typically wary of ‘going it alone’ (*Alleingang*). German leadership claims in the case of the euro crisis are therefore exceptional; they are usually constructed in terms of moral responsibility and/or providing a model of sound economic management. Examples of the former are usually understated:

Helmut Kohl always declined to arouse even the appearance of a leadership role in Europe. He would rather have saluted the Tricolore or the Union Jack three times a day. Angela Merkel had this [leadership] role handed to her – this was the wish of all our partners in Europe. She cannot help it. This role came to her (Barthle 2012, p. 19100).

At times this discourse of leadership was quite defensive, in the light of criticism that Germany was being overbearing:

What we are doing is not torture, rather it is necessary to ensure stable, sustained growth for all in Europe (Schäuble 2012, p. 22719).

Constructions of Germany as an economic model were more confident, however, perhaps best typified by the well-publicized claim of the parliamentary leader of the governing CDU party, that ‘[n]ow, suddenly, Europe is speaking German’ (Volker Kauder cited in *Spiegel Online* 2011). Examples abound in the texts of the model value of the German economy:

Competitiveness comes exclusively from industries, like we have in Germany ... producing products that can be sold throughout the whole world (Kauder 2012, p. 22713).

The central rule [of the Fiscal Compact] stipulates ... that there [must be] debt-brakes [i.e. legal limits to budget deficits] everywhere, like in Germany (Gammelín & Jakobs 2012).

There were two specifically French identity discourses which were observable in the texts. Firstly there was the discourse of French leadership. Unlike the German case however, as will be seen in the following case studies, the narrative of France as a leader in Europe as well as internationally is a standard and important element in French constructions of international affairs. The French minister for Europe provides a typical example:

which country advocated aid to Greece and brought the other European countries onside? France and Nicolas Sarkozy. Which country proposed the European Financial Stability Fund and its extension? France and Nicolas Sarkozy. Which country proposed the European Stability and Solidarity [sic] Mechanism to prevent the speculators from attacking the countries of the eurozone that are in difficulty? France and Nicolas Sarkozy (Leonetti 2012).

Secondly, to counter the impression that the euro crisis response was driven entirely by Germany, French government officials revived the traditional discourse of the Franco-German special relationship as the motor of European integration. Again and again it was asserted that France was the co-author of the new European institutions (rather than being solely German initiatives). The Fiscal Compact was referred to as the 'Sarkozy-Merkel treaty' (e.g. Muzeau 2012), and other measures adopted by the EU were said to be 'under the impulse of the Franco-German couple' (de Courson 2012).

The construction of Germany as imposing its economic (austerity-based) model on the rest of the eurozone was one of the primary vehicles for attacking crisis response policy in France:

Angela Merkel put her political stamp on the EU on Monday evening when twenty-five of the twenty-seven countries signed a budgetary pact steeped in Berlin's prescriptions (Mével 2012a).

The streets of Athens are rising up against Angela Merkel and the German 'diktat', which inflicts a new and drastic austerity program on Greece. Criticism is erupting everywhere against the 'iron chancellor' whose bitter potions will restrain growth all over Europe (Saint-Paul 2012).

In the face of German domination, the French government was accused by its critics of torpor and capitulation:

While France ... is quarrelling about the budgetary union treaty [the Fiscal Compact, on which the French socialists abstained], its partners have long since turned the page and are preparing the next step ... (Quatremer 2012).

France had proposed that the ESM dispose over a banking license. Why did it abandon this demand, and not only this one, in the face of German insistence (Caresche 2012)?

Another important strategy used in both Germany and France to attack the EU measures was to question their legality, democratic legitimacy or constitutionality. The legality of the European Stability Mechanism was challenged in both Germany's Federal Constitutional Court and the European Court of Justice (both upheld it as legal (Janisch 2012; Pratley 2012)). Parliamentary criticism typically focussed on the fundamental right of parliaments to decide over budgetary issues, which the Fiscal Compact would compromise by imposing deficit limits:

With regard to the constitution and to the Declaration of the Rights of Man, we have the right and the duty to discuss and to decide on whatever budget we wish for our country. That is what popular sovereignty is, and that is what you are going to revoke by modifying the treaty [on the Functioning of the European Union] in this way (Billard 2012).

The functioning of the European Stability Mechanism itself was also criticized as lacking democratic oversight (e.g. Souchet 2012). Such criticisms were usually countered by simple denial:

the law accompanying the ESM provides for a very intensive parliamentary involvement, which is why we should vote for it. In contrast to the IMF, parliamentary information and control is provided for (Schmidt 2012, p. 22729).

As head of the ESM, whom do you feel responsible to? The markets, the governments – or the taxpayers? That is completely clear: the 17 finance ministers of the Eurozone form a kind of supervisory board for the ESM. I am accountable to them, including in the legal sense. And behind the ministers are the citizens. I feel accountable to them (Klaus Regling cited in Gammelmin & Hulverscheidt 2012).

The illegality discourses were also defused by the court decisions pronouncing the measures legal or constitutional.

Another avenue for attacking government support of the EU crisis measures was to question the austerity approach in general, warning it would lead to social unrest and political extremism in the south (e.g. Steinbrück 2012, p. 19083) – this was especially true of the *Libération* texts (e.g. Cergel 2012). The Greek rescue was further criticized as interference in Greek sovereignty, or even a form of economic imperialism by the EU, the euro-north, or sometimes Germany alone:

The perpetrators and their accomplices aimed to destroy the sovereignty of the Greek state and replace it by right of economic conquest (Giorgios Tsangras cited in Lachmann 2012).

It is not a negotiation, it is the chronicle of a death foretold by the troika, which exercises a cynical blackmail over an entire people (Yannis Panagopoulos cited in Cergel 2012).

The extreme left in both France and Germany also constructed the Greek bailout as merely benefiting international financiers, who, according to this discourse, are the true masters of the EU. In this scenario the crisis response takes democratic powers away from the state in order to destroy the welfare state. In Germany these counter discourses were most strongly represented by the extreme left-wing political party *die Linke*, though as the successor to the former East German communist party their protestations were typically merely ridiculed by their parliamentary colleagues.

In any case, because of the broad parliamentary support for the EU measures in France and Germany, governments did not need to fend off these criticisms too rigorously. Furthermore, criticism of austerity did not gain much traction in Germany, presumably because budgetary belt-tightening was more compatible with German identity than prescriptions for economic stimulation by further deficit spending. In France austerity was seen as the price to pay for German underwriting of the bailout of the south and the rescue of the eurozone.

The north-south cleavage

Cleavages were described in the introduction to the thesis as fundamental disagreements within the EU on basic identity questions, which therefore have the possibility of derailing EU unity on issues that reconstruct them. With the contrast between fiscal cultures in the north and south of Europe, the euro crisis may appear to have opened up a north-south cleavage across the EU.

There is no doubt that othering between north and south was a strong discourse. The following examples demonstrate its manifestation in the German public sphere:

that effectively a master craftsman has to bear the costs of old Greek and Italian debt through his taxes ... cannot be right. We cannot have that. Neither can there be a banking union ... under which so to speak the grandma with her savings book in Germany is liable for investment bankers in Spain (Brüderle 2012, p. 22708).

Why should taxpayers in the creditor countries take on the responsibility for financing the euro crisis (Jungen 2012)?

Within this discourse, Greeks, in particular, are constructed as lazy, profligate, untrustworthy, incompetent, uncompetitive tax cheats. Quite often school-child or hospital patient metaphors are employed to describe them:

How was it when the Greek prime minister Papandreou wanted to ask the people and Mr Sarkozy and Mrs Merkel forbade him, like he was a little schoolboy (Heil 2012, p. 22726)?

We are not hostile to the principle of conditionality, but it should not be exercised blindly, at the risk of killing the patient one claims to be treating (Caresche 2012).

Greece must do its homework ... (Schäuble cited in Saint-Paul 2012).

In fact the discourse that Germans should refuse to pay for the profligate south was not strongly present in the mainstream media studied (though it may have been in the tabloid media). In any case this discourse was at least partly neutralised by the German government's insistence that the ESM be linked to the Fiscal Compact, ensuring that any bailout would be conditional on budget reform. Furthermore, constructing Greeks as hospital patients or naughty schoolchildren, however derogatory, results in the co-construction of a need to help them, rather than throw them out of the eurozone. These constructions, therefore, effectively reinforce the discourse of solidarity.

The north-south cleavage was also complicated by confusion over whether France belonged to the north or the south. In the German media France was typically constructed as a weak link:

The economically troubled country [France] was 'the central problem in Europe' (Michael Hüther cited in *Welt Online* 2012).

In French public discourses, because France effectively straddled the north-south cleavage, the line between north and south was deliberately blurred, as the following example of Schadenfreude over Dutch fiscal problems demonstrates:

The Netherlands, that paragon of budgetary virtue, had to recognize on Thursday that its public finances are sinking into the red and that just like Spain or Greece it will not be able to keep its promise of recovery ... A country that has often lectured others might become, when the time comes, the first to submit itself to the collective discipline [of the other EU states] (Mével 2012b).

The north-south cleavage therefore turned out not to be a cleavage at all. The discourse of letting Greece go (let alone letting the south go) was simply not present in the mainstream French and German texts. Both the dominant discourse supporting the EU crisis resolution measures and the counter-discourses critical of German dominance, the legality of the new measures, or the effectiveness of the austerity approach were nevertheless in favour of solidarity. In the end, in the texts studied, there was no split along north-south lines over the creation of the ESM or the Fiscal Compact, or the refinancing of Greece.

Having seen that in both France and Germany the euro crisis was constructed as an existential threat to the cherished European project, that it evoked specifically 'European' identity discourses such as solidarity, and that major Europe-wide initiatives were instigated to fight the crisis, it will come as no surprise that the principal construction of the appropriate locus of action on the euro crisis in both the French and German discourses was the EU. In France there were also some parallel usages of the Larsen categories 'France through the EU' and 'France and the EU', but, notably, essentially no national constructions. In the German texts there were some constructions of Germany alone as the appropriate locus for action, as a result of the German leadership discourse, but the predominant framing was nevertheless European.

The United Kingdom

As a non-member of the eurozone, the UK was effectively an outsider on the issue of the euro crisis. The debates in the parliament were different from those in France and Germany, as the UK was not involved in the second Greek rescue (though it had been involved in the first), the UK was not a party to the European Stability Mechanism, and prime minister David Cameron famously vetoed the Fiscal Compact in December of 2011 (preventing it from becoming part of the EU treaties, and resulting in the other member states having to sign a multilateral treaty outside of the EU to initiate it). Nevertheless, the House of Commons was still required to pass an amendment to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to enable the European Stability Mechanism to be created, which it duly passed, and the British government, despite its earlier veto of the Fiscal Compact, allowed the new institutions to use the organs of the EU.

From this perspective the UK still had a role in EU unity formation, though a much-reduced one. For this reason, as well as for consistency with the other case studies, the British discourses will still be considered here.

The basic construction of the euro crisis in the UK was that it was a problem for the eurozone to solve:

Britain is not in the euro, we are not going to join the euro, and we should have no liability for bailing out eurozone countries (Hague 2012, c. 74).

In the House of Commons texts the euro itself was typically constructed as a political compromise that could never work:

The existence of monetary union without fiscal or economic union has led to severe economic strains in a number of eurozone countries and permitted the build-up of excessive debts by some members to an unsustainable level (Hague 2012, c. 71).

The EU's response to the euro crisis was characteristically constructed as 'throwing good money after bad' (e.g. Reckless 2011, c. 807) and it was widely believed that the crisis could only be resolved by at least a partial break-up of the eurozone.

Many of the themes from the French and German texts were also present in the British sources. The *Guardian* in particular was concerned with German dominance:

Many ... have seen in Germany's approach a kind of economic imperialism (Kundnani 2012).

There was also media criticism of the EU's austerity-based approach, with the conditions imposed on Greece described as 'sheer lunacy' (Alistair Darling cited in Gow 2012), and warnings given that 'austerity fatigue' in the southern states would lead to a 'powerful backlash' (Mario Monti cited in *Telegraph.co.uk* 2012). Both the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* engaged in the discourse of north versus south, even characterizing the south, perhaps ironically, as 'sinners' (e.g. Armitstead 2012). By the same token there was acknowledgement that '[i]t would simply not be in the UK's national interest to watch the eurozone fail and even break up' (Williams 2011, c. 816). Furthermore, strong criticism of the euro did not equate with dismissing the EU project in toto. Even conservative MPs acknowledged the utility of core economic functions of the EU, and in almost the same breath as writing off the euro, called for the completion of the single market:

The European Union, including the United Kingdom, needs a relentless focus on competitiveness and growth through deepening the European single market; building a single market in the digital economy, energy and services; cutting the costs of European regulation on businesses, especially small enterprises; and agreeing more free trade deals with Canada, Singapore, Japan, the United States of America and other regions of the world (Lidington 2012, c. 124).

Finally, the widespread abhorrence of any mention of federalism or political union in relation to the EU is in stark contrast with the debates in the French and German parliaments, where ever closer union is an article of faith across a broad spectrum of political parties, and some form of federalism or political union is seen as both inevitable and desirable.

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this analysis of the British texts. Firstly, while for all intents and purposes the UK was an outsider on this debate, and despite David Cameron's vetoing of the Fiscal Compact as an EU treaty amendment, the UK eventually opted not to hinder the eurozone in implementing its response to the euro crisis, as long as there was no further British liability. The UK, in a small way, therefore contributed towards EU unity. Secondly, while the euro was universally constructed as a bad idea, economic integration was still seen in a positive light and as (what should be) the EU's core business.

Discussion

The role of the UK as an outsider highlights the fact that the euro crisis actually concerned the eurozone, and not the EU as a whole. However, for the same reasons that constructions of 'Europe' cannot be separated from constructions of 'the EU' when considering EU actorness (discussed in chapter 2), it does not make sense to consider eurozone actorness as separate from EU actorness – to the extent there is tacit consensus from the non-eurozone states. In the following application of chapter 2's theoretical approach, eurozone unity is taken as proxy for EU unity, and the UK is effectively bracketed from the analysis.

Specifically European identity elements are to be found in the texts of this case study. The first type concerns solidarity between member states, which supported the logic of bailing out the euro south. The second was a strong commitment to the European project, symbolized by the common currency itself, which translated into a preparedness to defend the euro at almost any cost. Additionally, both the French and the German texts contained discourses of national leadership: France via reconstructions of the traditional Franco-German leadership of the EU,

and Germany through constructing its national economic *modus operandi* as a role-model for the euro south.

It was argued above that the euro crisis can be included in this study because it was typically constructed in the form of an external threat to the eurozone. Indeed, whenever external forces such as financial speculation and the global recession were mentioned, the ESM and the Fiscal Compact were constructed as the best defence against them. Some have noted that the euro crisis led to othering inside the EU, between the fiscally responsibly north and the profligate south (e.g. Schmidt 2016, p. 32). However, to the extent that the south was constructed as the other, it was usually depicted by hospital patient or school-child metaphors, therefore reinforcing the logic of providing assistance. The north-south cleavage was further weakened by the ambiguous position of France on the cusp between the two camps.

The framing of the euro crisis policy discourses in France and Germany were strongly EU-centric, although the German leadership discourse also meant a certain amount of national framing in the German texts as well. In harmony with the above identity discourses, the appropriate course of action was constructed as solidarity in the form of bailing out Greece and creating a bailout mechanism for the eurozone as a whole, but solidarity in return for budget responsibility. More Europe (i.e. further integration), in the form of the European Stability Mechanism and the Fiscal Compact, was seen as the solution to the crisis.

The French and German governments' policy discourses were largely impervious to oppositional attacks. In France the complaint of German dominance was met by constructing the EU response measures as joint Franco-German initiatives. The criticism that the measures were undemocratic or unconstitutional was deflated by the rulings of the European Court of Justice and the German constitutional court. Objections to austerity itself were met in Germany by presenting German fiscal management as the model for the rest of Europe, and in France as the price to pay for German financial backing of the bailout mechanisms.

It is clear then, that eurozone unity can be described by configuration 1 of the discursive model: for the most part European identity constructions supported an EU-framed response to the crisis, which is the ideal case for EU actorness. The German texts also bore witness to the national discourse of German leadership by example, also consistent with the proposed EU measures.

There is thus an element of configuration 2b of the theoretical model mixed in with configuration 1. Although initially taking a stance in vetoing the fiscal compact, the British government eventually consented to the reforms (to the extent the UK was not liable for them). In this case it is argued that EU actorness is here discursively equivalent to eurozone actorness.

Necessary limitations in the scope of this study have meant that discourses on the euro crisis in the southern states have not been considered. While the inclusion of southern discourses would no doubt illuminate the analysis carried out here, their absence does not negate the applicability of the theoretical model developed in chapter 2. As the analysis above has demonstrated, north-south othering, however pronounced, was not a determining factor in eurozone unity formation. This unity extended to the southern states: north-south othering clearly did not prevent them from signing up to the measures.

Case study 2: The Chinese solar panels dispute

Background

In June 2013 the EU Commission announced that anti-dumping tariffs would be imposed on imports of Chinese solar panels. European solar panel manufacturers, in 2010 employing 130,000 workers in Germany alone (Hempelmann 2013), had come under increasing pressure from Chinese producers, with whom they could not compete on price. By 2013 China controlled 80 per cent of the European market (Balsler & Cáceres 2013). The Commission's announcement proved to be controversial, however. Germany took a strong stance against the Commission's move, despite the ongoing collapse of its own solar panel industry: the German government feared a trade war would adversely affect its lucrative export market to China. The UK also opposed the Commission's measure, citing the principle of free trade, and pointing out that the roll-out of residential solar power production in the UK was dependent on low prices. France initially supported the Commission's anti-dumping tariffs, based on the principle of *fair* trade and the need for EU unity with respect to China. However, once China threatened retaliatory tariffs on European wine, France changed its position and sought a compromise.

Despite the reputation of the Common Commercial Policy as one of the most supranationalised of EU policy areas, in fact the Commission only had the power to impose temporary sanctions (for 6 months), with longer-term anti-dumping tariffs requiring member state approval (*Welt Online* 2013). In the face of opposition from some member states, initially only symbolic tariffs

were imposed for a period of two months. In any case a compromise was reached within this period, which introduced a (relatively low) minimum price on imports, a position which was widely regarded as a back-down by the EU (Hurley 2013).

Discourse analysis

Identity discourses

A number of (at times conflicting) identity constructions are evoked in the discourses on the Chinese solar panel dumping dispute. The constellations of identity elements are quite different for each of the three member states under consideration here. Perhaps unsurprisingly, one of the key identity discourses evoked in the British texts reconstructs the UK as a supporter of free trade:

Free trade is inherently in the interests of both European consumers, giving them better goods at better prices, and European companies, giving them another reason to improve their products to hold their own in the global marketplace (Barker & Hatt 2013).

This reflects a British Conservative conceptualisation of the EU as a free trade zone. The free trade discourse also dovetailed with a green identity element, because cheaper solar panels meant a faster roll-out of household solar energy production. French government officials, by contrast, identified France with fair (as opposed to free) trade:

in the matter of the principle which France defends, it is that of fair trade, based on reciprocity and on a high level of ambition in social and environmental issues. This principle regulates relations between the [European] Union and its strategic partners (Repentin 2013, p. 4112).

The above constructions, which point to the free trade versus protectionism cleavage mentioned in the introduction to the thesis, already go a long way to explaining the *prima facie* positions of France in support of the tariffs and of the UK against them. Once China threatened to raise tariffs on European wine imports, however, the French government changed its position and called for a compromise.

In Germany the solar panel issue evoked two important identity elements: greenness and industrial identity. In Germany the two apparently contradictory discourses of Germany as environmentally progressive and Germany as an industrial superpower have a long history of coexistence (Lütkenhorst & Pegels 2014, p. 6; Weidner & Mez 2008, p. 360). Green industry therefore has a special appeal, and the fairy-tale rise of companies manufacturing solar energy

installations is testament to this appeal. It was therefore a non-trivial discursive challenge for the government to turn its back on the domestic solar panel manufacturing sector in the name of avoiding a trade war with China. To achieve this discursive manoeuvre, German solar panel manufacturing was constructed as an opportunistic industry that had grown fat on government-regulated subsidies aimed at supporting domestic solar power installation:

Instead of investing in research and development, R&D, as well as in automation, stock market listings were organised, football clubs were sponsored and dividends distributed. Certain well-known leaders of the industry bought themselves a castle on the Rhine with these proceeds, instead of hiring researchers and scientists. The R&D quota of German photovoltaic producers is 2.5 per cent of turnover. By comparison: in the processing industry the R&D quota is 5 per cent, in the electronics industry 7 per cent and for car manufacturers 5 per cent (Lämmel 2013, p. 30437).

There was widespread acknowledgement that these circumstances reflected broader failings of the German government's renewable energy regime. To reinforce the necessity of letting this industry fail, solar panel manufacturing was reclassified in the discourse as no longer cutting edge:

basically a solar cell is not a hi-tech product anymore ... A solar cell is much rather a cheap, mass-produced commodity, which is produced in factories outside of Germany and mostly on assembly lines in the Far East (Breil 2013, p. 30438).

A new definition was given to the German photovoltaic industry, as a much smaller, hi-tech niche industry:

In my Dresden electorate, for example, research is being carried out on organic photovoltaic modules. These cells are extremely flexible, thin and efficient. These are solutions that in future will contribute to high added value and prosperity (Lämmel 2013, p. 30437).

In the French and British texts, similar constructions of both green and industrial identity elements were to be found, though not as strongly. Significantly there were essentially no constructions of common European identity elements in any of the public spheres studied. This is both reflective of the free trade versus protectionism cleavage in the EU, and indicative of the absence of EU unity and lack of EU actorness on the issue.

The construction of China was also complex. The country was portrayed as an economic behemoth that was threatening European livelihoods through sweatshop production methods, low environmental standards, and unfair trade subsidies; but also a vast export market that

embodied the promise of growth to European economies still in the grip of the post-2008 recession. At the same time, a third identity element depicted China as powerful and threatening. Solar panel manufacturers in Germany portrayed China as an existential threat to European industry:

‘China is using dumping to attempt to create a monopoly over the technology for the exploitation of the largest energy source in the world’, Solarworld boss Frank Asbeck warns. ... The fear is that Beijing could soon use similar methods against Europe in other technologies of the future such as wind power or electromobility (Balsler & Cáceres 2013).

It was against just such constructions that the government’s discursive strategy of redefining photovoltaic manufacturing in Germany as low-tech mass production was aimed.

The appropriate course of action

In Germany the anti-dumping tariffs proposed by the Commission were interpreted as the opening shots of a trade war. Having accepted the decline of local solar panel manufacturing, and with China construed as both powerful and a vast export market for German industry, the EU tariffs were described as ‘madness’ (Milan Nitzschke cited in Wetzel 2013), and warnings were given that:

A trade war with the economic giant China will have an impact way beyond the photovoltaic sector and cannot be in the German interest (Hempelmann 2013, p. 30438).

The later retaliatory action proposed by China only confirmed the trade war construction:

After Bordeaux, Chianti and Riesling, China now has its sights on a product with just as many emotional associations, especially in Germany: cars. These are after all the heart of the German economy (*Welt Online* 2013).

For these reasons the German government was from the start firmly against the Commission’s proposed tariffs.

In France, the fair trade identity construction was consistent with supporting the anti-dumping tariffs. Moreover, the French government’s initial pro-tariff stance was also based on the argument that EU actorness with respect to China requires a unified EU-wide stance, a point made in the columns of *Le Figaro*:

France is not so much defending its solar panels as its higher principles: Europe must stop being ‘naïve’ with respect to China ... and must be able to ‘show its teeth’ when it has to (Bouilhet 2013).

‘Cohesion between the European countries on these subjects of commercial negotiation’ is necessary (government spokesperson cited in *Lefigaro.fr* 2013).

In the absence of EU unity, however, once France was targeted for punishment through proposed wine tariffs that would largely spare the UK and Germany – constructed in France as a ‘reward’ for opposing the tariffs – the French government had no choice but to change its position and seek a compromise. China’s threat was accompanied by constructions of France as a wine export champion, providing an alternative to the fair trade identity construction:

Wine and spirits remain the second highest positive contributor to France’s trade balance, behind aeronautics (de la Grange 2013).

In the UK, the tariffs were opposed not only on the principle of free trade, but also specifically because tariffs would mean higher prices and by implication a slower roll-out of renewable energy production across the country:

We are very concerned by the impact of EU tariffs on the UK solar industry. In the past three years we have added about 2.5 GW of solar here in the UK. We are making great progress but that could be jeopardised if those tariffs go ahead (Barker 2013, c. 1650).

Just as in Germany, the hoped-for role of China in the UK’s economic recovery was a major issue:

The Government also hopes to attract Chinese money to invest in UK infrastructure as part of George Osborne’s ‘Plan for Growth’. In other words, China is a key plank of the Government’s economic recovery plan (Aldrick 2013).

Degree of Europeanization

In the French discourses, despite the Chinese threat to the national wine industry, framing of the appropriate action was overwhelmingly in terms of the EU, Europe or Brussels. This no doubt reflects the reality that the tariffs were an EU issue. It was a similar story for the UK, although the British discourses were largely critical of the Commission’s position, while the French discourses were essentially, at least initially, supportive of it. In Germany, by contrast, whereas the media discourses likewise constructed the EU as the locus of action, in the parliamentary texts the formulation was overwhelmingly a national one. Again this is to be expected: the EU plan for anti-dumping measures was interpreted by the political elite in national terms, namely as a threat to German trade with China.

Discussion

For the German political leadership China was seen as a vast export market but a dangerous opponent in a trade war, and Germany's own solar panel manufacturing sector as expendable. Here the anti-dumping tariff issue was constructed in national terms. In France and the UK, even though the issue was framed largely in EU terms (whether the Commission was right to impose the tariffs), the two countries were on either side of a free trade versus fair trade cleavage. Divergent member state policy-identity constellations correspond to configuration 3 of the discursive theoretical model: disunity and weak actorness.

The change in the French position, once its wine industry had been threatened with Chinese tariffs, restored unity to the EU's big three, and a compromise was quickly negotiated. Superficially this corresponds to configuration 2b, in which different national constructions of the issue are consistent with a unified position – in this case to reach a compromise agreement with China. It can hardly be argued, however, that EU actorness was thus restored. In the context of events, the eventual unified position can only be seen as a back-down. This reasoning is consistent with the conclusion, reached in chapter 1, that actorness requires an enduring unity rather than a momentary agreement, and that formal unity on a weak position which masks fundamental disagreement cannot be considered the basis of EU actorness. This is especially pertinent in the context of EU-China relations, where China has established a reputation as being able to split the EU on important issues (Grant & Barysch 2008, pp. 21-22; Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008, pp. 320-321; Stumbaum 2007, p. 58).

This case study may look like an open-and-shut case for liberal intergovernmentalism, in that member states constructed their interests in terms of purely national economic calculus, and the institutions of the EU (in this case the Commission) were powerless to influence them. By the same token, the discursive approach of this thesis would insist that 'economic interests' remain discursive constructions, and are not independently knowable 'facts'. Thus, for example, Germany and the UK in this case study constructed short-term economic interests as having precedence over the long-term benefit of a united front with respect to China (Gegout 2010, p. 90; Grant & Barysch 2008, pp. 9). Alternatively, France and Germany, both states with similarly endangered solar panel manufacturing sectors, and similarly vulnerable to Chinese tariff reprisals, nevertheless initially constructed diametrically opposite positions on the Commission's anti-dumping tariffs. This is evidence that 'economic interests' are indeed

discursively constructed, and not exogenous to political discourse. The comparison between the theoretical approach of this thesis with liberal intergovernmentalism (and sociological institutionalism) will be addressed in more detail in chapter 8.

If it is accepted that even national economic interests are discursively constructed, then the discursive theoretical model is able to provide insight into how China exerts influence on individual member states of the EU. It is apparent that this influence is related to the degree to which companies and industry sectors are still constructed in public discourses in strongly national terms. It was German (not European) car exports and French (not European) wine production that were threatened by a trade war with China. In the end it is a discursive issue that Volkswagen, with production facilities all over Europe, is considered a German not a European company, and that European wine production is considered in national terms (Italian wines would also have been hit by the proposed Chinese counter-tariffs). It is exactly for this reason that China is able so successfully to prosecute a policy of divide and conquer against the EU on economic issues, and, as will be demonstrated in chapter 6, on political questions it is able to link to economic issues.

Conclusion

The analysis of the two case studies in this chapter, using the discursive theoretical model developed in this thesis, has produced some perhaps surprising results. Firstly it has provided an argument that the EU's 2012 response to the euro crisis is actually an example of strong EU actorness, the outsider role played by the UK notwithstanding. Within the eurozone, despite all the well-publicized acrimony, the widely predicted break-up of the eurozone was prevented by member states acting on the basis of the shared value of solidarity in the conviction of a common future together within the ever closer European Union. This statement comes with an obvious caveat: a radical change in the composition of European political elites could, by the same logic, lead to a profoundly different outcome in the future. The outsider role played by the UK, its link to Brexit, as well as the threat posed by political extremism to EU actorness are discussed in more detail in the conclusion to the thesis. Secondly, the Chinese solar panels case study has demonstrated that even in the case of a communitarized EU competence like trade policy, if the issue is important enough, the locus of EU actorness still lies with the member states, and not the supranational institutions. Thirdly, and related to the second point, this second case study has also highlighted the detrimental influence on EU actorness caused by the cleavage that

divides member states between free-trade and protectionist constructions of European commercial policy. Others have observed that this is a more general phenomenon, e.g. by Woolcock, who notes:

there is no qualified majority among member states, let alone a consensus in support of threatening to close the EU market. Liberal member states see strict definitions of reciprocity as economically counterproductive (2013, p. 333).

Such cleavage issues were identified in the introduction to the thesis as likely inhibitors of EU unity. Fourthly, this second case study also indicates that while the main strength of the EU is often thought to rest in its common market, this market is still sufficiently fragmented to have a negative effect on EU actorness. In relations with China, at least, national champions and nationally constructed industries are a weakness that China is able to exploit to divide the EU. Finally, this chapter has also confirmed the proposition that member state unity at a given instant is not sufficient for EU actorness, rather it rests on unity of purpose over a longer period of time.

Chapter 4: Environmental actorness

Introduction

Another area where the EU has clearly established leadership credentials is in international climate change negotiations (Delreux 2014, p. 1017; Groen & Niemann 2013, p. 309, Woolcock 2013, p. 341; van Schaik & Schunz 2012, p. 174; Vogler 2011, p. 151). It can be no coincidence that two significant examples of new thinking about what constitutes international actorness have sprung from consideration of the EU as an environmental actor: Jupille and Caporaso (1998), and Bretherton and Vogler (2006).

The EU's climate change credentials derive particularly from Europe's championing of the Kyoto protocol, especially once it became clear that the US would not ratify it. Until that point the EU's global warming policy efforts were characterized as 'lacking cohesion' (Pavese & Torney 2012, pp. 133-134). Signed in 1997, the Kyoto protocol required the signatures of states accounting for at least 55 per cent of global emissions before coming into force. The Europeans devoted considerable diplomatic energy to achieving this, agreeing to support WTO membership for Russia in exchange for it signing and ratifying the protocol (Bretherton & Vogler 2006, pp. 108-109). It was only with Russia's contribution that the 55 per cent hurdle was passed. European leaders were motivated both by the desire to prove EU relevance to European citizens (van Schaik & Schunz 2012, p. 177) and by the wish to demonstrate EU international leadership (Brandi 2012, p. 178; Schunz 2012, pp. 191, 204), in particular with respect to the US (Groen & Niemann 2013, p. 309; Groenleer & van Schaik 2007, p. 990; Vogler & Bretherton 2006). The othering of the US thus became an essential element in the establishment of EU actorness in international climate change policy (van Schaik 2013, p. 363; Pavese & Torney 2012, p. 134).

Combatting climate change has remained high on the EU agenda, with the Emissions Trading Scheme coming into force in 2005, and the EU climate and energy package being adopted in 2008, requiring 20 per cent greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2020 compared with 1990 levels. At the same time, in the lead-up to the Copenhagen conference in 2009, the EU agreed on a position offering to increase reductions to 30 per cent, if other industrialized nations made similarly serious cuts. Expectations were high that the Copenhagen summit would lead to a new

binding agreement on emissions reductions to succeed the Kyoto protocol. As the conference approached, however, it became clear that these expectations were overly ambitious (e.g. Miliband 2009, c. 1015). In the end there was effectively no agreement at Copenhagen, with the parties merely taking note of a final accord. The UN negotiations process was rescued in the following years by the conferences at Cancún, Mexico, and Durban, South Africa, which made progress towards less ambitious goals, under significantly less media coverage. The relative failure of the Copenhagen conference, and the qualified success of the 2011 Durban meeting are the two case studies in this consideration of the environmental dimension of EU actorness.

With the success of the 2015 Paris climate change summit, the EU has maintained its high profile on the issue. This is despite the fact that EU unity on climate change policy has been far from automatic in the intervening period. In particular:

some newer member states have become increasingly assertive in expressing their opposition to strengthening EU climate policy. ... in March 2012 and again in June 2012, Poland vetoed EU proposals for EU climate change targets beyond 2012 (Pavese & Torney 2012, p. 138).

While the domestic political debates of Eastern European member states fall outside this study, this observation highlights the dependency of EU climate change actorness on achieving member state unity.

Case study 1: The Copenhagen climate change conference

Background

The 2009 Copenhagen conference is typically constructed as a failure for the European Union (van Schaik & Schunz 2012, p. 169; Oberthür 2011, pp. 669-670; Kilian & Elgström 2010, p. 267). The EU was famously ‘not in the room’ when the last-minute, non-binding deal was hammered out (BBC cited in Pavese & Torney 2012, p. 137). Lack of unity is often cited by EU officials as the reason for this failure. Commission president Barroso commented, for example, that ‘while others did not match our ambition, we did not help ourselves by not speaking with one voice’ (2010). Brandi concludes that ‘behind the façade of unity suggested by the EU’s bold climate strategy’ there is a ‘much patchier picture: the Union appears to be an actor with no unified voice’ (2012, pp. 175-176).

Groen and Niemann have noted that at the time there was significant disagreement between the member states, in particular between east and west, on a range of issues including over the trigger for implementing the conditional 30 per cent offer, and over how much to contribute to the proposed adaptation fund for less developed countries (2013, pp. 312-313). These authors attributed the EU's apparent failure at Copenhagen to institutional inflexibility, as well as disunity:

Owing to a lack of preference coherence and the unanimity requirement within the EU, the Member States were unable to agree on significant alterations of the EU negotiating position that could have enabled them to interact in a more flexible and tactical manner ... As a result, the EU was sidelined during the final stage of the negotiations ... (2013, p. 318).

Others, however, downplay disunity in the EU (e.g. Vogler 2011, p. 170) and attribute the 'failure' of Copenhagen to external factors (Oberthür 2011, p. 676), or to the likelihood that the EU's goals at Copenhagen were simply too ambitious (van Schaik & Schunz 2012, p. 182). It was argued in chapter 1 that EU actorness is not necessarily negated by a single instance of disunity. Schunz contends that in the longer term the EU's 'leading-by-example approach arguably contributed to setting the agenda for global talks, especially with regard to the urgency with which the topic of climate change had to be treated' (2012, p. 208). Van Schaik also asserts that '[t]he way the 27 EU states have designed their climate change policy and have decided to share the emission reduction effort, could moreover be seen as a microcosm for what could be achieved internationally' (2013, p. 359).

The source texts studied for this case study contain a range of explanations for the 'failure' of Copenhagen, of which EU disunity is only one (e.g. Chanteguet 2009). Disagreement between the US and China over verification (e.g. Kirkup & Gray 2009), Chinese sabotage (Lynas 2009) and the Danish presidency's incompetence (e.g. Wetzel 2009) are all variously given as reasons for the failure of the Copenhagen conference. There is thus significant evidence to challenge the conventional wisdom that the disappointment at Copenhagen was due to lack of EU unity. These questions will now be investigated through the discursive theoretical model.

Discourse analysis

Identity discourses

The public discourses of all three member states under investigation bore witness to strong identification with climate change issues. It is clear from the texts studied that the link between anthropogenic gas emissions and global climate change is broadly accepted as ‘common sense’ by the French, German and British publics. There are occasional references to climate change sceptical or denialist discourses, but these are typically endowed with little credibility. This is true even in the UK, where the stronger presence of climate change scepticism is apparent through the use of accommodating language, such as in the following example from the House of Commons:

Does the right hon. Gentleman agree that even if we were wrong about human intervention in climate change, the measures that we need to take would have to be taken if we are to live in this world in a sustainable way, given the increase in population and the increase in the expectations and choices that that population has (Gummer 2009, c. 1008)?

The climate change problematic is thus infrequently referred to in the texts: it is simply taken for granted. Occasionally there are reminders of security threats that climate change could lead to, but mostly there is a basic assumption of consensus that greenhouse gas emissions reductions are needed to combat climate change.

There is also little debate that the appropriate course of action is to work towards a legally binding international agreement involving effective emissions reductions. This was clearly the goal of the EU and its member state governments at Copenhagen. It is only the UK’s *Telegraph* that in any way questions a politically negotiated solution as the appropriate course of action:

As politicians dither and debate, the market has taken another decisive step in dictating where the world’s energy dollars are invested [in low carbon energy production], whether campaigners like it or not (Reece 2009).

This discourse that the private sector is a more effective forum for combatting climate change is however only a side-discourse even in the *Telegraph* texts. It nevertheless recurs in the *Telegraph* texts for the next case study on the Durban climate change conference.

The absence of a clearly defined ‘other’ makes the climate change case studies different from the other case studies in this thesis. Nevertheless, there is still an array of self-other identity constructions, which indicates that the discursive theory of this thesis is still relevant. French

identity constructions on the theme of climate change tend to restate the French commitment to social market economics, in particular in contrast to unacceptable Anglo-Saxon capitalism. French parliamentary discourses frequently chose to see the hoped-for Copenhagen agreement as the start of a new world order, one that would concern more than environmental issues. This conceptualisation is shared across the political spectrum. Some examples of this language:

... we are entering a new world, a world of moderation, a world of more solidarity, a world of sustainable development, a world far more humane (Borloo 2009).

a new model of economic, environmental and social growth is possible in our world, on our planet (Poignant 2009).

In particular there were many calls by French politicians for the Copenhagen conference to establish a new world environment organisation, 'superior or equivalent to the WTO' (Borloo 2009). This was accompanied by discourses to be found in both the parliamentary and the media texts reflecting French distrust of market solutions:

At a time when capitalist instability is back, is it wise to put a price on a natural good such as the climate? Can we expect the forces which led to climate change to fight it (Salmon 2009)?

In Germany, important national identity constructions are of a land of high-tech industry and an export champion. As mentioned in the solar panel case study in chapter 3, for Germans, industry and environmental responsibility are not mutually exclusive:

We want to remain an industrialized country, we do not want to deindustrialize (Röttgen 2009, p. 591).

Through economic modernisation, which goes hand in hand with climate change action and through which we tackle climate change head-on, and through the introduction of new technologies we create new markets. Those who offer this will be the export champions of the future (Röttgen 2009, p. 592).

In fact much (though not all) of German industry was strongly behind an ambitious agreement at Copenhagen:

'German industry calls on the international community to conclude a global, effective and fair agreement at the international climate conference in Copenhagen,' read a farsighted statement from the BDI [Federal Association of German Industry] (Bauchmüller 2009).

The standard German conceptualisation of climate change reflects a construction of the global warming problematic from the perspective of economic opportunity (Pavese & Torney 2012, p. 135). This construction had also gained currency in the UK with the publication of the Stern review (2006). This report highlighted the enormous economic costs that global warming would incur if left unchecked, and pointed out that a concerted effort to shift to a low carbon economy now would not only be cheaper in the long run, but would create significant new growth sectors, especially for early movers who could then sell their technology to others. This construction of the climate change issue has traction across a broad political spectrum in Germany:

Climate change and environment policy must always go hand in hand with economic and energy policy. Then climate change policy will also be a lasting and self-supporting job machine for Germany. Then in future climate change policy will in every respect provide for growth, prosperity and employment in Germany (Barei 2009, p. 609).

Copenhagen could become the greatest economic stimulus of all, because if it sends a clear signal to the economy that a low-CO₂ economy is the future of world economic policy, then hundreds of billions of euros and dollars will be released in the world (Achim Steiner cited in Friedebold 2009a).

An example from the Durban conference demonstrates that this consensus even extended to the Greens:

we have always said that climate change action is also an economic opportunity and an opportunity for employment (Knast 2011, p. 18003).

Another identity construct that was very significant in both the French and German texts concerned climate change leadership. The French discourse of leadership is common to many contexts, and climate change is no exception:

France has a significant presence in the debate in Copenhagen, thanks to you [the members of the *Assemblée nationale*], and to the vote at the [2007 national climate change conference] ... and thanks to French expertise in the context of the European accord. France exercises a form of leadership, though with much humility (Borloo 2009).

The German parliamentary texts also contained a discourse of leadership – unusually for Germany, where, as discussed in the introduction to the thesis and in chapter 3 above, too much leadership is a political taboo. The word *Vorreiter* (forerunner, pioneer, leader) is most often used in the German context:

we, Germany, are in fact leaders [*Vorreiter*] in the fight against climate change (Steinmeier 2009, p. 592).

If ever there is a defined 'other' in the German and French contexts, it is usually the United States. As mentioned above, US lack of action on environmental issues is an important source of a European environmental consciousness. This was no doubt reinforced by a general rise in anti-Americanism in Europe coinciding with the administration of George W. Bush. The following is an example of an instance of othering of the US:

The conservative congressman James Sensenbrenner declared, according to Fox News, that he is coming to the climate summit, and will make clear to world leaders that contrary to all of Obama's promises the US Congress will not pass any law to reduce green-house gases until the 'scientific fascism' is over (Friedebold 2009b).

As this example demonstrates, the othering of the US contains nuances: the Obama administration is generally constructed in a more positive light, particularly in comparison with the previous Bush administration and big business:

As if scientists had not proved the dangers of greenhouse gas emissions and as if George W. Bush were still president of the US, domestic economic players are forming a united front against an agreement. 770 companies in the USA have hired around 2400 lobbyists to put pressure in Washington on the White House and Congress. That makes four lobbyists per member of Congress (Bauchmüller & Balsler 2009).

The othering of the US is less noticeable in the British discourses, and in fact there are generally fewer constructions of self, either explicit or implicit in the UK texts. Overall, the discourse here is dominated by a Stern review interpretation which stresses the economic opportunities of the transition to a low-carbon economy:

If anything, politicians in such debates – this is not a party political point at all – have not done enough to make the positive case for making the transition to low carbon: the case for future jobs and where they come from, for energy security, which is particularly important for Britain, and for quality of life (Miliband 2009, c. 1010).

We have to focus on domestic action in big fossil-fuelled economies: the US, China, and Europe. All three have made pledges about their intentions to act – each has the opportunity to introduce policies which will create huge markets in climate solutions. If they lead, these solutions will become available for use in all parts of the world, with the costs of development having been born by those most able to pay (Worthington 2009).

Where there was othering of the US, frequently it was grouped with other recalcitrants, most often China.

As mentioned, there was little debate about the appropriate course of action. In each of the three member states studied there was across-the-board political support for the common EU position at the Copenhagen conference. Criticism was confined to two main issues: firstly there were concerns that the proposed fund to be set up by rich countries to ameliorate the effects of climate change in poor countries was not large enough, and secondly it was feared that governments would divert money from existing aid budgets to contribute to this fund. Neither of these criticisms, however, disputed the overall direction of seeking a binding international agreement at Copenhagen.

Degree of Europeanization

Germany is typically the member state with the most Europeanized discourses in external action issues. While this was the case for the Copenhagen case study as well, it was somewhat less so than in most other case studies, because of the significance of the German *Vorreiter* discourse, mentioned above. In fact the dominant construction of the locus of action in the *Bundestag* texts was national, constructing Germany as a leader or model:

Developing countries will only be prepared to accept responsibility and reduce their CO₂ emissions if they receive reliable and long-term support from the industrialized countries. In particular the Federal Republic of Germany has the duty, because of the government's actions to date, to continue to be a leader [on this issue] (Niebel 2009, p. 602).

Interestingly, this was not carried over into the media texts, where the EU/Europe was the predominant construction of the appropriate locus of action. The story is similar for France: an overwhelmingly national conceptualisation of the issue in the *Assemblée nationale* compares with a much more balanced picture in the media, which construct France and the EU roughly equally as the appropriate locus of action.

This pattern was different in the British texts. While the media texts favoured the UK as the logical locus of action, the House of Commons discourses treated the UK and the EU roughly equally. This latter situation may be expected in a Labour-dominated House of Commons, but it is interesting to note that the unusual strength (for British texts) of Europeanization on display was shared by the Conservative side as well, as the following example illustrates:

My party [the Conservatives] in this country and in its European alliances is completely committed to tackling climate change. In fact, we regard it as one of the essential competences of the EU. ... No one who has studied the debates on these matters in the European Parliament in recent years can have failed to notice

the leadership that the British Conservative delegation there has given from our Front Bench (Clark 2009, c. 1018).

This case study, in common with the studies on the euro crisis (in chapter 3) and the Iranian nuclear negotiations (in chapter 7), highlights the existence of positive constructions of the EU on the Conservative side of British politics, a reminder of the minority status of the Eurosceptic camp within the British political elite. The incongruity between this political asymmetry on the one hand, and the 2016 Brexit referendum decision to leave the EU on the other, underlines the extent to which major decisions on external issues depend on the contingencies of domestic politics and the particular identity co-constructions present in the public sphere at the specific time in question. Brexit will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion to the thesis.

There is one further discourse element that needs to be discussed here, and that is the role of the EU (and its member states) as an international agenda-setter and model for emulation on climate change issues. A strong discourse element in essentially all the sources of texts was of reticent international actors beginning to make progress on climate change issues. While the driver of this change is usually left unmentioned, the context of the EU's leadership role is clear. If EU role-modelling and agenda-setting have contributed to other governments taking serious climate change action, then climate change policy is a candidate for EU normative actorhood of the EU. Most frequently these discourses do not mention the EU directly, yet the following examples contain a sense of momentum in the lead-up to Copenhagen, or of a virtuous cycle in which EU agency is clear:

Recent weeks and months have shown country after country raising their ambitions on controlling emissions (Stern 2009).

the major developed countries but also the emerging countries (China, Brazil, India, etc.) have shown their willingness by putting numbers on the table ... An important first for the Americans after the Bush era, who was hostile to the idea of engaging on the climate question, but also for the Chinese. And there is a virtuous cycle: the Indians, who a week ago were still refusing to go down that path, yielded in their turn last Wednesday (Court & Nodé-Langlois 2009).

Some examples explicitly attribute an actor role to the EU as well:

The European Council of 29-30 October delivered a clear mandate for Copenhagen. This position confers on the European Union an exemplary and leadership role in the negotiations (Lequiller 2009).

... it is right that the European Union has not treated this like a conventional negotiation – it has not kept its cards close to its chest until 3am on the last evening and then revealed its finance numbers. We have got to push and we have to be persuaders, and sometimes unilateral action is important, because it drives people forward. I also think that the EU's role in the coming weeks is to use our commitment to go to 30 per cent as part of a global deal as a way of leveraging up greater commitments from others (Miliband 2009, c. 1015).

The EU's offer of a 30 per cent CO₂ reduction still stands; one sees for the first time the USA and China, who until now had refused to commit, with concrete suggestions (Franke 2009).

While it is impossible to know the extent of European influence – China, for example, was clearly also reacting to other pressures, such as domestic concerns over pollution – there are clearly good arguments in favour of long-term EU actorness on climate change, despite the failure to achieve a binding agreement at Copenhagen.

Discussion

EU unity on the fundamental issues was strong in the lead-up to the Copenhagen climate change summit. The reality of climate change, the utility of binding international agreements to combat it, and the leadership of the EU in proposing ambitious reduction targets, were all almost universally accepted across the public spheres studied. Particularly in the French and German discourses the othering of the US contributed to a European identity based on environmental responsibility. The French and German elites also constructed a national identity of leadership in the international response to global warming. But whereas French parliamentary speakers envisaged a new economic world order to deal with the challenges of climate change, the German and British texts highlighted a discourse of economic opportunity unleashed by a global transition to a low-carbon economic model. Therefore, within the framework of the theoretical model of chapter 2, EU unity was based on the compatibility of the EU's approach with an anti-US European identity, common national identity constructions of climate change leadership, as well as differing national constructions of economic opportunity (Germany and the UK) versus a post-capitalist new world order (France), which were nevertheless still consistent with the common EU approach. The Copenhagen conference is thus a combination of configurations 1, 2a and 2b of the discursive theoretical model from chapter 2.

This investigation draws the conclusion that, despite its reputation, the Copenhagen climate change conference, in its broader context, is better characterized by EU cohesion than disunity.

The overall agreement which characterized the EU position was not undermined by disagreement on points of detail: discord over the exact conditions for moving to a 30 per cent reduction target, for example, were irrelevant when the conference parties could not even agree in principle to less ambitious targets. The above analysis sides rather with those scholars who see the Copenhagen conference as a set-back in a longer process in which ambitious EU positions played a strong role in setting the agenda for an eventual climate change agreement (van Schaik 2013; Schunz 2012).

Case study 2: The Durban climate change conference

Background

Whereas the Copenhagen conference is usually constructed as having been highly ambitious but ending in failure for the EU, Durban is typically constructed as a success in meeting more pragmatic aims (Groen & Niemann 2013, p. 319; Bäckstrand & Elgström 2013). This success is commonly seen as the result of effective diplomacy on the part of the EU. Isolated at Copenhagen by an alliance between the G77 poor countries and China, the EU set to work to build an international alliance itself with small island states, most at risk from global warming, and thus most supportive of ambitious international climate change goals, as well as poor, mostly African states, particularly at risk from resource shortages caused by climate change, but additionally attracted by the EU's support for the green climate fund to support developing countries (Bäckstrand & Elgström 2013, p. 1381). By Durban the EU was also able to present a more united front:

the EU seems to have been more successful in terms of attaining its goals. Here, the EU was able to act more coherently and thus displayed a larger degree of actorness (Groen & Niemann 2013, p. 319).

The Durban climate change conference reached agreement on the goal of a legally binding treaty, to apply to developed and developing countries alike, including the US and China, and to be finalized by 2015.

Discourse analysis

Identity discourses

The basic identity discourses, of Europeans being environmentally aware and responsible, especially compared to the American other, remained largely unchanged since the Copenhagen conference. There were a number of minor differences, however. One was a growing public

discourse of impatience with the UN negotiations process, and frustration that not enough was being done quickly enough to combat climate change. This is no doubt at least partly related to the perceived failure of the Copenhagen conference. This discourse was present in the public spheres of all three member states investigated:

More seriously, this new instrument will not see the light of day before 2015 and will only be put into force, in the best case, in 2020. Until then, commitments to reduce emissions are far from being equal to the challenge, putting us on a trajectory for a global temperature increase of 4°C or more (Combes 2011).

To observe the marathon negotiations for a few days is to understand why so many citizens have lost faith in climate change politics. On the weekend some 20,000 demonstrators took to the streets of Durban to put pressure on the politicians. The people sense that there is little time left, and yearn for clear decisions (Putsch 2011).

The motivation to increase ambitions could come from several sources, said Michael Jacobs of the London School of Economics, including people power. “By 2015 the world’s young people in particular can be expected to demand greater action as the evidence of future damage becomes clear” (cited in Harvey & Carrington 2011).

A variant on the othering of the US, in comparison with the Copenhagen discourses, was the construction of China, now as the ‘good’ other:

China on the other hand appears flexible, and has already made it known that it could vote in favour of a binding agreement. If China remains on this course then the USA would be isolated in the eyes of the international community. China would stand for progress, the United States for blockade (Bauchmüller 2011).

This is an example of identity construction with respect to more than one other, as discussed in chapter 2. One is the standard antithesis of the self, but the second is constructed in terms of attraction towards ‘us’, the ‘paragon’ to use the language of Campbell (1998, p. 131). This phenomenon will be observed again in the Ukraine case study in chapter 7.

One feature of the British texts, both parliamentary and media, was the construction of international legal mechanisms as inherently good:

For the past two years, ever since the disappointing Copenhagen climate summit, the 194 negotiating nations have stood indecisively at ... a junction. In one direction leads a steep and rugged pathway to a global agreement – legally binding on developed and developing countries alike – to cut emissions of the greenhouse gases that cause global warming. In the other lies a gentler and more

beguiling roadway, paved with voluntary measures and good intentions, which looks like leading to an ultimately hellish climate (Lean 2011).

Such constructions highlight the congruence between British norms favouring a rules-based international system and EU norms of international relations.

Because of the broad cross-party support for the three governments' stances, criticism of the course of action pursued was isolated, as in the case of the Copenhagen summit. Once again the most frequent attacks came in the form of questioning the sincerity of national commitments to the green climate fund, and accusing governments of planning to divert existing aid money towards the new fund. Another point of criticism was the perceived erosion of the role model status of the EU, for example because of the low carbon price associated with the Emissions Trading Scheme (Nodé-Langlois 2011), or because the aims for Durban were so modest (*Süddeutsche Zeitung* 2011). Once again, these criticisms did not question the overall direction of the EU's actions, thus were not able to threaten member state unity on fundamental questions. The second group of criticisms nevertheless highlights awareness of the EU as a role model for the rest of the world.

Degree of Europeanization

As mentioned in the background section above, the Durban conference was broadly constructed as a success, and a success for Europe:

Connie Hedegaard, the EU's climate chief, has been hailed the hero of the Durban meeting that reached an unexpectedly solid outcome in the early hours of yesterday. 'She is very, very good and we are very lucky to have her,' says Chris Huhne, the UK energy and climate change secretary. ... A deal was struck that met nearly all of the EU's aims, satisfied most developing countries and even brought the US on board (Harvey 2011).

The Durban conference discourses were significantly more Europeanized than was the case for the Copenhagen meeting. In France the shift was from overwhelmingly national to roughly equivalent treatments of France and the EU in the parliamentary texts, and from approximately equal attributions of France and the EU to overwhelmingly European in the media texts. In the German texts the *Bundestag* constructions went from overwhelmingly national in the case of Copenhagen to roughly equal numbers of national and European constructions for Durban. The media texts were even more strongly Europeanized for Durban than they were for Copenhagen. The British media texts, which favoured the UK in the case of the Copenhagen conference,

were now much more likely to construct the EU as the appropriate locus of action. The House of Commons, on the other hand, bucked the trend, and moved from even-handed treatment to a more strongly national perspective. This latter result may reflect the change of government in the UK from (Europhile) Labour to a Conservative Liberal Democrat coalition between the two conferences, though it should be noted that the environment portfolio was held by the Liberal Democrats at the time of the Durban conference. However, this trend may also be reflective of a much stronger leadership discourse in the House of Commons than 2 years previously. As was mentioned above, in the case of Copenhagen, both French and German government discourses exhibited a commitment to climate change leadership. By 2011 the British government also appeared keen to establish the UK as a climate change leader, in particular as one of the first countries to commit to the funding of the green climate fund for poor countries:

The UK is one of the few countries to have pledged climate finance beyond the initial fast-start period, and we will make an announcement on the green climate fund once its design is completed (Huhne 2011, c. 568).

The British government's national constructions of the Durban conference may thus be attributable to the UK playing catch-up in a discursive 'leadership' competition.

It is possible that this phenomenon represents an example of normative entrapment, in which the need to be a climate change leader becomes an end in itself: once politicians realize the electoral rewards of being able to claim climate change leadership, a process is unleashed in which governments compete for the right to claim such leadership. It is possible that such normative entrapment has been a contributing factor to the EU's ambitious example-setting on climate change issues, and thus EU environmental actorness in general. Both Thomas (2011a, p. 8) and Vogler (2011, p. 161) noted this phenomenon at work in the case of the EU's championing of the Kyoto protocol, for instance.

Discussion

Similar discursive mechanisms were at work in the case of the Durban conference as for the Copenhagen summit, with once again a combination of the theoretical configurations 1, 2a and 2b contributing to EU unity. Constructions of the EU as the appropriate locus for action were in harmony with a sense of European identity built on an enlightened understanding of climate change in contrast to the American other (configuration 1). A concerted European approach was also compatible with competitive national constructions of climate change leadership (configuration 2a), even when these differed (configuration 2b), for example with the UK

claiming leadership in commitment to the green climate fund for developing countries, and the other states in other areas.

The main difference between the Copenhagen and Durban case studies was that in nearly all groups of texts studied the framing of the issue was more Europeanized for the latter than for the former. The exception to this was in the House of Commons, where British leadership discourses now also emerged alongside their French and German counterparts in claiming a climate change pacesetter role for the national government. All other discourse areas exhibited a move away from national towards EU constructions of the appropriate locus of climate change action. What disunity there had been at Copenhagen was largely set aside. US othering remained a source of European environmental identity, which was given added confidence by a perception of movement from other initially sceptical actors, such as China, towards the European position, leaving the US isolated.

The theoretical model developed in chapter 2 expects a link between increased EU framing, stronger European identity and improved EU unity. Configuration 1 of the theory describes the ideal case for EU actorness in which a united EU position on an external action issue appeals directly to a European sense of identity. That the stronger presence of configuration 1 in the discourses at Durban was accompanied by greater EU actorness than at the Copenhagen summit therefore provides support for the discursive model put forward in this thesis.

Conclusion

Disagreement among EU member states on a number of (in the end irrelevant) points has often been cited as the reason for the failure of the Copenhagen conference. This chapter has argued, in contrast, that the two case studies bear witness to a strong and lasting consensus on climate change fundamentals. It was proposed in chapter 1 that long-term EU unity is the best measure available of EU actorness. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the EU is indeed a strong climate change actor. The failure of the Copenhagen conference to reach agreement on a binding accord is more likely to have been due to external factors, in particular the (ultimately unbridgeable) gap between EU proposals and the state of climate change policy in other major jurisdictions. This gap, in itself, may even have contributed to later successes, if EU environmental actorness functions normatively through example-setting. In any case it has been

argued above that short-term disagreement cannot necessarily be equated with loss of long-term actorness.

Through an ambitious and pioneering response to the challenges posed by climate change, the EU has set an example which has led ultimately to a binding international agreement, at the 2015 Paris conference, aimed at limiting global warming and mitigating its effects. EU environmental actorness is based on national consensus in the member states on the reality of anthropogenic climate change and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also on an emerging European environmental identity, originally based on the othering of an environmentally irresponsible America, but now also maintained by a public discourse of European leadership in international climate change matters. Normative entrapment, in which national leaders see benefit in being able to claim climate change leadership, then finding themselves required to back up their words with action, is also likely to have played a role.

Chapter 5: Military actorness

Introduction

It is in conventional military affairs that the EU's claim to actorness is probably weakest. Bull argued in 1982 that not only was Europe 'not an actor' on the basis of not possessing military power, but neither should it be, for military power is rightly the domain of nation states (Bull 1982, p. 163). According to Kagan:

For all Europe's great economic power and for all its success at achieving political union, Europe's military weakness had produced diplomatic weakness and sharply diminished its political influence ... (2003, p. 48).

As described in chapter 1 the EU (EC) was for a long time considered a purely civilian power (Smith 2000, p. 13; Duchêne 1972). Its military facility, the Common (originally European) Security and Defence Policy – largely the result of frustration with European impotence in the face of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s – only began operations in 2003. Though it has implemented some 35 missions to date (European External Action Service 2016), these have been limited in scope, and as such the object of criticism. For Keukeleire they are 'too limited to make a real difference' (2010, pp. 67), while Bindi and Shapiro report that, of the 30 operations approved by 2010, 'at least twelve were completely civilian, and most remain largely ineffective' (2010, p. 347). To investigate the military actorness of the EU, one such CSDP operation, the 2003 intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is the subject of the first case study in this chapter.

In an unorthodox sense the EU (EC) has long been a military actor. It was argued in the methodology section of chapter 2, that member states acting outside of the institutions of the EU should also be considered as contributing to EU actorness, as long as at least a tacit consensus exists for their actions. Both France and the UK can and do mount their own independent military missions. Many EU member states also regularly participate in NATO and other coalition operations. Because of the discursive impossibility of separating 'the EU' from 'Europe', to the extent that European participation in such operations is more than merely tokenistic these examples must have the potential to contribute towards EU actorness. The second case study, the 2011 intervention in Libya led by the UK, France and the US, is an example of such a situation.

Case study 1: The 2003 intervention in the DR Congo

Background

Early in 2003 ethnic violence in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of Congo flared up after Uganda withdrew its troops in April 2003 under a peace agreement aimed at ending the Second Congo War (1998-2003). A longstanding UN peace-keeping operation in the area, MONUC (United Nations Organisation Mission in Congo), had proved itself unable to prevent the spiralling violence in Ituri. MONUC troops were mostly holed up in their barracks, while massacres raged about them. The UN was in the process of preparing a reinforced MONUC contingent; however it was clear this would not be ready until September 2003. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan approached France to provide a solution to fill the power vacuum until the reinforced MONUC mission was ready (Ojanen 2011, p. 67).

France offered to become the major contributor towards an interim mission in Ituri, and on 30 May 2003 the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1484 authorizing the intervention. After it had begun preparations, the French government decided here was an opportunity to re-establish European credibility, damaged by the recent split over the US invasion of Iraq (Koops 2011, p. 321; Duke 2009, p. 405; Homan 2007, p. 152). In this spirit the French government proposed a European operation which was entirely independent of NATO and the US: the only other mission of the EU's new military facility to date (Operation Concordia in Macedonia) had merely taken over from an existing NATO operation (Koops 2011, p. 314).

Operation Artemis, as it came to be known, saw a mostly French contingent under EU insignia with significant support from other EU member states (as well as Canada, South Africa and Brazil) introduced into the city of Bunia in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the goal of stemming the violence. By the time it concluded, 3 months later, Artemis was acknowledged to have met its goal of stabilizing the situation (Koops 2011, p. 335; Gegout 2005, p. 442; Ulriksen, Gourlay & Mace 2004, p. 521), and duly handed over to the strengthened MONUC force in September 2003. Europeanists hailed the mission as a breakthrough for EU actorness (Koops 2011, p. 334; Alliot-Marie 2003).

Discourse analysis

The density of the media coverage of the Ituri crisis and Operation Artemis is quite low (there were roughly 10 times more articles in a similar time span for the following case study on the

Libya intervention, for example). Because debate in the public sphere is a pre-requisite for the discursive theory to operate, this may call into question the applicability of this theory to this situation. This issue will be addressed again in the discussion at the end of this case study.

Identity discourses

The exact identity of the other in this case study depends on the contextualization of the situation on the ground. This situation was constructed similarly across all texts as characterized by horrific violence, involving wholesale murder, mutilation, cannibalism, mass rape, the forced exodus of entire populations, as well as the shocking cruelty of child soldiers, often high on drugs. Constructions of the context of this violence can be grouped into three categories: either it was considered inter-tribal warfare between rival Hemas and Lendus, or it was due to the interference of neighbouring Uganda and Rwanda, maintaining the chaos in order to benefit from the mineral wealth of the region, or it was constructed more generally as genocide: the recurrence of the kind of mass killing that had characterized Rwanda for several months in 1994. The genocide discourse contained strong intertextual references to western guilt over Rwanda ('we' did nothing while 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered by the Hutu majority), and appears to have dominated the discursive construction of the Ituri crisis: there was nobody suggesting that because the violence in Ituri was inter-tribal warfare there was nothing that could be done (cf. Hansen 2006, p. 124), or that Uganda and Rwanda needed to be held accountable for their destabilizing interference. In this way the exact identity of the other became less relevant than the construction of the context of the violence as genocide.

The dominant genocide discourse established a logic of responsibility, incumbent on 'us', to prevent a repetition of Rwanda in 1994. The German defence minister gave expression to these sentiments as follows:

We are faced once more with a humanitarian catastrophe, to which the civilized world cannot and must not close its eyes (Struck 2003, p. 4228).

The main construction of the self in all three public spheres (German, French and British) was of people who cannot simply stand by while acts of genocide are perpetrated. A typical example:

It would be absolutely wrong for Britain to stand by and watch a repeat of the genocide that has taken place in the region (Clarke 2003, c. 855).

While there were relatively few direct statements of self-identity in the form of ‘our values’, typical of other case studies, the precise constructions of the appropriate action that needed to be taken in response to the crisis were nevertheless influenced by familiar identity discourses. In France the discourse of ‘not standing by’ was complemented by the recurring discourse of French international leadership, though this was tempered by the French government’s desire to present Operation Artemis as a European operation (discussed in more detail below). In Germany it was a pacifist discourse, commonly evoked on issues with a military element (as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis), which coloured the German government’s discourses on the appropriate response. Berlin accepted the French request to contribute to Operation Artemis, but addressed the non-military preferences of the German public by ensuring that German troops would not be stationed in the Democratic Republic of Congo itself, but only in support roles in neighbouring Uganda (*Süddeutsche Zeitung* 2003).

Appropriate course of action

In terms of the compatibility of government policy statements with public identity discourses, the texts reveal broad political and public support for the intervention, though with some misgivings. Chief amongst these, in all three member states, was the objection that the planned intervention was not militarily strong enough. Both parliamentary opposition and critical media reports felt there were too few soldiers, that concentrating them only in the city of Bunia was insufficient, and that the planned timeframe (only until the reinforced MONUC mission took over in September) was not long enough for the intervention to be effective. By the same token, these objections were clearly not criticisms of the intervention as the appropriate course of action per se.

There were also concerns in the German and British public spheres that France was pursuing its own, essentially national, ‘power-political self-interests’ (Pflüger 2003, p. 4170). These concerns were related to a broader, Atlanticist discourse in the UK and Germany, which combined objections to France’s determination to exclude NATO from the operation with fears that the EU did not have the experience to deal with a situation like the one in Ituri. The criticisms were summed up pithily by one Conservative (opposition) British MP:

the deployment is simply a little gift from the Prime Minister to the President of France that will allow the EU to strut its stuff on a stage that it should not even contemplate (Blunt 2003, c. 856).

In the context of the genocide discourse and the manifest need to intervene, these criticisms were only minor, and, once again, not criticisms of the intervention force as such.

Opposition to even the idea of an intervention force was voiced essentially only by the *Guardian*. Firstly it argued that there was no military solution to such a crisis:

Many backing this enterprise know it will fail. They are responding to the fashion for western military intervention 'to stop the killing', and if this logic prevails, Liberia or even Zimbabwe will be next. The chronic instability and devastation in the aftermath of US-led regime change in Iraq and Afghanistan should be a warning against another western military invasion with no clear mandate and no exit strategy (Brittain 2003).

Secondly, in addition to the intertribal warfare, the regional interference, and the genocide discourses, the *Guardian* also tried to establish a neo-colonialist discourse of western responsibility for the violence in Ituri:

Foreign companies, happy to cut deals with military commanders, have sustained the conflict by exploiting natural resources with near-total disregard for human rights or long-term development. In turn, when we use our phone, give a PlayStation to a teenager, or buy a diamond for a loved one, we too risk being an unwitting accomplice (Hunt & King 2003).

Such criticisms were, however, not taken up elsewhere in the media or by opposition members in the House of Commons and so did not appear to gain much traction in the public sphere.

Degree of Europeanization

In the French texts, the construction of the main locus of action for the response to the Ituri crisis varied inconsistently between the national and the EU level, with France outweighing the EU in the *Assemblée nationale* and *Libération* texts, and vice versa for *Le Figaro*. This situation was probably symptomatic of competition between the default French leadership discourse (present in most case studies) and the government's desire for a purely EU mission, which might explain the predominance of the EU over France in the pro-government *Figaro* texts. In the British texts the results were similarly inconsistent, with the EU dominating in the House of Commons discourses (the UK was only providing a small contingent), the *Guardian* all but ignoring the EU nature of the Artemis mission (preferring to see it as a French operation with UK involvement), and the *Telegraph* constructing France, the UK and the EU almost equally as the locus of action.

Only the German texts, both parliamentary and media, were consistently framed in EU terms, through statements such as:

the EU has decided on the basis of a United Nations mandate to send 1400 soldiers to the Ituri province, to prevent an impending genocide (Pflüger 2003, p. 4169).

Exactly the shameful failure of the much-vaunted ‘international community’ in the case of Rwanda ... has motivated the assignment of this ‘robust’ task to the EU (Scholl-Latour 2003).

These examples demonstrate that in the German discourses it was natural to consider the EU was naturally considered the appropriate source of a military mission to the African continent. This is probably partly a side-product of the pacifist discourse: it was permissible for Germany to participate ‘within its means’ (Müller 2003, p. 4168) in an EU force, in a way that would not otherwise be acceptable. It is also reflective of a more Europeanized German political discourse in general, observed elsewhere in this thesis as well.

However, from an analysis of the nomenclature assigned to Operation Artemis in the media texts, it is clear, especially in the case of France and the UK, that the mission was not strongly characterized as an EU operation in the public spheres. Quite often the Artemis force was referred to in ways that detracted from its EU nature. Examples of this confusing terminology include: ‘an international force led by France’ (Berthemet 2003), ‘the French force in Congo’ (Hofnung 2003), ‘troops sent by the UN’ (*Libération* 2003), ‘a multinational intervention force’ (Struck 2003, p. 4228), ‘the French-led international force, including a British contingent’ (Hunt & King 2003), and ‘a rapid reaction force led by France’ (Blomfield 2003). This terminological chaos can only partly be explained by the stylistic convention of avoiding word repetition in successive mentions of the same subject. There seems to have been a general confusion among journalists as to the ownership of Operation Artemis. This is surely representative of a similar haziness among the general public. This confusion, combined with the relatively low frequency of news stories compared with other case studies (mentioned above), casts doubt on the extent to which the EU engagement in Congo was fully taken up in the public discourses, and hence whether the Hansen mechanism can truly be thought to function in this case.

Discussion

The situation in Ituri was constructed similarly in all three member states, with a dominant discourse of genocide in a region where only nine years earlier the world had watched passively as 800,000 people were massacred. The corresponding co-construction of the self was of people who could not simply look on impassively – typically framed in either national terms (‘Britain cannot stand by ...’) or more generally from the point of view of the western or ‘civilized’ world. The governments’ proposed action, operation Artemis under the Common Security and Defence Policy was congruent with these identity constructions. Only the British left via the *Guardian* had qualms that an intervention would be a mistake. Other criticisms, such as that the force was too small and the operation too short, or that it served primarily French interests, were not pivotal, as they did not challenge the necessity of the intervention per se.

Only in Germany was the operation consistently framed in EU terms; in France and the UK it was mixed. EU constructions were particularly aimed at demonstrating EU relevance and unity after the rancorous split over the recent Iraq intervention. This case study therefore corresponds to a combination of the theoretical configurations 1 and 2a. Configuration 1 is when common European identity constructions are congruent with EU formulation of the appropriate action by the government (most particularly the case in Germany), and configuration 2a is when national constructions of the appropriate action are similar enough to allow a joint European solution.

This conclusion is based, however, on the assumption that the discursive theory applies here. As mentioned above, the low density of news coverage and confusion over the EU nature of the operation calls this in to doubt. If an issue does not enter the public sphere, then governments will not be constrained by the need for foreign policy to be congruent with public national (or European) identity constructions – the zero configuration of the theoretical model. In other words, if Operation Artemis did not enter the public sphere, then national politics was not a constraining factor on the ability of the EU to reach consensus on sending a CSDP mission. Despite the success of CSDP operations in general, within their terms of reference, it is therefore quite possible that because they typically happen ‘under the radar’, they do not correspond to examples of EU actorness. The invisibility of CSDP in European public discourse has been noted by others (e.g. Kantner, Kutter & Renfordt 2008, p. 12). In this configuration the DR Congo case study demonstrates the limits of the discursive approach pursued here.

Case study 2: The 2011 Libya intervention

Background

Early in 2011 the EU was taken by surprise by the Arab Spring and the accompanying overthrow of authoritarian regimes in Tunisia and Egypt – regimes many member states had happily been doing business with right up until the revolutions took place. In contrast to Egypt, where the army refused to fire on civilians, when the wave of uprisings spread to Libya, its leader, Muammar Gaddafi, having learnt from the mistakes of his counterparts, succeeded in deploying military force against the rebels – in part by hiring African mercenaries. Initial rapid gains by the rebels were slowly turned around, and the rebellion was on the brink of failure when on 17 March 2011 UN Security Council resolution 1973, sponsored by the UK, France and Lebanon, was passed, authorizing the use of force to implement a no-fly zone and protect civilians (BBC 2011). Within days France, the UK and the US were flying sorties into Libyan airspace. While the United States kept a deliberately low profile, in time the intervention was supported by the involvement of other European states and included the participation of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The Gaddafi regime was eventually defeated by the rebels, and Gaddafi himself was captured and killed on 20 October.

The Libya crisis is an example of European actorness in the broader sense: in which action is taken outside of EU institutions by a subset of member states. The validity of this stance was argued in chapter 2. The same discursive processes involved in member state governments reaching a common position (agreeing to participate in the intervention) will apply. It is the discursive processes of national politics that are the crux of the theoretical approach taken here, not the formal decision-making procedures within the EU. The EU initially appeared divided on the Libya intervention, with Germany, at the time an elected member of the UN Security Council, abstaining from resolution 1973. The German abstention caused surprise and criticism both at home and abroad. This led to Berlin reconsidering its position and attempting to compensate by supporting the operation in ways other than direct participation, such as providing relief for military operations elsewhere (Adler-Nissen & Pouliot 2014, p. 903). The assertion here is that the German government discovered that its abstention was incongruent with public identity discourses in which an alliance loyalty narrative played an important part. Open to attack over this incongruence, Berlin changed its position, as expected by the Hansen mechanism.

Brockmeier argues that the German abstention was due to the fact that the US also opposed military intervention in Libya until only days before the UN vote. Because all military missions require the support of the *Bundestag*, German policy-making is peculiarly inflexible on such questions, and was unable to adapt to the change in US direction before the UN vote (2013, p. 65). That Germany sought to align its position with the US is consistent with the alliance loyalty discourse being an influential one in Germany. Brockmeier's findings also confirm the importance of pacifist identity discourses, which she refers to as 'Germany's "culture of restraint" on military matters' (p. 64). She notes that both '[Chancellor] Merkel and [foreign minister] Westerwelle were convinced that their electorate was against the use of force abroad ...' (p. 73).

While some claim that the German abstention effectively hobbled the involvement of the EU (Bucher et al. 2013, p. 524), in reality this is not the only reason the Libya intervention was an extra-EU mission. The fact that 'the CSDP was not even considered for a mission on the EU's doorstep' (Menon 2011, p. 86) is an indication that many member state governments simply did not conceive of the CSDP as the appropriate forum for a military intervention of this scale. While some argue that the EU was disunited on the question (Thomas 2011a, p. 3), it is nevertheless true that a Common Security and Defence Policy humanitarian mission for Libya was approved on 1 April 2011 (even though it was never implemented). By the same token, the deliberately low profile maintained by the US, the prominence of the French and British contributions, and the participation of a number of other EU member states (Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Poland and Romania (Cameron 2011, c. 704)) meant that the Libya intervention had a decidedly European character.

Chivvis has constructed the Libya intervention as a failure for the EU and a reaffirmation of NATO (2012). However, the US was initially most reluctant to be involved, and 'desperate for its European partners to take the lead' (Menon 2011, p. 75), the main driving force behind the intervention coming from France and the UK. Chivvis acknowledges that 'credit is also due to the essential role played by Sarkozy and Cameron in building momentum for an intervention few other powers, including the United States, initially supported' (2012, p. 82). France was initially against NATO taking control, though Turkey's was the final opposition to fall (Adler-Nissen & Pouliot 2014, p. 906). NATO only took command of the Libya operation two weeks after UN Security Council resolution 1973 was passed. It is therefore appropriate to consider

the Libya intervention as a case study for European actorness. Although the situation in Libya deteriorated significantly in the years following the intervention, at the time the consensus of opinion was that it had been successful (Chivvis 2012, p. 69; Daalder & Stavridis 2012, p. 3).

Discourse analysis

In this case study there are two separate identity constructions of the other: the Libyan regime, and the Libyan people. The nature and behaviour of the Libyan regime was similarly constructed across all the texts studied, both parliamentary and media. The main description was of a regime using military violence against its own people – unarmed civilians and demonstrators. Commonly associated with the Libyan leadership were words such as ‘massacre’, ‘slaughter’ and ‘bloodbath’. References to the deployment of the air force and heavy artillery against the civilian population, the involvement of foreign mercenaries in atrocities, Gaddafi’s and his son’s dire warnings of ‘rivers of blood’, and the use of human shields to safeguard military hardware, complete this picture.

The construction of the Libyan people, on the other hand, was not so uniform. The main difference was between the parliamentary and the newspaper texts. Politicians in the national parliaments devoted considerable time to casting the Libyan people as simply wanting freedom and democracy ‘like us’. The utility of such a construction is that it creates a logic of equivalence to heighten ‘our’ duty towards ‘them’. As will be discussed in more detail below, in the newspaper texts, by contrast, it was rather the logic of difference that dominated.

Parliamentary constructions of identity and appropriate action

French prime minister François Fillon evoked a people carried by their ‘dreams of democracy and modernity’, with aspirations of ‘democracy and justice’, and who are ‘thirsty for democracy and human rights’ (2011). Democracy, liberty and prosperity are used repeatedly in the French parliamentary discourses to characterize the values to which the Libyan people aspire. French self-identity constructions extolling similar values were also explicitly evoked in the *Assemblée nationale*: ‘We are the land of liberty’, was an example provided by opposition leader Jean-Marc Ayrault (2011). Furthermore, these French values were constructed as universal. Fillon (2011) attributed the various manifestations of the Arab Spring to ‘the force of universal ideals’. Ayrault also asserted ‘we fight in the name of universal rights’ (2011). The logic of equivalence establishes a responsibility for ‘us’ to come to the aid of people just like ‘us’, who are under military attack from their own leadership. This obligation is reinforced by the recently

developed UN norm of the ‘responsibility to protect’, used in a UN Security Council resolution against a functioning government for the first time in the case of Libya (Bellamy & Williams 2011, p. 825). It is referred to in both the French parliamentary and media texts, for example:

The concept of intervention has been abandoned in favour of that of ‘the responsibility to protect’. This concept was adopted by the United Nations in 2005 and resolution 1973 is its first application (Juppé 2011).

The constellation of identities, France as the fount of the universal values of freedom, democracy and human rights, Libyans as demanding the realisation of these values for themselves, and the Libyan regime as violently repressing these aspirations with helicopter gunships, creates a logic of appropriate action for France. These connections are frequently given explicit expression, for example in the words of the prime minister:

There are always risks. But wouldn’t hesitation and doubt be more serious and more devastating at the moral and political level if we had done nothing? Wouldn’t they be marked by an immense culpability if, through prudence and weakness, we had stood by, arms folded, and watched the repression of an unarmed people? The president of the republic, true to the values on which our nation is based, has refused such an indignity (Fillon 2011).

The general acceptance of the use of the military in French foreign policy, combined with the above discourses of appropriate action meant that the French military intervention in Libya had cross-party support in the *Assemblée nationale*.

German politicians also made links between German identity discourses concerning freedom and democracy and the aspirations of the Libyan people. German foreign minister Guido Westerwelle asserted that:

As democrats we stand side-by-side with other democrats ... Our country is built on the values of freedom. It is these liberal values that millions of people in north Africa and the Arab world demand (2011a, p. 10815).

A few days later he continued in the same vein: ‘As a democracy we are a community of values, and therefore we stand up for liberal and democratic values all over the world’ (2011b, p. 11137). However, compared to French readiness for overseas military engagements, German pacifism had a decisive influence on what was considered appropriate action. There was a broad consensus in the *Bundestag* that while the Libyan people must be supported in their striving for freedom and democracy, military intervention was not appropriate. This pacifist discourse contained two main elements. Firstly there was a historically and constitutionally based reticence for military commitments across the political spectrum (Brockmeier 2013, p. 64).

Government speakers repeatedly used the mantra that ‘we shall not be participating with German soldiers in such a combat mission in Libya’ (e.g. Westerwelle 2011b, p. 11139).

Secondly there was a questioning of the utility of military solutions in this or any other crisis:

the supposedly simple solution of a no-fly zone throws up more questions and problems than it promises to solve. The no-fly zone – not even the words can hide the fact – is a military intervention, which it is not even clear can be effective in a country like Libya (Westerwelle 2011a, p. 10815).

The German preference was for a sanctions regime coupled with long-term support from the European Union for building civil society and supporting economic development through trade agreements.

The German abstention on UN Security Council resolution 1973 was delivered in this context: lack of support from across the political spectrum for the military intervention it entailed. However, the fact that Germany thus isolated itself in the Security Council from France, the UK and the US soon brought this position into conflict with an alliance loyalty discourse given voice in the public sphere (see below), for which the government was forced to make amends. The German government moved to support the intervention, for example by undertaking to fly the AWACS reconnaissance missions in Afghanistan, thus freeing up NATO partners for the Libya intervention. The responsibility to protect is also mentioned in the German parliamentary debates, quite often as a means of criticizing the government’s abstention on resolution 1973:

there is the internationally accepted principle, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which is based on the experience of Rwanda and the genocide there: the principle of the responsibility to protect. I think it is a disgrace that the federal government, as a member of the UN Security Council abstained in this situation (Wieczorek-Zeul 2011, p. 11145).

Attempts to establish a common identity with the Libyan people do not feature as strongly in the House of Commons debates, though they are not entirely absent, as the following statement by prime minister David Cameron demonstrates:

information about the Libyan opposition is not complete, but the evidence suggests that it consists predominantly of ordinary Libyans from all walks of life who want freedom, justice and democracy—the things we take for granted (2011a, c. 712).

As in the French and German cases, the British parliamentary discourses also explicitly linked the appropriate course of action with British identity. Cameron asserted that ‘in taking this

action, we should be proud that we are not only acting in British interests but being true to our values as a nation' (2011a, c. 714). Leader of the opposition Ed Miliband reciprocated:

We are a generous and compassionate people ... we have to make a judgment about our role in the world and our duty to others. Where there is just cause, where feasible action can be taken, and where there is international consent, are we really saying that we should be a country that stands by and does nothing? In my view, that would be a dereliction of our duty, our history, and our values. Let us not forget that those who have risen up against Colonel Gaddafi are part of a wider movement for reform and democracy that we are seeing across north Africa. We cannot and should not abandon them (2011, c. 719).

Presumably in an attempt to distinguish the Libyan situation from the 2003 Iraq invasion, the government stressed again and again that the proposed no-fly zone and defence of the civilian population did not constitute direct military intervention, and that the Libyan people 'must choose their own future' (e.g. Cameron 2011a, c. 701).

Media constructions of identity and appropriate action

The attempt by the political elites to create and exploit a logic of equivalence between the Libyan people and 'us' to justify action was not translated into the media discourses. In fact, often the opposing logic of difference was stronger: Libyan society was frequently depicted as under-developed and tribal, lacking civil institutions or a significant middle class. The country was occasionally described as divided, containing a significant Islamist element, and it was often pointed out that it did not have the structure of a modern state. Thus the attempt, especially by the French and German governments to propagate a logic of equivalence between Libyans and 'us' appears to have failed. By the same token, given the shocking nature of the constructions of the Libyan regime and its actions, a logic of equivalence between 'us' and 'them' was apparently unnecessary to justify the appropriate action. The logic that arises out of the constellation of identities is that the Gaddafi regime's actions are so egregious that 'we' cannot simply stand by and watch (as in the Congo case, above). In France and the UK, the logic of military intervention (under the conditions of a UN mandate and support from Arab countries) was largely accepted as the appropriate action – with the notable exception of many *Guardian* articles.

The *Guardian* took a critical stance towards military intervention in Libya, arguing before the UN vote that a no-fly zone would be ineffective without a land invasion, which, if undertaken, would only lead to an Iraq-style quagmire. Once the intervention had begun, the *Guardian*

argued that the allies were exceeding UN Security Council resolution 1973, in particular by directly attacking loyalist troops (Tisdall 2011), as well as tacitly gunning for regime change. Fractures in the coalition, especially concerning its Arab components, international criticism of the intervention, and the civilian deaths caused by the military action were also represented in the *Guardian* coverage. Nevertheless, this and other criticism of the UK government remained confined to a left-wing minority and could not threaten the powerful logic that the Libyan regime's use of military force against its own people justified a military intervention.

In Germany the situation was more complex, and the UN Security Council vote on resolution 1973 marked a watershed. The pacifist reflex – that the response should not extend to military means – was initially broadly common to both parliamentary and public discourses. Once Germany had isolated itself in the UN Security Council by abstaining from resolution 1973 (when its allies France, the UK and the US voted in favour) criticism of the government's position gained momentum in the form of a logic of alliance loyalty. This alliance loyalty discourse can be understood as a special case of the taboo against 'going it alone' (*Alleingang*), mentioned in the introduction to this thesis and in chapter 3. One example of this discourse comes from the columns of *Die Welt*:

Look at the company Germany found itself in: China, Russia, Brazil and India. At the meeting of the UN Security Council on the no-fly zone over Libya last Thursday evening, Germany almost seemed like an emerging country itself (Gerlach & Hahn 2011).

In the face of this public criticism, the government later moved to distance itself from the abstention, with members of the Christian Democratic senior coalition partner, for example, trying to shift the blame to the liberal democratic foreign minister (Brössler & Höll 2011). Chancellor Angela Merkel also found it necessary to voice direct support herself for the Libya operation:

But at the Libya summit in Paris, she [Merkel] made clear 'that the resolution that was passed is now our resolution too, and that we want it to be implemented successfully'. The Federal Republic of Germany is contributing to this by allowing US bases in Germany to be used for the operation, as well as by freeing up NATO resources [in Afghanistan] (Brössler & Höll 2011).

This finding is consistent with the study by Bucher et al., which found that media reports in Germany varied 'erratically' from week to week in terms of favouring the intervention, compared with French newspaper coverage (2013, p. 531). This is compatible with the

explanation that German public discourses were mainly against a military intervention, but not when this meant Germany breaking with its allies.

Degree of Europeanization

Of the parliamentary discourses, only in Germany was a prominent role constructed for the EU in the resolution of the Libya crisis. In keeping with their civilian/pacifist identity, German politicians saw the short-term response to the Libya crisis in terms of sanctions, and the long-term task in terms of supporting democratic change in Libya by promoting improvements in civil society, opening up markets, and carrying out education initiatives. While Germany is also frequently seen as the locus for these initiatives, including both Larsen categories ‘and’ and ‘through the EU’, EU framing is predominant. To a lesser degree the German media discourses also identified the EU most frequently as the appropriate locus of action, though this is sometimes in the context of unfulfilled hopes:

This should be the hour of the EU foreign affairs representative, Catherine Ashton, to propose to the EU a courageous and far-sighted new strategy for the Mediterranean area. There is no doubt that it could lead to a catastrophe for Europe if the EU maintains its bad habit of determining foreign affairs policy according to the lowest common denominator (Winter 2011).

In the House of Commons debates the UK was specified most frequently as the appropriate locus of action, though the EU also received significant mention – mostly on sanctions issues, long-term support for democratic transition, and the diplomatic work of EU high representative Catherine Ashton, herself British. Though it was clear the UK and France were taking on the lead roles, a distinctly European context was provided via lists of the minor contributions from a range of other EU member states (e.g. Cameron 2011b, c. 34). In the newspaper coverage, constructions of the appropriate locus of action were dominated by the UK, but there was also a wealth of various combinations involving the UK, France, the EU and the US. On the whole the UK construction of the Libya intervention was predominantly a national one, however.

The French discourses are most striking for the absence of the EU. President Sarkozy’s hyperactive diplomacy, early recognition of the Libyan oppositional National Transition Council, determination to carry out airstrikes, and strong advocacy for UN Security Council resolution 1973, provide ample material for a clearly present discourse of French international leadership in both the parliamentary and media texts. In the *Assemblée nationale* the EU is

hardly mentioned: only the US is more notable by its absence from debate. The only other agency formulation of note is 'France and the UK'. French media constructions of the appropriate locus of action were more balanced. In *Le Figaro* the French leadership discourse was still dominant, though there were significant mentions of 'France and the UK' and the EU. EU constructions were, however, often associated with inaction, indecision, and division. In *Libération*, French leadership was underplayed, perhaps as the result of a disinclination to champion the centre-right administration. Thus, also in the case of France, the predominant construction of the locus of action was national.

Discussion

The Libya intervention was not an EU operation. Nevertheless, the fact that France and the UK took on leadership roles, and other EU members took on supporting roles, whilst at the same time the US deliberately played down its (significant) role, implies that the Libya operation can legitimately be treated as a test of EU actorness. As a discursive phenomenon, the strength of European actorness in the case of a non-EU operation is equally dependent on member state unity. The split over the US Iraq invasion in 2003 was considered a disaster for EU, even though formally the EU itself hardly dealt with the issue. Likewise, consensus among EU member states over an operation carried out by a sub-group of members outside the institutions of the EU can be considered as at least potentially contributing to EU actorness. Such was the state of affairs for the Libya intervention.

In the case of Libya, constructions of identity and the need for action arising out of them were similar in all three member states. Initially, the constructions of what constituted appropriate action differed, however. In France and the UK the plans for military intervention, under the conditions of a UN mandate and regional (especially Arab) support, were consistent with public identity constructions. These discourses were essentially national, however, and not framed in EU terms. In Germany, by contrast, the EU was more frequently constructed as the appropriate locus of action, but the German government (supported by the opposition) initially took a non-military line, in harmony with German pacifist identity discourses. However, when this led to abstention in the Security Council and isolation from its allies, an alliance loyalty discourse came into play, and the government was compelled to change its position to one of explicit support for the operation, even if there was no German military participation. This kind of change of course is exactly as predicted by the Hansen mechanism. This case study therefore

corresponds to a combination of configurations 2a and 2b of the discursive theory developed in chapter 2. Configuration 2a is when national constructions of the appropriate action are similar enough to allow a joint European solution (the case for France and the UK); configuration 2b corresponds to when unique national constructions are still consistent with the common position (the case, eventually, for Germany).

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at two case studies in which the EU, or a subset of its member states, was able to demonstrate success in two relatively small-scale military operations. For the Operation Artemis case study, there are two possibilities for the theoretical model developed in this thesis. According to the first option, a discourse of genocide, and the responsibility on ‘us’ to avoid a repetition of the 1994 Rwandan mass killings, but also a willingness to demonstrate a European security identity after the damaging split over Iraq, facilitated domestic support in France, the UK and Germany for a military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo. According to the second possible explanation, the issue never properly entered the public sphere, and so member state governments did not need to enunciate their policies in terms that were congruent with national identity discourses, and other approaches must be sought to explain policy-making in this instance, demonstrating the limitations of the discursive theory presented here. In the Libya case study, European consensus occurred for the most part outside the formal institutions of the EU. The French and British governments justified the need for a military intervention by making it ‘our’ responsibility to put a stop to the egregious crimes of the Gaddafi regime committed against its own people; the German government initially abstained but was later pressured domestically to support the operation when an alliance loyalty discourse outweighed traditional German pacifism.

In neither case did EU framing or European identity constructions play a major role. While European discourses were most present in Germany, overall it was predominantly national considerations that led to EU unity. This suggests that EU unity on security issues is less likely than for questions on which the theoretical ideal case comes into play (i.e. configuration 1: EU framing and European identity corresponding to EU unity). The conclusion can be drawn that EU actorness on questions of military crisis management is weakened by the frailty of European identity discourses co-constructed on such issues. The Atlanticist/Europeanist cleavage mentioned in the introduction chapter is a specific example of such a source of weakness.

From the above discussion it can be concluded that the EU's military response to international crises can be categorized according to three levels. For small-scale interventions in specific geographical locations (essentially in Europe's neighbourhood or in Africa) requiring one or more of the (expanded) Petersberg tasks (humanitarian interventions, peace-keeping, etc. – see the introduction to this thesis), the EU's Common Defence and Security Policy comes into consideration. For higher risk operations the European response is more likely to be in the form of individual member states acting alone, in an ad hoc coalition, or within NATO as part of an extraterritorial mission. At the upper end of the scale, were European territorial security ever to be threatened directly, that would clearly be a question for the Atlantic alliance. This ultimate reliance on the US is often seen as the fatal flaw in the EU actorness argument. For Kagan it demonstrates that talk of civilian or normative actorness is merely Europe living in a Kantian dream-world, a luxury permitted only by the American security umbrella (2002, p. 24). However, although this speaks against a multi-*polar* construction of the EU's role in the world order, as was popular amongst the French elite especially during the time of the George W. Bush administration (Irdelle 2008, p. 155), it is nevertheless fully consistent with a multi-*lateral* conceptualisation of EU actorness. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7 and in the conclusion to the thesis, if multilateralism is a key norm of EU international relations, then seeking a range of coalitions to suit the situation is a natural part of EU normative actorness.

Chapter 6: Normative actorness 1: democracy, human rights and the rule of law

Introduction

The final two case study chapters investigate specifically normative dimensions of EU actorness. As discussed in chapter 1, normative actorness is here understood as the ability of the EU to represent and ultimately transmit to other actors certain norms of governance and international behaviour. As proposed in chapter 2, for the purposes of investigating normative actorness EU norms have been split into two groups. The norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights will be considered in this chapter, while the international relations norms of preventive engagement, effective multilateralism and respect for international law will be appraised in chapter 7.

As described in chapter 1, one of the strongest tools the EU has at its disposal for transmitting the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights is the principle of conditionality, according to which aid and trade agreements with third parties are made contingent on the beneficiary demonstrating progress in these areas. The discussion in chapter 1 also described the widespread perception, amongst scholars as well as the elites of beneficiary countries, that conditionality also tends to serve decidedly non-normative EU interests, such as providing trade access to markets poorly prepared for such competition, or curbing uncontrolled immigration (Carbone 2010, p. 241; Darbouche 2008, p. 60). In general these agreements appear to result in very little in the way of improvement in democracy and rule of law, or indeed development in the case of aid agreements. It has widely been concluded that unless membership of the EU itself is on offer, conditionality is of limited effectiveness in transmitting norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights (e.g. Bindi & Shapiro 2010, p. 346; Meunier & Nicolaidis 2006, p. 913).

Enlargement is usually seen as a case of successful norm transmission through conditionality. Eastern European states applying for EU membership after the collapse of the Soviet empire were required to comply with the Copenhagen criteria, which included achieving the 'stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities' (European Council 1993, p. 13). The accession of by now 11 former

members of the communist bloc is the example *par excellence*, it is claimed, of the transmission of western European norms to formerly communist dictatorships (Moravcsik 2010, p. 208; Vachudová 2005, p. 3). However, the authoritarian drift of Hungary since the election of the Fidesz government in 2010, and Poland since the Law and Justice party returned to power in 2015, gives cause to question this conclusion, and suggests that norm adoption may not have been as deep as originally thought. The case of Hungary is the first case study in this chapter.

Conditionality as a tool for norm transmission is, however, not always available to the EU. It is typically only an option in the case of asymmetric relations in which the EU has the power advantage. The advocacy of human rights in China, the topic of the second case study in this chapter, has required a different approach. Human rights came onto the agenda of EU-China relations because of the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown (Kinzelbach & Thelle 2011, p. 60). An initial approach based on censure (for example at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights) and lecturing brought little in the way of improvement in the human rights situation in China (Balducci 2010, p. 42; Gegout 2010, p. 85; Stumbaum 2007, p. 71). Meanwhile the temptation for member states to break ranks from a common EU position to gain economic favours from China was growing. Under the initiative particularly of France and Germany, the EU and its member states changed tack to a policy of ‘constructive engagement’, on the basis that engaging with China at many levels, including business, was more likely to bring about political improvements in China (Balducci 2010, p. 43). Human rights discussions were institutionalised into an EU-China human rights dialogue (Casarini 2006, p. 19).

The engagement strategy could be interpreted as an exercise in paying lip service to human rights in order to concentrate on economic interests. However, the early years of engagement apparently brought significant results, particularly in terms of binding China into the international system: the signature (though as yet not the ratification) of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1998, both the signature and the ratification of the UN Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights in 2001, enhanced cooperation on security questions, and the admission of China to the World Trade Organisation in 2001 (Marsh & Mackenstein 2005, pp. 205-206). The strategy of engagement was thus initially consistent with the aim of ‘[s]upporting China’s transition to an open society based on the rule of law and the respect for human rights’ (European Commission 1998, p. 9). The achievements of engagement have been thinner on the ground in more recent years, however, corresponding to a general recognition

that constructive engagement no longer has much effect on encouraging human rights developments in China (Fox & Godement 2009, p. 61). The case study considering the EU's reaction to the Chinese suppression of the 2008 Tibetan uprising aims to investigate the EU's attempted normative actorness in the case of human rights in China.

Case study 1: Hungary's backsliding

Background

While Vachudová has argued that conditionality played a major role in the adoption of liberal democratic norms in Eastern Europe after 1989 (2005, p. 3), concern about the shallowness of norm adoption through this process has been expressed by a number of voices. As early as 1998 Grabbe and Hughes noted the absence of debate in Eastern Europe on the actual implications of EU membership, beyond its general desirability (p. 70). Ágh observed that this lack of political debate meant that the accession process was largely an executive affair – in contrast with previous expansion rounds, in which the parliaments had been the fora of rigorous national debate culminating in accession referenda (1999, p. 844). Using the example of Estonian accession, Raik criticized the conduct of accession negotiations as being too focussed on 'speed, efficiency, and expertise', a characteristic which was detrimental to the consolidation of democratic norms (2004, p. 570). Grabbe also commented on the 'executive bias' and concurred with Raik that 'the EU gave priority to efficiency over legitimacy' (2006, pp. 207-208). Lengyel and Ilonszki have questioned the degree to which democratic norms were internalized even by Hungary's elites, suggesting that acceptance of these norms was 'simulated', with democracy far from being accepted as 'the only game in town' (2010, p. 154).

Since the elections of 2010, the incoming government of Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz party has taken steps to consolidate its grip on power by undermining constitutionality, restricting media freedom and weakening the rule of law (Bugarič 2014; Human Rights Watch 2013, pp. 25-29; Freedom House 2012; Rupnik 2012; Council of Europe 2011; Müller 2011). In January 2012 the EU Commission issued a number of infringement notifications on points of detail of these reforms, which the Hungarian government eventually yielded on, but these minimal concessions had little effect on Hungary's overall illiberal drift. The EU proved unwilling to make use of article 7 of the Treaty on European Union, which allows for certain rights of a member state to be suspended, including voting rights in the Council, in the case that 'there is a clear risk of a serious breach by a Member State of the values

referred to in Article 2', values which include 'respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights' (Treaty on European Union 2012). In March 2012 the Commission suspended Cohesion Fund payments to Hungary, basing its decision on Hungary's excessive deficit. This action was at the time widely interpreted as being linked to the controversial political reforms (Müller 2012; Wall Street Journal 2012), though there is no treaty facility for suspending funding on political grounds as such. In any case the suspension was lifted a few months later in June 2012, once Hungary had fulfilled its excessive deficit requirements. In July 2013, the European Parliament adopted a report from its Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, referred to as the Tavares report after its rapporteur, which criticized the Hungarian reforms and recommended the initiation of article 7 procedures (Tavares 2013). No such action was forthcoming, however.

Member state reluctance to take action could be attributed to their experience with Austria a decade previously. Early in 2000 the other 14 member states of the EU imposed bilateral diplomatic sanctions on Austria, a member only since 1995, after the Austrian People's Party formed a coalition government with Jörg Haider's extreme right Freedom Party of Austria. At that time there was no mechanism in the treaties for the EU to act pre-emptively in such cases, hence the bilateral nature of the measures. An ad hoc commission led by former Finnish president Martti Ahtisaari concluded later the same year that European values were not endangered by the Austrian government and that sanctions were counterproductive (BBC 2000). They were promptly lifted. The Austrian extreme right remained in the governing coalition until 2007. The Hungarian case appears to continue the history of EU weakness with respect to internal breaches of its values.

Just as in the case of the euro crisis, above, some justification is necessary for looking at the case of Hungary in this thesis: since its accession in 2004, relations between Hungary and the rest of the EU cannot be considered an external matter. Not investigating enlargement, however, would be a serious omission from a study of EU normative actorness, precisely because it is often mentioned as a foreign policy success (see above). It can also be argued that the othering of Hungary, because of its divergence from European norms of democracy and rule of law, may be sufficient for the discursive model of EU cooperation put forward here to be applicable. It might be contested that the accession of Turkey is a more relevant case study, as it is still clearly external to the EU; by the same token it cannot be argued that norm transmission has been

successful in the Turkish case. This question of whether the Hungarian case can truly be considered to belong to EU external policy will be returned to in the discussion section of the case study.

Discourse analysis

Parliamentary debate

In all three parliaments there was a clear division along party lines concerning how the government of Hungary was constructed. Left-wing oppositions generally constructed it negatively, while right-of-centre governments played down criticisms. Of the three parliaments, the *Bundestag* devoted the most debating time to the situation in Hungary. In the *Assemblée nationale* and the House of Commons, the Hungarian situation was only discussed in the course of debates on broader issues.

The negative constructions of the Orbán government in the textual sources focused on its undermining of democracy and rule of law; the disempowering of the constitutional court and the breakdown of the separation of powers, in particular by the stacking of the judiciary with loyalist judges; the manipulation of electoral laws; the curtailing of due process in the parliament; and most particularly the compromising of the freedom of the press, and the freedom of political expression.

The *Bundestag* debates in Germany reveal that the opposition Social-democratic and Green parties took a strong line against the Orbán government, while the governing Christian Democrats were more defensive, initially denying there was cause for alarm, then later admitting that there were areas of concern, but insisting that proper processes were in place, such as the Commission's infringement procedures, or indeed judicial review by Hungary's own constitutional court (ignoring the fact that its functioning had just been curtailed by the Orbán government). The Christian Democrats' liberal coalition partners were from the start more concerned with the developments in Hungary, but supported the coalition line that EU procedures were enough, and that Germany did not need to take a vocal stance itself. The Christian Democrats made use of an identity discourse of Hungary which reminded of its role in the collapse of the East German state:

Hungary made German reunification and the freedom of all Germans essentially possible in 1989 (Wadephul 2011, p. 9409).

I go so far as to say that German unity would not have been possible without our Hungarian friends' trust in freedom (Holmeier 2012, p. 20008).

The construction of Hungarians as 'our friends' and of Germany being 'thankful' towards them aligned well with the lack of strong action against their government.

In both opposition and government voices there were clear constructions in the *Bundestag* of European identity in opposition to Hungarian waywardness. The first example is from an opposition speaker, the second from the ranks of the governing coalition:

but more important than the euro and more important than the single market are our basic rights and freedoms. That is our most valuable good. That is the backbone of European identity (Roth 2011, p. 9407).

Of course there can be no doubt that we must take basic rights in Europe very seriously. They are part of our identity (Ruppert 2011, p. 9411).

The risk to EU normative power of tolerating an authoritarian member states was also often noted:

Europe is for many people all over the world very much a model when it comes to democracy and freedom. But only if we ourselves defend against the infringement of democratic rights in the European Union do we win for ourselves this democratic aura (Schmidt 2011, p. 9413).

The apparent reason for the party-line split on the question of Hungary had to do with party solidarity in the European Parliament, which became an important forum in this instance because of the role played by the Tavares report (see above). This highlighted a central dynamic in the way the Hungarian question was dealt with in the European Union: the membership of the Hungarian governing party, Fidesz, of the European People's Party bloc in the European Parliament afforded the Hungarian government significant protection. In all three member states under consideration a right-of-centre government was in power for the duration of most of the events which sparked debate on Hungarian backsliding (the French government changed in May 2012). In Germany oppositional voices attacked the government on this point:

Fidesz is a respected member of your conservative party family. One gets the impression that blood is thicker than water (Liebich 2013, p. 28437).

Feudalistic party political loyalty is inappropriate here ... If two or three years ago the [governing] CDU/CSU [coalition] ... had decided to join us in finding unambiguous language towards the political authorities in Hungary ... things would perhaps not have gone so far in Hungary (Roth 2013, p. 28442).

A similar situation existed in France. European identity constructions were also evoked in the *Assemblée nationale*:

So my question is very simple: what are France and the European Union planning to do to remind Hungary to respect the rules and values which are the basis of our common identity (Morin 2012)?

In France just as in Germany there was a government-opposition divide over taking action against Hungary. The opposition attacked the government over its inaction:

Faced with this situation, the European Union and the national governments have reacted with guilty silence. For your part, minister of state, you have indicated that there is ‘a problem’ in Hungary. When Austria formed a government with the xenophobic and nationalist right, the European Union was able to react. When will someone tell Mr Orbán that to belong to the European Union is not simply to belong to a free-trade zone, but it is also to respect fundamental rights and values (Morin 2012)?

As in Germany, the phenomenon of loyalty to party groupings in the European Parliament was also used to attack the government in France:

Are you going to content yourself, as you wrote to me recently, with writing to the Hungarian leadership, the party of which, just like the UMP, is a member of the European People’s Party? Mr Orbán, by the way, was present last December in Marseille at the congress of the EPP, at the side of Mr Sarkozy (Loncle 2012).

In the House of Commons, perhaps unsurprisingly there were no direct references to European identity. Hungary’s misbehaviour was instead co-constructed with national expressions of identity. For example, in reply to a question about the situation in Hungary, one Labour MP replied:

Labour Members are proud of our record on human rights while in government. We passed the Human Rights Act and prioritised the promotion of human rights in our external policies, particularly our development policy. Further back in history, the UK was one of the leading architects of the European convention on human rights. We remain proud that the UK is a signatory to that convention, and we are a full and active member of the Council of Europe (Reynolds 2012, c. 553).

The British Conservatives do not belong to the European People’s Party in the European Parliament, but sit rather with a smaller bloc of European Conservatives and Reformists. Instead of party loyalty, a national sovereignty discourse was used by right-wing elements of the Conservative Party to justify the lack of action on Hungary:

Is the hon. Lady aware of the enormous majority that the President, Prime Minister and Government of Hungary have as a result of free and proper

elections? Does she think it the right and duty of the EU or the Venice Commission [of the Council of Europe] to tell a member state how it should behave, when it has such a massive democratic mandate (Cash 2012, c. 552)?

This sovereignty discourse was also to be found in the German parliamentary texts, but was countered in a way which clearly would not find resonance in the House of Commons:

The principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs is expressly not valid for the European Union. Quite the opposite: there is a duty of intervention (Roth 2011, p. 9408).

All three parliamentary discourses clearly identified the appropriate locus of action on the issue as the EU, in particular, though not exclusively, the Commission:

In the end it is the European Commission which is the guardian of the treaties. It is up to it to react, which it is doing (Leonetti 2012).

The ball is now in the Commission's court (Hoyer 2011, p. 9417).

We expect unambiguous language from the European Council (Griese 2013, p. 28444).

Our general approach to the Hungarian legal changes has been to support the European Commission in its approach to the Hungarian Government (Liddington 2012, c. 563).

Media coverage

The media coverage in all three member states was universally and strongly critical of the democratic backsliding in Hungary. The construction of the Orbán government was similar to the oppositional constructions in the parliamentary texts, described above. Additional points of negativity focussed on more general human rights concerns, such as the situation of the Hungarian Roma population, and the rise of anti-Semitism in Hungary. Orbán was also accused of implementing reforms to keep his own party in power in perpetuity, or to tie the hands of future governments should his party ever lose power. He was often compared with other well-known authoritarian figures such as Putin, Chavez and Lukashenko. Like the parliamentary texts, the media texts also constructed the EU as the appropriate forum for dealing with the Hungarian situation:

The EU is currently engaged in an unprecedented conflict with a member state: Brussels has started infringement proceedings against Hungary and is also threatening to cut cohesion funds – essentially subsidies for infrastructure – if the government of Victor Orbán does not respond properly to a range of European criticisms of Hungary's new constitution (Müller 2012).

The media discourses identified a difficulty that the Commission had in attempting to bring Hungary into line: unlike economic rules and regulations, democracy is difficult to define in specific terms in enforceable legislative texts:

In Brussels the Commission drew attention to the fact that safeguarding freedom of the press is not about applying European law according to the letter, rather it is about promoting this freedom ‘in practice’ (Winter 2012).

The media discourses also observed the party loyalty phenomenon in the European Parliament:

A special role is played by the party family to which Hungary’s governing party belongs: the Christian democratic grouping in the European Parliament: the European People’s Party. Here there is concern about Hungary’s new style. But the old reflexes are still deeply ingrained. If an EPP member is attacked, then it must be defended (Schmid 2013).

The dispute over the Tavares report reflects above all, as so often, affiliation with the respective political camp (Caceres & Kahlweit 2013).

Discussion

The authoritarian drift of the Hungarian government was universally condemned in the public discourses of all three member states. In the French and German public spheres, liberal democratic principles were expressly constructed as European or even EU identity elements. In all three jurisdictions the EU was clearly framed as the appropriate locus for dealing with the Hungarian situation. Yet right-of-centre parties in France and Germany, acting out of EU level solidarity with Hungary’s governing Fidesz party, but also the British Conservatives, motivated by national sovereignty and non-interference arguments, adopted positions of inaction against Hungary. Without the unified commitment of member state governments, EU actorness was limited, and steps taken by the Commission and the European Parliament to bring about change in Hungary fizzled out.

According to the discursive theoretical model of this thesis, such a mismatch between public identity constructions and government policy should place the governments under pressure to change direction (the minus configuration). The German government attempted to deflect criticism of its inaction by adopting a construction of Hungarians as Germany’s ‘friends’, to whom ‘thanks’ were owed for German reunification. This discourse was not taken up in the media texts, however, an indication of its lack of credibility. For right-wing elements of the British Conservatives it was a sovereignty argument that was voiced. All three governments happily passed the buck to the EU, and the Commission in particular. But without active and

coordinated steps by the member state governments, it was clear that article 7 pressure was a purely academic option.

This situation calls into question the applicability of the minus configuration of the theoretical model. The expectation that oppositional discourses would pressure member state governments into taking joint action against Hungary over its democratic back-sliding and flouting of fundamental European values has proved to be unfounded. To date only minimal action has been taken against Hungary, and now Poland has embarked in a similar direction. An obvious explanation, as foreshadowed in the background section above, is that the case of Hungary's backsliding is indeed not a truly external issue, and that the discursive model is not applicable for that reason. The significant role played by EU-level party bloc loyalty in stifling action against Hungary would appear to support this interpretation.

There is a further possibility. It was argued in chapter 2 that lack of actorness capability can be considered a question of long-term unity: where the treaty facilities are inadequate, lasting member state consensus on an issue will lead to their improvement. In the case of Hungary, it was often argued in the texts that the article 7 voting rights suspension procedure was too crude: it was commonly referred to as the 'nuclear option' (Krichbaum 2013, p. 28436; Quatremer 2013). It is possible that this crudeness inhibited the ability of the EU to enforce its norms in this case. The Hungarian experience has led to the adoption of the 'Rule of Law Framework' (European Commission 2014), which seeks to refine the article 7 tool. The more recent waywardness of Poland might have been a test case for this institutional adaptivity. To date, though, there has still been little action to bring either Poland or Hungary into line, calling into question the proposition that the minus configuration might still be enacted over time.

Case study 2: China's 2008 intervention in Tibet

Background

What started as peaceful demonstrations by Tibetan monks in commemoration of the 49th anniversary of the 1959 uprising erupted in violence on 14 March 2008, with attacks by Tibetans on Han Chinese people and business premises. The unrest spread throughout the territory of former Tibet (i.e. including parts of the provinces adjoining the Tibet Autonomous Region). In the ensuing days Beijing deployed the military under the cloak of a media black-out to quell the riots. Occurring as it did only a few months before the Olympic Games were

due to take place in Beijing, the Chinese crackdown received significant media coverage in the west, and occupied European leaders at both the national and European levels. The subsequent Olympic torch relay through western capitals was disturbed by pro-Tibetan protests, producing a media spectacle that could only be described as a public relations nightmare for Beijing.

In response to the Chinese crackdown in Tibet there was little enthusiasm among European governments for a boycott of the Beijing Olympic Games. However the possibility of boycotting the opening ceremony was raised seriously by French foreign minister Kouchner (Herzinger 2008). French president Nicolas Sarkozy was perhaps the most vocal in supporting this option, as a result of which, but also because of the disturbances to the Olympic torch relay in Paris, France was singled out for punishment. Carrefour supermarkets were boycotted in China for months and there were angry demonstrations outside the buildings of French organisations in China (Eimer 2008; Shambaugh 2010, p. 102). A boycott of tours to France from China led to a 70 per cent reduction in visa applications in May 2008 (Fox & Godement 2009, p. 35). In the end Sarkozy did attend the opening ceremony, though ostensibly representing the French presidency of the EU, rather than as president of France per se (Tiersky 2010b, p. 184). UK prime minister Gordon Brown and German Chancellor Angela Merkel were however absent, although they did not link their non-appearance directly to the Chinese repression in Tibet (Walt 2008). Tensions continued, with Sarkozy's decision later in the year to meet the Dalai Lama in Poland leading to China's cancellation of the annual EU-China summit in November (Traynor 2008).

The lack of EU action in this case forms part of a pattern of European weakness with respect to China. EU-China relations go back to the establishment by China of an ambassador to the European Community in 1975 (Caira 2010, p. 264). Relations were initially heavily trade-based, founded on a 1985 Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (Stumbaum 2007, p. 61). The EC imposed sanctions and an arms embargo on China in the wake of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in June 1989, though all sanctions apart from the arms embargo were lifted within a few months. From 1990 until 1997, the EU member states regularly co-sponsored censure motions with the US against China in the United Nations Commission for Human Rights – only ever a symbolic gesture, as China was always able to garner enough votes for a no-action motion to be passed (Gegout 2010, pp. 76-77).

The 1990s witnessed a change in EU-China relations. The member states (especially the big three) had come to view China as an economic opportunity, and increasingly competed with each other for Beijing's favour (Exartier 2013, p. 254; Stumbaum 2007, pp. 65-67). Access to Chinese markets was treated as a zero-sum game:

Time and again, each of [the big three] has lobbied to become China's European partner of choice – even though Beijing only grants preferred status for a limited duration, offering its favours to the highest or most pliant bidder. Even during the [2008] clashes with China over meetings with the Dalai Lama, British, French and German leaders refused each other support, in effect seeking to capitalise on each other's misfortune (Fox & Godement 2009, p. 7).

This state of affairs was encouraged by Chinese officials as a means to divide and conquer during disputes with the EU, and was allowed to occur by EU member states despite the obvious benefits arising out of a united stance. Gegout has observed, for example, that in human rights positions on China '[i]t was only when the EU was split on its policy that China acted against Europe in economic terms' (2010, p. 90). Likewise Stumbaum argues that:

European potential is undermined by the unilateral actions of the Big Three, more interested in gaining short-term economic advantages than in avoiding weakening the EU's stance in the longer term (2007, p. 64).

Exartier has also noted the value of EU unity with respect to China (2013, p. 267).

The change in approach to China in the 1990s from confrontation to engagement could be seen as mere economic opportunism. However it was usually couched in a discourse of engagement being a more effective way of improving the human rights situation in China (Gegout 2010, p. 85). This discursive practice dovetailed neatly with a narrative of the 'opening of China' that was current at that time, according to which increasing trade relations with China was leading to the democratization of China from the inside:

It is broadly understood by many senior officials in Beijing that economic liberalization is likely to lead to political reform and increasing democratization. However, the Party clearly seeks to control its pace and manner, arguing that economic rights have priority over human rights, and economic and social freedom have priority over political and civil freedom/rights (Cameron & Zheng 2007, p. 11).

With this policy of engagement, EU-China relations progressed to include annual summits, commencing in 1998 (Caira 2010, p. 265), and the signing of a strategic partnership in 2003 (Zaborowski 2007, p. 41). This latter was also at least partly a consequence of the transatlantic rift over the Iraq war, and the desire of some European leaders to see a more multipolar world

in which US unilateralism could be balanced (Small 2007, p. 73). Since 1998 there has also been a biannual human rights dialogue between the EU and China, in parallel with bilateral dialogues pursued by some member states. These dialogues are, however, characterized by:

the lack of high-level participation from the Chinese side; the often overly rigid format of the sessions, where much time is spent reading out prepared statements; China's evasiveness when answering queries about concrete cases; a lack of follow-up action; and last but not least the inability to link any progress on the ground to what has been said in the dialogue (Barysch, Grant & Leonard 2005, p. 59).

In this context the human rights situation in China can be considered a hard test for EU normative actorness.

Discourse analysis

Identity of China

China was constructed similarly in all the sources examined as having questionable right to sovereignty over Tibet, having systematically abused the human rights of Tibetans over decades, in particular their right to freedom of religion, as well as deliberately changing the ethnic 'facts on the ground' through promoting the mass immigration of Han Chinese into the former territory of Tibet. The formula 'cultural genocide' was regularly used to describe Chinese Tibetan policy. Other rights such as media freedom and the right to due process (for the arrested demonstrators) are also referred to within the discourse of human rights abuses by China. China was at times also depicted as a totalitarian regime with a ruthless secret police operating outside of the law, as arrests of protestors began (e.g. Tisdall 2008). It was also regularly noted that China had in 2001 made certain commitments to improving its human rights records in order to win the right to hold the Games. The events in Tibet were condemned in this context as well. The media texts also reported on the attempts by the Chinese government to control the narrative over Tibet, including by sealing off the Tibetan regions and banning foreign journalists from the area. Such reports reinforced the discourse of China as a totalitarian regime. Official statements quoted in the western media were instantly recognisable as Soviet-style doublespeak. One often reported example was the description of the Dalai Lama as a 'wolf in Buddhist robes and a monster in human form' (e.g. Erling 2008).

Another common theme in the newspaper coverage consisted of examples of western solidarity towards Tibet, such as statements by prominent people and organisations, for example:

If freedom-loving people throughout the world do not speak out against Chinese oppression and China and Tibet, we have lost all moral authority to speak on behalf of human rights anywhere in the world (Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi cited in Spencer 2008).

The media also constructed western shame, by reporting that ‘the international community continues only to find nice words for the Tibetans’ (Kelsang Gyaltsen, special representative of the Dalai Lama, cited in Rattenhuber 2008), or decrying western passivity:

A recurring nightmare, international opinion watches on, dumbfounded, as the drama repeats itself in Tibet, whose inhabitants express their exasperation with foreign occupation, their frustration at being forced spectators to their own history, the Chinese authorities having usurped their fundamental right to decide their own fate and their future (Levenson 2008).

These journalistic mechanisms all served to reinforce the dominant narrative of the illegitimacy of the Chinese domination of Tibet.

Identity of the self

French government texts explicitly evoked national identity discourses, especially of France as the ‘motherland of human rights’ (Folliot 2008b, p. 1450). The French nationality of Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic movement, was also linked to French identity discourses via the Olympic values of ‘peace, purity and fraternity’ (Folliot 2008a):

Today, Tibetan cultural identity (its language, its religion) is threatened with extinction by the colonial policies of the Beijing regime. ... This intolerable situation is in perfect contradiction with the Olympic ideals which this country, as organiser of the games, should nevertheless uphold (Vuilque 2008, p. 4305).

The British parliamentary discourses also occasionally contained elements of British identity constructions:

What we take for granted in our country can be criminal offences in Tibet, punishable by long prison sentences and torture. Merely to have a photograph of the Dalai Lama or to shout ‘Tibet is free’, can land a person in prison for 15 or 20 years (Baker 2008, c. 231WH).

German parliamentary debates contained similar constructions of ‘our’ identity in terms of taken-for-granted rights, in the German case also linking them to European values:

We find in China a situation, in which the Tibetan people has for generations been denied basic civil rights, which are taken for granted in Germany and Europe (Vaatz 2008, p. 16159).

The parliamentary texts also occasionally contained explicit constructions of human rights as a normative (national) foreign policy issue:

France accords great importance to the question of human rights in China and in particular in Tibet (Yade 2008, p. 5871).

The current situation of Tibet is a vivid demonstration of many of the human rights concerns that we [the UK], as a country that aims to uphold international human rights standards across the world, find most troubling (Howells 2008, c. 236WH).

As usual the media texts did not contain explicit identity constructions such as these, however the negative constructions of China, described above, necessarily co-constructed 'our' identity as the opposite, that is, respectful of human rights, religious freedom, the freedom of the press, the right to self-determination, etc.

Appropriate action

The response to the Chinese actions in Tibet proposed by the three member state governments was subdued. The main reaction was to call initially for restraint, then for dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama. At the EU level there was a rather mildly worded statement by the EU presidency (held at the time by Slovenia) of 19 March 2008 (Council of the European Union 2008). When China finally did recommence talks with representatives of the Dalai Lama with an initial meeting in May 2008, this was greeted as a foreign policy success, though the talks, as usual, led nowhere. The option of boycotting the Olympic Games was frequently raised but invariably rejected (the Dalai Lama was also conveniently opposed), however the possibility of non-attendance by heads of state and government at the opening ceremony was left open. In particular the French parliamentary discourses seriously considered this option:

To the extent that China persists in denying the Tibetans and its own citizens the most elementary rights and freedoms, the government and the President of the Republic are requested to boycott at least the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Beijing (Giraud 2008, p. 2771).

As mentioned above, in the end Sarkozy did attend the opening ceremony, though Brown and Merkel did not. There was thus no unity over even a merely symbolic response to actions by China that were constructed as an egregious breach of rights comprising fundamental elements of French, British and German (and European) identity.

Government reticence to respond beyond calling for restraint and dialogue was reflected in the media discourses, which contained relatively few constructions of appropriate action. Once again the French (and to a lesser extent the British) media considered the possibility of boycotting the opening ceremony:

President of the European Union from 1 July, he [Sarkozy] could encourage the Twenty-Seven to adopt a common position. That would be the means for testing the capacity of Europe to influence the political future of the planet. Chinese power, as cynical as it is, could not remain insensitive to a unanimous decision by the Old Continent to boycott the opening ceremony or its invitation to dialogue with Tibet (Thréard 2008).

On the whole, however, there were few explicit constructions of appropriate action in the media texts.

Attacks

The main attacks against the governments' positions, in both the parliamentary debates and the media, were criticisms of the weakness of the proposed measures:

Calling on the Chinese government to demonstrate 'the greatest possible restraint' with respect to the Tibetan people, as various governments around the world have done, is completely insufficient (Fritscher et al. 2008).

Additionally, the failure of 'engagement' as a method of dealing with Chinese human rights abuses was a common criticism in the House of Commons:

the Government have rightly urged engagement between the Chinese authorities, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile. That is correct as far as it goes, but I hope that the Minister will recognise that the six rounds of dialogue so far have been a farce because the Chinese authorities have given nothing at all in response to overtures from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We are bound to conclude that the purpose of such dialogue is not to reach an accommodation, but to spin things out until after the Olympics and perhaps until the Dalai Lama is no longer with us on this planet (Baker 2008, c. 234WH).

Critical voices in the national parliaments also employed a discourse of shame for complicity with China:

The sad and distressing spectacle of the passage of the Olympic flame through Paris on Monday has challenged many of our citizens. Peaceful Tibetan flags confiscated; three thousand police officers deployed, not counting the Chinese guards, to escort the flame, which has become for many, including me, the flame of shame (Folliot 2008, p. 1450).

An apparent suggestion from the International Olympic Committee that athletes would be muzzled from expressing their views on China's human rights record in Tibet during the Olympics was also the basis for shame constructions:

There are sportsmen and women, who have announced that – unlike the IOC heavyweights – they want to stand up and show their support for the protection of human rights, but instead of supporting them, the IOC is threatening to bar them from the Olympic Games. That cannot be true. That has to change (Schulz 2008, p. 16162).

The main defence used by government speakers was to emphasize the benefits of engagement over confrontation as a strategy of dealing with the issue:

We have an interest in China not becoming isolated. We don't want overly aggressive anti-China rhetoric to lead to the nationalists, of whom there are many in China, gaining the upper hand now. Rather we want to strengthen the forces who argue for opening. If we can't achieve that, then we can no longer even talk about climate change, terrorism and many other important global issues with the Chinese (Toncar 2008, p. 16154).

Instantiations of this discourse of engagement included pointing to the various human rights dialogues maintained by member states and the EU with China. In the *Assemblée nationale* it was typically the EU human rights dialogue that was referred to – possibly a form of buck-passing in the face of French inaction:

The action of France in the domain of human rights happens equally through the dialogue on human rights between the European Union and China (Kouchner 2008, p. 6736).

In the *Bundestag*, however, it was invariably the bilateral German rule of law dialogue (which has a human rights component) that was mentioned. This unusually strong national framing of the German discourses is discussed further below. Sometimes economic reasons were also cited directly as justification for the chosen response to China's actions in Tibet. French foreign minister Kouchner referred to job creation, for example:

We are also required to look after a certain number of economic interests so as not to make unemployment worse: that is called governing (cited in Hofnung & Sergent 2008).

But on the whole the economic argument was rarely used to justify the strategy of engagement, or the lack of action in response to the events in former Tibet.

Degree of Europeanization

Agency in the French government discourses was roughly evenly divided between national constructions and the Larsen category 'France and the EU'. EU framing was thus comparatively strong in the *Assemblée nationale* texts, although, as mentioned, this included a form of buck-passing of human rights issues to EU institutions. EU framing may also have been due to the fact that France held the presidency of the EU in the second half of 2008, and could thus have represented an implicit reconstruction of the familiar French leadership discourse. UK government framing was almost entirely in national terms. This can be attributed to the traditional national framing of foreign policy issues in the House of Commons, reinforced in

this case by two further factors. Firstly, the UK upholds a special position on Tibet. As one of the few states to have had diplomatic relations with Tibet before the Chinese takeover in 1951, the UK does not strictly recognize Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, instead uses the formula ‘successive British Governments have regarded Tibet as autonomous while recognising the special position of the Chinese authorities there’ (Baker 2008, c. 233WH). Secondly, the UK has its own bilateral human rights dialogue with China (Howells 2008, p. 237WH). For once German framing was also strongly national, probably attributable to the fact that Germany also maintains a separate rule of law dialogue with China.

Discussion

In essentially all the sources investigated, China’s suppression of the Tibetan uprisings in March 2008 evoked strong, shared self-identity discourses which placed great value on the protection of human rights. Human rights were framed as part of ‘our’ values in both universal and national terms – or even sometimes, as in the case of Germany, in terms of European identity. But they were also employed in a normative sense, as norms which should guide foreign policy. Had the member states agreed on a joint protest action against China, the discursive theory predicts this measure would have been in harmony with national identity discourses (configuration 2a). However, beyond exhortations to restraint and dialogue, there was no common EU position forthcoming. In each case member state governments constructed the issue in national terms (their bilateral relations with China) rather than choosing a joint European approach. The tendency of national interpretations of relations with China to be zero-sum meant that no substantive EU initiative was forthcoming, corresponding to configuration 3 of the theoretical model.

This case study, like the one before it on Hungary’s democratic backsliding, further demonstrates the failure of the minus configuration of the theoretical model, which posits that strongly held, common identity constructions on an issue in which there is no unified EU position should push member state governments towards agreement, to avoid vulnerability to domestic oppositional attacks. A strong and common attachment to human rights norms in all three public spheres was not enough to pressure member state governments into supporting even a largely symbolic common action, such as boycotting the opening ceremony.

While it may be contended that a liberal intergovernmentalist argument of economic self-interest driving member state decision-making would appear to provide the explanation for this case study, it should be recalled that economic justifications were rarely cited in the texts. Rather, arguments were framed in terms of engagement with China being better than confrontation in achieving human rights aims. It has also been argued above that China would be unlikely to retaliate economically against the EU as a whole, had it implemented a common protest against the situation in Tibet. The fact that national governments chose to construct the issue in terms of bilateral relations with China, rather than a common EU stance, is a demonstration of the discursive nature of 'economic interests': the discursive force at play in this situation, it is argued, was the national construction of the European economy in public discourses. This is the same nationally fractured construction of the EU economy that was responsible for EU disunity in the solar panels case study in chapter 3.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the two opposite ends of the spectrum of EU normative actorness concerning the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. The Hungary example should have provided a strong argument for the transfer of EU societal norms, because of the conditionality of EU accession. At the other end of the spectrum, China as a powerful autocratic state, could be expected to be the least likely case for the successful transfer of EU norms. In the end neither example makes a strong case for the EU as a normative actor concerning the norms of democracy, rule of law and human rights. Norm adoption in Hungary now appears to have been far more shallow and instrumental (to gain membership of the EU along with the economic and status benefit that entails) than originally assumed. In the case of the Chinese crackdown on Tibet in 2008, the EU demonstrated that it was not able to present a credible picture of a principled actor on human rights (let alone effect any improvement in China on the issue). The EU proved to be disunited, despite strong public condemnation of China's actions, and Chinese sensitivity to international public opinion in the lead-up to the Beijing Olympic Games. These two case studies therefore support the conclusion drawn in the literature review (chapter 1), that, with the exception of a small number of headline cases, such as the campaign for the abolition of capital punishment and the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the EU has a poor record as a normative actor concerning the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Chapter 7: Normative actorness 2: norms of international relations

Introduction

The previous chapter investigated the EU as a normative actor in relation to the norms of democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights. This, the final case study chapter is focused on the second set of EU norms, those related to the EU's conduct of international relations: preventive engagement, effective multilateralism and respect for international law. In some ways this chapter can also be considered the counterpart to chapter 5 on military actorness, in that it also deals with international crises, in this case those for which the EU has restricted itself to a purely civilian response.

When in November 2013 an interim agreement was reached to lift international sanctions against Iran in exchange for controls to ensure that its nuclear program remained peaceful, there was significant recognition of the EU's role in clinching the deal (e.g. European Council on Foreign Relations 2014, p. 9; Blair 2013; Busse 2013). From the opening of talks in 2003, European negotiators had pursued an approach to the Iran issue based on the norms of engagement, multilateralism and respect for international law, in conscious contrast to the perceived unilateralism and militarism of the US, exemplified by its 2003 invasion of Iraq. In this way the Iran nuclear negotiations were constructed as a 'test case' for EU norms of international relations (Everts & Keohane 2003, p. 179). Despite significant risks and many setbacks, the EU approach eventually prevailed: an initially sceptical US eventually came on board and finally took on a leadership role in the two-pronged European strategy of applying increasingly rigorous multilateral sanctions, while at the same time pursuing negotiations with Iran. In this way, it can be argued, the EU successfully uploaded its norms of international relations to the wider international community concerning the handling of the Iranian nuclear program.

If the Iran nuclear dossier is truly an example of this second form of normative actorness, then the final case study, that concerning the EU's reaction to Russia's 2014 intervention in Ukraine, is clearly a harder test case for this type of actorness. As for the Iranian nuclear talks, EU leaders have pursued a twin-track strategy of negotiations (dialogue and ceasefire agreements) on the one hand, coupled with increasingly rigorous international sanctions (in conjunction with the

US) on the other (Pridham 2014, p. 60). Once again European leaders counselled against any form of military intervention: German chancellor Merkel emphasized that '[t]he conflict cannot be solved militarily' (2014, p. 1519). The distinctiveness of the EU approach in comparison with US policy, though not as stark as for the early phase of the Iranian nuclear crisis, is nevertheless apparent: the EU strategy of slowly stepping up sanctions was criticized as too soft by US officials, and EU leaders found themselves repeatedly having to persuade the US administration not to supply military equipment to Ukraine (BBC 2015a; Schmitz 2014a; 2014b).

Examples from the texts studied also bear witness to conscious comparisons with the Iran case:

The only way in which we can effectively hope to have a significant impact on Mr Putin's thinking is through financial and economic sanctions. That approach has become much more effective in recent years. We know that Iran is at the negotiating table because of the success of the financial and banking sanctions it has experienced (Rifkind 2014, c. 667).

The reaction to the Ukraine intervention was also constructed as a test case for EU actorness, in the same way that the Iran nuclear issue was:

Recent events in Ukraine are a key test of resolve for the European Union in particular. This clear and flagrant breach of international law has happened on Europe's doorstep, and the burden of responding to the crisis rests heavily on European Union leaders (Alexander 2014, c. 661).

Realists were once again sceptical of the European normative approach to the Ukraine crisis:

EU policy shows little sign of contributing much to the containment of the crisis. ... The 2003 European Security Strategy ... was informed by a vision of a gradually expanding European 'transformative power'. It had nothing to say about issues of great-power conflict (MacFarlane & Menon 2014, p. 96).

The much greater international presence of Russia, compared with Iran, and its veto on the UN Security Council also mean that the Ukraine intervention is a much harder case for EU normative power than the Iran nuclear program. Nevertheless it can still be argued that it is a valid candidate for an examination of this aspect of EU actorness.

Case study 1: The Iranian nuclear program

Background

With George W. Bush's 2002 'axis of evil' speech, the US's subsequent invasion of Iraq, as well as other comments by officials at the time (Sagan 2006, pp. 55-56), the US administration sent a number of signals that military action against Iran was on the table. A possible trigger was provided in February 2003 when the International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed that Iran was pursuing an extensive clandestine nuclear program, and gave the Iranian government until the end of October 2003 to demonstrate its peaceful nature. Only weeks before this deadline was due to expire the foreign ministers of France, the UK and Germany travelled to Tehran and negotiated a freeze in the Iranian nuclear program (Sauer 2007, p. 9). This was the start of a decade-long European-led process of negotiations and international sanctions, which culminated in the break-through interim agreement of November 2013, under which Iran agreed to controls on its nuclear program to prevent weaponization. This agreement was finalized in July 2015.

EU actorness was initially enacted through the big three member states in opening negotiations with Iran; but they were soon joined by EU high representative Javier Solana, in December 2003. When the UN Security Council passed its first resolution against Iran in July 2006, the negotiating team was expanded to include representatives of the US, China and Russia. Negotiations were led by EU high representative Solana, who was succeeded in 2009 by Catherine Ashton. That the EU's approach influenced US policy towards Iran has been noted by others as well. While initially US strategy was based on isolation and hints of the use of force (Leonard 2005, p. 3); by March 2005 the US had 'announced that it was backing the E3 initiative toward Iran' (van Oudenaren 2010a, p. 38). Leonard has also argues that the EU was successful in 'mobilising a global diplomatic coalition against Iran's enrichment programme, and persuading the United States to abandon its policy of isolation' (2005, p. 2). The analysis of the case study texts below also identifies a number of examples of the US changing policy on Iran and aligning with European norms.

As in the case of Operation Artemis in the DR Congo, the 2003 Tehran visit was part of a conscious effort to re-establish European credibility in international affairs after the split over the US Iraq invasion (van Oudenaren 2010a, p. 35). The European approach to the Iranian

nuclear issue was based on the norms of engagement, multilateralism and respect for international law, in deliberate contrast to the US's unilateralism, implied military threats and policy of isolating Iran (Leonard 2005, p. 3). The norm of engagement manifested itself in the 'twin-track' nature of negotiations: even when sanctions were imposed the EU-led negotiating team remained open to continued dialogue (Santini 2010, p. 472). Respect for international law was demonstrated by the EU scrupulously following the procedures of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and then the UN Security Council. This process was slow: it was not until February 2006 that the IAEA finally referred the case to the Security Council, once the Iranian government (in particular under newly elected president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad) had repeatedly demonstrated its unwillingness to comply with IAEA directives. UN sanctions were only gradually ratcheted up over the next four years. This slow pace entailed the significant risk that in the meantime Iran would be able to produce a nuclear weapon. But in return the legitimacy bestowed on the process by international legality was maintained. This leads to the third EU norm: multilateralism. By painstakingly following the procedures of international law, the EU approach kept the UN veto powers China and Russia (and many other states) on side, a factor which was crucial for the success of the sanctions regime.

Broad participation is important for any sanctions regime to be effective (van de Graaf 2013, p. 149; Maloney 2009, p. 132). The EU's approach to the Iran crisis appears to have achieved sufficient legitimacy in the eyes of the international community for the sanctions to be supported. The effectiveness of the sanctions in this case compares starkly with the ineffectualness of decades of unilateral US sanctions on Iran: the US was unable to persuade even its closest allies to participate (Maloney 2009, p. 140). In fact sanctions only really began to bite when in 2010 the EU and the US started applying unilateral sanctions over and above UN-mandated ones. But even these had been foreshadowed in the 2010 Security Council resolution, and by then the cause enjoyed legitimacy and broad support. In particular the second round of US and EU sanctions, introduced throughout the first half of 2012, hit Iranian oil exports hard (van de Graaf 2013, p. 153). In June 2013, in a climate of sanctions-induced economic crisis, the moderate candidate Hassan Rouhani was elected president of Iran. This represented a turning point in negotiations, and the interim agreement was secured before the end of the year. It transpired that the US had been involved in secret parallel talks with Iran (Borger & Dehghan 2013), no doubt a vital element in reaching the interim agreement.

Economic sanctions as a tool of coercion is an approach that rarely brings success, as a number of authors have pointed out in relation to the Iran dossier. Sanctions regimes can easily be circumvented by sanction-busters (Kozhanov 2011, p. 151), they damage domestic business interests (Patterson 2013), and there is a danger that through a rally-around-the-flag effect they can create a united front in the target country and actually strengthen hardliners (van de Graaf 2013, p. 157). The present case is therefore a rare example of international sanctions achieving their goal. Van de Graaf attributes the success of sanctions in this case to special factors: the EU and the US being able to exploit their structural positions in the world economy. For example, the EU ban on providing insurance services to oil tankers transporting Iranian oil hit hard because London is responsible for 95 per cent of world oil tanker insurance; and the key position of the US in world financial networks meant that its sanctions targeting any bank handling oil payments for Iran were a credible deterrent (2013, p. 154). The Iran negotiations are therefore a good test case for EU normative actorness.

Discourse analysis

Identity discourses

The prevailing characterization of Iran in nearly all the texts studied was of a state determined to produce nuclear weapons, in violation of its international obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This picture was only rarely challenged. In addition, Iran was characterized as a regime which abuses human rights, persecutes its ethnic and religious minorities, ignores the rights of women, and destabilizes the region, in particular by financing terrorist groups in neighbouring countries. The regional hegemonic ambitions of Iran were frequently noted. The government was sometimes described as a ‘mullah regime’ (e.g. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 2003b) or even a ‘mediaeval theocracy’ (Binley 2005, c. 10WH). It was noted as being undemocratic and brutal, frequently carrying out executions and imprisoning juveniles. As a negotiating partner Iran was cast as untrustworthy, playing games, and stalling for time.

The construction of Iran was not entirely negative: homage was often paid to Iran’s long history and ancient culture. There were also attempts by politicians, especially at the time of the disputed elections in 2009, to create a logic of equivalence between ‘us’ and the Iranian people, for example:

Iran is a young country – 26 per cent of the population are under the age of 15, and are forward looking. They do not look back to the conservatism of the regime that came in back in 1979. They are westernised and highly educated, and 62 per cent of the student population are women (Loughton 2007, c. 218WH).

These discourse elements did not affect the overwhelmingly negative construction of the Iranian regime, however. The implication of this negative construction of Iran was unambiguous: Iran must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons. The logic was stated clearly:

does the Secretary of State agree that an Iranian regime armed with nuclear weapons should be avoided at all costs (Amess 2006, c. 8)?

In spite of these strong representations, it was not the identity of Iran itself that was the main other for identity constructions in the texts analysed. The principal other was rather the perceived threat of a military intervention, usually understood to be emanating from the United States, or later, Israel. This military threat formed the background to the discursive construction of the Iranian question for essentially its entire duration:

the last thing that we want is for the United States of America and Britain to interfere again and make a mess of the situation, with no idea of how to leave the country and no prospect of doing so (Amess 2005, c. 6WH).

Elements of the US government demonstratively do not rule out a military strike (Müller 2007, p. 8303).

there has been an open debate about whether Israel would attack it, and we thought at one time that President Bush's Administration might do so (Davey 2009, c. 270WH).

It is in this context of permanent tension and religious hatred that today more and more persistent rumours are circulating of Israeli strikes on Iran (Myard 2012, p. 984).

In contrast, the European approach was constructed as non-military. In the French and German parliaments the construction of the appropriate course of action occurred predominantly as a co-construction of European (as opposed to national) identity as a civilian power:

The European Union, which is heavily involved in this dossier, has underlined on numerous occasions its commitment to a diplomatic solution (Bobe 2006, p. 796).

In all three parliaments the need for a ‘diplomatic solution’ or a ‘peaceful settlement’ was repeatedly stressed, though in the House of Commons this was not linked specifically to European identity. In the *Bundestag* the non-military discourse was also linked to the German pacifist identity construction:

Europe waged a world war, at the beginning of which there was also initially only sabre-rattling. In the end a single spark was enough to ignite it. For this reason we social-democrats oppose military measures (Mützenich 2007, p. 8300).

In the House of Commons, while, as already mentioned, there were no explicit statements of European identity, the UK parliamentary discourses shared with the French and German ones a construction of the unified European approach as the appropriate course of action:

Along with France and Germany, and with the support of Javier Solana, we have pursued a policy of constructive engagement (Howells 2005, c. 19WH).

Since 2003, the United Kingdom, French and German Governments, with Javier Solana, the EU high representative, have worked tirelessly to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation by Iran through ensuring that it complies fully with its international obligations (Straw 2006, c. 148).

These examples also serve to illustrate the explicit mention of the EU norms of engagement (the first example) and respect of international law (the second example). Similar expressions were to be found in the German parliamentary texts, though in the *Assemblée nationale* the EU approach was usually described in general terms as seeking a diplomatic solution.

In the German and British parliamentary texts, the legitimacy achieved through the third international relations norm of multilateralism was also noted:

One of the effects of the diplomacy pursued by what has become known as the E3 – the United Kingdom, under the Foreign Secretary, Germany and France – has been to build increasing unanimity and solidarity in the international community (Reid 2006, c. 8).

It was difficult to achieve the unity of the international community because of existing disagreements. However it was absolutely key to getting Iran via a negotiated agreement to refrain from its intention to build an atomic bomb (Müller 2007, p. 8303).

Explicit constructions of the EU norms of engagement, respect for international law, and multilateralism were also accompanied by representations of successful EU normative actorness: these are discussed in more detail below.

National governments were exposed to a number of attacks for supporting the EU-led negotiated approach to the Iran nuclear issue. The British government, which had repeatedly characterized the EU-led approach to Iran as constructive engagement, faced criticism from oppositional voices in the House of Commons due to the slowness of progress and the many set-backs along the way:

We have debated whether the Government are right to pursue their policy of constructive engagement, but events of the past six months have rather sadly proved that it is now insufficient (Simpson 2005, c. 17WH).

Towards the end of the negotiations process, as an agreement seemed increasingly likely, French oppositional attacks began to criticize the emerging deal as weak:

the 1800 centrifuges remain in place and not a single one of them will be destroyed. In other words what we have is an agreement to freeze [Iran's nuclear program], but by no means an agreement to disarm. ... Effectively, Iran has kept intact its capacity to acquire a nuclear weapon at any moment, like North Korea not so long ago in a similar kind of agreement with the United States (Lellouche 2013, p. 12150).

The EU's normative approach was certainly vulnerable to criticisms such as these; the absence of any alternative apart from military strikes or Iran developing a nuclear weapon meant that government policy discourses survived these attacks.

The media discourses broadly mirrored the negative construction of Iran and the need for a negotiated solution to the crisis, though with some nuances. Left-wing newspapers in all three member states were initially sceptical of the claims that Iran was developing nuclear weapons, seeing this as US posturing:

Tehran has always rejected the accusations of the USA that it has a nuclear weapons program. The USA however suspects that Iran is using its nuclear plants to enrich uranium to produce material for nuclear weapons. At the insistence of the USA the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has given Iran a deadline of the end of October to prove that its program serves exclusively peaceful purposes (*Süddeutsche Zeitung* 2003a).

This discourse faded however once it became clear the IAEA was genuinely alarmed. Later these same newspapers were critical of the sanctions regime, especially once it began to bite:

Six UN security council resolutions call on Iran to halt enriching uranium, address questions about its nuclear programme and be more transparent. Despite this, Iran has defied sanctions and threats of an Israeli military strike by continuing to enrich uranium. Meanwhile, talks between Tehran and [the] world's major powers have reached stalemate. ... Trita Parsi, president of the National Iranian American Council [said of the sanctions regime:] ... 'With Iraq,

that of course ended up with 500,000 Iraqi children dead, resulted in the shortage of medicine, and other needs, and ended up ultimately to forceful invasion and war' (Dehghan 2012).

According to this narrative, Western sanctions were causing human suffering in Iran, would not work, and, as they did in the case of Iraq, were likely to lead to war. This discourse did not appear to gain traction in the broader public sphere, however, once again presumably as the only alternatives to sanctions were an even worse military option, or Iran gaining nuclear weapons.

Degree of Europeanization

Through its leadership of the negotiating team, as well as through being the locus of economic sanctions, EU agency was relatively strong. This was true for all three member states, in both governmental and media texts, with the exception of France in the final period of the sanctions regime, when discourses reverted to a national framing of France as 'remaining resolute', perhaps as a reaction to the growing role of the US in the negotiations process. In the UK parliamentary texts, before the 2010 round of sanctions, constructions of agency were mixed, with the Larsen category 'the UK and the EU' used roughly as frequently as 'the EU'. However after mid-2010, when sanctions began to bite, framing changed to being overwhelmingly in EU terms. Even the foreign secretary's choice of nomenclature subtly reflects this EU framing: when asked a question framed in terms of 'the P5 plus 1' (the UN Security Council permanent five plus Germany), William Hague answered in terms of 'the E3 plus 3' (2013, cc. 646-647). In the German parliamentary texts, the use of the formulation 'P5 plus 1' was favoured, probably because it allowed the status of Germany to be highlighted as the only non-permanent member of the UN Security Council on the negotiating team:

The agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran, the permanent members of the Security Council and Germany is a significant step on the way to a peaceful solution of the nuclear crisis (Mützenich 2013, p. 139).

But this did not dilute the predominance of the construction of the EU as the appropriate locus of action in the *Bundestag* debates. In both the British and the German media texts, in the period up until 2010, agency was primarily attributed to the EU. In the post-2010 period the *Telegraph* constructed the main actor as the US, which was by then taking the lead on sanctions, while the German newspapers ascribed joint agency to the US and the EU in this period. While even in these cases EU framing was still stronger than national framing, particularly the attribution of agency to 'the EU and the US' in the German media points to the importance of the US in

European conceptualisations of multilateralism. This point will be returned to in the discussion below.

In France, in the *Assemblée nationale*, before 2010 the issue was framed overwhelmingly in EU terms. However, post-2010 a national construction was dominant (as mentioned above). Most of France's agency related to 'remaining resolute' during negotiations for the interim agreement:

When the Americans and the Iranians returned, theoretically with a solution, France said that it could not accept it, because some elements were missing. And this firmness paid off (Fabius 2013, p. 12150).

This discourse appears to be at least partly in response to oppositional attacks that the interim agreement with Iran was weak, and partly in reaction to the increasing presence of the US in the Iran issue. It is probably also an example of the reflex French leadership discourse, common to many of the case studies investigated in this thesis. A similar move from EU to French framing was reflected in the French newspaper texts:

[France] has played a key role in this dossier since 2003, notably through its policy of firmness and of putting sanctions into place, with the goal of avoiding the military option evoked by the Bush administration and to this day by the Israelis (Semo 2013).

This appeared to reflect the discursive agenda of the French government as an agreement began to appear increasingly likely.

Construction of EU normative actorness

The texts examined for this case study also contained clear constructions – at many stages along the drawn-out process – of the Iranian nuclear negotiations as an example of successful EU normative actorness. While this does not mean that non-European actors necessarily agree with this assessment, these constructions are still useful to consider in more detail, as an important element of an emerging European identity, and provide at least some support for the proposition that the Iran case study was an example of the EU transferring its norms of international relations to the international community, in particular to the US.

Firstly, especially in the early days of the crisis, there was a clear differentiation of the European and the American approaches:

Hawks in Washington, who see Iran as a member of the 'axis of evil' that must be confronted rather than befriended, will view the Europeans' agreement as a pact with the devil (La Guardia 2003).

Even if they agree on the gravity of the threat, the Americans, still tempted by the 'pre-emptive' use of force, and the Europeans, supporters of diplomatic action, diverge on the means to be employed if ever the confrontation were to deteriorate (de Barochez 2003).

Secondly, the uploading of the EU's norms to the international community was represented in a number of modes. Most weakly, the EU approach to the Iranian issue was simply constructed as effective (in contrast to the likely American approach):

Profiting from the American stalemate in Iraq, they [the Europeans] have delivered the proof of their capacity to bring about a nonviolent solution to a serious dispute over a question as important as nuclear proliferation (Jean-François Daguzan cited in Merchet 2003).

In a stronger mode, the model value of the EU's approach was explicitly mentioned (in particular by politicians):

Finally, we are doing it for the international community, motivated by the concern to find a new method for the settlement of proliferation crises. ... For our initiative goes beyond the case of Iran (de Villepin 2003).

It is important that the Iranian nuclear crisis is resolved by peaceful means. That would not only be an incalculable advantage for the region and an example of a common European foreign policy, but also a model for the solution of other international crises (Mützenich 2006, p. 1560).

Finally, the strongest representation of normative actorness is in the form of examples of actual influence over the US administration:

We also effected changes in the American political approach. In the beginning the Americans were not prepared to back the second track of our policy, the offers of negotiations and cooperation. Earlier the Americans were only prepared to back pressure. They are now prepared to try to convince Iran to abandon its path by offering something in return (Polenz 2007, p. 8297).

You must also perceive that American policy towards Iran has just changed. Since the start of negotiations in 2003, the USA had completely denied Iran the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. That has changed. ... I am completely convinced, that the announcement on the part of the USA to take part in an Iraq conference with Iran and Syria, took place ultimately on the basis of this learning process (Mützenich 2007, p. 8302).

In fact by the end there were often reports of pressure from the US on the EU to ratchet up its sanctions regime. By the same token, EU normative actorness was not an uncontested discourse.

As mentioned above, the post-2010 French discourses were dominated by national framing, and the *Telegraph* texts for the same period constructed the US as the main agent in bringing about the interim agreement. Nevertheless it can be seen that EU normative actorness was a genuine discourse component.

Discussion

The longitudinal nature of this case study permits the observation of the evolving nature of discursive unity formation amongst the member states under investigation. In the initial stages of the process, before sanctions began to bite in 2010, a common European foreign policy identity based on norms of international relations and the othering of the perceived unilateralism and militarism of the US combined with EU framing of the appropriate response (the EU led negotiations) to enable support in the French and German public spheres for the unified EU approach. This corresponds to configuration 1 (the ideal case) of the theoretical model. In the UK these same norms were not framed in an explicitly EU way, and othering of the US was also less pronounced. Nevertheless, these nationally framed forms still functioned in the same way to ensure harmony between public identity constructions and government policy. This is configuration 2a of the theoretical model.

In the later stages of the Iran negotiations, however, the French discourses became more national, stressing French ‘firmness’ (configuration 2b), and the British policy enunciations became more EU-framed (configuration 1). The French change can possibly be explained as a reaction of the French government to the increasingly prominent role played by the US in the negotiations process. The shift in the UK government to EU framing may partly be the result of the leadership role played by Catherine Ashton in the Iran negotiations, but it also reflects the common ground between EU and British norms of international relations. This has been noted before, and its implications in the context of Brexit are discussed in the conclusion to the thesis.

Arguments have also been presented above to support the hypothesis that in the Iran case the EU was able to upload its norms of international relations to the international community, in particular by bringing the US on board the pursuit of the twin-track approach. The US had maintained sanctions on Iran since 1979; now for the first time, because they were part of an international regime, they led to results. In addition, the US broke with three decades of almost

uninterrupted isolationism and opened (secret) negotiations with the Iranian leadership that led to the break-through interim agreement late in 2013. In the end, the success of the EU-led approach to the negotiations with Iran depended on the effectiveness of sanctions, which in turn would hardly have been possible had the EU and the US not been able to exploit their structural positions in the world economy (see above, van de Graaf 2013). Such structural advantages may not continue indefinitely in the context of the shifting distribution of global power.

The ultimate reliance of the EU on the US in this case is also reminiscent of the Libya case study in chapter 5. This seems to indicate that in the case of international crises even the EU's normative power is dependent on US collaboration, and not just its conventional military actorness. As discussed in the conclusion to chapter 5, however, this is not actually inconsistent with the EU's championing of multilateralism as a norm of international relations. In a truly multipolar world, alliances other than with the US would also be conceivable. The consensus of Russia and China was an important element in the Iran case, for instance. In reality, however, the EU probably has little choice when it comes to allies in its normative campaigns. It would thus appear that in practice the US has a key role to play in the enactment of EU normative actorness in the dimension of international crisis management.

Case study 2: Russia's intervention in Ukraine

Background

In November 2013, at a summit in Vilnius, president Yanukovich of Ukraine backed down from signing a long-prepared EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, apparently under pressure from Russia. Anti-corruption protests on Kiev's main square, Maidan, suddenly swelled and were transformed into a movement demanding a European future for Ukraine. In February 2014 the Yanukovich government tried to dispel the protesters by force, resulting in at least 77 deaths (Traynor & Walker 2014). Three EU foreign ministers, Steinmeier of Germany, Sikorski of Poland, and Fabius of France (the Weimar Triangle) travelled to Kiev and negotiated an agreement between the government and opposition groups which included provisions for early elections. Events moved more quickly, however, with Yanukovich fleeing the country the next day, and the parliament appointing an interim administration.

Russia's ensuing intervention in Ukraine, which involved annexing Crimea and supporting separatists in eastern Ukraine in breaking away from central control, took EU policy-makers by

surprise. The redrawing of European borders by force was behaviour that European leaders had assumed to have been left behind in the 20th century. The EU approach to the crisis consisted of engagement with both Russian and Ukrainian authorities to secure ceasefires, the avoidance of steps which could lead to escalation, such as providing arms to the new Ukrainian government, and, in partnership with the US, incrementally increasing sanctions pressure on Russia. EU member states (including France, the UK, Denmark) also contributed to increased NATO policing of the Baltic states' airspace (Hague 2014, cc. 580, 584), in a demonstration of NATO solidarity.

While successive ceasefires (principally the Geneva Agreement of April 2014, the Minsk Protocol of September 2014 and Minsk II of February 2015) have proved shaky, the economic pressure on Russia has been very significant. Economic sanctions have played a role, as have capital flight and reduced foreign investment (Ottaway 2014, c. 547). However, the primary cause of the economic downturn in Russia has undoubtedly been the dramatic fall in world oil prices. This drop may be a simple coincidence; it is also possible that the increase in Saudi oil production, the main driver of the oil price reduction, was the outcome of some form of agreement between the US and Saudi Arabia (Evans-Pritchard 2014). At the time of writing the Ukraine crisis is still essentially unresolved; nevertheless, so far, further military escalation has been avoided, and it is possible that economic pressure has forced President Putin to rethink or at least put on hold any plans for Russian expansion. The Association Agreement between the EU and the new government of Ukraine was eventually signed in two stages in March and June 2014.

EU relations with Ukraine since the 2004-2005 Orange Revolution have been ambivalent, to say the least. While in this time period a number of eastern member states favoured greater engagement with Ukraine, and could even contemplate it being offered membership, others, such as France, Germany and Italy, preferred a more cautious approach, partly out of deference to Russian sensitivities, but also mindful of European energy dependence on Russia (Pridham 2014, pp. 54, 58; Youngs 2011, pp. 34-35). On the question of EU membership, '[t]he standard line became that "the door is neither closed nor open" – the logical impossibility of this metaphor reflecting the extent of internal EU divergence' (Youngs 2011, p. 41). Instead, under the European Neighbourhood Policy, Ukraine was offered the opportunity of a high level of cooperation with the EU, but without the possibility of membership. The case of Ukraine once

again confirms that norm transmission through conditionality only has a chance of success if membership itself is on offer (MacFarlane & Menon 2014, p. 99). Though some legislation aimed at strengthening democratic institutions in Ukraine was passed under the influence of the EU's neighbourhood policy, little was implemented, and then only in the (forlorn) hope of eventual membership prospects (Ünal Eris 2013, pp. 60, 63). This background provides important context to the discourse analysis which follows, and is moreover clearly inconsistent with Putin's discourse of western expansionism, used to justify Russia's intervention in Ukraine.

Discourse analysis

Identity discourses

In all the texts studied, the constellation of identities in the discourses of Russia's invasion of Ukraine had three main elements: the (national or European) self, and two 'others', one Russian and one Ukrainian. These three elements were interrelated according to two distinct patterns: a dominant narrative and a subordinate counter-narrative. According to the dominant narrative, Russia was constructed as an aggressive, anachronistic power resorting to nineteenth or early twentieth century practices to redraw European borders by force. Russia was in breach of international law, in particular the 1994 Budapest Memorandum guaranteeing Ukraine's territorial integrity in return for it handing over of the nuclear weapons it inherited from the old Soviet Union. Russia was accused of having pursued the destabilization of Ukraine for years, in particular by monopolizing gas and oil supplies; and planning its eventual break-up, including by calling for it to become a loose confederation of independent states. The flight of deposed president Viktor Yanukovich from Kiev in the face of pro-European protests was constructed as a major loss of face for Russia, and one of the explanations for the aggressiveness of Moscow's reaction. The Crimean referendum transferring sovereignty over Crimea to Russia was labelled illegal, and Russia was portrayed as trying to recreate its lost Soviet Empire in the form of a 'Eurasian Union'. The Russian government was further criticized for the propaganda and censorship by which it maintained popular support at home and generated sympathy abroad. Finally, the Russian annexation of Crimea was often compared with Nazi Germany's annexation of the Sudetenland before the Second World War. Ukrainians, on the other hand, were constructed as wanting to be part of Europe, and being attracted to the EU and European norms of democracy and rule of law.

The counter-narrative told a different story. According to this explanation, Russia's actions might be controversial, but they are an understandable reaction to the policies and behaviour of the west in recent years. This narrative was sympathetic to Russia's 'fear of encirclement', and evoked the threat of a new Cold War. NATO was depicted as having breached a post-Cold War promise to Gorbachev not to expand eastward. Ukraine was portrayed as a divided country, according to a logic of difference between its Russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking populations. A recurring attack on the legitimacy of the new Ukrainian government was that it contained neo-Nazi elements. Russia was considered to have a legitimate claim to Crimea both because of its Russian-speaking majority, but also because Khrushchev arbitrarily 'gave' it to Ukraine in 1954. In place of Ukrainians being attracted to the European paragon, Slavic kinship between Ukraine and Russia was stressed, as well as Ukraine's dependence on Russia for trade. With the Association Agreement the EU was depicted as having given Ukraine a stark either/or choice between a European and a Russian future. Advocates of this counter-narrative pointed out that initial enthusiasm for the EU would inevitably give way to disappointment, and that Ukrainian industry was completely unprepared for EU standards. A further major element of this counter-narrative was the observation that there can be no solution to the Ukraine crisis without Russia's involvement. The efficacy of sanctions was also questioned, not the least because of the harm they cause to European economies as well as to Russia.

In parliamentary debates there was broad cross-party support for the dominant narrative. The counter-narrative was only weakly present, in a piece-meal fashion, in opposition discourses. *Die Linke* in Germany presented it in its strongest form. In the media the first narrative was also clearly dominant over the counter-narrative, which was nearly always cited as the views of Russian officials and frequently discredited using linguistic distancing devices, or cited in opinion pieces by authors obviously representing the Russian position. By comparison the dominant discourse was usually represented in 'factual' reporting. Once again it was in the German public sphere that the counter-narrative was most strongly present. The phenomenon of the German *Putin-Versteher* ('Putin-understanders') was noted by a number of sources including *Süddeutsche Zeitung*:

It has become fashionable to express understanding for Putin. Because the Soviet Union does not exist anymore and Poland wanted to become a member of NATO and Crimea is so important for the Russian soul, there was no choice left to him but to say to hell with the treaties and use might is right to correct borders (Bisky 2014).

The *Putin-Versteher* phenomenon was the source of some consternation in the German mainstream media (e.g. Ulrich 2014). Thus the counter-narrative of Russia's Ukraine invasion was not without influence in the German public sphere.

The dominant narrative implicitly co-constructs European identity as peaceful and respective of international law. The EU as a zone of peace that has overcome its belligerent past is a recurring element of specifically EU identity constructions, as noted in chapter 2. The German parliamentary texts also explicitly reconstructed European identity in terms of temporal othering of its violent past:

For centuries relations between European states were characterized by rivalry, shifting alliances and again and again terrible bloodshed. ... That these horrors were followed by now over half a century of peace, freedom and prosperity in wide sections of Europe still borders on the miraculous. ... European union has been and remains the great promise of peace, of freedom and of prosperity into the 21st century (Merkel 2014, p. 1518).

We all really thought the times were behind us when in Europe ... facts on the ground could be created through military means. Precisely because we want such times to be behind us, we will not allow the security architecture that has been laboriously built up piece by piece over the past decades to be torn down and trampled on in a matter of weeks (von der Leyen 2014, p. 2657).

In the French texts explicit constructions of European identity were in terms of the EU as an attractive paragon of democracy and human rights, rather than through temporal othering:

Ten years after the Orange Revolution, the democratic aspirations of an entire people, outraged by the excesses of certain of its elites, can finally be expressed. And this time, Europe has been able to respond with a single voice. We must welcome that (Auroi 2014, p. 2289).

As we speak, no single option has been left aside to punish those responsible for these violations of human rights in the heart of Europe: all will be held responsible for their acts (Bays 2014, p. 2056).

Identity constructions in the British texts were, once again, not expressed in explicitly European terms; the national constructions nevertheless display strong affinity for the EU's normative approach to the Ukraine crisis:

The Government believe that our national interest lies in a democratic Ukraine able to determine its own future, and in protecting a rules-based international system. Therefore, our objectives remain to avoid any further escalation of the crisis, to support the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine, and to uphold international law (Hague 2014b, c. 575).

As for the Iran case study, the official discourses in all three member states contained constructions of EU international relations norms. The reference to international law in the above quote is one example. Others include general statements stressing the need for a non-military solution (allied in Germany to the pacifist discourse):

There is no military solution to the conflict (Merkel 2014, p. 1519).

All three norms of EU international relations (engagement, multilateralism and respect for international law), were also given explicit mention in the parliamentary discourses:

In particular, the work done by EU High Representative Cathy Ashton in engaging with President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov in recent weeks has been welcome (Alexander 2014, c. 665).

The efforts of the international community, and in particular of Europe, must be brought to bear on these ... issues. For this reason we have taken up contact with the Russians ... the Americans, all the Europeans and the rest of the world (Fabius 2014a, p. 2296).

It was necessary, that Europe countered the blatant breach of international law by a member of the Security Council with neither false restraint nor with military threats, but with diplomacy and levelheadedness (Göring-Eckardt 2014, p. 1527).

By the same taken, these constructions of EU normative actorness were not as strongly present as in the Iran case study. Moreover in the media texts, as described below, they were almost totally absent.

As already noted in the discussion of European identity in the French parliamentary texts, constructions of European norms also referenced the three societal norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights (which formed the focus of chapter 6), corresponding to the construction of Europe as a paragon towards which Ukrainians are attracted:

the people want to live differently. The people want to live in freedom. The people want to live under the rule of law with free and fair elections, with independent courts, with freedom of opinion and independent media (Schockenhoff 2014, p. 1207).

Within the dominant narrative, therefore, the EU is constructed as an attractor for the people of Ukraine, who identify with European societal norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. European foreign policy identity is co-constructed through the othering of Russia, which is depicted as an international law-breaker in contrast to the European norm of respect

for international law, and an old-fashioned aggressor as opposed to enlightened European norms of civilian power.

Appropriate course of action

The implications of the dominant narrative are clear: Russian aggression and law-breaking must be opposed, both in the case at hand as well as to avoid setting a precedent:

It cannot be acceptable in the 21st century not only to invade and annex by force on the back of a sham referendum part of a neighbouring country, but to use military exercises and proxies to foment instability and disorder in that country, in an effort to disrupt its democratic elections (Hague 2014a, c. 540).

The response adopted by the EU and its member states was based on the twin-track approach of ratcheting up sanctions while remaining open to negotiations, used so effectively in the case of the Iranian nuclear negotiations:

Our position, which has been taken up by the Europeans, is at the same time one of great firmness and great responsibility. The firmness is the sanctions. We have defined with our partners three levels of sanctions. The first two have already been applied. The responsibility is to engage in dialogue (Fabius 2014b, p. 2553).

we are stepping up those measures while all the time leaving open the door of diplomacy (Hague 2014b, c. 590).

While reaching a common position was not always easy, government speakers frequently commented on the success of maintaining EU unity:

I expressly welcome that so far we have been successful in ensuring that the European Union speaks with one voice (Krichbaum 2014, p. 2666).

Any discussion behind closed doors often features a variety of views – as one would expect, when 28 EU nations are involved – but so far we have had no difficulty in reaching unanimous agreement on the sanctions that I have described, and that includes the decisions we made yesterday. Russia should not underestimate the willingness of the European Union to add further measures, including more far-reaching measures if necessary, and to engage in close co-ordination with the United States of America in that regard (Hague 2014b, c. 582).

The 17 July shooting down of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 by Russia-supported Ukrainian separatists is typically seen as having provided momentum to flagging European enthusiasm for sanctions (Pridham 2014, p. 59). Yet, by the same token, any further Russian-sponsored aggression is likely to have led just as surely to more serious sanctions, such as those introduced by the EU and the US later in July.

Governments were attacked for their support of the common EU position from a number of directions. The main oppositional attack in the UK was that EU sanctions were too weak. The government was also sometimes accused of having little appetite for sanctions due to close links between the City of London and Russian Oligarchs (e.g. Bradshaw 2014, c. 669). The *Telegraph* also attacked the very notion of normative actorness:

In short, though the EU finds the whole notion of geopolitics old-fashioned and unappealing, geopolitics is happening on its doorstep. And it is losing (Lucas 2014).

Similarly, the main oppositional attack in the French parliament was that the government was not doing enough; in the French media it was often the perceived lack of EU unity that was the object of censure. These critical discourses did not, however, reflect disapproval of the basic direction of EU policy, only that it did not go far enough.

As mentioned above, a further oppositional attack in Germany came in the form of the stronger representations of the counter-narrative in the public discourses. The widespread phenomenon of the *Putin-Versteher* has been noted above, as have the parliamentary attacks by the extreme left-wing *Linke* party. In the mainstream media at least, the counter-discourse was given little credit; in the *Bundestag* strong cross-party support for the government's position deflected this potential discursive threat to EU unity.

Degree of Europeanization

The framing of the locus of appropriate action in the UK government texts was issue-dependent. When discussing sanctions and negotiations, the main locus of action was the EU. However, for military gestures of support towards eastern European allies, NATO and national agency were strongest. The UK was also constructed as the appropriate forum for institution-building assistance. On the other hand the EU was considered the logical frame for energy security questions, even by Conservative members:

Russia's power derives from its ability to charge different countries different prices for its gas and thereby divide and rule, so why does the EU not create a single buying entity for Russian gas (Djanogly 2014, c. 554)?

Overall, UK government framing was quite strongly in EU terms, though with significant national formulations, including the Larsen categories 'the UK through the EU' and 'the UK and the EU'.

In the French government texts framing was similarly strongly in EU terms. If anything, because the Larsen formulation ‘France and the EU’ was stronger than in the case of the UK, parliamentary discourses can be considered more Europeanized in France than in the UK. Unlike in the case of the British government texts, framing was not issue-independent. In the German government discourses the appropriate locus of action was overwhelmingly constructed as the EU in all areas.

This strong framing of the Ukraine crisis in EU terms was carried over into the media discourses, but with important differences. Similarly to the government discourses, the EU is represented as a normative attractor for Ukrainians, who identify with the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights – most frequently individual freedom. With respect to the norms of international relations (engagement, multilateralism and respect for international law), the media texts construct the EU as a much less convincing actor. In the realm of this latter group of norms, EU framing in the media texts typically corresponded to criticism of EU weakness or division:

But the Twenty-Eight, beyond the lowest common denominator put forward on Thursday ... remain divided. Great Britain does not want to penalize the City, where Russian investments are very important, and Germany, which has played a leading role since the beginning of the crisis, is betting on a compromise, especially since a good one third of its gas comes from Russia. The countries of southern Europe (Spain, Italy) have other priorities (Semo 2014).

The key role of the trans-Atlantic alliance in the EU’s normative actorness is also a feature of the Ukraine case study, just as it was for the Iran nuclear issue. The economic sanctions regime needed to be a coordinated endeavour for it to be at all effective. The devastating effect of Saudi oil overproduction on the Russian economy means that if there was US influence over this decision, then it was a crucial element in stabilizing the Ukraine situation. This point was not ignored by European politicians:

It was the European Union and the USA that worked towards getting Ukraine and Russia to sign the Geneva agreement. That is the second point I would like to address: the EU and the United States of America. Today we are – more than ever since the end of the Cold War – virtually dependent upon a trusting and close cooperation with the United States of America (Kiesewetter 2014, p. 2668)

So far, the co-ordination between the United States and the EU and between EU nations has been very strong, and we in the UK play an important role in ensuring that there is that co-ordination (Hague 2014b, c. 582).

Discussion

EU unity on the Ukraine crisis was enabled by a number of factors: strong EU framing in all three jurisdictions; national and/or European identity constructions stressing respect for international law and peaceful conflict resolution, reinforced through the othering of Russia's behaviour; and a logic of equivalence between ordinary Ukrainians and 'us', created through constructions of the EU as an attractive paragon for the people of Ukraine. In the case of Germany, this is described by configuration 1 of the theoretical model (European identity constructions being consistent with a common EU policy); in the case of France and the UK by a combination of configurations 1 and 2a (engaging also similar national identity constructions compatible with the common policy).

As was noted above, reaching consensus within the EU was not always easy. Whether the EU approach succeeds in stabilizing the situation in Ukraine in the long term remains to be seen, and will depend largely on external factors, possibly including the price of oil. It has been argued in chapter 1, however, that long-term EU unity is the best measure of EU actorness, and that assessments of actorness should be independent of the external opportunity structure. According to this logic, even a failure in Ukraine should not necessarily be considered a failure for EU actorness, as long as it is the result of external factors, and to the extent that long-term unity in favour of acting according to EU norms of international relations remains. By the same token, the key role played by the US in EU normative actorness in practice, cannot be ignored. Just as in the Iran nuclear case study above, the effectiveness of EU international relations normative actorness once again appears to require achieving and maintaining significant commonality with the US.

Conclusion

In the Iran nuclear case study EU leaders sought to demonstrate not only EU unity and continuing relevance on the international stage in the aftermath of the damaging split over the Iraq war, but also the utility of an approach to international relations based on certain non-military norms of behaviour. These norms formed part of an EU identity discourse, particularly in Germany, through the narrative of European integration as having brought peace and prosperity to a continent marred by centuries of war. They are also norms which have strong correlations with national foreign policy discourses, notably in the case of the UK.

EU leaders pursued an approach to Iran which meticulously followed the procedures of international law, thus ensuring legitimacy and therefore broad support for the sanctions. This support extended beyond the sanctions mandated by the UN Security Council, and included the final and most effective rounds of unilateral sanctions applied by the US and the EU. An initially sceptical US joined with the EU's twin-track sanctions and negotiations approach, as demonstrated particularly by the opening of secret negotiations between Iran and the US, which assisted the EU-led E3+3 negotiations in clinching the November 2013 interim agreement. Because the EU both represented and transmitted its norms of international relations in the successful resolution of a serious non-proliferation issue, it can be considered a normative actor in this case.

A similar approach has been attempted with respect to Russia over its intervention in Ukraine. Circumstances are different in this case: there will be no UN resolutions because of Russia's veto on the Security Council; it is also unlikely that economic sanctions will lead to regime change, as was effectively the case in Iran, where the moderate Rouhani swept to power in the 2013 presidential elections in a climate of sanctions-induced economic crisis. By the same token, at the time of writing a highly volatile situation appears to have been stabilized. Once again, the EU favoured a norm-based approach, pursuing a similar, twin-track strategy as for the Iran case. Differentiation from the US may be more nuanced than in the Iran case study, nevertheless it is still possible to identify: the EU emphasised de-escalation through dialogue and negotiating ceasefires, persuading the US not to supply Ukraine with military equipment; and the Europeans applied sanctions in stages, in response to Russian non-compliance with certain undertakings, whereas the Americans urged stronger, punitive sanctions from the start. It is thus possible to argue that also in the case of the Russian intervention in Ukraine, the EU has exhibited normative actorness in an international crisis situation.

As has been noted above, if indeed these cases can be considered successes for EU normative actorness, the role of the US must be acknowledged as central, in terms of implementing effective economic sanctions against Iran and Russia, but also from the point of view of pursuing successful negotiations with Iran. It may appear contradictory that a distinctly European approach to international relations, especially one that sought to differentiate itself from American practice, in the end relies on the participation of the US for its success. This apparent inconsistency can be explained by acknowledging that it is not the US itself that EU

normative actorness rejects, but rather militarism, unilateralism, confrontation, escalation and isolation. Bringing the US on board a normative approach can be considered an important part of the success of EU normative actorness.

Chapter 8: Discussion

Chapter 2 put forward a discourse-theoretical model of EU consensus-making on external action issues, based on a mechanism developed by Hansen (2006): the need for government foreign policy statements to be in harmony with public identity discourses. In the case study chapters, 3 to 7, it has been demonstrated that in all but one case (the one concerning Hungary's democratic backsliding) the establishment of EU unity (or failure to reach a common position) was consistent with one or more configurations of this theoretical model. It was found that EU consensus occurred through EU framing of the issue being in harmony with European identity constructions (configuration 1 of the theoretical model), similar national framing of the question being compatible with common national identity discourses (configuration 2a), or different national framing in each member state of a common EU policy being separately in consonance with distinct national identity discourses (configuration 2b). In most cases EU unity was attributable to a combination of configurations. Disunity resulted from divergent national formulations of the issue and incompatible identity co-constructions (configuration 3). The following section summarizes the application of the discursive theoretical model to the 10 case studies. The results are tabulated in table 2.

The explanatory power of the discursive theory

The euro crisis

In the investigation of the euro crisis case study, because the eurozone was the relevant arena for considering EU actorness, the UK was effectively bracketed from the analysis. In both France and Germany, strong EU identity constructions (solidarity towards other member states, the sanctity of the European project and the euro as a symbol of it) were in harmony with the crisis response measures, which essentially entailed 'more Europe' (i.e. the creation of further integrative institutions). Common policy enabled by European identity constructions corresponds to configuration 1 of the discursive theory. North-south othering was diffused by linking solidarity with fiscal responsibility. This was crucial for German public support for the bailout measures, and found expression in a discourse of German leadership: German norms of economic management as a model for the southern states. When distinct national identity constructions are in harmony with the common European (in this case eurozone) policy, that situation is described by configuration 2b of the theory. Actorness in this case study therefore

corresponds to a combination of configurations 1 and 2b. Of the case studies investigated, the response to the euro crisis was the one in which specifically European identity constructions played perhaps the largest role (once the UK was excluded from the analysis).

The Chinese solar panels dispute

The Commission's decision to impose anti-dumping tariffs on Chinese solar panel imports divided the member states across a free trade/protectionism cleavage. France supported the tariffs on the principle of *fair* trade – until its own wine industry was threatened by Chinese retaliation. The UK was opposed to the tariffs on the principle of *free* trade: lower cost solar panels were expediting the roll-out of renewable energy production in the UK. The German government was unwilling to protect an industry that had grown inefficient on government-imposed subsidies, and feared a trade war would damage its lucrative export trade to China. The presence of such an identity cleavage was identified in chapter 1 as a likely cause of disagreement within the EU on certain issues. This cleavage characterized divergent national constructions of the issue which initially resulted in EU disunity, corresponding to configuration 3 of the theoretical model.

While unity was eventually achieved among the member states, this was essentially an agreement on a minimal position with respect to China, an accord which still reflected national constructions (of economic interest) of the issue. While this thesis has proposed that EU unity is the best measure of actorness, it has also argued that this unity must be long-term and on substantive measures. A once-off agreement on merely token anti-dumping tariffs, especially in the context of relations with China in which the EU has a history of disunity, cannot be considered an example of international actorness. In table 2, EU unity is therefore represented by a '0' in the second phase of the solar panels saga, and the case study as a whole is described by configuration 3 of the theoretical model, signalling disagreement due to incompatible national discourses.

This case study furthermore highlights a major cause of weakness for EU actorness with regard to China: despite half a century of European economic integration, and the championing of the common market as the world's largest single market, in Europe economic issues are still constructed in strongly national terms. Though it can be argued that the EU as a whole would be more successful in negotiations with China if it maintained unity, national governments

interpreted the solar panels dispute in terms of threats to nationally constructed industries. The prioritizing of Germany as a car export champion, and France as a wine-producing champion over the strength of EU economic actorness as a whole reflects a discrepancy between the extent of communitization of the EU economy, and the much weaker Europeanization of economic *discourse* within the EU. It can thus be concluded that the nationally fractured nature of the construction of the European economy in political discourse is a major source of weakness for European actorness.

Finally, the Chinese solar panel case study also provides an example of the supranational functionality of the EU ultimately being overridden by intergovernmental decision-making, providing further support to the proposition that member state (dis)unity is the most important locus of EU (lack of) actorness.

The climate change conferences

Despite the reputation of the Copenhagen climate change conference as a failure, allegedly because of division amongst the member states, chapter 4 has argued that the wrangling within the EU was actually irrelevant to the outcome of the conference, and that furthermore the EU was unified on broader principles and goals that enabled it to play a leadership role at this and other conferences, including the Durban summit 2 years later, and that this corresponds to significant EU environmental actorness in the longer term. The climate change case studies thus support the proposition that sustained EU unity of purpose on substantive issues corresponds to EU actorness (rather than momentary agreement at one point in time).

Long-term EU unity over climate change was enabled through constructions of European identity as environmentally enlightened, especially in contrast to the American other. Europe being at the forefront of international efforts to curb climate change and leading by example was an ever present, though often only implicit discourse. Thus international climate change negotiations is another issue area where European identity constructions were in harmony with the manner in which governments advocated a common EU position (configuration 1), though this resonance was probably not as strong as in the euro crisis case study. The discourse of climate change leadership also had a strong national element. Politicians were wont to highlight the climate change credentials of their own national governments, to the extent that a form of normative entrapment obtained in which the political value of claiming climate change

leadership justified further ambitious policy. Common national identity constructions facilitating a unified EU position corresponds to configuration 2a of the theoretical model. However there were also country-specific national discourses which were consistent with the common EU position. In France the transition to a low carbon dioxide economy was conceptualised in terms of reining in laissez-faire capitalism, whereas British and German constructions were characterized by a logic of economic opportunities associated with being an early mover on curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Both discourses nevertheless supported the EU's goal of a binding international agreement on emissions reductions. Thus there were also elements of configuration 2b in the mix. This combination of configurations was similar for both climate change conferences under consideration, the main difference being that the reputedly more successful Durban conference was associated with greater EU framing of the public discourses.

The 2003 intervention in the DR Congo

In the first case study investigating the military dimension of EU actorness, the case of the Common Security and Defence Policy intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003, the discursive theory allows for two possibilities. One is the zero configuration, on the basis that the issue did not enter the public sphere, thus governments were not constrained by domestic identity discourses, and other theories must be sought to explain common policy formation. The prime candidate for such an explanation is sociological institutionalism: this proposition is discussed below. The low intensity of the media coverage of the DR Congo intervention supports the conclusion that the zero configuration may be applicable in this case, and demonstrates the limits of the discourse-theoretical approach.

If it is assumed, on the other hand, that the media sources investigated here do indeed represent public debate, then the analysis indicates that EU unity was enabled by a combination of two configurations of the theoretical model. Firstly, European (most particularly French) politicians were keen for an opportunity to demonstrate both the EU's unity and the effectiveness of its international crisis management at a time of the highly public division over the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. The peace enforcement operation in the DR Congo was thus intentionally constructed as a European operation. An EU consensus forged on the basis of European identity constructions corresponds to configuration 1 of the theoretical model. The drastic situation on the ground in the Ituri region of the DR Congo also appealed to more universal values: to

western guilt concerning the 1994 Rwandan genocide and to the logic that ‘we’ cannot simply stand by while such atrocities occur. This discourse was framed either in national terms or more generally as an appeal to the ‘western’ or ‘civilised’ world – in any case not specifically in European terms. Member state government enunciations of common policy enabled by shared identity constructions that are framed in national terms corresponds to configuration 2a of the theoretical model. Universal ‘western’ identity elements are not considered by the theoretical approach presented by this thesis; they nevertheless point to the role played by western solidarity (primarily between Europe and the US) in the conceptualisation of EU actorness. The importance of the EU-US relationship for EU actorness has also been observed in the Libyan, Iranian and Ukrainian case studies, and will be the object of further discussion in the conclusion of the thesis.

The 2011 Libya intervention

The second case study in the military dimension chapter was the 2011 Libya intervention. Even though the EU itself was only minimally involved institutionally, it has been argued that the Libya operation does have an impact on EU actorness, because it concerned a selection of EU member states acting with the (at least tacit) consensus of the other member states. Whether agreement-making happens within the formal decision-making institutions of the EU or outside of them is not important from the point of view of the discursive theoretical model: the key locus of unity formation is in the public spheres of the member states, and is a discursive and not primarily an institutional process. The prominence in the operation of two member states in particular, France and the UK, and the playing down of the (admittedly very significant) US role in public discourses, gave a decidedly European flavour to the operation; the discursive impossibility of separating ‘EU’ from ‘European’ actions has also been discussed in chapter 2.

European unity in this case was enabled by common constructions of a responsibility to protect Libyan civilians from military attacks carried out by the Libyan government. In France and the UK these constructions were consistent with the intervention of the national militaries. In Germany a recurring pacifist identity element barred this option; here support for the intervention eventually emerged on the basis of an alliance loyalty discourse, after Berlin initially broke ranks and abstained on the Security Council resolution authorizing a no-fly zone. German support was not just rhetorical: it also came in the form of relieving allied military operations elsewhere on the globe. European unity in this case thus corresponds to

configurations 2a and 2b of the theoretical model, that is, a combination of common and specific national identity discourses.

Normative actorness 1: democracy, human rights and rule of law

Without denying that there may be normative aspects to EU actorness in the first six case studies, the final four investigations considered normative actorness as their central question. The definition used in this thesis for normative action, as set out in chapter 1, is of proceeding according to certain, pre-identified norms, with the intention that such behaviour should serve as an example for others to follow. European Union norms, as identified in key EU documents and by EU officials, were here divided into two groups for the purposes of the case study investigations. The first group contains the internal, societal norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights; the second consists of norms of international relations, in particular preventive engagement, effective multilateralism and respect for international law. The norms of international relations are tied to EU identity in particular through the narrative of post-war European integration having brought peace and prosperity to a region for centuries riven by ever more destructive wars.

Conditionality of agreements with third parties is a major avenue through which the EU attempts to transmit the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. As the discussion in chapter 1 highlighted, the consensus of scholarly opinion is that conditionality provides at best mixed results from the point of view of norm transmission. The accession process is often considered the prime example of norm transmission by conditionality: at the time of writing 11 formerly eastern bloc states have apparently adopted western European norms of governance in gaining membership of the European Union. Backsliding by recently admitted members, however, gives cause to question the degree to which western European norms were successfully transmitted to these societies. The case of Hungary since the general election of 2010 is cited as an example.

Despite universal condemnation in the French, German and British public spheres of the dismantling of liberal democratic institutions by the government of prime minister Viktor Orbán, the EU has only managed to effect minor and isolated changes to the illiberal reforms, and has proved unwilling to bring full treaty powers to bear on Hungary. Right-of-centre parties in power in Germany and France appeared to have kept their reactions muted because of their

alliance with Orbán's Fidesz party in the European parliament (the European People's Party). The British Conservatives, though not a member of the same EP bloc, opposed intervention by the EU in Hungary on sovereignty grounds.

In the French and German public spheres explicit identity constructions of the EU as a community of values, in which democratic norms have a special place, were common. In the British media texts, democratic identity was only implicitly constructed – through the othering of the situation in Hungary. The minus configuration of the theoretical model developed in chapter 2 would expect public identity discourses to exercise pressure on governments to make a concerted effort to address the problems in Hungary; to date this has not happened. Thus in the Hungarian case study member state governments' positions are incompatible with public identity discourses, but this has not led to the changes in these positions that the Hansen mechanism would predict. Hungary's backsliding is thus the only example of the case studies investigated which the discursive theoretical model does not adequately describe. The reason for this may be, despite the arguments presented in chapter 6, that Hungary's waywardness cannot be considered a genuinely external issue, and therefore the Hansen mechanism, which relies on foreign policy enunciations co-constructing national identity discourses, does not operate. The importance played in this case on European Parliament alliances (i.e. EU-internal machinations), would appear to support this reasoning.

The transmission of norms to states which are now members of the EU, the case of Hungary notwithstanding, has usually been considered a success for EU normative actorness. The case of EU influence over China on human rights is a much harder test of normative actorness. China's suppression of the Tibetan uprising in 2008 brought forth strong condemnation in the public spheres of all three member states investigated, as well as the suggestion, put forward by the French foreign minister, that European heads of state or government should boycott the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Despite the championing of human rights in national (and European) identity constructions and key EU documents, and despite strong disapproval of China's actions in all three public spheres, there was no unified EU stance in response to the events in former Tibet, beyond a mildly-worded statement, appeals for restraint, and calls for dialogue between the Chinese leadership and the Tibetan government-in-exile. This was also in spite of the fact that the EU was widely

constructed in all three public spheres as the appropriate locus for responding to the situation in China. The economic punishment meted out to France for its forthright stance was apparently enough to convince the other member states to avoid offending Chinese sensibilities. The member states' construction of the Tibet issue in terms of particular national (economic) interests corresponds to configuration 3 of the discursive theoretical model: divergent national constructions leading to disunity.

Once China had successfully linked the Tibet issue to national economic threats, its usual divide and conquer strategy was able to function. As in the case of the solar panels dispute, this relied on the fact that economic questions in EU member states are still framed in strongly national terms, despite half a century of economic integration, and despite the fact that a united front would surely lead to greater EU effectiveness in dealings with China. This case therefore demonstrates that China's dominance over the EU pertains not just to economic issues, but also to political issues that the Chinese leadership is able to link to national economic threats. Liberal intergovernmentalism has, of course, a ready explanation for this situation: that national economic interest and not common norms or identity steers decision-making in the EU. The liberal intergovernmentalist approach will be considered in the discussion below.

One further lesson from the Tibet case study is, once again, the failure of the minus configuration of the theoretical model – just as in the case of Hungary's democratic backsliding above. The Hansen mechanism suggests that in the case of EU disunity or inaction on a foreign policy issue evoking strong, common identity constructions, governments would shift their positions towards a common EU position, in order to avoid oppositional attacks at home. This was clearly not the case for this case study either: strong condemnation in the public sphere of China's actions in former Tibet did not lead governments to take even a largely symbolic common stand against human rights abuses in China – despite human rights issues being central to EU norms.

Normative actorness 2: norms of international relations

The remaining two case studies were used to investigate the normative actorness of the EU with respect to its proclaimed norms of international relations: preventive engagement, effective multilateralism and respect for international law. The case of the decade-long negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program is one in which EU unity was enabled by a combination of

European and national identity constructions. The European-led approach, which consisted of gradually stepping up international economic sanctions while at the same time keeping the offer of a negotiated settlement on the table, was constructed in terms of the norms of engagement, multilateralism and respect for international law. Engagement can be understood here as the permanent offer of negotiations; respect for international law was demonstrated by meticulous adherence to the procedures of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as ensuring sanctions resolutions were passed by the UN Security Council; and finally the multilateralism that such an approach entailed brought with it the imprimatur of legitimacy, which led to widespread adoption and hence effectiveness of the sanctions regime.

The contrast between the EU approach and perceived American militarism and unilateralism was a deliberate part of European strategy. Often the norms which were followed were constructed as explicitly European; at other times, in particular in the earlier British discourses, they were constituted in national terms. Finally, as a substantive agreement appeared increasingly likely, the French government chose to construct its Iran policy in terms of a distinctly national French leadership discourse. Unity formation in this case study was therefore enabled by a combination of configurations 1, 2a and 2b of the theoretical model, reflecting common European, common national as well as distinct national identity constructions.

In light of the success of the EU-inspired approach to Iran, European leaders once again proposed a dual-track strategy of engagement coupled with increasing economic sanctions in response to Russia's intervention in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea early in 2014. In this case the contrast with the US approach was not as stark: the militarism and unilateralism of the Bush administration was now a thing of the past. The Europeans nevertheless opposed American initiatives to supply the new Ukrainian government with military equipment, and imposed sanctions in a phased manner, in response to Russian non-compliance, instead of immediately levying punitive sanctions, as the US administration proposed. EU leaders worked steadfastly to secure ceasefire agreements, which despite repeated violations and breakdowns, appear to have at least stabilized the situation in the region. While US and EU sanctions caused some discomfort for Russia, a fortuitous fall in world oil prices plunged the Russian economy into recession, placing significant pressure on the Russian government.

Dimension of actorness	Case study	EU unity (0 = agree not to act)	Discursive theory configuration
Economic actorness	The euro crisis	✓	1, 2b
	The Chinese solar panels dispute	✗/0	3
Environmental actorness	The Copenhagen climate change conference	✓	1, 2a, 2b
	The Durban climate change conference	✓	1, 2a, 2b
Military actorness	The 2003 intervention in the DR Congo	✓	1, 2a <i>or</i> 0
	The 2011 Libya intervention	✓	2a, 2b
Normative actorness 1: democracy, human rights and the rule of law	Hungary's backsliding	0	none
	China's 2008 intervention in Tibet	✗	3
Normative actorness 2: norms of international relations	The Iranian nuclear program	✓	1, 2a, 2b
	Russia's intervention in Ukraine	✓	1, 2a

Table 2: Summary of the theory configurations explaining each case study.

Identity elements were constructed either in European or national terms. German discourses typically constructed identity in terms of European integration having banished war from the continent; French discourses were more concerned with the attractiveness of European democratic and human rights norms, thus also constructing solidarity with Ukrainians through a logic of equivalence; and British discourses reflected a national foreign policy identity that was in strong correlation with EU norms of democracy, multilateralism, and respect for international law. EU unity in the Ukraine case study therefore corresponded to configurations 1 and 2a of the theoretical model. Table 2 summarizes these results.

Comparison of the explanatory power of the three theories

The explanatory power of the discourse-theoretical approach developed in this thesis will now be compared with that of the two representative standard theories, liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism, identified for this purpose in chapter 1. The respective successes and failures of all three theories are summarized in table 3, below.

As described in chapter 1, sociological institutionalism expects that socialisation of national officials interacting with each other in EU institutions will lead to improved EU cooperation. In practice, this socialisation into EU norms is expected to manifest itself in a change of negotiating style in EU fora from a logic of bargaining, driven by self-interest, to a logic of problem-solving, according to which the common interest outweighs purely national considerations. This latter form of behaviour is thought to be associated with a common sense of identity (Scharpf 1988, p. 261).

Liberal intergovernmentalism, on the other hand, conceives of EU decision-making in two stages. Firstly there is a process of aggregation of the (primarily economic) interests of various groups at the domestic level of each member state. Interdependence of the member states' economies means this aggregation process has a transnational element. Above all, the establishment of the national interest is a rational process that is not affected by the institutions of the EU or the course of negotiations. The second phase of EU decision-making is the bargaining phase, in which each member state seeks a result which optimizes its national interest. Liberal intergovernmentalism does not rule out greater than lowest common denominator agreements, however it does insist that individual member states will have a selfish interest for entering into such an agreement: a side payment, for example, or a preference for a less-than-ideal agreement over the status quo.

Economic actorness

The euro crisis

A case in which European leaders agree on a course of 'more Europe' (further integration) appears to provide clear support for sociological institutionalism. A logic of problem-solving among Europeanized elites, it may be argued, led to the (second) bailout of Greece, the creation of the European Stability Mechanism, and the commitment to the Fiscal Compact, steps which brought a spiralling debt crisis back under control. This thesis argues that this is an oversimplification, because the Fiscal Compact is better understood not as a jointly decided problem-solving measure, but as a component demanded by Germany (and other northern member states) in order to satisfy its electorate, and shield its government from domestic attacks that it was committing to a 'transfer union'. However, it cannot be denied that an EU solution to an EU problem that involves (near universal) commitment to further integration is in keeping

with the expectations of sociological institutionalism; for this reason the euro crisis is recorded in table 3 as a success for sociological institutionalism.

Schimmelfennig (2015) has argued that the eurozone's response to the euro crisis can also be explained by liberal intergovernmentalism. He asserts that both northern and southern states shared a preference for retaining and remaining in the euro. And while they differed over burden-sharing, with southern, indebted states preferring a mutualisation of debt (e.g. through eurobonds), and northern, solvent states preferring national adjustment (p. 181), it was German preferences which carried the day, because of Germany's greater bargaining power (p. 188).

This, it is argued, is also an oversimplification of the situation. Firstly, it is not at all clear that remaining in the euro was in the interests of the southern states. Particularly in the case of Greece, a number of economists (e.g. Paul Krugman cited in Chu 2012; Roubini 2011) and EU officials (*The Economist* 2012) contended that the country would be better off leaving the euro, an argument seemingly validated by the long and deep recession that Greece has continued to suffer as a result of eurozone-imposed austerity. But similar arguments were put forward for the case of Italy (Evans-Pritchard 2012b) and other southern states as well. Such uncertainty indicates that the preference for remaining in the euro was constructed rather than somehow rationally derived, as liberal intergovernmentalism would insist.

Furthermore, while Schimmelfennig (2015, p. 181) argues that Germany's preference was clearly to maintain the integrity of the eurozone (because the resulting weak euro kept German exports competitive, among other reasons), in fact the empirical evidence shows that this was not unambiguous for Germany's decision-makers. Schimmelfennig himself notes that the German government was divided over whether Greece should remain in the euro:

at the height of the crisis, [German finance minister] Schäuble headed the 'infected leg camp' of policy-makers and advisers arguing that the exit of Greece from the EA [Euro Area] was necessary to save and strengthen the euro. ... In a situation rife with uncertainty, Merkel ultimately decided against taking the risk of Grexit. This debate shows that the preferences of Germany, a core actor, on Grexit, a core policy question during the crisis were not unitary, fixed or internalized ... (p. 182).

Likewise a leading opposition figure, Peer Steinbrück, himself an economist, made the following statement in the *Bundestag*:

As I know myself there is nothing helpful in the textbooks on overcoming the crisis. We have also heard a wide range of therapies prescribed by the professors (2012, p. 19084).

It has been pointed out above that by its exponents' own admission, liberal intergovernmentalism's explanatory power wanes in situations of disagreement or uncertainty over economic prognosis. As the above quotes indicate, the euro crisis was just such a situation. A more credible explanation of the pathway taken by the eurozone than economic interest is that interests were determined discursively: northern leaders supported the euro because of a strong identification with the European project, and because of the EU norm of solidarity among member states. The discursive argument is even stronger in the case of southern states such as Greece. Sound economic arguments in favour of leaving were overridden by identification with the eurozone in-group. That successive Greek governments of whatever political hue would not seriously contemplate Grexit can be explained by the Hansen mechanism: they were unwilling to risk the affront to Greek identity that this would have caused. Schimmelfennig's claim that liberal intergovernmentalism explains the eurozone's reaction to the euro crisis can therefore be called into question. For this reason table 3 records the euro crisis as both a success and a failure for liberal intergovernmentalism.

The Chinese solar panels dispute

The Common Commercial Policy is one the oldest competences of the EU; as such, it could be expected that national officials who engage with it are amongst the most socialized into common EU norms. The lack of EU consensus over the Chinese solar panels trade dispute is therefore a problem for sociological institutionalism. As has been noted many times above, sociological institutionalists observe that their theory may not be applicable to situations which are highly politicized because national governments 'interfere' in the agreement process. In any case it would appear that sociological institutionalism is not able to explain this case study, and this is the result recorded in table 3.

By contrast, a case such as this, with clearly calculable (at least short-term) economic outcomes in which states act in their own economic interests, unswayed by EU institutional influence, would appear to be an ideal case for liberal intergovernmentalism. This interpretation can, however, still be questioned from a number of perspectives. Firstly, the Commission's initial imposition of anti-dumping tariffs can hardly be considered economic folly: the US, for

example, had just imposed significant anti-dumping tariffs on Chinese solar panel imports (Aldrick 2013). Furthermore, the long-term utility of the EU maintaining a common position with respect to China has been widely recognized, as described in chapter 6 (background section of case study 2).

Secondly, if economic interest is established through a rational process of interest aggregation, it is not clear why France initially supported the tariffs whereas Germany and the UK did not, especially given the similarities between the solar panel markets in France and Germany. France's change in position once China threatened retaliation is also puzzling, given that such a reaction should have been wholly expected based on past experience. It is therefore argued that economic interest was in fact not so easy to calculate, and that liberal intergovernmentalism's 'ideology' (this discursive theory's 'identity') may have played a role after all. These criticisms aside, liberal intergovernmentalism nevertheless has a strong case to make, and is accorded a tick in table 3.

Environmental actorness

It was argued above that EU actorness in international climate change agreements arises from a long-term and deep-seated unity of purpose among the member states, which may suffer episodes of disagreement over specifics, such as some sources assert happened in the final stages of negotiations at the Copenhagen conference, without detracting permanently from overall actorness. Van Schaik adopts a sociological institutionalist explanation of this long-term underlying unity, attributing it to the Europeanization of national elites:

all member states being able to block the EU's position for the international climate negotiations surprisingly has not prevented it from adopting relatively ambitious positions. An explanation would be agreement over overarching preferences, something which was cemented due to socialisation processes of those being involved and a common opposition to the US opposition to the international climate regime in particular (2013, p. 360).

Groenleer and van Schaik observed similar processes at work in relation to negotiations related to the Kyoto protocol:

Our empirical research demonstrates that Member States, on the basis of similar basic goals, developed a common way of realizing these goals. ... Member State representatives appear to have been 'socialized' by the interaction during the frequent meetings taking place in Brussels and the EU co-ordination meetings at international conferences (2007, p. 989).

In keeping with the limits of sociological institutionalism, Groen and Niemann attribute the disagreements at Copenhagen to politicization:

the EU's procedural-tactical coherence was hampered by the significant degree of politicisation and political salience of the COP15 negotiations ... the COP15 negotiating agenda aroused a high degree of political debate inside many EU countries (2013, p. 314).

It can be seen that sociological institutionalism and the discursive theory developed in this thesis are in close agreement in their explanations of the EU's climate change actorness, the main difference being that discursive theory places importance on the Europeanization of public spheres rather than just national officials meeting in EU committees. In this case it is argued that the almost universal acceptance of the anthropogenic nature of global warming in European populations was an important contributing factor to EU climate change leadership.

By contrast the climate change case studies are quite problematic for liberal intergovernmentalism. Economic interests are not completely absent from the climate change equation: once the EU member states had agreed amongst themselves on significant emissions reductions targets, then the desire for a binding international agreement is clearly compatible with economic interest. Such an agreement would remove the comparative advantage enjoyed by competitors with laxer emissions rules, and would also allow European states to exploit a first mover advantage, for example by selling their low-emissions technology to third parties. However the initial agreement to abide by strict EU targets, in the absence of any guarantee of a binding international agreement, cannot be explained as individual member states acting in their own economic interests. It requires either an implausibly high degree of trust in the goodwill of other states in the international community that such an agreement will be forthcoming, or a belief in the normative power of EU environmental actorness, neither of which are compatible with liberal intergovernmentalism.

Military actorness

The 2003 intervention in the DR Congo

There are strong arguments that a Common Security and Defence Policy operation, such as Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003, can be explained by

sociological institutionalism. Breuer, for example, argues on the basis of his empirical research that:

the CSDP machinery and its bodies are increasingly governed and influenced by institutional rules and socialisation processes and that European defence policy is increasingly being guided by a logic of appropriateness and a new style of decision making [which can be termed] 'Brusselisation' (2012, pp. 120).

Bickerton (2011) also argues that both the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy are characterized by problem-solving behaviour, an expectation of sociological institutionalism. He describes these two EU institutions as being distinguished by:

an orientation towards consensus and compromise, the pragmatism of participants and the functional manner in which individual issues are considered. None of these characteristics fit with traditional liberal intergovernmentalist models of state interactions ... (p. 182).

In the specific case of Operation Artemis, Duke (2009) argues that EU unity can best be explained in terms of normative institutionalism: because the request for the intervention came from the UN, and because EU international relations norms attach such importance to the UN, normative entrapment ensured that the EU member states could not avoid mounting an intervention in the DR Congo (p. 397). This entrapment was enhanced by the recent commitment to the Common Security and Defence Policy made by France and the UK, a desire to recover from the split over the US Iraq invasion, as well as a determination to prove the ability of the EU to mount a NATO-free operation (pp. 406-407). However, in this case, what Duke refers to as normative institutionalism has much in common with sociological institutionalism: according to him, normative entrapment occurs when, '[w]ith the passage of time, actors begin to associate more closely with the institutions and the values they embody' (2009, p. 395). This ambiguity provides further support for the decision in chapter 1 to treat sociological institutionalism as representing, for purposes of comparison, the institutionalist theories in general.

Similarly to the climate change case studies, in the DR Congo example it can be seen once more that there is significant common ground between the discursive theory developed in this thesis and sociological institutionalism. Both identify the importance of common 'norms, values and identity in the complex decision-making processes of CSDP' (Breuer 2012, p. 111). The main

difference between the two is that the former places importance on the Europeanization of national discourses, the latter on the socialisation of officials. In fact if as suggested in chapter 5 the zero configuration of the discursive theoretical model does apply here (i.e. if the issue was not politicized, and member state governments were therefore not constrained by public identity discourses) then it can be seen that the discursive theoretical model mechanism essentially gives way to sociological institutionalism in the case of low politicization.

By contrast it is difficult to explain how military involvement in a long-running and remote conflict can be in the national interest of European states. This is a major difficulty for liberal intergovernmentalism in the case of many Common Defence and Security Policy missions. Whereas a convincing argument might be made that EU member states have a national interest in preventing conflagrations in their near neighbourhood, such as in former Yugoslavia, intervening in endemic ethnic violence in central Africa is more difficult to explain, without conceding that common institutional values and norms have the ability to nurture consensus and positive action in such cases.

Gegout argues nevertheless that Operation Artemis was indeed an example of member states 'think[ing] in terms of cost-benefit analysis' (2005, p. 442). She draws this conclusion based on her observation that 'EU Member States agreed to act in order to show states outside the EU – such as the USA – that the EU as a whole was capable of intervening military' and not 'to answer a humanitarian crisis' (p. 442). While the evidence presented in chapter 5 contradicts this assessment that the EU states did not act out of humanitarian motives, even if this were the case, it is hardly a rationalist argument to assert that individual member states saw it in their national interests to bolster a purely ideational claim on behalf of the EU, even to the point of rejecting a role for NATO. Both sociological institutionalism and the discursive theory put forward here provide a more convincing argument in terms of common norms, values, and identity. Table 3 therefore registers success for sociological institutionalism and failure for liberal intergovernmentalism in explaining this case study.

The 2011 Libya intervention

The lack of a Common Security and Defence Policy mission in the case of the 2011 Libyan uprising is difficult for sociological institutionalism to explain. Marchi Balossi-Restelli notes that '[a]fter a decade of rapid development in terms of structures and deployment, the CSDP

could have been operational in Libya' (2014, p. 89). In other words, the establishment of common institutions and the means for pooling military resources, and, after 26 CSDP operations, the socialisation of national representatives into common decision-making norms were apparently not enough to ensure a CSDP mission in Libya. On the basis of interviews with officials and a survey of documentation, Marchi Balossi-Restelli argues that common norms and shared patterns of behaviour are inadequate to explain the European reaction to the Libya crisis, and advocates instead a 'domestic level approach' taking member state political and electoral issues into account (2014, p. 98). Her observation identifies the inadequacies of sociological institutionalism and points towards the discursive approach taken in this thesis.

The Libya intervention may appear to be an easier case for liberal intergovernmentalism to explain, because in this case the operation was mainly coordinated between member states (in cooperation with the US, and others) outside of the institutions of the EU. An immediate difficulty for liberal intergovernmentalism, however, is that actual national interest, beyond the provision of live combat exercise for respective air forces, is difficult to establish. Maintaining the stability of the near neighbourhood in order to prevent the spread of terrorist organisations or to control mass migration could be a justification for the intervention on the basis of national interests. Subsequent developments in Libya, however, demonstrate the complete failure of this objective, if indeed it was one, as well as the difficulty of predicting the outcome of foreign policy measures. In fact the prior cosy relationship between EU member states and North African dictators, and the slowness of EU governments to shift support behind the Arab Spring's opposition groups, is more indicative of a construction of national interest as corresponding to the status quo rather than supporting the revolutionaries. In the case of Egypt, for example, Schumacher asserts that:

France ... spearheaded a group of southern European countries, joined by EU President [sic] Hermann Van Rompuy and HR Catherine Ashton ... [who] considered Mubarak a bulwark against Islamic extremism and believed that a democratic transition with Mubarak remaining in power was possible (2011, p.115).

It is therefore argued that factors other than rationally-derived member state national interests must be sought to explain European participation in the Libya intervention. A more credible motivation is the normative desire to protect a civilian population crying out for rights and liberties from a murderous dictator.

Davidson (2013) argues that no single existing international relations theory can explain the decisions made by France and the UK to intervene in Libya, and asserts that the key condition for action to take place is ‘public or opposition support’ (p. 311). This again points towards the discursive theory put forward here which does indeed place domestic politics at the heart of joint decision-making on external issues. But it is apparent that neither sociological institutionalism nor liberal intergovernmentalism can explain European participation in the 2011 Libya intervention.

Normative actorness 1: democracy, human rights and the rule of law

The weakness of the EU as a normative actor transmitting the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, a small number of headline issues notwithstanding (such as the abolition of capital punishment or the establishment of the International Criminal Court), poses perhaps the greatest difficulty for sociological institutionalism. These norms have been deliberately constructed as central values of the European Union, and yet in neither the case of a member state’s democratic backsliding, nor in the case of Chinese human rights abuses in former Tibet (at a time of great public relations vulnerability for the Chinese Communist Party in the lead-up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics) was unified action forthcoming.

Sociological institutionalism expects participation in the institutions of the EU by new member states will lead to socialisation into western European norms:

EU scholars have begun to study how the EU’s policies – notably, its application of conditionality – are promoting domestic change among the transition states of Eastern Europe. Renewing and reinvigorating an earlier neofunctionalist line of reasoning, Western Europeanists are once again examining how participation in the institutional structures of the EU may affect the interests and identities of state agents (Checkel 2005, p. 802).

In these cases the socialisation of national officials could not bring about a common position in harmony with cherished EU norms.

In the case of China, however, Balducci provides an alternative explanation in terms of sociological institutionalism. Regarding the move away from a hard line on human rights in relations with China which took place in the late 1990s (described in more detail in chapter 6) he argues that:

After 1998 all EU member states were *socialised* into abandoning the tabling of resolutions at the UNCHR to pursue an allegedly more effective and constructive approach (2010, p. 43).

Thus, according to this argument, the EU's relationship with China over human rights, now characterized by constructive engagement, was justified, at least initially, 'on the basis of *effectiveness* in the promotion of human rights' (p. 43), namely in recognition of the failure of previous, hard-line positions, and on the premise that China's economic growth and integration into the liberal world order would bring about political change (p. 46). On the other hand, the apparent failure of engagement to trigger such developments in China in the intervening years raises the question as to why European elites persist with such a policy, if the protection of human rights is such an important consideration.

By contrast, liberal intergovernmentalism would appear to provide ready explanations for both Hungary's backsliding and EU weakness over China's crackdown in Tibet. In the former case, individual member states cannot derive any tangible benefit from applying treaty provisions to punish a member state for breach of rather nebulous 'common values', and might even have reason to fear the same measures being used against them in the future.

In the latter case, boycotts of French businesses in China in response to president Sarkozy's public consideration of staying away from the opening ceremony provided a warning of what was in store for those who chose to take a stand over Tibet. By the same token, as was noted in chapter 6, the economic interest argument was rarely used explicitly by government speakers in defending their governments' positions. Furthermore, as has been argued several times already, it would be more difficult for China to take reprisal action against the EU as a whole, if it were to offer a united front. The question of economic interest is thus not so clear-cut: it could be argued that it is a discursive construction, rather than rationally-derived. Nevertheless, it is accepted that liberal intergovernmentalism provides a convincing explanation for these two case studies, and that sociological institutionalism does not, and these results are recorded in table 3.

Normative actorness 2: norms of international relations

Unified action by EU leaders in accordance with European norms of behaviour corresponds to the expectations of sociological institutionalism. In the case of the Iran nuclear negotiations, European officials, socialized into accepting the norms of multilateralism, engagement and

international law – the norms by which Europe has overcome its own belligerent past – pursued a strategy with respect to Iran that was at first greeted with scepticism by American officials, but which was eventually adopted by US policy-makers, and which ultimately brought about an agreement with Iran to ensure its nuclear program remained peaceful. In the Ukrainian case study, EU leaders have pursued a similar strategy which has at the time of writing succeeded in de-escalating the crisis, though without a similarly conclusive resolution.

These two case studies can therefore successfully be explained by sociological institutionalism. By the same token, it is argued that the discursive theory adds to these explanations a more compelling element: that for highly politicized issues like the Iran nuclear negotiations and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, socialized officials are not enough, government policy must stand up to scrutiny in the public sphere as well; and that European publics supported their governments' Iran policy because it addressed constructions of a civilian and international law-abiding European identity, in contrast to the Bush-era American other.

By contrast, liberal intergovernmentalism struggles to explain these two case studies. Once again it is difficult to identify national interests which would cause the member states to act concertedly in this way. Physical security is of course first and foremost amongst national interests. However, Iran was not constructed as a direct security threat to Europe in any of texts investigated. A more credible explanation is that the EU response was based on a desire to demonstrate EU actorness in the wake of the split over the US invasion of Iraq, a matter of EU identity rather than member state calculations of national interest. In the case of the Ukraine crisis, it was only the Baltic states which constructed Russia's behaviour as a direct security threat. Even other Eastern European states, still bearing the scars of 4 decades of Soviet hegemony, failed to see Russia's behaviour as threatening, and even argued against the economic sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU (BBC 2015b). Security concerns therefore, while present, were not dominant. A better explanation is that it was Russia's threat to the normative international relations order that European leaders had so painstakingly built up on their continent, and not calculations of national interest that led to the common EU policy towards Russia after the latter's intervention in Ukraine.

Any case which involves the application of sanctions onto a third party is also difficult for liberal intergovernmentalism to explain. As was noted in chapter 7, economic sanctions cause

economic damage for the sanctioners as well as the sanctioned. Governments will therefore face pressure from business interests not to impose sanctions. Reference was made, for example in the House of Commons debates examined for the Ukraine case study, of the German business lobby, represented by none other than the previous German Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, arguing against sanctions on Russia (Straw 2014, c. 581). An overriding security concern would need to be present before the ‘aggregation’ of sectoral interests came down in favour of sanctions: it has just been argued that this was not present in either the Iran or the Ukraine case.

A further problem with economic sanctions, however, is their effectiveness. If member states decided it was in their national interest to pressure Iran to abandon its nuclear weapons program, then it is hard to argue that the use of sanctions is a rational choice of means. As was discussed in chapter 7, the perceived wisdom before the 2012 round of sanctions began to bite, was that sanctions are ineffective. A quarter of a century of US sanctions on Iran was the proof of this. Sanction-busting states, only too willing to exploit newly available economic opportunities, and a rally-around-the-flag effect which leads to increased support for the regime being targeted are among the factors that make sanctions untenable (van de Graaf 2013, p. 157; Kozhanov 2011, p. 151). The case of the Iranian nuclear program is a rare example of economic sanctions actually being effective. In fact the EU actions and the choice of means, in both the Iran and the Ukraine cases, can only be explained in terms of putting into practice a normative approach to international relations, and not as member states pursuing their own national interests. It is therefore argued that liberal intergovernmentalism cannot explain the final two case studies.

Summary of comparison of theories

Table 3 summarizes the comparison of the explanatory power of the three theories in the 10 case studies, discussed above. It was found that sociological institutionalism explained 6 case studies, and liberal intergovernmentalism explained 3, possibly 4. By comparison, 9 of 10 case studies can be explained by the discursive theoretical approach put forward in chapter 2. The exception is the case study on Hungary’s backsliding, which could possibly be excluded from the analysis as not a true example of EU external action. The empirical chapters of this thesis therefore provide strong support for the discursive theory put forward in chapter 2, and thus for the assertion that the basis of EU international actorness lies in interaction between domestic political discourses and identity (re)constructions in the public spheres of the member states.

While this discursive theoretical model appears to have found strong empirical support, it is nevertheless important to emphasise that there are a number of limitations attached to it. Firstly, it is only applicable to external action issues. This is because it is based on the principle that foreign policy statements, which contain constructions of the ‘other’, necessarily co-create the identity of the self, thus are always also representations of national (or another form of) self-identity. Non-external issues may involve aspects of identity, but there is no automaticity that they will. This restriction to external issues does not apply to other theories of EU unity formation such as sociological institutionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism, which can be applied to all areas of joint decision-making, and are therefore more general theories.

Dimension of actorness	Case study	Sociological institutionalism	Liberal intergovernmentalism	Discursive theory
Economic actorness	The euro crisis	✓	✓/✗	✓
	The Chinese solar panels dispute	✗	✓	✓
Environmental actorness	The Copenhagen climate change conference	✓	✗	✓
	The Durban climate change conference	✓	✗	✓
Military actorness	The 2003 intervention in the DR Congo	✓	✗	✓
	The 2011 Libya intervention	✗	✗	✓
Normative actorness 1	Hungary’s backsliding	✗	✓	✗
	China’s 2008 intervention in Tibet	✗	✓	✓
Normative actorness 2	The Iranian nuclear program	✓	✗	✓
	Russia’s intervention in Ukraine	✓	✗	✓

Table 3: Comparison of the explanatory power of the three theoretical approaches explored in this thesis.

Neither does the discursive theory set out here claim to be a complete theory of preference formation of member state governments or EU institutions. It simply asserts that EU unity formation is constrained (or enabled) by the interaction of policy and public debate in the member states. There are other influences on government policy-making which this theory does not pretend to explain. However, given that a model of EU unity-formation based on the Hansen mechanism successfully explained 9 of the 10 case studies above, it is argued that the nexus between government policy and public sphere identity constructions has a very significant influence on EU policy-making.

Finally, the discursive theory is not applicable to issues that are not politicized beyond a certain threshold. If an international issue does not enter public debate, then member state governments are not constrained by the need for their policy announcements to be in harmony with co-constructed public identity discourses.

It is appropriate at this point to note that it is also possible to interpret the results presented in table 3 not so much as a competition for validity between three mutually exclusive theoretical approaches, but rather as an exercise in more precisely delimiting the conditions under which each is valid. Throughout this thesis a number of points of commonality have been noted between the discursive theory on the one hand, and both liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism on the other. In this final section of chapter 8 these commonalities will be discussed, the realms of applicability of each theory revisited, and the conclusion drawn that the discursive theory approaches the two standard theories at different limits of its applicability.

Both liberal intergovernmentalism and the discursive theory place importance on the nexus between member state governments and their populations. Both give weight to the observation that member state governments are primarily accountable to their own electorates – and ultimately dependent on them for their political survival. Liberal intergovernmentalism differs from the discursive theory in insisting that there is a rational process of ‘interest aggregation’ through which national interests emerge, which governments then take to the EU level negotiations, and that these interests are not influenced by the negotiation process itself. The discursive theory argues, on the other hand, that situations in which a clear, undisputed calculation of interest can be made are the exception rather than the rule: apart from a subset of

purely economic issues, policy outcomes are usually difficult to predict, and there are often competing claims over what the results of any given policy action will be. This is especially true in foreign policy. This thesis argues further that, rather than an ‘interest aggregation’, in fact the process by which the national interest is determined is a discursive one, subject to essentially social rules – a process which, in foreign policy, is particularly influenced by national identity constructions. Even the decision to appease China to avoid economic punishment is a discursive construction of national interest: the preferencing of calculations of short-term economic interest over the benefits of a more symmetric relationship.

It should also be stressed that despite their similarity the discursive theory is not an intergovernmental theory. Intergovernmentalism essentially rules out the influence of EU institutions in the process of consensus formation. The theory presented here does not; it merely asserts that member state politics has a key constraining effect on EU consensus-making. It by no means rules out the influence of EU institutions on member state preference formation. However, it does recognize that the process of Europeanization of public discourse is a mediated process: there is little opportunity for the EU to interact directly with a European public sphere, rather EU institutions exert discursive influence via the national public spheres. As has been observed for external action issues, the intergovernmental forum is still very strong in the EU, supranational institutions and community decision-making processes notwithstanding. The case study chapter on economic actorness showed that even in a case involving the Common Commercial Policy, one of the oldest and most communitarized areas of EU practice, member state consensus is still a precondition for EU action.

It is suggested that the commonalities between the discursive theory put forward here and liberal intergovernmentalism can best be understood by the proposition that at its limits, where the predictability of outcomes is high and/or the issue is constructed in predominantly national terms, the discursive theory approaches liberal intergovernmentalism (in the sense that its explanations become very similar). The approach of this thesis would still insist, of course, that the construction of national interests as a ‘rational’ calculation is still a discursive choice.

In a similar manner, the discursive theory can be seen to approach sociological institutionalism at its limits in an orthogonal direction: that of decreasing politicization. Sociological institutionalism argues that socialisation of national elites leads to policy convergence among

member state governments. The theory put forward in this thesis does not deny that Europeanization of elites is an important phenomenon when considering policy unity. For everyday, procedural issues, elite agreement may be sufficient for EU consensus formation. However for major issues – those which enter the debate in the respective national public spheres – it is Europeanization of the public discourse that matters. Of course the socialisation of elites is related to the Europeanization of public discourse, but it is only the latter which brings about the ideal case for EU actorness: common EU framing of an issue appealing to shared European identity constructions supporting a unified EU policy response advocated by all member state governments. Where an issue is not politicized, however, public discourses do not play a constraining role, and the explanation of EU (dis)unity is consistent with sociological institutionalism.

In this sense, therefore, the discursive theoretical model put forward in this thesis genuinely fills a gap in the existing theorizing of European Union actorness. However, while acknowledging that the discursive theory may occupy a space between sociological institutionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism, it is nevertheless argued that it is valid in the most important cases: when the outcomes of various policy options are unclear, and when the issue arouses strong public debate.

Conclusion

This thesis has put forward a theory of EU international actorness which meets deficiencies in existing theorizing. Derived from post-structuralism and discourse theory, this approach places the locus of EU actorness in the interaction between common national and shared European identity constructions on the one hand, and the contingencies of domestic political debate in the member states on the other. Such an approach allows for an understanding of EU actorness that goes beyond ‘rational’ calculations of national interest, on which liberal intergovernmentalism is based, but also for a conceptualisation that rests on the common values and identities of a much broader population than a Europeanized elite, to which sociological institutionalism is restricted.

The derivation of this discursive theory began with the argument that EU-wide agreement on substantive policy questions over time is a good measure of EU actorness. This approach allows for a definition of actorness that is not state-centric, in other words, one that does not simply require the EU to behave like a powerful state in order to qualify as an actor in international affairs. In particular it allows for the possibility that the EU may be a different kind of actor: a civilian one, that expresses its actorness through non-military means; or a normative one, that conducts itself according to certain norms of behaviour, and indeed represents these norms to others for emulation. Allowing for such possibilities is a more general – and hence more valid – starting point than insisting that international actorness can only derive from military power. The temporal qualification in this definition of actorness, that unity must extend over time, is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it means that temporary disagreements do not necessarily negate actorness. Secondly, as was argued in chapter 1, other variables commonly cited as prerequisites of actorness, such as capability and institutional capacity, can be shown to be related to unity of purpose over time. Because the total potential capabilities of the EU together with its member states is actually high – that is the basis of the capability-expectations gap (Hill 1993) – actorness is in fact a question of the political will to use them collectively, and that, it is argued, is equivalent to lasting unity of purpose. The theoretical model accounting for the discursive constraints on EU unity formation therefore becomes a theory of EU actorness.

This theory is not without its limitations: it is only applicable in cases of genuine external action (as the Hungary case study above demonstrated), and only those which are significant enough to enter the domestic political debate (questionable in the DR Congo case study). It also makes no claim of being a complete theory of member state and/or EU policy formation: it does not penetrate inside cabinet room or Commission decision-making processes, for example. Neither does it consider the institutional structure and policy-making procedures of EU as a whole. Rather it seeks to model the constraining influences of domestic politics and identity discourses on policy choices. Nevertheless, this thesis has demonstrated its efficacy in being able to provide an explanation for 9 of the 10 case studies investigated. In particular, it was more successful in these cases than the two most significant competing theories of EU consensus formation, liberal intergovernmentalism and sociological institutionalism. While acknowledging the incompleteness of the theoretical model presented here, this strong result nevertheless demonstrates the importance of discursive constraints arising from public identity constructions on EU actorness.

Sociological institutionalism provided adequate explanations for cases in which national officials were able to overcome their differences and reach a consensus to act in a way that was consistent with European values. These cases include the euro crisis, where national interests across the EU should have been diametrically opposed, but, in place of disintegration, a series of further integrative steps were taken. It was a similar situation for the climate change conferences, for which member state representatives had to overcome significant differences to reach agreement on common emissions reduction targets, and also for the international crisis management situations such as the successful deployment of a Common Security and Defence Policy mission in the DR Congo, or the sanctions regimes against Iran and Russia, the latter two demanding non-uniform economic sacrifices from the member states. In most of these cases, however, it has been argued that a stronger explanation can be provided in terms of the interaction between national politics and identity discourses in the public sphere. The fiscal compact, an important component of the measures adopted to combat the euro crisis, is better understood as a sop to the electorates of the solvent northern states, than as an initiative reflecting EU-wide values. This claim is supported by the subsequent lack of consequences for repeated breaches of the compact by a number of member states (de Finance 2016, pp. 8-9). Ambitious emissions reductions targets would also have been impossible without nearly universal public acceptance of the anthropogenic nature of climate change, of which an

important component was the construction of European identity as environmentally enlightened, in contrast to the ignorant American other. Othering of Bush-era US unilateralism and militarism in the public discourses was also a vital component in the EU commitment to a risky strategy to halt the Iranian nuclear program. In other words, the convictions of Europeanized elites were not enough in these cases to explain EU actorness: public support was also necessary. Just as significantly, sociological institutionalism could not explain cases in which supposedly Europeanized national elites were unable to reach a common position. In these cases consensus was prevented by divergent identity constructions in the member states' public spheres. Perhaps the biggest success for sociological institutionalism was the Operation Artemis intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which, judging by the low-key and confusing media coverage it received, may not truly have entered the public sphere, and thus may genuinely have been based on the decisions of national officials.

Liberal intergovernmentalism appeared to provide a good explanation of cases in which the EU consensus was foiled by member states pursuing their own, independent national economic interests. Thus the failure of the EU to stand united against China in two of the case studies could be explained in terms of member states separately competing for China's economic favour. But this ignores the logic that the longer term economic interests of the member states lie in a united Europe which is able to deal with China on equal terms. Which economic logic is more 'rational'? In fact, the failure of EU unity in these cases is better understood discursively, in terms of European economic questions still being constructed in public debate in largely national terms: Germany, not the EU, as an export giant; France, not Europe, as a wine producing champion. In the one case where the discursive theory failed, Hungary's democratic backsliding, liberal intergovernmentalism does appear to explain lack of EU consensus. However, it foundered in many other cases in which the EU reached agreement on a common position that could not be explained in terms of a 'rationalistic' determination of member state national interest.

For these reasons the discursive theory presented here is put forward as a better explanation of EU actorness on external action questions. However, rather than simply invalidating sociological institutionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism, the discussion above can perhaps better be understood as a clarification of the boundary conditions under which each theory may be valid. As was described at the end of chapter 8, the three theories appear to merge

at the limits of their validity. When politicization is below a certain threshold, the discursive theory appears to give way to sociological institutionalism. And when external action issues are constructed divergently and nationally in the various states, such as is often the case for questions on which short-term economic cost or benefit can be unambiguously calculated, then the discursive theory approaches liberal intergovernmentalism (though it would still be argued that economic calculus is constructed discursively). By the same token, this connectedness of the three theories does not detract from the usefulness of the discursive theory put forward here: the most important cases to be explained by a theory of EU actorness are those which are the most politicized, and the outcomes of which are hardest to foresee.

In addition to confirming the validity of the discursive approach taken in this thesis, a number of other conclusions have arisen out of the case study investigations. Firstly, it was frequently noted that EU actorness is hindered by persistently national constructions of economic questions, despite the all-pervasiveness of the 'common market'. Two case studies demonstrated how China is able to divide the EU not only on economic questions, but also on political issues that it is able to link to economic threats. This includes political issues which concern cherished EU norms and values. As long as a Chinese boycott of Carrefour is considered an attack on France and not on Europe, EU actorness will continue to be compromised.

The second observation has to do with the relationship between EU actorness and European identity. As discussed in chapter 2, many scholars see a strong link between the two. However, it has been argued in the thesis, and borne out in the case studies, that while the existence of European identity co-constructions is the ideal case for EU actorness, it is also true that similar national identity discourses are sufficient to enable EU unity – in fact so are even divergent national identity constructs, as long as these are still compatible with the unified policy being put forward. The case studies demonstrated that frequently a combination of all three of these configurations enabled EU unity and hence EU actorness on a given issue. An important caveat, however, is provided by the failure of the minus configuration of the discursive theory: common identity co-constructions across the member states are not enough in themselves to push governments to reach a unified EU position.

Thirdly, despite there being several identity pathways to EU unity, a number of cleavage issues exist, which, as recurring elements in national identity constructions, make EU consensus on certain questions difficult. On these cleavage issues, the identity discourses that are co-constructed in the member states' public spheres are strongly divergent and are hence unlikely to be compatible with a common EU-wide policy. The most prevalent of these cleavage issues are the Atlanticist-Europeanist divide, the free trade versus protectionism debate, and the split between those who envisage integration as progressing towards federalism, and those who do not. The departure of the UK after the Brexit vote may have the effect of ameliorating these cleavages: this will be discussed in more detail below.

A fourth observation concerns normative actorness. A section of chapter 1 summarized the debate surrounding the notion of 'normative power Europe'. This thesis adopted the definition that a normative actor is one that not only acts according to a set of defined norms, but also intends its behaviour to function as a model for others to emulate. Two case study chapters were devoted to the study of EU normative actorness, dividing EU norms into two groups, one containing the societal norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, the other encompassing norms of international relations: preventive engagement, effective multilateralism and adherence to international law. The investigation found that the EU is a relatively weak actor on the first group, but potentially a much more effective normative actor concerning its norms of international relations. Furthermore, other chapters also touched on elements of EU actorness that could be considered normative. The EU's acknowledged climate change leadership has a clear normative element, both in terms of the EU's own adoption of ambitious targets, and in its influence in setting an example which has helped to bring about more substantial commitments from other parts of the world. But also the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy missions can be seen to have normative elements: with their strong civilian components, and their strict limiting of military engagement to the Petersberg tasks. This latter claim to normative actorness is tempered, though, by the near invisibility of CSDP operations, in both the European and international consciousness. Thus, while this thesis did not set out to determine whether the EU is a normative actor or otherwise, it has found significant evidence that particularly on questions concerning relations between states, it can indeed be considered one.

Lastly, the empirical investigations in this thesis found that involvement of the US was a key aspect of EU normative actorness. For some, this is the knock-out blow for normative power Europe. Kagan has claimed that it is only the US security umbrella which enables the EU to live out its Kantian fairy-tale of normative actorness (Kagan 2002, p. 25). The Iranian case study in particular demonstrated the crucial role played by the US in the success of the EU's strategy. While this thesis suggests that it was EU normative actorness – the EU's ability to transmit its norms of international relations – that brought the US on board concerning the negotiating strategy, it is also likely that without US assistance, the overall strategy would have failed. The role of the US in the Libyan and Ukrainian case studies was likewise pivotal. However, rather than – like Kagan – rejecting the very idea of EU normative actorness, it is instead argued that the norm of multilateralism is perfectly consistent with flexible alliance formations, including the trans-Atlantic one. For small-scale international crises, such as in the DR Congo in 2003, the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy is sufficient. For higher level conflicts, the issue can be dealt with through NATO or an ad hoc alliance with the US and others. For threats to international security, the best solution may be one based on international law and multilateral institutions, first and foremost the UN. In this context the need for alliance building with other major actors, in particular the US, is a logical component, and not a refutation, of normative actorness.

Current issues

Insight on two current issues can also be gained by viewing them through the lens of the discursive theory put forward in this thesis. The first concerns political extremism. European integration has the reputation of being an elite undertaking (e.g. Haller 2008). The value placed on the European project by elites in the core member states was particularly striking in the euro crisis case study, in which French and German elite discourses made safeguarding the euro the equivalent of defending the cherished European project in its entirety. A major change to the composition of European elites, for example through extremist parties joining or forming government in core member states, could therefore potentially lead to divergent constructions of the European project, as well as government discourses that appeal to more divisive aspects of national identity. The phenomenon of the *Putin-Versteher* discourse in the German texts from the Ukraine case study, in which a large demographic professed an 'understanding' (if not outright support) for Russia's action, is a warning of the fertile ground that exists for extremist parties to place a different narrative on international events such as Russia's intervention in

Ukraine, with significant consequences for the EU unity that has been behind its normative actorness.

The 2015 refugee crisis provides another example of how identity discourses could be exploited by political rhetoric antithetical to traditional EU values. Uncontrolled migration, because of the immediate proximity of the ‘other’, leads to strong constructions of national identity that can render open-border government policies easy targets for attacks from extremist political groups. This situation is only exacerbated by terrorist strikes carried out by those from recent migrant backgrounds. A government containing extremist elements in a major member state, which achieves power by appealing to exclusive rather than Europeanized national identity, could have a very significant impact on EU unity. As this thesis has argued from the start, lack of unity over time would equate with decreasing EU actorness, and a declining role for Europe in international affairs: potentially the end of normative power Europe. From another perspective, however, it must be recognized that for the moment, mass migration towards Europe is in itself a strong expression of EU actorness: for millions around the world Europe remains an attractive paragon of peace and prosperity.

The exploitation of migration-related anxiety was also perhaps the most important factor contributing to the success of the leave campaign in the Brexit referendum of 23 June 2016 (Mason 2016). Despite the UK being one of the three member states investigated in the case study chapters of this thesis, it was argued in chapter 2 that the discursive theory proposed here is a general one, and is not invalidated by the expected departure of even such a significant member state as the UK. This theoretical model in fact provides a framework for analysing the potential effect on EU actorness of a British departure. Firstly, it was frequently observed in the case studies that the British public sphere is significantly less Europeanized than that of France or Germany. Secondly, on cleavage questions, the UK is recognized as the leader of the Atlanticist and free-trade groups, as well as being home to Europe’s most outspoken anti-federalists. From this perspective, then, the UK’s departure might be expected to improve the chances for EU unity and hence increase EU actorness.

It could be objected that the loss of its second-largest economy means a reduction in the EU’s economic weight, the very basis of its actorness. However it is also true the UK will be keen to remain as much a part of the free-trade area as possible. And it was never part of the most

closely integrated group of economies, the eurozone, a point highlighted by its outsider role in the euro crisis case study. It might also be argued that the EU without the UK nevertheless means a loss of EU capabilities, because only the UK and France have internationally credible militaries. However, it should be borne in mind that the EU never had automatic disposal over the British military, and the Libya case study demonstrated that the UK was probably more likely to participate in a joint operation outside the framework of the EU anyway. In future situations similar to the Libyan, Iranian or Ukrainian case studies, it is hard to imagine that a UK outside the EU would not play a part very similar to the one it played in those cases.

The important role played by the US as a partner to EU normative actorness, discussed above, provides a model for EU-UK relations after Brexit. Continuity is all the more likely, given the fundamental consistency between UK and EU norms of international relations, as was observed on several occasions in the cases studies (the British participation in the 2003 Iraq invasion notwithstanding). This is an indication that a future strong role for the UK in foreign policy endeavours championing these norms is just as likely for a UK outside of the EU. It is therefore possible that EU actorness will not suffer a blow commensurate with the purely numerical size of the UK's military or economic strength relative to the rest of the Union. By the same token, if the UK's departure contributes to electoral success for extreme or anti-EU political parties elsewhere in Europe, then that is bad news for EU actorness. As the failure of the minus configuration of the discursive theory demonstrates, common national discourses on international issues are not enough to bring about a unified EU policy if there is insufficient political will for it among member state governments.

In addition to shining new light on the complex question of EU actorness, this thesis has hoped to demonstrate the derivation of a theoretical model from post-structuralism and discourse theory which is both parsimonious and has practical application. 'Reflectivist' theorizing is often criticized as being overly descriptive and ultimately unfalsifiable (as discussed in chapter 2). Hansen herself expressed the hope that her mechanism would contribute to further study demonstrating that this need not be the case (2006, p. xvi). By the same token, there is room for further refinement and rigorization of the theoretical model developed here. The theory models the discursive constraints on EU policy-making imposed by the interaction between political debate and identity discourses in the public spheres of the member states. The processes of preference formation within member state governments and EU institutions such as the

Commission, which surely follow similar discursive rules, would be a rich area for further development of this discourse-theoretical approach to EU actorness.

Appendix: Details of the primary sources used in the discourse analysis sections

The following table is a summary of the textual sources which were coded for use in the discourse analyses in the case studies. Word count is to the nearest thousand. The reasons for the variation in word count between different sources across different case studies include the complexity of the basic discourses surrounding the issue (e.g. if discourses changed over time then more sources were required) and the availability of texts (e.g. there was significant variation between newspapers concerning the number of articles summoned under identical search conditions). Coding continued until a pattern of relative strength of recurring discourse elements was established, and no new elements emerged.

	France			Germany			UK		
	Assemblée nationale	Libération	Figaro	Bundestag	Süddeutsche	Die Welt	House of Commons	Guardian	Telegraph
The euro crisis	Debate 21/2/2012 36,000 words	14 articles 9,000 words	35 articles 15,000 words	Debates 27/2/2012 (part) and 29/6/2012 51,000 words	28 articles 18,000 words	23 articles 19,000 words	Debates 24/5/2011 and 3/9/2012 52,000 words	26 articles 20,000 words	28 articles 18,000 words
The Chinese solar panels dispute	1 written and 3 oral questions and responses 2,000 words	6 articles 3,000 words	12 articles 5,000 words	Speeches submitted to written protocol 16/5/2013 5,000 words	7 articles 4,000 words	12 articles 7,000 words	4 oral questions and responses, and 1 newspaper article written by the minister 2,000 words	7 articles 2,000 words	10 articles 6,000 words
The Copenhagen climate change conference	Debates 2/12/2009 and 22/12/2009 15,000 words	6 articles 5,000 words	8 articles 6,000 words	Debate 3/12/2009 15,000 words	12 articles 8,000 words	8 articles 7,000 words	Debate 5/11/2009 (part) 12,000	10 articles 11,000 words	11 articles 8,000 words
The Durban climate change conference	3 written and 1 oral questions and responses 4,000 words	9 articles 5,000 words	6 articles 4,000 words	Debate 16/12/2011 19,000 words	12 articles 6,000 words	10 articles 7,000 words	Debate 12/12/2011 7,000 words	7 articles 5,000 words	7 articles 6,000 words
The 2003 intervention in the DR Congo	Debate 5/6/2003 and 1 written question and response 1,000 words	13 articles 5,000 words	6 articles 5,000 words	Debates 6/6/2003 and 18/6/2003 15,000 words	9 articles 4,000 words	14 articles 7,000 words	Debate 12/6/2003 and 2 oral questions and responses 8,000 words	5 articles 4,000 words	8 articles 4,000 words

	France			Germany			UK		
	Assemblée nationale	Libération	Figaro	Bundestag	Süddeutsche	Die Welt	House of Commons	Guardian	Telegraph
The 2011 Libya intervention	Debate 22/3/2011 17,000 words	13 articles 8,000 words	15 articles 9,000 words	Debates 16/3/2011 and 18/3/2011 27,000 words	13 articles 10,000 words	13 articles 12,000 words	Debates 7/3/2011, 21/3/2011 (part) and 28/3/2011 28,000 words	14 articles 14,000 words	9 articles 11,000 words
Hungary's backsliding	5 written and 2 oral questions and responses 4,000 words	5 articles 4,000 words	5 articles 4,000 words	Debates 20/1/2011, 22/3/2011 and 14/3/2013 31,000 words	6 articles 7,000 words	5 articles 4,000 words	Debates 12/7/2012 and 1 oral question and response 1,000 words	5 articles 5,000 words	9 articles 6,000 words
China's 2008 intervention in Tibet	Debate 7/4/2008, 11 written and 3 oral questions and responses 10,000 words	9 articles 5,000 words	14 articles 8,000 words	Debates 10/4/2008 and 26/6/2008 15,000 words	20 articles 6,000 words	14 articles 7,000 words	Debates 25/3/2008 and 1/4/2008 7,000 words	14 articles 13,000 words	17 articles 12,000 words
The Iranian nuclear program	13 oral questions and responses 11,000 words	25 articles 13,000 words	12 articles 8,000 words	Debates 17/2/2006, 1/3/2007, 24/5/2012 and 28/11/2013 25,000 words	42 articles 19,000 words	16 articles 10,000 words	Debates 17/9/2003, 11/10/2005, 27/2/2007, 4/3/2009, 24/1/2012, 20/2/2012 (part), 17/6/2013, 11/11/2013, 12/11/2013, 25/11/2013 and 22 oral questions and responses 114,000 words	19 articles 19,000 words	23 articles 16,000 words
Russia's intervention in Ukraine	9 oral questions and responses, 2 appearances by the minister before the foreign affairs committee 25,000 words	9 articles 8,000 words	10 articles 10,000 words	Debates 31/1/2014, 20/2/2014, 13/3/2014 and 7/5/2014 47,000 words	11 articles 11,000 words	9 articles 11,000 words	Debates 24/2/2014, 4/3/2014, 18/3/2014 (part), 8/4/2014, 28/4/2014 and 13/5/2014 49,000	7 articles 9,000 words	8 articles 10,000 words

Primary source citations

Citations from the primary sources in the discourse analysis sections only of the case studies are listed here. Citations from the same sources in the remainder of the thesis are treated as references and cited in the reference section.

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