European Union: An Empire in New Clothes?

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Introduction

The political and academic discourse(s) of whether, or not, the European Union (EU) can be understood as a form of empire are, first, controversial and, second, encounter widely indignant disapproval by those who those who 'like' the EU and by orthodox EU scholarship. From such perspectives, the EU is understood as a 'normative', i.e., good, power that spreads and conducts politics guided by human rights, democracy, and free markets, while 'empire' is understood as something evil, martial, and aggressive (amongst others, Manners, 2002; Telo, 2006; Whitman, 1998). This, somewhat simplified, dichotomy is in desperate need of clarification; and in this clarification exists the approach of this book and its attempt to assemble some of the most important contributors to the first wave of the 'EU-as-empire-discourse' to revisit their arguments after some 10 years.

In order to summarise the main features of this discourse, now and then: in the context of the 2004 Eastern enlargement, the question arose among some political scientists, historians, and sociologists of whether the EU is indeed something 'sui generis' as the orthodox political and academic discourse widely held (see for the first, the first wave of 'EU-as-empire-discourse', for instance: Behr, 2007; Boeroecz, 2001; Diez, 1999; Engelbrekt, 2002; Hansen, 2002; Kovacs, 2001; Waever, 1997; Beck/Grande, 2007; Zielonka, 2006, Philipson, 2002; for the latter, see for example:

Phelan, 2012; Eichengreen, 2008). This questioning of the '*sui generis*'-argument initiated comparative perspectives into European and global history that resulted in mainly the three observations of (1) politics of conditionality by the EU (Stivachtis, 2008; Grabbe, 2002; Schimmelpfennig, 2004; Anastasakis and Bechev, 2003), (2) a geopolitical centre-periphery model in the EU characterized by asymmetric relations of wealth, power, and rights (Bartolini, 2005; Tunander et al., 1997; Copus, 2001; Behr, 2007), and (3) a discourse of and on European civilization in relation to the EU as global actor (Mitzen, 2006; European Commission 2014; Merlingen, 2007). Politics of conditionality, geopolitics of centre-periphery, and civilizational discourse resemble historically, whether one likes or not, features that are likewise evinced by what is non-controversially termed empire (historically see Benton, 2002; Eisenstadt, 1963; Sinopoli, 1994). Thus, the question seems to be indeed not whether the EU shows indicators that are (historically also) typical for empire, but, first, *what kind of empire* is the EU and, second, what at all *is* empire more fully and conceptually understood. The chapters collected here, approach and provide different perspectives and answers to these two questions. In doing so, and in having done so some 10 years ago in first attempts, these undertakings stem *not* from some dislike of the EU, but rather from disquiet and some dissatisfaction with the Union, carried by the wish to guard and rescue a worthwhile idea of supranational order. The 'EU-as-empire-discourse' was thus born from empathy (but concern) with the Union and was looking *beyond* approaches as they are established in orthodox EU scholarship but well established in other social sciences (such as discourse analysis, iconographic analysis, historiographical analysis, linguistic analysis, etc.).

One more observation may be added here that is, too, addressed in some of the following chapters: as this book and its chapters are written in the context and under the influences of modern, present-day language structures and semantics (in this case, English), they all suffer from one particular shortcoming in relation to their epistemologies as epistemology is influenced by language and by semantically generated and (re)inforced perceptions (on the relation between language and epistemology, see Shapiro, 1992; Marcuse, 1964; Chomsky, 1968; Danto, 1969; Nagel, 1969). This epistemological limitation determines the above mentioned disapproval of the 'EU-as-empire-discourse' by orthodox EU scholarship and politics. To be more precise: there was some igniting thought in José Manuel Baroso when he labeled the EU a 'non-imperial empire', but unfortunately he backpedaled very quickly. However, the idea he came from was correct. What we are talking about here, relates to a widely held and linguistically reasoned incapability to think of 'empire' other than as something aggressive, evil, and martial. This limitation is due to an age-long process of narrowing down the width that was comprised by the Latin '*imperium'* that stands at the roots of our English 'empire'. This process of narrowing-down has resulted in that we nowadays do not even have an adjective of 'empire' other than 'imperial' which inevitably sounds like, and is historically linked with, Chinese, Ottoman, British, Spanish, etc. expansion and 18th and 19th century warfare. 'Empire' thus appears as a political order that we cannot talk about other than dismissively. One aspect of the 'EU-as-empire-discourse' is hence to (re)open our imagination and to (re)gain a language that is more appropriate to empirical features and political experience rather than normatively pejorative (however, probably without being aware of it).

Such a more appropriate language, and subsequently political imagination and approaches, have not only to take into account the width of Latin *'imperium'* (see Champion, 2004; Erskine, 2010; Folz, 1969; Foster, 2015), but further to this the Ciceronian twin concept of *'patrocinium'* (see for Cicero his *De re publica*, *De officiis* and *De legibus*). Without delving here on linguistic nuances and genealogies, it might suffice to briefly mention the breadth of both *'imperium'* and *'patrocinium'* (for the latter we even have no noun in modern European English) in order to see what we as moderns have lost in terms of political imagination (why most of us are inclined to construe 'empire' – as the word we are left with – inevitably as something 'bad'). Both the Latin nouns of 'imperium' and 'patrocinium' encompass meanings such as 'order', 'power', 'authority', 'government', 'rule', 'mandate', 'tenure', 'patronage', 'responsibility', and 'protectorate'. Mentioning this, does not necessarily intend to promote the argument that 'empire' would be something 'good', but rather that it is a valuable *analytical* concept for the study of contemporary politics that is not to be dismissed due to normative likes and dislikes that appear indeed to be caused by language/epistemological limitations.

The Empire Discourse

The empire discourse is primarily related to the role of the United States in post- World War II international affairs and especially the U.S. international status following the end of the Cold War. However, the EU's eastward enlargement and its efforts to play a more active role in world affairs in the post-Cold War era has brought the empire discourse into EU studies. In this respect, the debate has been about the nature of EU power and its strategy to achieve its foreign and security policy objectives.

The United States as 'Empire'

The modern, 20th and 21st century discourse on empire initially gained prominence in relation to the U.S. involvement in world politics. Specifically, the idea of the U.S as an empire emerged after the end of WWII as the United States and the Soviet Union quickly became superpowers. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S. became the world's only superpower, with its military posts around the world declaring to provide security for allies and operating as it wished without constraints of other powers. Its hegemony encouraged the U.S. to act like an empire, imposing its views and constituting security cordons around the world (Craig 2004). In addition, it has been claimed that the U.S. engaged in new imperialist ventures not only militarily but also economically. Consequently, it has been argued that the U.S. is the sole example of geopolitical hegemony since the fall of the Roman Empire in that it can set conditions for peace and security of the world, has predominance in world economy, and manages security organizations, such as NATO (O'Brien and Clesse 2002).

Characterizing some aspects of U.S. foreign policy and international behavior as 'American empire' is controversial but not uncommon. Chalmers Johnson (2000) posits that the idea of American exceptionalism impairs popular recognition of American imperial conduct since it has governed other countries via surrogates. These surrogates were domestically weak, right wing governments that would collapse without American support. Sidney Lens and Howard Zinn (2003) have argued that from its inception, the U.S. has used every means available to dominate other nations. Niall Ferguson (2003 and 2004) argues that in both military and economic terms, the U.S. is nothing short of the

most powerful empire in history. Indeed, as Christopher Gray points out, the U.S. has about 5 per cent of the world's population but spends almost 50 per cent of all military budgets (Gray 2003, 7). For the moment, there is no credible counterbalancing power or combination of powers that can match it. The U.S. military divides the world into geographical commands that extend across various world regions and the U.S. military circles the globe with permanent military bases and weapons caches. It is worth noting that even before the occupation of Iraq, the U.S. had over 750 military bases in more than 130 countries and this number may be greater today (Gray 2003, 7).

However, as Robert Jackson and Philip Towle (2006, 22) indicate, Americans tend to regard themselves as reluctant imperialists. Although their presidents have not hesitated to pronounce global ambitions and enact policies of extraterritorial significance, the fact remains that for the Americans the U.S. is not an empire and if by some chance it is, then, it is one of a kind. Some contend that empire status is vital to prevent evil (terrorism and tyranny) in the world (Simes 2003). As such they contend that the American empire is benevolent and their only fear is that it may become weak, overstretched or collapse. For example, Ferguson believes that the U.S. has an unparalleled ability and opportunity to take the role of positive global leadership and shape the world around its values of free markets, the rule of law, and representative government (Ferguson 2004). He argues that the U.S. is a 'liberal' form of empire, which can benefit all peoples by enhancing prosperity and democracy, and by creating a kind of benevolent, negotiated global order upholding the rules of international law and coercing deviants with military power. In other words, Ferguson believes that the current international order needs America's enlightened leadership. Robert Kaplan (2005) also adopts the positive empire thesis and

emphasizes the role that the U.S. troops play in carrying American foreign policy on almost every continent. Michael Mandelbaum does not utilize the concept of 'empire' but he argues that he contends that the U.S. is indispensable as a benign world government (Mandelbaum 2005). For Mandelbaum, the U.S. provides world government through world-wide military deployments and rules for the global economy.

Some critical scholars, such as Michael Mann and Benjamin Barber take these arguments about the U.S. as empire further. They share the view that any empire built on military domination will eventually fail (Mann 2003; Barber 2003). Andrew Bacevich has also argued that the U.S. constitutes an 'informal' empire, not colonial in policy, but still richly equipped with imperial paraphernalia such as troops, ships, planes, bases, proconsuls, and local collaborators (Bacevich 2002) and has attacked the seduction of America into military adventures (Bacevich, 2005). Following the same line of argumentation, Chalmers Johnson (2000 and 2004) suggests that the American empire is not liberal but military. In his 2000 book, Johnson predicted that U.S. interventionism abroad would create the climate for catastrophic terrorist attacks at home, while in his 2004 book he warned that the rampant militarism could spell the end of American constitutional democracy. His argument stems from the notion that U.S. foreign policy revolves around a seemingly endless quest to accumulate military bases overseas. Military power has consolidated these bases in a new form of global and imperial rule. Johnson claims that because threats to homeland security are usually exaggerated, not only the U.S. becomes more and more militarized but also the department of Defense far exceeds the Department of State in terms of influence. Consequently, regional military commanders have more power than ambassadors and their influence is growing as they

oversee private military companies whom the U.S. both arms and trains to defend the interests of the American empire. Johnson holds that the large defense budget and the massive troop deployments overseas starve domestic needs in order to feed the colonial machine. Johnson concludes that 9/11 provided the U.S. with an excuse to expand the U.S. military, to abandon its alliance partners, treaties and laws, and to launch its imperial rule.

David Harvey (2003) argues that although the U.S. does not fit the old model of an imperial nation, it nonetheless has shown such predilections for some time. Harvey cites the U.S's ruthlessness in pressing global hegemony since the 1800s, including the internment of Japanese in World War II and the recent Patriot and Homeland Security Acts. He examines the symbiotic and parasitic relationship between Wall Street, the U.S. Treasury, and the International Monetary Fund as he explores how the U.S. has used an array of tactics, from trade embargoes to military force, to gain geopolitical influence. Finally, critics of the U.S. as empire focus on the negative aspects of a colossus determined and able to get its way in the world (Simes 2003; Todd 2003).

The European Union as 'Empire'

There is a general consensus that the EU represents a new kind of power in international politics (Diez 2005; Manners 2002; Whitman 1998) and that it plays an ever increasing role in world affairs (Elgstrom and Smith 2006; Orbie 2008). The increasingly important role of the EU in world affairs is reflected in the development of the European Foreign and Security Policy (EFSP) (Kirchner and Sperling 2007). The range of instruments at the EU's disposal continues to increase in size and scope. The use of these instruments is

guided by the ambitious objectives set out in the European Security Strategy (ESS) that was adopted in December of 2003 and which for the first time established principles and set clear objectives for advancing the EU's security interests based on the EU's core values. The "Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy" that was presented in December of 2008 reinforced the 2003 European Security Strategy (EC 2008, 1).

European Union's Conceptualization of Global Order

On the 12th of October of 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, and Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, jointly offered a press release following acceptance of the award, asserting that "…over the last sixty years, the European Union has reunified a continent split by the Cold War around values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights." The presidents explicitly illustrated the EU's conceptualization of global order as they elaborated: "…these are also the values that the European Union promotes to make the world a better place for all. The European Union will continue to promote peace and security in the countries close to us and the world at large" (EC 2012b). In other words, the EU has sought to conceptualize global order in terms of the spread and adoption of its own values and norms.

However, it has not been until the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 that the EU specified its foreign policy objectives, which included, among other things the promotion of democracy and the rule of law and human rights. The Draft Constitutional Treaty

proclaimed that the EU's policies should aim at "…preserving peace, preventing conflicts and strengthening international security" and that in doing so, the EU would be guided by the principles that inspired its own creation and evolution and which are rooted in traditions of "democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law" (Tocci 2007, 7). These principles were reaffirmed in the Lisbon Treaty.

In 2003 then, the EU published its 'Security Strategy,' which was slightly revised and updated in 2008. In these documents, the EU identified threats to international peace and security and indicated the ways in which it sought to address these threats. Examining the ESS, one can easily observe that the EU has taken a comprehensive approach to security where "the internal and external aspects of security are indissolubly linked" (EES 2003, 2) and where security is regarded as a precondition of development (ESS 2003, 2). According to the ESS, the EU perceives non-domestic threats in two overarching forms. Menaces stemming from states in the EU's immediate and nearby neighborhood are seen as peripheral threats, while the second class of threats is much broader, emerging from states outside of the EU's neighborhood area.

One of the most significant security threats identified in the ESS is bad governance - reflected in corruption, abuse of power, weak or collapsed institutions and lack of accountability (ESS 2003, 4). Therefore, spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and the abuse of power, establishing rule of law and protecting human rights are viewed by the EU as the best means for increasing European security. Because state failure is assumed to lead to organized crime and/or terrorism, the EU uses a variety of tools, including political and economic conditionality, to ensure the establishment of well-governed democratic states.

The two fundamental pillars of the ESS are: building security in the EU's neighborhood and promoting an international order based on effective multilateralism (ESS 2003, 9). The EU's security strategy is rather explicit in defining the neighborhood "as a key geographical priority of EU external action…" (ESS 2003, 9). Nathalie Tocci draws attention to the fact that the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) is unequivocally directed at promoting the EU's values "as a means to spread stability, security and prosperity in the southern and eastern neighbourhoods … and to strengthen the EU's contribution to the solution of regional conflicts." (Tocci 2007, 7).

The development of well-functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order are identified as fundamental EU objectives. However, 'effective multilateralism' is to be based on a set of principles, values and norms that reflect those of the European Union. For example, the ESS notes that "the quality of international society depends on the quality of the governments that are its foundation" (ESS 2003, 10). As a result, the best protection for EU's security is a world of well-governed democratic states. Trade and development policies are seen as powerful tools for promoting democratic reforms. Contributing to better governance through assistance programs, conditionality and targeted trade measures remains an important feature in EU's policy.

But what kind of capabilities are available to the EU to achieve these objectives? This discussion is associated with the question of the EU's identity as a 'civilian', 'military', and 'normative power'.

The idea that the EU could become a power that does not rely primarily on military but on civilian means was first formulated by Francois Duchene (1973). 'Civilian power'

has been defined as involving three key features: the centrality of economic power to achieve political goals; the primacy of diplomatic cooperation to solve international problems; and the willingness to use legally binding supranational institutions to achieve international progress (Twitchett 1976, 1-2). However, the linkage between the EU as 'empire' and EU as a 'civilian power' is better reflected in Hans Maull's definition of a civilian power as a state "…whose conception of its foreign policy role and behavior is bound to particular aims, values, principles, as well as forms of influence and instruments of power in the name of a civilization of international relations" (Maull 1990, 92-3).

On 9 May 2000, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, the EU distributed publicity material entitled "50 Years of Solidarity, Prosperity and Peace." According to this material, the EU saw itself as representing a 'civilian power'. The status of the EU as a global civilian power was also pronounced by Romano Prodi (2000, 3) who stated that "We must aim to become a global civil power at the service of sustainable global development. After all, only by ensuring sustainable global development can Europe guarantee its own strategic security." However, the inability of the EU to deal with the Yugoslav crisis made several scholars and practitioners argue about the need of the EU to develop and deploy its military power to achieve its foreign and security policy goals.

The Treaty on European Union (TEU), signed in 1991, signaled the intent of the EU Member States to move beyond a 'civilian power Europe' and to develop a defense dimension to the international identity of the Union (Whitman 1998, 135-6). According to Ian Manners (2002, 237), the move from the single structure of the EC to the three-pillar structure of the EU was part of a "fundamental shift from civilian to military power,

assuming that the development of a common foreign and security policy was eventually to include defense policy."

The trend towards 'military power Europe' can most clearly be found in the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) agreed upon at the June 1999 Cologne European Council which committed the EU to having a 60,000-person rapid reaction force (RRF) (Stivachtis 2004 and 2005). With the Treaty of Lisbon, ESDP came under the auspices of EFSP. This militarization of the EU that has been highlighted by the Union's involvement in a number of international military operations is not without criticism. For example, it has been argued that it weakens the EU's 'distinct profile' of having a civilian international identity (Zielonka 1998, 229) or that it promotes an image of the EU as a potential hegemonic and imperial power. However, according to Manners (2002), a better understanding of the EU's role in world politics might be gained by reflecting on its normative power.

Richard Rosecrance (1998, 22) has argued that "Europe's attainment is normative rather than empirical" and that "it is perhaps a paradox to note that the continent which once ruled the world through the physical impositions of imperialism is now coming to set world standards in normative terms." Elements of this normative power can also be found in the critical perspective of Johann Galtung, who argues that ideological power is "powerful because the power sender's ideas penetrate and shape the will of the power-recipient' through the media of culture" (Galtung 1973, 33).

Manners sought to illustrate that the EU should be best conceived as a 'normative power Europe'. His effort begins by briefly surveying the conceptual history of 'civilian power' and 'military power Europe' since the early 1980s in order to locate these

traditional conceptions of the EU's international role. He then introduces the idea of 'normative power Europe,' discussing the EU's normative difference and normative basis and explaining how EU norms are diffused. He concludes that the concept of 'normative power' represents a valuable addition to one's own understanding of the EU's civilian and military power in world politics.

Manners' empirical evidence that the EU is a normative power relies largely on the policies it pursues. Specifically, investigating the EU's normative basis, Manners argues that unlike what happened with historical empires and contemporary global powers, the EU's normative difference comes from its historical context, hybrid polity and political-legal constitution (Manners 2002, 240). In the post-cold war period, this combination has accelerated a commitment to placing universal norms and principles at the center of its relations with its Member States (Merlingen *et al.* 2001) and the world (Clapham 1999). Manners argues that the EU has gone further towards making its external relations informed by, and conditional on, a catalogue of norms which come closer to those of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) and the Universal Declaration of Human rights (UDHR) than most other actors in world politics (Manners 2002, 241).

The discursive construction of the EU as a normative power is one that most EU politicians and technocrats engage. As Thomas Diez puts it, "…there may well be disagreement about the development of the EU's military capacities between Council and Commission, and between different member states and different directorate-generals, yet the representation of Europe as a force for peace and well-being is nearly consensual" (Diez 2005, 619). According to Diez (2005, 314) debates about the character of EU's

identity as a global actor ignore or underestimate the 'power' that lies in the representation of the EU as a 'normative power.' He notes that not only is the success of this representation a precondition for other actors to agree to the norms set out by the EU, but it also constructs an identity of the EU against an image of 'Others' in the 'outside world'. Diez argues that this has important implications for the way EU policies treat those 'Others', and the degree to which its adherence to its own norms is scrutinized within the European Union. In this sense, the discourse of the EU as a normative power constructs a particular self of the EU, while it attempts to change others through the spread of its own particular norms.

Diez suggests that normative power connotes the characteristic of a Weberian type of power relationship (as A being able to make B do what s/he would otherwise not have done). This relationship, according to Diez, takes on a 'Lukesian twist in the form of a kind of hegemonic power', namely the power to shape the values of others (Diez 2005, 614). In addition, normative power refers to particular 'means'. In other words, it is not a power that relies on military force, but a power in which norms in themselves achieve what otherwise is done by military arsenals or economic incentives (Diez 2005, 614).

This does not mean that normative power cannot go alongside other forms of power in international relations, notably military and economic forms (Diez 2005, 615). Indeed, the latter two may underpin normative power, although normative power must not be reduced to economic or military power if it is to make sense as a separate category. For instance, as Diez has put it, the EU is most likely to 'shape conceptions of the normal' (and therefore have greater normative power) in the context of EU membership

candidacies, when the interest to join the EU can be assumed to be an important factor determining the impact of EU norms (Diez 2005, 615).

Diez correctly points out that normative power is not the opposite of military power (Diez 2005, 620). Helene Sjursen has also emphasised that it is entirely conceivable that military force is used to back up the spread of civilian values, partly because the application of civilian means would imply the pre-existing institutionalization of civilian values in order to be effective (Sjursen 2004, 122). Yet the more normative power builds on military force, the less it becomes distinguishable from traditional forms of power, because it no longer relies on the power of norms itself. Indeed, the imposition of norms through military force cannot be equated with successfully changing others, which relies primarily on socialization processes.

It is in this context that a comparison is drawn between the U.S. and the EU as 'empires'. According to Diez (2005, 621), it is necessary to consider the long-established assessment of U.S. foreign policy as strongly influenced by the frontier-myth, resulting in the 'Godgiven duty to spread the dream and promise of America beyond its own shores'; a predisposition that, as Michael Cox notes, 'inevitably infused American foreign policy with a particularly moralistic and idealistic tone' (Cox 2003, 238). The U.S.' normative power was, for example, very visible during Woodrow Wilson's presidency and in his 'Fourteen Points'. Also after World War II, when one could already see the dominance of military power and American hegemony in play, the U.S. helped to create a series of international institutions that would 'civilize' international politics.

Diez rightly points out that even the invasion of Iraq cannot easily be dismissed as mere power politics as it was driven by a particular worldview with strong ideas of how

democracy should work within a particular liberal governmental frame (Diez 2005, 622). Yet, interests and norms cannot easily be separated (Cox 2003, 239). Building up institutions after the World War II was a projection of American norms, just as much as it safeguarded American interests. This was due to the fact that those norms were supposed to spread a conception of life that would match that of the U.S. to build a 'community of ideals, interests and purposes' (Diez 2005, 622).

Diez, however, identifies one important difference between the EU and the US, namely that unlike the EU, the U.S. has sought to project, and often impose, its own norms while refusing to bind itself to international treaties (2005, 622). The difference between the U.S. and the EU in this respect should be understood not as a distinction between a normative and a traditional military power, but rather as a warning sign about a normative power in which military power is becoming increasingly important.

Today, the EU faces a situation similar to the one that the U.S. was facing during the first part of the twentieth century. Back then, the U.S. was not at all eager to intervene in conflicts outside its own hemisphere. President Wilson's aim was to spread peace throughout the world so that interventions would no longer be necessary. The idea was to do so not with military means, but with binding normative commitments. Yet over time, the military back up of this normative power came to be of ever-increasing importance. And even though the U.S.' reluctance to entertain imperial ambitions should not be overestimated this supplementation of norms with force was not solely due to imperial ambitions on the part of the United States. It was partly a response to international calls for U.S. involvement and engagement.

Currently, the EU is facing similar calls both for acquiring more military power and for using military force to achieve certain goals. In the case of the U.S., the entanglement of normative and military power is underpinned by a belief in the universal validity of its own norms and a missionary zeal to spread these norms to other places. But similar discourses have now been adopted by European politicians and EU officials. The ESS makes it clear that a peaceful and stable global order requires the creation of democratic states and the spread of European values and norms across the globe. It is such an unreflective normative stance that legitimizes the use of military force and thus emphasises the *imperial* nature of EU policies.

Book Structure

The present volume begins with Georgeta Pourchot's chapter challenging the basic premises of the argument advanced in this book. According to Pourchot, 'EU-as-empire-scholarship' insufficiently addresses traditional conceptual elements of empires such as conquest, coercion, pillaging, and hierarchy. As a result, a partial – and negative - image of the state of the EU as empire would emerge from such scholarship which would, according to Pourchot, benefit from more historically contextualized accounts of the drivers of enlargement, the sustainability elements of enlargement, and the modern types of hierarchy arising from post-communist states' accession to the European Union.

In response to traditional conceptualizations of 'empire', such as the one advanced by Pourchot, Hartmut Behr's paper engages a relation between two contested and complex concepts, those of 'empire' and 'governing from the distance'. In his chapter, Behr first goes back to the Latin term of 'imperium' and explores its manifold meanings of which

the English 'empire' appears to be a narrowed-down imagination over centuries of linguistic and political controversies. He then employs a historiographical approach that suggests a feature of 'imperium' which appears to have survived in contemporary politics and which serves as a tool to identify 'empire'/'imperium' in our times. This feature can be captured by the imaginary for - what Behr calls – 'governing from a distance' and thus draws on Edward Said and Michel Foucault, at the same time linking them back to the Latin richness of 'imperium' and the question of instruments of governing. It is within this context that the EU, according to Behr, can be seen as representing a contemporary form of empire.

Another feature of contemporary empire is suggested by Jan Zielonka. According to Zielonka, empire represents a type of political organization in which the metropolis exercises control over diverse peripheral actors through formal annexations and/or various forms of informal domination. Although at first sight it seems that the EU cannot be classified as empire, Zielonka argues that the EU represents a vast territorial unit with sizeable power and resources and which often imposes severe domestic constraints on formally sovereign actors, including its own member states. Like all empires, the EU would also have a civilizing narrative, if not a civilizing mission since it claims to be an indispensable agent of modernity and peace in Europe and beyond. Zielonka's chapter not only demonstrates how the EU looks, walks, and talks as empires do, but, too, examines the implications of this phenomenon for the evolving nature of European politics.

In his chapter on the EU as empire in the 21st century, József Böröcz adopts a historical-sociological approach and argues that West European societies have played a

central, and exceptionally privileged, part in the history global capitalism. According to Böröcz's analysis, some of the geopolitical and economic foundations of that centrality and privilege have recently begun to show powerful signs of erosion. His contribution regards the supra-state and the public authority of the European Union as an instrument of a strategic coalition among west and central European capital, state apparatuses and populations, aiming to optimize their geopolitical position under present-day conditions. The key instrument of this new global adjustment would bear a clear resemblance to the asymmetrical linkages that constituted the geopolitics of power of empires throughout much of global history. In light of this framework, Böröcz further examines how membership and association agreements work as "enforcement chains".

Aligning with the logic of Böröcz's chapter, Yannis Stivachtis seeks to re-examine the concept of 'empire' and demonstrates its application to the case of the European Union. It begins with the acknowledgement that the majority of scholars and practitioners have been very reluctant to consider the EU as an empire mainly due to the lack of aggressive imperial and expansionist tendencies that are historically associated with empires. However, the paper argues that the process of the creation and expansion of an empire has not been historically uniform and that the establishment of an empire can take different forms in the presence of 'international anarchy'. Stivachtis claims that sometimes empires may represent the end result of aggressive imperial tendencies and, at other times, be 'just' the outcome of a more peaceful process of international cooperation. To this end, he focuses on the EU's policy of conditionality and its application to the Union's enlargement, neighbourhood, and development policies to demonstrate how they have all served to create a 'non-imperial empire.'

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Resonating with important aspects raised by Stivachtis, Aylin Güney's study analyzes competing and converging geopolitical imaginations of Europe and their impact on European Union enlargement politics. Güney's paper first presents the analytical tools of critical geopolitics to understand how geopolitical identities may eventually be translated into EU's enlargement policies, especially towards Central and Eastern European countries and Turkey. The study then explains two different geopolitical identifications that stand behind two the conceptualizations of Europe of 'Europe as neo-Westphalian state' and 'Europe as neo-Medieval Empire'. The chapter then continues to analyse the effect of these competing and/or converging geopolitical identifications on the formation of Europe's geopolitical discourses and examines how this imagination has been translated into policies of inclusion and exclusion within European Union enlargement schemes.

Portraying the EU as torn between imperial and non-imperial features, Kalypso Nicolaidis and Nora Fisher Onar argue in their chapter that the EU suffers from a 'post-imperial' condition that has problematic consequences for its internal and external policies. They point out that different and multiple meanings of the 'imperial past' prevail in countries in east and central Europe, southern or northern Europe as well as in former European colonies which see the EU through the lens of their postcolonial status. It is the confrontation between these imperial legacies and the difficulty to transcend them by recognizing then and now the critical role of 'others' in the constitution of the EU project which forge Europe's imperial condition. They suggest that while the EU has made much formal and indeed substantial progress toward confronting echoes of imperialism, imperial patterns die hard. Moreover, they claim that many of the symbolic and effective

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types of oppression, which they unveiled and fought, still exist. But the echoes are fainter and more confusing than in immediately postcolonial times; for example, power is more diffuse and hybridity more pervasive. This would result in policies that are counterproductive to the EU's interests, not least in its relations with Turkey and its Eastern neighbours.

Robert Phillipson's chapter examines the relationship between language and global order. The myth of '*terra nullius*', Philipson contends, has been succeeded by an expansion of the cultural universe of the USA (as a '*cultura nullius*') and English. He argues that English is fraudulently marketed as a '*lingua nullius*' although it serves all equally well. Nevertheless, this would constitute a linguistic imperialism that, too, permeates EU institutional activities. In this context, globalisation and global English are seen as interlocking projects. Philipson points to the role of the European Court of Justice in advancing European integration and neoliberalism, demonstrating how European Commission initiatives, like the Bologna process, strengthen English in continental Europe. Philipson arrives at two main conclusions: first, that this authoritarian executive managerialism is undemocratic; and second, loose reference to English as a '*lingua franca*' in political and academic discourse conceals the role of English as the neo-imperial language of the transnational global corporate class made up by the power complex of the US-NATO-EU.

Another historiographical and genealogical perspective is offered by Russell Foster who points out that 'empire' as a political term would not refer to a taxonomy of state power, but to a *claim* of a political unit as the solely legitimate and superior order of the world. Therefore, Foster argues, 'empire' is a normative and exclusionary discourse of

sovereignty, legitimacy, duty, and manifest destiny. This would be most effectively conveyed through the coded language of symbols. Foster considers symbols to be the most powerful form of communication acting as a social solvent, encoding everyday life with the presence of a political ideology. However, Foster's chapter demonstrates that the EU's symbols express not only what the Union *is*, but most importantly what it *should be*, namely a political order which blurs the EU and Europe into a single, imperial synecdoche.

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