

Central Europe Review

Empire's New Clothes

Unveiling EU Enlargement

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Introduction: Empire and Coloniality in the "Eastern Enlargement" of the European Union¹, by József Böröcz

The issue, of course, is not to erase the West as though to restore to its others some ancient pre-colonial unity, as though, indeed, the West were erasable. The issue, it seems to me, is rather to establish a reflexively marked practice of dialogical exchange that might enable the postcolonial intellectual to speak to postcolonials elsewhere (subalterns, but intellectuals too) through those shared-but-different histories and shared-but-different identities. The issue [. . .] is to reconstitute the map so as to engage in a tacking between postcolonial spaces, a recursive movement of figure and ground in which that West—so much the sovereign legend of the colonial imagination—is at once interrogated and displaced, interrupted and critiqued (Scott, 1999a).

If we read, as I prefer, David Scott's above outline of the task of postcolonial scholarship as an invitation, this essay registers a modest RSVP from the right-hand half of the map of Europe. Clearly, the sender's address on my envelope might strike some as surprising. Others will feel comfortable with the sender's address but some might be taken aback by the destination of my missive.² I wish to seize on, and work with, that double surprise; this Introduction, and indeed the very volume it introduces, asks what we can learn from it.



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On the one hand, what I propose in this Introduction is the most conventional operation in the social sciences: examining the relevance of two consequential and contested theoretical concepts—empire and coloniality—to an empirical phenomenon—the "eastern enlargement" of the European Union (EU). Yet I do also mean to disturb the all-too-convenient normalcy of the "normal" science of conventional scholarly analysis, especially as it applies itself to various parts of Europe.

The absence of any theoretical absorption of the notions of empire and coloniality (and indeed basically any reference to those societies' connectedness to the rest of the world or to the structural conditions or theoretical implications arising therefrom) in the mainstream historical sociology of west European state making and statehood—logically a possible source of conceptual tools for the study of the European Union today—is one aspect of this normalcy I seek to unsettle.³ With a handful of refreshing exceptions (e.g., Bornschier 1995, 1997, Schmidt 1999 and the studies in this volume), the vast majority of the literature addressing the question of what the European Union is today (an international organization with a grandiose PR? a confederacy? a federal state in the making? a set of policy realms with an imperfect geographical overlap?) also proceeds from an entirely internal perspective, hence, by default, it remains oblivious to implications of empire and coloniality. It is this disconnect that makes it possible to address the external relations of the EU—as it is done customarily—as something that is added, always as if an afterthought, to an otherwise entirely internally focused perspective, just as the comparative-historical sociology of west European statehood is so conveniently apart from any consideration of International Relations. That omission of course also occludes the ways in which the experiences of western Europe and, by



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implication, its current supranational project, the EU, have been a constitutive focus and center of dependence for important social, cultural, economic and political processes at places outside of western Europe. If we intend to maintain an interest in this traffic between the internal and the external with respect to the European Union, the current experiences of the EU's nearest and most recently affected outside—commonly referred to as Central and Eastern Europe—should be of interest.

Even the official term that denotes the process—*eastern enlargement*—is suggestive. *Enlargement* implies a process of simple augmentation, reducing a daunting amount of social, cultural, moral and administrative complexity, involving concerted, sustained action by some very powerful European states aiming to redraw the continent's geopolitical order, to a quasi-technical operation. Given that in such idiomatic expressions as *Eastern Europe*, the term *Eastern* means either inferior or non-Europe, it is quite plausible to consider, furthermore, the possibility that the name "eastern enlargement" ends up as an orientalizing tool when applied as the marker of the current re-division of Europe.⁴ Of course, no previous enlargement has been called "eastern" in spite of the fact that the last one, resulting in the inclusion of Sweden, Finland and Austria, or the preceding one, appending former East Germany to the Federal Republic, involved, technically, the EU's expansion to the east.⁵

Let us take our departure from the frequent, easy reference to the historical subjectivity of the colonial perpetrator (or, alternatively, the supposed historic *telos* of human progress) as "Europe." Far from a nominalist preoccupation, my protest against this shorthand notes that the placement of "Europe" in the heart of this scheme blurs things inexcusably on two important counts: it is both falsely inclusive and falsely



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exclusive. At the risk of sounding pedantic, obvious, or both, I insist that the unqualified "Europe" invoked as the core protagonist of coloniality contains societies whose experiences in the realm of colonial practices have been vastly varied—indeed quite contradictory. Some have been modern colonial metropolises, some have not. Some have been centers and/or peripheries of empires of various kinds, some have not. The complexity of the cross-European experience with empire and coloniality is daunting. In addition, any quick reference to "Europe" as the colonial perpetrator also implicitly absolves large and important bodies of social experience—e.g., the US—whose history features imperial practices that are quite identical with those denoted as "European." If we imagine the continent for a moment as the landmass stretching from the northeastern littoral of the Atlantic to the Urals, and from the Arctic to the Mediterranean, one purpose of my brief Introduction is reconsidering some of the ways in which the notions of empire and coloniality are relevant to this Europe.

In this sense, our project resonates deeply, and in rather farcical ways, with some aspects of "Euro-speak" (Diez 1999)—a peculiar identity discourse promoted by the European Union. When the Green Foreign Minister of the most powerful member state announces, in an interview with an established liberal weekly of his country, no less than having discovered a remedy to nearly all the world's ills—"The Answer to Almost All Questions in Europe"⁶—he is only echoing the un-self-conscious and, frankly, rather crass combination of an imperial-colonial teleology and a vague sense of naive good intentions⁷ rampant in western Europe today. Fischer's example suggests that this Euro-speak is constructed by way of a complete, acquired-assertive obliviousness to the world outside of the EU, coupled with an intense penchant for claims of European



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universality—a cognitive posture that has been, as students of colonial history will remember, a clear defining feature of European-based, modern, Christian empires.⁸ To some extent, the confused and hypocritical political context of “eastern enlargement” is responsible, if not for the creation, surely for the survival and spread of this self-universalization and other-exclusion that becomes, viewed from where most members of humankind are located—outside the EU—nothing but a blunt exercise in the “ways in which differentials of power come already embedded in culture” (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995): a tool in naturalizing power.

Our volume tackles a mighty object indeed: the wholesale re-division of the European geopolitical map. Myriad smaller and bigger clues suggest the lurking presence of empire and coloniality in that process. One of those at hand is the fact that, in much of the discourse that weaves politics throughout the continent today, the signifier “Europe” appears to be latched, ever more tightly, on the signified *European Union*. Put differently, we see another project of manipulating boundaries; this time not through false universalization (where ‘Europe’ is a solution to the world, as in the Fischer example above) but in a *synecdoché* representation (where the part stands for the whole, conveniently ignoring, hence excluding and occluding, the rest). Much of public parlance—incidentally, all over Europe, not just within the EU—makes, and indeed revels in, this slip. Mass-produced advertising merchandise offers a good example.



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Figure 1 depicts the pen with which the future of Europe is written. Here we see a dark blue plastic object distributed as a cheap giveaway item in the EU Headquarters in Brussels. Of particular attention is the pen's clasp: the twelve golden stars, set against the background of the pen evoke the official symbol of the European Union; the grammatically unlinked, hence emphasized, words "Europe Europa" hammer the message of the *synecdoché* representation: the continent is conveniently equated with (reduced to) the European Union, elegantly excluding the "rest"—a good 250 to 300 million geographical Europeans outside and, indeed—at least since the implementation of the EU's common immigration policy called the Schengen Borders—by and large kept out of, the European Union. Hence the diversity and multiculturalism stressed by the plurilingual label "Europe Europa" is strictly internal to the EU.

Examples of this kind abound: pouring the EU into the vessel of "Europe" is likely the most common trope of identity speech in Europe today. It is difficult to see in this *synecdoché* anything but a major clue (Ginzburg 1989[1986]), intimating global power at work. This joint operation of universality and *synecdoché* modeling rhymes



perfectly with Anthony Pagden's formula for empire as "simultaneous singularity and exclusivity" (1995, p. 24). One source of the energy that fueled the research for our volume was an interest in deciphering, questioning and destabilizing the



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imprecision and tendentious symbolic violence contained in that synecdochic trope.

Using empire and coloniality as conceptual vehicles by which to address the contemporary process of geopolitical re-division should surely contribute to heeding David Scott's call for "reconstituting the map"—in our project, the map of the European continent, the one that is being redrawn as we speak. When we consider the relevance of the notions of empire and coloniality for "eastern enlargement" today, I pose this question, rereading Scott for the *other* (non-western) Europes: What are the "shared-but-different histories" of empire and "shared-but-different identities" through coloniality that reconstitute the map of Europe today?

This Introduction offers but a few, very tentative preliminary signposts. I raise questions and do not answer them in any systematic fashion. My double purpose is to provoke new thinking and to make explicit some of the theoretical threads that link the empirical studies in this volume. First I make a "strong," historical case for the relevancy of empire and coloniality for European politics today; then I sketch some ideas for a historical sociology of the contemporary relevance of empire and coloniality in a globalizing Europe. (Formal definitions of the two key concepts will be offered there.) Throughout, I stress implications for the "eastern enlargement" of the EU. Because of the discursive focus of the papers in this volume, my Introduction also emphasizes questions of *othering*.



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I. Empire State Building in "Europe"?

The states that have recently "shared and pooled" their sovereignty (e.g., Patten 2001) to create the European Union are of course sharply implicated in modern empire and coloniality in the strong, historically continuous sense of the word: the list of the European Union's member states reads as a catalogue of the major colonial powers of the period of world capitalism. It is indeed one of the basic tropes of economic history that the very emergence of capitalism as a global system during the long sixteenth century (e.g., Wallerstein 1974, esp. ch. 2) has been effected, and thus marked quite indelibly, by a process of global social change that originated in Europe and produced the socio-cultural experiences and institutional legacies of the colonial empires established and administered from western Europe. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw the expansion, intensification and previously unimaginable integration of those imperial structures (e.g., Hobsbawm 1987, esp. ch. 3) into a truly global system of industrial capitalism. It will be useful to remember that, as a result, as recently as two generations ago, nine of the fifteen states that constitute the European Union today directly controlled 31 percent to 46 percent of the land surface of the world outside of Europe and Antarctica. Those possessions comprised almost 75 percent of all territorial holdings in the world both in 1913 and 1933, an increase of about 15 percent from 1878. (See Table 1)



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Table 1. Territorial Possessions of the Member States of the European Union (as of 2001) in 1878, 1913-14, 1933 and 1939, Area [10^3 km^2], Percent [%] of Total Inhabitable Landmass of the Globe without Europe, and Percent of World Territorial Holdings [%]

	1878 ⁹	1913 ⁹	1914 ¹⁰	1933 ⁹	1939 ¹⁰
Land area of colonial possessions by states that are current EU members [10^3 km^2]	38627	57196	55392	57533	36206
Land area of colonial possessions by predecessors of current EU member states as % of inhabited surface of the globe outside of Europe¹¹	31.1%	46.1%	44.6%	46.32%	29.2%
Land area held by predecessors of today's EU states as % of world total territorial holdings¹²	57.8%	73.4%		73.6%	

My purpose in citing these widely known facts is not, of course, to stake a novel empirical finding. I only quote them to thematize two, closely tied points that are of significance for our object: the sustained centrality of western Europe in the international system known as the colonial order of imperialism, and its obverse, the lasting, pivotal significance of the experience of colonial empire in the histories of those societies which,



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today, constitute the European Union.¹³ A glance at the list of states that were the world's major colonial powers only two or three generations ago, included in the data presented in Table 1—Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom—should suffice to support the proposition that colonial history is a crucial component of the social imaginaries of those societies. Coloniality made the home states of the colonial empires different, even in their dealings that were strictly internal to their European constituencies in Europe, let alone their relationship to the world outside of western Europe. It is this difference at which Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper point by remarking that "nineteenth-century Great Britain or Holland was not Switzerland" (1997, p. 22). (Of course, Switzerland is not an EU-member; the point is variation in the histories of European statehood in terms of colonial empires.) Those nine former-colonial powers have not only made their indelible mark on the history of global capitalism; they are also the most powerful members, and represent about 90 percent of the population,¹⁴ of the European Union, a polity constructed as it is suggested repeatedly in European public parlance, by the "sharing and pooling of the sovereignty" of its member states. To the extent that its practices represent the "sharing and pooling" of the former-colonial powers of world capitalism, the European Union carries with it a distinctly colonial past. (It also carries an imperial past of a different kind—more about that later.)

This also suggests another implication regarding the existence of a high degree of internal variation within the EU with respect to coloniality. Some current EU-member states have never had any colonies. Some of the former-colonial member states achieved their colonial successes through geographical discoveries and conquest in the first phase



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of modern European empire building. The second wave of European empires was ushered in by the first wave of colonizers' defeat in the Americas and involved "the history of the European occupation of Asia, of Africa and of the Pacific" so that "the more indeterminate legacies of these empires—the British Commonwealth, the informal French tutelage over parts of Africa—remain a significant feature of the relationship between 'First' and 'Third' worlds" (Pagden 1995, p. 2). The economic, political and cultural impact exerted by those two waves of colonial history on the respective European centers was quite different, creating clearly discernible differences among the former-colonial states of Europe. All that variation is internal to the histories of the current member states of the European Union, making it quite difficult for the latter to speak with one voice to, and about, the rest of the world, especially the former-colonial states.¹⁵ Viewed from central and eastern Europe, however, it needs to be emphasized that *the EU is unique, and quite distinct from the eastern half of the continent, in its key member societies having inherited the entirety of the European colonial legacy.*

Just on this basis, any analysis of the European Union's behavior *vis-à-vis* the surrounding world should seriously consider two empirical expectations: (1) that the formation of the EU might in fact represent a global imperial strategy of sorts, and (2) that the specific histories of colonialism and empire, with their deeply coded and set patterns of inequality, hierarchy, exclusion and power—and especially their techniques pertaining to the projection of that power to the outside world—are reflected in a deep and systematic form in the socio-cultural patterns of the governmentality of the European Union. In this vein, we must proceed with sharp attention to the fact that the major west European societies that control most of the politics within the European Union have been



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historically—i.e., in the past, as well as with deep and meaningful continuities into the present—imperial and colonial centers. "Eastern enlargement"—i.e., the (geo)political process wherein the European Union explicitly and repeatedly rethinks the question of its borders and constantly refashions its relations to its immediate hinterland by a multidimensional system of dependence—should be an ideal test case for examining the extent to which empire and coloniality continue to hold sway or even emerge in new ways.

With about six percent of the world's population, the EU registered, at last count, almost 30 percent of the world's total gross national product and over forty percent of such a clear marker of the quality of life as global international tourist departures.¹⁶ Citizens of the European Union can expect to live some 12 years—or, about 18 percent—longer than average of the rest of humankind. (The latter average of course still includes some large and very wealthy states such as the US and Japan).¹⁷ Another familiar but often, in regard to the EU's "eastern enlargement," conveniently forgotten, consequence of this condition of west European post-coloniality is of course the fact that these societies' current core status in the world economy, especially their wealth, power, network centrality and privileged position in the global organization of consumption, has something essential to do with that specific, shared moment—the long and immeasurably destructive, imperial-colonial moment—of their history.

This is directly pertinent to the case of the eastern enlargement of the European Union in two ways. First, it is relevant insofar as that very combination of wealth, power, centrality and privilege—which owes its existence to the imperial-colonial past of western Europe—constitutes the iron core of the magnetism of the EU for its "eastern



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applicants" today. Second, manufacturing popular consent to the idea of sharing the fruits of that very wealth, power and privilege—again: a structural condition historically rooted in the imperial-colonial past—with a group of societies in the east-central and eastern parts of the continent that are, in some vague sense, recognized as European but, clearly, have not been part of the recent fifty-or-so-year history of the moral community of the "good" side of the Cold War is turning out to be one of the most difficult issues of PR-management for the EU elites.

II. What is empire?

Anthony Pagden (1995) quotes Thomas Pownall, Governor of Massachusetts as he explained the term "empire" (using its Latin equivalent *Imperium*), in 1772, as follows:

This modelling of the people into various orders and subordinations of orders, so that it be capable of receiving and communicating any political motion, and acting under that direction as a whole is one which the Romans called by the peculiar word *Imperium* [. . .] 'Tis by this system only that a people become a political body; 'tis the chain, the bonds of union by which very vague and independent particles cohere (Pagden, 1995, p. 13).

I suggest that we start with an initial, minimalist concept of "empire" that reworks Pownall's notion as follows: "Empire" is a polity that binds together "different and formerly independent" states or "create[s] such states where none had previously existed"



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(Pagden, 1995, p. 14). It is therefore not necessary that the metropole and all of its peripheries form a single, overarching, fully integrated state.

What follows is an unduly condensed, but, I hope, in its formulaic nature, useful, list of social-institutional practices, compiled by summarizing a large and in many ways disparate literature on coloniality and empire. My claim is that all processes of modern capitalist empire have included some combination of the social-institutional practices outlined in Table 2. They may not have occurred all in the same order, but this list surely does represent a significant part of the historical-institutional inventory of modern coloniality and empire.

Table 2. Signatures of Empire

- Discovery / sustained contact / settlement¹⁸
- creation of ties for extraction / trade / unequal exchange / continuous funneling of resources and all forms of economic value from the periphery to the centers¹⁹
- proxy rule / conflict / war / subjugation / pacification / international law²⁰
- administration / normalization / modernizationist reformism²¹
- enframing of *otherness* / establishment of culture- and race-based "scientific" hierarchies²²



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Even more formulaically, let us define the *substance* of imperial order—again: a polity that binds together different and formerly independent states or creates such—as a combination of the following four mechanisms of control:

- **unequal exchange**: sustained centripetal funneling of economic value,
- **coloniality**: cognitive mapping of the empire's populations, creating a fixed system of inferiorized otherness,²³
- **export of governmentality** through the launching of the normalizing, standardizing and control mechanisms of modern statehood, and
- **geopolitics**: fitting all of the above into of a long-term global strategy of projecting the central state's power to its external environment.

Re-read for the "eastern enlargement" of the European Union, the presence of each of those institutional elements of the colonial imperial order is clearly recognizable. The privatization of the assets of the post-state-socialist economies, coupled with the tax preferences for foreign direct investment and the generic structural adjustment policies imported by the democratically elected governments have already siphoned off unprecedented proportions of the national product of the applicant societies (Böröcz 1999). EU-based corporations constitute by far the largest investor group in central and eastern Europe now, while the former state socialist bloc's significance in the investment portfolio of EU corporations is minuscule.²⁴ "Eastern Europe" as a trope is firmly set as a negative stereotype (see Kovács & Kabachnik, Kovács, Dancsi and the latter's references in this volume), not only in public parlance within the European Union but also, in not-so-subtle ways, even in official rhetoric of all kinds, especially as politicians of the EU-member states brand enlargement as a "threat" or a "problem" (see Sher and Dancsi in



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this volume). The requirement that the applicant state must have already transposed and implemented the EU's body of legal materials presents conditions that are extremely conducive to the imposition of a highly bureaucratized-legal sense of Foucauldian Euro-governmentality on the applicant societies. Finally, virtually all political and administrative statements made on part of politicians of the EU and its member states since the collapse of state socialism have stressed the significance of "eastern enlargement" as a global strategy.

The point is, thus, not just that various elements of empire appear somewhat relevant. It is, rather, that *the creation of new institutions*, more powerful than ever, *that effect this peculiar combination of control with respect to the "eastern" applicants appears to be quite close to, and might indeed constitute, the core of the current European order.*

This volume drafts some baselines of a comparative-historical institutional sociology (as well as political science, social geography, etc) of that order by documenting in some detail the post-imperial and postcolonial (re)construction of empire and coloniality within Europe. The studies in this collection elaborate unique combinations of those factors by bringing to the fore rich empirical evidence from materials that are publicly available. Most of the studies elaborate discursive evidence, hence throwing especially sharp light on the operation of coloniality in highly marked, official documents—specimens of *consequential* discourse.

- József Böröcz's paper experiments with a sociology of state discourse and national humility by disclosing some inherently unequal, hierarchical, *othering* aspects of the process of application and evaluation;



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- Salvatore Engel-DiMauro's study provides a political-economic analysis of statehood and related institutional tensions around empire building and its consequences;
- the papers by Melinda Kovács & Peter Kabachnik and Melinda Kovács demonstrate empirically the way in which the political hypocrisy and discursive authority of the administrative, political and expert process of application-and-evaluation build up a hierarchical system of otherness that, in Kovács' well-chosen pun, puts down and puts off the applicants in the evaluation of the applications and the annual follow-up reports;
- Anna Sher links our empirical sociology of the other to Bourdieu's conceptualizations of power and knowledge through a close reading of imperial mental maps as they emerge from public speeches by top EU politicians; and
- Katalin Dancsi's study outlines some elements of the manufacturing of decency, aimed to dress up basically indecent, xenophobic political discourse, setting the stage for a politics of exclusion and explicit rejection *vis-à-vis* the "Eastern" applicants by a process of clearly racialized *othering* in the program of the Austrian "freedom" Party.



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III. What Kind of Empire?

At this point, serious and well justified objections may be raised: so far, we have only talked about one type of imperial structure—Burke's "detached empire" (Pagden, 1995, p. 14)—and that type might not fit the European Union's relationship to central and eastern Europe well. To fix that shortcoming, we need to introduce a simple conceptual distinction.²⁵ Let us narrow the scope of our analysis and consider only modern empires (those that have existed since the long sixteenth century) centered in Europe and divide the notion of "empire" into two categories on the basis of the physical terms that characterize the relationship between its center and periphery. Let us call the two ideal types that this criterion yields *detached* vs. *contiguous* empires.²⁶

The combination of the four institutional elements of imperial practices that I used in defining empire above (unequal exchange, coloniality, the imposition of governmentality and the subordination of all three to geopolitics) is relevant to empires of both types. Hence, the notion of coloniality, as I use it here, is not inexorably tied to the historicity of colonialism. It was perfected in that context and was elevated perhaps to its most obsessive levels there; but, as the example of Nazi Germany indicates, contiguous empire has also proven itself to be a suitable breeding ground for the fixed system of inferiorized otherness I call coloniality. (That is true even in the total absence of anything that can be abused as a marker of racial difference of course.) Hence, the concept of coloniality as I use it here exists in a one-step removal from colonialism, knowledge that has come to a life of its own.



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John Comaroff (1997) offers a helpful further specification. In an analysis based on mission literature, he isolates three "models of colonialism" and links them to the "British," the "Boer" and the "Christian" social locations, respectively:

1. [t]he *state* model, according to which the colonial government was seen to oversee the territory [. . .]
2. [*s]ettler colonialism*, [. . .] seen to be founded on brute coercion and domination by force [. . .] and
3. [t]he *civilizing colonialism* of the mission [which] [. . .] sought to "cultivate" (Comaroff 1997, pp 179-81).

This is useful for our purpose as it helps dispel a possible objection to the application of the notions of empire and coloniality to the current transformation of Europe: conquest, land taking and blatant, explicit physical violence exerted by one (oppressor) group on another are not defining features of coloniality. If we regard Comaroff's three types not as empirical isolates but aspects of empire that interact in complex ways in each empirical instance of empire, it allows us to recognize strikingly similar processes in the "eastern enlargement" of the European Union. The latter features a very prominent combination of state coloniality and a secular-"westernist" version of civilizing coloniality,²⁷ with direct physical violence relegated, so far, to relatively isolated instances such as the member states' constant, low-level violence against undesirable immigrants including, alongside the "aliens" from the former colonies, also the poor, undocumented central and east Europeans labor migrants and informal petty merchants, Romany or otherwise, the war on Kosovo and the continued, violent oppression of ethno-nationalist insurgency within the EU.



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One socio-cognitive feature that distinguishes detached vs. contiguous empires follows quite directly from the physical terms that characterize the relationship between imperial center and periphery: social interaction—specifically daily, matter-of-fact contact, including even the physical possibility of effectively interfused life-worlds and hence the danger of the erasure of the distinction between the populations of the imperial centers and peripheries—is clearly less pronounced, and both logistically and economically less feasible under conditions of the detached type than in situations where the empire's centers are physically contiguous with their peripheries. Extensive land borders and physical proximity foster co-presence and contact under terms that cannot be controlled effectively by the center. This creates conditions for a rather convenient, seamless articulation between the two kinds of distance—physical and moral—between the center's and the periphery's population in the case of colonial empires.

Contiguous empires can be quite different in this regard; physical and moral distances present themselves in sharp conflict there. To the extent that moral distance between populations is great, that distance is in constant tension with the possibility of a great degree of social co-presence, mixing and, ultimately, the transformation of social institutions, prone to creating a panic of social "miscegenation." In other words, contiguous empires tend to run the risk of their centers being intensely exposed to streams of strangers "who come today and stay tomorrow" (Simmel 1908 [1950], p. 402), persons who are denied moral proximity to match their physical proximity.²⁸ Modern empire *genus* compels moral distance by the inferiorization of peripheral others; its subtype, contiguous empire faces threats to that system by its centers being physically accessible to inferiorized strangers.



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As a result, all other things equal, the processes of cognitive mapping that emerge under the two arrangements of empire also differ: spatial contiguity might lend itself less to categorical exclusion than territorial detachment between metropole and colony. To achieve the same xenophobic result under contiguous empire, racialization of *otherness* requires extra measures. Reliance on arguments based on irreconcilable cultural or civilizational differences and deep national essences in contiguous empires serves this purpose. Inferiorization of peripheral otherness is, thus, not necessarily less predominant in contiguous empires: in fact, again, as the example of Nazi Germany suggests, contiguous empire can produce quite intense expressions of otherness, even at the cost of borrowing heavily from the racial notions that emerged in the context of the detached empires of other west European states.

Distance between center and periphery works in at least two important ways in the detached type: (1) It institutes a disconnect between the representatives of "whiteness" on the colonial periphery (colonial administrators, military personnel, settlers, anthropologists, missionaries and other clergy, "hired men" of all kinds and other rogue elements) and the centers, creating a fertile ground for racialized ideologies of all kinds by virtue of canceling many possible "decency" checks on acceptable behavior and thinking that might exist in the home context of western Europe;²⁹ and (2) by functioning as an effective filter for experience and information, especially such experience and information that could serve to create social institutional and emotional structures of tolerance, moral proximity, acceptance, identification or solidarity between the society of the center and the society of the peripheral others. Hence, the imageries of peripheral, inferiorized otherness that emerge in the presence of spatial distance tend to emphasize



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qualitative hierarchies of difference, leading to essentialized *othering* through exoticization, feminization, puerilization and racialization. A quick summary reference to the widely known work of Frantz Fanon and Edward Said should suffice here as a shorthand to the literature on colonial, *qualitative othering*.

Contiguity also foregrounds another kind of difference. This mechanism of *othering* can be described as the creation of a quantitative pattern of inferiorization: this type of other is seen as being perhaps of the same substance but offering an inexcusably inferior level of performance. This form of *othering* also proceeds through exoticization, but the thrill offered here is the excitement of tamed rusticity, a conviction that the peripheral other represents an un-developed version of the center's past thereby denying coevalness to the inferiorized *other* (Fabian 1983), resulting in cognitive schemas of condescension or rejection.

This distinction carries manifold implications for 'eastern enlargement.' The first one at hand concerns the essence of the European Union as a supranational polity committed to the acceleration of flows of all kinds within its borders. The much-touted "four freedoms" around which the European Union's legal order is organized consist of the freedom of the movement for the four principal forms of commodity: capital, goods, services and, most ambitious, of labor. Such movement acquires rather transcendental qualities in the EU's identity construction insofar as, according to its "ABC," the European Union's "mission" is no less than "to organize relations between the Member States and between their peoples in a coherent manner and on the basis of solidarity" (EU 2001), effected by pursuing the objective "to develop an area of freedom, security and justice (linked to the operation of the internal market and more particularly the freedom



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of movement of persons)" (ibid). This creates an image of the world outside the EU that is, by counterconceptual implication,³⁰ an area of unfreedom and/or insecurity and/or injustice. The more the EU is eulogized for its internal perfection, the more the imperfectness of its outside is foregrounded implicitly.

Specifically, as another official EU document celebrates,

these fundamental freedoms under the founding Treaties guarantee businessmen freedom of decision-making, workers freedom to choose their place of work and consumers' freedom of choice between the greatest possible variety of products. Freedom of competition permits businessmen to offer their goods and services to an incomparably wider circle of potential customers. Workers can seek employment and change their place of employment according to their own wishes and interests throughout the entire territory of the EU. Consumers can select the cheapest and best products from the far greater wealth of goods on offer that results from increased competition (Borchardt 2000, p. 12).

Let us re-read this uplifting text from the perspective of the center as it ponders enlargement. From this angle, the border is penetrable and inferior otherness is creeping up, threatening the centers with the extended presence of inferior strangers. Extension of the four freedoms, particularly the freedom of the movement of workers, is an ambiguous and excessively ambitious proposition. With respect to populations that are seen as inferior, even if that inferiority is "only" quantitative—as it tends to be in contiguous imperial space—the idea of the completely free movement of labor carries severe



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dangers: the potential intermixing of life-worlds. The possibility of social intercourse with inferior strangers presents the clear danger of social miscegenation.

From this point of view it is suggestive that, while the European Union's current bargaining position in the negotiations with the forerunner candidate states for accession operates with five reasonable options covering a broad range from "full and immediate application" of the freedom of movement for workers who are citizens of the accession states to "general non-application [...] for a limited amount of time" (European Commission 2001, p.3.), political discourse aimed primarily for domestic use teases out a solution that resembles an intra-European geopolitics of transforming the would-be accession countries (at some point after the collapse of state socialism independent, sovereign states) into restricted-exit homelands or reservations: in collusion with its right-to-extreme-right Austrian counterpart, even the Social Democrat-Green government of Germany is insisting on a seven-year freeze on the movement of "eastern" workers after accession, even for such small and successful accession candidates as Slovenia (Mrozek 2001). How exactly that would qualify as implementation of the idea of organizing a union "in a coherent manner and on the basis of solidarity" (EU 2001) by way of developing an area of "freedom, security and justice" (ibid.) is, let's just say, somewhat unclear.

IV. What Kind of Coloniality?

The distinction between detached and contiguous empires bears relevance to "eastern enlargement" on some further—less immediate, but no less consequential—



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levels. The historical experience of the two halves of the European continent differ quite significantly in terms of the kind of exposure they have afforded the societies that inhabit them. The societies that populate non-EU-member part of Europe have never had any first-hand experience with detached empires, except as expatriate immigrants.³¹ They have never had any colonies of their own; nor have they ever been subjected to imperial structures of the detached type. Hence, the two halves of Europe have a true gap in their historical experiences. The eastern and east-central parts of the continent have never benefited from the original influx of value from the colonies in the form of colonial trade and extraction; nine of the 15 member states of the EU, in which, again, nine-tenth of the EU's citizens live, have. The fact that "backwardness" is rightly considered an endemic feature of the modern, capitalist history of the continent's eastern half has much to do with the absence of the economic jolt of what Marx called the original accumulation of capital. In this regard, the pressures for enlargement, coming from the societies and states of the poorer half of Europe, end up being "just" a new enactment of that condition, another wrinkle in the several-centuries-long history of uneven development and dependency, in contemporary inter—and supranational politics in Europe.

Because of the absence of a colonial past from the history of central and east-central Europe, the societies of the former-state-socialist part of the continent have had no occasion to undergo any experience that is even remotely reminiscent of the little-to-moderate political cleansing decolonization has exerted on their former-colonial counterparts in the western part of Europe. As the societies of the colonial powers of the second wave of European empire were experiencing the collapse of their detached empires after World War II, the eastern half of the continent was absorbed in another,



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rather different process of large-scale social change: the industrialization, strategic-military buildup and posturing, social mobility and, in general, the construction of an alternative, state-socialist modernity that came as part of their Cold War package.

The societies of central and eastern Europe have also been preeminent pupils of the Enlightenment and the much-praised pan-European exchange of ideas. That circulation of ideas has also transported, however, along with the brilliant ideas of “light,” emancipation, freedom and rights, such elements as coloniality. Importation of coloniality received a fresh jolt after the collapse of state socialism, as part of the process whereby the continent’s eastern half was “catching up” with its western role model. Hence, the power of racial and other hierarchical cognitive schemas is not only present in the cultures of central and eastern Europe; it occupies a highly marked, indeed quite cultic location: it lurks in their prized cultural cargo arriving from the westerly direction.

The societies of central and eastern Europe learned about decolonization without the moral implications because not only the peripheries, but also the centers of the empires that were dismantled through decolonization were distant: decolonization and its discontents appeared to be, to the extent that they were perceived at all, somebody else’s problems. Official Communist political discourse underscored that decolonization was a signal of the crisis of capitalism, i.e., something that was distant and external to the experiences of the societies of “existing socialism.”

As a consequence hardly intended by the Communist parties, this left the post-state-socialist context with a widespread, almost naive gullibility to accepting the idea of population hierarchies on “racial” and cultural / civilizational grounds and the application of the latter to the former’s relations with its others. As a result, a remarkably



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unreconstructed notion of “whiteness” is rampant in the identity work performed by the societies of eastern and east-central Europe, under the silence or outright cynical guidance of some surprisingly large segments of their political and cultural elites.³² To a large extent because of the absence of any post-colonial cleansing effects—produced in the former colonial centers by decolonization—the central and east European applicants’ current desire for EU membership ends up producing an implicit and un-articulated nostalgia for the contemporary advantages and identity designs originating in somebody else’s colonial-imperial past.

In a bizarre turn of the symbolic politics of moral superiority in Europe, the political process of “eastern enlargement” provides a new opportunity to the EU’s member states as well as its apparatus to act *vis-à-vis* the applicant states in the old modernizationist scheme, like tired but insistent schoolmasters trying to discipline the rowdy brats under their control. This is of course in sharp contrast to the widespread toleration of a range of openly racist politics and everyday practices of governmentality within the EU. This “kindergarten” fantasy is of course one of the most recognizable tropes of imperial power.³³ A protracted, foot-dragging process of “enlargement” is hence widely seen, and enacted, as an effecting civilizing and disciplining process in the EU’s “eastern” geopolitics, in spite of the clearly “western” content of the patterns of exclusionary politics in central and eastern Europe.

Meanwhile, in sharp contrast to the absence of any experience with detached empires, the currently non-EU-member eastern part of the European continent has been amply subjected to an empire of the contiguous type. American college courses in east European area studies characterize the entire region as the “mush in the nutcracker”, with



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the bewildering ethnic mixtures of the societies in question being the mush and the encroaching contiguous empires—historically, the Prussian, Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman the most significant—as the prongs of the nutcracker. This is so much so that some of Hungarian historiography has even experimented with the notion of *félgyarmat* (literally: semi-colony) to denote the peculiar system of dependence, imbalance of opportunities and inequality of power that characterized important periods of Habsburg rule in central Europe.³⁴

Contiguous empire is of course something with which the societies of the entire continent, on both sides of the EU's border, have been quite intimately familiar. In this sense the EU's historical baggage is a mixture of detached and contiguous empires while central and eastern Europe's imperial history features empire exclusively in the contiguous form. More sharply relevant to the question of the EU's "eastern enlargement", however, is the additional condition that two of the most recent four major contiguous empires that have, as part of their geopolitical rivalries, created the contours of the current map of central and eastern Europe today, are land-based empires whose historical centers (Germany and Austria) are solid members of the European Union today. It has hardly escaped the attention of the societies of central and eastern Europe that large-scale capital headquartered in those two EU-member states happened to be by far the most active in foreign direct investment in the recent auctioning off of the productive assets and resource base of the former state socialist economies.

The past of the central and eastern parts of Europe is extremely ambiguous in terms of contiguous empires: just like in the western half of the continent, virtually every square meter of land has been controlled by multiple state actors. What is different in



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central and eastern Europe is, of course, the recent experience of momentous social change. That change has swept away the rule of the socialist states and their distinctive socio-political, -economic and -cultural order, widely perceived as all-powerful only a few years before. This has created new borders, increased the number of states in the region and introduced a new element of indeterminacy and geopolitical instability.

Today all societies of the region are faced with various historical legacies of recent imperial rule of the contiguous kind, in both ways: all the national imaginaries of the region's societies have parallel, often unreconciled collective memories of empire both as rulers and subjects, and the power of the existing arrangements of borders is often seen as radically diminished—i.e., the region's geopolitical arrangement can now be contemplated as possibly changeable. The shift between those two modalities of historical identity-memory—former rulers and former subjects—can be very easy, and the two do also work side by side, interfering with each other in very important ways. This has produced mental schemes of exclusion and inferiorization that may be perhaps more complex than those of the “west”: this has created what Milica Bakič-Hayden describes as a schema of “nested Orientalisms” (Bakič-Hayden 1995), with intricate systems of exoticization and inferiorization placed in the context of empire of the contiguous kind. In such schemes, identities that posture themselves as less Oriental than a chosen other have systematically latched on to the *synecdoché* notion of “Europe equals EU” and perpetuate that schema as a core element of their identity focus. Acceptance vs postponement for accession to the EU is read, in this frame, as reinforcement or rejection of *Europeanness* (i.e., *non-Orientalness*) and, hence, ultimately, of “whiteness.” Much



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of the current anxiety related to nested Orientalisms in central and eastern Europe is intimately linked to anxieties over positions *vis-à-vis* the EU.

The two-to-three-generation long experience of Soviet-centered state socialism, with its peculiar imperial structure³⁵—driven not by the economic but the political and security needs of the Moscow center—was but an additional variation on the theme of contiguous empires in this regard. Hence a complex memory of contiguous empire—again: subjection to a combination of unequal exchange, coloniality and exported governmentality organized by geopolitical interests—is very much part of the historical memory, and collective consciousness, of the peoples of east-central and central Europe. The collapse of the Soviet geopolitical project is widely experienced in an intensely (self-)ironical, distanced and downplayed way, relegating what the “West” conceives as the liberation of “Eastern Europe” to the last place in a long line of similar instances of imperial collapse in the collective memory of the region’s societies.

Several corollaries follow from this observation. First, in the societies of the EU the experience of the end to contiguous empires has proceeded in the form of nationalist state-making. As a result, there has been no analogue to the experience of a sudden decolonization for modern contiguous empires in western Europe. The legacy of contiguous empires, particularly their cognitive heritage regarding others, has not been nearly so well re-thought and re-articulated through processes of moral cleansing as it has been for decolonization. The only relevant example of such a catharsis is the denazification of Germany after World War II. Because Nazism has been seen through the Eurocentric lens of western public culture as extreme, horrible and in many ways unique, denazification has tended to be, to a large extent, isolated from the issue of



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empire and pinned on the historical experience of the German nation, as a new spin on the idea of the German *Sonderweg* (special road). As a result, denazification has never congealed into a collective consciousness of “Western” imperial responsibility that is even remotely similar to the effect of decolonization. Furthermore, within the process of denazification, the greatest emphasis has been placed on the high-modernist “racial” aspects of Nazism, assigning all moral-political questions of geopolitical empire-building a distinctly secondary importance.

At least some segments of some EU’s member societies are capable of exercising a sense of reflection, including some forms of guilt, regarding their colonial-imperial past. They have displayed a wide scale of moral positions, ranging of course from ubiquitous racism to some grudging, half-articulated remorse regarding the contemporary plight of the “third world.” We do see manifestations of this in some uniquely high levels of contributions to “third world” aid by states of, and non-governmental organizations based in, former colonial powers such as the Netherlands. In contrast, precious little such moral reflection can be observed in the societies of the EU-member states regarding imperial practices of the contiguous type, especially with respect to their immediate neighbors (and often former imperial subjects) to the east. The range of moral positions regarding their poor European counterparts is much narrower, with moral remorse almost entirely absent. There exists relatively little by way of cultural checks in western Europe regarding those cognitive schemas which owe their existence, historically, to inferiorization of the contiguous-imperial kind. Meanwhile, cultural prejudices regarding “East Europeans” abound, and they meet with precious little resistance, in Western Europe today. *The coloniality of those cognitive schemas can*



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flourish, paradoxically, not in spite, but because of the absence of a specific colonial history. As a large part of the Enlightenment heritage of comparative thinking about European *otherness* has been marked by inferiorized patterns of difference, the important historical scholarship of Larry Wolff (1994, 1995) and Maria Todorova (1997) remains relevant to the contemporary situation.

The process of large-scale social change commonly referred to as decolonization has involved two important components of institutional transformation: (1) the retreat of the colonizing power from the colony and the establishment of independent statehood for the colonized society; and (2) the simultaneous re-establishment of new, often as powerful ties as before, linking the periphery to the metropole in economic, political, cultural dependence. The end to contiguous imperial structures also involves the simultaneous operation of the two processes. The recent collective historical experience of the societies of east-central and eastern Europe involves a very complex set of transformations in this regard. Their linkage structures were not exclusively focused on their (contiguous) imperial center, the USSR, even during the heyday of state socialism, and certainly not in its late period. The resulting system of dual dependence afforded their political elites and publics some room for maneuver, eventually leading to the remarkably peaceful dissolution of the state socialist empire. What is most remarkable about the period that followed that collapse was the power, indeed vengeance, with which the economic dependence and unequal exchange were re-established, EU governmentality imposed and the explicit coloniality of the “Eastern” applicants as disparaged, inferior strangers has been produced in the European Union. While it could be argued, as I have in fact suggested elsewhere,³⁶ that the state socialist “camp” was a



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somewhat peculiar empire, the re-emergence of empire and coloniality in its wake is certainly quite closely reminiscent of something we have indeed seen before: the postcolonial *status quo*.

V. To Conclude

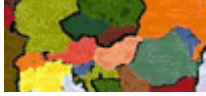
I have not provided any final answer to the questions I have raised earlier in this Introduction. I have simply tried to show that empire and coloniality appear to be relevant to the European scene today. I am not arguing that the European Union is a necessarily “evil” enterprise. I have simply argued that we should observe this important project, evolving before our eyes, with some of the tools of comparative history of empire and coloniality. The EU may very well turn out to be a new kind of supranational organization, one that we have never seen before. That the European supranational-making process manifests some core symptoms of empire and coloniality is, however, a testimony to the ubiquity of global structures of power, unequal exchange, dependence and patterns of exclusion under global capitalism as we know it today. It also demonstrates the staying power of the historical experiences of empire and coloniality for the political, economic and cultural heritage of Europe, in the western and eastern parts of the continent alike.

This implies two tentative conclusions. First, the European Union as an “*in vivo*” experiment has lasting implications for the globe. How the European Union is being fashioned today will determine some crucial aspects of the way in which the new, ever more intensely globalized world will be arranged. Without understanding the processes



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of inequality, marginalization and exclusion that are intrinsic to the current transformation of Europe, it will be impossible to grasp the structural transformation of the world today. Second, this also implies a research agenda, one that will focus on the political economy, statecraft, geopolitics and coloniality of suprastate-making in a single conceptual framework. The editors and authors hope that our volume is a useful contribution to such a truly comparative-historical European Studies.



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². This is in spite of the existence of work in a post-colonial frame with an intra-European focus. Regarding Ireland, see, e.g., Koebner 1961, chapter VI (pp. 238-75) or Lloyd 2001.

³. Observe, for instance, the absence of even the terms "colony," "colonial," "coloniality," "empire" or "imperialism" from such brilliant and very successful recent works on European state making as Ertman (1997) or Brewer and Hellmuth (1999). Even Tilly (1992) only considers colonial empires in a theoretically unarticulated detour in his analysis of 1000 years of European state-making.

⁴. Because of this, in the entire volume we introduce the convention that, when referring to the group of societies in question, we use lowercase references (e.g., central and eastern Europe, etc.) and capitalize only those instances of references to regionality that we regard as reified. To emphasize that, sometimes we resort to using distancing ellipses (e.g., 'western' knowledge, etc).

⁵. To be noted is, however, that the strikingly similar orientalizing tendencies were clearly present in the "western" discourses of Federal Germany's "reunification" toward the East.



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⁶. „Die Antwort auf fast alle Fragen ist: Europa“ (Hofmann *et al.* 2001).

⁷. Consider Daniel Cohn-Bendit’s claim, expressed in the title of his essay published in the same journal: “We Will Improve the World. Stop the Whining, Europe is Wonderful.” (Cohn-Bendit 2000).

⁸. See the chapter entitled “Monarchia Universalis” (pp. 29-63) in Pagden 1995 and Cooper and Stoler 1997 (p.1).

⁹. Computed from Clark 1936 (Table I, pp 23-4) by summing the “mandates,” “dependencies” and “self-governing territories” of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

¹⁰. Computed from Ansperger 1989 quoting Veit 1915 for the 1914 data.

¹¹. The total land surface of the globe is 148.941.000 km². From this, I subtracted the area of uninhabited Antarctica (14.235.000 km²) and Europe (10.507.630 km²). This leaves 124.188.370 km² inhabited territory outside of Europe. Source: Hammond 1913.

¹². Computed from Clark 1936, Table IV, (“Percentages of Territorial Holdings of the Western Powers,” p. 32) by subtracting from the cells “Total Western Holdings” in “World Total” the “United States” in “World Total” and “International Areas” in “World Total.”

¹³. See, eg on the significance of empire on British democracy, Burton 2000.

¹⁴. Computed from 1998 data presented in the table entitled “Total Population at 1 January” in EUSTAT 2001.

¹⁵. About this, see Böröcz 2000, reprinted in this volume.

¹⁶. Computed from Table 13 (June 13) in UNDP 2000 and from WDI 2000.

¹⁷. Computed from data in WDI 2000.

¹⁸. E.g., McClintock 1995, Pratt 1996.

¹⁹. E.g., Emmanuel 1972, Amin 1976, Bunker 1984, Schwartzmann 1995.

²⁰. E.g., Grovogui 1996, Pagden 1995, Introduction.



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²¹. E.g., Scott 1999b, Go 2000.

²². E.g., Said 1978, Cohn 1996, Mitchell 1988, Stoler 1997, Trouillot 1995, Young 1995.

²³. E.g., Quijano 2000, Pagden 1995.

²⁴. See, e.g., Böröcz 2001. In cross-border Mergers & Acquisitions, Central and Eastern Europe's external investment dependence rate (computed as sales/purchases) is 11 times. The same figures are 1.4 for the USA, .75 for the EU, and .31 for Japan. (Computed from Table IV.3, p. 108 in UNCTAD 2000).

²⁵. See, e.g., Stoler & Cooper 1997, p. 22.

²⁶. I am fully aware that the notion of empire could, and has been, sliced in a great many alternative, and additional ways for various analytical purposes. My exercise here does not purport to providing an idiographic tally of all varieties of empires as seen in history; its only purpose is to enable the pursuance of one particular theoretical exercise. The categories I present below are to be read, thus, as ideal types; their contrast is to be interpreted, as with all ideal types, *mutatis mutandis*.

²⁷. Comaroff's description of civilizing colonialism reads as if written to address some of the ways in which European Union has treated its formerly state socialist neighbors. Civilizing colonialism "sought to "cultivate the African "desert" and its inhabitants by planting the seeds of bourgeois individualism and the nuclear family, of private property and commerce, of rational minds and healthily clad bodies, of the practical arts of refined living and devotion to God" (Comaroff 2000, p. 81).

²⁸. To be remembered is, of course, that the detached and contiguous empires are ideal types. In addition, note also that the end of colonial empires has also produced new tensions around the center's similar exposures to inferiorized otherness due to the history of detached empires (see also Bodnár 2001).

²⁹. C.f., Stoler & Cooper 1997, p. 5.

³⁰. On the historical sociology of asymmetrical counterconcepts, see Koselleck, 1985 (1979). He defines asymmetrical classifications as "conflicting classifications, employed only in one direction and in an unequal fashion" (p. 160).

³¹. Some, like Conrad have contributed to the inauguration of empire and coloniality in important ways.

³². One example of how this plays out is that, as post-state-socialist, democratic Hungary signed the Geneva Agreement on Refugees, it restricted its scope to European refugees. The inexplicable, deep



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racism of that proviso was accepted in the extremely human-rights-conscious post-state-socialist parliament and it is an object of relatively benign protests by the European Union today. (On the implications for the language of the enlargement process, see Kovács & Kabachnik in this volume.)

³³. See: Go 2000.

³⁴. A brand in Hungarian post-war Marxist historiography picked up the notion from Ferenc Eckhardt's work (1922), only to be abandoned gradually in official history (much in harmony with the reformist leanings in national politics) since the 1960s, in favor of a more reading of Habsburg rule. My point is that of the historical sociology of knowledge: there appears to be evidence that, at a minimum, the analogy of colonial rule was present in central European thinking about supranational statehood and imperial rule in general.

³⁵. E.g., see Böröcz 1992 and 1999.

³⁶. Ibid.



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The Fox and the Raven: The European Union and Hungary Renegotiate the Margins of “Europe”¹ by József Böröcz

A series of diplomatic exchanges has recently unfolded between the Hungarian government and the Commission of the European Union. The stakes are historic for the Hungarian side. Hungary formally applied for full membership in the European Union on March 31, 1994, the first country to announce such intentions among the successor states of the former Soviet bloc.² Two years later, the Commission sent a lengthy questionnaire about the “state of the applicant” to all—by then, ten—central and east European applicant states. The Hungarian side filed its comprehensive response three months after the receipt of the questionnaire. The Commission waited until all responses were in and acknowledged the Hungarian answer in a document, issued another year later, whose purpose was to determine whether to recommend that the EU Council should start negotiations with the individual candidate countries about full membership.

¹ This chapter was first published in the journal *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. It is reproduced here with kind permission by the journal’s publisher, Cambridge University Press.

² Graham Avery and Fraser Cameron, *The Enlargement of the European Union* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), Table 1.1.



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The forty-four months that elapsed between Hungary's initial application and the issuance of the Commission's Opinion represent the longest waiting time³ in the history of accessions to either the European Union or its predecessor, the European Communities. This was a clear rebuttal to the repeated requests of the Hungarian government for a speedy process⁴, a request based on Hungary's perceived status as a forerunner of market and democratic reforms among the states of the former state socialist bloc during the last fifteen years. Hungary's application was processed considerably more slowly than that of fellow pending-applicant Cyprus (thirty-six months), Malta (thirty-five and a half) or Turkey (thirty-two), not to mention such earlier applicants as Norway, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland (two to four and a half months).⁵ Talks about Hungary's accession began in April, 1998. They are expected to last, even by the boldest optimists, for at least three more years.

This study is an empirical attempt to analyze the intersection of the sociologies of power, knowledge, interstate relations, underdevelopment, identity, and communication. I

³ Frustration over delays had been a general feature of Hungary's experience with the European Union and its predecessor, the European Communities. See, e.g., Péter Balázs, "The Globalization of the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union: Symptoms and Consequences," in Marc Maresceau, ed., *Enlarging the European Union: Relations between the EU and Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Longman, 1997), 358–75.

⁴ Nicholas Hopkinson, *The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union: Report Based on Walton Park Conference WPS 94/6, 12-16 September 1994* (London: HMSO, 1994), 14.

⁵ Computed from Table 2.2. in Avery and Cameron, op .cit., 25.



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look at the expert exchange that took place as part of diplomatic communication between Hungary and the European Union during the last phase of the former's application for membership in the latter. In doing so, I apply to this contemporary material various tools of textual analysis in the mode of what Carlo Ginzburg calls the "evidential paradigm"⁶: that is, I seek clues that help map the topography of the communicative space of two documents—the book-length (but nonetheless abbreviated) version⁷ of the Hungarian response⁸ to the EU-questionnaire (which reproduces the EU's original questions as well)—and the reaction to the Hungarian self-study report by the European Union itself.⁹

⁶ Carlo Ginzburg, "Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm," in *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989 [1986]), 96–125, and *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982 [1976]).

⁷ The full text of the Hungarian response—six thick tomes—was too vast for publication. It is available in its entirety as a manuscript in the Library of the Hungarian Parliament and in the National Széchényi Library. The document I analyze here is a version edited for presentation to the public. Possible differences between the abbreviated and the full version fall beyond the scope of the analysis of this paper: I assume that the authors of the full text consider the short version to be an adequate representation of the former.

⁸ *Magyarország a '90-es években. A magyar kormány válasza az Európai Unió kérdőívére. (Rövidített változat)* [Hungary in the 90s. The Hungarian Government's Reply to the Questionnaire of the European Union: Abbreviated version]. Felelős kiadó, Somogyi Ferenc államtitkár and Inotai András, az ISM vezetője. Felelős szerkesztő, Forgács Imre. A kötet szerkesztésében részt vettek: Gervai Jánosné, Gyenes László, Horváthné Stramszky Márta, Hovanyecz László, Kelen Károly és Krajczár Gyula. (Budapest: A Magyar Köztársaság Külügyminisztériuma és az Integrációs Stratégiai Munkacsoport, 1997). Quotations from the original Hungarian text will be presented in the main body of the text in English in this author's translation. Henceforth: *Hungary in the 90s*.

⁹ Commission of the European Communities, *Commission Opinion on Hungary's Application for Membership in the European Union*, COM(97)2001final. Brussels, 15th July 1997. Catalogue number: CV-CO-97-381-EN-C (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, DOC/97/13), henceforth *Commission Opinion*.



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In my search for, and interpretation of, such clues I repeatedly rely on advice from the scholarship of Mikhail Bakhtin.¹⁰

SUBJECTIVITY

Who speaks in these documents? A simple answer that points to two parties—the Republic of Hungary and the European Union—is only superficially satisfactory. Closer scrutiny reveals the asymmetry of these two parties, the dependence of one on the other, and points up some important observations concerning their respective subjectivities.

Asymmetry

Let us begin with the bidirectional version of a simple, generic model of communication (sender → message → receiver). In spite of this model's naiveté regarding the nature of the communicative process, it remains a useful point of departure for two main reasons: first, because it is the simplest such model; second, because the immediate context of the texts under scrutiny—a diplomatic exchange of official

¹⁰ The methodological paradigm of this study thus falls within the logic of discovery, not that of systematic theory testing.



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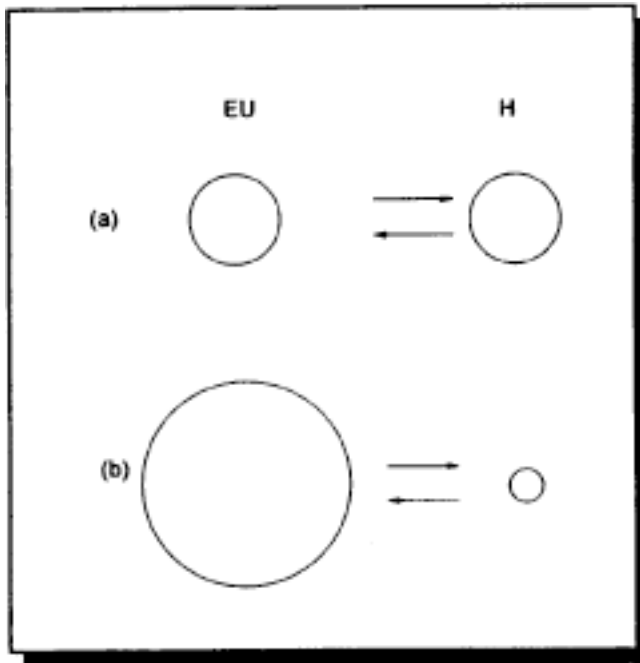
documents within a “basic bilateral framework”¹¹—invokes such a structure. According to this understanding, we have two symmetrical entities—the European Union and Hungary—facing each other in a communicative tie. In Figure 1, the identical size of the two circles represents the diplomatic symmetry of the two parties, and the two opposing arrows suggest communicative reciprocity.

Upon closer inspection, this generic model is applicable to the EU-Hungarian speech situation only after substantial revision. True, the diplomatic frame of the texts does suggest a formal sense of symmetry. Yet the two parties engaged in this exchange are hardly equivalent in any other respect. The *Commission Opinion* points this out in the language of numbers plainly as follows:

¹¹ Willy de Clercq, “Preface,” in Maresceau, *op. cit.*, xiii.



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Hungary, with a population of 10.2 million, has a gross domestic product (GDP) of 65 billion ECU. . . . Its population is thus about 3 percent of that of the Union, while its economy is only about 1 percent and GDP per capita is about 40 percent of the Union average (*Commission Opinion*, p. 17). The asymmetry is tremendous, and recognition of this fact is the main factor prompting the Hungarian side to enter into this type of exchange with the European Union in the first place—the main reason for any reasonable government's intent to join the European Union is the latter's size, wealth, power, and the



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consequent expectation of a windfall of membership benefits. Consequently, asymmetry is an intrinsic and essential component of this stream of communication. Here, power is emphatically “not simply a distortion of communication, it is its occasion.”¹² (Section b in Figure 1 represents this asymmetry by the difference in the diameter of the two circles.) The tension between the binding formal symmetry of the diplomatic documents as a genre and the substantive asymmetry of the two partners is thus a defining feature of these texts.

Dependence and Communication

A further obstacle to the application of a generic and unreconstructed model of rational intersubjective communication to these texts is the fact that the generic model assumes the *independence* of the two parties from each other. Yet serious doubts emerge about the substantive separateness and independence of these two parties. By the time of these exchanges, Hungary had been in *intense, frequent, and matter-of-fact contact* with the European Union; in another sense there had been an *overlap* between the two parties; and in yet another respect Hungary was of course *part and parcel of* an entity (‘Europe’) of which the European Union is also obviously part.

¹² Craig Calhoun, “Interpretation, Comparison, and Critique,” *Critical Social Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 5257



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The two entities' separateness is questioned by some basic data on flows of people, commodities, services, ideas, capital, and information across Hungary's borders, both in the present and in the past. One must also wonder about the extent to which the two parties can be regarded as independent when considering that the EU (which is, depending on the method of estimation, thirty to a hundred and twenty times bigger than Hungary) partakes in the latter's external trade¹³, direct foreign investment¹⁴, and increasingly in ownership of Hungary's "domestic" banking sector¹⁵ (at a level of up to seventy-five percent), and is physically present as a consumer bloc on Hungarian territory, up to seventy percent of the market in Hungary's largest industry, tourism.¹⁶

¹³ A U.S. government source, for instance, summarizes this as follows: "[P]rior to 1990, 65% of Hungary's trade was with Comecon countries. Now, over 70% is with OECD countries, including over 60% with the European Union." U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service and U.S. Department of State, *Country Commercial Guide Hungary*, Fiscal Year 1998, found at <http://www.flatrade.org/ccg/hungary.htm> (Since the time of the writing of this study, this site has been removed from the web.)

¹⁴ According to data collected by Hungary's Privatization Research Institute, the European Union has been the source of about fifty percent of the direct foreign green-field investment in Hungary, while the EU's own ECOSTAT estimates that forty-eight percent of privatization investment came to Hungary from only four European Union member states, i.e., Germany, France, Austria, and the Netherlands. See <http://www.itd.hu/english/stat.htm>.

¹⁵ See, e.g., <http://www.bankestozsde.hu/ex39/a391.html>.

¹⁶ During the mid-1990s, Hungary was the world's fifth most visited tourist destination country, so that roughly 3.9% of all global tourist arrivals took place in Hungary. Meanwhile, it occupied only the fortieth position in terms of tourist revenues, with a world tourist revenue share of .41% (WTO, *Annales des statistiques du tourisme*, Vol. 1, 48th ed. [Madrid: World Tourism Organization, 1996], 11–2). The share of EU citizens among all tourist entrants into Hungary has increased from 22.5% to 40% between 1994 and 1997; in terms of tourist nights, their proportion grew from 24.4% to 48% (KSH, *Idegenforgalmi statisztikai évkönyv / Statistical Yearbook of Tourism*, [Budapest: KSH, 1998]). For 1997, this represents the presence of 6,972,000 EU citizens spending 63.3 million tourist nights in Hungary, a country of a population of 10.2 million (*ibid.*). In commercial accommodations (the segment with the largest profitability),



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To be remembered, too, is the fact that this very syndrome—high concentration of a society’s resources, here especially markets and capital, in the hands of actors clustered outside its borders, typically coupled with sizeable trade imbalances¹⁷—is usually called external *dependency* in the scholarship of cross-border linkages. This asymmetry—a fact well-known to both parties—ought to be reflected in their communication, especially if the object of their dialogue is whether, and under what terms, the accession of the weaker to the stronger party would take place.

The physical proximity of the two parties and Hungary’s location within the European economic and strategic geography also contradict the idea of the two sides’ independence. Because of the long history of frequent and intense contacts between the EU and its predecessors on the one hand, and Hungary on the other, one must allow the possibility that the two actors have adapted to this condition: i.e., that their internal structures somehow reflect their system of external ties. Due to the differences in size and power between the two parties, this possibility has serious consequences—mainly,

citizens of the European Union made up 59.2% of the guests and spent 68.9% of the guest nights in Hungary in 1997 (ibid.).

¹⁷ In 1997, European Union exports to the ten applicant states of central and eastern Europe totaled 78,266,000,000 ECU, i.e., 21,610,000,000 ECU more than imports from those states. The central and east European countries’ collective trade imbalance with the European Union was thus 27.6% of EU exports (Source: Eurostat [Comext] http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/dg10/incom/eur_dial/98i5a6s0.html).



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although, as we shall see, not exclusively—for Hungary. (This is illustrated by the contact between the two circles of different size in section c of Figure 2.)

The ties between the Republic of Hungary and the various European Union member states, groups of states, and organizations, as well as with the entirety of the European Union, signal an even more meaningful sense of connection according to the formal logic of international relations. International agreements constitute an especially significant type of bond. The most relevant such agreement to the subject of this study is the Accession Treaty that was signed on December 16, 1991 and entered into force on February 1, 1994.¹⁸ This treaty made Hungary an associate member of the European Union two to three years before the writing of the documents here analyzed. The treaty's sections on commerce were implemented in March 1992, so Hungary had been an associate member of the European Union from the perspective of trade for four to five years by the time that the two documents under study here were written.

Association agreements—officially called Europe Agreements—are widely regarded as holding patterns assigned to applicants while their admission materials are evaluated and their membership is negotiated. Opinions regarding the degree to which

¹⁸ *Commission Opinion*, 5.



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such agreements indeed “provide an appropriate frame-work for gradual integration into the Community”¹⁹ diverge, as do interpretations of just what the term “integration” means in the given context. For its part, the Hungarian side has insisted that “integration” means no less than a firm promise of inclusion in the European Union through full membership. That interpretation, however, is not supported in the text of the document or in the political commentaries made by parties other than the Hungarian government who are knowledgeable about EU-Hungarian relations.

This seemingly minor semantic ambiguity regarding the precise denotation of the term “integration” is of huge practical significance for the associate member country. Critics have pointed out that association agreements differ from full membership in significant ways. They exclude the partner state from “any access to significant amounts of EU financial assistance”²⁰ and, more damaging yet, fail to give the associated partners any voice in the EU decision-making process. On the other hand, associate members’ access to markets and “pre-accession support” clearly exceeds that given to nonmembers. Yet, such agreements are seen as giving “market access to competitors from the EU—

¹⁹ Anne-Marie Van den Bossche, “The Competition Provisions in the Europe Agreements. A Comparative and Critical Analysis,” in Maresceau, *op. cit.*, 84

²⁰ John Redmond, “Introduction,” in John Redmond, ed., *The 1995 Enlargement of the European Union* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1997), 7–8.



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with little of the gain”²¹—a price that is acceptable for the applicant state only if there is reasonable certainty of admission to full membership.

It is thus certainly fitting to describe associate member Hungary’s status in its relationship to the European Union as *liminal*—in many important respects intermediate and transitory between the positions of outsider and full member. (This is illustrated in section d of Figure 2 by the placement of the smaller circle, representing Hungary, in partial overlap with the larger circle that stands for the European Union.)

Denying the portrayal of Hungary as an outsider and emphasizing the country’s deep Europeanness has been a most fundamental topos of Hungarian historiography. The following excerpt from a highly respected Hungarian historian, Domokos Kosáry—President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences at the time of this publication—should serve as a clear illustration:

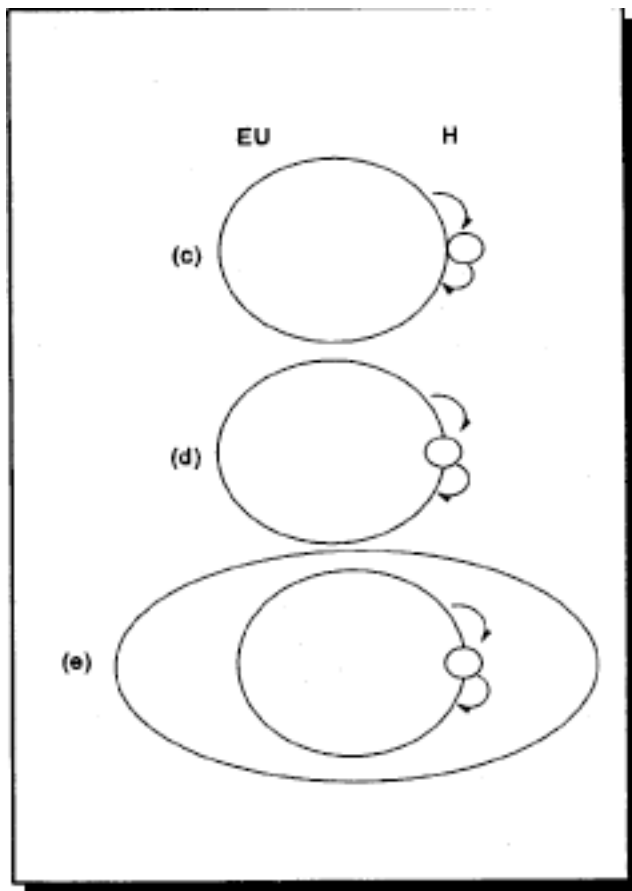
Europe is not just a geographical notion. It is not just the name of the continent on whose map we find Hungary as we move toward the inside from the capricious perimeters, within the arch of the Carpathian Mountains. Europe in this broader sense marks a specific historical culture as well, a culture that has unfolded here as one of the cultures formed during the development of humankind on the globe Earth. The various elements of this culture have been tied together, in spite of

²¹ Ibid.



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their manifoldness and multicoloredness, by a shared common development. The Hungarian people and Hungary, throughout history, have been one of those many elements constituting that culture and has found its place and role within this greater homeland.²²



²² Kosáry Domokos, *Újjáépítés és polgárosodás, 1711–1867* (Budapest: Háttér Lap- és Könyvkiadó, Magyarok Európában III, 1990), 11.



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This is quite a persuasive argument that could be raised by any supporter of Hungary's full membership in the European Union. Although the technical pages of the EU questionnaire, the Hungarian reply, and the reaction to the latter by the European Commission, are perhaps not the most suitable places for making this point about the inherent, profound, and substantive Europeanness of an essentialized Hungary, it is important to keep in mind the presence of this basic attitude among all applicants.

This is all the more so given the widespread practice among many social actors within the EU—including politicians, journalists, scholars, and average citizens—of using a *synecdochic* representation of the EU as Europe, and thus shielding or preempting any such argument by an outsider. No matter whether this practice is driven by carelessness, serious questions regarding the validity of claims to “Europeanness” by the societies of central and eastern Europe, or outright resistance to its expected consequences, the main effect is the obscuring of that discursive position which would allow the formerly state-socialist societies of central Europe to claim their Europeanness.

For a simple illustration of how this basic notion of Europeanness can, and is, denied to the non-EU-member majority of central Europe, it is worth interpreting the



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Internet address of the European Union's home page: <<http://europa.eu.int>>. The microscopic world model presented in this formula is to be read, according to the naming conventions of the Internet, as follows: "int" (standing for "international organization") is the broadest category; "eu" (the widely recognized name of the European Union) is a set within "int"; and, finally, the full name of the continent (a reconstructed version of the Ancient Greek original), "europa" is a subset of "eu." Being outside the "eu" *and* being part of "europa" is thus made logically impossible. Even some of "eu" falls out-side of "europa," which is thus depicted as a subset of "eu."

This aspect of the connectedness of the two communicating parties suggests that Hungary, Hungarian culture, Hungarian society, etc., are all in some historically "deserved," essential sense part and parcel to the notion of Europe. (Section e of Figure 2 represents this by placing the intersecting circles within an even larger unity, suggesting that both Hungary and the European Union are subsets of a more comprehensive unit.)

Hence the relationship between the European Union and Hungary does not conform to a rational model of interpersonal communication wherein messages pass between two disjunct entities. *Certain aspects* of the EU-Hungary relationship—e.g., the fact that the exchange takes place under the auspices of bilateral diplomacy—satisfy those requirements. In other, quite significant respects, however, the independence of the



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two communicating parties is questionable. “Contact” (section c of Figure 2) might be considered as an extreme limiting case of the interpersonal model of communication. The “partial overlap” and the “part-and-parcel” notions (sections d and e) are, however, irreconcilable with any model of communication based on separateness. As a result, it is reasonable to expect that communicative acts between such parties—whose relationship is marked by a multiplicity of partially contradictory connections—will be rife with uncertainty, ambiguity, polysemy, complexity, and contradiction.

A key question in such complex and ambiguous situations is where, when, and under what conditions a particular side assumes a position in which they are able to turn the ambiguity of the situation to their advantage. The communicative situation of the party aiming to achieve admission (Hungary) dictates that it should strive for control of the speech context, and of the manner in which it appears in one of the above positions (as the outsider, the party in contact, the party in overlap, or the historic actor “sharing Europe” with the European Union).

The State-Subject

To what extent can the two communicating partners be regarded as *subjects* in the intersubjective space of official interstate documents? The issue of applying the notion of



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subjectivity to the state—perhaps the largest and most complex formal organization humankind has ever produced—raises the problem of internal consistency in the behavior of the two parties.²³ In order for communication to take place at all, i.e., for the “finalized wholeness of the utterance,”²⁴ M. M. Bakhtin argues, three conditions must be satisfied: “1. semantic exhaustiveness of the theme; 2. the speaker’s plan or speech will; and 3. Typical compositional and generic forms of finalization.”²⁵ “The speaker’s plan or speech will” requires the speaker’s internal consistency. Thus it becomes possible, Bakhtin argues, that the frames of the speech act be determined by the speaker’s intent.

In each utterance—from the single-word, everyday rejoinder to large, complex works of science or literature—we embrace, understand, and sense the speaker’s speech plan or speech will, which determines the entire utterance, its length and boundaries. We imagine to ourselves what the speaker wishes to say. And we also use this speech plan, this speech will (as we understand it) to measure the finalization of the utterance.²⁶

The inner coherence of the subject’s speech intent is clearly very problematic, even in interpersonal communication. A further level of intricacy is encountered when a

²³ This thematizes the problem of the extent to which the European Union can be considered a sovereign (supra)state—a topic not addressed here due to considerations of space.

²⁴ Bakhtin, *op. cit.*, 76.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 76–7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.



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speech act is performed by a collective subject. Hence, it is all the more crucial that “an autonomously acting international actor must possess independent capacities to give, receive, elaborate, select, and react to, information.”²⁷

Of the participants in the speech situation under study here, neither the Hungarian government nor the European Union can be considered a single-channel, homogenous system. Both sides are extremely complex and diffuse entities emerging from the activities and interest conflicts of millions of individuals and hundreds or even thousands of organizations. Thus the simple fact that the two parties turn to each other with an apparent intent to communicate forces them to engage in the act of *creating* themselves as sides in a communicative process—sides marked by the features of consistency and coherence. The essence of this situation is a Goffmann-esque foreground-background mechanism, whereby a simplified and coherent, streamlined foreground is built before a complex and diffuse background. The communicative acts under study can be seen as manifestations of this streamlined foreground. Thus it is impossible to claim that a single coherent and consistent intent takes form in these acts of communication on either side during these acts of communication.

²⁷ Galló Béla, “Ki dönt, ki cselekszik?” in Galló Béla and Hülvey István, eds. *Szuverenitás-nemzetállam-integráció* (Budapest: MTAPolitikai Tudományok Intézete, Európa Tanulmányok I, 1995), 50.



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The disparity in power between the two sides has led to a great difference between their mechanisms for forming collective intent. On the Hungarian side, the levels of general wealth in the EU countries, the pro-EU interests of the political and intellectual elites and the emerging *comprador* segments of the managerial elites, the western orientation of Hungarian culture, and the pro-EU propaganda efforts of the last eight years have produced intense interest in, and great expectations of, EU membership. Every Hungarian government has supported the country's membership in the European Union without any reservation, alternative, or condition.²⁸ EU propaganda enjoys a near-complete hegemony in Hungary's symbolic space.²⁹ The power of the pro-EU rhetoric is so overwhelming that even efforts to convince the Hungarian electorate³⁰ of the merits of Hungarian membership in NATO operated within the rhetoric of "Europe."

The European Union's intentions regarding the prospects of Hungary's full membership register much more complexity.³¹ The *longue-durée* historical arguments,

²⁸ András Inotai, "Europe: Challenges and Risks at the Turn of the Century. An Economic Approach from Central Europe," in *On the Way: Hungary and the European Union, Selected Studies* (Budapest: Belvárosi Könyvkiadó and International Business School, 1998), 211.

²⁹ The symbolic power of the emerging European Union on Hungary's borders is in fact one of the little-examined underlying causes of the oft-noted smoothness of the regime change in Hungary.

³⁰ In an unprecedented plebiscite, the Hungarian voters were asked in November 1997 to approve a move to NATO's military, security, and intelligence organization.

³¹ Inotai, op. cit., 212.



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moral imperatives, and strategic considerations speaking in favor of the inclusion of the countries of east-central Europe are contradicted by at least four sets of problems: (1) clashes of interest, especially in the labor market area, between the applicant countries and their immediate EU-member neighbors; (2) considerations of the dominant EU member countries in the agricultural market, especially with respect to subsidies; (3) expected outflows of infrastructural development funds and other subsidies to the new member states from the central budget of the European Union; and (4) the anticipated structural effects of the inclusion of a relatively large number of small states on the European Union's extremely complex and carefully-weighted decision-making mechanism.

What the European newspapers call "eastern enlargement" is, no matter how insignificant the new member states would be in the new structure, an ambiguous, occasionally outright unpopular political issue in the European Union today, and promises a very large amount of new, often cumbersome work and many organizational headaches for EU administrators, legislators, and experts alike.

Hence, the two parties differ as to how they would create their subjectivity, which is so important for the communicative process. The Hungarian document, *Hungary in the 90s*, begins with a page-length letter, reproduced in facsimile, signed by Hungary's Prime



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Minister at the time of the preparation of the reply. This rather plain text evokes the dull genre of formal conference-opening addresses while demonstrating a personal commitment to the issue at the highest level of Hungarian politics. Its interest for the present analysis is due not so much to its content, which is negligible, but to its structural position and communicative function within the volume as a whole.

The Prime Minister's address, entitled "A Real Picture of Hungary,"³² ceremonially elevates the volume—published by the Hungarian Foreign Ministry and the interdepartmental working group charged with the technical preparations for the acceptance and implementation of the *acquis communautaire*³³ of the European Union—to the rank of a government document.

The fact that a letter, complete with the sender's name and signature, opens the book directs the reader's attention to a live, speaking, communicating, in short, *human* subject—characteristics that even the most stolid politician possesses in abundance when contrasted with that abstract and impersonal entity, the state, for which s/he speaks. The Prime Minister's address thus helps satisfy the need for subjectivity. On page 5, the

³² *Hungary in the 90s*, 5 [unnumbered page].

³³ The term *acquis communautaire* denotes the entire legal material, including laws and regulatory standards, of the European Union. Acceptance and implementation of the *acquis* is required of the applicant state well in advance of accession.



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volume's user learns that s/he is reading an official government document endorsed on the highest level. This provides the text with a subject—envisioned both as a state and as a person.

Of course the letter carries a strictly domestic political message as well: in this respect it resembles the plaques—“Built under the mayorship of such-and-such”—displayed on the walls of monumental buildings. With this letter, Hungary's Prime Minister placed his signature, in both the symbolic and concrete senses, on this important document of the Hungarian EU-admission process—one year before the general elections of 1998.

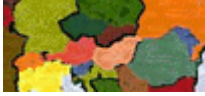
The closing eight pages of *Hungary in the 90s* also serve to cement the official to the personal. The volume concludes with an appendix entitled “Persons Who Wrote the Responses to the Commission Questionnaire, and Their Order of Responsibility within Each Chapter.” This appendix lists all specialists, indicating name, rank, and place of work, who took place in producing the Hungarian response. It also distinguishes the categories of “Main Responsible Person” and “Members,” and shows the abbreviated name of the ministry or department represented by the given person. The appendix serves the same double function as the Prime Minister's opening address: (1) by emphasizing governmental rank and position in the organization of the Hungarian state, it lends the



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text the weight of a strictly organized, coherent, and consistent Hungarian officialdom; (2) meanwhile, it reveals the chorus of the speakers as a collectivity of individuals, thus providing subjectivity to the text by making the personal symbolic. The indication of such individual professional status markers as “Dr.” or “Professor” also serves a double function: lends credit and weight to the person so marked while, by referring to a unique individual achievement, also helping to create a communicating subject. To be noted is that the Hungarian document uses the multiplicity of persons who created it for that purpose only: except for the Prime Minister’s preface, no part of *Hungary in the 90’s* is assigned explicit authorship. The body of the text suggests a collective-professional kind of subjectivity.

The shared communicative strategy of the Prime Minister’s foreword and the appendix make *Hungary in the 90s* a frame narrative. Its two most important components—the opening and closing elements—serve the discursive task of creating the author’s subjectivity. In it, demonstrations of the full weight of statehood, both symbolic (the coat of arms) and real (the Prime Minister, the ministries and other governmental organs), is coupled with the prominent presence of real, live persons marked by their name and workplace. *Hungary in the 90s* leaves no doubt about the fact that it emphasizes its subjectivity—a compound constructed from the strategic unity of the



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Hungarian state, its various units, and the high-ranking officials that staff those organs.

The subject so produced is a coactive actor organized into an efficient and purposive hierarchy. The relationships among the various state organs and the individuals represented in this subjectivity are presented as completely devoid of conflict. It is through this grand internal harmony of the Hungarian speaking subject that its communication acquires *coherence* and *consistency*. The Hungarian side's communication is characterized by the merger of two subject positions: a first person singular—"I speak," as with the state, the government, and the Prime Minister—and a first person plural—"we speak," as in the chorus of governmental organs and high-ranking officials, suggesting a moral unity between the two "first person" speakers.

The *Commission Opinion* reveals a much more concealed and impersonal sense of subjectivity. The identification of the speaking subject is possible exclusively by reference to the official nature of the speaker in singular—using the full force of official language. The printed version carries the following identification of the author:

"COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES COM(97)2001FINAL." The top left corner of the cover page presents the European Union's coat of arms (a set of twelve yellow five-armed stars arranged in a circle against a dark blue background). The Internet version carries only the document's reference number and date as follows:



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“DOC/97/13, Brussels, 15 July 1997.” No single person appears in the EU document. In contrast to *Hungary in the 90s*, the complete absence of a personal touch is a striking distinguishing feature of the *Commission Opinion*. The European Union’s communicative attitude emphasizes the exclusively official character of its subjectivity.

A simple contrast of the two documents reveals that the personal elements in *Hungary in the 90s* serve to forge the coherence and consistence of the speaking subject. The editors expect this subjectivity—created from statehood, professionalism, and personal presence—to produce a picture of the Hungarian side as a unified, well-organized, and articulate partner whose representatives insist on membership in the European Union *unanimously*, in both the figurative and literal sense. In contrast, the European Union’s strategy of subjectivity mobilizes a cold, impersonal, official kind of style.

ADDRESSIVITY

“An essential (constitutive) marker of the utterance is its quality of being directed to someone, its *addressivity*.”³⁴ The two texts under scrutiny, created one year apart, appear to be each other’s diplomatic counterpoints. (The reader imagines, as it were, that a



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representative of A handed the first document over to a representative of B; then B presented the response back to A.) Yet, quite apart from the bilateral diplomatic framework, the texts reveal much more subtle structures of addressivity.

Hungary in the 90s is addressed to the European Union. The introductory chapter³⁵ begins with the following sentence, printed in boldface: **“The Hungarian Government is convinced that the Republic of Hungary meets the political and economic requirements of membership as specified at the June 12–11, 1993, Copenhagen summit of the Council of Europe.”**³⁶ This is followed by a six-point summary suggesting that (1) due to changes of historical magnitude, Hungary has no choice but European Union membership. Hungary is a member of all international organizations, parliamentary elections are free, and political extremes have no parliamentary representation; (2) the country is an independent state governed by the rule of law, and the media are free; (3) the state guarantees human, ethnic, and minority rights; (4) Hungary has a functioning market economy; (5) the legal system harmonizes with the legal order of the European Union; and (6) the country is ready to accept the *acquis communautaire*. Although the text as it stands could be addressed to the whole

³⁴ Bakhtin, *op. cit.*, 95.

³⁵ Hungary in the 90s, 9–11.



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wide world, it communicates meaningfully only within a single relationship: the government of Hungary is saying this to the decision making bodies of the European Union.

A striking feature of the *Commission Opinion* is that it is *not* the obverse of *Hungary in the 90s*: the European Union speaks not to the Hungarian side but to another addressee. The title of the document—*Commission Opinion on Hungary’s Application for Membership in the European Union*—contains no reference to any notion of a “reply.” Nor does the body of the text. Here, the European Union appears to have exited from the realm of “basic bilateral relations” rather completely.

The party to whom the *Commission Opinion* is addressed is implied in the document’s substantive part (immediately after the table of contents and the executive summary). This section, entitled “Historical and Geopolitical Context,” provides a clearly decipherable clue as it begins with the following sentences:

Hungary is a landlocked country in the centre of Europe, which borders Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. The country’s area amounts to 93,033 km² and its population to 10.2 million (*Commission Opinion*, 4).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.



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This section makes one thing clear: the Hungarian partner—for which this information is glaringly redundant—is not among the addressees. The document’s perspective is that of the Western traveler in rough terrain, relating this experience to other Westerners. This brief, imaginary tour of the Carpathian Basin starts with Hungary’s only European Union member-state neighbor, Austria; it then circles Hungary from the south to reach Romania, and then—as if to refill the expedition’s supplies—it jumps back to Austria, and ventures into uncharted territory again, this time circling Hungary from the north.

This sentence is followed by a one-page sketch of Hungarian history, from the Hungarians’ landtaking in the ninth century in the area where Hungary is today, through the state’s German and Italian orientations during the second World War. One omission provides an important clue: a peculiar geographical myopia makes the authors of the *Commission Opinion* forget Japan as the third major Axis Power. Only Europe exists here. The *Commission Opinion* devotes two paragraphs to the state socialist period and appreciates the Hungarian reform effort, only to conclude with a paragraph on the system of international accords signed by current Hungary—a country that has “returned to democracy.”

The two brief paragraphs on the state socialist period are perhaps the most aloof passages of the *Commission Opinion*. This is not only the point at which the document



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discusses the sensitive, immediate past of central Europe, the period when the now-applicant states were facing the “West” as political and economic rivals and military adversaries. This period is also that part of the heritage of the societies of the applicant states about which the societies of the EU have the least amount of, and the least reliable, specific knowledge. Consequently, it is the one topic about which little empathy can be expected from the west European public. After all, for the nearly fifty years after the second World War, “Eastern Europe” and the state socialist bloc had been the main cold war opponents, and were imagined as the truly asymmetrical counterconcept³⁷ of a west European identity. The contempt, disdain, hatred, confusion, paralysis, sense of inferiority and superiority, competitiveness, and shapeless fear contained in this counterconceptual relationship from the “Western” side can hardly have been assuaged in the few years since the collapse of the state socialist empire. Severe difficulties of “cross-Iron Curtain” person-to-person contacts during the two generations of the cold war have created an experiential isolation between the two sides.

Because of the globalizing workings of the mass media and tourism, the societies of the former state socialist bloc have had at least a modicum of exposure to “west

³⁷ Reinhart Koselleck, “The Historical-Political Semantics of Asymmetric Counterconcepts,” in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1985).



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European” ways of life. The cultural impact of “Western” tourist inflows in Hungary has been particularly significant because of the impressive penetration of the institutional bundle of “Western” international tourism during the late state socialist period and thereafter, and the intrusion of “Western” tourists, who operate at the top of the Hungarian social hierarchy in terms of wealth and spending patterns, as well as sociocultural prestige.³⁸ Meanwhile, the same structures have worked to make it virtually impossible for members of western European societies to participate in the life world and social networks of people on the other side of the Cold War divide. Tourism in this sense has been more a blinder than a window.³⁹

Added to this is an ethos of ungenerosity marking the collective mentalities of the societies of the European core, prompting Habermas to posit the emergence of no less than a newfangled, “welfare-chauvinist”⁴⁰ EU nationalism directly connected with the ungracious end of the Cold War. As Gerard Delanty summarizes,

³⁸ József Böröcz, *Leisure Migration. A Sociological Study on Tourism*. (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1996).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, especially Chapter 1, 1–23. 40. Jürgen Habermas, “Yet again, German identity—a unified nation of angry DM-burghers,” *New German Critique*, 52 (1991):84–101, and *The Past as Present* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994). Quoted by Gerard Delanty, “Social Exclusion and the New Nationalism: European Trends and their Implications for Ireland,” *Innovation*, 10 (1997): 134.

⁴⁰ Jürgen Habermas, “Yet again, German identity—a unified nation of angry DM-burghers,” *New German Critique*, 52 (1991):84–101, and *The Past as Present* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994). Quoted by Gerard Delanty, “Social Exclusion and the New Nationalism: European Trends and their Implications for Ireland,” *Innovation*, 10 (1997): 134.



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The nationalism that emerged in Western Europe in the aftermath of the Eastern European revolutions (fuelled by the movement towards increased European integration) was the product of an endangered materialism that had emerged within a short period of rapid growth. The new nationalism is then marked by its concern with preserving material gains associated with the middle class style of life.⁴¹

The relevance of this idea to the state socialist past is reflected in the example of unified Germany, where the eastern side's acceptance—in terms of morality, life conduct, social networks, and contemporary history—by its western counterpart has been impeded because of what appear to be quite grave difficulties.⁴²

If this phenomenon occurs even during the unification of two states derived from the same nation, then it should definitely be expected to occur across national lines as well. Even more so should it be anticipated in the case of Hungary: a country whose culture exists in the medium of a non-Indo-European language, but which is nonetheless seeking admittance into an emerging supstate characterized by the vast numerical and prestige-predominance of Indo-European cultures. The two Hungarian words which

⁴¹ Delanty, op. cit., 133.

⁴² Intermarriage rates between west and east Berliners, for instance, have been hovering around three percent while the proportion of marriages in which one partner is a foreigner is about seven times higher. See: "Die Ost-West Ehe bleibt auch weiter die Ausnahme," *Berliner Zeitung*, 9 August 1996, 16. See also Marc Howard, "An East German Ethnicity? Understanding the New Division of Unified Germany," *German Politics and Society*, 13 (Winter 1995):49–70.



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appear in the *Commission Opinion*—the first and last names of the Communist politician running Hungary from 1956 to 1989—appear in such a way that the letter “á,” which appears in the name three times, is mistakenly replaced by tiny computer diskette symbols⁴³, suggesting, incidentally, that this exotic Hungarian character poses insurmountable difficulties for the EU’s word processing software. The Internet version of the *Commission Opinion* also reproduces the name incorrectly, although the mistakes are *different* in this case. Here it looks thus: “J<nos K<d<r.” This is all the more odd as the Hungarian character in question—“á”—coincides with the Spanish accented “á” or the French *accent aigu*, both of course official languages of the EU. The fact that the typist of the *Commission Opinion* did not recognize those obvious analogies indicates a sense of alienness that finds easy reference in the remarkably small number of cognates that most Europeans (as speakers of Indo-European languages) will find in Hungarian.

Returning to the problem of the *Commission Opinion*’s addressivity, it is difficult to imagine that the author(s) of this text would have thought of the Hungarian state, the government of the Republic of Hungary, or Hungarian society at large as their possible addressees. Were the European Union speaking to a Hungarian partner, the document

⁴³ *Commission Opinion*, 4.



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would certainly not say the things that it does: if it did, the above description would seem but an empty set of statements with no communicative content.

The emptiness of that communicative act would be apparent only within this relation: Hungarians are the only people who do not need to be told these facts. For them, competence in Hungarian culture begins at a rather more sophisticated level. The first substantive section of the *Commission Opinion* is thus a very sharp rhetorical tool. It carves out the communicative relation by emphasizing that the text speaks to anybody—everybody—except the applicant. The European Union speaks about Hungary, but never to Hungary.

This inference is reinforced by the fact that the *Commission Opinion* also possesses a frame structure—albeit a very different one from that of *Hungary in the 90s*: This frame consists of map reproductions. The booklet opens with a sketchy political map of the region of central Europe, emphasizing Hungary by dark shading. The document closes with two maps of Hungary—one delineating the administrative units of the country, the other depicting its traffic network. Again, the maps in the frame reveal new information only to the non-Hungarian reader, suggesting that the *Commission Opinion* is addressed to just about anybody except the Hungarian government or society.



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In sum, the communicative functions of the two sides have differed in every respect examined so far. The applicant follows a strategy of subjectivity that molds personal and official elements; the recipient, in contrast, constructs its speech exclusively by relying on its official subjectivity. The Hungarian side fixes its gaze on—and speaks loudly and clearly to—the European Union, while the latter avoids eye contact, as it were, following a strategy of communication that puts Hungary in the position of the outsider-object, treating it as an irrelevant presence in a private discussion (albeit a discussion about the future of Hungary itself).

Hence, the addressivity of the two documents is completely asymmetrical. *The Hungarian side treats the European Union as a subject* by speaking directly and unambiguously to it. *The European Union, in contrast, treats the Hungarian side as either an object or a locative adverb, but never as a subject.*

The EU is quite careless, even at that: in one paragraph the document loses its “Hungarian” focus, and refers to its object-locative as “Poland”:

The Europe Agreement provides for a competition regime to be applied in trade relations between the Community and *Poland* based on the criteria of articles 85 and 86 of the EC Treaty (agreements between undertakings) abuses of dominant



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position and in article 92 (state aid) and for implementing rules in these fields to be adopted within three years of the entry into force of the Agreement.⁴⁴

This tiny mistake provides a rather major clue. It suggests two observations of some conceptual significance: (1) the European Union's "opinions" about the applicant states' replies appear not to have been made independently of each other (quite an unorthodox procedure given the supposedly "bilateral" diplomatic framework of the admission process); and, (2) editing of the *Commission Opinion* did not receive concentrated professional attention (such mistakes would have been easy enough to avoid using the "search and replace" function of any word processing software).

This also raises the issue of whether it is possible that not only the *Commission Opinion* but indeed the Hungarian application materials themselves had been produced as boilerplate, i.e., by copying them from documentation submitted by a previously successful candidate. This is a reasonable supposition, since much diplomatic communication is patterned. From language use to negotiating behaviors, dress codes to seating arrangements, imitation is an important and widely used technique for creating stability and predictability in the world of interstate relations. The Commission's

⁴⁴ *Commission Opinion*, 45. Emphasis mine.



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boilerplate approach to its central European applicants as shown here, however, goes far beyond the usual diplomatic technique of deriving stability from imitation. Instead, it suggests that the detailed material submitted by a state as part of its application for EU membership is not evaluated on a state-by-state basis. It is difficult to imagine a more powerful means for denying subjectivity to an inferiorized other.

The possibility that Hungary or any other applicant could have used a similar approach to produce their application can be safely discarded. For the *structure* of the current round of applications—termed ‘eastern enlargement’—has been noticeably different from all preceding rounds. The record of previous application suggests that the questionnaire-and-response technique was invented for the ten central and east European applicants. Western observers have pointed out that with the applications of the formerly Soviet-bloc states, “the Commission was confronted with a number of problems which rendered the exercise more difficult than for previous Opinions.”⁴⁵ Those unanticipated problems included the unprecedented number of applicants (ten states from central and eastern Europe plus Cyprus, Malta, and Turkey), the perceived “absence of detailed

⁴⁵ Avery and Cameron, *The Enlargement of the European Union*, op. cit., 35.



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information on important aspects of the candidate countries,”⁴⁶ the view that “the economic gap between applicants and the existing Member States [is] greater than in the case of any previous enlargement,”⁴⁷ and the sense that a delicate matter of political decision was required in order to determine “the order of ranking [in which] the Commission [would] place the countries as a result of its assessment.”⁴⁸ As a result, the Commission produced “a questionnaire of 150 pages with 23 chapters”⁴⁹ and required that the applicant states provide the information voluntarily. In other words, the questionnaire technique was new; the absence of the “response-to-the-EU-questionnaire” as a preexisting genre denied the applicant state any opportunity of copying from previous responses, even if the intent was there. As Graham Avery and Fraser Cameron pointed out about the eight applications evaluated before the current round, “the Opinions on Greece, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Austria, Sweden, Finland and Norway all had been issued separately; only in the case of Malta and Cyprus had there been a simultaneous finalization of Opinions.”⁵⁰ Not even in the latter two cases do we find the questionnaire technique, however. While it is safe to assume that the drafters of the Hungarian response

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 36.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 37.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 35.



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may have consulted the application materials of previously successful entrants, the direct relevance of those prior materials to the construction of a unique Hungarian document is negligible.

This evidence regarding the boilerplate evaluation of applications is of crucial significance for interpreting the European Union's behavior vis-à-vis its central European neighbors: by objectifying the applicant, the European Union's document in effect erases the Hungarian (Polish, Czech, etc.) side's subjectivity. With respect to our immediate object, this implies no less than the destruction of the Hungarian government's carefully constructed, complex strategy of producing its own subjectivity. The addressivity of the *Commission Opinion* does not reflect the communicative efforts of the Hungarian party; it mirrors, instead, the asymmetry of the two sides' power relations "before," as it were, the production of these documents.

CONTENT

The Cunning of Interrogative and Responsive Reason

Hungary in the 90s consists of replies to the Union questionnaire. The European Commission sees its own role in having "obtained a wealth of information on Hungary's

⁵⁰ Ibid.



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situation from the Hungarian authorities, and has utilized many other sources of information, including the member states and numerous international organizations.”⁵¹ In this description, (1) the European Union is the active subject that “has obtained [the] information” so that, in effect, (2) the Hungarian effort, intellectual as well as organizational, expended in providing it is devalued drastically: a several-thousand-pages-long series of highly structured and precise replies becomes merely “a wealth of information,” whose source is revealed in a locative (“from the Hungarian authorities”): The Hungarian side’s subjectivity is further curtailed.

To see whether any more is going on in these documents than one party merely “obtaining” information from the other, I will apply the logic of interrogative reason to a passage chosen from the one of the most detailed sections of *Hungary in the 90s*: the fifty-page treatise on “Agriculture.” The comprehensive question in section 2.2, entitled “Product Specific Agrarian Policies” reads as follows:

The descriptions should detail the purpose and basic mechanism of all current or planned product specific agrarian policy measures (planned subsidies, production or export taxes, fees, customs or import duties and other import-related measures, product control, etc.). If the specific measures refer to several product groups,

⁵¹ *Commission Opinion*, 3.



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please include their description in each product group. The descriptions should contain the following information: x the name of the agrarian policy measure, x is the measure currently in effect or is it planned (the timing of the introduction of the planned measure) x legal basis (the number and name of the relevant legal material), x aims and general description of the measure, x applicability, x payments—positive or negative incentives, x payments and the basis of their territorial differentiation (basis for the determination of regions), x amounts paid since 1990, in sum and per unit costs (grades of the scale, if there is regional differentiation), x where the levies/taxes have been paid (central government budget or the financing of specific activities), x control measures. In addition, please include in the description of the vegetables-fruits section the economic significance of the productive organizations in case they carry significant weight (including the production proportions and percentages covered by organizations). Please also include in the description all subsidies spent on the processing of fresh fruits and vegetables and the legal relations that exist between the producers and processors of fresh produce. As the excerpt shows, the question about this divisive issue is long and extremely detailed. (The typical length of a question in the EU questionnaire is one to three sentences.) The level of technical detail required in this question might otherwise bring to mind international economic espionage, except that here of course the investigative work must be done by the target of the information-gathering process itself.

Meanwhile, it is also striking that the question reflects the internal tensions of the European Union; it has nothing to do with the specific features of Hungarian, or central



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and east European, agriculture. This is well-illustrated by those elements of the question that request information on products that are obviously impossible to grow in Hungary due to climatic reasons—for instance olives or cotton—while such traditionally “strong” Hungarian products as apples or apricots are tucked under the residual category of “vegetables and fruits.” The EU- (i.e., self-) centeredness of the interrogating mind is also revealed in the rigor with which the questionnaire investigates state subsidies in agriculture—and this to the government of Hungary, a country whose economy had relied on exceptionally low levels of agricultural subsidies throughout the preceding decades.

A host of cunning techniques are applied in response. Much of those In particular, much is revealed in the brief but rather complex reply in *Hungary in the 90s* to the “Olive Oil” question:

4. Olive Oil

The plant is not produced in Hungary due to the lack of ecological conditions. Domestic demand is met by import that is 100% liberalized.

The Hungarian reply suggests with patience, tact, and brevity that the question is irrelevant in the Hungarian context. It then adds that domestic demand is met from imports—and one hundred percent liberalized imports, at that. This produces at least



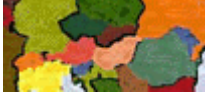
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three narrative effects: (1) It gives the correct and briefest possible reply to the posed question while (2) attempting to guess the underlying motive of the question, and (3) trying to soothe possible anxieties on the part of its partner regarding possible “problems.” This perfectly fulfills Bakhtin’s classical definition of dialogical speech:

The addressee of the utterance can, so to speak, coincide *personally* with the one (or ones) to whom the utterance responds. This personal coincidence is typical in everyday dialogue or in an exchange of letters . . . When considering my utterance, I try actively to determine this response. Moreover, I try to act in accordance with the response I anticipate, so this anticipated response, in turn, exerts an active influence on my utterance (*I parry objections that I foresee, I make all kinds of provisos, and so forth*).⁵²

That is exactly what the EU questionnaire fails to do when posing questions about specifically Mediterranean or subtropical produce to a country with a continental climate. The Hungarian side, on the other hand, carefully considers its partner’s situation in the answer above, as well as in its replies to all questions pertaining to the important branches of Hungarian agriculture.

⁵² Bakhtin, op. cit., 95. Second emphasis added.



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This fact is further illustrated in the Hungarian reply to the question on “Wine.” First, the respondent takes a certain pride in indicating that this sector has a strong tradition in Hungary, and lists some data on raw and processed products. Next follows a section in which the Hungarian side guesses the causes of, and preempts, the other side’s worries. Here (1) the Hungarian text points out that eighty percent of production is for domestic consumption—i.e., it seeks to calm the Union’s wine producers’ fears that Hungarian exports are insignificant; (2) it hastens to say that wine is imported as well, to the tune of fifteen to twenty percent of exports—i.e., it suggests that “we are in principle open” to imports, including imports from the European Union as well; (3) it then hits an optimistic note by arguing that (given certain conditions) the “domestic and international market background of the product is secure”⁵³—i.e., it preempts, as it were, doubts concerning the competitiveness of the Hungarian wine industry; (4) finally, after a reference to the historic roots of Hungarian wine production regulation, it reports that Hungarian wine law has recently moved in the direction of harmonization with European Union requirements—i.e., it “replies” to the implicit question regarding Hungary’s ability to adjust to the *acquis communautaire*. (This is followed by a substantial amount of other information not aimed at playing “hide-and-seek” with the Union’s intents.)

⁵³ Hungary in the 90s, 38.



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In sum, the European Union interrogates directly from its internal perspective and practices a synthetic style of dialogic speech, in which the speaker is aware of the presence of the communicative partner but refuses to consider their subjectivity. The Hungarian side's discourse, on the other hand, is emphatically and fully dialogical: it "guesses" at the European Union's considerations and seeks to anticipate even their implicit objections, in order to avoid any possibility of an even partly negative evaluation.

The Hall of Mirrors

The Hungarian undertaking is nearly impossible. It would be difficult, although possible, to comprehend the EU's logic if that logic were unified, coherent, and consistent. Since the EU's economic criteria for membership do not exhibit those features, however, it is nearly impossible for Hungary to adjust to their position.

The four economic criteria formulated during the admission process and reflected, among other places, in the *Commission Opinion*—i.e., (1) the openness of the country's system of economic institutions; (2) the economic potential of the country; (3) its competitiveness; and (4) its readiness to accept the *acquis communautaire*—mutually



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contradict each other.⁵⁴ Of the six possible pairwise combinations of the four criteria, each contains at least the possibility of a true contradiction: (1) the criterion of the “openness of the system of economic institutions” contradicts the criterion of “economic potential,” as openness can easily become an instrument for the leakage or suction of resources; (2) if so, then “openness” may become a grave impediment to “competitiveness”; (3) “openness” may also contradict the “ability to accept the *acquis*” to the extent that the current state of openness provides access to Hungarian economic space not only to EU companies, but to outsiders as well. This possibility has recently been discussed quite eloquently by Tamás Csányi *et al.* as follows: “While the date of full membership in the European Union is ever more uncertain, what is ever more clear is this: what [Hungary is] about to join is a complicated re-distributive system, completely at odds with the direction of [Hungary’s] current tendency toward becoming a ‘wild Eastern’ ‘free’ market economy.”⁵⁵ It is most remarkable that the aforementioned mutually contradictory tendencies are in harmony with the economic criteria set by the European Union for the applicant states. (4) “Economic potential” (whose main corollary

⁵⁴ This four-element system of criteria is a stylized summary distilled from a fifteen-page treatise. *Commission Opinion*, 17–31.

⁵⁵ Csányi Tamás, Juhász Péter, and Megyik László, “A hiánygazdaságtól a gazdaság hiányáig,” *Élet És Irodalom*, 28 November 1997, 5.



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is the ability to contribute to the European Union's system of subsidies) may directly contradict "competitiveness," unless greater competitiveness is coupled with higher product quality (competitiveness arising from lower wage costs may be a tremendous impediment to economic potential); (5) "economic potential" contradicts "ability to accept the *acquis*," to the extent that economic strength is created by way of non-EU (North American or Far Eastern) sources of investment; and, finally, (6) "competitiveness" is also contradicted by "adjustment to the *acquis*," to the extent that the redistributive elements of the *acquis communautaire* limit competitiveness based on low wage costs.

Efforts to represent the Hungarian position are further complicated by the fact that the Hungarian side has to negotiate a double system of traps with respect to the treatment of obvious facts. Take, for instance, one of the most basic descriptive macroeconomic facts regarding Hungary: that already—i.e., even before full membership—about sixty percent of the country's external trade has been taking place with the European Union.⁵⁶ The applicant's problem with this simple fact is the following: on the one hand, this proves the country's openness and commitment to trade



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with the European Union (i.e., “we are already completely open, even before full membership”); on the other, it raises the question of what more Hungary can actually offer in exchange for Union membership (and to offset the attendant increased expenses, to be guaranteed by the EU in subsidies, etc.).⁵⁷ Opening the import markets is certainly not an option, as those are already dominated by companies based in the European Union.

The Hungarian side’s uncertainties also arise from its difficulties in figuring out subtle changes in the direction of the EU’s preferred economic policy. The “edge” of the Union’s questions is entirely different if posed, say, from a Keynesian perspective than if asked from a set of neoclassical assumptions. The “Labor Market” section of the *Commission Opinion*’s “Structural Transformation” subchapter, for instance, concludes with the following statement: “The reduced demand for labor has been to a large extent absorbed by a reduction in the active population, facilitated by generous provisions for early retirement and disability pensions.”⁵⁸ This idea is then detailed in the following paragraph:

⁵⁶ See, e.g., “Around 60% of Czech and Hungarian Trade Now with the EU,” <http://www.eubusiness.com/easteuro/971006ra.html>, quoting data reported by EU-ROSTAT, the European Union’s own statistical service.

⁵⁷ E.g., András Inotai, “What Is Novel about Eastern Enlargement of the European Union?” in Inotai, op. cit., 17.

⁵⁸ Commission Opinion, 22.



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Over one-third of non-interest expenditure goes to finance a relatively generous system of social security. Low statutory retirement ages, disability pensions, and early retirement schemes result in an effective average retirement age of under 55 for both men and women.⁵⁹

The Hungarian problem with such formulations is that, depending on the reader's preferred economic perspective, the facts described in this section can be considered a great civilizing achievement (and proof of the Hungarian state's readiness to be part of the European Union) or a grave structural problem (and evidence of Hungary's unpreparedness for EU-membership). The latter reading is supported by most of the *Commission Opinion's* economic policy sections. However, the "Descriptive Summary" of the chapter on "Economic and Social Cohesion" argues a different interpretation and adds more confusion:

Hungary spends about 22% of its GDP on social security and welfare. . . . Continued efforts are required to ensure that measures of social protection are developed. The Hungarian health system needs to be improved.⁶⁰

In the middle sentence of this excerpt, the *Commission Opinion* clearly speaks from a pro-welfare-state position, pointing out the Hungarian welfare state's perceived

⁵⁹ Ibid., 23.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 76 –7.



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difficulties. Its contradiction to the previous quote is obvious and irreconcilable. The last sentence, then, returns to ambiguity by failing to suggest just what the author means by “improvement.”

The task of the applicant in this “hall of mirrors” is to prove its own Union-readiness by way of a rhetoric free of ambiguity. It is of course not knowable during the formulation of the Hungarian response which of the self-contradictory and ambiguous EU criteria will be taken into account during the evaluation of the application: the task of the applicant is obviously impossible. The above example of the “Olive Oil” reply can be interpreted as a quite successful attempt at solving an unsolvable task.

The applicant’s position is further burdened by the fact that this strict dramaturgy of interrogation and reporting does not allow reference to any causal factor. This is made especially problematic—and politically, eminently explosive—by the fact that one of the most potent causal factors so muted is Hungary’s dependence on the EU.

STYLES

Both documents are written in a combination of the language of international diplomacy and professional jargon. This would be self-evident and quite trivial if we did



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not know what we already do about the two parties' power imbalances; about the asymmetry of their speech situations; about the way one party treats the other as a subject while itself in turn being treated as an object; and about the profoundly ambiguous nature of the stronger party's position, which makes the task of adjustment virtually impossible. All this throws quite different light on the style requirements of professionalism and official behavior. Bakhtin argues about neutral-objective speech as follows:

[E]ven the so-called neutral or objective styles of exposition that concentrate maximally on their subject matter and, it would seem, are free of any consideration of the other still involve a certain conception of their addressee. Such objectively neutral styles select language vehicles not only from the standpoint of their adequacy to the subject matter of speech, but also from the standpoint of the presumed apperceptive background of the addressee. [. . .

O]bjectively neutral styles presuppose something like an identity of the addressee and the speaker.⁶¹

Because of the basic asymmetry of relations between the two sides, the effects of their shared official-professional styles are quite different. On the Hungarian side, the professional and official language of the document is evidence for the applicant's commitment to the tie, its frankness and—via its ability to provide EU-compatible data and self-analysis—its preparedness for full membership.

⁶¹ Bakhtin, *op. cit.*, 98.



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On the other hand, the *Commission Opinion*'s emphatic presentation of Hungarian geographical *topoi* as novelties discovered by the western subject, the maps, the denotation of the European Union document as an “*Opinion*” rather than a “reply,” and its use of an addressivity that carefully avoids the Hungarian side—all of this converges to establish the EU's official-bureaucratic mode of subjectivity. In this mode, the stronger side cannot possibly reply directly to its partner: as in Bakhtin, the objective observer's position suggests the idea that the speaker's and addressee's perspectives are identical. Just as nineteenth-century anthropologists and geographers spoke to the educated gentile elites of their society without conceiving that they could address their minutely descriptive, scientific work to the indigenous people of the newly-discovered, obviously uncivilized, parts of the world, so the European Union as the discoverer of Hungary cannot possibly address itself to its Hungarian counterpart. The Commission can talk to only one addressee: itself, imagined as the established, stable, wealthy, democratic, bourgeois subject. This perspective matter-of-factly sinks the poor applicant from the “east” with its parvenu aspirations—and its supposedly questionably capitalist or democratic nature—to the lower rank of the object (or locative adverb) of technical discovery.



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That is how a host of distancing, uncertain, and obscure stylistic elements and caveats make their way into the official, objective style used by the European Union. The language of the *Commission Opinion* on Hungary is rich in such elements. These fall under two types. Positive statements of fact on Hungary are systematically distanced by using such colloquialisms as “seems to,” “can be regarded as,” or “should be able to.” The other, even more conspicuous, linguistic tool is the recurrence of the awkward and officious phrase “presents the characteristics of.” These distancing phrases suggest two alternative and unreconciled interpretations. (1) They imply—without asserting in such a way that the authors could be then taken to task—the possibility that what is being presented is not reality but mere appearance (as if saying that “this object presents the characteristics of something but in reality is not like that”). (2) Meanwhile, they can also be shrugged off as no more than roundabout expressions, features of bureaucratic language. The *Commission Opinion* offers no hint about which is the appropriate interpretation.

This is all the more significant as these formulae dominate, and so contextualize, the conclusions of the *Commission Opinion*. The most upbeat section of the conclusion reads as follows:

In the light of these considerations, the Commission concludes that:



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—Hungary presents the characteristics of a democracy, with stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;

—Hungary can be regarded as a functioning market economy and it should be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union in the medium term[.]⁶²

The important essence of this communicative strategy is that *both interpretations*—“it can be regarded as such but it really is not” and “it is”—*are meaningful and possibly correct*. There is never a choice made between the two. Thus we cannot exclude the possibility that the ambiguity of this material, suggesting an evaluative polysemy in the concluding summary section of the *Commission Opinion*, is intentional. As indirect support for this interpretation, it is useful to remember that all of those formulae are remarkably cumbersome and that, in their cumbersomeness, they contradict the principle of authorial economy. If the document is to end with such formulae, then extra efforts need to be made.

⁶² *Commission Opinion*, 105.



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Desire and Suspension

It would be a mistake to attribute the European Union's evident reluctance, condescension, and aversion vis-à-vis one of its immediate neighbors—by many accounts the most hopeful candidate of the “eastern enlargement”—solely to the recent legacy of the Cold War. Some *longue-durée* patterns also work to this effect. As critical work on the history of European ideas shows, a rational-Western self-image has produced, since the Enlightenment, the notion of “East Europeanness” as a rudimentary, “rustic,” and low-scale version of itself.⁶³ Patterns of public culture mirror this tendency closely, as I have shown in an earlier study of the mental maps produced by tourist guidebook representations of various parts of Europe from the 1860s through the 1920s.⁶⁴

In this imagery, the mental map of geographical Europe becomes a downward slope toward the east. Through this process, public parlance and newspaper language use the adjective “eastern” to mean “inferior,” or outright “non-” in such idiomatic expressions as “Eastern Europe.” The name of the current round of EU applications, “eastern enlargement” is particularly suggestive in this regard, since the need for a rubric

⁶³ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 13.

⁶⁴ József Böröcz, “Travel-Capitalism: The Structure of Europe and the Advent of the Tourist,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (1992): 708–41. See also my *Leisure Migration*.



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was curiously absent during previous enlargements, although they resulted in the admission of states such as Finland, Sweden, Austria, and even East Germany: states whose territories lie, technically speaking, due east of the European Communities member-states of the time.

A fascinating feature of the official exchange between Hungary and the EU is the “Western” side’s reversion to the colonial topos of *discovery*. Just as colonial discovery involved, according to Anne McClintock, “a journey to a far-flung region, asking the local inhabitants if they know of a nearby river, lake or waterfall, paying them to take one there, then ‘discovering’ the site,”⁶⁵ so, too, the European Union “obtains” information from the Hungarian locals, then excludes the informants so as to interpret this information as new knowledge, and expresses it as a “discovery.” The expert gaze of “European” subjectivity on “Eastern Europe” thus resembles what Mary Louise Pratt describes as

strategies of representation whereby European⁶⁶ bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony. . . . The

⁶⁵ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather. Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 30.

⁶⁶ To be noted is the irony in Pratt’s imprecision here: her critique of colonial consciousness uses the *topos* of identifying “western Europe” with “Europe,” the same exclusionary, *synecdochic* representation of Europe pointed out above.



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main protagonist . . . is a figure . . . whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess.⁶⁷

The issuance of a questionnaire to the native governments of the central and east European states, requesting information about the political, economic, sociolegal, and cultural landscape in their countries, and the presentation of this information as a discovery by denying subjectivity to the natives, bears a striking resemblance to this ethos of colonial discovery. Admission of the Hungarian (Polish, Czech, Slovene, etc.) society to full membership in European Union as *equal* partners would thus require no less than the erasure and reinscription of an over two-hundred-year-old *topos* of west European identity construction. That would involve re-imagining the weaker, ignored, belittled, scientifically and officially apprehended and described—hence objectified—other as a dynamic, inspiring, lively, and exciting partner characterized by a complex subjectivity. Such an endeavor, as all those involved understand, would require serious adjustment by the applicants—but not by them. One of the most pervasive results of the communicative process as it unfolded was the shielding of the “western” subject from

⁶⁷ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 7.



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responsibility for this adjustment, thus conveniently placing responsibility for the smoothness of the enlargement process on the applicant.

The stronger party's communicative strategy can be described as *suspension*: an effort to gain time while keeping the applicant in uncertainty. The technique of wrapping evaluative polysemy into highly official language effectively serves this purpose.

Whether the expert exchange is to be interpreted as a form of large-scale international economic espionage or as a benign request for information to ease the jovial-neighborly admittance of a new member to the European Union will depend entirely on the outcome of the decision-making process: the European Union's unilateral decision to accept or reject Hungary's application. An additional benefit of the long-term suspension of that decision for the more powerful party is that suspension makes it possible to postpone the moral odium of a possible negative decision, while exacting an intensely pacifying, normalizing effect on the eastern borderlands of the Union.

This conclusion allows a tentative remark about the question of what the term "integration" means within the Europe Agreement, which provides Hungary and all hopeful applicants with associate membership. Judging from the European Commission's communicative strategy, "integration" means transposition and implementation of the *acquis communautaire*, including the opening of the applicant state's borders to EU



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actors. What it does not mean is a reliable promise of full membership. The essence of the European Union's strategy vis-à-vis the central and eastern European applicants is *integration without inclusion*: participation in the production systems, and appendance to the consumption markets of EU corporations without the attendant political, economic, social, and cultural rights conferred by European Union citizenship.

The applicant state's tacit recognition of this strategy is the reason that drastic asymmetry does not lead to a breaking of ties. The Hungarian party operates a communicative strategy that can be formulaically described as [Hungary → EU]. The EU, in contrast, first interrogates, then opines without addressing the object, thus communicating as [EU → "non-Hungary"], and postpones substantive decision about the one issue the Hungarian side is eminently interested in—admission—into the unforeseeable future. Were this an act of interpersonal communication, it would be considered rather boorish behavior. However, the tie survives because the power imbalance and the Hungarian desire for acceptance to full EU membership are sufficient to sustain this highly asymmetrical communicative situation.

Hence, the two sides apply radically different rules of communication. The more powerful party matter-of-factly relies on a discursive strategy of asymmetry, denying subjectivity to its partner and in effect reserving subjectivity to itself. This involves the



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deployment of a veritable grammar of exclusion, creating an imaginary world in which the applicant is distant, inferior, and disposable. The dependent, less powerful party, on the other hand, struggles to maintain communication and its own space of subjectivity by adhering to a grammar of democratic-rational inclusion. This effort is motivated by the excluded party's desire to be allowed entry into its partner's superior subjectivity, and is made possible by the bilateral-diplomatic context. The Hungarian strategy promises success to the extent that the European Union can be held responsible for applying its principles of democracy and openness, but is doomed to failure if those principles are not actually applied—a possibility suggested by one observer of decision-making in the European Union, who argued that “if the European Union were to apply for membership, it would be rejected because of its lack of transparency.”⁶⁸

The relationship of the two communicating parties thus bears a striking resemblance to that of the fox and the raven in La Fontaine's fable. In that story, the fox has a strong desire for the cheese, which is in the raven's possession. The fox's task is to sing a song charming enough to make the raven drop the cheese. The raven, acutely aware of the value of the cheese, hesitates; he has not yet decided whether to let the fox have the cheese. This parable may help us to understand the (Hungarian) fox so

⁶⁸ Half-joking remark to this author.



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persistently maintains contact with the evasive (“European”) raven, without a breakup of communication. Instead, what is produced is a communicative process “hung” in its long-term inequality.

The fox is singing its most charming songs; the raven is looking down upon the fox with the removed gaze of the expert evaluator. The cheese, meanwhile, is quite perishable.



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The enduring national state: NATO-EU relations, EU-enlargement and the reapportionment of the Balkans, by Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro

I. Introduction

Numerous scholars have claimed that recent processes of globalization have effectively eroded the sovereignty of national states, reflecting a historically new reordering of the locus of (geo)political influence to global and/or regional scales. The emergence and expansion of supranational institutions, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the European Union (EU), are often cited as examples of this new form of political and economic relations (Agnew, 2000; Bourdieu, 1998; Brenner, 1998; Negri, 1998, 2001; Sassen, 1999). Others have been more sanguine about globalization, exposing the dialectical relationship between fractions of capital and national states, the pre-existing and continuing contingency of state power, and the actual delimitation of sovereignty to a handful of states in different periods (Arrighi, 1999; Krasner, 1999; Taylor, 1994; Tilly, 1992).

Despite its widely encompassing nature, this debate on the national state¹ has left largely unexamined the expansionistic and contradictory tendencies of suprastatal organizations such as NATO and the EU. Studies so far mostly range from uncritical prescriptive and prognostic arguments regarding EU and NATO expansion to debates over the meaning of "Europe" (Gowan and Anderson, 1997; Smith and Timmins, 2000; Taibo, 2000). Meanwhile, the geopolitics of the EU's eastward enlargement have been understudied, especially as they connect with NATO expansion and military



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interventionism. The importance of analyzing the EU-NATO relation emerges from the clues it provides regarding the evolving nature of the EU as possibly a novel process of state formation and/or imperialism and regarding the practical consequences of eastward enlargement for eastern European countries. The EU-NATO relation exposes the continuing importance of national states, imperialistic struggles and colonialism in the structuring of global political economic relations.² In the context of eastward enlargement, it reflects the persistence of inter-state struggles through an imperialistic and colonial rearrangement of Europe. Simultaneously, the interactions between the EU and NATO have added a nuance to the debate on globalization by revealing the context-specific internal tensions within and between suprastatal institutions, national states and capital.

In the following pages, I first explicate the nature of the EU and its connections to NATO as related to the issue of sovereignty. I will then address the colonial and imperialist implications of those connections for eastern Europe, citing as exemplars the events leading to the bombing of Yugoslavia and the establishment of the "Stability Pact" for Southeastern Europe. The evidence from official documents, economic policies and military interventions suggests that the relationship between NATO and the EU and their respective policies toward eastern Europe presents a pattern of both renewed imperialism and colonialism. Inconsistencies and/or tensions within EU expansionist policies derive from EU-NATO membership overlap and the centripetal and centrifugal effects of the different imperial centres associated with the two suprastatal organisations (Franco-German in case of the EU and British-American in the case of NATO).



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The EU-NATO relationship has practical implications for the EU's eastward enlargement process in terms of the mode of integration of eastern Europe. Arguably, there are two possibilities at stake for eastern European states. The region could be differentiated according to existing (and shifting) arrangements within the EU and NATO as part of a polycentric empire. Alternatively, the region could be subsumed differentially under major EU and/or NATO powers through a revamped colonial scheme. Moreover, despite its peculiarity as a supranational entity, the EU's internal conflicts over the apportionment of eastern Europe demonstrate that it largely remains a set of interacting national states dominated by three major powers competing for supremacy.³

II. Methodological approach

For the purpose of this analysis, I consulted a variety of official sources to expand on the empirical studies of other scholars. Aside from NATO itself, official documentation derives from agencies formally extraneous to the EU, such as the UN Security Council, KFOR, USAID and OSCE. Related documentation from the Council of the European Union (henceforth "the Council"), the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and the European Commission responsible for External Relations served as the basis of decoding EU policy toward the Balkans. The general method is one of progressive elimination in order to deduce elementary geopolitical blocs and their shifts behind EU state-formation and expansion and thereby determine the objects of their struggles. It is commonly known that power relations are characterized by Franco-



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German predominance within the EU and US-UK domination within NATO. In order to detect the connections between the EU and NATO, the analysis focuses on the Kosovo crisis and the Stability Pact because they represent instances of intense overlap that potentially betray the tensions among different colonial powers.

III. EU, NATO and sovereignty

Irrespective of how globalization is approached as a process, the formation of one supranational institution, the EU, and the expansion of its capacities may yet become problematic to current notions of state formation and reproduction, at least as a unique regional phenomenon. To some, the EU represents a new and ambiguous state form, neither confederation nor "nation-state." As a supranational institution, the EU officially claims a "sharing and pooling" of sovereignty among member states, as embodied in the Council, a sort of "Council of Ministers" (Council of the European Union, nd-a). This relatively diffused sovereignty retains ultimate authority in national state administrations through a system of appointed representatives in the Council. Relative to western European parliamentary systems, such a form of sovereignty reduces an already exiguous influence on the part of voters in general. The EU thereby defies categorization according to contemporary theories of state formation, organization (eg, lack of separation of powers in the Council) and sovereignty, as well as mainstream notions of citizenship or "democracy" (Bornschier, 1997). Viewed in less conventional terms, arguing for the EU as a state-formation process becomes problematic because several principal factors of state formation remain largely undeveloped. For instance, the



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constitution of executive organs, the extension of control over the means of coercion, and the development of disciplining and educational institutions are all at most embryonic processes within the EU (Böröcz, personal communication, 2000; Tilly, 1992).

A long-term view of European historical developments may shed some light on the problem of state formation. The EU has emerged from a context of national states that became progressively entrenched since the nineteenth century (Stoler and Cooper, 1997; Tilly, 1992; Woff, 1994). According to Bornschier (1997), the EU represents a historical dynamic within Europe promoted by the interaction of the contradictory forces of state absolutism (later transformed into nationalism) and individualism (subsequently achieving preeminence in the form of liberalism). Although it may seem novel, this approach to European history has precedents in the anarcho-communist tradition.⁴

Notwithstanding the lack of originality, Bornschier correctly identifies a problem with approaching the EU through existing mainstream theoretical frameworks relying on statist models, functionalist geopolitics and economic arguments (see Tilly, 1992, for a critical review). Yet his reduction of internal EU contradictions to an ideological struggle between nationalist and liberal ideologies remains incomplete and thereby unconvincing. In contrast, I contend that the EU not only can be treated as a set of interacting national states, but that inter-state competition within and outside the EU clarifies the unique configuration that so bewilders most scholars.

Several basic structural characteristics of the EU evince more of an affinity with a regional inter-state system than with a state *per se*. In the first place, the putative absence of control over the means of coercion or the creation and centralization of educational and disciplinary institutions may be overstated. Professional armies, police organs,



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schools and secret services have been intensely developed and deployed effectively throughout Europe, especially in the case of the current member states of the EU (Tilly, 1992). Such coercive and consent-generating media remain under the control of EU member states as much as before, according to an uneven sovereignty consistent with internal state hierarchies (Krasner, 1999). These military and other capacities can be mobilized as required, just as votes within the European Council, in the struggle for supremacy and expansion (not necessarily territorial) among EU states. These struggles and EU foreign policy in general are complicated by overlaps and inconsistencies among the strategic alliances of the member states. Military mobilization, for instance, is contingent upon the outcome of tensions between major NATO powers, which include the US. A unified military under the control of the EU is pre-empted or largely redundant as a result of the expansion of NATO, which represents the same major powers within the EU.⁵ Eleven of the 15 EU member states are simultaneously affiliated with NATO, while four of the non-EU NATO members are applying for EU membership (Figure 1).

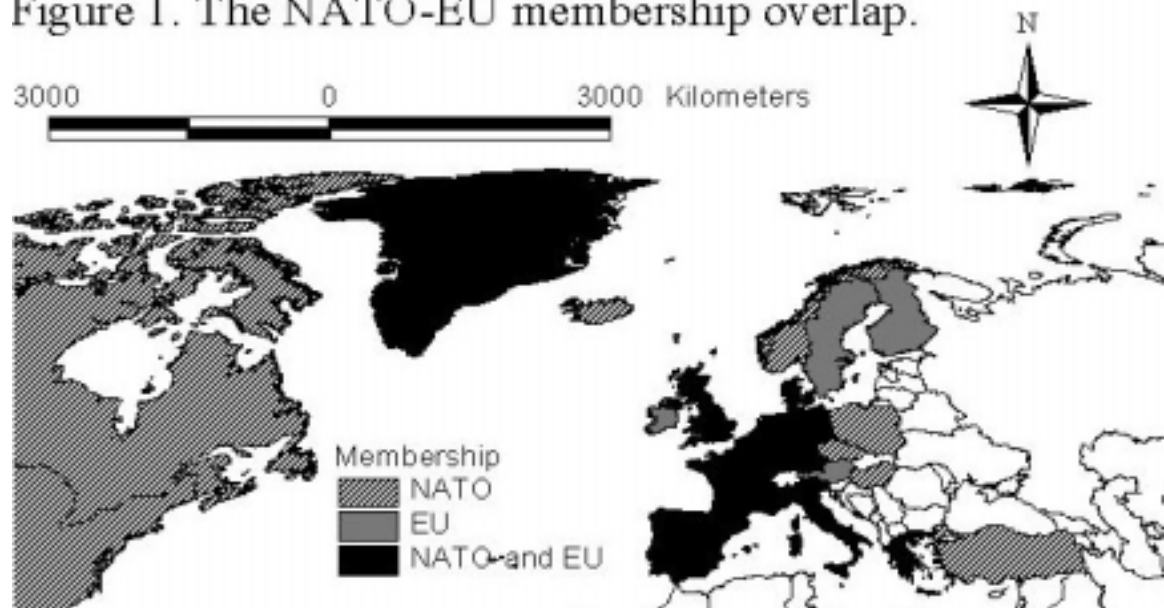
In other words, because of this palimpsest,⁶ the EU represents a polycentric configuration of national states, rather than a sharing of sovereignty based on the semblance of equality formalised in the European Council. The multiple centers of this imperial reconfiguration called the EU are comprised of France, Germany and Great Britain as major powers, with Italy and Spain as lesser states within the EU hierarchy. Its convulsive formation and reproduction through expansion may not be unique, at least, I argue, not in the present conjuncture. The current internal dynamics of the EU, such as



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the decline in "democratic" representation and the expansion of economic power through "mergers," follow overall global patterns already articulated by world-system theorists

Figure 1. The NATO-EU membership overlap.



elsewhere (Arrighi, 1999; Chase-Dunn and Boswell, 2000). To complicate matters, differences among major powers over foreign policy are mitigated by US economic influence and military supremacy. This subordination of EU powers derives, among other factors, from technological dependence. Chris Patten, EU Commissioner for External Relations, depicted this dependence eloquently in his 1999 speech in Berlin, stating that "The EU member states import from the US seven times more armaments than they export" (Patten, 16 December, 1999).



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IV. EU enlargement as colonialism

Having discussed the shifting structure of the EU in connection with EU-NATO relations, the issues of colonialism and imperialism merit some elaboration because they are rendered potentially problematic by the above-mentioned peculiarity of the EU as a state form. Comaroff (1997) identifies three concurrent forms of colonialism in the South African context that are relevant to EU enlargement: 1) administrative, 2) settler, and 3) missionary colonialism. Each form entails context-specific social relations and social reconfigurations. The juxtaposition of these colonial elements render the EU enlargement process contradictory and internally heterogeneous. They may be more appropriate indicators of the roles played by national states in the case of EU expansion than the various forms of "capital" suggested by Bourdieu (1998) regarding the "ambivalent" character of the state developed in northern and western Europe.

In the case of EU and NATO enlargement, there is a complex reproduction of inter-imperial struggle and colonialism. The process is represented by the bellicose treatment of the Balkans, the expansionism of national fractions of capital accomplished through eastward enlargement, and the colonial form of discursive practices associated with the accession process (see Kovács, Kovács and Kabachnik, and Sher in this collection, as well as Böröcz, 2000a, and Stoler and Cooper, 1997: 26-27). The imperial dynamics are illustrated by contradictions in the treatment of states in eastern Europe through accession hierarchy and bombing-raid decisions, the inconsistencies of the multifarious imperial gaze relative to peoples living in eastern Europe (eg, fear of eastern European immigrants with a simultaneous and sudden preoccupation with the living



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conditions of the Roma), and the jostling among EU fractions of capital competing with other national capitals for new fields of exploitation (Böröcz, 1999; Chase-Dunn and Boswell, 2000; Kagarlitsky, 1995).

The three concurrent colonial processes described by Comaroff (1997) are arguably encountered in the EU/NATO-eastern Europe relation in revamped forms. Administrative colonialism is occurring through bureaucratic means whereby the *acquis communautaire* is being transposed by (indirect) political economic coercion onto applicant states in eastern Europe. As Verheugen betrays in his optimistic proclamations, "I am absolutely convinced that without the prospect of European integration, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe could not have managed the process of transformation so rapidly or so successfully" (Verheugen, 3 October, 2000).

This administrative and institutional transposition is reinforced by capital flows. Settler colonialism is much less brutal than Enlightenment antecedents with the settlement of relatively wealthier EU proletarians in "safe" eastern Europe countries (as occurred in Spain, Italy and Greece earlier) and the migration of EU capital to exploit cheaper labor-power and purchase property in eastern Europe. Finally, missionary colonialism is comparable to the various EU-, NATO- and USAID-supported NGOs, *inter alii*, that diffuse the gospel of "free markets," "democracy," and "civil society" among the masses of eastern Europe. The latter two forms of colonialism are being cemented by the concurrent process of integration into the EU's circuit of capital. As Verheugen revealed regarding the economic impact of EU accession:



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The European Union is by far the largest trading partner of the thirteen candidate countries. Between 1993 and 1999, the total value of trade almost trebled to €210 billion. Together, these countries account for 13.7 % of total foreign trade, a fact which makes them the EU's second most important trading partner after the USA. The EU's trade surplus with the candidate countries for 1999 stood at €25.8 billion. Trading relations between the EU and the candidate countries have become even more intensive. (Verheugen, 8 November, 2000)

Enlargement and the uneven character of trading relations establish dependence and the extension of spheres of influence divided among major western European states and fractions of capital. These diverse colonial processes, complicated by the state-capital relation, ensure an ambivalence and contestability within the functions and structures of the EU, as well as within applicant and member states.

V. NATO-EU corridors of military and economic power: partitioning by destroying

The events leading to the bombing of Yugoslavia exposed the imperialistic tendencies ensconced within the European "democratization" process following the debacle of the USSR. Moreover, they revealed some of the fundamental problems and ambiguities generated by geopolitical realignment. At first, the opacity secreted by the UN-NATO-EU overlap may confuse some of the issues at hand regarding the EU eastward expansion process in terms of economic and political/military ambiguities. The first is represented by the coordination and/or resolution of struggles of diverse economic



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interests pressing for the expansion of spheres of influence into eastern Europe from within the EU and NATO membership. The overlap of jurisdictions presented by the repeated interventions of the EU, NATO and the UN posed additional quandaries. A brief clarification of overall military and economic trends may render the overlap more transparent.

The bombing of Yugoslavia effectively resolved many ambiguities and uncertainties through military means and the imposition of political economic reforms. NATO and the UN Security Council policies, in any event, have been historically guided by US interests underlain by occasionally internally divisive fractions of capital (Arrighi, 1999: 56; Dehove, 2000: 132). These policies are often followed zealously by UK governments (witness the war against Yugoslavia, the continuation of the bombing of Iraq, and the current bombing raids against Afghanistan). The issue of the UN Security Council can be subsumed under that of NATO. The general role of the UN has been effectively subordinated to NATO prerogatives by means of NATO's unilateral military intervention in Yugoslavia (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, May, 1999). This could also be interpreted as a logical consequence of the increasing dependence of the UN Security Council on NATO military might, as shown during the 1995 bombing of Serb army positions in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

At the same time, there must also exist an often-forced consensus among other EU powers, France and Germany, which are part of NATO. The intensification of French and German co-operation remains in spite of recent differences expressed over EU structure. The UK, on the other hand, even flaunts its allegiance to the US. In a recent address to the Polish Stock Exchange in Warszawa (Warsaw), UK Prime Minister



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Tony Blair emphasized that "in a world moving closer together, with new powers emerging, our strength with the United States is not just a British asset, it is potentially a European one. Britain can be the bridge between the EU and the US" (Blair, 6 October, 2000).

Given the currency of these alliances, it can be surmised that both the EU and NATO are internally divided into two predominant blocs. The Chirac and Fischer pronouncements have rendered explicit a plan to centralize the membership according to a hierarchical system based on Franco-German leadership (Chirac, 2000; Fischer, 2000). Less powerful states and the UK could form separate blocs or retain existing ones. Yet this is not the case, as the UK continues to be aligned preferentially with the US.

In the case of NATO, the war in Yugoslavia has given ample evidence for a US-Canada-UK axis with French, German and Italian government coalitions at the brink of collapse as a direct result of the intervention. The debate over intervention raged in nearly all EU states and demonstrated the lack of representativeness of the ministers involved in the decision-making process within the EU Council (see, for instance, the debate within the Irish Parliament, <http://www.irlgov.ie/debates-99/25mar99/sect4.htm>). Though the EU Council initiated the Rambouillet accords (France and the UK), there were EU member states that remained "neutral" or "passive" throughout the conflict (Raptis, 2000).

Moreover, the US, along with the usual British ally, ultimately pressured all sides into a full-fledged conflict by excluding the relatively moderate Rugova faction during the Paris meetings and imposing the infamous Appendix B, which would not be signed willfully by any sovereign state.⁷ The orchestration of the Rambouillet accords were



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aimed at gathering popular legitimacy for an otherwise potentially destabilizing endeavor in terms of national politics within most NATO member states. The staged farce at Rambouillet was combined with negative media portrayals of Serbians to pre-empt effective political opposition by demonstrating the exhaustion of diplomatic options with an unreasonable, if not inveterately genocidal leadership. The arbitrary application of international human rights legislation purposefully exacerbated matters (Hayden, 1999; Skoco and Woodger, 2000).

Aside from the universalization of US-EU policies and the internal political legitimacy reinforced through humanitarianism arguments, direct intervention in the Balkans has permitted a more effective penetration of capital (see USAID example below). The destruction wrought through the conflict allows core countries to establish greater control over the region by means of rebuilding projects, as currently witnessed by the Stability Pact. Successful belligerence, however, reconfigures geopolitical schemes and initiates newer forms of great power struggles over eastern Europe. The global constellations of resource access and control complicate this process further. For instance, US and EU interests extend beyond eastern Europe, so that the Stability Pact implicitly considers the construction of infrastructure aiding incoming oil and gas pipelines from the Central Asian republics, interestingly circumventing Turkey (Adriaticus, 2000: 94-97)⁸. The case of Balkan intervention demonstrates that fundamental processes of state formation and maintenance pertain to internal EU relations in ways similar to an inter-state system, such as war-making, intra-national legitimation struggles, inter-state competition and colonial expansionism, and the



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continuing mutual reinforcement of state and capital (Chase-Dunn and Boswell, 2000; Tilly, 1992).

Yet the (renewed) eastward colonial expansion of the main EU and/or NATO powers is made complex and diffuse precisely by the palimpsest exuded by the two suprastatal organizations. NATO's internal differentiation has thereby a direct bearing on EU enlargement not just relative to the internal dynamics of the EU, but also to the internal dynamics of applicant countries themselves. Applicant countries that have recently joined NATO could be rallied in support of the preponderantly US-dominated bloc or join in relatively weak, acquiescent "dissent" with other members, such as the Italian government. The tensions within the EU-NATO palimpsest could force applicant countries into developing inconsistent foreign policies towards the EU and NATO as they attempt to appease one suprastatal institution in order to become members of the other. NATO accession has been explicitly linked to improving chances for EU membership (eg, the 1994 elections in Hungary). The linkage has even been expressed as a general principle by Solana himself in connection with Austria's shifting foreign policy. Solana, in a press release in Vienna, remarked that "The EU security agreement is tied to NATO and brings all Union member countries to a similar position. Today, the agreement already treats Austria in such a way that it can be considered a NATO member" (Földvári, 2001: 21, my translation).⁹ This partial, polycentric EU-NATO superposition makes the task of creating a unified EU foreign policy, or disentangling multiple intersecting geopolitical interests, appear to be a convoluted process that extends beyond the current negotiations carried out through the EU Commission on Enlargement.



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The Franco-German colonization of eastern Europe through EU expansion may be tempered by the insertion of high-ranking personnel of ambiguous allegiance, forming an interlocking directorate between pivotal offices within the EU combined with (former) NATO affiliation. Mr. Javier Solana, initially a physicist by profession, constitutes a primary example. He is currently the Secretary General of the Council as well as the High representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU (CFSP). This latter post was created as part of power-expanding provisions in the revised Maastricht Treaty, effective with the Köln European Council of June 1999 (Council of the European Union, nd-b). Before the Maastricht Treaty revision, Mr. Solana was NATO Secretary General between December 1995, and October 1999 (<http://ue.eu.int/solana/default.asp?lang=en>). In other words, shortly after the cessation of NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia, the NATO Secretary General was appointed as head of the EU Council, "the main decision-making body", according to the EU's own definition (<http://www.europa.eu.int/inst-en.htm>). With the introduction of the CFSP, the EU Council becomes effectively the foreign policy executive organ of the EU.

The presence of a former NATO head in "the main decision-making body" of the EU may imply that predominant US and EU policies remain sufficiently similar that such rapid exchanges of high-ranking officials present no conflict of interest. The identity between EU and NATO security arrangements underlined by Solana in the above-quoted remarks suggest such a proximity. In this light, Patten's statements regarding the establishment of the CFSP could be interpreted as corresponding to actual aims.



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The objective is for the Union to have an autonomous capacity to take the decisions and to launch and then to conduct military operations "where NATO as a whole is not engaged". This is not a threat to NATO. The suggestion that Javier Solana ... would put his name to any policy that might damage that organisation is seriously misguided (Patten, 16 December, 1999).

And yet there do exist differences, as attested by the NATO intervention in Yugoslavia and the notable absence of the central EU powers in the repeated bombing of Iraq; however, these differences may be at times mitigated through convergence of political economic interests, while on other occasions they may be subordinated to US demands as a result of western European dependence on US military technology.

VI. The partitioning system of the Stability Pact

On 10 June, 1999, shortly after the killing of hundreds of civilians and the damage to Yugoslav industrial capacity, a meeting was held in Köln ostensibly to establish the foundations for the political and economic stabilization of Southeastern Europe. The meeting involved all major international organizations that feature US, EU and Russian representation (<http://www.seerecon.org/KeyDocuments/KD1999062401.htm>). The stated objectives identify the primary responsibility of southeastern European countries "to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity, in order to achieve stability in the whole region." These principles describe the official general aims of the "Stability Pact." The incentive for such efforts is the ambiguous reward of the possibility of "integration into Euro-Atlantic structures."



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The Pact reproduces a colonization strategy that has been successfully employed earlier in the Balkans. The US, for example, has already intervened effectively in the economic restructuring of Bosnia-Herzegovina through a USAID loan scheme for "small-to medium-businesses" (it is unreported what these terms actually mean). Accordingly, "USAID loan recipients account for an impressive fifty percent of all of Bosnia's post-war exports" (<http://www.usaid.ba/information/sheets/mainapr.htm>). This magnanimous event is accompanied by correlate programmes to aid businesses. As explained in the same USAID document, "Through its Business Development Program, USAID is assisting Bosnia-Herzegovina to make the transition from a planned to a market economy." There may be a certain irony to the deployment of a form of central planning from the US state in order to forge a "market economy" elsewhere.

Internal inconsistencies aside, this aid to capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina is subsequently constructed in terms of humanitarian assistance, equating state aid to capital with the welfare of war victims. "The BDP [Business Development Program] loans are expected to provide employment to over 17,000 Bosnians, including returnees and women adversely affected by the war, representing a mix of ethnic backgrounds." Undoubtedly, a similar dependence on US financial capital, inflected with paternalistic overtones of economic transition and humanitarian intervention, awaits the regions currently within Yugoslavia. This capital-intensive colonial approach to eastern Europe follows a pattern established since the late nineteenth century and expanded during the Cold War. The process of developing debt-related dependence through high-interest and politically contingent loan disbursements is reminiscent of the sort of "aid" packages funnelled into some Warsaw Pact members following the economic troubles resulting



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from the oil crisis of the 1970s (Berend, 1996; Berend and Ránki, 1982). Similar forms of intervention are being conducted by the EU in the same region through the European Investment Bank (EIB) and mainly through the Sappard and Phare programmes in the rest of eastern Europe, but further analysis would be required to ascertain which great powers within the EU are to gain the most influence out of such schemes. In the case of Albania, Serbia (Kosovo) and Macedonia, it is the Italian state, as one of the main contending powers in the region (see below).

Given the above-mentioned uneven dispensation of the law in the European courts, the arbitrary military attacks with the pretext of "human rights" (Yugoslavia and Iraq, but not Rwanda, Israel, Indonesia or the US itself), the unwillingness of Euro-American powers to maintain or facilitate peace (or, rather, their active role in promoting warfare, such as the bombing of Sudan and Afghanistan, including currently), and the vagueness of "democracy", other purposes must underlie the Stability Pact under the guise of "economic prosperity."

In accord with general US/EU foreign policy, the capitalist aims of the Pact are at least explicitly declared in the agreement itself, under point number 10. The Pact involves

creating vibrant market economies based on sound macro policies, markets open to greatly expanded foreign trade and private sector investment, effective and transparent customs and commercial/regulatory regimes, developing strong capital markets and diversified ownership, including privatisation, leading to a widening circle of prosperity for all our citizens; fostering economic cooperation in the region and between the region and the rest of Europe and the world,



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including free trade areas ... combatting [sic] organised crime, corruption and terrorism and all criminal and illegal activities

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/stapact/10_june_99.htm

Actual investment priorities cement the primacy of favouring capitalist interests. Funds made available through international financial institutions (mostly the EIB and World Bank) have been predominantly channelled (roughly 76 percent of the € 2413.4 million set aside) into business infrastructure, such as oil and gas pipelines, electricity, motorways, and financial institutions. As a result, approximately 15 percent of the economic infrastructure aid has been apportioned directly to private enterprises, rather than to humanitarian assistance (calculations based on figures furnished by Adriaticus, 2000: 91).

In order to coax Yugoslavia into a regime change, Montenegro at first became the preferred recipient of this aid assortment. In addition, oil, gas and electricity routes were carefully planned so as to circumvent and isolate Serbia. The former was etched into the agreement itself by stating that "In order to draw the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia closer to this goal, respecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, we will consider ways of making the Republic of Montenegro an early beneficiary of the Pact." The latter plans emerged subsequently through various high-level meetings in which mostly the US, Italy and Greece resolved their long-term economic interests (Adriaticus, 2000). The capitulation of the Milošević regime was then hastened through strikes and popular revolt (Hudis, 2000). Economic pressures clearly in place prior to this successful insurrection



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may nevertheless have had a similar outcome, though not at the level of intranational political struggle.

The Stability Pact inserts the variety of EU-US interests directly into Yugoslavia, arguably one of the remaining pieces in the consolidation of EU's eastward expansion. Aside from the numerous negotiations that achieved temporary compromise between the US and the EU powers, the methods used to consolidate control over the Balkans are already in place but require intensification. I will cite but one example for the sake of brevity. KFOR, which, as Solana and Patten hasten to remind the EU Parliament, is comprised of 80 percent EU troops (Solana and Patten, 7 February, 2000), is partially deployed to secure trade routes and extinguish illegal trafficking. The Italian state, or a fraction thereof, is probably anxious to eliminate this source of capital for various criminal substate organisations, such as the 'Ndrangheta. At the same time, oil and gas ducts, as well as access to an enlarged Adriatic market, further facilitate the penetration of various interests incorporated within the Italian and Greek bourgeoisie. The re-opening of a Serbian corridor may bring Greece and Italy, possibly along with the US, into renewed negotiations over which areas should be receiving priority infrastructural development funds through the Stability Pact participants.

As the above examples illustrate, the Pact reproduces a history of colonialist partitioning of resources and spheres of influence as well as the paternalistic and colonial discourse over the Balkans among western European elites. The rhetoric has shifted, but the strategies remain similar in terms of constructing the "savage" *other*, implementing policies that reinforce political economic subordination, and using national elites against



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each other through the uneven distribution of concessions and military-economic support (Berend, 1996; Croci, 1991; Samary, 1995; Todorova, 1997).

VII. The EU-NATO palimpsest and eastward enlargement: contradictions on the expansionist road

The EU's three major powers' membership overlap with NATO complicates the process of eastward enlargement through the centrifugal tendencies brought by US involvement and the centripetal tendencies brought by the Franco-German alliance (Arrighi, 1999; Chase-Dunn and Boswell, 2000). The arguably unique state-formation and expansion process represented by the EU cannot be fully explained without accounting for these effects in that, through NATO, the US exerts disaggregative pressures on those members that simultaneously dominate the EU, namely France, Germany and the UK. Centripetal effects, on the other hand, include alliances forged or intensified within the EU in order to counterbalance the powers of the US/Canada-Japan axis, China or potentially Russia.¹⁰ The consequences of these tendencies on eastern enlargement manifest themselves in terms of the applicant states' geopolitical positioning and alliance formation relative to the three western European powers and the US.

The war waged against Yugoslavia exposed the influence of such centripetal and centrifugal forces through the temporary military resolution of divergent economic interests within the EU and NATO related to the EU's lack of an independent military apparatus (the classical means of coercion) and of the overlap of self-appointed jurisdictions over Balkan affairs between the EU, NATO and the UN. The deployment



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and tension of the EU-NATO palimpsest is articulated to a concurrent geopolitical shift marked by the disappearance of the USSR as a major imperial force and the re-opening of eastern Europe to western European imperialism. In other words, there exists an unresolved struggle over the partition of eastern Europe into colonial spheres of influence that coincides with the emergence of the US as a single military superpower (Arrighi, 1999).

There exists additional inter-state competition internal to the EU that exerts centrifugal pressures. The recent dispute between French and German governments over EU Council/Commission voting procedures and population-specific scales of representation may favor greater US influence (*The Economist*, 18 November, 2000: 59; *Il Manifesto*, 1 December, 2000). In addition, the colonial character of eastward expansion is checked by internal EU friction regarding the distribution of the spoils of the "Cold War" and/or the existing uneven political economic influence of EU states in eastern Europe, which unfolded since the late 1960s (Berend, 1996). This internal friction translates into tensions among NATO members as a result of the partial membership overlap mentioned above, as well as the incursions of US interests through the penetration of financial capital and the expansion of military presence and direct warfare (including Japan in the former and Canada in all three processes). The contradictions and ambiguities emerging from the discourse on eastward enlargement, exposed by the studies in this volume, partly reflect an intercalation of state struggles within the EU-NATO palimpsest.

On the other hand, there are centripetal tendencies for counterbalancing US influence that are spearheaded by the UK itself. Speaking to the audience at the Warsaw



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stock exchange, Blair clearly delineated a program to establish the EU as a superpower independent of the US:

In a world with the power of the USA; with new alliances to be made with the neighbours of Europe like Russia; developing nations with vast populations like India and China; Japan, not just an economic power but a country that will rightly increase its political might too; with the world increasingly forming powerful regional blocs—ASEAN, Mercosur; Europe's citizens need Europe to be strong and united. They need it to be a power in the world. Whatever its origin, Europe today is no longer just about peace. It is about projecting collective power. That is one very clear reason, quite apart from the economic reasons, why the central European nations want to join ... Such a Europe can, in its economic and political strength, be a superpower; a superpower, but not a superstate. (Blair, 6 October, 2000)

Despite the centripetal intimations, the avoidance of a "superstate" implicitly seeks to downplay the consequential development of an executive branch for the EU that would act independently of NATO, where the UK and US states preponderate. The contradictions brought by the EU-NATO overlap reverberate even within a speech advocating for the EU as superpower.

Further complicating the EU's eastward expansion process, NATO itself is not immune to internal rifts. The war against Yugoslavia, for example, did not meet with the consent of all members and created much friction within member governments. This internal differentiation has a direct bearing on EU enlargement. As mentioned above,



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applicant countries that have recently joined NATO could be rallied in support of either bloc within the EU-NATO palimpsest. This process relates to EU enlargement in that NATO accession has been explicitly linked to EU membership (eg, Solana's remarks on Austria). The ambiguity created by NATO-EU relations may pressure new NATO members in eastern Europe, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, to undertake inconsistent foreign policies that might be used as excuses barring them from EU membership. This partial superposition makes the task of creating a unified EU foreign policy, or disentangling multiple intersecting geopolitical interests, appear to be a convoluted process that extends beyond the current negotiations carried out through the EU Commission on Enlargement. The contradictions and ambiguities emerging from the discourse on eastward enlargement, which are also exposed by the other authors in this collection, partly reflect an intercalation of struggles between EU and NATO states.

VIII. Conclusion: questions of internal and external partitions

The EU-NATO palimpsest affects directly and forcefully eastern European states and the EU enlargement process. It also tends to dissimulate the colonial and imperial strategies pervading the eastern enlargement process when NATO and the EU are treated as internally coherent agents. Exposing and examining internal contradictions demonstrates that the situation is in fact characterized by the superposition of competing imperial powers.

The competing powers within the EU vie to extricate themselves from US superpower dominance and simultaneously to gain predominance within an arguably



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embryonic EU state. As central EU powers, France and Germany have tended to intensify their alliance and extend their economic leverage through EU enlargement. This leverage may unravel with a dispute over the EU's internal command structure, but the established commonality of geopolitical interests and economic influences over eastern Europe will not necessarily wither as a consequence. The British vacillate between increasing economic clout through the EU and maintaining a military edge through an alliance with the US within NATO. The overlap of these states between a mostly military and a mainly economic bloc partly results from the subordinate character of EU states in military affairs relative to the US. The increasing economic power derived from the development of the EU remains insufficient to counterbalance US hegemony, which also benefits from the support of Japanese financial capital (Arrighi, 1994).

The EU's continued subordination to US economic power and dependence on US military technology stunts the effectiveness of the EU powers' imperial strategies, which are being feebly addressed through the formation of an EU military outfit. The bombing of Yugoslavia, at the same time that it annihilated the decisionary powers of the UN Security Council, also underlined the subordination of NATO-member EU powers to US strategic imperatives. Within NATO, the US continues to dominate with the aid of the UK, an obedient and mediating EU-NATO ally. For this reason, there are attempts to make the EU a superpower, absorbing only those eastern European states that further strengthen the process.

These diverse colonial processes ensure an ambivalence and contestability within the functions and structures of the prospective EU state, as well as within applicant and



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member states. According to Stoler and Cooper, "the rationalizing, accumulating and civilizing tendencies of European expansion both built and could not escape the violence of militarism as that expansion blended coercive and persuasive strategies of racial rule" (Stoler and Cooper, 1997: 3). In some respects, what Stoler and Cooper describe regarding nineteenth century European imperialism applies equally to the present state of EU-eastern Europe relations.

The geopolitical reconfiguration posed by eastward expansionism and the tensions thereby generated within the EU are predicated on neo-colonial expansionism, which is overwhelmingly represented by but not confined to eastward enlargement. Examining interactions between as well as within EU and NATO relative to eastern European states refocuses the problem of state-formation and globalization to include the coercive and expansionist processes that continue to be integral to state-capital dynamics.



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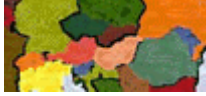
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¹ Following Tilly (1992), I use the term "national state" in lieu of "nation-state" to obviate the mythological assumption that modern states represent individual nations.

² For the definition and scope of the terms empire and coloniality, the reader is referred to the work of József Böröcz in the introduction to this volume.

³ Rather than negating the EU as a new state form, I believe the present conjuncture makes the thesis of the EU as a unique state-formation process still premature, owing to the current inter-state competition both within and outside the EU. Nevertheless, the creation of an EU state remains possible in the near future, depending on the outcome of the centripetal and centrifugal forces discussed below.

⁴ Perhaps unbeknownst to Bornschier, this theoretical approach was propounded much earlier by Kropotkin (1902). He identified a historically shifting, dialectical relation between materially based individual interests and social institutions emerging initially as co-operative structures reacting to external pressures. This dialectical relation is punctuated by critical thresholds, when social institutions outgrow their socially integrative functions of satisfying individual as well as collective interests. It is beyond such thresholds that social upheaval and institutional change ensue.



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⁵ There is presently an incomplete overlap of membership between the EU and NATO, with countries such as the US, Canada, Iceland, Poland and Hungary being part of the latter but not the former, for example. On the other hand, France, Germany, and the UK, the major powers within the EU, are simultaneously NATO members, as are the minor EU powers, Italy and Spain. This partial overlap, arguably, shapes EU military and possibly economic policies through direct US influence.

⁶ The inconsistencies of EU policies towards eastern Europe relate to NATO membership overlap. I find these slippages in EU policy formation analogous to a multiple effacement and re-engraving on a single (imperial) surface, as in a palimpsest.

⁷ Appendix B (http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/ksvo_rambouillet_text.html) demanded from the Yugoslav government the near complete relinquishing of sovereignty to an occupying army over all Yugoslav territory by allowing NATO personnel unimpeded movement within Yugoslav borders (Ackerman and Naureckas, 2000: 100-103).

⁸ The latest pretext used by the US and UK to attack Afghanistan may solidify Caspian oil access further by means of establishing a direct military presence in the region, already accomplished in Tajikistan and to some degree in Uzbekistan.

⁹ "Az EU biztonsági megállapodást [Ausztria] kötött a NATO-val, s ez az unió összes tagországát azonos szintre helyezi. Ausztriát már ma is úgy kezelik, mint egy NATO-tagot."

¹⁰ Russia has been effectively diminished as a geopolitical actor during the Yeltsin regime (Kagarlitsky, 2000). The Russian state faces major difficulties in maintaining its former military standing, witness Putin's initiatives to decrease nuclear arsenals and expand existing military treaties resulting from budgetary constraints (cf. De la Gorce, 2001; *The Economist*, 18 November, 2000: 62-63) and the state's inability to consolidate power within its official borders (eg, Chechnya).



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The Shedding Light on the Quantitative Other: The EU's Discourse in the Commission Opinions of 1997, by Melinda Kovács and Peter Kabachnik

I. Introduction

Winston Churchill did not create a divided continent when he announced, "from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent": that distinction was a pre-existing condition.¹ As Larry Wolff shows in *Inventing Eastern Europe*, "It was Western Europe that invented Eastern Europe as its complementary other half in the eighteenth century, the age of the Enlightenment" (Wolff, 1994: 4). Wolff's work is an outstanding example of diagnosing that particular process of the Enlightenment whereby eastern Europe was constructed as inferior to western Europe and as a backward, uncivilized region that was located more in western imagination than on any map. This history of constructing otherness is relevant today as, in the eastern enlargement of the European Union (EU), we observe dynamics that are remarkably similar: the same dichotomy is reinscribed onto eastern Europe.

In this study, we carry out an empirical investigation of the 1997 Commission Opinions on Applications for Membership of the European Union for the eastern European candidates. We concentrate specifically on the sections entitled "Criteria for Membership: Political Criteria."² Our findings indicate that the Opinions function as a medium through which the EU actively reinscribes the Enlightenment notion of an inferior eastern Europe onto the applicants.



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Prior analysis of the Commission Opinions by József Böröcz provides some context for our study.³ In "The Fox and the Raven," Böröcz analyzes the communication, or what stands in its place, between the EU and Hungary. Our study extends the scope of that work by analyzing the texts of the Opinions on all ten eastern applicant states, rather than concentrating on a single one. Also, the analysis of the Political Criteria sections provides access to the entire discursive universe of the sections under scrutiny whereas Böröcz's work in "Rationales for a choice" focused on the summaries of those sections. Our aim is to obtain a more complete account of how the EU offers and imagines eastern enlargement. What we gain in scope, we lose in depth. Our analysis here is not as minute as Böröcz's in "The Fox and the Raven," however his initial study provided the impetus for us to look at the full set of 1997 Commission Opinions.

Our methodology utilizes Carlo Ginzburg's evidential paradigm, the intricate search for clues in the details, which Böröcz, in "Rationales for a Choice," uses to show that the Opinions offered by the Commission were developed to prove their conclusions, which were generated *a priori*. By a close analysis of the texts, one can deconstruct the logic of their arguments and notice their apparent contradictions and redundancies. We build on this approach in our qualitative discourse analysis to uncover the strategies and patterns in the texts.

A fruitful theoretical framework for the patterns that emerge from the Commission Opinions is Wolff's discussion of how eastern Europe finds itself in the uncomfortable position of purgatory, an undefined, complicated mixing ground. The second section of our study presents three discursive strategies found in Wolff's work (1994) that we consider relevant to our material. The third section analyzes the same



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discursive strategies in the ten 1997 Commission Opinions. Our final section examines the reinscription of Enlightenment notions of eastern Europe in the Commission Opinions and interprets the EU's discourse with regards to the implications for the eastern applicant states. What predispositions can be identified in the EU's relationship to the eastern applicant states?

Our findings show that the EU's discourse mirrors that of the 18th century western European elites as analyzed by Wolff. Like Cooper and Stoler, who analyzed the dynamics of empire-building, we are interested in the dialectic between the EU and the applicant countries of eastern Europe, a peculiar continuation of inclusion and exclusion, typical of the relation between colonizer and colony.⁴ The analysis of this dynamic is relevant because the EU sets the standards for inclusion and for potential post-accession interaction. Thus, it is important to point out that the discursive strategies used during the Enlightenment are duplicated in the EU's eastern enlargement process.

II. The quantitative other

The Enlightenment period constructed eastern Europe as a differentiated zone of ambiguity, neither quite Occidental, nor quite Oriental. Although not deemed Oriental per se, eastern Europe was still othered. The idea of an inferior eastern Europe, quantitatively less than western Europe, was invented by the Enlightenment and is perpetuated and reified by the EU discourse regarding the eastern applicants. In this section we summarize, based on Wolff, the discursive strategies utilized during the Enlightenment to invent eastern Europe.



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The three discursive strategies found in Wolff's analysis that inform our analysis are:

- Definitional efforts
- Idea of civilization
- Ambiguities

The first discursive strategy, *definitional efforts*, is exemplified by western Europe's role in the invention of what eastern Europe was to epitomize, its opposite. Eastern Europe was defined in contrast to western Europe, just as the Orient was the constructed opposite to the Occident. Eastern Europe was defined in order to provide western Europe the opposition necessary to contrast itself with: superiority and civilization as opposed to eastern Europe's inferiority and barbarism. Western Europe located its quantitative other in eastern Europe, and deemed it backward and inferior to itself, creating a hierarchy and justifying its own domination and superiority.

Enlightenment thinkers, philosophers and travelers assumed a certain authority or expertise. The arrogance of the Enlightenment's invention spawned the claims that eastern Europeans were barbarians, even in texts whose authors had never even entered eastern Europe. In Wolff's words, Enlightenment intellectuals engaged in "travelling vicariously" (Wolff 1994: 196), with the result that "no one wrote more authoritatively and enthusiastically about Russia than Voltaire, who never traveled east of Berlin, and no one was engaged more passionately and creatively on behalf of Poland than Rousseau, who never went east of Switzerland" (Wolff 1994: 7). Because western narratives were an expression of dominance, the lack of actual encounters with eastern Europe did not discredit them.



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The perspective of superiority sought to identify and define those qualities of eastern Europe that upheld western expectations *vis-à-vis* that region, while transforming positive traits into negative traits. Furthermore, this also allowed western Europeans to be blind to the shortcomings found in western Europe, and hold the other to standards that they themselves would not comply with. Their attitude toward eastern Europe yielded "alternative visions of Eastern Europe, the laboratory of ideological experimentation in which the Enlightenment explored political possibilities by performing theoretical operations within a hypothetical domain" (Wolff 1994: 236).

The next discursive strategy, *civilization*, is revealed as eastern Europe is set up in contrast to western Europe. Western Europe is civilized, while eastern Europe is under development. Western Europe operates under the "presumptions of precedence and hierarchy" (Wolff 1994: 357). Cartography came to equate itself with the light of civilization:

Cartography was clearly identified with the Enlightenment, the work of 'enlightened people' seeking to cast light upon the darkest corner of the continent. Furthermore, the light of cartography was implicitly related to the light of civilization, for Eastern Europe was often described in the eighteenth century as emerging from darkness, *ténèbres*. (Wolff 1994: 149, emphasis in the original).

Western Europe was the norm. Its thinkers operated under the assumption that similar development must occur in other regions as well. If eastern Europe did not develop according to western European standards, then eastern Europe was deemed quantitatively



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inferior. When this region was placed on the mental and printed maps of the west, it did not thereby become civilized. Much rather, eastern Europe was represented as civilization's constitutive outside.

Philosophic geography excluded eastern Europe from Europe (Wolff 1994: 7). Colonial constructions of the inferior races of the colonies provided Orientalism and colonial discourse with a qualitatively inferior and differentiated other. West European coloniality with respect to eastern Europe has taken a peculiar, quantitative form, as Böröcz has shown.⁵ The dichotomies between Europe and Asia gave eastern Europe geographical meaning, while the dichotomies between civilization and barbarism gave eastern Europe philosophical meaning (Wolff 1994: 357). Enlightenment travel accounts and images of backwardness and barbarism helped to invent eastern Europe in such a way that negated its relative closeness to the west.⁶ Eastern backwardness is contrasted with western Europe, which can then be defined as civilization because of its own invented opposition.

The third discursive strategy identified by Wolff and relevant to our analysis, is *ambiguity*. According to Wolff, "Eastern Europe will continue to occupy an ambiguous space between inclusion and exclusion, both in economic affairs and in cultural recognition" (Wolff 1994: 9). Ambiguities and westerners' uncertainties abound in travelers' accounts of eastern Europe. The Marquis of Salaberry thought it astonishing and incomprehensible that a destitute woman to whom he offered food—and who, in his view was reasonably expected only to be concerned for her own survival—gave the food to her child, thereby exhibiting self-sacrificial parental love that contradicted Salaberry's image of eastern Europe (Wolff 1994: 46). Similar surprise and incomprehension was



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chronicled in 1784, when the Count Louis-Philippe de Ségur left France for Russia and met with Frederick in Potsdam, where he was told by Frederick of the curious, ambiguous nature of the Poles. "The Poles were keen warriors but their armies undisciplined. Polish men were brave and *chevaleresque*, but Polish women seemed to have more firmness of character, even heroism" (Wolff 1994: 18, emphasis in the original). Frederick then mocked the situation, "the women are truly the men" (Wolff 1994: 18). Contradiction and paradox were salient in the rhetoric of the time because some of the travelers' experiences did not correspond to the dominant images of eastern Europe. Where expectations and experiences clashed, ambiguity resulted.

Uncertain fieldwork by travelers and what was perceived as the shifting boundaries of eastern Europe enabled *definitional efforts* to locate and explain eastern Europe to western Europe. Western Europe was defined clearly, and had no ambiguities. Just as western Europe was definite, eastern Europe was ambiguous. Eastern Europe was framed in terms of potential or possible development; thus its inferiority was assumed.

Geographers, cartographers and encyclopedists who sought to capture and locate eastern Europe on maps and in encyclopedias revealed the *ambiguity* in the actualized *definitional efforts* of the Enlightenment.

Eastern Europe appeared as a sea where shifting borders moved with the rising and ebbing tides. These were lands that ultimately evaded the competing claims of Europe and the Orient, lands that neither encyclopedist nor geographer could locate with fixed certainty (Wolff 1994: 185).



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Eastern Europe was a zone of uncertainty and ambiguity, constantly shifting in the perceptions of western Europe.

The Enlightenment's notion of eastern Europe has persisted, culminating in the second half of the twentieth century when the Iron Curtain expressed and justified the "darkness" that eastern Europe was located within. As Wolff notes about western prejudice, "the iron curtain is gone, and yet the shadow persists" (Wolff 1994: 3). It has become more difficult for western Europe to inferiorize eastern Europe without the Cold War, but as the studies in this volume show, the EU reinscribes Enlightenment constructions of eastern Europe. Now that the Soviet bloc no longer disguises and justifies the simplified portrayals of eastern Europe, western Europe, through the EU, has to reconceptualize its position *vis-à-vis* eastern Europe. In Wolff's summary:

The revolution of 1989 in Eastern Europe has largely invalidated the perspective of half a century, compelling the reconsideration of Europe as a whole. The maps on the wall have always showed a continent of many colors, the puzzle pieces of many states; the dark line of the iron curtain, supplying the light and shadow in front and behind, was drawn on the maps in the mind. Those maps must be adjusted, adapted, reconceived, but their structures are deeply rooted and powerfully compelling (Wolff 1994: 3).

The "deeply rooted and powerfully compelling" structures that Wolff refers to are similarly discussed in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979).



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Said, drawing upon Gramsci, points out that "we can better understand the persistence and the durability of saturating hegemonic systems like culture when we realize that their internal constraints upon writers and thinkers were *productive*, not unilaterally inhibiting" (Said 1979: 14, emphasis in the original). The invention of eastern Europe and Orientalism are similar in the sense that the dominant west produces mental and objective structures that perpetuate the simplification and inferiorization of the other. Said points out that powerful structures and institutions are established to enable and support Orientalism. In a similar vein, Engel-Di Mauro (in this volume) utilizes Comaroff's three colonial strategies and applies them to the EU, revealing that powerful colonial institutions are still in place.⁷ Similar structures and institutions surround the process of the invention of eastern Europe.

The discursive strategies diagnosed by Wolff amounted to the invention of eastern Europe during the Enlightenment. The following section shows how the EU is operating within that same conception of eastern Europe, employing the same discursive strategies, and reviving the Enlightenment's notion of an inferior eastern Europe.

III. The Commission Opinions

In this section we review the EU discourse that revives the Enlightenment's east-west dichotomy, diagnosed by Wolff, and reinscribes it on the eastern European applicants. These strategies are active attempts at defining eastern Europe, reminiscent of the Enlightenment definitional efforts; emphasis on the negative traits of eastern Europe and assigning civilization only to western Europe; and highlighting the ambiguities of



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eastern Europe. Each of these strategies is manifested in multiple discursive patterns. By discursive patterns we refer to emergent analytical categories that we have identified in the discourse produced by the EU Commission in its Opinions. They are typical recurrent ways the EU describes eastern applicants that amount to the creation of certain meanings and connotations about these applicants. We have identified the following patterns:

- lack
- obstacle
- the foregrounding of tradition
- the presentation of Roma
- ‘sociological factors’
- bilingual use
- gender assumptions

We analyzed the sections entitled "Criteria for Membership: Political Criteria" in each of the Opinions on Applications for Membership in the European Union issued by the EU Commission for the eastern European candidates in 1997.⁸ These sections follow up on the checklist the EU created in order to judge whether a country would face accession or postponement produced at a meeting held in June 1993 by the Copenhagen Council of Ministers. The three Criteria are as follows:

- the applicant country must have achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- it must have a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU;



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- it must have the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.⁹

In our study, we focus on how the EU Commission applied the first Copenhagen Criterion. Following the establishment of the Copenhagen Criteria and the self-study reports of each applicant country, the European Union Commission created a set of Opinions for each country¹⁰. The Commission claims that the Opinions were the basis for the EU's decision: Five states (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) were granted the opportunity to proceed and begin negotiations, while five others (Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia) were postponed.

The Commission's first condition for entry is referred to as having a "stable democratic political system" (Jovanovic 1997: 360). Miroslav Jovanovic elucidates this type of expectation: "This means a multi-party system; rule of law and respect of human and minority rights; good neighborly relations; and no territorial disputes" (ibid). He then concludes that "not a single transition country passes this test, but then again some EU countries do not measure up" either (ibid). Indeed, EU member states have been experiencing armed conflicts, territorial disputes and separatist struggles. The EU formulates the expectation of stable democracies, while there are atrocities in its midst. The actions of the EU member states, when taken as the background and context to the discourse produced about eastern applicants, reveal a double standard. We analyze the discursive patterns in the Commission Opinions against this backdrop. In our discussion we use examples and quotes from the Opinions, and the entire list of our empirical findings is included in the Appendix.



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Lack

This discursive pattern refers to phenomena that the Commission Opinions mention as ones that the applicants do not have. They reveal that eastern applicants are contrasted to an ideal that they have to match before they can be admitted. This pattern shows the EU's definitional efforts: eastern applicants are given primary identity in missing certain features.

This is a significant pattern: references to lack occur one hundred and two times in the ten Opinions. The distribution of the occurrences is the following:¹¹

'Lack'—countries granted negotiation		'Lack'—countries that are postponed	
Czech Republic	10	Bulgaria	10
Estonia	10	Latvia	11
Hungary	10	Lithuania	12
Poland	6	Romania	16
Slovenia	4	Slovakia	13

If we take the number of occurrences as a measure of the degree to which each eastern applicant is seen as lacking in EU-compatible or EU-worthy traits, we can conclude that Slovenia and Poland are the closest to the EU ideal, Romania and Slovakia are the farthest, Lithuania is an in-between case, and the other five applicants are at what may be understood as the average level. This level is the degree of otherness that the EU ascribes to various eastern applicants. As a testimony to the inconsistent and



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contradictory nature of the discourse of the EU, the countries that would appear to be closest to the ideal in this regard do not get the most favorable overall treatment. One of the postponed countries lacks to exactly the same degree as three of those granted negotiation. This is true for the Commission Opinions and the Follow-up Reports produced subsequently.¹²

But just what is lacking? In eastern applicants, institutions and legislation are missing and so is compliance with EU directives and agreements. Examples of missing institutions include the ombudsman in the cases of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovakia. The Supreme Court of Cassation in Bulgaria, an administrative Supreme Court in the Czech Republic and specialized courts in general in Latvia. Missing legislation refers to the lack of a civil service act in Bulgaria, the absence of a media law in Hungary, legislation on minority education in Latvia, a law on pornography and child abuse in Lithuania, a civil service act in Romania, and minority language use legislation in Slovakia. The cases of missing compliance in applicant countries suggest that there are conventions and documents these countries did not sign or ratify. The Convention on Minorities is missing ratification in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. The social charter is missing in Estonia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. Also, Lithuania failed to ratify the convention to prevent torture, and Hungary signed the Geneva refugee convention only with regards to refugees from Europe but not from elsewhere.

Of all the kinds of elements that may be missing in applicant countries, the most telling type is the ensemble of cases where eastern applicants fail to comply with explicit directives from the EU by not having signed or ratified agreements. In these cases, the



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applicants fall short because they have not done what the EU told them to.¹³ If the EU is constructed both as the repository of civilization and the expert on what is best for democratic regimes, then not doing what it says is a serious problem. This is exactly the case, given the reinscription of Enlightenment norms where western Europe is civilized and eastern Europe is backward.

The Enlightenment dichotomy between east and west is such that the difference is quantitative and not qualitative. The quantitative nature of the difference between the EU and the eastern applicants is made explicit in several cases: orphanages have too little money in Bulgaria; judges in the Czech Republic have too little experience and qualifications; there are too few qualified civil servants in Estonia; the judiciary is not efficient enough in Latvia—where there is also a "lack of teaching staff" for language courses for non-citizen minorities—there are too few qualified judges in Lithuania; the police in Poland is resource-poor in combating organized crime; the judiciary has a shortage of qualified judges, lacks equipment, and there is insufficient judicial control over police activities in Romania; and, in Slovakia, "the rights of the Opposition are not fully respected."

These mentions of lack do not berate the eastern applicants, nor do they imply that the applicant countries do anything wrong. In these instances the eastern applicants act in appropriate ways and have the requisite procedures. They just do not do or have enough. This becomes obvious because there is an implied perspective from which the EU is assessing the applicants. While the standard against which applicant countries are measured never becomes explicit, the Opinions convey a sense that the standard exists.



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The existence of this standard and the shortcomings of eastern applicants are parallel discursive creations.

Obstacles

The definitional efforts of the EU are also evident in a pattern that we label obstacles. The obstacle pattern accounts for those instances where the EU explicitly names traits that applicants have and which hinder their accession to the EU. The reason we treat this pattern as separate from the lack pattern is that here, the EU is explicit in its references to problems in applicant countries.

The thirty-five occurrences of the pattern are distributed among applicant countries as follows:

'Obstacle' in countries that negotiate		'Obstacle' in countries that are postponed	
Czech Republic	1	Bulgaria	0
Estonia	1	Latvia	5
Hungary	0	Lithuania	3
Poland	3	Romania	9
Slovenia	3	Slovakia	10

As obstacles to membership in the EU go, Romania and Slovakia appear to be the farthest from accession. This replicates and reinforces the position assigned to these two countries under the lack pattern. The two countries that the lack pattern represents as closest to the EU ideal, Slovenia and Poland, do not get a similarly favorable ranking



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here. The countries that the obstacle pattern would lead us to believe will have the least problematic accessions are on the opposite sides of the verdict: Hungary can proceed to negotiation; Bulgaria is postponed. Successfully promoted Poland and Slovenia have exactly as few (three) obstacles as postponed Lithuania. While, no doubt, the EU places itself in the position of the judge over the applicants and makes efforts at defining them as inferior, it does not exercise consistency.

Typical examples of the obstacle pattern include: "the situation of the courts in the Czech Republic constitutes a major challenge for the country's integration to the European Union"; "The Latvian authorities must consider ways to make it easier for stateless children born in Latvia to become naturalized"; in Lithuania, "police protection is needed for Jewish places of worship"; and "The fact that the Constitutional Court's rulings can be overturned by a two-thirds majority in Parliament is a major obstacle to genuine constitutional control in Romania." Also, in Slovenia, the National Assembly needs better staff "to enable it to fulfill its legislative functions, notably in the context of European integration." The precise and explicit statements by the EU reflect how the EU is the expert on eastern applicants as well as on democratic arrangements.

Tradition

The EU constructs itself as the expert on regimes: it also explicitly refers to a tradition of political culture and institutions. References to political culture and institutions constitute the tradition pattern under which the traditional, customary and conventional traits of certain political regimes are mentioned. The tradition referenced is



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never explicitly identified and it remains unclear whose tradition it is supposed to be. Presumably, it could be the tradition of the EU itself, except that for this to be possible, the EU is to be considered a homogeneous entity. Constructing the EU as a tradition serves the purpose of highlighting the uncertain and ambiguous nature of eastern Europe. This is the equivalent or trace of the Enlightenment westerners' reaction to eastern Europe: eastern Europe does not exhibit the traits expected from it by the western European observer.

The twelve occurrences of the tradition pattern are fairly evenly distributed among the ten applicant countries: the Opinion of each has one mention, except for Lithuania and Romania that each have two. The tradition is most frequently referred to by mentioning the traditional immunities of members of Parliament: this happens in the cases of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. In Lithuania and Romania, the additional references are to the powers of the President of each country. The special case in this pattern is Slovakia. There the reference to tradition is the following: "the present government does not fully respect the role and responsibilities of the other institutions and frequently adopts an attitude which goes beyond the confrontations traditionally accepted in a democracy." This case is exceptional both because the tradition is named and explicitly identified as democratic and because Slovakia is described as falling short of that tradition. Other occurrences of the pattern highlight aspects of applicant countries that are in keeping with the tradition. As a result, Slovakia appears in a significantly less favorable light than other applicants.



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The tradition pattern adds interesting nuances to the way the EU reinscribes the Enlightenment's east-west dichotomy on the applicants. Tradition may be expected to function as a code word for backwardness, for obsolete ways of doing things, for lack of modernity, of which eastern applicants would likely be accused. That presentation would be in keeping with the hierarchy between western and eastern Europe that the EU inherited from the Enlightenment. However, the tradition used here is more a synonym for civilization, of which the EU is the repository. This particular use of the trope of tradition taps into the inferiorizing dynamic by implying that eastern applicants lack civilization.

Roma

Just to what extent the eastern applicants lack civilization is illustrated by the way they treat minorities.¹⁴ In seven of the ten Commission Opinions, mistreatment of, and discrimination against, the Roma minority is mentioned thirty-four times. The distribution of these occurrences among the countries is the following:

'Roma' in countries that negotiate		'Roma' in countries that are postponed	
Czech Republic	5	Bulgaria	4
Estonia	0	Latvia	0
Hungary	13	Lithuania	0



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Poland	2	Romania	4
Slovenia	2	Slovakia	3

This is an exceptionally slanted pattern: the Opinion on Hungary features thirteen out of the thirty-four mentions of Roma. This creates the impression that Hungary is the country most strongly associated with the Roma minority and with the symbolic meanings this group is made to stand for. If eastern applicants are backward, then the one that is most strongly associated with a folkloric people in its midst is even more so.

The Roma are referred to by a variety of morphological forms. The availability of multiple morphological variants to refer to the same entity signals the importance of that entity in a given discourse. Because there are multiple ways of referring to the Roma, we conclude that they play an important role in the EU's construction of eastern applicants. The morphological variants and their occurrences are the following: (The variants are the actually occurring forms quoted from the Opinions. Plurals and singulars are included in the same category).

Morphological variant	Number of occurrences
"gypsies (Romanies)"	2
"gypsies," "gypsy"	6
"Romany (tzigane)"	1
"gypsies (Roma)"	10



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"Roma"	6
"Roma (gypsies)," "Roma (gypsy)"	7
"gypsies or Roma"	1

Seven morphological variants refer to the same group. However, in the Enlightenment spirit that the EU inherited, a strict referential theory of meaning would be the logical choice, with exactly one label in the language for every single referent in the outside world. Normal Enlightenment language breaks down because of the uncertainty, ambiguity and difficulty involved in defining the Roma. This ethnic group is mysterious and epitomizes the mystery of all eastern applicants. In contradistinction to the light and reason of the enlightened west, eastern Europe lacks clarity and fixity.¹⁵

‘Sociological factors’

The ambiguity and shadowy uncertainty of eastern Europe, which has been a trope in the Enlightenment dichotomy, is markedly reinscribed by the treatment of Roma in the Commission Opinions. The Roma pattern is also supported by another one in the EU discourse: the pattern of ‘sociological factors’. The Opinions on Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia each mention sociological factors as reasons for the plight of the Roma in these countries. What those sociological factors are is never clarified in any of the Opinions. The term ‘sociological factors’ sounds social-scientific and as if it might have been devised by the enlightened west. It also invokes the authority of empirical or theoretical social science in a political text by referring to



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‘sociological’ rather than ‘social’ factors. In light of the usage in the discipline of sociology, the expression has no meaning, which is a significant clue that it may be a euphemism for class and race.

Because no referent is specified for the term ‘sociological factors’ it seems to cover things that are obvious to the subject assessing the applicants. The applicants, in turn, are just the way they are: not only do they harbor discrimination against the Roma but they also feature ‘sociological factors’ that make conditions deplorable.¹⁶ The presence of these ‘sociological factors’ in the applicant countries contributes to reinventing eastern inferiority.

Bilingual use

The pattern of bilingual use consists of the eight cases where the Commission Opinions feature words in the languages of the countries they are about. Bilingual use makes the eastern applicants appear exotic. This exoticism is an aspect of difference and distance from, and possibly inferiority to, the western self. The occurrences of the pattern are the following: in Estonia, districts are "*maakond*"; in Latvia, the single house of Parliament is called "*Saeima*"; the Lithuanian unicameral Parliament is called "*Seimas*" and in Romania, "central government has devolved the administration of the country to the counties (*judets*)." The Commission Opinion on Poland has four of the eight instances of bilingual use. They are: one of the parliamentary chambers is the "*Sejm*"; Senate members are elected within "*voivodships*"; local governors are *voivods*; and there is an "intermediate tier of decentralized administration between the



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municipalities and the *voivodships* ("powiats")." Because the occurrences of bilingual use are so numerous in the case of Poland, that country appears slightly more exotic than others. As the words in the languages of the eastern applicants are hardly going to become technical terms of the EU enlargement process, they appear highlighting eastern difference. The element of exoticism hints that eastern applicants may not only be quantitative but also qualitative others.¹⁷

Gender assumptions

The issues of civilization and whether eastern applicants are construed by the EU as anything other than backward, are raised by the assumptions about gender in the Commission Opinions. If the ideal against which applicants are measured and which is never explicitly identified, is democratic, then we assume that it would favor inclusion over exclusion and would therefore prescribe that offices and political activity and participation be open to both/all genders. Because the documents under analysis are the products of the EU, by teasing out the assumptions about gender in the texts, we can elucidate one aspect of the ideal the EU claims to hold.¹⁸

The twenty-five occurrences of gender assumptions may be divided among three types: gender inclusiveness (cases where people of both/all genders are assumed to be participants in agency and political efficacy either as elected officials or as voters who elect them), gender exclusiveness (cases where only males are assumed to be participants in agency and political efficacy either as elected officials or as voters who elect them), and 'gender facts' (cases where the description of office holders as male is a reflection of



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the situation at the time). The distribution of the twenty-five occurrences listed in the Appendix is the following:

Type of gender-related language	Occurrences of the type (the numbers refer to those listed in the Appendix)	Total
Gender inclusiveness	4, 5, 6, 11, 25	5
Gender exclusiveness	1,2,3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23	17
Gender facts	16, 22, 24	3

The prevalence of gender exclusiveness is striking. The discourse that the EU produces reveals an ideal that is not inclusive of both/all genders for political participation. A possible objection here would be that the EU is merely describing the eastern applicants and that process yields these texts. However, other than sheer description being unacceptable to us as a model, it is also the case that the description of the state of affairs in eastern applicant countries only accounts for the three ‘gender facts’. Of the twenty-two remaining cases where the EU describes political offices and participation in the abstract, it only resorts to gender inclusiveness five times, although it may as well use gender-inclusive language. In fact, if the EU were committed to the democratic ideal of inclusion, gender-exclusive forms would not occur at all. Not choosing gender inclusiveness shows that on this particular normative measurement, the EU ideal—something that is held up for applicants—is not democratic. This is in tension



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with the overall stance of the EU revealed in the other discursive patterns where a hierarchy is established between a superior EU and inferior applicants.

On the whole, the Commission Opinions reveal attempts to define eastern applicants through the patterns of lack and obstacle as not doing and not having enough for accession. These definitional efforts establish the EU in the position of the superior outsider who wields power through definition. Definitional power involves the parallel construal of self and other: the Commission Opinions engage in defining the EU as well as the eastern applicants. This is apparent in the tradition pattern where the EU discourse refers to the EU as the repository of a tradition that is synonymous with civilization. Eastern applicants are portrayed as ambiguous, uncertain and backward through the patterns about the Roma and ‘sociological factors’. Discrimination against an ethnic minority is uncivilized, and sociological factors, although never defined, suggest an inherent, unchanging essence in the applicant countries. Language use about the Roma hints at the ambiguities of eastern Europe. The pattern of bilingual use adds a touch of exoticism to the image of eastern applicants, while the gender assumptions in the EU texts shows that it does not necessarily endorse an inclusive democratic ideal.

IV. Opinions enlightened

The Enlightenment ushered in a philosophic dichotomy between eastern Europe and western Europe. We see this dichotomy reinscribed on applicants in the setting of the eastern enlargement of the EU because the EU now uses the discursive strategies of



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the western Europe of the Enlightenment: it resorts to defining eastern applicants, which entails presenting them as quantitative others (inferior), it highlights the ambiguities of the applicants, and it portrays itself as the repository of civilization. The discursive patterns that emerge from the text of the Country Opinions reflect these strategies: the pattern of *lack* is an explicit case of definitional efforts by the EU, aiming at constructing eastern applicants as quantitative others; the *obstacle* pattern is a further effort at definition through prescriptions and references to phenomena that hinder applicants from being admitted; the *tradition* pattern highlights how only the EU has civilization; the issue of civilization is further elucidated by the *Roma* pattern, which also features morphological variants that underline the ambiguities of the applicants; the '*sociological factors*' pattern explains the situation of the Roma in terms of the uncivilized nature of applicant countries; the *bilingual use* pattern further illustrates that eastern Europe is an ambiguous region. Finally, the *gender assumptions* pattern, which is a case apart since we used a priori normative understandings of the democratic ideal in uncovering it, revealed that the EU does not use language that conforms to the gender-inclusiveness of the democratic ideal and is thereby in tension with the portrayal of the EU as the repository of civilization.

Eastern enlargement is quite unique in the history of empire and coloniality. It is opaque and involves the construction of an empire that grows by willing dependencies, not by force. The illusion of self-determination by the applicants allows them to make application their own decision, since there is no direct coercion or military aggression. As Godlewska and Smith have shown, "it would be a mistake to conclude that this decolonization marked the end of empire" (1994: 268). The EU appears to be stepping in to



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fill the void left by the Soviet regime to bring eastern Europe under a new type of control and imperialism. As Böröcz (Introduction to this volume) points out, the history of western Europe cannot be separated from the history of imperialism and colonialism. The idea of Europe is contingent on Empire.

The Enlightenment idea of eastern Europe is reinscribed, preserving distinctions, proffering exclusion and inferiority while nourishing the EU's identity. The idea of an inferior eastern Europe, counterposed to the dominant western Europe, is embedded in the discourse between the EU and the applicant eastern European states. A close analysis of the Commission Opinions reveals the process of the EU's reification of an inferior eastern Europe, not unlike the invention of 'Eastern Europe' during the Enlightenment period.

The Enlightenment dichotomy between a superior western Europe and an inferior eastern Europe is replicated in the 20th century dichotomy between western capitalism and state socialism. During the Cold War, the bipolar geopolitical arrangement of the world simplified the dichotomy into one single dimension. The multiple ideological aspects of the Enlightenment were no longer necessary because the existence of the Soviet empire was sufficient as a unique referent and signifier. After the dissolution of the USSR, that grand simplification was no longer available, but because the dichotomy was discursively necessary for western Europe, different discursive vehicles were required. This need prompted the return to the Enlightenment's multi-faceted ideologies of eastern inferiority.

While the vehicles of inventing and imposing eastern inferiority have changed—and come full circle—in the past centuries, the relationship to eastern Europe has not



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been modified. Eastern Europe has been constantly invented and reinvented as inferior to western Europe. The philosophical dichotomy of the Enlightenment received a new terminology in the Cold War, but not a new substance. After the Cold War, the constant invention of eastern Europe retained its substance and, in the 1990s invention, it reverted to Enlightenment ideologies. The explanation for why the EU is engaged in reinscribing the Enlightenment dichotomy that has already seen a previous reincarnation in the Cold War, may reside in the crucial nature of the Commission Opinions. These Opinions lay the groundwork for enlargement. How and on what terms eastern applicants will be admitted into the EU is first sketched out in these documents. That the enlargement process is indeed maintaining the same hierarchical dichotomy may be seen in the follow-up reports to the Commission Opinions, where the same dynamic is pervasive and no alternative appears.¹⁹ Applicant states have also tended to endorse the same dynamic in their discourses produced for domestic use.²⁰ High-ranking officials of the EU and of EU member states also maintain hierarchy between the EU and the applicants in a form that Sher (in this volume) calls a 'di-vision'. These developments and the idea of a two-tiered EU membership structure show that the Commission Opinions' reinvention of eastern Europe was successful.



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Appendix

The following is a list of the occurrences of all discursive patterns in all ten of the Commission Opinions. Page numbers refer to our printouts from the websites indicated below.

Lack

- 1.—Bulgaria p. 3.—no civil service act
- 2.—Bulgaria p.4.—no ombudsman
- 3.—Bulgaria p. 5.—"There is no procedure whereby citizens can refer matters directly to the Constitutional Court"
- 4.—Bulgaria p. 5.—there is still no Supreme Court of Cassation (although p.4. talks about it as if it exists)
- 5.—Bulgaria p. 6.—didn't sign Social Charter or Convention on Minorities, signed but not ratified human rights conventions
- 6.—Bulgaria p. 6.—the poor have a hard time getting lawyers in preliminary hearing phase
- 7.—Bulgaria p.6.—death penalty has not been abolished
- 8.—Bulgaria p. 7— inadequate funding lead to bad prison conditions
- 9.—Bulgaria p. 7.—orphanages have too little money
- 10.—Bulgaria p. 9.—no stats on Roma
- 11.—Czech Republic p. 2.—no rules for minority representation in Parliament



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- 12.—Czech Republic p. 3.—no procedure for a referendum
- 13.—Czech Republic p. 3.—local authority not set up for regions yet
- 14.—Czech Republic p. 4.—"absence of civil service procedures"
- 15.—Czech Republic p. 5.—no administrative Supreme Court yet
- 16.—Czech Republic p. 5.—no ombudsman
- 17.—Czech Republic p. 6.—not enough experience and qualifications of judges
- 18.—Czech Republic p. 6.—not ratified convention on minorities
- 19.—Czech Republic p. 9.—not ratified convention on minorities, second

mention

- 20.—Czech Republic p. 10.—no rules on minority representation in Parliament
- 21.—Estonia p. 2.—no provision for minority representation
- 22.—Estonia p. 4.—shortage of qualified civil servants
- 23.—Estonia p. 4.—police not effective
- 24.—Estonia p. 5.—no ombudsman
- 25.—Estonia p. 5.—death penalty not abolished
- 26.—Estonia p. 6.—social charter not signed
- 27.—Estonia p. 6.—legal aid not available in practice thought there is legal

provision for it

- 28.—Estonia p. 6.—"Capital punishment has not been abolished in Estonia"—

second mention

- 29.—Estonia p. 9.—not enough money and resources for Russians to learn

Estonian

- 30.—Estonia p. 10.—no minority representation law



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- 31.—Hungary p. 3.—state of crisis bill not passed yet
- 32.—Hungary p. 4.—constitutionality of parts of police law is questionable
- 33.—Hungary p. 4.—training of public administrators inappropriate
- 34.—Hungary p. 6.—"Justice does not yet operate in a satisfactory way at all levels in Hungary"
- 35.—Hungary p. 6.—social charter not signed yet
- 36.—Hungary p. 7.—defense rights not properly covered for all groups
- 37.—Hungary p. 7.—no media law
- 38.—Hungary p. 7.—media sector not open to foreign investors
- 39.—Hungary p. 8.—Geneva refugee convention signed only for refugees from Europe
- 40.—Hungary p. 8.—no systematic steps against cases of police brutality
- 41.—Latvia p. 2.—no minority representation rule
- 42.—Latvia p. 2.—non-nationals cannot form parties
- 43.—Latvia p. 4.—no intermediate levels of government
- 44.—Latvia p. 5.—no specialized courts
- 45.—Latvia p. 6.—improvements are needed in judiciary, appropriate instruments missing, not enough efficiency
- 46.—Latvia p. 7.—not ratified social charter, not signed convention preventing torture
- 47.—Latvia p. 7.—"shortage of qualified lawyers"
- 48.—Latvia p. 7.—capital punishment not abolished



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- 49.—Latvia p. 12.—"lack of teaching staff" for language courses for non-citizen minorities
- 50.—Latvia p. 12.—no parliamentary representation for minorities
- 51.—Latvia p. 12.—no legislation on minority education
- 52.—Lithuania p. 2.—"There are no longer any rules specifically ensuring the representation of minorities"
- 53.—Lithuania p. 4.—"there is no suitable mechanism whereby public servants can be held accountable"
- 54.—Lithuania p.6.—too few qualified judges
- 55.—Lithuania pp. 6-7—not ratified convention to prevent torture
- 56.—Lithuania p. 7.—not signed social charter
- 57.—Lithuania p. 7.—public servants and police officers are not called to account
- 58.—Lithuania p. 7.—death penalty not abolished
- 59.—Lithuania p. 9.—"Lithuania has no appropriate legislation against pornography or against the sexual abuse of children"
- 60.—Lithuania p. 9.—"Nor have the authorities in Vilnius kept their promise to annul the measures, illegally taken by the Soviet regime, to rehabilitate persons suspected of crimes against humanity"
- 61.—Lithuania p. 10.—not ratified convention on minorities
- 62.—Lithuania p. 10.—no collective rights for minorities in constitution
- 63.—Lithuania p. 10.—minority languages may only be used in court via an interpreter



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64.—Poland p. 4.—"The police still lack adequate resources to combat effectively the rise in crime and, in particular, organized crime"

65.—Poland p. 7.—not ratified convention on minorities and social charter

66.—Poland p. 7.—can't get lawyer until charges are specified

67.—Poland p. 8.—non-profit organizations cannot get tax breaks

68.—Poland p. 8.—journalists face jail for slander and their sources are not protected

69.—Poland p. 8.—while the Jewish community was given back the property taken by the Nazis, the same did not happen to private individuals

70.—Romania p. 4.—no civil service act

71.—Romania p. 4.—no supervision of how parliament approves of certain decisions on defense

72.—Romania p. 4.—"The exercise of local authority is hampered by the lack of an official regulatory framework for local government employees and by local authorities' limited financial resources"

73.—Romania p. 4.—"The lack of a civil service act and particularly low salaries pose problems"

74.—Romania p. 5.—"Acts of brutality by the Romanian police force have not always been prosecuted"

75.—Romania p. 5.—judges leave for private sector and better salaries

76.—Romania p. 6.—powers of People's Advocate not defined

77.—Romania p. 6.—judiciary not working properly, shortage of qualified judges, lack of equipment



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78.—Romania p. 7.—not ratified social charter

79.—Romania p. 7.—not sufficient judicial control over police actions

80.—Romania p. 8— asylum seekers do not have sufficient access to justice

81.—Romania p. 8— no provision for the punishment of inhuman treatment at the hands of the police

82.—Romania p. 9— "The rights of the child have long been a matter for concern in Romania" —protection is missing and that is not honoring Romania's international obligations

83.—Romania p. 11.—"a number of shortcomings with regard to respect for fundamental rights""

84.—Romania p. 11.—"even if the Hungarian minority seems well integrated ... the same cannot be said for the Roma (gypsies)"

85.— Romania p. 11.—child protection reforms have not yet borne fruit

86.—Slovakia p. 2.—"the operation of institutions in Slovakia has encountered a number of difficulties"

87.—Slovakia p. 3.—"Parliament in Slovakia does not carry out its duties in conditions which comply with the normal rules for the operation of democracy"

88.—Slovakia p. 3.—"The rights of the Opposition are not fully respected"

89.—Slovakia p. 3.—no provision for opposition to have proportionate number of seats in Parliament

90.—Slovakia p. 3.—"Respect for the mandates of members of Parliament and the procedures governing the work of Parliament is not always guaranteed"



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91.—Slovakia p. 4.—"the present government does not fully respect the role and responsibilities of the other institutions and frequently adopts an attitude which goes beyond the confrontations traditionally accepted in a democracy"

92.—Slovakia p. 5.—lack of civilian control over secret service activities

93.—Slovakia p. 6.—bill on prosecutor's office not yet passed into law

94.—Slovakia p. 6.—no ombudsman

95.—Slovakia p. 7.—"judges would benefit from stronger guarantees of their independence"

96.—Slovakia p. 10.—no collective rights for minorities

97.—Slovakia p. 10.—no provision for parliamentary representation of minorities

98.—Slovakia p. 10.—no legislation on minority language use yet

99.—Slovenia p. 4.—"no law at present guaranteeing openness in measures taken by the administration"

100.—Slovenia p. 6.—inefficiency of courts

101.—Slovenia p. 7.—not ratified convention on minorities nor signed social charter

102.—Slovenia p. 8.—limitations on foreigners' ownership of land

Obstacle

1.—Czech Republic p. 6.—"The situation of the courts in the Czech Republic constitutes a major challenge for the country's integration to the European Union"



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2.—Estonia p. 11.—"Estonia needs to take measures to accelerate naturalization procedures to enable the Russian-speaking non-citizens to become better integrated into Estonian society"

3.—Latvia p. 8.—"The position of asylum-seekers should improve with the forthcoming adoption of an act governing the status of such people in Latvia"

4. —Latvia p. 11.—"The Latvian authorities must consider ways to make it easier for stateless children born in Latvia to become naturalized"

5.—Latvia p. 11.—non-citizens cannot even vote in local elections

6.—Latvia p. 12.—differences between citizens and non-citizens are to be reduced

7.—Latvia p. 13.—"Efforts to improve the operation of the judicial system and to intensify the fight against corruption need to be sustained"

8.—Lithuania p. 8.—"An appropriate legal basis for such actions [warrants before wiretaps] should be laid down"

9.—Lithuania p. 9.—"The present state of affairs prevents Lithuania from ratifying the European convention for the prevention of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment"

10.—Lithuania p. 9.—"police protection is needed for Jewish places of worship"

11.—Poland p. 4.—"Local authority autonomy continues to meet with obstacles on numerous fronts and must be further developed"

12.—Poland p. 8.—"Certain difficulties persist with regard to respect for privacy and the right of inviolability of the home"



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13.—Poland p. 11.—“Poland needs to complete procedures for compensating those whose property was seized by the Nazis or Communists”

14.—Romania p. 6.—“The fact that the Constitutional Court's rulings can be overturned by a two-thirds majority of Parliament is a major obstacle to genuine constitutional control in Romania”

15.—Romania p. 7.—“There are certain obstacles to the exercise of the right not to be arbitrarily arrested”

16.—Romania p. 8.—“Respect for privacy is endangered by the considerable powers of the secret services”

17.—Romania p. 8.—“As regards equality before the law, homosexuals are exposed to abuses by the vagueness of the term “public scandal” as applied to homosexual acts”—cf. Lithuania p 9 no law on porn—sex is always a matter of political and civil rights

18.—Romania p. 10.—Roma “are quite often assaulted by police officers or members of the public, offences that go unpunished”

19.—Romania pp. 10-11.—“It is important that the Government step up the integration measures”

20.—Romania p. 11.—“Further information is needed on the situation of the Roma and a reliable assessment of their numbers”

21.—Romania p. 11.—institutions “need to be anchored by greater respect for the primacy of law”



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22.—Romania p. 11.—"much still remains to be done in rooting out corruption, improving the working of the courts and protecting individual liberties from the activities of the police"

23.—Slovakia p. 5.—"Such inter-institutional conflict goes well beyond what is normally acceptable in democratic politics"

24.—Slovakia p. 5.—"The government also sought to extend its methods of exercising control over various sectors of civil society"

25.—Slovakia p. 6.—"The independence of the judicial system in Slovakia is impeded in a number of respects"

26.—Slovakia p. 8.—government has been influencing media

27.—Slovakia p. 9.—police have been inflicting inhuman treatment

28.—Slovakia p. 10.—"there are nevertheless some tensions between the government and the Hungarian minority"

29.—Slovakia p. 11.—"This ambiguous situation is further aggravated by certain government decisions concerning the Hungarian minority such as reductions in the subsidies granted to Hungarian cultural associations and the cessation of bilingual school reports in Hungarian schools"

30.—Slovakia p. 11.—Roma are targets of skinhead violence

31.—Slovakia p. 11.—"substantial efforts will have to be made to provide better guarantees of the independence of the judicial system and of satisfactory conditions for its operation. The fight against corruption also needs to be made more effective"

32.—Slovakia p. 12.—improvement needed in how Hungarians are treated



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33.—Slovenia p. 2.—National Assembly needs better staff "to enable it to fulfill its legislative functions, notably in the context of European integration"

34.—Slovenia p. 8.—"Parliament must adopt the necessary rules" to allow foreigners to own land

35.—Slovenia p. 10.—"Certain improvements still need to be made in terms of the working of the judicial system and the restoration to the original owners of property expropriated by the Communist regime. Efforts to combat corruption need to be more effective"

Tradition

1.—Bulgaria p. 2. "Members of Parliament enjoy a traditional array of immunities"

2.—Czech Republic p. 2.—MPs have "traditional immunities"

3.—Estonia p. 2.—"Members of Parliament enjoy the conventional immunities"

4.—Hungary p. 2.—"Members of Parliament have a traditional system of immunity"

5.—Latvia p. 2.—"MPs enjoy a traditional array of immunities"

6.—Lithuania p. 2.—"Members of Parliament enjoy a traditional array of immunities"

7.—Lithuania p. 3.—"The President exercises the traditional prerogatives on a Head of State"



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8.—Poland p. 2.—"Members of Parliament enjoy a traditional array of immunities"

9.—Romania p. 2.—"Members of Parliament enjoy the usual immunities"

10.—Romania p. 3.—"In addition to the usual powers of a head of state, the President plays a major role in the institutional and political life of the country"

11.—Slovakia p. 4.—"the present government does not fully respect the role and responsibilities of the other institutions and frequently adopts an attitude which goes beyond the confrontations traditionally accepted in a democracy"

12.—Slovenia p. 2.—"MPs enjoy the usual parliamentary immunities"

Roma

1.—Bulgaria p. 8.—"gypsies (Romanies)"—percentages on top of section

2.—Bulgaria p. 8.—"The gypsies (Romanies) continue to suffer considerable discrimination"

3.—Bulgaria p. 9—"a reliable survey of the numbers of gypsies"

4.—Bulgaria p. 9.—"the Romany (tzigane) population"

5.—Czech Republic p. 8.—"a number of gypsies (Roma) of Czech nationality"

6.—Czech Republic p. 9.—"gypsies (Roma)" percentages

7.—Czech Republic p. 10.—"situation with regard to the Roma, however"

8.—Czech Republic p. 10.—"some Roma were expelled"

9.—Czech Republic p. 10.—"the Roma population"

10.—Czech Republic p. 11.—"discrimination affecting the Roma"



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- 11.—Hungary p. 7.—"certain categories of foreigners and gypsies"
- 12.—Hungary p. 9.—"gypsies (Roma)" percentages
- 13.—Hungary p. 10.—"The gypsies (Roma) have a special place"
- 14.—Hungary p. 10.—"the gypsies (Roma) are still frequently subjected to attacks"
- 15.—Hungary p. 10.—"the gypsies (Roma) are victims"
- 16.—Hungary p. 11.—"inequality of opportunity between the gypsies (Roma) and the rest of the Hungarian population has increased in recent years"
- 17.—Hungary p. 11.—"the education of the gypsies (Roma) has improved"
- 18.—Hungary p. 11.—"The gypsies (Roma) are also subject to discrimination on the labor market"
- 19.—Hungary p. 11.—"reduce the inequality of opportunities between the gypsies (Roma) and the rest of the population"
- 20.—Hungary p. 11.—"The Council for coordinating matters concerning the gypsies has since the ..."
- 21.—Hungary p. 11.—"The Committee for the Gypsy Programme"
- 22.—Hungary p. 11.—"social problems encountered by the gypsy community"
- 23.—Hungary p. 11.—"ensure justice and protection for the Roma (gypsies)"
- 24.—Poland p. 10.—"There are an estimated 40 000 Roma (gypsies)."
- 25.—Poland p. 10.—"The Roma (or gypsies), who are few in number in Poland"
- 26.—Romania p. 10.—percentages for "Roma (gypsies) who are estimated to make up five to seven percent of the population"



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27.—Romania p. 10.—“The Roma, who account for a considerable percentage of the population”

28.—Romania p. 11.—“Further information is needed on the situation of the Roma and a reliable assessment of their numbers”

29.—Romania p. 11.—“even if the Hungarian minority seems well integrated ... the same cannot be said for the Roma (gypsies)”

30.—Slovakia p. 9.—percentages of “gypsies or Roma”

31.—Slovakia p. 11.—“The gypsies or Roma, whose numbers grew in Slovakia after partition”

32.—Slovakia p. 12.—“The position of the Roma (gypsies)”

33.—Slovenia p. 10.—“the special nature of the Roma (gypsy) community”

34.—Slovenia p. 10.—“A special law on the protection of gypsies”

‘Sociological factors’

1.—Bulgaria p. 8.—“Their social position is difficult, though here sociological factors play a part alongside the discrimination”

2.—Czech Republic p. 10.—“Their social situation is often difficult (though sociological factors to some extent account for this).”

3.—Hungary p. 11.—“This situation can largely be explained by sociological factors”



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4.—Poland p. 10.—"They frequently live in situations of social hardship as a result of a combination of sociological factors and a failure by the authorities to take sufficient account of the special nature of their situation"

5.—Romania p. 10.—"Besides the discrimination they suffer from the rest of the population, sociological and cultural factors account to some extent for their very difficult social situation."

6.—Slovakia p. 11.—"Their social position is often difficult, although here sociological factors play a part"

Bilingual

1.—Estonia p. 3.—districts are "*maakond*"

2.—Latvia p. 2.—"Parliament consists of a single house—the *Saeima*"

3.—Lithuania p. 2.—"Parliament consists of a single house—the *Seimas*"

4.—Poland p. 2.—"Parliament consists of two chambers—the *Sejm* ..."

5.—Poland p. 2.—Senate members are elected "within "*voivodships*""

6.—Poland p. 4.—"Government at regional level is organized on the basis of (49) *voivodships*, in which the *voivod* or local governor represents central government"

7.—Poland p. 4.—"an intermediate tier of decentralized administration between the municipalities and the *voivodships* ("*powiats*")"

8.—Romania p. 3.—"Central government has devolved the administration of the country to the counties (*judets*)"



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Gender assumptions

- 1.—Bulgaria p.2.—President of the Republic assumed to be male
- 2.—Czech Republic p. 3.—President of the Republic is assumed to be male
- 3.—Czech Republic p. 3.—district leader is assumed to be male
- 4.—Czech Republic p. 5.—private individual can go to Constitutional Court if this individual "considers his/her fundamental rights to have been infringed"
- 5.—Estonia p. 3.—President of the Republic: "If he/she cannot command that majority"
- 6.—Estonia p. 3.—Prime Minister: "before he/she can form a government"
- 7.—Estonia p. 5.—Chancellor of the Law is assumed to be male
- 8.—Hungary p. 5.—Procurator General is assumed to be male
- 9.—Latvia p. 3.—President of the Republic is assumed to be male
- 10.— Latvia p. 5.—Chief Prosecutor is assumed to be male
- 11.—Latvia p. 10.—"The acquisition of citizenship depends on passing an examination where the applicant must demonstrate his/her knowledge of the Latvian language"
- 12.—Lithuania p. 2.—President of the Republic is assumed to be male
- 13.—Lithuania p. 3.—Governors are assumed to be male
- 14.—Lithuania p. 5.—ombudsmen are assumed to be male
- 15.—Lithuania p. 6.—President of the Republic is assumed to be male
- 16.—Poland p. 5.—President is male—"gender fact" single quotes please
- 17.—Poland p. 6.—ombudsman is assumed to be male



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18.—Romania p. 5.—Prosecutor General is assumed to be male

19.—Romania p. 6.—People's Advocate is assumed to be male

20.—Slovakia p. 3.—President of the Republic is assumed to be male

21.—Slovakia p. 4.—Prime Minister is assumed to be male

22.—Slovakia p. 6.—Minister of Justice is male—"gender fact" single quotes

please

23.—Slovenia p. 3.—President of the Republic is assumed to be male

24.—Slovenia p. 6.—ombudsman is male—"gender fact" single quotes please

25.—Slovenia p. 6.—"Pursuant to Article 162 of the Constitution any person who can demonstrate that he or she has a case to bring may bring it before the court"



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¹ See "Winston Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech in its Entirety" at <http://history1900s.about.com/homework/history1900s/library/weekly/aa082400a.htm?terms=Winston+Churchill>

² See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/index.htm>.

³ See "The Fox and the Raven" and "Rationales for a choice."

⁴ Cooper, and Stoler, p. 3.

⁵ See the Introduction to this volume.

⁶ For some images of barbarism, see Wolff pp. 187-88.

⁷ For analysis of the colonial strategies as applied to the EU, see Engel-Di Mauro in this volume. For analysis of Comaroff's colonial strategies in its initial context, see Comaroff, John L. "Images of empire, contents of conscience: Models of colonial domination in South Africa" in Cooper, Frederick and Laura Ann Stoler. *Tensions of Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, pp. 163-97.

⁸ For our empirical analysis, the Commission Opinions were accessed on October 27, 2000 at the following locations:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/bulgaria/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/czech/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/estonia/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/hungary/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/latvia/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/lithuania/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/poland/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/romania/op_07_97/index.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovakia/op_07_97/index.htm

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⁹ European Commission. "Commission Opinions concerning the Applications for Membership to the European Union." Brussels: 1997.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/opinions/intro/index.htm>

¹⁰ Our attention will be focused to the ten eastern European countries that were recently state socialist countries, and their status in the process of application to the EU. These ten countries are not the only applicants. The eastern European countries, however, will be regarded as a legitimate group, as they are all completely within continental Europe. They all share a relatively similar recent history of a return to democracy and the dispelling of Soviet influenced governments. Thus, the eastern enlargement countries differ significantly from the remaining three, which are Cyprus, Malta, and Turkey.

¹¹ In the discussion and presentation of applicant countries, we separate them according to whether the EU decided to open accession negotiations with them.

¹² Please see Kovács in this volume.

¹³ Continued failure to sign or ratify documents will be routinely pointed out in follow-up reports. See Kovács in this volume.

¹⁴ For a discussion of how minority policies are used as a synecdoche for democracy, see "Rationales for a choice."

¹⁵ The discourse of the EU will evolve from this conceptualization to a more essentializing one in the follow-up reports. See Kovács in this volume.

¹⁶ None of this is intended to diminish the hardship of the Roma in these countries. What we are arguing, however, is that the EU discourse does more than call attention to the underclass status of this group and uses their treatment to construe eastern applicants in certain particular ways.

¹⁷ Qualitative otherness is informed by the work of Said more than that of Wolff. On how exoticism becomes a main strategy in EU discourse later, see Kovács in this volume.

¹⁸ By carrying out this part of the analysis, we do somewhat diverge from the course of action used in the case of the other patterns of the discourse: in the case of gender assumptions, we do bring something a priori to the analysis (the presumption that if the ideal held by the EU is democratic, it is also gender-inclusive; as well as a commitment to investigating the nature of the ideal, democratic or otherwise), whereas in the other cases, the discursive patterns emerged during the analysis without input from our pre-existing normative commitments. While this makes the gender assumptions pattern a case apart, it does not render it unhelpful.

¹⁹ See Kovács in this volume.

²⁰ On the case of Hungary, see Kovács, Melinda. "Communicating past each other? The EU and Hungary's discursive construction of one another." Paper presented at the Sixth Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, Columbia University, April 6, 2001.



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Putting Down and Putting Off: The EU's Discursive Strategies in the 1998 and 1999 Follow-Up Reports, by Melinda Kovács

I. Introduction

In this study I examine the Reports that the European Union (EU) produced on those countries that responded to questionnaires in their application procedure to become EU members.¹ I seek to produce an interpretive account of the reluctance of the EU by identifying its discursive strategies. The analysis teases out the patterns and the strategies in the discourse. These elements are contexts and reference points for each other. Together, they create meanings—in this case, the meaning of the EU's attitude to the applicants as well as the meaning of eastern European applicant-hood.² This investigation also sheds light on how the dynamic began in the 1997 Commission Opinions has been evolving. My discourse analysis, inspired by the evidential paradigm proposed by Ginzburg (1989), reveals how the EU views these eastern European applicants (as inferior), and also the intentions it has towards them (postpone their admission).³

The analysis of the Reports of 1998 and 1999 is set against the background of other writings about the discursive production surrounding the eastern enlargement of the EU. Böröcz has found that in communicating about, rather than with, Hungary, the EU destroys the subjectivity that Hungary constructed in its communication to the EU.⁴ Not granting subjectivity to the entity described is analogous to the colonial strategy diagnosed by Said in *Orientalism*.⁵ Colonial powers described and spoke for the colonies

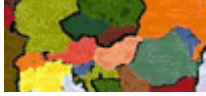


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and their people: natives did not need to produce narratives about themselves and their countries because they were created by the colonizers. Because the communication between Hungary and the EU in the Hungarian response to the EU questionnaire and in the EU Opinion of 1997 is reminiscent of a colonial dynamic, the question arises whether this is only typical of this one channel of interaction (Hungary—EU), or of all communications with eastern European applicants.

My analysis shows that the EU discourse creates and maintains a dynamic similar to the perception of the colonized by the colonizers. I do not argue that the EU perceives itself as a colonizer. Nor do I argue that it consciously uses the means of colonial discourse. The EU does not intend to create a colonial ontology of eastern European countries, much like it does not set out to colonize them. While there are analogies between the colonial endeavor and the eastern enlargement of the EU, they are not identical, as the EU deals with countries that expressed interest in being included. While there are analogies between the two processes, they are not the same. However, the perception of applicant countries that discourse analysis reveals in the EU Reports, closely resembles the colonial administrator's perception of Orientals. Perceptions manifest and reinforce power dynamics. The perception of Orientals by colonial officers amounts to creating an ontology. Orientals come to be what the colonial administrators perceive.⁶

In order to show the relevance of the analogy with colonial perception, I will review the traits of the colonial encounter, and then move to the presentation of the discursive strategy whereby the EU reveals the ontology of eastern Europeans as inferior.



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Finally, I will review the discursive strategy that is a consequence of the putting down strategy of eastern inferiority: the postponement of admitting the applicants.



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II. Colonial perception

Certain traits of the colonial encounter are relevant to understand the discourse that the EU produces on applicant countries in the follow-up Reports. In order to identify these traits, I rely on Edward Said's work. Said documents an entire field of practice, complete with a scholarly discipline as well as public administration and intellectual frameworks. Of particular interest to me are the traits that best characterize the perception involved in the colonial encounter: creation of an ontology, issues of language and speech, pre-existing conceptions, directionality of perception, the dichotomy of normal and different, and issues of native incomprehension. These traits appear as traces in the discourse of the EU on eastern European applicants.

Colonial administrators assume the posture of the Creator. They create a body of knowledge about the colonies that reinforces their position of power: "Knowledge of the Orient, because generated out of strength, in a sense *creates* the Orient, the Oriental, and his world" (Said, 1979: 40, emphasis in the original). This creation reinforces the differences in strength of the cultures: the colonizers are powerful and, therefore their culture appears as superior and more powerful to the extent of inventing the other culture and inventing it as inferior. Colonialism involves an ontological maneuver but does not stop at dominance achieved through knowing. It moves on to explicit control: "knowledge of subject races or Orientals is what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control" (Said, 1979: 36). The



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EU's efforts to gather information about eastern European applicants in the questionnaires have been the assertion of a framework that the applicants are expected to fit into but which is not a reflection of their realities as much as a construction and a self-contained world.⁷ In finding out about the applicants, the EU asserts its coordinates for reality and thereby turns the applicants into entities that are easy to manage by the EU.

Colonizers typically speak instead of the colonized. The appropriation of language may be seen as a continuation or extension of the ontological move described above: colonial power defines and calls into being what the colonized are, and because it "knows" them in that sense, it naturally speaks on behalf of them, and preempts their speech. Even if the colonized did speak, their language use would not amount to more than a superfluous re-assertion of the power hierarchy (Said, 1979: 34-35). A trace of the superior power appropriating all language may be detected in applicant questionnaires and communication being disregarded in the Commission Opinions that were produced by the EU allegedly in response to them.⁸

In the encounter between the colonizers and the colonized, the preconceived notions of the colonizers serve as the basis of their perceptions. In describing the "textual attitude" to the Orient, Said points out that the pre-existing narratives about the place to be seen have always been more attractive to colonizers than its realities. Prior narratives determine the experience.⁹ The role of the EU texts in light of this dynamic may be dual: they serve both as the creation of such narratives and as post-encounter accounts. To the extent that they are the latter, the narratives structuring the EU's experience of eastern European applicants may be the elements of the larger discourse on eastern Europe that



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has asserted its backwardness for centuries and on which the Commission Opinions have been shown to rely.¹⁰

Colonial perception is not an interactive two-way process: the colonizers control and limit how the colonized can perceive them. Colonial powers such as Britain made their administrators retire at the age of 55 (Said, 1979: 42). The colonized could not see elderly or frail colonizers, but only strong and powerful administrators. The image of dominance was reflected in the physical state of the colonizers. This image was the only one the colonized were allowed to perceive. They only came into contact with an idealized Western self that bracketed some domains of human experience. The idealized rather than actual Western self is of interest in the analysis of EU enlargement because it will emerge as the reference point for judging eastern European applicants in the analysis below.

While the Western self in the colonial encounter was an idealized one, it was also presented as normal. The Western self as normal was meant to dichotomize it from the Oriental self, which was different. The use of difference was a hierarchical move where different may be understood as synonymous with abnormal and inferior. This dichotomy relates to the one documented by Wolff.¹¹ In the analysis below, these discursive moves will become relevant when I discuss the signs that eastern European applicants are compared to an idealized western self rather than any average or aggregate of EU members. The follow-up Reports construct an idealized image of the EU member states. This is the only image that the applicants are allowed and supposed to consume.

The final element of the colonial encounter that I find significant in the discussion of interaction between the EU and the applicants is the colonizers' understanding that, if



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the colonized do not accept the colonizers' truths, that reveals the degenerate nature of the colonized. As Said puts it, Orientalists apply their truths "without great success, to uncomprehending, hence degenerate, natives" (Said, 1979: 52). The truths that colonizers arrive at come from their endeavor of discovery and their quest for knowledge that leads to dominance. Native incomprehension of colonizer narratives is allegedly proof of native inferiority. The EU proffers its truths through its documents, starting with the Commission Opinions and then in the follow-up Reports. Its narratives are to be accepted by eastern natives. Applicants are evaluated as if they are not capable of assessing what they are and what they have to do to become acceptable for the EU.

The traits of the colonial encounter that I reviewed here appear as traces at various points in the interaction between the EU and the eastern European applicants. The analysis of the Reports below will reveal how the traces of colonial perceptions amount to two discursive strategies: putting down the applicants and putting off their admission. In the analysis, I used the online version of the 1998 and 1999 Reports, published on November 4, 1998 and on October 13, 1999.¹² I analyze part B., chapter 1. of each Report, entitled "Political Criteria." I chose these sections because their equivalents were the object of investigation in the case of the Commission Opinions in this collection, and because these sections are representative of the entire discursive universe of the EU. In referring to the Reports, I use a combination of country names and years to identify them.



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III. Putting down

The elements of this discursive strategy are the various instruments of replicating colonial perception: within the discursive universe of the Reports, they establish the inferiority of eastern European applicants. They are instances of Orientalism, mentions of lack and the treatment of the Roma. Orientalism represents eastern applicants as exotic others; the lack pattern details the shortcomings of applicants; the treatment of the Roma in the Reports is that of an essentialized minority whose presence turns the applicants into a folkloric region, which Wolff found to be an element of western conceptions of eastern Europe.¹³

III.1. Orientalism

By this term, I refer to the pervasive mode of discourse that, in its manifestations constructs eastern European applicants as exotic others. This is a specific aspect of colonialist interactions, and is represented in the EU Reports by the problematic of audience and redundancy, by bilingual use and by reference to corruption.

All of the Reports problematize their audience. It is not clear for whom they are intended. They are similar to 19th century British writing on colonial India in their cataloguing techniques. They do not address the applicants.¹⁴ Further, their sections such as "recent developments" are redundant—the populations of the applicant countries know the information contained therein.¹⁵ However, the Reports are responses to the requests for admission and as such, ought to speak to the applicants. The direction of



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communication is unclear, if it is only examined at face value. As part of the Orientalist framework, this type of communication is the assertion of power over the applicants and as such, this assertion is directed both to the westerners and the easterners.

The next element of the Orientalist pattern is bilingual use. As a continuation of a discursive strategy in the Commission Opinions, where bilingual use already appeared as an exoticizing strategy equating difference with inferiority, some of the Reports will occasionally feature the languages of the countries they are about. A benign reading of these would be that the EU may just be learning about these countries, and therefore it uses its new information in its Reports. This reading is implausible because of the presence of all the other elements of the discourse that bear witness to the reluctance of the EU to admit the applicants. The drive to keep the applicants away is not compatible with genuine interest in their realities, which would require granting them the position of equals. The knowledge that is sought in the framework of Orientalism is based on hierarchy and is an instrument of dominance. Orientalist knowledge does not aim at understanding the other on the other's terms or treating the other as an equal. Those are the aims of Geertzian description, whose result is "another country heard from."¹⁶ Because the egalitarianism of this type of knowledge is absent from the EU discourse, I reject the benign reading.

Examples of bilingual use most often include the names of the parliaments of the various countries: in Estonia 98 and Estonia 99, the *Riigikogu* is mentioned in the original, Latvia 98 gives the name of the Parliament as *Saeima*, Lithuania 98 as *Seimas* and Poland 98 features *Sejm*. The other non-English words also refer to administrative units in Poland 98: the levels of self-government from regional to county to commune



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(sic) level are identified as Voivodships, Poviats and Gminas, respectively.¹⁷ Bulgaria 99 features new administrative regions called *oblasti*. Hungary 98 uses the Hungarian acronym, FIDESZ, for the party winning the 98 elections. There is no indication as to why these words—names of parties, administrative units and parliaments—are of special interest. Their use without any explanation about their relevance contributes to the overarching inconsistencies in the EU's discourse to be discussed later.

The issue of corruption appears as part of the Orientalist mode of discourse as a trait of the other when the Reports deal with the "Catch-up Facility."¹⁸ The "Catch-up Facility" is a program whereby the EU gives financial assistance to Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Romania to help them prepare for accession in "certain areas." What these areas are does not become evident from the Reports. The only area where the Facility is mentioned is the fight against corruption. In the cases of Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia, the 1998 Reports mention the help received from the EU and the measures that these applicants took to remedy their situations. The Reports on Romania do not mention this program and the whole of the text does not provide a reason why.¹⁹ That the EU finances programs to fight corruption in applicant countries, has special significance. It cannot be denied that corruption is a serious problem in the applicant countries and that it requires action. This, however, does not make eastern European applicants special, as corruption is not peculiar to these countries. It is present worldwide—even in the EU where it resulted in a change of Commission in the year of the publication of the second follow-up Report. Yet, there is a symbolic logic behind highlighting it as a key issue: in a well-known trope, it makes the applicant countries exotic and inferior. The Oriental other (of the idealized western subject) is easily



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understood as corrupt. For it is the idealized western subject whose other is created in the Eastern applicants. Even though in the case of the eastern European applicants, the East is not the East that the Orientalists, as described by Said, were reacting to, but Wolff's quantitative other, the western subject is no more actual in the latter situation than in the former. The EU is therefore threatened by the very possibility of admitting the applicants: if they are allowed in, the negative identity category of the western subject can no longer be maintained.

By using redundancy and an ambiguous concept of audience, by including words in the languages of the countries it is reporting about, and by focusing on corruption, the EU discourse offers a construction of eastern European applicants as utterly different from the EU. The exotic traits of the applicants suggest that they are inferior to the self the EU presents itself as. This self is a monolithic, idealized Western self, and not an aggregate of EU member countries. The eastern European applicants, by contrast, are created by these features of the EU discourse as a radically different region, where political entities are referred to by strange words, where commendable norms of transparency do not apply, given indigenous corruption unrelated to the EU or its citizens. Because this is a completely different world than that of the EU, it is plausible to create texts about it rather than texts that would address it. The creation of the eastern European other is taken one step further by the instances where Roma are mentioned.

III.2. Roma



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The presentation of the Roma is the ultimate othering move in the Reports. I chose to discuss this pattern separately because it deals with an entity, an ethnic group, about which applicant countries also produce discourses, as distinct from the other entities in the Orientalism pattern.

The word use about Roma is a pervasive element in the 1998-99 Reports. It is clear and consistent. This was not the case in the Opinions where inconsistency was frequent.²⁰ In the follow-up Reports, only the word "Roma" is used, without synonyms or parenthetical explanations. The EU uses this same language throughout all the Reports. Discursively, not only has the issue of minority rights been turned into a litmus test for democratic politics in applicant countries, but the Roma have been essentialized into the prototypical minority and into a single group that is spread over several countries but has one identity in all.²¹

The choice of the Roma as the essentialized minority might be problematic because the treatment of the same group is easy to identify as unacceptable in western Europe as well. However, the synecdoche to refer to the Roma as THE minority problem in the applicant countries (after the EU carried out a similar synecdoche switch from institutions to minority issues as the test of democratic politics) is a tool for the EU to displace its own fear about the Roma and the concerns about the EU's own minority situations, which are not in order. This is a Foucauldian assertion of power: by remaining silent about minority situations within the EU while criticizing them in the applicant countries, the EU creates a position of power for itself. It is possible for the EU to turn the Roma into an undefined threat by expressing worries about them, without pronouncing a summary condemnation of the group. The Roma carry at least a double



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referentiality: they stand for the parallel threats of the backward and the folkloric. Roma fit the stereotype of folkloric people, and the EU finds them in multiple applicant countries—thereby signaling that the applicant countries where folklore, a sure sign of the past, is still present, are backward and archaic.

The instances of mentioning the Roma are opportunities for the EU to point out to the applicants—to the extent that the Reports are addressed to them—that they have not done enough for this group. In Bulgaria 98, the Roma minority is described as one whose situation improved somewhat but not sufficiently. The general evaluation is phrased in terms of some, but not sufficient progress. In Bulgaria 99, the Roma are used as the prototypical minority and the presentation of their situation is also emblematic of the discourse of the Reports: while Bulgaria shows commitment to improving the situation of the Roma, concrete legislation is still needed.

How the Roma are discussed is also ridden with inconsistency: the closure of the section on human rights and minorities in Czech Republic 98 is phrased in terms of the program for Roma being encouraging, although more work needs to be done. This contradicts the list of all the things that are missing. It also contrasts with the treatment of Bulgaria where the tone is one of criticism in spite of everything that has been done. In the Czech Republic's case, the tone is one of optimism in spite of everything that is missing. Then in Czech Republic 99, the wall of Ušti nad Lábem is featured prominently in the Report. Immediately following it is the statement that "the Government action plan of October 1997 detailing measures to improve the situation of the Roma has mostly been fulfilled." This pronouncement contradicts the three paragraphs preceding it that detail what is wrong and missing.



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In Hungary 98, it is the general evaluation section that features a short reminder that the situation of the Roma needs to be improved. Then, there is at least some consistency across time in the treatment of the same issue in the same country: in Hungary 99, the situation of the Roma is presented through a list of improvements and programs and then concludes on the judgment that in spite of "the steps taken, the situation of the Roma remains very difficult." Without questioning the truth of this statement, it must be pointed out that the technique is to acknowledge improvements and then to judge them insufficient.

In the discussion of minorities in Romania 99, projects of positive discrimination aimed at helping Roma are mentioned only after cataloguing all the bad things happening to the group, which set a negative tone. The summary evaluation at the end prescribes that attitudes about the Roma must change. (They should.) There is nothing wrong with that normative claim. However, if accession is made conditional on socio-cultural change of mental maps, it is postponed indeterminately. This move may properly be part of the putting off strategy. I still choose to include the treatment of Roma in the EU Reports under the putting down strategy because it establishes the inferiority of the applicants both by highlighting that eastern Europe is backwards in its minority policies and by revealing a preconceived notion on the part of the EU which holds that there is a minority problem in eastern Europe. This is correct. However, as a preordained narrative by the EU, it also suggests that in western Europe, there is no minority problem—a claim rendered absurd by the daily evidence of the news. This in turn makes western Europe more civilized than eastern Europe, and justifies its position of superiority.



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III.3. Lack

This pattern was already an overwhelming presence in the EU discourse of the 1997 Commission Opinions.²² In the Reports, qualitative differences are only rarely mentioned. Most of the instances of lack are of the quantitative difference type. This is in keeping with the symbolic logic of postponement that other elements of the discourse manifest and contributes to the putting down strategy.

The instances of what is lacking in the Reports are the following: in Bulgaria 98, the judiciary lacks in staff, experience and independence. The legal framework also needs more improvement. Even the general evaluation section of this Report is phrased in terms of insufficient progress. Czech Republic 99 features a lack based on a qualitative difference: there is no Supreme Administrative Court in place at the time of writing the Report. There are also lacks based on quantitative differences from the idealized Western subject in the same Report: the judiciary has not improved sufficiently, legal experts are in short supply, organized crime is still not curbed and corruption is on the increase rather than decrease. In Latvia 98, lack is all a matter of quantitative differences: the reform of the executive and judiciary branches has not been found satisfactory. Lithuania 98 lacks in a qualitative sense: there is no civil service act in place. By 1999, Lithuania lacks quantitatively, though: the efforts in the fight against corruption have not been sufficient and more are needed. In Slovakia 99, quantitative differences and lack are diagnosed in the judiciary—the most often mentioned area in the lack pattern—in the realm of administrative reform and anti-corruption measures. There



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has been progress in these areas, but that has not been enough and more is expected. In Slovenia 98, the main item lacking is speed: the legislative process is too slow, public administration reform is too slow and the judicial process is too slow. The latter is the reason for quite an unusual complaint: the judicial process is slow because there are too many human rights guarantees.

That the pattern of lack is less salient in the 1998 and 1999 Reports than in the 1997 Commission Opinions may be the result of other patterns of the Reports taking over the same putting down functions. That lack is still a significant element of the EU discourse on the applicants in the 1998-99 Reports, though, attests to the drive to portray these eastern European countries as inferior to the EU. The emphasis on lack is a peculiar case of the EU speaking on behalf of the applicants in ways that are reminiscent of colonialism. If the applicants were to speak for themselves—which they clearly cannot, since the setting is that the EU is writing Reports on them—or even if texts were produced from their perspectives by others, they may focus on what the applicants have and what they have in common with EU members. It is only in a discourse that hinges on the inferiority of eastern Europeans that lack is so prevalent.

To summarize, the EU uses Orientalist discourse about the applicants that constructs them as exotic through bilingual use and through focus on corruption, and disregards them by using redundancies. The mentions of Roma in eastern European applicant countries portrays these countries as backward and folkloric while essentializing the Roma. The discursive pattern of lack depicts applicants as falling short of a standard or an ideal that the EU is implicitly implied to stand for as a unified homogeneous entity. Those discursive moves together put down the eastern European



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applicants. The EU's ontology hinges on a hierarchy where it constructs eastern European applicants as inferior and itself as superior. Given that this putting down is how eastern European applicants are seen, it is logical for the EU to be reluctant to consider their admission and therefore the other discursive strategy in its Reports is putting off.



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IV. Putting off

The discursive patterns that belong in this group are the tools of postponement. They are the use of "wait and see" language, the introduction of "new items" among the expectations, and the internal contradictions within the texts that only make sense in the presence of a hidden agenda on the part of the evaluator.

IV.1. Wait and see

I use this term to refer to instances where the EU Reports acknowledge that reform has taken place in a certain country, but they claim that there has not been enough time to assess the efficiency of the reforms. Crucial to interpreting this strategy is the finding that whether or not the language of wait and see is used does not depend on the time elapsed.

In Bulgaria 99, reforms are presented as not in place for long enough for EU authorities to pronounce on them—which is a reflection of the EU's image of Bulgaria. In the case of some countries, one year is not sufficient to judge reforms, while in some others, it is. While it is quite plausible to claim that major reforms will not bear fruit in one year, the fact that in some countries—and in the Reports about them—they do, hints at the possibility of pre-existent proclivities to judge applicants differently.²³

Similarly, in Estonia 98, the discussion of corruption describes the situation as one that has improved, while "It is not clear yet whether the measures taken until now



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have had a positive impact." Because at the time when the EU was only negotiating with some applicants (the forerunners), Estonia was among those looked upon more favorably, it is not the case that the wait and see language is only used in the case of applicant countries who lag behind in the application process. Another forerunner, Hungary, also receives this type of language in its 98 Report. It is possible that the wait-and-see language serves the purpose to make the so-called forerunners wait: if there was no wait-and-see period necessary, then it would be hard to justify not admitting them. However, this type of language also appears in the Reports about countries that are not forerunners: Latvia 98, Latvia 99 and Lithuania 98 all feature wait and see usage.

The obverse of the strategy outlined above also appears: there are cases where, given the general tone of a report, wait and see language may be expected but it is not used. Poland 99 may serve as a case in point. The Report says that "some significant developments have been registered since the 1998 Report." In this case, one year is sufficient for the EU to make a judgment about the effects of measures. Similarly, Slovakia 99 announces that democracy is now being consolidated in Slovakia, which means that regime stability changed from the time of the 1998 Report.

From this evidence I conclude that it is not time alone that decides how the EU will pronounce on matters. There must also be predetermined attitudes entering its judgments. In the cases where the EU resorts to wait and see language, its discourse manifests inconsistencies—of which, more will be said later. It also clearly manifests reluctance to admit eastern European applicants.

IV.2. New items



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By new items I refer to issue areas that the initial Commission Opinions did not identify as concerns or areas to work on, and still, the Reports mention them as missing or requiring considerable effort on the part of applicants. This is relevant in the light of the fact that already in the 1997 Opinions, the major discursive pattern to describe the applicants was in terms of lack.²⁴ Now in the follow-up yearly Reports, the EU is adding other areas. This indicates that the list of expectations and the standards are constantly changing and the bar is constantly raised higher.

These new items might be interpreted within a benign reading analogous to the one referred to under the Orientalism pattern above. According to that interpretation, the EU is just learning about these countries and finding out about their problems and shortcomings. This learning process could be an explanation for why there are items in the follow-up Reports that were not featured in the Commission Opinions. Another way of interpreting the new items is to point out that what the applicants are measured against is not inherently stable. If the implicit basis for comparison is not the ensemble of 1997 opinions but the *acquis communautaire* itself, then it is a standard that is hard to measure up to since it is constantly changing itself.

An example of a new item would be the gender gap in wages. If the implicit assumption behind the Reports is that the EU is worried about including countries that used to be parts of the evil empire of communism, then picking out issues like the lack of wage parity across genders is not a very sound strategy: state socialist systems were among the most egalitarian in history in terms of wage and employment parity.²⁵ This is not the class of problems that the communist heritage is responsible for. The gender gap



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in wages is a capitalist problem and it shows the EU as displacing the problems its countries and economies created, onto the applicant countries, and then using these problems as justification for postponing admission.²⁶ The gender gap in wages is a new item in Czech Republic 99 and Estonia 99, while Romania 98 and Slovenia 99 have the formulation gender equality as a new item, which is a broader category and implies more than just wage parity. Also, in Slovenia 99, in the case of gender relations, the glass ceiling put women's salaries at 85 percent of those of men. Pointing this out as a shortcoming is a strong clue that the standard is not the real but the idealized version of western Europe and EU members: the standard implied is a context without a gender gap in wages. Other gender-related new items also appear in the follow-up Reports: to stop the traffic in human beings in general and in women in particular is a task in Czech Republic 99, Poland 99 and Slovakia 99. Poland 99 features women's rights as a new item.

Other areas where new items are introduced as expectations in the follow-up Reports include the rights of people with disabilities (Hungary 99, Latvia 99, Romania 98, Romania 99²⁷, Slovenia 99²⁸), the ratification of various international treaties (Czech Republic 98, Lithuania 99) and the improvement of prison conditions beyond what is sometimes already diagnosed as progress in this domain (Latvia 99, Lithuania 99). The expectations vis-à-vis public service media are mentioned (Hungary 99, Slovakia 99).

A specific area of new items is corruption—an issue that I also discussed under the othering strategies of the EU. The section on anti-corruption measures in Lithuania 99 deserves careful attention: its structure is to pronounce that more efforts are needed and then say that some steps have been taken. The steps are listed only after the negative



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tone is set. Also, a new item appears: "the definition of active and passive corruption." In Bulgaria 99, the following sentence appears: "Bulgarian legislation does not yet provide a concrete definition of the concept of 'corruption'." Definition is problematized in the sense that: a) the Bulgarian law is reprimanded for not having defined it; and, b) by pointing out the lack of definition, the text opens up the possibility that maybe it cannot be defined or can only be defined with great difficulty. This is a clear case of the bar being raised constantly: in addition to the fight against corruption, conceptual clarity is also expected now. The definition of corruption is also a new item—this is not something that the 1997 Commission Opinion prescribed, but the follow-up Report still notes its absence. Latvia 99 features the following: "Whilst it is difficult to quantify the level of corruption in any country, public perception in Latvia suggests that corruption is particularly acute in public bodies such as the customs service, the traffic police and the judicial system." In the twenty Reports taken together, this is the only allusion to the difficulty of measuring corruption. Other than these three cases, where corruption appears as a somewhat fluid and ambiguous entity or process, the other references to it suggest a fixed, and therefore knowable, controllable, phenomenon.

In Romania 99, the tone about corruption is set by highlighting the continued gravity of the situation. The positive measures to combat corruption are mentioned only after this. The conclusion of the section criticizes Romania for lacking determination in fighting against corruption. A new item also appears: cooperation among the various bodies dealing with corruption is expected. It is reasonable strategy to want anti-corruption bodies and organizations to cooperate. However, in the context of the EU



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assessing applicants over a period of time, any new suggestion regardless of its reasoning is a sign of the continuous raising of the bar for eastern applicants.

The new items related to corruption have a dual nature: they represent new expectations on the part of the EU both in the domain of fighting corruption and in the realm of defining corruption. The definitional demands show that new expectations may reach into ever-newer intellectual territories.

Some further new items that appear in the Reports on several countries are the speed of reforms and money to be spent on problem areas. Poland 99, Slovakia 98 and Slovenia 98 are all criticized for being too slow in the implementation of their reforms. Here, the nature of the dynamic between the EU and the applicants is revealed. This is not the most typical dynamic between doctors and patients, where patients with ailments seek assistance from doctors who are knowledgeable and powerful enough to help them recover. In that prototypical doctor-patient scenario, patients are obedient, doctors are benign and illnesses are the enemies. It is not possible to blame the patients for not recovering fast enough. The EU-applicants dynamic is more reminiscent of a prototypical teacher-student interaction, where powerful and knowledgeable teachers prescribe tasks to students who may be participating in the interaction against their will. Good students are compliant and perform the tasks quickly, while bad students disobey and/or are slow. While in the doctor-patient dynamic, the goal of both parties is the same (combat illness), the teacher and the bad student are pitted against each other. The teacher has a reason to reprimand bad students.

One of the more interesting new items in several Reports is the prescription that money be spent as a solution to problems. In the case of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic,



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Hungary and Romania, the 1999 conclusions prescribe that money be infused into problem areas. This expectation was not there in 1998. In 1999, the inadequacies of the social safety net are reproached to these applicants. Because the social safety nets of the applicant countries were dismantled after the fall of state socialism, this criticism appears grotesque. It is also difficult for the applicants to react to the pronouncements of the EU: some elements of the social safety net, such as a relatively low retirement age, for instance, could be either seen as positive or as negative.²⁹ Early retirement is a positive trait in a Keynesian welfare state, but a negative trait in a free market. Because it is not possible to know how the EU interprets this and other traits, it is impossible to comply with its expectations.³⁰

There are country-specific new items in the Reports as well: the Czech Republic in 99 is reproached for the inadequate punishment of hate crimes. In Hungary 99, a new item is the substandard hygienic conditions in the camps for illegal migrants. While refugees receive care on an internationally acceptable level, the new expectation is that illegal migrants ought to receive the same treatment. This appears to be a case of a constantly rising standard especially in the context of the treatment of refugees in Hungary. The 1999 Report says: "The UNCHR Branch Office in Budapest awarded its 1998 Menedék (Refuge) Prize to the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights in recognition for its work in general and efforts on behalf of aliens, asylum-seekers and refugees in particular."³¹ The treatment of refugees is commendable, but the new expectation balances or cancels it out.

Latvia 98 prescribes rehabilitation programs, and when all recommendations are implemented in terms of citizenship law, information will have to be continuously



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distributed about citizenship applications. Romania 99 features a lengthy discussion on child protection. It references the 1998 Report which saw positive change in children's rights and says that the change was in the right direction, but offered only a partial solution and the year 1999 brought a deterioration of conditions. The new item of the passage is statistics on children in care: the numbers are contradictory and the new expectation is to have satisfactory statistics.

The prevalence of new items and expectations that the EU did not identify as goals for the applicants in the original country opinions of 1997, highlights the reluctance to admit eastern European applicants. Because reluctance is not explicitly phrased, discursive justifications for postponement are proffered: new standards and new measurements are introduced to gauge the development of applicants. Since these reveal the applicants' shortcomings, postponement is a logical strategy for the EU.

IV.3. Hidden agenda

While inconsistency plagues the entire discursive universe of the Reports, one particular brand of contradiction is internal to particular Reports. There are cases where various parts of the same Report contradict one another. I take this as a sign of a hidden agenda, of motivations that the EU does not publicly proclaim but which nonetheless influence its judgment of the applicants.³² An alternative reading of the inconsistencies would interpret them as signs of bureaucratic incompetence or the results of multiple offices working on the same documents. However, the symbolic logic of the discourse as



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a whole suggests the hidden agenda. Discursive patterns being each other's contexts, they make one another make sense.

In the twenty follow-up Reports as a whole, there is no obvious single principle of presentation. The assignment of space to certain issue areas in the different Reports does not reveal similarities, nor do the Reports themselves reveal the EU's reasons for writing more extensively on certain areas rather than others. There may be explanations external to the Reports, though, that are also in tension with the proclaimed aim of the EU to use impartial sources of information. For instance, in the case of Romania, a disproportionate amount of space is devoted to the fate of children in care. The orphans—very often unwanted as a result of the pro-natalist policies of the Ceausescu regime—were abandoned in large numbers. The despicable conditions in orphanages led to a population of institutionalized children with serious physical and mental disabilities as well as HIV, whose pictures were widely circulated in the Western media. These pictures, rather than impartial sources, seem to have been haunting those writing the Reports. This possibility is further supported by the treatment of civil rights issues other than child protection in Romania 99. The rights section goes from child protection to what it calls "other issues." In this passage, issues are mentioned briefly: the penal code not being compliant with European norms is accorded a total of three lines, in which six issue areas are identified as problematic. This contrasts sharply with the page and a half devoted to child protection and suggests that if there is a pre-existent perception of an applicant country, the EU Reports will allot more space to issues that fit that western perception. This is an example of the colonialist mode of knowledge-creation: preconceived notions impact upon what the texts say.



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While the assignment of space within the EU discourse is potentially motivated by phenomena other than the ones the EU is officially interested in, thus creating inconsistencies, there is also a line of internal contradictions in the texts. They suggest that there might be a hidden agenda that governs the inclusion of certain language, qualifications and assessments by the EU. These formulations, once they are included, clash with the other parts of the Reports that are included presumably in an effort to summarize what has been happening in applicant countries in a given year. Looking merely at the Reports, it is impossible to distinguish between the various parts included on the basis of different principles.³³ An example of this is the treatment of NATO accession in the case of EU applicants.³⁴

In Hungary 99, NATO accession could not be placed more emphatically: it is in the first sentence of the section on recent developments, starting off what is easily the most glowing paragraph in the twenty Reports under review. Admission to NATO is followed by mentioning the presidency of the Council of Europe—a symbolic assertion that Hungary is an integral part of "Europe"—and by mentioning the election of local minority self-governments—reinforcing the idea that in the scheme of things where minority policy is the measure of democracy and civilization, Hungary is well-qualified.³⁵

In the case of Poland, NATO accession is mentioned in the second paragraph of the "recent developments" section. After emphasizing that EU membership is a high priority for the government of Poland, the text goes on to say that NATO accession "underlines successive government's (sic) commitment to integration in Euro-Atlantic structures." It is not NATO membership per se that is focused on, but the desire of



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Poland to be "integrated." In a Report that is otherwise highly critical of Poland for being slow in civil service legislation and in fighting corruption, and is on the whole less positive than its 1998 predecessor, the desire for integration is the only positive trait. The presentation of accession in this manner adds to the plausibility of a hidden agenda. In the case of the Czech Republic, NATO membership is mentioned at the end of a very long "recent developments" section, after mentioning that there has been no change in government, that EU accession is a priority, that administrative reform yielded only limited progress and that the government accepted a report about delays in reform legislation. The latter two especially set a negative tone—and then one sentence mentions accession to NATO, which is then made to appear insignificant.

A further area of internal contradictions that affects several Reports, is the use of personal names. This might be a corollary to the bilingual use analyzed above. The Reports usually do not use names of persons when talking about the political structures and offices of the applicant countries. However, in Bulgaria 98, Prime Minister Kostov is mentioned by name, just as President Adamkus is in Lithuania 98, President Schuster in Slovakia 99 and President Milan Kučan in Slovenia 98. The mention of these persons gives the impression that these are not household names, and therefore need to be mentioned to make them familiar. If the names all came from countries that were not originally considered forerunners in the application process, then that would explain their mentions—the ones lagging behind might be conceptualized as less known. However, Slovenia was put in the category of forerunners when the ten respondents to questionnaires were originally divided into two groups. If there are types of symbolic logic in the ensemble of EU Reports, they are not followed consistently.



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The structure of the Reports is also inconsistent in several cases. Namely, the main body of the Report texts is often contradicted by the general evaluation at the end of the Reports. The Report on Slovenia in 98 is quite positive on the whole when compared to most others. That is in contrast with the general evaluation at the end: this Report features no laudatory comments at all. Other Reports would include words of praise in the final evaluation even at the end of Reports that in general are less favorable. After a long list of problems and critical remarks, Poland 98 closes on a general evaluation section that is surprising on two counts: it is in contrast with the rest of the Report and it is exceptional among the closing summary sections. For it is unquestionably entirely positive. This is a powerful sign that various principles are at play and clash in the production of these Reports. Then in Poland 99, the general evaluation at the end is less positive than the one of the previous year. This is a multi-layered tension: the text of the 1998 Report was rather negative and the evaluation was positive. In 1999, the general evaluation is less positive but the text on the whole is less negative. Poland's case is the strongest argument that the main body and the evaluative summaries of the Reports are the products of different processes and principles.

Contradictions also appear in the treatment of individual countries: Poland 98 and Poland 99 are inconsistent with one another; there are contradictions within Czech Republic 98; and in Romania 98, the very language of discussing the country is inconsistent. In the Report on the Czech Republic in 98, the section on civil and political rights features a contradiction: it first says that there "are no major problems regarding the respect of civil and political rights" and then in the next paragraph it pronounces that the "application of Czech law on citizenship continues to be problematic." The closure of



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the section on human rights and minorities is phrased in terms of the program on the Roma being encouraging, although more work needs to be done. This contradicts the list of all the things that are missing.³⁶ Then in 99, the wall of Ušti nad Lábem is featured prominently in the Report on the Czech Republic. Immediately following the discussion of the wall is the statement that "the Government action plan of October 1997 detailing measures to improve the situation of the Roma has mostly been fulfilled." This pronouncement contradicts the three paragraphs preceding it that detail what is wrong and missing. There is a tension between summarizing negative developments and the intention not to condemn. This might be a case of what Böröcz identifies as an a priori conclusion in "Rationales for a choice": if there is a hidden agenda that requires that the Czech Republic not be condemned, that explains the lack of criticism in spite of the events of Ušti nad Lábem.

Romania 98 starts with the statement that emergency ordinances are still widely used, which has been a concern already at the time of the opinion in 1997. This appears as a tone-setter in the context of the other Reports. However, it is not followed by negative or critical comments. Instead, the government of the country is described as committed to reforming the administration. This is followed by the section on the judiciary, which begins with an introduction that is absolutely free from either praise or condemnation. It just states that "a series of measures has been taken to strengthen the working of the judiciary." Refraining from judgment at the initial stage is unusual among these Reports. After the measures are listed, the Report says that "there remains considerable scope for improving the operation of the judicial system." The language is important here: room for improvement is significantly more laudatory than the mention



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of insufficient efforts and more work to be done. Criticism is largely avoided in this Report. Even when the Report discusses police reform, it mentions the lack of a clear timetable as to when and how the police will be demilitarized without further comment.

The point where criticism or negative comments do appear is the discussion of anti-corruption measures. They need to be more effective—which is especially difficult because "the legal basis for the fight against corruption remains incomplete." Corruption is either so much worse than the other domains described that there is no plausible way of holding off on criticism here or there are different motivations producing the passage on corruption and the previous ones. Corruption as the main problem area in the case of all applicants appears to be an overarching discursive strategy in the Reports, which could produce the critical passages. The rest of the Report may be the manifestation of a language and conceptualization peculiar to Romania. Romania-specific language is used again in the beginning of the section on civil and political rights. In pronouncing that there has been improvement in child protection, the Report says the "underlying reform strategy, supported by the Phare program, has started to bear fruit." Also, in child protection, "there is scope for further improving policy implementation." This is the same type of "room for improvement" language use as in the discussion of judiciary reform earlier in this Report. These elements set a positive tone and thereby balance out the statement that there has not been improvement in civil rights. The closing sentences of the section on civil and political rights contradict the previous optimistic pronouncements.

Inconsistencies and contradictions exist within particular Reports, in the Reports about the same country in different years, across the tone of discussing various countries



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in the same year, across the treatment of the same issue in different countries and in the structures of the Reports. All these various levels of inconsistencies contribute to the image of the EU as reluctant to admit the applicants and to admit to the reluctance. The motivation for this reluctance may be the fact that EU identity is posited on hierarchy and the dichotomy between the EU and inferior others. There is confusion which, together with the bar being continuously raised and new expectations being presented to applicants whose efforts are not deemed long-lived enough to assess, amount to the putting-off strategy of the EU's discourse on eastern European applicants. The construction of eastern European countries as inferior in the putting down strategy provides the discursive justification of this postponement.



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V. Conclusions

The discursive patterns I discovered reflect a colonialist dynamic in the perception of eastern European applicants by the EU. In its Reports, the EU appears as the dominant colonial self: it defines, objectifies and creates eastern European applicants, it presents a selective aggregation of the features of their realities based on preconceived notions about them and it presents itself as an idealized, superior self. In these discursive moves, the EU employs colonial perception of applicant countries and ultimately establishes an east-west hierarchy. The EU appropriates and allocates to itself the discursive power to impose an ontology on eastern European applicants.

The EU's follow-up Reports on eastern European applicants in 1998 and 1999 reveal two main discursive strategies that I label putting down and putting off. These strategies are teased out of the texts by qualitative discourse analysis. The putting down strategy has three elements: 1) Orientalist discourse that establishes the exotic otherness of eastern European countries by focusing on their corruption, by using words in their languages, and by not addressing them directly; 2) the presentation of Roma as an essentialized minority whose folkloric presence signals the general backwardness of eastern European applicants; and 3) the focus on lack by highlighting the areas where eastern European applicants do not measure up to the EU. Constructing a colonial relationship and construing eastern applicants as exotic others and as different suggests not only that the EU is the norm, but also that it is a monolithic entity. Or at least that it wishes to be perceived as such by the applicants. While controlling perception is a trait



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of many power hierarchies, the type of control attempted by the EU is a colonialist maneuver. It also enhances the strength of the lack pattern that lists all things that eastern applicants do not have. They are less than the EU. While this is in keeping with the quantitative otherness diagnosed by Wolff, lack is also a vehicle for stressing inferiority.

The inferiority that the EU discourse creates, justifies the other strategy: putting off. This covers the drive to postpone the admission of eastern European applicants. The three tools of supporting postponement are: 1) a language of wait and see that claims that the reforms in the applicant countries cannot yet be judged; 2) new items, which present ever-newer expectations that applicants ought to fulfill before admission becomes possible; and 3) contradictions and inconsistencies in the texts that hint at a hidden agenda. The first two elements of the putting off strategy display the power of the EU and its similarities to the colonial prerogative: assessment and task assignment are prototypical activities for colonial administrators. The hidden agenda may be a predetermined refusal to admit eastern applicants, which is not explicitly stated but whose existence is strongly suggested by inconsistencies in the Reports.

These two strategies in the 1998 and 1999 Reports reveal the various aspects of the EU's reluctance to admit eastern European applicants. This reluctance hints at two possible continuations of the application process of the ten countries reviewed here: their admission will either be postponed indeterminately while the appearance of negotiations will be maintained, or their admission will happen but on terms that will lead to second-class citizenship in the EU. In either case, what the current discourse of the EU seems to foreclose is the admission of eastern European countries as members with full rights and agency.



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In its discourse, the EU appropriates discursive power over eastern applicants. Discourse is not alone, though. It is not separated from other realms of power: economic and military, for instance. Discourse prepares, maintains and reveals power relations and thereby justifies other expressions and exercises of power. In the context of EU enlargement, the discourse's similarity to colonial encounters and perceptions foreshadows the inclusion of eastern applicants into a structure where the *raison d'être* of some is to serve others. The colonized were integral parts of colonial structures: they provided for the colonizers' economic and identity needs. Given the colonial dynamic, admitting eastern applicants without modification to that dynamic means that eastern European countries will find themselves in an empire they cannot extricate themselves from.



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¹ These countries are Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

² Because this meaning is produced in a specific context of imposition by a powerful hierarchy, there are no alternatives to this meaning.

³ On the evidential paradigm, please see *Clues, myths and the historical method*.

⁴ Please see "The fox and the raven."

⁵ Please see *Orientalism*.

⁶ In the context of EU enlargement, this raises the question whether applicants perceive themselves in the same framework as the EU has formulated. In my work on Hungary, I have found that to be the case in that country. See Kovács, Melinda. "Communicating past each other? The EU and Hungary's discursive construction of one another." Paper presented at the Sixth Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, April 2001.

⁷ See, in particular, the discussion of the questions relating to agricultural production in "The fox and the raven."

⁸ See "The fox and the raven." Also, for an analysis of the Commission Opinions, see Kovács and Kabachnik in this volume.

⁹ For a similar account of how 19th century Europeans who traveled expected to find an imaginary place, see *Colonizing Egypt*.

¹⁰ For an account of the symbolic geography of eastern Europe, please see *Inventing Eastern Europe*. On how the EU builds on centuries-old stereotypes, please see Kovács and Kabachnik in this volume.

¹¹ On eastern as a synonym of inferior, please see Wolff and "The fox and the raven."



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¹² They were all accessed on November 11, 2000, at the following locations:

Bulgaria – http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/bulgaria/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/bulgaria/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Czech Republic - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/czech/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/czech/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Estonia - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/estonia/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/estonia/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Hungary - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/hungary/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/hungary/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Latvia - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/latvia/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/latvia/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Lithuania - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/lithuania/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

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Poland - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/poland/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/poland/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Romania - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/romania/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

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Slovakia - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovakia/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovakia/rep_10_99/b10.htm

Slovenia - http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovenia/rep_11_98/b10.htm and

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/slovenia/rep_10_99/b10.htm

¹³ Please see Wolff, op.cit.

¹⁴ On the EU's refusal to address an applicant, please see "The fox and the raven."

¹⁵ I provide no specific Reports as examples of this, since all twenty of them feature these sections.

¹⁶ Please see *The interpretation of cultures*.

¹⁷ The spelling that I use is the one found in the English-language online documents produced by the EU.

¹⁸ Corruption is, however, also analyzed under the heading of new items later. The reason for this is that in some cases the same element of the discourse is invested with multiple meanings, and in those cases I include that element under the heading of each meaning to better convey the rich texture of the discourse.

¹⁹ This could, however, be related to the Romania-specific language discussed below.

²⁰ Please see Kovács and Kabachnik in this volume.

²¹ Other national minorities that may be found in more than one applicant country, for instance Russians, are not treated in the same manner in the texts.

²² Please see Kovács and Kabachnik in this volume.

²³ The differential treatment of reforms in applicant countries is somewhat analogous to the a priori reasoning documented in "Rationales for a choice."

²⁴ They were regularly referred to as not having or doing things. The negative formulation created a sense of insufficiency and backwardness. It contributed to the maintenance of a hierarchical view of the EU and the applicant countries where the latter are inferior. However, the already member countries are not



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necessarily equipped with all that the applicants are lacking. The applicants are measured against an idealized picture, not the realities of EU members. See Kovács and Kabachnik in this volume.

²⁵ For a review of how state socialist countries compared to western European and north American countries in terms of women's participation in the labor force, please see Fong, Monica and Gillian Paull. "Women's economic status in the restructuring of Eastern Europe" in *Democratic reform and the position of women in transitional economies*, pp. 217-47.

²⁶ In fact, eastern applicants may be experiencing an increase in the gender gap in wages precisely because of the transition to a market economy. I thank Anna Sher for pointing this out to me.

²⁷ While the issue of rights for people with disabilities is not new in 99 in the sense that it already appeared in Romania 98, it is still an expectation that was not formulated in the original 1997 country Report, and therefore fits the definition of a new item and an ever-rising standard.

²⁸ In Slovenia 99, the rights of people with disabilities are an exceptional new item: this is the first time they are mentioned, but at the first mention they are presented as protected by an article of the Constitution. This is the one case where a new expectation is presented for the very first time as already met.

²⁹ For a discussion of how it is impossible for applicants to know how the EU will interpret phenomena in applicant countries, see "The fox and the raven" p. 867.

³⁰ On the difficulty of guessing what the EU expects, and how it may interpret phenomena in applicant countries, see "The fox and the raven."

³¹ In the spelling of the EU document, Menedék appears as Menedek. How the unwillingness to recognize this Hungarian diacritic mark as the same as the respective French or Spanish characters plays into a larger colonial dynamic, please see "The fox and the raven."

³² For the analysis of inconsistencies in the 1997 Opinions, please see "Rationales for a choice."

³³ For an overview of contradictory logics in the EU country opinions, please see "Rationales for a choice." Inconsistencies have been part of the EU discourse about the applicants before the Reports of 1998 and 1999.

³⁴ EU—NATO relations are a domain of ambiguity and telling overlaps. See Engel-Di Mauro in this volume.

³⁵ Minority rights have been a synecdoché for democratic politics since the 1997 country opinions. Please see "Rationales for a choice."

³⁶ This instance also reveals that contradictions exist also across countries in the tone of the Reports. Czech Republic 98 contrasts with the treatment of Bulgaria where the tone is one of criticism in spite of everything that has been done. In the Czech Republic's case, the tone is one of optimism in spite of everything that is missing.



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A Di-Vision of Europe: The European Union Enlarged¹, by Anna Sher

Introduction

"We are determined to seize this wonderful opportunity to unite Europe. Not by force of arms or ideology but by mutual consent and on the basis of shared values and common goals."

"People need to know why this enlargement is to be welcomed, not feared. The time has therefore come to explain and persuade."

Excerpts from Romano Prodi "Catching the Tide of History: Enlargement and the Future of the Union." Speech delivered to the Paul-Henri Spaak Foundation, Brussels, 11th October 2000.

The end of the Cold War, and the economic and political changes that have been taking place in the former state-socialist countries of eastern Europe, have opened up a unique possibility to "rethink our mental maps of Europe"² in a way that could seriously question and perhaps make obsolete the centuries-old cultural construction of a divided Europe. This fundamental change in the way we understand Europe is often said to have happened instantaneously with the fall of the Berlin wall. Others want to *persuade* us (and conceal their ideological power) that it will happen once the countries of central and eastern Europe are admitted into the European Union. It is clear that bringing eastern³ and western Europe together into one supra-national political entity depends on



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successful legitimation of enlargement and on generating consent for the realization of this project among diverse populations inside and outside of the current borders of the European Union. This legitimation can be accomplished through the effective use of symbolic means of discourse, and is necessarily set against the backdrop of the historical construction of a divided Europe. The centrality of political discourse to the formidable task of expanding the EU brings the following questions to the fore: In the prospect of enlargement, do powerful political actors of the EU *preserve, transform or abolish* the notions of "eastern Europe" and "western Europe" and/or the underlying distinction of inferiority and superiority as applied to the two? How do dominant political actors construct and use the concept of "Europe" given the emphasis on the strategic importance of a common European identity for this political project of the EU? And perhaps most important, how does the framing of enlargement of the EU as a "civilizing mission" vis-à-vis the recent applicant states contribute to the reconstruction of the division of Europe through the inferiorization / othering of the societies of central and eastern Europe seeking admission?

I address these questions through an analysis of speeches delivered by top EU officials⁴ on the subject of the future of Europe during the year 2000. First, I briefly describe the formation of the EU discourse on enlargement; namely, the way in which power relations between the EU and the applicant countries have found their articulation in the institutionalized accession procedure and in the Opinions and Progress Reports on the applicants produced by the EU. I draw extensively on the work of József Böröcz (2000a, b, this volume) and on existing scholarship on colonial and imperial discourse. I



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identify the conditions of possibility for the EU to set in motion and secure the elements of imperial domination and control over the applicants through discursive means.

Given the property of a dominant political discourse to reinforce the existing relations of power, the issue of symbolic power and domination comes to the fore of the analysis. As Pierre Bourdieu has argued, powerful political actors employ the means of political discourse to formulate and legitimate a particular vision of the social world in order to act upon it (1999). Thus I turn to the work of Larry Wolff (1994) and Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power and political field and invoke the latter's concept of "di-vision" (a vision that divides)⁵ to describe the long-term complementary relation between the concepts of "eastern Europe" and "western Europe." Given the origins and longevity of the *di-vision* of Europe into eastern and western parts, it can be conceived as a system of classification that constitutes the shared understanding of the part of the social world called Europe. Consequently, dominant political actors in the EU inevitably have to build upon the historical construction of a divided Europe when they attempt to construct a *new* vision(s) of "Europe" within the current political discourse.

In the last part of my paper I present an analysis of some discursive properties of several speeches delivered by prominent politicians of the EU to western audiences in the year 2000. Working within Bourdieu's theoretical framework, I identify and discuss three discursive strategies that these politicians use to articulate their vision of Europe in order to legitimize and promote enlargement as a civilizing mission of the EU. My analysis suggests that the dominant actors in the political discourse on enlargement have not even started to dismantle the symbolic division of Europe. Instead, they use it to advance their political goals that, to a large extent, end up reifying that division.



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By focusing on the discursive level where these conceptualizations of Europe(s) emerged and have been sustained through time, I intend neither to reduce social life to discourse, nor to argue that these (or other) symbolic constructs have had no impact on social reality. Rather, I follow critical discourse analysts who have emphasized the socially constitutive properties of dominant discourse and hegemonic power exercised by agents involved in its production (e.g. Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Moreover, social subjects or their identities, and social relations between categories of subjects are constituted within discourse. Based on this position, I emphasize the importance of the analysis of dominant political discourse for our understanding of the relation of the EU to the applicants as well as the processes of supranational state making that have been set in motion by a prospect of enlargement.

In this paper, however, I limit my analysis to some prominent producers of dominant political discourse. I do not address the issue of the heterogeneity of “western” perspectives; nor do I consider such issues as the reception of, and strategies of resistance or even countermoves against, dominant political discourse. Applying Bourdieu's approach to political discourse allows me to discuss the symbolic power of the discursive strategies identified as having an impact on audiences inside and outside of the current EU. By focusing on statements by prominent politicians of the EU, I do not dismiss the possibility that multiple and even antagonistic discourses exist and depend on actors' position in the social structure and, more specifically, in the European political field. I emphasize, however, that the politicians whose speeches I analyze, are in a position to produce dominant political discourse as they interpret and legitimize existing political, economic and social arrangements that make such discourse possible in the first place.



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I. Conditions of imperialist discourse

The purpose of the following overview is to underscore that the current enlargement process is characterized by a particular imbalance of power between the eastern applicants and the EU, a condition that is more present here than in previous enlargements. In the Introduction to this volume Böröcz suggests that, given the EU's intentions to expand its current borders, the analysis of the EU phenomenon should be undertaken not from the internal perspective as it is conventionally done, but by focusing on the EU's relation to the outside world. More specifically, he argues that

...any analysis of the European Union's behavior vis-à-vis the surrounding world should explicitly and seriously consider two empirical expectations: (1) that the formation of the EU might in fact represent a global imperial strategy of sorts and (2) that the specific histories of colonialism and empire, with their deeply coded and set patterns of inequality, hierarchy, exclusion and power—and especially their techniques pertaining to the projection of that power to the outside world—are reflected in a deep and systematic form in the socio-cultural patterns of the governmentality of the European Union (Böröcz 2001).

These propositions guide my investigation of the EU political discourse on enlargement. I examine EU politicians' statements as central venues where mechanisms



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of imperial domination have manifested themselves and through which they have operated in the past.⁶

Böröcz (2001) defines the imperial order as a combination of the following four mechanisms of control:

(1) **Unequal exchange**: sustained centripetal funneling of economic value, (2) **coloniality**: cognitive mapping of the empire's populations, creating a fixed system of inferiorized otherness, (3) **exportation of governmentality** through the launching of the normalizing, standardizing and control mechanisms of modern statehood, and (4) **geopolitics**: fitting all of the above into a long-term global strategy of projecting the central state's power to its external environment (emphasis original, this volume).

The analysis of the political discourse that I undertake in this paper aims at exploring mainly the second aspect of the aforementioned mechanisms of control and, to a lesser extent, articulations of the third and fourth aspects of imperial control in the speeches of top EU officials.

The process of the eastern enlargement of the European Union has been characterized by a profound change in the relations between the EU and those states of central and eastern Europe that applied for membership. With the institutionalization of a formalized accession procedure *specifically* for the ten applicants, the EU has instituted for itself a powerful role of an evaluator and for the applicants, a power-*less* role of the evaluated (Böröcz 2000a, b). One of the necessary steps towards legitimizing the



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evaluation procedure as a whole and the role of the EU as an evaluator in particular was the applicants' "voluntarily" giving the EU access to vast amounts of knowledge in their economic, political and legal spheres. Even before being formally included as a member, each eastern applicant country has become subject to surveillance by a significantly more powerful conglomeration of western European states, the EU. Thus, the relationship between the societies of central and eastern Europe *and* the EU has acquired a distinct but hardly unprecedented form. By taking this innovative step of using questionnaires and monitoring procedures to evaluate the applicants as for their membership-worthiness, the EU in fact invoked the old tradition of a large colonial bureaucracy that "occupied itself, especially from the 1860s, with classifying people and their attributes, with censuses, surveys, and ethnographies, with recording transactions, marking space, establishing routines, and standardizing practices" (Cooper and Stoler 1997, 11).

Through the institution of the Opinions, yearly Reports and other official documents and speeches, the EU has secured a dominant position of authority within political discourse to determine the fulfillment of the criteria of "western civilization" based on *its* specialists' objective, rationalized, and scientific expertise. The dominant political discourse has become a forum for the EU to *define* the applicant countries and their constituents,⁷ an outcome similar to that of the European colonial surveying practices, the "total effect" of which, according to Stoler and Cooper, "exceeded the sum of each appropriation of information" (1997, 11). As David Scott has formulated, colonialism as such should be understood not only as a structure of material exploitation and profit but also as a "structure of organized authoritative knowledge (a formation, an archive), that operated discursively to produce effects of Truth about the colonized"



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(1999, 12). Similar to the ways in which some of the EU member states dominated their colonial subjects in the past, in the present discourse on enlargement, EU politicians actively engage in the "acts of creation" of the subjects of the EU's surveillance, the applicants. Since the Enlightenment era, the practices of inferiorization and othering have been embedded in such notions as rationalism, economism and, certainly, scientific objectivity. As the analysis of speeches will show, in the contemporary political discourse these notions' discursive power (to produce the effects of Truth) is invoked again to establish the authority of—in this case, the EU's—evaluative (dominant) position as a neutral observer and non-partisan regulator of the "modernization" process required for the accession. Since the Enlightenment, not only rationalism and scientific objectivity have accrued more power and legitimacy to construct an all-encompassing (and thus seemingly coherent) definition of social reality but most importantly they continue to confine the categories of thought to paired analytical antitheses, that of civilization and barbarism.

To further underscore the relevance of the concepts of empire and coloniality to the project of the EU enlargement, one can point out the fact that Romano Prodi, the President of the European Commission has emphasized on numerous occasions in his speeches that the European Union embodies European civilization today (see a detailed analysis of his speeches later). There is a consensus on the part of the prominent politicians of the EU that expansion will bring the EU the status of a new global power. Thus, they argue, it is time for the EU to begin asserting its global leadership that is to embark upon expanding its territory and civilizing the inhabitants of the prospective lands to the EU's liking. The eastern enlargement of the EU even prompted Prodi to declare



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that Europe is about to experience its renaissance,⁸ the full meaning of what this proposition might entail invites a consideration of what Europe—and he clearly implies western Europe by that—carries in its historical baggage (see for example, Introduction to this volume).

Despite, or perhaps due to the publicity of the Opinions and speeches designed to manifest the EU's objective and open stance on the matter of enlargement, the evaluative procedure brings to the fore the issue of power (perhaps most obviously its economic and political form) for, without it, the monitoring procedures and an indeterminacy of the accession date have no underlying rationale and thus little legitimacy. Undoubtedly, we cannot dismiss the fact that members of the European Commission and those prominent EU politicians that have served as representatives of the EU's constituency are vested with EU authority that gives them weight and legitimizes their participation in the political discourse. This high level of authority held by top EU politicians predisposes the discourse produced thereby to fulfill its potential of serving as the legitimate basis for the EU consequent actions towards the applicants.⁹

Ultimately, the authority invested in the Commission and the stakes involved renders problematic the presentation of information exchange between the Commission's members and their audience as pure communication, and brings the issue of symbolic power to the fore. If we were to treat the texts of their documents and speeches as acts of simple exchange of information between equal sovereign powers/entities,¹⁰ then we would ultimately deprive them of the meaning and function they serve and consequently minimize the role of political actors in the enlargement process. We should take seriously the speculations on the subject of the future of Europe by high-ranking EU



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politicians who vigorously assert their central role in determining the "shape" of the "future Europe" (see the analysis of Verheugen and Prodi's speeches below). Besides, a treatment of the EU political discourse as a relation of pure communication requires taking an a-historical approach to the political discourse, which has been effectively used for the maintenance of western European colonial regimes in the past.

This account of the political project of the EU as articulated in the EU discourse and practices is intended to demonstrate the existence of the following conditions of possibility for the EU to set in motion and secure the elements of imperial domination and control over the applicant states through discursive means:

- (1) the supra-state building project that brings eastern Europe under the direct control of western Europe;
- (2) the authority and power of the EU secured in all spheres, be it economic, political or symbolic;
- (3) the applicants' consent to the evaluation procedure; and
- (4) the pre-existing cultural construct (a mental map) of an hierarchically divided Europe.

Although prior to the current project of expansion of the EU "the idea of eastern Europe never attained the definitive 'otherness' of the Orient" (Wolff 1994, 358), I argue that both practical and discursive venues that have been set up by the process of the EU's eastern enlargement indicate that EU officials are in a position of power to articulate a hierarchical vision of *Europe*.



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II. Symbolic Power of Classificatory Systems

As Bourdieu has argued, the domination exercised in and through political discourse is central to understanding any political project—particularly a project of this scale—for political actors use political discourse to formulate a particular vision of the social world that would allow them to act on this pre-constructed reality *but* in a legitimate way (1999).¹¹ In our case, high-ranking EU politicians producing the discourse on enlargement are in the position that inherently involves an exercise of symbolic power that is defined by Bourdieu as the imposition of a certain worldview through acts of speech. In other words, when we are presented with the account, we, as the audience, are subjected to an attempt to transform or preserve our understanding of the structure of the social world. A projected inclusion of the countries of east-central Europe clearly indicates that we should consider closely what pre-given vision of Europe EU officials are acting upon. It is the *di-division* (to use Bourdieu's term)¹² of Europe, into western Europe and eastern Europe, the notions that have been invented during the Enlightenment era as "complementary moieties" and sustained as such later on (Wolff 1994, 360). As Wolff writes, "the evolving idea of 'civilization' was essential to this process [of invention of these notions], and provided the most important philosophical term of reference for putting Eastern Europe in a position of emphatic subordination" (ibid.). The idea of bringing eastern and western Europes together into one supra-national political entity can seemingly offer an opportunity to transform these notions' underlying distinction of inferiority/superiority. However, the conditions under which enlargement of the EU is being implemented, as outlined above, seem to invoke these



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notions' complementary nature in very similar terms to those that produced them in the first place.

According to Wolff, what largely contributed to the longevity of the notion of "eastern Europe," and the connotations of inferiority invariably attached to it, was that despite the different philosophical and geographical positions from which the di-vision has been (re)constructed in political discourse prior to the current enlargement, eastern Europe remained in a subordinate position as an object of analysis and prescriptions. Moreover, the distinctive notions of "western Europe" and "eastern Europe" owe their longevity and symbolic power of organizing perception and maintenance of the social order to the fact that these representations have been invented and then reinvented again and again based on an aggregation of both "fact and fiction" (ibid, 356). That is, the symbolic properties comprising these notions have always been adjusted to the objective distribution of material resources. This combination of fact and fiction is essential to understanding the di-vision's acceptance as "making sense" and internalization by both eastern and western Europeans.¹³ That this classificatory scheme was "successfully" adjusted to various objective divisions of Europe (the latest being the "iron curtain") underscores its symbolic potential to have become an internalized and "meaningful" representation of social reality. Most importantly, as Böröcz points out, "for nearly fifty years after the second World War, 'Eastern Europe' and the state socialist bloc had been the main cold war opponents, and were imagined as the truly asymmetrical counterconcept of a West European identity" (2000a, 859).

Considering that the Opinions, reports, as well as the speeches, are written for the western audience,¹⁴ it is imperative that we follow Bourdieu in his argument on the



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power of discourse. He argues that the degree to which the powerful group can recognize itself in the discourse and find in it an expression of its own interests determines (of course, not fully but to a significant extent) the power of political discourse (Bourdieu 1999, 188). In the case of the speeches analyzed below, that are primarily aimed at western European audiences, a presentation of western Europe as a superior part of Europe—or even the world—and its leading (civilizing) role in the enlargement process exemplifies discursive moves of such kind. As for the less powerful group's acceptance of the proposed political arrangements, Bourdieu argues that slogans and mobilizing ideas that are easily recognizable by both the dominant and the dominated are thus capable of concealing the underlying relations of power to the extent of them appearing acceptable and legitimate to the latter group as well. Given the property of political discourse to oversimplify and categorize social reality, it can be argued, following Bourdieu, that the symbolic di-vision of Europe as a classificatory system has a potency to continue to operate within the EU political discourse not only as the means of organizing reality but also of organizing and concealing its constitutive power relations.¹⁵

Consequently, the potential of the notions of "western Europe" and "eastern Europe" to be easily recognized and serve as a powerful symbolic means of the construction of the self and the domination of the other leads me to propose that in the context of the eastward enlargement of the EU, this symbolic di-vision can serve as the means of construing the emerging multi-national political entity as an empire with an internal center of dominance and a periphery. The distinctive properties of superiority and inferiority carried by the notions comprising the symbolic di-vision of Europe into



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two parts underscore the latter construction's crucial similarity to the symbolic means of the imperial discourse employed by western powers in the past.

III. Analysis of Speeches

József Böröcz (2000a,b), Melinda Kovács & Peter Kabachnik (this volume) and Melinda Kovács (this volume) have shown that the Opinions and the follow-up Reports produce a standardized and essentialized view of each applicant. Informed by the results of their research, I pursued analysis of public speeches delivered in the year 2000 by high-ranking officials of the EU. The speeches, unlike the Opinions and Progress Reports on the applicants, constitute a discursive venue where presentation of the EU is the central and explicit theme. I selected the speeches devoted to the topic of Europe's future because they inevitably deal with the applicant countries, and thus provide a more comprehensive and explicitly formulated vision of Europe. Since its initiation by Joschka Fischer on May 12, 2000 in Berlin, this preoccupation with the future of Europe has become the focus of high-level political conversation in Europe. Speeches by the other three politicians—Chirac, Prodi and Verheugen—reveal the centrality of this theme in the political debates on enlargement to this day.¹⁶

The perceived strategic importance of a common cultural identity for the political project of the EU cannot be underestimated for it is invariably emphasized in all speeches that I have analyzed. The question is, however, against what implicit counterpoint that common European identity is being constructed and how it engages a notion of western Europeaness. Therefore, in the light of the argument outlined above, I am particularly



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interested in exploring whether the vision of Europe, articulated in speeches, is a structured vision and if so, whether and in what manner it builds upon the centuries-old di-vision of Europe into western and eastern parts.

To address those research questions, I selected eight speeches made by Romano Prodi (President of the European Commission), Günter Verheugen (European Commissioner for Enlargement), Jacques Chirac (President of the French Republic) and Joschka Fischer (German Foreign Minister).¹⁷ I distinguish three discursive strategies employed by these politicians in an attempt to promote and legitimize the project of enlargement and simultaneously preserve the dominance of the current member states of the EU in the future (enlarged) political entity. They include:

- drawing a familiar line dividing Europe by directly referring, in antithetical terms, to the Cold-War divide of Europe into eastern and western parts;
- grounding the symbolic di-vision in some objective indicators of relative economic and political development thus construing the applicant states as an economically and politically unstable and ultimately inferior group compared to the current EU; and
- constructing the applicants as culturally inferior by substituting the notion of "western Europe" with that of "Europe," thereby excluding the applicants.

In regards to the potential symbolic power of the first two discursive strategies taken together (for they always do appear together), I found that the di-vision of Europe is being reestablished again in a similar vein that produced it and sustained it through time. Namely, the distinction is being constructed through a selective aggregation of both "fact and fiction:" modern indicators of relative economic and political development



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and the Cold-War ideological constructs. In other words, as Bourdieu theorized, the way in which political discourse exerts its power depends upon the combination of facts that carry the power of objectivity and purely ideological constructs that have the power of recognition and appeal of internalized slogans. Arguably, without these two discursive moves, it would be very difficult for the EU to put forward any argument regarding the cultural/civilizational inferiority of the dominated—in our case, the applicants.

Explicit reference to the "division"

The discursive strategies through which political actors deal with a certain indeterminacy and vagueness of the present often involve references to the future or the past (Bourdieu 1999, 234-5). In this section, I focus on references that are explicit and show that they involve a "retrospective reconstruction of a past adjusted to the needs of the present [...], and especially the future, with the creative foresight associated with it..." (ibid). In their speeches, all four politicians explicitly acknowledge the Cold War division of Europe and/or a possibility of different forms that this divide might take in the future. The time frame of the past division of Europe is identified differently. Fischer, for example, states that it "existed for 50 years" and "ended in Europe and Germany in 1989-1990 following the collapse of the Soviet empire." Chirac perceives the division to have occurred in a similar time frame by claiming that the division has ended: "our continent was once again reunited." The faultiness of such a myopic and monocausal approach to the past di-*vi*sion of Europe characteristic of Chirac and Fischer has been effectively



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demonstrated by, for example, works of Larry Wolff (1995) and Adam Burgess (1997). One can also refer to the statement made by Günter Verheugen in one of his speeches.

The division of Europe has always been artificial. The failure of the liberal revolutions in the nineteenth century, the devastating wars Europe has witnessed in the twentieth century and the Communist regimes created two separate Europes, which we must now join.¹⁸

As evident from the excerpt, Verheugen's attitude is quite different from that of Chirac and Fischer for he perceives the division's continuous and constructed nature. He gives a longer historical overview of the division: since the 19th century, thus acknowledging that the division existed prior to the Soviet empire. Also, Verheugen identifies other actors responsible for its establishment besides the Soviet influence, whereas Fischer and Chirac perceive the latter to be the only "historical force" responsible for the division of Europe. Moreover, for Verheugen, the division has not been eradicated by default with the end of the Cold War; it "must" be achieved through enlargement. What form of unity Verheugen envisions enlargement would bring to Europe will be discussed later. Here I consider the substance of Chirac and Fischer's interpretation of the past division of Europe.

In Chirac's words, the division revealed the "brilliant success" of the west and, by implication, the failure of the "totalitarian regime" of the east. As a discursive strategy, such a description can be potentially very effective in reifying the division of Europe for several reasons.



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- It drastically contrasts the applicants and the EU member states;
- it serves as the only reference to the history of the continent thus underscoring the differences rather than commonalities;
- it is phrased in the terms of the Cold War propaganda that makes it easily recognizable to the western audience as the way in which they have understood their identity to be distinctive at least for the last 50 years;
- it eliminates any (let alone central) role that the west has played in the conception and maintenance of the past division of Europe, and thus it precludes any interrogation of the possibility that the division has not been eradicated but in fact continues to take place in the context of enlargement;
- it blurs any diversity within the two blocs; hence,
- it precludes any possible discovery of similarity between the blocs.

The division is described in Chirac and Fischer's speeches in the very same terms of the Cold War propaganda that constituted eastern European and western European identities as true antithetical notions. Such a description of the historical legacy of the EU member states and the applicants serves as a foundation for an interpretation of the current process of enlargement and a construction and justification of a vision of the future EU hierarchically structured. Both Chirac and Fischer proceed to raising the question of what Europe means in the prospect of enlargement, ultimately construing enlargement as a threat. They dwell extensively on the origin and the authorship of "the idea of unification" to assert an exclusive role of France and Germany in realization of the EU project and thus an ultimate authority over the very idea of Europe. If, based on



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past experience, France and Germany should assert their right to form a "pioneer" group within the enlarged EU and continue to formulate the direction and development of the Union, then, in a similar vein, the newcomers should be expected to play late-comer, peripheral roles.

EU politicians' assessment of relative economic and political development of the member states and the applicants in political discourse on enlargement

As in the Opinions and Progress Reports, the applicants appear in the speeches again as the objects of the EU analysis of their economic and political development. For instance, in a speech given in the USA,¹⁹ Verheugen describes the current applicants in terms of their population size, their communist past, current GDP and inflation rates. The last two indicators of economic development are intended to demonstrate "a huge economic gap between the Union and accession candidates" (Verheugen, *ibid*). Such an assessment compares the applicants' individual economic development to that of an "average" (non-specific, idealized) member state of the Union. Needless to say that this serves to hide the differences in economic development that exist among and within the current EU member states. It also precludes consideration of the possibility that there might be multiple, qualitatively different ways in which meaningful and appreciable social development can take place, implying a wholesale rejection of the idea of prizing diversity in social practices. However, such a discursive strategy is necessary because construing the applicants as economically unstable and underdeveloped is perhaps the most effective means to legitimize the specific nature of the enlargement process and any



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special arrangements that might be undertaken upon accession of any of the applicants. This approach is reinforced by a similar assessment of their political development, which is discussed below.

Not a single high-ranking EU politician has missed an opportunity in his speeches to underscore that the prospect of joining the EU has been a decisive factor in the process of reforms in the eastern European applicant countries. The implication here is that the former socialist countries need motivation and direction in implementing democratic reforms. It also feeds into a widespread conviction that it is necessary to keep the date of accession ambiguous because knowing for sure will stop these countries from completing the reform process. Verheugen, for example, contrasts the *prosperous* western and *poor* eastern Europe in a way that the latter is seen incapable of sustaining economic and political development on its own.²⁰ He implies that, without the EU's promise and supervision, it is more likely that the applicants will sink into "chaos" and "poverty." No doubt, the former socialist countries have been going through a rather profound transformation of their political and economic institutions; however, the invocation of images of chaos and poverty is so strong that it effectively sets them far apart from the member states of the EU. What it denies without any substantiation is, again, the possibility of the effective, *sui generis* success of those transformations.

The role of the west in the reform process in the applicant countries is strongly emphasized in Verheugen's speech. The quote cited below follows his statements discussed above. Note that he simultaneously affirms that the applicants have instituted "stable democratic systems"—and yet, they need membership in the EU to sustain them.



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I am absolutely convinced that without the prospect of European integration, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe could not have managed the process of transformation so rapidly or so successfully. The countries involved in the enlargement process already have stable democratic systems in place. Credit for bringing about this achievement within such a short space of time belongs to the people of those countries themselves, who found the courage to shake off bureaucratic rule and state-run economies and build open societies, modern democracies and genuine market economies. But it is also true to say that in part they did this because the prospect of EU membership gave them hope of solidarity, of a safe political and economic haven (Verheugen, *ibid.*).

The last part of the statement is striking because of its openly self-congratulatory stance: The EU is no less than a "safe political and economic haven." Such a representation of the EU again drastically contrasts the EU member states as a group and the applicants. Moreover, it allows EU politicians to assert their own successful role in building of the EU and to legitimate their intervention in (or supervision of) eastern Europe's political and economic development.

The division of Europe is, thus, being reconstructed in a way that invokes the complementary nature of the notions of "eastern Europe" and "western Europe." Joschka Fischer joins Verheugen in ascertaining that, without the EU control, the countries of east-central Europe will continue to endorse the "old system of balance with its continued national orientation, constrains of coalition, traditional interest-led politics and the permanent danger of nationalist ideologies and confrontations."²¹ He strives to affirm



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that western Europe has been successful in rejecting the European balance-of-power principle characterized by hegemonic ambitions of individual states, that is, in adherence to the principles of integration, western European states have supposedly moved beyond "national orientation, constraints of coalition, and traditional interest-led politics" (ibid). This new, more modern orientation is, according to Fischer, communitarian in the sense that several (powerful) nation-states have a legitimate right to take on a leading role in European development.

While the EU arrangement, especially after enlargement, can be particularly conducive for Germany and France to assert a civilizing mission, the failure to admit the current applicants into the EU could potentially lead to digression and disintegration of the EU for "these traditional lines of conflict would shift from eastern Europe into the EU again" (ibid). Here eastern Europe is identified as a vessel of conflict that, if left without control, would spill over to the EU. As Burgess points out, this rhetoric of threat of eastern Europe's disintegration, and the necessity of its containment, was well pronounced in the interwar years and served to intensify the division of Europe (1997, 53). The analysis of the speeches made by western politicians in the year 2000 provides new evidence in support of Burgess' observation that "now that the 'containment' provided by Soviet control has gone, the sense that a new form of regulation is required has reappeared in Western discourse" (1997, 55).

Without exception, in all the speeches the prospect of enlargement is discussed in conjuncture with the issues of security and stability of Europe. Verheugen, for example, does not deny that external and internal stability existed under the Soviet empire but believes it was illusory and inherently short-term. He professes that the enlarged EU is



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not just politically feasible but *long-term*. He ultimately implies that stability in Europe decisively depends upon accession. Consequently, it is not enough for a given country, or a set of countries, of east-central Europe to establish democracy, the rule of law, human and minority rights to "guarantee" Europe as a whole with stability and peace. For those achievements must be locked in, secured through "unification," i.e. direct control by the member states of western Europe. Not only does this reference to the Soviet empire bring to the fore the undemocratic past of the former socialist countries but, most importantly, it underscores the external powerlessness and internal (institutional) weakness of these countries.

Burgess also points out that "the suggestion frequently encountered today, that East Europeans have a predisposition to non-democratic government, was markedly absent until the end of the communist bloc" (1997, 21). Indeed, in the speeches made by high-ranking EU politicians we find statements of reassurance of eastern Europeans' commitment to the democratic values counterpoised with a pronounced emphasis on the role of the west in instituting those commitments. As the President of the European Commission put it, "Our enlargement strategy *ensures* that these [fundamental] values [such as justice; freedom of belief and expression; democracy and the rule of law; respect for human rights and the protection of minorities] are enshrined in the constitutions and institutions of all candidate countries before they can join the EU" (Prodi "Catching the tide of history," emphasis mine).

The evaluation of the present and future economic and political development of the candidate countries serves many purposes, one of them being the elimination of the alternative possibility of the countries of east-central Europe forming a political and



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economic bloc by themselves. To take a non- or anti-EU position would be, simply, irrational for the applicants. This suggests that the EU politicians dominating the discourse not only strive to construct the vision of a future Europe but, most important, they mean it as the *only* vision. Limiting the potentially numerous possibilities of political action to the only one, correct "road to Europe's future" (to use Prodi's title of the speech), i.e., "our road," is one of the main functions of the dominant political discourse (production of consent through symbolic violence), as identified by Bourdieu. Moreover, the EU political discourse serves as the venue for an articulation and legitimation of one of the mechanisms of imperial control defined by Böröcz as "exportation of governmentality through the launching of the normalizing, standardizing and control mechanisms of modern statehood" (Introduction to this volume).

No doubt, an explicit affirmation of the EU founding or all current member states' "ownership of the idea of Europe," is one of the central arguments advanced in the speeches. As some western commentators have pointed out, those fundamental values that the west in general and EU politicians in particular have prided themselves on—a belief in progress and improvement; freedom from the state, a belief in democracy, etc—have been losing momentum in western Europe.²² While these authors express doubts whether these values can be successfully exported to the *rest of the world*, it needs to be emphasized that repeated reference to Europe's division is the context of enlargement. This gives EU officials an occasion to assert the universality and vitality of those values within the EU as well.

Another and related function of the applicants' evaluation is the legitimation of the relationship of the EU to the applicants in which the former has taken upon itself an



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explicit role of a "civilizing force." Thus in the political discourse on enlargement we find achieved and expected economic benefits being entwined with the argument about moral imperatives and historical necessity to assist in "modernization" of the eastern European applicants. In sum, in its attempt to secure the legitimacy of the eastward expansion of the EU and the way in which it has been executed, namely, the pre-accession procedure, these EU politicians have employed discursive means to construct a particular view of the applicants as economically and politically inferior.

A new cultural division of Europe?

As Böröcz argues in Introduction to this volume, coloniality involves, beyond "race," cognitive mapping based on cultural/civilizational inferiorization. The third discursive strategy I have isolated in the top EU politicians' recent statements aims at underscoring cultural differences between the EU member states and the eastern applicants. The construction of the applicants' common identity (as distinct from the EU) is centered around but not limited to the evaluations of their historical political and economic development of the last 50 years. The issue of culture, common or diversified (but to what extent?), is omnipresent in the speeches. As Wolff shows, cultural hierarchy within Europe has been solidified in the notions of "eastern" and "western" Europe that emerged through the naming and thus classification of social reality (formulated in Bourdieu's terms). Are these notions still being explicitly employed in political discourse? My analysis of the eight speeches made by EU officials and German Foreign Minister shows that, with the exception of Fischer's speech, words such as "the west" or



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"western" are not used to identify the western part of Europe (see Table 1). Meanwhile, terms referring to "the east" and "eastern"-ness are used in all speeches, although infrequently. Other signifiers such as central or southern Europe quite consistently appear in combination with eastern Europe to identify the applicants. The concepts of central Europe or east-central Europe are entirely absent from the speeches.

Table 1. The Use of Geo-Political Signifiers in Speeches of EU Public Officials

Ways of Identification	The current EU member states as a group		The Applicants as a group		
	"the West" (capitalized)	"Western Europe"	"the east" (not capitalized)	"Eastern Europe"	"Central and Eastern Europe"
Fischer "From Confederacy..."	1	3	3	4 ⁽²³⁾	-
Chirac "Our Europe"	-	1 ⁽²⁴⁾	-	1 ⁽²⁵⁾	-
Verheugen "Enlargement is irreversible"	-	-	-	-	2
Verheugen "Shaping a new Europe"	-	-	1 ⁽²⁶⁾	-	3
Prodi "2000-2005..."	-	-	-	1 ⁽²⁷⁾	-



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Prodi "Catching the Tide"	-	-	-	-	1
Prodi "Enlargement"	-	-	-	-	1
Prodi "The Road..."	-	-	-	-	1

What this set of speeches reveals is the centuries-old dilemma of delineating the ambiguous borders of the European continent and its politically defined divisions. Although the classificatory categories "the west" or "western Europe" are nominally absent from most of the speeches, their underlying meaning of "western civilization" has not disappeared at all. Quite the opposite, it is being explicitly reestablished again in reference to the current EU member states precisely in their relation to the applicant states. Consequently, the complementary nature of the division preempts any answer to the question of whether the expression "Central and Eastern Europe" carries any semantically different content than the notion of "eastern Europe." That is to say that the notion of Central and Eastern Europe—perhaps the only politically correct form of reference to the applicants—cannot function as a pure geographical signifier of the area located to the east of the EU when the other part of Europe is being constructed as superior. It could be possible perhaps if the speeches had contained a new, more generous (i.e. inclusive of the applicants) cultural vision that juxtaposed the EU—"a superior model of society"—to the rest of the world. The notion of "Europe" would then



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be used in an encompassing sense including, and thus not distinguishing, the applicants from the member states. As my analysis will show, that is not the case.

To investigate these questions, I have selected one of the speeches by Romano Prodi entitled "2000-2005: Shaping the New Europe" presented to the European Parliament on February 15, 2000, where we do not find words "the west" or "western" at all. The applicant countries are referred to four times. The main theme of the speech is a celebration of the EU as "a supreme model of society" that has been forged and "successfully implemented" by the EU policymakers. Against what is this success constructed? How are the applicant countries addressed, evaluated and presented in the prospect of them becoming members of the EU? Prodi explicitly refers to enlargement twice and I will discuss each instance.

- (1) "The prospect of enlargement divides public opinion between hope and fear—hope for stability and progress, fear for a Europe without identity and frontiers."

This sentence evaluates the applicants as a whole group, which might put in danger "European identity" as it is constructed now, in the present EU. It says that the frontiers of *Europe* can lose their definite character. The implication here is that whereas now there is *no* ambiguity, it is the eastern border of the continent that has an ambiguous and potentially threatening character. Why and how these claims enter the domain of concern becomes clear if we consider the way Prodi refers in the same speech to a completed product of enlargement: "an enlarged Europe." That he does it twice



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eliminates to a reasonable degree the accidental nature of the expression. Specifically, Prodi states that "The enlarged Europe will certainly need strong institutions," and later: "We will play a leading role in the debate over how an enlarged Europe should be governed..." As Böröcz points out, this practice of "using a synecdochic representation of the EU as Europe" is widespread among many social actors within the EU (2000a, 852). But in Prodi's speech, this substitution is only one of the instances of an attempt to deny *Europeanness* to the "eastern" European applicants. The expression "an enlarged Europe" is a clear-cut example. Other examples are not as obvious. Consider the second explicit reference to enlargement.

(2) "Enlargement is essential if we are to spread peace, stability and shared values throughout the continent."

At first sight, the reference to the continent does not exclude eastern Europe from *Europe* per se. But when something is shared by two parties (in the sense of being common to both of them), it does not make sense to say that one party wants to *spread it*, a supposedly shared "good," to the other party. Unless the other party does not have *it*. It is clear that there is an absolute consensus among high-ranking politicians that eastern Europe does not have stability and peace;²⁸ what Prodi shows with this statement is that the latter does not have the "shared values" that the EU member states have to *provide them with*. Where do these values come from? Prodi's answer is this: "We Europeans are the heirs of a civilization deeply rooted in religious and civic values." Given that enlargement is a "civilizing" mission of the EU (or one of them) and the entity of the EU



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is already being replaced by the notion of Europe, it is possible that in the above statement Prodi excludes the citizens of east-central Europe from a seemingly encompassing expression "We Europeans."

One can also recall Jacques Chirac's speech (2000) quoting General de Gaulle as having stated during his visit to the Federal Republic of Germany that the formation of the Union was a significant historical event in Franco-German relationship. The idea of the future, enlarged Union, de Gaulle said, represents "the immense task of human progress which the world has to carry out and in which the combination of Europe's values, **in the first place, ours**, can and must play the major role" (as cited in Chirac, emphasis mine). The current French President then remarked that since the General's speech, forty years have passed but "[t]o a large extent realized, the ambition remains" (ibid).

In his speech "2000-2005: Shaping the New Europe," Prodi talks about that very same ambition when he states: "Europe needs to project its model of society into the wider world." One can read his statement to mean that the dividing line is being drawn between the EU (of the future) and the rest of the world. However, in the same paragraph he qualifies this claim by referring specifically to eastern Europe: "It is not imperialism to want to spread these principles [of democracy, freedom, and solidarity] and to share our model of society with the peoples of Southern and Eastern Europe who aspire to peace, justice and freedom." It follows that the "peoples of Southern and Eastern Europe" are included in the "rest of the world." It is by expanding the EU beyond its present borders, that the "civilization" called EU is "being enriched by its openness to other cultures." Now the aforementioned "fears" of the EU public begin to make sense: They are about to



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include in their "civilization" "peoples of other cultures." In sum, the di-vision of Europe that emerges in Prodi's speech seems to nominally transform the old version into a new one by the EU appropriating for itself the notion of Europe in its totality and assigning the applicants to a status of the privileged other.

As in the case of the Opinions and Progress Reports, the speeches contribute to the emergence of a homogenizing, essentializing and inferior image of "eastern Europe" constructed in opposition to the self-proclaimed, homogenized and essentialized superiority of the EU, the notion that has taken the place of "western Europe." Moreover, the current evaluation of the applicant countries does not presuppose that the founding member states would undergo (or have undergone) any type of evaluation procedure themselves. As a consequence, the applicants are being evaluated in comparison to an idealized, self-proclaimed view of what a member of the EU is.²⁹ This is one of the reasons why an evaluation of the applicants "on an individual basis" did not prevent the EU from and perhaps even facilitated the (re)construction of an essentialized view of the whole region in terms of its economic and political instability, dependence on the west and, ultimately, inferiority.

Conclusion

The analysis of the speeches made by four prominent EU officials in the year 2000 has revealed that three discursive strategies are employed in an attempt to promote and legitimize the project of enlargement and simultaneously preserve the dominance of the current EU member states in the future (enlarged) political entity. One strategy is to



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draw a familiar line dividing Europe in two parts by invoking the antithetical constructs of the Cold War era. Another strategy involves selective assessment of the applicant states' current economic and political development relative to that of the "average" EU member state. This serves to construct the applicant states as an economically and politically unstable and thus inferior group compared to the current EU. To some extent, such an approach actually reinforces rather than alleviates the negative attitude toward enlargement and the applicants among the EU constituency. However, these two discursive strategies create the foundations for advancing a cultural/civilizational construction of difference. Namely, the framing of enlargement as the EU's civilizational mission towards the applicants is the third discursive strategy which results in the construal of the applicants as culturally inferior. In sum, in the dominant political discourse these three discursive moves cumulatively work to reconstruct the centuries-old symbolic division of Europe in the prospect of enlargement.

The use of these discursive strategies by high-ranking EU officials indicates that as they explicitly pursue the EU's quest for global power by securing EU's firm control over eastern Europe, they reify the centuries-old division of Europe. In the light of Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power, it is by acting upon the shared understanding of the structure of the social world that EU officials can effectively justify and legitimate the EU's economic and political control of eastern Europe, and ultimately proceed with enlargement based on the attained consent of the population. That the prospect of the EU eastward enlargement is reactualizing and moralizing the division of Europe into a superior, "civilizing" part and an inferior one needing to be civilized and controlled



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through the practices of controlled modernization and surveillance, is the essence of colonialism in the Foucauldian sense.

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¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 6th Annual Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN) at Columbia University, NY 6 April 2001 in a panel entitled "Nationhood and the European Union" organized by Melinda Kovács (Rutgers U, USA).

² see Wolff 1994, p. 372.

³ The discussion and analysis pertain to the ten countries that filled out questionnaires issued by the EU, namely, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Throughout the paper they are referred to as the "eastern applicants" or simply as the "applicants."

⁴ The four politicians whose speeches I analyze are: Romano Prodi (President of the European Commission), Günter Verheugen (European Commissioner for Enlargement), Jacques Chirac (President of the French Republic) and Joschka Fischer (German Foreign Minister). For the list of speeches and other notes, see note 17. Although Fischer never officially represented the EU constituency as a whole, his speech is considered to have opened the current debate on the future of Europe.

⁵ In Bourdieu's use of this concept, it generally means a vision that divides. See esp. his *Language and Symbolic Power* (1999). In my argument, it acquires a second meaning for the 'di-' part of the concept: 'two' parts of Europe. It is also important to note that in his work he applies the concept of di-vision to class structure within a national state.

⁶ Travel accounts and other types of literary and art production can be named as other *genres* of imperialist discourses.

⁷ See Böröcz, Kovács & Kabachnik, and Kovács's papers in this volume.

⁸ see his speech titled "Europe's renaissance"



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⁹ see for example, Bourdieu (1999, 223) about how the effectiveness of discourse depends on the authority of a speaker.

¹⁰ see Böröcz (2000a).

¹¹ To my knowledge, Bourdieu himself has never applied his theory of the use of symbolic power in political field to EU political discourse. I have not found any examples of political discourse analysis that would explicitly apply/test propositions developed by Bourdieu.

¹² See note 4 above.

¹³ see Böröcz (2000a).

¹⁴ see esp. Böröcz (2000a).

¹⁵ I consider the symbolic di-vision of Europe to constitute a perception of the social organization of reality, a disposition that is part of habitus of producers of dominant political discourse (see also Bourdieu 1990). Thus I do not inquire into whether in their discursive practices, these politicians make conscious and rational choices.

¹⁶ An official announcement of the opening of a public debate on the future of Europe was made on March 6, 2001. <<http://europa.eu.int/futurum/>>.

"The debate, which is scheduled to continue until 2004, will closely involve political, business and academic circles as well as civil society and public opinion, through discussion meetings and the Internet, in order to gather as many opinions as possible. The applicant countries will also be involved. To mark the opening of this great debate, Mr Persson, Mr Verhofstadt, Mrs Fontaine and Mr Prodi have made a Joint Declaration initiating the debate on the future development of Europe. They have also announced the opening of this « futurum » Internet site, which will act as the gateway for the debate throughout Europe and will enable citizens to contribute via the various discussion forums which it will set up on the key questions concerning the future of Europe."

Below is a quote from the contribution to the Joint Declaration made by Göran Persson, President of the European Council and Prime Minister of Sweden:

"In a separate declaration from Nice it was, however, agreed that further reform would be needed in a few years' time and that a new Treaty Conference should be convened in 2004. At the same time, it was clearly stated that **this time** reform will have to be based on a **real** effort to listen to what the citizens of Europe actually want" (emphasis mine).

¹⁷ The speeches are:

Chirac, M. Jacques. *Our Europe*. Speech delivered in the Bundestag, Berlin, 27 June 2000.

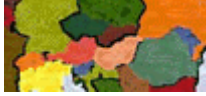
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---- *Enlargement is Irreversible*. Debate on Enlargement in the European Parliament. Strasbourg, 3 October 2000.

See a complete bibliography with web links in the 'works cited' section. Also, I need to emphasize that the speech of Joschka Fischer, German Foreign Minister has to be treated differently from the rest for he has never served as a representative of the EU constituency as a whole. Jacques Chirac's speech is officially billed as "one of the most important documents issued during the French presidency of the EU." <<http://www.presidence-europe.fr/pfue/static/acces5.htm> > (accessed March, 2001).

¹⁸ "Shaping a New Europe: Political and Economic Implications of Enlargement"

¹⁹ "Shaping a New Europe..."

²⁰ "Enlargement is Irreversible."

²¹ "From Confederacy to Federation: Thoughts on the Finality of European Integration."

²² see for example Burgess (1997, 13); also Gray (1995).

²³ One of them refers to the eastern side of the Berlin wall.

²⁴ refers to west Berliners.

²⁵ refers to east Berliners.

²⁶ refers to Russia and Ukraine.

²⁷ This classification is problematic because Prodi refers to the applicants once as "Southern and Eastern Europe" and then he refers three times to the states of the former Yugoslavia as the "South-Eastern Europe."

²⁸ See examples above.

²⁹ See Kovács & Kabachnik and Kovács's papers (this volume).



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The Austrian Freedom Party's Colonial Discourse in the Context of EU-Enlargement, by Katalin Dancsi

I. Introduction

This study maps the political discourse of the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) by analyzing two chapters of the current party program¹ in English translation. The program was adopted in October 1997, two years after Austria had joined the European Union (EU), exactly at the time when this supranational organization announced officially (July 1997) that it would start enlargement negotiations with five of the formerly state socialist applicant countries.² The party program can be considered an important, if not central contribution to forming the FPÖ's political discourse, designed to give the FPÖ the success it achieved in the last national election in 1999. Chapter III, "Austria First" and Chapter IV, "The Right to Cultural Identity" are under particular scrutiny here as both deal with the formulation of "Austrianness" as a form of national identity proposed by the FPÖ, an image that emerges in the prospect of the current enlargement process of the EU. In this study I only focus on the FPÖ's political discourse from the perspective of the EU enlargement. On the one hand, I consider the FPÖ to be part of the Austrian political discourse where it is becoming noticeably influential. On the other hand, since Austria is a EU member state, the party's political discourse operates within the larger EU political scene as well, including presence in the EU Parliament. In brief, I argue that the FPÖ is producing colonial imageries through the articulation of its "Austria" concept.



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I am interested in the FPÖ's discursive world in terms of how it constructs the notion of Austria as the notion of self and whether the instruments of this formulation are similar to colonial methods of constructing self image through *othering* (Said 1979). To find an answer to these questions, I first explore the context of the FPÖ's political discourse. I assess the recent changes Austria (including the FPÖ) has faced, paying special attention to the EU's current enlargement process as one of the major challenges for the FPÖ. Then I consider the relevance of colonial practices by outlining their basic elements according to contemporary literature on empire and coloniality (Böröcz 2001; Stoler and Cooper 1997; Todorova 1997; Wolff 1994; Said 1979). Finally, I investigate, through textual analysis, how the party program constructs the FPÖ as superior, equates the party with Austria, and simultaneously conceptualizes outsiders (immigrants and political opponents) as the inferior *others*. I show that the document exhibits, through the defining process of the self and the *other*, characteristics of colonial discourse. It is not the aim of this study to pay any judgment on the FPÖ's discursive articulation; I only rephrase what the text contains.



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II. Political and social context of the FPÖ

The FPÖ has gained substantive public support in the last 15 years as reflected in the rise of the percentage of votes it collected at the general elections in Austria. In 1986, almost immediately after Jörg Haider was elected as federal leader of the party, the FPÖ gained 9.73 percent of the votes, which was more than a 3 percent increase to the party's previous performance. In the following elections its share of popular votes rose drastically and reached 16.6 percent in 1990, then 22.4 percent in 1994 while it remained nearly the same in 1995 (Austria Facts and Figures 1997). Finally in 1999 it unexpectedly extended to almost 27 percent. Thereby the FPÖ has become the second strongest party in Austria together with the Austrian People's Party, behind the Social Democrats, enabling it to participate in the present coalition government. As a reaction to the FPÖ's entering the government, the 14 other EU member states introduced unprecedented bilateral diplomatic "sanctions" against the country in February 2000 for nearly eight months to signal their disapproval. The bitter reaction from fellow EU member states to the FPÖ's impressive domestic performance at the elections brings into focus the FPÖ's rhetoric that contributed to the party's domestic popularity and brought the unusual EU diplomatic boycott. In order to put the party's discourse into context, I discuss what I consider to be of central importance to Austria's post war history in terms of the FPÖ's emergence.

In the post Cold War period, Austria has had to face three major challenges that are particularly relevant to this analysis. First is the disappearance of its advantageous inter-bloc position. During the Cold War, Austria occupied a niche in world politics that



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made it possible for the country to achieve spectacular economic growth, prosperity and prestigious international recognition (Hable 2000; Lauber 1996; Sully 1990; Pelinka 1998). Since the ratification of the State Treaty in 1955, Austria developed a corporatist system based on "social partnership," became a model of social peace, political stability and generous welfare state. It achieved a highly successful economy with extraordinarily low levels of protest and high levels of consensual politics, and evolved an economic system, named "Austro-Keynesianism" (Lauber 1996: 127). Furthermore, it gained a notable international reputation for maintaining a policy of perpetual neutrality while establishing a "collective amnesia toward [its] national-socialist past" (Hable 2000: 14).

As József Böröcz points out, Austria's exceptional economic and diplomatic success was, to a large extent, a consequence of its inter-bloc position occupied in the bipolar world system, similar to the Finn's success (Böröcz 1996: Chapter 4). He suggests, the stability and international reputation of the country was based on the State Treaty in which the main powers externally guaranteed Austria's neutrality, democratic policy and independence (Böröcz 1996: 86). The continuous rivalry of the two military blocs located Austria in a mediator's position between the state socialist and capitalist blocs not only in a political and diplomatic sense (e.g. Vienna is the third center of the U.N.) but in an economic sense also. Böröcz summarizes the economic impact of the Cold War on Austria as follows:

As a technologically advanced neutral country, Austria had comfortable access to orders from the state socialist economies for commodities that the Soviet-bloc could not, or, for political reasons, would not, purchase in the EEC. Similar to



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Finland, the Austrian economy specialized in mediation between the state socialist economies and the capitalist world. This phenomenon was clearly reflected in the rising percentage of the shares of the state socialist economies in Austria's export (Böröcz 1996: 94).

On these social, political and economic grounds a new nation building process started to unfold. According to its rhetoric, Austria was perceived as the first victim of Hitler, distinct from the Germans, an "island of the blessed," and a neutral and generous welfare state with high international influence (cited by Pelinka 1998: 29; Hable 2000).

With the fall of the Iron Curtain, Austria's advantageous position and hence, much of its image vanished. This spawned a general confusion about the country's present and potential role in the world. Austria turned out to be—using Richard Mitten's expression—a "small country of a declining geopolitical significance" upon the closure of its inter-bloc position (Mitten 2000). This rapid international change resulted in the disorientation of Austria's national identity and the radical reorientation of its political strategy. It also induced significant changes in its social and economic policies. The new political direction became explicitly pro-western European, despite the idea of perpetual neutrality, a central feature of the Austrian State Treaty. This quick western shift culminated in Austria's rapid application and accession to the EU (Pelinka 1998: 220). As Helmut Kramer remarks, Austria submitted its application in 1989, at a time when the other European neutral states (Finland, Sweden and Switzerland) did not consider accession compatible with their neutrality principle (Kramer 1996: 169). In sum, at the end of the Cold War the basic pillar (the inter-bloc position) of the country's very



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successful image disappears, creating severe consequences for its internal political, economic and social structures.

Secondly, in the beginning of the 1990's, Austria had to cope with the challenge of the influx of "new" tourists, as traveling restrictions have been relaxed for the citizens of the former state socialist countries. The opening of the borders and then, the crisis in former Yugoslavia correlate with the shift to widespread negative attitudes toward foreigners in Austria (Wodak 1997: 134). Based on this observation it is reasonable to assume, as I will in my analysis of the document below, that the immigrants that figure in the party program, are mainly those citizens of central and eastern Europe, not of the EU member states. Although Austria has always been a popular destination for international tourism and its economy is highly dependent on the tertiary sector, foreigners are contemptible and this detestation is not directed toward—borrowing Böröcz's ingenious distinction—the "highly paying leisure migrants" from the US or the EU, but toward the "low paid menial labor migrants" coming from eastern Europe (Böröcz 1997). In the year when the FPÖ's program was adopted, 9.9 percent of the total population, approximately 800,000 foreign nationals were living in Austria with limited political rights (IBRD 2000). As Anton Pelinka suggests, this high rate is due to the country's refugee and guest worker policy. Austrian immigration policies have consistently assumed the labor migrants and refugees would stay for a definite period only, so there is no need of their legal naturalization. He also shows that the foreign guest workers demographic structure is different from legalized Austrian residents. For example, they are significantly younger; therefore they contribute to the welfare system by paying proportionally more taxes and other duties than working Austrian citizens. He concludes



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that the appearance of Austrians' popular disdain for foreigners has no logical background (Pelinka 1998: 225). Still, the encounter with eastern European people, not as highly paying tourists and visitors, but as legal, illegal or guest workers, war-refugees and asylum seekers continues to serve as a reference point against which the FPÖ constructs an image of Austria, its image of the self.

The third challenge for Austria is the EU's forthcoming enlargement process. When Austria joined the EU in 1995, it hoped to regain economic prosperity, political stability (especially to dissociate itself from the crisis in former Yugoslavia), social harmony and possibly to reestablish its prestigious self-image (Kramer 1996: 182). However, by the time accession takes place, the EU itself has changed dramatically. As a significant sign of the changes, the EU invites eastern applicants, publishes the Commission Opinions, and starts a negotiation process regarding full membership with five of those countries against whose population Austrians have just developed a sense of fear and demand protection.



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III. Relevance of colonialism to eastern Europe

The particular circumstances in which Austria and the FPÖ find themselves in the post Cold War era have significant similarities to the colonial encounter, which gives a possible explanation why the FPÖ constitutes its self image through a colonial type of *othering*. First of all, the opening of the borders in state socialist countries and also Austria's economic structure resulted in a population influx from the applicant countries, which indicates that an encounter is taking place, perceived by some as endangering Austria's stability. The fact that the Austrian economy is also highly dependent on guest workers from these countries, like metropolises were on the resources coming from the colonies, suggests that a colonial dynamic is likely to be present in the FPÖ's case. The EU's colonial reminiscent discursive construction of the applicants in the eastern enlargement process gives another impetus to the present tension of the FPÖ's perception of eastern European people (Engel-DiMauro, Kovács, Kovács & Kabachnik, Sher 2001 in this volume). Böröcz also highlights the importance of coloniality in connection to eastern Europe, as he suggests that applicant countries, although never colonized in the sense of the "detached type," have always been subjected to the "contiguous type" of coloniality (Böröcz 2001 in this volume). This leads me to explore the FPÖ's discursive self-construction that emerges in the context of the enlargement of the EU like a colonial image.

The scholarship on empire and coloniality is abundant, far reaching and goes beyond the scope of this study. What is relevant in the east European context is the recognition of the unequal relationship between metropole and colony, where the



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metropole is in the dominant position and possesses the ability to re-define reality encountered in the colony. As Stoler and Cooper state: "...colonial regimes were trying to *define* the constituents of a certain kind of society, even as they embedded the notion of creation within a notion that [...] the state was a nonpartisan regulator and neutral observer" (Stoler and Cooper 1997: 11—italics in the original). With the definition of the *other*, the construction of the self becomes possible. I distinguish three steps in the procedure of acting upon the dominated object: entering the space and encountering its people; inventing and classifying the objects; creating a dominated *other* in order to define the image of the dominant self. In this section I relate these three elements of the colonial discursive defining process to the FPÖ's political discourse.

Larry Wolff identifies the process of "entering" as the first encounter with the unknown land and people of eastern Europe in the 18th century (Wolff 1994: 17). The travelers perceived the unknown realm of eastern Europe as if it offered itself up to their gaze. They, like colonizers, preserve the privilege to freely associate on the unknown land and its people and to project their preconceptions on them. As I show in my analysis the FPÖ "enters" the same way its post Cold War Austrian political discourse with presumptions, expectations and with the application of its norms to the other.

The second phase is "from discovery to invention," as described by Maria Todorova (1994: 453). This is the stage of classification when the subordinated people and land gain their characteristics as part of the cultural construction and intellectual invention of the dominant. Todorova analyzes the construction of the notion of the Balkans and summarizes it as being a concept of discursive construction that is "paired in opposition to the 'West' and 'Europe' " (1994: 482). Invention is the colonizers'



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intellectual process of classification, by producing general rubrics of people and land with allegedly essential characters. The FPÖ is acting similarly when it contrasts the self with the *other*. In opposition to the latter image, it articulates the notion of its "Austria", as the notion of the self.

The third step is the realization of the hierarchical element between the participants of the discourse: identification of the dominant and the dominated. Unlike the dominated, the dominant is in the position of defining the *other* and the self. Edward Said points out the hierarchical relationship present in the dynamics of coloniality: "Orientalism [is] a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1979: 3). The FPÖ also implements a hierarchy in its formulation of self-image, in which the self occupies the position of dominance and defines immigrants and political opponents as the subjected *other*, while this *other* has no possibility to act similarly.



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IV. The FPÖ's discourse

What follows is the examination of the FPÖ's party program using the elements of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) outlined by Teun Van Dijk (1993) to explore the three steps of colonial practice for the construction of the notion of self and the *other*.

Discourse analysis becomes critical when it scrutinizes the relationship between language and power;³ a dynamic relationship in which language use shapes social practices and reflects them at the same time. Therefore, discourse is an instrument of control, as it is an instrument to construct social reality (Jaworski-Coupland 1999; Riggins 1997; Van Leeuwen 1993; Fairclough 1992). Van Dijk develops a methodology of CDA to discover how discursive power-reproduction works. He identifies two phases: (1) finding the various structures of the text, those expressions which legitimize the dominance of the speaker; (2) mapping the results of such structures in the mind of the recipients, recording how socially shared knowledge is reproduced or transformed by the consumers of the text (Van Dijk 1993).

My analysis involves the first phase of CDA, focusing on the FPÖ, the producer of its own particular political discourse.⁴ I identify the properties of the text, which reveal how the FPÖ attempts to justify its dominant position in the construction of the notion of "Austria." In order to reconstruct the FPÖ's discourse, I decode the text step by step and I apply—as tools—categories of analysis identified by Van Dijk such as *access control*, *presuppositions*, *justification strategy* and *macrosemantics* (Van Dijk 1993: 270, 272, 263, 276). I distribute the results of the textual analysis of the FPÖ's program in three subsections according to the three relevant steps of the colonial discursive defining process (entry and discovery; invention and classification; creation of dominance).



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The first subsection describes who has access to the FPÖ's discourse and the presuppositions that this discourse is built upon. I assess two preconceptions that the party takes for granted and applies to the population of Austria. In the second subsection I describe the *justification strategy* of the FPÖ, which is supported and emphasized by several semiotic elements. This *justification strategy* is the party's persuasive invention and classification process, ascribing to the participants of the party's worldview certain characteristics. The strategy is based on positive self-representation and negative *other*-representation. The third subsection deals with the construction of discursive domination with the tool of macrosemantics, which serves to institutionalize the unequal relationship between the self and the opposing *other*. I show how the victim-victimizer reversal legitimizes the establishment of hierarchy.

IV. 1. Entry and discovery

This subsection describes how the fundamental elements, the presumptions in the FPÖ's conception of "Austrianness" influence the phase of *entry and discovery*. These *a priori* elements, together with access control, form the starting point of the party's discursive worldview, from where the party evaluates the *other* and the self in the *classification and invention* phase.

Access control: The genre of a political party program involves unidirectional communication. The communicative act is performed by the party and directed toward the voters and the opponents who have no voice in the party's discourse. This implies that only the FPÖ's conception can be found in the document. What makes the FPÖ's program powerful is that it can speak *of* the other participants of the Austrian political



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scene and *of* the Austrian population in general and yet exclude from its discourse their voices and any opposing views and ambiguities.

Presuppositions: I distinguished two premises, two strict axioms in the FPÖ's discursive construction of "Austria" or the self. The first is the FPÖ's construction of the population of Austria as a set of distinct groups, each group having one clearly defined "naturally borne" nationality or ethnicity, from which emerges the immanent cultural identity of the members.⁵ This idea of a naturally borne and clear nationality is termed by Magali Perrault an "organic view of people"(Perrault 2001). The term "*ethnische Gemeinschaft*"⁶ (IV/3) denotes these organic communities. The FPÖ constructs separate communities by using such terms as "historical groups," "cultural groups" and states "the **coexistence** [...] of different cultural groups" or "[the law lists] the **individual** historically settled (*autochthone*) cultural groups" (IV/1-3 my emphasis, but parenthesis in the original). There is no overlap among the national communities and no mixed population. Community memberships are imagined as belonging to one of the "historically settled groups"(IV/3). Additionally, the text also reveals which historical groups can be considered Austrian by explaining: "the historically settled indigenous groups [are] (Germans, Croats, Roma, Slovaks, Slovenians, Czechs and Hungarians)..." (IV/1 parenthesis in the original). This view of Austria, comprised by mutually exclusive ethnic categories, has the corollary that Austrian cultural identity is also the sum of the ethnic group identities, since one derives the right to Austrian cultural identity from ethnic community membership. The text illustrates the clear disjunction of cultural identities:



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The term 'cultural identity' [*Heimat*] is defined in spatial, historical groupings [*ethnische Volksgruppen*] and cultural ways (IV/1). [E]very citizen has the right to decide on his own to which cultural [Volksgruppe] group he wants to be assigned according to his identity (IV/3).

No ethnic community or identity, such as Slovene speaking Austrians would fit this model. However, it is often hard or impossible to classify one's ethnicity or nationality and even harder to sort out one's identity, which can involve a combination of (mixed) ethnic origin, language, citizenship, religion, education, etc. In a multicultural environment like Austria, it is not the case that one either belongs to a certain ethnic community or does not. Neither can there be seen identities or cultures as mutually exclusive categories that can be derived from some clear nationality. Nonetheless the FPÖ's discourse sets the norm that communities are organic. With this discursive move the FPÖ imposes its own preconception as a norm on post Cold War Austria's population. This gives the party legitimacy to treat the *others* (eg immigrants or people with mixed ancestors) as deviant, therefore inferior if they do not correspond to the FPÖ's appointed norm of an Austrian historical community.

The second presumption in the text is that only one form of citizenship exists: that is an "active" one, which presupposes devotion to democratic ideals *and* patriotism at the same time. According to the text, to be an Austrian is an "ongoing commitment to develop and preserve democracy for the people" (III/2). The lack of the peoples' protest against the existence of democracy attests to their constant devotion to it. Being democratic is the most patriotic act, according to the text, because it states: " [There is] a



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permanent task to preserve and develop democracy as a basis for Austrian patriotism" (III/2). Patriotism becomes the extension of democratic rights. The conclusion is that since everybody is democratic, all the people are patriotic per se as well because patriotism is a corollary of democratic rights. This is an indirect way to suggest that if someone is not patriotic, then s/he is undemocratic. Having made this presupposition the FPÖ categorizes as undemocratic *other* all the people who do not share this idea of patriotism. By equating democracy and patriotism the FPÖ implicitly expropriates democracy for itself and its allies and it deprives of this quality those (eg political opponents) who think differently.

If one subscribes to this point of view, then the characterization of the Austrian population as comprised of distinct ethnic communities of patriotic people might seem quite convincing. These are the normative presuppositions, which the party brings into its political discourse and to the scene of post Cold War Austria. They determine the construction of the self and the *other* in the next phase.

IV. 2. Invention and classification

Here I show how the process of classifying the self as opposed to the *other* is present in the FPÖ's program. According to the norms discussed above, two groups fall under the label of *other*. One is that group of residents who either have ethnic origins different from those the text listed or have a mixed ethnicity. The other group consists of those inhabitants who do not share the view of equating democracy with patriotism. I refer to the former group in this study as immigrants, because they are over represented



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among them, and the latter group as political opponents, because they are the most likely to challenge the latter idea.

In the invention phase, the FPÖ marks the *other* and the self with different characteristics. It creates a positive self-representation and a negative representation of the *other*. I discuss the justification of such hierarchization in the next subsection. The program uses several tools for classification to create a "realistic" contrast in the *justification strategy*. For the positive self-representation the instruments are the strategies of "apparent tolerance," "apparent democracy" and the applied perspective (using Van Dijk's terms 1993: 266, 267). For the negative representation of the *other*, the FPÖ employs essentialized characteristics and generalized statements combined with the systematic association of the *other* with certain problems, and "over or under complete description" (Van Dijk 1993: 275).

Justification strategy: This is the phase where the party invents alleged characteristics for itself and for the *other* in order to differentiate the two. I start the discussion with positive self-representation, its three strategies of "apparent tolerance," "apparent democracy," and the perspective of the text (Van Dijk 1993: 266, 267). Then I continue this study with the negative *other* representation.

The positive self-representation is accomplished by utilizing three strategies. The first is termed "apparent tolerance" (Van Dijk 1993: 266). One way for the FPÖ to depict itself in incontestably positive way is to emphasize its tolerant and fair attitudes. The FPÖ's intention to classify itself as tolerant comprises two elements. First, the program uses a diversity-rhetoric when it describes Austrian cultural identity as being based on the several historical groups of population and when it praises the federal structure of the



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state (IV/1 III/1-2). This diversity-rhetoric serves to found a basic impression that the FPÖ is far from excluding different nationalities from Austrian identity, population and state formation. The second element is to announce explicitly that Austria is an asylum giving country with the following sentence: "Austria must give asylum to people who are persecuted for racist, religious or political reasons..." (IV. /4). Although the FPÖ might have an indisputable intention to advocate humanitarian values by giving asylum to refugees who have been persecuted in their home countries for various reasons, this intention clashes with the preceding part of the text where the party argues for further restriction on immigration policies because immigrants endanger the wellbeing of the country. Here are some examples from Chapter IV of the text to illustrate the contradiction.

- (1) The basic right to a home country [*Heimat*] does not allow for an unlimited and uncontrolled immigration to Austria. [...]
- (2) Unlimited immigration would demand too much of the resident population as far as an active capacity for integration is concerned. It would endanger the right to preservation and protection of cultural identity.
- (3) To protect the interest of the Austrian population requires full sovereignty in matters concerned with the rights of the immigrants. [...] (IV/4)

These excerpts demonstrate that the FPÖ forgets to apply humanitarian norms to immigrants and that it assumes the immigrants to be unable and/or unwilling to assimilate (for associating the immigrants with problems, please see the negative *other*



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representation below). In the second example, the FPÖ homogenizes the resident population as being non-immigrant, in the same way the refugees are standardized also as non-immigrants.

The second strategy for positive self-representation is "apparent democracy" (Van Dijk 1993: 267). This discursive tool is the evocation of the notion of democracy. The party appears as the mouthpiece of the people and as an undeniable follower of democratic rules. The text suggests several times that "the people" of Austria have some supposed interests, which are expressed by the FPÖ. The examples cited above illustrate this point. In the second and third example, the reference to the "resident population" and "Austrian population" implies that the inhabitants, and not the Freedom Party, want to restrict immigration (IV/4). Another reference point, in the first example, is a humanitarian value, which works similarly to the reference of the average "resident." The unquestionable value is the "basic right to the home country" (IV/4). Immigrants are depicted as "endangering" this right (IV/4). Therefore it sounds as if it is not the FPÖ that assumes the immigrants behave so, but it is the nature of the immigrants to endanger this right. This move problematizes immigrants subtly: it disdains them, because their mere existence is depicted as a threat to Austrian political rights and cultural identity. Finally, the program also refers, in various forms, to the importance of the rule of law, the legal system, which is the guarantee of an existing democracy in the text. The program emphasizes the preservation of the rule of law and constitutional principles, cites the legal system and has one particular article referring to the Basic Law (it even adds that it has a rank of the Constitution) to gain seemingly objective legitimacy for the FPÖ's ideological position (III/1-2, IV/2). This is a common way to avoid responsibility by referring to the



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law of the land, which is always above criticism. One example of this is the following citation: it is not the party but the "legal system [which] presupposes that the overwhelming majority of Austrians is of the German origin" (IV/1).

By identifying the point of view of the Freedom Party—as the third strategy for positive self representation—it becomes apparent that the FPÖ claims to speak on behalf of all the Austrians when it uses the terms like: "[a]s all Austrians belong together we do not only have civil rights but also civil duties," (III/1,3). This is a "we—the Austrians" perspective, equating the two. Thus, the party excludes political opponents who do not consider themselves undemocratic for possessing less patriotism than the FPÖ does, and rejects immigrants, because they have no "decent" ethnicity, and are endangering rights. Finally it explicitly supports the interests of those people who are ready for "intellectual resistance" and "who believe in Austria [*aller patriotischen Kräfte*]"⁷ which is a significantly smaller group compared to the whole population of Austria (III/4).

In sum, positive self-representation is part of the rediscovery and invention process, which serves for securing the positive classification of the party, from which the dominant position in the discourse would be derived in the next subsection of the discursive definition process. In its political discourse the FPÖ equates itself with all the Austrians, when the party claims to speak on behalf of "the people," and claims the perspective of the whole country as its own. It evaluates itself (and every Austrian) to be as positive as possible (caring for diversity, asylum seekers, people's voice, humanitarian values, the rule of law). The FPÖ applies a homogenizing strategy in stressing the cooperation and togetherness of the Austrian population to establish its seemingly inclusive, general rubric of "Austria" to equate it, or use it as a synonym to the self, while



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collectively discredit the *other*. The construction of the self goes together with the shaping of the opposing *other*.

Positive self-representation is combined with negative representation of the *others* in the classification stage. The image of the *others* is obscured by two instruments applied at the same time: their persuasive marginalization through generalized, decontextualized statements and assigning constantly negative attitudes and problems to them. I also address here the "over or under complete description" as it is a combined strategy employed at the same time to elaborate on both the positive self-representation and the negative *other* representation (Van Dijk 1993:275).

The negative representation of the *other* is carried out in the way that the sentences, which deal with political opponents and immigrants, are very formal and are highly decontextualized. The text asserts certain "acts" as general norms in a direct way, or implied norms in an indirect way, always without any background information. The following group of examples illustrates these declarations:

- (1) Especially in the media a decline in the cultural level has been obvious for years (III/4).
- (2) [...] since Austria's entry into the EU [the politics ends in] massive efforts to standardize and level down, to detriment of Austria's intellectual and cultural substance (III/4).
- (3) The basic right to decide one's own identity and culture has to be guaranteed to all Austrians (IV/3).



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(4) The basic right to a home country [*Heimat*] does not allow for an unlimited and uncontrolled immigration (IV/4).

These examples also demonstrate the strategy of creating the other by associating them systematically with social problems or paying extensive attention to their alleged threat on "decent" people. The first three declarations illustrate how political opponents (including the media) are associated with being in "a decline" and being unable and/or unwilling to prevent the "massive detriment" of culture or to "guarantee" basic rights (III/4, IV/3). These are the imagined features of the political *other* in the perception of the FPÖ.

The fourth decontextualized generalization deals with the picture of the immigrants and shows a possibility of depicting immigrants negatively by assigning problems to them. I have already discussed above how immigrants are associated with the inability to assimilate and their presence is sufficient to produce an endangering effect (IV/4). I have also cited the example describing that the interests of Austrian population require protection which expresses the same ethnocentric idea (IV/4 previous bloc third sentence). According to the text they also "bear social conflicts with them" and they "demand too much"(IV/4). The fourth example reveals another aspect of negative depiction. It implies that immigrants have been arriving in Austria in unlimited numbers, and that authorities have lost all control over them. In sum the FPÖ uses the efficient method of problemisation to discredit the *others*, by assuming that their assigned features are known by everyone (as a shared knowledge), so there is no need for further explanation.



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With selected alleged propositions about the political opposition and the immigrants, the FPÖ rediscovers them as problematic groups. The tools designed to classify their negative perception are their constant association with social, political and economic problems and the use of highly decontextualised assessments.

Van Dijk identifies the strategy termed "over or under complete description" (Van Dijk 1993: 275). He focuses on separate, independent expressions and articulates what their role is. He is interested to learn how relevant and irrelevant information is represented in the sentences. He considers relevant all information that contributes to the contrast building process of the self and *other* and irrelevant, that does not support this dichotomized image. As a general tendency, preferred expressions are detailed, repeated and described in an over complete way, while irrelevant information is less detailed and described on a higher level. This document adopts both moves simultaneously. Positive self-representation, and negative *other* representation are detailed, while traits of exhaustive negative self-representation and positive *other* representation are virtually missing from the document. First I indicate some examples of over complete description of preferred information, then I cite some illustrations of disliked information with their incomplete description.

On the one hand, in the case of positive self-representation the portrayal of the diversity rhetoric reveals redundancy several times such as "variety and multitude [of regional identities]" or "historically settled autochthone [cultural groups]" as signs of over complete description (IV/1, 3). Similarly, references to the law and the importance of "constitutional principles" are mentioned many times to symbolize the FPÖ's respect of the law (III/2). Both techniques are applied to brighten the positive image of the FPÖ,



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so the FPÖ keeps repeating them. On the other hand, because of the intention of negative *other*-depiction we see several linguistic designs to express Austria's cultural devolution in order to discredit political opponents. The document contains the following examples: "to decline," "to revile," "to willfully disparage," "massive effort to standardize and level down," "to detriment," "abusing" and "disparaging" (III/4). Simultaneously, the problematized image of the immigrants is also carefully detailed as I have showed.

While the most outstanding example of over-complete description is the "protection and preservation" (of the home country) language devise which occurs several times both in explicit⁸ and in implicit ways.⁹ The repetition of the importance of protection strengthens the negative perception of the other against whom protection seems necessary.

Irrelevant information is much less complete. Basically all the generalized and decontextualized remarks are illustrations of this strategy. Details of the situation such as who is disparaging Austrian culture, what is the supposedly unlimited number of immigration, or how immigrants endanger the basic right of residents are considered to be irrelevant, therefore not detailed. Besides, the FPÖ keeps stereotyping certain groups, and it disregards specific information about them in order to homogenize and essentialize them. This attitude is usually illustrated by the use of generalized broad categories, like "the media" and "unlimited immigration" (III/4). Analogously, as I have mentioned above, residents are essentialized as being non-immigrants, so are refugees. As De Cillia et al put it: "Particularizing synecdoches like 'the foreigner' [and] 'the Austrian' serve [...] to generalize and essentialize stereotypes that apply to a whole group of persons..." (De Cillia et al. 1999: 165).



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In the invention and classification process over complete and under complete description serves to further empower the positive representation of the self and the negative representation of the *other* without adding new alleged characteristics to any of the two representations.

IV.3. Creation of domination

In the third phase of the FPÖ's self defining colonial implicative discourse, the party establishes a hierarchy between the two previously contrasted images. By this stage, the FPÖ can legitimate the introduction of its dominance because the image of the self and the *other* has already been well-prepared to accept hierarchization: one side measures up to the self-appointed norms (of being member of an organic community and being patriotic), that is the image of the self; the other side does not measure up, that is the picture of the *other*. In this step the FPÖ gains further legitimacy by placing opponents and immigrants in a subjugated position and itself, as the representative of Austria, in a dominant position.

Macrosemantics: The party creates the conditions—by using the device of reversing victimization—to ensure its dominance in the discourse. I explore the values of the text to discuss the structure of "victim-victimizer reversal" (Wodak et al 1993: 239). The application of this tool results in the redefinition of the situation and the legitimization of the discursive dominance of the FPÖ.

As the base of the FPÖ's rhetoric the document makes a reversed application of values when it deploys the "you are intolerant" claim pointing at the immigrants. The FPÖ projects inhuman attitudes on the *othered* people in order to safeguard their objected



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status and negative character. When immigrants are explicitly associated with social problems, limitless demands and dangers to basic rights, they implicitly become responsible for all the attacks against them. The residents become the "real" victims who did nothing wrong but they still have to suffer from social insecurity and poverty, moreover their right to live in their own traditional way in their own country comes under question. This is a technique to justify the inferiority of the *other* by labeling it as the source of all problems. The same way, the FPÖ practically associates political opponents with unpatriotic (ie undemocratic) features such as the then-government's act to allow the cultural level of the country to deteriorate in order to legitimize their condemnation.

The *other* is perceived as deviant, pointed out as victimizer and source of threat, while the FPÖ's self image is constructed as the norm, the only democratic actor, the protector of law and basic human rights. Once the contrast and hierarchy are established, the party becomes successful in redefining the situation in its discourse. With this maneuver the whole discursive situation changes, a new discourse emerges, with a new question about the legitimacy of the *other* in criticizing the self. The self occupies the dominant position, maintaining the privilege for further re-definition of social reality by determining the conditions of the discourse, while the *other* is placed in a subordinated status, without the possibility to criticize the self or construct itself.



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V. Conclusion

The FPÖ establishes a colonial dynamics in its political discourse of creating the image of the self, as opposed to the creation of the *other* and equates its self-image with the notion of Austria. The formulation of "Austrianness" through *othering* is a colonial mechanism of implementing dominance. In the FPÖ's formulation of the self the signs of its dominance are explored in this study in three steps: entry and discovery; invention and classification; and creating discursive dominance. In the formulation of the concept of self as the concept of "Austrianness" the first step is to "enter" in the discursive field and limit the access of the *other* to participate. This step also involves the projection of deviation from certain norms on the *other*, which becomes undemocratic with inorganic origin. The second step is the "invention and classification" phase (Todorova 1994: 453). It includes the creation of an alleged contrast between the image of self and the image of the *other* by the combination of selected positive and negative characteristics. On the one hand "apparent democracy" and "apparent tolerance" work as tools to strengthen self-representation; on the other hand, generalized stereotypes, decontextualized statements and homogenization serve to corrupt the description of the *other* (Van Dijk 1993:266, 267). The world of the FPÖ's discourse becomes a dichotomous model. In the third step the FPÖ redefines the values with the tool of victim-victimizer reversal and threat-rhetoric in order to create hierarchization and to secure its dominant position. This legitimizes the party's self defining process *vis-à-vis* the *other*. As a result of the articulation of the self, the concept of the *other* acquires its definite shape with negative characteristics. The two constructed images are and remain in an unequal relationship.



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The party's rise since the collapse of the Iron Curtain highlights the significance of its rhetoric. What gives strategic importance to the FPÖ's definition of the "Austrianness" that the concept emerges during the EU enlargement process, as opposed to the candidate countries' population. Critical Discourse Analysis points out that language use influences social reality, as well as reflects it. In this study I have uncovered the discourse the FPÖ creates, but the question remains how this language use influences social reality, and whether the FPÖ can once more transform into electoral success a discourse very much in keeping with the coloniality embraced by the EU and documented in the other studies in this volume.



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<http://194.96.203.5/englisch/Program.htm> . or <http://www.fpoe.at> . April 26, 2001.

¹ See the whole document at: <http://194.96.203.5/englisch/Program.htm> or <http://www.fpoe.at>

² See these EU announcements at the concluding section in the documents of the European Commission's opinion on ...the applicant countries at <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement>

³ For further explanation of how power and discourse is interrelated, and why discursive power is relevant in analyzing political documents please see Sher's work, especially her discussion on symbolic power in chapter II. (Sher 2001 in this volume).

⁴ However, a political discourse is much more encompassing than a single party document, it includes a constellation of activities and institutions that create and maintain particular ideas and render them predominant, unfortunately some of these activities are hardly traceable, so I consider the party program still to be the central document in which the articulation of the party's worldview is summarized.



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⁵ The concepts of identity and culture are either used interchangeably in the document or together as "cultural identity." I use these terms in the same way.

⁶ In the English translation of the party program, some original German terms in brackets are inserted as reference points to the original German text. The intention of the editors of the party program was to reduce misunderstanding of the program, to contribute to its exact reading. However, the translations of the Germans words are usually very different from their official vocabulary meaning and they may vary from the line to line in the text. There are severe translation slippages in the text, the most prominent example is the word "*ethnisch*" (ethnic) which can be read four times in the fourth chapter as an original German reference point in brackets, although it is never translated as ethnic but rather as "historical," "cultural" (group) or once there is no translation at all (IV/1, 3). Nonetheless some pages later in the document the word "ethnic" emerges, it is only the fourth chapter, which deals with the concept of Austrian identity, from where this term is missing. Another example is "*Patriotismus*" which is translated as being "self-image" three times and only once as patriotism (III/1-3). The situation is the same with the expression "*Volksgruppe*." Sometimes the English equivalent is "historical group," sometimes "cultural group" according to the context of the sentence but never national or ethnic community (IV/1-3).

⁷ This German expression means "all patriotic forces" however, the in text it is translated "all people who believe in Austria" (III/4). Another illustration of translation slippage is the following sentence: "*Wobei von der Rechtsordnung denklogisch vorausgesetzt wird, daß die überwiegende Mehrheit der Österreicher der deutschen Volksgruppe angehört*" (IV/1). In the English translation of the party program it sounds like this: "The legal system in Austria presupposes that the overwhelming majority of Austrians is of German origin" (IV/1). An authentic translation would be: However, logically thinking the legal system presupposes that the overwhelming majority of the Austrians have ethnic German origin.

⁸ The term "*Heimat*" has three aspects in the text, which deserves protection. First in the Democratic Republic of Austria with its federal structure and the following sentences express its protection: "Austria's self image (*Österreichpatriotismus*) is expressed in the will [...] to preserve democracy, human rights, the rule of law and federalism ..." (III/1). "This dedication to Austria underlines a permanent task to preserve and develop democracy [...] Beyond that it means an obligation [...] to preserve its constitutional principles." (III/2). "...there is an ongoing commitment to develop and preserve Democracy for the people. This commitment includes the preservation of federal, [social and liberal] constitutional principles" (III/2). "The protective requirement of this fundamental right to the home country makes it clear ..." (IV/4). The second aspect is the people, historical groups of Austria: "So our country with its centuries-old historical groups [...] are subjects to be protected." "In Austria [...] cultural groups [are] subjects to be protected"(IV/1). "To protect the interests of the Austrian population requires full sovereignty..." (IV/4) The third aspect is the cultural identity of Austria. "The cultural identity (*Heimat*) is to be preserved, protected and developed...." "This means a special commitment to preserve [a viable environment and] to protect and develop the cultural traditions of civilization." "It means a protection of [the population and] the cultural identity..." (IV/2). "The basic right to decide one's own identity and culture has to be guaranteed to all Austrians." "The free acknowledgment of one's own cultural tradition (*Volkstum*) is a basic principle for the preservation and further development of the cultural values..." (IV/3). "It would endanger the right to preservation and protection of cultural identity (*Heimat*)... (IV/4).



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⁹ These are the following: "... a positive self-image (*Patriotismus*) which calls for a self-assured Austrian politics and a resistance to a decline in the cultural level." "We reject the politics that end in [...] a detriment of Austria's intellectual and cultural substance." "The modern trend [...] needs resolute intellectual resistance..." "So we need a new intellectual and cultural move to keep Austrian traditions and regional peculiarities alive" (III/4).