

'Wider Europe', the Mediterranean, Israel, and the Middle East

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Abstract

The paper investigates the apparent contradictions between the EU's 'wider Europe' scheme and its 'traditional' policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East. In particular, it will discuss the potential impact of 'Wider Europe' on EU-Mediterranean relations by paying attention to EU-Israeli relations and the EU's approach towards the Middle East conflict. In spite of various shortcomings in practice, the EU's Mediterranean policy reflected a relatively coherent line of (European) security thinking, which was motivated by 'rational' security interests. 'Wider Europe', on the other hand, derives from identity-driven dynamics in view of EU enlargement. It resulted in wide-ranging proposals concerning the future of EU-Mediterranean relations in general and EU-Israeli relations in particular, which may challenge the EU's approach towards the Mediterranean and Middle East maintained hitherto. The paper permits to highlight three aspects of EU security thinking, identity dynamics, and foreign policy-in-the making: First, change within the EU's foreign policy can be explained in terms of competing logics, while the logic of 'identity dynamics' currently seems to override previous approaches. Second, politics of inclusion/exclusion do not follow clear-cut lines. Rather, in line with the findings of social psychology, there is a third category, which could be termed 'simultaneously other and like'. 'Wider Europe' aims the creation of such a category, and Israel particularly qualifies for it. Third, 'wider Europe' accommodates and translates the EU's needs to redefine itself and its borders in view of enlargement. Thus, it is therefore a potentially powerful concept that is most likely to have a strong impact on the EU's foreign policy thinking in the medium and long term.

Introduction

Among the EC/EU repeated attempts to develop an adequate and coherent policy towards 'the south' (Grilli, 1993; Lister, 1997), the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) is certainly the most encompassing initiative (Commission of the European Communities, 1995; Barcelona Declaration, 1995). When the EMP, or Barcelona Process, was launched in November 1995, the Middle East peace process had just started, and it seemed possible to address the Mediterranean within a single, multi-layered framework. However, eight years later, the parameters of the EU's Mediterranean policy have changed. The Middle East peace process has collapsed, and the events of 9/11 have shifted the EU's focus of attention to the issue of terrorism and Islamist extremism (Gillespie & Youngs, 2000; Haddadi, forthcoming). At the same time, however, the EU itself is undergoing significant changes with important implications for its relations with Mediterranean states. The accession to the EU of Malta and Cyprus in 2004, along with the approval of Turkey's EU candidacy (at least in theory), have changed the composition of the EMP's southern participants. Combined with the collapse of the Middle East peace process, this development has eroded the EMP's regional dimension as it has become extremely difficult to foster regional co-operation between the remaining eight Arab Mediterranean partners and Israel. Moreover, the issue of enlargement has prompted the EU to reconsider its relations to those countries on the EU's southern and eastern borders that will not enter the EU in the foreseeable future. The Commission's recent 'wider Europe' scheme (Commission of the European Communities, 2003) can be read as an attempt to offer a 'consolation prize' to the economically and politically most 'advanced' new and old neighbours. Based on a benchmarking approach, this initiative includes the possibility of integrating the southern and eastern neighbours into the EU's single market in the long term.

The paper focuses on the EU's policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East in view of the 'wider Europe' scheme and the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) (Commission of the European Communities, 2003 and 2004). Focusing on the EU's southern neighbours, it will be argued that with the 'wider Europe' scheme, an important shift – if not a rupture – in the EU's external relations with the south is currently taking place. This is particularly the case if we consider the probable future scenario of EU-Israeli relations within the framework of 'wider Europe'. In fact, if implemented, Israel is expected to gain most from the 'wider Europe' scheme (Primor, 2003). But this leads to the question of whether 'wider Europe' will be compatible with both the principles of the EMP and the EU's traditional stance on Middle East peace-making.

The paper will start by pointing out the differences between the concept of 'wider Europe' and the EU's policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East maintained thus far. This part of the discussion will compare the new versus the old policy approach of the EU with regard to the Mediterranean and Middle East in terms of principles and expected outcome. Particular attention will be paid to the likely impact of 'wider Europe' on EU-Israeli relations and the implications of the latter for the EU's role and position towards Middle East peace-making. Subsequently, the paper will further

elaborate on the differences between 'wider Europe' and the EU's traditional policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East in terms of origin, motivation, and underlying logic. This leads to the question of how the policy shift within the EU's foreign policy-in-the-making can be explained. The main proposition of this paper is that 'wider Europe' derives from a fundamentally different 'logic' than the EU's Mediterranean policy maintained thus far. While the latter was motivated by rather traditional security interests within 'European' security thinking, 'wider Europe' is a consequence of EU-internal dynamics that are linked to question of identity against the background of EU enlargement. In this context, the paper will touch upon the much debated question of how 'interests' are linked to the concept of 'identity' in the realm of international relations. Finally, considering the explanation of identity dynamics for the re-formulation of the EU's external relations, the paper seeks to conclude on the potential of the 'wider Europe' scheme as far as the EU's security thinking and foreign policy in the medium and long term are concerned.

The EU and the Mediterranean/ Middle East: From EMP to ENP

Until the European Commission launched its 'wider Europe' proposal, the EMP was the main venue for the EU's relations to its southern periphery. Involving most countries of the southern Mediterranean, the EMP covers large areas of regional and bilateral co-operation in the political, economic, and 'human' fields. The achievements of the EMP thus far have been widely criticised on different accounts (Jünemann, 2001; Huld, Engman & Davidson, 2002). Indeed, the EMP did not live up to the expectations, for which there are a number of EU-internal and external reasons.

The EU's Mediterranean policy thus far also included a policy towards the Middle East peace process – or, alternatively, Middle East conflict – which was *de jure*, but not *de facto* separated from the EMP. The EU's policy towards the Middle East peace process consisted in mainly declaratory politics and diplomatic back-stage activity (Ginsberg, 2001). The EU also had an important role in the financing of common projects as long as the peace process was alive, and it has been granting substantial financial support to the Palestinian Authority, both before and after the collapse of the Oslo peace process.¹

Concentrating on the Mediterranean and Middle East, this paper suggests that the 'wider Europe' initiative represents a departure from the EMP and the EU's traditional role and stance on Middle East peace-making. Three aspects are particularly important in our context.

1. Regionality versus differentiation

¹ Among the international community, the EU and its member states contributed 50% to the Palestinian Authority in grants and loans between 1994 and 1998, accounting for € 1.5 billion. If the budget support to UNRWA, the UN organisation in charge of the Palestinian refugee camps, is included, the EU's financial aid between 1994 and 1998 accounts for € 2 billion. From June 2001 to date, the EU has been contributing € 10 million a month in direct budgetary assistance to the Palestinian Authority. Figures from the EU's official website at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/mepp/index>, accessed 11 November 2003.

The EMP has an explicitly *regional* focus. This goes hand in hand with the region-building approach it implies (Del Sarto, 2003b; Adler & Crawford, forthcoming). The underlying idea of the EMP was to create a Euro-Mediterranean region as an alternative approach to regional security. Of course, the EMP also includes a bilateral dimension, which *de facto* is differentiated. Nevertheless, the regional focus remained an intrinsic element of the EMP's policy approach, considered as 'one of the most innovative aspects' of the EMP (European Commission, 2004: 5).

The 'wider Europe' scheme, on the other hand, is an explicitly *differentiated* and *bilateral* approach (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). Indeed, the ENP operates on an individual basis, as it offers to upgrade relations to those neighbours that are politically and economically most advanced and/or show commitment to undertake serious political and economic reforms.² At the same time, unlike the EMP, the 'wider Europe' approach also stipulates the intensive involvement of the partner states in the country-specific definition of priorities and the path to take.³ 'Joint ownership' of the process is presented as important element of the ENP approach (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 8). As far as the Mediterranean is concerned, the Commission states that the regional dimension of the EMP shall be maintained to promote sub-regional co-operation in the south (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 8). But there is no doubt that 'wider Europe' no longer relies on the EMP's idea of an encompassing *Euro-Mediterranean* region. If the EU claimed in 2000 that in its Mediterranean policy '[m]ultilateralism is now as common as, and even prevalent over, traditional bilateral approaches' (European Commission, 2000, p. 15), the Commission now acknowledges that the regional dimension of the Barcelona Process is only a complementary element, which is limited to the promotion of *intra-regional* trade and *sub-regional* cooperation in the southern periphery at best.

Dealing with each country of the southern Mediterranean on a one-by-one basis certainly comports a far greater opportunity for the EU of exerting its political and economic influence in its neighbourhood. Nevertheless, for many states in the southern Mediterranean, the policy shift from predominantly regional to predominantly bilateral is certainly a positive development. Egypt for example, that tends to display itself as a particularly important player in Middle Eastern politics – as leader of the Arab world – can be expected to prefer an individual approach over a regional one. A similar consideration applies to Morocco, which is undoubtedly interested in upgrading its relations to the EU as much as possible, irrespective of regional developments (Académie du Maroc, 1996; Lister, 1997; Del Sarto, 2003b).

² Among others, the following incentives are proposed by the Commission: integration into the internal market and extension of the regulatory structures, preferential trade relations and opening of markets, integration into the transport, telecommunications, and energy networks as well as the European Research Area, new instruments for promoting and protecting foreign investments, support for integration into the global trading system, enhanced financial and technical assistance, and perspectives for lawful immigration and movement of people.

³ Mediterranean partners had repeatedly complained about the lack of sufficient consultation and involvement in the formulation of the country-specific Strategy Papers and 'National Indicative Programme' that set the priorities of MEDA funding within the EMP.

The 'wider Europe' proposal was also extremely well received in Israel. This country had always tended to consider the EMP as a 'straightjacket', in view of its advanced economic status and long-standing political relations with the EU (Del Sarto & Tovias, 2001). This was even more the case in recent years, as the difficulties and eventual collapse of the peace process inevitably spilled over to the regional dimension of the EMP.

Considering that among all the countries that are or will be situated at the EU's external border, Israel is most 'advanced' in its economic and political relations with the EU, Israel is most likely to benefit from the ENP. In this vein, the country may well be 'the leading star of wider Europe', as one observer has put it (Primor, 2003). Indeed, the status of EU-Israeli relations cannot be compared to the bilateral relations that the EU maintains to other Mediterranean partners: A full-fledged free-trade agreement in industrial goods between the EU and Israel is in place since 1995, Israel is the only southern Mediterranean state that does not receive any development aid in form of bilateral MEDA funding, and Israel is also the only non-European state that participates in the EU's Research and Development Programmes as equal partner. And indeed, EU officials presented Israel's integration into the EU's internal market as a very probable scenario of EU-Israeli relations in the future, provided that Israel was interested in such a development. In this vein, Commissioner Günter Verheugen stated: 'I consider Israel to be a natural partner for the EU in the new neighbourhood policy. (...) Our relations will be tailor-made and can range from the status quo to the type of close interconnection that we have with countries like Norway or Iceland in the European Economic Area' (Verheugen, 2003). It should be noted that some academics in Israel had been advocating that Israel should enter the European Economic Area, or achieve a similar status, long before that (Tovias, 2002). In the light of this possible scenario, 'wider Europe' implies that Israel will be de-coupled from the Mediterranean/Middle East, so to speak, by closely attaching this country to the EU. The probable outcome, however, has not much in common with the attempts to build a Euro-Mediterranean region according to the original idea of the EMP.

2. 'Wider Europe' and the EU's stance on Middle East peace-making

Considering the likely scenario of future EU-Israeli relations, 'wider Europe' may additionally have an impact on the policy that the EU maintained so far towards peace-making in the Middle East.

On this matter, the EU sought to maintain a more or less even-handed approach towards the different parties of the conflict – while aiming at reconciling different preferences of single EU member states (Dasberg, 2004). In general, this has led to accusations from both sides that the EU is biased, which, in this sense, is a rather positive sign. In fact, presupposing that neither side is innocent in a conflict such as the Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the accusations directed at the EU of being one-sided from both sides actually attest the EU a certain degree of neutrality. At the same time, Israel had repeatedly complained that the EU tended to make the upgrading of bilateral relations dependent on progress in the peace process.

The fate of Middle East peace-making undoubtedly impacted on EU-Israeli relations so far. Thus, until the beginning of the Oslo peace process, the EC/EU made the advancement of bilateral relations to Israel conditional on progress in achieving a solution to the Middle East conflict in general and the Palestine conflict in particular. With the beginning of the Madrid and the Oslo peace processes, EU-Israeli relations considerably improved (Sachar, 1996: 337 ff.). Soon afterwards, the EU and Israel entered into negotiations on the upgrading of the previous free-trade agreement, which was to become the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Free-Trade Agreement between the EU and Israel (Del Sarto & Tovas, 2001). With the collapse of the peace process in September 2000, political relations between Israel and the EU have recurrently turned sour. Israel repeatedly reacted very negatively to the EU's criticism of Israel's policy in the occupied territories, to EU declarations on the Middle East in general, and even more so to the EU's attempts to exert political pressure on Israel (Del Sarto, 2003a).

However, the EU's proposition of significantly upgrading its relations to Israel and to offer Israel a status 'like Norway or Iceland' (Verheugen, 2003) also implies that, in the future, the EU will have more difficulties in displaying an even-handed approach regarding the Middle East conflict, particularly in the eyes of Arab states and the Palestinians. This is particularly the case if we consider that other parties to the conflict are not likely to receive any comparable offer for the time being.

Moreover, according to the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* (10 July 2003), EU officials explicitly conveyed to their Israeli counterparts that within the 'wider Europe' scheme, the future of EU-Israeli relations will no longer depend on progress in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process (Sadeh, 2003). This may well be an overly optimistic Israeli interpretation of the EU's diplomatic parlance. In fact, the EU ambassador to Israel was more cautious on this issue, declaring that 'progress in the peace process, in particular the implementation of the Road Map, will facilitate the presentation of a convincing case for the substantial upgrading of bilateral relations' (Chevallard, 2003).

But the tendency of disconnecting the EU's policy towards Middle East peace-making from future bilateral relations to single countries in the region is clearly discernible. Thus, the EU recently reiterated its view that 'it will not be possible to fully build a common zone of peace, prosperity and progress unless a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is found. However, progress on the resolution of the conflict cannot be a pre-condition for confronting the urgent reform challenges facing our partners in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, nor vice versa ('Presidency Conclusions, Brussels European Council 17 and 18 June', 2004: 2, see also 'EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and Middle East, Final Report').

In the light of this re-assessment, it appears that within the 'wider Europe' scheme, the EU will indeed soften its stance regarding the interconnectedness between the upgrading of bilateral relations to Israel and the fate of the peace process. Together with the likely development of EU-Israeli relations, it is more than questionable, then, whether the EU will be able to maintain its ambitions of acting like an even-handed broker in Middle East peace-making. One may argue that by attaching the EU closer to the EU will ensure a greater influence of the EU on Israel, and thus reduce

Israel's reluctance of having the EU playing a greater political role in the Middle Eastern politics. Whether the other parties to the conflict will accept this assessment, however, remains doubtful. At any rate, a policy shift within the EU's Middle Eastern policy is clearly observable.

3. *Conditionality: From passive engagement to active engagement?*

A policy shift from the EMP to the ENP is also discernible with regard to the issue of conditionality. In the framework of the EMP, the EU had already introduced the principle of conditionality regarding its relations with the Mediterranean partners. Conditionality, however, was of a 'negative' kind. In fact, the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements contained the clause that the agreements may be suspended if the respective partner state violated stipulated principles, such as the respect for human rights. However, the EU never made any use of this principle. Neither did the EU suspend bilateral funding when, absurdly, the Egyptian sociology professor Sa'ad Eddin Ibrahim was imprisoned for conducting a MEDA-sponsored human rights project (Weaver, 2001). In general, the EU's lacking will and/or capability to effectively follow up on human rights issues has widely been criticised (Jünemann, 2001). At the same time, progress of other Mediterranean partner states in the stipulated reform process did not translate into any additional funding. In the context of democracy promotion, Richard Gillespie has noted for instance that 'while the EU has failed to give Morocco significant incentives to proceed further with political reforms, the people of North Africa have observed Europe granting "backsliding" Egypt some €351 million in aid over three years' (Gillespie, forthcoming).

Irrespective of the Commission's claim that the 'EU does not seek to impose conditions or priorities on its partners' (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 8), the whole approach of 'wider Europe' is explicitly based on the principle of *positive conditionality* – which goes hand in hand with a differentiated policy approach (Schumacher, 2004: 91-93). Indeed, only those states that share the EU's political and economic values and/or commit themselves to engage in reforms will have anything to gain from the EU's Neighbourhood Policy – such as a stake in the EU's internal market and increased assistance. While the single states will be actively involved in developing a country-specific 'Action Plan', as the Commission calls it, EU engagement will explicitly be conditional on the meeting of agreed targets for reform (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 16). This indicates that the EU intends to move from 'passive engagement', which characterised the EMP, to 'active engagement' with the ENP, as Emerson has put it (Emerson, 2004: 69-75). The aim of adopting a far more active role is also re-iterated in the EU's Security Strategy Paper of December 2003 ('A Secure Europe in a Better World, European Security Strategy, 2003).

With regard to the Mediterranean and Middle East, this 'shift of gears' can be expected to be highly relevant. If implemented, it can be assumed that receptive states such as Morocco or Tunisia will be even more encouraged to pursue their reform agenda. Conversely, states which are reluctant towards political and economic reforms would not benefit from increased aid or trade concessions. Thus, Egypt's on-going de-liberalisation process (Kienle, 2001) for instance, would neither be

rewarded nor ignored by the EU. In general, the principle of soft conditionality that is inherent in the 'wider Europe' scheme promises a notably increased influence of the EU, not only with regard to domestic developments in southern Mediterranean partner states, but also with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and wider Middle East conflict.

However, if the principle of 'active engagement' is to succeed and make any difference in the southern Mediterranean and Middle East, the EU must be serious regarding the incentives it can offer besides free trade in industrial goods. The latter is already covered by the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements which have or will be signed with all the Mediterranean partner countries. It is also necessary to assess whether the incentives offered in the 'wider Europe' scheme will be sufficient to encourage wide-ranging reforms, particularly as far as reform-reluctant states are concerned (Schumacher, 2004). Moreover, it appears evident at this stage that the EU's policy must be supported by sufficient financial means, which, at present, are rather meagre. Indeed, to say the least, there is quite an imbalance between the ambitions of 'wider Europe' and the € 225 million that are earmarked for supporting the ENP policy in the period 2004-2006 (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 24). The Commission's declared intention to work towards an increase of the ENP budget (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 28) should indeed be put into practice, if 'wider Europe' is to achieve even parts of its objectives. In addition, as noted above, it is not clear how the balance between the EU's political potential with regard to the Middle East peace process and the prospect of integrating Israel into the EU's internal market will be struck.

To sum up, the 'wider Europe' proposal stipulates that the initiative 'should not override the existing framework for EU relations with [...] the Southern Mediterranean Partners' (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). In fact, the Commission presents 'wider Europe' as a further development of the EMP, stipulating that the ENP 'will be implemented through the Barcelona Process and the Association Agreements' (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 6). But in view of the discussion thus far, there is hardly a basis for such claims.

In fact, the 'wider Europe' approach is a departure from the rationale and guiding principles of the EU's Mediterranean policy maintained thus far. Most conspicuously, 'wider Europe' contradicts the regional design of the EMP and its inherent region-building approach. While it downgrades the regional dimension to a complementary, and in fact optional, element, 'wider Europe' also potentially implies a 'de-coupling' of Israel from the Mediterranean region by attaching this country more closely to the EU than other Maghreb and Mashreq states. Concerning Israel, 'wider Europe' clearly implies a return to the logic of the EU's 1994 Essen Declaration, which conceded Israel a 'special status' (Extracts of the Conclusions of the Presidency of the Essen European Council', 1994). At the same time, 'wider Europe' seems to imply a softening of the EU's political pressure on Israel with regard to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, making the upgrading of bilateral relations between the EU and Israeli less dependent on the latter. Of course, the EU may still want to maintain some sort of 'conditionality' in EU-Israeli relations, as the above-mentioned statement of the EU's

ambassador to Israel indicates. For example, the EU may want to limit the offer of integrating Israel into its internal market to the territory of Israel within its pre-1967 borders. With it, the EU would act in accordance with its decision of not applying the 1995 free trade agreement to Israeli products manufactured in Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

However, together with the adoption of the principle of 'positive conditionality' on an individual basis, the New Neighbourhood Policy is also a departure from the EU's traditional stance on Middle East peace-making. In accordance with its declared aim, the approach of the ENP certainly promises a somewhat greater political role of the EU in matters of peace and reforms in the Middle East – provided that the EU considerably increases its budget for its new policy. Yet considering the EU's offer of possibly extending the 'four freedoms' to Israel – but for the time being not to other Mediterranean partners – the EU's ambition of being an even-handed broker in the Middle East conflict will be difficult to maintain.

Strategic interests versus identity dynamics

To a certain extent, the 'wider Europe' scheme addresses some of the shortcomings and in-built contradictions of the EU's Mediterranean policy so far. It also partly responds to regional and global developments of the last years and the negative impact they had on the Barcelona process. These include most notably the collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the persistence of violence, as well as the events of 9/11 and their aftermath. But this only partly explains the contradictions and departures that the ENP represents with regard to the EU's policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East maintained hitherto. How can we explain the policy change that took place within the EU's external relations, particularly with regard to the Mediterranean and Middle East? And what are the implications in terms of IR theory?

A further investigation into the origin, guiding principles and leading concepts of the 'wider Europe' scheme, as compared to the EU's Mediterranean policy maintained so far, leads to the assumption that 'wider Europe' relies on a basically different motivation and logic than the EMP. Three points deserve a special attention in this context.

1. Origin and motivation

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was undoubtedly motivated by self-interested security concerns. In this context, it is worth reminding that at the beginning of the 1990s, southern European states pushed for the formulation of a new policy towards the southern Mediterranean, because they felt particularly concerned by a number of developments in the south. These included, among others, the aborted elections in Algeria and their aftermath, the rising of Islamist fundamentalism in the region, and the issue of illegal immigration.

Conversely, the ENP is primarily a result of EU enlargement, as the Commission widely acknowledges (Commission of the European Community, 2003: 3-4). It was conceived as alternative

proposal towards old and new EU neighbours that for the time being do not have the prospect of becoming an EU member. The 'wider Europe' scheme was also concocted in the Commission's DG for Enlargement under the aegis of Commissioner Günter Verheugen, the Commissioner for Enlargement. The DG for External Relations, and here in particular the desks that are responsible for the Mediterranean and the Middle East within that Directorate, were initially not involved in the formulation of the new policy. In fact, the DG for Enlargement dominates the processes of further elaborating and concretising the 'wider Europe' concept and the ENP until present. Indeed, the Commission's internal 'Wider Europe Task Force' reports to Verheugen and is strongly dominated by DG Enlargement officials.⁴ Thus, in terms of EU bureaucracy and decision-making structures, 'wider Europe' and the ENP also 'physically' originate in the enlargement department and are dominated by the latter until present.

But if the ENP was a consequence of EU enlargement, then it is also quite evident that the EU's current reformulation of its external relations is intrinsically linked to questions of defining and delineating 'Europe' and its borders, and with it, to questions of EU identity. In this context, the notion that the ENP aims at creating 'a ring of friends', as EU Commission President Romano Prodi has put it, is as much telling as the concept of 'wider Europe' and the idea of 'neighbourhood' themselves.

2. Concepts and framing

Although the EMP was motivated by rather traditional security interest, it was framed in terms of region-building and allegedly shared values deriving from a common history and, more concretely, common interests. While the EU conceived security as comprehensive, the underlying idea of the EMP was that increased co-operation and interdependence in the Euro-Mediterranean region under construction would gradually replace conflictual relations and prevent conflicts in the future. Hence, the EMP was in large parts modelled according to the EU's own history. To put it in Federica Bicchì's words, the EU basically 'downloaded' the EMP from its own experience (Bicchì, forthcoming). This went hand in hand with a notably liberal agenda that underpins the Barcelona Declaration. Indeed, the latter extensively relies on liberal concepts, such as democratisation, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, co-operation, the involvement of civil society, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the like (Barcelona Declaration, 1995).

'Wider Europe', on the other hand, may well have been motivated by what we may call 'identity dynamics'. However, the ENP is framed in terms of 'interests'. Indeed, compared to previous documents relating to the EU's policy towards the Mediterranean, the documents on 'wider Europe' and the ENP are quite assertive and straightforward in stating what the EU's *interests* are. For example, the 2003 document states that close co-operation with its neighbours is in the EU's *interest*

⁴ While reporting to Verheugen, the task force is headed by the Deputy Director General of the DG for External Relations. However, it comprises 18 officials from the DG Enlargement, and only 10 officials from the DG External Relations. The composition of the task force can be viewed at http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/task_force_en.htm, accessed 21 June 2004.

in order to be able to provide security and welfare to its citizens in the future (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 3). The issue of co-operation in the effective control of borders is explicitly mentioned as a 'common interest' (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 6). Regarding the challenges deriving from poverty, autocratic rule, and conflicts in its periphery, the document unambiguously states – even formatted in bold – that 'the EU has a clear interest in ensuring that these common challenges are addressed' (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 16). Similarly, the 'wider Europe' document also clearly expresses the EU's interest in playing a greater role in conflict prevention and crisis management, explicitly mentioning the Palestine conflict and the dispute over the Western Sahara (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 12). So far, EU officials would acknowledge these ambitions, but had refrained from putting it clearly on paper in foreign relations key documents, such as, for instance, the Barcelona Declaration.

At the same time, 'wider Europe' intensively relies on the concepts of 'shared values' or 'common values'. However, the idea is not of creating common values with the neighbouring countries. Rather, the underlying rationale is to export the EU's own political and economic values into its periphery through material incentives. Thus, 'concrete progress demonstrating shared values' is a key benchmark on which closer economic integration with the EU will be dependent (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 4, 10). Similarly, it is stressed that 'the respect for shared values' (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 16), as the Commission nicely puts it, is a key condition for the deepening of bilateral economic and political relations with the EU. On other occasions, the EU stresses the importance of the 'commitment to shared values' of the partner countries, while subsequently listing the shared values *of EU member states*, such as democracy, liberty, rule of law, respect for human rights and human dignity (Commission of the European Communities, 2004: 12). With it, the EU acknowledges its ambitions of acting as a 'normative power' (Manners, 2002) in a surprisingly assertive way. Normative power, in this sense, relies on the principle of exerting influence in world politics and achieving peaceful change through the export of norms and values (Adler and Crawford, forthcoming).

3. EU perspective and self-perception

Differences between the EMP and the ENP are also visible in terms perspective and self-perception, or, to put it differently, in the way the EU considers itself and looks at the world. As noted above, the Barcelona process envisaged the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean area through increased north-south and south-south cooperation in a variety of policy areas. This went hand in hand with an emphasis on the notion of 'partnership'. Of course, the EU's vision and rhetoric in the framework of the EMP never fully corresponded to the EU's conduct of relations to its southern periphery in practice (Huldt, Engman & Davidson, 2002). It may well be true that, to a large part, the EMP was 'caught between the language of post-colonialism and the behavior of neo-colonialism', as Adler and Crawford have aptly put it (Adler and Crawford, forthcoming). The EMP nevertheless pointed to a

fundamentally different perspective and distinct guiding principle as compared to the 'wider Europe' scheme. The latter explicitly conveys a centre-periphery approach – with the EU obviously standing at the centre. Maybe with some exaggeration, the concept of 'Neighbourhood Policy' and 'wider Europe' is somewhat reminiscent of the 'backyard' approach that had characterised the policy of previous US administrations towards Latin America.

Thus, with the ENP, the EU is not only moving towards a greater assertiveness, but it also displays a new self-confidence regarding its role in regional and international politics. The means and the quality of the EU's foreign policy towards its periphery may still be predominantly co-operative, 'soft', 'civilian', and normative. However, there is no doubt that that with the ENP, the EU finally acknowledges the unequal power relations between itself and its neighbours openly, while displaying the willingness to use this power for pursuing its foreign policy interests.

In light of the discussion thus far, EU-internal identity dynamics lie at the heart of the formulation of the ENP. They influence concepts and guiding principles of this policy approach. Originating in the Commission's Directorate that is responsible for EU enlargement, and a direct consequence of the latter, 'wider Europe' represents a reassessment of the EU's external relations in view of the fundamental changes that have been taking place within the EU itself. The enlarged EU does not only find itself bordering new states, but it has also become larger in terms of population and territory – and thus more powerful in economic and political terms. Internally, the considerations of what the new Europe is and what it should be are reflected in the fervent discussions on the constitution that the EU is to adopt. In the realm of foreign policy, enlargement has resulted in the EU's rather explicit acknowledgement of its increased weight in world politics, along with a re-evaluation of relations to the old and new bordering states. With regard to the latter, the EU's re-assessment of its position and capabilities is translated into the EU's explicit intent to exert its power through a differentiated benchmarking approach, positive conditionality, a greater engagement, and increased assertiveness, which all rely on an explicit centre-periphery perspective. Thus, in contrast to the EU's Mediterranean policy so far, which was mainly motivated by 'objective' strategic security interests, the discussion suggests that 'wider Europe' can best be explained in terms of EU-internal 'identity dynamics'.

Competing 'logics': Explaining foreign policy change

In the case of the ENP, questions of how the EU defines itself and 'other' had a direct impact on the formulation of its policy towards its neighbourhood. Change in the definition of 'us' and 'them', as caused by EU enlargement, explains the new approach of the EU Commission towards the EU's neighbours, new and old. But how far does the explanation of the ENP in terms of 'identity dynamics' take us? And what are the theoretical and practical implications of the suggested distinction between the 'identity logic' and the logic based on 'strategic interests' which, as the discussion suggests, nurtured the EU's Mediterranean policy?

In terms of IR theory, explaining 'wider Europe' and the ENP as a result of EU-internal 'identity dynamics' reflects the contention that definitions of 'us' and 'them' impact on international politics, a claim put forward by many IR scholars over the last decade (Neumann, 1996; Katzenstein, 1996; Lapid & Kratochwil, 1996; Adler, 1997; Buzan, Weaver & De Wilde, 1998; Wendt, 1999). At the same time, our discussion refutes a central claim of orthodox neo-realists, namely that domestic or internal developments are irrelevant for explaining foreign policy outcome (Waltz, 1979: 18 ff., 65). Conversely, explaining the ENP and the policy change it implies in terms of 'identity dynamics' is consistent with both liberal theory and constructivist approaches. While both schools of thought give importance to domestic developments in explaining foreign policy outcome (Moravcsik, 1997), constructivist theory also explicitly acknowledges the mutually constitutive relationship between an actor's identity and the formulation of its foreign policy interests (Wendt, 1994).

Embedding 'wider Europe' and the ENP into an 'identity logic' also permits to accommodate an additional, but often overlooked, aspect of theories on political identity. This aspect concerns the assumedly neat distinction between 'us' and 'them'. According to research in political sociology and social psychology, processes of identification do not follow black-and-white patterns, and 'us' and 'them' are not the only categories that are relevant. Anne Norton has argued that in addition to 'self' and 'other' there is a third category, which she calls 'simultaneously other and like' (Norton, 1988: 45). According to this rationale, the definition and understanding of the 'self' is based on the recognition of the other two categories. This observation becomes interesting if we apply it to the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy. In fact, the ENP does not only aim at delineating the boundaries of the EU in relation to 'the other', that is, those states that will not enter the EU in the foreseeable future. Rather, it explicitly envisages the creation of a third category, which is neither 'in' nor 'out' – a 'ring of friends', in the EU's parlance. But it is also obvious that among the EU's old and new neighbours, there are states that are already closer to the EU in terms of values – more 'friends', so to speak – than others. Among all the states situated at the EU's southern and eastern borders, Israel certainly most qualifies for this category. Explaining the ENP in terms of EU identity dynamics, thus, accounts for the EU's explicit wish of closely attaching Israel to Europe within the 'wider Europe' scheme (Sadeh, 2003) – even if this may compromise or 'overwrite' the EMP as well as the EU's traditional stance on Middle East peace-making.

The proposed distinction between the logic of 'strategic interests' and the logic of 'identity dynamics' for explaining the shift from the EMP to the ENP touches upon the tricky question of how 'interests' and 'identities' relate to each other. In fact, distinguishing between two 'logics' does not imply that the concepts of 'interest' and 'identity' can easily be separated from each other. Within both logics, interests and identities intervene and intertwine, albeit in a different way. Thus, 'realist' strategic interests motivated the formulation of the EMP, which, however, heavily borrowed from the EU's own experience and international identity (Duchêne, 1973; Manners & Whitman, 1998; Nicolaidis & Howse, 2002) in terms of approach and narrative. Conversely, in the case of 'wider Europe' and the ENP, the relationship between motivation and narrative in terms of interests and identity is inverted: while identity dynamics motivated this policy, the ENP is framed in terms of 'realist' security and foreign policy interests. In this context, the export of the EU's rules of governance and values is part of the EU's 'realist' foreign policy interests and a fundamental aspect of EU normative power. To be certain, the aspect of exporting values and EU normative power was already present in the EMP's region-building approach (Adler & Crawford, forthcoming). But in this case, the EU was far less explicit about its intentions, aims, and interests as compared to the 'wider Europe' scheme. The logic of identity dynamics, therefore, led to a far greater assertiveness and self-confidence of the EU with regard to its 'objective' security interests.

Hence, the case under discussion certainly provides ample evidence for the theoretical argument that identities and foreign policy interests are interdependent and mutually constitutive (Katzenstein, 1996; Wendt, 1999). They condition and influence each other at different levels. Indeed, attempts to tackle 'realist' security interests may be framed in terms of identity, as in the case of the EMP. And questions of identities may be expressed in terms of interests, or even lead to a greater assertiveness in the pursuit of the latter, as the ENP indicates. However, the literature on the role of identities in international relations has occasionally been lacking analytical rigour regarding the question of how and in which way interests and identities are linked.

The distinction between the logic of 'strategic interests' and the logic of 'identity dynamics' that we propose is a question of analytical priority, starting point, and prevalence. While keeping the interconnectedness of interests and identities in mind, the discussion suggests that the relationship between interests and identities can be conceptualised in two different ways. In the first, identity provides the *framing* of security interests, while it also impacts on design and guiding principles of a given policy approach. In the second, identity dynamics are treated as *origin and motivation* of a given policy, which, however, may be framed in terms of concrete interests. Such an analytical distinction is useful in explaining different lines of EU foreign policy as well as *policy change* in view of EU enlargement. The distinction of the two logics is particularly conducive if we are interested in the origins, motivation, and reasons of policy change, as well as in the *process* of foreign policy making itself. In the case under discussion, the distinction between the two logics also helps to shed light on how a new approach came to override a previous one. In this context, the case of the 'wider Europe'

suggests that identity dynamics are far more powerful in motivating foreign policy than 'objective' security interests – which may be framed in terms of identity.

Moreover, while the 'wider Europe' approach is most likely to dominate the EU's relations to its neighbourhood in the years to come, the logic of the EMP will probably not be abandoned completely. Thus, we are most likely to witness an interesting interplay between the two different 'logics', supported by different groups of actors, within EU foreign policy making in the near future. Certainly, the friction between strategic interests and identity-driven consideration within EU foreign policy-making is by no means a new phenomenon, particularly with regard to the Mediterranean and Middle East (Greilsammer and Weiler, 1987). However, the analytical distinction between the 'interest logic' and the 'identity logic' may be useful for a better conceptualisation of EU foreign policy making and its outcome in the short and medium term.

Finally, in terms of IR theory, the analytical distinction between an 'interest logic' versus an 'identity logic' implies that a realist perspective may be useful to analyse particular aspects of EU foreign policy making. In fact, the 'interest logic' within our discussion strongly reminds of a realist rationale. In general, while concentrating on policy *output*, for instance, realism would lend itself to focus on the EU's 'objective' interests with regard to its neighbours, which may have changed. From a realist angle, regional and global developments of the last years, together with EU enlargement, may count as altered strategic conditions and capabilities, thus explaining the EU's foreign policy change. Similarly, a realist perspective may well be useful for analysing instruments and policy objectives. Such a perspective, however, remains superficial by ignoring that EU enlargement cannot be explained in terms of altered 'external' conditions alone. Moreover, a realist perspective is limited to assess 'given' interests in a vacuum-like environment, without further inquiring into the set-up and framing of a given policy. Thus, a realist framework of analysis tends to overlook the identity-based mechanism that motivated the re-assessment of EU foreign policy, along with the direct impact that identity dynamics had on concepts and guiding principles of 'wider Europe'. But integrating a realist perspective into a broader theoretical framework, as this paper suggests, may be highly useful for conceptualising EU foreign policy in-the-making, and explaining outcome.

Conclusions and outlook

The EU's policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East is currently being absorbed into the 'wider Europe' scheme and the New Neighbourhood Policy. A comparison between the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the EU's stance towards the Middle East conflict maintained so far on the one hand, and the ENP on the other hand, however, points to a number of significant differences in terms of policy approach and expected outcome. In view of the resulting contradictions between the two approaches with regard to the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the claim that the ENP is merely a further development of the EU's policy towards the south cannot be sustained.

This paper has tested the assumption that the EU's Mediterranean policy maintained so far and the ENP are the result of two different logics within EU foreign policy-making. While the former was motivated by rather 'classical' security interests – albeit framed in terms of identity, the ENP results from the EU's internal identity dynamics against the background of EU enlargement. These identity dynamics are currently 'overwriting' the logic of the EMP, which has been downgraded to support sub-regional co-operation and integration in the southern Mediterranean. The assumption that there is an internal competition and interplay between the two 'logics' within the EU Commission may explain the EU's efforts to present the two approaches as compatible, in spite of the obvious contradictions. It may also explain the expected attempts to reconcile 'wider Europe' with the EMP in the medium and long term. Thus, explaining the EU's foreign policy change in terms of competing, and fundamentally different logics, is helpful to shed light onto EU foreign policy in-the-making.

Both 'logics', however, are characterised by an intertwining of the concepts of 'interest' and 'identity'. In terms of IR theory, this observation further supports the claim that interests and identities in international relations are intrinsically linked and mutually constitutive. While keeping this in mind, the paper nevertheless suggests two different ways of conceptualising the relationship between interests and identities. The differentiation between the 'interest logic' and the 'identity logic' permits to treat one concept as analytically prior to the other. In this vein, it allows raising the question of whether 'identities' or 'interests' predominantly motivate a certain policy, or 'merely' provide the policy framing. Disentangling the two concepts from each other, as this paper proposes, may be a necessary prerequisite for conducting a meaningful foreign policy analysis and explaining outcome. With regard to the logic of 'strategic interests', the adopted approach partly incorporates a realist perspective. However, this perspective is put into a larger context, which goes far beyond the realist rationale. Thus, the paper also indicated that theoretical approaches that pay attention to internal identity dynamics do not contradict the analysis of clear-cut, 'realist' foreign policy interests into which identity dynamics may translate. And neither are these approaches inconsistent with the analysis of power, whether normative or otherwise.

Finally, explaining 'wider Europe' in terms of EU-internal identity dynamics does not only shed light onto reasons and motivations of the EU's current foreign policy change. The logic of identity dynamics also accounts for the concept and guiding principles of 'wider Europe' and the ENP itself. Thus, 'wider Europe' is a potentially powerful concept as it sprang out of, and accommodates, the EU's new assessment of itself, its 'other', and its 'friends'. The concept of 'wider Europe' is even more compelling as it additionally reflects the new position, needs, capabilities, and 'actorness' (Schumacher, forthcoming) in international relations of an enlarged EU. Thus, 'wider Europe' and the ENP can be expected to determine the EU's foreign relations and security thinking in the medium and long term.

Whether the concept of 'wider Europe' will be able to translate its potential powerfulness into practice, however, remains to be seen. This will depend on a number of factors. First, it will depend on whether the EU will be able to develop towards a more unitary actor in international relations and

to close the 'capabilities-expectations gap' (Hill, 1993). In this context, it will also be important to reflect on whether and how the ENP, the EMP, the EU's Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and the EU's CFSP can effectively be linked, as the European Council suggested (Council Conclusions on European Neighbourhood Policy). This is not only a question of approaches, but also of different players and institutions within EU bureaucracy as well as of different procedures. Second, it will be crucial to address the issue of potentially conflicting priorities, such as the inherent friction between the policy objectives of security and democratisation in its southern (and eastern) periphery (Haddadi, forthcoming; Gillespie, forthcoming). The same applies to the potential conflict between economic and political reforms on the hand and stability on the other. In this regard, 'wider Europe' maintains the same ambiguity as the EMP, an ambiguity that has increased in the post-9/11 era. In a similar vein, the EU should also reflect on the issue of how a greater involvement in Middle East peace-making as even-handed 'broker' and the possible non-conditional integration of Israel into the EU's internal market can be reconciled in practice. Third, impact and outcome of 'wider Europe' will depend on the EU's willingness to support the new policy approach with both concrete and meaningful incentives and substantial financial means. Finally, the outcome of 'wider Europe' and the ENP will also depend on the degree of co-operation with the US, which, for the time being, remains the far more important player in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

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