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# The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Transformative Power of Integration

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**Abstract** Our article analyzes the impact of the European Union (EU) on border conflicts, in particular how integration and association are related to conflict transformation. We approach this issue from a theoretically as well as empirically grounded constructivist perspective. On this basis we propose a stage model of conflict development, based on the degree of securitization and societal reach of conflict communication. We argue that the EU can transform border conflicts and propose a four pathway-model of EU impact. This model comprises forms of EU impact that are, on the one hand, either actor-driven or indirectly caused by the integration process and have, on the other hand, as their main target either particular policies or the wider society in border conflict areas. We then apply this model to a comparative study of border conflicts, thereby analyzing the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Greece-Turkey, Cyprus, Europe's North (EU-Russia) and Israel-Palestine. We finish with a specification of the conditions of positive and negative EU impact.

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Integration will help to overcome conflicts and maintain peace and stability: this was a widespread legitimization for European Union (EU) enlargement toward central and Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup> Yet the argument was far from new. Both academic discussions as well as the public debate have commonly seen European integra-

We are grateful to Gesa Bluhm, Olga Demetriou, Katy Hayward, Pertti Joenniemi, Kemal Kirisci, Yosef Lapid, Andrey Makarychev, David Newman, David Officer, Michelle Pace, Sergei Prozorov, Bahar Rumelili, Myria Vassiliadou, Jevgenia Viktorova, Tobias Werron, Antje Wiener, Haim Yacobi, and the reviewers and editors of this journal for their stimulating inputs, criticism, and support in the preparation of this article. Audiences at the Universities of Bielefeld, Hannover, and Osnabrück, Bilkent University (Ankara), the Viessmann Centre at Wilfrid Laurier University (Waterloo, Canada) and the copanelists at the BISA conferences 2002 and 2003, the ISA/CEEISA conference 2003, the ISA Annual Convention 2004, the ECPR Joint Session of Workshops 2004, and the ECPR SGIR Meeting 2004 have helped to shape and refine the arguments presented. We also thank Apostolos Agnantopoulos for his editorial assistance. This article builds on a research project on "The EU and Border Conflicts: The Impact of Integration and Association" (EUBorderConf), funded by a grant from the European Union's Fifth Framework Programme (SERD-2002-00144), with additional funding by the British Academy. See also (<http://www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk>) for further information.

1. Higashino 2004.

tion as a crucial factor in maintaining peace in (Western) Europe after World War II, and in particular in contributing to the lasting resolution of the Franco-German conflict.<sup>2</sup> Yet how exactly does integration help to bring about the peaceful transformation of border conflicts, and under which conditions? Is its impact always positive, or can integration also lead to the intensification of such conflicts? Does the power of integration extend to association? Until recently, these questions have hardly been addressed.<sup>3</sup> Yet there is a need to understand better the way in which integration and association affect border conflicts within the EU (for example, Northern Ireland), at its borders, old (for example, Greece-Turkey) and new (for example, areas bordering Russia in Europe's North), and in its associated near abroad (for example, Israel-Palestine). In addition, the EU is now also facing the challenge of a contested de-facto border, which the EU itself does not formally recognize (Cyprus).

In this article, we develop a theory of the power of integration and association in border conflict transformation. We propose four different paths of potential EU impact. We also use the five cases mentioned above to provide an initial test of our theory, allowing us to specify further some of the conditions under which individual paths have a positive or negative effect on border conflicts. The selection of these cases is not based on a distinction of different settings of conflict, such as interstate or intrastate conflicts, but on how conflicts relate to different constellations of integration and association. It follows the hypothesis that the EU's impact is strongest and most positive in situations where the border is fully a part of the EU, and all parties involved therefore subjected to the forces of the integration process. At the other end of the spectrum, we expect the EU's impact to be weaker in situations of association, although we would also argue that the power of integration might potentially be also at play in association agreements. Finally, we would expect the EU to have a negative impact in situations where the border conflict coincides with the outer borders of EU territories, as the need to enforce the *acquis communautaire*, in particular, the Schengen agreement, further divides rather than integrates these border areas.

Such a comparison across our set of case studies can of course only provide initial findings, which need to be subjected to further research in a larger number of cases. The nature of the paths of EU impact that we suggest in this article necessitates a wide range of qualitative research methods, which presuppose active knowledge of language and culture and are highly labor-intensive. Individual teams of researchers will therefore always be restricted to a relatively small number of cases. We thus see this article first and foremost as a contribution to the development of a theory of the impact of integration on border conflicts, the usefulness of which we will demonstrate in our case studies. We hope that this will spark further research projects along the suggested lines.

2. See Wallensteen 2002, 33; and Cole 2001.

3. More recently, however, see Noutcheva et al. 2004; Tavares 2004; and Tocci 2005.

To avoid misunderstandings, we also need to stress that our concern is with the impact of integration and association, not with the EU as a more traditional third party intervening in conflict resolution. This limits the scope of our argument, but it will also make it more precise. The question of the EU as a foreign policy actor in conflict resolution is an interesting and, with a strengthening of the EU's Common and Foreign Security Policy (CFSP), equally topical and challenging one, but it is different from the question of the impact of integration and association, and requires further reflections on the literature on CFSP as well as on third-party intervention, which we do not take into account in the following discussion.<sup>4</sup> This does however not mean that our framework cannot be applied to conflicts with EU involvement beyond integration and association,<sup>5</sup> but it would almost certainly have to be amended for this purpose.

In what follows, we proceed in three steps. First, we define what we mean by "border conflict" and successful (or "positive") EU impact. Secondly, we develop the four possible paths of such an impact. In a third step, we discuss how these pathways have operated with regard to our five case studies and then outline the conditions under which there is an impact, and whether this impact is positive or negative. We will refer to our empirical cases throughout the article as we develop and discuss our approach.

## Border Conflicts and Successful EU Impact

### *A Discursive Definition of Border Conflicts*

To begin, we need to define what we consider to be a successful or positive impact of integration or association on border conflict transformation, which in turn requires a definition of conflict. We follow a discursive definition of conflict as the articulation of the incompatibility of subject positions. More simply stated, we observe the existence of a conflict when an actor constructs his or her identity or interests in such a way that these cannot be made compatible with the identity or interests of another actor. Conflict is therefore discursively constructed. This means that, on the one hand, we do not consider violence as a necessary element of conflict; on the other hand, we do not regard as conflicts what the literature refers to as "latent" conflicts, in which an incompatibility is deducted from "objective" predispositions rather than actual communication.<sup>6</sup>

In a border conflict, actors construct and communicate their identities and interests in relation to a larger group, the overall identity or interests of which are seen as incompatible with that of another group. In the modern society of (nation) states, such "imagined communities" tend to be constructed as nations organized in ter-

4. For this literature, see, among others, Hill 2001; Smith 1998; and M. E. Smith 2003.

5. See Loisel 2004.

6. Efinger, Rittberger, and Zürn 1988.

ritorially bounded states, or aspiring statehood.<sup>7</sup> At the heart of a border conflict under these conditions is therefore the reference to a territorial border that is under dispute. In the case of Turkey and Greece, this involves primarily the delineation of the continental shelf as well as the status of some disputed islets in the eastern Aegean. In Cyprus, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) declared itself independent in 1983, although the island was already divided into two parts since the Turkish military intervention in 1974. The TRNC, and therefore the de facto border dividing the northern and southern parts of the island, has however not been recognized by the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) and, indeed, any other state apart from Turkey. In the Middle East, the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip since the Six Days War of 1967 clashes with the Palestinian aspiration for statehood in this disputed area. This situation becomes exacerbated by significant portions in both societies that aim for the establishment of “Greater Israel” or “Greater Palestine” respectively, that is, rejecting any territorial rights of the other side in the Holy Land.<sup>8</sup>

The case of Northern Ireland demonstrates how a border conflict can mutate from a conflict about a state border (between Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland) to multiple border conflicts (in the demarcation of republican and unionist spaces in Belfast, (London-)Derry, and other cities in Northern Ireland). Meanwhile the conflict about the actual state border has greatly diminished, although it has not altogether disappeared.<sup>9</sup> Finally, at the new border between the enlarged EU and Russia, it is not so much the location of the border both parties dispute, but rather the precise policy regime to govern this borderland, stretching from Finland, through the three Baltic, states to Poland. At the heart of this border conflict lies the issue of whether to establish a relatively stringent border management, as the EU wishes, or a more open and integrated borderland that prevents any form of exclusion, as advocated by Russia.<sup>10</sup>

One specific mode to capture conflict communication in our border conflict cases is securitization, which we define, following Buzan and Waever, as the representation of the other as an existential threat justifying extraordinary measures.<sup>11</sup> We observe a conflict when actors articulate an incompatibility by referring to another as an existential threat to the self. In doing so, we focus in particular on public discourse, as it is here that border conflicts gain political salience.

The case studies on which our argument builds have systematically analyzed instances of securitization in parliamentary debates, newspaper commentaries and history schoolbooks throughout the period of EU involvement in each conflict. In-depth interviews with policymakers on all sides of a conflict, as well as the EU, complemented the emerging picture, although their primary purpose was to recon-

7. Anderson 1991.

8. See, for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Tessler 1994.

9. See, for the conflict in Northern Ireland, Ruane and Todd 1996.

10. See, for EU-Russian relations, Johnson and Robinson 2004.

11. See Buzan et al. 1998, 21, 24; and Buzan and Waever 2003, 71.

struct one particular (“compulsory”) pathway of EU impact, which we will introduce below. We take our empirical examples from these case studies, for which a larger project team was responsible. A project Web site,<sup>12</sup> documents the results of these studies in an extensive working paper series, and we will quote from the working papers published there as appropriate to illustrate our comparative findings. The Web site also provides more extensive details of our methodology than we are able to offer in the space of such a composite study. In addition to the sources listed above, newspaper reviews and interviews with select individuals in border regions have also formed part of the empirical data set.

This approach allows us to assess degrees of securitization, which are to do with the extent to which individual attempts to securitize (so-called “securitizing moves”) gain acceptance by other members of the group or society, the frequency with which securitizing moves occur, and the extent to which a given group or society perceives the threat of the other as “existential.” A securitization in its strongest form is manifest in the argument that the 1974 coup in Cyprus, organized by the then reigning military junta in Athens, represented an existential threat to the Turkish Cypriots (and also, given Cyprus’s proximity to Turkey’s southern coastline, to Turkey), which justified the extraordinary measure of military intervention.<sup>13</sup> Similar examples of extreme securitization abound in the Middle East, where the references to alleged plans of the other side either to “push the Jews into the sea” or to transfer all Palestinians to Jordan and other Arab countries often rhetorically justify drastic measures such as targeted killings or suicide bombings.<sup>14</sup> While in Northern Ireland the threat perception did not in recent years reach such existential levels, both conflicting communities nevertheless continue to securitize the protection of their religious and cultural autonomy.<sup>15</sup>

We would also see the disputes in the 1996 Imia/Kardak crisis between Greece and Turkey as instances of securitization, even though the articulated threat was not one of wiping out an entire population—in fact, the dispute was over a rocky, uninhabited island in the Aegean. Yet the threat was still seen, on a more symbolic level, as existential for the Turkish and Greek states.<sup>16</sup> The same can be said for EU-Russian relations in which securitization also pertains to such “contained” threat perceptions on both sides. As far as the EU is concerned, these perceptions address potential spillovers of social and political instabilities from Russia to the EU, while in Russia there is a growing suspicion that the EU attempts to restrict Russian political, cultural, and economic influence in Russia’s western periphery through a reinforced border regime.<sup>17</sup>

12. See [www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk](http://www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk).

13. Adamson 2002, 170.

14. For the persistence of deep-seated suspicion in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, see Wasserstein 2003.

15. See also Mitchell 2006.

16. For the Imia/Kardak conflict, see Athanassopoulou 1997.

17. See, for example, Browning 2003.

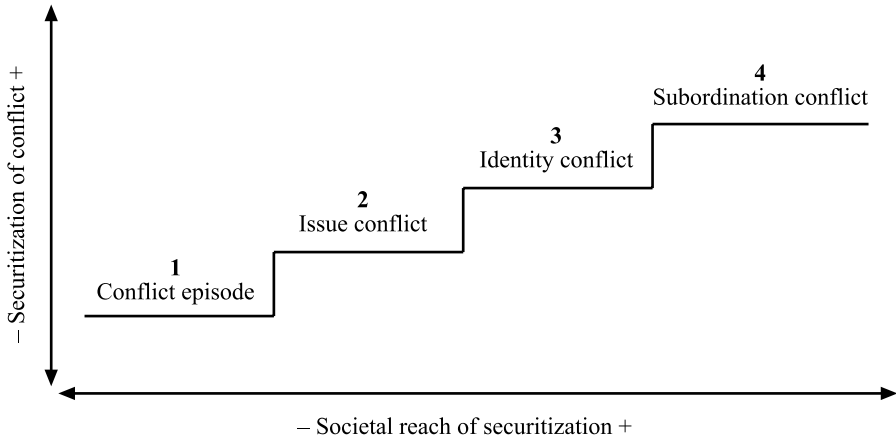


FIGURE 1. *Stages of conflict (as modified from Messmer 2003)*

#### *Stages of Conflict and Observation of EU Impact*

Our discursive definition of conflict allows us to conceptualize an ideal-typical model of conflict stages, which forms the basis for our analysis of EU impact further below. These stages are characterized by (1) an increasing intensity of securitization (a greater stress on the existentiality of the threat; an increased frequency of securitizing moves; a greater acceptance of securitizing moves); and (2) a greater infiltration of societal life by securitization.<sup>18</sup>

Conflict is at its weakest if the articulation of an incompatibility occurs as a singular, isolated incidence with no reference to an existential threat, which we call a *conflict episode*. An *issue conflict* displays conflict communication that is limited to a particular issue and contains no or few securitizing moves. Issue conflicts are largely about conflicting specific interests. Although identities are partly expressed through interests, at the stage of issue conflicts the parties do not explicitly invoke identities as such as part of the conflict. This, however, becomes the case in *identity conflicts*, where securitizing moves abound and conflict parties articulate explicitly existential threats to the “self.” Conflict communication begins to overshadow most spheres of societal life. In the final stage of *subordination conflicts*, the conflicting parties widely accept the existential threat posed by the other, as well as the need to counter this threat with extraordinary measures. Conflict communication dominates all aspect of societal life, including the interpersonal level.

We want to emphasize that from an empirical perspective, these different conflict stages are not discrete, but rather overlapping zones on a continuum between

18. See also Messmer 2003.

conflict episodes and subordination conflicts. The point of this discussion is not to be able to unambiguously classify a conflict as being at one or another stage, but rather to observe movements along this continuum over time. We may argue that integration or association have had a positive impact if we can observe that they have contributed to the movement of a conflict from a stage of greater conflict intensity to stages of lower intensity. When this is the case, we may observe, for instance, that the representation of the other side as an existential threat becomes confined to specific issues in both parliamentary debates and newspaper commentaries; that more actors contest securitizing moves instead of readily accepting and engaging in them; or that new editions of school books begin to stress commonalities, rather than incompatibilities, between the parties involved. Conversely, integration and association can be seen to have had a negative impact if a conflict intensifies and moves, for instance, from an issue conflict to an identity conflict.

*Border Conflict Transformations Through Integration and Association*

While the precise location of a border conflict on this continuum may be contested between different observers, we find that there is usually widespread agreement about the tendency of the movement of the overall conflict. If there is no such tendency, this is usually because of divergent patterns of interaction within assumed conflict parties. An illustration outside our five case studies is instructive in this respect: the conflict about Gibraltar might overall be seen as an identity conflict that has by now moved to the stage of an issue conflict as far as the British and Spanish governments are concerned, while in the articulations of many Gibraltarians it comes closer to a subordination conflict. This is not necessarily a problem for our research; it rather helps to specify where exactly a border conflict transformation has taken place, for such a transformation may well involve only some sectors of society, while others remain unchanged or move into the opposite direction. Indeed, it would not at all be surprising to find that at times integration has contradictory effects on border conflicts, which we need to observe and explain as such, rather than artificially trying to bring them into a single coherent picture.

Thus our five case studies cover a range of different conflict constellations, with different directions of movement between conflict stages. While in Northern Ireland the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA) succeeded in limiting previously widespread instances of intercommunal violence, which allow us to describe the conflict prior to the GFA as a conflict of subordination, it nevertheless reinforced the articulation of antagonistic unionist and republican identities. The Northern Ireland conflict has thus moved to a lower conflict stage, yet it has become “locked in” at the stage of an identity conflict.<sup>19</sup> A more pervasive move toward a relatively low stage of securitization has been achieved in the Greek-Turkish conflict.

19. Hayward 2004a. See also Hayes and McAllister 1999.

While important conflict issues, such as the delineation of the continental shelf in the eastern Aegean or the status of some islets remain disputed between both states, the overall political, social, and economic relations between Greece and Turkey have reached an unprecedented level of détente and cooperation, in which negative images of the other, let alone recourse to military means, are no longer a dominant characteristic of conflict communication in either society. Consequently, the conflict moved from the level of a subordination conflict toward an issue conflict.<sup>20</sup>

A movement in the opposite direction characterizes our three other case studies. In the Middle East, the failed Camp David summit of September 2000 preceded the outbreak of the second Intifada and the massive increase of violence by both Israelis and Palestinians. With the factual end to the Oslo peace process since 2000, the Middle East conflict has become locked in at the stage of a conflict of subordination.<sup>21</sup> While the demise of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, the Gaza disengagement, and reforms of the Palestinian Authority (PA) might pave the way for a resumption of this process, such a development remains far from obvious, given the massive opposition on both sides to any compromise on the various contested issues of this conflict (such as borders, Jerusalem, refugees, settlements). As far as EU-Russia relations are concerned, we observe that initially “isolated” conflictive issues (rights of Russian minorities in new member states, degree of cross-border cooperation, status of Kaliningrad) become increasingly intermingled with identity-related “narratives of exclusion,” thus indicating a movement toward greater securitization, which predominates at the stage of an identity conflict.<sup>22</sup> In Cyprus, hardliners have on the one hand been voted out of the government in the Turkish-Cypriot north, while on the other hand there is no or little movement toward less securitization in the Greek-Cypriot south. The conflict therefore remains at the stage of an identity conflict, and even a subordination conflict in some parts of Cypriot society.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Four Pathways of EU Impact*

Integration or association are always only one among several factors that influence the development of a border conflict, and empirically it is difficult clearly to distinguish between these various factors. Thus the transformation of border conflicts might also be related to the role of other actors (for example, the United States or the UN).<sup>24</sup> Moreover, European integration typically goes along with

20. See Vathakou 2003; and Rumelili 2004a.

21. On the Oslo process, see Lustick 1997.

22. Prozorov 2005.

23. Demetriou 2004a and 2004b.

24. Tocci 2005.



other, less institutionalized forms of international cooperation (for example, in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]), and is embedded in a process of globalization. Finally, democratization processes (for example, in Greece) stand in an often mutually reinforcing relationship with integration.

It is not possible to clearly separate these factors from integration on the basis of our cases because the latter are all similar with respect to the alternative explanatory variables. Indeed, the possibility of states to participate in European integration depends on this similarity, especially after the Copenhagen Criteria, and consequently it is difficult to find appropriate control cases. However, democratization, as a more tangible factor than globalization, as such does not seem to be a sufficient condition for border conflict transformation, as there was no weakening of securitization in Northern Ireland or Greece/Turkey while they have been democracies. Some studies even suggest that the process of democratization leads to a period of greater conflict volatility.<sup>25</sup> As we will demonstrate, our cases suggest that while processes such as globalization and democratization might facilitate border conflict transformation in the long run, other factors are crucial to make it happen. Our task is then to identify the specific contribution that integration makes to such a transformation.

The demonstration of the impact of integration and association, therefore, has to rest on a number of indicators that amount to a plausible story across cases. In this respect, the impact of integration is similar to the impact of ideas.<sup>26</sup> In order to tell such a story, we rely on a variety of social science approaches, which, rather than being incompatible, alert us to the different dimensions of EU impact on border conflicts.

We propose to distinguish four different possible pathways of EU impact in the transformation of border conflicts. These pathways relate to two dimensions: (1) whether the impact is generated either by concrete EU measures or an effect of integration processes that are not directly influenced by EU actors; and (2) whether the impact is on concrete policies or has wider social implications. In conceptualizing these four pathways of EU impact, we have made use of the work of Barnett and Duvall on different categories of power in international politics.<sup>27</sup> Barnett and Duvall distinguish between direct and diffuse power, on the one hand (close to our second dimension), and power through the actions of specific actors or through social relations, on the other hand (close to our first dimension). It makes sense to use Barnett and Duvall as a starting point, because “impact” signifies an effect of power, and because we agree that rather than setting different forms of power against each other, we need to think of them in a complementary way, and observe their interplay. We have also borrowed from Barnett and Duvall one of their categories of power (“compulsory power”) but have otherwise varied

25. See Adamson 2002; and Russett 1993.

26. Yee 1996.

27. Barnett and Duvall 2005.

TABLE 1. Pathways of EU impact

		Approach by EU	
		Actor-driven	Integration process
Target of impact	Policy Society	(1) Compulsory impact (3) Connective impact	(2) Enabling impact (4) Constructive impact

the labels for our different forms of impact to provide a better fit with the specific question that we are addressing.

Path 1 (compulsory impact) works through carrots and sticks, compelling actors through the mechanisms of integration and association to change their policies vis-à-vis the other party toward conciliatory moves, rather than deepening securitization.<sup>28</sup> The main carrot that the EU has at its disposal is membership.<sup>29</sup> In membership negotiations, as well as by setting conditions for the opening of membership negotiations, the EU insists on the implementation of its legal and normative framework, the *acquis communautaire*, including the resolution of border disputes.<sup>30</sup> This path is obviously dependent on the desire of the conflict party to become an EU member: if such desire is lacking, the conflicting party will not regard membership as an incentive to change its policies. If it does follow the EU carrot, this does not necessarily imply that it has altered its views of the other party or its beliefs about the conflict—the change may simply reflect strategic behavior. In that sense, while the compulsory impact is very effective in membership negotiations, its effects may be short-term and superficial. Yet, as Risse and colleagues have shown in their analysis of human rights and domestic reform, such strategic moves can, in the long run, and provided the right context, lead to deeper reforms through continued pressure and socialization.<sup>31</sup> In our case, EU membership can be considered a framework in which both pressure and socialization are likely, thus linking compulsory impact with what we will below call constructive impact.

In comparison with membership, other EU incentives can be regarded as relatively minor in weight and importance. Association agreements do not entail all the benefits of full membership, in particular not the symbolic importance of being

28. Dorussen 2001.

29. Wallace 2003.

30. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004.

31. Risse et al. 2001.

an EU member, as the debate about an alternative form of membership for Turkey has shown.<sup>32</sup> Financial or other forms of aid or free trade agreements, part of the traditional set of diplomatic instruments to influence third parties, can be important carrots especially outside the geographical neighborhood of the EU, but they are unlikely to be as sweet a carrot as membership. Likewise, the EU has few sticks at its disposal.<sup>33</sup> While it can impose sanctions, its most important stick consists in the withholding of carrots, in particular the threat of declining membership.

Path 2 (enabling impact) relies on specific actors within conflict parties to link their political agendas with the EU and, through reference to integration, justify desecuritizing moves that may otherwise have not been considered legitimate.<sup>34</sup> In conflict situations, civil society actors in favor of a peaceful resolution often fall victim to marginalization and ridicule, or accusations of being traitors. Alternatively, in the heated atmosphere that characterizes identity and particularly subordination conflicts, in which rally-around-the-flag effects drive policies, the public may push the governments and other political leaders toward further securitizing moves.<sup>35</sup> In either case, if EU membership or association is widely seen as an overarching goal, actors can use the legal and normative framework of the EU to substantiate their claims and delegitimize previously dominant positions. Perhaps ironically, if used by governments, this path relies on what is otherwise seen as a problematic feature of EU governance, its democratic deficit, in that political leaders use the EU framework to push through policies against the preferences of their electorate.<sup>36</sup>

Path 3 (connective impact) supports contact between conflict parties, mainly through direct financial support of common activities. Such contact is not in itself a step toward desecuritization. Sustained contact within the context of common projects may however lead to a broader societal effect in the form of social networks across conflict parties, which in turn should facilitate identity change as foreseen within the constructive impact below. Outside the EU, support for such activities largely takes the form of traditional grants.<sup>37</sup> At the EU's borders, as well as at member states borders, the Interreg program provides funding for such cross-border cooperation. Within the EU, the PEACE program in Northern Ireland is also an example of how structural funds, which are not part of the Interreg program, can be used to support specifically cross-border and cross-communal projects.<sup>38</sup>

32. Diez 2005.

33. See Smith 1998; and Hill 2001.

34. Buzan, Waever, and deWilde 1998, 41–42.

35. See Adamson 2002, for the case of Cyprus in 1974.

36. Newman 1996, 189; but see Moravcsik 2002, 612, for the view that decision making at EU level is much more tightly scrutinized.

37. Stetter 2003.

38. See Anderson and O'Dowd 1999.

Path 4 (constructive impact) is the most indirect but—if successful—also most persuasive mode of transformation, because it “aims” at changing the underlying identity-scripts of conflicts, thus supporting a (re-)construction of identities that permanently sustains peaceful relations between conflict parties. This pathway is based on the assumption that EU impact can put in place completely new discursive frameworks for creating novel ways of constructing and expressing identities within conflict regions. These new identity-scripts will foster desecuritization in a virtuous circle. Ultimately, this may lead to the eventual resolution of the conflict, that is, the disappearance of articulations of the incompatibility of subject positions. This is clearly a long-term process, but its applicability is corroborated by the claim that while there may not (yet) be a single European identity, “Europe” has become an integral part of the identity/-ies in each of the EU’s member states.<sup>39</sup>

There are two often-discussed influences of integration on conflict that do not seem to fit easily into the four paths as outlined above. The first of these is the essentially neofunctionalist logic that conflicts can be overcome by bringing actors to cooperate on functional matters, this process leading to a change in preferences and ultimately in individual “allegiances.”<sup>40</sup> Yet, there are in fact two mechanisms on which this logic rests: the facilitation of cooperation by focusing on seemingly technical matters, and the long-term shift of subject positions that this might bring with it. Both mechanisms are contained in the connective and the constructive impact, respectively.

The second possible gap in our scheme is the argument that integration leads to increased wealth and employment, and that this will take people off the streets and alter their preference structures so that violent conflict is no longer a desirable option—an argument often found in the early discussions on Northern Ireland in the European Parliament.<sup>41</sup> This possible influence can, however, be seen as an economic version of the constructive impact because it ultimately leads to a change of subject positions that is caused by the incentive structures within a European framework, the effect of which cannot be controlled through direct EU policies.

While we have presented all paths as possibly leading to a reduction of securitization, and therefore to a successful impact of integration on border conflict transformation, their influence can also be negative. Regarding the compulsory impact, this is for instance the case when new member states are required to implement certain policies to satisfy the *acquis*, which actors in neighboring states see as securitizing moves: the implementation of visa regimes on the border of Russia and the EU is an example.

Likewise, integration can enable actors to pursue policies that have the effect of intensifying conflict discourse, such as in the case of Cyprus after accession, where Greek Cypriots have adopted the discourse of a “European solution” to insist on

39. Waever 1996.

40. See Haas 1958 and 2001.

41. Pace 2005.

the four freedoms. In this view, the latter would have been compromised under the UN-sponsored Annan Plan for a solution in Cyprus, which had the backing of most other EU actors. EU policies can have a disconnective rather than a connective impact if new visa regimes make contact across the border more difficult, as is the case not only in Russia and Europe's North, but also between Greece and Turkey. Finally, and in particular in cases of conflicts between EU member and nonmember states, integration can foster the construction of a European identity in opposition to the neighboring conflict party outside the EU. Whether or not integration does have an impact on border conflicts, and whether or not such an impact is positive or negative can therefore not be determined in the abstract, but is a matter of empirical investigation. Furthermore, the different paths do not occur in isolation from each other. Instead, we need to observe their interplay, including the reinforcing effects between them.

### **The Operation of Pathways in Border Conflicts**

In this section we specify, on the basis of our pathway-model and the aforementioned case studies, whether and under what conditions integration and association have an impact on border conflict transformation. We argue that in most cases integration and association contribute to a desecuritization of border conflicts, thereby largely confirming our hypothesis of the transformative power of integration. However, there are also cases in which EU impact has led to a further securitization of the conflict. This leads us to establish the conditions of positive and negative EU impact. In observing change, we do not argue that EU impact operates in a simple cause-effect relationship. Instead, in many cases integration and association support rather than initiate desecuritizing moves.

#### *Compulsory Impact*

The success of the compulsory impact of integration is subject to three conditions. First, the compulsory impact operates most efficiently in situations of pending membership negotiations, while it loses much of its power without such a concrete offer and once membership has been attained. It follows that we cannot confirm our initial hypothesis that EU impact is strongest in cases of EU membership of all parties, at least in relation to formal policy changes. This pathway, second, crucially depends on the credibility of the membership offer. Only if a conflict party considers the carrot of membership an achievable option will it engage in desecuritizing moves. Third, the pervasiveness of the compulsory impact depends on the extent to which domestic actors internalize the legal and normative framework of integration.

Both the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom are members of the EU and therefore the Northern Ireland conflict is an internal conflict of the EU. Yet the compulsory impact has been rather limited. We can explain this by the fact

that during the preaccession period in 1973, the then European Community (EC) provided no facilitating conditions for solving the conflict. The EC of the early 1970s was a different institution from the EU of the 1990s, when the linkage between a resolution of border conflicts and entry into the EU had become part of official policies. In 1973 border conflicts were considered a matter of national prerogative.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast, the compulsory impact is most obvious in the case of Greece and Turkey. Since Turkey's EU membership candidacy, "policymakers [have been] careful to restrain themselves from further escalating crises, and worked toward improving bilateral relations."<sup>43</sup> Likewise, when Greece was a membership candidate, Greek policymakers were careful not to undermine their prospect of membership through an intensification of the conflict with Turkey.<sup>44</sup> However, in line with our set of contextual conditions, the compulsory impact of the EU on Greece decreased after the country had joined the EC in 1981. It also remained limited with regard to Turkey throughout most of the 1990s, when "Turkey did not perceive EU membership as a strong possibility."<sup>45</sup> In these periods, both Greek and Turkish policymakers repeatedly resorted to securitizing moves, at times coming to the brink of war. This illustrates how in premembership periods, without the constructive impact, desecuritization is often a tactical tool for achieving EU membership, rather than an intrinsic value for policymakers.

A similar effect can be observed in the case of Cyprus where the compulsory impact of the EU on both conflict parties was highly influential during membership negotiations with the RoC from 1997 to 2004. Yet it failed to pave the way for a long-term desecuritization of this conflict after the RoC had joined the EU, due to the instrumental approach of Greek Cypriot policymakers on possible concessions. The lukewarm approach by the EU, which tied "Cyprus' EU accession to the negotiation process for resolution of the conflict, but disengaged it from an absolute requirement that such a resolution be reached" did not foster the belief of Greek-Cypriot policymakers that concessions to the other side should be made.<sup>46</sup> Thus the rejection of the Annan-Plan by both the southern Cypriot government and the popular referendum in April 2004 showed the limits of the compulsory approach "when incentives and disincentives are not available at all stages of the conflict resolution process" and when the value of desecuritization has not been internalized by the political leadership and the wider society.<sup>47</sup> On the Turkish-Cypriot side, the compulsory impact was unlikely to set in because the official governmental position before 2003 had rejected EU membership under the condi-

42. Hayward 2004b, 5.

43. Rumelili 2004a, 7.

44. Pridham 1991.

45. Rumelili 2004a, 9.

46. Demetriou 2004b, 13–14. For a critique of EU policies toward Cyprus, see also Brewin 2000; and Diez 2002.

47. Demetriou 2004b, 16.

tions offered. Instead, the carrot of the material benefits of integration was largely aimed at society at large.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, this was one factor contributing to the mass demonstrations against the regime of Rauf Denktaş, although the crucial development that sparked off these demonstrations was not so much EU membership per se but a banking and general economic crisis in 2000.<sup>49</sup>

In Europe's north, too, the compulsory impact of the EU remained limited from the outset because the potential benefits of membership only extended to one side, Central and Eastern European countries, while Russia was deprived of carrots stemming from any form of closer integration. The impact of the membership prospect in compelling hesitant governments of the Baltic States to improve the status of Russian minorities is well documented in the literature.<sup>50</sup> However, this partial success of the compulsory impact has not been able to outweigh the increasing securitization in EU-Russian relations that emerged since the late 1990s in connection with the eastern enlargement of the EU and, in particular, the EU's unilateral establishment of the Schengen border regime at its eastern external border with Russia. In protracted negotiations, which related in particular to the status of Kaliningrad, the Russian political leadership opposed fervently the proposals by the EU for a strict visa regime. However, on the European side the fear of various insecurity spillovers from Russia into the EU prevailed and thus limited all attempts to provide for more significant integration between Russia and the EU beyond the vague concept of "four spaces of cooperation," which offers little in the form of a credible commitment by the EU for greater integration.<sup>51</sup> These developments led to the emergence rather than the disappearance of a new type of border conflict in Europe's North, a conflict in which the EU has turned into a main conflict party. It can thus be argued that as far as Russia is concerned, the compulsory impact of the EU has been "generative rather than ameliorative of new conflictual dispositions" between both sides.<sup>52</sup>

In the Middle East, membership of Israel or Palestine in the EU has not been considered an option, despite isolated voices in both Europe and the Middle East proposing EU membership of Israel as a carrot for obtaining Israeli concessions toward the Palestinians.<sup>53</sup> The compulsory impact of the EU in the region has until now remained limited to the association of both Israel and Palestine with the EU in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). However, despite its ambitious peace building and regionalization agenda, the EMP setting has not amounted to much more than a stronger economic integration of Israel and Palestine with the EU, with only a marginal impact on a desecuritization of

48. Diez 2002.

49. See Demetriou 2004b, 25–26; Diez 2006; and Lacher and Kaymak 2005.

50. D. Smith 2003.

51. Wallace 2003.

52. Prozorov 2005, 1.

53. Schael 2002.

the Middle East conflict.<sup>54</sup> Thus the entry into force of new Association Agreements with both Israel and Palestine in the late 1990s has not been able to prevent the massive violence that occurred during the Second Intifada (2000–2004). Nor has it been able to prevent a growing alienation between the Israeli government and the EU officials in this period, as a result of their divergent perceptions of the conflict in the Middle East.<sup>55</sup> It would, however, be inaccurate to dismiss entirely any compulsory impact of the EU on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus a report by the Israeli prime minister's office has recently argued that it is in Israel's interest to seek an internationally accepted solution to the conflict in order not to endanger its relations with the EU, which have become too important to Israel to be jeopardized.<sup>56</sup>

### *Enabling Impact*

For a pervasive impact of the EU on border conflict transformation, compulsory impact alone does not suffice. In order to successfully contribute to long-term conflict change, the carrot of integration or association must also empower a political leadership in conflict societies that is able to legitimize, through reference to the *acquis*, desecuritizing moves within their wider domestic constituency. However, this impact and its modalities are also dependent on contextual conditions. The first of these relates to the perceived legitimacy of references to integration for desecuritizing moves and to the basis of this legitimacy, which can be limited to a narrow political elite or reach out to a wider societal base. The second condition concerns the degree to which integration or association become overarching policy goals and overshadow the powerful securitization discourses in conflict societies.

In Northern Ireland the enabling impact of the EU has had a considerable effect. This was particularly true in the 1990s, when the Social and Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) of John Hume successfully linked its conflict resolution agenda with the issue of European integration.<sup>57</sup> However, the emergence of the nationalistic Sinn Féin as the largest Catholic party in Northern Ireland after the GFA also points to the limits of the EU's enabling impact.<sup>58</sup> This directly relates to one of our conditions formulated above, namely, the societal reach of conflict-diminishing political agendas. In Northern Ireland, a "lack of popular identification with the SDLP's pro-European ideology and with the EU in general" limits the pervasiveness of the enabling impact.<sup>59</sup>

In addition, the EC/EU offered an institutional framework that regularly brought the heads of government of Britain and Ireland together at European Council meet-

54. Stetter 2004.

55. Peters and Dachs 2004.

56. *The Guardian*, 14 October 2004, A1.

57. See Hayward 2004b, 7; and Laffan 2001.

58. See also Cunningham 1997 for such a critique.

59. Hayward 2004b, 7.



ings. During the 1983 European Council meeting in Brussels, for instance, “[Irish] Taoiseach FitzGerald and [British Prime Minister] Thatcher held their first meeting in fifteen months,” which was perceived as the major “turnaround in British-Irish relations at this time.”<sup>60</sup> Council meetings provided the opportunity as well as the legitimacy to engage in such meetings, which otherwise would have been met with far greater controversy.

As far as the relations between Greece and Turkey are concerned, the literature on the gradual Europeanization of Greek foreign policy documents well the enabling impact of European integration.<sup>61</sup> Rather than using Greece’s EU membership as a tool against Turkey, which was the dominant instrumental approach throughout the 1980s and most of the 1990s, Greek policymakers increasingly began to see the Europeanization of Turkey as a recipe for sustained desecuritization. The very existence of the EU as a reference point for “peaceful relations as a natural outcome of Europeanization . . . legitimizes, and renders rational, that Greece should work toward bringing its main rival into the European Union.”<sup>62</sup>

In a similar way the Turkish political leadership demonstrates a “perception of the EU as a successful security community, which defuses interstate conflicts . . . and serves to legitimize the joint efforts to gain membership in the EU and to resolve the outstanding disputes with Greece.”<sup>63</sup> A key effect of this growing relevance of the enabling impact on the Greek and Turkish political leadership is reflected in the shift of balance between advocates of desecuritization and securitization. As Millas has argued with a view to the period of sustained rapprochement since 1999, “[T]he talkers and the silent ones have changed places. There have always been both hawks and doves in the two countries. Before, the environment was hospitable to the hawks; now, it is more suited to the doves.”<sup>64</sup> There is little doubt in the literature that this hospitable environment came about mainly due to the legitimizing effect of the enabling impact of integration.<sup>65</sup>

As we have already argued above, a decisive problem with the compulsory impact in the Cyprus conflict has been the lack of internalization of EU norms on the level of the Greek Cypriot political leadership, which, despite long-lasting negotiations between 1997 and 2004, retained an instrumental approach to European integration. The situation in the Turkish north of the island was however different and here we observe a considerable role of the enabling impact in fostering desecuritization. This relates in particular to the empowerment of an alternative political agenda of the Turkish-Cypriot opposition, which successfully managed to couple the issues of détente in relations with the south, the entry of northern Cyprus into the EU, and replacement of the old Denktash government. This enabling impact

60. Ibid.

61. See Ioakimidis 1994; and Ugur 1999.

62. Rumelili 2004b, 16.

63. Ibid., 17.

64. Millas 2004, 21.

65. See overview in Rumelili 2004a.

of the EU became visible in the parliamentary elections in northern Cyprus in 2003, in which the peace-oriented opposition party, with its main election slogan being “Europe is within sight,” defeated the nationalistic Denktash government.<sup>66</sup>

The power of the enabling impact in northern Cyprus depends on the fact that the carrot of membership is still out. This fits well with Demetriou’s observation that the enabling impact has not gained a sufficient societal base on both sides that would be necessary to change the balance of power between “talkers and silent ones” in a sustained manner, as is the case in the Greek-Turkish conflict. Thus in northern Cyprus the failed unification of the island has “resulted in a heightened sense of public disillusionment about the ability of the EU to effectively and positively impact on the conflict.”<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, among Greek-Cypriots a new discourse has taken hold that insists on the four freedoms guaranteed in the European Union Treaty as the “European solution,” whereas the Commission has continuously stressed its willingness to accommodate a solution even if it makes temporary derogations from the *acquis* necessary.<sup>68</sup>

The securitizing effect of the strict border regime in Europe’s north between the enlarged EU and Russia has severely limited the enabling impact of the EU on this conflict. In a detailed study of Russian political elite discourses on Europe, Prozorov shows how the application of the Schengen border regime at the eastern border of the EU has triggered in Russia a “policy of ‘self-exclusion’ from the European political and normative space.” This policy finds strong supporters in “the entire spectrum of the political discourse in Russia,” including the once pro-European liberal-democratic camp.<sup>69</sup> While conservative political actors in Russia see EU-policies as a confirmation of their long-held suspicion that Europe is not willing to accept Russia as an equal partner, the impact of EU-policies on the traditionally pro-European liberals is of greater interest for our purposes. Thus rather than becoming advocates of desecuritization and greater integration with Europe, “the exclusionary practices of the EU have . . . antagonised the most ‘pro-European’ forces within the Russian political debate, severely weakening any future impact on Russian politics” through these actors.<sup>70</sup> In line with our set of contextual conditions mentioned above, EU policies toward Russia have contributed to an empowerment of those actors in Russia who advocate a more radical stance on the conflict, while silencing the political actors potentially favorable of greater integration and driving them toward self-exclusion in the Russian political debate.

The enabling impact of the EU has been the most pervasive pathway through which the EU has influenced the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This relates in particular to the Palestinian side, where Newman and Yacobi have identified a “social-

66. Demetriou 2005, 23.

67. *Ibid.*, 19.

68. *Ibid.*, 25.

69. Prozorov 2005, 1; see also Potemkina 2003.

70. Prozorov 2005, 10.

isation of policy-makers . . . into a ‘European discourse’” taking place.<sup>71</sup> They argue that this enabling impact of the EU has contributed, among other factors, to the establishment of a new factor in Palestinian politics, namely, a broad coalition of actors that started to push since the late 1990s for democratic elections, a real division of powers, a dual executive and the constitutionalization of the Palestinian polity.<sup>72</sup> While the emergence of this new movement has not prevented the increasing securitization of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after the failed Camp David summit of September 2000, it has nevertheless led to significant changes in this period, which unfolded after the death of Palestinian President Arafat in November 2004, when Israeli-Palestinian relations cautiously improved. Among these changes, Newman and Yacobi mention the enactment of a Palestinian Basic Law in 2003 as well as the establishment of the office of a Palestinian prime minister.

In both Israel and Palestine, it has become commonplace to refer to European integration as an example that conflicts between long-time foes can be overcome in a cooperative manner.<sup>73</sup> Accordingly, peace initiatives, such as the Oslo Process or the recent Geneva Initiative, are “associated with Europe” even if the EU has not actively participated in the design of these peace frameworks.<sup>74</sup> However, a central shortcoming of the enabling impact in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies yet again in the limited societal reach of these discourses. This has to do both with a deep-seated skepticism, especially in Israel, toward Europe with its history and the EU as a political actor in the Middle East, and the remarkable embeddedness of highly securitized views on the conflict even amongst moderates in both societies.<sup>75</sup>

### *Connective Impact*

As our examples have already made clear, the successful transformation of border conflicts depends on the extent to which desecuritization reaches out beyond the political elite and builds up a wider societal base. This serves as a rationale for the EU’s direct support of contacts between societal actors of the conflict parties. The success of these contacts depends, first, on the ability of the EU to support not only the already “convinced,” but to reach out to actors who would not adopt a desecuritization agenda without the EU’s support. Second, it depends on the extent to which financial assistance of the EU is accepted in conflict societies as a legitimate tool rather than as external interference into domestic affairs.

71. Newman and Yacobi 2004b, 23.

72. Jamal 2001.

73. A similar rationale underlies the EU’s approach to integrate Israel and Palestine into regional multilateral fora, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, thereby supporting Middle Eastern integration. See Asseburg 2003.

74. Newman and Yacobi 2004b, 7.

75. See, for example, Morris 2004.

The EU's connective impact on the conflict in Northern Ireland is widely acknowledged.<sup>76</sup> As Hayward argues, the EU played a "crucial role . . . shaping community development in Northern Ireland and the border counties [of Ireland]." <sup>77</sup> The main pillars of EU support are the Interreg program as well as the PEACE program, both of which operate under the umbrella of the structural funds of the EU. Their impact relates in particular to the development of manifold cross-border projects in Northern Ireland and adjacent regions in the Republic of Ireland.<sup>78</sup> The two iterations of PEACE between 1995 and 2004 received a combined contribution of nearly 950 million Euros from the Commission, about three quarters of the overall volume, with matched funding from the UK and Irish governments.

With both Britain and Ireland being members of the Union, the EU could make use of the cross-border component of the Single Market Program as an indirect means to desecuritize the conflict in Northern Ireland. As a "powerful, and neutral, economic actor or, more specifically, material benefactor . . . the EU has become a main stimulator for community development on both sides of the border."<sup>79</sup> What matters for our analysis, is that this massive financial support of the EU in Northern Ireland has led, despite various institutional obstacles in the rapid implementation of funds, to a remarkable desecuritization of intercommunal relations.<sup>80</sup> This is most obvious at the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, where strong financial support from the EU has transformed this border from being a protected line of division into an area characterized by cross-border economic and infrastructure development. Nonetheless, the impact has been limited in its overall societal reach. Thus, as we will argue below when discussing the constructive impact, the lines of division in Northern Ireland have not disappeared but moved to the micro-level of specific boroughs or streets which the connective impact of the EU has not yet permeated.

Large-scale direct funding of societal actors in Greece and Turkey has only begun after the bilateral rapprochement since 1999. The connective impact of the EU operates through two main grant programs, the first one being the Greek-Turkish civic dialogue program, which started in 2002 and has a budget of 8 million Euros. The second grant, established in 2004, provides 35 million Euros of funds for cross-border projects between Turkey and Greece under the umbrella of the Interreg III program. With these projects the EU attempts directly to support those nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the two countries that advocate a desecuritization agenda, but also, through the Interreg program, to widen the societal base of successful conflict transformation.

76. See Meehan 2000.

77. Hayward 2004b, 22.

78. Bradley and Hamilton 1999.

79. Hayward 2004b, 26.

80. See Teague 1996.

The relatively late timing of the actual establishment of these funds indicates that the connective impact has not been the driving force of desecuritization in the Greek-Turkish context. Yet it remains an important underpinning of desecuritization. This is particularly true for Turkey, where EU funding of wider societal organization—in the absence of alternative domestic sources of funding—has become a crucial factor in the Turkish reform process.<sup>81</sup> In an empirical analysis of EU funding in the Greek-Turkish context, Rumelili concludes: “[T]he impact of EU funding has been strongest in cases where the EU has specifically supported local and grassroots organizations, successfully combined the objectives of Greek-Turkish cooperation and Turkish civil society development, and facilitated the formation of new partnerships between Greek and Turkish organizations.”<sup>82</sup> Without a domestic environment conducive to intensified Greek-Turkish cooperation, these funding efforts would risk to support only the already “convinced” without making a larger impact on the conflict.

Through funding bicomunal projects in the framework of the Civil Society Program, which the EU launched in 2003, it aims to bring together Greek and Turkish Cypriot individuals and NGOs, thus making use of opportunities offered by the opening of the Green Line by the TRNC administration in April 2003. Before 2003, the EU supported Turkish Cypriot NGOs with a desecuritization agenda, in particular, the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce, the main driving force in the run-up to the massive pro-EU and propeace demonstrations in northern Cyprus in early 2003. The Chamber was particularly aware of the “impact of the international isolation of the north and the possibilities that a solution [to the conflict] coupled with entry into the EU could unleash.”<sup>83</sup>

While in Europe’s north, the compulsory and enabling impact of the EU are severely limited and have not prevented an increasing securitization of EU-Russian relations as a result of the strict border divide between Russia and the EU’s eastern external borders, the connective impact has to some extent been able to counterbalance this development. This is particularly true for the Finnish-Russian borderland, in which the Euregio Karelia, which is part of the Interreg program, provides for an institutional framework of cross-border cooperation on the wider societal level.<sup>84</sup> In addition, the Russian Republic of Karelia has throughout the 1990s been one of the main recipients of Tacis funds, which the EU provided for civil society development in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The overall positive assessment in the literature of the EU’s connective impact in Europe’s North has however one important caveat, the negative impact of the Schengen border regime outlined above.<sup>85</sup> This concerns not only institutional obstacles to a joint development of the border region faced by wider societal actors, but

81. Belge 2004.

82. Rumelili 2004b, 15.

83. Demetriou 2004b, 23.

84. On this region, see Forsberg 1995, and Prozorov 2004b.

85. See Prozorov 2004a; and Cronberg 2003.

also the disruption that the new border regime has introduced to traditional cross-border cooperation in this region.

Like the enabling impact, the connective impact of the EU in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is more pervasive than the compulsory pathway.<sup>86</sup> The metaphor that “the EU is a payer but no player” in the Middle East conflict illustrates this argument.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, the EU has in the 1990s become the single most important financial contributor to the peace process and supporter of the PA. Part of this funding included financial support for peace-oriented NGOs in both Israel and Palestine as well as to the development of a Palestinian civil society through the support of democracy projects and economic and infrastructure development.<sup>88</sup> This has sparked harsh criticism from the hawkish sectors of society. To pick but one example, a right-wing monitor group in Israel has claimed that the EU’s support of peace-oriented projects is contributing to the promotion of NGOs with an “extremist ‘post-Zionist agenda’” or “radical NGOs in the Israeli-Arab sector, which disseminate false allegations of discrimination and Israeli human rights abuses.”<sup>89</sup> This delegitimization of EU support measures as betraying the “national cause” can only be understood as stemming from the concern that the connective impact of the EU might eventually empower an alternative agenda to the dominant securitization discourse in both Israel and Palestine. Given the positive connotations of the reference to the “European integration experience” (as opposed to “Europe” as such) in the Middle East, such a concern may not be entirely unwarranted.

Yet the connective impact of the EU in the Middle East has had its shortcomings. Several authors have referred to the nontransparent and slow implementation procedures that hampered the overall pervasiveness of EU funding in the region, thus pointing to a problem that EU funding also encountered in some of our other case studies.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, there have been accusations that the PA misused some EU funding to support terrorist activities during the Second Intifada. While the EU admitted that “there had not been an adequate system of control over the use of these funds,” these accusations have had a negative impact on the EU’s role in the conflict because they underpinned a growingly skeptical attitude toward the EU in Israel over the past few years.<sup>91</sup>

### *Constructive Impact*

In our previous discussion of pathways we have often stressed the crucial role of the societal diffusion of a desecuritization agenda. Any long-term transformation of conflicts crucially depends on a change in identity constructions in conflict soci-

86. Stetter 2004.

87. See, in particular, Behrendt and Hanelt 2000.

88. Stetter 2003.

89. Steinberg 2004, 8–9.

90. Stetter 2003.

91. Newman and Yacobi 2004a, 35.

eties, to the extent that subject positions are no longer regarded as incompatible and the relevance of invoking previous conflict issues loses attraction.

In spite of the setbacks in the Northern Ireland peace process after the GFA, the conflict has not reached levels of securitization that characterized previous decades. This, according to Hayward, has to do with the fact that integration has offered an alternative frame for identity constructions in Northern Ireland and empowered “previously silent sections of the population,”<sup>92</sup> particularly in the mainly Protestant southern border districts of Northern Ireland. While initially these communities were hesitant to apply for funding under the PEACE program, over time more and more Protestant groups did, which led to a subtle reassessment of identities.<sup>93</sup> In this way, the EU has initiated a redefinition of previously inimical identities in the border region.<sup>94</sup> We do not argue that this identity change has affected all sectors of society in Northern Ireland, nor that it has permanently shifted the balance of power in favor of peace-oriented identities. Yet it has made possible many of the cross-border projects, which would have been unthinkable only a decade earlier. Furthermore, in the Northern Ireland context the EU became an explicit source of inspiration for reconsidering identities to such an extent that cooperation with the other side, once unthinkable, has become a reality.

The significance of Greek-Turkish rapprochement since 1999 lies not so much in the actual resolution of the various disputed issues, but rather in the societal diffusion of a sustained desecuritization agenda.<sup>95</sup> While before 1999 desecuritizing moves by the political leadership often met public rejection due to widespread nationalistic readings of the conflict, this situation has crucially changed after 1999. As Rumelili observes, prior to this period both Greece and Turkey employed references to “Europe” as a means of castigating the other as non-European, thereby drawing a sharp dividing line between the countries. In Greece, it was the acceptance of the country as member of the Euro-Zone in 1999, which paved the way for a “positive identification with the EU, which manifested itself in increased willingness to use the EU as a foundation for the resolution of its disputes with Turkey according to EU norms.” Turkey’s acceptance as a candidate country in 1999 “has accelerated the process of internalization of EU norms in Turkey, and paved the way for the perception of EU norms and procedures as a neutral basis to build a cooperative relationship with Greece.”<sup>96</sup> In other words, the normative framework of the EU has become internalized by a growing number of Greeks and Turks and this provided the societal basis for the aforementioned shift of balance between “talkers” and “silent ones.”<sup>97</sup>

92. Hayward 2004b, 8.

93. *Ibid.*, 12.

94. See also Meehan 2000.

95. For an illustration of this societal diffusion in the cultural sector, see Tarikayha 2004.

96. Rumelili 2004a, 20.

97. Rumelili 2004b, 26.

The constructive impact of the EU on the Cyprus conflict is manifested most prominently in the linkage between a solution to the conflict and the idea of Europe, which has become particularly visible in the massive propeace demonstrations in northern Cyprus in 2002 and 2003, where many demonstrators waved EU flags. The effect was to reshuffle political allegiances, as the demonstrations “established a connection between Turkish- and Greek-Cypriots who supported the same cause, even without being able to have contact with each other, and thus fostered a change of identification of the civil society of the conflicting parties from ethnic (Greek/Turkish) to political (prosolution and rejectionist).”<sup>98</sup> In southern Cyprus, the constructive impact operated in a less pervasive manner. While there are also examples of a linkage between EU membership and a prosolution approach, what dominated in the south was an attempt to link EU membership with a more nationalist agenda. This became possible because with membership only granted to the RoC, the northern part of the island could be referred to as being outside Europe. This conforms to our hypothesis of a potentially negative impact of integration on border conflicts at the EU external borders.

A similar effect resulting from a strict external border regime is at play in Europe’s north. The combination of various conflictive issues in EU-Russian relations, ranging from the stringent visa regime to different interpretations of the 1999 Kosovo war by NATO or the Russian war in Chechnya, have fostered a sense of difference between both sides. Thus the aforementioned sense of exclusion has penetrated the identity dimension of even pro-European sectors of Russian society. The lack of meaningful integration between the EU and Russia has contributed to a greater securitization of EU-Russian relations. Contrary to the situation during the Yeltsin presidency, when calls for greater cooperation and integration between the EU and Russia were more prominent, the subsequent years have been dominated by discourses that advocate an inherent difference between Russia and the EU on the identity dimension.<sup>99</sup> The flipside of this is the representation of the new member states in Central and Eastern Europe as “more European” than their bigger neighbor in the East.<sup>100</sup>

The constructive impact of the EU on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains limited for two reasons. On the one hand, the relatively weak integration provided for by the association of Israel and Palestine with the EU in the EMP setting constrains the pervasiveness of the EU’s constructive impact from the outset. On the other hand, a rather ambivalent attitude toward the EU on the identity level further limits the EU’s ability to become an uncontested reference point for a reconstruction of identities and sustained desecuritization.<sup>101</sup> This is particularly true for Israel where “anti-European sentiments” have proliferated in recent years, and

98. Demetriou 2004b, 25–26.

99. Prozorov 2005, 17.

100. Neumann 1998.

101. Newman and Yacobi 2004a.



where negative images of the EU have become part of securitization discourses.<sup>102</sup> As Peters and Dachs argue, the EU has turned into an easy scapegoat in Israeli public discourse. Thus “negative images of Europe in the Israeli media and political arena abound and are rarely challenged . . . The majority of Israelis regard Europeans as caring little for Israel’s long-term security.”<sup>103</sup>

These negative images with regard to the role of the EU in the Middle East conflict stand in a complex relationship with the positive endorsement that European integration receives in Israel. The growing number of applications by Israelis for a second passport of one of the EU’s member states reflect this, but also the results of several opinion polls indicating that 85 percent of Israelis are in favor of Israeli membership in the EU.<sup>104</sup> Torn between attraction to and historically and politically shaped suspicion of Europe, the “ambivalent relationship” between the EU and Israel limits the capacity of the constructive pathway to become an enthusiastically endorsed reference point for a long-term reconstruction of identities in this region.<sup>105</sup>

## Conclusions

Our empirical analysis allows us to derive a number of preliminary conclusions about the impact of the four pathways on border conflict transformation and their interplay as well as the conditions for positive or negative impact of integration and association, which we hope will be tested further in other case studies. As far as the compulsory impact is concerned, we have argued that this pathway works best within the framework of a credible membership perspective. If there is such a perspective or if negotiations are already under way, conflict parties avoid securitizing moves in order not to endanger the membership perspective. This has been the case in Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, as well as Central and Eastern Europe. However, without a credible membership perspective (Turkey before 1999) or once membership has been achieved (Cyprus), the compulsory impact loses much of its leverage, as it does under the condition of the weak form of integration offered by association (Israel-Palestine).

These structural limitations of the compulsory impact beg the question of the extent to which policymakers in conflict regions have internalized the norms and values of the EU and the degree to which they are able to legitimize desecuritizing moves through reference to European integration. Our analysis has shown that this enabling impact of the EU has played a major role in conflict transformation, either through a long-term socialization of policymakers into European normative

102. Newman and Yacobi 2005, 14.

103. Peters and Dachs 2004, 6.

104. *Ibid.*, 8.

105. Newman and Yacobi 2004a.

discourses (Greece, Northern Ireland) or the empowerment of alternative desecuritization discourses (Turkey, northern Cyprus, Northern Ireland). However, we also have referred to instances in which reference to the EU has, for different reasons, legitimized further securitization. Such a constellation becomes more likely if only one conflict party becomes integrated into the EU, while the other side is subject to a more or less strict external border regime (Cyprus, Europe's north) or if both conflict parties remain outside the institutional framework of integration (Israel-Palestine). In such cases, reference to the EU is often used in order to reinscribe difference rather than promote cooperation.

The EU encourages cooperation on a wider societal level *inter alia* through financial support of peace-oriented actors. The pathway leading to a connective impact is a key strategy, working either through directly supporting peace-oriented groups (Cyprus, Greece-Turkey, Israel-Palestine, Europe's north, in particular Karelia, and Northern Ireland) or through community development that only indirectly relates to cross-border cooperation, such as economic development in border areas (Northern Ireland). We have also, however, pointed to the disruptive effect of a strict external border regime on antecedent forms of cross-border cooperation, impeded by partial integration of conflict parties into the EU (Europe's north). We have furthermore emphasized that the connective impact of the EU loses in pervasiveness due to complicated funding provisions, which slow down, obstruct and therefore limit the power of this pathway (Greece-Turkey, Europe's north, Israel-Palestine, Northern Ireland).

Corresponding to our initial observation that conflicts are constituted by an incompatibility of subject positions, the most pervasive form of conflict transformation relates to overcoming such incompatibilities—hence our argument that the *constructive impact* is the most powerful, but also the most demanding, pathway of EU impact. The constructive impact depends—more than all others—on a high degree of integration and internalization of European norms of conflict resolution on a wider societal level. This is, at least to some extent, the case in those conflict societies that have for a long time been integrated into the EU (Northern Ireland, Greece), or where at least the credible perspective of integration supports such a gradual change of scripts (Turkey). This impact is largely negligible under the condition of association (Israel-Palestine), while it operates in a conflict-enhancing manner if cross-boundary measures clash with the establishment of a strict external border regime (Europe's North), or with particularistic interpretations of European identity (Europe's North, Cyprus).

A second condition for negative EU impact relates to the perception on the part of conflict parties that the EU is biased in favor of one side of the conflict. This reinforces preexistent negative images of the EU in conflict regions. The EU can then even become a reference point for further securitization (Israel, Russia, Turkey before 1999).

Through the prospect of, as well as the instruments offered by, integration and, to a much lesser degree, association, the EU has a significant impact on the transformation of border conflicts. However, unlike the much-cited example of the res-

olution of the Franco-German conflict suggests, this impact is by no means automatic or unidirectional. Rather, as, for example, in the case of Europe's north, this impact can also be negative and conflict enhancing. Mainly, however, the above analysis has shown that a study of the EU's influence on the transformation of border conflicts, and thus of the relationship between integration and peace in a wider sense, requires taking into account a variety of possible pathways of influence that bear on different aspects of complex conflict constellations. What we have offered in this article is a conceptual framework for studying EU impact on the transformation of border conflicts, which we found useful in the five examples that we have examined and that, we hope, will be further applied, and subsequently refined, in other cases.

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