

EUROPEANA

Backdoor Nationalism

Abstract

Contrary to expectations, the EU's eastward expansion in 2004 did not sound the death knoll of nationalism in the region; rather, it signalled its reinvention and, in some respects, reinvigoration. In this paper, we examine three ways in which nationalism has been redefined in Hungary and Poland in the context of EU enlargement. First, consensus on the desirability of European unification has lessened the importance of left/right party divisions; in its place, the "nation" has provided a fulcrum for inter-party contestation. Second, EU integration has provided nationalists in the region with a backdoor for realising old nationalist ambitions of national reunification across the porous borders of the EU. Third, we examine the way radical nationalist organisations in Hungary and Poland increasingly define themselves in opposition to the EU.

Keywords: Nationalism, EU enlargement, Poland, Hungary, East Europe.

WITH THE ACCESSION of eight East European states to the European Union in 2004, there was renewed hope that the nationalism that had plagued the region throughout the 20th century would be on the wane in the 21st century. The European Union's supra-national structures and ethos would ultimately supplant the outmoded model of the nation-state, already weakened by the inexorable advance of globalisation. The EU proffered not only a new form of European belonging antithetical to the particularistic national attachments rooted in the past; it also required its newest aspirants to get their national houses in order as a condition of membership in the new club. For their part, the new member states enthusiastically embraced Europe's official endorsement of their Europeanness and rewrote their laws to conform to new European norms. The EU thus presented its newest members with an opportunity to turn over a new leaf and abandon the divisive nationalism of the past. But at the same time, it provided these same members with opportunities for nationalist recidivism. Contrary to both the spirit and letter of the EU, accession opened a backdoor for East Europe's unreconstructed nationalists to

pursue their nationalist ambitions. They did this not (just) by evading EU policies and pronouncements, but by engaging and adapting them in new and imaginative ways. Indeed, the vagueness of the European project gave scope to would-be nationalists to fashion their national and nationalist agendas in ways that could appear (or be made to appear) “European”.

The purpose of this paper is to explore three ways in which this backdoor nationalism has emerged in Hungary and Poland over the past two decades. First, we consider the reconfiguration of the left/right political space along a new axis of national/non-national differences. A broad consensus on the desirability (if not inevitability) of European unification has contributed to the flattening of nascent left/right cleavages. In its place, the “nation” has re-emerged as a convenient fulcrum for inter-party contestation. This has not manifested itself as the virulent nationalism of the early 1990s but rather a softer version that distinguishes those political parties claiming to represent “the nation” from those who, by extension, do not. Second, we turn to the instrumental use of European discourses and institutions to accomplish the nationalist aims of kin-state politics. EU integration has provided nationalists in the region with an opportunity to realise old nationalist ambitions of national reunification in a new postmodern way. This is not actual reunification through territorial revision, but rather symbolic reunification across the porous borders of the EU’s newest member states. If these first two trends represent a certain taming of nationalism, the third trend we identify points to its radicalisation. In the third part of our paper we turn to the emergence and strengthening of radical nationalist organisations in both Hungary and Poland. EU accession in these countries coincided with the marginalisation of far-right wing nationalist parties and the emergence of radical nationalist groupings operating outside the political establishment. More recently, a number of these organisations have tried their hand at electoral politics with some impressive results. We suggest that the taming of mainstream nationalism is not unrelated to the unleashing of these more virulent forms of nationalism operating at the margins of the political establishment.

Together, these three developments signal important changes in the trajectory of nationalism in Hungary and Poland, and East Europe more generally. The EU would like to stifle nationalism, but paradoxically it has opened up a new political space in East Europe for its elaboration and indeed resurgence. By selectively examining different dimensions of nationalism and European enlargement side-by-side,

we posit a casual – but not causal – relationship between European unification and the transformation of nationalism. Our argument is that European institutions, regulations, and discourses provide diverse audiences and users with opportunity structures that serve multiple purposes not always consistent with the intentions of their framers (on political opportunity structures see, *eg*, Gamson and Meyer 1996, Marks and McAdam 1996, Princen and Kerremans 2008). This is a political opportunity structure approach in a weak sense: we do not suggest that nationalism in the region can be explained with sole reference to EU opportunity structures; rather, we simply observe new developments in nationalism in the shifting contexts of European enlargement. Our framework is exploratory, not explanatory. Contrary to expectations, the accession of the EU's newest members did not sound the death knoll of nationalism in the region; rather, it signalled its reinvention and, in certain respects, reinvigoration. The European Union has not impeded nationalism's advance but rather re-channelled it – albeit inadvertently – into new and vigorous forms (Smith 1992, Guibernau 2007).

Nationalising political space

Since the collapse of communism in 1989–1990, EU unification in East Europe has consistently been seen as a “return to Europe” (Batory 2002, p. 526). This framing captured not only the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of the re-incorporation of East Europe into the fold of Europe, but the moral necessity of it as well. As such, there was little room for dissent on the question of East Europe's relationship to Europe. As the political landscape of the region was reconfigured to accommodate new and different voices, there was consensus that East Europe's rightful home was in Europe.

To be sure, there was debate about EU unification across all the candidate countries. There were differences of opinion over the timing and mechanics of accession, debate over the often exacting conditions imposed by the EU as part of the accession process, and variation in the intensity of support coming from Euro-sceptics and Euro-enthusiasts (Batory 2002, Kopecký and Mudde 2002). But the expression of differences in these and other ways was constrained in two important ways. First, the basic proposition of EU unification was unquestioned and unquestionable: East Europe was, and always had

been, a part of Europe. The incorporation of East Europe into the institutional structures of the EU was thus simply the *status quo ante* recognition of this state of affairs. Unification in this sense was a moral imperative (Vachudova 2005, p. 4). Second, the debate that did take place did not underscore left/right cleavages but rather blurred them. The perceived triumph of neo-liberalism over decades of ruinous state-socialist planned economies, dramatically distilled in the events of 1989, left little room for questioning the ideological foundations of the EU (Vachudova 2005, p. 181, pp. 183-184). The basic features of the post-communist landscape – parliamentary democracy, neoliberal economy, and civil society – were preordained by the self-proclaimed victors of the Cold War (Bryant and Mokrzycki 1994, p. 6). These assumptions were not questioned in East Europe but rather embraced as an organic expression of the region's own values and norms. The transition to democracy thus enabled new forms of political competition, but did not lead to critical debate about the value of Western free market principles (Graff 2009). Unification, in this sense, was also a socio-economic imperative.

The question of accession became a centrist project promoting open markets, reduced public spending, and fiscal responsibility (Grzymala-Busse and Innes 2003, pp. 64-66, Marks *et al.* 2006, p. 163, p. 166). Through conditionality, the candidate countries were confronted with the hard constraints of accession, a list of things that needed fixing before they could join the European club (Vachudova 2005, p. 4). These constraints had the effect of flattening differences that might otherwise have taken shape along a left/right axis. Indeed, the only genuine opposition to EU unification came from (and simultaneously defined) fringe elements in the political spectrum (Kopecký and Mudde 2002, pp. 315-317, Marks *et al.* 2006, p. 163, p. 166, Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002, pp. 26-28, Beichelt 2004, pp. 34-35). Those left/right differences that did emerge among more mainstream parties were often difficult to predict, with successor communist parties singing the praises of the free market whilst their opponents on the “right” clung to the elaborate but crumbling social-welfare apparatuses of state socialism (Bakke and Sitter 2005).

But whilst these socio-economic dimensions of accession were not subject to serious debate, other axes of difference did emerge to give shape to the political field across the region. “The nation” for one came to be employed as an effective discursive device for differentiating those parties that represented national interests from those parties that, by extension, did not (Palonen 2009, pp. 321-324).

In a context where the ideological differences between the economic left and right were increasingly unclear, it became expedient for political competitors to draw on national (and sometimes nationalist) justifications to create the appearance (if not reality) of difference. In both Hungary and Poland, we see how incipient left/right differences were increasingly eclipsed by national/non-national distinctions along the long road to European unification.

Our argument here is that the EU provided not only the institutional context but also, in some ways, the discursive resources and even incentives for the reconfiguration of political space in national terms. EU conditionality established the institutional terms of accession; EU discourses elaborated its spirit. We are interested in the first instance not in the mechanics of conditionality but rather in the ways in which the accession process more generally has constrained the discursive possibilities for debate. Since the basic underlying principles of unification were taken as given, political debate shifted instead to the familiar terrain of the nation. A constraint was transformed into an opportunity: a national framing of EU accession offered its users ideological ballast, strategic advantage and, ultimately wider application and salience for the nation.

Hungary

This reconfiguration of the political landscape in Hungary is most strikingly evidenced by the transformation of the Young Democrats (Fidesz) from a left-leaning youth organisation with minimal parliamentary representation in the early 1990s to a national right wing governing party by the end of that same decade (Kiss 2003, Fowler 2004a, Bakke and Sitter 2005, Waterbury 2006). In spite of its centrality to the events of 1989, Fidesz fared poorly in the 1990 elections. Hungary's first post-communist government was formed instead by the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), Hungary's centre-right torchbearer of the nation. Four years later, Fidesz pegged its electoral hopes on an alliance with the left-liberal Free Democrats (SZDSZ); this resulted in a poor showing for both parties. The victorious Socialists squeezed Fidesz and SZDSZ out of their crowded quarters on the left; the right, effectively abandoned by the Democratic Forum, was left to more fringe elements (the populist Smallholder Party [FKGP] and the nationalist Justice and Life Party [MIÉP]) that were either unable or unwilling to gravitate to the

centre. In the following years, Fidesz recognised an opportunity to claim the right (and the nation that came with it) as its best strategy for future electoral success. This strategy paid off and in the 1998 elections Fidesz was catapulted into the government where it remained until 2002. Fidesz consolidated its position in opposition as Hungary's centre-right party of the nation and decisively reclaimed power in the 2010 elections by staying this national course.

This new and improved Fidesz rebranded itself as the party of the Hungarian nation. Whether in government or opposition, Fidesz publicly claimed to represent the nation's interests. This nation in Hungary spills out beyond its borders which were truncated by the peace treaties that concluded World War I. The national question in Hungary is thus understood and articulated as one that requires the defence of the interests of all ethnic Hungarians, irrespective of where they live. Fidesz appointed itself the official spokesperson for this nation; in so doing, it denied the role to others (Palonen 2009, p. 324). There was only one nation; therefore there could be only one official defender of that nation, and that was to be Fidesz (Weaver 2006, pp. 131-134, Szabó 2007, p. 139, Korkut 2009, p. 7). By usurping this role, Fidesz claimed to represent the widest, most undifferentiated swath of the electorate (Szabó 2007, pp. 132-133; see more generally Verdery 1994, pp. 11-13). Before, Fidesz had struggled to define itself; now, the nation provided the leverage it needed to distinguish it from its rivals.

A nascent left/right divide in Hungarian politics was thus transformed into a divide between those forces that represented the nation and those forces that, by extension, did not, could not, or would not represent it (Szabó 2007, pp. 145-54, Hanley *et al.* 2008, p. 410, Palonen 2009, pp. 321-324, Batory 2010, p. 37, p. 42). The nation served as a discursive tool for transforming all manner of political issues into national ones (Verdery 1994, p. 13). Social issues were recast as questions about the welfare of the nation, foreign policy decisions were subordinated to the national interest, and elections were contested on the terrain of the nation. Not unexpectedly, therefore, the question of European unification was ripe for national framing. European conditionality and the moral and economic imperatives of "returning to Europe" stifled debate on the socio-economic foundations of unification (Vachudova 2005). In Hungary, there was a general convergence in the orientation of all parties to the pro-market policies of the EU (Batory 2002, pp. 529-530, pp. 533-534). Even MIÉP, the most outspoken critic of the accession process, was reluctant to oppose unification outright (Kopecký and Mudde 2002,

pp. 307-310, Minkenbergh 2007, p. 270). Differences over the pace of accession between so-called Euro-enthusiasts and Euro-sceptics did not consistently congeal along the ill-formed pathways of left/right cleavages but rather tended to reflect the strategic concerns of particular parties as they traded places between government and opposition (governing parties pushed the pace of accession whilst the same parties in opposition often tried to put on the brakes [Lakner 2004, pp. 140-146]). It was in this relative vacuum of left/right variation that debate over European unification was increasingly framed in national terms (Batory 2002, pp. 528-530, Fowler 2004b, pp. 57-68; see more generally Vachudova 2005, p. 184, Marks *et al.* 2006, pp. 156-157; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009, pp. 290-291).

At first glance, the nation would appear to be a strange bedfellow for parties nominally committed to European unification. Indeed, Europe represented the vision of a postnational future for the continent. But in the idiom of the nation, Fidesz adroitly melded its European agenda with its national interests. For the MSZP, EU accession represented progress; for Fidesz, unification offered an opportunity to develop and promote the interests of the nation (Batory 2002, pp. 528-529, Fowler 2004b, pp. 73-76; see also Waterbury 2006, pp. 484-485). The three pillars of Hungarian foreign policy articulated and embraced by successive governments on both the left and right throughout the 1990s were rapprochement with the neighbours, defence of the interests of Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring countries, and European unification (Fowler 2001, pp. 2-3). For the MSZP, finding an appropriate balance between promoting the interests of transborder Hungarians without offending the national sensibilities of their neighbours or the non-national sensibilities of the EU posed no uncertain challenge (on the inherent contradictions of these policy goals, see Tóth 2003, p. 215, Saideman and Ayres 2008, p. 112, p. 128). For Fidesz, however, the same challenge presented itself as an opportunity: by championing Hungary's neighbours' bids for EU accession (Saideman and Ayres 2008, p. 124), Fidesz was able to mollify its neighbours whilst offering the Hungarians in the neighbouring countries the promise of a new (European) home in a borderless Hungarian nation, all without jeopardising Hungary's own chances for EU unification. The EU in this sense was not an obstacle for Fidesz's pursuit of its national objectives; it was a vehicle for it. European unification was pitched as Hungarian national unification.

Thus the interests of the nation could be invoked and deployed to differentiate Fidesz's approach to accession from that of its rivals

(Grzymala-Busse and Innes 2003). Such a framing proved useful in a political field characterised by its inchoateness. The nation provided Fidesz with a discursive idiom for distinguishing itself not only from its rivals' bland talk about "progress" but more importantly from their implicit neglect of national interests (Palonen 2009, p. 323). In this way debate about the EU became a national question.

Poland

As in Hungary, the debate about the EU in Poland was constrained by an underlying political consensus on the imperative of EU accession. All successful mainstream political actors held favourable views of the integration process and wanted the country to become a member of the EU as soon as possible. During the 1995 campaign for the presidency, for example, both Lech Wałęsa and Aleksander Kwaśniewski stressed EU membership as a crucial foreign policy goal even though they represented radically opposing political traditions and polarised the electorate with regard to most other subjects (Zubek 1997, Raciborski 2003, p. 223). In parliamentary elections, too, post-communist politicians (the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD]), post-Solidarity moral conservatives (including Solidarity Election Action [AWS]) as well as pro-business neo-liberals (like the Citizen's Platform [PO], established in 2001) all favoured EU accession. Radical parties were more openly critical but still shared the basic assumption that Poland had a right to "return to Europe", even if only to increase their distance from Russia. With this convergence around European unification came a quasi-consensual endorsement of the new market-oriented socio-economic model that the EU represented. Mainstream parties in Poland became less prone to describe their position as an ideological choice or as the representation of a particular class-based interest; rather, they sought to broaden their appeal to the widest possible share of the electorate. Nationalism thus began to function as a new form of interest articulation, a politics that symbolically included the entire nation in the decision-making process whilst more or less ignoring socio-economic concerns (Cirtautas 1994).

Polish political parties made use of nationalism as a key strategy of differentiation most clearly in the parliamentary elections of 1997 and 2005. On both these occasions, "the nation" emerged as the central axis of political competition. In 1997, nation-talk became the central framing strategy of a party that presented itself as the successor of

Solidarity, the AWS (Skłodowska and Dołbakowska 2004, Migalski *et al.* 2006, p. 168). The AWS defined its targeted voter audience not in socio-economic terms but in cultural, religious, and moral ones. This was a nationalist gesture that served two important purposes: first, it attempted to halt rising fragmentation among conservative-minded politicians by gathering a diverse group of politicians under a single banner; and second, it offered an opportunity to brand the moral viewpoints of the incumbent social democrats, the SLD, as un-Polish, thereby challenging them without questioning the deeper assumptions on which their socio-economic policies were based.

The SLD had introduced measures that were consistent with the principles of a globalising free market. The AWS, unable or unwilling to counter the SLD with a leftist discourse, instead discreetly endorsed a neo-liberal agenda whilst more openly promoting the notion that Polish nationhood once again needed defending (Ost 2005). This was a remarkable strategic choice for the AWS given the party's Solidarity base and historical defence of labour interests. By the 1997 elections, the party abandoned the substance of its Solidarity heritage and relied almost exclusively on its form – the symbols, visual images and slogans of the opposition movement of the 1980s (“we, the nation” against “them, the communists”, “we, the Catholics” against “them, the atheists”, and so on). The original Solidarity movement's use of nationalism was oblique; it had been a broad movement seeking to achieve the particular goal of better worker representation by challenging the representational quality and (national) legitimacy of the communist regime. Solidarity's implicit nationalism served to demonstrate that it could rely on broad networks of mobilisers among a large swath of the electorate that extended well beyond its worker base. The AWS, in contrast, inverted this strategy. It did not aim to represent workers in labour negotiations, but rather sought to broaden its appeal to farmers and the middle-class electorate to achieve direct power over policy-making processes in a broad range of fields. In doing so, it pursued a strategy that echoed and amplified the discourses and tropes of the old Solidarity whilst simultaneously moving away from its ideological underpinnings.

This strategic nationalism did not disappear from mainstream political discourse in the following years despite the fact that the AWS eventually collapsed under the strain of internal division. Several constituent parties (the AWS was an umbrella organisation) left the group to form new parties in preparation for the 2001

elections. Nationalism re-emerged as a mobilising strategy in the period between 2001 and 2005 when some of these post-Solidarity politicians regrouped around two new parties: Law and Justice (PiS) and the Citizen's Platform (PO). In the run-up to the elections of 2005, conservatives from PiS put aside their ideological differences in favour of nationalist rhetoric aimed at unifying them and differentiating them from their rivals (Skłodowska and Dołbakowska. 2006). PiS wanted to rekindle the patriotic feelings of the Poles, their sense of traditional moral values, and their faith in Catholicism in order to differentiate itself from its main competitors, the SLD and the PO. The party campaigned for full-scale social and political renewal to lead the nation away from its communist past and back to its real roots (Markowski 2006). The campaign reframed its moral, religious and ideological stances in explicitly national terms. PiS representatives insinuated (unjustly, as it turned out) that the father of the PO's presidential candidate, Donald Tusk, had been a volunteer in the *Wehrmacht* during the Second World War (and as such a traitor to the nation). Political opponents from the PO and the SLD who supported euthanasia, abortion, or same gender marriage were cast as "anti-Polish". Its own positions, ranging from harsher lustration laws, a new constitution, tax cuts, anti-corruption measures, and tough criminal-justice policies, were presented as matters at the heart of the Poles' national identity. This nationalist image was strengthened in 2006 when PiS formed a coalition with the League of Polish Families (LPR), a radical right-wing party.

Like the AWS in 1997, PiS's campaign to "revert to nationalism" was useful for distinguishing it from the self-declared left-wing party, the SLD. PiS also used the nation frame to avoid locating its own policy proposals (especially those dealing with the economy) on a left/right scale. Positions that may have appeared to the unbiased observer as leftist were characterised by PiS as simply "Polish" or, according to one of the party's slogans, "closer to the people".

PiS was even more effective than the AWS in linking its nationalist and its anti-communist agendas. The SLD fared very well in the 2001 elections but after that was plagued by corruption scandals. PiS emerged in 2005 to replace the SLD as the most important mainstream party. To that end, PiS did not merely argue that the implosion of the SLD was caused by internal party corruption; it argued that corruption itself was a symptom of the refusal of the SLD to break with the communist past and defend the Polish nation against the foreign (Russian) interests still deeply entwined with that communist

legacy. PiS was thus able to align its protest against corruption with nationalism. It argued that the SLD's corruption showed that the social democrats were still deeply implicated in a well-defined network of people with roots in the (essentially foreign) communist establishment.

PiS also linked Polish nationalism with Euro-scepticism. This helped the party differentiate itself not only from the SLD but also from the main pro-business party, PO. The SLD had been the party that had negotiated the terms of EU accession and PO represented the business interests that benefited most from that agreement. PiS could not deny that EU membership for Poland had been the SLD's major achievement, but it could promote a different (and more diffident) relationship with the EU. The party framed its more critical stance as a fundamental concern for Poland's national interests. This Euro-scepticism came at a relatively low cost since it was clear that it was not meant to, and in fact could not, jeopardise membership itself. Therefore it was ostensibly only aimed at strengthening the position of those who wanted more attention for Polish interests within the Union (Vermeersch 2010).

In unanticipated ways, then, the EU accession process provided the context for the reconfiguration of the political space according to the logic of national differences. In Poland, as in Hungary, the nation was used as a discursive means for establishing difference in an otherwise murky political terrain. EU unification did not bear witness to a lessening of nationalist tensions; rather, it channelled and transformed the nation in new and imaginative ways, reinventing and reinvigorating it in the process.

Using Europe

European unification not only revitalised the nation as a frame for marking political difference, it also helped its users achieve their national (and sometimes nationalist) objectives. The nationalist violence of the 20th century discredited (but did not eradicate) violence as the method of choice for matching nations with states. The European Union proposed a different solution to the national(ist) problem by proclaiming the obsolescence of nation-states and the dawn of a postnational era. The East European candidate countries were willing to forego violent means to the resolution of national conflicts, but they were less predisposed to renouncing their nationalist aspirations wholesale. They

instead found other plans for the EU. For Hungary and Poland, the EU did not have to dampen their nationalist ambitions; on the contrary, it could be an unwitting ally in achieving those objectives.

The European Union supplied the candidate countries with a veritable toolkit for resolving their national problems (see Keating 2004, Keating 2006). The EU's decentering of states and the boundaries that contained them made it possible to imagine, among other things, greater cultural nations reuniting across increasingly porous boundaries (Zielonka 2001, pp. 525-526). By challenging the hegemony of states, the EU afforded greater manoeuvrability not just to supra-state institutions but to sub- and trans-state actors as well (Paasi 2001, pp. 13-14; Keating 2004, pp. 373-374, Hoppe 2005, pp. 22-23, Gupta 2008, pp. 68-69). To be sure, the activities and ambitions of the EU were postnational in spirit, intended (if not expected) to engender a new European form of consciousness to supersede retrograde national attachments. But the opening up of this new and imperfectly defined institutional space had unintended consequences (Korkut 2009, p. 4, pp. 12-13). Some political actors, including certain Hungarian and Polish nationalists, were able to cash in on the perceived dismantling of the state not to supersede national attachments but to redefine and even revive them. Through the elaboration of minority rights regimes and policies aimed at co-ethnics in neighbouring countries (Brubaker 1996, Fowler 2004c, Saideman and Ayres 2008), nationally-minded politicians in both Hungary and Poland were able to promote and pursue distinctly national objectives. The EU of course sought compliance in the area of minority protection and attempted to temper some of the candidate countries' more excessive policies aimed at co-ethnics (commonly referred to as kin-state politics) (see, *eg*, Kelley 2004, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). But the exceedingly complex, ambiguous and, at times, contradictory nature of EU policy (coming from multiple institutions with amorphous and overlapping remits) ultimately provided the targets of those policies with room to manoeuvre (Kymlicka 2008, Sasse 2006). Domestic political agendas that might at first glance have appeared incompatible with the requirements of accession were nevertheless creatively manipulated to appear compatible (or at least not incompatible) with those requirements (Saideman and Ayres 2008). These agendas were of course not always realised according to plan. But they were fully articulated and at least partially institutionalised within the larger context of EU enlargement. Such was the case with nationalism in Hungary and Poland.

Hungary

The national question in Hungary does not, in the first instance, concern ethnic minorities within its borders but rather ethnic Hungarians beyond its borders. Since the reconfiguration of the region's political landscape at the end of World War I stranding millions of ethnic Hungarians in the newly created neighbouring countries, the question of the fate of the Hungarians beyond the borders has been the dominant national question. Hungary annexed half of the lost territories in World War II through an alliance with Nazi Germany. After the war (and the return of the annexed territories), an ideology of communist internationalism stifled open debate on the question.

Old nationalist grievances were unfettered by the changes that swept across East Europe in 1989 and 1990. In place of the discredited revisionism pursued in the first half of the century, however, Hungarian nationalists began to imagine and articulate new modalities of national reunification. But now Hungary, like the other candidate countries, had to reconcile its political aspirations within the institutional structures and discursive strictures of the European Union. As a first step in the mid 1990s, Hungary concluded Basic Treaties with its neighbours in which it formally renounced claims on its neighbours' territories in exchange for assurances of increased rights and protection for the Hungarian minorities living there. These gestures of good will were intended as much for the EU as they were for their historically apprehensive neighbours (Linden 2000, pp. 128-137, Vachudova 2005, pp. 147-151). This compliance with European constraints (in exchange for joining the EU's waiting list) put to rest earlier aspirations for territorial revisionism.

It was not long, however, before Hungarian politicians and intellectuals on both sides of the border began to view European unification as an opportunity for, and not an obstacle to, Hungarian unification (Kis 2001, p. 239, Weaver 2006, pp. 177-78, pp. 191-192; Saideman and Ayres 2008, pp. 123-125). The EU's weakening of political boundaries afforded Hungarian nationalists an opportunity to articulate and, to a certain extent institutionalise, a new deterritorialised vision of national reunification (Csergő and Goldgeier 2004, pp. 27-28, Fowler 2004b, p. 61, p. 69). Since the changes in 1989 and 1990, Hungary not only pursued its own path of European unification but also advocated the integration of neighbouring countries into the EU as well (Csergő and Goldgeier 2004, pp. 27-28, Fowler 2001, pp. 2-3). This support for its neighbours was borne not

out of good will, but rather Hungary's self-professed obligation to protect the well-being and interests of the Hungarian minorities in those countries (Saideman and Ayres 2008, p. 124). For all mainstream parties in Hungary, EU accession promised Hungary's incorporation into Europe; for Fidesz and its allies, accession was simultaneously the path to Hungarian national unification (Fowler 2004b, Waterbury 2006).

The fuzzy terrain of minority rights provided Hungary with one useful means for defending and promoting the interests of the Hungarians in the neighbouring countries (Waterbury 2008, Deets 2006). Adherence to minority rights and, indeed, acceptance of international monitoring of these norms was increasingly regarded as "a test of a country's readiness for European integration" (Kymlicka 2008, p. 14). But European discourses and policies on minority rights were sufficiently ambiguous to accommodate varied interpretations whilst conveniently providing the international legitimacy for buttressing individual interpretations. Hungary, like other candidate countries, readily signed on to the requisite minority rights instruments whilst simultaneously authoring its own minority rights laws. Its 1993 Minorities Law strengthened the country's reputation as an enlightened, pro-Western frontrunner in the accession process. It also provided Hungary with a legal platform for the elaboration of its own brand of collective rights, legitimated with reference to international minority rights instruments like the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Such references were selective, reflecting Hungary's national interests whilst ignoring other international laws and protocols on minority rights. Nevertheless, by appearing to meet and exceed European norms and standards on minority rights, Hungary's law could serve not only as a showpiece for general European consumption but, more importantly, as a new (and European) precedent that could be invoked to champion the rights of the Hungarians in the neighbouring countries (Schwellnus 2005, p. 60). Inconsistency, ambiguity, and even contradiction in international minority rights regimes provided fertile ground for Hungary and its antagonists to advocate minority rights in ways that suited their own national interests (Deets 2006, pp. 419-421, pp. 434-441).

But before the EU would become part of the national solution, it would first be a part of the national problem. Uncertainties and discrepancies in the timing of the accession process threatened to divide rather than unite the Hungarian nation. Hungary's entry into the Schengen Zone ahead of its neighbours placed a new European

border between Hungary and Hungarians in Romania, Ukraine, and the former Yugoslavia (Tóth 2003, pp. 209-211; Waterbury 2008, pp. 222-226). While Schengen weakened the internal boundaries of the EU member states, it reinforced the external boundaries that separated Europe from everyone else. This dilemma motivated Hungarian nationalists to seek alternative remedies to national division. The Status Law, sponsored by Fidesz and passed in 2001, was a package of entitlements designed to symbolically and institutionally incorporate Hungarians in the neighbouring countries into the fold of the Hungarian nation. Transborder Hungarians could apply for special Hungarian Identity Cards that would grant them privileged access to Hungary's labour market along with a series of incentives and entitlements designed to promote Hungarian national development in their countries of origin. The Status Law extended extra-territorial quasi-citizenship rights to the transborder Hungarians on the basis of putatively shared ethnicity (Fowler 2004c).

In so doing, it tested the limits of the EU's vision for a post-sovereign Europe. From the EU perspective, the principle of shared ethnicity enshrined in the Status Law clashed uncomfortably with its strictures against ethnic discrimination (and favouritism). Hungary responded to these objections by extending the law's guest worker provisions to all claimants in the neighbouring countries irrespective of ethnicity (effectively denuding the law of its *raison d'être*). In this regard, complying with EU requirements for unification trumped Hungary's aspirations for national unification (Kemp 2006, Waterbury 2006). But the law's Hungarian Identity Card survived the amendments, thereby leaving transborder Hungarians with a means for displaying their attachment to the mother country and cashing in on some of its more modest symbolic and material benefits.

The next attempt to incorporate the transborder Hungarians into the fold of the nation came in 2004 from the World Federation of Hungarians (with political backing from Fidesz) when it recycled plans for dual citizenship for transborder Hungarians that had originally been on the table in the mid 1990s (Culic 2006). The new plans were pitched as reflecting (if not pioneering) the EU's commitment to the deterritorialisation of citizenship. A sceptical EU, watching from the sidelines, however, breathed a sigh of relief when the 2004 referendum on dual citizenship failed owing to low voter turnout (Kovács 2006, pp. 440-443). No referendum was needed, though, for the latest incarnation of dual citizenship after Fidesz secured a two-thirds parliamentary majority in the 2010 elections. With its new

majority, Fidesz simply passed a new citizenship law that abolished earlier residency requirements for citizenship for ethnic Hungarians. Dual citizenship is now on offer for transborder Hungarians.

Whilst the EU has had some success in asserting the institutional limits of post-sovereignty, it has been more difficult for it to rein in some of the excesses of nationalist discourses. Indeed, Hungarian nationalists beat the EU at its own game by appropriating and adapting postnational European discourses to do the work of Hungarian nationalism. This is perhaps best evidenced in Hungarian nationalists' invocation of a "Europe of Regions". Vaguely defined and inconsistently institutionalised, a Europe of Regions offered Fidesz a discursive opportunity for expressing nationalist ambitions (Keating 2004, pp. 376-380). In theory, a Europe of Regions was intended to promote decentralisation in order to facilitate administrative coordination and economic development between different levels of government both within and across states (Paasi 2001, pp. 13-15, Brusis 2002, p. 534, p. 539). In practice, a Europe of Regions was discursively malleable enough to afford various actors with a language for expressing sub- and trans-state forms of nationalism (Batt 2002, p. 10, Keating 2004, pp. 376-380; see more generally McGarry and Keating 2006). Nationalists could thus pursue their goals by bypassing the states in which they were situated in favour of these other forms of political organisation (Hoppe 2005, pp. 13-14, pp. 22-23). Viktor Orbán, Fidesz's president and prime minister of Hungary from 1998 to 2002 and again since 2010, creatively rewrote a "Europe of Regions" into a "Europe of National Communities" (Csergő and Goldgeier 2004, pp. 27-28, Batory 2010, pp. 40-41). The new decentralised vision of a Europe of Regions with its weakened states and strengthened forms of non-state governance provided both a discursive and ultimately institutional space in which nationalists could operate and indeed thrive (Csergő and Goldgeier 2004, pp. 25-26, Hoppe 2005, p. 13, Gupta 2008, p. 68).

The European Union was alternately an impediment and facilitator of the nationalist ambitions of different political actors within its borders (Hoppe 2005, p. 13, Gupta 2008, pp. 63-64). On the one hand, nationalism and its retrograde derivatives were incompatible with the EU's plans for a postnational Europe. On the other hand, the European Union and its various discursive and institutional accoutrements served as a resource for sub- and trans-state actors intent on pursuing nationalist agendas. Hungarian nationalism responded and developed not only to the constraints of the requirements of European

accession but also more creatively to the vaguely defined vision of post-sovereignty in Europe.

Poland

In Poland, too, the EU served as a resource for nationalists who aspired to realise the symbolic reunification of the nation across state borders. In this case, however, the focus was not on Poles in new EU states; rather, attention was turned further east to Poles in Ukraine and Belarus (Burant 1993). These territories, collectively known as the *kresy* or ‘frontier lands’, had been part of Poland before the Second World War and are still viewed by many Poles as part of their nation, or even a mythic homeland (Czapliński 2000).

The *kresy* has not been a central concern to Polish nationalism for some time. After World War II, Polish nationalists were focused on creating a new Polish nation out of the people who lived within the new borders of the state. Even the communists committed themselves to this task and sought to develop what some have called “ethnic communism”, a communist system of and for ethnic Poles (Snyder 2003, pp. 202–214; see also Zaremba 2001). The new post-war Polish demography lent its support to this idea: the composition of Poland’s population had changed fundamentally through the wartime extermination of large parts of the Jewish and Roma populations and the Soviet-sponsored population transfers of 750,000 Poles from Soviet Ukraine to Poland and three million Germans from Poland to Germany. Communist Poland introduced “repolonisation” campaigns to deal with “Germanised Poles” and other minorities (Majdacyk 1998). At the same time, links between Poland and the ethnic Poles beyond the borders were suppressed.

In the context of EU accession, however, the question of the *kresy* gradually re-emerged with Polish nationalists elaborating increasingly outspoken kin-state politics in two ways. First, they stressed the need to demand increased protection for (Polish) national minorities in Belarus and Ukraine as a nationalist concern that was consistent with the EU’s external policy goals of democracy promotion and good relations with the new neighbouring states (Browning and Joenniemi 2008). A broad range of Polish politicians became strong advocates of the EU’s neighbourhood policy through the promotion of closer relationships with the eastern neighbours, in particular with Ukraine. Such relations were also tied to certain requirements in the field of

minority protection. This conditionality created an opportunity to merge nationalist ideals with the larger European aims of democratisation and the fostering of international stability in the larger European space beyond state borders.

Second, kin-state politics was given increased attention in the context of the EU's external border regulations. The more the EU influenced the elaboration of Poland's new visa regimes and border regulations intended to ensure effective monitoring of the EU's external borders, the more Polish politicians turned to kin-state rhetoric and policy in an effort to exempt transborder Poles from these new regimes and regulations. Concern for co-ethnics abroad thus complemented the return of nationalist discourses to the centre of party competition. PiS went the furthest in this regard by campaigning for the introduction of an identity card for co-ethnics abroad, the *Karta Polaka* ("Pole's Charter") (Fowler 2004c), a document issued to foreign nationals on the basis of Polish ancestry and some knowledge of the Polish language. The *Karta*, not unlike the Hungarian Identity Card, offered transborder Poles entry privileges, such as refunds on Schengen visas, access to Polish schools and universities, and permission to do business in Poland. In 1999, plans for the *Karta* were voted down in the *Sejm* by politicians who viewed it as a potential liability to the EU accession process. A newer version of the bill met a similar fate in 2001 (Kaczyński 2003). After EU accession, however, and once PiS took over the government, the *Karta Polaka* returned to the agenda. It was finally passed into law in 2007, taking effect the following year (Dytkowski 2009). PiS had a double interest in pursuing this. First, it was a matter that fitted well with the nationalist ideas that characterised the rest of the party's political programme and, second, it helped distinguish PiS from the social democrats of the SLD (the party that had successfully negotiated Polish accession to the EU), but without calling into question EU membership itself.

In short, kin-state politics in Poland became a more important feature of nationalist mobilisation not despite the EU, but because nationalist politicians were able to turn the new constraints of the EU enlargement to their advantage. The more EU membership for Poland became a realisable goal, the more it became a threat to existing ties between Poland and the ethnic Poles in the east, particularly in Ukraine and Belarus. Kin-state politics has not been the main focus of nationalism in Poland, but it is nevertheless telling that it came into view in conjunction with the timing of EU accession.

Radicalising nationalism

The European Union has provided nationalists in the region with a means (and sometimes legitimacy) for pursuing their objectives. Thus far we have argued that this has led to a resurgence of nationalism, but also a softening of it as it struggles to find a home within the institutional and discursive confines of the EU. At the same time, however, there has been a hardening of nationalism initially outside of these confines, but more recently back within them. EU accession coincided with the demise of Hungary and Poland's far right political establishment. But as these parties were sidelined, new fringe elements began to emerge outside of these traditional political constraints. Much of the recent headline grabbing nationalist activity in the region, from violence against Roma in Hungary to the anti-Semitic activities of skinheads in Poland, has occurred not only outside mainstream and EU political norms and structures but in many cases in explicit defiance of them. By 2010 in Hungary, however, the most notable of these new fringe elements made its debut on the main stage of Hungary's political establishment with an impressive showing in the parliamentary elections. Whether operating inside or outside these constraints, however, these reconstituted extremist elements (in contrast to their predecessors) do not attempt to conform to EU standards but to contradict them. These are EU opportunity structures not enabling mainstream nationalists but acting as a foil against which extremist aspirations are articulated and legitimated. The international, cosmopolitan, and/or "Jewish" character of the European Union (with its stooges in Budapest and Warsaw) provides this next generation of extremists with the grist for their nationalist mills.

Opposition to the EU thus defines and is defined by this new nationalist extremism in the region (Kopecký and Mudde 2002, pp. 315-317, Marks *et al.* 2006, p. 163, p. 166, Szócs 1998, p. 1098-1102). Whilst the nationalism of the mainstream has adapted its message not to offend European ears, the nationalism of the new extreme has adapted its own message *to* offend European ears. In both Hungary and Poland, extremist parties that toned down their nationalist excesses found themselves on the losing side of elections in the build up to accession. Around the same time extra-parliamentary elements stepped up their own rhetoric in an all out attack on the enemies of the nation. Territorial revisionism, violence against the

Roma, and anti-Semitism do not sit comfortably with the EU. But such themes do appear to resonate with a sizeable number of ordinary Hungarians and Poles frustrated with the ineptitude of the political classes and the broken promises of transition (Minkenberg 2002, pp. 340, Minkenberg 2007, pp. 261-262, pp. 273-278). For these organisations and their supporters (the perceived if not actual losers of the transition), the nation, presented in all of its historical and territorial glory, is the ultimate antidote to the disruptive transformations of the past decades (Minkenberg 2002, pp. 344-346, p. 356, Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007, pp. 30-34).

This is the radicalisation of nationalism at the fringes of mainstream politics. For these extremist elements, the EU demands conformity to an entity and ethos that are seen as inimical to their goals and aspirations. European constraints have effectively pushed these elements away from conventional politics where they can formulate and express their increasingly virulent views with renewed fervour. Nationalism on the margins has thus hardened in the recent context of EU enlargement.

Hungary

Hungary's first post-communist version of firebrand nationalism came from István Csurka and his Hungarian Truth and Life Party (MIÉP). Csurka began his political career as a Hungarian Democratic Forum MP. But his hints at territorial revision and veiled references to Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracies earned him an early reputation as an extremist and, ultimately in 1993, expulsion from the party. MIÉP was established shortly thereafter but did not manage to cross the 5% threshold for parliamentary elections until 1998 (Bozóki and Kriza 2008, pp. 226-228). Following four years in opposition, MIÉP has since been unable to achieve the 5% of the vote necessary to gain parliamentary representation (Fowler 2003, pp. 803-804).

MIÉP presented itself as embracing all things Hungarian and rejecting all things non-Hungarian (Bozóki and Kriza 2008, pp. 222-225). Its glorification of Hungary's past occasionally found expression in calls for recapturing that past through future territorial revision (Weaver 2006, pp. 100-109). The enemy within who would foil these grandiose ambitions were non-Hungarians, usually understood (implicitly but sometimes explicitly) as Jews and Roma. The Jewish enemy in Hungary was at the same time part of the Judeo-Bolshevik

cabal, typically embodied in the European Union and the United States (Weaver 2007, pp. 181-182, Bozóki and Kriza 2008, pp. 222-223). Hungarian parties on the left were viewed as the local representatives of this global conspiracy; those on the right were viewed somewhat more forgivingly as the sometimes well-intentioned but more often ineffective and unfortunate victims of these same forces.

In the years leading to accession, MIÉP was faced with reconciling its extremist agendas against the centripetal forces of mainstream politics. This led to inconsistency, contradiction, and vacillation: calls for territorial revision were replaced by pronouncements accepting Hungary's current borders (Weaver 2007, p. 182); openly anti-Semitic remarks were toned down, qualified, and retracted (Szócs 1998, p. 1098, Mudde 2005, p. 177); and even the EU, public enemy number one, was recast as Hungary's new friend, helping it achieve its ambitions of national reunification (Minkenberg 2007, p. 270, Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007, p. 46). Such waffling risked alienating MIÉP's extremist base without enhancing its legitimacy among Hungary's more mainstream political players. MIÉP had to contend with a general electorate wary of sending the wrong message to Brussels on the eve of accession (Mudde 2005, pp. 164-165, Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007, p. 43, p. 46). For MIÉP, EU unification coincided with its electoral and political demise.

The rise of the extreme right outside mainstream politics has followed closely on the heels of MIÉP's marginalisation (LeBor 2008, p. 35). In 2003, Jobbik Magyarországért (Movement for a Better Hungary), joined in 2007 by its paramilitary wing, the Magyar Gárda (Hungarian Guard), began filling the extremist vacuum left by MIÉP. Jobbik shared this increasingly crowded terrain with the Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom (Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement, established in 2001), the Nemzeti Őrsereg (National Guard, established in 2007), and a number of less formal groupings without clear organisational structures or names to match (on typologies of extreme right movements, see Minkenberg 2007, p. 264, Mudde 2005, pp. 166-168, Bozóki and Kriza 2008, pp. 217-218). The majority of these groupings in Hungary are anti-establishment and anti-parliamentarian (Szócs 1998, pp. 1098, Mudde 2005, pp. 162-163, pp. 166-168); as such, they operate free from the constraints of mainstream politics. Where MIÉP's half-hearted conformist gestures foretold its demise, the explicit refusal of these extremist elements to play by the rules gave them free rein (if not indeed the justification) to express and propagate a more unrepentant radicalism. These are the sorts of groupings suspected to

be behind some of the recent violence against Roma in Hungary. Their positioning outside the political establishment was not only shaped by their extremist views but simultaneously shaped those views as well (Mudde 2005, p. 177, Szócs 1998, p. 1098, p. 1105).

Jobbik, however, the most significant of these groupings, has bucked this trend by consistently (and successfully) seeking political office. Following early failures and some spotty success in local elections, Jobbik caught national and international attention when it captured 15% of the popular vote and three seats in the 2009 elections for the European Parliament. This was the prequel to the 2010 Hungarian elections when Jobbik received nearly 17 % of the popular vote, only a few of percentage points behind the previously governing Socialists. By combining its extremism with these dramatic electoral successes, Jobbik and its now outlawed Gárda emerged as the most visible, organised, and coherent elements of the extreme right in Hungary. In contrast to other extremist groupings, Jobbik has planned its attack of the establishment from the inside, but unlike MIÉP before it, without diluting its extremism.

Jobbik promotes and perpetuates the cult of Trianon (the treaty ending World War I which “dismembered” Hungary), licking past wounds to justify future territorial claims, whilst aggressively pushing a law and order agenda at home aimed at the supposed offenders of law and order, the Roma. The European Union, in contrast, is the favourite external enemy, representing the main 21st century threat to national sovereignty (Ray 2009, p. 331-332). MIÉP’s worn image of old men in polyester suits sporting unintentionally retro hair styles has been replaced by the younger and internet savvy face of extremism projected and managed by Jobbik and the Gárda. In appearance, the Gárda’s penchant for uniforms with insignia harkening back to a darker era is suggestive of the organisation’s subversive intent and authoritarian tendencies. In tone, the differences are more substantial. Where MIÉP’s waffling undermined its extremist credentials, Jobbik’s extremism is unapologetic, making no concessions to Hungary’s Roma, Jewish, or European nemeses, or to any of the niceties of mainstream political correctness. Indeed, where MIÉP struggled to play by the rules, Jobbik has drawn its fervour from breaking them. Jobbik does not seek to refine its message for mainstream Hungarian or European ears but to use its institutions to express an iconoclastic shock and awe brand of politics. This is the public performance of defiance. Where others have failed (or simply not attempted) to reconcile extremism with the constraints of mainstream politics,

Jobbik has turned a disadvantage into an advantage, becoming a significant player in both European and Hungarian politics.

The political establishment in Hungary has reacted to the rise of Jobbik with dismay. Fidesz's reaction has been somewhat more ambivalent. On the one hand, Fidesz has condemned Jobbik's excesses and reacted squeamishly to its tamer manifestations (LeBor 2008, p. 37). On the other hand, Fidesz has flirted with Jobbik and the extreme right. In the autumn of 2006 violent street protests erupted when then Socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány was caught on tape telling fellow party members (in a closed meeting) that the party had lied in the run-up to elections earlier that year. Extremist elements led by the Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement (with support from other elements) quickly took to the streets in protests that culminated in the 23 October commemorations of the 1956 Hungarian revolution (Ahn 2007, pp. 117-120). These demonstrators shared the same goals as Fidesz: Gyurcsány's resignation and the collapse of the Socialist government. Fidesz, however, was ambivalent as to whether these objectives should be pursued through parliamentary means, extra-parliamentary means (with more volatile and potentially violent street protests), or some combination of the two (Ahn 2007, pp. 118-120, Bugaric 2008, p. 197).

Fidesz did little: the demonstrations fizzled, the Socialists remained in power, the extremists displayed their extremism, and Fidesz reinforced its proclivity for mainstream politics. To be sure, Fidesz could expand its electoral base by courting the extreme right, but doing so would run the risk of relinquishing its comfortable corner on the mainstream nationalist market (Bozóki and Kriza 2008, pp. 226-128, LeBor 2008, p. 37). It has thus avoided direct association with the extreme right's *causes célèbres* of territorial revision, anti-Semitism, the vilification of Europe, and the damning of the Roma. With its comfortable two-thirds parliamentary majority, it now has the best of both worlds: Jobbik can give expression to Fidesz's darker repressed urges from the safe distance of its opposition benches whilst Fidesz can deny any formal association with them. Fidesz preserves its mainstream credentials. By casting the net widely with a softer (if not insipid) and more inclusive brand of Hungarian nationalism, Fidesz appeals to the largest swath of the electorate. The hardening of nationalism on the extreme right thus has its counterpart in Fidesz's softening of nationalism within the confines of what is right and proper in Hungarian and European politics (Minkenberg 2002, pp. 358-359, Minkenberg and Perrineau 2007, p. 43).

Poland

Extreme nationalism in Poland has traditionally been a weak political force. Although anti-Semitism and hatred of all things not Polish inspired the interwar National Democrats (*Endecja*) (Porter 2002) and other movements, after 1989 such radical rightwing organisations did not regain popularity (Ost 1999). By the mid-1990s the consensus among observers was that the extreme right had failed (Millard 1996, Ost 1999). It consisted of myriad small parties, some more radical than others, but with most unable to break the 5 % threshold needed to gain parliamentary representation. The only radical right wing party that managed to escape the margins and get into parliament on its own was the Confederation of an Independent Poland (KPN) in 1991 and again 1993. By the 1997 elections, however, severely weakened by internal dissension, the KPN too had lost its parliamentary representation (Ost 1999, p. 98).

The results of the 1997 elections dramatically altered the national political landscape. Solidarity Election Action (AWS), a new party formed from several smaller parties on the right united by their strategic nationalism, defeated the incumbent SLD. The AWS's victory (together with the demise of the KPN) signalled the return of soft nationalism to the political field and in so doing transformed the landscape in which radical nationalists manoeuvred. The response of the radical right took two forms. One strand of extremists moved more toward mainstream right-wing politics in pursuit of the more moderate nationalism favoured and legitimated by the AWS. Both the AWS and PiS after it welcomed these former radicals as long as they toned down their rhetoric consistent with the demands of established right wing nationalism. The AWS and PiS could not risk alienating their broad voter base, which included the Solidarity trade union, an organisation that had nationalist tendencies but also relied on a democratic ethos that clashed with right-wing authoritarianism (Ost 1999, p. 107).

Poland's most famous extreme right party, the League of Polish Families (LRP, established in 2001), followed a similar trajectory of increasing moderation. In the 2001 elections, the LRP had hoped to become a considerable electoral force without abandoning its extremism. It captured nearly 8 % of the vote on a platform of radical Euroscepticism including opposition to EU membership. Once EU membership became a reality, however, its rhetoric shifted. Initial opposition to accession was recast as a criticism of the *terms* of accession. In 2006, together with the populist Self-Defence Party

(Samoobrona), the LPR joined a coalition with the governing PiS. Within a little more than a year, however, the coalition collapsed, and the elections that followed left the LPR with just 1 % of the vote, revealing its failure to win over nationalist voters from PiS or even maintain its original electoral base.

At the same time, other extremists in Poland sought to preserve their nationalist idealism by turning away from electoral politics altogether and taking up direct movement activities, including the organisation of rallies in small towns, the promotion of youth groups, the establishment and operation of various media, and (at times covert) involvement in groups such as skinheads and football hooligans. The EU accession process sharpened the divide between radicals who became part of a more moderate right wing political force and those who turned away from established politics in order to preserve their radicalism.

This radicalisation of nationalism outside electoral politics included the activities of groups with varying degrees of organisation. Less organised groups included skinheads, football hooligans, and other fringe movements with anti-Semitic, homophobic, and racist messages and graffiti. In some Polish cities (Łódź, for instance), inflammatory inscriptions and symbols appeared not only on buildings associated with Polish-Jewish history (such as Łódź's old synagogue), but also on bus stops and blocks of flats in other parts of town (Marciniak 2006, p. 615). Anti-Semitic slogans and symbols also became increasingly visible among groups of football fans infiltrated by skinhead organisations. Although this is hardly a new phenomenon, and something that by definition occurs at the margins of society, it has gained new symbolic significance in the context of Poland's EU membership since racist and homophobic slogans now appear next to graffiti denouncing migration and open borders. This European context is further acknowledged in government attempts to prevent the actions of these organisations. For example, a government graffiti clean-up campaign in 2000 in Łódź called *Kolorowa Tolerancja* (Colourful Tolerance) was announced as an initiative to provide Poland with a "passport to the family of free European nations" (quoted in Marciniak 2006, p. 628).

Radio Maryja is perhaps the most important example at the other end of the spectrum. It is a well-organised network, outside electoral politics, but with clear informal links to certain politicians. Radio Maryja is an ultra-conservative religious radio station that broadcasts its conservative Catholic spin on a wide variety of issues (Eaglin 2008).

When it was established in 1991, it had a small number of devout listeners; increasingly it attracts a largely elderly audience with conservative political views. The station's programming includes lengthy prayer sessions and talk shows, and it encourages its most radical listeners to speak out publicly with their political views. Listeners and presenters routinely criticise Church-backed centrist politicians, often peppered with anti-German, anti-European, and anti-Semitic allusions. In 1998, the station claimed four million regular listeners, comprised mostly of elderly people in rural areas (Migas 2005). Some mainstream political parties, most clearly PiS in the 2005 elections, have cautiously tried to use Radio Maryja to mobilise their voting public. The radio station has responded to these attempts by affirming its independence, whilst making it clear to its listeners that they should support the most nationalist and religiously conservative candidates. Even though Radio Maryja has avoided direct involvement in institutionalised politics, it continues to present a radical challenge to mainstream political discourse on a broad number of issues, not least of all the question of the EU. It has linked EU membership with abortion, secularism, Jewish interests, and homosexuality, placing Poland's membership in the EU at the centre of an emotionally charged discussion about the ethical value of Polish nationhood.

Equally well-organised is the All-Polish Youth organisation (*Młodzież Wszechpolska*). This group was founded in 1989 as the successor to the inter-war anti-Semitic youth movement of the same name. Its founder, Roman Giertych (who later became the leader of the LPR), wanted to reach out to a young generation of both urban and rural populations. The organisation's rhetoric contains allusions to anti-Semitism, vigorous opposition to foreign ownership of anything deemed Polish, and the depiction of Germany as a continuous and constant threat to Poland. The All-Polish Youth links extreme nationalism with radical Catholicism and anti-Europeanism (Strutyński 2006, p. 132). The enlargement of the EU, the separation of church and state, and the more moderate nationalism that has risen in response to EU demands have all prompted the All-Polish Youth to construct a counter-discourse linking ethnic homogeneity and anti-gay politics with anti-Europeanism (captured in a 2002 slogan that read "Paedophiles and pederasts are Euro-enthusiasts") (Graff 2008, p. 35). The organisation, with a membership estimated at 3,000, has received wide press coverage for its street protest activities directed against sexual minorities. The boundaries between the

organisation and mainstream electoral activism have not always been clear. In the run-up to the 2005 elections, several members of the All-Polish Youth ran on LPR lists and were indeed elected. But after All-Polish Youth members were caught on video with outstretched arms in Nazi salutes in 2006, the LPR responded by cutting ties with them (Zmarz-Koczanowicz 2007).

Since the beginning of the EU accession process, Poland's official discourse has emphasised the country's willingness to adapt to European demands and expectations about transnational mobility, Europeanisation, postnationality, economic liberalism and ethnic diversity (Borneman and Fowler 1997, Schimmelfennig 2001, Marciniak 2006). This official narrative has tempered (but not eradicated) radical nationalism by seducing some of its key proponents into the fold of mainstream politics. At the same time, however, it has fuelled a growing and virulent anti-European nationalist counter-discourse outside electoral politics. Those parties who entered into a coalition with PiS compromised their radicalism and eventually their popular appeal. This opened the door for other extremists outside electoral politics to challenge everything that established politics stands for. They have answered the mainstream consensus on European integration with a radically ethnicised understanding of the interests of "the nation". Europeans are portrayed as the allies of the enemy within: non-Catholics, sexual minorities and ethnic minority populations, in particular Jews, gays, and Roma. At the same time, their extra-parliamentary position has provided them with leverage and legitimacy for distancing themselves from the alleged corrupting influence of organised, established democratic politics.

Conclusion

We have examined three ways in which the European Union's eastward expansion has provided nationalists in Hungary and Poland with opportunities to explore, adapt, and even step up their national and nationalist ambitions. There is evidence of similar trends across the region. In different ways and to varying degrees, nationalism has come to define and delineate if not dominate cleavages between mainstream parties from the Baltics to the Balkans. Kin-state politics have become *de rigueur* across much of the region, with Romania,

Slovakia, Slovenia, and Bulgaria all asserting their obligations to co-ethnics in neighbouring countries. And the standard bearers of extreme nationalism in Romania (the Greater Romania Party) and the Czech Republic (the Republican Party) have met their electoral demise at the same time that extra-parliamentary radicalism in these same countries (evidenced in the activities of the New Right in Romania and the Workers' Party in the Czech Republic) has been on the rise. There are other examples from the region, however, that do not neatly fit within the framework we have presented. In Slovakia, for instance, Robert Fico's Direction-Social Democracy party recently teamed up with Ján Slota's Slovak National Party (SNS) and Vladimír Mečiar's People's Party-Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (L'S-HZDS) to give more radical nationalists a cosy home within the confines of the Slovak governing coalition. (That home, however, went up in smoke in the 2010 elections following the poor electoral performance of both the SNS and L'S-HZDS.) Next door in the Czech Republic, Václav Klaus has made his ardent and caustic opposition to the EU the cornerstone of his political career. And in the Baltics, nationalist politics continue to be defined in large part in opposition to the presence of large Russian minorities.

We do not interpret this local variation as weakening our argument. It has not been our intention to present an exhaustive or watertight typology of backdoor nationalism for the entire region. The variation in the region draws attention to other ways in which nationalism responds not just to the demands of European expansion but also to the contingencies of local context at the same time. Our aim has been to focus on the ways in which nationalism has been redefined and at times reinvigorated in the context of European enlargement: the European Union has provided the institutional structures and discursive legitimacy for nationalists in the region to pursue old agendas in new and imaginative ways. Without denying (or indeed even considering) the effects of other influences on nationalism, we have argued that the ways in which nationalism has been transformed in the context of the EU's eastward expansion cannot and should not be ignored. This nationalist revival should not be viewed as mere coincidence but rather as an unintended consequence of EU enlargement. The EU was meant to rescue East Europe from the excesses of its nationalist past; instead it has helped secure it a nationalist future.

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Résumé

Contrairement à certaines attentes, l'élargissement en 2004 de l'Union européenne vers l'Est n'a pas sonné le glas du nationalisme dans cette région. Il l'a plutôt fait revenir à la surface et en quelque façon renforcé. On examine à partir des cas hongrois et polonais trois développements. En premier lieu l'accord consensuel pour l'entrée de l'Union européenne a diminué l'opposition entre droite et gauche ; en revanche, la « Nation » est devenue un point de fixation pour les luttes entre partis. Deuxièmement, l'intégration européenne a donné aux nationalistes une entrée latérale pour réaliser de vieilles ambitions de réunification par-dessus les frontières poreuses des Etats de l'Union. Troisièmement, en Hongrie comme en Pologne, des organisations nationalistes radicales apparaissent pour affirmer leur opposition à l'Union européenne.

Mots clés: Nationalisme, Élargissement de l'UE, Pologne, Hongrie, Europe de l'Est.

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Zusammenfassung

Anders als erwartet, hat die Osterweiterung der EU nicht zu einem Rückgang des Nationalismus in dieser Region geführt. Ganz im Gegenteil, er ist publikumsfähig geworden und verstärkt aus ihr hervorgegangen. Die ungarische und die polnische Situation weisen drei Möglichkeiten auf. Erstens hat der allgemeine Konsens beim EU-Beitritt hat die Unterschiede zwischen Rechts und Links verringert. Die Nation wird Zentrum der Parteikämpfe. Zweitens hat der EU-Beitritt den Nationalisten die Möglichkeiten gegeben, eine Wiedervereinigung über die durchlöchernten Grenzen der EU hinweg zu erreichen. Drittens, sowohl in Ungarn als auch in Polen, entstehen radikale, nationalistische Verbände, um ihrem Widerstand gegen die EU Gestalt zu geben.

Schlagwörter: Nationalismus, EU-Erweiterung, Polen, Ungarn, Osteuropa.