Introduction

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Integration and peace

At the start of the twenty-first century, European integration is generally seen as not being in the best of shapes.[1] Budgetary quarrels and the persistence of national differences in various policy domains, including foreign policy, dominate the headlines; the majority of voters reject the proposed European Constitution in referenda in two founding member states; the Euro is derided as having made life more expensive after its introduction as a common currency in many member states. Perhaps most importantly, many European Union (EU) citizens (but also academics) believe that this organisation is by its very nature characterised by a democratic deficit (for a discussion of whether there is a democratic deficit or not see Decker 2002; Moravcsik 2002; Schmidt 2004). Put bluntly, against the background of its widespread negative image, why should we bother about this seemingly undemocratic, expensive, wasteful and illegitimate organisation?

Leaving aside the problematic assumptions on which the populist calls for a downscaling of or even withdrawal from the European integration process are based, even those critical of the EU in its current shape usually find at least one core argument that speaks in favour of integration: its contribution to peace. Indeed, all the grand speeches on European integration, past and present, tend to stress that a return to a Europe of nation states without an integration framework would mean a return to the seemingly eternally violent and war-torn centuries before 1945, culminating in the horrors of the Second World War and the Holocaust (see Welch 1999). Thus, when EU political leaders justified the 2004 enlargement, they, too, invoked the horrors of nationalism and the benefits of integration for peace to make their case for taking up the new member states in central and eastern Europe (Higashino 2004).

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But what is the underlying logic of this often-assumed link between integration and peace? Most of the political arguments and academic discussions resort to high-level, abstract reasoning when addressing this question. They tend to follow the classical approach of liberalism in international politics in their focus on the dependencies generated by integrated economies that make war too costly (see Doyle 1997), and the long-term reorientation of identities and interests towards a common whole (Ernst Haas's 'shift of allegiances'; Haas 1968: 5) that makes war increasingly unthinkable.

When on 9 May 1950 French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman proposed the pooling of European coal and steel production in what then became the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the first supranational institution from which today's EU has developed, he started from the assumption that '[w]orld peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it'; and that '[t]he coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany'. He continued to make his case through the arguments of the changing material structure and the change of minds triggered by supra-national integration: 'The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for eco-nomic development as a first step in the federation of Europe … The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible … that fusion of interest … may be the leaven from which may grow a wider and deeper community between countries long opposed to one another by sanguinary divisions.'[2]

Schuman and one of his civil servants (and later High Commissioner of the ECSC), Jean Monnet, who was largely responsible for the so-called 'Schuman Plan', picked up the functionalist arguments of David Mitrany and others (cf. Mitrany 1965) and transferred them to the regional level. They enriched Mitrany's functionalism by emphasising the central role of a supranational body (today's European Commission) to guard and promote the integration process. Schuman's and Monnet's 'method' thus became known as neofunctionalism. Yet their basic ideas were wide-spread among liberal thinking in the interwar years (see de Wilde 1991), and variations can be found in many writings of the 1950s and 1960s, from John Burton's cobweb model (Burton 1972) to Deutsch's transactionalism and security community concept (Deutsch *et al.* 1957).

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[2] Robert Schuman, Declaration of 9 May 1950, text version on http://europa.eu.int/abc/symbols/9-may/decl_en.htm.

In each, placing nation states in an international network curbs their power, and people are brought together in various forms of cooperation and societal exchange. As a consequence, states can no longer easily resort to violent unilateralism, and their citizens see the value of cooperation and develop or 'discover' common interests and identities.

While these arguments are also at the heart of our analyses, taking them on their own throws up at least two problems that we will address in both our theorisation of the relationship between integration and the transformation of border conflicts and our empirical studies. Firstly, since Deutsch's work, analysts have lost interest in the link between integration and peace, with the idea of security communities only finding its way back into the mainstream International Relations literature in the late 1990s (Adler and Barnett 1998), and so its empirical validity remains largely unexplored. Secondly, this link cannot be studied properly on the level of nation states and the reorientation of national identities alone, as it involves the changing social practices of border communities and the transformations of entire regions *across* national borders. Thus, our analyses need to focus on the transformation of border conflicts in their concrete social and political settings across several layers. Have they changed to become less conflictive on the regional and national levels? Has the meaning and significance of borders changed for those who live in the border region or for the political elites in these countries at large? If so, what has been the contribution of the integration process to such developments? Does association as a weaker form of 'membership', when compared to integration, also make a difference? What role do specific actors – local, regional, national, European – play in this process? Or is the context of integration alone sufficient to do the trick? In this volume, we address these questions on the basis of a comparative study of five cases of border conflicts within the EU, at its borders and between associated members. Our comparison will show that integration does have a positive effect on border conflict transformation, but that this effect is far from automatic. As our cases will demonstrate, there are circumstances in which the impact of integration is to hinder cross-border cooperation and to introduce new conflicts to a border region. Even if integration has helped to transform a border conflict towards a more peaceful situation, its success is often dependent on events outside the EU's control and on local actors making use of the integration process in ways that are conflict-diminishing (what we will call 'desecuritising') and not conflict-enhancing (or 'securitising') (see Buzan *et al*. 1998).

It is this emphasis on both the positive and the negative effects of integration (and association) which distinguishes our study from those approaches in the field of 'regional studies' that assume a more direct and

automatic linkage between integration and peace (see Tavares 2004). We share the assumption of these studies that higher levels of 'regionness' (Tavares 2004: 29), such as the European integration project, are characterised by a mushrooming of different peace agents and peace instruments as well as a fundamental transformation of the very concept of peace in line with Galtung's (1969) notion of a positive peace. Thus, 'regional communities', such as the EU, are indeed often characterised by an 'empirical association between regionalism and the *possibility* to achieve peace' (Tavares 2004: 43; our emphasis). However, we maintain that the impact of integration and association also always leaves open another possibility, namely to nurture or breed conflict. As Noutcheva *et al.* (2004: 25) have argued in their study on the role of the EU in the resolution of secessionist conflicts at the EU's periphery, the EU's attempts in conflict resolution can have both intended and unintended consequences, not all of them beneficial. The subsequent chapters of this book will accordingly specify these conditions of positive *and* negative EU impact on border conflict transformation from an empirical and theoretical perspective.

The Franco-German example

The one example of border conflict transformation that dominates the historical literature in particular, but is also a common reference point in political speeches, is the Franco-German border, and in particular the border region of Alsace. Alsace changed hands four times in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, during or as a consequence of the Franco-German war of 1870/1 and the First and Second World Wars. From a French perspective, the Rhine constituted a 'natural' border in the East, while Germans made reference to the local culture and language (van Dijk 1999: 27–32 cited in Walters 2002: 566). Until the Second World War, France and Germany were often constructed as 'hereditary enemies' who would never escape the security dilemma of two competing, neighbouring great powers. The Rhine border was a core prize to be won in that struggle for power in the centre of the Western half of the continent (cf. Schulze 1991).

Yet today's situation could hardly be more different. While the border still exists, it mainly serves administrative purposes. People are free to travel across (and many do so on a near-daily basis living on one side and working on the other side of the border); the EuroAirport in Mulhouse serves three countries with a common French/German exit (the third country is Switzerland, a non-EU member who at the time of writing had signed but not yet implemented the Schengen Treaty); and in

October 2003, French President Jacques Chirac famously represented Germany in the European Council. This is not to say that the border has disappeared, and the different administrative systems on both sides still make cooperation difficult at times (Pletsch 2003). Yet observed from a longer-term historical perspective, the changes that have taken place are astonishing. Who, just about a hundred years ago, would have thought that people would easily cross the Rhine for lunch?

Explanations for these changes vary, although their emphasis until the 1990s was on political rather than on the social and economic factors. Some authors have focused on the impact of particular personalities after the war who pushed both the integration process and Franco-German reconciliation (e.g. Simonian 1985: 378; Treacher 2002). But even though, as the findings in this book will also show, concrete actors driving the peace process are crucial in border conflict transformation, these actors are themselves to a considerable extent a product of their environment and engage in broader societal discourses to which they contribute but which also shape them – the example of the Rhinelander Adenauer is an illustration (Schwarz 1986). They also need a context that is favourable to their policies, and the European integration process, once set up, proved to be such a setting (Simonian 1985: 377). One of the aspects often commented upon in this respect, especially since the 1990s, is the social interaction across the border, following Karl Deutsch's notion of transactionalism (Deutsch *et al*. 1957). The interaction of 'ordinary' people in exchange programmes, twinning of cities and towns, common cultural projects or simply economic transactions, according to this view, is at least as important in reconciliation processes, transformations of identities and redefinition of borders as the high politics of individual states(wo)men (see e.g. Moreau 1993; Bock 1998; Defrance 2001; Krotz 2004). In all of this, one has to keep in mind that the former enmity has not been replaced by a single identity, and misunderstandings persist (Noll 2004). Yet the point of border conflict transformation is not that a single new identity is forged; it is rather that identities and borders are reconstructed in such a way that the border at a minimum is no longer the site of violence, and beyond that the identities constructed around it are no longer conceptualised in antagonistic terms.

The Franco-German history provides us with some initial clues about the relevance of European integration in the process of border conflict transformation (Miard-Delacroix and Hudemann 2005). Yet its discussion remains marooned in a single case. To proceed further, we need to first step back and define in general terms the core concepts at the heart of this volume, laying the groundwork for our theoretical approach and the case studies explored in the following chapters.

Border conflicts and European integration

Political discourse often tends to refer to a conflict in international politics as a relationship dominated by physical violence – and so does academic discourse on this subject matter. Consequently, common conceptualisations of conflict resolution are focused on the removal of such violence (see Elwert 2001). Yet the disputes about the meaning of peace alert us to the problems of such a narrow definition (Richmond 2005). Peace may be defined as the absence of war, but if this is the only criterion, systematic social and economic exclusion, political division and a war of words if not arms may still affect people within such a peace. It is like a volcano after an eruption: it may lie dormant now, but underneath the magma is still boiling, and is likely to erupt one day. Real peace therefore is not simply achieved by a signature underneath a treaty; it requires long-term political, social and economic transformation of conflict societies.

Similarly, violence is merely one way of dealing with conflict; it marks the eruption of long-standing disputes that define the conflict. Conflict is therefore a much more fundamental category of social and political life, as social sciences other than International Relations are much more ready to acknowledge (see contributions from Sociology or Social Psychology as well as Peace and Conflict Studies, e.g. Coser 1964; Azar 1990; Deutsch 1991). As chapter 2 will elaborate, we therefore take conflict to be the incompatibility of subject positions (Efinger *et al.* 1988). Subject positions are characterised by identities and interests that define a particular subject. If those identities are mutually exclusive, or if the interests contradict each other and cannot be reconciled without a transformation of the subject position itself, there is an incompatibility of subject positions and therefore a conflict.

Some have used this conflict definition to infer the existence of a conflict from material structures underlying a society (see Efinger *et al.* 1988). A conflict is therefore taken to exist if, for instance, the distribution of water or oil benefits one country over a neighbouring one, thus following classical balance of power assumptions. As neither water nor oil are easily substituted, and as there are natural limits to their exploitation while both are vital to the national economy in both countries, a situation of high vulnerability in a zero-sum game ensues, which makes the positions of the two sides incompatible with each other. Yet such a focus on material structures makes the rather heroic assumption that such structures lead automatically to particular claims and actions that follow from these claims. This, we argue, cannot be sustained, as any such material structure – often referred to as the 'root causes' of conflict – will first have to be translated into claims of one subject over another in order to become

an incompatibility. The distributional problem is therefore insufficient to cause conflict in itself; it requires an act of communication to do so.

We thus follow a discursive understanding of conflict in this book. A conflict exists if actors articulate mutual incompatibilities. Whether these have their base in material structures does not interest us in our conflict diagnosis; indeed, insofar as material structures are themselves discursively constructed, the differentiation between such structures and discourse makes little sense. As we will spell out in more detail in chapter 1, securitisation – the representation of an Other as an existential threat against which the Self has to be defended (Buzan *et al.* 1998: 23–4) – is the main practice through which subject positions and their incompatibilities are constructed. We also argue that conflicts are characterised by different levels of intensity, and violence only comes into the picture in conflicts at their most intense degree of securitisation (see also Messmer 2003).

If integration or association are to have any effect on conflicts, they have to make a contribution to the transformation of the very communication that constructs a conflict in the first place. Such a contribution either will move the conflict towards a less intense stage; or it will change the self-definitions in such a way that the subject positions are no longer seen as incompatible. In the latter case, the conflict is truly resolved in the sense that it ceases to exist; in the former case, the conflict is merely transformed towards a less tense situation but remains, at best, what is often referred to as a 'fragile peace'. It would be wrong however to assume that integration always has a conflict-diminishing effect. Instead, our study has to be open to the possibility of integration leading to intensified securitisation, or bringing about new subject positions that are constructed as incompatible.

What then makes a conflict a border conflict? Our definition of 'border' initially links up with a traditional understanding of borders as the geographical lines that divide states or entities aspiring to statehood. Thus, the subject positions involved in such conflicts are likely to be those of 'nations', following the definition of a nation as a self-defined modern political community seeking its own political organisation as a state within its own territory (Gellner 1983; Weber 1988; Anderson 1991; Breuilly 1993). Because of such nations' search for a match between the nation and a clearly defined, contiguous territory on which to build their states, incompatibilities tend to be articulated in relation to the borders of this territory. A core characteristic of the modern state system therefore is the construction of a distinction between the peaceful and domesticated sphere 'inside' and the dangerous and anarchic sphere 'outside' these borders (Ashley 1988; Walker 1993). In this construction,

the 'outside' is dangerous because it is populated by equals that accept no higher authority. As long as no incompatibilities are articulated, this is of no great bother to the nation state, but once they are, incompatibilities crystallise around the border that 'shields' the inside from the outside.

As the Schuman Plan made clear, European integration is a political project that seeks to overcome the inside/outside divisions. Whether or not it would replace these divisions with a new federal polity, as Schuman and others envisaged, and what exactly such a federation would look like need not interest us at the moment (see Padgen 2002 for a history of European federal ideas). Suffice it to say that integration was supposed to bring the incompatibilities between the European nations to an end, and transform their borders so that they were no longer markers of a division between a peaceful and secure inside and a dangerous and anarchic outside. It therefore makes sense to start from a traditional concept of borders. Yet we do not stop here. Instead, we follow developments in the study of borders, among others by critical geographers since the 1990s, in which the border is no longer merely a line on a map or indeed in the proverbial sand (e.g. Paasi 1999; Albert *et al.* 2001; Newman 2003). There is a shift in this work from the border as a geographical feature towards a focus on the political and cultural practices that construct, sustain, transform or multiply the border; the bordering, debordering and rebordering practices that define social and cultural identities, delineate economic spaces and sustain political orders. This move is consistent with our discursive definition of conflict: the articulation of an incompatibility always implies the inscription of a border between two subjects. While this applies in principle to all sorts of social groups and how they set themselves apart from each other, our cases of border conflicts have a 'traditional anchor' in that they are related to, but not necessarily confined to, disputes about a border between states or state aspirants.

The case studies in this book therefore start from the aim of Adenauer, De Gasperi, Monnet, Schuman and their contemporaries to make Europe a peaceful place by transforming the borders between and identities and interests of its nation states through a process of political integration. We argue that if this project is successful, it indeed transforms the border practices in such a way that they no longer articulate incompatibilities. This can take different forms: the border might disappear as a marker of any social significance; debordering practices might establish societal links across the border without the latter vanishing; the border might become a focal point for common identification; or rebordering practice might shift the border to a new place or move it from the realm of territorial nation states to social interest groups, in which case old incompatibilities might simply be replaced with new ones.

In order to trace this change of practices and the impact of integration or association upon them, chapter 1 offers not only an elaboration of the different conflict stages and how to assess them, but also develops four 'pathways' of the impact of the EU and of the European integration process itself on border conflict discourses. The two dimensions along which we develop these pathways are firstly, whether EU actors are directly involved, or whether the integration process as such interferes with an existing conflict; and secondly, whether the impact is targeted at specific policies or the population at large. We call the resulting pathways *compulsory* (involvement of EU actors and aimed at concrete policies); *enabling* (on the basis of the integration process but also aimed at changing specific policies); *connective* (focused on EU actors, but aimed at society at large); and *constructive* (a change of subject positions induced, or aided, by the integration process). Each pathway is one avenue for the EU or for the integration process to contribute to a change in the way conflicts are being articulated and managed, or to change the way in which the border at the heart of the conflict is represented and how identities and interests are constructed.

Our focus on these four pathways bears some similarities with the study by Noutcheva *et al*. (2004), who analyse the impact of Europeanisation on the resolution of secessionist conflicts at the EU's external borders. They argue that the EU can have a positive impact on such conflicts 'by linking the final outcome of the conflict to a certain degree of integration of the parties involved in it into European structures' (*ibid*.: 7). Noutcheva *et al*. argue in particular that it is the impact of conditionality and socialisation that might have a positive effect on conflict transformation, thus emphasising both the direct and the indirect forms of EU impact. However, their study is limited to conflicts external to the EU, since they maintain that the 'dynamics of the Europeanization process are different' at the EU's periphery in comparison to the EU core (*ibid*.: 7). While we do not dispute that this is the case, we insist that in principle, as we have argued above, association should at least have the potential to bring about some of the effects that integration does. We therefore need empirical studies that compare the impact of association to that of integration, and analyse the conditions of positive and negative effects of EU involvement.

Our five case studies

In order to assess the impact of European integration and association on border conflicts, we apply our framework in chapters 2–6 to five cases: Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Greece/Turkey, Russia/Europe's North and

Israel/Palestine. Each of these cases stands in a different relationship to the present EU and the integration process: Northern Ireland is a conflict that has been fully within the integration framework for more than three decades at the time of writing. Cyprus is a case where an internationally not recognised border runs through a new member state that joined the EU on 1 May 2004. Besides the particular challenge of a conflict about a non-recognised border, this case allows us to trace the impact of accession negotiations, as does, at least in part, the case of Russia and Europe's North. The latter case consists of three sub-cases: the long-standing border disputes of Karelia (between Finland, an EU member since 1995, and Russia); Pskov (at the Estonian–Russian border – Estonia joined the EU with Cyprus in 2004); and Kaliningrad (a Russian enclave surrounded by EU territory since the 2004 enlargement with Poland and Lithuania). The Greek–Turkish conflict involves a member state since 1981 (Greece) and a country that was made an EU membership candidate at the Helsinki European Council in 1999. Finally, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict involves two actors associated with the EU without being full member states or indeed seeking, or planning to seek, full membership at the time of writing.

Given the diversity of the cases, the point of comparison is not to identify the variables that determine the impact of integration or association across similar cases of EU involvement. There is not a sufficient number of cases to do this, and if we want to say something useful for future EU involvements in border conflicts, we need to address the variety of engagements in an integration context that we are confronted with. The purpose of our comparison is therefore to look for commonalities across our cases with different degrees of EU involvement, but all affected by integration or association in one way or another, and to trace the impact of the different ways in which the EU is involved on these border conflicts.

It is also important to note that we are not investigating the impact of the EU on border conflicts outside the framework of integration and association. Our focus is not on the EU as a third party in border conflicts, but rather on the impact of the integration process as such. EU-level actors such as the Commission, Council or Parliament come into the picture in this context only as part of the integration process. The closest we come to the EU as a third party is in the case of Israel/Palestine. We have included this case because association, while falling short of full integration, does have integration elements and obliges the associate members to implement parts of the *acquis communautaire*, the established set of EU rules and norms. The concrete specification of the rules applicable differs from association agreement to association agreement. In the