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The European Union and the western Balkans

Abstract

This review article focuses on a wide canvas of issues relating to the EU's engagement with western Balkans countries. Putting current policies into the perspective of the recent history of the western Balkans region, the author develops a number of theses about the nature of the EU's engagement including among them the extension of the modernisation agenda and the difficulties that this is causing the EU's own internal capacities. The author cites the destruction of Yugoslavia during the 90s, a process in which a European Community preoccupied with its own economic and monetary union appeared powerless to react, as being key in the problematic development of a foreign and security policy at the EU level, where the EU is still 'between globalisation and fragmentation'. The author explores EU initiatives in the integration of western Balkans states, including the Stability Pact, and concludes that integration offers a difficult challenge to dreams of European unity in which the experience of the US in the application of its foreign policy offers a key lesson as to the likely weighting of the challenges that matter most of all to ordinary people.

Keywords: *europeanisation, modernisation agenda, globalisation, world society, US hegemony, common foreign and security policy, sovereignty and the nation state, EU integration, Stability Pact, fight against corruption, social progress.*

Introduction

After the accession of Greece in 1981 and Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, the EU expects further expansions towards south-east Europe. The so-called western Balkan states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and, since 17 February 2008, Kosovo) are knocking on heaven's door of entering the EU. Apart from Albania, these relatively new nation states belong to the bankrupt assets of the imploded Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), which brought the unstable region nearly 45 years of peace, stability, freedom of movement and a planned economy – not democracy and the market economy. The latter belong to the key values of western 'modernity' and 'modernisation', and all candidates who want to join the European 'club' have to adopt these values and facts.

To understand the politics and interests of the EU towards the western Balkans, to understand the politics of the region's political elite in entering the EU, it is necessary to face historical and political developments since the early nineties and before: Balkan stereotypes in western thinking and the destruction of Yugoslavia (sections 2 and 3). The wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo changed the European perspective, while peace-keeping measures led to solidarity and unification processes (section 4). A further aim of this article is to analyse the political and governance

approach of the EU which is part of the 'new' globalisation[1] and fragmentation processes after the self-destruction of the post-Stalinist systems in eastern Europe (sections 5 and 6). Furthermore, the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe[2] (section 7), one example from the micro level (section 8) and the fight against corruption (section 9) are also examined. Last but not least, I discuss the role of the EU in negotiating the separation between Serbia and Montenegro as an example of a new step in a common EU foreign policy. The article ends with a brief epilogue (section 10).

The dark sides of the Balkans – some western clichés

After NATO's Kosovo War in 1999, the Balkans mostly disappeared from prime time news – such exceptions as there are prove the rule including, for example, the time after the assassination of Serb Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić[3] (March 2003); the brutal riots in Kosovo against Serbian monasteries and churches (March 2004); the death of Slobodan Milošević (March 2006); and the 'independence' of Kosovo on 17 February 2008, with its repercussions for Serbia's EU perspective. All in all, south-east Europe remains a fascinating cultural area in which different religions and people come into contact, exist side-by-side, meet, fight each other and dissolve. Indeed, the power and ruling conditions of the great powers are reflected here as in a crucible. And here, as many times before, it is decided if the opportunity for a united Europe is taken or gambled away. However, the Balkans still remain a topic for writers, historians, political scientists and journalists. The Turkish word for 'wooded mountain' still appears as the epitome of 'aggressive nationalism' and 'ethnic cleansing'; as the incarnation of hate and threat ('the Balkans mafia'); and as writing on the wall concerning the difficulties of the EU (the Kosovo mission; its engagement in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia).

In a notable study from the Ottoman conquest of south-east Europe to the Kosovo intervention of the NATO, Mazower (2000) characterised the western idea of the Balkans as reflected exemplarily in the formula 'Turkey in Europe'. After investigating a multitude of western clichés surrounding the Balkans, he describes certain fundamental historical and socio-economic developments. Nationalism, i.e. the achievement of an idea of a nation state in the 19th and 20th centuries became the essential drive for the Balkans. According to the British journalist Harry de Windt, the area between the Adriatic and the Black Sea, in which such nation states as Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro put pressure on a weakened Ottoman Empire, became the 'wild', i.e. uncivilised, Europe. Among the most long-lasting stereotypes are also religious

1 As Wallerstein (1979) and other authors (Osterhammel and Petersson, 2003) have shown: internationalisation and globalisation is as old as the rise of capitalism in the 14-16th centuries or before. Marco Polo or Christopher Columbus could be seen as modern global players or conquerors.
2 Sometimes I also use the term Balkan Stability Pact.
3 He was the symbol of charisma, modernisation and westernisation and of the trials to reach, as quickly as possible, EU integration. In addition, Đinđić personified classic contradictions when he played the Serbian national card in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s, when he demanded a division of Kosovo in 2002/2003, and when he made a political pact with organised crime to bring about the fall of Milošević in 2000 (Melčić, 2003; Mappes-Niediek, 2008).

moments: the tensions between Roman-Catholic and Greek-Orthodox Christianity on the one side and between Christianity and Islam on the other.

Furthermore, antiquated social relations were destroyed by the advancing monetary economy, similar to Austria-Hungary and Tsarist Russia. Balkan shepherds or 19th century peasants liberated from feudal inter-dependences increasingly orientated themselves towards market laws and the traditional subsistence economy lost ground. The peasant's hunger for land could not be fed by the clearing of forests on a huge scale. Migration, emigration to the cities, industrialisation and the expansion of state bureaucracies are concomitants of this modernisation which was continued in Yugoslavia and other south-eastern European 'socialist' states after the Second World War. Among these are the extension of heavy industry and that specific urbanisation of real socialism in which rural elements and concrete jungles still form a strange kind of symbiosis.

According to Mazower, the decade of wars between 1912 and 1922 showed the whole range of nationality problems which cannot be explained by the dichotomisation 'Muslim-Christian'. The liberal concept of the nation state attempted to bring into accord the claims on power of ethnic minorities via the granting of individual rights. In reality, this approach was doomed because of the multitude of tensions, animosities and clashes of interests which prevailed amongst ethnic minorities. The national question overlapped the social question. The chauvinist deterioration in 'nation building', and the identity politics involved, as well as the co-operation politics of the European great powers – constants in the 'Balkans question' in the 20th century apart from the era of the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia – burden the co-existence of the south-east European people almost up to the current day.

In the end, according to the trenchant irony in Mazower's account, bearing in mind the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, this focus on the respective nation state of Slovenes, Croatians, Serbs etc. turns out to be an illusion in the face of a turning towards the west, the market economy and democracy: just at the point when the struggle for an own nation state has been completed, the struggle for the entry of a national economy on to the world market gets underway. In the face of their structural economic weaknesses, the states of the Balkans belong among the losers of European globalisation.[4]

The destruction of Yugoslavia

To understand the difficulties of the EU and the other players in the western Balkans, it might be useful to have a short digression on Yugoslav history. We find a highly internationalised political action field. Nobody thought during the 1980s and early 1990s that Yugoslavia or its successor-states could become members of the European Community, the predecessor of the EU. The virulent conflict of nationalities between Serbs and Croats, and Serbs and Kosovar Albanians, as well as the vituperative antagonism between the well-developed northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia on the one hand and the less-developed parts of Serbia (Kosovo), Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia on the other, were suppressed by the authority of President

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4 Only Slovenia, which is already in the EU, and also Croatia in some ways can be seen as 'economic winners'.

Josip Broz Tito, the founder of SFRY. After his death in 1980, this antagonism and the increasing animosities became dominant. National emotions in nearly all parts of SFRY – except for the multicultural Bosnia and Herzegovina – grew. The decline of Yugoslavia, accomplished by a deep political and economic crisis, began.

After 1948, and also after Tito's death, the US and most NATO states were good friends of SFRY, which played a quite independent role between the capitalist western bloc and the post-Stalinist eastern bloc. The reason is clear: during the Cold War 1950s and 1960s and the post-Cold War of the late 1970s and 1980s, a communist-ruled alliance against Communism was welcome. Much financial donations and credits were given: in 1981, the financial debt of SFRY to the IMF, World Bank and other donors was about $19.5bn. New credits to finance the pile of debt were necessary (Meier, 1995: 29).

However, the surprising implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and COMECON, the communist economic community, caused confusion amongst the western allies. This confusion continued when the Yugoslav Army intervened in Slovenia and Croatia in 1991 following declarations of independence from both Socialist Republics. Before that, tough conflicts within the federal institutions of Yugoslavia, which became paralysed, and the obviously chauvinistic politics of Serbian ruler Slobodan Milošević in the Serbian provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina, and his efforts to create a greater Serbia, provoked a state crisis (Meier, 1995). Like Franjo Tuđman in Croatia, he was a nationalist leader. The western states certainly under-estimated the power of nationalism in the Balkans (Gallagher, 2001). It is worth mentioning that there was a lack of strategy in western policy which led to improvisations that help to explain the western muddling-through and playing for time in the western Balkans since the launch of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe in 1999. One of the great Yugoslav intellectuals, Milos Nikolić, commented:

> [At] the time of the growing and destructive crisis of SFRY in 1990-1992, the so-called international community (the EU, the OSCE, the USA and so on) was very engaged in trying to find a way to resolve the problems of Yugoslavia in a peaceful way. As far as the autumn of 1991, all the subjects of the international community expressed opinions in favour of the continued existence of SFRY. In some analyses of the destruction of Yugoslavia, however, the sincerity of this attitude has been put in question, at least concerning some countries. Mentioned in this respect has been, in particular, Germany which officially recognised Croatia and Slovenia on December 28 1991. (Nikolić, 2002: 49)

Several months later, the US, UK, France and other countries followed suit. The destruction of SFRY led to war, with ethnic cleansing, massacres and expulsions, and to the previously mentioned rise of new nation states. One bizarre result has been the conflict between the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Greece. Both neighbouring states invest the term Macedonia with the great historic tradition of Alexander the Great. Of course, territorial questions also belong to the game which the UN employed up to 1991. Besides, Montenegro and Kosovo followed as independent nation states in 2006 and 2008.

European unity progress at war?

However, between 1991 and 1995, the Yugoslav wars of division destroyed parts of Slovenia, Croatia and, especially, Bosnia and Herzegovina, causing some 120 000 – 150 000 victims.[5] Europe operated in a crisis of legitimation, unable to speak with one voice and powerless to act in the first military conflict after the Second World War which was occurring at the heart of the continent. It was too weak, while heterogeneous interests blocked a strong political response. However, it is also true that the Balkans were seen as peripheral to the interests of the USA and western Europe:

> The USA in the 1980s, under its own nationalist President, Ronald Reagan, found western Europe with its kaleidoscopic politics difficult enough to track without taking into account the Balkans. The European Union was absorbed with its plans for economic and monetary union and scarcely perceived that it was worth paying attention to the implosion occurring in a communist federation a few hours drive to the east. (Gallagher, 2001: 274)

A common European foreign and security policy did not stand at the top of the political agenda. The focus of European unification was a common market, free trade without customs control, the hope of economic expansion and, last but not least, the planned introduction of the Euro in 2002. The appointment of Javier Solana as the 'High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy' and the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union happened nearly ten years after the Yugoslav wars of division.

Between 1991 and 1995, thousands of Bosnian refugees escaped to Germany, France, Italy and other European countries. Transnational solidarity with the victims and their families, as well as TV pictures of the cruelties in the Balkans, deepened the pressure to do something. The Bosnian Serb siege of Sarajevo and the cowardly killings of the Bosnian Serb snipers who murdered thousands of civilian inhabitants brought about a change. NATO was forced to intervene after it became clear that the mission of United Nations (UN) had ended in disaster, in the catastrophe of Srebrenica in 2005, where 7 000 – 9 000 Bosnian men and boys were killed by the army of General Ratko Mladić. In 1999 (and nowadays) on the Kosovo question, different interests between Russia and China on the one hand and the US and their allies on the other prevented the unanimous and proper dealings of the UN; its Security Council was not able to allow a clear military mission. So NATO and the US government convinced Slobodan Milošević to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

'Dayton' divided the country into two entities – into Republika Srpska and the Bosnian-Croatian Federation. Under the roof of the federal structured Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and under the international control of the High Representative and his administration, we saw the rebirth of protectorates. The main aim was the rebuilding of a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina (Cudić, 2001), the return of refugees to their homes and the punishment of war criminals at the International Tribunal in The Hague.

The influence of the media and of communications or marketing strategies increased during the Balkan wars. What is widely unknown, however, was that, in 1992

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5 Before this correction, experts estimated that there were around 250 000 deaths in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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when the battles started in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the American advertising agency Ruder Finn was already acting on behalf of the recently independent state of Croatia and the at that time not yet autonomous Republic of Kosovo when it created a campaign to link just-published photos from prisoner camps in Bosnia with German concentration camps. Ruder Finn succeeded in winning Jewish organisations over to the Bosnian cause:

> In public opinion we knew we were able to equate the Serbs with the Nazis. Immediately there was a noticeable change in media language usage. The emotional upheaval was so powerful that nobody dared to contradict because nobody wanted to be accused of revisionism. (Becker and Beham, 2006)

In particular, western countries behaved in some contradictory ways. One should bear in mind that Milošević and the majority of the Serbian people had built up a kind of symbiosis in the eighties and in some way during the four Yugoslav wars in the nineties which, all in all, Milošević lost and which led to the process of erosion culminating in the loss of power on 5 October 2000. It is unforgettable that western governments, including US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke (1999), depicted Slobodan Milošević as a guarantor of peace and a factor for stability over a long period. His memoirs document this several times.[6] The contentious peace agreement of Dayton would not have been accomplished without Milošević's authority putting pressure on the Bosnian Serbs. He was closely tied to Lawrence Eagleburger, former Vice-Secretary of Foreign Affairs and ex-US Ambassador in Belgrade, through a friendship between the two men. Milošević was also able to fool western observers and win their favour without showing his true intentions because of his international experience and command of English acquired as the long-standing head of Beobanka, one of Yugoslavia's largest banks (1975-1984).

So, the attitude towards Milošević and his regime had different aspects. From 1992 to 1993, Milošević was called the 'Balkan Butcher' when Serbia was at war with Croatia and Bosnia. During 1993-1995, western countries used him as a strong man to implement the Dayton Agreement. Crucially, the latter did not grant an amnesty for war crimes committed during the conflicts. Thrown back by Croatia's Operation Storm, which rapidly over-ran the Republic of Serbian Krajina, the Milošević regime became more or less a weak factor in the Balkans. Obstacles of decline could also be seen in the Montenegrin break with Serbia in 1997, when Milo Đukanović, a previous follower of Milošević, started a process of 'democratisation without regime change' (Bieber, 2003) to gain the support of the international community.

The Milošević regime lost its reputation when, between 1997 and 1999, the situation in Kosovo became even worse. The Serbian police and army intensified their campaign of repression of the majority of Kosovar Albanians who wanted an independent Kosovo. In 1999, the Kosovo crisis culminated in the Račak massacre and the violent actions of the Serbian security forces as regards Kosovar-Albanian citizens – in the eyes of Serbian responsibilities, all were 'terrorists'. The rise of the

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6 Seven years later, Holbrooke wrote: 'Today, this man, this monster, this war criminal who destroyed south-east Europe at the end of the 20th century, is gone. What he has done remains, and this isn't directly positive.' (quoted by Becker, 2006: 11)

UÇK, the escalating military conflict, the increasing numbers of refugees fleeing to Macedonia or elsewhere and the failure of the OSCE mission made Kosovo the most dangerous place in Europe (Joetze, 2001); a new 'genocide', a new 'Srebrenica' seemed to be on the agenda. NATO started its 'virtual war' (Ignatieff, 2000), the bombing of Serbia, on 24 March 1999 without a UN mandate – against international law. On 9 June, the Serbian army left the Serbian province of Kosovo, which gained the status of international protectorate covered by the UN, NATO, the EU and other players.

UN Security Council Resolution No. 1244 stressed that Kosovo belongs to the former Yugoslavia, at this time to Serbia and Montenegro, without any guarantee of independence. The latter was, however, the key demand of LDK and other representatives of Kosovar-Albanians. In reality, Resolution No. 1244 declares Kosovo's status as 'meaningful autonomy' by protecting Serbia's territorial integration (Relić, 2008).

It should be mentioned that, from NATO's perspective, there were a number of risks connected with a war against the Milošević regime on Kosovo. In his book *Waging modern war. Bosnia, Kosovo and the future of combat* Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, pointed out:

> The stakes in this conflict were huge, and success was not inevitable. In fact, many predicted that NATO would fail in the mission to end the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Had we failed, the consequences would have been profoundly damaging to NATO, to its many member nations, to the Kosovar Albanians, and to many nations in the region that need stability and democracy. NATO could likely not have survived in its present form, and a wave of fear and insecurity would have raced through Eastern Europe. I was warned that a NATO failure would bring the collapse of several European governments, as well. Failure would have meant another one and half million refugees and accepting ethnic cleansing as an unalterable act. Failure would have deepened instability in the Balkans and raised moral outrage in Europe. (Clark, 2001: XXV)

And he added:

> For the United States, there would have been worldwide repercussions on United States credibility and the significance of American commitments.

The NATO air strikes against Serbia and Montenegro – no allied soldier died; all military actions were carried out by the air force; it was a virtual war to calm sceptical and divided western societies – were justified as preventing 'genocide'. Indeed, hundreds of thousands of refugees left the country and massacres happened on both sides. According to Clark, however, the NATO war was more than a moral obligation; more than a humanitarian intervention. It was a test of how NATO's military and – also important – its propaganda machine functioned. Clark's hint that NATO failure would bring about the collapse of several European governments (for instance, in Germany and the UK) and 'worldwide repercussions on United States credibility and the significance of American commitments' reflect the real intentions. The price – an infringement of international law which accepts the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of a UN member-state – was high. The humanitarian catastrophe of the Kosovar Albanians was misused to legitimate an offensive war in opposition to international law.

Another main result of the Yugoslav wars was the formation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). This court plays an important role in the policy of the EU as regards Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo. Many accused war criminals still enjoy their freedom. The most prominent of them, General Ratko Mladić and the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadzić, are still at large. An important process against the Croatian General Ante Gotovina and others has begun; ICTY is investigating Croatian ethnic cleansing concerning Serbs in the Krajina during the military operation 'Storm' in 1995.

Altogether, the western Balkans have a profound importance for the European Union and its security and economic prosperity, and also for Europe's identity. In particular, the Bosnian and the Kosovar wars:

> Sharpened the feelings for good and evil, for 'us' (that share emotions) and 'them' (the feelings of others), for power and weakness, for knowledge and ignorance. As a European-Atlantic war, they led Europe to the border of its morality, solidarity, power and self-knowledge. (Hondrich, 2002: 131)

In this view, Europe's unity continues at war. The contours of a European identity are visible, showing for which values European societies stand, which ones belong to the continent or not, if – and who – becomes hegemonic or not. For the first time after the Second World War, German soldiers were sent to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and German soldiers supported the air strikes against Serbia and Montenegro – with the acceptance of NATO and the EU, this seemed to be a sensation and a normalisation of Euro-Atlantic co-operation.

Meanwhile, the EU has tried to develop a coherent and strong policy for the western Balkans (Bendiek, 2004). The Council of the European Union decided on 12 July 2004 to conduct a military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). This EU-led operation added in a significant way to the EU's political engagement, its assistance programmes and its ongoing police and monitoring missions with a view to helping Bosnia and Herzegovina make further progress towards European integration in the context of the stabilisation and association process. However, the main test for a coherent EU strategy on the western Balkans is Kosovo, as Olli Rehn (2006: 72), European Commissioner responsible for enlargement, has pointed out:

> The EU is certain to play a key role in any post-settlement international civilian and military presence that will exercise appropriate supervision and monitor compliance with the provisions of the future status agreement. We are currently preparing for our role, particularly in the fields of the rule of law (especially judicial and police reform) and the economy. Kosovo will not be the 51st state of the United States of America, but rather a part of the EU's future home territory. We Europeans therefore have a major responsibility for assuring stability and progress in Kosovo. There is no exit strategy for us, only an entry strategy – but we will work only with leaders of Kosovo who ensure genuine ethnic co-existence and apply European standards.

According to Rehn, Kosovo's EU integration in the long-run is intended. This includes similar perspectives for Serbia and other western Balkans states. And it encompasses the risk of failure.

On 17 February, the parliament in Pristina declared the independence of Kosovo. After 1999, the so-called international community sought to buy time. Western states and the Kosovo Albanians hoped to attain an independent Kosovo by a kind of muddling through, although Russia and Serbia blocked all efforts to find a compromise. The most prominent effort was the Ahtisaari Plan. Many rights for the Serbian and other minorities, and checks and balances under a controlled independence – this was the vision of Martti Ahtisaari, Special Envoy of the UN. The new state is a 'quasi-' or semi-state. Without international transfers, it could not exist. And it is a semi-state under the control of the so-called international community with antagonist interests between the western states, Russia and even China.

This is the background to the European Union's forthcoming police and justice mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the International Civilian Office (ICO), which started in March 2008. The mission is expected to have a supervisory role over justice and policing. After the end of the Kosovo war, these functions have been in the hands of the UN administration in Kosovo, UNMIK, which will be replaced in practice by the new EU mission. Around 1 800 experts and police officers from the EU have been charged with this activity, which is a showcase for adopting the leading position in the region which has been held by the US, but which has become, after the military and financial costs in Iraq and Afghanistan, less realistic. However, the intended dissolution of UNMIK and its replacement by EU staff has still failed. In the eyes of the Russian and Serbian governments, EULEX and other EU missions cannot take on the UNMIK mandate. They argue that Kosovo's independence violates international law. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has suggested that EULEX and ICO be accepted as a mission charged by the UN. In the Serbian part of Kosovo, UNMIK should remain responsible for police and other questions; in the Albanian-controlled part of Kosovo, the EU missions should start. This is a paradox which seems to be typical of the Balkans. This situation, in rhetoric and practice, prevents the EU not only from being a global actor but also a regional one.

By recalling these points, it is not wrong to point out that the EU can only be a global actor if the Union can enhance its power in the Balkans. That US influence still persists could be seen in January 2008 when US diplomats urged representatives of the EU to recognise the independence of Kosovo after its declaration. During a meeting of GAERC, the General Affairs & External Relations Council of the EU, the Slovenian EU Presidency for the first half of 2008 was instructed to manage the US strategy. The Slovenian and Serbian newspapers *Delos* and *Politica* reported, after recognition by the EU and several EU states, that the UN Secretary-General could demand that the UN mission in Kosovo be taken over (*Junge Welt*, 18 February 2008). The US, Germany, UK and other western states recognised the independence of Kosovo immediately. Except for Greece, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Cyprus, which are still waiting, all other EU member states recognise the independence of Kosovo. A further step to an independent state can be seen in the new constitution, which was brought into force on 14 June.

In the first weeks after Kosovo's independence, we find deep ethnic divisions. The northern part is under the control of Serbs who do not want to co-operate with the EULEX mission which, in the eyes of Serbian Prime Minister Koštunica, is 'illegal' while, in his view, the UN retains responsibility. His government broke apart on 9 March 2008, the reason being the Kosovo question. Serbia's political class remains

divided between a moderate and an extreme nationalist wing on the one hand and a pro-European democratic wing on the other. Despite the Kosovo question, a coalition between Tadić's party coalition and the Socialists, the former party of Slobodan Milošević, seems to be possible. From an opposite point of view, the EU is more or less united in seeking to enforce EULEX and helping Serbia to enter the EU as soon as possible – without Kosovo. Reaching a positive peace and the concrete EU integration of Kosovo and Serbia, as one interpretation, can be possible if both sides accept each other as partners and only when they intensify communications and co-operation to understand EU integration as an opportunity (Hajrullahu, 2008). According to Rehn (2006), the EU has a major responsibility to assure stability and progress in the western Balkans, especially in Kosovo, Serbia and Bosnia. However, it obviously has neither a clear exit strategy nor a coherent entry strategy.

The EU between globalisation and fragmentation

The implosion of the so-called communist systems led to a global heterogeneity which follows the fragile stability of a bipolarised world. Other key dates – the destruction of the World Trade Centre and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – changed the situation. With the emergence of global politics and elements of cosmopolitan law (the global diffusion of human rights), as well as the institutionalisation of global (the WTO process) and regional (EU, NAFTA etc.) trade regimes, the new processes of transnational interactions are becoming more intense (globalisation and regionalisation). In addition, the spaces of societal actions are expanding beyond the boundaries of national states or detaching themselves from territories (de-territorialisation).

Furthermore, societal consciousness, living in a globalised world (informalisation), is growing (Beisheim and Walter 1997: 157). The idea that all human beings live in a 'single' world no longer dominated by nations and are, therefore, building a world society (Albrow 1987, 1990; Archer, 1991) has become a *raison d'être* in sociological research. Visions of a post-national society of world citizens (Beck 2002), providing all individuals with equal opportunities, competes with reservations that assume a 'world society without societalness' because accelerated monetarism and commercialisation evoke the eradication of inter-societal differences and, thus, world society (Altvater and Mahnkopf, 2002). Hoffmann-Nowotny (1991) connects the genesis of world society with the diffusion of the 'western structure- and culture-model' that has gradually spread from highly-developed industrialised countries over the rest of the world. He makes a distinction between the increasing integration of values (the cultural factor) and the differences in development between each of the states in world society (the structural factor). At the same time – in the 1990s – the United Nations as a symbol for the possibility of a institutionalised 'world state' has become more and more weakened; the USA has been raised to the status of a single empire. Quoting US Defense Planning Guidance 1994-1999, one can recognise a mixture between multilateral and unilateral solutions:

> While the United States cannot become the world's policeman and assume responsibility for solving every international security problem, neither can we allow our critical interests to depend solely on international mechanisms that can be blocked by countries whose interests may be very different than our own. Where our allies' interests are directly affected, we must expect them to take an appropriate share of the responsibility (…), but we maintain the capa-

bilities for addressing selectively those security problems that threaten our own interest. (Menzel, 2004, 135)

There is no doubt that the national interest of the US government, regardless of whether it is Bush senior, Clinton or Bush junior who are reigning, has priority. Simultaneously, processes of fragmentation and de-nationalisation (Zürn, 1999) are emerging, while the Gulf wars and new military inventions have occurred. The dissolution of the Soviet Union, Caucasian separatism (Chechnya, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, etc.), the new Baltic or western Balkan states with their specific minority problems, regionalism in Spain (Catalonia) and the new emphasis on the nations in the UK (Scotland, Wales), and the destruction of Somalia as a state, could all be seen as fragmentation processes challenging the sovereignty of the nation state. The engagement of NATO in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1994-1995 and the air strike campaign against Serbia to stop the ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians in 1999 were new challenges especially for European societies who were awaiting the 'peace dividend' (George Bush, senior).

The approach of the EU

It is important to remember that the EU:

> Was founded on a series of 'intergovernmental bargains', bargains which have more recently included the Single European Act (1986), the Maastricht Treaty (1991) and the Amsterdam Treaty (1997). More than any other kind of international organisation, the political processes of the EU can be described by the term 'supranationality'. It is important to bear in mind that the Union's powers were gained by the 'willing surrender' of aspects of sovereignty by individual states – a 'surrender' which, arguably, has actually helped strengthen European nation-states in the face of the dominance of the US in the first three decades after the Second World War and the rise of the economic challenge of Asia-Pacific. (Held *et al*, 1999: 74)

According to this thesis, sovereignty is now clearly divided; the EU conception of sovereignty assumes as outmoded any indivisible, illimitable and exclusive form of public power embodied with an individual state. Global governance, or multi-dimensional forms of governance and learning, describe the reality of European network society (Becker *et al*, 2007: 415).

The 'transformation of politics and informalisation of the nation-state' (Altvater and Mahnkopf, 2002b: 324) finds its theoretical basis in the co-operative and decentralised multi-level global governance approach (Messner, 1999; Brand *et al*, 2000, Deutscher Bundestag, 2002): in the face of a more complex environment, the co-operative state (Esser, 1999) acts in multi-sector networks. Global political policies and the linked concept of global partnerships between national, non-governmental and private-economic participants – strongly promoted by the United Nations (www.unglobalcompact.org) – distribute, for example, public goods or gains and spread knowledge (Reinicke, Benner and Witte, 2002). Innovational alliances, as well as innovational experiments to arrange globalisation, can be seen as the *conditio sine qua non* of an EU governance system, albeit without a warranty for success (Reinicke, Benner and Witte, 2001). What distinguished modern national-ness/statehood so far (the formal and legitimate exercise of power) is being changed by the emerging 'net-

work-shape'. This transformation of shape or, rather, the global transformation of de-cision-making in political structures as well as the players involved, comprise control mechanisms for business, money, politics, and so on. So it is not surprising when Castells (2003: 380) describes the complex geometry of European institutions and its control mechanisms as the new shape, or form, of government (state). This so-called networking-state is characterised by asymmetrical relations and the division of authority.

Unmistakably, European integration (and/or the Europeanising, or pooling, pro-cess) affects institutional changes and discussions over the new outlines of the consti-tution of the democratic state (Bieling, 2004; Katenhusen and Lamping, 2003). Euro-peanising formalises the interactions between the participants in the form of European agenda setting, which affects domestic institutions, political processes and pro-grammes whereby European Union problem solution offers mediate themselves, by political networks and, among other things, instances of civilian-social bridges, inter-spersed at the level of the European Union (Boerzel, 2003; Heinelt and Meinke, 2003). Europeanising means, in general, 'extremely different configurations'; the in-dicators of adjustment (processes) are various and the effects on inner (intra-national) institutions, as well as players, differ (Green Cowles and Risse, 2002: 27). A memo-randum of the German State Department, published on 14 January 1999, delivers a diagnosis which remains valid today:

> Until a self-supporting stability is established which can only stem from the region itself
> national co-operation, peace and stability still has to be resolved/regulated by international
> organizations (…) on the Balkans. (quoted by Joetze, 2001: 171)

The dilemma is clear: great financial and economic challenges, lesser acceptance of enlargement by the EU15 and even by the EU27, and a lack of political identity – all culminate on the one hand in a question as to what does EU-Europe mean, and where does it end?, and, on the other, in wishful thinking by many ordinary people and some elites in south-east Europe.

To resolve the problems of the western Balkan states, the EU has given a vague accession perspective since the Thessaloniki summit of 2003, based on tough integra-tion standards – benchmarks to copy the *acquis communautaire*, the European legisla-tion framework, the guarantee of human and civil rights, the protection of minorities, the fight against corruption, the establishment of a transparent market economy with property rights, the building up of democratic institutions and an independent judicial system. Together with sizable infrastructure programmes, expert and money transfers and police and administration missions in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU has tried to play an active role in encouraging the transition – the called Stabili-sation and Association Process (SAP).

If, furthermore, the age of globalisation is taken into account and the meaning of loose alliances or international political policies influences, for instance, the expan-sion of the European Union or the transformation from the 'Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE)' to the 'Organisation for Security and Co-opera-tion in Europe (OSCE)', which have taken place in the last fifteen years – these un-mistakably demonstrate that institutionalising processes bring players concerned by transnational issues to one table while their traditional special interests and spheres of

influence stay in the background. Both democratic institutions and different actors in civil society belong to the (constitutional) project of the European Union. Whether europeanisation becomes:

> A continuing process that will eventually lead to a full European government or whether centralization will be unable to overcome persisting national identities and/or increasing interest in localism is a matter of some debate.[7]

Stabilising the Balkans – the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe

Achieving peace, stability and prosperity in south-east Europe are the main goals of the international community as regards the western Balkans. One year after launching the Balkan Stability Pact to help the reconstruction of Kosovo and to improve the accession chances of south-east European states, a report by the World Bank focuses clear words on the European interest in the Balkans:

> Not only will continued instabilities and stagnating economic growth adversely affect the welfare of the people of the SEE region, continued instabilities will also affect Western European economies and societies as well as other countries in the Stability Pact. The recent Kosovo crisis was a vivid reminder of this reality. An unstable region is a fertile breeding ground for crime, smuggling, illegal activities, which will not only affect the lives of people in the SEE countries but also those in neighbouring societies. A more prosperous, stable SEE region would also benefit Western Europe economically, by opening up new markets for investments, sources of skilled, low wage labour and trade opportunities. As articulated in the Stability Pact, creating the conditions for peace and prosperity in the SEE region therefore should be seen not only as an objective for the SEE countries themselves, but also for the international community.

The Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, which was established on 10 June 1999 by the European Commission and forty partner countries, is, after the period of crisis intervention in the Balkans, the first significant long-term institution for conflict avoidance and the reconstruction of the Balkans region, benefiting eight states in south-east Europe. Some elements of the Pact are part of EU integration policy, such as the principles of regional co-operation and conditionality. The instruments – they include learning, networking and co-operation under market and democratic conditions with different interests and the necessity of consensus – were already carried on in the Balkans (Bendiek, 2004: 150). Regional co-operation in different sectors was, so to say, necessary:

> The main motivation for intra-regional cooperation is provided by the EU within the setup of compatible free trade arrangements. (Kusić and Grupe, 2007: 132)

Under the control of Bodo Hombach, the first Special Co-ordinator of the Balkan Stability Pact, the Regional Table and three 'Working Tables' (democratisation and human rights; economic reconstruction; and security issues) were created. The primary concern of the Initiative for social cohesion was the integration of the social dimension into the economic and political reconstruction of south-east European

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7   See http:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europeanisation [accessed on 13 December 2007].

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countries. The aim was to avoid the difficult challenges in the social sector being 'forgotten' during the reforms taking place in south-east Europe. The Initiative takes the view that reforms in the social sector are an essential condition for the integration of these states into Europe and that any economic and political progress is only possible and meaningful in connection with corresponding social progress. To this end, as part of the Initiative, the social systems of the affected countries are to be reformed, the role of the social partners strengthened and the housing and health systems improved, to mention some examples. The essential tools for this purpose are financial assistance and, above all, the passing on of experiences and examples of best practice from the partner countries.

Some further key dates in European western Balkans policy-making should be mentioned. In 1997, before the Balkan Stability Pact was established as a major recovery programme, the EU Council of Ministers established political and economic conditionality for the development of bilateral relations to strength the regional approach. To encourage the path of the Balkan states to European integration, the EU proposed in 1999 the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) for five countries of south-eastern Europe – Serbia and Montenegro (the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)) included. One year later, the European Council stated that all SAP countries were 'potential candidates' for EU membership: thus, SAP became officially endorsed by the EU and the western Balkan countries at the Zagreb Summit in 2000. Furthermore, the new CARDS programme specifically designed for SAP countries was launched to support the transition process. During the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003, SAP as the EU policy for the western Balkans and the EU perspective of these countries was confirmed. The EU Commission adopted so-called feasibility reports on the conditions of integration to check candidate states' progress, or lack thereof.

On 27 February 2008, the last Special Co-ordinator of the Balkan Stability Pact, Erhard Busek, handed over responsibility for regional co-operation in south-eastern Europe to the Regional Co-operation Council (RCC) and its new Secretary-General Hido Biščević, a former journalist and Secretary of the Croatian foreign ministry.

All in all, the participants noted that the Stability Pact, through its activities since 1999, had significantly contributed to the stabilisation of south-eastern Europe. The overall socio-economic situation, as well as security in the region, has improved. From this March onwards, the Regional Co-operation Council should play a key role in consolidating the achievements of the Stability Pact to date and in making further progress in the different areas of co-operation.

The Stability Pact at the micro level – the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The quasi-protectorate is still financially dependent on the international community. The co-existence of Croats, Muslims and Serbs remains dominated by mistrust and, sometimes, even open animosity. The return of exiles to former 'ethnically cleansed' areas is coming along slowly, albeit continuously. In particular, young people are suffering from the miserable socio-economic situation and think about emigration.

Hence, it is pleasing to see that, within the framework of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe, projects have been initiated which open up new perspectives for adolescents who have often experienced hate and disassociation. One interesting project of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media was called 'Defending

our Future': mobile.culture.container (in short: m.c.c.), which belonged to Working Table One (democratisation and human rights) of the Stability Pact (Duve and Koch, 2002). The core of the project aimed to bring together 'the others' and 'the strangers', to act as a means of interchange with young people from different ethnic backgrounds and to think about the perspectives of multi-ethnic co-existence. Only where the most different experiences and views meet can the incidents in former Yugoslavia be understood.[8] Following the maxim of the Stability Pact 'to mobilise the endogenous forces of the region' (Duve and Koch, 2002: 31), to change mentalities and behaviour in order to 'rehearse' democratic and legal practices, m.c.c. had the ambitious aim of touring Bosnia-Herzegovina with a mobile workshop, an ambitious container construction. The fundamental concept consists of the elements:

> Cupola, container, circle and combines traditional and modern styles of construction and lifestyle. (*ibid*: 50)

Sojourns organised by m.c.c. lasting several weeks gave a lasting visual instruction to the different actors present in 2001 and 2002. These took place in Serb Čačak, in Croat Osijek and in nearby Vukovar, which had been destroyed in 1991 by parts of the Yugoslav Peoples' Army and Serbs in paramilitary groups, and in Tuzla, once multi-ethnic and now dominated by Muslim refugees. In Goražde, young people controversially discussed the meaning of multi-ethnic schools. For the first time, youngsters of the same age were invited from neighbouring Višegrad, a city which, after the ethnic cleansings, is now dominated by Serbs. At every station, the m.c.c. team tried to leave something 'to feel and to show' and that lasted by means of talk shows, internet cafés, concerts and pupil and youth magazines. What was intended was visibility and the spirit of the age, in short: a sense of the spectacular.

> The light focused on the 16 containers is conspicuous and the different events time and time again give the opportunity to present the aims with great public appeal,

Achim Tröster, Permanent Representative of the German Embassy, pointed out (ibid: 31). The team, consisting mostly of citizens of the former Yugoslavia, counted on the factor of culture and, in this context, on 'public private partnerships'. The Allianz culture foundation and VW were amongst the donors. International culture projects are said to build bridges across traditions, nations and generations (ibid: 37). A little irritating, however, was the conceptual and linguistic currying of favour with the *zeitgeist*: 'sustainability', 'networking', 'performance' and other common terms also influence behaviour of the international organisations. It is to be hoped that creativity and the ability to imagine of 'the kids' and 'the team' does not suffer from this.

Fighting corruption

The fight against corruption is a key issue in EU policy. The entanglements of the Balkan political class and organised crime have been the subjects of particular inquiries by Norbert Mappes-Niediek. Even if the sub-title of his 2003 work suggests that

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8   Rightly, Günter Grass calls to mind *Rashomon*, the legendary movie by Japanese director Akira Kurosawa, in which the story of a murder is told through four different viewpoints.

south-east European states are 'in the hands of crime and a threat to Europe', the author rejects any 'Balkans cynicism'. It is touch-and-go with the region: migration, depression and delinquency are the watchwords. The long-standing Balkans journalist sees in the mafia-like structures within state and society the basic problem of the states of south-east Europe which re-emerged at the beginning of the 1990s: members of the old nomenclature had often made deals with criminal circles. The latter were used, for instance, by the Milošević regime even before the start of the war in Bosnia and, afterwards, were accordingly rewarded with positions and gifts.

The bizarre cult of 'Arkan', this kind of archetype of a state-supported 'war and peace criminal' on the side of the Serbs is reasonably well depicted by Mappes-Niediek. Such characters illustrate how fine the dividing line between ethnic conflict and criminal interests can turn out to be. If the character of the 'semi-extremist, semi-criminal *guerillero*' was formed in Kosovo, the internal Macedonian conflict between Albanians and Slavs proved that the UÇK was primarily interested in zones of influence and tribute payments. The author's fundamental thesis that national independence movements, such as the UÇK, and the new small states in the region would be 'aircraft carriers for organised crime' should, however, in the face of the complex correlations between events, nation building, ethnic rivalries, economic and international interests, not all be lumped together. Small states do not necessarily imply criminal chaos.

Actually, Serbia has to be taken as an extreme example of the 'no man's land between politics, police and crime', as more than 150 murders have taken place since 1991 caused by the mafia. Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Croatia and Bulgaria all have similar problems: 'grey areas', lawless spheres or spheres in which the state does not make any attempt to gain authority. When Serbia's President Boris Tadić and the Democratic Party want to pick up the accession process, it will be necessary to take more vigorous actions at the level of the EU within the framework of future reformed police and legal co-operation.

The case of Montenegro shows what can be achieved with European pressure. Beside international aid, earnings from cigarette smuggling were used until 2001 to finance the Montenegrin budget. New and former Prime Minister Đukanović was responsible for state 'licences for 'tobacco transit'' and, from the port in Bar, some 29 million kilograms of cigarettes were shipped between 1996 and 2001. This source of income faded because of preliminary proceedings, although the economic embargo declared by the international community over a long period, however, favoured organised crime in Serbia and Montenegro. Mappes-Niediek puts tensions between Beograd and Podgorica down also to Đukanović's 'state monopolism' which made it more difficult for Serb smugglers to reach the coast. Even so, these clear explanations allow further conclusions: a well-known political reformer such as Zoran Đinđić were likely to get mixed up in the existing balance of power. Similar to his political friend Đukanović, the political realist was associated with the cigarette mafia. The plan of the tobacco combine BAT to establish a cigarette factory in the industrial city of Kragujevac, which was going through a difficult crisis, was approved by his government in the summer of 2001. This would have meant that 'tobacco smuggling in Europe had obtained an impregnable bulwark'. Mappes-Niediek explains the affair with the dependency of the Democratic Party on donors. To guarantee the financing of the Party, Đinđić cultivated different kinds of contacts to companies which derived

from the society of the legal or the illegal economy, as did most party leaders of the Serb opposition.

If the corruption of the state apparatus in some south-east European countries is almost a part of everyday business, cigarette smuggling, the trading of drugs and women or contract murders deepen to a depressing synopsis of organised crime. Mappes-Niediek verifies this with a whole range of examples. Nevertheless, the control mechanisms of the separation of powers are starting to function, above all the judiciary and the press. After the murder of Đinđić, Serb police authorities have started to clean out the stable of Augias of corruption and organised crime with an iron broom. In Montenegro, investigations into the abduction of women are still being made. Are the states of south-east Europe really 'a threat to Europe' as Mappes-Niediek's subtitle suggests? Scarcely so: corruption rules on a global level.

Serbia and Montenegro – the EU as honest broker?

The relationship between Serbia and Montenegro changed after the break with Milošević in 1996. Popović (2002) takes up the changes in the capitalist world economy determined by Wallerstein, as well as the still-important role of the state in stabilising social balance, in order to reach an understanding of the confused conditions of Montenegro which, to the present day, are determined by political and mafia-like power struggles between pro-Serb and state independent-supporting factions. In the 'post-Cold War Balkan chaos', Popović states, the second period of the Montenegrin transition has been initiated by Milo Đukanović following the break with Milošević, whose foster-son the Prime Minister had been. According to Popović, this is the historical contribution of the again-current Prime Minister of Montenegro.

> The disintegration of the old monopolistic Democratic Party of Socialists was a necessary pre-condition for the beginning of the positive transition of the second phase. To fight and resist Slobodan Milošević's regime, Milo Đukanović's new Democratic Party of Socialists has been forced to form a coalition with anti-Milošević opposition parties. (*ibid*: 12)

van Meurs (2003) examines the achievement of the so-called Belgrade Agreement of March 2002 and its possible consequences. He focuses on the 'platforms' of the Đukanović administration on the one side and of Đinđić/Koštunica on the other. Tables clarify the differences regarding international status and representation, state institutions and decision-making, common policy fields and competencies which are listed together with the result of the Serbia and Montenegro Agreement. According to van Meurs's clear thesis, without the intervention of the EU, fearing an independent Montenegro because of a possible effect on Kosovo, the apparently artificial state construction of Serbia and Montenegro would not have been established. Was EU chief negotiator Javier Solana really able to act at all credibly as an 'honest broker' in front of the prejudices towards Montenegrin independency? van Meurs states clearly:

> Solana's attempts to keep Serbia and Montenegro together were (...) understood as a blunt attempt to save the *status quo* of the 'good old' Yugoslav Federation with some minor, cosmetic modifications. (*ibid*: 65)

The author manages to clarify the different motivations and interests of the participants. At several points, the failure of the negotiations seemed to be evident. Đukanović in particular needed at least the option of running a referendum on Montenegrin independency three years after the establishment of the confederation. The Serb or Yugoslav side, with the paradox of the different sovereignties being symbolised by Đinđić and Koštunica, was guided by the opinion that its international reputation could be regained by a will to compromise. Regional stabilisation could only be achieved by resolving the Kosovo question and by choosing a functional solution regarding an independent Montenegro and Serbia or a solid confederation. In the end, summarises van Meurs, the 'triangular dilemma of Belgrade-Podgorica-Pristina' remains. Hoping to develop a durable 'framework for new trilateral and regional arrangements', the EU played for time. Perhaps the fragile construction of Serbia-Montenegro was a necessary step towards this aim. In the meantime, the independent Montenegro is seeking to become a member of the EU, while Serbia is still searching for its way.

Epilogue

The EU integration programme is a major westernisation programme (and promise) intended to attain economic wealth, social integration, stability and political participation. In other words: after the 'post-Cold War Balkan chaos' (Milan Popović) a 'process of civilisation' (or westernised modernisation) is required to civilise an uncivilised region. Those stereotypes were part of westernised thinking in the 19th and 20th century; they seemed to be confirmed during the Yugoslav wars in the nineties (Todorova 1999; Becker and Jurkeit, 2001). Globalisation and europeanisation have brought a new quality:

> The periphery wants to be the core. The comparison challenges. However, at the same time it creates wrong claims. The periphery wants to adjust to the consumption standards of the core, but does not reflect the necessary measures needed to reach this aim. All the peoples of the Balkans live beyond their means. They are societies on credit. (Wagner, 2003: 299).

If Europe fails to integrate them, all dreams of European unity and common policies may fade away. Stabilising and integrating the western Balkans with EU governing and learning methods is a great challenge. During the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, EU member states found starting points to co-operate at a military level. Previously, the EU had been absorbed with its plans for economic and monetary union. But more or less economic issues cannot alone bring an European identity. The EU is a regional player with diffuse global obligations and it has perceived that it is worth paying attention to the implosions occurring in other parts of the world. Europe's unity at war has happened. Engagement in the western Balkans, in combination with a common foreign and security policy, is the result.

However, honestly spoken, it is a unification consensus by cosmopolitan European elites who are the greatest profiteers from globalisation and europeanisation. Ordinary people – the so-called average guy – do not care about which kind of engagement in the western Balkans or in Afghanistan has happened. All the opinion polls in Italy, Spain, Germany, Czech Republic or elsewhere in Europe show that fighting against unemployment rates and social decline is more important than wag-

ing wars outside Europe. In this view, the EU should build up a proper welfare state not a globally-acting military machine. The bizarre role of the US as an over-taxed and unpopular world police officer is a metaphor.

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