

THEORIZING EURO-ATLANTIC SOCIALIZATION: INFERENCES FOR A STABLE BALKAN ORDER

Emilian Kavalski*

Abstract

The article attempts to provide a theoretical framework of international socialisation that helps initiate a security community-pattern of relationship in the Balkans, in its process of Euro-Atlantic accession. It focuses on the interaction between "ideas" and "institutions", and their import for the international socialisation of the Balkans. However, it delineates to what extent the ideational aspect of neoliberal-constructivism can be applied in regional policy-making; and to what extent the process of Southeast European socialisation within Euro-Atlantic structures can be used as an instrument for attaining regional stability. For this purpose, the investigation defines the concept of order for the Balkans. The suggestion is that Euro-Atlantic organisations are equipped to address the Balkan sources of conflict and encourage inter-state cooperation. The prospect and conditionality of membership provides them with significant influence in the region, which in turn facilitates regional cooperation and thus, the emergence of a nascent security community.

“It would be conceited to claim that we have an important role to play. Who are we to teach others lessons?”

Simeon Saxcoburggotsky, Prime Minister of Bulgaria¹

INTRODUCTION

The major objective of the Euro-Atlantic (i.e. the EU and NATO) accession of the Balkans is the establishment of "a peace order" (Mintchev 2001:3) for the region.²

* Marie Curie Visiting Fellow at SPIRIT-Europe, Aalborg University, Denmark.

¹ Interview with Simeon Saxcoburggotsky on 22 March 2002 at:
<http://www.government.bg/PrimeMinister/Interviews/2002-03-22/1485.html>

² In "the Balkans" I include the following states: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro and Slovenia. For the purposes of the present paper I am using the Balkans and Southeastern Europe interchangeably (as synonyms); nevertheless, I am aware of the conceptual debate on their different connotations.

However, the above statement by the current Bulgarian Prime Minister is indicative of a major stasis of meaning in the Balkans, underscoring its fragmentation: the belief that Southeast European actors have *nothing to offer* for the stabilisation of the region. This evinces a kind of regional reliance on the international community not only to "sort out" the Balkan mess, but also to *suggest* (i.e. *dictate*) the way for its implementation. That is why the "existence of this international high authority... has freed the local parties of ever having to agree on anything meaningful" (Sletzinger 2001:7). Thus, it is the lack of regional initiative, rather than the oft-quoted "endemic antagonism", that is the main poser for the successful accession of the region to Euro-Atlantic structures.

This is especially clear in the post-September 11 environment, when the "Balkan fatigue" (particularly in the US) has nearly developed into "abandonment" of the region. Such noticeable lack of interest must put the pressure on Balkan actors to initiate joint projects for tackling common problems. Thus, the present theorising of Southeast European accession to Euratlantic structures aims at depicting a desirable *optimal* end state: the establishment of a security community in the Balkans. The purpose of accession is perceived by this exploration not simply as individual regional states becoming members of these institutions; but that in the process they establish a particular type of *order* in the Balkans. In this respect, the launch of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe (SP) in 1999, *in theory* suggests the institution of a patterned relationship around the buzzwords of socialisation, reciprocity and intersubjectivity.³ However, its praxis (and the fact that it took the international community several "Balkan wars" and thousands of dead and displaced to formulate the SP) has, so far, failed to materialise this expectation.

The current article queries whether it is possible to detect in the theory and praxis of international socialisation cooperational frameworks that can be initiated without (necessarily) requiring trust or solidarity among the actors; but which (in the process of interaction) can lead to establishing trust and solidarity among them. Evincing such patterns would help the development of similar frameworks for Balkan cooperation that can establish long-term trust and solidarity among regional actors. In its essence, this is an attempt to provide a theoretical framework of international socialisation that helps initiate a security community-pattern of relationship in the region, in its process of Euro-Atlantic accession. Broadly defined socialisation involves the transmission of the rules of socially appropriate

³ For an insightful study of the topic see Vucetic (2002).

behaviour among actors and in practical terms it provides guidelines to states and their leaders about how they are supposed to behave in the international system. Consequently, in such an altered and complicated environment as the one in the Balkans, the challenge to policy-makers of order formation in the Balkans is both pragmatic (how to adjust policy and devise new policy to changing circumstances) and substantive (how to adjust pre-existing perceptions and attitudes to accord with new realities).

This research focuses on the current debate in International Relations (IR) theory on the interaction between "ideas" and "institutions", and their import for the international socialisation of the Balkans. However, it delineates to what extent the ideational aspect of neoliberal-constructivism can be applied in regional policy-making; and to what extent the process of Southeast European socialisation within Euro-Atlantic structures can be used as an instrument for attaining regional stability. For this purpose, the investigation defines the concept of *order* for the Balkans. The objective of its theoretical considerations is to inform regional policy-making and decision-taking with the prospects from cooperation and community-building in the process of accession to Euro-Atlantic structures.

The suggestion is that Euro-Atlantic organisations are equipped to address the Balkan sources of conflict and encourage inter-state cooperation. The prospect and conditionality of membership provides them with significant influence in the region. This socialisation occurs in terms of altering domestic practices through compliance and learning, and in changing external behaviour. These processes, in turn facilitate regional cooperation and thus, the emergence of a nascent security community.

WHAT IS ORDER

The pragmatic purpose for grappling with the issue of international order is to provide a definition that suggests a potential for reform in the Balkan region. Thus, order is understood to be a framework of predictability. Predictability (in the sense of self-sustaining continuity) is rationalised as a mechanism for maintaining a structure of power; and power stands for the exchange between different forms and sources of authority. In this way, a political order gives meaning to and makes sense of the relations and interactions in the international society. That is why, order is about control (in the sense of checks and balances): regulating the participants' resources, their use and distribution. It sets the framework within

which they can be meaningfully utilised and the types of interactions that the members can have.

Since the aim of this exploration is not to exhaust the meaning of the concept of order, but, instead, to suggest a framework for the discussions of Balkan order, this study would like to emphasise three distinct aspects of order: *solidarity*, *regulation* and *security* (Rengger 2000). In spite of the fact that more often than not these aspects overlap it is the distinct interaction between them that can suggest a relationship-pattern for overcoming the current stalemate in the meaning of order in the Balkans. The order that this study wants to proffer for Southeastern Europe is security community.

The self-sustaining continuity of order derives from the interaction between actors, whose behaviour in the international arena is embedded in intersubjective understandings and expectations. This intersubjectivity is constituted by the collective meanings that actors hold for each other. At the same time, interaction is as much the result of a "social contract" (in the sense of a recognition of the negative effects the disintegration of this system of exchange can have on the actors' own interests and that of the other participants) as well as a consequence of the "*solidarity*" among the participants, deriving from their "shared values" and "shared interests" (Wallace 1997:228. Emphasis added). The recognition of the interests of the rest points to an awareness of the existence of international community. This communitarism stems from a belief that actors have to work together for the internationalisation of the democratic community so that they can protect themselves from the negative effects of global economic and social forces. In other words they embed their roles in the context of belonging to an international society (Bull 1979). The understanding of their actions as conforming to a pattern of predictability is borne out of the social interaction between actors to preserve the structure of order.

Order can be "defined primarily in terms of negotiated connections among externally autonomous and internally integrated" actors (March and Olsen 1998:5). It *regulates* the relationship between actors' corporate identities and their social roles as participants in the international arena. The current international order establishes different structures for accommodating the objectives of individual actors. In this way, through the regulatory aspect of order, what used to be interstate interaction gradually developed into (or more precisely is still developing towards) supra-national, non-territorial relations. In this way, order identifies actors as separate entities and develops a pattern of predictability

through which it mediates their individual goals. At the same time, however, it initiates a process of structural change within its participants, in which they substitute a portion of their identity in favour of their own (as well as that of the system of order) stability. Such identity transformation results from the process of social interaction among actors. Changing the context of interaction (i.e. increased interdependence and societal convergence) modifies actors' expectations (in the context of "character planning"), which, subsequently, affects not only their behaviour, but brings about "critical self-reflection... to think of oneself in novel terms" (Wendt 1992:419). Thus, their identity is influenced by the relationship-pattern of predictability, where order allows for re-evaluation of actors' interests and identities without endangering the continuity of its stability.

The other important aspect of international order is the establishment of a sense of *security* (among the individual participants). Security is understood as knowledge of order's ability to overcome successfully (without disintegration into violence) disruptions to its patterns of predictability. Security is a process of continuous sanction (in the sense of guarantee) that the system of order protects the participating actors from adverse contingencies. In an applied sense, security indicates "a low probability of damage to acquired values" (Baldwin 1997:13). Therefore, the stability of order indicates its ability "to contain and overcome disturbances to order" (Ikenberry 2001:45). This is where the importance of the normative culture among actors in the international arena, becomes so important: because it constitutes a base that buttresses individual confidence in the potentiality of the mutual control over the system's checks and balances.

Such definition of order as interaction between its three aspects (solidarity, regulation and security) articulates a distinct pattern of predictability, which regulates the intersubjective relationship between actors. The significance of this framework of order (i.e. for the discussion of Balkan order) derives from its emphasis on international relations as a process of learning and socialisation, during which actors develop a cognitive understanding (based on their experience of interaction in the international arena) of the reciprocity of international society as a security community. This reciprocity (in the context of solidarity) underscores the belonging to a community sharing a common normative base. Such interdependence mediates actor's interests and regulates their exchange within a secure framework of order's stability. Thus, this particular understanding of order constitutes a pattern, which allows for peaceful exchange and interest-mediation, as well as joint decision-taking and non-territorially-based policy-making.

However, prior to dealing with the socialisation dynamic some theoretical matters for the understanding and explanation of this process are on order.

DIFFERENT THEORETICAL VIEWS AND ORDER

Bearing in mind the pragmatic approach to the socialisation dynamic of the Balkans – i.e. the purpose of this examination of order is not to exhaust its meaning, but rather to position it in a way that would suggest an analytical framework for establishing a security-community-type of order in the Balkans in the process of accession to Euro-Atlantic structures – this investigation is objective to the extent of its awareness of the different theoretical perspectives on order, but it is at the same time prescriptive as to its goals. For the purposes of clarity this article looks only at the dominant orthodoxies of IR theory: neorealism, neoliberalism and constructivism. The focus is on the "kind of knowledge" (Wendt 1999:377) of international relations that the three analytical frameworks produce, and in what way can it be used for theorizing the present state of order in Southeastern Europe. Thus, this is an attempt to arrive at a set of useful theoretical indicators of a security-community-type of order, which can suggest the necessary pragmatic instruments for establishing cooperative relations among Balkan actors. This overview suggests the potential for adopting "neoliberal constructivism" as the theory underscoring the establishment of a prospective Balkan order.

NEOREALIST PERSPECTIVE ON ORDER

From a neorealist (Waltz 1979) perspective, *the* actor of the international system of order is the nation-state; while, international politics is the struggle for power – understood as the ability to influence or resist such influence on the behaviour of actors (Buzan et al. 1993). Interstate relations are "always power politics: for it is impossible to eliminate power from them" (Carr 1981/ 1939:145). Thus, international order is viewed as anarchy, meaning that there is no central authority to mediate the relations between states and these states are dependent upon themselves (their resources) for the protection of their national interests. Interstate interaction is driven by the logic of a "self-help" system, in which collective security and closer cooperation are impossible, because of the egotistic, self-interested and suspicious-of-the-other attitude of each actor. For realists, the only means to avoid conflict (war) in such an anarchical system is through the development of some sort of hierarchy among states (based on their material resources to exert influence). State preferences are usually fixed and conflictual, that is why interstate politics become a constant bargaining game (Powell 1999).

The pattern of actor-socialisation within a neorealist order is very much conditioned by anarchy, rather than the internalisation of ethical norms of international relations linked to rights, justice and morality. Actors are led by the logic of anarchy, or they are eliminated (Sigel 1970). Thus, compliance is achieved only to the extent that an actor is forced to abide by certain rules, delineated by the threat from an immanent punishment. For instance, one can take the post-Dayton Accords behaviour of Serbia/Montenegro as such example. As soon as what was left of the former Yugoslav union perceived that the threat from the international community would not be acted upon the Kosovo conflict became: (a) a trial of the military capabilities and mostly commitment of the international community to deliver on its promises – a test, which as far as Serbia/Montenegro is concerned, the Yugoslav army won (Ignatieff 2001:91-219); and (b) it brought into question the neorealist concept of non-intervention in intra-state affairs, and to a certain extent a case may be made that it violated current international law set up to protect state-sovereignty.⁴ Nevertheless, the Kosovo conflict proved that without compulsion an actor would not submit to the signals of the international system.

The unfeasibility of providing a viable solution to the problem of Southeast European security (in a neorealist international order) comes from the virtual impossibility of collective security based on cooperation. The system of anarchy (a complex balancing act between states, each desiring to become a hegemon) makes collaboration between states almost unattainable. In the realist model, the closest nation-states can come to working together is by forming alliances. However, alliances (seen as temporary organisations) are formed according to perceived hostile intentions of a state (or a group of states) against another (or a group), and as such they represent a "balance-of-threat" mechanism as opposed to balance-of-power (Walt 1987).

As a policy framework, the neorealist view of order is problematic when elaborating a prospective relationship-pattern in the Balkans, because of its underlying pattern of enmity. On a pragmatic level, it would be very difficult for a neorealist framework of analysis to be translated into a practical foreign-policy mechanism rooted in a relationship-pattern that would allow actors (not just states) to identify positively with one another in the context of a security community. The reason being the neorealist assumption that anarchy (the lack of centralised

⁴ Although as Malcolm (1998:264-5) argues Kosovo was never legally recognized under international law as part of Yugoslavia.

authority) at the international level (the macro-structure) is interpreted in state (highly-centralised) policy-making during international interaction (the micro-structure) as preserving one's survivability in the natural selection process of the neorealist marketplace (Archer 1995). Thus, neorealist theory presents a pattern in which actors behave in a way that is dictated by the framework of anarchy of international relations (and the perceived malicious intentions among actors), rather than from the actual knowledge of the other actors' intent (Wendt 1999:264). Partly, the reason for the current instability of the Balkans is this "lack of interaction" (acting according to assumptions rather than knowledge of the other), which hampers the prospect for regional interaction.

NEOLIBERAL PERSPECTIVE ON ORDER

The other major tradition in IR is neoliberal institutionalism (Baldwin 1993). For neoliberal institutionalists the main actors in the international arena still continue to be nation-states; however, they suggest a plethora of non-state actors (international and transnational organisations, non-governmental organisation, multinational corporations, etc.) as important participants in the process of international relations. Institutions in this context are understood to be "a relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behaviour for specific groups of actors in specific situations" (March and Olsen 1998:8). Neoliberal institutionalism presents interstate relations as the complex interdependence of distinctive political processes, which translate power's sources into power as control of outcomes (Keohane and Nye 1997). The institutions, suggested by neoliberal theory, seek "to reduce the uncertainty [of the anarchic system], lower transaction costs, and solve collective action problems" (Ikenberry 2001:15).

Both the anticipated and unanticipated consequences of neoliberal institutionalism make it a very interesting proposition for outlining a framework of analysis, which can support the development of a prospective order for the Balkans. However, the post-Cold War years have posed a number of challenges in the Balkans, which suggest certain limitations to the logic of neoliberal institutionalism. The benefits of socialisation within the rules and procedures of neoliberal institutionalism are subjected to the costs of rationalist materialism. Institutionalism alone would not introduce an awareness of "common fate", "shared identity" and "we-feeling". It can initiate such a process, but there is also the opportunity that it can generate a Balkan alliance system of regional divisions and suspicions. In this sense, the institutional approach can be effective if it is internalised by all actors involved as a mechanism for building trust among them (and not one-way monologue from the

EU and NATO towards the Balkans). Thus, the process of enlargement of the EU and NATO often tends to be interpreted as a lack of commitment by Euro-Atlantic structures to the region, something that brings into question the policies used to promote regional stability and security (as for instance the rhetorical hype during the launch of the SP and its virtual non-functioning, let alone delivery today). Alterations in state behaviour alone within institutional limits (at least in Southeastern Europe) are not enough to make the region a place of economic, political and social stability, security and cooperation. Achieving this requires a thorough investigation into actors' interests and identities: how do they take shape and how (if at all) can they be influenced (and changed) in the process of interstate interaction.

CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVE ON ORDER

The end of the Cold War era has posed a number of questions to rationalist analysis (both neorealist and neoliberal) of international relations, the majority of them querying its focus on the state-centric model. Developments in the former Eastern Bloc, and especially in the Balkans, during the 1990s emphasised the importance of maintaining peaceful relations through cooperation. However, both neorealism and neoliberalism failed to deliver a pattern of cooperative and stable relations (in the sense of social, political and economic development) among the Southeast European states. Instead the strategy of deterrence, attempted by a number of international actors, further exacerbated the situation in the region. Partly, the reason for this failure of rationalist approaches, was (1) their inability to comprehend the complexity, as well as the diversity of the security dilemmas in the Balkans and (2) take into account the individual human input into the construction of these dilemmas (and hence their solution). Their models remain to a large extent on the state (inter-governmental) level, without considering the process of formation of state preferences and interests on the societal level.

The theoretical basis for the study of actors' identities and interests has been called constructivism (Onuf 1989; Wendt 1999). Constructivism investigates the influence of international interaction on actors' interests and identities, and challenges the rationalist (both realist and neoliberal) "two-step" (Legro 1996). Constructivism proposes that systemic interaction transforms state interests and, in the process, even affects their identity (i.e. the logic of anarchy is not fixed). Actually, it asserts that the dynamics of international relations are the result of actors' need and purposes. Thus, actors' actions (or inactions) are constituted by collective meanings. For example "states act differently towards enemies than they

do towards friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not" (Wendt 1992:397). Constructivism also posits that the process of interaction informs the meanings in which actors' behavior is organized. The underscoring mechanism in interstate relations is learning: interaction reinforces some international processes by rewarding actors "for holding certain ideas about each other", and, at the same time, discourages them from holding others (Wendt 1992:405). Constructivism asserts that actors' identities and interests are formed in the process of interaction and are not given prior to it (hence they are not primordial). State identity is defined through relations with other states. The process of international relations gives meaning to concepts such as "state sovereignty" and "national territoriality".

Constructivism develops the role of identity and interests in international interaction. The experience of inter-actor relations develops a repository of knowledge about each other, which they use as a basis for their action towards one another. However, constructivism alone would not be sufficient to construct a theoretical model for a prospective Balkan order. Its idealism (in the sense of emphasising how ideas and culture constitute the content and meaning of materialist power and interests) provides a rather abstruse theoretical framework for influencing decision-making in the region (Wendt 1999:370-7). In order to overcome the abstraction of constructivism and also to assist the incorporation of its analysis into Balkan policy-making there is a need of rationalist tools to instantiate the practices that lead to shared identification among regional actors into a security-community-type of order. Owing to the prevalent rationalism of Southeast European relations, as well as the dominant position of negative identification among the main actors in the region (mainly nation-states, or entities aspiring to such status), the only viable approach would be one that would combine neoliberal practices with constructivist ideation.

NEOLIBERAL-CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVE ON ORDER

Neoliberal constructivism (being an eclectic approach) combines in its understanding of international order rationalist (interest-based and power-based) and cognitive (knowledge-based) perspectives. Applying it to the Balkans involves foregrounding the aspects that hold the promise of establishing a stable and cooperative pattern of relations. The main aspects of neoliberal-constructivist order are: institutions - based on mutual agreements, whose normative "stickiness" and institutional autonomy proffer cooperation; and interaction - the process of interest and identity formation, which develops experiential knowledge among actors and introduces positive identification and community building. Thus,

neoliberalism provides the rules and procedures for institutional co-binding, while constructivism facilitates the learning of new practices and the establishment of trust among actors. Combining these two theoretical concepts of international relations allows putting the issue of prospective Balkan order in its rightful context: as a distinct pattern based on the interaction between the solidarity, regulation and security aspects of order.

Establishing such an order in the Balkans entails the development of institutional networks that help develop positive intersubjective meanings among actors. The theoretical basis for such pattern can be elicited from the emphasis on the weakening position of state actors, followed by the diminishing relevance of military security in the context of "complex interdependence". The neoliberal notion of "complex interdependence", emphasises that "(1) states are not the only significant actors - transnational actors working across state boundaries are also major actors; (2) force is not the only significant instrument - economic manipulation and the use of international institutions is the dominant instrument; (3) security is not the dominant goal - welfare is the dominant goal" (Nye 1993:169). In this way, institutionalism stresses its pragmatic qualities for facilitating the establishment of closer cooperation among Southeast European actors. Within the context of the SP, the promotion of economic and social welfare is understood as a tool for initiating regional actors into a process of working together. This in turn is expected to promote peaceful coexistence (in the sense of actor-behaviour that would make the recourse to violence obsolete), which offers solution to some of the current problems of Balkan order. Thus, institutions can be helpful for creating expectations among actors that they would "behave" in an accepted (or agreed upon) way in particular situations.

However, what constructivism contributes to this process is the understanding that "complex interdependence" translates into "complex learning" – i.e. the dynamics of identity-/interest-formation (Wendt 1999:170). Namely, the process of interaction *makes* actors learn about each other, which provides them with knowledge of what to expect from each other. Thus, within the context of neoliberal institutionalism they agree to work together, which initially affects only their behavior. However, the continual practice (re-enactment of the norms, which initiated the process) prompts them to "internalize" the rules and procedures, which subsequently affects their identities (how they perceive themselves and the other actors) (Wendt 1999:327). In this way actors participate in the pattern of

international relations according to the expectations that its rules (instituted through "complex interdependence") have been established (and are beneficial).

Within such a framework, neoliberal-constructivism should be understood as a "common sense" pattern of international relations (Wendt 1999:296). It is this context that allows developing a certain pattern of interdependence, based on shared norms and collective identity, which emphasises order as a security community.

A security community is an inter-actor relationship that maintains "dependable expectations of peaceful change" (Adler and Barnett 1998:30). It represents a peaceful, nonviolent international order that elicits the importance of non-national, collective identity. In many respects it is the very opposite of realist power politics. A security community arises from the process of interaction in which actors develop their knowledge of shared meanings and values. The self-sustaining continuity of security communities is the result from the institutional self-enforcing agreement among actors. Neoliberalism offers an opportunity to socialise the actors within the norms and rules of the security community. Institutions provide the framework for internalising the values beliefs and behaviour consistent with their rules, which establish a political culture of legitimacy (Wendt 1999:272). In this context, actors' acquisition of the institutional rules, helps overcome adversarial polarisations in their relations, which subsequently leads to developing stable expectation about each other (owing to the internalisation of institutional procedures). Thus, the legitimacy of the institutional basis of inter-actor relations within a security community ensures "that the members of that community will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other way" (Deutsch 1957:5). Thus, the normative base of institutions constitutes the regulatory authority of order. It is in this way that the establishment of common rules for involving actors in a relationship of complex interdependence allows them to begin developing collective interests and knowledge of each other. Being always in process, actors' interests and identities constantly relearn the benefits from developing positive meanings of each other.

Thus, combining the insights of neoliberalism and constructivism informs the study of international orders, and proffers a potential model for theorizing a Balkan pattern of international relations. The analytical implications of combining institutionalism with interest and identity-interaction suggests a pattern of order based on the exchange between different forms and sources of authority, which regulate actors' resources (their use and distribution) in the environment of a

security community. It provides the basis for promoting institutions for interaction between regional actors that can contribute to a process of shared identification. The dynamics of common intersubjective meanings has been referred to as socialisation. The current process of accession and association with Euro-Atlantic structures is expected to put forward a development suggestive of regional cooperation in the Balkans.

REGIONAL COOPERATION AND SOCIALISATION

The defining moment of any international order is its handling of crises. Crisis marks the boundary of a security community. It indicates a denial of the “trust and shared values among actors” (Bially-Mattern 2001:356). However, the question for establishing order in the Balkans is how to initiate a security-community-relationship among regional actors out of the current crisis (marked by a lack) of intra-regional interaction in Southeastern Europe? In the context of the theoretical analysis of neoliberal-constructivism the query can be modified as to what type of socialisation facilitates the establishment of regional institutions that can introduce cooperative exchange in the region? And what is the role of Euro-Atlantic structures in assisting (or hindering) such process?

The establishment of a security community in the Balkans can be achieved through instituting cooperation among regional actors around issue areas of common concern. The expectation is that joint work for tackling such problems can help socialise not just the expert-groups directly involved in this exchange, but also can contribute to trust-building among societies. Naturally, in its initial stages, this could not be the *optimal* form of a security-community-order. It can be an “organisational emulation” of the Euratlantic pattern of institutionalised behaviour (Vucetic 2002:113).

The assumption of this research is that the establishment of peaceful order in the Balkans is premised on the *external* promotion of a “nascent security community” (Adler and Barnett 1996:36) in the region. Its institution could set the Balkans on the course of developing intersubjective relationships that (in the long run) could lead to the *optimal* form of regional security community. However, owing to the pragmatics of its promotion, this research would focus primarily on the socialization practices that can *initiate* a nascent security community. Being the first stage of a process of regional (re-) building, the nascent security community requires material incentives (for instance, conditionality) to sustain its pattern of

relationships. Nevertheless, its institutional framework could provide the environment for interaction, which could lead to the development of shared expectations for appropriate behaviour (i.e. logic of predictability, which can facilitate the building of trust).

The expectation is that the current involvement of international structures (i.e. Euro-Atlantic institutions) in the Balkans can create the facilitating domestic conditions for regional actors (by diffusing “‘selected’ liberal practices”) to initiate a security community-type of order (Adler 1997:250). Such relationship can result from a redefinition of the *acquis* process for Balkan actors that would reflect their particularism (in the sense of providing assistance, according to specific needs and problems), and at the same time stress the importance of the *idea* and *practice* of cooperation.

Probably the main obstacle for instituting cooperative behaviour in the Balkans is the unwillingness of regional actors to identify with each other. The reasons are: (1) the current involvement of Euratlantic structures in regional conflict resolution focuses on individual actors (i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, or Macedonia) without involving more regional actors (or the region as a whole) in their mediation; and (2) the subsequent pejorative connotation of the region as a symbol of instability and division (hence, "Balkanization"). Some regional actors (i.e. Croatia) fear regional cooperation, because of its reputed threat to whatever stability individual actors have succeeded to maintain.

However, both these points help not only in understanding the need for cooperative behaviour in the Balkans, but also for initiating regional cooperation. The starting point is the definition of *region* as an area within which there is a more "*intensive co-operation*" between countries and communities than in their interactions with the other parts of the world (Simai 1994: v. Emphasis added). The first issue that strikes one is the definition of the Balkans as a region in the sense of *intensive co-operation*. The recent developments in Southeastern Europe have indicated just the opposite kind of processes - antagonism and confrontation. So, in this sense, is Southeastern Europe a region? According to this definition - not! But when one takes into consideration the external perception on Southeast European developments, then the answer is - yes! The Balkans is defined not by its awareness of itself as an entity, but by the other regions' discernment of the area as idiosyncratic. Because of the connotations from Balkan identification, regional actors try to disassociate themselves as much as possible from their neighbours in an attempt to dispel this view of the Balkans as a peculiar entity.

However, these efforts (ironically) further entrench the belief of the outside world, that Southeastern Europe is an area with its own, inimitable characteristics of antagonism and instability. In this sense, perhaps paradoxically, *working together can help regional actors disassociate themselves from the negative identification of their belonging to the Balkans*. That is why, within such context, the relationship of the region with the Euratlantic structures needs to satisfy the diverse interest of all actors (which can come only from cooperation). This understanding beckons an explanation of how socialisation works and what in the current process of Euro-Atlantic accession proffers the initiation of a security community.

More formally, the international socialisation of Southeastern Europe through the accession process is premised on the development of stable institutions of inter- and intra-state relations. In itself it is a “process that is directed toward a state’s internalisation of the constitutive beliefs and practices institutionalised in its international environment” (Shimmelfennig 2000:111. Emphasis original). In other words, it refers to a process through which institutions, practices, and norms are transmitted between international actors. Being a *complex* and *context-specific* process, socialisation (for the purposes of this study) is understood to comprise two complementary aspects: compliance (socialisation *by* international organisations) and learning to comply (socialisation *in* international organisations). This indicates that the process of international socialisation has two sides: one, potentially coercive and the other – educational. Both of them are characterised by their own set of means for achieving adherence to the externally promoted rules, however their effectiveness can be assessed in their complementarity.

The process of conditionality linked to accession is the main proponent of the socialisation *by* international organisations. In this context, the level of compliance is related (i) to expected rewards, and (ii) to avoiding specific punishments (i.e. threat of sanctions). The implications for generating cooperative behaviour in the Balkans are that enforcement is required to deter states from shirking (Tallberg 2002:612). The power of attraction of the socialising agencies (the EU and NATO) puts them in a strong bargaining position, which allows them to shape the procedures and monitor the implementation of rules and norms. For example, the “New PHARE Orientations for Pre-Accession Assistance” adopted in 1997 emphasise that it is the EU (through its Accession Partnerships) and not the beneficiaries that decide how PHARE money is spent. Thus, “mandatory

adaptation” (Barbara Lippert and Peter Becker quoted in Brusis 2002:534) effects adherence to rules by conditioning the actors. Conditionality – “the use of incentives to alter a state’s behaviour or policies” (Checkel 2000:1) – emphasises the role of the sanctioning authority, which is responsible for monitoring the degree of adherence to the promoted norms and rules. In the Balkans (as it has already been stated) the principal socialising agencies are the EU and NATO, which set up the criteria for accession to their structures. For instance, the Copenhagen European Council of 1993 introduced the broad political and economic criteria for EU membership, which provided the EU with a mandate to monitor, control and guide policy-making in the accession countries. This position was re-emphasised in the conclusions of the Luxemburg European Council of 1997, which suggests the “threshold principle” adopted by the EU, indicating “the qualitative and subjective judgements about minimum standards” that applicant states must meet in their bid for membership (Jacoby 2001:181). In other words, the presence and constant monitoring of this process by the EU offers some guarantee that Balkan elites institutionalise and act according to community-compatible practices. Within this context their compliance with the socialising mechanisms is ensured by both the symbolic and instrumental pulling incentives of these extra-regional organisations. However, coercive means are required (i) to diminish the possibility of free-riding, as well as (ii) to indicate commitment by the socialising agency and if necessary make an example of the negative effects of non-compliance (as the case of Yugoslavia illustrates). This conclusion emphasises the unique position of the Euro-Atlantic institutions (the EU in particular) to enforce compliance through the leverage of their supranational institutions, and thence (possibly) initiate cooperation in the region.

The socialisation *in* international organisations occurs through the actual interaction by the socialised states with the EU and NATO in partnership and association activities. Very often non-compliance occurs not because of a deliberate decision of the target to violate the promoted norms and rules, but because of the lack of capacity building, rule interpretation and transparency (Tallberg 2002:613). Thus, Euro-Atlantic organisations have developed programs of *learning* for accession countries by enhancing the accountability of state bureaucracies and providing technical assistance and expertise in the implementation of certain programs. For instance, the European Commission recognised in 1998 that the “only alternative to long transitional periods is a major *investment* effort” to help applicant countries “adapt to Community norms and standards and to develop their infrastructure” (*European Report* 1998. Emphasis added). This conviction is reflected in subsequent initiatives developed by the EU

(mainly PHARE and CARDS) aimed at strengthening the programming and administrative abilities of candidate countries with the purpose of boosting their absorption capacities. One example of the EU fostering domestic institutional change is the PHARE “twinning” programme introduced in 1999, in which experts from the EU Member States (called “Pre-Accession Advisors”) assist and partner their counterparts from accession countries (EC 2001:5). Similarly, NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, introduced at the January 1994 Brussels Summit of NATO, is a major initiative to enhance stability and security in the applicant countries through capacity building “by promoting the spirit of practical cooperation and commitment to democratic principles that underpin the Alliance” (NATO, 2001). In this context, the Balkan accession to Euro-Atlantic structures can be viewed as a transnational arrangement to allow time for adapting to behavioural requirements (Tallberg 2002:615). In its course, the socialising organisation provides authoritative interpretation as well as time for the socialised to *learn to comply*. The *power of attraction* of extra-regional actors offers the stimuli that lead to learning, i.e. policy change (Haas 1990:27-28). Said otherwise, the socialisation *in* international organisations seeks to overcome the ambiguity of the promoted norms and build the capacity of the socialised entities to carry out their obligations by providing a temporal framework for their implementation (Chayes and Chayes 1993:188).

Thus, the *power of attraction* that the Euro-Atlantic institutions have, allows them to become a legitimate authority for evaluating the degree to which its preferred norms and rules have become integral part of (i.e. constitutive to) the decision-making practices of the Balkan states. As it has been outlined in the previous chapter, the legitimacy of their involvement derives from the complex discourse on accession dynamics, in which “actors regularly refer to the norm to describe and comment on their own behavior and that of others, *the validity claims of the norm are no longer controversial*, even if the actual behavior continues violating the rules” (Thomas Risse cf. Cortell and Davis 1996:456-57. Emphasis added).

In this way, the two aspects of the international socialisation of the Balkans – compliance and learning to comply – are brought together by the Euro-Atlantic organisations and promote rule conformity both as a rhetorical practice and operational mechanism to justify and facilitate the reproduction of their pattern of order. These mutually reinforcing aspects of socialisation develop a common process, which develops in three phases: interaction, interpretation and internalisation (Koh 1997:2645-649).

Interaction occurs in the course of conditioning the target to comply with the external agency by convincing it to delegate its sanctioning authority to an international institution. This is best evidenced by the influence that Euro-Atlantic institutions have in shaping policies in the region through the conditions for accession (as well as the prospect of membership). For instance, the 1994 concluding document from the inaugural conference of the Pact on Stability in Europe held in Paris, states that the participants' "aim is to encourage countries which have not yet concluded *cooperation* and *good neighbourliness* agreements and arrangements, extending also to issues concerning minorities and borders, to do so" (EU 1994:100. Emphasis added). Such adoption of superiority powers through institutional designs to Euro-Atlantic institutions is a crucial aspect for the effectiveness of the socialising interaction (Tallberg 2002:638). It encourages (and ensures) respect for appropriate practices and adherence to acceptable patterns of behaviour.

Interpretation indicates the mechanisms through which the socialising agency translates its requirements to the domestic arena so that it can achieve the necessary levels of understanding and, hence, effect compliance. For example, the 1995 declaration of the Pact on Stability in Europe indicates that the Euro-Atlantic institutions "*undertake* to combine [their] efforts to ensure stability in Europe... [by encouraging] states to cooperate across frontiers" (EU 1995:112. Emphasis added). This conviction in the teaching capacities is reflected in the words of Commission President Jacques Delors, who asserts that the "[European] Community has a special responsibility not only because of its importance as a pole of stability and prosperity, but also because it has an armoury of instruments to deal with the most pressing problems" (Delors 1994:11. Emphasis added).

Internalisation is a matter of practice. It indicates the degree to which the rules and norms introduced in the process of interaction and interpreted according to the needs of the internal context of the state are actually domesticated in policy-making. In other words, internalisation "does not require deviant desires or behavioural preferences to be completely absent, only that *internal* (rather than external) *sanctioning mechanisms* are sufficiently *effective* to prevent deviant preferences from becoming norm-violating actions" (Schimmelfennig, 2000:112. Emphasis original). However, in the early stages of socialisation, the internalisation aspect is *induced* by the conditions of the socialising agencies. The statement of France's European Affairs Minister, Alain Lamassoure, indicates such externally-*encouraged* internalisation: "No country with unsettled border or

minority conflicts will be allowed to join [the EU]” (quoted in *The Economist* 1995).

This triple dynamic of socialisation suggests a possibility that can lead not only to the transfer of Euro-Atlantic norms and rules to the Balkans, but also the replication of their pattern of international relations (i.e. influence foreign-policy-making in the region). Or as the External Relations Commissioner, Chris Patten put it at the Western Balkans Democracy Forum, the Stabilisation and Association Agreements “are extremely demanding because they are not just frameworks for dialogue and for good relations... Signatories *undertake* to align their entire legal and economic frameworks with that of the EU. They begin *to take on the obligations* of EU membership, and to put in place *a network of cooperation* and free trade agreements with their *immediate neighbours*” (Patten 2002:2. Emphasis added).

Thus, as Jonas Tallberg asserts, socialisation premised on the complementarity of enforcement and teaching tends to be “particularly effective in securing rule conformance” and demonstrates “an enhanced capacity to handle non-compliance” (Tallberg, 2002:610). Moreover, the Euro-Atlantic institutions have both “*sufficient credibility* and *sufficient potency*” (George 1999:12. Emphasis original) to maintain this process. The promise of membership once the appropriate procedures have been domesticated (i.e. internalised) by the acceding states serves as a positive incentive that makes regional actors susceptible to international socialisation. The presence of the Euratlantic institutions creates favourable conditions that make it possible for the actors in the domestic political process (i) to internalise international norms and rules, (ii) to appropriate them “to further their interests in the domestic political arena” (Cortell and Davis 1996:471), and parallel with that (iii) to reproduce it in their international relations. In other words, learning becomes a process of “managed interdependence”, where Southeast European states are *induced* to question “older beliefs and... to institutionalise new ways of linking knowledge to the task the entity is supposed to carry out” (Haas 1990:37). In short, the emulation of the transparent and accountable Euro-Atlantic institutions by Balkan elites, makes them more prone to cooperation, since the socialising dynamic makes regional bureaucracies less able to disguise their capabilities and intentions (Keohane, 1984:258-9). The existence of similar democratic domestic institutions can lead Balkan states to consider each other as “not-threatening”, and hence, potential partners. Thus, the norms and

rules promoted by Euro-Atlantic structures can become the foundations of shared meanings that can suggest the initiation of a nascent security community.

CONCLUSION

The promotion of a secure and stable order in the Balkans must (if not resolve, at least) find a way to ensure that all actors involved in the region work together for solving common problems. Said otherwise, the establishment of an institutionalised setting of Balkan relations can contribute to the introduction of stability in the region. Its framework of patterned behaviour involves regional actors in a dialogue on common issues and provides them with opportunities to exchange information. Thus, this process of exchange based on certain rules and procedures can establish shared expectations about each other, which in the process of interaction can lead to the establishment of a security community in the region. The study of this dynamic entails an examination of the role external actors play in the promotion of security-community-relationships in Southeastern Europe, as well as the domestic dynamic, which initiates their involvement.

As it has been suggested, in their nascent stage, prospective security communities rely (to a large extent) on a complex process of organisational emulation, initiated and maintained by third parties. For the Balkans, these extra-regional structures are Euro-Atlantic organisations. Their involvement in the region is underlined by the policy of promoting a particular intra- (and by implication inter-) state relationships aimed at *teaching* them certain norms and rules of appropriate behaviour. In this respect, conditionality (adherence to particular requirements of extra-regional actors) has become a pragmatic approach for achieving compliance. In other words, the Euro-Atlantic institutions are involved in a process of transforming the post-Cold War order in the Balkans to one that is less likely to resort to violence for the solution of conflicting issues. Their conflict resolution approach can be described as an attempt to socialise Southeast European states within a pattern of appropriate behaviour, which can (in the process of accession) introduce cooperation (based on shared understandings); and, hence, mitigate the instability deriving from the threat of violent conflict.

The argument, then, is that Balkan state-interaction with Euro-Atlantic organisations (principally the EU and NATO) leads the latter to propagate norms on accepted practices to Southeast European states. These practices relate to domestic politics and also to inter-state relations. The rules and norms are

propagated in a number of ways. These processes of socialisation, in turn, can encourage inter-state cooperation by the Balkan states (i.e. because they have adopted similar norms and thus types of practice), which can suggest the development of a regional security community.

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