

3. The Demand Side of the EU Enlargement: Understanding our Neighbours

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Introduction

Further EU enlargement is generally treated as a national interest of the Czech Republic. Research has confirmed the existence of a domestic consensus on the Czech political scene in favour of the policy (Král, 2006; Beneš, 2008b) and a quick look at the practice of Czech diplomacy reveals also the high relevance of the topic among Czech priorities in the EU.

Nevertheless, one aspect of the EU enlargement process remains underspecified. Do the neighbouring countries really want to enter the European Union? Is the entrance into the EU an acceptable and desirable alternative for these countries?

The existing academic literature about the EU enlargement (for example, Schimmelfennig, 2003; Moravcsik–Vachudova, 2003; Sjursen, 2002) provides theoretically informed explanations whose focus is on the EU members' motives for admitting new members. At the same time, the “demand side” of the EU enlargement process remains understudied. The scholarly literature leaves many questions pertaining to the acceptability and desirability of the EU membership for the neighbouring countries unanswered (Mattli–Plümper, 2002). What could explain the variability of the integration policies across the neighbourhood?

In this chapter, I focus on the issue of the acceptability and desirability of the EU membership for the neighbouring countries. Since acceptability for the external actors forms, according to the procedural approach to national interests, one of the criteria of national interest, the topic bears practical relevance for the public and political debate in the Czech Republic regarding the Czech national interest. The chapter also tries to contribute to the scholarly literature about EU enlargement by covering the understudied “demand side” component of the enlargement process. Utilizing the conceptual framework of role theory, I will show how the historically constructed role and purpose of a particular state in the international arena does (or does not) allow us to construe “the entrance into the EU” as a normal, right, and intuitively plausible policy. In order to answer my research question, I will utilize one particular type of comparative analysis – the so-called “contrast of context” (Skocpol–Somers, 1980). Such a method allows us to bring out the unique features of each particular case in order to show

us how they affect the working out of social processes (the EU enlargement process in our case).

The chapter has the following structure. In the first section, I operationalize the national interest criteria and enframe my analysis in a wider research program focused on the Czech national interest. The second section introduces the conceptual framework of role theory. The next section goes into the details of the “contrast of contexts” method. The fourth and fifth sections are devoted to case studies on Turkey’s and Russia’s national role conceptions. The sixth section compares (juxtaposes) both cases and deduces conclusions regarding the acceptability of the entrance into the EU using the conceptual framework of role theory. The concluding section returns to the original research question regarding the criteria of Czech national interests.

Operationalization of National Interest Criteria

This chapter follows the procedural approach to national interest (see Kratochvíl, 2009a; this volume). According to the procedural approach, we can distinguish three criteria of national interest: relevance, domestic consensus and acceptability for the members of international society.

Relevance

The relevance of further EU enlargement for the Czech decision-makers is quite easily discernible from the practice of Czech domestic and foreign policies. Even though I do not put the relevance criterion to a dedicated empirical test in this chapter, a few arguments are worth presenting to support my assumption. First, the support for further EU enlargement has been a steady ingredient of Czech policy within the European Union (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004; Government of the Czech Republic, 2003). On the domestic scene, most major political actors continuously expressed their support for such policy (Sychra, 2006; Král, 2006; Beneš, 2008b). The domestic support for the EU enlargement culminated when the promotion of further EU enlargement made it into the priorities of the Czech EU presidency (Government of the Czech Republic, 2008). The Czech diplomacy constantly promoted the idea of further EU enlargement. On the European level, Czech diplomacy regularly engaged in rhetorical quarrels with France and other opponents of the EU enlargement process.

Consensus

The existence of the Czech domestic consensus in favour of further EU enlargement has already been verified in specific analyses (Král, 2006; Beneš, 2008b). In contrast to other topics of European integration (such as institutional reform or the Common Foreign and Security Policy), the Czech political scene was able to find a consensus in favour of the EU enlargement. In my analysis on the EU enlargement as a priority for the Czech EU presidency (Beneš, 2008b), I took the overlap between the political priorities of individual political parties as a proxy for domestic consensus. The analysis confirmed the existence of a general consensus in favour of the EU enlargement. The EU enlargement is seen as the most successful foreign policy tool, as it spreads peace, prosperity, democracy and stability (Topolánek, 2009). Reflecting its own experience, Czech politicians treat entrance into the EU as beneficial and thus desirable (and acceptable) for the neighbouring countries.

Even though the EU enlargement is accepted by all major political forces as beneficial for both the EU and the candidate (neighbouring) countries, individual political parties may hold diverging views on some particularities, such as the possibility of the entrance of Turkey into the EU. The Czech Republic officially supports the entrance of Turkey into the EU once all of its entry conditions are met. Nevertheless, the consensus on the political level is quite limited given the opposition towards Turkey's EU membership from a minority of political parties (the Christian Democrats and, to some extent, the Communists).

Acceptability

This chapter focuses on external acceptability – the third criterion of national interest, as it has been conceptualized (see Kratochvíl, this volume). External acceptability has been defined as acceptability of a particular policy for a community of democratic states. In the case of the Czech national interests, the members of the European Union¹ can serve as such a reference community. Nevertheless, in some instances it is necessary to seek acceptance from not-so-democratic but still *decent societies* (Ibid.). The policy of EU enlargement is directly targeted at third countries, and in such cases (direct and often wide-ranging consequences for democratic or at least decent societies), the acceptability for non-EU or even non-democratic (but still decent) societies enters the equation of national interests. We may argue that the acceptability of the foreign policy alternative “entrance into the EU” for the societies of the target countries makes up one of the criteria if we want to designate the EU enlargement a Czech national interest.

I utilize the conceptual framework of role theory in order to enhance our understanding of the sources of the pro-integration policies of the EU neighbouring countries and the sources of the acceptability of the EU membership as a foreign policy alternative for these countries. The foreign policy alternative of “entrance into the EU” is acceptable for the target country if it corresponds to its national role conceptions, which can also be defined as “domestically shared views and understandings regarding the proper role and purpose of one’s own state as a social collectivity in the international arena” (Krotz, 2002: 6; see also Holsti, 1970: 245–246).

Conceptual Framework: Role Theory

In this paper, I utilize the so-called role theory. Role theory is a conceptual framework used in foreign policy analysis. It focuses on the reasoning of national political elites, their understanding of the international system and the perceived role of their own states within this larger system (Carlsnæs, 2002: 341). I will utilize its core concept – *national role conception (NRC)*, which was first introduced by Holsti. He defines the national role conception as “the policymakers’ own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems. It is their ‘image’ of the appropriate orientations or functions of their state toward, or in, the external environment” (Holsti, 1970: 245–246). National role conceptions are “domestically shared views and understandings regarding the proper role and purpose of one’s own state as a social collectivity in the international arena” (Krotz, 2002: 6).

What does role theory tell us about the acceptability of a particular foreign policy alternative (EU membership)? National role conceptions are the points of departure of a foreign policy; they provide actors with a stable sense of identity (Chafetz, 1997: 664). NRCs induce preferences and motivate wills, goals, and actions. Often, interests and policies that derive from NRCs are viewed as normal, right, and intuitively plausible within the respective country. According to Le Prestre, “the articulation of a national role betrays preferences, operationalizes an image of the world, triggers expectations, and influences the definition of the situation and of the available options. It imposes obligations and affects the definition of risks” (Le Prestre, 1997: 5). At the same time, national role conceptions “make [certain] interests and policy options intuitively implausible, categorically exclude them as wrong or unacceptable, or make them unthinkable” (Krotz, 2002: 8). National role conceptions are a product of

domestic socialization processes – they give meaning and purpose to the foreign policy.

In line with this definition of a national role conception, a particular policy will be acceptable if it naturally fits into (and stems from) domestically shared views and understandings regarding the proper role and purpose of one's own state in the international arena.

Methodology: Interpretive Comparative Case Study

This chapter is an example of a comparative case study. Comparative case studies are predominantly utilized for causal analyses concerned with the explanation and the identification of the causal configurations that produce the outcomes under our inquiry. However, as T. Skocpol and M. Somers (1980) illustrate in their typology of comparative case studies,² a comparative case study can be utilized even in interpretive research which does not aim at producing generalized knowledge (see also Karlas, 2008: 63–67).

Epistemology-wise, I follow the tradition of interpretive research and reconstruct the individual or shared meanings attributed to reality by individuals or social groups (Drulák, 2008: 19; McNabb, 2004: 341–343).³ Thus, I do not utilize the comparative analysis for the production of explanatory generalizations. Methodology-wise, my analysis fits into the category described by Skocpol and Somers as the “contrast of contexts” (Skocpol–Somers, 1980: 178–181). The goal of this type of comparative case study is to bring out the unique features of each particular case, and to “show how these unique features affect the working-out of putatively general social processes” (Skocpol–Somers, 1980: 178). This chapter shows how the unique features of the historically constituted national role conceptions affect, regulate and constitute the foreign (integration) policies towards the EU. By highlighting the contingencies of national contexts, I confront and historicize the overtly generalizing assumptions and arguments about the “attractiveness” and acceptability of EU membership for the EU neighbouring countries.

My first case study focuses on Turkey, and the second one focuses on Russia. The selection of cases follows the practice of “contrast of contexts”, which involves case studies where (usually two) maximally different cases of a given category are chosen for comparison. Such systematic comparison / juxtaposition offers a valuable commentary on the character and uniqueness of each case (Skocpol–Somers, 1980: 179–180).

In each of the two cases, I ask the question whether the studied country's domestically shared views regarding the proper role and purpose of one's own

state as a social collectivity in the international arena allow us to see the foreign policy alternative “entrance into the EU” as an acceptable and reasonable policy. Does the alternative of entry into the EU conform to the studied country’s domestically shared vision about its own function or mission? In order to answer this question, I will describe the core visions and themes of the Turkish and Russian national role conceptions by looking at the elites’ “time-view”, a broader context within which the national role conception is being formulated, the character of the national “mission”, and how the European power (Europe as such) fits into this image of the national mission. National role conceptions are relatively stable ideas and tend to cluster into a few dominant or even hegemonic visions and themes. In line with the basic tenets of the “contrast of contexts” case study, I will carefully respect the historical integrity of each case. In the next step, I will confront this context-rich depiction of national role conceptions with the foreign policy alternative “entrance into the EU”. National role conceptions induce interests and foreign policies, and they also regulate by rendering certain policies acceptable (desirable) or otherwise. Thus, in the final step, I will show how the Turkish and Russian national role conceptions work and how they render “entrance into the EU” (un)acceptable.

I identify these core visions and themes of national role conceptions with the help of secondary literature. My analysis is based on literature explicitly utilizing role theory, on literature analysing national foreign policy discourses and on historiographical literature mapping the evolution of national identity and ideology.

Turkey

The Turkish National Role Conception in a Historical Perspective

We can trace a continuity in the formulation of the Turkish national role conception since the late Ottoman Empire. The most basic task assigned by the late Ottoman and early Turkish elites to the state was modernization. Most Turkish (or late Ottoman) elites shared the vision that the ultimate goal of Turkey (or late Ottoman Empire) in the international arena is the construction of a civilized and modern (according to the then valid notion of modernity) Turkey. This “mission” set by the founding fathers of the Turkish Republic and shared by many (not only Kemalist) politicians and intellectuals is well captured in the Preamble of the Turkish constitution. The Constitution embodies, among other things, “the determination to [...] attain the standards of contemporary civilization

as an honourable member with equal rights of the family of world nations” (*The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*, 2008).

The quest for modernity, civilization and recognition was formulated at a time when the Ottoman Empire had a peculiar national standing. According to A. Göl (2003b), the late Ottoman Empire was a part of the European system (it was included in the network of diplomacy, alliances and war making), but it lacked social status – it was not a member of the European international society (as it was defined by Bull, [1977] 2002). Trying to answer this identity crisis, the Ottoman elites set out on the path of modernity and European international law in order to gain the recognition and status of a modern and civilized nation. Göl argues that the young Turkish Republic inherited the same ambiguous status vis-à-vis the European society of states (Göl, 2003a, 2003b). The quest for the status of an equal, respected and recognized member of the European society of (modern, civilized) nations remains the key theme of the Turkish national role conception (a vision of Turkey’s proper role and purpose in the wider environment).

As we have noted earlier, the articulation of a national role imposes obligations and affects the definition of risks (Le Prestre, 1997). In the Turkish case, the (perceived) security risk lies in 1) the eventuality of lagging behind and losing the race towards progress and civilization and 2) the imperialism of the European powers (members of the European international society).

Firstly, according to the modernist and positivist “timeview” and worldview held by the late Ottoman and Turkish elites, one could either modernize or perish. For example, the early Turkish nationalist Gökalg, inspiring Kemal Atatürk himself, “believed in progress as a relentless, linear march into the future, which one could join in or be bypassed” (Glyptis, 2005: 403). Turkey tries to “catch the train of modern civilization” (Kösebalaban, 2008: 4).

Secondly, the above mentioned quest for modernity and social status can be described as a kind of *defensive modernization*. In the Kemalist discourse, European powers are seen not only as examples (of modernity and civilization), but also as potential imperialist threats against the integrity and sovereignty of the Turkish state (see the so-called Sèvres syndrome below). The desired status of a recognized and equal member of international society (of the European powers) is perceived as a guarantee against the potential “imperialism” (foreign intervention, disintegration and subversion) from the existing members of the international society of modern and civilized states. As Göl puts it, “the Turkish elite’s commitment to modernisation was a consequence of both internal developments and external pressures from European powers. There is another dilemma at this stage of Turkish history: although the Turkish modernising elite accepted Westernisation as a totality they, interestingly enough, developed the

nationalist ideology against the expansionist policies of European powers.” (Göl, 2003a: 27–28; see also Aydın–Keyman, 2004: 3) The Turkish nationalists – the founding fathers of the Republic – adopted the quest of defensive modernization because they believed that “in order to be strong against the West one needs to adopt its civilization, getting rid of its own tradition and moral codes. For self-empowerment, a comprehensive Westernization process was necessary” (Kösebalaban, 2008: 3).

Kösebalaban traces the idea back to the key intellectuals and philosophers of the nascent Turkish nationalism (Kemalism) of the late 19th and early 20th century: Ahmet Adaodlu and Ziya Gökalp. These founding fathers of Turkish nationalism formulated an ambitious mission, which was widely accepted by the elites: “The superiority of the Western life over our life is comprehensive. If we want to escape from this and maintain our existence we have to accord our entire life not only through our dress and some institutions but also with our minds, hearts, views, and mentalities. There is no other way for salvation” (Ahmet Adaodlu, quoted in Kösebalaban, 2008: 3).

Contemporary Manifestations of Turkey’s National Role Conception

The Kemalist interpretation of western (European) powers was a combination of two images: 1) models and ideals of modernity and civilization; 2) expansionist powers threatening Turkish territorial integrity and questioning its sovereignty. The contemporary European Union is frequently approached as a club of modern European powers and as such it has inherited the meanings and expectations associated with the 19th century European powers. According to Aydın and Çakır, “the EU is not just seen [by the moderates like AKP] as a political entity to be joined, but largely as a ‘democratic model’” (Aydın–Çakır, 2007: 5). In a similar manner, Aydınli and his colleagues optimistically argue that the current interpretation of the European Union by Kemalist elites leans towards the EU-friendly “face” of the traditional Kemalist discourse (EU as a model for modernization). “Although the ideology [of Kemalism] has sometimes been considered an obstacle to EU membership because it promotes sovereignty, statism, and nationalism, it has in fact been adapted very well to suit new situations” (Aydınli et al., 2006: 90).

Nevertheless, other researchers are more sceptical regarding the question of which of the two above-mentioned “faces” of Kemalism currently prevails. The “Kemalist culture of insecurity” is still alive in the Turkish establishment and “the Turkish military is ideologically unprepared to accept any degree of change in the definition of sovereignty” (Kösebalaban, 2002: 140; see also Güneş-Ayata, 2003:

208–212). The Sèvres syndrome is still alive in the Turkish narrative (Jung, 2003) and produces anxiety over the changing nature of national sovereignty within the EU. The EU has “inherited” some of the taint attributed to the European powers (of the 19th and early 20th century). “The image of a conspiratorial West bent on the destruction of Turkish national integrity with the collaboration of ‘internal enemies’ continues to exert a strong influence on their foreign-policy mentality” (Kösebalaban, 2002: 131). Kösebalaban rightfully concludes that the two Kemalist images of Europe are inseparable. “Hence Europe is both the center of the civilization into which Kemalists are eager to join through a civilizing mission but the source of threat to Turkish independence and national integrity from which they seek to escape” (Kösebalaban, 2008: 5).

Russia

The Russian National Role Conception in a Historical Perspective

Through centuries, Russia situated (and socialized) itself into the role of a moral authority and a guardian of traditions. The Orthodox doctrine of the Third Rome allowed (and impelled) Russia to protect its uniqueness and moral superiority. The role of the “Third Rome” can manifest itself through (eschatological) isolationism in the name of “keeping its true and only Christianity unsoiled by Roman heresies” (Neumann, 1996: 7). But more often, the messianist theme materialized itself through the more pro-active (or even expansionist) policy of Russia being a guardian and redeemer with a global responsibility.

It is worth noting that it was Europe who was seen by Russia as needing to be guarded and redeemed by it. Russia’s intellectual and political elites believe that the proper role and purpose of Russia within the wider environment has been to protect Europe (her true values) from both external threats and its internal degeneration. The external menace to Europe can assume the form of an “Asian chaos” – as we can see in the traditional interpretation of the Kulikovo Battle (1380 AD). According to the myth, “the Russian people had saved Europe at Kulikovo, but at a huge cost to themselves. The battle was of great significance: Russia of course did not begin with Kulikovo field, but she was given direction and defined by it” (Duncan, 2000: 79). From a more recent history, the heroic narrative of the Great Patriotic War serves as another pillar of Russia’s self-perception. “The history of World War II can be told in such a manner that the Soviet Union will appear at the centre of the struggle for the genuine European

values against a barbarian force (stemming, by the way, from the very heart of Europe)” (Morozov, 2007: 14).

If we follow the conclusions of Neumann’s analysis of Russia’s foreign policy discourse (Neumann, 1996), Russian elites often see the European politics as a clash between two binary normative categories: between some kind of “True Europe” and the “False Europe”. The “False – True Europe” dichotomy serves as a discursive frame allowing Russia to morally assess other European nations, define Russian subjectivity in European affairs and operationalize its own role and purpose in the European arena (Makarychev, 2005a: 7).

The True Europe is a valorized and cherished image of a desirable European political and moral order – “the original spirit of Europe” (Makarychev, 2005a). It is important to note that “Russia’s relations with the current Europe are not geographic but temporal in the sense that Russia is imagined as a ‘real’ Europe, an inheritor of the centuries-long European culture” (Makarychev, 2005b: 21). The True Europe is a temporally distant and rather limited ideal and also a reference point (Joenniemi, 2005: 234). The False Europe represents a negative image against which Russia’s identity is being formulated.

A good example of Russia playing the role of a guardian of the True Europe is the tsarist conservative foreign policy of the 19th century. In 1815 Tsar Alexander I initiated the traditionalist and anti-revolutionary Holy Alliance. During the rest of the 19th century, Russian tsars acted as (the last) guardians of the *ancien régime* (what they saw as truly European, conservative and Christian values) against the internal European degeneration and decay (the false Europe of liberalism, democracy and secularism).

The Soviet formulation of the USSR’s national role conception fits the themes outlined above. In his article “Redeemer Empire”, Rowley clearly identifies elements of traditional Orthodox discourse in the Soviet thinking and self-perception (Rowley, 1999; see also Rowley, 2000). Millennialism, the climax of history, self-sacrifice, a goal of universal redemption⁴ and other themes of the Orthodox discourse commanded the way the Soviet Union defined its role and purpose in the international environment. “Just as Marxism can be considered a secularized form of Judeo-Christian eschatology, the Communist revolution can be seen as a revolutionized form of Russian imperial [i.e. universalist] ideology” (Rowley, 1999: 1599). Again, Europe plays a pivotal role in this discourse. As Neumann remarks, the Bolshevik saw the turmoil of the First World War as “the opportunity [...] to ally with progressive Europe in an apocalyptic struggle against stagnant Europe in order to save European and world civilisation” (Neumann, 1996: 107).

Contemporary Manifestations of Russia's National Role Conception

The literature on foreign policy often stresses the influence of realist and geopolitical reasoning on the contemporary Russian foreign policy discourse. Preservation or restoration of a (global) power status is one of the unifying elements of contemporary Russia's foreign policy (Smith, 2005: 47). Russian elites often formulate the role and function of their state in the international arena by using the language of realism, asserting Russia's sovereignty and its (social) status of a great power – one of the influential centres of the multipolar world (Kratochvíl, 2008, 2002). But this realist language is in fact tainted by “idealist”, universalist and moralist visions.

Russia's elites do utilize the language of “balance of power”, but Russia does not subscribe to the neorealist notion that the balance of power is some kind of natural equilibrium restored through the “invisible hand” of structural forces – an unintended consequence of foreign policies motivated by particularist security interests (Waltz, 1979). On the contrary, in line with classical realist theory (and the English school in IR) (Little, 2005; see also Morgenthau, 1948: 179), balance of power is treated as a deliberately managed universalistic normative goal (or an institution) that ensures stability and promotes the collective security and common interests of all the Great Powers.

Using the realist language, Russian elites formulate just another universalist or even messianist mission: Russia as a unique and indispensable balancer and a guardian of some kind of global stability (for the universalist and “moralizing” rhetoric of contemporary Russia's elites, see Wagnsson, 2001; see also Tsygankov, 1997: 251). “This notion of global responsibility has been one of the few areas of near-consensus in [Russia's] foreign and security policy [after the end of the Cold War]” (Lo, 2002: 19–20). B. Lo in fact describes Kozyrev's⁵ project of a “constructive partnership” between Russia and the USA to “influence positively the course of world affairs” as the most messianic project of all (Lo, 2002: 20).

The continuity of some key components of Russia's national role conception can be traced not only in the pro-Western discourse of Kozyrev, but also among more radical currents of Russian geopolitics. The analysis by Sidorov nicely shows the reincarnation of the major Orthodox metaphor, the concept of Russia as the Third Rome, in various contemporary Russian geopolitical ideologies, including Orthodox Nationalism, Neo-Panslavism and Neo-Eurasianism (Sidorov, 2006). In a similar vein, Tsygankov (1997) and Neumann (2002, 1996) take notice of a strong universalist (messianist) tint in the geopolitical discourse of (early and late) Eurasianists. Russia carries (according to Eurasianism and other

anti-Western ideologies) the burden of being a guardian of a global balance of forces. “The West” should be checked not (only) in the name of Russia’s survival, but in the name of the planet, the real humanity and (the true) Europe.

Russia’s destiny is to maintain a strong state so that it can check the West and act as the holder of the balance between the East and the West, a task “vitally important both for Russia and the entire planet” (Pozdnyakov, 1991: 46; quoted in Neumann, 2002: 195; see also Tsygankov, 1997: 254–255). V. Morozov comes up with a similar argument: “Russia’s mission, then, is to save [the true] Europe from absorption by the West [i.e. the false Europe] and protect its uniqueness” (Morozov, 2004: 3).

In the previous section I have illustrated how the False – True Europe dichotomy informed the tsarist policy (defence of the *ancien régime* and “traditional European values”) during the 19th century. But even today, the False – True Europe dichotomy serves Russian elites in operationalizing the mission (role) of the state. Russian intellectuals often develop the argument that various “post-modern”, “post-sovereign”, “post-European” and “decadent” aspects of contemporary European integration betray the “original spirit of Europe”. Contemporary Europe is often presented by Russian intellectuals as rotten and unattractive to Russia (Makarychev, 2005b: 20). We even conclude that “the discourse focusing on an alleged degeneration of Europe leads to a rather interesting twist in the reasoning of some Russian thinkers who conclude that the genuine ‘European project’ could – paradoxically and counter-intuitively – be implemented by Russia itself” (Makarychev, 2005b: 20–21).

Comparison of National Role Conceptions and the Implications for the Policies Towards the EU

This chapter tries to assess the acceptability of the EU enlargement (the foreign policy alternative “entry into the EU”) for the third countries by comparing the Turkish and the Russian case. In this section, I will employ a comparative approach in order to highlight the key themes, topics and ideas of Turkey and Russia’s national role conceptions. As noted earlier, interests and policies derived from national role conceptions are viewed as normal, right, and intuitively plausible within the respective country. In this section, I will ask the question whether (and why) it is possible to interpret the Turkish and Russian entries into the EU as acceptable, right and desirable policies in the context of the respective Turkish or Russian national conceptions.

World-view: Progressivism vs. Eschatology

The entry into the EU fits quite well into Turkey's national role conception as it has been defined since the late Ottoman Empire and the early Turkish Republic. It is not difficult to assess the EU membership as the completion of the Turkish self-modernizing and self-civilizing mission (Kösebalaban, 2002: 131; İnaç, 2004; Aydınli et al., 2006; Kösebalaban, 2008: 8; Glyptis, 2005; Öniş, 1999: 107). Ottoman / Turkish elites have traditionally perceived the European powers as models of civilization, effectiveness and modernity. The EU inherited (in the eyes of Turkish elites) the qualities of a 19th century European international society – it is often approached as a club of modern and civilized powers. In line with the imperative of Turkey's national role conception (“attain the standards of contemporary civilization”) and the positivist / progressivist time-view, the pre-accession reforms and the eventual EU membership can be interpreted as an important “leap” in Turkey's “linear march into the future and civilization”.

In contrast to Turkey, Russia's elites only rarely adopted the modernist / positivist argument that the meaning of History is some kind of linear march towards progress and civilization. Russian elites tend to deprecate the nihilist materialism of the modern, globalized world (including the EU) and defend the unique cultural and civilizational heritage of Russia (/Europe/ the World) and (the) spiritual strength and organic unity (of Russians). The national role conception, as it has been defined by Russian elites, does not force Russia into any kind of “march” or breakneck race towards “progress” and modernity. The Russian national role conception has been formulated on the background of an eschatological or even millenarist (i.e. not positivist or modernist) time-view bridging the past and the future. In such a context, the EU tends to be viewed as a faceless materialist and bureaucratic entity lacking a soul and a subjectivity (Makarychev, 2005b: 22). When tested against Russia's eschatological time-view and her universalist / messianist mission, the idea of Russia gaining membership in the earthly, temporal or even rotten / decadent EU does not make much sense.

The teachings of Atatürk and the early Turkish nationalists (surviving in the national role conception that remained largely intact until today) read like a typical example and a reincarnation of 19th century romantic nationalism, fiery positivism and intransigent modernism. Turkey, beside its episodic love affair with pan-Turkism, refrained from developing a universalistic mission, let alone a mission to redeem Europe. In contrast, Russia's national role conception has been often formulated in universalist, messianist or even imperialist language. Turkish elites define the course of history “as a relentless, linear march into the future, which one could join in or be bypassed” (Glyptis, 2005: 403). Russian elites see “the history as a relay race where Russia was about to receive the

Olympic torch *on behalf of* humanity. [... Russia is] destined to realise a common human idea” (Neumann, 1996: 55–56, italics in original).

Social Status

We can regard the full Turkish membership in the EU as the logical evolution of Atatürk’s cherished goal of making Turkey an “equal member of the family of European nations” (Kösebalaban, 2008: 8–9). For Turkey, EU membership would amount to the attainment of the status of a respected (i.e. sovereign) member of the European international community (Göl, 2003a; Glyptis, 2005). Such social status has appreciable security implications. As noted earlier, the later Ottoman Empire and the young Turkish Republic sought membership in the society of European powers in order to secure (recognition of) their sovereignty and prevent the intrusive policies of the same European powers.

Turkey’s EU membership makes sense and is acceptable only if Turkey enters the EU as “an honourable and respected member” (Güneş-Ayata, 2003: 212) and if the integrity of the “eternal historical Turkish nation” is respected (Bora, 2003: 448). The Sèvres syndrome – the fear that the conspiratorial European powers still promote a hidden agenda to destroy the Turkish national integrity through their collaboration with “internal enemies” – is still alive (Jung, 2003). It manifests itself through wariness towards potentially perfidious European powers, through disapproval of arrangements which relegate Turkey to inferior (social) positions (e.g. the “strategic partnership” proposed by France and Germany), through second thoughts about the real purport of the entrance criteria and through open euroscepticism in some quarters of the Turkish political spectrum (Kösebalaban, 2002; Güneş-Ayata, 2003: 212; Tacar, 2007: 126).

Even though Russia, like Turkey, has struggled to achieve great power status in the historical European society of states (but with greater success) (Neumann, 2007), the rationale behind this quest was completely different. Russia considered itself superior on transcendental and moral grounds and “the problem was that this self-understanding was not shared by any other political entity” (Neumann, 2007: 42). This self-appointed⁶ higher moral status lies at the core of the Russian messianic, universalist and global national role conception and manifests itself through the True – False Europe dichotomy and the (self-appointed) quest for the salvation and redemption of Europe. I argue that this messianic and universalist nature of the Russian national role conception and the self-proclaimed Russian moral superiority over (and responsibility for) Europe do prevent Russia from pursuing or even considering the entrance into the EU as an acceptable alternative.

If the “self-modernization” is the key theme of Turkey’s national role conception, then messianism (some kind of “redemption of others” or self-sacrifice – see

Rowley, 1999) is one of the most important themes of Russia's definition of its own role and purpose in the international arena. Russian messianism focuses first and foremost on Europe. Russia, as a bearer of traditional European values, feels obliged to guard Europe against external threats but also against the internal degeneration of the "False Europe".

According to the Russian interpretation, the contemporary (earthly and temporal) Europe has quite too often deflected from her true spirit and values and fallen from the grace of God (or History). Russia's function is to guard the stability of the world and to redeem Europe. Against the background of such a national role conception and such interpretations of Europe, the entrance of Russia into the EU would make no sense. The entrance into the EU, established by the Western powers after the end of WWII and often representing one of the instances of the "false Europe", would amount to Russia discarding its History-given (or even God-given) mission. Such a policy contradicts the definition of the role and function of Russia in the European order. Russian elites (tsarist, bolshevik and contemporary) do occasionally cherish a noble and distant (crowning, "millennial") dream of a genuine "European project".⁷ But this universalist

Table 1. Turkish and Russian National Role Conceptions in Juxtaposition

	Turkey	Russia
Time-view is based on	progressivism, positivism	eschatology, millennialism
Context of the national mission	positivist vision of a race towards progress	moralist vision of a defence of true (European) values
National role conception (national mission)	particularistic, nationalist mission of "self-modernization"	universalist, imperialist mission of "redemption of others"
...realizable through...	realizable through modernization and imitation of Europe	realizable through redemption and salvation of Europe
European powers are...	civilizationally (or even morally) superior examples of advancement, but perfidious	morally inferior, astray or even rotten (fallen from the grace of God and/or History), though still salvable
In the context of the national role conception, entrance into the EU can be interpreted as...	an advancement towards the status of a modern, advanced, and civilized nation; promotion in social status (if Turkey enters as an "honourable member")	a renunciation of the status of a moral authority (on the global stage and vis-à-vis Europe); a discarding of the a discarding of the History-given (or God-given) universalist (messianist) task

quest can not be accomplished by entering the existing structures of European “integration”. Assessed through the prism of the Russian elite’s national role conception, it makes more sense for Russia to initiate and implement such a project by herself (cf. Makarychev, 2005a: 8).

Table 1 summarizes the conclusions of my comparison / juxtaposition.

Conclusion

This chapter contributes to the scholarly and public debate about the EU enlargement process and the Czech national interests in the sphere of the EU enlargement. I have utilized the procedural conceptualization of national interests which distinguishes three criteria of national interest formation: domestic consensus, relevance and acceptability for the members of international society. I have focused my empirical analysis on the most problematic and understudied criterion: acceptability for external actors.

The Czech consensus in favour of the EU enlargement has been already documented, and the domestic relevance of further EU enlargement is easily discernible from the Czech foreign policy practice. Regarding the third criterion for the national interest – the external acceptability – this chapter came to one general conclusion and a few specific arguments about the acceptability of the European perspective (eventual EU membership) for Turkey and Russia.

On a specific level, this analysis unveiled the historical, cognitive and discursive sources (and thus also the limits) of Turkey’s desire and Russia’s unwillingness to join the EU (see the previous section).

On a general level, this chapter argues that there is no such thing as a universal and objective attractiveness of the entrance into the EU. The acceptability of the entrance into the EU among (most of) the Turkish elite reflects the distinct character of the Turkish “nation-building”, “myth-making” and “role-defining”. Similarly, the apparent disinterest of Russia in the EU membership can be explicable by reference to the historically constituted views and understandings shared by the Russian elite regarding the proper role and purpose of Russia in the international/European political order. The idiosyncratic, historically constituted national role conceptions provide a cognitive and normative background for the formulation of foreign policy and therefore make particular policies towards the EU more (or less) acceptable and intuitively (im)plausible.

By contrasting the two cases of Turkey and Russia, my “contrast of contexts” comparative analysis showed that the acceptability of the entrance into the EU reflects the contingencies of the national role conceptions of the neighbouring countries. One can expect that should a similar methodology and similar concepts

be applied to other states, the idiosyncrasies of their national role conceptions will rise up as sources of their European policies. Since this acceptability makes up one of the criteria for the national interest, important conclusions about the Czech national interest vis-à-vis Turkey and Russia and the EU enlargement as such can be made.

Firstly, the analysis of Turkey's national role conception showed that the acceptability (attractiveness) of the EU membership for Turkey has its limits. Thanks to the deeply seated visions about the role and mission of Turkey in the wider international environment, Turkey's elites find the EU membership acceptable only if it provides Turkey with equal (social) status in the European community of powers. For example, the alternative of "strategic partnership" (offered to Turkey by French and German representatives) does not provide such status and is found unacceptable by Turkish elites. Since the acceptability for external actors accounts for a criterion of the Czech national interest, the strategic partnership between Turkey and the EU does not qualify as a Czech national interest. The possibility of Russia gaining EU membership has never been seriously considered by Czech politicians. My analysis verified that such an option is not deemed reasonable and desirable by Russia's elites either. Russia's potential EU membership does not qualify as a Czech national interest.

Secondly, this chapter argues that any formulation of Czech national interests in the area of EU enlargement must take into account the local and historical contingencies of the neighbouring states and should not rest on putative generalizations about the universal attractiveness of the European integration process. My analysis illustrated that the policies of the neighbouring states towards the EU are induced by idiosyncratic aspects of the respective national role conceptions. The attractiveness of the European Union does not rest in what the EU *is*, but in what the EU (as well as the entrance into the EU) *means* for the neighbouring countries and how such a meaning fits (or does not fit) into their idiosyncratic world views and domestically shared views regarding the state's role and purpose in the international arena.

Endnotes

¹ The European Union is often conceptualized as a representative of the Western international community of states respecting liberal values and norms (Schimmelfennig, 2003: 68–154).

² Skocpol and Somers distinguish three types of comparative analysis: "macrocausal analysis", "parallel demonstration of theory" and "contrast of contexts" (Skocpol–Somers, 1980).

- ³ Role theory itself is an example of the “interpretative actor perspective” in the study of foreign policy (Carlsnæs, 2002).
- ⁴ “In typical imperial/millenarian style, Soviet citizens were asked to sacrifice themselves for an ideal more noble than their own national self-interest” (Rowley, 1999: 1600).
- ⁵ Kozyrev was Yeltsin’s foreign minister between 1990 and 1996.
- ⁶ Understandably, in the interpretation of the Russian elites, Russia was entrusted with her mission by divine forces: by God (Orthodox messianism) or by History (Marxist and other secular forms of messianism).
- ⁷ We can treat both the Holy Alliance and the Comintern as two distinct attempts to realize the dream of a “genuine” European unity.