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European Security and Frozen Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space

(Field Report)

The intensive review of literature during the stay at the University of California, Berkeley, has made it possible to identify a number of discussion points related to the topic of the research. Here, I would focus on some of them.

Structural realism apparently offers a useful analytical tool to help explain how the frozen conflcits fit into broader security patterns. It is the concept of a regional security complex which was traditionally defined as "a set of states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another"[1]. A more nuanced definition of a regional security complex which takes into account the contribution of the constrctivist approach is "a set of units whose major processes of securitization, desecuritization, or both, are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved aspart from one another"[2].

A comprehensive work on regional security complex theory, *Regions and Powers*, casts light on the emergence and transformations of regional security complexes[3]. It describes the "essential structure" of a regional security complex as consisiting of a boundary, the distribution of power among the units and patterns of amity and enmity in intra-complex relations. Buzan and Waever give an overview of regional security complexes all over the world. In particular, they define a post-Soviet security complex centered on Russia. According to the authors, it includes four subcomplexes, Central Asia, the Baltics, the "Western theatre" (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova) and the Caucasus[4]. EU's growing activism in the Transnistrian issue and, to a lesser extent, in the Georgian conflcits as well as the resulting tensions with Russia could probably be

analyzed through the lens of the regional security complex theory. It might be inferred that the boundary of the post-Soviet security complex changes. Firstly, Moldova drifts toward the EU-centered security complex, with this tendency reinforced by Romania's accession to NATO and the EU and the changes in the amity / enmity patterns in the Russian-Ukrainian relations after the Orange Revolution. Secondly, the South Caucasus tends to become an autonomous security complex. These hypotheses, of course, need verification, and it remains to be explored to what extent the conceptual apparatus of the regional security complex theory helps to understand and predict the security dynamics around the Eurasian conflict zones.

The concept of securitization seems to be relevant to the explanation of the EU's increasing involvement nto the post-Soviet conflicts, especially the one in Moldova. Securitization means that "the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergenct measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure"[5]. Securitizing moves and successful securitization have to be distinguished. To study securitization, we should focus on "discourse and political constellations"[6]. The study of the EU's discourse after 2002 reveals the securitization of the Transnistrian problem, Transnistria came to be portrayed as a hotbed of transnational criminal activities, a chief obstacle to Moldova's "progress towards democratic consolidation and economic improvements"[7] and, therefore, a threat to European security. The forces behind the securitizing moves were the leadership of the new member states who joined the EU in 2004 (especially of Poland and the Baltic states) and of Romania whose international profile rose after Bucharest was firmly set on the road to NATO and EU membership, the Dutch diplomacy which held the OSCE Chairmanship in 2003 and sought to coordinate the activities of the EU and the OSCE in Moldova and to change the framework of the Transnistrian

peacekeeping operation and, evidently, some influential figures in Brussels, such as Javeir Solana[8].

The EU's international actorness and foreign policy-making is another field of theoretical debate I would like to touch here. Among the various approaches to understanding the EU as a specific polity the two dominant are liberl intergovernmentalism and multi-level governance. The liberal intergovernmental model developed by A. Moravcsik combines a liberal theory of national preference formation (national chiefs of government aggregate the interests of their domestic actors and articulate national preferences towards the EU), a classical intergovernmental model of EU-level bargaining, and a rational choice theory of international institutions understood as a tool of strengthening the credibility of governments` mutual commitments[9].

The governance approach is "not a single theory of the EU or of European integration but rather a cluster of related theories emphasizing common themes"[10]. These themes include: the non-hierarchical nature of EU governance which involves networks of public and private actors and is guided by both informal and formal institutions; EU governance as a distinctive phenomenon requiring new models and new vocabulary for its understanding; the capacity of the EU to engender "persuasion" and "deliberation", a model of policy-making where actors are open to changing their beliefs and preferences; the potential of the EU to evolve into a "deliberative democracy", with collective problem-solving as the dominant form of policy-making. This image of EU policy-making came to be known as multi-level governance. This tradition has inspired studies of "Europeanization", the process through which EU institutions and policies influence national institutions and policies[11].

Most scholars suppose that the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the second pillar of the EU, remains a strictly intergovernmental process regulated by the special provisions of the Treaty on the EU. The intergovernmental structures of the EU are the dominant actors initiating, discussing and deciding on proposals[12]. However, some scholars argue that multi-level governance de-facto penetrates even into the CFSP[13], although it is generally acknowledged that it has not yet expanded to the European Security and Defense Policy[14].

The governance approach has been applied to the analysis of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). "External governance" is defined as a "selective extension" of EU's norms, rules and practices[15]. According to this line of thinking, the ENP combines inclusionary and exclusionary approaches to the EU's near abroad. It aims at expanding the "legal boundary" of the grouping without opening its "institutional boundaries". Interestingly, the govrnance approach to the ENP links its elaboration with the resurgence of EU's "fundamental identity as security community"[16]. The realist narrative of the ENP points out at the same feature of this initiative: the creation of new division lines in Europe[17].

There have been attempts to apply the concept of Europeanization to the analysis of the EU's policies vis-a-vis the conflicts in its neighbourhood. In this context, Europeanization has been understood as a "process activated and encouraged by the European institutions, primarily the EU, by linking the final outcome of the conflcit to a certain degree of integration of the parties involved in it into European structures"[18]. However, the "Europeanization" evidently does not work with respect to the post-Soviet conflicts. If the EU offered a membership perspective for Moldova (a tiny country whose inclusion would hardly overstretch the EU's capabilities), it would certainly be an incentive for some parts of the Transnistrian elite to reunify with

Moldova. But the current political developments in the EU and the debate about further enlargement make it almost imposible to expect the fulfillment of Moldova's European aspirations in the foreseeable future. It remains to be seen how Europeanization will work in the case of Kosovo, and it does not seem to have advanced the resolution of the Cyprus issue. With respect to conflict resolution, the concept of Europeanization looks, at least for the time being, rather detached from the realitiy. Meanwhile, the officials in Brussels should not disregard the possibility that 'the EU can even become a reference point for furhter securitization'[19]. There are signs that it is the tendency in Transnistria. Is a cautious dialogue with secessionist statelets not a better alternative for the advancement of EU's interests in the Eastern neighbourhood and not a shorter way to the conflict resolution[20]?

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[1] Buzan Barry, Regional Security Complex Theory in the Post-Cold War World. In: Theories of New Regionalism: a Palgrave Reader. N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. P. 141.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Buzan Barry, Waever, Ole. Regions and Powers: the Structure of International Security. N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[4] Ibid., p. 397-439.

[5] Buzan, Barry, Waever, Ole, Wilde, Jaap H. de. Security: A New Framework for Analysis. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998. P. 23-24.

[6] Ibid., p. 25.

[7] The European Commission. 2002 – 2006 Country Strategy Paper for Moldova. Brussels, 2001. P. 7.

[8] I study this process in greater detail and show that accusations of Transnistria were largely unsubstantiated in my paper on Transnistria (Troitskiy E.The EU and the Conflict in Transnistria. In: EU and Russia: Face to Face Materials of an international conference. Tomsk: Tomsk State University, 2007. P. 85-107). Because of lack of access to the literature on securitization at the time of writing that piece, I do not use the concept of securitization there. Now, I find it to be the appropriate explanatory framework.

[9] Pollack, Mark. Theorizing EU-Policy Making. In Wallace, Helen, Wallace, William, and Pollack, Mark. Policy-Making in the European Union. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. P.13-48.

[10] Ibid., p. 36.

[11] Ibid., p. 26-48.

[12] Foster, Anthony, Wallace, William. Common Foreign and Security Policy. In Wallace, Helen, Wallace, William, and Pollack, Mark. Policy-Making in the European Union. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. P. 461-492; Bretherton, Charlotte, Vogler, John. The European Unon as a Global Actor. L.: Routledge, 1999.

[13] Smith, Michael. Towards a theory of EU foreign-policy making: multi-level governance, domestic politics and national adaptation to Eurpe's common foreign and security policy // Journal of European Public Policy. 2003. # 4. P. 740-758.

[14] Ibid. See also Deighton, Anne. The European Security and Defense Policy // Journal of Common Market Studies. 2002. # 4. P. 719-741.

[15] Lavenex, Sandra. European Union's exernal governance in "wider Europe" // Journal of European Public Policy. 2004. # 4. P. 680-700.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Smith, Karen. The outsiders: the European Neighbourhood Policy // International Affairs. 2005. # 4. P. 757-773.

[18] Europeanization and secessionist conflicts: concepts and theories // Journal on thnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe. 2004. http: //www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/1-2004Chapter1.pdf

[19] Diez, Thomas, Stetter, Stephan, and Albert, Mathias. The European Union and border conflicts: the transformative power of integration // International Organization. 2006. Summer. P. 563-593.

[20] It is what a British scholar Dov Lynch calls for. See Lynch, Dov. Separatist states and post-Soviet conflicts // International Affairs. 2002. # 4. P. 831-848; Lynch. Dov. Engaging Eurasia's Separatist States. Wash.: US Institute of Peace, 2004.