Tatia Dolidze[1]

US VS OTHER: THE BALTIC STATES' AND GEORGIA'S PATHWAYS TO EUROPE (1991-2004)

Abstract

This article is inspired by the empirical puzzle that the comparison of the Baltic states' and Georgia's European integration cases embody during the period of 1991- 2004, – that is from the break up of the Soviet Union to when Baltic States became the members of the European Union and Georgia was included in the European Neighbourhood Policy. By comparing EU policy and discursive practices towards the Baltic states and Georgia during these 13 years of their independence, the author finds that the different pathways of their European integration were shaped in light of the distinctive perception of Balts' and Georgians' European identity held by the EU. European identity is scrutinized as an operational social construction in the EU's hands that often serves as a reason/justification for more or less European integration. The subsequent findings are theoretically interpreted through Discursive Institutionalism along with the methodology of Discourse Analysis, that discerns the differences in the EU's manner of communication towards the Baltic states and Georgia in its foreign policy towards the two.

Key Words: Baltic States, Georgia, European Integration, ENP, European identity

Introducing the Puzzle

After the breakup of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [USSR], newly independent Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia [hereinafter referred to as the Baltic states] and Georgia entered a period of tough social, economic and political transitions. On the ruins of the Soviet systems democratic and lawful states had to be built.

Certain preconditions for successful reforms were already present to certain extents: Firstly, the Georgian and Baltic societies were ruled by the will of regaining their independence and restoring historical justice (Siversten S. H, 2011, p.154), – this social capital could have positively contributed to the creation of democratic states. Secondly, the existence of national movements in the form of political parties offered strong grounds for the establishment of a multiparty political systems (Sabanadze, 2010, p.60, p.90). Last, but not the least, existing non-Soviet economic relations and relatively developed infrastructure could have helped set up market economies (Dawisha & Parrott, 1994, p. 190-194; Gylfason, 2008, p.4). While this potential has been successfully used by the Baltic states, for Georgia, the transition period resulted in an endless post-Soviet nightmare. Advantages went by the board, the dream about creating multiparty politics faded, raised capital vanished and infrastructure crumbled. Georgia found itself engaged in civil wars that further impoverished the nation and resulted in the loss of jurisdiction over two of its regions.

Thirteen years after the restoration of their independence, European Union [EU] opened its door to Baltic states as to its fully-fledged members, while Georgia was only offered participation in the European Neighborhood Policy [ENP], without a tangible perspective of ever joining the EU. Incentivized by this puzzle, this author analyzes the different pathways of European integration shaped for Baltic States and Georgia.

Out of 8 Central and Eastern European [CEE] countries that joined the EU in 2004, only Baltic states were truly post-Soviet [like Georgia] and not just the former satellites of the USSR. The Baltic States and Georgia were the

[1] PhD Candidate at the English-taught interidisciplinary Doctoral Studies Programme in European Studies of the Institute for European Studies of Ivane Javakhishvii Tbilisi State University. E-mail: tatia.dolidze@gmail.com

first to declare the independence from the Soviet Union and the only ones out of the newly independent states to reject the membership of the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States. Foreign policies of Baltic states and Georgia have revolved around the security concerns about Russia's meddling in their internal affairs and all of them had chosen the European way of development before even the Soviet occupation happened.

With similar starting positions in terms of the prospect of their integration into the European Union but diverging outcomes, the Georgian and Baltic cases qualify as 'most similar cases' for a qualitative comparative study (George & Bennett, 2005, p.50). This similarity challenges Rationalist school of thought and calls for the inclusion of ideational factors in the analysis. However, Constructivism as an alternative theory is limited in that it does not advise on the driving and/or restraining forces of European integration processes (Theiler, 2005, p.15), and has no methodological tool similar to what cost-benefit analysis is to rationalists (Adler, 2002, p.109). On that account, the author resorted to Discursive Institutionalism [DI) (Schmidt, 2008), – a theory with a potential of serving as a Constructivist theory of European integration – and applied it along with its inherent methodology of discourse analysis to discern the differences in the EU's manner of communication towards Baltic States and Georgia in its foreign policy towards the two.

On the one hand, the author looks at the application of the 'Return to Europe' formula, stressing Balts' belongingness to the "Western European International Community" ["Self"] out of which they were forcefully kept throughout the decades of the Communist rule (Schimmelfennig, 2003, p.90). On the other hand, it detects the discursive practice of 'othering' towards Georgia that eventually materialized through bringing Georgia into the ENP and designating it as a 'neighbour' of Europe. DI is thus used to theorize about EU's instrumental usage of the European identity through the 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' policies and political discourse the Union has applied to the Baltic States and Georgia, respectively.

This article argues that the EU has always judged the Baltic States as European ['Us'], facilitating their way towards the membership, while Georgia has been considered as lacking Europeanness ['Other'], restraining its prospect of integrating into the Union. Accordingly, the author claims that the distinctive perception of their European identity held by the EU is a minimally sufficient explanation of the proposed puzzle.

The primary list of sources examined comprises of Strategy Papers, Council Conclusions, Press Releases, Commission Avis, and speeches of the Commissioners concerned. Analysis provided in this article covers the period of thirteen years, starting with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and ending with the year 2004, when Baltic states gained the full membership of the EU and Georgia was included in the ENP. Time period right before the collapse of the USSR is still addressed to prepare the contextual background for further analysis.

Born and Bred European "Self": The Baltic States Return to Europe

On August 23, 1989 Baltic populations formed a human chain from Vilnius through Tallinn to Riga. This famous episode of Baltic history clearly portrayed the will-power of the Baltic states to free themselves from the Soviet reality (O'Connor, 2003, p.155). Two million people holding each-others' hands covered the territory of 600 kilometers and protested against the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 on the basis of which Soviet Union and Nazi Germany had divided Baltics between them (Kasekamp, 2010, p.125). This historical event was followed by the declaration of independence in 1991 and marked the beginning of Baltic states' European integration process. From then on, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia embarked on their 'safe' journey towards EU membership. The word 'safe' is a reference to the positively stable and secure nature of EU policy towards the Baltics throughout the integration process. From the very beginning, the EU had conveyed Baltic states' eventual membership in the form of a foregone conclusion.

To start with, the EU distinguished the Baltic states for preferential policy treatment as early as in 1991. No longer than six months after the collapse of the Soviet Union, they were already in possession of the Most Favored Nation Status and the Trade and Cooperation Agreements were signed (Rukhadze, 2012, p.2). The same year, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were invited to join Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring of their Economies [PHARE] (Europa Publications, 2003, p.227). PHARE stood hierarchically higher than Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States [TACIS] offered to Georgia along with other former Soviet republics. The economies of Baltic states were considered similar to the other TACIS states like Ukraine, rather than to Poland or Hungary, but the EU still found them eligible to participate in PHARE, further stressing

Balts' Europeanness (Mole, 2012, p.154). The political superiority of PHARE became even more obvious when it was later transformed into the assistance package for the 'Europe Agreement' countries on their way towards the EU membership (Dent, 2002, p.117). By signing 'Europe Agreements' with the Baltic states in 1995, the European Union officially recognized them as part of the Central and Eastern Europe, and acknowledged their accession perspective (Elsuwege, 2008, p.130). The Baltic states acted in accord with their newly obtained status of the EU membership candidates and officially applied for membership in 1995 (Pautola, 1996, p.23). Preparative phase ended in 2002, and in 2003 already, Baltic states signed the Treaty of Accession. Eventually, on May 1st 2004, Baltic States officially became full members of the European Union (Grigas et al, 2003, p. 22).

As this short overview of their contractual relations demonstrated, European integration process for the Balts was less of a struggle and more of a synergy with the EU. Eastern enlargement figuratively commenced alongside the CEE revolutions of 1989-1991 with the slogan of "Return to Europe" (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, p.25). Right after the fall of the Berlin wall, the European Community asserted that member states were "***fully conscious of the common responsibility which devolves on them in this decisive phase in the history of Europe***" (European Council, 1989, p.15). In 1993, the European Council made a clear commitment by declaring that: "***countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the Union. Accession will take place as soon as a country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions***" (European Council, 1993, p.13). The EU made a pledge that the CEE countries, including Baltic states, would indubitably become full members provided the Copenhagen Criteria were met.

Looking at the primary sources such as speeches by EU officials or agreements made, there seems to be a clear perception of a duty to enlarge Eastwards. This, it seems, is what triggered the decision to enlarge, in spite of the expected costs. The then-Commissioner for Enlargement [1999-2004], Mr. Gunter Verheugen, affirmed: ***"With the disappearance of the iron curtain we have the opportunity and the duty to go forward with integration and heal the wounds inflicted by the division of our continent. This project is about peace first and foremost and enlargement second"*** (**European Commission**, 2002a, p.5). The moral responsibility to accept the CEE countries back was accentuated in the Enlargement Strategy Paper that reads: ***"The enlargement of the EU now under way on the basis of the Luxembourg (1997) and Helsinki (1999) European Council decisions has an unprecedented political, historical and moral dimension. This is more than just an enlargement. It means, in fact, bringing our continent together. We are moving from division to unity...*** [Emphasis added] (**European Commission**, 2000, p.3). Then-president of the Commission [1999-2004], Mr. Romano Prodi himself designated approaching Eastern enlargement as "Europe's historic duty": ***«It is ... Europe's historic duty. Enlargement – in other words, the unification of this continent – closes one chapter in Europe's history and lays the basis for building the future»*** (**European Commission**, 2001, p.2).

Correspondingly, the formula of "Return to Europe" was used as a general justification for the Eastern Enlargement of 2004 and was naturally applied to the Baltic case as well. As early as in 1993, at the ministerial session in Helsinki, the then-European Commissioner for Foreign Relations [1993-1995], Mr. Hans van den Broek, stressed the need of Baltic States' ***"participation in the wider process of European unification***" (European Commission, 1993). In 1994, at a ceremony held in honor of Free Trade Agreements signed with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, there were declarations on the part of the EU that this occasion signified "***a vital step forward in the process of integration of the Baltic Countries into Europe"*** and was meant to ***"recover their place in the circle of free peoples of Europe"*** (European Commission, 1994). In 1995, upon signing the Europe Association Agreements with Baltic states, Presidents of the Council and the Commission claimed it was a sign of ***"return of the Baltic States to the European family***" (European Commission, 1995a). Subsequent press release of the European Commission conveyed that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were "***considered as potential future members of the EU"*** (European Commission, 1995b). Eventually, Commission Opinions on Baltic states' applications for the EU membership affirmed that their accession was "***part of a historic process, in which the countries of Central and Eastern Europe overcome the division of the continent which has lasted for more than 40 years, and join the area of peace, stability and prosperity created by the Union***" (European Commission, 1997a; 1997b, 1997c).

Against this background, one can confidently assert that the Europeanness of newly independent Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was not debated within the EU. European countries had never officially recognized the Soviet rule over the Baltic states and their international recognition happened faster than for other Communist states (Takamaa and Koskenniemi, p.200-204). It was taken for granted that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were European.

It must not be underestimated though, that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia managed to implement wide-ranging, sometimes traumatic but in the end, effective social, political and economic reforms (Vilpisauskas, 2005). Instead of discounting the importance of these reforms, it is argued that what shaped the speed and scale of these reforms was the high degree of assurance from the EU's side that Baltic states would subsequently join the Union. Contrary to the stimulating effect that the EU's attitude had on Baltic states, the policy and discursive practices that the EU exercised towards Georgia threw cold water on latter's European ambitions.

Europe's Neighbouring 'Other': Georgia's Miscarried Europeanness

Upon the breakup of the Soviet Union, the newly independent Georgia directed its gaze towards Europe. In 1991, Georgia refused to join the Commonwealth of Independent States and the same year launched its official rapport with the European Union. Responsibilities and duties were reciprocated between the two: Georgia swore allegiance to Western values such as democracy, rule of law and human rights, while the EU, on its part, took responsibility of helping Georgia meet the challenges posed by such commitment. Formally, this exchange of vows took the form of the TACIS. Through its participation, Georgia accepted the challenge of Europeanization, for what it had historically longed.

From the very first year of Georgia's independence, the European Union represented the main funding source of the Georgian state-(re)building venture (International Monetary Fund, 2003, p.89). The EU's support to Georgia was indeed substantial, but this statement is only true when it comes to numbers, – as for political support, the EU was very reserved at that time. The TACIS agreement was in stark contrast with PHARE offered to Baltic states. PHARE was specially designed as "the main financial instrument of the pre-accession strategy for the Central and Eastern European countries which have applied for membership of the European Union" (EUR-Lex, 2007a). PHARE was, therefore, targeted at the sustainable economic, political and institutional development, while TACIS was more of an emergency assistance tool with no clear strategy (Rinnert, 2011, p.6). In the beginning of 90-ies, therefore, the EU had preferred to limit itself to the role of Georgia's financial, technical and humanitarian assistant.

However, in the mid-90s, the European Union took more interest in Georgia, and the South Caucasus [Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia] as a whole. Throughout 1994-1996, ten Central and Eastern European countries submitted their applications for accession to the EU, and the Eastern Enlargement proved an imminent reality (EUR-Lex, 2007b). Democracy and stability in Georgia suddenly became more pertinent to the peace and security of the EU itself. Correspondingly, the European Union opened its office in Tbilisi in 1995, and the ground was laid for the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement [PCA] signed a year later in Luxembourg (Siskova, 2014, p.136). PCA was a step forward in Georgia's bilateral relations with the EU, but in no way comparable to the Europe Agreement offered to Baltic states. PCA was of a much more general character that, contrary to its Baltic alternative, did not imply the future membership of the European Union (Cameron, 2002, p.89-90).

Later in 2003, General/High Representative of European Union, Javier Solana, raised the importance of South Caucasus region in the European Security Strategy by stating "***We should now take a stronger and more active interest in the problems of the Southern Caucasus, which will in due course also be a neighbouring region"***, (European Council, 2003, p.10). In the same year, the EU appointed a special representative in the South Caucasus, – Mr. Heikki Talvitie (European Commission, 2003), and in 2004 offered Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia to join the ENP, which was specially designed to ensure EU was surrounded by ***"the ring of friends"*** (European Commission, 2002b, p.4). This famous expression by then-President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi constructed social reality in which, to much disappointment of Georgians, Georgia was not Europe. While the ENP membership was a significant milestone in the EU-Georgia relations, it nevertheless unfavorably legitimized Georgia's status of a neighbour of Europe ['Other'], rather than making Georgia a part of it. Along with the South Caucasus countries, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, the ENP encompassed countries that did not even geographically make part of the Eurasian continent and thus could never become eligible for EU membership.

'Othering' of Georgia happened in a natural way since Georgia did not exist in the EU's foreign policy outside the context of the South Caucasus. Given the volatility, fragmentation and disputed belongingness of the Caucasus to the European Continent, being caught up in the 'Caucasian trap' was troublesome for Georgia. It was commonly believed that Europe ended at Urals, which left South Caucasus on the 'other' side (Jonnson

et al., 2000, p.6). With the geographical component of their Europeanness questioned, the prospect of ever joining the European Union was low, even if Armenians and Georgians would certainly qualify themselves as Europeans. Moreover, not only their European identity, but even the European choice of the other two South Caucasian states was contested (Nuriyev, 2007, p.5). One-size-fits all approach to the South Caucasus states was thus to the disadvantage of Georgia which, since its independence, has fought to expel Russia from the region, and had proclaimed European Integration country's top foreign policy priority. ***„I am Georgian and therefore I am European"***, – former Prime Minister of Georgia, at that time Chairman of Parliament, Zurab Zhvania had pronounced in front of Council of Europe in 1999 (Tarkhan-Mouravi, 2014, p.65).

It must be noted that Georgian thirst of Europeanization is not merely a Post-Soviet phenomenon. Sovereign Georgia had opted for European vector of development as early as in 1918, when Georgia first declared its independence from Tsarist Russia. ***"Russia offered us [a] military alliance, which we rejected. We have taken different paths, they are heading for the East and we, for the West"***, – asserted the then-Head of the Georgian government, Mr. Noe Zhordania (Kirchick, 2010). The Soviet occupation of 1921 interrupted Georgia's European dream for 70 years, but the chase after it resumed when the Soviet Union collapsed, and Georgia regained its independence in 1991. However, asserting its Europeanness has proved challenging for Georgia.

The European Union interpreted its support to Georgia as the assistance to 'others'. The EU seems to have assisted Georgia in the realization of reforms solely for the sake of reforms per se, without further commitment from its side. "***Georgia's own future will depend on you yourselves -- on your determination to make your country work", –*** then-President of the European Commission Mr. Romano Prodi stressed (European Commission, 2004).

In case of Baltic states, it happened vice versa, – the commitment preceded the assistance.

TACIS initiative is also interesting in this respect. The agreement spoke of integrating Georgia in world economy rather than European one: ***"TACIS has three main objectives: to support the transition towards the market economy and democracy, to develop partnerships and foster links and network at all levels, and to integrate recipient countries into the world economy"*** (Cordis, 1995). Neither ENP did accommodate the prospect of subsequent EU membership. It was clarified by Mr. Verheugen, European Commissioner for Enlargement [1999-2004], , -***"Membership is not on our agenda for these [ENP] countries"*** (EurActiv, 2004).

Georgia may thus be viewed as an example of what T. Casier (2008) labelled as "Enlargement Dilemma" (p.19), – EU's tactic aimed at avoiding the moral responsibility of welcoming every country that adheres to the fundamental European credo (Casier, 2008). In 2004, during a visit in Brussels, then-President of Georgian Mikheil Saakashvili voiced his belief that Georgia would soon be ready for the EU membership. A. Rochowanski from Eurasianet (2004) communicates that the then-Commission President, Romano Prodi, met Saakashvili's enthusiasm without any reciprocity. The exact quote is not available, but his earlier remark on the same matter is quite indicative: ***"People in New Zealand also feel that they are European. That is the problem. We cannot limit ourselves to considering the historical roots. We also have to give a natural size to the EU", –*** noted Prodi in an interview with Danish paper, Jyllands-Posten (Pihl, 2002).

Theorizing the Findings

Discursive Institutionalism is a relatively new development in the Institutionalist studies. The author of DI, Vivien Schmidt, attempts to fill in the gap left by the traditional Insitutionalist approaches by looking at the role of ideas and discourse within the institutional set-up. In doing so, Schmidt draws inspiration from constructivist ontology. DI is deemed to be a highly applicable to the empirical puzzle addressed in this article in that similarly to Schmidt's postulates, it deals with "the substantive content of ideas" embodied in the EU's policy practices towards Baltic States and Georgia, as well as with the "processes of discourse" towards the two (Schmidt, 2012, p.2).

Schmidt distinguishes the 'ideational' and 'interactive' dimensions of discourse. The former encompasses cognitive and normative functions of discourse, and the latter has coordinative and communicative functions. To start with the ideational dimension, its cognitive function implies formulating "a central idea" that would subsequently "provide the basis for policy-makers to come up with solutions to a wide variety of problems" (Schmidt, 2002, pp. 218-219). In the case of the Baltic states' European integration, this "central idea" took the form of the 'Return to Europe' formula as a general solution to the division of Europe due to the Soviet occupation.

Normative function of the discourse then turns these ideas into more specific policy-oriented solutions, following the logic of appropriateness (Schmidt, 2002, p.202). According to this logic, the EU felt obliged to commit itself to the Eastern Enlargement because this decision was judged as appropriate given the interests and thus obligations that the European identity of CEE countries entailed. However, the logic of appropriateness entails an obligation [Baltic example] just like it entails non-obligation [Georgian case]. Accordingly, this paper argues that the logic of appropriateness called for duty from the EU's side to return Balts to Europe, while the same logic regarded Georgia as more appropriate for a "neighbour" status rather than that of a member. Being "Caucasused" laid additional 'otherness' burden on Georgia as the EU considered much more proper to deal with Georgia in the Southern Caucasus regional context.

Regarding the interactive dimension, its 'coordinative function' is a notion similar to what Frank Schimmelfennig (2010) designated a "rhetorical entrapment" (p.272-279) and manifests itself in the inner negotiations between the community members. However, this function falls out of this specific research interest as the author of the article is not looking into the 'hidden agenda', but what was actually communicated to the target audience in Baltic States and Georgia, – i.e. at the 'communicative function" (Schmidt, 2008, p.310). In the policy or discursive communications studied, Baltic states were proclaimed European [one of "Us/Self"], while Georgia was referred to as a neighbor of Europe at its best. Following this logic, one cannot be 'European' until it's said to be one and until its Europeaneanness is constructed through the discursive and policy practices, – social interaction (Schmidt, 2002).

DI logic is thus highly applicable to the case under research and could potentially also serve as a gap-filler to other constructivist accounts on European studies. Even more as Schmidt's work resembles a toolkit as she offers a theory that is also combined with an analytical strategy, – something that has been considered as "the major missing link in constructivist theory and research" (Adler, 2002, p.109). Schmidt's theoretical 'map' allows an insight into how the European integration processes in aspiring countries are shaped in light of the European Identity perceptions held by EU.

Conclusions

The study was stimulated by the empirical 'puzzle' that the comparison of the Baltic States' and Georgia's European integration processes embody. With comparable determination and potential to become fully-fledged members of "Western European International Community", the Baltic States and Georgia concurrently set out on their pathways to Europe to eventually find themselves in different degrees of European integration. The article argued that the puzzle could not be solved without comprehending the role that European Union's attitude played in the Europeanization processes of the two.

Vivien Schmidt's Discursive Institutionalism was used to interpret the Balts' and Georgians' Europeanness as the 'ideational' and 'interactive' filter of the discourse through which the EU considered their desire of Europeanization. In its totality, "discourse encompasses both a set of policy ideas and values and an interactive process of policy construction and communication" (Schmidt, 2002, p. 40), that the author sought in the EU's policy and discursive practices towards them. Findings revealed a prejudice about Balts' and Georgians' Europeanness as perceived by the EU, encouraging and discouraging the European integration processes within the two, respectively. Author argued that the EU has adjudged Baltic States as European [one of 'Us/Self'], facilitating their way towards the membership, while Georgia has been considered as lacking European identity ['Other'], restraining its prospect of integrating into the Union. European identity was used in EU's policy and discourse as a reason/justification of Baltic states' and Georgia's more and less European integration, respectively.

Despite reasonable financial, technical and humanitarian assistance, EU engaged with Georgia without any political commitment, while in case of Baltic States it happened vice versa – commitment preceded assistance. What is more, Georgia's integration process was discussed on a par with that of Azerbaijan and Armenia, accentuating its South Caucasian identity, rather than its belongingness to the historical Europe. EU policies like TACIS, PCA, ENP were not there to bring Georgia into Europe, they have rather institutionalised a 'friend-zone' between the EU and Georgia. In contrast to Georgian case, the analysis showed that Baltic states were given a preferential treatment on both discursive ["Return to Europe" formula] and policy levels [PHARE, Europe Agreement, Membership candidacy]. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have been receiving all the positive signals from EU giving them a reason to believe that their Europeanization efforts would not end up being in

vain. Author argues that the successful reforms that the Baltic states undertook should be understood as a response to EU's supportive attitude. The pledge that Baltic states would become the members of the European Union was made before Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia would set out on their way of implementing Copenhagen Criterions. Contrary to that, the predominant message communicated to Georgians was that the EU would not expand its borders so as to include Georgia. Seeing no real prospective, Georgia immersed in the painful search of self-identification.

To sum up, the EU's differentiated attitude towards the Baltic states and Georgia manifested through the dissimilar types of agreements that had been offered to them and the discourse that was reassuring or unpromising, respectively. The EU was emphasizing Balts' Europeanness and the duty of their return to European family, ergo to 'Us'. Contrary to that, the EU conceived Georgia as a friendly neighbor, whom it officially and unofficially 'Othered' through its policies and rhetoric. This article thus argues that the different pathways of European integration for Baltic states and Georgia were shaped in the light of the distinctive perceptions of their European Identity held by EU.

As enlightening as they are in their own right, these findings are also pertinent to understanding the EU's attitude towards the European integration processes that Post-Soviet countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova are currently undergoing. The history has recently repeated itself with the EU having once more felt the moral responsibility to enlarge eastwards, the ongoing war that Russia has waged in Ukraine being a reason for such a shift in the European Neighbourhood Policy. "Return to Europe" formula has been revived to be applied to Ukraine, and with it – Moldova, which had followed the suit and filed an application for the EU membership. However, Georgia's concurrent EU bid has stalled, and the historic enlargement in response to Russia's war appears to be leaving Georgia out, raising questions similar to the ones posed and attempted to be answered in this article.

References

Adler, E. (2002) 'Constructivism and International Relations', in W. Carlsnaes, T.Risse and B. A. Simmons (eds), ***Handbook of International Relations***, London: Sage, pp. 95-118

Bretherton, C. & Vogler, J. (2006) ***The European Union as a Global Actor***, New York: Routledge

Cameron, P. (2002). ***Competition in Energy Markets: Law and Regulation in the European Union***, New York: Oxford University Press

Casier, T. (2008). "The New Neighbours of the European Union: The Compelling Logic of Enlargement" in J. DeBardeleben (Ed.), ***The Boundaries of EU Enlargement: Finding a Place for Neighbours.*** Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cordis (1995). ***Cooperation between the European Union and Russia,*** available at: https://cordis.europa.eu/article/id/4300-cooperation-between-the-european-union-and-russia

Dawisha, K. & Parrott, B. (1994) ***Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Politics of Upheaval,*** New York: Cambridge University Press

Dent, C. (2002). The European Economy: The Global Context, London: Routledge

Elsuwege, P. (2008). ***From Soviet Republics to EU Member States: A Legal and Political Assessment of the Baltic States' Accession to the EU***, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers

EUR-Lex (2007a). PHARE Program. Summaries of EU Legislation, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3Ae50004

EUR-Lex (2007b). ***The 2004 enlargement: the challenge of a 25-member EU.*** Summaries of EU Legislation, available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3Ae50017

Euractiv (2004). ***'New Neighbours': Commission adds three countries, rules out debate on future borders,*** available at: https://www.euractiv.com/section/central-europe/news/new-neighbours-commission-adds-three-countries-rules-out-debate-on-future-borders/

Eurasianet. (2004). ***EU Extends Cooperation with Georgia, but Expresses Caution on Accession Issue.*** Available at: https://eurasianet.org/eu-extends-cooperation-with-georgia-but-expresses-caution-on-accession-issue

Europa Publications ed. (2003). ***The Europa World Year Book***, Volume I: ***International Organizations; Countries: Afghanistan-Jordan***, Europa Publications, London: Taylor & Francis

European Commission (1995a). Signing the Europe Association Agreements with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, 12 June 1995, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_95_173

European Commission (1995b). Europe Agreements Initialled with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Press Release, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_95_379

European Commission (1997a). Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Latvia's Application for Membership of the European Union, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/DOC_97_14

European Commission (1997b). Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Lithuania's Application for Membership of the European Union, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/DOC_97_15

European Commission (1997c). Agenda 2000 – Commission Opinion on Estonia's Application for Membership of the European Union, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/DOC_97_12

European Commission (2000). ***Enlargement Strategy Paper: Report on Progress Towards Accession by each of the Candidate Countries***. European Commission Press, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2000/strat_en.pdf

European Commission (2001). ***"The Enlargement"***, Speech by Romano Prodi President of the European Commission to the European Parliament Strasbourg, 13 November 2001, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_01_531

European Commission (2002a), ***Learn from History and Shape the Future***, Main extracts of Mr Verheugen's Speech, Center for International Relations and 'Rzeczpospolita', Warsaw, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_02_334

European Commission (2002b). "***A Wider Europe – A Proximity Policy as the key to stability",*** Statement by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, Sixth ECSA-World Conference. Jean Monnet Project. Brussels, 5-6 December 2002, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_02_619

European Commission (2003). ***Council appoints an EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus***, Brussels, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_03_196

European Commission (2004). ***To students and representatives of civil society in Georgia,*** Speech by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, Tbilisi State University, Georgia, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_04_407

European Commission. (1993). Statement by Mr. Hans Van Den Broek at the Council of the Sea States: Second Ministerial Session- Helsinki, 16 March 1993, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-93-26_en.htm?locale=FR

European Commission. (1994). Free Trade Agreement Ceremony Between the European Communities and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania- Brussels, 18 July 1994, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_PRES-94-148_en.htm

European Council (1989), 8-9 December 1989, Presidency Conclusions, Strasbourg, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20580/1989_december_-_strasbourg__eng_.pdf

European Council (1993), European Council in Copenhagen, 21-22 June 1993, Conclusions of the Presidency, available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21225/72921.pdf

European Council (2003). ***A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy,*** Brussels, available at: http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15895-2003-INIT/en/pdf

George, A., & Bennett, A. (2005). ***Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences***, Massachusetts: MIT Press

Grigas, A. et al (2003) ***The Baltic States in the EU: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow***, Notre Europe, Jacques Delors Institute

Gylfason, T. & Hochreiter, E. (2008) ***Growing Apart? A Tale of Two Republics: Estonia and Georgia***, Working Paper, International Monetary Fund

International Monetary Fund (2003). Georgia: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, IMF Country Report No. 03/265, Washington D.C.

Jonsson et al. (2000). ***Organizing European Space.*** London: SAGE Publications

Kasekamp, A. (2010). ***A History of Baltic States.*** London: Palgrave Macmillan

Kirchick, J. (2010). "Letter from Tbilisi: Georgia Between Two Powers. Russia on their mind"**,** Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, available at: https://pressroom.rferl.org/a/Kirchick_in_Foreign_Affairs/2088521.html

Mole, M. (2012). ***The Baltic States from the Soviet Union to the European Union: identity, discourse and power in the post-communist transition of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania***, London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

O'Connor, K. (2003). ***The History of the Baltic States,*** Westport: Greenwood Press

Pautola, N. (1996) 'The Baltics and the European Union- On the Road to Membership, Review of Economies in Transition', ***Bank of Finland***, No.4, pp.21-40

Pihl, L. (2002). ***Prodi: EU enlargement must stop somewhere***. Available at: https://euobserver.com/institutional/8530

Rinnert, D. (2011). The Eastern Partnership in Georgia: Increasing Efficiency of EU Neighborhood Policies in the South Caucasus? Working Paper, SWP Berlin

Rukhadze, V. (2012). European Union's Eastern Neighborhood: How Much Can EU Influence? ***European Union and World Politics Conference.*** New York: The University at Buffalo (SUNY)

Sabanadze, N. (2010) ***Globalization and Nationalism: The Cases of Georgia and the Basque Country***, Budapest-New York: Central European University Press.

Schimmelfennig, F. (2003). ***The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric.*** London: Cambridge University Press.

Schimmelfennig, F. (2010). Europeanization beyond the member states, ***Journal for Comparative Government and European Policy***, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2010), pp. 319-339

Schmidt, V. (2002) ***Futures of European Capitalism.*** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, V. (2002). ***Futures of European Capitalism.*** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, V. (2008). Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse. ***Annual Review of Political Science***. Vol. 11: 303-326

Siskova, N. (2014). From Eastern Partnership to the Association: A Legal and Political Analysis, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Siversten, S. H. (2011) 'The Dissolution of the Soviet Union: Agency, Performance or Legitimacy?' in Bakke, E., Peters. I. (eds.) ***20 Years Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall: Transitions, State Break-Up and Democratic Politics in Central Europe and Germany***, Berliner Wissenchafts-Verlag, pp. 141-159

Tabula (2011). ***Interview with Gunter Verheugen.*** available at: http://www.tabula.ge/en/story/70143-interview-with-gunter-verheugen

Takaama, K. & Koskenniemi, M. eds. (1997). Finnish Yearbook of International Law, Volime 8, Leiden: Kluwer Law International

Tarkhan-Mouravi, G. (2014) 'Georgia's European Aspirations and the Eastern Partnership' in Jones, S (ed.) The Making of Modern Georgia, 1918-2012: The first Georgian republic and its successors, New York: Routledge

Theiler, T. (2005). ***Political Symbolism and European Integration.*** Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Vilpisauskas, R. (2005). The Political Economy of Baltic States' accession into the EU: The impact on the role of the state, Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Paper Series, Vol. 5, No.21, University of Miami, available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/8150/1/Vilpisauskasfinalversion.pdf