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Introduction:
Democracy and the Future European Peace

War and Peace in Europe

Viewed from a historical perspective, no region in the world can stand comparison with Europe as for belligerence. Gleditsch (1995a: 539-40), for example, points out that in 25 of 75 interstate wars between 1815 and 1993, the war action took place at least partly in Europe. Moreover, in 31 wars one or more European countries participated on both sides, while in 46 wars at least one European country took part. Of the 31 million battle casualties in all interstate wars since 1815, the 31 wars among European countries accounted for 25 million deaths or 80%. Finally, Europe was the starting point of the two World Wars, which are the most devastating wars in the history of humanity. Since 1945, however, Europe has been comparatively peaceful. Between 1945 and 1989 the Correlates of War Project notifies only three wars in Europe. Interestingly, they have long time-intervals between them and decrease in size. Although an increase in overall violence in Europe occurred immediately after the end of the Cold War, the number of violent conflicts is again very low (Gleditsch, 1995a: 555-63).

How can we explain this comparatively peaceful state of Europe for half a century? With regard to the era of the Cold War, one dominant view holds that the combined effect of bipolarity and nuclear deterrence accounts for the shift from major violence to relative peace in Europe (Gaddis, 1987; Waltz, 1993, Mearsheimer, 1990).[1] With the downfall of the Iron Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, however, there definitely came about a new era in European politics. By that time, it became clear that the certainties of the Cold War were no longer (Snyder, 1993). Indeed, for more than forty years both the form and content of European security politics had been largely determined by the two superpowers, namely the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Through their relationships of power, armament and mutual nuclear deterrence, they had set the parameters of peace and security in Europe all along.

The end of the Cold War made for thorough changes in the European security equation. The Warsaw Pact is no longer and with it went natoâs post-war reason of existence. In addition, the Soviet Union has fallen apart into several independent republics, some of which have still a close relationship with Russia because of former economic ties and a paper confederation. Likewise, the nations of Central and Eastern Europe are passing through a political and economic transformation, and many of them strive for membership of Western international regimes, particularly nato, weu and the eu. Furthermore, Germany is united again and therewith increased her geographical and political significance in Europe. Finally, and more broadly, the ideological enmity that was so typical for the relations among the two post-war blocs gave way to growing ideological conformity and growing amity (Sperling and Kirchner, 1997).

The future of European Security:
Neo-realism vs. Liberalism

Considering the transition to the post-Cold War era and the deep changes going along with it, ample reasons exist for recasting the European security condition. Such, however, is not the view of neo-realist scholars. For them, no fundamental changes appear to have occurred. The Îdeep structureâ[2] of the international system stays anarchical and competitive in nature. Without a central authority capable of enforcing agreements or guarantying security, states face

a security dilemma. Therefore, they continue relying on self-help to maintain their independence and protect their interests. Enduring international co-operation remains problematical as states continue to worry about relative gains because of fears of cheating and dependence (Waltz, 1979; Grieco, 1988a; 1993). The main expected mutation situates itself on the level of the distributional structure. The political change that started in 1989 is about to give way to a shift in the existing distribution of capabilities within the system. Although at present the latter is still characterised by military bipolarity, in the longer run we are clearly heading for a multipolar system (Waltz, 1993; Layne, 1993). The future of European security, therefore, looks bleak as the continent is gradually returning to multipolarity with its ever-shifting coalitions. Consequently, the future Europe will be fairly unpredictable and unstable. Nationalist and ethnic conflicts will continue to spill over to the international level since they are no longer frozen under the bipolar order (Mearsheimer, 1990).

Others, taking a liberal view, make a more positive forecast and see a Europe Îprimed for peaceâ (van Evera, 1990/91). They are optimistic about the transition of the former Warsaw Pact countries to a market economy and democratic rule. For liberals economic and political liberalisation offers the best guarantee of stability. A Europe of democratic regimes tied together through liberal trade, would be a Europe where war would belong to the past. Therefore, the security dilemma will be substantially reduced (Risse-Kappen, 1994c: 51; Sperling and Kirchner, 1997: 7-10). The European states will evolve into relationships of Îcomplex interdependenceâ (Keohane and Nye, 1977) like those between the states belonging to the oecd world. Complex interdependence, however, does not imply that no conflicts will occur, but that the latter will be solved without the use of force. Such situation, then, comes close to what Deutsch (1957) came to call a Îsecurity communityâ, viz. a more or less integrated group of states that do not regard each other as a military threat and solve their conflicts in non-military ways. Put differently, liberals expect the likelihood of armed conflict in the new European security order to be very low. Consequently, force levels can be drastically reduced.

In predicting this entirely different future of European security, the liberal view starts from a distinct conception of world politics (Keohane and Nye, 1977; Zacher and Matthew, 1995). For them anarchy is not a permanent feature of the international system. As a pure self-help system, it is but one possible form of recurrent behaviour, and as such, processes of institutionalisation can transcend it, the more likely so in an environment characterised by complex interdependence. Hence, liberals regard international co-operation as far more common than realists would like us to believe. Moreover, they claim that domestic political processes and structures account for variances in state behaviour. In other words, states cannot be treated as unitary actors. For liberals recent history shows that democracies interact more co-operatively than non-democracies do. While democracies are clearly not inherently more peaceful than non-democratic regimes, they rarely if ever fight each other. Relationships between democratic regimes seem to evolve peacefully and result in so-called zones of democratic peace (Ullman, 1991). Using different data sets, this conjecture has been by now firmly established (Maoz and Russett, 1992, 1993; Bremer, 1992; Russett, 1993b; Ray, 1995; Maoz, 1997). Probably no other hypothesis has reached a similar level of acceptance among international relations scholars. According to Russett (1990: 245), the proposition that democracies do not fight each other is Îone of the strongest nontrivial or non-tautological statements that can be made about international relations.â

Democracy and Peace in Europe

The argument that democracy is a strong source of peace goes back to Immanuel Kant.[3] For him, democracies are peaceful primarily because they are controlled by the citizens. As rational beings, the latter will not support warlike policies, the economic consequences of which are only detrimental to their welfare. This, however, is not a very strong explanation of peace between democracies since the connection between public opinion and the conduct of foreign policy is much less straightforward and transparent than in Kantâs leading expectation (Sorensen, 1993: 99; Risse-Kappen, 1991)[4]. The peaceful nature of the relationships among democracies does not flow contiguously from peace-loving citizens influencing the decision-makers. For a better understanding of the peace among democracies, we need to look for some more fundamental factors.

On closer examination, Kantâs general framework seemingly offers the elements for such a deeper understanding. More specifically, he indicates that the peace among democracies depends on the existence of a pacific union[5] sustained by ties of economic interdependence. Kant was well aware that these elements do not materialise easily as they are part of a process in which early results of co-operation affect subsequent co-operative efforts (Doyle, 1986). Therefore, reversals or even a backsliding into violence may always occur. Ultimately, however, he expects the pacific union to expand and provide perpetual peace among all democratic nations. According to Sorensen, Kantâs pacific union rests on three conditions:

> First, the mere existence of democracies with their culture of peaceful conflict resolution; second, the moral bonds that are forged between the democracies on the basis of their common moral foundations; and third, the democraciesâ economic cooperation toward mutual economic advantage (Sorensen, 1993: 110-111).

All three conditions need to be met for the connection between democracy and peace to hold. We shall further explore each of Kantâs conditions and examine them in the contemporary European context.

The first condition concerns processes whereby democratic regimes promote norms and expectations that further peaceful conflict resolution between democracies ö a process affecting both the citizenry and the policy-makers. The decisive factor in the whole process, however, is not the control of elites by the citizens; it is the democratic political culture. Such a culture implies that in democracy citizens hold rights to liberty, and hence the states democratically representing them have the right to exercise political independence. Since democracies are alike in this respect, mutual respect for these rights thus becomes the major criterion of international liberal theory. For Sorensen this

> ·democratic political culture rules out ideological motives for democracies to act in expansionist ways against one another and makes it very difficult for democratic elites to legitimate wars against other democracies (Sorensen, 1993: 99).

In other words, norms of peaceful conflict resolution and norms recognising other peopleâs right to self-determination incite democratic regimes to show restraint and caution in their conduct of foreign policy, especially in their dealings with other democracies.

Regarding the fulfilment of the first condition in Europe, the present predicament is ambivalent. Whereas a democratic culture with norms of peaceful conflict resolution exits in the consolidated democracies of the West, this is not yet the case in the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. Going from a non-democratic to a democratic regime is a long and not necessarily tidy process. Only in the consolidation phase, democratic practices become an established part of the political culture (Porter, 1995). Although in Central and Eastern Europe a civil society is budding, it will still take much time and effort for a fully-fledged democratic culture to establish itself.

The second condition concerns the moral element, which helps founding the environment for peaceful intercourse between democratic states. According to Kant, this moral element resides in the common principles of co-operation, mutual respect, and understanding (Sorensen, 1993: 101). Such moral bonds are present in the relationships among the consolidated democracies of the West. Furthermore, plausible grounds exist for hypothesising that the security community composed of the Western stable democracies can be expanded to embrace the recent democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. Not only are these former communist states going through a political and economic transformation, but most of them also strive for membership of Western international regimes, particularly nato, weu and the EU, whose very foundation is the recognition of common moral values of personal freedom, political independence, democracy, and the rule of law. Moreover, within the framework of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (osce), all the East European countries including Russia have committed themselves to basic democratic values and the peaceful resolution of conflict. If the democratisation process in these countries continues successfully, becoming full members of the security community that has developed in Western Europe turns possible for the latter. Such a development gets even more likely since the end of the Cold War has diminished the force of anarchy in shaping the European security environment and has enhanced the interaction capacity[6] of the European state system (Sperling and Kirchner, 1997: 16). The interaction capacity of an international system not only affects the ability and the willingness of states to interact, but also determines what types and levels of interaction are both possible and desired. One feature of the systemâs interaction capacity is precisely the extent to which states share norms and shape their preferences through common institutions. According to Buzan et al. institutions

> greatly facilitate, and even promote, interactions that shared norms and values make possible and desired. (·) Institutions not only provide more opportunities to communicate, but also more obligations and more incentives to do so (Buzan et al., 1993: 70-71).

In the European security space states increasingly come to share common norms. Moreover, state interaction is increasingly steered by common economic and security institutions. Joint membership of institutions cultivating Kantâs common principles of co-operation, mutual respect, and understanding on a pan-European basis has thus made for an improved interaction capacity in the European security space.

Kantâs final condition for a pacific union among democracies to develop and maintain itself is economic co-operation. In his view, countries led by the spirit of commerce will develop mutually beneficial ties of trade and investment, which in turn will strengthen the bonds of peace among them (Sorensen, 1993: 107). Such mutually beneficial economic co-operation figures high among the consolidated democracies in the West ÷ that is Western Europe, North America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Since these countries also comply with the two other conditions discussed earlier, namely a democratic culture of peaceful conflict resolution and a common moral foundation that flows from it, they make up a true security community. On closer examination, the latter concept boils down to a contemporary interpretation of Kantâs pacific union (Deutsch et al., 1957).

The prospects for economic co-operation in Eastern Europe are less certain. Some pessimism subsists regarding the possibilities for rapid economic transformation and world market integration of Eastern Europe. The transitions to the market economy in the East European states and the former Soviet Union are unfinished and flawed. One problem is the burden of debt facing some of those nations, especially Albania, Poland, Hungary, and the Russian Federation.

The major obstacle, however, resides in the difficulty of the task itself. The transition to the market economy and democratic rule demands a profound remodelling of society rather than the simple correction of malformed economies. As Sperling and Kirchner (1997: 188) put it: ÎThe discipline of the market and the ambiguities of democratic politics are neither easily exported nor easily absorbed.â Moreover, the whole process necessitates sustained and vast capital inflows over at least a decade. So far, however the capital inflows into Central and Eastern Europe have been insufficient. This failure to deliver is foremost a political one. Western governments have been very reluctant in their commitment of the necessary resources in support of economic liberalisation and democratisation processes. At a time when the economic instruments of statecraft figure as the most effective and important to the stability in Europe, the major states may be in lack the fiscal means to exploit that opportunity (Sperling and Kirchner, 1997: 191-92). Even though leading decision-makers in the European Union (eu) foresee the admission of at least some East European countries at the turn of the century, the less developed of those countries will clearly have great difficulty in reaching the level of economic development, which would turn membership of the eu into a real possibility. Unfortunately, it is mainly through such membership that they can develop ties of economic co-operation, which in turn will allow them to reinforce their position in a European security community.

Major Themes and Organisation of the Book

Using Kantâs idea of a pacific union as a lead, we have tried to cast the idea of democratic peace while at the same time relating it to the European security environment. The results are mixed. Whereas a substantial headway is clearly visible on the road to a liberal and democratic pan-European order, none of the three criteria has been fully met until now. Moreover, although the idea of democratic peace is sound, it leaves open many questions, notwithstanding ample empirical evidence corroborating some of its aspects. Although so far no two democracies have ever been observed to go to war, this alone provides no epistemological basis for concluding that we will not observe a war between democracies tomorrow. Things would look better if we had a theoretical explanation that indicates the reasons why war between democracies is very unlikely if not impossible. Then we would be on much safer ground for assuming that the relationship is structural or stable.[7]

Unfortunately, as Risse and De Vree argue in their respective contributions, at this stage the democratic peace hypothesis is still under-theorised. Like it or not, despite the vast amount of work already done and notwithstanding the encouraging results from analysing different data sets, our understanding of the mechanisms underlying the establishment and evolution of democracy is still limited. For an abstruse assessment of the prospects of democratic peace in Europe, we need a deeper insight in the intricate causal mechanisms connecting democracy, economic interdependence, and peace. The present volume aims at making a constructive contribution to this endeavour. All the contributors view the democratic peace proposition as a challenging avenue to theory construction and empirical analysis in the disciplines of international relations and peace research. More specifically, they each address one or more of the following major themes:

ð What do we know about democratic peace and how do we explain it?

ð Which theoretical perspective holds the best promise for enhancing our insight in the processes underlying democratic peace?

ð How and to what extend is democracy connected to other variables as economic interdependence, international trade, prosperity, state autonomy, and peace?

ð What about the warnings by realist scholars that the demise of the bipolar structure of international politics will bring and end to Îlong peaceâ, which reigned over Europe since the end of the Second World War?

ð Has the time come for admitting that anarchy is to prevail again even in the heartland of democratic peace? Alternatively, will the pacifying impact of stable democracy still preserve the peace in Europe despite some worrying signs that the end of bipolarity was not with its destabilising effects?

In his contribution, Thomas Risse discusses Îthe empirical finding that democracies are Janus-faced. While they do not fight each other, they are frequently involved in militarised disputes and wars with authoritarian regimes. He argues that these two empirical findings are under-theorised. After reviewing the prevailing explanations for the Îdemocratic peaceâ, he presents a social constructivist perspective. Democracies create their friends and enemies by inferring either defensive or aggressive motives from the domestic structures of their counterparts. On the one hand, they follow behavioural norms externalising their internal compromise-oriented and non-violent decision rules in their interactions with other democracies. On the other hand, the presumption of potential enmity creates a realist world of anarchy when democratic states interact with authoritarian regimes.

For Johan De Vree democracy has proven to be a notably successful system for providing peaceful and orderly

government and wealth and prosperity. This success has made democracy into the standard against which we judge political regimes. However, the author claims, our deep moral or ideological commitment to democracy keeps us from a dispassionate analysis of its true nature, of what makes it work, and of what underlies its establishment and evolution. Such an analysis, he argues, will bring to light serious flaws in our conception of democracy. The most important of these is perhaps the rather common assumption that a democratic regime is just a matter of enlightenment and political will, independent of the structural conditions in the society or system concerned.

Erich Weede argues that, in retrospect, the Marshall Plan can be seen as a component of an almost incredibly successful strategy of establishing a capitalist and democratic zone of peace. According to Weede, the best way to reinforce democracy is to promote prosperity, while the best way to promote prosperity is to establish free trade on as large a scale as feasible. The peace, which the United States established after World War II, rested on capitalism and free trade, prosperity and democracy. This package, Weede concludes, proved attractive enough to bind Germany and Japan firmly to the West.

Liberals believe that shared democracy can be a foundation for peace not only directly, but also indirectly through increased trade between countries as well. Harry Bliss and Bruce Russett test the hypothesis that democratic states will conduct more trade with each other by relating pairs of statesâ trade to their political regime type, official language, openness to trade, alliance status, and the presence of militarised disputes, as well as to the statesâ respective gross domestic products an the distance between them. These results provide strong support for the hypothesis that shared democratic polity, common language, and openness to trade are associated with higher values of international trade.

Does a high level of trade between two states reduce the likelihood of conflict between them? Both theoretical arguments and empirical research present different answers to this question. James Morrow, Randolph Siverson and Tressa Tabares address the question empirically, drawing their data from the major powers, who have been the leading trading states of the world, over the period 1907-1965, a span that witnessed significant shifts in both the patterns and levels of trade, as well as significant amounts of international conflict. They conclude that the occurrence of international conflict may be more readily attributed to the interests of states and the joint characteristics of their political institutions than it is to the trade between them. Although their results seem to undermine the peace through trade argument, the authors indicate some good reasons for not abandoning it too quickly.

Joseph Grieco addresses two main questions. First, why in the face of an apparent similar stimulus ÷ the end of the Cold war ÷ have Germany and Japan responded so differently on the issue of regional economic institutions? Second, can modern realist theory help us understand the differences observed in German and Japanese preferences for regional economic institutions? Grieco suggests that a part of the explanation for difference in German and Japanese interest in regionalism can be explained by focusing on the role and level of American power in the two regions.

Edward Spiezio, claims that the liberal perspective on the relationship between democracy and collective security is inadequate because it generally fails to consider how domestic politics can interfere with a stateâs ability to ratify and to honour international security commitments. Spiezio argues that the domestic structure of democratic political system typically serves to constrain the autonomy of the state. Spiezio not only presents a theoretical argument in favour of these claims. He also highlights the practical significance of the argument through an analysis of how the domestic structure of the major domestic powers may inhibit their ability to participate in a post-Cold War collective security system in Europe.

In the concluding chapter, James Lee Ray contends that the end of the Cold War has created conditions for what he describes as an Îhistorical experimentâ. While neo-realists believe that the disappearance of the bipolar structure of the Cold War era is likely to bring an end to the lengthy period of stability Europe has known since 1945, advocates of the democratic peace proposition tend to believe, in contrast, that the spread of democratic regimes will enhance peace and stability in Europe. Ray claims that there are reasons for being sceptical about democracyâs pacifying impact. Some empirical evidence indicates that democratising states are more war prone. Yet, a closer look at this evidence suggests that such a conclusion only applies if the democratising states under consideration are surrounded by autocratic states. Therefore, efforts to move East-Central European states in the direction of democracy are unlikely to have the dangerous effects some scholars have hypothesised, unless the successes for this policy are isolated, and surrounded by failed movements toward a democratic status. Moreover, aggregate data analysis, close analysis of crucial cases, as well as examination of theoretical support for the democratic peace proposition all provide important reasons for conjecturing that a uniformly democratic Europe will remain a peaceful and stable continent.

Notes

1. For a critical appraisal of this view, see Risse-Kappen (1994: 49-50).

2. Concept initially introduced by Ruggie (1986), and now further elaborated Buzan et al. (1993: 37-47). It refers to the first two tiers of Waltzâs definition of structure, viz. the organising principle of the international system and the functional differentiation of units. For Buzan (Ibid.: 38) these two tiers Îidentify an element that is deep in the sense of representing a basic pattern that is not only durable (on historical evidence), but also self-reproducing (in that the operation of the balance of power sustains the anarchic arrangement ö and in Waltzâs view also the like units).â

3. Kant developed this argument in his essay ÎPerpetual Peaceâ, which was first published in 1795. See Kant (1795 [1991]).

4. See also Risseâs contribution to the present volume.

5. In Kantâs view a pacific union is not a signed treaty but a zone of peace based on a common moral foundation among democratic states. Peaceful ways of conflict resolution are regarded morally superior to violent strategies, and this view is transposed to international relations between democracies (Sorensen, 1993: 94).

6. For an in-depth discussion of interaction capacity as a structuring factor in the international system, see Buzan et al. (1993: 69-80).

7. However, we still can never be sure. According to modern epistemology, all scientific knowledge is hypothetical in character. At least since Hume it became clear that no epistemological basis for induction exists. For a recent restatement of this issue in peace research, see Smith (1998).