

EC/EU MEMBERSHIP AND AUSTRIA, SWEDEN AND FINLAND: NEUTRALITY REDEFINED WITH EUROPEAN NORMS?

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ABSTRACT

Based on sociological institutionalism and approaching neutrality from a political perspective, this article investigates domestic political debates on neutrality in Austria, Sweden and Finland. The aim was to answer the question how their concepts of neutrality were reconceptualised in relation to European norms of peace, democracy, liberty, human rights and rule of law during their EC/EU membership applications. In the Austrian case, neutrality was framed to be compatible with membership due to its same embedded normative aspects as the European norms. However, despite similar norms, Swedish neutrality was not argued to be adaptable to the European norms because of the notion of national autonomy and exceptionalism associated with neutrality. Finally, Finnish neutrality, first and foremost conceived and developed out of security concern, was not redefined with reference to European norms as such, but rather considered a security tool to be abandoned once the threat from the East disappeared in order to get fully integrated with the Western Europe. This article comes to the conclusion that neutrality is not merely a matter of security, but also embedded with cultural dimension, resulting in different reactions with European norms, hence different interpretations of neutrality. This would in the future have a certain implication on those countries' roles in the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

KEY WORDS: neutrality, Europeanisation, Austria, Sweden, Finland

1 INTRODUCTION

Towards the final phase of the Cold War, the three European neutrals, Austria, Sweden and Finland, applied for a membership of the then European Community in 1989, 1991 and 1992 respectively. Those three neutrals' prospective close participation in the European family as full members

sparked domestic political debates with regard to the compatibility of membership with neutrality.

This was largely due to the fact that, unlike the international organizations of universal character, a neutral state's membership in a regional organization would give the impression of partiality toward a group of states. In the EC case, the supranational decisions could not only hamper the autonomy of those states, but the Community had also set the aim of becoming a political union. Nonetheless, Austria, Finland and Sweden submitted their applications and gained membership in 1995, with neutrality not phased out altogether. This situation leads to the assumption that the definition of neutrality was subject to change to the extent that it could go beyond the legal meaning and original intent of neutrality.

This research approaches neutrality as a contested concept, the definition of which is to be uncovered from discourses and their contexts. Based on the ontological conception of sociological institutionalism, the core assumption here is that an institution affects an actor, who, in order to develop identities compatible with it, internalizes the norms of the institution, hence the research question:

To what extent were the concepts of neutrality in Austria, Sweden and Finland redefined in domestic political debates in relation to European norms during their applications for EC/EU membership?

It is arguably important to ask this question because this will lead to a better understanding of those states' roles in the formation of the EU common foreign and security policy. Some literature prematurely argued for the incompatibility of neutrality with the mutual defense clause brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon, without paying much attention to their membership application period (Devine 2011). Upon detailed investigation back then towards the end of the Cold War, this may reveal the compatibility with the EU's security ambition in their respective readings of neutrality. In the other scenario, it may be that some of them had already intended to forsake neutrality, in which case the compatibility with the mutual defense clause in Lisbon would be out of question. This will be revealed as the content of this research unfolds in each case study.

2 STATE OF THE FIELD

Neutrality has traditionally been studied from the legal and political perspectives. Legal scholars investigate the rights and duties of neutral entities along historical development (Vagts 1952; Verdross 1956). The legal view remained dominant until the end of the Second World War, after which it was gradually superseded by a political notion of neutrality. This was largely because, in legal literature, little was covered about what a neutral state should do in peacetime.

In political science, neutrality is studied along the line of the dominant international relations theory in a given period of time. Since the late 1950s to 1980s, neutral states were considered weak, passive and vulnerable in realist IR literature (Morgenthau 1958). Considered small, a neutral state was normally fused with the study of other small states with a blurred focus on neutrality (Handel 1985; Katzenstein 1985). As for realist literature devoted to neutrality, the object of study primarily dealt with what a neutral state should do to survive in a given geopolitical context (Karsh 1988; Hakovirta 1988). It was largely due to the political approach that the definition of neutrality extended beyond the common legal definition of non-participation in war. From the laws of neutrality, states can customize neutrality according to their specific interpretations (Hakovirta 1988), not least affected by the origins its neutrality (Maude 1982; Vagts 1998).

Neutrality study gained dynamics in the wake of the debate between rationalism and reflectivism around the 1990s. It was during this period that a substantial literature explored a connection between domestic politics and foreign policy, paving the way for social constructivism. Domestic values, preferences, history and norms were given focus, thereby providing insights into foreign and security policies of neutral states (Aigus and Devine 2011). These works brought into light not only divergences between neutrality of states, but pointed to the need to take into account the specificity, belief and values of each neutral (Norman 1993; Nevakivi 1993; Malmberg 2001; Lantis and Queen 1998; Eliasson 2004; Ferreira-Pereira 2005; Kořan 2006). This corresponded with methodological innovative, i.e. discourse analysis, to uncover those hidden facets of neutrality previously understood only in security term.

Recently, attention was paid to the development of neutrality in the EU foreign and security policy framework. In this regard, Karen Devine studied the discursive contents of neutrality in EU neutrals in parallel with the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and measured the compatibility with the mutual defense clause brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon (Devine 2011). What is missing in Devine's study is the collation of neutrality with the European norms.

Some works found the reorientation of foreign and security policies of Austria, Finland and Sweden in line with broader European priorities (Möller and Bjereld 2010; de Flers 2012; Rathkolb 2008). In particular, Douglas Brommesson investigated how Swedish foreign policy came to be reoriented along the line of European norms identified as peace, democracy, human rights, liberty and rule of law (Brommesson 2010). Still, these works did not single out neutrality as a separate subject of study, but mingled it with the broader foreign and security policy. Moreover, some other researches argued for neutral states' active contribution to European

security notably in terms of conflict management and the promotion of non-military security solutions (Eliasson 2004; Miles 2005; Strömvik 2006; Väyrynen 2006). Nevertheless, there was a missing connection to substantiate that the neutral states understood these activities to be an integral part of their neutrality.

This research builds on the previous literature by using the findings with regard to the specific content of neutrality of each case study and domestic debates surrounding the application for EC membership. By investigating the content of neutrality as such apart from the broader security and foreign policy and by collating it with European norms, this study will contribute to the field of neutrality study in particular and add to an ontological and epistemological debate in the broader field of Europeanisation study.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research tailors a method of content analysis to uncover how neutrality was interpreted in each case study. Because of the limited access to primary sources and my incompetence in German, Swedish and Finnish, only available few primary and secondary sources in English and French will be used. In order to compensate for this problem and to reduce the bias associated with the selection of discourses in secondary literature, I have tried to find and use a variety of sources to crosscheck the accuracy to the extent possible. In addition, a comparison between the three neutral states elaborated below is supposed to make up for the resource problem by bringing about not only a clearer picture of the similarities and differences between them, but also a factor which would explain the different outcome with regard to the internalization of European norms.

In order to understand what choices were proposed in domestic political debates with regard to neutrality and membership, this research argues for the relevance of each case study's specific historical context in which the concept of neutrality had developed. This is because an actor's choices with regard to neutrality had become institutionalised over time, constraining the actor's policy choices by means of eliminating alternative solutions or making the deviation from the path dependency costly. As the process of path dependency is contingent upon the conditions of the preceding stages in the temporal sequence, this theoretical conception necessitates the investigation into the history of neutrality in each of the neutrals. This will later explain the extent to which the path dependency allowed for the reinterpretation of neutrality during the membership application.

The European norms refer to the five core norms identified by Ian Manners from the *acquis communautaire* and the *acquis politique* of the Union: peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights

(Manners 2002). As Manners rightly argues, the five core norms clearly have a deep historical context to them attached to Western Europe. Therefore, I argue that the core norms had become “sticky” or well-established in the institution and have strong normative power over candidate states according to the theory of sociological institutionalism.

To analyse the domestic political debates, it is necessary to refer to the ontological understanding of sociological institutionalism. That is, the EU affects a candidate state, which, in order to develop identities *compatible* with it, internalises the norms of the institution. The keyword leading to the answer to the research question is thus *compatibility*. In order to investigate the extent to which European norms were absorbed in the concept of neutrality, it is argued that in cases where neutrality was presented as compatible with European norms, the concept of neutrality was enlarged to include those norms.

In cases where neutrality was primarily tied with security concern without or with relatively much less aspect of identity, it is more likely that neutrality would be abandoned once the security threat disappears. In cases where neutrality is strongly tied to the identity of the country in question, the reconceptualisation of neutrality to include European norms was out of question. Finally, in cases where neutrality was tied to values such as peace, democracy and human rights, it was more likely that the concept of neutrality would be enlarged to incorporate European norms. Nonetheless, since the normative aspects of neutrality were not necessarily confined to the European norms, there were normative aspects of neutrality that were not amenable to interpretations of compatibility with European norms. In such cases, some normative aspects of neutrality were hindrances to the reinterpretation of neutrality as compatible with European norms.

The case studies will be investigated individually in a chronological order of application submission: Austria (1989), Sweden (1991) and Finland (1992). Each chapter begins with the evolution of neutrality, followed by the domestic political debate and closed with an analysis.

4 THE AUSTRIAN CASE

AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY: A BACKGROUND

The origin of Austrian neutrality could be traced back to 1955. Austria was then demanded by the Soviet Union to declare permanent neutrality based on the Swiss model as a condition for the restoration of its sovereignty. This Moscow Memorandum of 15th April 1955 led to the conclusion of the State Treaty for the Re-Establishment of an Independent and Democratic Austria (State Treaty). The declaration of Austrian neutrality came later on 26th October 1955 (Neuhold 1994). On that day, the Austrian Parliament

adopted the Constitutional Law on the Neutrality of Austria, stipulating that the country will not join any military alliances or permit the establishment of any foreign military bases on her territory.

Federal Chancellor Leopold Figl, in his press announcement on 23rd October 1956, stressed that Austria was “a free state not subjected to any obligations; its neutrality is of purely military nature” (Op. cit. Kořan 2006, 25). This interpretation of neutrality allowed Austria a freedom to make a choice for full membership in any given non-military alliance and organisation according to the Austrian understanding. Subsequently, Austria applied for and gained a seat in the United Nations (1955) and the Council of Europe (1956). This position was also seconded by the so-called Verdross doctrine, arguing for the relevance of neutrality only in wartime (Verdross 1956, 63–65).

The identity dimension of neutrality began to develop from 1957 onwards. The reinterpretation suggested that a neutral country was not only obliged to pursue a policy that eschewed any possibility of getting involved in a war, but also *actively* seek policies that create conditions eventually leading to the abolishment of wars as such (Kořan 2006, 28). Consequently, Vienna demonstrated a high degree of international engagements, including a deployment of military personnel (Meyer 2007, 3) in Kongo (1960), Cyprus (1972) and the Golan Heights (1974). The chancellorship of Bruno Kreisky also brought Austria to the scene of mediation on the international political stage, allowing its people to overlook that their country was only a small country without influence (Meyer 2007, 3). The national consciousness and pride of the Austrians was particularly increasing during this era of active foreign policy with the view of internationalism as active peace builder.

After the end of Kreisky's term in 1983, Austrian neutrality underwent another transformation by the Foreign Ministers Leopold Gratz and Alois Mock, who brought Austria to the period of “realistic foreign and neutrality policy,” with a focus on regional matters with European outlook (Kramer 1996, 169–170). Foreign policy was supposed to serve nothing, but the “actual needs” and “interests” with the aim to defend the status quo by a policy of natural self-restraint from international activism. In addition to the escalating crisis in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and the reducing importance of the Third World, this narrower interpretation of neutrality was due to domestic recession, rising unemployment and structural crisis in the nationalised industries (Kramer 1996, 172). In turn, this new interpretation of neutrality opened a debate on the prospect of Austria's membership in the EC, which shall now be addressed in details in the next section.

AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY AND EC MEMBERSHIP

The discussion in the governmental circle over the possibility of full membership began as soon as the European Economic Community (EEC) was established by the Treaty of Rome in 1958.

In the late 1950s, to defend the decision not to take a part in the European integration, the then Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky referred to the commitment made in the Moscow Memorandum (Kořan 2006, 26), that is, to remain not only militarily, but also politically and economically neutral. Any association with the Common Market would make it difficult for a neutral state to escape commitments of politico-military character (Tarschys 1971, 72; Karsh 1988, 126–7).

However, the Austrian attitude began to change at the end of the 1980s under the new coalition between the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), in favour of Austria's accession to the EC (De Flers 2012, 94). Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, several Austrian politicians began to voice that neutrality either was obsolete or needed to be revised. Still, the then Chancellor Franz Vranitzky was for the continuation of neutrality, although needed to be revised, as of yet no stable new security structure had developed in Europe and because of the positive popular view since 1955 considering neutrality to be a part of Austria's identity (Meyer 2007, 6; Kramer 1996, 180; Luif 2003),

On the other hand, according to the ÖVP's foreign policy spokesman, Andreas Khol, neutrality had outlived its usefulness and had to be replaced by solidarity with Europe, a position supported by Foreign Minister Mock (Kramer 1996, 180). According to Mock, aside from economic arguments, national security considerations were in favour of Austria's accession to the EC due to the rapid world integration and new security problems (Kramer 1996, 180).

On the middle ground, the Secretary of State for Integration and Development Cooperation, Peter Jankowitsch, proposed to maintain neutrality, but with a reinterpretation (Jankowitsch 1994, 35–62). According to him, Austrian neutrality, since its inception, had been used for the sake of peace, the very same purpose that the EC aimed to achieve. In the UN, Austria had a voting record that placed the country very close to other West European democracies with regard to the right of self-determination of Third World nations and the campaign against Apartheid. Policy events in the Gulf in 1990 and 1991 also demonstrated Austria's solidarity with international community. This standpoint was also accepted in the government and the parliament (Kramer 1996, 178). Based on the past neutrality policy of Austria, Jankowitsch argued that Austria's external policy has always shared the fundamental values towards a common Western European stance in international politics: the safeguarding of human rights, the

reduction of tension through co-operation and mutual confidence, disarmament and the promotion of a liberal system of economic exchanges and solidarity (Jankowitsch 1994, 57).

Membership negotiation was set for 1st February 1993. In the opening session in Brussels, Foreign Minister Mock declared that Austria was ready to accept the principles of the European Union and to adopt its *acquis*, although without raising the issue of neutrality (Kramer 1996, 182). However, in a government statement made in Vienna, it was clarified that Austria was entering as a neutral (Kramer 1996, 182).

ANALYSIS

The prominent argument after the collapse of the Soviet Union was in the direction of abandoning neutrality for the sake of solidarity with the European peers. This was largely due to the fact that the threat that had constituted a prerequisite to its neutrality, thereby the restoration of its statehood, was perceived to almost virtually disappear. Nevertheless, politician could not categorically abandon neutrality in favour of membership due to the normative values of neutrality embedded in the path dependency of neutrality. The decision to adopt this policy, its subsequent usefulness and the association with national identity had become locked-in to the extent that politicians were unable to abandon it without the risk of agitating the public. As a result, the politicians were obliged to sustain neutrality, albeit with redefinition.

Because of neutrality's international activist aspect, the government argument was framed to demonstrate this ideological aspect as compatible with the European norms. This came with concrete examples as Vienna did not only actively participate in UN peacekeeping missions, but also acted as a middle man for negotiations and a venue for international organisations. This internationalist aspect of neutrality was realigned to suit with the regional outlook towards the EC membership. Among other things, Austria's voting behaviour in the UN setting was emphasised in the governmental circle to be in the same direction as EC member states. Because of the shared goals of Austrian neutrality and the EC in promoting such norms as peace, human rights, democracy and liberty, neutrality was portrayed compatible with the membership.

As will be seen in the next two chapters on Sweden and Finland, Austrian neutrality was not instilled with a relatively strong sense of national autonomy vis-à-vis the West and the East or the high security sensitivity vis-à-vis the USSR in comparison with Sweden and Finland respectively. As a result, Austria faced the least difficulty in redefining its neutrality along the line of European norms. This point will be further

elaborated in the closing chapter putting the three case studies into perspectives.

5 THE SWEDISH CASE

SWEDISH NEUTRALITY: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

The root of modern Swedish neutrality can be traced back to the 19th century. Having ceased to be a great power following the Great Northern War, Sweden under King Karl XIV adopted a neutral stance with the aim to avoid the involvement in the Middle East conflict, laying the foundation for the principle of “non-participation in alliances in peace time, aiming at neutrality in the event of war” (Wahlbäck 1986, 8; Ferreira-Pereira 2005, 466–8). Unlike its Austrian counterpart, Swedish neutrality was not founded on any legal instruments, but political practices. This flexibility would later allow the country a large room of maneuver in the interpretation of neutrality.

As the Second World War developed, Swedish neutrality was challenged. Sweden allegedly perpetrated a violation of its neutrality. From 1940 to 1943, Stockholm permitted a regular transfer of German troops and equipment from Norway across Swedish territory to Germany and Finland (Karsh 1988, 56; Hicks 1965, 184–6). In response to the criticism, the Swedish government was of the view that the rule of neutrality did not apply to the transport of belligerent troops across neutral territory to an occupied area where hostilities had ceased (Wahlbäck 1986, 49). Notwithstanding, this alleged flaw in Swedish neutrality would emerge again in the domestic debate on neutrality and EC membership for the forsaking of neutrality.

During the Cold War, the government reiterated its preparedness to fulfil its obligations under the UN Charter vis-à-vis the collective security system, albeit with the reservation of neutrality in case of division into power blocs inside the UN (Norman 1993, 306). It is also during this period that the Foreign Minister Östen Undén further developed Swedish neutrality. According to him, not only was it necessary to refrain from any commitment that might impair Sweden’s status as a neutral in wartime, it was also of paramount importance to pursue a policy that inspired and sustained the confidence of the antagonistic blocs in Sweden’s ability and determination to remain a neutral in wartime (Norman 1993, 307). This was manifested in the increase in armed forces, which were not only for the sake of the credibility of its neutrality, but also used for UN peacekeeping operations considered to be of its own security interest. This active participation helped to make the Swedish neutrality universal in the eyes of the

organisation's members, bringing the UN to rely on its contribution for the purposes of mediation and reconciliation (Karsh 1988, 120).

Another main theme in Undén's non-partisan foreign policy was that Sweden should follow an independent, objectively charted course between the East and the West (Norman 1993, 307). In practice, this was translated in Sweden's condemnations of both the US and the USSR (Karsh 1988, 120; Melbourn 2008, 134; Fox 1965, 776). Also, by siding with and providing generous development assistance to newly liberated Third World, Palme strengthened Sweden's national autonomy vis-à-vis the Western and Eastern blocs (Mellbourn 2008, 135).

The Swedish wish to stay autonomous vis-à-vis the East and West was also the origin of the Swedish *exceptionalism* as an alternative between Capitalism and Communism. Palme further integrated the role of Sweden in the world with the furtherance of the Swedish Social Democratic model of economic and social development as the middle way between those two opposing camps. This Swedish course of neutrality was not only chosen out of realistic security concerns, but also had a higher ideological value as such (Mellbourn 2008, 135). This normative side was further strengthened by the economic success of the welfare state mythologised with the long peaceful existence of the country outside the wars as a result of its adopted neutrality. Neutrality thus weighed heavily on the emotional scales of the population with the support of virtually all citizens (Ferreira-Pereira 2005, 468).

Seen in this light, Swedish neutrality was not the option to stay passive out of troubles of world conflicts, but a tool for activism and an expression of virtues and values, a normative aspect of neutrality.

SWEDEN AND EC MEMBERSHIP: DEBATES ON NEUTRALITY

As in the Austrian case, membership of the EC was inconceivable before the end of the Cold War due to the perceived incompatibility with neutrality to participate in the supranational European organisation (Lassinantti 2001, 103), coupled with the perception of Swedish neutrality as antithetical to the EC considered conservative, capitalist, colonial and catholic (Miles 1997, 187–9; Aigus 2011, 378). However, when the Conservative came into power in September 1991, Prime Minister Carl Bildt underlined Sweden's transition from a reluctant to an eager European. In his statement of 18th November 1991,

The policy of neutrality could no longer be adequately applied as a description of the foreign and security policies. We wish to pursue within the European framework. We will pursue a policy with a clear European identity. (Op. cit., Norman 1993, 310)

Furthermore, he declared his position vis-à-vis neutrality that,

The hard core of Sweden's security policy would continue to be non-participation in military alliances, with an obligation to maintain an adequate and independent defence capability to enable us to be neutral in the event of a war *in our immediate vicinity*. (emphasis added) (Op. cit., Norman 1993, 310)

According to this so-called 1992 formula of Bildt, the expression "in our immediate vicinity" meant that once Sweden moved outside its neighbourhood, it was free not to be neutral as in the case of the Bosnian War, in which Stockholm took part in peacekeeping operations under NATO (Ferreira-Pereira 2005, 469). This amounted to the shift in co-operation framework from the universal one under the UN to the regional one under NATO to achieve the same purpose. Bildt further argued that international legal neutrality was not a self-evident choice for Sweden if the Balts, in its vicinity, were threatened militarily (Malmberg 2001, 177).

Disengagement with Swedish traditional neutrality was intensified by the discourse of the false myth of neutrality (Möller and Bjereld 2010, 379). Sweden arguably deviated from neutrality by allowing the transit of German troops through its territory and later arranging to receive assistance from NATO in the event of an attack against Sweden. If the state was never really neutral, then neutrality had a false relationship to the identity of the nation-state (Möller and Bjereld 2010, 379). This was also supported by the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sverker Åström (Huldt 1994, 143).

Criticising the Bildt government for having too light-heartedly abandoned traditional Swedish neutrality, the Social Democrats conditioned membership upon Sweden's status quo; "naturally membership is favoured if we can only keep Sweden as it has been up to now" (Op. cit., Huldt 1994, 125). Likewise, Lars Werner, the leader of the Left Party was of the view that membership would imply giving up neutrality, while Birger Schlaug, spokesman for the Environmentalists, noted that Sweden would be giving up its voice in the world and that the country would now become a member of a military pact (Huldt 1994, 130).

Returning to power in 1994, the Social Democrats under Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson brought Sweden into the European Union on 1st January 1995. This came with the announcement that Sweden should not only engage in Europe and the Baltic Sea region, but again deal more with the Third World and UN (Malmberg 2001, 177).

ANALYSIS

As could be discerned, the domestic political debate revealed that, irrespective of parties, neutrality was viewed incompatible with membership. This leads to the assumption that Swedish neutrality was not reinterpreted to demonstrate its compatibility with European norms to a large extent.

In connection with Stockholm's desire to distant itself from conflicts between great powers, Swedish neutrality served Sweden's autonomy cause vis-à-vis the two opposing blocs during the Cold War as concretely manifested in the Swedish condemnations of both the USA and the USSR. This notion of autonomy as an independent and sovereign state was subsequently tied with the idea of Swedish exceptionalism as a successful welfare state, a middle way between Capitalism and Communism. This was further strengthened by the Swedish alignment with the Third World and small states in its support for their right to self-determination and independent development policy, with the implication that Stockholm was against colonialism. This independent position with regard to the West and the East led to Sweden's trusted role as mediator and spokesman of small newly independent states in the bipolar world order. In short, national autonomy, in addition to its security sense, had established itself in the ideological sphere of Swedish neutrality.

This distinct identity associated with neutrality, in turn, constituted the main hindrance for the Swedish neutrality to be interpreted in such a manner as to demonstrate compatibility with membership, since national autonomy would come to no sense if independence in decision-making would be largely constrained by supranational power of the Community. Also, given the colonist status of member states, the Community was perceived to have adopted the colonial cause, which was against the ideological aspect of Swedish neutrality in favour of the independence of Third World countries. In addition, as a middle way of welfare state, an alternative to Capitalism and Communism, this exceptionalist aspect of Swedish neutrality stood distant from the Capitalism-oriented Community. Because of these reasons, membership and neutrality were antithetical to each other, and the absorption of European norms into Swedish neutrality was thus hardly conceivable.

This incident simply reaffirms the relevant role of the path dependency in limiting alternative interpretations of neutrality. A set of policy associated with neutrality during the Cold War had become locked-in and embedded in national identity to the extent that politicians were unable to forsake neutrality altogether without arousing public discontent. At the same time, institutional choices of neutrality during the membership application did not allow the concept to completely absorb European norms in order to demonstrate its compatibility, i.e. to manifest that Sweden could

still be a good member with neutrality sustained. This dilemma could seem to explain the inception of the 1992 formula, merely a confusing message of the government's aspiration to abandon neutrality while appeasing the public of the continuation of this policy.

It could be discerned that, as in the Austrian case, the debates about neutrality in Sweden were undertaken with a notable reference to the European norms and identity and with a remarkable concern about its compatibility with the membership, as the sociological institutionalism would explain. However, unlike the Austrian case, the rhetoric about solidarity with member states was formulated in separation from Swedish neutrality. In other words, solidarity was not integrated in the new concept of neutrality as such.

6 THE FINNISH CASE

FINLAND'S NEUTRALITY: ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION

Finland's geo-strategic position between stronger neighbours turned it into the traditional battleground between these powers (Karsh 1988, 84). In particular, Finland was long perceived by Russia as an important strategic location as a buffer state. The control over the Finnish territory had been the aim of Russia, for fear that Finland would become a springboard of an attack against it by Sweden and Germany (Karsh 1988, 84). In order to distant itself from great powers' conflicts, neutrality was officially declared at the outset of the Second World War in September 1939 (Nevakivi 1993, 36). As the War developed, Finnish neutrality was put to test.

Following the Soviet invasion of Poland and claims over the Baltic States, the Finnish representatives were invited to Moscow to sign a treaty of mutual assistance based on a similar model as with the Balts (Nevakivi 1993, 36). Considering the defence treaty inconsistent with neutrality to the extent of *de facto* identification with the Soviet Union, Helsinki outright rejected (Nevakivi 1993, 37; Karsh 1988, 88). Finland was later given a chance of a negotiated peace instead of an unconditional surrender. By this way, Finland remained independent, albeit with destructive remnants of war in the country.

Following the Second World War, Finland found itself in the middle of the two opposing blocs. Given the experience of the previous failed negotiations with serious consequences, the Finnish leadership advocated a more flexible line towards its Soviet neighbour (Karsh 1988, 90-1). Coupled with the looming conflicts of the Cold War, the Finns, desiring to remain outside the turbulences, agreed to sign with the Soviet Union the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) on 6th April 1948. The military obligations therefrom were of unilateral nature. While

the Soviet Union was required to provide Finland with military support, Finland had no reciprocal obligation. Soviet troops were to be dispatched to Finland not automatically, but only in a case of necessity and upon Helsinki's approval, the position which the incumbent President Passikivi stressed from the beginning (Nevakivi 1993, 41). It could also be discerned that the treaty did not imply Finland's political engagement with the Soviet Union in the sense that Finland would be included in the Soviet bloc. In connection with this, President Passikivi, based on his hypothesis that the Russian interests in Finland were only of strategic nature, affirmed in September 1947 his commitments to stay out of any hostile action or alliances directed against the Soviet Union, but "in other respects and before all in defending our democracy we belong to the Nordic and Western countries" (Op. cit., Nevakivi 1993, 41).

Despite Finland's cautious foreign policy manoeuvre under President Kekkonen in rendering official positions in the UN impartial vis-à-vis the East and the West, it happened that Finnish delegates to the UN abstained from voting on resolutions against the Soviet Union after the suppression of the Hungarian uprising (1956), intervention in Czechoslovakia (1968) and occupation of Afghanistan (1980) (Karsh 1988, 93). This avoidance of criticising the Soviets raised doubts in the West. If Finland wished to identify with the west, what could then explain this seemingly controversial action?

This brings us to the notion of Finlandisation associated with the FCMA Treaty. Despite its distinguished feature vis-à-vis the treaties that the Soviets concluded with their Eastern bloc countries to the effect that Finland was not officially integrated into the bloc, the idea of Finlandisation had a negative connotation of Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union (Maude 1982, 3). In practice, this was seen in the government's censorship of political criticism about Soviet actions. This fostered the original American and British views that Finland had been "compartmentalised" in terms of identity politics (Wahlbäck 1981).

However, in the Finnish eyes, this was crucial to their country's survival. Article II of the FCMA Treaty committed Helsinki to mutual consultations with the Soviet Union in the event of military threat. The perceptions of Soviet foreign and defence policy were thus relevant for Finnish leaders; it was in the Finnish interest for their leaders to sympathise with Soviet security concerns (Maude 1982, 6). Otherwise, they might be surprised by a demand for the implication of the military clauses in the FCMA Treaty. It could thus be inferred that, paradoxically, *because* of its wish to identify with Western democracies, Finland had to impose self-restraints with regard to the criticism of those Soviet actions; otherwise, it would have been occupied and completely incorporated in the Soviet bloc.

Besides, Kekkonen actively sought to promote a more stable and peaceful international environment that would, in turn, accommodate a more favourable setting for Finnish-Soviet relations (Karsh 1988, 93–4). This active component of Finnish neutrality was manifested in a various foreign policy instruments. In this regard, Finland became a forum of many bilateral and multilateral interactions such as the SALT negotiations (1962–1972), bilateral talks between the two powers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and preparatory talks for the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (1983). Other prominent examples were the Finnish initiatives and sponsorship of the CSCE.

FINLAND AND EC MEMBERSHIP¹

Sami Moisio conceptualised the debate on membership as interplay between two major political persuasions: nationalist-realist and western-liberalist (Moisio 2006, 439–64). The key difference between them was the question of how to manage relations with the Soviet Union/Russia and Western Europe. While nationalist-realists put emphasis on neutrality and non-alignment as the best way to secure the survival of the Finnish statehood, their western-liberalist counterparts often supported the idea of political and military alliance with western countries for the same end.

The dominant narrative of neutrality during the Cold War was of nationalist-realist nature, the presidents in favour of neutrality subjugating the other argument. However, the geopolitical transition brought about by the end of the Cold War seriously undermined the dominant political standpoint. The political debate on the country's neutrality became heated between late 1991 and late 1994 along the internal political struggle over membership of the EC/EU.

The nationalist-realists argued that EU membership did not guarantee Western Europeans' readiness to provide military aid in case of Russian aggression. Therefore, Finland had to continue the "politics of loyalty", i.e. neutrality, to earn the trust from Russia by remaining outside the European family. Given Finland's geopolitical situation, Finland should not confuse its eastern neighbour.

Against neutrality, the influential argumentation of the westernisers rested on the claim that, with EU membership, Finland was "returning to Europe". This conception of the EU and Europe was strategically interconnected in order to create an image that the Cold War policy of neutrality had, in fact, been pushing Finland "away from Europe". To further substantiate this argument, the Chairman of the Social Democrats and Director of

1 Because of the lack of access to resources on this topic, the content in this section, unless otherwise indicated, is obtained from Sami Moisio's work (Moisio 2006, 439–64).

the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Paavo Lipponen, argued that, in order to defend European values against external enemies, the Finns, as Europeans, had adopted neutrality to give necessary security guarantee to the Soviet Union without making Finland part of the Soviet Empire (Lipponen 1994, 65–6). Seen in this light, neutrality was not embedded with European values as such, but considered a tool to prevent the expansion of Soviet influence at the expense of Finland being compartmentalised from Western democracies. With the collapse of the Eastern bloc, neutrality should be abandoned to allow Finland to return to Europe.

In response to this argument, the traditionalists created a geopolitical alternative to replace European integration and support neutrality: Nordic integration. This regional cooperation was a logical conceptual continuation of the nationalist-realist foreign policy tradition, according to which neutrality should always remain the backbone of Finnish geopolitical doctrine. Nordic political cooperation was seen as a saviour of this tradition and a real alternative to EU membership, since the constructed notion of European integration was based on an imbalance of power between politically powerful and weak states. In contrast, the Social Democrats' Chairman Lipponen was of the view that EU membership "will help Finland to repel any military threats" (Op. cit., Palosaari 2013, 8). This view was widely shared in the parliament.

Nevertheless, instead of abandoning neutrality altogether along with Finland's declared commitment to the CFSC, official documentation and domestic debate stressed non-alignment as a continuing key element of Finnish foreign and security policy (Palosaari 2013, 8). The government regarded the CFSC's aims to lie in general issues such as peace, security and the promotion of human rights, underlying that the responsibility for defence would remain national with the possibility of independent national decision-making (Palosaari 2013, 8). The reasoning for this argument was the then embryonic state of the CFSC in the 1990s, making it possible to argue that the CFSC only complemented the national policy and did not come into conflict with it.

Towards the closing of membership negotiation, the official national interpretation was that Finnish military non-alignment and the CFSC were compatible with each other. Together with this, many members of the parliament underlined that the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union no longer defined the international role and identity of Finland; it was replaced by EU membership, European values, non-alignment and independent defence (Palosaari 2013, 9).

ANALYSIS

Finnish neutrality had been primarily tied with security need against its eastern neighbouring superpower throughout its history. Because of this imperative, neutrality, according to Finland's perception, was the soundest option available not to be included in the political sphere of the Soviet Union. The former's wish to identify with Western democracies was thus largely constrained by the policy of neutrality. Nevertheless, the Finnish leadership, in the declarative sphere, tried to give a message to the West to reaffirm its democratic value.

In this regard, the prominent view after the Cold War demonstrated that Finnish neutrality was a false policy placing the country in the wrong camp in terms of identity politics. As a result, Finland was argued to have lost its identity as a real Western European state in the eyes of important Western political actors. By acceding to the EU, Finland would locate itself in the correct reference group of states, thereby eliminating the embarrassing notion of Finlandisation. It could thus be inferred from this dominant view that neutrality, an obstacle to identification with the EU, would not need to internalise European norms to demonstrate its compatibility with membership.

Unlike the Austrian case, Finland did not demonstrate the compatibility of its neutrality with membership in terms of what had been achieved under the umbrella of neutrality such as peacekeeping and the promotion of human rights and democratic values around the globe. Instead, the compatibility was demonstrated in the sense that the CFSC would merely *complement* national defence, which would still remain in the national competency with the emphasis on national defence only for Finnish territorial integrity. In other words, Finland did not equate membership with the adoption of the Third Pillar of the Maastricht Treaty, and neutrality was thus conceived to be a separate part from the CFSC.

All in all, Finnish neutrality, in the context of EU membership, seemed to be reconsidered from security perspective along with ideological view in the sense that the concept should be gradually abandoned in order to allow the country to get fully integrated with its Western counterparts. The absorption of European norms into neutrality was thus not found in the Finnish case.

CONCLUSION

Based on the ontological conception of sociological institutionalism, this research has thus far investigated the domestic political debates on neutrality and EC/EU membership towards the end of the Cold War against the backdrop of the specificity of neutrality in Austria, Sweden and Finland.

Conceived and developed first and foremost out of security concern, Finnish neutrality was not invested with such ideational values as its Austrian and Swedish counterparts, and was thus most likely to be forsaken once the threat from its eastern neighbour disappeared. Furthermore, Finnish neutrality was embedded with Finland's wish and need to identify with Western democracies. As a result, upon the end of the bipolarity, Finnish neutrality was perceived to be a hindrance for Helsinki's full identification with the EU. In domestic political debate, Finnish neutrality was to be abandoned in order to adopt European identity at large. In other words, there was no reinterpretation of neutrality itself with reference to European norms.

In contrast, invested with normative values, Austrian neutrality was an object of a debate on the reinterpretation of the concept with European norms. With an international activist aspect of the concept in promoting peace, human rights, liberal values and rule of law in the UN framework, the government demonstrated that this normative aspect was compatible with the European norm counterparts. In this respect, Austrian neutrality was framed as adaptable and thus consistent with solidarity with the European regional grouping sharing the same values and goals.

Although with similar international activist content, Swedish neutrality found itself in a more difficult situation to demonstrate the compatibility with European norms. This was largely because of the association of Swedish neutrality with national autonomy and exceptionalism vis-à-vis not only the East but also the West. In this regard, this notion of autonomy as an independent and sovereign state was tied with the idea of Swedish exceptionalism as a successful welfare state, an alternative or a middle way between Capitalism and Communism. This was further strengthened by the Swedish alignment with the Third World and small states. Consequently, in spite of the shared goal with the Community in the promotion of peace, human rights, and rule of law, absorption of the European norms into Swedish neutrality was not found; neutrality was instead conceived to be a separate part of Stockholm's wish to adopt European identity and goal.

This research, by approaching neutrality from political perspective against the backdrop of historical development in each case study, reveals that neutrality was not merely a security matter, but was embedded with cultural dimensions beyond the origin of neutrality as a derivative of war for a state to stay out of conflicts. Consequently, the evolution of neutrality was not only a matter of security concern, but also depended on the normative side of the concept. All in all, the specificity of neutrality in Austria, Sweden and Finland reacted with the norms of the European grouping in a different way, resulting in different interpretations of their respective neutrality.

For a research on neutrality and Europeanisation to come, I hope that the findings of this research, i.e. the foundation of path dependency of neutrality laid during the membership application, will contribute to a better understanding of how this has been affecting the development direction of the EU common foreign and security policy ever since.

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SAŽETAK

EZ/EU ČLANSTVO I AUSTRIJA, ŠVEDSKA I FINSKA:
NEUTRALNOST REDEFINIRANA EUROPSKIM NORMAMA?

Na temelju socijalnog institucionalizma i promatrajući neutralnosti iz političke perspektive, ovaj članak istražuje domaće političke rasprave o neutralnosti u Austriji, Švedskoj i Finskoj. Cilj je bio odgovoriti na pitanje kako su se njihovi koncepti neutralnosti rekonceptualizirali u odnosu na europske norme mira, demokracije, slobode, ljudskih prava i vladavine prava tijekom aplikacije za članstvo u EZ/EU. U austrijskom slučaju, neutralnost je uokvirena da bude kompatibilna s članstvom. Međutim, unatoč sličnim normama, švedska neutralnost nije bila prilagodljiva s europskim normama, zbog nacionalne autonomije i iznimne povezanosti s neutralnošću. Konačno, finska neutralnost, prije svega zamišljena i razvijena radi sigurnosnog interesa, nije redefinirana u odnosu s europskim normama, već se smatra sigurnosnim alatom koji bi bio napušten kada bi nestala prijetnja s istoka, kako bi se u potpunosti integrirali sa zapadnom Europom. Ovaj članak dolazi do zaključka da neutralnost nije samo pitanje sigurnosti, već je povezana s kulturnom dimenzijom, što rezultira različitim odnosom naspram europskih normi, otkuda potječu različita tumačenja neutralnosti. To bi u budućnosti moglo imati određene implikacije na uloge tih zemalja u zajedničkoj vanjskoj i sigurnosnoj politici.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: neutralnost, europeizacija, Austrija, Švedska, Finska.