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Europe Reaches Its Limits

From Dynamic Expansion to Differentiated Integration

Until now, the evolution of the European Union has been driven by an inter-play of integration and enlargement, and it has followed a pattern of concentric circles around a prosperous core with a partly integrated periphery. This form of evolution, however, is reaching its limits. It is unsustainable, because continuous EU expansion means ever rising integration costs. EU enlargement and the deepening of integration are increasingly at odds with one another. As a result, the pattern of concentric circles is turning inward: There is mounting evidence for the emergence of a differentiated kind of integration within the EU, even though this may not be politically intended.

Completion of the first round of eastern enlargement has not resolved the EU enlargement crisis. On the contrary, it has made it clear that the prevailing evolutionary pattern of the EU is caught on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, the specific mode of EU integration demands and encourages successive expansions. On the other, the ongoing expansion creates such enormous problems that the EU's capacity for integration is increasingly being called into doubt. It must be asked how long EU expansion and

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integration will continue along the current evolutionary pattern. And it must also be asked, what will replace it?

The EU's dynamic expansion blurs the borders of Europe. It has become unclear which countries still belong to Europe in which sense. Although geographic borders are no real obstacles to enlargement, they do matter because they tend to demarcate economic and cultural differences. Any further EU enlargement will entail an exponential amplification of differences within the EU. This means that one crucial effect of the dynamic expansion is to increase the costs of integration, making expansion and integration antagonistic developments. Is the EU capable of finding any institutional responses to the problem?

I will begin by analyzing the driving forces behind EU integration and enlargement and then discuss limits to their effectiveness. Subsequently, I will apply my findings to the debate surrounding Turkey's possible accession to the EU. Finally, I will present some thoughts on differentiated integration within the EU once expansion has lost its dynamism.

The dialectics of integration and expansion

The political and economic spheres of influence of the EU have the shape of concentric circles.¹ The centre encompasses a politically stable region of material prosperity. Outside of this region, prosperity falls with increasing distance from the centre. Borders of varying permeability separate the individual regions of prosperity. The more distant a region is from the centre, the less permeable the borders. Decreasing prosperity and permeability form a double safety mechanism for the core region. They increase the obstacles to and reduce incentives for accession.

The rationale of self-interest behind dynamic expansion is the protection of the prosperous EU core by including the periphery according to certain defined criteria of democratic development and the rule of law.

What propels the dynamic expansion of the EU? First, expansion of the EU is driven by the large prosperity gap between the EU and its periphery. Such gaps create problems not only for the poor periphery but also for the richer core through potential spill-over from problems such as migration, cross-boundary environmental damage and political instability.² Therefore, the EU has an interest in promoting economic development in the poorer region at its periphery. However, while economic growth in the peripheral countries narrows the gap between them and the rich core, it widens the one between them and even poorer neighbours. As former peripheral regions are integrated into the EU, the prosperity gap is shifted outward. Since each new member of the EU core takes an immediate interest in a secure and thriving neighbourhood, in other words, a buffer zone, this pattern of expansion has a built-in tendency to perpetuate itself. For each new circle of peripheral regions to effectively shield the core region from external disturbances, the periphery must be free of severe political or economic problems. This is why "EU enlargement is not ... a one-time issue with a definite deadline, but an ongoing process."³ Each step to expand the EU today is a reason for more expansion in the future. Second, deepening integration changes the external relations of the EU.⁴ Its general effect is a more direct impact of events in the periphery on the prosperous core, generating immediate interest within the core in securing the common external borders and improving economic and political conditions in the surrounding regions. In other words, deepening EU integration, i.e. lower internal dif-

ferentiation, heightens common awareness of external borders and political and social conditions beyond the EU's borders.

EU policy reactions to these two conflicting goals are border closures and expansion. Expansion aims at inclusion of the periphery in the name of self-interest, while border closures attempt to insulate the EU from external influences. Jointly, the two policies reproduce the pattern of concentric circles even beyond the EU borders, but depending on state at which they are directed, they are used in varying combinations.

Border closures

The prosperous core is more likely to perceive external influences as threats when their benefits and costs are unequally distributed and there is little ability or willingness to bear the costs. The classic reaction is to call for border closures. The political issue of migration demonstrates this particularly well. Low-skilled workers and economically strained companies in less competitive sectors of a rich economy request border closures. They join forces to form protectionist alliances against open borders and demand import restrictions or limits on immigration. Albeit not congruent, their interests and demands converge, because both interest groups perceive – and want to use – the nation-state as a bulwark against external threats. Such interest coalitions were behind the resistance against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the early 1990s⁵ and, more recently, had a strong impact on the U.S. presidential election campaigns in 2004.⁶ The association agreements between the EU and the new reform states in the east provide further evidence for the

power of protectionist alliances. Contrary to EU proclamations that the agreements would have asymmetric advantages for the associated countries, all of them have been to their disadvantage.⁷ The paradoxical effect of EU policy is to incite the eagerness of peripheral countries to integrate by excluding them, which explains much of the EU's dynamic expansion.

Since the early 1990s, the EU and its members have increasingly used semi-military equipment to fortify the common external borders. In a parallel development, they have introduced chain deportations, in particular through the concept of "safe third countries". The German-Polish border is a good example. Fierce control and apprehend technologies have been installed there. At the same time, readmission agreements between Germany and Poland have shifted the control and deportation problem from the German to the Polish eastern border. As a result of this agreement, the Polish government concluded treaties with the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria and thus laid the legal foundations for an international deportation system.⁸ These agreements shift the political costs caused by the politics of exclusion from the centre onto the periphery.

The politics of exclusion created a special dilemma for Poland. It wanted EU membership on the one hand, but needed to cultivate economic exchange and friendly relations with its eastern neighbours on the other.⁹ In the recent past, shuttle trade and border-specific economic activity – which is not always entirely legal – along the eastern borders of the new EU member states have brought economic growth to those regions.¹⁰ A restructuring of the EU external borders in accordance with the criteria of the Schengen Agreement – which sets out the EU's border regime – would threaten to disrupt this

growth and thus harm such regions, which traditionally have been among the poorest parts of their respective countries.¹¹ Thanks to Schengen, they could end up the losers in enlargement. EU accession will reinforce regional disparities.¹²

Inclusion in pursuit of self-interest

Nothing can make borders completely tight. Some cross-border activity can be stopped only at prohibitive costs; some cannot be stopped at all. The experience of or insight into the limited success of exclusionary policies engenders political strategies of self-interested inclusion. These strategies are even more likely when the need to deal with the effects of unstoppable cross-border activity becomes an electoral issue. Self-interested inclusion is informed by a rationale of self-interested assistance.¹³ In such cases, the assisting group has an incentive to solve problems at their (external) source so as to prevent unwanted cross-border influences – “from terrorism to air pollution” – from ensuing.¹⁴ For example, EU assistance to the former planned economies during their transformation and modernization as well as economic assistance provided to countries bordering the Mediterranean are aimed at improving living conditions on Europe’s periphery in order to mitigate the push factors of cross-border migration. Generally, self-interested assistance is motivated by the prosperous core’s recognition that “your problems are our problems”, as Western European politicians liked to point out in the first years after 1989 while explaining financial assistance for the reform states to their voters. The reform states have used and continue to use the mirror image of this expression, noting “our problems are also yours.”

The fall of the Iron Curtain has made eastward expansion through inclusion possible and, from an EU perspective, also necessary. In fact, the EU had a vital interest in enlargement. It was not just a historic obligation, but the only way possible to prevent destabilization and conflicts in border regions and thus alleviate pressures from migration.¹⁵ The two wars in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s certainly reinforced this interest. It cannot be ruled out that the surprisingly quick international recognition of Slovenia, which accelerated the collapse of Yugoslavia and the subsequent outbreak of armed conflict, was motivated by the wish to create a buffer between the EU and the conflict regions in the Balkans. In the end, this political manoeuvre actually contributed to the eruption of precisely those conflicts which the buffer was designed to protect the EU against.

German unification, understood as the integration of the former German Democratic Republic into the EU (and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) and an early example of eastern enlargement, serves as a useful illustration of how the interest in politically and economically stable neighbours sustains the EU's dynamic expansion. After 1989, Germany quickly became the champion of its eastern neighbours' wish to be accepted into the EU and NATO. Clearly, the unified Germany realized that its geographic position meant it had to forestall unrest at its eastern borders at the earliest possible stage. As a result, the German security strategy for Europe, in some sense, has been one of stabilization since 1990. The underlying principle of this strategy continues to be a preference for exporting stability over importing instability to this day. Former German Defence Minister Volker R  he, one of the first supporters of NATO enlargement, noted that it was in Germany's best interest to be surrounded by stable democ-

racies, partners and allies. "We don't want to be the state on the edge of Western Europe."¹⁶

In line with the logic of self-interested inclusion, representatives of countries on the EU periphery use the specific geographic position as an argument for EU accession.¹⁷ For example, when asked, what Poland would bring to Europe? Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski responded: "Our strategic position that has brought us much suffering, but also much competence in interacting with neighbours, in particular those in the east. Poland does a lot for the stability in this region."¹⁸ The same argument of strategic importance is frequently cited in discussions about the possible EU accession of Turkey.

Inclusion and exclusion

The current depth of EU integration has been reached by creating the Europe of Schengen without internal borders and the European Monetary Union with the euro under the criteria of the Maastricht Treaty.

The Schengen Agreement abolished border controls almost entirely within the European Union. As an immediate consequence, developments in EU border regions have become extremely important taken for the prosperous core region, particularly for Germany. Before Schengen, emigration from North Africa to Spain meant the emigrants ended up in Spain. After Schengen, it means that emigrants effectively enter the entire Schengen zone, including Germany, France, Scandinavia, etc.

Developments in the Spanish enclaves in Africa, Ceuta and Medilla, vividly illustrate the ramifications of Schengen. According to reports from border posts, the border region was relatively peaceful before the conclusion of the

agreement. This changed abruptly afterwards. Today, the border is under massive migratory pressures, and it is being armed at high costs. The overall effect of Schengen has been to drastically increase migratory pressures from the south, professional human trafficking around the Mediterranean and the ruthlessness of the traffickers. Reports on human tragedies involving refugees in the Mediterranean area have increasingly come to resemble those from the Caribbean or the border between the US and Mexico.¹⁹

On the one hand, deepened integration has created a common interest among the richest EU countries in terms of strict border control standards, and it has triggered efforts to control the control practices of EU members with external borders. On the other hand, progressive European integration has engendered a common interest of the rich core countries in improving living conditions and stabilizing the political situation in the EU neighbouring countries, that is, in providing self-interested assistance to the neighbours.

In 1995, the EU initiated the Barcelona Process,²⁰ which aims at establishing a more intensive partnership between the EU and the Mediterranean countries. The process includes the EU members and ten partner states, all of which border the Mediterranean with the exception of Mauritania.

Although the Barcelona Process involves much less money than the assistance programs for the eastern reform states, the goal is the same: to reduce the prosperity gap between the EU and its neighbours in order to ease migratory pressures. A free trade area is planned for 2010.²¹

From the EU perspective, the policy of inclusion has two advantages over trying to seal the borders. First, it enables the northern countries to dominate EU decisions concern-

ing border issues, while they otherwise would have to rely on the foreign and security policies of those member states that have external borders. This is an advantage because the willingness or ability of those countries to conduct strict border controls is somewhat ambiguous. For example, various Spanish interest groups have a significantly different outlook on immigration than the EU.²² Spanish farmers depend on legal and illegal immigrants and do not support the restrictive EU immigration policy. Second, the policy of inclusion mitigates strong prosperity gaps and political instability at the immediate EU borders. As described above, this helps to reproduce the pattern of concentric circles in accordance with the EU's stability interests.

One can already anticipate the next round of exclusions. The EU will exert increasing pressure on its eastern and southern neighbours to close their borders as their role as transit routes for immigrants from other parts of the world grows. It will also see to the introduction of chain deportations, especially beyond the first and second row of eastern neighbours. Even before EU enlargement in May 2004, it became evident that this pattern of exclusion was shifting outward, and that the policy of laying buffer rings around the prosperous EU core was being continued. The EU Commission strategy paper "Wider Europe" makes this sufficiently clear when suggesting, "The EU should assist in reinforcing the neighbouring countries' efforts to combat illegal migration and to establish efficient mechanisms for returns, especially illegal transit migration. Concluding readmission agreement with all the neighbours, starting with Morocco, Russia, Algeria, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, will be an essential element in joint efforts to curb illegal migration."²³

The analysis demonstrates that the evolution of the European Union has indeed followed the trajectory of the

described dialectics: borders have moved outwards, chain deportations have been established, and this has caused conflicts of interest between the (partially) included periphery and its external neighbours. Simultaneously, the prosperity gap, while decreasing, is also moving outward, gradually giving rise to the hope of other neighbours to participate in the inclusionary process originating in the centre as well. This evolutionary pattern has unfolded for several decades and become so engrained that it has dominated the imagination of the political actors within the EU and its neighbours until now.

The joint application of self-interested inclusion and border closures aims to “develop a zone of prosperity and friendly neighbourhood – a “ring of friends” – with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations.²⁴ The aforementioned strategy paper “Wider Europe” promises a wide range of cooperation opportunities short of full EU membership to the periphery states to ensure their transition to stable buffer and stability zones. However, the promises are not unequivocal in their objectives. The periphery states can interpret them either more as rewards for performing a buffer function or more as offers of assistance to foster stability. The problem is that each interpretation has different political consequences. A country that considers itself a buffer tends to raise permanent financial demands at the EU. By contrast, the self-interpretation of a country as a zone of stability is likely to see economic assistance as an encouragement for self-sufficient development. In the former case, the respective country is content with a special relationship below EU membership; in the latter, full integration into the EU remains conceivable and therefore part of the respective country’s expectations. Accordingly, each country lying within the “ring of friends” is likely to show one of two

possible kinds of reaction. The first one is to try and reap the highest rewards for performing the assigned buffer function. Since the respective state does not expect full membership, it has no incentive to hold out until later requests for compensation for providing security to the EU. The second kind of reaction is to think of membership in the “ring of friends” as temporary and insist on full EU membership at one point. This is exactly the point Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshchenko made when he said, “It would be illogical not to admit Ukraine”.²⁵ But which of the two interpretations is prevalent in the EU expansion policy? The question is best answered with the help of an example.

Limits of enlargement: the example of Turkey

Rapprochement between the EU (and its predecessor the European Economic Community) and Turkey has a long and unique history. Turkey became an EEC associated member in 1963, a status that included prospects for full membership. A Turkish application for accession was rejected in 1989, but in 1996, the EU established a customs union with the country. Turkey became an accession candidate in 1999 under the condition that accession negotiations would be held until the country met the Copenhagen criteria for EU accession. Finally, in November 2004, the EU decided to open negotiations. Turkey’s accession exemplifies the way the EU has reached the limits of expansion. Three peculiarities make it a special challenge. The accession of Turkey is not just in its own interest. The country demarcates the border between Asia and Europe – a border highly charged with cultural and religious differences. The disappearance of the predominant global line

of conflict between capitalism and communism has heightened the salience of these differences. Turkey's special role within NATO and the specific US interest in its EU membership are clear indicators of political hopes that it may serve as a bridge between two civilizations. Turkey itself frequently wields this argument to make its case for EU membership. According to the honorary president of the Association of Turkish Businesspeople and Enterprises in Germany, Bülent Eczacıbaşı, mediation between East and West "can only occur if Turkey is integrated into the West".²⁶ In other words, the first peculiarity is Turkey's extraordinary strategic importance stemming from its unique geographical location.

The populations of the EU member states on the one hand and Turkey on the other hand have very different views on numerous issues, most notably on basic values (concept of the family, gender roles, etc.) and the role of the state (concept of democracy, relation between state and religion, etc.).²⁷ Given that the EU conceives of itself as a "community of values",²⁸ these value gaps are on a much larger scale than anything ever confronted by the EU during any other round of enlargement. In addition, the Turkish people are split over the question whether a reduction of these differences in the wake of EU membership is desirable. Some are worried by the spectre of westernization as a by-product of EU membership, while others actually regard the reduction of cultural differences a worthy objective.²⁹ The second peculiarity then lies in the cultural gap between the EU and Turkey and the diverging opinions on the desirability of reducing it.

Turks and people of Turkish descent in EU member states potentially have considerable political clout. Consequently, the debate on Turkey's EU accession has distinctly domestic overtones in some EU core countries, particularly in Ger-

many. While EU member states usually treat EU enlargement rounds as special cases of foreign policy, which tend to attract only scant attention from political parties, Turkey's accession touches on immediate interests of significant voting populations. It has thus become a domestic issue in which parties seek to distinguish themselves according to their ideological outlook, at least in Germany. The difficult relationship between Greece and Turkey further complicates the matter. This is the third peculiarity: In some member states, most notably Germany and Greece, the debate on Turkey's EU accession takes place at a much higher conflict level of domestic politics than the accession of other countries.

The example of Turkey shows that the EU borders can always be pushed outward. And it can be anticipated that the borders will indeed be pushed if a shift promises an adequate political payoff. However, the costs of expansion mount correspondingly.

In the Turkish case, the logic of expansion is likely to overpower political demands to stop EU enlargement. Two arguments support this prediction. The first one is based on considerations of interest. The starting point is to ask how much each of the three peculiarities affects politically influential interest groups. The obvious strategic importance of Turkey is a strong argument in favour of membership. By comparison, the case against membership is less clear-cut, an objection emphasizing the expected difficulties arising from the pronounced cultural differences could be countered by pointing out that membership will actually bring about a reduction of those differences. Similarly, the domestic explosiveness of the issue means that, while important parts of the population explicitly oppose membership, there is also outspoken support.

Systems theory provides a second set of arguments. One of its basic assumptions is that the functionally specialized subsystems of modern society operate under binary codes that are internal to the respective subsystem. The relevant code for the political subsystem is “to have power – not to have power”. It follows that the political system is sensitive to all external signals that transmit a power/no power message. Conversely, it does not respond to signals that lack such coding. With this theoretical framework it is possible to establish whether each peculiarity of Turkey’s accession has the potential to penetrate the political system by sending an appropriate message. Everything about Turkey’s unique geopolitical position is of crucial importance, precisely because Turkey’s possible accession to the EU is of such geopolitical significance. The international system strongly responds to the geopolitical characteristics of Turkey, while its cultural and religious features matter only insofar as they can be transformed into political signals, for example, exploited by politicians to mobilize electoral majorities against Turkish membership in the EU.

Overall, there are considerably more signals that will lead to a policy of securing power by offering Turkey full membership. In an illuminating, if hyperbolic, remark, Eczacıbaşı said he expected Turkey’s integration into the European Union “would make the EU a true world power”.³⁰

Both the interest-based and the systems-based argument lead to the following conclusion: The unique EU pattern of EU integration and expansion makes Turkey’s accession inevitable in the medium term. Of course, there are powerful arguments against full membership. But these arguments are not based on purely political characteristics. The logic of expansion will prevail over them. This does

not mean that cultural differences and domestic salience of the issue are irrelevant. They will resurface as problems once Turkey's accession has been completed. The process of integration transforms cultural signals into political ones. This observation can be read as a strong argument for a slow and cautious accession process. The EU's political system needs time to process the cultural, religious and other differences so as to slow their re-emergence as political problems.

Clearly, the differences between the EU and its periphery, which are sharpened by continued EU expansion, are potential sources of problems in the wake of new memberships. The following point matters when discussing the limits of expansion: In view of the outlined logic of integration and expansion, it is reasonable to assume that Turkey will also want a buffer zone after full integration. It is equally likely that the EU will have an interest in such a buffer zone then too, especially once the border controls between Turkey and other member states have been eliminated. This convergence of interests is a propitious condition for the emergence of yet another external ring. However, an expansion of the EU to its periphery east of Turkey will incur unforeseeable costs and risks, and it will occasion resistance in the concerned regions as well as in the United States, among others. It becomes evident that the case of Turkey is peculiar in yet another way: The dialectics of integration and expansion will come to a final end at Turkey's eastern borders. The EU has no clearly defined border. It is therefore impossible to find a rigorous way of demarcating it. Nonetheless, the dynamic expansion of the EU "has reached" its usefulness as a political option as demonstrated by increasing difficulties to integrate new members after expansion and the weakening appeal of Europe as a means of identity creation. The

EU's limits will have been reached when the costs of integration permanently exceed the benefits of expansion, and it is no longer possible to resolve politically the contradiction between expansion and integration.

Differentiated integration

The eastern enlargement of the EU in 2004 marked the break with the formerly prevailing evolutionary pattern. The strategy outlined in "Wider Europe" has been one reaction to this. What does this mean for the two main mechanisms of the dialectical interplay between expansion and integration discussed above?

The dynamic expansion of the EU used to unfold in a pattern of concentric circles that was continuously reproducing itself. But if it sputters and then stops, the pattern will be put into jeopardy. This will impinge in turn on vital interests of the prosperous EU core. Therefore, the future evolution can take two possible paths. The EU could decide to isolate itself from abroad, which would entail strict border demarcations and armed border security. However, such a decision is unlikely because exclusionary policies have only limited effectiveness, for the reasons mentioned earlier. Borders cannot be sealed permanently. It is more likely that concentric circles will continue to be the prevalent evolutionary pattern of the EU, albeit in modified form, meaning that individual EU member will begin to form groups with decreasing degrees of integration from the centre to the periphery.

Differentiated integration is a possible outcome, because the evolution of the EU is not just an automatic process of shifting concentric circles as predicted by the centre-periphery model,³¹ but a deliberate political attempt to

safeguard the prosperous core of Europe. Therefore, the past EU evolutionary pattern of permanent expansion is not the only possible one. In fact, the geopolitical objective of protecting a prosperous core with surrounding layers of decreasing prosperity and increasing barriers to accession can be achieved in two distinct ways. Either the core seeks to create buffer zones in its immediate vicinity, which itself will belong to the centre in due time, in turn creating more remote buffer zones. Or a core group of states decides to set itself apart from the larger, evenly integrated union of members while pressing ahead with integration in order to turn its EU surroundings into a buffer zone. This latter development model constitutes the reversal towards the interior of the historically dominant evolutionary pattern. This is the shared meaning of the proposals for an integration *à deux vitesses*, a treaty within a treaty, a core Europe or a gravitational core of some states.³² All advocate an integrated core surrounded by other members. Opinions only differ as to who belongs to the core, and whether or how the core can and should be kept open to the other member states.

It is wrong, though, to assume a direct connection between such public proposals and the actual path of EU evolution. For example, it is plausible that some politicians will employ the notion of a “core Europe” as a threat to discourage resistance against a deeper integration of a few EU members, as occurred when conflicts erupted over the majority rule in the constitutional treaty draft. It could also happen that politicians will try to talk down the possibility of a core Europe whenever there are serious efforts at creating one. This contradictory behaviour is reflected succinctly by a position widely held in Austria: “We are against a core Europe, but if it happens we want to be part of it.” Virtually all members share this position, effectively neutralizing it.

My aim is not to reveal any political actor's "true" intentions, and even less so do I aspire to draw up an alternative blue print for the future integration of Europe. I merely make the point that the fixation on political rhetoric reduces political events to political intentions. This presupposes a very simple causal relation between intentions and results, which is inadequate for the analysis of an as complex process as EU evolution. In reality, a new kind of integration is coming into existence, engendered by developments that are relatively unaffected by intentions. This is what I mean by differentiated integration.

Several observations support this hypothesis. First, several EU members already cooperate more intensively than others in various policy areas.³³ For example, the limited participation in the monetary union has produced varying depths of integration within the economic policy area. Similarly, the new Central and Eastern European members in particular have obtained a shallower membership because they are unable to meet the criteria for quick accession to the euro zone.³⁴ Moreover, border controls within the EU will continue to exist as long as there is no free movement of labour (to protect the labour markets in the old member states) and no free movement of agricultural products (to protect agriculture in the new member states).³⁵ These limits likewise impose a pattern of differentiated integration levels on the EU, at least temporarily. Homeland security is another case in point, because the threat of international terrorism may lead to the reintroduction of border controls. In general, any difficulties to enforce controls at the external borders of the EU fuel attempts to resurrect its internal borders, thereby contributing to the differentiation of integration levels in the area of national security.³⁶ Defence policy is also affected. The three big NATO and EU members France, Great Britain

and Germany are hatching plans for integration that would clearly leave some EU members by the wayside. In sum, differentiated integration takes place in two kinds of interacting scenarios. The first one is the admittance of new members at a (temporarily?) lower integration level; the other is the differentiation of integration levels among older members.

Europe is reaching its limits. Further expansion will come at the cost of intensified integration problems. The EU is devising two sets of institutional responses. With respect to its exterior, it is trying to maintain concentric-circles pattern of expansion by developing individualized forms of cooperation below full membership. The concept of a “ring of friends” is the EU attempt to extend that pattern beyond the limits of expansion in order to resolve the contradiction between dynamic expansion and the capacity to integrate. With respect to its interior, signs are mounting that the EU members are congealing into groups of varying integration levels. It follows that the concentric-circles pattern is no longer the consequence of expansion but of differentiated integration within the EU. Differentiated integration according to the concentric-circles pattern is producing a core Europe – even if nobody wants it.

Translated from German by Steven Arons, Langen

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- ² Georg Vobruba, *Autonomiegewinne* (Wien 1997), p. 197f.
- ³ Stuart Croft et al., *The Enlargement of Europe* (Manchester, New York 1999), p. 56.
- ⁴ Georg Vobruba, "Internal Dynamics and External Relations of the Enlarged Europe", in Maurizio Bach, Christian Lahusen (ed.), *Social Dynamics and Political Institutions in an enlarging Europe* (Berlin 2004).
- ⁵ Richard Belous, Jonathan Lemco (ed.), *NAFTA as a Model of Development. The Benefits and Costs of Merging High- and Low-Wages Areas* (Washington 1993) and Christoph Scherrer, *Globalisierung wider Willen?* (Berlin 1999), p. 247ff.
- ⁶ "Ungesunde Outsourcing-Debatte in den USA", in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 13-14 March 2004.
- ⁷ Croft, *Enlargement*, p. 65. See also Renata Stawarska, "EU Enlargement from the Polish Perspective", in *Journal of European Public Policy*, 5, 1999, p. 825.
- ⁸ Author collective, *Ohne Papiere in Europa* (Berlin, Hamburg 2000), p. 159.
- ⁹ Ibid, p. 167f.
- ¹⁰ Cf. András Inotai, "The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia", in Helena Tang (ed.), *Winners and Losers of EU Integration* (Washington D.C. 2000), pp. 17–51, here p. 34.
- ¹¹ Martin Heidenreich, "Regional Inequalities in the Enlarged Europe", in *Journal of European Social Policy*, 4, 2003, p. 313–333.
- ¹² Cf. Martin Brusis, "Internal Problems of the European Union that Might Obstruct an Enlargement towards the East", in Tang, *Winners and Losers*, pp. 265–289, here p. 277.
- ¹³ Georg Vobruba, *Gemeinschaft ohne Moral. Theorie und Empirie moralfreier Gemeinschaftskonstruktionen* (Wien 1996), p. 185ff.
- ¹⁴ Commission of the European Union, "Wider Europe, Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours", 2000, p. 3.
- ¹⁵ Renate Langewiesche, "EU Enlargement and the Free Movement of Labour", in Emilio Gabaglio, Reiner Hoffmann (ed.), *European Trade Union Yearbook 1999* (Brussels 2000), p. 370.
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- Lévesque (Ed.), *The Future of NATO Enlargement, Russia and European Security* (Montreal 1999), pp. 108–118, here p. 111.
- ¹⁷ Vgl. Sylke Nissen, “Who Wants Enlargement of the EU? Support for Enlargement among Elites and Citizens”, in *Czech Sociological Review*, 6, 2003, pp. 757–772, here p. 759ff.
- ¹⁸ “Der Westen scheint müde, wir sind frisch”, in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 11 March 2000.
- ¹⁹ Oscar J. Martínez (ed.), *U.S.–Mexico Borderlands* (Wilmington, Del. 1996), and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (ed.), *Crossings. Mexican Immigration in Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge 1998).
- ²⁰ Peter Schlotter, “Der Maghreb und Europa”, in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 17, 1999, pp. 3–10.
- ²¹ Competing plans by the Bush administration may increase the prospects of a self-interested inclusion of North African states, cf. “Mideast trade plan a leap of faith for Bush”, in *Financial Times*, 10–11 May 2003, p. 6.
- ²² Cf. Laura Huntton, “Immigration to Spain: Implications for a Unified European Union Immigration Policy”, in *International Migration Review*, 4, 1998, pp. 423–450, here p. 431, and *Ohne Papiere*.
- ²³ “Wider Europe”, p. 11.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ²⁵ “Kiew dringt auf EU-Beitritt”, in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 17 February 2004, p. 7.
- ²⁶ “Türken werben in Berlin für Mitgliedschaft ihres Landes”, *Financial Times Deutschland*, 12 March 2004.
- ²⁷ Jürgen Gerhards, “Paßt die Türkei kulturell in die Europäische Union?”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 February 2004, p. 13.
- ²⁸ *Europäischer Konvent, Entwurf eines Vertrages über eine Verfassung für Europa* (Luxemburg 2003).
- ²⁹ Evidence thus far shows that EU membership does affect convergence, but it is limited to the economy and social policy, Jan Delhey, “Europäische Integration, Modernisierung und Konvergenz. Zum Einfluß der EU auf die Konvergenz der Mitgliedsländer”, in *Berliner Journal für Soziologie*, 4, 2003, pp. 565–584.
- ³⁰ “Türken werben in Berlin für Mitgliedschaft ihres Landes”, in *Financial Times Deutschland*, 12 March 2004.
- ³¹ Stein Rokkan, *Staat, Nation und Demokratie in Europa*. (Frankfurt 2000). See also, Bach, *Europeanization* and my sceptical position, Vobruba, “Internal Dynamics”.
- ³² See the contribution by Rudolf Hrbek, “Modelle politischer Ordnung. Föderalismus, Mehrebenensystem, variable Geometrie”, in *OSTEUROPA* 5–6, 2004, pp. 87–104.

³³ Cf. Croft, *Enlargement*, p. 81.

³⁴ "Beitrittsländer geben raschen Euro-Start auf", in *Financial Times Deutschland*, 11 March 2004, p. 16, and Robert Read, "Monetary Union and Eastward Expansion in the EU", in Hilary Ingham, Mike Ingham (eds.), *EU Expansion to the East. Prospects und Problems* (Cheltenham 2002), pp. 23–49.

³⁵ Brusi, "Internal Problems", p. 274.

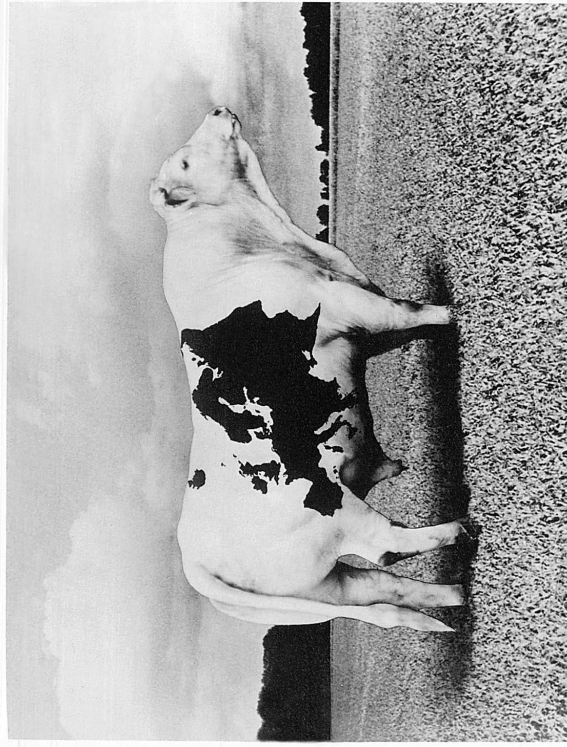
³⁶ On this interaction, see David Brown, "Storming the Fortress: The External Border Regime in an Enlarged Europe", in Ingham, *EU Expansion*, pp. 89–109.

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