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The Democratic Deficit in the EU's Security and Defense Policy - Why Bother?

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Wolfgang Wagner is Senior Research Fellow at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) and Senior Lecturer at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VUA). E-mail: wwagner@hsfk.de

Abstract

Even though the member states have kept the European Union's security and defense policy intergovernmental, there has been an emerging democratic deficit in this issue area. Given the standard version of the democratic deficit as a result from Qualified Majority Voting in the Council and from the delegation of competencies to supranational institutions, the notion of a democratic deficit in the intergovernmental second pillar of the EU may come as a surprise. This paper demonstrates, however, that the high degree of military integration among the EU states serves as a functional equivalent to the pooling and delegating of competencies: Because the establishment of multinational high-readiness forces ('battle groups') requires member states to commit specific troops for specific periods, it has become difficult for individual members to refrain from participation in a military mission even in the absence of domestic public support.

Students of European governance or democratic theory may argue that a democratic deficit in this issue area is indeed *less* troubling than in other issue areas because the commonly accepted standard of democratic control in security and defense politics has been low anyway. In contrast, a growing body of literature in peace and conflict research has pointed to the effects of democratic governance on a wide range of security policies. Beginning with the so-called 'Democratic Peace', peace and conflict research has indeed made a 'democratic turn' by highlighting democracies' distinct restraint in using military force and their distinct record in establishing and maintaining international cooperation. The paper gives an overview of the 'democratic distinctiveness programme' that has emerged in peace and conflict research over the last two decades.

Keywords

Introduction

The past fifteen years have witnessed a lively debate about the "democratic deficit" in European Union (EU) politics.[1] The rejection of the Maastricht Treaty in a Danish referendum in 1992 was instrumental in triggering this debate because it indicated the dwindling of the "permissive consensus" among the citizens of the member states that had accompanied the process of European integration for most of its existence. Since the 1992 referendum, politicians and scholars across Europe (and beyond) raised concerns about a loss of democratic accountability in European politics because national governments have pooled and delegated some of their sovereignty in and to supranational institutions. As a consequence, political decisions are no longer made exclusively by national parliaments or governments but also by Commission officials (as in competition politics), by complex expert networks (as in food safety) or by ministers negotiating complex package deals behind closed doors.

The debate on Europe's democratic deficit has had a clear focus on the politics of common market governance the impact of which citizens feel most directly. In contrast, the EU's Common Foreign, Security and Defense Policy has been almost entirely absent from this debate. At first glance, the silence on the democratic control of security policy may not be surprising for two reasons. First, the EU's Common Foreign, Security and Defense Policy has kept the supranational institutions at distance and instead remained firmly intergovernmental. As a consequence, the institutional features that fuel the democratic deficit in common market politics are, by and large, missing. Without Qualified Majority Voting and powerful supranational institutions, one could argue, there simply is no democratic deficit in security politics. Second, even if there was a democratic deficit, one may still question whether we should bother about it. After all, there has been a long and eminent tradition to measure foreign, security and defense politics against a lower standard of democratic accountability in most democracies because an effective security policy seems to require a higher degree of secrecy and flexibility than other policies.

In this paper, I argue that both claims are flawed. In the next section, I will argue that the Europeanization of security and defense politics does lead to a democratic deficit because the growing integration of military forces increases the pressure on reluctant member states to contribute to military missions even in the absence of majority support at home. In the third section, I will draw on recent debates in peace and conflict research and point out that a democratic deficit in European security and defense politics is not only worrying for its own sake but also because a growing body of literature regards the democratic control of security and defense politics as the best guarantee to maintain peaceful and cooperative relations with other states.

[1] Cf. among many others Weiler et al. 1995; Moravcsik 2002; Føllesdal and Hix 2006.

The democratic deficit in European Security and Defense Politics

The establishment of a European Security and Defense Policy

The establishment of autonomous European military capabilities only began in the late 1990s but has proceeded at a remarkable pace ever since. The embarrassing failure to prevent war on the Balkans had boosted calls for a military arm in the EU's crisis management since the early 1990s. It took another crisis in Kosovo and a change of government in Britain, however, to launch a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). The EU members pledged to become able to deploy up to 60,000 troops within 60 days for peace-keping and peace-enforcement missions ("Helsinki Headline Goal"). Only a few years later, they added the ambition to be able to deploy battalion-sized "battlegroups" within only ten days ("Headline Goal 2010", cf. Lindstrom 2007).

Based on a broad consensus to keep the EU's supranational institutions at bay, the institutional dimension of ESDP caused few problems. The member states upgraded the Political Committee (now Political and Security Committee (PSC)) to a permanent institution at ambassadors' level and placed a Military Committee (MC) and a Military Staff (MS) at their disposal. In 2004, a European Defense Agency was added to identify and manage joint armaments projects. In the event of a crisis, the foreign ministers in the Council would decide unanimously on whether to launch a military mission.[2]

The achievement of the military headline goals posed a greater challenge because most EU states had made only little progress in adapting their militaries to the post-cold war agenda. Many member states still commanded huge numbers of tanks and troops (often conscripts) but were short of personel for demanding peace support missions and the means to transport and equip them. Given the concomitant decrease in defense spending since the end of the cold war, Europeanization seemed a promising way to spend shrinking budgets more efficiently.[3] Overcoming wasteful double and triple development and production of armaments as well as parallel military infrastructures and command and control systems has thus been a key target of ESDP.

In enhancing efficiency, the integration of forces plays a key role, especially since governments hesitate to abolish barriers to trade in armaments and defense equipment. In the military realm, integration refers to the deliberate creation of interdependent relations among the armed forces of the member states. Governments may agree on varying degrees of military integration: At the minimalist end of the spectrum, they may merely coordinate force levels and structures with a view to a joint headline goal. Such a low degree of integration does not impact on a state's capacity to deploy its armed forces unilaterally. At the maximalist end, governments may come close to establishing a supranational army replacing national armed forces. In this case, a state is entirely bereft of any unilateral military capacity. Inbetween these extreme points, governments may agree to varying degrees of common procurement, role specialization and coordination of their armed forces. For example,

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[2] Denmark opted out of ESDP and does therefore not participate in military crisis management. Set-up and functioning of the institutions are described in Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet (2002).

[3] An often quoted figure was that European NATO members only obtained 10% of US capabilities although they spend about 60% of the US defense expenditure (Yost 2000: 99).

the Helsinki Headline Goal reinforced efforts to define common standards for equipment and to address capability gaps (such as long-range airlift) jointly. Moreover, EU members reported what troops they could make available for the peace support tasks envisioned at Helsinki. Thus, the Helsinki Headline Goal only requires a limited degree of integration. In contrast, the ambition to launch battalion-sized force packages within only ten days necessitates a higher level of integration. The short time horizon in particular is not compatible with the kind of force generation process frequently used for peacekeeping purposes. In order to ensure a rapid response capacity, EU governments have not only to indicate what troops they may contribute. They also have agreed on a binding schedule assigning six-months periods of training, high-readiness ("standby") and stand-down to a limited number of battlegroups. In the same vein, the short-time horizon does not allow for the ad-hoc composition of member state contributions. Instead, governments have either committed specific national or multinational forces. Such a "battlegroup roster" indicates a rather high degree of integration because member states significantly limit their unilateral freedom of manoeuvre for the sake of a European one.

Even though no battlegroup has thus far been sent on a mission, the EU has carried out a remarkable number of military operations. The deployment of some 7,000 troops to Bosnia in December 2004 ("EUFOR-Althea") is particularly worth highlighting. One decade after a humiliating diplomatic failure in the face of the Bosnian war, the EU is now using the entire foreign policy tool kit including armed forces.

The meaning of democracy in security and defense politics

In order to assess whether there is a democratic deficit in ESDP, we have to make clear what "democratic control" refers to in the context of security and defense politics. This is everything but a trivial endeavor as "democracy" means different things to different people, especially in the realm of security and defense politics.[4] In the following paragraphs, I will argue that the parliamentary control of deployment decisions is a key aspect of democratic control and may therefore serve as a proxy for the problem at large.

To be sure, security and defense politics impacts on citizens' lives in many ways: recruitment policy determines how much (if any) time young men must spend as conscripts, and the defense budget influences how much the government can dedicate to social policy, etc. The most tremendous impact, however, results from decisions on the actual deployment of troops in military missions because, in addition to their political and fiscal repercussions, citizens' lives are then put at risk. Since the end of the Cold War, the importance of deployment decisions has grown because "peace support operations" have become more common as a number of violent conflicts have increased the demand for such missions. At the same time, the United Nations (UN) Security Council has been blocked less frequently by one of the veto powers. In 2003, the then fifteen member states of the EU had deployed some 55,000 troops in international peace support operations (Giegerich and Wallace 2004: 169). From the

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[4] A more comprehensive discussion of the manifold aspects of democratic control in security and defense politics can be found in Wagner 2005.

perspective of democratic control, deployment decisions can therefore be regarded as the most important aspect of contemporary security and defense policy.

For governmental decision-making concerning the use of force, parliaments are considered "the central locus of accountability" (Hänggi 2004: 11). As elected representatives of the people, the articulation of popular interests and concerns has been a prominent task of members of parliament. Hans Born and Heiner Hänggi have distinguished three dimensions of parliamentary power in security and defense politics: "authority" refers to "the power which Parliament uses to hold government accountable" and which is "derived from the constitutional and legal framework as well as customary practices". "Ability" denotes the resources such as specialized committees, budget and staff which are necessary to make efficient use of the authority conferred upon parliament. Finally, "attitude" refers to the "willingness to hold the executive to account" which, among other things, depends on the extent to which legislative–executive relations are characterized by party discipline (all quotes from Born 2004: 209–11). Although each of these factors has had an influence on the effectiveness of parliamentary accountability, Born and Hänggi conclude that "the strongest means of parliamentary oversight by far is …. the constitutional or legal right to approve or reject such use of force" (Hänggi 2004: 14). In contrast, budget and staff are certainly indispensable to make use of legal authority but they reflect rather than cause legal powers. Therefore, in discussing the democratic control of security and defense policy, this paper focuses on parliament's control of deployment decisions.

ESDP and the Weakening of Parliamentary Control

In this section, I want to show *how* exactly the Europeanization of security and defense politics generates a democratic deficit. Because parliamentary control of deployment decisions has been identified as a suitable proxy for democratic control in the previous section, I will demonstrate in particular how effective parliamentary control is made more difficult by transferring decision-making from the national to the European level.

The causal mechanisms linking Europeanization to the emergence of a democratic deficit in security and defense politics are only partially familiar from the study of common market governance. Most obviously, the democratic deficit in security and defense politics does not result from an outvoting of governments in the Council because the treaties do not allow Qualified Majority Voting for decisions having military or defense implications.[5] Neither does the democratic deficit stem from the delegation of authority to supranational institutions such as the Commission or the European Central Bank which have been an obvious target of criticism in this respect. Indeed, as far as formal decision-making rules are concerned, the Europeanization of security and defense politics has left national systems of parliamentary control intact.

The work of Andrew Moravcsik and Klaus Dieter Wolf helps to identify those causal mechanisms that are at play even if decisions are taken unanimously and supranational institutions are only involved at the fringes. Both Moravcsik and Wolf have pointed to a "dark side of intergovernmental cooperation" (Wolf 1999: 334),

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[5] Cf. the explicit wording in Art. 23 (2) TEU-N.

namely that "international cooperation tends to redistribute domestic political resources toward executives" (Moravcsik 1994: 7). Andrew Moravcsik has suggested four causal mechanisms that cause a loss of control over the executive. In the realm of ESDP they can be found to varying degrees.

Most importantly, Moravcsik argues that once international agreement has been reached, it "may be costly, sometimes prohibitively so, for national parliaments, publics or officials to reject, amend or block ratification of and compliance with decisions reached by national executives in international for a" (Moravcsik 1994: 11). For military deployments, this effect is further exacerbated by the fact that even the ministers in the Council can no longer amend agreements previously reached between the conflicting parties or within the UN Security Council which form the bases of the military mission. Traditionally, states may still decide to refrain from participation or may add caveats as to their individual contributions. Precisely these options to bring a country's contribution in line with domestic preferences, however, are increasingly qualified by the integration of forces and role specialization. The battle group concept, for example, implies that in the event of a decision to launch a military mission, the battle group currently on stand-by has to be sent abroad lest the EU refrains from intervening at all. If forces have been integrated, any state's decision against its participation in a mission de facto frustrates the entire deployment because other states' forces cannot work effectively without the missing state's contribution. As a consequence, states whose forces have been integrated on an international level may come under heavy peer pressure from those states that advocate the use of joint forces. The same effect results from any elaborate scheme of role specialization: if capabilities are no longer held by all member states but by only a few or even a single one, the menu of choice for the member state concerned has been severely transformed: instead of deciding about its country's participation in a particular military mission, it de facto bears the burden of deciding about whether the EU may become involved at all since no other member state could replace the capability under consideration.

Equally important is another causal mechanism identified by Moravcsik according to which executives can impose an initial ideological "frame" on an issue which is difficult for domestic groups to challenge. With a view to military missions, it is highly important whether an intervention is framed as a "humanitarian intervention" or as a self-interested campaign. Although the initial framing may be questioned by domestic audiences, the executive has a large influence on the initial parameters.

In addition, Moravcsik holds that international co-operation enhances the executive's control over the domestic agenda because the international agenda has been "cartelized" between national leaders. In the realm of security and defense, this effect seems rather weak because the agenda is set in large parts by developments outside the EU and the control of member governments (cf. Wagner 2003). As a general rule, the possible deployment of armed forces will be discussed whenever an international conflict escalates and receives wide media coverage. However, governments can still decide on whether to have the EU, NATO, or the UN deal with a crisis.

Finally, Moravcsik argues that international co-operation gives executives privileged access to information about the political constraints of other governments and about the technical consequences of alternative policies.

Klaus Dieter Wolf's notion that executives may deliberately use international cooperation to gain leverage over domestic actors finds support in an empirical study by Mathias Koenig-Archibugi (2004). If the Europeanization of security politics is designed to enhance the executive's room of manoeuvre, Koenig-Archibugi argues, we should expect most support for a supranational security policy from those member governments whose freedom of action is most highly circumscribed domestically. Indeed, this new raison d'État-hypothesis is confirmed in a regression analysis.

Why bother?
The "democratic turn" research in peace and conflict research

Even if one accepts the analysis in the previous section that there *is* an emerging democratic deficit in European security and defense politics one may still question whether this warrants particular concern. Students of European governance or democratic theory may argue that a democratic deficit in this issue area is indeed *less* troubling than in other issue areas because the commonly accepted standard of democratic control in security and defense politics has been low anyway. Historical legacies and functional requirements have both served as explanations - and justifications - for a rather low standard of democratic control. According to the historical argument, the level of democratic control is lower because security and defense politics has been a reserve of the executive. According to the functional argument, democratic control of security and defense policy has to be lower because an effective policy requires secrecy and flexibility.

In this section I will draw on a growing body of literature in peace and conflict research to make the opposite claim, namely that a democratic deficit in security and defense politics is rather troubling. In contrast to students of European governance or democratic theory, students of peace and conflict research are not only concerned with the democratic legitimacy of politics *per se*. Over the last two decades or so, they have also devoted increasing attention to the *effects* of democratic governance on a wide range of security policies and, ultimately, on the prospects of peace.

Over the last two decades or so, there has been a "democratic turn" in peace and conflict research, i.e. the peculiar impact of democratic governance on a wide range of security issues has attracted more and more attention. Although the notion that democracy is a force for good has a long and eminent tradition, peace and conflict research has hardly pursued this line of thinking until Michael Doyle's famous piece on "Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs" (Doyle 1983).[6] Doyle's article triggered the debate on the so-called "Democratic Peace" which in turn gave rise to what John Owen aptly called a "democratic distinctiveness programme" (Owen 2004: 605). Two and a half decades after the publication of Doyle's article, democracy has become the prime candidate for developing explanations for a growing number of puzzles in peace and conflict research. In the following paragraphs I will give an overview of the emergence and development of the "democratic distinctiveness programme". Since the story of the Democratic Peace debate has been told many

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[6] A notable exception is Ernst-Otto Czempiel (1972; 1981) whose influence has been limited to the German-speaking political science community.

times before (cf., among many others, Chan 1997; Owen 2004), I will focus on subsequent research linking democracy to a wide range of security-related policies.

The "Democratic Peace"-debate

The starting point of the "democratic distinctiveness programme" is the finding that democracies have rarely if ever waged war against each other.[7] This finding introduced democracy as a cause of peace even though it only applied to the limited realm of relations between established democracies.[8] The subsequent success story of the Democratic Peace resulted from its defense against a large number of theoretical, methodological and empirical critiques from various viewpoints and from the significance of this debate for the realism/liberalism debate more broadly.

In the early days of the debate, various critics claimed that the Democratic Peace was a mere statistical artefact, i.e. a result of flaws in research design. These criticisms took various shapes: Whereas David Spiro in particular challenged the statistical significance of the finding, a group of scholars attributed the absence of war among democracies to other causes than regime type.

David Spiro (1994) challenged Michael Doyle's finding that there have been no wars between democracies by arguing that the absence of wars is not necessarily statistically significant. Spiro correctly pointed out that in the time period covered by the Correlates of War project, i.e. since 1816, only few states were democracies. At the same time, the number of units under consideration, i.e. of pairs of states or "dayds", has been rather large. Moreover, in most years, wars were rare events as well. As a consequence, the likelihood that a war involved one of the view pairs of democratic states appeared small anyways. According to Spiro, the absence of war between democracies does not warrant the conclusion that democracy was the cause of peace because it could jut as well be the result of chance. However, Spiro's critic was countered by Bruce Russett's argument that "not all dyads have an equal probability of being at war" (Russett 1995: 171f.). Rather, the universe of cases should only comprise dyads that inlcude a great power (with global interests and the capability to project military force) or neighboring countries. Indeed, Russett's suggestion to "concentrate on the roughly 12 percent of dayds in the international system for whom war is a real possibility" (Russett 1995: 172) formed the basis of subsequent statistical analyses. Methodological disputes about the appropriateness of statistical techniques have resurfaced ever since but have not again amounted to a serious challenge of the core findings.[9] Rather, the Democratic Peace seems to have become a popular illustration for methodological disputes and has benefited from the resulting methodological refinements.

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[7] The qualification „rarely" served to accommodate a number of contested cases such as democratic Finland in World War II (fighting against the Soviet Union and, by implication, against the Western allies as well) or the war of 1812 between the USA and a United Kingdom whose democratic quality has been questioned due to limited suffrage and vast executive freedom on foreign affairs. A comprehensive treatment of these borderline cases can be found in Ray (1995, chapter 3, pp. 86-130).

[8] The related claim that democracies are less war-prone in general experienced a little renaissance in the late 1990s (cf. Benoit 1996) but did not carry the end of the day (for an overview cf. Macmillan 2003).

[9] Cf. for example the discussion about "fixed unobserved differences" in pooled cross-sectional analyses (Green et al. 2001; Oneal and Russett 2001; Beck and Katz 2001).

If the absence of war between democracies is no result from mere chance, it could still result from causes other than regime type that have been omitted from the research design. The issue of "omitted variable bias" goes to the very heart of inter-paradigm debate and has been heavily contested respectively. Indeed, proponents of competing schools of thought have made great efforts to demonstrate that their theoretical tool kit better accounts for the absence of war between democracies. Since neo-realism was at least then the most prominent theoretical alternative to the liberal theories of the Democratic Peace, its proponents were particularly eager to demonstrate that the Democratic Peace is better attributed to international power politics than to regime type.

Henry Farber and Joanne Gowa (1995) distinguished between various time periods and argued that the Democratic Peace is only discernible during the Cold War period when it is but an epiphenomenon of underlying security interests. Among others, Zeev Maoz has criticized "this exercise in slicing" as "devoid of theoretical content and strictly ad hoc" (Maoz 1997: 166). Most importantly, however, Democratic Peace scholars have taken up the challenge and incorporated control variables to fend off allegations of omitted variable bias. Power ratios, alliances and levels of trade have become standard controls of any statistical analysis.[10] At the same time, scholars moved beyond the analysis of wars (i.e. conflicts with a minimum of 1.000 battle-related deaths) to the examination of "Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs)" more broadly.[11] The inclusion of interactions involving the threat, display, or actual use of force was also welcome mainly for methodological reasons because MIDs are, by definition, less rare events than wars. The changing conceptualization of the dependent variable also brought about a re-framing of the central research question: instead of inquiring into the law-like (near) absence of wars between democracies, scholars now aimed to demonstrate that democratic dyads have a significantly lower probability of MIDs. The confirmation of these core hytheses in a number of more sophisticated statistical analyses added to the success story of the Democratic Peace (cf. Bremer 1992; Maoz and Russett 1993).

To be sure, the search for explanatory variables was no monopoly of quantitative approaches but included a considerable number of case studies as well. For example, John Owen (1994), James Lee Ray (1995) and Christopher Layne (1994) all used process-tracing to show the crucial importance of democratic institutions in case of the two former and considerations of military capabilities in case of the latter. Following the editor of the most impressive collection of case studies, however, the evidence from case studies was rather mixed: "domestic politics in general, and the democratic process in particular, crucially affect war and peace decision making, though not always in ways that are consistent with the democratic peace theory" (Elman 1997: 474).

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[10] James Lee Ray (2003b) has pointed to the converse problem that the failure to distinguish between confounding and intervening variables leads to an *under*estimation of the explanatory power of the main independent variable. For example, if democracies have a higher inclination to form alliances, the incorporation of "alliance ties" as a control variable would lead to an underestimation of the Democratic Peace.

[11] The concept of MIDs is explained in Gochman and Maoz 1984. Prominent studies of the Democratic using MIDs as dependent variables include Maoz and Abdolali 1989 and Maoz and Russett 1993.

Arguments that the Democratic Peace was better explained by previously omitted variables have continued to this day. Indeed, the widespread confidence in its core finding has made the Democratic Peace an attractive trophy in any inter-paradigm debate. It is telling, however, that the candidates for such challenges come from within the liberal or Kantian paradigm itself. For example, Erik Gartzke has argued that developments in economic activity, such as the integration of capital markets, better account for the absence of war among democracies (Gartzke 2003, 2007). As a consequence, the discussion of ommitted variables has by and large become a debate *among* proponents of a liberal paradigm which has replaced the debate between liberals and adherents of a power-based, realist paradigm.

Even though the bulk of studies have confirmed the explanatory power of democracy for the level of violent conflict between states, the search for a sound theoretical account has not been completed. Democratic institutions have played a key role in developing an explanation for the Democratic Peace. Following Kant, democratic institutions have been regarded as making government policy responsive and accountable to a citizenry which is pictured as eager to preserve their lives and property and thus to abhor war.[12] In a more formal vocabulary, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James Morrow, Randolph Siverson, and Alastair Smith have argued that democracies are characterized by large "selectorates" (the proportion of society selecting the leadership). Because political leaders' staying in power thus depends on a broad winning collation, they are better off providing public goods (such as peace and economic growth) instead of private goods (for an outline of the "selectorate theory" cf. Bueno de Mesquita et al 2003). An early wave of institutionalist theorizing also argued that "institutional constraints – a structure of division of powers, checks and balances – would make it difficult for democratic leaders to move their countries into war" (Russett 1993: 38). More recently, scholars have de-emphasized the constraining effects of domestic institutions and have instead highlighted that elections, open political competition and free media improve a government's ability to send credible signals of its resolve (Fearon 1994; Schultz 1999).

The Renaissance of Kantian Theorizing

The success of the Democratic Peace inspired two closely interwoven developments in peace and conflict research. First, because Immanuel Kant was widely celebrated as the intellectual godfather of the Democratic Peace, scholars re-examined interdependence and international institutions as further conditions of peace as suggested in Kant's "Perpetual Peace" and thus re-vitalized two further traditions of liberal theorizing. Second, students of peace and conflict added more and more items to the list of what distinguishes democracies from other regimes in international

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[12] An alternative account has emphasised democratic norms and culture instead of democratic institutions (cf. Doyle 1983; Russett 1993; Maoz and Russett 1993; Owen 1994; Weart 1998). From this perspective, decision-makers "will try to follow the same norms of conflict resolution as have been developed within and characterise their domestic political processes" (Russett 1993: 35). Since democracies are characterised by *peaceful* conflict resolution, they will prefer negotiation over the use of force in international politics as well. This pacifist preference, however, only translates into peaceful relations with other democracies. In conflicts with non-democracies, democracies are forced to resort to realist strategies lest they risk being attack (Risse-Kappen 1995). Critics claim that the normative/cultural model fails to account for the numerous threats made by one democracy against another (Layne 1994: 13) as well as for colonial wars against states "that were about subjugation rather than self-protection" (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999; Rosato 2003: 588).

(security) politics. These two developments were closely interwoven because the renaissance of commercial peace- and institutional peace-studies soon made a "democratic turn", i.e. democracy was identified as a favorable context condition. I will address these two developments in turn.

Commercial Peace

The commercial peace thesis has a long and well-known tradition[13] but did not figure prominently until the 1990s when it gained momentum from the renaissance of Kantian thinking following the Democratic Peace debate. Most proponents of the commercial peace have drawn on expected utility-models and developed an "economic deterrence argument" (Levy 2002: 356) according to which the anticipation of a disruption in trade deters politial leaders from excalating conflicts.[14] It should be noted, however, that constructivist theorizing has also been present in the commercial peace literature. Drawing on Karl Deutsch' work on security communities, Bruce Russett stressed that "economic exchange becomes a medium for communicating perspectives, interests, and desires on a broad range of matters not the subject of economic exchange, and that these communications form an important channel for conflict management" (Russett 1998: 374; cf. also Doyle 1997, chapter 8).

Although several studies found support for the thesis that economically significant trade between states reduces the risk of armed conflict between them (e.g. Polachek 1980; Russett and Oneal 1997), a large number of scholars reported lasting doubts because the findings remained vulnerable to changes in concepts, data measurement or time periods studied (Mansfield and Pollins 2003: 21).[15] As a consequence, scholars called for the identification of context conditions for the commercial peace (cf. Schneider et al. 2003).

Among the context conditions suggested are the level of economic development (cf. Hegre 2003), the institutionalization of trade relations (cf. Mansfield and Pevehouse 2003) and – most significant in the context of this paper – the regime type of the states engaged in trade. Christopher Gelpi and Joseph Grieco in particular have argued that democracies "react to greater trade integration with a reduced propensity to initiate militarized disputes with their partners" (Gelpi and Grieco 2003: 2). Drawing on the selectorate theory, Gelpi and Grieco argue that democratic institutions entail incentives for leaders to provide public goods whereas for leaders in non-democracies it often appears rational to provide private benefits to members of a small winning coalition. Following the standard economic argument about the effects of trade, Gelpi and Grieco maintain that leaders in democracies have particularly strong incentives to seek growth by fostering trade. Moreover, once a state has established high levels of

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[13] The works of Adam Smith, Richard Cobden, Norman Angell and Joseph Schumpeter may be regarded as milestones in that tradition (for an overview cf. Doyle 1997: 230-50).

[14] A reformulation of the expected utility-argument along the lines of James Fearon's informational theory of conflict can be found in Morrow (1999) and Gartzke et al. (2001). According to these scholars, "[t]rade flows could reduce the risk of escalation by increasing the range of costly signals of resolve in a crisis. A greater range of available costly signals increases the efficiency of signalling between the disputants, increasing the chance that they will reach a peaceful settlement" (Morrow 1999: 481).

[15] Evidence for as well as against the notion of a commercial piece was almost exclusively presented in large-n, quantitative studies. Interestingly, a in-depth study examining the impact of economic interdependence on decision-making during the crises 1914 and 1936 found almost no support for the expected utility argument (cf. Ripsman and Blanchard 1996)

trade with another country, democratic leaders can be expected to be vulnerable to possible interruptions of trade flows because missed growth opportunities may damage their prospects of being re-elected. As a consequence, democracies but not other regime types are expected to avoid armed conflict with states to which they have close economic relations. Gelpi and Grieco find robust support for this expectation for the period 1950-1992.

The commercial peace can also be expected to be particularly strong among democracies because democracies tend to trade disproportionately among themselves. Harry Bliss and Bruce Russett list several reasons for especially high levels of trade among democracies (cf. Bliss and Russett 1998: 1128f.): First of all, leaders in democracies "need be less concerned that a democratic trading partner will use gains from trade to endanger their security than when their country trades with a nondemocracy"; furthermore, firms will "prefer to trade with those in states with whom relations are reliably peaceful" and where the rule of law precludes expropriations. Finally, shared norms "help reduce trade interference from embargoes and boycotts". Further empirical studies found that democracies have a higher probability to conclude preferential trade agreements (Mansfield et al. 2000, 2002) and that democratization in developing countries is associated with trade liberalization (Milner and Kubota 2005).

Taken together, the renaissance of Kantian theorizing has given a new impetus to the commercial peace debate. Moreover, it has linked the idea that trade reduces conflict to the Democratic Peace as empirical evidence for the commercial peace has proved patchy in general but strong for democratic dyads.

Institutional Peace

While there have always been countless studies on the contribution of a particular international institution to the management of a particular conflict, early large-n studies failed to show any significant effect of membership in international institutions on the level of conflict between states (cf. especially Singer and Wallace 1970). This corresponded to a reading of Kant according to which his "federation of free states" is rather a result of than a cause for peace (cf. Moravcsik 1996). Again, the renaissance of Kantian thinking in the aftermath of the Democratic Peace debate re-initiated the systematic analysis of the "institutional peace".

Again, a broad range of causal mechanisms has been put forward to explain the pacifying effect of international institutions: They may reduce uncertainty by conveying information (Russett et al. 1998; Haftel 2007; Bearce and Omori 2005), they may act as mediators in a conflict (Haftel 2007) or, as in collective security institutions, even coerce norm-breakers (Russett et al. 1998). Drawing on Fearon's rationalist theory of war, Boehmer et al. (2004) emphasize that institutions enable signaling and help to make commitments more credible. Finally, from a constructivist perspective, institutions may contribute to peace by creating trust (Bearce and Omori 2005), by generating narratives of mutual identification (Diez et al. 2006) and by socializating states into norms of peaceful conflict resolution (Russett et al. 1998).

Notwithstanding a much later take-off than the commercial peace-debate, the courses of the two debates have shown striking similarities: Whereas several studies found

evidence in support of an institutional peace, others failed to do so suggesting that the institutional peace thesis is vulnerable to changes in specification and measurement.[16] The subsequent search for context conditions again led to a "democratic turn", i.e. the regime type of the member states was identified as an important qualification of the institutional peace thesis.

Democracies have been considered to have both particular inclinations and capacities to establish and maintain international institutions. To a large extent, explanations for these particular features of democracies' foreign policies have drawn on causal mechanisms familiar from explanations for the Democratic Peace and the commercial peace. For example, the selectorate theory holds that democracies tend to establish and maintain international institutions for the same reasons that they tend to avoid costly wars or promote trade: because democratic leaders face incentives to provide public goods, they will establish and maintain international institutions which help to do so. From a constructivist point of view, in contrast, democracies tend to cooperate among themselves for the same reason they maintain peaceful relations and high levels of trade: A common set of values fosters trust and overcomes otherwise prominent relative gains concerns etc.

Democracies are not only considered to be especially *interested in* international cooperation; they are also regarded to be particularly *capable* to establish and maintain international institutions. Again, the causal mechanisms that make democracies "reliable partners" (Lipson 2003) are familiar from the Democratic Peace. Most importantly, the checks and balances, transparency and openness characteristic of decision-making in democracies also contribute to their capability to establish and maintain international institutions (Ikenberry 2001). Because entering into an international commitment requires the consent of parliaments, courts, interest groups etc., defection becomes less likely once such consent has been achieved (Cowhey 1993; Martin 2000).[17] Moreover, free media and a vital civil society make the detection of defection likely which in turn helps to mitigate problems of monitoring characteristic of collective action problems (cf. Zangl 1999). From a constructivist perspective, one may add that democracies' esteem for the rule of law extends to the honouring of international (legal) commitments (Gaubatz 1996).

In another analogy to commercial peace-research, scholars of the institutional peace have argued that democracies cooperate disproportionately among themselves and that "interdemocratic institutions" (i.e. international institutions composed of democracies) are particularly effective in reaping the pacifying effects of cooperation. According to Hasenclever and Weiffen (2006), interdemocratic institutions are particularly suited to block escalation pathways between states that have been identified as typical steps to war. Because of democracies' distinct record as reliable partners, interdemocratic institutions are distinctively effective 1) in taming power competition by setting standards and verification schemes for appropriate defence policies; 2) in preventing the recourse to strategies of unilateral self-help by integrating domestic actors into international cooperation and 3) in averting an

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[16] Russett et al. 1998; Oneal et al. 2003 found that there is a significant effect of international institutions on peace whereas Bennett and Stam 2004 and Gartzke et al. 2001 found no supporting evidence.

[17] In the terminology suggested by James Fearon, the "audience costs" of defection are higher in democracies than in other regimes.

overall polarization of interstate relations by insulating "islands of cooperation" from more disputed domains.

A number of empirical findings have supported the notion of a "democratic turn" in the institutional peace-debate: Already in 1996. Cheryl Shanks, Harold Jacobson and Jeffrey Kaplan reported that „free states belonged on average to more IGOs than those that were partly free or unfree" (Shanks et al. 1996: 609). More recently, this finding has been confirmed by Jon Pevehouse, Timothy Nordstrom and Kevin Warnke (2004) who have listed those ten states that have the most memberships in international organizations for 1965, 1985 and 2000: all three lists comprise exclusively democratic states. In a similiar vein, Edward Mansfield and Jon Pevehouse demonstrate that "democratization is a potent impetus to IO membership" because "[e]ntering IOs can help leaders in transitional states to make a credible commitment to sustain democratic reform" (2006: 139 and 140 respectively). In the realm of security institutions, Brett Ashley Leeds found that democratic states are less likely to violate alliance commitments (Leeds 2003). Most importantly, in a study covering the period between 1885 and 2000, Jon Pevehouse and Bruce Russett have provided empirical evidence that IGOs have the more pacifying effects the more democratic their member states are (Pevehouse and Russett 2006).

The "Democratic Distinctiveness Programme"

As these brief reviews of the state-of-the-art on the commercial and institutional peace show, both debates have made a "democratic turn" as democracy has been identified as a crucial context condition. Thus, these studies have not only revitalized the debates on trade, international institutions and peace but have also added to the notion of "democratic distinctiveness" more broadly.

The emergence of a "democratic distinctiveness programme" has been most obvious with regard to the treatment of "democratic violence", i.e. violence exerted by democratic states. To be sure, proponents of the Democratic Peace never claimed that democracies generally refrain from the use of military force. Even proponents of the so called monadic version oft he Democratic Peace only claim that democracies fight wars less frequently than other regimes but nevertheless do so regularly. With the notable exception of Michael Doyle, however, proponents of the Democratic Peace hardly analyzed the violence emanating from democratic states in terms of its democratic distinctiveness. If "democratic violence" surfaced at all, it was either presented as a challenge to the Democratic Peace proposition or treated as an un-democratic contaminant and pre-democratic relict. For example, in his study on US covert forcible actions against elected governments during the Cold War period, David Forsythe argued that these actions at first glance seem inconsistent with the liberal analyses of inter-democratic relations. At closer look, however, covert actions appear to be possible only because "the decisions are not taken in the open, subject to the full range of checks and balances and popular participation" (1992: 393). Likewise, Ernst Otto Czempiel (1996) argued that wars by democracies such as the one fought by the United States in Vietnam point to a lack of democratic control even in otherwise mature democracies. In a similar vein, Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder do not question the Democratic Peace proper but caution against "a naive enthusiasm for spreading peace by promoting democratization" (1995: 36) because before becoming mature democracies, state go through a transitional phase of democratization during which they "become more aggressive and war-prone, not less, and they do fight wars with democratic states" (1995: 5). Notwithstanding vast

differences in theoretical approaches and methods, these studies regard democracies as inherently peace-prone and attribute their aggression to pockets of un- or pre-democratic institutions and culture.

More recently, however, democracies' use of force has been treated as inherently democratic violence in the sense that the very same feature that are responsible for peace among democracies are to be held accountable for democracies' distinct record of using military force. The literature on the diversionary use of force has been an important precursor to this re-framing of "democratic violence". The diversionary-use-of-force-thesis builds on the so called "rally around the flag effect" according to which the incumbent government's popularity soars in the face of an external threat.[18] Unpopular government may thus be tempted to provoke and escalate international crisis in order to divert attention away from domestic problems. However, the diversionary-use-of-force-thesis has remained highly contested as empirical studies have yielded an ambiguous picture.[19] In a recent attempt to integrate the diversionary use of force into the Democratic Peace agenda, Oneal and Tir (2006) conclude that economic conditions do indeed affect democracies' (not autocracies'!) likelihood to use force but that sufficiently low economic growth rates are too rare to negate the Democratic Peace.

Another group of scholars has focused on the ambivalence of liberal norms as causes for both peace *and* war. Whereas respect for human rights and principles of democratic governance commands non-intervention in other democracies, their violation may be seen as a cause for military intervention. As a consequence, so called humanitarian interventions have become a typical feature of democracies' use of force (cf. Hasenclever 2001; Daase 2004; Brock et al. 2006).

Military interventions by democracies have also confirmed previous findings that public support for military action declines with the number of casualties suffered. As a consequence, democracies have made particular efforts to avoid casualties. In a further extension of the democratic distinctiveness programme, Niklas Schörnig (2007) has portrayed the "Revolution in Military Affairs" as a distinctly democratic armament policy of minimizing casualties. In the same vein, Reiter and Stam (2002) argue that democratic governments are particularly good in selecting military conflicts they are sure to win. This selection effect may also explain why democracies win the better part of the wars they fight.[20]

The extension of the democratic distinctiveness programme into the realm of intrastate violence is further evidence of the research programme's viability. In an early study, Krain and Myers found that "non democracies are more civil war prone than democracies" (1997: 114) and Rudolph Rummel concurred that democracy reduces the occurrence of intense violence within states (Rummel 1997). In a more comprehensive study, Hegre et al. (2001) found that both democracies harshly authoritarian states have few civil wars. However, the democratic civil peace is not

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[18] The rally-around-the-flag effect was "discovered" by Kenneth Waltz (1967) and has been confirmed in a vast number of empirical studies ever since (cf. in particular Mueller 1970 and 1973 as well as, most recently, Eichenberg et al. 2006).

[19] Cf., among many others, James and Oneal 1991, Meernik and Waterman 1996, Smith 1996, Gelpi 1997 and Gowa 1998.

[20] For a critique of this claim cf. Desch 2002.

only more just than the autocratic peace but also more stable because autocracies are less stable than democracies and regime change are frequently accompanied by domestic violence.

In addition to the Democratic Peace, the analysis of "democratic violence" is certainly a corner stone in the democratic distinctiveness programme. Civil-military relations, intelligence cooperation and foreign aid have been suggested as objects of future research (George and Bennett 2005: 58; Doyle 1996: 365f) whereas the examination of arms control policies (cf. Becker and Müller 2005) and internal security cooperation (Wagner 2003) has already begun. Taken together, a multitude of studies demonstrates that the theoretical tool kit developed to explain the (near) absence of war between democracies has proved helpful in addressing an ever broader range of (security) issues in international politics. The democratic distinctiveness programme has therefore been celebrated as a "powerful paradigm" (Doyle 1996: 364) or "progressive research programme" in the Lakatosian sense (Ray 2003a). To be sure, research on the economic, power-related or cultural causes of conflict has certainly not been *replaced* by the democratic distinctiveness agenda. Nevertheless, for almost any puzzle in peace and conflict research, the distinct difference of democratic governance has become an obvious point of departure. Equally important, issues of contention increasingly concern the specific substance of rather than the democratic distinctiveness *per se*.[21]

Conclusion

The review of recent peace and conflict research demonstrates that a growing number of issues has been (re-)examined with a view to the distinct impact of democratic governance. Put differently, the conjecture that democracies somehow behave diffe-rently from other regime types has become an obvious starting point in addressing whatever puzzle in peace and conflict research one is interested in.

Although there has been a growing consensus on the distinctiveness of democracies, the nature and the causes of this distinctiveness are still heavily contested. Despite a mounting number of studies, no finding can so far claim a similar degree of robustness as the Democratic Peace which triggered the democratic distinctiveness program in the first place. The better part of the evidence available, however, holds that democracies are indeed a force for good. Although they do fight wars frequently, they appear less prone to causing high numbers of casualties. Moreover, they tend to allow for higher degrees of interdependence (such as trade) and are better in establi-shing and maintaining international institutions, particularly among themselves.

In the face of such a distinct record in international (security) politics, the European challenge to democratic control warrants concern (cf. also Hummel 2003). To be sure, the cumulative findings of democratic distinctiveness program hardly allow for the expectation that the further Europeanization of security and defense politics will soon yield unreliable and aggressive member states. Nevertheless, scholars of peace and

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[21] For example, Gartzke and Gleditsch (2004) argue that the peculiarities of democratic governance make democracies less reliable allies thereby accepting the distinct impact of democratic decision-making as a new common ground.

conflict studies may well alert their colleagues in European Union studies that an emerging democratic deficit in security and defense policy may not merely be deplored for the loss of national self-determination but may, albeit gradually, change the very substance of security policies.

The extent to which the Europeanization of security politics can be regarded as a challenge to its democratic control heavily depends on the causal mechanisms that are made responsible for the democratic distinctiveness in the first place. For proponents of norms-based causal mechanisms, the Europeanization of security politics may appear to have few tangible consequences. In contrast, the transfer of decision-making from national to international institutions directly impacts upon the accountability of democratic governments to their citizens. The institutions-based causal mechanisms thus lead one to expect that government decisions on the use of force will be less constrained in international fora. As a consequence, governments may become less risk-averse and may eventually find themselves involved in military confrontations more frequently. On the other hand, however, the internationalization of security politics may also bring about new institutional constraints at the international level. Although governments in the Council may face fewer constraints from domestic actors, they may encounter new ones from other member state governments whose consent is required (Dembinski et al. 2004). The net effect of Europeanization of security and defense is therefore difficult to calculate. Given the potentially disastrous consequences of a democratic deficit in European security and defense politics, however, a further critical examination of the effects of Europeanization on democratic control as well as a debate a possible re-introduction of democratic control at the European level seems necessary.

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