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### **EC/EU Membership and Austria, Sweden and Finland: Neutrality redefined with European Norms?**

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# Table of Content

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Research question.....	2
Selection of case studies.....	3
State of the field.....	4
On Europeanisation theory.....	7
Methodology.....	12
Comparativism.....	15
Definitions.....	16
Language style.....	16
<b>CHAPTER I The Austrian Case.....</b>	<b>17</b>
Austrian neutrality: a background.....	18
An evolution of Austrian neutrality.....	20
Austrian neutrality and EC membership.....	24
Analysis.....	29
<b>CHAPTER II The Swedish Case.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Swedish neutrality: origin and development.....	33
Summary of Swedish neutrality.....	42
Sweden and EC membership: debates on neutrality.....	43
Analysis.....	42
<b>CHAPTER III The Finnish Case.....</b>	<b>53</b>
Finland's neutrality: the origin and evolution.....	54
Summary and evaluation of Finnish neutrality.....	63
Finland and EC membership.....	64
Analysis.....	68
<b>CHAPTER IV A Comparative Perspective.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>77</b>

# Introduction

Towards the final phase of the Cold War, the three European neutrals, Austria, Sweden and Finland, applied for a membership of the then European Community in 1989, 1991 and 1992 respectively. Those three neutrals' prospective close participation in the regional European family as full members sparked domestic political debates with regards to the compatibility of membership with their neutrality.

This was largely due to the fact that, unlike the international organisations of universal character, i.e. the League of Nations and the United Nations where major great powers were members, a neutral state's membership in a regional organisation would give the impression of partiality toward a group of states. Empirically, in the EC case, the binding supranational decisions could not only hamper the autonomy of those states, but the European Community had also set the aim of becoming a political union with common foreign and defence policy, which would make it difficult for a neutral to devise an independent foreign policy or would even drag it into a war. In other words, the common concern of those three neutrals was that membership would damage the credibility of their neutrality and even jeopardise their existence as states. In addition, for Austria, membership would put at stake the 1955 State Treaty with Moscow, which had restored its sovereignty, because the accession to the Community could amount to the prohibited reestablishment of connection or *Anschluss* with Germany. The particular Finnish concern was that membership would alarm the USSR of Finnish partiality towards the West, hence the risk of neutrality being put to an end by Soviet invasion.

Nonetheless, Austria, Finland and Sweden submitted their applications and subsequently gained membership in 1995, with neutrality not phased out altogether, at least in domestic discourses. This situation leads to the assumption of this thesis that the definition of neutrality was subject to change to the extent that it could go beyond the legal meaning and original intent of neutrality.

As will be elaborated later in the literature review section, it would suffice to summarise here that there are two main approaches to neutrality, legal and political. In the former, neutrality is defined in terms of formal rights and duties of a neutral state and a belligerent in wartime as crystallised from state practices culminating in the Hague Conventions V and XII in 1907. However, in peacetime, international law does not stipulate the rights and duties of a neutral state. This brings us to the political approach to neutrality as a peacetime concept subject to various interpretations. As Efraim Karsh put it, neutrality as a political meaning was more permissive than the purely jurisprudential definition; deviation from international law of neutrality may be acceptable if that serves such vital underlying interests as the protection of sovereignty or state survival.<sup>1</sup> From the laws or rules of neutrality, states can customise neutrality according to their specific interpretations,<sup>2</sup> not least affected by the origins and manner in which neutrality was conceived.<sup>3</sup> Given their temporal aspects, the Hague Conventions were argued to be outdated, but the political position of neutrality is a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon, to be investigated how it shifted or changed within a particular contexts.<sup>4</sup>

Based on these political theories, this thesis approaches neutrality as a contested concept, the definition of which is to be uncovered from discourses and their contexts. However, instead of investigating how a neutral state devised the policy of neutrality to enhance its credibility and respectability in peacetime as Karsh and Hakovirta had done, this thesis studies neutrality from a normative aspect against the mainstream political approach to neutrality posited in the realist positivist camp at that time. The core assumption of this thesis is that an institution affects an actor, who, in order to develop identities compatible with it, internalises the norms of the institution. In other words, this research includes normative aspect as central argument for a foreign policy reorientation of candidate states, i.e. neutrality of Austria, Sweden and Finland, hence the research question:

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

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<sup>1</sup> Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London: Routledge, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> Harto Hakovirta, *East-West Conflict and European Neutrality* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> George Maude, “The Further Shores of Finlandization,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 17 (1982): 3-16.

<sup>4</sup> Detlev F. Vagts, “Neutrality Law in World War II,” *Cardozo Law Review* 20 (1998): 459-82.

It is arguably important to ask this question because this will lead to a better understanding of those states' roles in the formation of the EU common foreign and security policy. Furthermore, although neutrality was perceived to be an obstacle by the Commission and some other member states, an insight into how those three neutrals demonstrated the compatibility, if any, of their neutrality with the European security goals at that time will contribute to some nuanced arguments about the development of their respective neutrality as such in the future within the EU context. Some literature<sup>5</sup> prematurely argued for the incompatibility of neutrality with the mutual defence clause brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon, without paying much attention to the period when those neutrals applied for membership. Upon detailed investigation back then towards the end of the Cold War, this may reveal the compatibility with the EU's security ambition in their respective readings of neutrality. In the other scenario, it may be that some of them had already intended to forsake neutrality, in which case the compatibility with the mutual defence clause in Lisbon would be out of question. This will be revealed as the content of this thesis unfolds in each chapter.

### **Selection of case studies**

Among the four EC/EU neutral member states, i.e. Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden, Ireland is excluded from this study because of its earlier accession to the Community back then in 1973. This has a certain implication on the selection of case study. At that time, the Community's aim to establish a political union or common foreign and security policy was not as evident or concrete as in the early 1990s when Austria, Finland and Sweden applied for membership. As neutrality was primarily tied with security policy, it is expected that the pressure on those three neutrals to redefine neutrality was arguably stronger than when the Community was still an economic project, i.e. when Ireland applied for membership. Moreover, neutrality of Austria, Sweden and Finland were all associated with a concern vis-à-vis the USSR, and applications were submitted towards the end of the Cold War, i.e. in a similar international political setting. Because of these similarities, it would be appropriate to compare the findings after the case studies are individually analysed. In turn, comparison, by bringing into light similarities and differences, also makes up for problems in analysis due to the limited access to primary sources containing discourses. This is further elaborated in the comparativism section.

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<sup>5</sup> Karen Devine, "Neutrality and the Development of the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy: Compatible or Competing?" *Cooperation and Conflict* 46(3) (2011): 334-369.

## State of the field

Neutrality has traditionally been studied from the perspectives of two main disciplines: international law and political science. Legal scholars investigate the rights and duties of neutral entities along historical development and how these rights and duties were applied or (re)interpreted.<sup>6</sup> In addition, some quest for the origin of neutrality of a certain state from a legal instrument and argue for its validity based on international law.<sup>7</sup> The legal view remained dominant until the end of the Second World War, after which it was gradually superseded by a more political notion of neutrality. This was largely because, in legal literature, little was covered about what a neutral state should or was supposed to do in peacetime, i.e. what neutrality as such or a policy of neutrality should look like outside wartime. In this regard, it was because of the insufficiency of legal definition that political approaches have come into play. Through this expansion to political science, neutrality has come to acquire various interpretations at the expense of clarity.

In political science, neutrality is studied along the line of the dominant International Relations theory in a given period of time. In the late 1950s to 1980s, neutral states were considered weak, isolationist, passive and vulnerable both in the terms of capacity and in geopolitical sense in realist IR literature,<sup>8</sup> and were thus mostly neglected. In this regard, since a neutral state was considered small, it was normally fused with the study of other small states with a blurred focus on neutrality as such.<sup>9</sup> As for realist literature specifically devoted to neutrality, the object of study primarily concerned with what a neutral state should do to survive in the international system divided into military blocs or in the context of its geopolitical position, whether as a buffer or rim state.<sup>10</sup>

For example, according to the political theory developed by Efraim Karsh,<sup>11</sup> *credibility* and *respectability* are what a neutral state seeks to gain and strengthen during peacetime in order for the state in question to successfully protect and uphold its neutrality in wartime. To this

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<sup>6</sup> Vagts, "Neutrality Law."

Lassa Francis Lawrence Oppenheim, *International Law: Disputes, War and Neutrality* (London: Longmans, 1952).

Alfred Verdross, "Austria's Permanent Neutrality and the United Nations Organisation," *The American Journal of International Law* 50(1) (1956): 61-68.

<sup>7</sup> Stéphanie Dagon, *La neutralité permanente et l'Union européenne* (Baden : Nomos, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Dilemmas of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

<sup>9</sup> Michael Handel, *Weak States in the International System* (London: Frank Cass, 1985).

Peter J. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Market: Industrial Policy in Europe* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985).

<sup>10</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*.

Hakovirta, *East-West Conflict*.

<sup>11</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*.

end, one of the most crucial ones to enhance credibility is the non-participation in alliances, blocs or any other form of military co-operation since peacetime, to give a message that the neutral state has foregone war as an instrument of foreign policy, with the exception of wars of self-defence. This also includes the anchoring of neutrality to the state's social and cultural heritage as well as its political and legal system. Nevertheless, in order to increase the chance of success, policy of neutrality, besides reducing fears from belligerents by not taking part in a military alliance, should convince them on the desirability of this policy. To assure the belligerents of the value of its neutrality, the neutral state must attempt to show that the maintenance of this policy may offer them services that could not otherwise be obtained from any non-neutral state. Such services include mediation or conflict management for belligerents, the success of which would, in turn, contribute not only to the respectability of its neutrality, but also to the security of the neutral itself. It was largely due to the political approach that the definition of neutrality extended beyond the common legal definition of non-participation in war.

Neutrality study gained even more dynamics in the wake of the debate between rationalism and reflectivism around the 1990s. It was during this period that a substantial literature explored the connections with domestic politics and foreign policy, paving the way for social constructivism. Because of this approach, domestic values, preferences, history and norms were given focus, thereby providing insights into foreign and security policies of neutral states.<sup>12</sup> These works brought into light not only divergences between neutrality of states, but pointed to the need to take into account the specificity, belief and values of each neutral for analytical purpose.<sup>13</sup> This corresponded with methodological innovative, i.e. discourse analysis, to uncover those hidden facets of neutrality previously understood only in security term. For example, Torbjörn Norman found the ideological association of the Swedish

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<sup>12</sup> For more discussion, please see Christine Aigus and Karen Devine, "'Neutrality: A Really Dead Concept?' A Reprise," *Cooperation and Conflict* 46(3) (2011): 272.

<sup>13</sup> Torbjörn Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality," in *Neutrality in History/ La Neutralité dans l'histoire*, ed. Jukka Nevakivi (Helsinki: Tiedekirja, 1993), 303-312.

Jukka Nevakivi, "Finnish Neutrality," in *Neutrality in History/ La Neutralité dans l'histoire*, ed. Jukka Nevakivi (Helsinki: Tiedekirja, 1993), 33-44.

Miakes af Malmberg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden* (Wiltshire: Palgrave, 2001).

Jeffrey S. Lantis and Matthew F. Queen, "Negotiating Neutrality: the Double-Edged Diplomacy of Austrian Accession to the European Union," *Cooperation and Conflict* 33(2) (1998): 152-182.

Johan Eliasson, "Traditions, Identity and Security: the Legacy of Neutrality in Finnish and Swedish Security Policies in Light of European Integration," *European Integration Online Papers (EIoP)* 8, 6(2004): 1-21.

Laura C. Ferreira-Pereira, "Swedish Military Neutrality in the Post-Cold War: 'Old Habits Die Hard'," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 6, no. 3 (2005): 464 - 489.

Michal Kořan, "Austrian Neutrality: Burden of History in the Making or Moral Good Rediscovered?" *Perspectives* 26 (2006): 23-45.



survival through the two World Wars and the success of welfare state with Swedish neutrality, which had become embedded in Swedish national identity.<sup>14</sup> As for the Austrian case, neutrality was argued to be a manifestation of distinct national feature vis-à-vis Germany and later tied with such values as peace, democracy and human rights.<sup>15</sup> However, in Finland, a similar ideological aspect was hardly found or not as strong as its counterparts.<sup>16</sup>

Recently, attention was paid to the development of neutrality in the EU framework with the latter's aspiration to make a progress towards the common security and defence policy. In this regard, Karen Devine<sup>17</sup> studied the discursive content of neutrality in EU neutrals in parallel with the development of the EU's foreign, security and defence policy, and measured the compatibility with the mutual defence clause brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon. What is missing in Devine's study is the collation of neutrality with the European norms.

Some works found the reorientation of foreign and security policies of Austria, Finland and Sweden in line with broader European priorities.<sup>18</sup> In particular, Douglas Brommesson<sup>19</sup> investigated how Swedish foreign policy came to be reoriented along the line of European norms identified as peace, democracy, human rights, liberty and rule of law. Still, these works did not single out neutrality as a separate subject of study, but mingled it with the broader foreign and security policy. Moreover, some other researches argued for neutral states' active contribution to European security notably in terms of conflict management and the promotion of non-military security solutions.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, there was a missing connection to substantiate that the neutral states understood these activities to be an integral part of their neutrality.

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<sup>14</sup> Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality."

<sup>15</sup> Kořan, "Austrian Neutrality."

<sup>16</sup> Eliasson, "Traditions."

<sup>17</sup> Karen Devine, "Neutrality and the Development of the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy: Compatible or Competing?" *Cooperation and Conflict* 46(3) (2011): 334-369.

<sup>18</sup> Möller, "From Nordic Neutrals."

Nicole Alecu de Flers, *EU Foreign Policy and the Europeanization of Neutral States: Comparing Irish and Austrian Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2012).

Oliver Rathkolb, ed., *Sweden-Austria: Two Roads to Neutrality and a Modern Welfare State* (London: Transaction, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> Douglas Brommesson, "Normative Europeanization: The Case of Swedish Foreign Policy Reorientation," *Cooperation and Conflict* 45(2) (2010): 224-244.

<sup>20</sup> Eliasson, "Traditions."

Lee Miles, *Fusing with Europe? Sweden in the European Union* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

Maria Strömviik, "Starting to "Think Big": The Nordic Countries and EU Peace-Building," in *The Nordic Countries and the ESDP*, eds. A.J.K. Bailes, G. Herolf and B.Sundelius (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 199-214.

Tarja Väyrynen, "The Higher Cause of Peace: What Could and Should the Nordic Countries Contribute to the Development of Conflict Mediation in the EU Context?" in *The Nordic Countries and the ESDP*, eds. A.J.K. Bailes, G. Herolf and B.Sundelius (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 215-33.

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

## **On Europeanisation theory**

With a particular focus on neutrality, this thesis is situated in the broader field of Europeanisation roughly defined as the study of impacts of EU institutions on EU member and candidate states. This section discusses and reflects upon traditional theories of Europeanisation in order to develop an appropriate theoretical framework for this thesis.

The research agenda on Europeanisation has been dominated by the structuralist camp of neo-institutionalism with a combination of sociological, historical and rational choice institutionalisms. For the summary of key neo-institutionalist characters, see *Table 1: The Three Neo-Institutionalisms* (page 7). These three theories share a basic assumption that institutions are autonomous entities with a casual political and social power over an agency. Ontologically speaking, the EU is conceptualised as a highly institutionalised polity with established principles, norms, rules and procedures, constraining or enabling policy choices of a member or candidate state. This theoretical framework is used as a tool in understanding domestic adaptation to the European Union.

Of ideational structuralist orientation, **sociological institutionalism** studies the effects of institutions defined as norms, cognitive frames and meaning system, on an actor's identity, preferences and actions. The main argument of this neo-institutionalist camp relies on the *logic of appropriateness*; the actor behaves in accordance with its role and identity as a member in the group through the process of socialisation within the actor's particular institutional context.<sup>21</sup> In other words, an endogenous part of the institution, the actor takes an action that it deems appropriate in a given situation.

On the other hand, based on materialist assumption, **rational choice institutionalism** stresses on the *logic of consequences*. That is, actors, rational and with preferences, attempt to maximise relative gains and at the same time minimise costs of political interactions in a

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<sup>21</sup> James March and Johan Olsen, "The Logic of Appropriateness," in *Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*, eds. Michael Moran, Martin Rein and Robert Gooden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 690.

given institution.<sup>22</sup> In other words, the actor's behaviour is driven by a cost-benefit calculation, although this is not completely autonomous as the actor's behaviour or action is constrained within the institutional context.

The above two institutionalist sub-branches' lack of temporal consideration is fulfilled by **historical institutionalism**, paying attention to institutional change in the actor-structural setting across time. The central argument is the relevance of a set of institutional choices made in the past to the limitation of an actor's present or future behaviour. In other words, certain previous decisions or the habits of the actor have become locked-in, constraining the actor's future policy choices, a situation called *path dependency*, which also makes it difficult or costly to deviate from this path. Whether an actor's action is driven by the logic of appropriateness or the logic of consequences, the results could become sticky overtime, enforcing the actor to follow a particular behavioural path. Thus, historical institutionalism is presented as a middle-ground between social and rational choice institutionalist approaches, while also being ontologically distinct due to its focus in the temporal aspect of social process.<sup>23</sup>

The following table summarises and compares the three institutionalist theories.

*Table 1: The Three Neo-Institutionalisms*<sup>24</sup>

	Sociological Institutionalism	Historical Institutionalism	Rational Choice Institutionalism
Research focus	Normative determinism – effects of normative institutions on identity of the actor	Historical determinism – effects of institutions over time	Rational determinism – effects of institution on behaviours and interests of the actor
Institutions	Norms, cognitive frames, meaning systems	Rules and regulations as sticky, persistent overtime	Narrow rules/ exogenous constraints
Agency	Constituted by the institutional structure	Constrained by the locked-in institutional choices	Independent agency, constrained by its rationality (within the institutional context)
Social process	Socialisation, logic of appropriateness	Path dependency	Cost-benefit calculation, logic of consequences

<sup>22</sup> Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (5) (1996): 953.

<sup>23</sup> Hall and Taylor, "Political Science," 937.

<sup>24</sup> Senka Neuman Stanivuković, *Europeanization: A Poststructuralist Approach* (Routledge [forthcoming]), 22.

Approach to change	Institutional persistence via cultural norms	Institutional persistence via path dependency	Institutional persistence via fixed preferences of the actor
Explanation of change	External shock		

On the epistemological plane, the dominant Europeanisation literature seeks to investigate the top-down direction process of the EU's causality over domestic affairs. The central question is to what extent and under what conditions the EU's institutional pressures cause domestic change. In this regard, the EU institutional structure is taken as an independent variable while dependent variable is the extent of domestic change in response to EU pressures. To operationalise this kind of research, it is necessary to establish a mechanism to prove the EU's causal effect on domestic level. With regard to the diffusion of norms under the theoretical framework of social institutionalism, Ian Manners<sup>25</sup> introduces six channels that facilitate the diffusion of EU norms:

- 1) *Contagion diffusion of norms* is entirely symbolic normative power resulting from the unintentional diffusion of ideas from the EU to other political actors;
- 2) *Informational diffusion* is the result of largely symbolic normative power found in the range of strategic communications, including new policy initiatives by the EU, and declaratory communications by the Commission;
- 3) *Procedural diffusion* involves the institutionalisation of a relationship between the EU and a third party, such as an interregional cooperation agreement, membership of an international organisation or enlargement of the EU itself;
- 4) *Transference diffusion* takes place when the EU exchanges goods, trade, aid or technical assistance with third parties through largely substantial normative power;
- 5) *Overt diffusion* occurs as a result of the physical presence of the EU in third states and international organisations;
- 6) *Cultural filter* mediates the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organisations leading to learning adaptation or rejection of norms.

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<sup>25</sup> Ian Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2002).

As Senka Neuman Stanivuković rightly points out,<sup>26</sup> all of these neo-institutionalist approaches suffer from a structural bias by giving primacy to the institution, ignoring the intersubjective nature of institutions. Embedded as an endogenous part of the institution existing in the vacuum, the actor itself is incapable of changing the institution, which would rather be explained by an external shock. This inherent weakness or bias of neo-institutionalism passes on when one applies to Europeanisation research. As this paradigm sees the structure as ontologically prior to, and generative of, the actor's behaviour and identity, political outcomes are attributed to the unidirectional structural force, leaving the agency deprived of the power of autonomous action.<sup>27</sup> According to the critical analysis of the Europeanisation literature by Ian Bache et al., the mainstream literature the research focus on “a downward implementation of EU constraints, however based on rather structuralist accounts of agency, without enough attention paid to ideologies, identities, discourses of those actors who agree with being constrained.”<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, neo-institutionalist Europeanisation research agenda reduces the meaning of Europe and European institutional structure to the European Union, which exposes Europeanisation research to a dual fallacy.<sup>29</sup> First, on a macro-level, by excluding processes connected with Europe *writ large* from the ambit of research, the literature conceptualises domestic adaption to EU institutions as taking place in a vacuum, thereby disregarding the link between Europeanisation (read as EU-isation) and the broader spatiotemporal context in which it takes place. As a consequence, the relevance of NATO-isation, OSCE-isation, among other things, is neglected despite their parallel occurrence with EU-isation. Second, on the domestic level, the equation of the EU with EU institutions prevent the field of research from analysing whether, and to what extent, the meaning of European Union is determined by actors exogenous to the *EU proper*. Because of non-members' limited access to the EU's decision-making process, external Europeanisation is defined as an EU-led, unidirectional transposition of one institutional order, principally set by Western Europe, to the new territories. The relevance of the non-EU members with regard to the Europeanisation process is thus sidelined from the analytical scope.

Despite some weaknesses and limitations, neo-institutionalism, particularly the sociological branch, provides a conceptual understanding of the structure-agency relationship

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>28</sup> Ian Bache et al., “Europeanization: A Critical Realist Perspective,” in *Research Design in European Studies. Establishing Causality in Europeanization*, eds. Theofanis et al. (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2012), 14.

<sup>29</sup> Stanivuković, *Europeanization*, 25-26.

in the sense that institutions influence the actor about what it should or should not do. Therefore, in order to develop an identity compatible with the institution whose membership they sought after, the selected neutral states are also supposed to have been constrained to a certain degree by the EU norms with regard to their respective neutral stances. In other words, this thesis refers to Europeanisation as a process primarily based on the logic of appropriateness. This definition leads to an assumption that there is a misfit between the norms at the European and domestic levels, which will be elaborated in the next section on methodology.

Epistemologically, this thesis does not investigate the mechanisms of norm diffusion because this does help to explain the content of neutrality as such. Instead of measuring the casual effect between EU norms on the one hand and change in domestic perception of neutrality on the other, this thesis aims to find out how domestic perception of neutrality was constructed with reference to the EU norms. To this end, attention needs to be paid to the ideologies, identities and domestic debates in those neutral states, which is not only in line with the proposed political approach to neutrality, but also to avoid the bias of unidirectional norm diffusion understanding in neo-institutionalism. By investigating the membership process at the domestic level via political debates, I hope to demonstrate the contested process of domestic adaptation to EU institutions often neglected by neo-institutionalists.

In addition, as Europeanisation, i.e. EU-isation, did not occur in separation from other wider political contexts, the reinterpretation of neutrality in each case study will be process-traced by comparing the domestic policy choices to structures with the closest proximity to those choices. That is, if a change in the concept of neutrality was relatable or articulated with reference to an EU factor, it could be preliminarily established that this occurred in the context of Europeanisation. In other words, a policy that is assumed to have been normatively Europeanised should show signs of references to European home.<sup>30</sup>

In summary, this thesis merely takes the empirical part of sociological institutionalism for an ontological understanding of the influence of EU norms over domestic adaptation on the road to membership. That is, EU norms could be argued to have transcended into domestic political debates, thereby affecting the interpretation of neutrality. Epistemologically speaking, this thesis does not employ the mechanism approach, but makes an inquiry into the reconstruction of the meaning of neutrality in relation to the EU norms. The following section elaborates on the methodology.

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<sup>30</sup> Douglas Bromesson, "Normative Europeanization: The Case of Swedish Foreign Policy Reorientation," *Cooperation and Conflict* 45(2): 229.

## Methodology

This thesis employs a tailored method of content analysis to uncover how neutrality was interpreted in each case study. In order to understand what choices were purposed in domestic political debates with regard to neutrality and membership, this thesis argues for the relevance of each case study's specific historical context in which the concept of neutrality had developed in the past prior to the membership application. This is because an actor's choices or decisions with regard to neutrality, whether driven by the logic of consequences or the logic of appropriateness, had become institutionalised over time and thereby constituted a path dependency, which constrained the actor's policy choices by means of eliminating alternative solution or making the deviation from the path dependency costly. As the process of path dependency is contingent upon the conditions of the preceding stages in the temporal sequence, this theoretical conception necessitates the investigation into the history of each of the neutral states, in which their respective neutrality were conceptualised. This will later explain the extent to which the path dependency allowed for the reinterpretation of neutrality when Austria, Sweden and Finland applied for the membership.

In connection with this, the process of path dependency suggests the importance of the conditions at the formative stage when the idea becomes institutionalised. This is because a formative moment is a breach of the previous path dependency, unfolding the opportunity of long-term impact by reformulating conditions and rules of a new institutional order.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, this thesis argues for the relevance of the accession period, because this period itself constituted a formative moment of a new path dependency of neutrality in the European integration context. In this regard, this thesis will lead to a better understanding of the roles of those neutral states' subsequent contributions to the EU foreign and security policy as constrained by the new path dependency of neutrality.

In order to operationalise this research, i.e. to find out how domestic perceptions of neutrality were constructed with reference to European norms, it is first of all necessary to treat neutrality a contested concept subject to interpretation. The specific content of neutrality will be studied against the backdrop of history of each of those three neutrals in two main periods of time: 1) after the inception or institutionalisation of neutrality of each until the membership application, and 2) after the application until the accession to the European Union in 1995. In the former, the evolution of neutrality will be demonstrated and evaluated for the subsequent collation with the political debate on neutrality and membership. In other

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 368.

words, the first part will provide information about the path dependency of neutrality, which will be used as a tool to analyse the extent of European norms' absorption into the concept.

In particular, this thesis dissects the content of neutrality in order to find two main aspects of the concept, namely security and normative aspects, because of their relevance to the analysis. As the main purpose of this thesis is to study the ideational dimension of neutrality, a focus will be turned to the reaction of this normative side of neutrality with the European norms, while the strategic usefulness, i.e. the security side, would also be taken into account where relevant.

The European norms in question refer to the five core norms identified by Ian Manners<sup>32</sup> from the *acquis communautaire* and the *acquis politics*, i.e. the treaties, policies, criteria and conditions of the Union. The first of these is the centrality of **peace** found in key symbolic declarations such as that by Robert Schuman in 1950, as well as the preambles to the Treaty establishing European Coal and Steel Community of 1951 and the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC) of 1957. The second is the idea of **liberty** found in the preambles of the TEC and the Treaty on European Union (TEU) of 1991, and in Article 6 of the TEU which sets out four foundational principles of the Union. The third, fourth and fifth norms are **democracy**, **the rule of law**, and **respect for human rights**, all of which are expressed in the preamble and founding principles of the TEU, the development cooperation policy of the Community (TEC, Article 177), the common foreign and security provisions of the Union (TEU, Article 11). Together with the core norms, there are four minor norms: social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance.

According to Manners, the four minor norms are still contested and of relatively limited importance in the *acquis*. Neither were those minor norms were then evident in the 1990. As Manners further rightly argues, the five core norms clearly have a deep historical context to them, with peace and liberty being defining features of Western European politics in the immediate post-war period. The norms of democracy, rule of law and human rights grew later when it was important to distinguish the democratic Western Europe from the communist Eastern Europe. The importance of these core norms was subsequently concretely demonstrated in the culmination of membership conditionality in the so-called Copenhagen criteria. Therefore, this thesis argues that the core norms had become “sticky” or well-established in the institution and are thus supposed to have a strong normative power over candidate states according to the theory of sociological institutionalism. Moreover, based on

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<sup>32</sup> Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2002): 235-58.



the empirical findings of neutrality in each case study, it is rather the five core norms that neutrality got associated with especially during the Cold War. In investigating the reinterpretation of neutrality vis-à-vis European norms, it would thus be appropriate to focus on those five core norms instead of the minor ones.

To analyse the domestic political debates, it is necessary to refer back to the ontological understanding of sociological institutionalism. That is, the EU affects a candidate state, which, in order to develop identities *compatible* with it, absorbs or internalises the norms of the institution. The keyword leading to the answer of this thesis's research question is thus *compatibility*. In order to investigate to what extent the concept of neutrality in each case study absorbed the European norms of peace, democracy, human rights, liberty and rule of law, it is assumed that the more the concept of neutrality was argued to be compatible with those norms, the more the concept absorbed those norms. In other words, the demonstration of compatibility is the key to the absorption. As will be seen in the chapter on each of those states, in order for neutrality to be capable of being interpreted as compatible, it is rather the identity aspect of neutrality that played a central role.

In this regard, if neutrality was primarily tied with security concern without or with relatively much less aspect of identity, the chance would be higher that neutrality would be abandoned once the major threat leading to the inception of neutrality disappeared. In other words, in this extreme case, the reconceptualisation of neutrality with European norms would be out of question. On the other hand, in the case where neutrality was largely invested with identity, this is subject to further investigation. If neutrality came with such normative values as peace, democracy and human rights, it would be likely that this would facilitate the absorption of European norms into the concept of neutrality. In other words, this concerns the reorientation of similar norms embedded in neutrality with international outlook to a regional one with emphasis on Europe. Nevertheless, as identity aspect of neutrality was not necessarily confined only to the same normative values as the European Community, there may be some other identity aspects of neutrality capable of hindering the interpretation of the concept to demonstrate the suitability with European norms. Among other things, as will be clearly seen in the Swedish case, the obstacle norm embedded in neutrality in question was the preservation of autonomy vis-à-vis both the West and the East during the Cold War.

A question may arise as to why it would have mattered for a neutral to demonstrate the compatibility despite the existence of similar norms embedded in its neutrality and the EU. This refers back to those neutrals' common concern that, unlike the universal organisations of the League of Nations and the United Nations, membership in a regional organisation was

likely to give rise to suspicions with regard to their neutrality from the eyes of the outside world, and would also spark public discontent, especially in a neutral state where neutrality had become embedded in national identity. In other words, this concerns the shift in co-operation framework from the much less disputed universal to the controversial regional one. As a result, if there was to be a reinterpretation of neutrality in the context of European norms, it would be necessary for a neutral state to frame its discourse on neutrality in such a manner as to demonstrate the compatibility with the European integration context. The empirical data from a pilot study suggests the existence of this concern, thereby reducing the bias of the institutionalist presupposition of the misfit between the European and domestic levels.

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

## **Comparativism**

The specificity of neutrality of each case study leads to the assumption that the degree of norm absorption would also vary. For the explanation about *tertium comparationis*, please refer back to the section *Selection of case studies* on page 3. In order to find out the factor leading to this outcome, this thesis argues for the relevance of John Stuart Mill's Method of Difference. Mill describes this method as follows:

“If an instance in which the phenomenon under investigation occurs, and an instance in which it does not occur, have every circumstance in common save one, that one occurring only in the former; the circumstance in which alone the two instances differ is the effect, or the cause, or an indispensable part of the cause, of the phenomenon.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Op. cit., Jonathon Moses and Torbjørn Knutsen, *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research* (Great Britain: Palgrave, 2012), 99.

In short, when all cases share basic characteristics, but vary with respect to a certain key explanatory factor, the presence or absence of this factor can then be used to explain any variation in outcomes as the other relevant explanatory variables are controlled for by case selection.<sup>34</sup> In other words, that factor is attributable as a cause for the difference in outcomes. To apply this method, the ideational aspects of selected neutral states will be put together to single out the difference(s), which may be an explanatory factor for the difference in the internalisation of European norms.

## **Definitions**

The only fixed definition of neutrality is from international law perspective: non-participation in war. However, because of the social constructivist nature of this thesis, neutrality will be treated as contested concept, the meaning of which is to be filled by relevant actors with their own security interests and ideological persuasions. By not treating neutrality as a fixed term, this allows to uncover the various meanings of neutrality specific to each case study. Consequently, in accordance with the political approach to neutrality, it can happen that the interpretation of neutrality in one neutral is different from another and may reveal a certain deviation from the rules of international law. In this regard, as long as “neutrality” is not completely abandoned in an official manner, any content associated with it, whether called “military non-aligned”, “non-allied” etc., will be treated as a redefinition of neutrality.

## **Language style**

This thesis employs British English, but American spelling styles are retained in the original quotations. Also, since political debates occurred in the period between 1989 and 1995, during which the European Community was in the process of transforming into the European Union under the Treaty of Maastricht, both the terms EC and the EU are used in this thesis as the case may be when elaborating on domestic debates.

The case studies will be first investigated individually in a chronological order in which they submitted the membership application: Austria (1989), Sweden (1991) and Finland (1992). Each chapter begins with the evolution of neutrality, followed by the domestic political debate and closed with an analysis. Then, all case studies will be put in a comparative perspective in a separate chapter.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

# CHAPTER I

## The Austrian Case

Austria submitted the application for the membership of the European Community on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1989. In the letter to the President of the European Economic Community, simultaneously sent to the Presidents of the European Community for Steel and Coal (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), the government stated that:

“On behalf of the Republic of Austria, I have the honour to submit Austria’s application for membership of the European Economic Community, pursuant to Article 237 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community.

Austria submits her application on the understanding that her internationally recognised status of permanent neutrality, based on the Federal Constitutional law of October 26, 1955, will be maintained and that, as a member of the European Community by virtue of the Treaty of Accession, she will be able to fulfil her legal obligations arising out of her status as a permanently neutral state and continue her policy of neutrality as a specific contribution towards the maintenance of peace and security in Europe.”<sup>35</sup>

At first glance, this may give the impression that there was no change in the Austrian neutrality in the context of European norms, with Austria’s intention to maintain its permanently neutral status. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, the concept of Austrian neutrality had undergone a reconceptualisation process in order to fit with its membership in the European family.

For this purpose, it is first of all necessary to see this against the background of the development of Austrian neutrality since its inception in 1955. After this, this chapter will

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<sup>35</sup> Op. cit. Peter Jankowitsch, “The Process of European Integration and Neutral Austria,” in *Neutral States and the European Community*, ed. Sheila Harden (Exeter: Brassey’s, 1994), 35.

See also Paul Luif, “Austrian Neutrality and the Europe of 1992,” in *Austria in the New Europe – Contemporary Austrian Studies*, ed. Anton Pelinka and Günter Bischof (London: Transaction, 1993), 41.

proceed to the debates leading up to Austria's formal entry into the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1995.

### **Austrian neutrality: a background**

The origin of Austrian neutrality could be traced back to 1955. Occupied by the victorious allies after the Second World War, Austria was demanded by the Soviet Union to declare a policy of permanent neutrality based on the Swiss model as a condition for the restoration of its sovereignty. This Moscow Memorandum of 15<sup>th</sup> April 1955 led to the conclusion of the State Treaty for the Re-Establishment of an Independent and Democratic Austria (State Treaty).

A scholar<sup>36</sup> considered the Moscow Memorandum the origin of Austrian neutrality from international law perspective. However, this was counter-argued by the fact that the Memorandum was merely an informal agreement.<sup>37</sup> This was because of the incompetence of the Austrian representatives to take such an engagement.<sup>38</sup> In this regard, the Austrian delegation to Moscow was merely supposed to *persuade* the government to adopt permanent neutrality.<sup>39</sup> Because of the lack of primary sources, this thesis could not investigate into the details of the competences of the Austrian delegation. However, in any cases, since at that time Austria's independence was yet to be regained, it would be absurd to claim, according to international law, that the Memorandum was a treaty with a legally binding effect on Austria while the latter was not then existent as a sovereign state. Nevertheless, despite unsettled legal debate, this thesis argues that the involvement of Moscow would have a subsequent *political* implication on the interpretation of Austrian neutrality.

On the other hand, some scholars considered the State Treaty to be the source of Austrian neutrality.<sup>40</sup> Upon investigation into the Treaty, neutrality was not mentioned in any articles. Installing Austria as an independent and democratic state, the Treaty merely included, among other things, such primary obligations as the prohibition of any future *Anschluss* with Germany,<sup>41</sup> the maintenance of democratic institutions<sup>42</sup> and a ban on development of

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<sup>36</sup> J. L. Kunz, "Austria's Permanent Neutrality," *American Journal of International Law* 50 (1956): 418.

<sup>37</sup> Stéphanie Dagron, *La neutralité permanente et l'Union européenne* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010), 126-7.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Jeffrey S. Lantis and Matthew F. Queen, "Negotiating Neutrality: the Double-Edged Diplomacy of Austrian Accession to the European Union," *Cooperation and Conflict* 33(2) (1998): 153.

<sup>41</sup> Austrian State Treaty, Article 4.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 8.

weapons of mass destruction.<sup>43</sup> The declaration of Austrian neutrality came later when the last soldier of the occupation forces left the Austrian territory on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1955.<sup>44</sup>

On that day, the Austrian Parliament adopted the Constitutional Law on the Neutrality of Austria on. According to Article I(1) of the Constitution,

“For the purpose of the lasting maintenance of her independence externally, and for the purpose of the inviolability of her territory, Austria declares of her *own free will* her perpetual neutrality. Austria will maintain and defend this with all means at her disposal.”<sup>45</sup> (emphasis added)

In connection with this, a scholar<sup>46</sup> argued for Austria’s own choice in choosing to be a neutral state due to the perception that permanent neutrality imposed on the country in a treaty, especially in an agreement with great powers, would make this status less respectable as a sovereign and independent state. As will be seen later in the next section, this issue was integrated on the debate on the compatibility of EC membership and neutrality. It would suffice to preliminarily mention here that the Secretary of State for Integration and Development Co-operation, Peter Jankowitsch (1990-1992), argued that Austria’s free will was made upon the consideration for peace in the context of ongoing East-West conflicts due to Austria’s geopolitically sensitive location,<sup>47</sup> in order to realign Austrian neutrality with the European norm of peace.

As for the legal content of Austrian neutrality, Article I(2) stipulates that,

“For the securing of this purpose in all future times Austria will *not* join any military alliances and will *not* permit the establishment of any foreign military bases on her territory.”<sup>48</sup> (emphasis added)

According to the legal provision above, the definition of neutrality was formulated in a *negative* manner, the wording of the Constitution itself not suggesting a *positive* content of what the country should do to render neutrality effective or reliable. In other words, any

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., Article 13.

<sup>44</sup> Hanspeter Neuhold, “Austria’s Security Policies in a Changing Europe” (paper presented at the Conference on Small States and Security, Vancouver, Canada, 1994).

<sup>45</sup> “Constitutional Law on the Neutrality of Austria,”  
[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/constitutional\\_law\\_on\\_the\\_neutrality\\_of\\_austria\\_26\\_october\\_1955-en-670aa09c-4d4b-451a-84f2-23f2f9c8cb06.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/constitutional_law_on_the_neutrality_of_austria_26_october_1955-en-670aa09c-4d4b-451a-84f2-23f2f9c8cb06.html).

<sup>46</sup> Gaertner and Hoell, “Austria.”

<sup>47</sup> Jankowitsch, “The Process of European Integration,” 52.

<sup>48</sup> Constituional Law on the Neutrality of Austria, Article I(2).

particular significance for the foreign policy orientation could be hardly inferred from the legal provision besides the abstention from joining a military bloc and the prohibition of any establishment of foreign military bases. This situation would thus later allow opportunities for different interpretations, the concept of neutrality subject to change across time. The next section will investigate discourses made to fill in the meaning of Austrian neutrality.

### **An evolution of Austrian neutrality**

As can be seen from the Article I of the Constitution, Austrian neutrality implies certain military constraints in peacetime in order for the country to be able to sustain its neutral status in time of war. To this negative content, the then Foreign Minister Kurt Waldheim (1951-1956) added a positive content to neutrality by stating that:

“It would be too simplifying an interpretation of the notion of permanent neutrality to understand by it only the obligation to remain neutral in case of war. The neutral state has to conduct a policy in peacetime that protects the state from entanglements in future armed conflicts or in political conflicts which can lead to such conflicts. In our century, wars are not exclusively fought by military actions, they can also take the form of an economic and propaganda war.”<sup>49</sup>

This discourse extended Austrian neutrality to economic and political dimensions, in contrast with the Constitution, which signified only the military aspect. This position was later reduced to the Constitution’s core by the Federal Chancellor Leopold Figl in his press announcement on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1956, stressing that Austria was “a free state not subjected to any obligations; its neutrality is of purely military nature.”<sup>50</sup> This interpretation of neutrality allowed Austria a freedom to make a choice for full membership in any given non-military alliance and organisation according to the Austrian understanding. Subsequently, Austria applied for and gained a seat in the United Nations (14<sup>th</sup> December 1955) and the Council of Europe (16<sup>th</sup> April 1956).

Arguably, this stance was primarily to differentiate the Austrian neutrality from its Swiss counterpart, the model of which Vienna was supposed to follow according to the memorandum with Moscow.<sup>51</sup> As it was necessary for the Austrian government to demonstrate itself as an independent state without external intervention in domestic political

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<sup>49</sup> Op. cit., Luif, “Austrian Neutrality,” 80.

<sup>50</sup> Op. cit., Michal Kořan, “Austrian Neutrality: Burden of History in the Making or Moral Good Rediscovered?” *Perspectives* 26 (2006): 25.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

life, both the Constitution and international law in general needed to be interpreted in such a manner as to provide a legal and moral platform for foreign policy conduct substantially different from the Soviet-imposed model of Switzerland, which then remained outside the United Nations. In other words, this interpretation associated neutrality with national autonomy.

Austria's entry into the UN, however, was not without concern over the compatibility with its neutrality. In this regard prevailed in the government circle the so-called Verdross Doctrine, developed by a prominent international law expert, the then Director of the Institute of International Law in Vienna, Alfred Verdross.

Based on international law and the Constitution, Verdross's argument was for the compatibility of Austria's UN membership and its neutrality, in contrast with the League of Nations.<sup>52</sup> According to Verdross's interpretation, while Article 16 of the League's Covenant ruled out neutrality by requiring member states to take an immediate economic step against an aggressor and to allow a transit of troops its territory, the obligations under the UN Charter were more adaptable.<sup>53</sup> This is because the Security Council, despite its binding decisions, had a discretionary power<sup>54</sup> as to whether to invite or excuse a member state to take a measure. Since the UN accepted Austria's membership without reservations and with full awareness of its neutral status, it could be inferred that the Security Council did not expect Austria to take part in any measures incompatible with its neutrality. Furthermore, Verdross argued for the relevance of neutrality only in wartime; the only case when neutrality would be employed in peacetime is when particular obligations to another country could get a neutral state involved in war. Otherwise, Austria was "absolutely free in its domestic and foreign policy."<sup>55</sup>

In summary, from 1955 to 1956, Austrian neutrality was largely tied with national autonomy connected with the idea of a sovereign and independent state without the need to follow the condition imposed by the superpower to follow the Swiss model. Emphasis was put on its military element and primary relevance in time of war. While neutrality was in this period defined in a negative term as non-participation in military alliance with embryonic positive content, a more defined positive element would later be added to the concept.

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<sup>52</sup> Alfred Verdross, "Austria's Permanent Neutrality and the United Nations Organisation," *The American Journal of International Law* 50(1) (1956).

<sup>53</sup> Verdross, "Austria's Permanent Neutrality," 65-67.

<sup>54</sup> UN Charter, Article 48(1): The action required to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security shall be taken by all the Members of the United Nations or by *some of them*, as the Security Council may determine. (emphasis added)

<sup>55</sup> Verdross, "Austria's Permanent Neutrality," 63-65.



According to Kořan, the positive element was connected with Austrian identity.<sup>56</sup> In 1957, despite the fact that Germany was officially declared as the other, there was still a strong societal current within Austria rejecting the idea that Austria was a separate entity vis-à-vis Germany, hence the risk to attempt to establish Austrian statehood solely around this notion.<sup>57</sup> The politicians were thus unable to freely choose any form of statehood myth without neglecting a potential emotional harm or political instability. As Austrian identity had been built on rather schizophrenic foundations oscillating between Austrian and German components,<sup>58</sup> there seemed to be no common unifying past experience upon which a distinct Austrian national character could be built. In this regard, emotionally neutral elements that could constitute the foundation of Austrian identity needed to be found. Besides the concepts of social partnership and social stability associated with the success of the second republic, neutrality was considered an equally valuable and emotionally neutral feature.<sup>59</sup> This added an identity aspect to neutrality, which had been previously understood merely in a military strategic term.

The identity dimension of neutrality, in turn, paved a way to the change in the interpretation of its scope and purpose after 1957 to substantiate or concretise this aspect of neutrality. The reinterpretation suggested that a neutral country was not only obliged to stay away from armed conflicts and to pursue a policy that eschewed any possibility of getting involved in a war, but also *actively* seek policies that create conditions eventually leading to the abolishment of wars as such.<sup>60</sup> As a consequence, Vienna demonstrated a high degree of engagement in international organisations, including a deployment of military personnel.<sup>61</sup>

From 1960 onwards, Vienna sent between 60,000 and 70,000 soldiers under the UN peacekeeping missions such as in Kongo (1960), Cyprus (1972) and the Golan Heights (1974). The former Foreign Minister Kurt Waldheim was UN Secretary General for two terms from 1971 to 1981. The chancellorship of Bruno Kreisky (1970-1983) also brought Austria to the scene of mediation on the international political stage, allowing its people to overlook that

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<sup>56</sup> Kořan, "Austrian Neutrality," 26-28.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Edwards Timm, "Austrian Identity in a Schizophrenic Age: Hilde Spiel and the Literary Politics of Exile and Reintegration," in *Austria 1945-1995: Fifty years of the Second Republic*, eds. K.R. Luther and P. Pulzer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998).

<sup>59</sup> Kořan, "Austrian Neutrality," 28.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Berthold Meyer, "Austria between Felt Permanent Neutrality and Practised European Engagement: Austrian Case" (research paper under the Volkswagen-funded research project "The Image of Democratic Soldier: Tensions between Organisation of Armed Forces and the Principles of Democracy in European Comparison, 2007), 3.

their country was only a small country without influence.<sup>62</sup> This came with a concrete example during the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), especially during the phase of the development of the CSCE process. Kreisky also attempted to assume a mediating role in the Middle East conflict (1973-1976) and to assert influence in the 1981 North-South Dialogue in Cancun. Towards the end of the 80s, Vienna became the third host city of the UN after New York and Geneva. In short, the national consciousness and pride of the Austrians was particularly increasing during this era of active foreign policy with the view of internationalism. This normative aspect of neutrality was furthered strengthened by the global recognition of this status of Austria.<sup>63</sup> Altogether this active side of neutrality was significant for the enormous sympathy of this international status in the public opinion.

Still, Kořan's argument should be qualified by Efraim Karsh's.<sup>64</sup> In order for Austria to play this active international role, neutrality was also interpreted in such a manner that the country's missions appeared compatible with neutrality. Because of its failure with regard to collective security, the role of the UN was constructed in the Austrian discourses as "to heal, not judge." That is, the principal role of the UN in peace maintenance needed not be performed by a punitive measure or enforcement, but rather through meditation, conciliation and compromise, hence the compatibility with neutrality.

In summary, with sovereignty and security having become established during the first few years after 1955, Austria took another step to develop its own concept of neutrality previously understood merely in security term. After 1957, Austrian neutrality was used as a fundamental normative element to foster the distinctiveness from Germany. In turn, this added another dimension to the Austrian neutrality as an active peace builder, previously conceived to be against neutrality. With the success and international recognition of this policy, neutrality became an imbedded identity of Austria, the concept which, this chapter will argue later, would have a significant implication for the interpretation of neutrality when Austria applied for the EC membership.

After the end of Kreisky's term in office in 1983, Austrian neutrality underwent another transformation by the Foreign Ministers Leopold Gratz (1984-1986) and Alois Mock (1987 – 1995), who brought Austria to the period of "realistic foreign and neutrality policy," with a

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>64</sup> Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States!* (Londong: Routledge, 1988), 119-121.

focus on regional matters with European outlook rather than a global line of vision.<sup>65</sup> Foreign policy was supposed to serve nothing, but the “actual needs” and “interests” with the aim to defend the status quo by a policy of natural self-restraint from international activism.

In addition to the escalating crisis in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and the reducing importance of the Third World, this narrower interpretation of neutrality was due to domestic recession, rising unemployment and structural crisis in the nationalised industries.<sup>66</sup> This corresponded with Austria’s weakening political profile in the Middle East conflict as well as in other activities in the UN as reflected in the loss of leading administrative positions and in the reduction of political initiatives. Stronger emphasis on the military component of Austria’s security policy was another expression of this narrower interpretation of Austrian neutrality. The Defence Ministry was able to secure the request for the purchase of new interceptor aircraft and anti-tank missiles.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, owing to the budgetary difficulties, the defence spending was not increased in a significant way.<sup>68</sup>

This conception of Austrian foreign policy was a distinctive change from the former optimistic and activist approach to international affairs and the foreign policy opportunities of Austria in the Kreisky era to a more pessimistic perspective on the international system and Austria’s role in it.<sup>69</sup> In turn, this new interpretation of neutrality in the politically and economically difficult environment opened a debate on the prospect of Austria’s membership in the EC, which shall now be addressed in details in the next section.

## **Austrian neutrality and EC membership**

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

In the late 1950s, to defend the decision not to take a part in the European integration process, the then Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky referred to the commitment made in the Moscow Memorandum and defined neutrality in the Swiss term,<sup>70</sup> that is, to remain not only militarily, but also politically and economically neutral. This was due to the deep economic

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<sup>65</sup> Helmut Kramer, “Foreign policy,” in *Contemporary Austrian Politics*, ed. Volkmar Lauber (Boulder: Westview, 1996), 169-170.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>68</sup> Heinz Vetschera, “Austria,” in *The Missing Link: West European Neutrals and Regional Security*, ed. Richard E. Bissel and Curt Gasteyger (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990).

<sup>69</sup> Kramer, “Foreign Policy,” 171.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

commitment to other countries that the membership of the EEC would entail, excluding *a priori* the possibility to maintain neutrality in the case of armed conflicts.

Primary concerns in the governmental circle were the Soviet negative views on the membership of the EEC. Although a neutral state was free to have trade relations as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements with other states, any association with the Common Market under the EEC represented a qualitatively different situation,<sup>71</sup> due to the fact that economic co-operation with the EEC would make it difficult for a neutral state to escape commitments of a politico-military character.<sup>72</sup> This was coupled with the fact that the institutions of the EEC were authorised to pass resolutions with which its members had to comply.<sup>73</sup> Of particular importance, membership of the EEC, according to the Austrian government, would amount to the violation of Article IV of the State Treaty, prohibiting the country from any political or economic unification or *Anschluss* with Germany, one of the major states of EEC.<sup>74</sup>

This concern led Austria, together with other neutral and non-neutral states not interested in the Common Market, to form a European Free Trade Association (EFTA) on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1959 under the Stockholm Convention. Unlike the EEC, EFTA had no authority of supra-national character to restrict sovereignty of its members and did not impose a common external tariff, thereby projecting a more impartial and less discriminating image.<sup>75</sup> Thus, the Austrian government argued for the compatibility of neutrality with EFTA membership.<sup>76</sup>

After membership in the EEC had been viewed as incompatible with Austrian neutrality for a long time, the Austrian attitude began to change at the end of the 1980s under the new grand coalition between the Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs: SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei: ÖVP), which came into power in 1987.<sup>77</sup>

The government was in favour of a full integration of the Austrian economy into the Single European Market and thus for Austria's accession to the EC. On this basis, on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1989,

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<sup>71</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 126-7.

<sup>72</sup> Daniel Tarschys, "Neutrality and the Common Market: the Soviet View," *Cooperation and Conflict* 6 (1971): 72.

<sup>73</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 123.

<sup>74</sup> Kořan, "Austrian Neutrality," 27.

See also Harto Hakovirta, "The Soviet Union and the Varieties of Neutrality in Western Europe," *World Politics: A Quarterly Journal of International Relations* 35 (1983), 565-6.

<sup>75</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 123-4.

<sup>76</sup> Kořan, "Austrian Neutrality," 27.

<sup>77</sup> Nicole Alecu de Flers, *EU Foreign Policy and the Europeanization of Neutral States: Comparing Irish and Austrian Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2012), 94.

Austria applied for EC membership with a reservation clause with regard to Austrian neutrality. In the application, while wishing to fulfil “its legal obligations flowing from its status as a permanently neutral state,” Austria, as a member state, would “continue its neutrality as a specific contribution to the maintenance of peace and security in Europe.”<sup>78</sup> However, the European Commission pointed out in its *avis* that significant problems could result from the future common foreign and security policy for a permanently neutral member state.<sup>79</sup> In connection with this, Austrian authorities were required to give specific assurances “with regard to their legal capacity to undertake obligations entailed by the future common foreign and security policy.”<sup>80</sup> In response, Vienna, in the two *Aides Mémoires* dated November 1991 and June 1992, attempted to assure its commitment by fully and actively taking part in the CFSP and demonstrating solidarity also in the field of foreign and security policy.<sup>81</sup>

At the domestic plane, the initial response by the then Chancellor Franz Vranitzky was a defence of the traditional policy; Austria would risk its reliability if it abolished time-honoured neutrality.<sup>82</sup> Following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, several Austrian politicians began to voice that neutrality either was obsolete or needed to be revised. Still, Vranitzky emphasised that, even though it was necessary to rethink Austria’s neutrality as a foreign and security policy instrument and to limit it to its military content, as of yet no stable new security structure had developed in Europe. Coupled with the positive popular view since 1955 considering neutrality to be a part of Austria’s identity,<sup>83</sup> Vranitzky and the SPÖ argued that neutrality should not be rashly thrown overboard in an era characterised by insecurity and uncertainty.<sup>84</sup>

On the other hand, according to the ÖVP’s foreign policy spokesman in the parliament, Andreas Khol, neutrality had outlived its usefulness as an instrument of national security in Europe and had to be replaced by solidarity.<sup>85</sup> Erhard Busek, ÖVP’s chairman and Vice-Chancellor (1991-1995), considered the maintenance of neutrality as mythologising and

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<sup>78</sup> Op. cit., Jankowitsch, “The Process of European Integration,” 35.

<sup>79</sup> European Commission, *The Challenge of Enlargement: Commission Opinion on Austria’s Application for Membership* (Belgium: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1993), 15-6.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 17-8.

<sup>81</sup> De Flers, *EU Foreign Policy*, 95.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. 94.

<sup>83</sup> Kramer, “Foreign Policy,” 180.

Meyer, “Austria,” 6.

Paul Luif, “Austria: The burdens of History,” in *Small States in World Politics*, ed. Jeanne A.K. Hey (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

<sup>84</sup> Kramer, “Foreign Policy,” 180.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

fossilising the concept. In this regard, Foreign Minister Mock also pleaded for the gradual abandonment of neutrality and for “the step forward from neutrality to solidarity.”<sup>86</sup> According to Mock, aside from economic arguments, national security considerations were in favour of Austria’s accession to the EC, because the country was no longer “in a calm zone between the two blocs,” but was “on the edge of a storm front” as the conflicts in Yugoslavia were unfolding.<sup>87</sup> As a result, “Austria’s security is greater with EC membership than without it,” given the rapid world integration and new security problems such as international crime, migration, refugee flows and environmental problems, which could be dealt with efficiently within the framework of traditional strategies of the nation-state.<sup>88</sup>

On the middle ground, the Secretary of State for Integration and Development Cooperation, Peter Jankowitsch (1990-1992), proposed to maintain neutrality, but with a reinterpretation.<sup>89</sup> In this regard, he attempted to demonstrate the compatibility between Austrian neutrality and solidarity, instead of having to choose one and forsaking the other.

According to his argument, Austrian neutrality, since its inception, had been used for the sake of peace, the very same purpose that the EC aimed to achieve. For instance, during its membership of the Security Council in 1973 and 1974, Austria had a voting record that placed the country very close to other West European democracies, not least those who were already members of the EC, especially with regard to the support of the right of self-determination for emerging Third World nations, campaign against Apartheid and the Smith regime in Southern Rhodesia. Policy events in the Gulf in 1990 and 1991 also demonstrated Austria’s solidarity with international community. Required by the Security Council to go beyond the imposition of economic sanctions against Iraq, Austria rapidly not only took such legislative measures, but also allowed the use of its air and ground space for transit purposes. By this way, Austria gave a clear message that its specific type of neutrality did not stand in the way of concerted international action against violations of international law, demonstrating its commitments as a member of international organisations devoted to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Jankowitsch further argued that this action was not of alliance nature, but seen as a system of collective security neither specifically directed against a country nor against a group of countries, but striving to safeguard and uphold fundamental principles of international legal

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Op. cit., Ibid., 179.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 179-180.

<sup>89</sup> Jankowitsch, “The Process of European Integration,” 35-62.

order.<sup>90</sup> The rule of international law was a fundamental and vital issue for a country which had chosen a legal status as the means of safeguarding its independence. In connection with this, Jankowitsch distinguished between wars as understood in the traditional sense, i.e. the attempt of two or more states to resolve conflicts of national interest by the use of force on one hand, and the means which the community of states deemed necessary in order to counter a serious breach of law endangering international peace and stability on the other. It was in this latter case that solidarity with community of states must prevail over the rule of traditional neutrality with regard to the equal treatment of parties engaged in an armed conflict. This standpoint was also accepted in the government and the parliament as collective security measures, defined as a “police action”.<sup>91</sup>

Likewise, Jankowitsch considered the EC as an anchor of stability, especially in matters of regional peace in Austria’s vital interest in the advent of conflicts in Yugoslavia.<sup>92</sup> Recognising the violation of international law and atrocities of wars with extensive consequence outside the region, Austria should look for closer co-operation with EC because of the prominent role of the latter in Europe.<sup>93</sup> Based on the past neutrality policy of Austria, Jankowitsch also argued that Austria’s external policy has always shared the fundamental values towards a common Western European stance in international politics: the safeguarding of human rights, the reduction of tension through co-operation and mutual confidence, disarmament and the promotion of a liberal system of economic exchanges and solidarity:

“With Austrian security policy and the concept of an EC Common Foreign and Security Policy sharing identical objectives, the participation of neutral Austria in the non-aggressive mechanisms of security envisaged by the future European Union appears quite conceivable.”<sup>94</sup>

In several *aides-memoires* and public statements by members of the government and other top officials, it was affirmed that Austria as a future EC member would work “on the creation and the functioning of a new European security order within the framework of the European

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>91</sup> Kramer, “Foreign Policy,” 178.

Arguably, it was according to these principles that the Austrian Parliament in 1991 revised the Austrian Act on the Export of Military Equipment and the relevant articles of the Penal Code, clarifying that the measures taken within the framework of the collective security system according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter should not be considered a war.

<sup>92</sup> Jankowitsch, “The Process of European Integration,” 55.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 57.

Union and, beyond that, would cooperate in a spirit of solidarity.”<sup>95</sup> Similar to Jankowitsch’s conclusion, the government argued that Austria’s inclusion in the CFSC would not be a serious problem because in recent years its foreign policy position had been strongly and increasingly in agreement with EC countries in the UN, the CSCE and also in bilateral foreign policy.<sup>96</sup>

Membership negotiation was set for 1<sup>st</sup> February 1993. In the opening session in Brussels, Foreign Minister Mock declared that Austria was ready to accept the principles of the European Union and to adopt its *acquis*, although without raising the issue of neutrality at that session.<sup>97</sup> However, in a government statement made in Vienna, it was clarified that “Austria is entering the negotiations as a neutral country and will join as a neutral.”<sup>98</sup> Together with Finland and Sweden, Austria became a member of the EU on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1995.

## **Analysis**

As can be seen, domestic political debates in Austria encompassed those who were in favour and against the retention of neutrality for the Austrian accession to the European Community. At the final negotiation session, the government, while making a statement of commitment to the CFSC, still maintained the term “neutrality” to describe its foreign policy. It may thus be tempted to conclude that Austria considered its neutrality compatible with the EC membership.

A closer analysis suggests that the prominent argument, especially after collapse of the Soviet Union, was in the direction of abandoning neutrality for the sake of solidarity with the European peers. This was largely due to the fact that the threat that had constituted a prerequisite to its neutrality, thereby the restoration of its statehood, was perceived to almost virtually disappear. Nevertheless, security was only one side of the coin of Austrian neutrality. As previously illustrated, Austrian neutrality had overtime become embedded in national psyche and identity associated with peace, the upholding of international law and human rights as well as the prosperity of the Austrian state in the post-War era. As a result, politician could not categorically abandon neutrality all at once for the purpose of

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<sup>95</sup> Kramer, “Foreign Policy,” 179.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*



membership application. This led to the reconceptualisation of neutrality to realign the concept with European solidarity as required by the Commission.

From the historical institutionalist perspective, the difficulty in phasing out neutrality all at once could be explained by the path dependency of neutrality. The decision to adopt this policy and its subsequent usefulness had become locked-in, i.e. institutionalised to the extent that politicians were unable to abandon it without the risk of agitating the public. The stickiness of Austrian neutrality institution was also reinforced by the embedded popular national identity, which in turn would make an alteration from the established path of neutrality too politically costly, at least at the domestic level. What then could explain the politicians' desire to deviate from this path? Again, historical institutionalism gives a sensible account for this. The change to the institution, as Stanivuković points out, is rather attributable to an external factor instead of the actor itself. In this case, the factor in question is the end of the Cold War, an external shock to the persistence of neutrality. Nonetheless, due to the yet unestablished security environment at that time, the external shock did not seem strong enough to demolish the institutional stickiness of neutrality. As a result, the politicians were obliged to sustain neutrality, albeit with redefinition, in order to avoid the political risk of defying the popular opinion.

As Austrian neutrality had an international activist aspect, the government argument in the debate was used to demonstrate this ideological aspect as compatible with the European norms of peace, democracy, human rights, rule of law and liberal economic system. This came with many concrete examples as Vienna did not only actively participated in UN peacekeeping missions, but also offered itself as a middle man for negotiations of conflict solutions and a venue for international organisations set up for peaceful purposes, not to mention the UN, the IAEA and OSCE. This internationalist aspect of Austrian neutrality was realigned to suit with the regional outlook towards the EC membership. Among other things, Austria's voting behaviour in the UN setting was emphasised in the governmental circle to be in the same direction as EC member states. Because of the shared goals of Austrian neutrality and the EC in promoting such norms as peace, human rights, democracy and liberty, neutrality was portrayed compatible with the membership. To reiterate the stance of Secretary of State for Integration and Development Co-operation, Peter Jankowitsch (1990-1992),

“Austria's external policy has always shared the fundamental values towards a common Western European stance in international politics: the safeguarding of human rights, the reduction of tension

through co-operation and mutual confidence, disarmament and the promotion of a liberal system of economic exchanges and solidarity.”<sup>99</sup>

In order to strengthen this framing, collective action was distinguished from alliance or military bloc. In this regard, a military bloc was understood as the attempt of two or more states to resolve conflicts of national interest by the use of force. On the other hand, collective action was argued to be the means which the community of states deemed necessary in order to counter a serious breach of law endangering international peace and stability. As this situation was not considered a *war* in the traditional sense, neutrality was not perceived to be at a high stake. Also, it was in this latter case that solidarity with community of states was argued to have precedence over the rule of traditional neutrality with regard to the equal treatment of parties engaged in an armed conflict. By this redefinition, the Austrian government moved the definition of classical neutrality, i.e. staying passive and giving equal treatment in an interstate conflict, to the one with activist outlook. In turn, this international engagement facilitated the discourses on the reorientation of neutrality with European regionalism because of the shared norms as demonstrated in the previous paragraph.

The attempt to reinterpret neutrality by politicians could also be explained by the theory of rational choice institutionalism. That is, an actor’s behaviour is based on a cost-benefit calculation with the goal of preference maximization within a given institutional context. By not abandoning neutrality, but redefining the concept in such a manner as to demonstrate the compatibility with European norms, the politicians could sustain neutrality, thereby not only avoiding public discontent but also satisfying the EU demands with regard to Austria’s commitment to the future common foreign and security policy.

It could be discerned that the debates about neutrality were undertaken with a clear reference to the European norms with a remarkable concern about its compatibility with the membership, as the sociological institutionalism would explain. In this regard, the rhetoric about solidarity with member states was closely associated with the new reading of Austrian neutrality. Based on the available sources, it could thus be established to a large extent that the redefinition of neutrality occurred in the context of European norms. Incidentally, although not a focus of this thesis, a mechanism identified by Manners is detected in the process: *informational diffusion* whereby the Commission, in its communication to Austria, asked for Austria’s guarantee with regard to its commitment to the common foreign and

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<sup>99</sup> Jankowitsch, “The Process of European Integration,” 57.

security policy. Arguably, this helped to transcend the European norms into the domestic political debates on neutrality.

Last but not least, it would be exaggerated to conclude that the redefinition of neutrality occurred only in the identity sphere. With the looming conflicts in its immediate neighbour Yugoslavia and the influx of immigrants, Austria also felt unsure about its security. Consequently, solidarity with the Community was also argued to be in Vienna's own security interest.

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

## CHAPTER II

# The Swedish Case

On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1990, the Swedish parliament voted by 289 to 28 to apply for membership of the European Community “with the retention of neutrality.”<sup>100</sup> Later on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1991, the government submitted a declaration to the parliament on its view of Sweden’s application and some attached conditions referring to Swedish neutrality and expectations that consideration from Brussels would be paid to the traditional positions of the member states with regard to security matters.<sup>101</sup> Subsequently, Prime Minister Carlsson submitted the application to the Community on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1991 without any qualifications as previously stated in the declaration.<sup>102</sup> Still, domestic debate on membership and neutrality continued.

As in the previous chapter, this chapter firstly investigates the development of Swedish neutrality. After that, focus is turned to the domestic debate concerning membership and its implication on neutrality in order to analyse the content of neutrality in the context of European norms.

### **Swedish neutrality: origin and development**

The root of modern Swedish neutrality can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century after a long period of active and expanding foreign policy. Having ceased to be a great power following the Great Northern War with Russia, Sweden under the reign of King Karl XIV adopted a neutral stance by giving “a formal explanation of my system of strict and independent neutrality” message to the British and Russian governments in the context of the crisis in the

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<sup>100</sup> Bo Hultdt, “Sweden and European Community-building 1945-92,” in *Neutral States and the European Community*, ed. Sheila Harden (Exeter: Brassey’s, 1994), 118.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

Middle East.<sup>103</sup> With the aim to avoid becoming involved in a conflict, this laid the foundation for the principle of “en alliansfri politik syftande till neutralitet i krig”, i.e. “non-participation in alliances in peace time, aiming at neutrality in the event of war”.<sup>104</sup> As will be seen later, this negative definition of neutrality would be filled with positive contents as the course of history developed.

Unlike its Austrian counterpart, Swedish neutrality was not founded on any legal instruments, but political practices. Invited by some powers for several occasions at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to negotiate and conclude a treaty on the recognition of its neutrality, Sweden refused to get itself engaged in that way.<sup>105</sup> According to the extract from the parliament’s response in 1899 to the proposition by a parliamentarian to formalise neutrality, it appeared that the parliament preferred a voluntary and flexible policy of neutrality to the legal status of permanent neutrality:

“The Parliament, rejecting the motion, declares that the Swedish people sincerely desire Sweden and Norway to be able to continue to enjoy the peace without getting involved in the affairs or conflicts of other States. It is convinced that the government will take all favourable occasions to persuade other nations that Sweden and Norway, in case of conflicts between other States, will limit themselves to the safeguarding of neutrality of the two United Kingdoms.”<sup>106</sup>

Such has been the Swedish preference with regard to its neutrality. Arguably, as will be seen later in this section, this flexibility has given the country a large room of manoeuvre in the interpretation of neutrality and foreign policy at large.

In this regard, it happened that Sweden sometimes dropped the word “neutrality” to describe its foreign policy.<sup>107</sup> This is particularly the case of the Swedish accession to the League of Nations.<sup>108</sup> In stark contrast, a neutral state like Switzerland maintained the word

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<sup>103</sup> Kristen Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality* (Uppsala: Ord & Form AB, 1986), 8.

<sup>104</sup> Laura C. Ferreira-Pereira, “Swedish Military Neutrality in the Post-Cold War: ‘Old Habits Die Hard’,” *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 6, no. 3 (2005): 466 - 468.

<sup>105</sup> Stéphanie Dagron, *La neutralité permanente et l’Union européenne* (Baden : Nomos, 2010), 141.

<sup>106</sup> Author’s translation, op. cit., *ibid.*, 142.

« Le Diète, tout en rejetant la motion, déclare que le peuple suédois désire sincèrement que la Suède et la Norvège puissent continuer à jouir de la paix sans s’immiscer dans les affaires ou différends des autres Etats. Elle est convaincue que le gouvernement saisira toutes les occasions favorables pour persuader les nations que la Suède et la Norvège, en cas de différends entre d’autres Etats, se borneront à sauvegarder la neutralité des Royaumes-Unis. »

<sup>107</sup> Stéphanie Dagron, *La neutralité permanente et l’Union européenne* (Baden: Nomos, 2010), 140.

Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, 31.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

“neutrality” and, when applying to join the League, requested and subsequently received exemption from any obligation to take part in military sanctions.<sup>109</sup>

As the League failed to prevent the Italian conquest of Ethiopia in the spring of 1936 because of the inconsistency in its sanctions against Rome, Stockholm came to realise the inefficiency of the League system in solving or even alleviating the security problems of small states. This led to the Swedish refusal to participate in any further sanctions under the umbrella of the League in any circumstances. In this connection, Sweden’s interest in its Nordic neighbours for security co-operation was raised.

Rejecting the proposals for a Nordic defence alliance as excessively far-reaching, the then Swedish Foreign Minister Rickard Sandler (1932-1939) instead agreed to examine whether there were “*limited* areas or questions where a certain degree of coordination between the armed forces of all or some of the Nordic countries might enhance our chances of avoiding war”.<sup>110</sup> As Sandler further put it, this Nordic co-operation aimed to prevent a Nordic country from being dragged into a bloc of great power:

“No power shall count on having us, or any of us, on its side. No power shall count on having us, or any of us, against it. The Nordic region shall be erased from the preparatory calculations of general staff, whether pro or contra.”<sup>111</sup>

At this stage, the Swedish reservation to participate in a Nordic defence alliance manifested its attempt to preserve its neutrality to a certain degree. Even in the aftermath of the Second World War when Sweden showed a favour for a defence union, the then Foreign Minister Östen Undén, in his parliamentary statements in 1945 and 1948, emphasised that Nordic co-operation did not constitute the kind of “bloc”, but rather represented a regional group of states which worked to maintain peace and international standing:

“The Swedish government was interested in the possibility that the three countries<sup>112</sup> might form a defence union and act in relation to other states as an independent group untrammelled by alliance with any third party. We regarded the aim of a Scandinavian defence union as being to strengthen Scandinavia’s ability to resist an attack on any of its three constituent states, to keep them outside any general war that might break out and in peacetime to remain aloof from other

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*, 34-35.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

power blocs and thus to prevent to the greatest possible extent that our territories are drawn into military calculations of the great powers.”<sup>113</sup>

During the Second World War, the Soviet invasion of Finland in November 1939 and the ensuing Winter War put the credibility of Swedish neutrality to test with domestic and foreign challenges.<sup>114</sup> On the domestic plane, the Swedish government was faced with strong pressures from wide circles of the public to come to Finland’s aid, while, in the external arena, Sweden was forced to deal with the Allies’ demand for permission to transfer forces through Swedish territory to Finland. Whether or not the Swedish government was able to successfully withstand the domestic pressures is controversial. While Efraim Karsh was in the affirmative position,<sup>115</sup> Torbjörn Norman<sup>116</sup> argued that Sweden, adopting a non-belligerent status, organised considerable aid for Finland and even depleted its own stores to supply the victimised neighbour.

Notwithstanding its ability to reject the Allies’ demand, the Swedish government came to be aware of the delicate position in which the war had placed it, and from then on vigorously acted to achieve a ceasefire between Finland and the USSR as quickly as possible.<sup>117</sup> To this end, the Swedes, on the one hand, attempted to alleviate Finnish fears regarding a settlement with the USSR by promising Helsinki an increase in economic aid after the war; on the other, they warned the Soviets of their intention to intervene directly in the war if a settlement was not quickly reached.<sup>118</sup> Arguably, while it was unclear that the Swedish effort played a decisive role in persuading the Soviets to agree to the ceasefire, Stockholm nevertheless did exert a measure of influence on the decision to cease hostilities in this regard. This could be considered an active element of Swedish neutrality, offering tertiary services to parties at war.

As the Second World War further developed, Swedish neutrality was once again challenged. In this regard, Sweden allegedly perpetrated a violation of its neutrality. From July 1940 to August 1943, Stockholm permitted the regular transfer of German troops and equipment from Norway across Swedish territory to Germany.<sup>119</sup> This controversial activity

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<sup>113</sup> Op. cit, Wählback, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, 78-79.

<sup>114</sup> Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London: Routledge, 1988), 39-41.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Torbjörn Norman, “Stages in Swedish Neutrality,” in *Neutrality in History/ La Neutralité dans l’histoire*, ed. Jukka Nevakivi (Helsinki: Tiedekirja, 1993), 305.

See also Stéphanie Dagron, *La neutralité permanente et l’Union européenne* (Baden: Nomos, 2010), 139.

Stockholm provided Helsinki with raw materials, credits and arms.

<sup>117</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, 39.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 55-57.

See also Dagron, *La neutralité permanente*, 139.

took place within the framework of a Swedish-German agreement dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 1940 in the form of an exchange of notes whereby German replacement troops being shuttled to and from Norway could travel via Sweden. The *unarmed* German soldiers were transported by special trains carrying military equipment. According to the Swedes, the guiding principle of this arrangement was that quantitative parity would be maintained between those entering and leaving Norway, to the effect that the agreement would appear to only involve force replacements. Nevertheless, within two months, the capacity of the arrangement was expanded. The frequency of troop train movements through Swedish territory was increased, and the soldiers defined as “soldiers on leave” would be allowed to bear arms. During the first half year of the agreement, approximately 130,000 German soldiers were replaced in Norway, considerably strengthening the military forces both in terms of equipment and other supplies.<sup>120</sup> Beyond the limit of this arrangement, the Swedish authorities occasionally authorised the German transport of additional forces on an *ad hoc* basis through their territory.<sup>121</sup> In addition, Sweden granted significant assistance to the German war effort by allowing the transfer of a German division, with arms, across its territory from Norway to Finland.<sup>122</sup> Learning the British intention to bomb the trains with German soldiers and arms, Stockholm reinforced its air defence units in the region of potential danger and even considered suspending the standard procedure of firing warning shots for foreign aircraft encroaching upon Swedish airspace.<sup>123</sup> Ostensibly, these constituted a proof of Sweden’s determination to adopt military measures to prevent the violation of its neutrality. However, as Karsh put it in a paradoxical wording, “this instance indicated the Swedish readiness to employ force in defence of a belligerent that was violating its neutrality, against another belligerent attempting to prevent this violation.”<sup>124</sup>

In response to the criticism of the Swedish deviation from the international law of neutrality, the Swedish government was of the view that this did not conflict with international law.<sup>125</sup> When the Norwegian government-in-exile in London and the British government protested the Swedish concession to Germany, they referred to the stipulations in the Hague Convention on land warfare forbidding the passage of belligerent troops across the

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<sup>120</sup> A.H. Hicks, “Sweden,” in *The World after the Peace Conference : being an epilogue to the "History of the Peace Conference of Paris", and a prologue to the "Survey of International Affairs, 1920-1923,"* ed. Arnold J. Toynbee (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1965), 184-6.

<sup>121</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 56.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>125</sup> Wählback, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, 49.



land territories of neutral states.<sup>126</sup> Stockholm replied that these regulations were not probably meant to refer to the transport of belligerent troops across neutral territory to an occupied area where hostilities had ceased; neither could soldiers on leave be equated with units that were about to be sent into battle.<sup>127</sup> Notwithstanding, this alleged flaw in Swedish neutrality would emerge again in the domestic debate on neutrality and EC membership for the forsaking of neutrality.

Following the Second World War, Sweden was in the process of considering its membership of the United Nations. On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1945, the government under the leadership of the Social Democratic Party's Foreign Minister Östen Undén (1945-1962) declared:

“We are prepared to join a collective security organisation and in the event of a future conflict to refrain from upholding neutrality to the extent required of us according to the statutes of the organisation.”<sup>128</sup>

Notwithstanding, in case of a tendency for the great powers to divide into two camps within the organisation, “our policy must be not to allow ourselves to be forced into such a grouping or bloc formation.”<sup>129</sup> It was further pointed out that the people of Sweden must “on account of both their vital interests as well as for idealistic reasons devoutly with that no political division of states into opposing groups should take place.”<sup>130</sup>

As the Cold War developed, the debate on security policy became increasingly keener in Sweden. In a statement of 4<sup>th</sup> February 1948, the government reiterated its preparedness to fulfil its obligations under the UN Charter vis-à-vis the collective security system. However,

“If the new security organisation is undermined by the political formation of blocs or even paralysed in its capacity to take action, our country must be free to choose the path of neutrality.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Hague Convention (V) Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land:

Art. 2. Belligerents are forbidden to move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral Power.

Art. 4. Corps of combatants cannot be formed nor recruiting agencies opened on the territory of a neutral Power to assist the belligerents.

<sup>127</sup> Wählback, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, 49.

<sup>128</sup> Op. cit., Norman, “Stages in Swedish Neutrality,” 306.

<sup>129</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

In other words, it could be inferred that the Swedish statement of international solidarity was qualified by its persistent need to avoid being drawn into any bloc of great power.

In the face of the growing East-West conflict and after Finland had signed with the Soviet Union the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in April 1948, the proposal for a Scandinavian defence alliance again came to the surface. Foreign Minister Östen Undén proposed in May 1948 an alliance between Sweden, Norway and Denmark in the form of a defence union of Nordic neutrality. Oslo took the position that a Scandinavian defence union could not be a satisfactory solution to Norway's security problems unless it was linked to the broader security framework of Atlantic Alliance.<sup>132</sup> In contrast, the Swedish government insisted that the defence union had to be an independent, non-aligned grouping and this excluded military co-operation with third parties. This led to the agreement between the three countries that there was no sufficient foundation for a defence union.<sup>133</sup> As it turned out, on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1949, Norway and Denmark became NATO members. The disintegration of Nordic security policy cooperation became a reality, resulting in Sweden being isolated.<sup>134</sup> This isolation would later be brought in domestic debate on EC membership, accusing neutrality as a cause of Swedish isolation.

Consequently, this situation contributed to Sweden becoming a strongly armed buffer zone of a non-alignment between Denmark and Norway associated with NATO on one hand and Finland under the security treaty with the USSR on the other, a security policy pattern termed as the Nordic Balance.

During his long period in office, Undén further developed Swedish neutrality by adding some activist contents. While his conservative critics expressed a preference for the description of Sweden's position in the negative term as *non-aligned* in order to stay away from a conflict in the future, Undén emphasised the inadequacy of this term and opted for *neutral*.<sup>135</sup> According to his understanding of neutrality, not only was it necessary to refrain from any commitment that might impair Sweden's status as a neutral in wartime, it was also of paramount importance to pursue a policy that inspired and sustained the confidence of the antagonistic blocs in Sweden's ability and determination to remain a neutral in case of war.<sup>136</sup> This was manifested in the increase in armed forces,<sup>137</sup> which were not only for the sake of

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<sup>132</sup> Wählback, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, 79.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>134</sup> Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality," 307.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> However, there were certain difficulties which began to be evident in the late 1960s. In 1968, the defence plan adopted by the government indicated a levelling-off and the *de facto* reduction of Swedish

the credibility of its neutrality, but also used for UN peacekeeping operations considered to be of its own security interest. This active participation helped to make the Swedish neutrality universal in the eyes of the organisation's members, bringing the UN to rely on its contribution in many instances for the purposes of mediation and reconciliation, thereby proving the useful functions and the compatibility of neutrality with international peace maintenance.<sup>138</sup>

Given the Cold War threat right through Europe between the two opposing blocs, another main theme in Undén's non-partisan foreign policy was that Sweden should follow an independent, objectively charted course between East and West without ties, superfluous censures or professions of sympathy, emphasising that foreign policy connections should not be allowed "to be influenced or defined by the economic and political regimes prevailing in other countries."<sup>139</sup>

In practice, this was translated in Sweden's condemnations of both the US and the USSR. While refraining from any physical engagement in conflicts and taking care to participate only in collective actions not directed against any specific state, in the *declarative* sphere Sweden allowed itself to take a stand in line with its views even in conflicts involving the superpowers.<sup>140</sup> For instance, Sweden not only voted in favour of a series of resolutions against the USSR. While condemning the USSR, Sweden took a similar stance towards the USA to demonstrate its impartiality. Previous research has concluded that this was an important way of upholding the credibility of neutrality. In criticising the United States, Sweden was signaling its neutral position to the Soviet Union.<sup>141</sup>

This came with a concrete example during the Vietnam War. Sweden under the leadership of Prime Minister Olof Palme (1969-1986) of the Social Democratic Party recognised the North Vietnamese government and even extended humanitarian aid to North Vietnam.<sup>142</sup> Moreover, Palmed gave a harsh criticism of the US policies by referring the US bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong to Nazi war crimes.<sup>143</sup> This was in contrast with the reticence of his

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armaments. This was considered to be a result of economic problems as it was no longer possible to maintain an ambitious military programme while at the same time continuing to expand the welfare state. The 1968 plan became the starting point of a continuing process of reductions in military spending up to 1987. This did not occur without the concern of Sweden's ability to uphold the credibility of its neutrality. For more information, please see Huldt, "Sweden and European Community-Building," 109.

<sup>138</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 120.

<sup>139</sup> Op. cit., Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality," 307.

<sup>140</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 120.

<sup>141</sup> Ulrika Möller and Ulf Bjereld, "From Nordic Neutrals to Post-Neutral Europeans: Differences in Finnish and Swedish Policy Transformation," *Cooperation and Conflict* 45(4) (2010): 376.

<sup>142</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 121.

<sup>143</sup> Mellbourn, "Varieties of Non-Alignment," 134.

predecessor Undén and the restrained attitudes of Finland, Switzerland and Austria. On the other hand, Palme condemned invasion of Hungary and calling for the end of intervention, but also provided humanitarian assistance to Hungarian refugees.<sup>144</sup> Later, a similar stance was taken by the Swedish side vis-à-vis the Soviet suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968 and called the Czechoslovak leaders of the early 1970s “creatures of dictatorship”.<sup>145</sup> When the Polish opposition openly organised a union movement of Solidarity in 1980s, there was a considerable support from the Swedish Social Democrats.<sup>146</sup>

Also, by siding with and providing generous development assistance to the newly liberated Third World, Olof Palme strengthened Sweden’s national autonomy vis-à-vis the Western and Eastern blocs. His international vision was to identify with small states, their right to sovereignty and independent development.<sup>147</sup> Assignments as mediator and as a spokesman of small independent states in a bipolar world order also sent a message to international and domestic opponents that Sweden contributed actively to international peace and security.<sup>148</sup> Palme further issued a declaration to the effect that there should be neither expectations nor apprehensions that Sweden, even under strong external pressure, would relinquish its neutrality,

“Our declared intention is to refuse to abandon the policy of neutrality, even under powerful external pressure and never to become an outpost for any military alliance.”<sup>149</sup>

The Swedish wish to stay autonomous vis-à-vis the East and West was also the origin of the Swedish *exceptionalism* as an alternative between Capitalism and Communism. Undén’s successor, Olof Palme, further integrated the role of Sweden in the world with the continued furtherance of the Swedish Social Democratic model of economic and social development as the middle way between those two opposing camps. In other words, this Swedish course of neutrality was not only chosen out of realistic security concerns, but also had a higher

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<sup>144</sup> A.B. Fox, “The Small States of Western Europe in the United Nations,” *International Organization* 19 (1965): 776.

In the Finnish case, Helsinki was in favour of the resolution to dispatch UN observers to Hungary and to extend humanitarian assistance to the refugees, but refrained from voting for the resolution condemning the USSR. *Ibid.*, 779.

<sup>145</sup> Mellbourn, “Varieties of Non-Alignment,” 135.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>148</sup> Möller, “From Nordic Neutrals,” 376.

<sup>149</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Norman, “Stages in Swedish Neutrality,” 309.

ideological value as such.<sup>150</sup> This normative side was further strengthened by the economic success of the welfare state mythologised with the long peaceful existence of the country outside the wars as a result of its adopted neutrality. As could be inferred, neutrality as previously understood in foreign and security terms became closely associated with social policy. In connection with this, neutrality weighed heavily on the emotional scales of the population with the support of virtually all citizens on the basis of the idea of peace, prosperity and social welfare, culminating in a dogma and a major component of national identity.<sup>151</sup> With the penetration of neutrality into the national consciousness and the survival of the country during the World Wars contributed to the concept, neutrality provided an irrefutable argument to the extent that to question neutrality would amount to a political ruin of that party.<sup>152</sup> When Sweden was later in the process of accession to the EU, this exceptionalist side of neutrality would be put to test during the debates on EC membership.

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

### **Summary of Swedish neutrality**

As presented thus far, a closer analysis reveals that Swedish neutrality was oriented around two principles: to convince other states of its intention and capability to have its neutrality respected on one hand, and to maintain freedom in the definition of its neutrality even at the expense of credibility. This was translated into a mixture of alternate choices between isolationism and international solidarity.

Showing the trend of gradual shift from undifferentiated neutrality in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the one with activist content and international outlook, Swedish neutrality, nevertheless, was instilled with the precautions against the risks of being dragged into either camp of the superpowers in a given period of time. As a result, Stockholm took side with small states, mostly newly independent ones in the Third World, and the areas of UN collective actions for Swedish physical engagement were largely limited by those not directed against either of the superpowers. Also, when there was a sign of power division in the universal organisations,

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<sup>150</sup> Anders Mellbourn, "Varieties of Non-Alignment and Solidarity: Swedish Foreign and Security Policy since 1945," in *Sweden-Austria: Two Roads to Neutrality and a Modern Welfare State*, ed. Oliver Rathkolb (London: Transaction, 2008), 135.

<sup>151</sup> Ferreira-Pereira, "Swedish Military Neutrality," 468.

See also Malmberg, *Neutrality*.

<sup>152</sup> Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality," 311.

Sweden usually made a reservation to return to neutrality or revised the plan for the building of a Nordic neutrality defence union as in the late 1930s, 1945 and 1948. In other words, there were attempts to keep distance from conflicts of power politics in the otherwise seemingly international engagement outlook. As could be induced, Swedish neutrality was not only associated with security perception of traditional threats at the time when interstate conflicts prevailed in its vicinity, but also for the sake of national autonomy vis-à-vis the superpowers.

It would be a mistake to overlook the ideological side of Swedish neutrality. Under the long rule of the Social Democrats after the end of the Second World War, Swedish neutrality became connected not only with the Swedish survival through the two World Wars, but also the success and prosperity of the welfare state considered to be the middle way between Capitalism and Communism. In the name of neutrality, Stockholm also promoted international law and human rights especially in the Third World. All of these ideological aspects of neutrality became embedded in the Swedish identity.

As will be seen later in the next section, both security and ideological dimensions of Swedish neutrality, along with its alleged flaws associated with the controversial practices during the Second World War, would be used in the debates both in favour and against EC membership. While the usefulness of neutrality as a security tool became increasingly irrelevant due to the end of the Cold War and the emergence of non-traditional threats of transboundary character, politicians nevertheless found it difficult to abandon neutrality altogether because of the identity aspect embedded in the national psyche of the Swedes. To elaborate on these issues, it is now time to turn to the debate on Swedish membership and neutrality.

### **Sweden and EC membership: debates on neutrality**

As in the Austrian case, membership of the EC was inconceivable before the end of the Cold War due to the perceived incompatibility with neutrality to participate in the supranational European co-operation aiming at political integration in the mist of ongoing East-West conflicts.<sup>153</sup> Together with other neutrals, Sweden joined the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1959. Later Stockholm received a special free trade arrangement in 1972 with the EC, its vital trading partner. However, as the Community had been expanding, with Sweden's EFTA peers Britain, Denmark and Ireland becoming members of the EC,

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<sup>153</sup> Gunnar Lassinantti, "Small States and Alliances: A Swedish Perspective," in *Small States and Alliances*, eds. Erich Reiter and Heinz Gartner (New York: Physica-Verlag, 2001), 103.

Stockholm began to feel isolated. Coupled with domestic economic problems<sup>154</sup> and the changing political landscape after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Sweden started to consider the membership seriously, intensifying the domestic discussion on, among other things, to what extent Swedish neutrality could be combined with the European integration.

In a governmental statement of 7<sup>th</sup> March 1990, while stressing the significant implications of the dramatic change in the Communist camp, Ingvar Carlsson, Olof Palme's Social Democrat successor, affirmed the classic Swedish neutrality formula: "non-participation in alliances in peacetime with a view to neutrality in the event of war," which Carlsson considered an unsurmountable obstacle to Sweden's membership.<sup>155</sup> To reaffirm this position, Carlsson further stated that,

"This policy of neutrality is a great asset, especially in times of unpredictability and great changes. This policy will be pursued purposefully and consistently."<sup>156</sup>

A few months later, the official Swedish position vis-à-vis the EC began to change in the midst of economic crisis. In the autumn of 1990, capital began to flow out of the country at an alarming speed with decreasing confidence in the government, both in business circles and in the electorate in general.<sup>157</sup> The finance minister suggested that Sweden needed to accede to the European Community in order to find a long-term solution to economic and employment problems.<sup>158</sup> In this regard, the government submitted an economic crisis programme, one paragraph of which stated:

"The government will work for a new decision by Parliament about the policy towards Europe, which more clearly and in more positive wording clarifies Sweden's ambitions to become a member of the European Community."<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> By the mid-1980s, more than half of Swedish trade was with the EC, in comparison with 20 per cent with EFTA. The debate showed a growing concern for Sweden's economic future in a Europe increasingly integrated in economic terms in the long run. This gained more relevance as Swedish industrial sector showed a tendency to move operations and productions out of Sweden into the EC area. For more information, please see Huldt, "Sweden and Community-Building," 115-6.

<sup>155</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*, 117.

Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality," 307.

<sup>156</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> Huldt, "Sweden and European Community-building," 118.

<sup>158</sup> Mellbourn, "Varieties of Non-Alignment," 137.

<sup>159</sup> Huldt, "Sweden and European Community-building," 119.

With the increasing rate of unemployment and inflation, the Social Democrat Congress finally passed a resolution in favour of membership of the EC.<sup>160</sup> Informed by the government on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1990 that “the Community’s co-operation on foreign and security policy might not be of such a nature that it entails binding defence policy, the parliament decided with a substantial majority on 12<sup>th</sup> December to ask the government to submit an official application for Swedish membership of the EC “with continued adherence to Swedish neutrality.”<sup>161</sup> However, Prime Minister Carlsson, on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1991, submitted the application without any reservation with regard to neutrality.

As could be inferred, at this stage, the character of the decision to apply for membership was highly symbolic without notable references to security or grand European projects.<sup>162</sup> Rather, membership was deemed a pragmatic instrument necessary for Sweden to solve its very practical acute problems in the economy. The situation would change later under the leadership of the non-socialist party.

When the Conservative came into power following the general election in September 1991, Prime Minister Carl Bildt underlined Sweden’s transition from a reluctant to an eager European. In his statement of 18<sup>th</sup> November 1991,

“The policy of neutrality could no longer be adequately applied as a description of the foreign and security policies we wish to pursue within the European framework. We will pursue a policy with a clear European identity.”<sup>163</sup>

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

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

This so-called 1992 formula was also approved by the Swedish parliament: non-participation in military alliances, with the aim of making possible for our country to be neutral in the event

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Norman, “Stages in Swedish Neutrality,” 310.

This came with an opposition from the Environmentalists and the former Communist Party or the Left Party.

<sup>162</sup> Mellbourn, “Varieties of Non-Alignment,” 137.

<sup>163</sup> Op. cit., Norman, “Stages in Swedish Neutrality,” 310.



of war in our immediate vicinity.<sup>164</sup> According to Bildt, the expression “in our immediate vicinity” meant that once Sweden moved outside its neighbourhood, it was free not to be neutral as occurred in the case of the Bosnian War, in which Stockholm took part in peacekeeping operations under the NATO umbrella.<sup>165</sup> As could be discerned, this amounted to the shift in co-operation framework from the universal one under the UN to the regional one under NATO to achieve the same purpose. However, in case of aggression against Finland, the Baltic States, Ukraine and Belarus, which were considered to be neighbouring countries, Sweden *should* opt to be neutral,<sup>166</sup> because of the relatively much closer geographical position vis-à-vis Russia.

The Bildt government frequently pointed out that the range of possible conflicts in which it would be natural for Sweden to declare full neutrality under international law was becoming limited.<sup>167</sup> In a number of statements between 1992-3 and notably in a speech at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1993, Bildt argued that international legal neutrality was not a self-evident choice for Sweden if the Balts, in its vicinity, were threatened militarily.<sup>168</sup> In this regard, Bildt affirmed in his statement dated 26<sup>th</sup> February 1992 that,

“There was a strong Swedish interest in participating fully in the expansion of security and foreign policy co-operation both within the European Union and the CSCE, with the object of building up a European security order which functions smoothly. This means that the European identity in our security and foreign policy will gradually become increasingly important.”<sup>169</sup>

As can be seen, Bildt pursued a membership for Sweden, which had been regarded, under the long term in office of the Social Democrats, as antithetical to Swedish identity because of the perception of the EC as conservative, capitalist, colonial and catholic.<sup>170</sup> While maintaining the core of non-military alignment, Bildt argued that neutrality was no longer an apt description of Swedish security policy in the context of the EC.<sup>171</sup> Still, he reserved the

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<sup>164</sup> Laura C. Ferreira-Pereira, “The European Union’s Military Non-Allied States in the Post-Cold War Security Architecture” (PhD diss., University of Kent): 95-108.

<sup>165</sup> Ferreira-Pereira, “Swedish Military Neutrality,” 469.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. Ferreira-Pereira’s exact word choice is “could”.

<sup>167</sup> Malmberg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden*, 177.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Op. cit., Norman, “Stages in Swedish Neutrality,” 310.

<sup>170</sup> Lee Miles, *Sweden and European Integration* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), 187-9.

Christine Aigus, “Transformed beyond Recognition? The Politics of Post-Neutrality,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 46(3) (2011): 378.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

position of Sweden to be neutral in the vicinity. In other words, while not phrased out altogether, the concept of Sweden neutrality was largely qualified by a certain condition.

This seemingly contradictory formula of neutrality was arguably due to the identity aspect of Swedish neutrality. Swedish neutrality had established itself in the national consciousness associating the concept with the Swedish survival during the two World Wars and the ensuing prosperity of the country. Additionally, during the long period of Social Democratic rule for more than three decades, social welfare and neutrality came to appear closely interconnected as the two sides of the same coin, with neutrality being elevated to a sanctified dogma as a means of political ostracism.<sup>172</sup> Therefore, to declare neutrality completely obsolete would cause political ruin to that party, even with rational arguments about a changing Europe.<sup>173</sup>

In order to remove the Social Democratic norms associated with neutrality, Bildt divested neutrality previously understood as a moral actor in international affairs and equated the concept with isolationism in the age of interdependence and non-traditional threats.<sup>174</sup> During his term in office, Bildt distanced Sweden from the neutral and non-aligned group in the UN and oriented its UN voting patterns with the EC at the expense of solidarity with developing states.<sup>175</sup> For many non-socialist politicians, previous active internationalism was merely an emotional compensation for a bad state to feel good about itself.<sup>176</sup>

Disengagement with Swedish traditional neutrality was further intensified by the discourse of the false myth of neutrality, that no neutral state was really neutral.<sup>177</sup> As demonstrated in the previous section, Sweden, arguably, deviated from neutrality by allowing the transit of German troops through its territory and later arranging to receive assistance from NATO in the event of an attack against Sweden. This alleged flaw of Swedish neutrality was integrated into a discourse for the abandonment of neutrality altogether. That is, if the state was never really neutral, then neutrality had a false relationship to the identity of the nation-state.<sup>178</sup> The revelations of the Swedish co-operation with belligerents in the Second World War were even made by the opposition party's former Finance Minister Kjell Olof Feldt.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Norman, "Stages in Swedish Neutrality," 311.

See also Mikael af Malmborg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden* (Wiltshire: Palgrave, 2001).

<sup>173</sup> Buldt, "Sweden and European Community-Building," 124.

<sup>174</sup> Aigus, "Transformed beyond Recognition?" 378.

<sup>175</sup> Ulf Bjereld, "Sweden's Foreign Policy after the End of the Cold War – From Neutrality to Freedom of Action," in *New Thinking in International Relations: Swedish Perspectives*, eds. R. Lindahl and G. Sjöstedt (Stockholm: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 1995), 183-94.

<sup>176</sup> Ann-Sofie Dahl, "Activist Sweden: The Last Defender of Non-Alignment," in *Activism and (Non)Alignment*, eds. Ann-Sofie Dahl and Norman Hilmer (Stockholm: Utrikespolitiska Institutet), 141-2.

<sup>177</sup> Bjereld, "Sweden's Foreign Policy," 379.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Buldt, "Sweden and European Community-Building," 133.

Criticising the Bildt government for having too light-heartedly abandoned traditional Swedish neutrality, the Social Democrats conditioned membership upon Sweden's status quo; "naturally membership is favoured if we can only keep Sweden as it has been up to now."<sup>180</sup> In other words, this was to ask the question "whether it will be possible to maintain Sweden as we know it *without* EC participation."<sup>181</sup> As much of the argument from those opposed to the membership assumed that only by staying out would it be possible to maintain Swedish welfare, freedom and independence as had been a historic achievement of the party for more than 50 years during its terms in office. Likewise, Lars Werner, the leader of the Left Party was of the view that membership would imply giving up neutrality, while Birger Schlaug, spokesman for the Environmentalists, noted that Sweden would be giving up its voice in the world and that the country would now become a member of a military pact.<sup>182</sup>

In its *avis* on the Swedish application, the Commission urged that, during the negotiations over membership, the Swedes should clarify their willingness to make a commitment to a common security policy ultimately involving a common defence. In response, the Bildt government declared that Sweden had already accepted all the provisions and obligations arising from the Maastricht Treaty with no difficulties for the country to be a party to EC security and foreign policy "such as we know it today."<sup>183</sup> This was largely due to the fact that the Community had not so far come to a common term with regard to common defence policy, making it "impossible for Sweden to take a stand on the issue when its significance was not yet clear," as Bildt put it.<sup>184</sup> Nevertheless, the prime minister no longer used "neutrality" to define Swedish security policy in order to be prepared for the change in the country's security policy in accordance with the changing European situation.

Bildt's unqualified response to the Commission with regard to neutrality sparked another domestic debate. Carlsson reaffirmed his position that "non-alignment remains despite the EC" and "we will not become members of any military alliances in the foreseeable future."<sup>185</sup> In addition, Carlsson's former Finance Minister, Kjell Olof Feldt, expressed deep doubts about the compatibility of membership with continued neutrality as it had been known in

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<sup>180</sup> Op. cit., Buldt, "Sweden and European Community-Building," 125.

<sup>181</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*, 132.

Swedish foreign and security since 1945.<sup>186</sup> In this regard, he criticised Bildt for sending a mixed message to the Swedish people and to the world at large.<sup>187</sup>

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1992, the former Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sverker Åström, one of the most prominent advocates of Swedish neutrality, spoke out in favour of defence co-operation with the Community as a “unique opportunity, after the demise of neutrality, to strengthen the defence of our freedom and peace.”<sup>188</sup> Flatly stating the incompatibility of EC membership with previous conceptions of Swedish neutrality, he pointed out to the changing strategic position of Sweden after the Cold War, co-operation with the Community now opening up new possibilities. The vanishing credibility of Swedish neutrality necessitated a total consideration of Swedish foreign policy choices.<sup>189</sup>

Returning to power in 1994, the Social Democrats under Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson brought Sweden into the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1995. However, this came with a partial retreat from the reorientation of its predecessor, with the announcement that Sweden should no longer only engage in Europe and the Baltic Sea region, but *again* deal more with the Third World and UN.<sup>190</sup>

Before turning to the analysis section, it would be interesting to summarise how a political party changed its position vis-à-vis neutrality overtime. In 1920, during the debate over the membership of the League of Nations, it was the Social Democrats that were in favour of international co-operation and collective security, while opposition was found in the Conservatives’ line of argument, advocating Swedish nationalism, traditional neutrality and unilateral defence over international engagement. However, the positions swapped during the debate on EC membership. International outlook was the position of the Conservatives, while the Social Democrats adopted an attitude against common foreign and security policy for the sake of neutrality.

## Analysis

As could be discerned, the domestic political debate revealed that, irrespective of parties, neutrality was viewed incompatible with membership. The Conservative was of the view that

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 132-3.

<sup>187</sup> For more discussion on this two-level game theory, please see Karen Devine, “Neutrality and the Development of the European Union’s Common Security and Defence Policy: Compatible or Competing,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 46(3) (2011).

<sup>188</sup> Op. Cit., Bildt, “Sweden and European Community-Building,” 133.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>190</sup> Malmberg, *Neutrality and State-Building in Sweden*, 177.

neutrality was no longer an appropriate term to define Sweden's foreign and security policy in order to pursue European identity and security interests. Likewise, the Social Democrats and those opposing membership argued for the continuation of neutrality, which would be lost once Stockholm was in the Community. It could thus be expected that neutrality was perceived antithetical vis-à-vis membership. In turn, this leads to the assumption that Swedish neutrality was not reinterpreted to demonstrate its compatibility with European norms to a large extent.

Besides security needs and concerns to stay outside great power conflicts at its inception, Swedish neutrality was later largely invested with ideational content. Given Stockholm's emphasis on international peace and human rights in UN framework, it may be tempted to conclude that Swedish neutrality could absorb European norms without much difficulty. However, this is not the case due to some other ideological aspects associated with Swedish neutrality.

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

This distinct identity associated with neutrality, in turn, constituted the main hindrance for the Swedish neutrality to be interpreted in such a manner as to demonstrate compatibility with membership, since national autonomy would come to no sense if independence in decision-making would be largely constrained by supranational power of the Community. Furthermore, because of its isolationist implication with regard to the West, including the Community, Swedish neutrality, as could be seen from the debate, would not allow a great extent of solidarity from the Swedish side with other member states. Also, given the colonialist status of member states, the Community was perceived to have adopted the colonial cause, which was against the ideological aspect of Swedish neutrality in favour of the independence of Third

World countries. In addition, as a middle way of welfare state, an alternative to Capitalism and Communism, this exceptionalist aspect of Swedish neutrality stood distant from the Capitalism-oriented Community. Because of these reasons, membership and neutrality were antithetical to each other, and the absorption of European norms into Swedish neutrality was thus hardly conceivable.

However, in pursuing the membership, neutrality could not be phased out altogether, arguably because of its national identity aspect. Throughout the two World Wars, the Swedes associated neutrality with the country's survival without devastating effects. This was subsequently tied with the Swedish prosperity and the success of the welfare state for almost five decades. This led to the controversial reinterpretation of neutrality, resulting in the so-called 1992 formula. Still, the import of European norms into the concept was invisible. According to the 1992 formula, Sweden would not adopt neutrality in conflicts outside its immediate vicinity as demonstrated in the case of the Bosnian War. In this regard, Stockholm dispatched troops alongside NATO, whose members included virtually all of Western European states. At first glance, this may lead to the conclusion that neutrality was reinterpreted to demonstrate its compatibility with European norms of peace and human rights. However, the analysis of this thesis suggests the otherwise, affirming that Swedish neutrality was still perceived unsuitable with European norms. Had it been the case, neutrality should have been articulated in such a manner that it was fully in line with such a mission. It was not neutrality as such that allowed such an operation, but the reconsideration of foreign and security policy as a whole.

This incident simply reaffirms the relevant role of the path dependency in limiting alternative interpretations of neutrality. A set of policy associated with neutrality during the Cold War had become locked-in and embedded in national identity to the extent that politicians were unable to forsake neutrality altogether without arousing public discontent. At the same time, institutional choices of neutrality during the membership application did not allow the concept to completely absorb European norms in order to demonstrate its compatibility, i.e. to manifest that Sweden could still be a good member with neutrality sustained. This dilemma could seem to explain the inception of the 1992 formula, merely a confusing message of the government's aspiration to abandon neutrality while appeasing the public of the continuation of this policy. In a broader perspective, the external shock to the institution of Swedish neutrality could be attributed not only to the changing political climate, but also to the illusion of concept and the economic problems, allowing the reconsideration

and the modification of the time-honoured policy, which, otherwise, could have not been endogenously changed by the actor itself.

It could be discerned that, as in the Austrian case, the debates about neutrality in Sweden were undertaken with a notable reference to the European norms and identity and with a remarkable concern about its compatibility with the membership, as the sociological institutionalism would explain. However, unlike the Austrian case, the rhetoric about solidarity with member states was formulated in separation from Swedish neutrality. In other words, solidarity was not integrated in the new concept of neutrality as such. Still, the correlation between the European norms and the reformulation of Swedish neutrality is found, with the latter perceived incompatible with the former, leading to the confusing 1992 formula as explained in the previous paragraph. Incidentally, although not a focus of this thesis, a mechanism identified by Manners is also detected in the process as in the Austrian case: *informational diffusion* whereby the Commission, in its communication to Stockholm, asked for Sweden's guarantee with regard to its commitment to the common foreign and security policy. Arguably, this helped to transcend the European norms into the domestic political debates on neutrality.

As elaborated thus far, Swedish neutrality was not reconceptualised to fit with European norms as such. This was largely due to the normative dimensions of neutrality developed in connection with its security needs and concerns overtime. The distinct characteristics of Swedish neutrality associated with national autonomy, in turn, constituted the barriers to absorb European norms into itself and led to the reconsideration of a larger foreign and security policy. To this end, the government made a clear reference to the European framework and identity in its discourses when devising the controversial 1992 formula. Although this was later invoked to allow the Swedish participation alongside NATO in Bosnia, the relevance of the EU framework was not negligible as an explanatory factor for the change in Swedish foreign and security policy, to demonstrate its identity as a state wishing to perform a proper role in the organisation. All in all, as in the Austrian case, the Swedish case reaffirms the ontological understanding of sociological institutionalism, albeit without the absorption of European norms into neutrality found in its Austrian counterpart.

## CHAPTER III

### The Finnish Case

Finland became a member of the European Union in the first wave of post-Cold War enlargement in 1995 together with Austria and Sweden. Before the accession, the Commission expressed a concern with regard to Finnish neutrality and the development of common foreign and security policy:

“In respect of the common foreign and security policy, the question arises to what extent Finland, which, as an armed neutral, has always laid great emphasis on the capability of defending the national territory, can fully share some of its objectives, such as the safeguarding of the independence and security of the Union.”<sup>191</sup>

After the accession negotiations, Finland, in the Government Report of 1/1995, made an official national interpretation that Finnish military non-alignment and the CFSP did not contradict each other.<sup>192</sup>

This official interpretation merits further investigation into domestic debates which led to this outcome. In Finland, the question of EC membership emerged into political debate in 1989 and increasingly gained attention in the latter part of 1990.<sup>193</sup> The debate on the pros and cons of membership became intense from January 1992 onwards after President Mauno Koivisto had mentioned it in his New Year’s speech.<sup>194</sup> Following the EC summit in Maastricht and the conclusion of the EEA negotiations, debates in Finland developed into a

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<sup>191</sup> Op. cit., Teemu Palasaari, “Neither Neutrals nor Non-Aligned: The Europeanization of Finland’s Foreign and Security Policy,” *Finnish Foreign Policy Paper* 03, December 2013: 8.

<sup>192</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> Paavo Lipponen, “Finnish Neutrality and EC Membership,” in *Neutral States and the European Community*, ed. Sheila Harden (Exeter: Brassey’s, 1994), 63.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*



confrontation between those for and against the membership of the Community. This eventually led to the Finnish government's decision in March 1992 to apply for membership of the European Community, which was subsequently gained in January 1995.

This chapter elaborates the debates on the compatibility of Finnish neutrality in political circle and the eventual membership of the EC. As in the previous cases, the background of Finnish neutrality will be first discussed for a better understanding of the debates and also for the purpose of analysis.

### **Finland's neutrality: the origin and evolution**

Finland's geo-strategic position as a buffer zone between two stronger neighbours, Sweden and Russia, turned it into the traditional battleground for frequent wars between these powers.<sup>195</sup> For hundreds of years, both strove to annex the Finnish territory and convert it into a frontier province, with a long record of successes and failures on both sides.<sup>196</sup> With an end of the Russian-Swedish struggle for control over Finland in 1809, Sweden was forced to cede Finland to Russia as a result of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>197</sup> The territory of the present Finland was later a buffer zone between Germany and Russia in both World Wars and subsequently between the Western and Eastern blocs during the Cold War. As will be discussed later in the political debates on Finnish neutrality and EC membership, Finland's sensitive strategic location and associated past experience played a central role in the debates.

Finland was perceived by Russia as an important strategic location as the former represented some 720 miles of shared border.<sup>198</sup> This perception was significantly intensified with the establishment of St Petersburg as the capital entailing the shift of political concentration from Moscow to the north at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The control over or even annexation of Finland had been the aim of Russia because this would relieve to a great extent its fear of Finland becoming a springboard of an attack against it. As could be expected, the independence of Finland in 1917 revived this traditional fear because Finland was again placed in the buffer position, this time between Germany and Russia, which persistently believed in the necessity of establishing some control, however partial, over Finland in order to prevent it from becoming a launching point for an attack against Russia.

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<sup>195</sup> Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London: Routledge, 1988), 84.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

In order to distant itself from great powers' conflicts which had previously led to devastating consequences, Helsinki's first intention to declare neutrality dated back as soon as the country gained independence from Russia towards the end of the First World War in 1917. Originally planned to be included as an annexe in the Finnish Declaration of Independence of 6<sup>th</sup> December 1917, the statement of neutrality was omitted by the then Finnish cabinet dominated by pro-German nationalists, supposedly with the support of Germany.<sup>199</sup> One year later, the original idea of declaring neutrality proved to be legally<sup>200</sup> and politically impractical. Through civil war, the Finnish White free troops frequently transgressed into Russian territory to the effect that the Finns were involved in a war against the Bolsheviks.<sup>201</sup> A couple of thousand Finnish volunteers even assisted the Estonians in liberating the latter's territory from the Red Army. With the possibility of a rapprochement with the Entente from the German side, neutrality was impossible for Helsinki until a peace accord was signed with Soviet Russia in October 1920.<sup>202</sup>

Neutrality was declared for the first time at the outset of the Second World War, together with Denmark, Norway and Sweden, in the meeting of their premiers and foreign ministers in Copenhagen on 18-19 September 1939. According to their common statement, the Nordic countries were convinced that neither of the belligerent parties wanted them to be involved in the hostilities.<sup>203</sup> As the war developed, Finnish neutrality was once again put to test.

Following the Soviet invasion of Poland and claims over the Baltic States, the Finnish representatives were invited to Moscow to sign a treaty of mutual assistance based on a similar model as with the Balts. As Stalin reasoned, England or Germany might exert pressure upon Finland in order to force it to participate in an aggression against the Soviet Union.<sup>204</sup> The second claim consisted of extensive territorial concessions aimed to permit the Soviet Union to deepen its zone of defence by establishing bases in those territories. In this regard, not only the Karelian Isthmus in the proximity of Leningrad and the islands of the Gulf of

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<sup>199</sup> Jukka Nevakivi, "Finnish Neutrality," in *Neutrality in History/ La Neutralité dans l'histoire*, ed. Jukka Nevakivi (Helsinki: Tiedekirja, 1993), 33-34.

<sup>200</sup> Please see the Hague Convention (V) Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land:

Art. 16. The nationals of a State which is not taking part in the war are considered as neutrals.

Art. 17. A neutral cannot avail himself of his neutrality

(a) If he commits hostile acts against a belligerent;

(b) If he commits acts in favor of a belligerent, particularly if he voluntarily enlists in the ranks of the armed force of one of the parties.

<sup>201</sup> Nevakivi, "Finnish Neutrality," 33-34.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

Finland, but also those on the Arctic coast were requested by the Soviet side. The Finnish government considered the defence treaty inconsistent with neutrality, thereby outright rejected, while the extensive territorial concessions were also regarded as politically dangerous as other great powers might ask for similar favours.<sup>205</sup> The main fear of the Finnish government was that the acceptance of the Soviet demands would be interpreted as a deviation on the part of Finland from its course of Scandinavian neutrality to the extent of *de facto* identification with the Soviet Union.<sup>206</sup> Given Helsinki's uncompromising position, the Kremlin consequently dispatched the Red Army on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1939, the beginning of the Winter War.

Finland's performance at war raised self-esteem among the Finns, showing that even a small nation could manage to resist a major power when united and convinced of the rightness of its cause.<sup>207</sup> As a lesson learned, Helsinki demonstrated its attempt to maintain neutrality and gave a message to potential intruders of the disproportionately high cost for the conquest of Finland. On the other hand, the Winter War brought to the fore the weakness of Finnish neutrality. Not only was the very reason for aggression associated with the incredibility of Finnish neutrality in the Soviet eyes, but the Finns also failed to gain assistance from their neutral Scandinavian neighbours to safeguard the integrity of neutrality. This experience disheartened the Finns and led to their fear that neutrality might not be feasible.<sup>208</sup>

As a result, despite the declared neutrality, the Finnish government was prepared to accept military assistance from belligerents. In addition to Britain and France, the Polish refugee government in Angers offered to send troops and war material to Finland. However, the Norwegians and the Swedes opposed the transit of the proposed Allied expeditionary force across their territories. In turn, estimating the offered assistance to be too weak and politically compromising, Helsinki was ready to give up calling in the Western powers and subsequently signed the Peace of Moscow on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1940.

Meanwhile, as the continuous pressure from the Soviet side had given the Finnish government the impression that the Soviets would sooner or later repeat their aggression. As a counterweight to the Soviets, Helsinki accepted the Germans' offer of a large amount of armaments for the latter's right to transit troops through Finland to and from the occupied Norway,<sup>209</sup> although this violated the international law of neutrality because the Hague

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>206</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 88.

<sup>207</sup> Nevakivi, "Finnish Neutrality," 37.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 38.

Convention prohibits the movement of troops via the territory of a neutral state.<sup>210</sup> By June 1941 on the eve of the German invasion of Russia, Finland had committed military acts indicating its unlikelihood to maintain neutrality. A prominent example is the Finnish troops' subordination to German High Command as early as one week before the launch of Operation Barbarossa on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Furthermore, Finnish air space was used for the German operations, provoking Russian counterattacks. Against Hitler's claim that the Finns were allied with Germany, the Finnish Foreign Office pointed out that such an alliance did not exist, both countries being merely "cobelligerent" in a war against the same enemy, the Soviet Union.<sup>211</sup>

In the summer of 1944, Finnish troops had difficulty preventing the Soviet penetration. Owing to Stalin's decision to move half of the Red Army to southern fronts, the last efforts to occupy the country were repulsed. As a consequence, Helsinki was given a chance of a negotiated peace instead of an unconditional surrender. By this way, Finland remained independent, albeit with destructive remnants of war in the country.

Following the end of the Second World War, Finland found itself in a different strategic situation. Germany defeated and occupied, the Soviet Union got rid of its traditional rival. As a consequence, Finland was no longer a buffer zone between them. However, without the existence of any immediate great power to counterbalance the Soviet influence, Finland instead became a rimstate; this transformation of Finland's geo-strategic posture entailed a considerable reduction in the potential threats to the USSR via the Finnish territory.<sup>212</sup> With the disappearance of the German influence from Eastern Europe and the Baltic, there remained, in terms of geographical proximity, no enemy from the west to invade the USSR by using Finland as a springboard.<sup>213</sup> Nevertheless, as the Cold War developed, Finland found itself in the middle of the two opposing blocs.

Although the Soviet Union's objective security needs vis-à-vis Finland had been met in 1944, President Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim (1944-1946) and his successor Juho Kusti Paasikivi (1946-1956), perceived that their national strategy would not be successful unless it

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<sup>210</sup> The Hague Convention (V) Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land,

Article 2: Belligerents are forbidden to move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral Power.

Article 5: A neutral Power must not allow any of the acts referred to in Articles 2 to 4 to occur on its territory.

<sup>211</sup> Nevakivi, "Finnish Neutrality," 38.

<sup>212</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 90-91.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

satisfied the USSR's perceptions of its national security needs.<sup>214</sup> Given the experience of the failed 1938-1939 negotiations with serious consequences, the Finnish leadership advocated a more flexible line towards its Soviet neighbour.<sup>215</sup> Coupled with the looming conflicts of the Cold War, the Finns, desiring to remain outside the turbulences, agreed to sign with the Soviet Union the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1948, which defined Finland's defence obligations as follows:

*“Article I.* In the event of Finland or the Soviet Union, across the territory of Finland, becoming the object of military aggression on the part of Germany or any State allied to the latter, Finland, loyal to her duty as an independent State, will fight to repulse the aggression. In doing so, Finland will direct all the forces at her disposal to the defence of the inviolability of her territory on land, on sea and in the air, acting within her boundaries in accordance with her obligations under the present Treaty, with the assistance, in case of need, of the Soviet Union or jointly with the latter.

In the cases indicated above, the Soviet Union will render Finland the necessary assistance, in regard to the granting of which the parties will agree between themselves.

*Article II.* The High Contracting Parties will consult each other in the event of a threat of military attack envisaged in Article I being ascertained.”<sup>216</sup>

When drafting the preamble to the treaty, Finland, upon its Soviet counterpart's agreement, proposed to insert in the text a reference to “Finland's aspiration to stand aside from the contradictions of interests of Great Powers.”<sup>217</sup> The future president Urho Kekkonen, who was then the Finnish representative to negotiate the text in question, commented that this would represent the future programme of Finnish foreign policy.<sup>218</sup>

According to these two articles, the military obligations were of unilateral nature. While the Soviet Union was required to provide Finland with military support in the event of aggression against the latter, Finland had no reciprocal obligation towards the Soviet Union. Helsinki was only supposed to defend its own territorial integrity within its borders by reliance on its own military forces. Soviet troops were to be dispatched to Finland not automatically, but only in a case of necessity and upon Helsinki's approval, the position

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Op., cit., J.A.S Grenville, *The Major International Treaties 1914-1973 : A History and Guide with Texts* (London: Methuen & Co., 1974), 369.

<sup>217</sup> Op., cit., *ibid.*

<sup>218</sup> Nevakivi, “Finnish Neutrality,” 40.

which the incumbent President Passikivi (1946–1956) stressed from the beginning.<sup>219</sup> It could also be discerned that the treaty did not imply Finland’s political engagement with the Soviet Union in the sense that Finland would be included in the Soviet bloc. All of these features essentially distinguished the FCMA from the agreements between Moscow and its Eastern bloc countries.

In connection with this, President Passikivi, based on his hypothesis that the Russian interests in Finland were only of strategic nature, affirmed in September 1947 his commitments to stay out of any hostile action or alliances directed against the Soviet Union, but

“...in other respects and before all in defending our democracy we belong to the *Nordic and Western* countries. We cannot comply with any attempts preventing us from continuing our old relations with these countries. In this question we cannot yield, even if we have to avoid quarreling on matters which from our point of view are small and in reality of little significance.”<sup>220</sup> (emphasis added)

In other words, in the Finnish eyes, not only did the FCMA not involve Finland in the Soviet alliance system, but its preamble also expressed the Soviet recognition of Finland’s right to remain outside the conflicting interests of the great powers, i.e. to adopt a policy of neutrality.<sup>221</sup> It should be noted that Paasikivi did not refer to “neutrality” before February 1956, when the evacuation of the Soviet military base at Porkkala, less than 25 kilometres from Helsinki, convinced him of the possibility of neutrality even in times of war.<sup>222</sup> As it turned out, the acceptance of Finnish neutrality from the Soviet side was confirmed precisely at the same time in February 1956 in the report which the First Secretary of the SCP, Khrushchev, gave at the 20th Party Congress during the leadership of Urho Kekkonen.<sup>223</sup> Moreover, according to the Finnish interpretation, the FCMA Treaty did not forbid Finland to identify or establish relations with Nordic and Western democracies. This connection between

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>220</sup> General Speeches and Statements ((Ulkopoliittisia Lausuntoja ja asiakirjoja ) published by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1973, op. cit., Nevakivi, “Finnish Neutrality,” 41.

<sup>221</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 93.

<sup>222</sup> Nevakivi, “Finnish Neutrality,” 41.

<sup>223</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 93.

Later under the government of Brezhnev, Moscow refrained from using the word neutrality in connection with Finland, and Soviet commentators openly denied its existence in the international meaning of the concept on the ground of the incompatibility of neutrality with the Finnish engagement in the FCMA. It was not until Mikhail Gorbachev’s speech in Helsinki on 26th September 1989 that Finnish neutrality was fully recognised.

neutrality and Finland's repressed identity as a Western democracy would reemerge during the debates on the EC membership. To further substantiate the argument that Finnish neutrality was a demonstration of the country's hidden wish to be seen as a Western European, it is useful to examine Article V of the FCMA treaty and how it was implemented in reality. The Article in question provides that,

“The High Parties affirm their determination to act in the spirit of cooperation and friendship with the object of further promoting and consolidating the economic and cultural ties between the Soviet Union and Finland.”<sup>224</sup>

According to the legal professor at the University of Turku, George Maude, in contrast to the increase in the Finnish export of goods to Russia, the provision with the aim to foster cultural ties had meagre effect in practice.<sup>225</sup> Little concern for the Russian language was shown in Finland and it was not placed in a prominent position in the educational system. Furthermore, Russian experience was not applied to institutional changes in Finnish society as could be seen in the great school reform in the 1970s; Soviet education system was hardly taken into account. Nevertheless, at the international level, the Finns' wish to estrange itself from the Soviets in terms of identity politics met with some difficulties and doubts from the West.

Despite Finland's cautious foreign policy manoeuvre under President Kekkonen in rendering official statements and votes in the UN impartial vis-à-vis the East and the West, it happened that Finnish delegates to the UN abstained from voting on resolutions containing allegations against the Soviet Union after the suppression of the Hungarian uprising (1956), intervention in Czechoslovakia (1968) and occupation of Afghanistan (1980).<sup>226</sup> This avoidance of criticising the Soviets, as well as the lenient attitude towards Finnish Communists, raised doubts in the West.<sup>227</sup> If Finland wished to identify with the west, what could then explain this seemingly controversial action?

This brings us to the notion of Finlandisation associated with the FCMA Treaty. Despite its distinguished feature vis-à-vis the treaties that the Soviets concluded with their Eastern bloc countries to the effect that Finland was not officially integrated into the bloc, the idea of Finlandisation had a negative connotation of Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Op. cit., Grenville, *The Major International Treaties*, 370.

<sup>225</sup> George Maude, “The Further Shores of Finlandization,” *Cooperation and Conflict* XVII (1982): 7.

<sup>226</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 93.

<sup>227</sup> Nevakivi, “Finnish Neutrality,” 41.

<sup>228</sup> Maude, “The Further Shores,” 3.

The fundamental issue was whether the Finns had, in order to sustain its statehood by avoiding antagonising its eastern neighbour, become subservient to Soviet policy dictates so that not merely was their external policy far less independent than was desired, but the vigour and honesty of their international politics were being sapped as a result of this imposing inter-state relation.<sup>229</sup> In practice, this was seen in the government's censorship of political criticism about Soviet actions and even about Finnish actions with implications on the Soviets, in addition to Finland's abstention to criticise the Soviet invasions of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Afghanistan, let alone what the Soviets did to the Baltic States. Coupled with the fact that there was no similar treaty anywhere else in Western and Northern European countries, this fostered the original American and British views that Finland had been "compartmentalised" in terms of identity politics.<sup>230</sup>

However, in the Finnish eyes, this was crucial to their country's survival. Article II of the FCMA Treaty committed Helsinki to mutual consultations with the Soviet Union in the event of a threat of military attack. This being the case, the perceptions of Soviet foreign and defence policy were relevant for Finnish leaders; it was in the Finnish interest for their leaders to understand, i.e. sympathise with Soviet security concerns, as demonstrated in Kekkonen's condemnation of NATO's MLF plan and the abstention from criticising the Soviets in their actions in those Eastern bloc countries.<sup>231</sup> In other words, if the Finns were not clearly aware of Soviet security interests, they might be surprised by a demand for the implication of the military clauses in the FCMA Treaty.<sup>232</sup> It could thus be inferred that, paradoxically, *because* of its wish to identify with Western democracies, Finland had to impose self-restraints with regard to the criticism of those Soviet actions; otherwise, it would have been occupied and completely incorporated in the Soviet bloc. The association of neutrality with security priority and repressed identity would become prominent later in the debates on the membership of the European family.

In order to strengthen Finnish national security, Kekkonen backed up Finland's neutrality by acquiring during the 1960s and 1970s surface-to-air missiles, modernised the country's low-altitude radar system and increased the number of fighting aircrafts.<sup>233</sup> Besides, Kekkonen actively sought to promote a more stable and peaceful international environment

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>230</sup> Kristen Wahlbäck, "American and British Views on Scandinavia and Finland in the Early Cold War Period, 1945-9" (lecture given at University College, London, February 4, 1981).

<sup>231</sup> Maude, "The Further Shores," 6.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Karsh, *Neutrality*, 93 – 94.



that would, in turn, accommodate a more favourable setting for Finnish-Soviet relations.<sup>234</sup> This active component of Finnish neutrality was manifested in a various foreign policy instruments and techniques with the aim to lessen international tensions. In this regard, Finland became a forum of many bilateral and multilateral interactions such as the SALT negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States (1962-1972), bilateral talks between the two powers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and preparatory talks for the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (1983). Other prominent examples were the Finnish initiatives and sponsorship of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the preparatory talks of which were hosted in Helsinki in 1972-1973 as well as the first and the third stages of the Conference in 1973 and 1975. In the UN framework, Helsinki actively contributed to the activities of the UN, notably by dispatching troops and financial support to almost all of its peacekeeping operations. It should be noted that this positive active neutrality image of Finland did not come without a challenge on the ground of the notion of Finlandisation, giving the impression of Helsinki's close association with the Soviet Union.

As for the Finnish attitude towards the European Community, in order to remain neutral in accordance with Kekkonen's policy, Finland not only refused to join the Community, but also restrained from becoming a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) due to the possibility, envisaged by the preamble of the FCMA Treaty, of the close contact with the EC.<sup>235</sup> Concerned with the balance of commercial relations with the countries of the two blocs, Helsinki did not accept to conclude an association agreement with the EC until 1973 after having signed the agreement of the same type with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON).<sup>236</sup>

As a matter of fact, there were also some oppositions to Finnish neutrality in the government circle. However, during the Cold War period, the need for strong, non-partisan foreign policy leadership, particularly in Finnish-Soviet relations, had resulted in a constitution granting the president almost exclusive powers over foreign policy choice.<sup>237</sup> Consultations with parliament were minimal and at the president's discretion. This explained why the opinions of western liberalists were silenced in the official spheres of foreign policy

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Dagron, *La neutralité permanente*, 152.

Finland became an associate member of EFTA in 1961, then a full member in 1985.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>237</sup> Johan Eliasson, "Traditions, Identity and Security: the Legacy of Neutrality in Finnish and Swedish Security Policies in Light of European Integration," *European Integration Online Papers (EIoP)* 8, 6(2004): 3.

during the Cold War.<sup>238</sup> Their idea of primordial cultural association of Finland with Western Europe and their inherent need to attach the country to the Western European institutions, i.e. the European Communities, was largely kept outside the discussion by President Kekkonen, viewing this position as unwise in the eyes of Moscow.<sup>239</sup> Instead, the president preferred emphasising European ties through Nordic political cooperation, i.e. the Nordic Council, where Helsinki gained membership in 1955.

### **Summary and evaluation of Finnish neutrality**

Finnish neutrality was primarily associated with national security concern tied with the threat from its eastern neighbour. Decisions to adopt neutrality connected with the FCMA Treaty with the Soviet Union were made in response to political needs, even at the expense of its conformity with international law, prohibiting a military transgression into the territory of a neutral state. It could thus be inferred that Finnish neutrality, rooted in historical quests for survival, was equated with maintaining independence, as a tool to defend the nation state. Active participation with international community under the UN mandates was primarily conceived to be of Finland's national security interests. This led to Johan Eliasson's conclusion that Finnish style of neutrality was characterised by *realpolitik*, pragmatism and flexibility without moral or identity connotations,<sup>240</sup> as in the Austrian and Swedish cases.

However, upon closer analysis, which is further elaborated in the next section, Finnish neutrality had a hidden agenda of identity politics. This was implied from the government justification that neutrality was the only possible way to give a message to its Western European peers that, in terms of identity, it did not belong to the Soviet sphere of influence, while, at the same time, it could not fully engage itself with the Western European family due to the political environment. Thus, Finnish neutrality implied an identity aspect, representing Finland's wish to be seen as a European democracy someday as will be seen later in the debates surrounding the EC membership in the next section. This side of the Finnish neutrality coins became increasingly relevant as the main *raison d'être* of Finnish neutrality, the threat from the Soviet Union, was largely reduced after the end of the Cold War.

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<sup>238</sup> Sami Moisio, "Competing Geographies of Sovereignty, Regionality and Globalisation: The Politics of EU Resistance in Finland 1991-1994," *Geopolitics* 11:3 (2006): 448.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Eliasson, "Traditions," 3.

## Finland and EC membership

Because of the lack of access to resources on this topic, the content in this section, unless otherwise indicated, is obtained from Sami Moisio's work.<sup>241</sup>

In Finland, the domestic debates on EC membership could be divided into two phases with the collapse of the Soviet Union as the dividing line.

After signing a trade agreement with COMECON, Finland felt at ease to establish a trade link with Western Europe through EFTA in 1973. In order to emphasise Finland's neutral position, Foreign Minister Kalevi Sorsa stated in 1988 that "neutrality is not a trade policy term."<sup>242</sup> By adhering only to purely economic relation, the government felt secure about its neutrality. This position was also supported by the Minister of Foreign Trade, Pertti Salolainen in his speech to the parliament, in which he flatly rejected EC membership:

"Membership in the EC is incompatible with Finland's policy of neutrality, thus it has no intention of seeking membership of the Communities. The EC's final objective is an economic and political union. These aims and the supranationality of decision-making have been further strengthened. A prerequisite for pursuing a credible policy of neutrality is the preservation of full sovereignty in foreign policy and keeping decision-making in Finnish hands in all issues affecting foreign policy."<sup>243</sup>

This line of thinking was subsequently reaffirmed by the next Foreign Minister Pertti Passio in a statement to the parliament dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 1989:

"Neutrality is not a term known to trade policy. Yet trade policy should not be pursued in a manner that would limit the application of the policy of neutrality. From these points of departure it must be stated that Finland is not considering becoming a member of the European Communities."<sup>244</sup>

However, following the end of the Cold War, arguments in favour of EC membership began to get a dominant position. In this regard, Moisio conceptualised the debate as an interplay between two major political persuasions: nationalist-realist and western-liberalist. There also

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<sup>241</sup> Sami Moisio, "Competing Geographies of Sovereignty, Regionality and Globalisation: The Politics of EU Resistance in Finland 1991-1994," *Geopolitics* 11:3 (2006): 439-464.

<sup>242</sup> Op. cit. Mervi Porevuo, "Finnish Neutrality and European Integration," in *Yearbook of Finnish Foreign Policy 1988-1989* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 1990), 18.

<sup>243</sup> Op. cit. Lipponen, "Finnish Neutrality and EC Membership," 69-70.

<sup>244</sup> Op. cit., *ibid.*

existed some alternative views, which will be presented after these two main arguments. The key difference between the dominant political positions was the question of how to manage relations with the Soviet Union/Russia and Western Europe. While nationalist-realists put emphasis on neutrality and non-alignment as the best way to secure the survival of the Finnish statehood, their western-liberalist counterparts often supported the idea of political and military alliance with western countries to achieve the same purpose. This dichotomy was based on the different perceptions of Moscow. On one hand, the nationalist-realist perceived Moscow as a defensive power using force towards Finland only if its security needs arose. On the other, the westernisers considered Moscow as an expansionist or aggressor.

It should be noted here that both sides were trying to persuade the Finns to support their political choices by asserting that their reasoning was inextricably based on *political realism*. Unlike realism as a political philosophy and theory in International Relations, *political realism* here refers to a political strategy often used among political elites in their struggles to persuade audiences and vilify their opponents. Understood in this way, *political realism* in this context is merely a specific rhetorical strategy, a way of framing political arguments to demonstrate that their policy alternative was not *idealist*, but *realistic*.

As explained in the previous section, the dominant narrative of neutrality during the Cold War was of nationalist-realist nature, the presidents in favour of neutrality subjugating the other argument. However, the geopolitical transition brought about by the end of the Cold War seriously undermined the dominant political standpoint portraying Finland as an intermediary between the East and the West, and this situation, in turn, opened up space for alternative conceptualisations. The political debate on the country's neutrality became heated between late 1991 and late 1994 along the internal political struggle over membership of the EC/EU.

The westernisers argued that Russia was expansionist in nature and therefore a constant threat, in fact Finland's only potential political enemy. Therefore, Helsinki had to join the EU because of its geographical location; otherwise, it would be in the danger of being isolated from the Western security structures and thereby becoming a lone state in the event of a future Russian military intervention. Furthermore, even though the EU did not have any actual military capability, the political recognition of Western Europe provided it with security, that is, EU membership would locate Finland in the "correct" reference group of states.

The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) was an integral part of Finnish foreign policy during the Cold War. Together with the Soviet involvement in Finnish domestic political affairs, this treaty led to an intense debate on Finlandisation,

serving as a warning example of a state officially independent but forced to be closely tied to the Soviet bloc in reality. This debate was not only an embarrassment for the political elite trying to keep the state from a western track, but also a tool of criticism for those against Western ties. As a result, soon after the collapse of the Eastern bloc, Finnish neutrality was openly accused of being a false policy, locating Finland in the “wrong” place on the European map in terms of identity politics, too close to its political enemy, Russia. The opponents of the nationalist-realists further argued that Finland was losing its identity as a real Western European state in the eyes of important Western political actors.

Proclaiming their opponents’ political view as idealist and false belief, the nationalist-realists argued that EU membership did not guarantee Western Europeans’ readiness to provide military aid in case of Russian aggression. Moreover, the advocates of integration were deemed idealist in that they did not understand the historical fact associated with the inevitable geographical location of Finland with a long shared border with Russia. Instead, the nationalist-realists’ reasoning regarded Russia as a potential threat both militarily and culturally. Therefore, Finland had to continue the “politics of loyalty”, i.e. neutrality, to earn the trust from Russia and remain an independent state by remaining outside the European family. As a member of the EU, Finland would become a scapegoat, an outpost of the West, a front-line state that would serve as a battlefield if the Western European states and Russia were to be at war. This reflected the fear that Finland would lose its ability to act autonomously in foreign policy by being forced to follow the decisions of the EU. The only way to remain outside any military conflicts was to continue its politics of loyalty and refrained from political integration with Western Europe. Given Finland’s geopolitical situation, Finland should not confuse its eastern neighbour. In other words, Finland should continue the policy of neutrality.

Against neutrality, the influential argumentation of the westernisers, which would later become dominant in Finland, rested on the claim that, with EU membership, Finland was “returning to Europe”. This conception of the EU and Europe was strategically interconnected in order to create an image that the Cold War policy of neutrality had, in fact, been pushing Finland “away from Europe”. To further substantiate this argument, the Chairman of the Social Democrats (1993 – 2005) and Director of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (1989-91), Paavo Lipponen, argued that, in order to defend European values against external enemies, the Finns, as Europeans, had adopted neutrality to give necessary security guarantee to the Soviet Union without making Finland part of the Soviet Empire, with the emphasis that

there was no military co-operation between Helsinki and Moscow.<sup>245</sup> Seen in this light, neutrality was not embedded with European values as such, but considered a tool to prevent the expansion of Soviet influence at the expense of Finland being compartmentalised from Western democracies. With the collapse of the Eastern bloc, neutrality should be abandoned to allow Finland to return to Europe, or the negative connotation of Finlandisation attached to neutrality would persist.

In response to this argument, the traditionalists created a geopolitical alternative to replace European integration and support neutrality: Nordic integration. The Nordic geographical area was seen by the traditionalists as the “natural community” for Finland. In other words, this regional cooperation was a logical conceptual continuation of the nationalist-realist foreign policy tradition, according to which neutrality should always remain the backbone of Finnish geopolitical doctrine. Nordic political cooperation was seen as a saviour of this tradition and a real alternative to EU membership, since the constructed notion of European integration was based on an imbalance of power between politically powerful and weak states. In contrast, the westernisers did not treat this Nordic cooperation as an effective replacement for EU membership, portraying the Nordic Union as an old-fashioned geographical initiative that would not meet Finland’s necessary security guarantees.

In this regard, the Social Democrats’ Chairman Lipponen was of the view that EU membership “will help Finland to repel any military threats.”<sup>246</sup> This view was widely shared in the domestic debate as the following extract from parliamentary speech illustrates:

“Any actor threatening Finland has to take into consideration that Finland is in a union with a community of 350 million inhabitants and that the EU does not accept the intimidation against any of its member states.”<sup>247</sup>

Nevertheless, instead of abandoning neutrality altogether along with Finland’s declared commitment to the CFSC, official documentation and domestic debate stressed non-alignment as a continuing key element of Finnish foreign and security policy.<sup>248</sup> The government regarded the CFSC’s aims to lie in general issues such as peace, security and the promotion of human rights, underlying that the responsibility for defence would remain national with the

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<sup>245</sup> Lipponen, “Finnish Neutrality,” 65-66.

<sup>246</sup> Op. cit. Palosaari, “Finnish Foreign Policy Papers,” December, 2013, 8.

<sup>247</sup> Op. Cit., Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

possibility of independent national decision-making.<sup>249</sup> The reasoning for this argument was the then embryonic state of the CFSC in the 1990s, making it possible to argue that the CFSC only complemented the national policy and did not come into conflict with it.

Towards the closing of membership negotiation, the official national interpretation was that Finnish military non-alignment and the CFSC were compatible with each other. Together with this, many members of the parliament underlined that the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union no longer defined the international role and identity of Finland; it was replaced by EU membership, European values, non-alignment and independent defence.<sup>250</sup>

## **Analysis**

The final decision and interpretation of the Finnish government seemed to be a synthesis of the two opposing views with regard to neutrality and membership. That is, neutrality was maintained despite membership, but this does not tell much about how neutrality was understood vis-à-vis the European norms. This analysis will put the Finnish neutrality and the domestic political debates into perspectives to answer this question, to argue that Finnish neutrality was not reconceptualised in relation to European norms as such.

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

Even during the Cold War, some opposition parties were in favour of a closer tie with Western Europe, but the Finnish leadership was of the prerogative opinion that this was not a sound choice and thus opted for co-operation with the Scandinavian neighbours as the most viable policy choice to distant the country from the Soviet sphere of influence. In other words, neutrality, in the Finnish leaders' eyes, seemed to be the only possible option to signify in the safest manner that Helsinki still belonged to the West. This implied the wish to move closer to the door of Western Europe, which was to be opened later when the threat from the East

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 9.

largely disappeared. To further substantiate this argument, it is now opportune to turn to the domestic political debates surrounding the EC membership.

In this regard, the prominent view after the Cold War demonstrated that Finnish neutrality was a false policy placing the country in the wrong camp in terms of identity politics, too close to Russia. As a result, Finland was argued to have lost its identity as a real Western European state in the eyes of important Western political actors. By acceding to the European Union, Finland would locate itself in the *correct* reference group of states. In addition, Finnish neutrality was associated with the notion of *Finlandisation*, referring to an example of a state officially independent but forced to be closely tied to the Soviet bloc in reality. In connection with this notion, neutrality was considered an embarrassment, which was used as a tool for criticism of those against the membership and in favour of continued neutrality. It could thus be inferred from this dominant view that neutrality, an obstacle to identification with the EU, would not need to internalise European norms to demonstrate its compatibility with membership.

It should be noted that those in favour of neutrality against membership considered it in terms of security vis-à-vis Russia, and thereby proposing the Nordic co-operation to be a viable alternative to the EU membership in terms of identity politics. Nevertheless, it could be implied from this position that, if possible, Finland should reorient itself towards Western Europe. In other words, neutrality, although the most viable policy from this point of view, was still conceived as hindrance or obstacle to full identification with Western democracies after the end of the Cold War.

This came with a concrete example towards the end of the membership negotiation. Many members of the parliament underlined that the FCMA Treaty with the Soviet Union no longer defined the international role and identity of Finland; it was instead replaced by EU membership, European values, non-alignment and independent defence. The adoption of European values may lead to the temptation to conclude that Finnish neutrality came to integrate European values or norms. However, this is not likely to be the case when the official national interpretation of neutrality and the Common Foreign and Security policy were further examined.

Unlike the Austrian case, Finland did not demonstrate the compatibility of its neutrality with membership in terms of what had been achieved under the umbrella of neutrality in the past decades such as peacekeeping and the promotion of human rights and democratic values around the globe. Instead, the compatibility was demonstrated in the sense that the CFSC would merely *complement* national defence, which would still remain in the national



competency and decision-making, with the emphasis on national defence only for Finnish territorial integrity. In other words, Finland did not equate membership with the adoption of the Third Pillar of the Maastricht Treaty, and neutrality was thus conceived to be a separate part from the CFSC. In comparison with the Austrian discourse on the shared norms and purposes of the country's neutrality and the European security interests as such, this gives a clearer picture that Finnish neutrality did not internalise European norms.

Upon reflection, the path dependency of Finnish neutrality did not constitute a problem for the redefinition of the concept with reference to the European norms. Instead, the external shock to the institution of neutrality in this case seemed to be of so great extent as to disable it from hindering a policy breakthrough. The end of the Cold War with the ensuing collapse of the Soviet Union had seemed to greatly erode the foundation of Finnish neutrality primarily conceived out of security interest, in particular vis-à-vis its immediate eastern neighbour. In other words, as the usefulness of neutrality largely, if not completely, disappeared, so did the strength of path dependency. This situation opened up an alternative view, the surfacing of the previously subjugated viewpoint: neutrality had hindered the Finnish identification with Western Europe. Together with other negative attitudes toward neutrality, this point of view became a dominant position against the continuation of this policy for the sake of Finland's EU membership. The post-War remnant of neutrality could be understood as a reconciled position with the minor position in the government. All in all, the situation in Finland affirms the ontological understanding of sociological institutionalism. That is, in order to become a member of the EU, Helsinki expressed its intention to adopt European norms and values by, among other things, largely downplaying its neutrality, perceived as something having put Finland into the wrong camp and thereby having given rise to doubts in Western Europe.

Also in the Finnish case, the debates about neutrality demonstrated the European Community/Union as a reference point with a discernable rhetoric of "return to Europe". This discourse, in turn, served as a bridge to import European values in further debates about neutrality, argued to be incompatible and thereby should be abandoned in order for Finland to adopt European norms and identity. Nonetheless, unlike the Swedish case, the preference for European norms and identity, based on the available sources, was not attached with the rhetoric of solidarity. This is seen in the brighter light when one considers Helsinki's position that the Third Pillar of the Maastricht Treaty would merely *complement* Finland's security. In other words, the Third Pillar was not only considered a separate part from Finland's defence policy, but also deemed a one-sided benefit, if any, to Finland's security. Therefore, during

the membership application, it could be inferred that, in Finland, European norms merely operated on the constitutive plane, while both the constitutive and regulative roles of norm were found in the Swedish case.

All in all, in contrast to the Austrian and Swedish cases, Finnish neutrality was not embedded in popular national identity as such. Neutrality did not save Finland from devastating effects of wars, was not connected with economic success of the country or national pride. This could be seen in a brighter light when considering the embarrassment associated with the notion of *Finlandisation* or neutralisation of the country by the Soviet Union. Consequently, Finnish neutrality, in the context of EU membership, seemed to be reconsidered from security perspective along with ideological view in the sense that the concept should be gradually abandoned in order to allow the country to get fully integrated with its Western counterparts. The absorption of European norms into neutrality was thus not found in the Finnish case.

## CHAPTER IV

### A Comparative Perspective

As could be seen thus far, it is only in the Austrian case where neutrality was (re)framed in discourses to demonstrate a compatibility with European norms, while a similar result is not found in its Swedish and Finnish counterparts. This chapter puts the three cases into a comparative perspective based on John Stuart Mill's Method of Difference to detect a factor contributing to such an outcome. Mill describes this method as follows:

“If an instance in which the phenomenon under investigation occurs, and an instance in which it does not occur, have every circumstance in common save one, that one occurring only in the former; the circumstance in which alone the two instances differ is the effect, or the cause, or an indispensable part of the cause, of the phenomenon.”<sup>251</sup>

In short, when all cases share basic characteristics, but vary with respect to a certain key explanatory factor, the presence or absence of this factor can then be used to explain any variation in outcomes as the other relevant explanatory variables are controlled for by case selection.<sup>252</sup>

Among the three neutral states, the Austrian and Swedish versions of neutrality were heavily invested with normative values, while Finnish neutrality was fundamentally tied with security concerns. In this regard, due to the absence of ideological content, no interaction was found between Finnish neutrality and European norms, which, instead, were subject to contentious debates in the Austrian and the Swedish cases with regard to compatibility issue. Therefore, in order to find a normative factor leading to the difference in norm absorption, the Finnish case is excluded and focus is turned to the Austrian and the Swedish neutrality. The

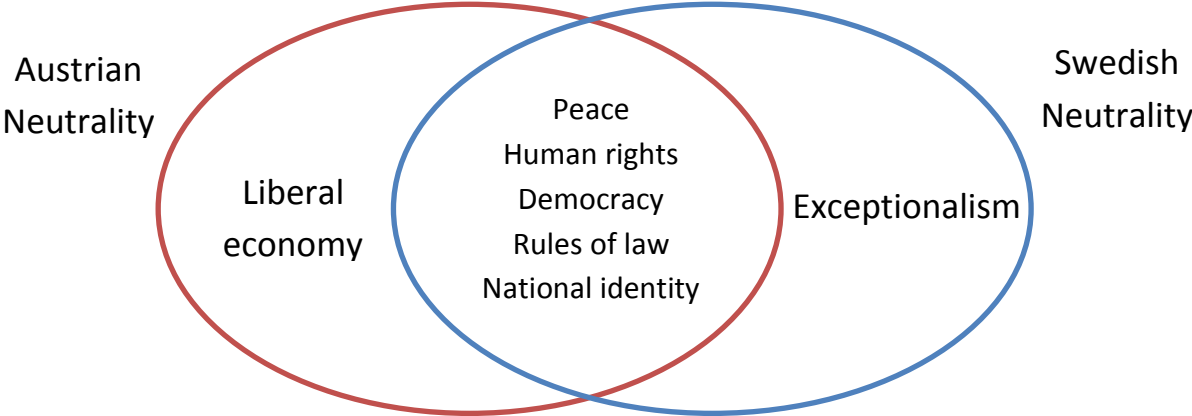
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<sup>251</sup> Op. cit., Jonathon Moses and Torbjørn Knutsen, *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research* (Great Britain: Palgrave, 2012), 99.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

figure below illustrates the normative similarities and differences between Austrian and Swedish neutrality

Figure 1: Comparison of the normative aspects between Austrian and Swedish neutrality



As could be discerned from the figure, both Austrian and Swedish neutrality shared the normative aspects of peace, human rights, democracy and rules of law and were also embedded in the national identity. Given these similarities, the explanation for the different absorption of European norms, according to Mill’s method, should lie in the differences.

In this regard, Austrian neutrality incorporated the economic ideology of liberalism. Together with peace, human rights, democracy and rules of law, the normative content of Austrian neutrality came close to the five core European norms. On the other hand, there was no economic liberalist dimension in the Swedish neutrality. Indeed, this could be explained by the Swedish exceptionalism associated with Sweden’s national autonomy vis-à-vis the West and the East, politically and economically. As discussed in Chapter II, this notion was, in the political sphere, formed when Sweden aligned itself with the Third World countries for their independence cause against colonialism of both the West and the East. Added to this notion was Sweden’s welfare state, conceived and perceived as a middle way or an alternative to Capitalism and Communism. All of these exceptionalist aspects of Swedish neutrality thus stood distant from the Capitalism-oriented Community, whose majority of members were colonists. In contrast, a comparable exceptionalist content was not found in Austrian neutrality, which demonstrated the least difficulty in being interpreted compatible with European norms. The normative factor contributing to the difference in outcome between these two cases is thus the exceptionalist dimension in Swedish neutrality. Mill’s Method of Difference, therefore, reaffirms the findings in the previous chapters.

# Conclusion

Based on the ontological conception of sociological institutionalism, this thesis has thus far investigated the domestic political debates on neutrality and EC/EU membership towards the end of the Cold War against the backdrop of the specificity of neutrality in Austria, Sweden and Finland. In order to analyse to what extent the concept of neutrality absorbed European norms, neutrality was dissected into two dimensions, security and normative aspects. This was read in the context of history to find in each case study the path dependency of the concept, which would later constrain some policy options for neutrality during the membership application.

According to this thesis's assumption, it is rather the normative side of the neutrality coin that was connected with the redefinition of neutrality vis-à-vis the European norms. This is because, if neutrality was primarily tied with security concern without or with relatively much less aspect of identity, the chance would be higher that neutrality would be abandoned once the major threat leading to the inception of neutrality disappeared. In other words, in this extreme case, the reconceptualisation of neutrality with European norms would be out of question. On the other hand, in the case where neutrality was largely invested with normative values, this is subject to further investigation. If neutrality came with such normative values as peace, democracy and human rights, it would be likely that this would facilitate the absorption of European norms into the concept of neutrality to demonstrate compatibility with membership, hence solidarity with other member states. In other words, this entailed the reorientation of security co-operation from the universal framework of the UN to the regional one of the EC/EU. Nevertheless, as normative aspect of neutrality was not necessarily confined only to the same normative values with the European organisation, there may be some other normative aspects of neutrality capable of hindering the interpretation of the concept to demonstrate the suitability with European norms.

The findings of this thesis affirm this assumption, with the Finnish case represents the most extreme one. Conceived and developed first and foremost out of security concern, Finnish neutrality was not invested with such ideational values as its Austrian and Swedish

counterparts, and was thus mostly subject to be forsaken once the threat from its eastern neighbour disappeared. The promotion of peace in Finnish neutrality, among other things, was largely seen as a move towards Helsinki's own security, not as an advocate of peace in the normative sense as such. Furthermore, Finnish neutrality was embedded with Finland's wish and need to implicitly identify with Western democracies while the international political environment did not allow a larger extent of co-operation with the latter. As a result, upon the end of the bipolarity, Finnish neutrality was perceived to be a hindrance for Helsinki's full identification with Western Europe, i.e. the EC. In this regard, in domestic political debate, Finnish neutrality was not argued to be compatible with European norms as such, but something to be abandoned in order to adopt European identity at large. The remnant of neutrality was seen to be a separate part of the European common foreign and security policy.

In contrast, invested with normative values subsequently interconnected with popular national identity, Austrian neutrality was an object of a debate on the reinterpretation of the concept with European norms. With an international activist aspect of the concept in promoting peace, human rights, liberal values and rule of law in the UN framework, the government demonstrated that this normative aspect was compatible with the European norm counterparts. In other words, the existing identity dimension of Austrian neutrality with international outlook facilitated the absorption of similar European norms with regional solidarity. Particularly, it was especially the upholding of international law that strengthened the argument for the compatibility. That is, as war became an illegal mean for international conflict solution, collective security to counter the breach of international law came to gain momentum, implying the increasing importance of solidarity and the difference between wars in the traditional sense and the collective actions of states to suppress a state violating international law, according to the Austrian view. Having been used to uphold the rule of international law, Austrian neutrality was also argued to be adaptable and thus consistent with solidarity with the European regional grouping sharing the same values and goals.

Although with similar international activist content in promoting peace, human rights and rule of law, Swedish neutrality found itself in a more difficult situation to demonstrate the compatibility to absorb European norms. This was largely because of the association of Swedish neutrality with national autonomy and exceptionalism vis-à-vis not only the East but also the West. In this regard, this notion of autonomy as an independent and sovereign state was tied with the idea of Swedish exceptionalism as a successful welfare state, an alternative or a middle way between Capitalism and Communism. This was further strengthened by the Swedish alignment with the Third World and small states in its support for their right to self-

determination and independent development policy, with the implication that Stockholm was against colonialism, which had been adopted by most Western European states. As a consequence, in spite of the shared goal with the Community in the promotion of peace, human rights, and rule of law, absorption of the European norms into Swedish neutrality was not found; neutrality was instead conceived to be a separate part of Stockholm's wish to adopt European identity and goal. John Stuart Mill's Method of Difference further reaffirms that, in comparison with Austria, it is the Swedish exceptionalism integrated into the Swedish neutrality that contributed to this outcome.

This thesis, by approaching neutrality from political perspective against the backdrop of historical development in each case study, reveals that neutrality was not merely a security matter, but was embedded with cultural dimensions, i.e. normative values beyond the origin of neutrality as a derivative of war for a state to stay out of conflicts. Even in the Finnish case where neutrality was seemingly predominantly tied with security interest, there was a hidden identity aspect in the concept that was in favour of full identification with Western Europe. Consequently, the evolution of neutrality was not only a matter of security concern, but also depended on the normative side of the concept. All in all, the specificity of neutrality in Austria, Sweden and Finland reacted with the norms of the European grouping in a different way, resulting in different interpretations of their respective neutrality.

On the mega-theoretical plane, the empirical of this thesis reaffirms the ontological conception of sociological institutionalism with regard to the relevance of European norms to the domestic adaptation in the quest for membership as a candidate state. By investigating domestic political debates and taking into account the ideologies and identities of each case study in a historical context, this thesis reveals the contested process in membership application and the simultaneous influence of another regional organisation in the redefinition of neutrality in a certain case study. This helps to reduce the epistemological and methodological bias associated with dominant neo-institutionalist research agenda.

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

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