Uncharted Waters: Greek Foreign Policy Agenda during the Process and in the Aftermath of the EU Eastern Enlargement

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ABSTRACT

The implications of the completion of EU enlargement in Southeastern Europe for the whole region and especially for Greece are significant. There has been no precedent of such type of integration in the past. The years to come will be uncharted waters for Greece and its regional partners in the conduct of foreign policy and the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda. The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of EU enlargement on the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda during and in the recent aftermath of the process. The first section examines the fundamental factors in the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda, looking at national interests, party politics, public opinion and internal economic interests, as well as the Europeanization of foreign policy, EU conditionality, traditional bilateral affiliations, and investments and economic partnerships. The second section illuminates the so-called transformative power of the EU, analyzing the way in which the neighbors of Greece have changed as a result of the EU conditionality clauses and the prospect of EU membership. The third section sets a historical timeline to investigate the specific tipping points in the arrangement of the Greek foreign policy agenda from 1996—when the process of enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe commenced, and a significant shift of style in the conduct of Greek foreign policy—to the present; that is to say, right after the recent accession of Romania and Bulgaria. The final section presents the policy implications for Greece in the aftermath of enlargement and the potential further enlargement to the Western Balkans and the creation of a Balkan pole in the EU, emphasizing the fact that today, European involvement in its agenda is the strongest asset Greece has in geopolitical, economic and social terms.

The completion of the European Union enlargement in Southeastern Europe with the accession of Bulgaria and Romania has signaled the beginning of a new geopolitical era for the region. The implications for the whole region and especially for Greece are significant as there has been no precedent of such type of integration in the past. The years to come will be uncharted waters for Greece and its regional partners in the conduct of foreign policy and the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda. The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of EU enlargement on the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda during and in the recent aftermath of the process. Therefore, the central question attempts to explore the promotion of the Greek foreign policy agenda in the region due to the process of enlargement. Has Greece missed the chance to enhance

its economic and political influence in the region or has it managed to take advantage of the unique window of opportunity attributed to the enlargement of the Union? The paper examines the impacts through process-tracing and the various path dependencies in the foreign policy decision-making process created by the chain of events leading to the completion of enlargement.

The first section of this paper examines the factors that are fundamental in the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda. These include both endogenous (national interests, party politics, public opinion and internal economic interests) and exogenous factors (Europeanization of policy, EU conditionality, traditional bilateral affiliations, and investments and economic partnerships). The second section illuminates the so-called transformative power of the EU. In essence, it focuses on the exogenous constraints and influences in the formation of the foreign policy agenda attributed to the way the neighbors of Greece have changed as a result of the EU conditionality clauses and the prospect of EU membership. The third section sets a historical timeline to investigate the specific tipping points in the arrangement of the Greek foreign policy agenda from 1996—when the process of enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe commenced, and a significant shift of style in the conduct of Greek foreign policy—to the present; that is to say, right after the recent accession of Romania and Bulgaria. This approach is more historical observing temporal sequences to show the impact of the process on institutions, actors and policies that are involved in the conduct of foreign policy, including the formation of the agenda through the creation and promotion of programs of regional cooperation administered by Greece (foreign economic aid and direct investments, cooperation in the sectors of energy et al.). The final section elucidates the policy implications for Greece in the aftermath of enlargement and the potential further enlargement to the Western Balkans and the creation of a Balkan pole in the EU. The paper concludes that Greece indeed missed a number of opportunities created by the process of enlargement to enhance its influence in the region which was mainly due to the untimely reaction of institutions and actors in the formation of a coherent foreign policy agenda, as well as a failure to exploit the well-founded European status of the country that took place between 1996 and 2004.

Constraints and influences on the Greek foreign policy agenda

The formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda is subject to competing and colluding exogenous and endogenous forces, much like in every country in the global realm of international relations that opens up to international commerce and bilateral or multilateral political exchanges. The interplay of various endogenous and exogenous factors at any time balances out their weights to create the foreign policy position for each event. The main pressures stem from the expression of national interests, public opinion, political platforms, and the socio-economic circumstances on the one hand; and on the other, from the participation of a country in international political or economic transactions. In the case of Greece, there is one more constraint and influence that needs to be factored into the analysis, namely the top-down pressures exercised by the country's membership in the European Union. This section examines the pressures on a country's foreign policy agenda from a path dependence point of view.

One of the most difficult tasks when analyzing issues of foreign policy is the ability to ascertain the single most influencing cause behind a certain outcome. Path dependence theory facilitates the inclusion of more than one factor, assessing their individual weight on the choice of causal paths. According to Bennett and Elman (2006), the theory suggests that causal possibility implies that in the evolution of an event more than one path may have been taken. Nevertheless, the causal path may be influenced by a random or unaccounted variable. Therefore, as a result of the impact of that variable, the possibility of particular paths taken is decreasing or minimized. Thus, once a path is chosen by the agenda-setter, in order to keep the affected actors in accordance with that path, there is a need to have a degree of constriction or processes that minimize deviations.[1] Through the use of process tracing and the sequencing of events the analysis can identify those parts of the causal path influenced by distinct actors or policies and explicate their respective weight on the choice of causal path. Accordingly, "the crucial feature of a historical process that generates path dependence is positive feedback (or self-reinforcement),"[2] that is to say, that positive feedback corresponds to a specific tipping point, where deviations from the causal path are diminished.

Conversely, when looking at the formation of a coherent foreign policy agenda, it is necessary to introduce the notion of veto players that—as a game theoretical concept—allows for the examination of the mechanisms that lead to the conclusion of a policy. In theory, there is a strong correlation in a repeated vertical game, such as in the formation of foreign policy, where the presence of more actors, institutions and existing policies produces a more conservative and inert foreign policy. In fact, according to Tsebelis (2002), "the number of veto players should be negatively related to the potential for policy innovation in the diverse political systems and to their capacity of actively responding to external challenges and of 'adapting to exogenous shocks'."[3]

The domestic setting for foreign policy

Many academics and politicians have frequently commented on the peculiarities of the Greek case in terms of foreign policy agenda, which stems from its 'history, geography, political development pattern, religion and culture, weak economy and initial opposition to European Union membership'.[4] Thus, commencing from the internal predicaments in the Greek foreign policy agenda, national interests compared to domestic and local concerns are expressed in a longer-term horizon. Yet, in the case of Greece, the developments after the collapse of existing socialism in the Balkans, opened up Pandora's Box. The successive wars of independence in Southeastern Europe, as well as the resurfacing of nationalist and irredentist sentiments—hibernating throughout most of

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[1] Bennett, A. and Elman, C. (2006). "Complex causal relations and case study methods: the example of path dependence", *Political Analysis* 14: p. 252

[2] Pierson, P. (2004), *Politics in Time: History, Institutions and Social Analysis*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, p. 20

[3] Tsebelis, G. (2002). *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, p. xv, and pp. 1-37. Also see Giuliani, M. (2003), "Europeanization in Comparative Perspective: institutional fit and national adaptation" in Featherstone K., and Radaelli, C. (eds.) *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 134

[4] Tsardanidis, C., and Stavridis, S. (2005), "The Europeanization of Greek foreign policy: a critical appraisal", *European Integration*, 27 (2), p. 218

the Cold War era—radically changed the foreign policy agenda. In essence, the end of the Cold War expanded the veto players in the conduct of Greek foreign policy, creating new points of reference in terms of actors, institutions and policies, and revising the so-called "geopolitical code" of Greece. This code operated at three levels: global, regional and local, defined in terms of "a state's interest, an identification of external threats to those interests, a planned response to such threats and a justification of that response."[5] Hence, Greece was faced endogenously with a redefinition of national interests and the addition of new features in the traditional Cold War tensions with Turkey and Cyprus. It was quite apparent in Greece that there was an inherent post-dictatorial lack of long-term planning, direction and strategy vis-à-vis its foreign relations, which can be potentially traced to the long exposure under the protective umbrella of the United States, the Transatlantic Alliance, and, to a lesser degree, the European Communities. Of course, this can be perceived as a natural outcome in the Cold War context, attributed to the geopolitical position of Greece right on the fault line between East and Western Europe.

Greece never really had to cope with creating an independent foreign policy, despite the fact that public opinion was against foreign protection, and the political platforms of parties throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s were calling for foreign policy independence and non-alliance. Foreign policy is traditionally considered as being outside and above partisan domestic debates; 'foreign and security matters were directly and insolubly linked to the preservation of national sovereignty and highly symbolically entrusted to the national executive.'[6] Nevertheless, the 1980s and 1990s brought the domination in the foreign policy agenda-setting of the personalities of the prime ministers and on occasion of the foreign ministers; or agenda-setters within the agenda-setter. It has been noted, that foreign policy was even used as a tool for personal political career development by foreign ministers, to the detriment of the long-term foreign policy strategy-building.[7]

It is quite important to note at this stage that economic interests of the Greek business community also play a very important part in the advancement of foreign policy as an element of 'low politics.' In the past, this element has been vastly ignored by the Greek foreign officials, as there was a traditional perception of foreign policy as 'the management of 'high politics' issues.'[8] The expanded modern agenda now encompasses issues of trade, environmental cooperation, technology and cultural exchanges, as well as agricultural cooperation.[9] However, using the carefully chosen words of Tsoukalis (2000), "Greek diplomacy has experienced difficulties in finding the right combination of the language of might, right, and common interests."[10] In other words, the agenda rarely

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[5] Taylor, P.J. and Flint, C. (2000), *Political Geography: World-economy, nation-state and locality*, 4th edition, Prentice Hall, Pearson Education Limited, pp. 90-91, Also Huliaras A., and Tsardanidis C. (2006), "(Mis)understanding the Balkans: Greek geopolitical codes of Post-Communist era", *Geopolitics,* 11 (3)

[6] Major, C. (2005), "State of the Art: Europeanization and Foreign and Security Policy—Undermining or rescuing the nation states?" *Politics*, 25 (3), p. 183

[7] Huliaras and Tsardanidis, op. cit., p. 467. The reference here is clearly towards Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras, who in the crucial years of the appellation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, saw this as: "an opportunity to assert himself as the unrivalled future leader of his party" according to Economides (2005), "The Europeanisation of Greek Foreign Policy", *West European Politics* 28(2), p.489n

[8] Ioakimidis, P.C. (2000), "The Europeanization of Greece's Foreign Policy: Progress and Problems" in Mitsos A, and Mossialos, E, (editors), *Contemporary Greece and Europe*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pp. 363-364

[9] Ibid.

[10] Tsoukalis, L. (1999). "Greece: like any other European country?" *The National Interest*, 22 March 1999

emphasized the need for coalition-building and for identification of common interests with other European or Balkan partners. The Greek agenda was overwhelmed by nationalistic elements well-entrenched into the public opinion; and, at times, these elements were articulated through a manifestation of Greece as "the center of the whole world",[11] and more specifically, a proclamation as the hegemony of Southeastern Europe.

Exogenous strains in the backdrop of the agenda

Given the fact that Greece is a small country—relative to its European counterparts—the agenda-setting for foreign policy was highly influenced by a number of external constraints. In this category, traditional bilateral affiliations with neighboring Balkan nations, investments and economic partnerships, the effect of EU conditionality for accession, as well as the Europeanization of foreign policy should be included. Greek foreign policy has involved and has called upon historical ties with the region, especially with Serbia, which has caused a deviation from the general policy lines prevalent in the international sphere. Moreover, as the only country of the region integrated with Europe through the European Union and NATO, Greece has the potential of becoming a vehicle for the reintegration of the rest of the region when it comes to the introduction of economic and social models. To that respect, Greece maintains some 'low politics' policy tools which include an outward-looking private sector, technical expertise in key areas of public policy, and above all, political credibility—giving investments and commercial partnerships additional momentum. The regions surrounding Greece, along with the general international trend of the 1990s are undergoing severe and brisk changes in political, social and economic terms. Thus, one of the primary objectives of Greek foreign policy in the 1990s was the enhancement of the bilateral relations with its neighboring states, with a hope of providing impulses of stability and peace.

Above all, the integration of the country into the European Union realm should not be overlooked. There is indeed a case to be made, and throughout the current literature, arguing for the purported *Europeanization* of the national agenda on foreign policy. Though it is not in the intentions of this paper to engage in a much heated debated over the exact definition of the term *Europeanization*, it should be noted that there have been multiple definitions[12] the most popular of which appears to be the one provided by Radaelli (2003), as a:

> "process of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, 'ways of doing things', and share beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then integrated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies."[13]

Nevertheless, for the purposes of this paper, Europeanization is defined as the two-level game of a 'transformation in the way in which national foreign policies are constructed,

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[11] Ioakimidis, op. cit., p. 366

[12] Olsen, J, (2002), "The Many Faces of Europeanization" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40 (5). Also refer to Featherstone and Radaelli (2003), op. cit., and Vink, M., and Graziano, P. (editors) (2007), *Europeanization: New Research Agendas*, Palgrave/MacMillan, Basingstoke.

[13] Radaelli, C. (2003), "The Europeanization of Public Policy" in Featherstone and Radaelli, op. cit., p. 30

in the ways in which professional roles are defined and pursued and in the consequent internalization of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy making.'[14] The intention of this definition is to provide a succinct description of the two-way interaction of institutions, actors and policies of the EU member states with the European Union. In essence, Europeanization can be perceived as a challenge to national politics and to the member states governance capacity, involving the adaptation to supranational dynamics that cannot be fully handled by national policy-makers.[15] Yet, returning to Major's argument, there is a risk of overestimating the Europeanization factor and forgetting the effect of other endogenous and exogenous forces. Major is quite keen in her support of the fact that "at the domestic level, modification may well occur for other reasons such as national administrative reform projects […] political chances, influence of pressure groups or political events."[16] Much of the recent literature on Greek foreign policy has indeed ignored this factor and focused excessively on the Europeanization of Greek foreign policy proper.

Returning to Radaelli's definition, at the domestic level, foreign policy actors pressure their national decision-makers to engage in policies at the European level that are sympathetic to their own interests. Conversely, at the European level, the national governments advocate the initiation of European policies that are favorable to their respective domestic pressures, simultaneously attempting to minimize any political costs that they may incur at the domestic political arena. According to Börzel (2002) there are three types of member state strategies involved in the European level: *pace-setting*, or actively pursuing policies at the European level reflecting their individual preferences; *foot-dragging*, meaning blocking or delaying costly policies in order to prevent them altogether; and *fence-sitting*, namely neither pushing for policies nor blocking them but rather building coalitions with other member states.[17]

It is quite accurate to argue that Greece, can be classified in the majority of occasions when it comes to foreign policy as a *foot-dragger*, the argument being that it has numerous times tried to block policies extended towards Turkey for example, that seem to be affecting the *national interests*. However, it seems that in the case of the Balkans and the development of Southeastern Europe, Greece has been a frontrunner, essentially a *pace-setter*, pushing for policies—not necessarily successful—on further enlargement into Southeastern Europe, pre-accession funding schemes and other European Union regional initiatives that aim at the stabilization and prosperity of the region. As argued by Schmidt and Radaelli (2004), "EU policies are not produced in a vacuum, but in an arena where EU institutions and member states project their interests and discourses."[18] To that extent, Greece perceives the participation in the EU not only as a tool for the espousal of foreign policy objectives by its EU counterparts, but also as a mechanism for having some bearing on the way EU 'foreign policy' is formulated and conducted. Economides (2005) has argued that the Europeanization of Greek foreign policy has both a 'top-down' and a 'bottom-up' approach. He argues that Greece had to

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[14] Major, op. cit., p. 185
[15] Giuliani, op. cit., p. 135
[16] Major, op. cit., p. 183
[17] Börzel, T. (2002), "Pace-setting, foot-dragging and fence-sitting: member state responses to Europeanization", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2), p. 194
[18] Schmidt, V.A. and Radaelli, C. (2004), "Policy Change and Discourse in Europe: Conceptual and Methodological Issues", *West European Politics* 27 (2), p. 185

'adopt and adapt to practice stemming from the continuing growth in the EU's foreign policy-making capacity and intentions' but has also used the EU and its weight in the international milieu as a vehicle to promote the national foreign policy agenda.[19] In essence, the agenda has not only changed in terms of endorsing the 'EU way of doing things' but has also incorporated its main issues into the wider European agenda. Nevertheless, the projection of that agenda per se is a quite difficult process, given that all EU states may choose to behave in this way.

Yet, at the same time, Greece has not been the only country undergoing transformation in terms of actors, institutions and policies; its Balkan neighbors have also experienced dramatic alterations that can be attributed—apart from the collapse of communism—to the prospect of EU membership extended to most of the Balkan countries, for some of which had a triumphant outcome, namely Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovenia. As a result, many of these countries have experienced a foundational change in economic, political and social terms. Thus, it is necessary to focus on the transformative power of the EU and look at issues of EU conditionality for the incoming member states that affected the tone of foreign policy and cooperation agendas emanating from Romania and Bulgaria, but also, the carrot of potential promise of EU membership to FYROM, Croatia and Serbia, that created a whole different sphere for the expression of foreign policy and brought the relaxation of the stance of particular countries in issues of migration, investment, and national sovereignty.

Transforming the Neighbors of Greece

From the second half of the 1990s to the present day, Greece advocates two vital objectives, namely, (1) the transformation of foreign policy into a promotion tool for its national interests in both the EU and Southeastern Europe; and, (2) the creation of a stable, secure and prosperous region around its borders.[20] In order to achieve these goals, it seems quite cogent to argue that Greece should endeavor to become the mediator and the reference point for the countries of Southeastern Europe vis-à-vis the European Union, if not the world. Having a thorough knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of the region in historical, social and political terms, it can maintain an arbitrating role as a chief negotiator for issues concerning Southeastern Europe. However, in order to be able to advance such a position, it is Greece that had to take the first step. Transforming the security environment of Southeastern Europe to serve its own national interests, Greece was a keen supporter of EU and NATO enlargements and advocated the quick accession of the Balkan countries within these international structures. Such a development was indeed releasing resources from the Greek foreign policy agenda, as the behavior of these countries' actors and institutions, as well as the dissemination of their respective foreign policy agendas was scrutinized by heavy-weight international actors like the European Union countries (with unanimous vote on issues of enlargement) and the United States. Put in a different perspective, the creation of stable liberal democracies without any serious sovereignty threats around the borders of Greece, as well as an enhanced economic interconnectedness eliminates the chances of deep crises of belligerence with

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[19] Economides, S. op. cit., pp. 472-478
[20] Kranidiotis, Y. (2000), "The Fundamental Objectives of Greek Foreign Policy", in Mitsos and Mossialos op cit. p. 31

its neighbors and improves the security environment for risk-free and interregional investment projects.[21] Based on this argument, the aspiration of these countries to join the European Union structures without severe delays was followed by the enunciation of membership criteria with respective conditionality clauses. Conditionality was used as an operational instrument to ensure the adherence of these countries to principles of economic liberalization and democratic consolidation. Thus, it is important to examine the so-called "transformative power" of the EU[22] to comprehend the impact of the EU factor on the relaxation of a tightened foreign policy environment, making it possible for Greece to transform its own policy agenda.

There has been an extensive literature on the EU conditionality clauses towards the aspiring members of the Union. The respective theory is placing as its central argument the 'soft power' of the conditions for membership set in Copenhagen in 1993, namely, the condition on democratic stability, on a functioning market economy, and on the obligation to adhere to the Union's established practices, crowned by the ability of the Union to incorporate new members with its contemporary structures.[23] Adherence to the conditions is the first step towards membership, thus it has been argued that the EU-imposed conditionality has been the focal driving force behind the commencement of the Europeanization process in the acceding countries. On the other hand, the EU has maintained conditionality as its main tool for exercising leverage for quick, coherent and structured reform in the former communist countries.[24] EU conditionality has retained a strategy of reinforcement by reward[25]—the final carrot being membership. In fact, the change of government to more reform-oriented parties, with a solid commitment to transformation and eventual membership, such as in Croatia after Tudjman, or the return of reformist forces in Romania and Bulgaria after a long period of Euro-fatigue and inertia, can be attributed to the democratization condition.[26] Moreover, some of the investment projects and commercial partnerships that were contracted in the Balkan countries may not have gone forward without the economic liberalization condition. Lest forgotten, that the EU has made extraordinary condemnations of undemocratic practices in the candidate countries, with a 'name-and-shame' strategy, by producing country reports on an annual basis, forcing the candidates to make rapid institutional or policy changes coherent with the European conditionality standards.[27]

The Commission's country reports are the instruments of the European Council to make a decision on the admission of each candidate to the next stage of the accession

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[21] The basis of this argument can be traced in traditional liberal theories of international relations. For a better understanding of the liberal economies and the peace-loving democracies theories please refer to the debate presented in the seminal article of John J. Mearsheimer, <u>Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War</u>, *International Security* 15 (1), Summer 1990, pp. 40-51

[22] Grabbe, Heather, (2006), *The EU's Transformative Power: Europeanization through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke.

[23] Ibid., p.10

[24] Papadimitriou, D. and Phinnemore, D. (2004), "Europeanization, Conditionality and Domestic Change: The Twinning Exercise and Administrative Reform in Romania", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42 (3), p. 622

[25] Schimmelfennig, F. and Sedelmeier, U. (2004), "Governance by Conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe", *Journal of European Public Policy* 11 (4), p. 663

[26] Ibid., p. 669-671

[27] Grabbe, H. (2001), "How does Europeanization affect CEE governance? Conditionality, diffusion and diversity," *Journal of European Public Policy,* 8 (6), p. 1021

process, and in fact, there have been numerous examples demonstrating their impact on candidate countries.[28] Romania was singled out for example on its progress of economic reforms and the conditions of state orphanages and that report endangered its prospects for opening up negotiations in 2000.[29] Another quite effective example was the imposition of specific responsibilities on nuclear power for Bulgaria. The EU reports called for decommissioning the dysfunctional nuclear reactors of Kozloduy nuclear power plant, which presented a valid threat for a Chernobyl-type accident in the near future.[30] What is quite remarkable in this move is that Greece and Romania have unsuccessfully been struggling—ever since the Chernobyl accident of 1986—to convince the Bulgarian government to either take measures for the modernization or shut down four of the six reactors, and it took the European Union two negative reports to succeed. It thus, seems that the transformation of the regional partners of Greece was a successful strategy administered by the EU on the basis of linking specific demands towards candidate countries with a potential benefit.

Yet, to agree for the purposes of this paper with Irondelle, "Europeanization intervenes not only after the process of integration, when common institutions and policies exist, but also during and even before the process."[31] The EU extended its pre-accession strategies towards the candidate Balkan countries as it did with the any other candidate. The financial aid inflow, of which Greece is also a part, facilitated the anchoring of an environment of political, economic, social and cultural cooperation—which would have never been possible in a strictly Balkan background. The Stabilization and Association Agreements signed with the Balkan countries, represent reshaped and updated versions of the former European programs for regional assistance adding the potential of membership according to the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Copenhagen criteria. Stepping on the transformative power of the EU, process tracing can facilitate the understanding of the status of the new member states within the EU, and the outcome of the process which was indeed successful, even for the two laggards—Bulgaria and Romania. Nevertheless, "the processes of Europeanization can be and have been exported,"[32] whether successful or not, it remains to be seen in the coming years.

The reconstruction efforts of the whole region have involved projects of infrastructure building to which both the EU and the Balkan countries maintain a high interest. New infrastructure proposals, especially in the energy sector, are the most concrete results of this cooperation: new oil and gas pipelines, electricity production and export, and the creation of energy networks from Southeastern Europe to the EU are bound to have important geopolitical implications for the region. In addition, efforts are being carried out to develop new and modernize the dilapidated transportation

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[28] For example the European Commission published a series of reports: EC (1996, 1999a, 2000).

[29] Ibid., p. 1022 and in the negative reports series by the Commission (1998b-2003) *Regular Report on Romania's Progress towards Accession*, Brussels, p. 12

[30] Similar for Bulgaria, European Commission (1998a), *Regular Report on Bulgaria's Progress towards Accession*, Brussels, p. 30 and in the subsequent report 1999, p 43 and p. 73. Since 2001, the Commission published a series of regular reports underlining the successful agreement of a realistic time schedule (2001, 2003, 2004).

[31] Irondelle, B (2003), "Europeanization without the European Union? French military reforms 1991-96", *Journal of European Public Policy,* 10 (2), p. 223

[32] Papadimitriou and Phinnemore, op. cit. p. 622

infrastructure in Southeastern Europe.[33] The EU and other regional and international partners are currently funding the Pan-European Transportation Corridors initiative involving road, rail and water transportation grids, running from the Danube to the Aegean Sea and from the heart of Russia to the Adriatic Sea, providing important assistance to the conduct of trade and other regional and continental exchanges.

Generally speaking, policy-making is perceived as a four-part process: (1) setting the agenda; (2) specifying alternatives from which a choice is to be made; (3) authoritative choice (vote or decision); and (4) implementation of the decision.[34] Grabbe (2006) argues that the EU influence was present both in the agenda-setting stage and the stage for the specification of alternative options. Nonetheless, the European Union could affect the timing and sequencing of a decision[35], adding timetables for reform in the Country Reports. Therefore, despite the fact that by 1996, when the first Association Agreements were concluded with the candidate countries, the regime change only counted five or six years of life, these countries entered a guided environment that never allowed the ethnic tendencies and security issues of the disintegration of Yugoslavia to spill over throughout the Balkans—though the danger still lurks. Nevertheless, this channeling of foreign policy resources that was consumed with building a close relationship with the European Union allowed for moderation, rather than propagation on behalf of the Balkan countries of foreign policy polemic against Greece. To conclude this section, it is not arguable that the transformation of its regional partners has allowed Greece more room for maneuvering in setting up its own foreign policy agenda. The commencement of Europeanization in the Balkans brought them into a unique foreign policy environment that revolved around the principles of cooperation, stability and prosperity. Greece has been and still remains a peace-loving nation; however, the long-lasting protection of national interests from bellicose neighbors, and the sudden awakening of nationalist feelings in these countries, required perseverance on acceding countries meeting the conditionality criteria to the best possible extent. As a result of Greece having a say in the final decision for membership, it possessed a quite powerful tool of foreign policy, and having neighbors that had commenced a Europeanization process, in terms of norms, values and political behavior, implied that the veto points of conflict in the foreign policy agenda towards them became fewer.

The Transformation of the Greek Foreign Policy Agenda

In the early 1990s, soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Greece found itself entangled in a completely unfamiliar foreign policy milieu. The disintegration of Yugoslavia during the first half of the decade created new geopolitical entities that were trying to establish their sovereignty in a small territorial space and endeavoring to be reintegrated in the European context. During those years, Greek foreign policy entered uncharted waters of an unidentified security environment that called for a redesign of its foreign policy objectives but also a reconfiguration of its foreign policy actors and institutions. Those years were indeed characterized by hostility towards the neighboring

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[33] Lesser, I., Larrabee, F.S. Zanini, M., and Vlachos, K. (2001) *Greece's New Geopolitics*, RAND Publications, Santa Monica, CA, p. 78
[34] Cf. Grabbe (2006), op. cit., p. 71
[35] Grabbe (2006), op. cit., p. 72

states, and a 'rhetorical, symbolic, nationalistic, formalistic and at times parochial and populist'[36] style of policy. The turning point has been identified in the literature as 1996 with the assumption of the Primer Minister's office by Kostas Simitis, who proclaimed himself a modernizer and a Europeanist. As Economides argues, "In effect, Simitis' intention was to embark on a parallel process of "re-Europeanizing" Greek foreign policy while pursuing a modernizing domestic reform program."[37] Simitis set his foreign policy style to a more 'pragmatic, problem solving and issue-oriented one,'[38] essentially into a more technocratic context. However, where can we trace the causal factors that led to this change? There appear to be three dominant and interrelated factors: first, the Europeanization of the Greek foreign policy actors and institutions; second, the launch of the Europeanization process in the Balkans through EU conditionality; and third, through the shift of the Greek geopolitical code as a result of the ongoing devolution of Southeastern Europe into *Kleinstaaterei*. These three factors were crucial for the shift of style, and in the words of Ioakimidis:

> "Although Greece showed a marked inability to grasp the significance of the historic changes and take advantage of the opportunities unleashed for contributing to the political and economic transition of the region, it eventually adjusted its policy to new conditions thereby responding to the pressures from the EU."[39]

Indeed, one of the most noteworthy and constructive improvements post-1996 was the ability of the Greek foreign policy agenda to transcribe itself in a multilateral echelon rather than remain a bilateral basis and to maintain prosperity and stability in view of regional conflicts and irredentist tendencies in its bordering neighborhood. This section examines the turning points in the formation of the Greek foreign policy agenda since 1996, the domestic impact of the Europeanization of foreign policy, the development of strong economic relations with the Balkans, as well as, the internal institutional transformations that took place.

At this stage, it is useful to utilize the notion the bottom-up aspect of the Europeanization of the foreign policy agenda, defined as "The impact of national policy preferences and interests on institution-building and policymaking at the European level, analyzing to what extent Member States try to project their preferences to the EU level within the emergence of new European structures."[40] This is exactly what happened in 1996: Greece removed the bilateral level of foreign affairs with its neighbors and brought it up as part of the EU enlargement agenda. At the same time, it lifted many of its veto points, allowing for the Europeanization of its national agenda characterized by a projection of national interests in the European milieu. In essence, the potential of enlargement created a certain momentum for Greece to integrate deeper and become a more active participant in the EU framework.

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[36] Ioakimidis, op. cit., p. 365
[37] Economides, op. cit., p. 481
[38] Ioakimidis, op. cit., p. 365
[39] Ibid., op. cit., p. 364
[40] Major, op. cit., p. 176

The Disintegration of Yugoslavia

The European Union, as a political entity, appeared quite sluggish in responding to the challenges posed by the dissolution of Yugoslavia. In the aftermath of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Dayton agreement in 1995, the dissolution of Yugoslavia unveiled the fragility of peace in the Balkan and the perils of war sprawling in regions within the newly created statelets where nationalist and irredentist feelings made a stark appearance. For the EU, the "Regional Approach" set a new basis for cooperation relying on the establishment of democratic regimes that would protect human rights and the rights of minorities and the establishment of 'cooperative relations with neighboring countries.'[41] Nevertheless, this situation raised concerns in Greece, thus making one of the main objectives in the Greek agenda the preservation of the status quo of the Yugoslav entity in any format. According to Economides (2005), "it was argued that Greece's geopolitical location afforded it a clearer understanding of the historical and systemic tensions inherent in Balkan international relations, and what was at stake regionally in the context of the Yugoslav wars."[42] More importantly, the Greek economy had suffered from the loss of Balkan tourists, the obstruction of land transportation and air routes and from the diversion of trade via other countries. Therefore, any strategy that could expose Greece to further commercial isolation and destabilization of the region was faced with criticism by the domestic public opinion: 'A progressively nationalist public opinion precluded the continuation of a rational and low-key policy—emphasizing security concerns in the Western European/transatlantic context—towards Yugoslavia's collapse.'[43] Few years later, the Kosovo crisis brought the Greek foreign policy agenda to a serious test resulting from the demand for cooperation with NATO forces.

The series of bombardments performed by NATO in March 1999 provoked the peace-loving sentiments of the Greek public. The Greek media intensified these reactions by projecting the air strikes 'as an act of aggression not only against Serbia, but also against the geopolitical order in the Balkans.'[44] In fact, during the Kosovo campaign, national opinion polls revealed a 95% of the Greek public opposing the NATO intervention.[45] Nevertheless, it appears that the wheels had turned for the transformation of Greek foreign policy. Despite the public outcry against the bombings, in a rare unified stance, both the socialist government and the major opposition party displayed a pragmatic and down-to-earth position.[46] The steering of the crisis by Simitis was to manage a stratagem where the Greek position would be in accordance with the international demands, and bear the least domestic political costs. Albeit at the heart of the Greek diplomatic efforts stood a political solution, through the promulgation of a 'policy of *constructive ambivalence*, Simitis balanced out internal demands and international necessity by declining Greek military participation […] but not opposing the operation and granting NATO forces the right of passage and maintenance of logistics

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[41] Lesser et al., op. cit., p. 60
[42] Economides, op. cit., p. 479
[43] Ibid., p. 480
[44] Huliaras and Tsardanidis, op. cit., p. 478
[45] Tsardanidis and Stavridis, op. cit., p. 232
[46] Tziampiris, A. (2003), "Greece and the Balkans in the Twentieth Century" in Couloumbis, T., Kariotis, T. and Bellou, F. (editors) *Greece in the Twentieth Century*, Frank Cass Publishers, London, p. 147

routes through Greek territory.'[47] Besides, the political skill of the Prime Minister's decision was shown in the fact that despite concerns over religious and historical affiliation with the Serbs, the strong interest of the Greek public and media was short-lived.[48]

At the end of the crisis, Greece revealed a strong Europeanized agenda by admitting refugees from Kosovo, and of course, with the dispatch of humanitarian aid in large quantities. Simultaneously, Greece appealed to its European counterparts for aid towards presenting an integrated regional framework for reforms in the areas of crime, security, and public administration, for the protection of human rights and newly created minorities, and the reconstruction of Serbian infrastructure. This plan complemented the proposed Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe[49] and created an organization, based in Thessaloniki, under the auspices of the EU: the European Agency for Reconstruction. According to the Agency, its main task is 'to manage the European Union's main assistance programs in the Republic of Serbia, including Kosovo, the Republic of Montenegro and FYROM.' It maintains four operational centers in Pristina, Belgrade, Podgorica and Skopje, and since its establishment in 2000, it has managed the flow of €2.85 billion in aid programs.[50] The comment by Tziampiris (2003) provides the encapsulation of the implications of the Greek foreign policy agenda during those years:

> "It can be argued that during the Kosovo conflict and its aftermath, Greece behaved in an almost exemplary manner […] Partisan and personal disputes did not seriously affect or determine the country's foreign policy. Actions were based upon a realistic assessment of the extent of Greece's influence and power. Furthermore, Greece successfully managed to be perceived by the international community as contributing towards the solution of the crisis, and not as a cause of it. Most significantly though, Greece eschewed any opportunism and focused upon the importance of stability in the Balkans, advocating and assisting in the implementation of international aid programs for the entire region."[51]

The flourishing of economic interactions and partnerships

Although the first years of the 1990s were marked by a serious trade embargo with FYROM over the well-known dispute of the country's appellation, Greece began to increase its commercial presence in the Balkans and managed to recover in the subsequent years to become 'an economic giant in the region'—despite the fact that, by

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[47] Economides, op. cit., pp. 485-486

[48] Huliaras and Tsardanidis, op. cit., p. 478

[49] The Stability Pact was the first serious attempt by the international community to replace the previous reactive crisis intervention strategy in Southeastern Europe, with a comprehensive, long-term conflict prevention strategy. On June 10, 1999, after an EU initiative, the Pact was adopted in Cologne, emphasizing in its founding document the need to assist the countries of Southeastern Europe "in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity in order to achieve stability in the whole region". Please refer to www.stabilitypact.org for more information.

[50] Information provided by the European Agency for Reconstruction website at http://www.ear.eu.int/, accessed May 26, 2007

[51] Tziampiris, op. cit., p. 148

EU standards, it was rather poor.[52] In fact, according to Featherstone (2005), 'Greece has become a leading source of foreign direct investment in the rest of the Balkans.'[53] It is exactly this characteristic that has elevated Greece to a status where any undermining of the otherwise fragile stability can shatter the strenuously-built economic partnerships that the Greek business community has concluded with their regional counterparts. Furthermore, given its geographic location as a gateway to the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean, Greece has an even stronger share of interest in the development of sustainable regional commercial joint ventures. With the recent addition of Bulgaria and Romania in the European Union family, Greece has finally acquired long-desired land borders with the Union, thus, obtaining a secure land route for trade and a direct access to the East European markets. This section draws heavily on the previous work of Walldén (2000) and Huliaras and Tsardanidis (2006) on the development of economic relations with the Balkans.

Since the opening of the borders with Albania, the conclusion of Association Agreements with Bulgaria and Romania, and the lift of the embargo with FYROM, placing 1996 as the landmark year, Greek foreign policy-makers—especially within high-ranking officials and the ministerial quarters—developed a notion of Greece as the most powerful country in the region. The rest of Southeastern Europe was seen as uncharted territory, full of economic prospects, cheap labor force, and unexploited markets. The Balkan countries were a Greek business-friendly territory ready to open up to investment. In fact, during the first years of the 1990s more than 3,500 Greek companies had engaged in interregional ventures and investment projects, while at the same time exports to the Balkans more than doubled.[54] In fact, by the end of the decade all major firms in Greece had established a powerful economic stronghold in almost every Southeastern European country.[55] This effect was enhanced by the fact that confrontational foreign policy agendas were a trend of the past and Greece was projected to its neighbors 'as a Western nation that attempted to bring stability and economic development to a troubled region.'[56]

By the year 2000, the Balkans became one of the few regions with which Greece ran a trade surplus, with a steadily rising share in Greek trade and by quadrupling its share of Balkan-oriented exports since 1989. Furthermore, the Balkans covered more than half of Greek trade with the former countries of the Eastern Bloc, whereas the same figure for the rest of the EU-15 is exceptionally low.[57] Bulgaria remains the most important Balkan trade partner, accounting for more than a third of the total trade with the region, with Romania, FYROM, Albania and Serbia following. Nevertheless, trade exchanges with the rest of the countries are minimal. It is also accurate to highlight that Greek economic partnerships are quite diversified ranging from textiles and agriculture to energy and manufacturing goods. In terms of direct investment, Greece has been impressively active in Bulgaria, Romania and Albania (and to some extent to FYROM

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[52] Tsoukalis, L. (2000), "Greece and the EU: Domestic Reform Coalitions, External Constraints and High Politics", in Mitsos and Mossialos, op. cit., p. 45
[53] Featherstone, K. (2005), "Introduction: Modernization and the Structural Constraints of Greek Politics," *West European Politics,* 28 (2), p. 224
[54] Huliaras and Tsardanidis, op. cit. 472
[55] Ibid., p.473
[56] Ibid.
[57] Walldén, A. S. (2000), "Greece in the Balkans: economic relations", in Mitsos and Mossialos, op. cit., p. 433

and Serbia), with acquisitions of local banks, telecommunication companies and food processing firms as well as enterprises in the sector of energy.[58] Important examples include: (1) the expansion of the National Bank of Greece, Eurobank, Alpha Bank and the Bank of Piraeus in Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia, not only with the opening of new local branches but also with the acquisition of many smaller local banks; (2) the acquisition of landline telephony and mobile communications companies by the Greek Telecom Organization (OTE); (3) the acquisition of OKTA in FYROM by Hellenic Petroleum, including the building of a pipeline to Thessaloniki, and the expansion of private Greek oil companies to refineries in Romania[59]; and (4) the recently agreed upon construction of the Burgas-Alexandroupolis pipeline to bring Russian oil bypassing the turbulent Caucasus region and avoiding the Bosporus.[60]

Nevertheless, Huliaras and Tsardanidis (2006) argue that there is a case to be made that in fact, Greek interregional partnership are not that strong because although a large chunk of the investment was stemming from leading banks and telecom companies, most of the Greek investors were small and medium-size firms, retailers and textile manufactures who sought to 'rebuild lost competitiveness by shifting to low-wage countries such as Bulgaria and Albania.'[61] This of course had severe repercussions for the domestic economy. It is also accurate to report that most of the Greek investment post-1996 originated from state and semi-state-owned companies like OTE and Hellenic Petroleum. Finally, they argue that post-1996 'all businesses with headquarters in Greece were considered as 'agents' of Greek national interests, business people were compared to diplomats, investments were thought of as Greek foreign policy instruments. Therefore, Greek foreign policy priorities and the interests of Greek business have begun to converge as never before.'[62] However, the business environment was quite conducive to Greek businesses as the Balkans are 'a difficult market in which informal relations and practices are predominant and the Greek businessperson is used to operating in such environment.'[63] As demonstrated, the penetration of the Balkan market in all sectors has increasingly deepened since 1996, thus creating a favorable environment for the sustainability of the new outlook of the Greek foreign policy agenda.

Other significant developments

Finally, there were a few other significant developments that helped the Greek agenda map its way in the years since 1996. First of all, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs experienced a considerable reorganization, and had shifted to a more liberal position. The old motto of Greece not negotiating on national interest issues had been replaced by a

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[58] Ibid., pp.433-438
[59] Lesser et al., op. cit., p. 95
[60] The Financial Times, "Putin gives go-ahead for oil pipeline," March 15, 2007, accessed May 25, 2007 at http://search.ft.com/ftArticle?queryText=Alexandroupolis&aje=true&id=070315001287. The story has been covered in the New York Times, the International Herald Tribune, the Boston Globe and by other important news agencies around the world marking the significance of the agreement for the energy future of the whole of Europe and the world.
[61] Huliaras and Tsardanidis, op. cit., p. 474
[62] Ibid., p. 475
[63] Labrianidis, L. (2000), "Are Greek companies that invest in the Balkans in the 1990s transnational companies?" in Mitsos and Mossialos, op. cit. p. 469

motivation to utilize the instrumental advantage of complying with European norms.[64] The law of 1998 stipulated a radical reform of the institutional organization of the Ministry 'to meet the needs and challenges facing Greece, as a member of the European Union, whose foreign policy is increasingly intertwined with that of the European Union.[65] The purpose of this reform was indeed the institutionalization of an agenda-making practice that was mainly dictated by a personalized style of administration. Nevertheless, Greece in those years managed to play an active role within the EU and lead the collective efforts towards the reconstruction of the Balkans and the gradual reintegration of all countries into the European continent through the formation of various international organizations. Greece was praised for its moderation and its cooperation in dealing with the break-down of the legal order in Albania after the 1997 scandal, and the Kosovo crisis. Its participation in the peace-keeping and observation forces in these areas reflected 'Greece's equidistant (vis-à-vis parties in dispute) and [multilateral] policies in the Balkans.'[66] The culmination of the transformation of the Greek agenda was the assumption of the rotating presidency of the EU in 2003, where Greece managed to pass a common position on the development of a structured European strategy towards the Western Balkans, and managed to successfully conclude the enlargement process with all the political and institutional implications it entailed. As Lesser et al. (2001) argue 'virtually all of Greece's external policy challenges, including some of the most traditional and neuralgic, have now been placed in a multilateral frame. The European linkage confers great advantages, and the re-nationalization of Greek policy in most areas would be costly, damaging and perhaps impossible.'[67] Indeed, it can be argued that despite the lack of immediate response in the initial years, Greece managed to explore these uncharted waters and that between 1996 and 2004, its foreign policy agenda underwent a monumental redefinition of interests and processes.

Uncharted Waters, version 2: Future implications and concluding remarks

The transformation of the Greek foreign policy agenda during the period of enlargement, that is, since 1996, is indeed laudable. Nevertheless, after completion of membership negotiations and the subsequent accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, Greece enters a new version of uncharted waters, which entail two strategy caveats: first, the fact that Greek isolation from the rest of the continent belongs to the past; and, second, the potential loosening of its Euro-Balkan strategy. Regarding the first ramification, Greece has never developed a foreign policy agenda with 'friendly' Balkan nations, and today, many of the former agenda issues (with Bulgaria for example) have become obsolete. Even more, moderation is today, and more than ever before, an imperative as the connection via land routes to the European Union is an important domestic development tool for the northern Greek territories and the further enhancement of its commercial ventures with its regional partners. Á propos the second implication, Greece may face a danger of relaxing its European involvement now that the first part of

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[64] Featherstone, op. cit., p. 237
[65] Ioakimidis, op. cit., pp. 366-367
[66] Couloumbis, T. (2000), "Greece in a post-cold war environment" in Mitsos and Mossialos, op. cit., p. 382
[67] Lesser et al., op. cit., p. 36

the task is completed. In essence, Greece may completely rest its agenda vis-à-vis its new EU neighbors in the hands of the Union without pursuing further involvement in the decision-making and agenda-setting process. And there are in fact signs of this phenomenon. After the change of government in 2004, Greek foreign policy has not been very active in the region, and most of the issues have returned to a bilateral basis, ignoring the potentialities of multilateral agenda-setting. If truth be told, the recent reemergence of the constitutional name and the international recognition of FYROM, and its exploitation for domestic partisan interests may become an important issue in the upcoming elections and, consequently, in the future agenda of Greek foreign policy.

To summarize the argument, Greece could have never achieved a shift in its agenda-setting in foreign policy. Despite the competing and colluding exogenous and endogenous factors in the formation of the agenda, the timing was right post-1996 for convergence of most of the factors. Nevertheless, following unilateral and bilateral foreign policy strategies would have been detrimental for Greece and for the region. Without the well-timed coincidence of the simultaneous presence of down-to-earth policies initiated by Simitis, the restructuring of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the involvement of the business community in the conclusion of economic partnerships, but also the Europeanization of the national agenda and the complete alterations that its Balkan neighbors underwent, as part of their EU accession process, Greece would have not been able to respond to challenges the uncharted waters of foreign policy entailed.

Hence, what kind of outlook should the national agenda on foreign policy assume to endure in the new uncharted waters of foreign policy? Of vital importance remains the maintenance of a moderate style of policies aiming at the increase of regional cooperation with its new EU neighbors and strengthening the prospects of EU membership for Croatia and FYROM. Greece should aim at involving, within the regional partnerships, other EU regional players like Italy and Austria who have increased stakes in the consolidation of the stability of the region. This implies a continued projection of the Greek agenda as an integral part of the EU foreign policy agenda in the region. Nevertheless, Greece should construct a coherent agenda vis-à-vis Serbia and the potential independence of Kosovo, while intensifying the diplomatic efforts for the procurement of a common ground solution in the conflict with FYROM. At the same time, the cultivation of close relations with Albania should continue. Finally, the European options of Greece should be intensified and extended. This is no longer simply an option in the formation of its foreign policy agenda. After 2007, this option has become an imperative strategic choice. The prospect of the formation of a Balkan pole with future enlargements, the reform of the Union in terms of decision-making processes to accommodate the large number of members, and future of the cohesion funds will be important issues for the future agenda-setting, strengthening the statement that European involvement in its agenda is the strongest asset in geopolitical, economic and social terms.

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Title:
"The Social Construction of Greek Foreign Policy: A Constructivist Reinvigoration".

Paper prepared for the 3rd Hellenic Observatory PhD Symposium "Contemporary Greece: Structures, Context and Challenges",
Hellenic Observatory,
London School of Economics and Political Science, 14 – 15 June, London, UK.

Abstract:

The end of the Cold War was the central fact for the theoretical demise of the academic domain of international relations (IR). The false promise of neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism to predict, explain and understand this systemic change marked a new era for the prospects of world politics and foreign policy analysis. The effect of the failure of neo – utilitarian theoretical approaches was a sociological turn to the IR academic domain which was best conceptualized by the emergence of the social constructivist project.

The aim of this article is to highlight the theoretical merits of the constructivist approach by giving special emphasis in the study of Greek foreign policy. It is widely common among diplomats, politicians and IR academics that the Greek foreign policy is characterized either as an effete and significant expression of EU foreign policy (Common Foreign and Security Policy), or as a limited framework for national interest foreign policy bargaining.

Social constructivism attempts to understand foreign policy as social construction. Its critical attribute is to ask how – possible questions and thus to take as problematic the possibility that a particular decision or course of action could happen by explaining how the perceptions and the dominant belief systems were socially constructed such that certain choices and decisions were made possible.

The main theoretical assumption of social constructivism is that identities are the bases for foreign policy interests. The impact of norms (international or European or national – Greek) is the fundamental feature of constructivist methodology and the crucial factor to open the black box of identity, role and behaviour of actors in Greek foreign policy agenda. This is undoubtedly important since the constructivist approach is based on the hypothesis that the state interests are derived endogenously from the social interaction of actors rather than created exogenously, taken as pre – determined 'givens' before any social interaction takes place. What has to be clearly explained is the intersubjective nature of norms and their influence on the social construction of identities and interests of Greek foreign policy actors.

The goal of this approach is to reinvigorate the study of foreign policy analysis by critically examining the reciprocal relationship between CFSP and Greek foreign policy. This emphasis on the mutual co – constitution of agency and structure could be the most appropriate precursor for the thorough understanding of Greek foreign policy decision – making mechanisms and policy – making regime.

Introduction.

Economics has been characterized as the dismal science and thus many commentators believe that it does not comprise a science at all. However, the last fifty years, it has been observed a widespread interest for economic sciences within the academia and the community of social scientists. This trend is justified by the fact that the basic theory of economics, microeconomics, has penetrated in the fields of all social sciences, from anthropology to sociology and from history to political science. This predominance of microeconomic theory in collaboration with the development of game theory, statistical analysis and econometric methods has led many social theorists to use these approaches as the fundamental analytical and methodological tools for social research.

As branches of political science, International Relations (IR) theory and European integration studies could not avoid these currents. For example, Kenneth Waltz has used the microeconomic methods of analysis and game theory in his seminal study in 1979[1]. The end of the Cold War, however, was the central fact for the entire demise of IR dominant theories. The false promise of neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism to predict, explain and understand this systemic change marked a new era for the prospects of world politics and foreign policy analysis (FPA). The effect of the failure of neo – utilitarian theoretical approaches was a sociological turn to the IR academic domain which was best conceptualized by the emergence of the social constructivist project (Checkel 1998; Ruggie 1998)[2].

The aim of this paper is to highlight the theoretical merits of the social constructivist approach by giving special emphasis to the study of Greek foreign policy. The constructivist approach is based on the hypothesis that the state interests are derived endogenously from the social interaction of actors rather than created exogenously, taken as pre – determined 'givens' before any social interaction takes place. Hence, social constructivism attempts to understand foreign policy as a social construction. Its critical attribute is to ask how – possible questions and thus to take as problematic the possibility that a particular decision or course of action could happen by explaining how the perceptions and the dominant belief systems were socially constructed such that certain choices and decisions were made possible (Doty 1993).

The structure of this paper is divided in three parts. The first part examines thoroughly the theoretical approach of social constructivism exposing its main theoretical assumptions for IR theory. The second part points out the basic problems of Greek foreign policy stating that the problem is twofold: a) practical and b) theoretical. The third part analyzes Greek foreign policy as a social construction and is optimistic to emerge a new model of foreign policy analysis based on the theoretical framework of social constructivism.

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[1]See, Waltz, K. (1979) *Theory of International Politics,* (Reading, MA: Addison – Wesley) and Snidal, D. (1985) 'The Game Theory of International Politics' *World Politics* 38 (1): 25 – 57.
[2] Ruggie illustrates that the neo – utilitarian theoretical approaches share common rationalist assumptions. For example, neo – realism and neo – liberal institutionalism are two neo – utilitarian approaches since they share similar rationalist theoretical assumptions (Ruggie 1998).

The Theoretical Framework of Social Constructivism.

The approach of social constructivism is without doubt the most evolutionary theoretical and methodological trend in the modern academic domain of IR theory. As Guzzini has noted, " 'The social construction of…' is littering the title pages of our books, articles and student assignments as did 'the political economy of…' in the 1980s" (Guzzini 2000: 147). This current is widely accepted since the IR theoreticians have started to talk about the emergence of two new big debates in the IR academic domain, this between rationalism and constructivism and this between constructivism and critical theory (Reus – Smit 2001). It is not a random fact that three of the most cited academics in American IR community, Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane and Stephen Krasner, mention that the importance of this new constructivist trend has penetrated all the strands of IR theory and refer to the emergence of the fourth great IR debate between rationalist and constructivist approaches (Katzenstein, Keohane and Kranser 1998 and for a critique of this argumentation, Smith 2000).

If one attempts to develop a detailed genealogy of social constructivist foundations, he / she will surely take a false step and stumble to the ideas of theorists who come from a variety of academic disciplines. This means that the philosophical, historical, sociological and political principles of constructivism constitute a deep labyrinth without start or end. Based on the philosophical writings of Italian scholar Giambattista Vico (Jackson and Sorensen 2003), the neo – Kantian philosophy (Adler 2004), the linguistic research program of Martin Heidegger (1962) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953), the radical waves of poststructuralists (Jacques Derrida 1982, 1992, 1998) and postmodernists (Michel Foucault 1970, 1978, 1979), the critical theory of Frankfurt School (Max Horkheimer 1972; Teodor Adorno 1976), the theoretical works of Jurgen Habermas and the political thought of Karl Deutsch, neofunctionalism (Ernst Haas 1958) and the English School of IR, social constructivism keeps a complex theoretical identity in the gulfs of IR theory.

The starting point for the constructivist turn in IR was given by a prolific article of Kratochwil and Ruggie (1986) who managed to clarify the inherent contradictions between the ontology and the epistemology of regime theory. Kratochwil and Ruggie wondered how it is possible the ontology of regimes to be defined by an inescapable intersubjective quality and the epistemology of them to be entirely positivist in orientation. By this logical argument, they concluded to the powerful inference that "epistemology fundamentally contradicts ontology" (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986: 764). According to Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener (1999), three are the most important implications of the contribution of Kratochwil and Ruggie for the social constructivist project: a) the intersubjective nature of epistemology in regime analysis, b) the social ontology of structure in the international system of states, which is the result of the social interaction among them (Wendt 1992) and does not come from the notion of international anarchy (Waltz 1979), and c) the influence of international norms in national policies and not only in international politics (Finnemore 1996, Klotz 1995, Katzenstein 1996).

The in - depth understanding of Kratochwil and Ruggie's argument entails a thorough analysis of the theoretical assumptions of social constructivism. Although social constructivism is a wider sociological theoretical approach, John Gerard Ruggie has managed to give it a concise definition:

> "…constructivism concerns the issue of human consciousness: the role it plays in international relations, and the implications for the logic and methods of social inquiry of taking it seriously. Constructivists hold the view that the building blocks of international reality are ideational as well as material; that ideational factors have normative as well as instrumental dimensions; that they express not only individual but also collective intentionality; and that the meaning and significance of ideational factors are not independent of time and place" (Ruggie 1998: 33)

Similarly, Emanuel Adler claims that "Constructivism is the view that the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world" (Adler 1997: 322). These two definitions are not incontestable truths and thus it is very important to note that social constructivism is not a theory per se, but a philosophical approach of social science (Christiansen, Jorgensen και Wiener 1998: 530, Ruggie 1998: 34). As Adler has argued, "Constructivism, unlike realism or liberalism, is not a theory of politics per se. Rather, it is a social theory on which constructivist theories of international politics – for example, about war, cooperation, and international community – are based (Adler 1997: 323).

The main theoretical foundation of social constructivism in IR theory is its great achievement to sit precisely at the intersection between both rationalist and reflectivist approaches. This is happening since social constructivism deals simultaneously with the same features of world politics that are central to both rationalism (neo – realism and neo – liberalism) and reflectivism (post – modernism, feminist theory, normative theory, critical theory and historical sociology) (Smith 1997). Smith characteristically cites that "constructivists would be the acceptable face of rationalism for reflectivists and the acceptable face of reflectivism for rationalists" (Smith 1997: 184).

Although social constructivism is deemed the middle ground theory between rationalism and reflectivism, it challenges the methodological individualism of rational choice theories which are taking the identities and interests of actors as given. Therefore, constructivists do not emphasize the material structures of the world politics, but they hold by the normative or ideational structures of the social and political world. Social constructivism lays the foundations of a reality of social world which does not exist 'out there' but comprises an integral part of the thoughts and ideas of human beings. "It is probably most useful to describe constructivism as based on a social ontology which insists that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings ('culture' in a broad sense)" (Risse 2004: 160). Jackson and Sorensen believe

that the social world of constructivists "is not an external reality whose laws can be discovered by scientific research and explained by scientific theory as behavioralists and positivists argue", but "everything involved in the social world of men and women is made by them" (Jackson and Sorensen 2003: 254).

Social constructivism essentially acknowledges that human relations, including international relations, consist of thoughts and ideas. Hence, its core ideational element focuses on intersubjective beliefs (ideas, conceptions, perceptions, etc.) which are widely shared among people. These shared beliefs compose and construct the identities and the interests of people that are by this way rendered socially constructed (Jackson and Sorensen 2003: 254). The weberian notion of Verstehen[3], according to Adler (1997), sheds adequate light on the theoretical interpretation of the concept of intersubjectivity and explains to a great extent why the social action should be explained in an interpreting setting, which requires us "to specify that there is meaning both in the 'behavior of others' and in the 'account' which the acting individual takes of it. That leads directly to the central hermeneutic theme that action must always be understood from within" (Hollis and Smith 1990: 72 as quoted at Adler 1997: 326). Accordingly, the intersubjective meanings do not only concern the common beliefs of people, but also the collective structures of knowledge which are constructed and maintained via the social practices of the actors of a society. The process of social communication plays an appropriate role in this construction of collective knowledge[4].

It is then obvious that the specific social environment encompassing the material, political and economic structures of a society is playing the most important role for the intersubjective perception of reality. For example, think the nuclear weapons, which comprise the ultimate material capability. Constructivists do not concern about the nuclear weapons per se, but for the international environment in which these weapons exist. Americans worry very little about the large quantity of nuclear weapons held by the British; "however, the possibility that North Korea might come into possession of even one or two generates tremendous concern" (Checkel 1998: 326). The most famous example of the social construction of intersubjective reality is money. "It is only our shared beliefs that this piece of paper is money which 'makes' it money" (Searle 1995 as quoted at Guzzini 2005: 498).

There are many examples in IR theory which justify the existence of shared beliefs and meanings in the societies of international system. "The social world is a world of human consciousness: of thoughts and beliefs, of ideas and concepts, of languages and discourses, of signs, signals, and understandings among human beings, especially groups of human beings, such as states and nations" (Jackson and Sorensen 2003: 254). The state is such an intersubjective understanding among a group of human beings who deem themselves as part of this entity. Their collective perception that this state is a distinct part of the international system of states and their consciousness about the specific characteristics of their culture, their history and their religion are the results of the intersubjective nature of reality. As a

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[3] In German language, verstehen means understand.
[4] Here, Adler reminds us the basic role that social communication plays in the theoretical works of Karl Deutsch about the 'security communities' and in Benedict Anderson (2006) about his notion of 'imagined communities'.

consequence, all the aspects of reality of social world are intersubjectively constructed.

The defense of the normative or ideational structures of social and political world essentially means that social constructivism distrusts to a great extent the theoretical individualism of rational choice theory, which deems the identities and the interests of actors as given. Ruggie fairly asks how the neo – utilitarian approaches produce the identities and the interests of actors, since they do not offer an in – depth methodology or theory about this matter (Ruggie 1998). Wendt (1992) argues that international anarchy is not some kind of external given but it is constructed via the relations between states. He stresses that there is no such thing as an automatic security dilemma for states, but self – help essentially emerges only out of interaction between states (Smith 1997: 185). This argument comes from his conviction that collective meanings shape actors' identities and interests and social institutions are in effect stable sets of these identities and interests. According to him, self – help can be deemed such an institution. Thus, the main theoretical key – point is "how intersubjective practices between actors result in identities and interests being formed in the processes of interaction rather than being formed prior to interaction" (Smith 1997: 185, Wendt 1992: 393 – 394)[5].

The identity of actors is being seen by constructivists as a leading variable which plays a crucial role in the development of social constructivist approach. In an international environment where chaos and anarchy are the dominant elements, the creation of intersubjective identities is necessary in order to "ensure at least some minimal level of predictability and order" (Hopf 1998: 174). Hopf also informs us that "identities perform three necessary functions in a society: they tell you and others who you are and they tell who others are" (Hopf 1998: 175). If one asserts that identities are given in an international system, then he/she assumes that these identities are also invariable within the time and space of international system.

There is a growing empirical literature deals with the issue of the influence of ideational factors in the sphere of world politics. However, constructivists have many times been blamed for the empirical inaccuracy of their models and their exclusive adherence on theoretical issues. The notion of intersubjectivity indirectly inserts the concept of 'norm' in IR theory which can be deemed as the most important empirical tool in the project of constructivism. In this paper, as in Katzenstein's volume, the concept of norm is used to "describe collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity" (Katzenstein 1996: 5). Some norms are coming from the international system and the internalization of them is the generative reason for the acquisition of collective identities and the establishment of specific interests among groups of actors in a society (Finnemore 1996a). Other

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[5] A striking example of this sociological turn in IR research is the study of Katzenstein et al. (1996). In this survey, Katzenstein et al. approach the crucial notion of national security through a sociological perspective and they base their theoretical framework in the following proposition: "The international and domestic societies in which states are embedded shape their identities in powerful ways. The state is a social actor. It is embedded in social rules and conventions that constitute its identity and the reasons for the interests that motivate actors" (Katzenstein 1996: 23). Look at Katzenstein, P., ed. (1996) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics,* New York: Columbia University Press.

norms are the result of the national level of policy and their understanding by the people of a society is the main reason for the establishment of collective identities. According to Katzenstein et al., norms can have a double quality: "Sometimes norms operate like rules defining (and thus 'constituting') an identity…in other instances, norms are 'regulative' in their effect" because "they operate as standards for the proper enactment or deployment of a defined identity" (Jepperson, Wendt και Katzenstein 1996: 54). This argumentation about the 'constitutive effects' of norms in the vocabulary of constructivists is the key – point of dispute between them and the rationalist scholars. Constructivists blame rationalists that the latter lack any thought of 'constitutive rules' in their agenda and thereby it is very difficult for them to interpret and understand the 'deep' structures and the actions of actors in the modern international system (Onuf 1989; Kratochwil 1989; Ruggie 1998).

The above analysis illustrates with a clear way that social constructivism borrows theoretical premises from a variety of critical approaches of social sciences and hence it can easily stand next to the most radical interpretations of social research. However, although constructivist theoretical framework clearly fights for a theory of change in international politics, its conclusions are poorly dedicated to such a direction. For example, Ruggie does not provide a thorough examination of how change occurs, but offers a soft theory of transformation which is based on three superficial solutions: a) structure both constrains action but is also the medium through which actors act and, in doing so, potentially transform the structure[6], b) the macro – structural dimension of international politics constitutes the set of characteristics of social actions which are vulnerable to change, and c) the micro – practices of international relations are always in a process of change (Ruggie 1998). By the same way, Hopf develops a soft constructivist argumentation arguing that "what constructivism does offer is an account of how and where change may occur" (Hopf 1998: 180). On the contrary, Adler seems to be more optimistic about the process of change in the constructivist model and according to him, "it may be only a slight exaggeration to say that if constructivism is about anything, it is about change" (Adler 2002: 102). He stresses the fact that "constructivism's added value is to take change less as the alteration in the positions of material things than as the emergence of new constitutive rules (Ruggie 1998), the evolution and transformation of new social structures (Dessler 1989; Koslowski and Kratochwil 1994) and the agent – related origins of social processes" (Adler 2002: 102)[7].

IR theorists always illuminate the material face of the concept of power, mainly economic or military, and are rarely interested in the intersubjective nature of it (Barnett and Duvall 2005). Constructivists, on the contrary, are giving special emphasis to the interaction of material and discursive power and are stressing the power of knowledge, of ideas, of culture, of ideology, of language, of norms and generally of all the social constructions of world (Hopf 1998; Guzzini 2005). Although, constructivists

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[6] Here, Ruggie uses Giddens' theoretical framework about the 'duality of structure' and only offers a purely theoretical solution (Ruggie 1998: 26). See, Giddens, A. (1978) *Emile Durkheim,* (New York: Penguin) and Giddens, A. (1979) *Central Problems in Social and Political Theory,* (Berkeley / Los Angeles: University of California Press).

[7] According to Adler, the most appropriate mechanisms of change are collective learning, cognitive evolution, epistemic change and the 'life cycles of norms'.

have highlighted how underlying ideational structures constitute actors' identities and interests, according to Barnett and Duvall, "they have rarely treated these normative structures themselves as defined and infused by power, or emphasized how constitutive effects also are expressions of power" (Barnett and Duvall 2005: 41). However, for constructivists like Stefano Guzzini, the concept of power has an enormous importance for two crucial reasons. First, it can link "the interaction between the social construction of meaning (including knowledge) with the construction of social reality" (Guzzini 2000: 170). Second, it has a powerful role in our political discourse because "it tends to 'politicize' issues" (Guzzini 2005: 497). Among others, the relation between power and knowledge of Foucault (1970, 1978, 1979, 1991), the theory of ideological hegemony of Antonio Gramsci (1992), the weberian differentiation of coercion from authority (Weber 1971), the structural power of Susan Strange (1987, 1994) and the soft power of Joseph Nye (1990, 2002) are the most important foundations of the concept of power in constructivist analysis. Influenced by these critical approaches, modern constructivists highlight the power of speech acts (Onuf 1998), the power of hegemonic discourses (Cox 1981), the power of identities (Checkel 2001), the power of moral authority (Hall 1999) and the power of rules and norms (Kratochwil 1989; Finnemore 1993, 1996).

Finally, the above theoretical arguments have fundamental implications for the agency – structure debate which lies at the heart of social constructivists. It is true that the agency – structure problem has provoked big discussions within the IR scholarship and essentially constitutes a problem which has been expanded to all social sciences. The main feature of the agency – structure problematique accounts for the nature of international society and more specifically, focuses on how structures constraint or reinforce the actions of actors, how the actions of actors diverge from structures and how the actors influence these structures (Wendt 1987; Dessler 1989; Karlsnaes 1992; Adler 1997; Hopf 1998). In reality, there is a reciprocal relationship between agency and structure and for this reason, constructivists insist on the mutual constitutiveness of social structures and agents rather than their co – determination (Risse 2004). As Reus – Smit has sardonically mentioned, "normative and ideational structures may well condition the identities and interests of actors, but those structures would not exist if it were not for the knowledgeable practices of those actors" (Reus – Smit 2001: 218). According to Checkel, the mutual constitutiveness of agents and structures constitutes the key theoretical approach to open the 'black box' of identities and interests' formation. The identities and the interests of actors emerge from this interaction between agents and structures and are in effect endogenous of this process[8].

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[8] For the debate of the agent – structure problem and its significance in international relations theory, look at: Wendt, A. (1987) 'The Agent – Structure Problem in International Relations Theory' *International Organization* 41:3, 335 – 370, Dessler, D. (1989) 'What's at Stake in the Agent – Structure Debate?' *International Organization* 43(3): 441 – 473, Carlsnaes, W. (1992) 'The Agency – Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis' *International Studies Quarterly* 36 (3): 245 – 270, Doty, R.L. (1997) 'Aporia: A Critical Exploration of the Agent – Structure Problematique in International Relations Theory' *European Journal of International Relations* 3(3): 365 – 392, Gould, H. (1998) 'What Is at Stake in the Agent – Structure Debate?' in Vendulka Kubalkova, Nicholas Onuf and Paul Kowert, eds., *International Relations In a Constructed World,* (New York: M.E.Sharpe), pp:79-98 and Wight, C. (1999) 'They Shoot

Greek Foreign Policy.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent breakdown of Soviet Empire marked the end of the Cold War between the two superpowers, USA and USSR, and the beginning of a 'new world order' in IR theory. The two fundamental characteristics of this new époque are: first, the hegemonic dominance of the United States of America in the global political system, and second, the expansion of neoliberal globalization of free trade as the unique economic orthodoxy in the new international economic system. These cosmogonic changes laid the foundations for the reconsideration of the role of Europe as an important global actor in the post – Cold War agenda of world politics. As Stanley Hoffmann has argued, "with the end of the Cold War, the issue of a European full capacity to act in world affairs came to the fore again" (Hoffmann 2000: 191).

The last decade, undoubtedly, EU has been emerged as a unique regional economic bloc under the auspices of Economic and Monetary Union. For this reason, it is obvious that Europe has done well in the economic domain and its future is also promising. However, if one attempts to valuate the sensitive domain of foreign policy, he/she will easily discover the cracks of European economic empire. Loukas Tsoukalis has characterized EU as an economic giant, but a political midget in the international relations among nations (Tsoukalis 2004). This consideration is very important because Europe will be judged in relation with its political integration rather than its economic success. Although the differentiation between 'high politics' issues and 'low politics' issues seems to be anachronistic within a globalized economic system, the political nature of integration cannot be downgraded.

The Treaty of Maastricht inaugurated the genesis of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of EU as a distinct pillar in the decision – making process. Many changes have been accomplished in the Treaty of Amsterdam which came into force in 1999 and spelled out five fundamental objectives of CFSP:

- to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union in conformity with the principle of the United Nations Charter ;
- to strengthen the security of the Union in all ways;
- to preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as the

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Dead Horses Don't They?: Locating Agency in the Agent – Structure Problematique' *European Journal of International Relations* 5: 109 – 142. Look also Martin Hollis and Steve Smith's ongoing debates about the agent – structure problem in IR: Hollis, M. and Smith, S. (1990) *Explaining and Understanding International Relations,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), Hollis, M. and Smith, S.(1991) 'Beware of Gurus: Structure and Action in International Relations' *Review of International Studies* 17: 393 – 410, Hollis, M. and Smith, S. (1992) 'Structure and Action: Further Comment' *Review of International Studies* 18: 187 – 88, Hollis, M. and Smith, S. (1994) 'Two Stories about Structure and Agency' *Review of International Studies* 20: 241 – 51, Hollis, M. and Smith, S. (1996) 'A Response: Why Epistemology Matters in International Theory' *Review of International Studies* 22: 111 – 16.

principle of the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Paris Charter , including those on external borders;

- to promote international co-operation;
- to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms[9].

Since then, we have witnessed a rapid expansion in the policy – scope and institutional capacity of EU foreign policy – making (Tonra and Christiansen 2004). According to Tonra, the policy – making regime has been developed along at least three axes: bureaucratic structure, substantive policy remit and decision – making capacity (Tonra 2003)[10].

However, it is very difficult for someone to speak for a common foreign and security policy in the sense of one that replaces national policies. Rather, EU foreign policy is a product of three distinct but interdependent systems of decision – making:

● a national system of foreign policies;
● a Community system focused on economic policy (and based within the first - pillar in the EU's tri – pillar structure); and
● an EU system centred on the CFSP (or second pillar) (Peterson and Smith 2003: 197).

Therefore, the fundamental obstacle for a common European foreign policy remains the reluctance of the member states to "submit their diplomacy to the strait – jacket of EU decision – making" (Tonra and Christiansen 2004: 1). According to Gordon, CFSP's integration is almost an impossible task since "states will only take the difficult and self – denying decision to share their foreign policy sovereignty if the gains of common action are seen to be so great that sacrificing sovereignty is worth it, or if their interests converge to the point that little loss of sovereignty is entailed" (Gordon 1997 – 1998: 81).

Greek foreign policy decision – making system is precisely working as the previous analysis indicated. This means that although there are many institutional restrictions by the Greek participation in the EU and subsequently by its involvement in the CFSP process, the Greek foreign policy has been directed separately from the CFSP and continues to "walk alone" in many foreign policy issues within the global political agenda. This is actually not only a Greek invention in foreign policy domain, but constitutes the usual path as has been previously argued, since many EU member states want to 'protect'

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[9] For a thorough examination of how CFSP works and its institutional regulations, look at the European Union official website,
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/cfsp/intro/index.htm.
[10] For a historical review and the changes in the institutional development of CFSP, look at the following texts: Fink-Hooijer, F. (1994) 'The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union', *European Journal of International Law* 5: 173 – 198, available also at: www.**ejil**.org/journal/Vol5/No2/art2.pdf, Dinan, D. (1999) *Ever Closer Union: An Introduction to European Integration,,* 2nd Edition, (Palgrave: New York), Forster, A. and Wallace, W. (2000) 'Common Foreign and Security Policy' in Helen Wallace and William Wallace,eds., *Policy – Making in the European Union,* 4th Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp: 461-491, Peterson, J. and Smith, M. (2003) 'The EU as a Global Actor' in Elizabeth Bomberg and Alexander Stubb, eds., *The European Union: How Does It Work?,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp: 195-215, Smith,K. (2003) 'EU External Relations' in Michelle Cini, ed., *European Union Politics,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp: 229-245.

their national interests within a world system characterized by intense complexity and relentless competition[11].

The main problem with Greek policy in foreign affairs is the geographical dimension. Greece is between three continents (Europe, Asia, Africa) and is being surrounded by sea. Its geographical position is situated in a region where many conflicts and wars have been occurred throughout the world history: Balkan Wars, World Wars, Conflicts between the superpowers during the Cold War, Iraqi Wars, Middle East Conflicts, etc. Hence, Greece was always a crucial foreign policy player in the power relations among states and undoubtedly continues to be one of the main centres of global political agenda.

However, this Greek centrality in world affairs is a 'generative machine' which basically fosters 'bad perspectives'. The main theoretical construction of this sense of Greek centrality is the development of a nationalist approach as far as the foreign policy issues are concerned. According to Irakleidis (2001), the nationalist school of Greek foreign policy emanates from the Neo – Greek Enlightenment and the 'Big Idea' of Eleftherios Venizelos and substantially challenges the foreign 'enemies' of Greek territory and society as the fundamental devils of Greek catastrophic marching in the modern history. Irakleidis makes the clear argument that the Greek nationalist approach focuses exclusively on the Greek – Turkish relations and for this reason thoroughly scorns the Turkish policy in relation with the Greek dominance in Aegean, the Cypriot Problem, the Greek minorities in Istanbul and the muslins in northern Thrace {Alexandris (Αλεξανδρής), Veremis (Βερέμης), Kazakos (Καζάκος), Koufoudakis (Κουφουδάκης), Rozakis (Ροζάκης) and Tsitsopoulos (Τσιτσόπουλος) 1991; Kranidiotis (Κρανιδιώτης) 2000; Irakleidis (Ηρακλείδης) 2001}.

Except for the nationalist approach in Greek foreign policy, there is a widespread recognition among the Greek public opinion that Greek foreign policy is a diplomatic game which is played only for micro-political gains in the national elections[12]. Many times in the past, the two big political parties in Greece, PASOK and Nea Dimokratia, have used the Greek 'triumphs' against the Turks or the Greek 'achievements' within the EU to support their campaigns for electoral gains. This phenomenon has led to a limited decision – making framework of foreign policy which is directed by the dominant personalities (especially the Prime Ministers and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs) and the leading elites of the governments. For example, Ioakimidis has developed a model of foreign policy – making based on the intense influence of Greek governing personalities versus a coherent institutional structure. This in essence means that the Greek foreign policy decisions are made exclusively by the personal views, preferences and perceptions of the leading figures of Greek governments, like the Prime Minister or the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and not from the existing institutional structures, like the National Council of Foreign Policy or the Diplomatic Service of the Ministry of

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[11] This argument presupposes that the national interests of EU member states are many times in antithesis with them of EU.

[12] Look, for example, the recent article of a Greek columnist: I. Kartalis (Καρτάλης) (2007) 'Expediences' (Σκοπιμότητες), *Το Βήμα της Κυριακής (Sunday Vima),* Sunday 27 March 2007, pp: A27.

Foreign Affairs or the Government Council on Foreign and Defence / KYSEA (Ioakimidis 1999).

The lack of a coherent institutional structure within the Greek foreign policy – making process and the inability of the leading figures to work collectively avoiding the populism and the private political interests for their parties, leads to a sequence of successive mistakes and lost opportunities. For example, two striking cases designate clearly the dominance of personal preferences in Greek foreign policy issues. First, the problem with the name "Macedonia" of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) was indeed a personal decision of Samaras[13] himself without any previous discussion in the cabinet of the governmental council on foreign policy (Ioakimidis 1999: 152 – 153). Second, the persistent problematic Greek – Turkish relations as regards the issues of Aegean, Cyprus and the two minorities in Istanbul and the northern Thrace are essentially political decisions taken by the personal perceptions of the Prime Ministers after the end of dictatorship in 1974 (Karamanlis, Papandreou, Mitsotakis, Simitis and Kostas Karamanlis)[14]. Ambassador Theodoropoulos, former Secretary – General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has pointed out that "the maximalistic, largely irrational objectives and the uncompromising, unyielding stance in the foreign policy domain have resulted either in national catastrophies and defeats or, at best, in the acceptance of worse solutions than we could have achieved through a more flexible strategy" (for this point, look at Ioakimidis 1999: 159).

Although, the capability – expectations gap of Greek foreign policy, which is already obvious to a great extent in CFSP[15], seems to be an interesting area for research, it is not this paper's special theme of analysis. The centre of attention is the theoretical problem of Greek foreign policy analysis and how it is related with the empirical part which is actually the capability – expectations gap as mentioned before. This paper claims that the basic problematique for any study in foreign policy analysis is the theoretical construction and how the researchers can build clear assumptions and methodological frameworks so that to fully understand the practices and the behaviors of the actors completely involved in the foreign policy decision – making process.

The Theoretical Problem of Greek Foreign Policy.

There is a big number of researchers arguing that the essential problem of Europe's foreign policy is in reality the non – existence of a robust theoretical framework to analyse CFSP. Roy Ginsberg characteristically

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[13] Antonis Samaras was Minister of Foreign Affairs for almost three years (1989 – 92) under the presidency of Konstantinos Mitsotakis.

[14] The names in parenthesis are the names of Prime Ministers who governed Greece after the dictatorship in 1974.

[15] For the capability – expectations gap as far as European Foreign Policy is concerned, look at Christopher Hill, "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role," Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol. 31, No. 3 (September 1993): 305-328.

points out that "the gap between the expectation and capability of European Foreign Policy (EFP) is mirrored in the gap between the expectation and the capability of theoretical concepts explaining EFP behaviour (Ginsberg 1999: 432). Ohrgaard goes so far by stating that the sui generis problem of CFSP and generally of the EU is the space that has been created "between the richness of empirical observation and the parsimony required by theoretical generalization" (Ohrgaard 2004: 26)[16]. This paper hypothesizes that Greek foreign policy analysis is being dominated by the same problems as those of CFSP.

The existing studies in EU foreign policy in effect analyze the development of decision – making within CFSP and evaluate the policy outcomes which are the products of these decision – making processes (Tonra and Christiansen 2004; White 2004). Although, such studies are very important because they clearly highlight the capability – expectations gap created by the policy process of CFSP, they often miss the point to examine thoroughly the interaction between the CFSP and the broader European integration and what such interaction means for the relationships between EU member states and their evolution as international actors (Tonra and Christiansen 2004). Brian White has continuously stressed that the theoretical and analytical framework of EU foreign policy has lost its concern to study the CFSP process itself – how policy emerges, from whom or what, and why – and for this reason, "the focus is on outcomes rather than process" (White 2004: 46)[17]. This clearly implies that the study of Greek foreign policy faces the same problem and thus it is necessary the examination of the process of Greek foreign policy construction within the broader agenda of European political system and not only the substantiation of the potential outcomes of this process.

A cadre of scholars has stated that the study of European foreign policy cooperation still remains at a pre – theoretical stage (Ginsberg 1999; Ohrgaard 2004), since the dominant school is realism, whether or not this is explicit (Ifestos 1987; Pijpers 1991). The realist theoretical framework as well as its descendant, neorealism, share the view that EU foreign policy issues are based on power relations between EU member states where the concept of international anarchy is dominant within the European political system. The most powerful states regulate the rules of the game and fight for their pre – existing national interests. The smaller member states have "no choice other than to play at the margins of the game and adapt themselves to it" (Tonra and Christiansen 2004: 7). Greek power relations with the other EU member states are somehow standing in the middle of this process since Greece is not

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[16] The sui generis problem has considered the EU "somehow beyond international relations, somehow a quasi – state or an inverted federation, or some other locution" (Long 1997: 187 as quoted at Ohrgaard 2004: 26). During the past decade, there was a fruitful debate about this problem. See, for example, Pijpers, A. (1991) 'European Political Cooperation and the Realist Paradigm' in Martin Holland, ed., *The Future of European Political Cooperation. Essays on Theory and Practice,* (London: Macmillan) and Long, D. (1997) 'Multilateralism in the CFSP' in Martin Holland, ed., *Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Record and Reforms,* (London: Pinter).

[17] For the constructivist argument about the importance of the process of 'process' between the interaction of the states of the international system, look especially the famous article of Alexander Wendt, (1992) 'Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics' *International Organization* 46: 391 – 426.

a powerful state but also cannot be deemed as a small one. Hence, the EU foreign policy process is a battleground between the EU member states where the lowest common denominator politics is the natural and most hopeful ending and its intergovernmental nature is the most preferable decision – making process so that to ensure the self – containment of national foreign policy interests.

Additionally, a neo – liberal institutionalist interest – based regime is diffused by the same logic. In this case, the member states are interested in the absolute gains that can negotiate among themselves. "The most useful analogy of this situation is that of an especially complex poker game – where the member states bring their cards to the table and must then deal amongst themselves to construct the best possible hand" (Tonra and Christiansen 2004: 7). However, neo – liberals differ from neo – realists because they characterise states, not as defensive positionalists, as neo – realists do, but as utility – maximisers, as actors that will ensure their cooperation so long as it promises the preservation of their interests (Reus – Smit 2001).

Whatever the importance of these two theoretical frameworks is and whatever their ongoing debate is, it is common among a big number of academics that neo – realism and neo – liberal institutionalism share an inherent rationality (Onuf 1989; Kratochwil 1989; Wendt 1992; Carlsnaes 1992; Checkel 1998; Tonra and Christiansen 2004)[18]. But, where is the problem with this rationality? The most important critique to the neo – utilitarian approaches is driven by the argument that the identities and the interests of the main actors of European and Greek politics are exogenously given and do not comprise the result of the interaction between them. This means that rationalist approaches can be deemed unhistorical, apolitical and unsocial. According to Hyde – Price, the pursuit of parsimonious theory leads rationalists "to ignore the impact of historical, political and societal change on the structural dynamics of European order" (Hyde – Price 2004: 100 – 101). Additionally, a serious critique comes from the exclusion of agency in the analytical contexts of rationalist models[19]. Neo – realism and neo – liberal institutionalism are deemed 'structuralist' approaches, since their focus is on structures rather than actors (Hill 1996). This creates the problem that always the actors are determined by the structures and not vice versa. Thus, the relation between agents and structures is an one – way process and this

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[18] Alexander Wendt (1992) ranks neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism in the same neo – utilitarian range and as it is broadly known, rationalism shares the following assumptions about world politics: a) the international anarchy is given among states, b) the states are the primary actors in the global political system, and c) the identities and the interests of states are given and are exogenously produced. Thereafter, the two rationalist approaches assume that the states are rational actors fighting in the international anarchy for the maximization of their utility. Hence, their preferences are exogenously given and are defined by material terms, like the power, the security and the wealth of the international system.

[19] It is true, on the other hand, that many academics have noted this problem and have started to compose models which include the domestic factors of foreign policy issues. See, for example, Andrew Moravcsik's attempts to develop such models: Moravcsik, A. (1991) 'Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community' *International Organization* 45 (1): 19 – 56, Moravcsik, A. (1993) 'Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31:4, pp. 473 – 524 and his seminal text, Moravcsik, A. (1998) *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).

fosters two significant problems: a) it is highly impossible for 'structuralist' approaches to explain the behaviors of these actors which are not influenced by the structure, and b) they offer little room for the explanatory capabilities of national characteristics to determine the crucial factors which drive foreign policy behavior of EU member states. Hoffmann's expression is characteristic in accordance with this problematique: "the refusal to consider what goes on within states is perhaps the most serious flaw of neorealism (Hoffmann 1995: 283 as quoted at Hyde – Price 2004: 101). In relation with this overall critique, White states that the existing models of foreign policy analysis are full of misunderstandings, problematic analytical frameworks and missing theoretical tools. For example, although the neo-realist approaches entirely exclude the effects of economic interdependence and the impact of international organisations on state behavior, the neo – liberal institutionalists, who fully consider such attributes in their analyses, are vulnerable to avoid the collective action problems which undoubtedly lead to 'free – riding' behaviors of EU member states. White also stresses the preference of these models to adopt the EU as a single or unit actor and thus to undermine its polymorphic character and 'rich' face in world politics, as well as the idiomorphic nature of the member states themselves (White 2004).

Although, the list of critique to rationalist approaches is various and long, the scope of this essay does not allow for such an analysis. On the contrary, it is crucial to be stressed the failure of these models to shift the agenda of EU studies to issues that deal with the policy process of EU foreign policy cooperation and the reasons of how and why this process is being determined with specific ways. As well, it is necessary the emergence of theoretical and analytical approaches which will be able to highlight the historical, political and social dimensions of Greek role in world politics and how these are influenced by the domestic and the international environment of the global political system of states. The challenging point is the transformation of the existing foreign policy models from empiricist forms of knowledge to social forms of knowledge and the use of variables such as ideas, common values, norms, identities and culture. In a nutshell, the whole socially constructed realm of EU (Greek) agenda should be at the forefront of research in EU (Greek) studies (Williams 1998).

A Constructivist Analysis of Greek Foreign Policy.

The preceding discussion illuminated the theoretical limits of foreign policy analysis in the EU generally and in Greece particularly. This problematique is almost ubiquitous in foreign policy studies because "the study of foreign policy analysis (FPA) has been a kind of free-floating enterprise, logically unconnected to, and disconnected from, the main theories of international relations (IR)" (Houghton 2007: 24). Kubalkova has illustrated that the basic factor of FPA's isolation from IR was the split of the field of IR in the 1950s into two camps: the FPA and the study of International Politics (IP) as seen from a systemic point of view (Kubalkova 2001: 15)[20]. Based on the

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[20] Kubalkova's argument is fully analyzed at Vendulka Kubalkova (2001) 'Foreign Policy, International Politics, and Constructivism' in Vendulka Kubalkova, ed., *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World* (New York: M.E.Sharpe), pp: 15-37. For a thorough review of FPA, look at

same logic, one could argue that CFSP and particularly Greek foreign policy are also separated as fields of study from the broader field of European integration theory.

This paper claims that FPA is an integral part of IR and consequently CFSP and Greek foreign policy cannot be separated from any analysis of European integration theory. Greek foreign policy is actually a social construction which has been emerged and continues to be emerged from the social interaction among diplomats, officials, politicians, the citizens of Greek state, the EU member states themselves, as well as other actors or structures which influence the Greek foreign policy agenda. Paraphrasing a famous phrase given by Wendt in 1992, "foreign policy is what states make of it" (Smith 2001)[21]. Two main theoretical assumptions are the precursors for the social construction of FPA: a) Greek foreign policy should be viewed as a regime, and b) the normative or ideational structures of Greek politics are just as important as the material structures.

It is the crucial point of this paper that Greek foreign policy may be best viewed as a regime defined as a set of "…implicit (and) explicit principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations." (Krasner 1983 ; Tonra 2003). Although such a definition has been criticized for its imprecision by many scholars[22], this explanation of Greek foreign policy as a regime can be very helpful because it has the advantage of side – stepping somewhat sterile debates about the institutional and procedural form of Greek foreign policy – whether it is sui generis, a modernized form of alliance or a foreign relations sub – system (Tonra 2003). Such a definition also "gives regimes an inescapable intersubjective quality" and as Kratochwil and Ruggie have noted, "we know regimes by their principled and shared understandings of desirable and acceptable forms of social behavior" (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986: 764). This means that it is necessary to consider the normative or ideational structures of Greek foreign policy and how these structures define and constitute the policy process and the policy outputs of Greek foreign policy.

The Social Construction of Greek Foreign Policy.

The social construction is a quite prevalent label in IR theory since Wendt's first article in 1992. The same tendency is going on within European integration theory and it is widely known that the 'Social Construction of Europe' as labeled by Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener in 1999, has influenced to a great extent the research agenda of European Studies[23]. Why not, then, for a 'Social Construction of Greek foreign policy'? Although constructivists seem to be ambiguous about their research since they come from a diverse collection of approaches and therefore it is very difficult for

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Walter Karlsnaes (2002) 'Foreign Policy' in Walter Karlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations* (London: SAGE), 331-349.

[21] Wendt's phrase is: "Anarchy is what states make of it". Look at Wendt 1992.

[22] Look, for example, the review article by Young, Young, O. (1986) 'International Regimes: Toward a New Theory of Institutions' *World Politics* 39 (1): 104 – 22.

[23] Look at Christiansen, T., Jorgensen, K.E. and Wiener, A. (1999) 'The Social Construction of Europe' *Journal of European Public Policy* 6 (4): 528 – 44, special issue.

them to build coherent theoretical and analytical frameworks, the necessity for common assumptions and analytical tools within the constructivist framework is imperative than ever. In reality, when one refers to the social construction of something, this means that he / she wants to analyze the intersubjective environment in which this something is constituted and reproduced. In other words, the constructivist researchers would like to see behind the scenes, analyze the social context in which an object (agent) of analysis takes place and examine the interaction of this object (agent) with the broader structure in which this object (agent) acts or interacts. And vice versa: how does the structure affect and interact with the object (agent) of analysis?

This is not the place to go into the details of social constructivism, since this is done previously in this paper. However, it is fruitful to remind the three most important constructivist theoretical assumptions which distinguish its nature from this of rationalist approaches: a) the normative or ideational structures of world politics are just as important as the material structures, b) the identities of the actors are not exogenously given, but are endogenously constituted by the social interaction of agents and structures, and c) the agents and structures are mutually constituted. These three assumptions are in reality interrelated and set the foundations for the constructivist explanation of Greek foreign policy, while, simultaneously, challenging the current neo – realist and neo – liberal paradigms. In the following analysis, I will sketch the most important analytical tools of social constructivism which influence the present agenda of Greek foreign policy decision – making policy and afterwards, I will try to emerge a coherent constructivist model of Greek foreign policy analysis borrowing elements from existing models of FPA.

How Possible Questions.

The main theoretical divergence between rationalist and constructivist approaches is the kind of questions they are posing to analytical contexts. It is generally known that the rationalist approaches deal with questions of 'why' and therefore they insist to know about the causal mechanisms and the behavior of the actors. According to Wendt, the basic why – question is "Why did X happen rather than Y?" and for this reason, the why – questions are concerned with the domain of the actual (Wendt 1987: 362)[24]. For Doty, the why – questions "presuppose a particular subjectivity (i.e., a mode of being), a background of social / discursive practices and meanings which make possible the practices as well as the social actors themselves". Hence, explanations for why – questions are incomplete because "they generally take as unproblematic the possibility that a particular decision or course of action could happen" (Doty 1993: 298).

Social constructivism, by contrast, cares about questions of 'how'. Wendt claims that the basic how – question is "How is action X possible" and thus how – questions are concerned with the domain of the possible (Wendt 1987: 362)[25]. Doty explains that the main theoretical charisma of how –

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[24] Wendt mentions that the why – questions are the object of analysis of historical approaches. Look Wendt (1987: 362 – 365).
[25] Wendt notes that structural analysis is the most suitable analysis to explain and examine how – questions. In another study, Wendt signifies the fact that there is a broader how – question which is able to close the gap between positivists and post – positivists. This

questions is to "examine how meanings are produced and attached to various social subjects / objects, thus constituting particular interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others" (Doty 1993: 298). In accordance with the Greek foreign policy, what has to be explained is not why a particular outcome obtained, "but rather how the subjects, objects, and interpretive dispositions were socially constructed such that certain practices were made possible" (Doty 1993: 298). Doty makes a clear argument about the appropriateness of how – possible questions for FPA. Therefore, it is very important for the explanation of our constructivist Greek foreign policy analysis to quote her point at length:

> "Moving from why – questions to how – possible questions has important implications for foreign policy analysis. By making more elements of policy making problematic and taking less as given, an approach that poses how – questions is more critical than an approach confined to the question of why. When we ask why states or decision makers engage in certain practices with other states, we assume the existence of those states and decision makers. When we pose a how – possible question, we can still ask why, but we must in addition inquire into the practices that enable social actors to act, to frame policy as they do, and to wield the capabilities they do. Perforce more critical, this mode of questioning takes us to relations of power – power in its productive aspect that why – questions neglect" (Doty 1993: 299).

Regulative vs Constitutive Rules.

The concept of rule is constitutive for the social constructivist theoretical framework. For constructivists like Onuf, the rules are the starting points for every constructivist analysis because "social rules make the process by which people and society constitute each other continuous and reciprocal" (Onuf 1998: 59)[26]. For them who realize the world as social construction made by people and societies and by their mutual constitution, social rules are the basic components which link the two elements (people and society, or in the parlance of IR theorists, agency and structure) together. According to Onuf, "a rule is a statement that tells people what we should do. The 'what' in question is a standard for people's conduct…the 'should' tells us to match our conduct to that standard" (Onuf 1998: 59). For this reason, rules reveal the signs who the active participants in a society are, since they give agents choices, give them opportunities to act upon the world and constraint others from taking action within it (Onuf 1998). In a nutshell, Onuf states that

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question is: "how are things in the world put together so that they have the properties that they do?" (Wendt 1998: 103).

[26] It is very important to be pointed out that Onuf is the first scholar who inserted the constructivist term in IR theory. For this point, look Wendt 1992 and Onuf, N. (1989) *A World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press).

Additionally, when Onuf refers to rules, he means social rules which include the legal rules but are not restricted to them.

rules have considerable effects for the social construction of our society and consequently for the construction of social reality of world politics.

Although the debate about rules is lengthy and very important for the constructivist analytical framework[27], the limited space in this paper does not allow us to proceed to a thorough understanding of rules in the social constructivist project. Nevertheless, among others, rules have a fundamental element which should be pointed out for the interpretation of FPA phenomena. Their nature is characterized by an inherent duality, since rules can be constitutive or regulative. According to Ruggie, "regulative rules are intended to have causal effects" because they regulate an antecedently existing activity, whereas, "constitutive rules define the set of practices that make up any particular consciously organized social activity" (Ruggie 1998: 22)[28]. This in reality means, as Onuf notes, that "constitutive rules are the medium of social construction" and "regulative rules are the medium of social control" (Onuf 1998: 68). For instance, specifying which side of the road to drive on is an example of a regulative rule, whereas, the rules of chess create the very possibility of playing chess and thus they are constitutive rules (Ruggie 1998: 22)[29].

This distinction can be important for IR, European integration theory and Greek politics, because there are no academic debates making a clear distinction between constitutive and regulative rules or their constitutive / regulative effects in world political arena. This is justified by the fact that the neo – utilitarian approaches, such as neo-realism and neo-liberal institutionalism, lack any concept of constitutive rules since they only try to explain the nature and the efficacy of regulative rules in coordinating them (Ruggie 1998: 22 – 23). Implicitly, as Ruggie states, "constitutive rules are the institutional foundation of all social life. No consciously organized realm of human activity is imaginable without them, including international politics" (Ruggie 1998: 24). Substantially, constitutive rules are the tools for the understanding of the noncausal explanations of social life which are not evident and measurable by the agents and their social contexts in which they act and interact[30]. This is the crucial point which should be highlighted and be incorporated in the explanation of Greek foreign policy issues and which is more often dismissed by the neo – utilitarian approaches. Tonra rightly wonders what makes so many foreign policy – makers labour so long and so hard for a foreign policy output which is so little and so limited[31]. "What makes them do it?" (Tonra 2003: 742) He illustrates that foreign policy rules are not simply devices for problem – solving, but "their purpose and explicit aim is to

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[27] For a good analysis about the role of rules in constructivist research, look Onuf 1989 and Onuf, N. (1998) 'Constructivism: A User's Manifesto' in Vendulka Kubalkova, Nicholas Onuf and Paul Kowert, eds., *International Relations in a Constructed World* (New York: M.E.Sharpe), pp:58-78.

[28] This does not mean that this distinction is always clear and desirable. In addition, as Onuf has argued, from a constructivist point of view, "all rules are always constitutive and regulative at the same time" (Onuf 1998: 68).Look Onuf 1998, pages 68 and 69.

[29] For a thorough clarification of this distinction between regulative and constitutive rules, as well as for clear examples of this separation, look at John Searle (1995) *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: Free Press).

[30] For this complex philosophical point, look at Searle 1995.

[31] As explained previously in this paper, the European and Greek foreign policy outputs are to a considerable effect limited and ineffective.

establish a clear identity and to pursue decisive collective action – indeed to create an identity for collective action". This is the motivating factor which propels the foreign policy-makers to act collectively, at both a personal and an institutional level (Tonra 2003: 742 – 743). And, this is also the key constructivist point on which we should stand and explain the deeper process taking place in the Greek foreign policy agenda. Namely, how do rules construct the identities and the interests of actors in Greek foreign policy? Which constitutive rules influence this process? The following discussion accounts for these vital issues explicating the constitutive effects of norms in Greek politics and developing a constructivist model of Greek foreign policy analysis.

The Constructivist Model of Greek Foreign Policy.

Norms and Individual Beliefs.

The social constructivist theoretical approach has many times been blamed for its inability to create robust empirical models for analytical purposes. This means that a big number of constructivist scholars adhere exclusively on theoretical issues, because for them the empirical research seems to be difficult and mainly inaccessible. Nonetheless, there is a growing literature review which indicates the empirical application of social constructivism in IR theory (for example, look at Adler 1987; Klotz 1995; Price 1995; Finnemore 1996; Katzenstein et al. 1996; Banchoff 1999; Tannenwald 1999). The fundamental characteristic of this trend is the use of norms and identities as analytical elements in international life among states and their interrelationship, namely how norms affect the construction of identities and how identities influence the creation of norms.

The concept of 'norm' in IR theory can be deemed as the most important empirical tool in the project of social constructivism. As Onuf informs us, norms are rules and their distinction is determined by how formal they are. Norms are in reality informal rules that "observers are not always sure that they are rules until they see how other agents respond to them" (Onuf 1998: 70). Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein define norms as "collective expectations about proper behavior for a given identity" and illustrate their constitutive and regulative nature. This means that sometimes norms operate like rules defining an identity and thus have constitutive effects, and other times, they operate as standards for proper behavior and thus have regulative effects (Jepperson, Wendt και Katzenstein 1996: 54). As explained above, the diffusion of some norms is happening at the international level and their internalization constitutes specific identities and interests among groups of actors at the national level; and some other times, norms are shared at the national level, for example, within a society, and their understanding generates specific identities and interests for the actors who act or interact in this society.

Henning Boekle, Volker Rittberger and Wolfgang Wagner (1999, 2001) have developed an exceptionally robust empirical model of constructivist

foreign policy which is based on norms[32]. This model rejects the rationalist assumption that actors pursue their exogenously determined preferences according to a logic of 'consequentiality' and, by contrast, assumes the working of a logic of 'appropriateness' in the explanation of foreign policy behavior. The crucial feature of this logic of appropriateness is its critique of the concept of utility-maximizing homo economicus which is at the core of neo-realist and utilitarian-liberal analyses of foreign policy and the adoption of an actor concept described as homo sociologicus or *role player* (Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner 2001: 106 - 107)[33]*.* The homo sociologicus take decisions "on the basis of norms and rules on the background of subjective factors, historical – cultural experience and institutional involvement" (Boekle et al. 2001: 106).

The constructivist model of Greek foreign policy is based on this logic of 'appropriateness' and for this purpose, norms are defined "as intersubjectively shared, value-based expectations of appropriate behavior" and serve as independent variables for explanations of foreign policy behavior. This means that norms are the important empirical tools which influence the foreign policy agenda and "shape actors' identities and preferences, define collective goals and prescribe or proscribe behavior" (Boekle et al. 1999: 3). According to Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner, the choice of norms as independent variables is not arbitrary since there are three specific characteristics which distinguish the explanatory nature of them by other ideational variables: a) their intersubjectivity, b) their immediate orientation to behavior and c) their reference to values and counterfactual validity[34].

A much-stated criticism of constructivist foreign policy theory is the fact that an actor is frequently faced with many value – based expectations of behavior, and thus it is very difficult for him / her to choose between relevant and irrelevant expectations of behavior. Another critique supports the view that this distinction between appropriate and inappropriate norms becomes arbitrary. "Constructivists are therefore always at risk of 'explaining' foreign

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[32] For a thorough examination of this model, look at Boekle, H., Rittberger, V. and Wagner, W. (1999) *Norms and Foreign Policy: Constructivist Foreign Policy Theory,* Center for International Relations / Peace and Conflict Studies, Institute for Political Science, University of Tubingen, Tubingen Working Paper No 34a, available also at: www.uni-tuebingen.de/ifp/taps/tap34a.htm and Boekle, H., Rittberger, V. and Wagner, W. (2001) 'Constructivist Foreign Policy Theory' in Volker Rittberger, ed., *German Foreign Policy Since Unification: Theories and Case Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp: 105 – 137.

[33] For a full clarification of the 'logic of appropriateness', look at James March and Johan Olsen (2004) 'The Logic of Appropriateness' *ARENA Working Paper 04/09,* Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo.

[34] The concept of intersubjectivity distinguishes norms from individual convictions, and thus from ideas which have been described as "beliefs held by individuals" (Goldstein and Keohane 1993: 3). The second characteristic, that of immediate orientation to behavior, also makes a distinction between norms and ideas. Especially, it deals with the relationship between norms and world views, as has been defined by Goldstein and Keohane (1993). According to Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner, world views are too abstract for generating actual expectations of behavior, and therefore cannot be deemed as intersubjective variables equal to norms. Third, norms always involve a value reference and therefore have counterfactual validity. This actually means that norms consist of elements of morality and ethics which are not substantial for ideas and "causal beliefs" (Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner 1999: 5 – 7).

policy *ex post* by choosing that expectation of behavior as an explanation which comes closest to the observed behavior to be explained" (Legro 1997: 33 as quoted at Boekle et al. 1999: 7). However, many criteria have been developed in the constructivist literature which determine the strength of norms and hence their possibility to make *ex ante* explanations. The strength of a norm, namely its influence on foreign policy behavior, depends on two properties: on its commonality, i.e. on how many actors of a social system share a value-based expectation of behavior, and on its specificity, i.e. on how precisely a norm distinguishes appropriate from inappropriate behavior (Boekle et al. 2001: 109 - 110)[35].

Following the constructivist vein, the constitutive effects of norms, as explained above, comprise the fundamental characteristic of this model (Greek constructivist foreign policy model) for motivation in foreign policy analysis. The basic question is thus a how – possible question. How norms can shape a state's behavior? How norms are communicated to actors and are accepted and internalized by them as directions for action? (Boekle et al. 1999, 2001) How norms can influence the identities and the interests of Greek foreign policy actors? Although, the constitutive effects of norms comprise the basic point of analysis, it is crucial to note that the structure of this model in reality denies to include the personal beliefs and ideas of individuals who influence the foreign policy agenda of their countries; but, as has been analyzed in another study (Houghton 2007), the personal beliefs and perceptions of individuals comprise a constitutive element for the thorough explanation of foreign policy issues. Thus, a combined model of personal and intersubjective beliefs would be a good starting point to interpret and understand foreign policy and more specifically, Greek foreign policy analysis. This does not mean that the combination of norms and individual beliefs contradicts the intersubjective nature of norms because of the inherent subjectivity of individual beliefs, but, as Houghton explains, "the justification for collaboration or 'marriage' between individual and social construction is simply that each benefits from restoring the missing piece of the puzzle each leaves out; neither is complete without the other, and neither can fully claim to represent the process of making foreign policy in isolation" (Houghton 2007: 42 – 43). Especially, in the case of Greek foreign policy, this combination of individual and social construction is crucial since, as analyzed before, the Greek foreign policy paradigm is full of individual aspirations and perceptions (look at Ioakimidis 1999), and thus, any analysis without the thorough

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[35]Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner state that "the strength of obligation attached to a norm depends on the extent to which it is shared by the units within a social system". For this reason, they count the commonality of norms with three degrees: a) high degree commonality, if all the actors in a social system, for example the member states of an international organization, share a certain value-based expectation of behavior, b) medium degree of commonality, if a certain expectation is shared 'only' by a majority of actors, and c) low degree of commonality, when only a minority of actors shares a certain expectation of behavior.
As far as the specificity of norms is concerned, they point out that "a norm is highly specific if it clearly distinguishes between appropriate and inappropriate behavior" and this depends on its explication, i.e. its formal expression, for instance, in written conventions (Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner 1999: 7 – 8). For their model, a norm should be at least in a medium degree of commonality and specificity so that to be valid for consideration.

examination of the personal factor cannot approach deeply the Greek foreign policy reality.

Socialization Process.

The missing point of this model however is how norms and individual beliefs are internalized and thus being known by the society, by the specific groups of foreign policy making or by the policy – makers of Greek foreign policy process. The answer emanates from the assertion that the effects of norms and individual beliefs are attributed to socialization processes. "Socialization is a process in which a person grows into the society and culture surrounding him and, by learning social norms and roles, becomes an independent, competent social being" (Boekle et al. 1999: 9). Berger and Luckmann define the term as "the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or sector of it" (Berger and Luckmann 1991 as quoted at Johnston 2001: 494). The actors internalize the expectations of behavior imparted to them by their social environment and by this way align their preferences and interests in accordance with these expectations[36]. The processes of internalization are actually a methodological enigma which will not be analysed in this paper. One could say however that normative persuasion and social influence (Johnston 2001), as well as elites' changes of substantive beliefs and compliance though coercion (Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990) constitute the basic macro or micro – processes via which socialization occurs[37]. The crucial characteristic of this socialization process is that foreign policy decision – makers are influenced at the same time by two social systems, the international and the national. For this reason, it is important to separate our analysis into two distinct areas of research: a) the international level of analysis and b) the domestic (Greek) level of analysis.

As far as the international level is concerned, government decision – makers' foreign policy actions are determined to a great extent by the diffusion of international norms which exist within the international society of states. In reality, the internalization of international norms in the Greek society constitutes the identities and the interests of state actors by aligning the preferences of Greek foreign policy decision makers in accordance with these norms. The main theoretical assumption of this model for the behavior – guiding effect of international norms is "the discovery that the practices of state actors on an international scale are characterized by a considerable level of similarity (isomorphism) (Boekle et al. 1999: 14). However, this does not mean that this isomorphic nature will tend to homogenize the values and the ideas of the states of the international society. On the contrary, Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner highlight the importance of norms which are generated

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[36] However, it is very important to be pointed out that "the socialization process should not be conceived of as a one-way process to which the person being socialized contributes no preconceptions of his own. Rather, the person being socialized may well reflect on what he internalizes during the socialization process and even modify its content". Hence, we can assume that socialization is a continuous process and is never complete (Boekle et al. 1999: 9).

[37] For a complete analysis of how socialization works, see Johnston, A.I. (2001) 'Treating International Institutions as Social Environments' *International Studies Quarterly* 45(4): 487 – 515 and Ikenberry, J. and Kupchan, C. (1990) 'Socialization and Hegemonic Power' *International Organization* 44(3): 283 – 315.

and diffused via the social subsystems in which many states or individuals are members. Therefore, international norms are defined as "those expectations of appropriate behavior which are shared within international society or within a particular subsystem of international society by states, its constituent entities" (Boekle et al. 1999: 15).

When an expectation of behavior is produced from an international norm, it is important to be clarified the degree of its commonality and specificity internationally and domestically. Hence, the states should be analysed in relation with their 'position' in the international or national level in which they act and interact. For Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner, the 'position' of each state is constituted by its degree of 'participation' in the international institutions that coexist in the international system of states. The international institutions are sets of interrelated norms which "constitute behavioral roles and give meaning to the concrete expectations of behavior attributed to these roles" (Boekle et al. 1999: 17). International institutions such as international organizations and international regimes can be deemed as the most relevant 'suppliers' of international norms, since the states define and redefine themselves from their participation in these institutions and their compliance to the norms that are embedded in them. A similar essential role can be played by transnational advocacy coalitions which could contribute to a great extent in the establishment of new norms and the diffusion, socialization and internalization of the existing ones.

At the domestic (Greek) level of analysis, the foreign policy makers internalize norms which exist within a specific social environment, such as a society. Boekle, Rittberger and Wagner call these norms 'societal' and argue that their defining characteristics are similar to the norms which exist in the international society. The big question of this model hinges around the issue of whose expectations of behavior are considered as having decisive influence on foreign policy (Boekle et al. 1999: 18). While many constructivists support the experts in a certain issue area as having the biggest influence on the value – based expectations of behavior, others strengthen the influence of society in its entirety to have more effective value – based expectations of behavior. The experts are groups of people which have a shared set of normative and principled beliefs and specialize in a certain issue area where decision-makers are insufficiently informed about the complexities of the issue area. For this reason, the norms shared by experts enjoy a low or medium degree of commonality, but a high degree of specificity.

On the other hand, the society per se makes its own expectations of behavior. This means that the society itself shares norms, common values and intersubjective beliefs. The theoretical departure of this approach is related with the issue of the existence of a collective historical experience which influences the identities and the interests of actors. This model recognizes two common terms which used to signify these norms shared by society as a whole: a) national identity and b) political culture. It is obvious that the norms shared by the society in its entirety enjoy a high degree of commonality, but often a low or medium degree of specificity. According to this model, the researchers should look first for expectations of behavior shared by society as a whole and if this is not the case, afterwards they can investigate whether there are experts which formulate expectations of appropriate foreign policy behavior.

However, as mentioned above, the individual beliefs of dominant foreign policy decision – making actors also play a prominent role in foreign policy exegesis. Expect for the constitutive effects of norms both in the international and the national level of analysis, this model attempts to synthesize these norms with the individual beliefs of exceptional governing elites and by this way to examine the added value of these personal beliefs on norms and vice versa. How are the individual beliefs influenced by the international or domestic norms? The hidden ambition of this model is to analyse the powerful perspective of elites in the foreign policy decision – making process and how this influences or is influenced by the constitutive effects of norms.

Last, but not least, and perhaps the most fundamental of all, this model provides us with a clear empirical constructivist analytical framework. This is a very important characteristic, since, as we have already mentioned, the basic problem for constructivist research programs is the empirical examination. Contrarily, this model is full of empirical elements. At the international level of analysis, indicators for international norms are:

1. The International Law comprises the more robust international norm since it is acceptable by the biggest part of international community. Its following sources represent a hierarchy of norms: a) international treaties - voluntary international agreements whose norms are regarded as legally binding, b) customary international law – rules of behavior observed by the subjects of international law in their mutual transactions in general, c) the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations and d) judicial decisions and teachings of the most highly qualified publicists of many nations.
2. The Legal Acts of International Organizations, which are expressed by international charters.
3. The Final Acts of International Conferences which formulate common goals and adopt action programs for determination (e.g. the Vienna World Human Rights Conference, the Peking World Women's Conference, the Copenhagen World Social Summit) (Boekle et al. 1999).

Additionally, at the domestic level, indicators for societal norms are:

1. The individual beliefs of domestic (Greek) foreign policy decision - makers. Especially, in the Greek case, the beliefs of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the perceptions of the elite participants in the National Council of Foreign Policy and the executive board of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. Survey data, which analyze the role of public opinion in the foreign policy decision-making process.
3. The constitutional and legal order of a society serves to transform societal norms into specific rules for appropriate behavior. This transformation can be achieved through legal provisions which adopt symbolic character and thus influence the preferences and the actions of the members of a society. The constitutional and legal order of a

society comprises a convenient indicator for examination since it is public and therefore easily accessible for the scholar.

4. The Party Programs and the Election Platforms are relevant indicators of value-based expectations of appropriate (foreign) policy behavior because they express the convictions and the expectations of the party elites who shape their programs and thus their behaviors in close connection with the social order.

5. Parliamentary Debates function as a further indicator of societal norms. For example, the members of EU Parliament do not comprise rationalist actors who seek for the maximization of their votes, but they are honest social actors who seek for the establishment of common intersubjective social norms in their societies (Boekle et al. 1999).

Identity.

The suitability of norms and their constitutive effects to interpret and understand Greek foreign policy agenda is endemic in this study. But, the big effect of norms and their internalization via the socialization processes is on identity formation. "The study of identity formation is a crucial component of constructivist research with a central focus on the role of language and discourse, especially as these contribute to the creation of epistemic communities and a shift in foreign policy identity" (Tonra 2003: 743). Language has always been important to identity formation in foreign policy cooperation. The political declarations and statements, as well as the diplomatic demarches constitute the 'constitutive' features of this language which is the raison d'etre of Greek foreign policy. But for many analysts and practitioners, the crucial productive characteristic for the evolution of a common Greek foreign and security policy is information (Tonra 2003). The development of a structure for regular meetings between ministers and senior officials whose explicit purpose would be to share and exchange information would be the main reason for the emergence of a common foreign policy identity (Tonra 2003). It is this language, the common modes of thoughts and ideas, as well as the common perceptions and shared values on which Greek foreign policy bases its collective identity and its material existence that, in turn, impact on the identity of practitioners and foreign policy decision – makers (Tonra 2003: 744). However, as mentioned above, this institutional structure is still missing from the Greek foreign policy process and is the main wound which leads to complete failures and controversies in the Greek foreign policy process.

But, what is also missing is a coherent understanding of what is an identity. Many scholars have tried to fully theorize this notion but they have been blocked by its complex nature (Fearon 1999; Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott 2006)[38]. If someone realizes what an identity means and which are its main components, then he / she can develop a robust model of foreign policy analysis by examining the constitutive effects of norms and individual beliefs on these specific attributes of identities. Is it race or gender which define an identity? Nationality or ethnicity? Culture, language or

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[38] For an overall critique to the concept of identity, look at Brubaker, R. and Cooper, F. (2000) 'Beyond "Identity"' *Theory and Society* 29(1): 1 – 47.

religion? Common perceptions, dominant beliefs or the national political system of a society? Or, the combination of all of them? By answering these questions, someone is almost ready to fully examine how interests and preferences are formed and how action and behavior is being shaped or transformed. This is the crucial sequence which should be realized as the real promise for a more coherent constructivist model of foreign policy analysis:

The Constructivist Model of Greek Foreign Policy Analysis:

International or Societal (Greek) Norms - Individual Beliefs of Greek Leaders (Foreign Policy Decision – Makers) (Combination of Individual and Social Construction)

↓

Socialization Processes:
Normative Persuasion, Social Influence, Elites' Changes of Substantive Beliefs[39], Compliance via Coercion

↓

Greek Identity Formation:
Components of Greek Identity: Nationality, Ethnicity, History, Race, Gender, Culture, Religion, Language, National Political System, Dominant Social and Political Perceptions, Common Beliefs

↓

Interest and Preference Formation of Greek Foreign Policy Decision - Makers

↓

Behavior (Action)

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[39] By elites, I mean the dominant figures of foreign policy – making.

Conclusion.

This paper has made the case that a constructivist approach to the study of Greek foreign policy can yield significant outcomes for the deep understanding of Greek foreign policy agenda. In the first section, we analyzed the philosophical and political roots of social constructivism as well as its theoretical assumptions for IR theory. Paradoxically, although a big number of scholars are using the analytical tools of social constructivism, there are no explicit studies to examine rigorously the basic theoretical assumptions of this methodological framework. The first section of this paper tries to cover this failure and hopes to establish the agenda for future research on this theoretical matter.

In the second section, we did a small introduction to the problems that Greek foreign policy is facing this time. The problem is essentially twofold. First, the cohesion and the institutional development of Greek foreign policy do not help the Greek practitioners and officials to narrow the capability – expectations gap. Second, there is a lack of theoretical development within the study of Greek foreign policy. The existing studies are limited to evaluate the evolution of Greek foreign policy decision – making process and its policy outcomes which are the results of this decision – making process. This paper claims that what we need is a robust theoretical approach which would be able to study the policy – making process itself.

In the last section, we made a clear constructivist argument about the study of Greek foreign policy. Our conviction is that Greek foreign policy should be analyzed as a social construction within the wider sphere of world political system. A constructivist analysis of Greek foreign policy should ask how – possible questions so that to 'problematize' the identities and the interests of Greek foreign policy actors. The constitutive effects of norms and the elites' individual beliefs are the crucial analytical tools for this approach. Norms and individual beliefs in effect constitute the identities of Greek foreign policy actors and thus comprise the independent variables for our analysis. Identities, on the contrary, are the dependent variables since they depend on rules, norms and personal beliefs. The interests of Greek foreign policy actors are shaped by the identities of them and thus are endogenously produced. Like the wagons of a train, rules, norms and individual perceptions constitute identities and identities constitute interests. In constructivist research, nothing is given, but everything is under (social) construction. Finally, one would say that Greek foreign policy is the ideal empirical testing ground for what might be called a hard – core constructivist approach (Tonra and Christiansen 2004).

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