

# **Europe: A Symbol of Progress on Reconciliation?**

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## **Abstract**

In the 1950's, the European Integration was thought to stop the hereditary wars in Europe. Up until now, the development of integration has been perceived as progressive. An example would be the will of former communist countries to 'return to Europe' and to enter the EU.

However, the EU has been criticized on several issues, especially when it received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. What was, is and will be the EU's contribution to progress?

The hypothesis in this paper states that the EU has been a strong incentive for reconciliation in several cases — e.g. France/Germany — and will probably remain so — with the Balkans to provide the next proof?

The first part of this paper concentrates on the past cases of reconciliation in which the EU played a significant role. The second part presents cases in which the European framework for reconciliation has not been as successful—Cyprus/Turkey, or Slovenia/Croatia. The third part analyses possible future cases of reconciliation, in which the EU is deeply involved: the Balkans.

## Introduction

‘The coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany’, said Robert Schuman in his Declaration on 9 May 1950.<sup>2</sup> Integrating French and German coal and steel industries, then signing the Rome Treaties, were actions aimed at stopping the often hereditary conflicts between the two neighbours, after three extremely bloody wars in less than eighty years. After these events in the 1950’s, European integration and its further developments have been seen as a means and a symbol for progress. That is why when the Eastern Block imploded, Central Eastern European countries, led by the Visegrad Group, wanted first to ‘return to Europe’ and to the Western sphere.<sup>3</sup>

European Integration has been an attractive goal, especially through the possibility of enlargement. In spite of the symbol of progress European integration represents, the European Union (EU) has been criticized on several issues, in particular when it received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. It seems therefore interesting to ask what has been, is and will be the EU’s contribution to progress.

The main hypothesis of this paper states that the EU has been a strong incentive for reconciliation, a ‘force for good’ to quote Michelle Pace, in several cases.<sup>4</sup> For example, France and Germany, but also Germany and its Eastern neighbours, Poland and the Czech Republic in particular. This paper will examine whether the Balkans will provide the next proof of this claim.

This reasoning is built on three points: the past cases of reconciliation, in which the EU/ European integration played a significant role. The second point focuses on the cases in which the European framework for reconciliation met its limits. The last point is turned towards the possible future cases of reconciliation in which the EU is deeply involved, i.e. the Balkans.

There is an abundant amount of literature concerning reconciliation and collective memory, with both practical and theoretical focuses.<sup>5</sup> Authors have often specialised on particular cases, such as Georges Mink who looks at issues of memory in Poland, Dirk Moses who concentrates on Germany, or Valérie Rosoux looking at France and Germany.<sup>6</sup> Some others have conducted studies on European memory or memories or on the role of the European institutions in conflict resolution.<sup>7</sup> The aim of this paper is to paint a broad picture

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<sup>2</sup> The full text can be read on the European Commission’s website: [http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration/index_en.htm) Accessed: 17 March 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. for example President Vaclav Havel’s speech in front of the Polish Parliament on 25 January 1990. The speech is also available on the Internet: <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/the-visegrad-book/havel-vaclav-speech-in> Accessed: 17 March 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Michelle Pace, ‘The EU as a “force for good” in border conflict cases’, in Thomas Diez, Mathias Albert and Stephan Stetter (eds), *The European Union and Border Conflicts. The Power of Integration and Association*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp.203-219.

<sup>5</sup> Pablo DE Greiff (ed.), *The Handbook of Reparations*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, p.2021 and Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, Tome 1, Paris: Gallimard, 1984, p.674.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Georges Mink, ‘La réconciliation polono-russe: vers un changement de paradigme?’, *Politique étrangère*, vol.75, n°3, autumn 2010, p. 607-619 and Cf. Dirk Moses, *German intellectuals and the Nazi Past*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p.293 and Valérie-Barbara Rosoux, *Les usages de la mémoire dans les relations internationales. Le recours au passé dans la politique étrangère de la France à l’égard de l’Allemagne et de l’Algérie, de 1962 à nos jours*, Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2001, p.403.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. The recently edited volume of *Politique européenne*: Sarah Gensburger, Marie-Claire Lavabre (eds.), *Politique européenne*, ‘D’une “mémoire européenne” à l’européanisation de la “mémoire”’, n°37, 2012, pp.8-155 and Cf. Bruno Coppieters et al., *Europeanization and Conflict Resolution. Case studies from the European Periphery*, Gent: Academia Press, 2004, p.258.

of the European role. This paper does not aim to present an exhaustive view of all cases of reconciliation but rather give some examples of the different types of reconciliations in which Europe was involved in order to assess what their contribution toward progress might be in the future.

In order to discuss reconciliation, it is important first to define conflict. According to *Le Petit Robert*, a conflict means: ‘1. Fight, combat; 2. Meeting of contrary elements, sentiments that oppose; 3. Contestation between two powers that quarrel about a right’.<sup>8</sup> A conflict may then be a simple opposition or incompatibility, but could also imply violence. Reconciliation is defined, again by *Le Petit Robert* as: ‘1. Religious ceremony through which a person is reintegrated into the Church; 2. Action to re-establish friendship (between two people who were at odds with each other)’.<sup>9</sup> Here, the non-religious definition is taken into account. There are different types and ways reconciliation is promoted by the EU. Indeed, reconciliation can emerge from different frameworks: economic integration, political integration and cooperation, regional cooperation or through civil society, dialogue and exchange programmes. Thomas Diez, Mathias Albert and Stephan Stetter argue that there are four pathways in which the EU can play a role in border conflict management: through the compulsory pathway, mainly ‘carrots and sticks’; the enabling pathway, actors linking their agenda with the EU to justify desecuritising moves; the connective pathway, supporting contact between conflict parties and the constructive pathway, aiming at changing identities to bring new discursive frameworks in which incompatibilities have disappeared.<sup>10</sup>

The concept of reconciliation has been deeply debated among scholars. In this paper the definition will be rather basic: the possibility to open a dialogue with a former enemy and to be able to prepare a common future.

## **I. Reconciliation through European Integration and Accession: A Success Story**

European integration has first been based on the European Coal and Steel Community, then on the European Communities (EC) and the European Union. These organizations all included France and Germany—alongside with Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg and the Netherlands—from the beginning. The set-up of such platforms for contacts, exchanges and build-up of interdependences was directed towards the establishment of peace on the European continent, and more specifically between France and Germany.

### ***A. The Franco-German Reconciliation as the Milestone of European Integration***

Following several decades of wars, France and Germany decided to be part of a broader European platform, which would force them to cooperate: the European Steel and Coal Community. Indeed, creating interdependences in these two fundamental sectors of the war industry would require former enemies to cooperate and to reconstruct together. That is indeed what happened, and after this first success on the short term, the Rome Treaties were signed in March 1957. The first aim proclaimed for these integrations was to bring peace to the European continent. For nearly 70 years no war has occurred between Germany and France.

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<sup>8</sup> *Le Petit Robert 2004*, free translation by the author.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Diez, Mathias Albert and Stephan Stetter, ‘Introduction’, in Thomas Diez, Mathias Albert and Stephan Stetter (eds), *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-12.

The Franco-German relationships further developed, both inside and outside of European integration, till the point that the two countries became the first economic partner of each other. Beyond economic integration, President Charles de Gaulle and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer signed the Elysée Treaty, the basis for a deep political cooperation and friendship: before each Summit the two countries had to consult and to explain their position one another. The Franco-German couple has survived through multiple changes of the head of State: from G. Pompidou-W. Brandt, to J. Chirac- G. Schröder, through F. Mitterrand- H. Kohl or V. Giscard d'Estaing- H. Schmidt and N. Sarkozy/ F. Hollande with A. Merkel, all the heads of State have led a deep dialogue between the two countries, bypassing political divergences.

This dialogue has not been only on the level of head of States, but also among civil society and youth: the Franco-German Office for Youth was created just a few months after the Elysée Treaty<sup>11</sup> and has been seen as the second symbol of the new established dialogue. It has organized many exchanges, summits and general dialogues between the French and German youth.

The reconciliation between the two nations has also been done through the relation to the past. Indeed, civil society—especially historians—have set up conferences over the past and for the future between the two countries. The aim, with the agreement of the governments, was to de-politicize the past and collective memory, in order to prepare a common future.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, they insisted more on the common elements of the past, like belonging to the same civilization or the Carolingian dynasty,<sup>13</sup> while silencing their more recent past events.<sup>14</sup> Silencing the past is not a synonym of reconciliation; nonetheless trying to insist on some common relatively positive elements of history helped them to come closer to one another. The discussions have been conducted to the point of creating a common schoolbook, trying to have a common discourse, but accepting diverging interpretations when it was not possible to have a harmonized one<sup>15</sup>. The schoolbook was considered by H.M. Bock as the new symbol of reconciliation between the two hereditary enemies<sup>16</sup>.

Therefore, the Franco-German reconciliation has been considered as a milestone of European integration. This renewal in the relations built a model for the developments of European enlargement.

### ***B. Further Integrations: a European Framework for Reconciliation***

The success of the Franco-German reconciliation formed a model for appeasing former conflicting neighbouring relations. Indeed, after 1989 the Franco-German couple became a triologue with the addition of Poland within the Weimar Triangle, from 1991 onward. This mainly political cooperation continued also in Heads-of-State meetings and

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<sup>11</sup> Office franco-allemand pour la jeunesse, created on 5 July 1963.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Anne Bazin, 'Produire un récit commun: les commissions d'historiens, acteurs de la réconciliation', in Georges Mink, Laure Neumayer, (eds.), *L'Europe et ses passés douloureux*, Paris: La Découverte, coll. 'Recherches', 2007, pp.104-117 (p.110).

<sup>13</sup> Corine Defrance, Ulrich Pfeil, 'Au service du rapprochement franco-allemand. Dialogue d'historiens de part et d'autre du Rhin', in Georges Mink, Laure Neumayer, (eds.), *Op. cit.*, pp.91-103 (p.96).

<sup>14</sup> On the different strategies towards the past in International Relations, see Valérie- Barbara Rosoux, *Op. cit.*, Chapter 3 'Usages du passé dans les relations internationales. Essai de classification': overevaluation of the past, silence over the past, work on memory, pp.247-331.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Corine Defrance, Ulrich Pfeil, *loc. cit.*

<sup>16</sup> Hans Manfred Bock (ed.), *Deutsch-Französische Begegnung und europäischer Bürgersinn. Studien zum Deutsch-Französischen Jugendwerk 1963-2003*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2003. First quoted in Corine Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil, *loc. cit.*, p.101.

summits every year and has persisted through the entry of Poland to the EU: the three countries have created a joint battle group within the European Defence and Security Policy for 2013.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the cooperation has implied a connective impact, through youth and civil society exchanges, for example at the regional level between Silesia, North Rhine-Westphalia and Nord-Pas de Calais. Indeed, these entities organize a Youth Summit of the Regional Weimar Triangle every year in one of the three regions.<sup>18</sup> Economic cooperation has also been deepened; for instance, Germany is now Poland's first economic partner.

To enter the EU, Poland, like all EU candidates, needed to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria laid down in 1993. As there was no clear definition of the political standards, the European Commission had a large margin of appreciation. Therefore, it included a good neighbourhood relationship clause in the criteria, forcing candidates and potential candidates to reconcile.<sup>19</sup> The accession process created a very high leverage for the EU on reconciliation and conflict resolution as the 'carrot' of entering the EU was very attractive. Beyond this compulsory pathway from the EU, German foreign policy gave incentives to reconcile and start a dialogue with neighbouring former opponents. These conditions, strengthened by the success of the Franco-German case, created a European framework for reconciliation which all future and potential EU Member States had to abide by.

Therefore, further enlargement and integrations pushed for a European framework for reconciliation. This framework was clearly at work for the Polish-German and German-Czech cases.

### ***C. Germany-Poland and Germany-Czech Republic: new models of reconciliation?***

The German-Polish and German-Czech cases followed the model of the Franco-German reconciliation. Indeed, there was some cooperation at the Heads of State level, for instance within the Weimar Triangle for Poland, as previously explained. Civil society was involved as well, and created a commission of historians in charge of discussing and de-politicizing the conflicting past. The aim was once again to write a common history, but for the German-Czechoslovak case, not to avoid difficult questions such as those presented by a French-German reconciliation.<sup>20</sup> Anne Bazin and Kerstin Schwedes underline the importance of schoolbooks in this perspective, as they shape public opinion and memory culture.<sup>21</sup> This does not mean that creating a new book would be enough for reconciling, but such a book could change some perceptions in the long run within the framework of a constructive

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<sup>17</sup> Technical agreement on the set-up of the Weimar battlegroup, signed on 5 July 2011 in Brussels. Source: Nicolas Gros-Verheyde, journalist at Ouest-France, blog 'Bruxelles2' on European Defence and Security Policies: 'Accord sur le battlegroup de Weimar', 5 July 2011: <http://www.bruxelles2.eu/defense-ue/capacites-milit-%E2%80%93-exercices-ue/accord-sur-le-battlegroup-de-weimar.html> Accessed: 6 July 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. The call for applications for 2013 is online on the Regional council of Nord-Pas de Calais' website: [http://www.nordpasdecals.fr/jcms/c\\_63062/sommet-des-jeunes-du-triangle-regional-de-weimar](http://www.nordpasdecals.fr/jcms/c_63062/sommet-des-jeunes-du-triangle-regional-de-weimar) Accessed: 23 March 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Laure Neumayer, 'Les institutions européennes comme acteurs de la réconciliation en Europe centrale: une médiation entre droit et politique', in Georges Mink, Laure Neumayer (eds.), *Op. cit.*, pp.195-209.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Common Declaration of the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Czechoslovakia Jiri Dienstbier and of West Germany Hans-Dietrich Genscher, for the creation of a German-Czechoslovak commission of historians, 2 February 1990.

<sup>21</sup> Anne Bazin, 'La réconciliation à travers l'écriture d'une histoire commune: l'exemple des commissions d'historiens germano-tchèque et germano-polonaise', *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*. Vol. 31, n°1, 2000, pp.33-65. Kerstin Schwedes, coordinator of the 'EurViews' project analysing Europeanness in history and geography textbooks. See <http://www.gei.de/en/research/europe-narratives-images-spaces/trans-europe-external-borders/eurviews-europe-in-textbooks.html> Accessed: 22 July 2014.

pathway, or at least make people from the two former opposing countries know the position of the other one. In both cases the historians decided to first treat the least controversial questions and then the most difficult ones. Although I would not go as far as Anne Bazin's statement, 'there is no more taboo question today', the irreconcilabilities between the countries have been deeply reduced.<sup>22</sup>

The enlargement played a significant role in these reconciliations: the countries needed to fulfil the 'good neighbour clause' to enter the EU. The European institutions were involved in the famous Benes Decrees issue regarding the expulsions of German Speakers from the Sudetes right after the war. Moreover, German foreign policy helped the countries to enter Western fora, such as the EU and NATO: from the beginning of the nineties the country strongly defended its neighbours' accession to the EU and NATO. Poland and Czechoslovakia endorsed the 'return to Europe' idea that they had always been part of the West, and that the EU owed them their entry to the platform.

These reconciliations successful: Germany is now Poland's first economic partner and there are many exchanges at both the state and civil society level. The three countries—after the soft separation of Slovakia and the Czech Republic—entered the EU in 2004 and can now have a word in European and Western assemblies. The Czech Republic and Slovakia continue to be partners within the EU, for example within the framework of the Visegrad group, together with Poland and Hungary. The Polish-German case of reconciliation is considered a big success and a model to be followed for other reconciliations and dialogues with neighbouring countries. The Polish-German and French-German reconciliation are at the forefront of dialogues between Polish-Ukrainian or Polish-Russian.<sup>23</sup> If reconciliation had been possible with Germany, one of Poland's historical enemies, according to Dmowski's nationalism, why could it not be successful with Russia too?<sup>24</sup> This could also be a model for other Central and Eastern European countries towards Russia in particular, as the dialogue is rather difficult with this strong neighbour, although the leverage would be far lower, as the EU relationships with Russia are different and there is no 'carrot' of accession or even association with this country.

Therefore, the German-Polish and German-Czech cases have been set-up to follow the Franco-German reconciliation, as well as to fulfil the new criteria of good neighbourhood relations. The two cases are considered as new examples to be followed, as relations have greatly improved with their former enemy.

To conclude this first chapter, the European framework for reconciliation, created after the Franco-German dialogue opening and integration, strengthened by the European institutions, has played a significant role in the further cases of reconciliation. It has helped Poland and the Czech Republic to reconcile with Germany, one of their historical opponents, and now one of their closest partners. However, the European incentives for reconciliation do not always work.

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<sup>22</sup> Anne Bazin, 'Produire un récit commun...', *Loc. cit.*, pp.104-117 (p.113).

<sup>23</sup> Interview with a Professor Andrzej Paczkowski, co-author of two chapters of the book *Białe Plamy. Czarne Plamy, Sprawy trudne w relacjach Polsko-Rosyjskich (1918-2008)*. Warsaw, Institute for Political Studies (ISP), 12 April 2012, 1h05.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Emmanuelle Hébert, 'Les relations polono- russes: une histoire, un espoir. L'exemple du "groupe sur les questions difficiles" dans le dialogue entre les deux nations à l'ère du réconciliationnisme européen', Master thesis presented under the supervision of Professor Georges Mink for the diploma of Master in European Interdisciplinary Studies at the College of Europe, Natolin Campus, 2011-2012, p.75.

## II. The limits of the European framework for reconciliation both inside and outside of the EU

The European framework for reconciliation seems to have worked very well within the enlargement procedure. Nonetheless, it has apparently not always been successful in regards to the EU's neighbours.

### A. *The EU with its neighbours: a failure to reconcile?*

The question of reconciliation with the Russian Federation is always a factor when considering Central and Eastern European countries. Indeed, Russia has long been considered an enemy, or foreign invader, both after the Second World War and before. Their opposition to Russia has sometimes blocked EU dialogue with its strategic partner, such as in 2006 when Russia had forbidden meat imports from Poland. When it comes to energy relations with Russia, Central and Eastern European Member States, still very dependent on Russian gas supply, always stress the need for securitization and ask for a better coordination in the EU as well as for a vital diversification of the EU sources of energy, or else begin to make use of shale gas, such as in Poland.

Even though Poland may be involved in these tensions, the country could be seen as an exception regarding reconciliation with Russia. For example, the two neighbours have set up a 'group for difficult matters' that has been functioning since 2008. The group was established according to historical and political criteria and produced a common book addressing sixteen controversial historical events. As such, it could be seen as a follow-up of the Franco-German or German-Polish commissions of historians, which edited a common schoolbook, even if in this case the aim was not to write a schoolbook, but, as in the other commissions, to create a platform for dialogue on history and a common understanding of the past between the two nations. Each chapter of the book edited was written by a Polish and a Russian researcher.<sup>25</sup> The group has been followed by two Centres for dialogue and understanding, based in Warsaw and Moscow, which promote *inter alia* youth exchanges or common researches.<sup>26</sup> The insistence here has been on civil society. However, heads of state and governments have begun to organise common meetings and the ministries of foreign affairs are involved in the funding of the group and the centres.

The European Union has also failed to push its neighbours to reconcile with one another in several other issues: the so-called 'frozen conflicts' are an important example here. Indeed, the EU has shown itself not very active in the region considered by Russian authorities as the 'Near Abroad', being therefore dealt with not in the classical foreign policy. In Georgia, the Russian intervention in Abkhazia and South Ossetia could happen very quickly, while the EU was not ready for a fast counter action. Russia is generally deeply involved in the conflicts in the former Soviet Republics: Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia: all are examples of conflicts in which the EU is not very active, while Russia plays a significant role, from militarily support to providing Russian passports to people living in these regions.<sup>27</sup> The EU leverage is indeed more limited in these cases: it

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Adam D. Rotfeld, Anatolij W. Torkunow (eds.), *Białe plamy. Czarne plamy. Sprawy trudne w relacjach Polsko-Rosyjskich (1918-2008)*, Warsaw: Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2010, p.907.

<sup>26</sup> The Centre in Warsaw was opened in 2011. See its website: <http://www.cprdip.pl/main/index.php?lang=en> Accessed: 23 March 2013. The Moscow Centre opened later on, see: <http://rospolcentr.ru/> Accessed: 18 July 2013.

<sup>27</sup> For more information on the 'frozen conflicts', see Xavier Follebouct, *Les conflits gelés de l'espace postsoviétique. Genèse et enjeux*, Louvain-la-Neuve: Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2012, p.276.



can give support to reconciliation through funding, especially within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership, in which Ukraine, Belarus, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan—but not Russia—take part. The Association Agreements including Deep and Comprehensive Free-Trade Agreements are very important for some of these countries, like Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova or Georgia, however the ‘carrot’ is less attractive than full accession to the EU. Regional cooperation as well as civil society meetings have been fostered, as for example the setting-up of a permanent secretariat for the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in 2012 could show. The actors involved would more go through the enabling and connective pathways than the compulsory one, as conditionality is softer.

Therefore, the EU and the European framework for reconciliation have not been as successful within the neighbourhood. Several conflicts persist, in which the EU does not play a big role and Russia keeps its sphere of influence.<sup>28</sup> Europe’s role in reconciliation is also debatable in regards to its relations with some of its neighbours that are official candidates.

### ***B. The EU’s role on reconciliation with candidate neighbours: another failure?***

Although leverage is strongest during the accession process, the EU and European framework for reconciliation did reach its limits with some candidate countries. Indeed, the opposition between Slovenia and Croatia could be solved only at end stage of the signature of Croatia’s accession treaty in 2012: the ultimate accession brought the acceptance of a solution between the two countries.

With regards to Cyprus (as well as Greece) and Turkey, the EU conditionality clearly did not work. Indeed, EU accession was seen as a catalyst for reconciliation and conflict resolution over Cyprus.<sup>29</sup> The EU made use of its powers through the support of projects in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus which took place between the two communities. As a consequence, Cyprus was supposed to enter the EU united, but at the very last moment, Greek Cypriots rejected by more than 75% Kofi Annan’s plan, the acceptance of which was considered as ‘the last chance for re-unification of the island’.<sup>30</sup> At the moment of the referendum, the accession ‘carrot’ had disappeared; the process was so advanced and the accession treaty already signed, the EU could not go back and block Cyprus’ entry to the EU.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, Cyprus entered the EU divided, bringing its conflict with Turkey inside of the Union and transforming the conflict and deepening its perception of the conflict with Turkey. That is why eight negotiations chapters have been blocked for Turkey until it applies to Cyprus the Additional Protocol of the Ankara Treaty. The situation has not really evolved between the two neighbours, and while it sometimes creates tension between Greece and Turkey, it is the two nations close to the isle that have a difficult relationship.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Facing the current events in Western Ukraine, the situation is at the moment very volatile, which might affect Russia’s influence in the region.

<sup>29</sup> Olga Demetriou, ‘Catalysis, catachresis: the EU’s impact on the Cyprus conflict’, in Thomas Diez, Mathias Albert and Stephan Stetter (eds), *Op. cit.*, pp.64-93 (p.65).

<sup>30</sup> Michael Emerson, Nathalie Tocci, *Cyprus as Lighthouse of the East Mediterranean. Shaping Re-unification and EU Accession Together*, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2002, 94p. (cover page)

<sup>31</sup> Olga Demetriou, *loc. cit.*

<sup>32</sup> ‘close’ isto be understood geographically, but also culturally and politically. For more information about Greek and Turkish nationalisms, see Umut Özkirimli and Spyros A. Sofos, *Tormented by history. Nationalism in Greece and Turkey*, London: Hurst Publishers, 2008, p.220 and See Bahar Rumelili, ‘Transforming the

Moreover, Macedonia, another official candidate to the EU, has not been able to reconcile with Greece yet. The opposition here goes to the very name of the Republic, refused by Greece and officially named *FYROM—Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*—at the international level. Some other issues, such as the flag, seem to have been more or less solved, but the name of the Candidate State is still not recognized. On this issue the EU has not been able to act, and accepts the international acronym of FYROM for the State: socialisation between a member state and a candidate country has not been strong enough to overcome these oppositions.

Therefore, the EU has met its limits in regards to some candidates and Member States' reconciliation cases. Inside the EU itself, opposition persists.

### ***C. Inside the EU: some oppositions persist***

Tension exists between Member States of the EU. Indeed, after entering the EU, member states have the same voice and can then change their view or go back to the viewpoint they had just adapted as a strategy to ascend. For example, Lech Kaczynski's ruling was not so keen on negotiating, especially with Germany—even if Lech was not as opposed as his twin brother Jaroslaw, Prime Minister at that time. Affirming Poland's role very clearly marked their foreign policy, while their aggressiveness caused them to be negatively perceived and receive fewer opportunities for the country.<sup>33</sup> Although Jaroslaw is not in power anymore, he still leads the first opposition party, which is not very much in favour of talking to Germany—and to Russia, the two 'hereditary enemies'.

One of the most important sources of tensions in the EU regards the treatment of minorities, especially with the Hungarian laws granting rights to Hungarian people living abroad, but also about the Roma issue: every Member State rejects the fault on the others, so that nobody takes responsibility for hosting these European citizens. These tensions can be perceived as less fundamental, as no Member State refuses to recognize another one—obviously, as the enlargement is based on unanimity—but they concern strong foreign issues, such as between Hungary and Slovakia or questions related to Human Rights, even if minorities' rights are not recognized in the EU (they were nonetheless part of the Commission's political criteria for the enlargement). Here, the motive of accession has also disappeared, and despite economic and political cooperation and integration, as well as regional cooperation and the involvement of civil society, the constructive impact is low.

The EU and the European framework for reconciliation have therefore met their limits either inside or outside, within the ENP or not, reconciliation is not a given. Certain issues persist to oppose the countries concerned and the leverage is very limited once the countries are sure to enter the EU or sure not to join. The question of the EU's and the European framework for reconciliation is also to be questioned in the case of the Balkans, a possible future Member States of the EU.

### **III. Possible future cases of reconciliation in which the EU is deeply involved: the Balkans**

The Balkans are potential future Member States of the EU and represent a strong case in which the EU could be very much involved towards reconciliation.

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Greek-Turkish conflicts: the EU and "what we make of it!", in Thomas Diez, Mathias Albert and Stephan Stetter (eds), *Op. cit.*, pp. 94-128.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the opposition on the change of voting weight after the Nice Treaty: 'Nice or death' was their motto.

### ***A. The EU has long been involved in the region historically***

During the nineties, the United Nations (UN) set up a mission in the Balkans, led by European generals: the United Nations Protection Force. In April 1993 the UN Security Council (UNSC) declared the enclave of Srebrenica a safe area in resolution 819. However, two years later a massive massacre was perpetrated, qualified as genocide since 2004 by the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia.<sup>34</sup> The possibility of such a crime and of the later Bosnian was seen as a collective failure, especially for the EU, as it could not prevent a major security issue in its immediate neighbourhood. The Common Foreign and Security Policy was not yet ready to prepare an intervention, while preserving peace and stability was an objective for the continent.

After these tragic events, the European institutions got more involved in the region, within the framework of the OSCE missions, but also through a United Nations Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina that was established in December 1995 and replaced in 2002 by a European Union Police Mission (EUPM). In Kosovo, while a United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was launched after the UNSC Resolution 1244 of 1999, a European Union Rule of Law mission (EULEX) appeared under its umbrella from December 2007.

The EU wanted to stabilize and securitize its neighbourhood, as the Treaty on the EU stipulates that the EU 'shall contribute to peace, security, [...] as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter'.<sup>35</sup> The EU then established a deep cooperation with the Western Balkans, through the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, which reflected a regional approach and included the Euro-Atlantic platforms. The EU also launched the Stabilisation and Association Process for the Western Balkans which is now the basis for cooperation with the region, on an individual basis for each country.

Therefore, the EU has been deeply involved in the Balkans, with different missions present on the field. Despite this presence, some parts of the Balkans are still in the process of Nation-State building.

### ***B. The Balkans are undertaking a process of Nation-State Building that could harm reconciliation***

After the collapse of Yugoslavia and the following wars of exacerbated nationalisms, the Balkan countries are in the process of building Nation-States that could constitute harm to reconciliation and integration. Therefore, the International Community, especially the EU, have different missions in the Balkans to assist them in further strengthening their States and the rule of law.

Some of the Balkan countries are clearly 'unfinished', to quote Veton Surroi's.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, regarding Kosovo, the country is still not recognized by the whole International Community beginning with its own neighbour, Serbia, which refuses to recognize the newly independent State. Serbia contests the existence of Kosovo and has long supported the Serbs

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<sup>34</sup> Prosecutor v. Radislav Krsti, Icty Appeals Chamber Judgement, Case No. IT-98-33, 19 April 2004.

<sup>35</sup> *Consolidated Version Of The Treaty On European Union*, 30.3.2010, Official Journal of the European Union, C 83/13, Article 3 paragraph 5, former Article 2 TEU.

<sup>36</sup> Veton Surroi, 'The Unfinished State(s) in the Balkans and the EU: The Next Wave', in Jacques Rupnik (ed.), *The Western Balkans and the EU: The Hour of Europe*, Chaillot Papers, No 126, Paris: Institute for Security Studies, June 2011, pp.111-120.

living there, such as in the North, under their control. The EU itself does not recognize the State, as five of its Members reject such recognition. This has led the EU to launch an ‘unfinished policy’.<sup>37</sup> To take another example quoted by Veton Surroi, Kosovars can have a Schengen visa, valid only for the EU Member States recognizing Kosovo. Its neighbour Serbia, who has long backed the Republika Srpska, controlled by Serbs living in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also contested Bosnia’s territory. As for its Constitution, Bosnia and Herzegovina are looking for a new one that could help set a democratic system, rather than the internationally drafted one, which helped pacify the country and the region.

What is even more complicated in the region is that the States must build a Nation State with limited sovereignty. Indeed, if they do not want to renew the bloody 1990’s wars they have to at least accept coexistence with their neighbours. That is why some civil society meetings have been taking place and why the EU has been insisting on regional cooperation. As the Balkans are all more or less turned towards EU help, in terms of economic and financial support, but also at the political and individual person level, the compulsory, enabling and connective impacts of the EU can be very high. Indeed, the countries must respect the EU conditionality, which specifies the respect for democratic, political and juridical criteria, such as the respect for the rule of law. The rule of law is indeed still to be further implemented and strengthened in the region: corruption and organized crime have developed and deepened fast in these countries, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, as their very territory and legitimacy are contested. But Serbia and the other Balkan countries are not off the line on this point: it has taken time until Serbia accepted to hand over its generals who perpetrated war crimes. The EU conditionality seems to have worked here: the Commission recommended the opening of negotiations with Serbia only when it handed over General Mladic, while Croatia accepted to hand over General Gotovina, when the country was sure to enter the EU.

Therefore, the Balkans are in the process of Nation-State building, which is quite difficult as the countries have to accept limited sovereignty. The EU seems to have been rather successful with its conditionality to make them hand over their generals to the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia. The EU also pushes for reconciliation in the region.

### ***C. The Balkans: possible future EU Member States, that shall reconcile***

The Balkan States want to join the EU, however, in order to do so, they have to reconcile, as the EU works with unanimity and will probably not accept opposed countries to enter and block its institutions. Some of the Western Balkans are already inside of the EU, Slovenia joined in 2004 and Croatia entered the EU in 2013.<sup>38</sup> For Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro negotiations have been opened and they are official candidates. Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania are all potential candidates. Until now, the EU had to integrate established States, and was rather effective in doing this. The challenge now is to lead a process of integrating contested and ‘unfinished’ States, to relativize their sovereignty in order to be able to join the EU.<sup>39</sup> The Commission has created a ranking between Balkan States on their democratic progresses. Nevertheless, such competition could lead to an escalation of tensions, contrary to EU objectives of pacification and reconciliation.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>38</sup> Although Slovenes might not consider themselves as Western Balkans, we have decided to include them in this category, mainly because they used to be part of Yugoslavia.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Jacques Rupnik, ‘Introduction’, in Jacques Rupnik (ed.), *Op. cit.*, pp.17-30 (p.24).

Beyond the EU's pressure for more regional cooperation, people-to-people contacts and a reconstruction of identities that would reduce the incompatibilities, the countries involved have made some progress on reconciliation themselves. The EU drafted a UN joint resolution with Serbia in 2010, which enabled the opening of talks with Kosovo in 2011.<sup>40</sup> On 31 March 2010 the Serbian Parliament voted a resolution recognizing the responsibility in the crime committed by General Mladic's troops in Srebrenica. The majority was very tight; nonetheless such a vote was highly symbolic. A Serbo-Croat commission was also established in order to deal with the difficult questions, while a discussion about the narratives have been opened and the Brussels agreement, on the normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosobo, was signed in April 2013.<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, the EU has worked, alongside with the processes at stake in the region, on reconciliation in the Balkans. The countries have accepted to open discussions with each other, while no new wars have erupted in the region.

To conclude this third chapter, the EU has been deeply involved in the Balkan region: from its missions in the field, to the collective failure in preventing the genocide, the EU has been an important player in the Western Balkans. It is now helping to build Nation-States, which should respect the rule of law and the limitation of sovereignty, in countries that want to join its institutions. The EU conditionality has worked at some point: the alleged war criminals have been handed over, but reconciliation processes have just begun.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, European integration has been a symbol of progress on reconciliation, with the key friendship founded between France and Germany. This has been followed by the development of a European framework for reconciliation, and other cases of normalisation of relations, especially in Central and Eastern Europe: Germany-Poland, Germany-Czech Republic for instance. The hypothesis stated in this paper could then be validated at this point: the EU has been a strong incentive for reconciliation in several cases.

However, the leverage is higher when the 'accession carrot' is at stake. Indeed, conditionality through the compulsory pathway has only worked when the countries were under the accession process. Moreover, this pathway has been less functional when there is no accession perspective—as in the ENP—or when the perspective is certain, when the accession treaty was already signed, as it was the case for Cyprus towards Kofi Annan's plan. The enabling and connective impacts have been more or less working both inside and outside of the EU, through economic, financial and political incentives from the EU, while the constructive pathway, the most persuasive transformation, has been working on the long-run, such as between Germany and its neighbours.

Therefore, the EU and the European framework for reconciliation have not been efficient in all cases. The hypothesis shall as a consequence be nuanced if the EU's pressure and framework for reconciliation have been working in many cases, but it has its limits. As for the Balkans, the EU is supporting them in reconciliation, although they are doing a lot themselves. However, such insistence on reconciliation by the EU could be questioned, under

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. Euractiv: 'Serbia abandons hard line on Kosovo': <http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/serbia-abandons-hard-line-kosovo-news-497652> Accessed: 24 March 2013.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Darko Gavrilovic, Vjekoslav Perica (eds.), *Political Myths in the Former Yugoslavia and Successor States: A Shared Narrative*, Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation, Dordrecht: The Republic of Letters, 2011.

Valérie Rosoux's reflections on reconciliation in Rwanda: to what extent can we reconcile and when is it not possible? This goes from accepting to coexist, to being very close friends. This is indeed already very much demanding to have people accept to coexist after a genocide, the EU could already be satisfied by such acceptance—on the way— in the Balkans.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Valérie Rosoux, 'Memory versus Reconciliation. The Limits of a Fairy-Tale', paper presented within the framework of a conference organized by the European Remembrance and Solidarity Network: 'Regions of Memory. A Comparative Perspective on Eastern Europe', Warsaw, 26-28 November 2012.

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