KAGAN REVISITED: ARE EUROPEANS REALLY VENUSIANS?

Gaye Gungor
Assistant Professsor, Gediz University Izmir, Turkey

Abstract

This paper revisits Robert Kagan's "transatlantic discord" thesis advanced in his sensational essay "Power and Weakness" (2002) and later developed in his subsequent book, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the World Order* (2003). In a line of thought popular among neo-conservatives within the Bush administration after 9/11, Robert Kagan, the shrewdest of the neoconservatives, seized the world's imagination with his provocative thesis that revealed the so-called ever growing divide between the Atlantic partners. In this paper, however, I do not tackle this question: the source of strain. Rather I argue that the apparent disparity between the US and European security strategies in post 9/11 environment does not necessarily mean that Europe moved away from the traditional security concerns into a post-Westphalian global order. It is quite the opposite. Europe display core traits inherent to the Westphalian state and adopts traditional symbols and expressions of the modern state (nation state) such as a common currency, passport, flag, national anthem, president, foreign minister and embassies. More importantly, however, the European Union (EU) is becoming a security state that combines and coordinates power both domestically and internationally (Polat 2012). What is problematic, however, is that the EU is not a state. Yet, it is almost always compared to the model of the nation-state (Diez, Manners and Whitman 2011).

Introduction

Today we live in a post-Lisbon era. With the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union (EU) aspired to stateness by establishing such offices as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the first permanent President of the European Council, and a European External Action Service (a supranational diplomatic corps). The adoption of these state like powers are not consistent with the standard EU

practices. When I was thinking of these developments, I remembered Robert Kagan's famous 2002 article and then 2003 book where he placed Americans on Mars and Europeans on Venus; Mars representing power or reality and Venus standing for an ideal world or in fact utopia.

Kagan's central thesis is that there is a transatlantic gap, which is basically a result of Europeans' decision to take a break from history. In the new post 9/11 world order, à la Kagan, the United States and Europe were fundamentally different. In fact, not only they stopped sharing a common worldview, they no longer occupied the same world. In his famous caricature of Americans and Europeans as Martians and Venusians, Kagan pointed to the divergent perspectives of the transatlantic partners "on the all-important question of power-the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power" (Kagan 2003:1). Kagan depicted Europeans as weak Kantians turning away from traditional power politics that characterizes the Westphalian state and "entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Immanuel Kant's 'Perpetual Peace'" (Kagan 2003:1).

There is no doubt that Kagan provoked controversy and offended Venusians on both sides of the Atlantic. For neoconservatives, on the other hand, his analysis was not particularly novel. He had just stated the obvious, and there was no reason to turn a blind eye to the obvious that Europeans lacked power and depended on American protection. For others, however, his analysis was a revelation that Europe and America had parted ways long time ago; in fact they were just different from the onset.

On many occasions, Kagan's thesis was dissected and rebutted. Not only his arguments proved to be theoretically inconsistent proceeding from different premises (Henrikson 2003), but also empirical testing of some of his hypotheses (in fact, arguments) found no evidence that Europe rejected traditional power politics and security concerns in favor of non-coercive practices such as negotiation and cooperation. While many studies pointed to the divergent strategic cultures between Europeans and Americans, they portrayed a different, a more pragmatic European security that is more "realistic" than a more "utopian" US security strategy (Gordon 2003, Berenskoetter 2005).

So using Kagan's thesis as frame of reference, I am trying to demonstrate that the apparent disparity between the US and European security strategies in post 9/11 environment does not necessarily mean that Europe moved away from the traditional security concerns into a post-Westphalian global order. It is quite the opposite. The European Union has been moving more and more to the traditional states' zone. What is problematic, however, is that the EU is not a Westphalian state and can never be one. It suffers from an existential sort of capabilities-expectations gap

(Hill 1993). Yet, 'despite its innovative character in academic discourse significant support remains for the notion that the EU is best considered against the model of the nation-state' (Diez, Manners and Whitman 2011:3).

A Traditional Security State?

The tension between the EU's capabilities as a polity in non-traditional sense and the demands placed upon it by the international environment creates a mismatch or "decoupling" between the EU's stated goals and actions. The EU has been constantly accused of hypocrisy — failing to practice what it preaches. The paper argues that such inconsistency is mainly the result of 'organized hypocrisy', a notion developed by organization theorists that describes decoupling organizational discourse from behavior. It is, however, no surprise to see the EU moving into the more traditional areas because as Meyer argues, the more problematic an actor's identity, the more easily it will adopt the institutional forms prevailing in "the script of modernity" (Meyer 2010, 14).

And we see this decoupling especially in the area of immigration. Immigration policy concerns borders and national security. It still remains within the domain of the nation state; its sole responsibility. Unlike other policy areas where nation states are taking the back seat, immigration still remains one area where the nation state is exercising the monopoly over territory (Benhabib 2005). Nation states still possess considerable power over the formal rules and rights of immigrants. The porous borders for the movement of capital and goods are erected as walls when it comes to immigrants, particularly illegal or undocumented ones. Immigrants are seen as a threat to national sovereignty and integrity. Borders determine the excluded and accepted. As Necati Polat (2012: 137) beautifully puts it:

The new Europe displays most of the indigenous traits of the modern state that are endemically linked to coercion. Largely modeled after the nation state, the integrated Europe not only clearly reproduces its violence in terms of human security, particularly evident in the treatment of immigrants, but is also likely to follow the modern state regarding conventional security. The integration à la Fortress Europe reveals most of the tell-tale signs of a security state in the making, seeking to combine and coordinate power domestically, without necessarily, and once and for all, giving up the objective of amassing power internationally, that is, outside the emerging European state, and by whatever means.

In the following part, the historical evolution of the European Union's immigration policy will be analyzed to document the move towards a Westphalian state.

Europe's Immigration Regime

Borders and border control belong to the sovereign state. The gradual communitarisation of the immigration policy, as Sandra Lavenex argues, is

not so much related to the policy seeking goals of the national immigration ministers (Lavenex 2006). As I stated above, this is the result of the EU's ambitions to become a state. A brief look at the development of the immigration control regime at the EU level would reveal this thesis.

Although it all goes back to the founding treaties, the Schengen agreement of 1985 laid the groundwork for the Fortress Europe. Five EU Member States opened their borders and over the years the Schengen area expanded to thirty-one countries, including four non-EU countries. That is, border controls were lifted at the internal borders, but most importantly outside borders were fortified.

Following the signature of the Schengen agreement, the three pillar structure introduced by the Treaty on European Union (TEU) also known as the Maastricht Treaty and the creation of the third pillar-the Justice and Home Affairs was the second step towards the establishment of an area of freedom, security and justice. Under this solely intergovernmental pillar, the EU Member states were required to cooperate to provide European citizens a safe area. To this end, new legal instruments were introduced, but these were classic traditional intergovernmental instruments falling in the realm of international law, namely conventions, resolutions, conclusions and recommendations. Title VI of the TEU was devoted to the institutionalization of cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. A cumbersome structure often paralyzed the decision making and was mainly criticized for being not transparent enough and too complicated.   The unanimity procedure, above all, obstructed and delayed the decision making process (Maastricht Treaty 1993).

The Amsterdam Treaty remedied all these ills by introducing more efficient, effective and democratic methods and instruments that gave the Community institutions a bigger role in the justice and security fields. Transfer of these intergovernmental areas to the EC Treaty with Amsterdam meant the involvement of the supranational institutions like the European Commission, European Parliament and the Court of Justice of the European Communities. A five year deadline was introduced for unanimity and then qualified majority voting was also allowed when adopting measures under Title IV. In the new Title IV-free movement of persons, asylum, immigration and judicial cooperation in civil matters, the Court of Justice was given the jurisdiction:

if a national court of final appeal requires a decision by the Court of Justice in order to be able to give its judgment, it may ask the Court to rule on a question concerning the interpretation of the title or on the validity and interpretation of acts by the Community institutions that are based on it (Amsterdam Treaty 1999).

The decisive turning point in the area of freedom, security and justice was the Tampere European Council of 1999. The European Council held a special meeting on 15 and 16 October 1999 in Tampere towars the establishment of a common asylum and migration policy in the European Union. The Coucil called for the development of a common EU policy to include partnership with countries of origin, a common european asylum system, fair treatment of third country nationals and management of migrant flows (Tampere European Counil Presidency Conclusions).

Tampere European Council is actually known as the first step in the externalization of the EU's asylum and immigration policy (Lavenex 1999, 2006), but it should be read as a move towards the securitization of the immigration policy. In the name of the unionwide fight against crime, the European Union stepped into the realm of the nation state. Conceptualization of the asylum and migration policy in security terms, reveals the European Union's self image as a traditional security state. This move can be linked to the democratic deficit arguments and understood as a legitimization attempt. Going back to the decoupling argument uttered in the beginning, the EU's practices are not commensurate with its stated goals and objectives. Thus, the EU is in an existentialist crisis. Not to mention, the sovereign debt crisis that turned into a tragedy and shook the foundations of the monetary union. But what I suggest is that these moves should be read as an attempt to reach the EU citizens and fix the so-called democratic deficit. The only way out for the EU in its current crisis-struck environment is to move to the areas traditionally occupied by the nation state. This brings the EU much closer to its citizens. As Manners (2011) richly documents in his analysis of the symbolism in European integration process, Europeans' recourse to traditional symbols represents its insatiable quest for relevance and persistence. These "invented realities," as McNamara argues, are the cornerstones of the EU's legitimacy. The EU's struggle is not only internal; externally the EU has to prove itself as well. But in a sovereign states system, it is difficult for the EU to project itself as an international organization, as it is not really one. So, it develops state-like qualities to gain external and internal legitimacy.

Conclusion

In a recent New York Times Op-Ed entitled "The Fix for Europe: People Power," Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Felix Marquardt, co-founders of Europeans Now, plea for a truly supranational move to take the European Union to the next level by allowing European wide supranational parties to run in the next European Parliament elections. As they suggest, Europe's ills can no longer be remedied with traditional sovereign state tools because they are truly European problems:

It's naïve to expect traditional politicians elected for four- or five-year terms by citizens from within a sovereign territory to adequately address issues like resource scarcity, deforestation, chronic unemployment, global warming and fishery depletion that are intrinsically global, and whose resolution will take decades.

In search of relevance and significance, the emulation of the nation state with the adoption of "Old World Status symbols" would ironically cause irrelevance as the authors argue. To mind the capability-expectation gap, the EU should practice what it preaches. The programs for a more competitive and innovative Europe such as the Horizon 2020, Innovation Union and Erasmus Mobility Scheme are truly European initiatives outside the traditional sovereign state realm. Going back to the initial argument, unlike Kagan's thesis, Europeans are not from Venus; they are from the Earth as much as the Americans.

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