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Wolfgang Zellner (ed.)

Security Narratives in Europe

A Wide Range of Views

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Foreword

This volume represents both the raw material and a by-product of the 2016 OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions' project and report "European Security – Challenges at the Societal Level"[1]. This project differed in two respects from other projects dealing with Russian-Western relations: *First*, it seriously strove to overcome the limitations of comparable reports, which focused solely on state action, and to include societal actors and factors, only to find out that this was not as easy as one would imagine. And *second*, it used more than a dozen national security narratives as the starting point for the report, which embedded the discussion into a much broader and much more differentiated context than the usual Russian-Western dichotomy. Originally, the publication of these country narrative reports was not planned. However, after we had realized how valuable and useful they were, we decided to publish at least most of them. This volume contains 13 country narrative reports in the order provided by the English alphabet. We have also decided to reprint the report, which was published in late 2016 on the website of the OSCE Network and as a printed brochure in a limited number of copies, as an annex to this book.

Both the notion of "narratives" and the finding that more than two of them exist, go back to the report "Back to Diplomacy" compiled by the "Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project" under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger. In his foreword to the report, Ischinger wrote: "For governments and other institutions, as well as for the OSCE as a whole, it might be worth considering a research project on these different narratives, on our common history, bringing together scholars from different countries, and aiming to set out more systematically our divergent views of the past, and how and why they developed."[2] Precisely this was done by the OSCE Network project.

The term "narrative" has currently reached a certain prominence in political discussions. It is borrowed from an equally fashionable strand of political science, discourse analysis, without necessarily taking on board the whole theoretical construction connected with the latter.

This volume is not based on a specific theory or uniform understanding of "narratives". For our purposes, it is sufficient to understand narratives as a complex of interconnected tales on different aspects of security and security policy: perceptions of threats, challenges and chances, assessments of the

1 Wolfgang Zellner (principal drafter), Irina Chernyk, Alain Délétroz, Frank Evers, Barbara Kunz, Christian Nünlist, Philip Remler, Oleksiy Semeniy, Andrei Zagorski, European Security – Challenges at the Societal Level (OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions), Hamburg 2016.

2 Final Report and Recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project, November 2015.

beliefs of one's self and others, positions, interests and objectives, assessments of the international environment and its developments, and so on.

Security policy narratives serve a number of political purposes: Domestically, narratives unify actors behind certain positions, provide legitimacy and prepare action. *Vice versa*, counter-narratives block action by diminishing legitimacy and disputing certain positions. Internationally, narratives display the positions of states or other actors, dispose predictability or unpredictability, depending on certain actors' preferences, draw "red lines" or point to opportunities for compromise and negotiation.

There are long-term and short-term narratives. Long-term narratives can persist over decades and even centuries, can gain and lose in prominence over these periods and change their form, structure and parts of their substance. Political conditions decide which narratives gain or lose relevance at a certain time. We were particularly interested in the longer-term features of security-related narratives that frame actors' behaviour substantially over time. Significant changes in narratives are typical for times of crisis and transformation or even historical turning points. In this respect, the increasing referral to the narratives, which can currently be observed, is an indication of more profound crises.

One of the greatest rewards of dealing with security-related narratives is the observation that the different country-specific tales are much more complex and diversified than the binary Russia-Western pattern would suggest. On the one hand, security-related perceptions, positions and objectives within what is usually called the "West" cover a much broader spectrum than anyone of us would have believed before this project. On the other hand, in addition to shared positions, there are also a great many disputes and disagreement between Russia and its partners in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). If treated responsibly, the knowledge of these commonalities and differences opens up substantially more possibilities for co-operative policy approaches.

I want to thank all authors of this volume for their contributions and all their efforts to bring them into good shape. My very special thanks go to Christiane Fröhlich who spared no effort in seeking to harmonize essays that originally differed substantially in terms of language and style. My sincere gratitude goes also to Susanne Bund and Elizabeth Hormann who edited all of the texts in their highly professional manner. I also want to express my gratitude to the members of the project's reflection group – Nadezhda Arbatova, Hüseyin Bağci, Serena Giusti, William Hill, Kornely Kakachia, Dzianis Melyantsou, Kari Möttölä, Barend ter Haar, Marcin Terlikowski and Monika Wohlfeld – who discussed the country narrative reports at a workshop at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) in May 2016. I am grateful to the GCSP, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and to Naida Mehmedbegović Dreilich for organizing two workshops in Geneva and Moscow. And I warmly thank the sponsors who made the overall project possi-

ble: the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Foreign Office, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Finally, I would like to express my special thanks to Gernot Erler, the Special Representative of the German Federal Government for the 2016 OSCE Chairmanship. He is the father of the idea of devoting special attention and a specific project to the different and opposing security policy narratives in the OSCE area. Without his intellectual stimulation and his support the "European Security" project would not have been possible.

Wolfgang Zellner

Kari Möttölä

Finland between the Practice and the Idea: the Significance and Change of Narrative in the Post-Cold War Era

Abstract

Faced with an unsettled and fractured situation in European security, Finland continues to rely on a foreign policy reflecting a guarded attitude and combining long-term doctrines of small-state national realism, liberal Euro-atlantism and normative globalism.

Concerning the strained relationship between Russia and the West, the Finnish elite and public narration views Russian power politics as challenging the foundation of European security, but stops short of giving up on the order as broken.

Adjusting a common OSCE-framed security order through a process of redefinition (*Paris II*) would avoid a unilateral great-power deal (*Yalta II*) and an open-ended, multilateral renegotiation of norms and principles (*Helsinki II*) as alternatives with severe geostrategic difficulties for Finland.

The confidence of alert public opinion in the foreign policy remains high and calls for change are limited compared with the significance of events in Europe at large and in the strategic space of the Baltic Sea region. In the welfare domain, economics is markedly securitized due to Finland's halting performance in European and global markets.

While the geopolitics of Russia's military power is a familiar challenge for Finnish narration, responding to the information war, cyber attacks and hybrid war as active social technologies calls for new kinds of tools and strategies to control and guarantee the confidence-building nature of the Finnish territory.

Enhanced attention is focused on regimes closely linked to economic welfare and societal security, stronger agency for the European Union and effective Nordic co-operation. While a bid for NATO membership is not in sight, the possibility remains a means of influence, together with a closer security relationship with the United States, calling for requisite narration.

Introduction: Narratives for a Europe in Crisis

The role of narratives on the current crisis of European security is emphasized by a 'competition of narratives' within the European order, shaken by "a return of geopolitics" and "a resurgence of geo-economics" driven by

Russia and the West (as organized politically within NATO and the European Union), with participation by in-between actors.

As a concept for analysis and policy, narrative may refer to material, institutional and ideational drivers of actorness.[1]

From the strategic point of view, narrative is a means used by policy makers to construct a shared meaning of the past, present and future of international politics in order to shape the behaviour of domestic and international actors. Publics regularly internalize and rationalize the world in the form of narrative and the media may exert a greater impact on public perceptions than government does.

From the discursive point of view, narrative is an identity-driven and identity-reproducing process, whereby nations, leaders or people strive to connect their roles and destinies with internal and external developments. As a result, narrative tends to be a widely used and recognized story of the past.

Narrative and policy belong together and proceed in parallel. Narrative is used to validate or legitimate policy for domestic and international audiences and those messages may not necessarily be identical, but are tailored to serve a function or purpose. The need for narrative within governments and societies is at its greatest when there is a change in policy underway or expected. As interpretations of developments in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regions, narratives serve to rationalize and validate strategies and actions in a formative period of international security.[2]

The crisis in and around Ukraine has brought the situation to a head, with narratives commenting upon the status and future of a unifying "security community" within the framework of the norms, principles, and institutions of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and its area of responsibility.

Both the initial Russian narrative and the Western counter-narrative characterize the current situation as a rupture of the established order based on post-Cold War commitments and understanding. For Russia, the breakdown is a cause for and for the West it is an effect of recent negative developments. A political settlement on a renewed common security order remains uncertain or out of reach.

Russia has been more assertive in the game of narration over a long period of time. The aggravated Western response has raised the question of whether Russia's actions should be treated as violations of fundamental commitments or interpreted as a rejection of the post-Cold War security governance. Similarly, Russia's implications for the adoption of spheres of interest and calls for a European security treaty represent for NATO and the EU

1 Cf. Ronald R. Krebs, Narrative and the Making of US National Security, Cambridge 2015.

2 Interviewees consulted by the author in preparing the article: Tuomas Forsberg (University of Tampere); Marko Lehti (Tampere Peace Research Institute); Hanna Ojanen (University of Tampere); Johanna Rainio-Niemi (University of Helsinki); Pekka Visuri (Finnish National Defence University).

an unacceptable overturning of the OSCE-framed security regime, with mutually reinforcing institutions and organizations, each with its own area of action and responsibility.

It is significant that narratives used to shape policies and impact outcomes embrace an unsettling or potentially fractured situation, in which a formerly common narrative related to the Helsinki/Paris regime is being contested, complemented or supplanted. At the same time, the ongoing situation testifies to a broader set of underlying and conflicting issues beyond the Russian-Western relationship, in particular the rise of socioeconomic narratives securitizing the consequences within regional and global change, caused by globalization and the financial and economic crisis of 2008 and onwards.

While country-to-country circumstances vary, national narratives are playing a two-level game by addressing domestic and external (regional or international) situations and audiences. While expected to be a key item in most narratives, the representation and significance of the role of the Russian-Western relationship reflect a varied set of values and interests. Not all national narratives evaluate the great-power relations with identical attention or intensity.

Finland as a Narrator: Setting the Background

The Legacy of the Cold War: Russia and the Fault Line

Finland entered the post-Cold War era with a legacy of practical or pragmatic national realism underpinning a dominant narrative of the workings of the world order, with great-power politics at its core. A by-product of the past experience was the idea of Finnish exceptionalism reproduced by the forces of history and geopolitics in intermittent association with one of the powers in the Moscow-Berlin-Stockholm triangle.

Having been the overriding issue in the bipolar Cold-War milieu, an eastern relationship with Russia was to retain a primary but adaptable status for Finnish foreign policy in the post-Cold War trajectory. While Finland's ability to deal with Russia bilaterally is a key part of the narrative, with variable attention to Nordic and European directions, as well as an inevitable response to global change, Russia's role in the Finnish strategic agenda has been proportioned in sync with changes in the European and world orders.

A leading driver in the Finnish experience has been the effect of the country's location at a *fault line* of contested policies and narratives in Europe. While signifying a geopolitical and ideological borderline in the Cold War, a crucial question since has been the extent to which the division is supplanted by a normatively and institutionally unifying European order, with Russia as an integral contributor, or regenerated by Russia's challenge as a status-seeking revisionist power.

Alongside the Russian factor, since the Cold War, Finland's international position has been reshaped and strengthened by joining the western forces of liberalism and acceding to economic and political integration in European, transatlantic and global order-building. The advent of a 'post-post-Cold War' era continues to be coloured by the future of a normative and institutional fault line. Russia has a role in the Finnish narration, not only as a great-power neighbour, but also as a key factor in the unification or division of Europe at large.

Finland in the Cold War: Eastern and Neutrality Policies

Never occupied, and a sovereign Nordic democracy, Finland was placed in a Soviet zone of privileged influence by the great-power Yalta arrangement (1945) and the bilateral treaty of friendship (1948) with security and defence implications. Drawn from the experience of military overextension, together with political survival in the war, Finland was determined to guarantee, by its own policy and action, that it would not again land in a situation in which the eastern great power would have cause or an excuse to claim being militarily threatened through the Finnish territory.

Termed in hindsight, Finnish small-state realism, the policy of survival embraced statecraft as the art of maintaining domestic democratic order, while not provoking the Soviet Union/Russia as a neighbour with what could be perceived as its legitimate security interests and accommodating ideationally to the world of power politics.[3] For an influential geopolitical school in the Finnish polity, the lesson learnt and adopted in 1944 has remained a consistent argumentative narrative, being challenged, but not overturned by schemes of defence integration within the European Union or closer partnership with NATO.

While constraints flowing from the prioritized eastern policy varied with the east-west tension, Finland's room for manoeuvre was enlarged and utilized by an active policy of neutrality, associated and strengthened with the Helsinki order of the 1975 Final Act. Finland maintained – although with a less permanent or visible profile – a working relationship in the security policy area with Washington, which valued its stability-promoting neutral role in the sub-region and wider Europe.

The policy of neutrality allowed the opening of another consistent strand in the Finnish narrative, driven by idealist or liberalist thought, on participation in the normative and institutional process of multilateralism and western integration, shaped by globalization in the longer term, as a welfare- and security-promoting and influence-creating strategy of foreign policy. The

3 Tuomas Forsberg and Matti Pesu, The "Finlandisation" of Finland: The Ideal Type, the Historical Model, and the Lessons Learnt, in: Diplomacy & Statecraft 27(3)2016, pp. 473-495; Johanna Rainio-Niemi, The Ideological Cold War: The Politics of Neutrality in Austria and Finland, New York 2014.

neutrality policy was also embraced by the realist school as an instrument for managing Finland's relations with great powers. With universal conscription and the mobilization-based military capability, designed to cover the entire territory of the country as its leading principles, an indigenous defence solution was sustained to serve armed neutrality - in practice, though not formally called so.[4]

In line with the ending of the Cold War, through the restored sovereignty and unification of Germany and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Finland unilaterally nullified (1990) the 1947 Paris peace treaty-related military limitations on its sovereignty. Finland's neutrality was embraced by Mikhail Gorbachev's "new thinking", which dislodged Russia's interest in controlling Finnish domestic politics and the bilateral treaty relationship with Russia was renewed with a new treaty to comply with the practices based on the common norms and principles of the Paris Charter for a new Europe (1992).

With the breadth and rapidity of change testing the capability for intelligence, foresight and planning, Finland had to take decisions unaware or uncertain of their implications in the newly permissive milieu. To avoid undue pressure on the Gorbachev regime, which might endanger its reforms, and in view of uncertainty which might otherwise follow in European change, Finland was cautious about moving to rectify the bilateral relationship with the Soviet Union/Russia (1991/92) and apply for membership in the European Community/Union (1992). Driven by economic rationality, with security justification significant, albeit less prominent in the public discourse, Finland attached no legal or *de facto* opt-outs to EU membership, while ascertaining that accession did not require or embrace military alignment with collective defence obligations.

In the end, the transition phase from the Cold War was not a particularly taxing time for Finland compared with the pressures experienced during the heyday of Soviet power in bipolarity. In the Finnish narrative, the Gorbachev regime is recognized to have occupied a key role in ending the Cold War. The timely and successful adaptation of the eastern and neutrality policies, both of which had strong public support, showed that the country was going to address the emergent European order as a competent and capable actor with full sovereignty in form and practice.

Managing the Onset and Course of the Post-Cold War Order

Facing the onset of the post-Cold War era (1989-92), Finland's narrative of its place and policy was reflective of a combination of uncertainty, unification and integration as drivers of a new Europe.

4 Harto Hakovirta, East-West Conflict and European Neutrality, Oxford 1988; Kari Möttölä, The Politics of Neutrality and Defence: Finnish Security Policy Since the Early 1970s, Cooperation and Conflict XVII/1982, pp. 287-313.

Although there were fundamental layers of continuity, the incoming post-Cold War narrative entailed a transition in policy and identity, from marginality by Cold-War neutrality to centrality by European integration. The narrative of a "security state" coping with power politics was to be coupled with one of a competitive "welfare state" capable of a top performance in European and global markets. At the same time, marginality has remained an historic element and an alternative or opt-out position in the narrative battles over Finnish identity, driven by uncertainties in geopolitical and geoeconomic futures.

While the configuration of the United States as a sole superpower and a weakened Russia on the European scene was recognized as an unknown and unpredictable premise for international ordering, the great-power relations at the time were seen to be mainstreamed by co-operation in regional conflict management and arms control, trends traditionally perceived as serving Finnish security interests.

While a Europe without dividing lines or socioeconomic gaps was taken as a legitimate promise, the new Russia and other former constituent parts of the Soviet Union, together with the Western Balkans and adjacent regions, were seen as posing an arc of instability, potentially causing indirect or "new" risks and threats. At the same time, within an all-European security order in flux, Finland was treading on a path to unprecedented political integration within the European Union.

The puzzlement of dealing with a weak Russia in transition did not drive Finland to underestimating the sensitivity of a bilateral eastern relationship, however normalized or generic it might become in a unifying Europe. Whether transposed in substance or geography, there was the possibility of a Russian-driven fault line remaining or resurging in Europe, albeit shaped with new forms of security risks and threats. Despite the asymmetry with the West in non-military and conventional military power, Russia, as a neighbouring nuclear-weapons power, retained a key place in Finnish security threat assessments.

The geopolitically retreating, institutionally dissolving and domestically reforming Soviet Union/Russia was transferred to the category of unstable or fragile states and societies to be addressed with engagement in dialogue and support for reform, while enhancing societal resilience at home. Scenarios on security and safety risks concerned nuclear power and other environmental catastrophes in adjacent areas as well as refugees, driven by the chaos of civil war, crossing Finland's eastern border. Redeployment of Soviet/Russian forces from Central-Eastern European and Baltic states to bases too close for comfort led to Finnish enquiries for clarification. None of these concerns were to materialize in a serious way as the era of the Yeltsin regime unfolded in the 1990s.

Nightmares of geopolitics, such as spheres of influence or interest-based arrangements imposed by great powers over small states, remained in the

background of a narrative in which a renewed great-power confrontation was not viewed as an overarching factor or as a separate concern for Finland. A model example of the promising atmosphere was the US-Russian co-operation on threat reduction by the dismantling of nuclear weapons. With NATO in search of a mission and a potential membership not on the active Finnish agenda, Finland was not a party to the Russian-Western great game, which engendered the dispute over NATO enlargement.

In the context of CSCE-based order building, Finland focused on the institutionalization of the process and conventional arms control. No peace dividend was envisaged as maintaining territorial defence and remaining militarily non-allied were retained as residual "cores" of neutrality. Diplomatic efforts as a non-party actor were directed at preventing armament build-up in flanks as a consequence of the treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE). Confidence- and security-building measures were promoted as tools of transparency on a transforming politico-military playing field among states with different postures of military defence and alignment.

In the Finnish narrative, a functioning CSCE/OSCE-framed security community, with all states bound by common norms in dispute settlement and conflict resolution, would make neutrality superfluous. In a more definite manner, neutrality as a term defining the foreign policy line was discarded during the accession period of 1992-95, as Finland committed itself to a common foreign policy in a deepening and enlarging European Community/ Union.

Going forward in embracing the post-Cold War Europe in the 1990s and beyond, in a newly permissive milieu, as realism was complemented by normative and liberal features in the foreign policy narrative, Finland invested in the enlarging role of the EU in supporting and managing political and economic transition eastwards as a key structural means for unifying the continent, although viewed as an uneven and uncertain process. An instrumental objective of strategic value for Finland, a proponent of support for Russian "modernization", the EU-Russian partnership was troubled with uncertainty and frustration. The positive and confidential narrative of the 1990s on European integration and multilateralism was to include growing security concerns from the early 2000s on.[5]

Russia's emergent effort under the Putin regime, from the late 1990s and into the following decade, to regain a great-power status, remained an ambiguous and protracted security concern, complicated by its failing reform, domestic instability and ethnic conflict within the country and the wider post-Soviet space. Although there were initial concerns about sub-regional stability in the Baltic Sea rim, NATO's openness for enlargement and partnership was taken in the Finnish narrative as legitimate follow-up to the freedom of choice principle in the Helsinki *acquis*. At the same time, the implications of

5 Tuomas Forsberg and Hiski Haukkala, The European Union and Russia, London 2016.

a sensitive Russia-NATO relationship were felt in the growing US attention to the security of the Baltic States in the context of NATO enlargement, although the dispute did not militarize at the time. The Finnish response was an active promotion of stability-enhancing and institutionalized sub-regionalism around the rims of the Baltic, Barents and Arctic Seas.

As an interim conclusion, throughout the post-Cold War era and into the pre-Ukraine crisis 2010s, the dominant Finnish narrative had seen an all-European situation being largely settled in the OSCE framework, albeit with worrisome trends of fragmentation producing signs of brittleness in the common order. In tune with internal and external developments, Finland has been an active and model student of the concept of comprehensive security, adopted as a mode of action by the countries and international institutions driving multilateralism within the OSCE and the United Nations.

Public confidence has sustained a foreign and security policy line towards wider Europe, consisting of stability and transition support, co-operative crisis management and participation in the EU's common security and defence policy, in parallel with participation in NATO's partnership for peace. In the politico-military sphere, Finland has not experienced a security deficit separate from overall European and global developments. With growing attention to strengthening societal security, institutionally and materially, completing the strategic approach, elite and public support for the posture of military defence by denial and non-alliance has remained robust, including preparedness for the possibility of power politics as a matter of doctrine.[6]

Back to the Future: European Security Becoming Unsettled

Europe on a Descent to Multiple Crises

The post-Cold War trajectory of European security has turned during the 2010s into a prolonged process of indeterminate complications, driven by a geopolitical and geo-economic competition, a deficit of domestic and international governance and a complex socio-economic crisis. With a presumptive rupture of the European order and despite the concept of security community reconfirmed in the Astana declaration of 2010, no clarity prevails on the significance or consequences of the violation of the established rules of conduct by Russia over Ukraine, as argued by a broad majority of OSCE participating States, or the use of force by the West in the series of other regional conflicts, as argued in the Russian narrative.

While references to a "new Cold War" have not gained critical support among politicians or experts, there are two main reasons for ambiguity around the assessments of the transformation underway.

6 Kari Möttölä, Finland's Comprehensive Security: Challenges and Responses, Network for European Studies, Helsinki 2014.

On one hand, as a predominantly Russian-Western dispute, the crisis in and around Ukraine has long roots in rhetoric and substance. The contestation of narratives is driven by the political use of history, reaching as far back as the incomplete digestion of the dissolution of the Soviet Union by Russia and the revitalized critical historiography of Western policies towards the Gorbachev and Yeltsin regimes in the defining period of ending the Cold War and immediately thereafter.

On the other hand, the Ukraine crisis is not the sole defining turn in the turbulence underway in the European and global order. An undeniable game-changer is the economic and financial crisis of 2008 and its political and social consequences, not least within the European Union and its member-states.

Amidst integrated and advanced western countries, struggling with stagnation or recession and coping with a lingering Euro-crisis and runaway globalization, both of them feeding Euro-scepticism, the rise of populism and extremism, as well as the threat of transnational terrorism and the migration and refugee crises, are dominating the agenda in most polities, shaking the confidence of established market democracies and not only transit or failing societies and countries. Consequently, the ideational, institutional and material future of the European order has been seen to hang in the balance in the contest between liberalist and populist forces in the elections in several key European countries, in the wake of Brexit and in the face of the uncertainty created by the ascent of Donald Trump in the United States.

Finnish Narration on Europe at a Political and Economic Crossroads

The Finnish narration is faced with providing answers to a number of serious and formative questions on Finnish agency. Are the contours of Finnish foreign and security policy as formed in the Cold War and post-Cold War eras under stress or duress? Does the current situation represent the end of an era or the breakdown of an order?

Even while recognizing that international relations are characterized by rising tensions and serious and intractable crises, Finnish narrators would not be apt to conclude that the Helsinki/Paris order is necessarily broken. Were that the case, a renewed European order would be imposed by power politics (Yalta II) or constructed through a renegotiated political settlement on basic norms and principles (Helsinki II) – both geostrategic dilemmas for Finnish planning and, at best, severe challenges for foreign policy.

Consequently, and not unexpectedly in the long historic tradition, a search for redefining stability and continuity in a pragmatic and multilateral mode (which could, analogically and analytically, constitute a Paris II process)[7] is articulated for the core philosophy of the Finnish course of action in

7 Yalta II, Helsinki II, and Paris II are here used for illustrative and analytical purposes; they are not quotes from any official Finnish narrative.

the dominant leadership narrative supported by parliamentary and party-political consensus and the largely sympathetic or non-challenging public opinion. Calls for adjustments with a direct or tangible impact on the foreign policy line are minor or marginal, keeping in mind the range of accelerating external events and trends of relevance for the Finnish foreign, security and defence policies.

The economic and financial crisis has shaken Finnish self-confidence and societal stability more deeply than the Ukraine crisis with its run-up and aftermath, while it is admitted that a precarious phase in the great-power relations is at hand, instigated by actions of a resurgent and assertive Russia and correspondingly shaped by a revitalized NATO's response of reassurance with direct and regional impacts for Finnish security.

During the post-Cold War era, the relative positions of economics and security have switched in Finnish narrative, driven by events and reproducing identity. Economics has been securitized, as the dynamic European and global markets have called for a competitive state to perform at the highest level to sustain the benefits of social welfare.

While the maelstrom of global crisis continues to be leading to a loss of confidence in the field of economics, the effects of the Georgian and Ukraine wars and other indications of instability and disunity filtering and spreading over the political management of the European order have returned back to traditional security a great deal of its relative priority – although its significance had never been forgotten in Finnish narration.

Although the multilateral institutions in which Finland has consistently invested strategic capital for sustaining comprehensive security, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU), have suffered and lost in credibility and effectiveness in the across-the-board, but differentiated fragmentation underway, they have retained legitimacy as foci in the Finnish narrative.

In the context of the comprehensive concept of security, the Finnish response has targeted the respect for a normative principle: Ukraine's freedom of choice in domestic and foreign policies must be respected and restored. The issue came up internationally with the discussion on a Finnish (or, alternatively, Austrian) model or example for Ukraine's future external orientation, presumptively through a great-power arrangement. Finnish debaters noted that it is only Finland's past Cold-War combination of eastern, neutrality and integration aspirations, which could be haltingly comparable to Ukraine, although with conditions. There was no will to offer Finland, with its exceptional history and trajectory as a present-day model or to engage in a discussion on limiting or conditioning a fundamental principle in international politics and law.[8]

8 For the 'parachronistic' use of the concept and policy of finlandization related to the current situation in European security, see Tapio Juntunen, Helsinki Syndrome: The Parachronistic Renaissance of Finlandization in International Politics, in: New Perspec-

Drawn from authoritative surveys, Finnish public opinion emerges in which alertness is mixed with continuity in security perception. In an opinion survey, conducted in autumn 2016[9] on issues causing concern among citizens, the international situation with refugees, employment and Europe's economic outlook topped (from 85 to 75 per cent respectively) the list, followed by international terrorism, political extremism, Syria, the situation in Russia and climate change, with the growth of immigration (61%) and asylum seekers (61%) in Finland, as well as cyber threats and Ukraine, further down in the list. On the other hand, the share of people who considered the military situation in the Baltic Sea region more threatening doubled in 2014-15 from the time before the Ukraine crisis, while the share of those who saw Russian actions negatively affecting Finnish security was slightly reduced in 2015 (57%) and in 2016 (59%) from the peak in 2014. Altogether, the share of those who looked to a less secure world for the next five years rose considerably in 2014-15 to 65 per cent and remained at 59 per cent in late 2016, with close to a similar peak in 1993-94, caused at the time by recession at home and political chaos in Russia.

As for policy solutions to alleviate security and safety concerns, specifically with respect to the handling of the Ukraine conflict, a slight majority in late 2015 graded EU actions negatively, whereas a slight majority viewed Finnish actions upon the outbreak of the crisis positively. When asked about security-enhancing factors in late 2016, the list was topped by participation in Nordic defence policy co-operation (79%) followed by EU common defence (62%), EU membership (54%), international economic co-operation and participation in international crisis management. Favourable views on military non-alliance (45%) and a possible NATO membership (32%) sent mixed signals.

At the same time, as an indication of the will to defend the nation, the share of those who think the Finns should take up arms in all situations, even if the outcome seemed uncertain, has remained high (71%) as has the support for general (compulsory male, voluntary female) conscription (79%). At the same time, after 2013 (32%) there was a significant increase of the share of those in favour of increasing defence spending to 2014 (56%), 2015 (47%) and 2016 (47%) respectively.

While the surveys show a realization and knowledge of change taking place in the international environment, the greater public sees developments

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tives 25(1)2017, pp.1-19; Hans Mouritzen, Small States and Finlandization in the Age of Trump, in: Survival 59(2)2017, pp.67-84.

9 Finns' opinions on foreign and security policy with a special focus on defense-related issues have been surveyed systematically since the 1970s by the Advisory Board for Defence Information (ABDI), a permanent parliamentary committee administratively part of the MOD. For the report (02/2016) issued late 2016, see http://www.defmin.fi/files/3579/ABDI_(MTS)_December_2016_Report_in_english.pdf.

as confirming the established foreign and security policy line. The defence policy was viewed among the population as being conducted extremely (7%) or fairly well (72%) and the foreign policy as well (70%) in the late 2016 survey.

Support for possible Finnish membership in NATO has served as a closely followed thermometer as well as a potential game-changer in the impact of public opinion on the fundamentals of foreign and security policy. Although the measured support for membership peaked at 30% in 2014 and has slightly decreased since, the share of those opposed to the idea of membership is also going somewhat downwards. In three different surveys in 2015, those in favour of membership numbered 25, 22 and 27 per cent, whereas those against reached 43, 55 and 58 per cent, respectively, while in late 2016, the shares for and against were 25 and 61. Figures from earlier surveys tell the same story: 30-60 (2014), 21-70 (2013) and, more than a decade ago, 28-63 (2005). The overall variation in the last twelve years has remained between 18 and 30 percentage points for those *for* and between 58 to 71 percent for those *against* a NATO membership.

On the whole, while the present official line enjoys broad consensus, the Finnish public is becoming more fragmented and divided, politically and socially, on the issue of military non-alliance. While support for membership grows towards the right and decreases towards the left, no party is unanimous on the NATO issue. While the state leadership takes guidance from public opinion, actors across the political spectrum are keeping their options open. Although no Finnish government or political party has – so far – taken actual political steps or called for immediate action to accede to NATO membership, the political decision-makers are keen to keep their options open and not to become forced into taking a clear-cut or binding final stand on the issue. At the same time, the NATO question remains a formative issue, related to fundamental choices in Finnish security policy.

Consequently, the Russia-NATO-Finland contingency has, on occasion, presented competing narrations, especially when the borderline between advisory analysis or foresight and official government or public policy becomes blurred or contested. As a MFA futures report prepared by the policy planning unit noted that NATO membership would clarify Finland's position in many ways, the authors were criticized by the foreign minister for stepping overboard and not consulting the political masters.[10] When a think tank report commissioned by the government identified, in dire terms, the consequences of Russian power politics towards Finland as part of a foreign policy driven by the Putin regime's ("system") preoccupation with survival, the analysis of the Russian domestic situation was widely commended for its straight talk, commensurate with open public discussion, but the conclusions on potential

10 Finland's position, security and welfare in an increasingly complex world, Futures Outlook of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Publications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs 10, Helsinki 2014.