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The German political foundations (*politische Stiftungen*) have played an important role facilitating party cooperation in countries in transition from authoritarian rule and, more recently, in the context of the transformation of Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC). As party-related, publicly financed and largely autonomous organisations, these foundations are specific transnational actors. This chapter deals with both theoretical and empirical aspects of a transnationalist perspective in the study of EU enlargement, focussing particularly on the party cooperation preceding the accession of new member states.

The first section discusses the specificity of the research object and the normative bases of the institutional meshing between the foundations, the federal ministries and the political parties; it also provides evidence of the foundations' involvement in democratisation processes. Having sketched a few analytical biases of government-centred research on EU enlargement, the case study of foundations' involvement in CEEC allows including the consideration of norm dynamics and legitimation through transnational networks in EU enlargement studies. Finally, an analysis of the transnational cooperation between the European party federations and the political foundations in the years preceding the accession of new member states to the EU helps us to reconsider the questions of identity and transnational socialisation in an enlargement context.

The German political foundations as transnational actors

The political foundations (*Politische Stiftungen / parteinahe Stiftungen*) are peculiar research objects in political science. Formally considered non-governmental organisations, they are associated with the German foreign policies through the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Foreign Ministry (AA). Created mainly in the post-war years, they were traditionally committed to run political education projects, to encourage civic involvement in political life and to promote pluralism in the post-war Federal Republic. Unlike most NGOs, they are financed by public funds and the amount each foundation receives depends on the number of each political party represented in the Bundestag. Nowadays, six foundations exist in Germany. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) affiliated to the Social-Democratic Party and created in 1925 is the oldest one. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) affiliated to the Christian Democratic Union was officially set up in 1964 out of two other organisations, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNS) affiliated to the Liberal Democratic Party in 1958, the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS) allied to the Bavarian Christian Social Union in 1967. The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) affiliated to the Greens (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*) was created in 1997 out of three smaller foundations publicly financed since 1989. Finally, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS) allied to the post-communist Party of Democratic Socialism received its first public grants in 1999.

The specificity of German political foundations raises the problem of the definition of non-state actors and of the use of their NGO status in the foreign policy. Insofar as the *Stiftungen*

are financed mainly by public funds (95%) and have close links with ministries and with the political parties, they do not fit to the classic definition of NGOs. Most of them are even not 'foundations' in the legal sense.[1] However, they do fit the definition of transnational actors if we accept the suggestion of Wolfram Kaiser and Peter Starie (Introduction) and operate the switch from a structural (formal autonomy) to a more functional definition, looking at the practices and repertoires of action rather than at the origin of their financial resources. Further I apply Thomas Risse's definition of transnational relations as 'regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organisation' (Risse 1995: 3). 'Transnational' does not refer to a level, as Bastiaan van Apeldoorn reminds us in this book, but rather to 'social phenomena that link different levels'. As party-related organisations, the *Stiftungen* pursue their own agendas, in the wake – or in the avant-garde - of party international cooperation. They build networks across the world, involving political parties and their organisations, trade unions, professional associations and NGOs. Thus they may be conceptualized as 'go-betweens' between these different groups (Bartsch 1998). Foundations' international activities may collude with German governmental policies. Still foundations cannot be regarded as governmental instruments though, as they represent all the political tendencies represented in the Bundestag. Another reason is that they act at the multilateral level of transnational party cooperation and thus go beyond the governmental framework of bilateral assistance towards democratisation.

It is to be noted that foundations represent themselves as private organisations in their activities abroad. The construction and strategic use of this NGO image help us to perceive more clearly the relationship between German public and non-public actors and to see how public agencies take advantage of the transnational, non-state profile of the foundations. Furthermore, the support of the state may be a crucial element allowing norm entrepreneurs to pursue their agenda of norm socialisation (Finnemore, Sikkink 1998). This corroborates the conclusion of the growing irrelevance of distinction between public and private actors, as both these 'worlds' (Rosenau 1990) are closely interwoven. In the case of Germany due to the federal and corporatist traditions and to the democratisation of the Federal Republic under the auspices of the allies, transnationalism has been historically rooted, as a brief review of the institutional origins of the foundations' entrenchment in German foreign policies will show.

Products of Germany's democratisation and the Cold War

The origins of the political foundations stem from the post-war context with allied control of the reconstruction of democratic institutions in Germany. Because of the delay in the institutionalisation of foreign policy, the first German representations abroad in the post-war years, parallel to, sometimes preceding the embassies, were non-state agencies (companies, church humanitarian organisations and private foundations) (Danckwort 1990). Thus, the specificity of the political foundations is enmeshed in Germany's character as a 'semi-sovereign state' (Katzenstein 1978).
Germany's negative international image at that time is another factor explaining the tendency of German public agencies to delegate responsibilities – and funds – to private or semi-public organisations, which did not officially act on behalf of the state and could thus be better perceived and more easily accepted abroad. This tendency was reinforced by the onset of the Cold War in Europe, and the confrontation of two ideological blocks. While in some cases it was difficult for German diplomats to engage officially in this confrontation abroad, the German Foreign ministry - *Auswärtiges Amt* (AA) took advantage of the activity of the political foundations and welcomed their initiatives such as the organisation of meetings and

seminars for young scholars, trade unionists or politicians from developing countries trying to prevent 'communist infiltration' in these areas.[2] Throughout the decades, the cooperation between the foundations and the state was characterized by a significant continuity of norms, which took shape with the institutionalisation of German development policies:

First, the notion of *pluralism* is stressed, as far as the foundations are committed in their overseas activity to reflect the diverse political tendencies co-existing within German society. The idea is you can teach pluralism only while practising it, through the transmission of a plurality of values, which may compete, complete, and overlap each other (BMZ 1995: 6).

Secondly, an idea broadly shared by public policy officials concerns the *role of the state*. In fact, there is a consensus common to BMZ officials and to the foundations that the state alone is unable to fulfil all the tasks of development and foreign policies. Thus, as compared with state-run programs, foundations have the advantage of leading a direct social dialogue, to ensure a continuous, long-term presence, independent of government changes in Germany.

Finally, an important constitutive feature enables the *use of NGO status* to fulfil the objectives of state policies. Because of suggestions by the government, foundations present themselves in their work abroad as non-governmental organisations according to the principle of so called 'limited publicity' (BMZ 1973: 59; BMZ 1999: 15). This shows the importance accorded to Germany's international image and also explains the difficulties for external observers to understand the actual status of the *Stiftungen* due to their flexible profile, that allows them to appear as more or less state- or party affiliated, according to circumstances (Bartsch 1998).

The relationship between foundations, ministries and political parties is based on their original exchange of resources. As political foundations are party-affiliated organisations, each of them has close personal and ideological links with a political party. While the party support emanating from the Bundestag provides political foundations with the necessary financial resources from the public budget, the party affiliation guarantees them a considerable degree of independence from possible ministerial influence. Thus, foundations are among the organisations that enjoy the widest leeway in their relations with the BMZ (Glagow, Schimank 1983). From a sociological perspective, foundations may be considered as brokers between different institutional fields. An example of a situation when party resources are reinvested in strengthening the foundations' position is the annual vote on the federal budget, which takes place in the Bundestag. The funds for foundations are divided between them according to a schedule, depending more or less on the numbers of votes obtained by each political party during the last two parliamentary elections.[3] In fact, MPs from each party support 'their' foundation in the Budgetary Committee. While this all-party coalition, which led to an increase of funds in the 1970s used to be publicly criticized as *Selbstbedienung* (self-service) of parties from the public budget, it could not prevent some cuts due to the recent budgetary crises in Germany.

An important part of foundations' activity was their support of the opposition in authoritarian countries. The *Auswärtiges Amt* welcomed this, as long as it did not endanger the German embassies, which could thus preserve their neutral position in case of internal conflicts abroad. Owing to their mediating role and the informal support of opposition movements, foundations played an important role during transitions from authoritarian rule in Latin America, Southern Europe and Africa. The KAS invested the most in Latin America, due among other things to its links to the Christian democrat trade unions in the *Central Latinoamerico de Trabajadores* (CLAT) and the American Christian democrat party federation, the *Organización Demócrata Cristiana de América* (ODCA). It has been active in Chile and Venezuela, in the 1960s, later also in Guatemala, Argentina, El Salvador and Nicaragua. It has developed an impressive network of formally independent, in practice often

political research organisations and training institutes (Wagner 1994). In Chile, the KAS gave decisive support – parallel to the American involvement through the *National Endowment for Democracy* – to the plebiscite of 1988, which led to the overthrow of general Pinochet. The social democratic FES used strong influence in Costa Rica, however its main field was Africa and support of the local trade unions.

Foundations' activity in Southern Europe is relatively well known due to their support of the opposition to authoritarian regimes in Spain and Portugal in the 1970s. The FES, in cooperation with the Socialist International and the German trade unions gave decisive support to Spanish political émigrés and helped them to reconstruct party structures after General Franco's death. It also supported the very pro-European wing of the Socialist PSOE around Felipe Gonzáles in the transition process in Spain (Ortuño Anaya 2002). The Portuguese Socialist Party under the leadership of Mario Soares is said to be instituted in Germany, in 1973, in one of the FES education centres (Pinto-Duschinsky 1991, 1996).

Since the 1970-80s, political foundations have set up their offices also in industrialized countries, where they tend to reinforce political dialogue. The Brussels offices are important platforms facilitating access to European institutions. Also the Washington offices, aimed at strengthening transatlantic dialogue are considered strategic centres. The activity in Central and Eastern Europe combines the characteristics of both approaches: assistance for democratisation and political cooperation. Although Central European states were not considered to be developing countries according to OECD criteria, the liberalisation of 1989 required a substantial transfer of know-how in the economic, political and judicial spheres. The political foundations supported the reform process, but at the same time they developed political dialogue with the clear objective of helping stabilize the party landscape in the target countries and finding potential partners for German political parties.

The transnational perspective of EU enlargement

The study of transnationalism in the European Union is a helpful and necessary tool for understanding European integration in the long term. As Wolfram Kaiser demonstrates in his contribution to this book, contemporary history provided important empirical evidence to help overcome the conceptual limits of intergovernmentalism with its focus on EU institutions and inter-state bargaining without sufficiently taking into account the role of transnational agents and elite networks in exchanging ideas and influencing the political agendas. While the study of European integration as such and the recent studies of Europeanisation of domestic policies have acknowledged the role of transnational actors as important channels of common norms, values and ways of doing, the enlargement studies still suffer from a strong intergovernmental bias. A brief outline of these biases poses the question how the study of transnational relations may help overcome this bias and bring back the study of EU enlargement into a broader framework of European integration analysis.

Most of the EU enlargement studies in the 1990s were embedded in the intergovernemental perspective, focussing on the macro level, inter-institutional bargains and treaties (see Sedelmeier 2002). Thus, they seem to have overtaken the arguments of the intergovernmental analysis, considering EU institutions as unitary bureaucracies reflecting the interests of the member states. Several factors explain this perspective: while enlargement was initially conceived as a policy 'like any other', it quickly appeared that it is an undertaking without precedence due to the scope of change, the consecutive growth of heterogeneity within the EU and the legal requirements to be met (Mayhew 1998). Considering the alleged weakness of civil society and of political parties in the candidate states, some authors concluded that electoral stakes were marginal in the institutional change and in the adoption of European

norms in Central Europe (Schimmelfennig, Engert, Knobel 2002). In this way, the unquestionable asymmetry of the relationship between the EU and the candidate states as well as the leadership role played by the Commission from the beginning of the process (Robert 2001) has led to a sometimes oversimplified perception of the EU enlargement as a unidirectional, vertically oriented process, operated exclusively by bureaucratic agents. Let me indicate some examples of bias of this analytical perspective:

Regarding the variety of actors participating in the enlargement process, the distinction is rarely made between the enlargement *policies* as such – conceived and set up at the level of institutions (especially the Commission and national governments) – and a more openly defined enlargement *process*. The latter involves undoubtedly a multiplicity of actors at different levels: governments and ministries, but also political parties, interest groups etc. The empirical demonstration of their pro-active role in the European agenda-setting has in some cases provided remarkable evidence of interest groups' influence on specific policy sectors of the EU enlargement (Saurugger 2003; Sedelmeier 2002; Torreblanca 1998). Moreover, rejecting the non-governmental channel because of the weakness of civil society in Central Europe may seem paradoxical if one keeps in mind the leverage effect transnational coalitions had on transformations in societies under authoritarian regimes (Grabendorff 1996; Pridham 1999). Another bias of the 'bureaucratic' enlargement perspective is the illusion of a rational, unitary and intentional EU action. The somewhat mechanical vision of conditionality functioning according to the logic of cost/benefit calculation, punishments and rewards on the EU side, leading to a final rule adoption in CEE suffers from a teleological bias. It leaves little room to study the deviations and inconsistencies of EU policies, their fragmented character as well as different structural obstacles to the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* in the candidate states. Finally, while the importance of pressures to adapt exerted by European institutions in the candidate states cannot be contested, the scope of resulting *convergence* is a matter for discussion. On the one hand, several factors, such as the speed of adjustment and the receptivity of Central European elites allow the hypothesis of a more important convergence of the institutional structures in the candidate states resulting from accession than was the case during former enlargement stages (Grabbe 2001). On the other hand, empirical evidence shows that coercive instruments cannot be widely applied. Due to the diversity of national models, the EU is not able to propose a single model in some sectors such as public administration (Goetz 2001). So this diffused character of EU influence (Grabbe 2001) does not necessarily lead to increased convergence.

Agents of change: foundations' strategy in CEEC

The context of democratisation rapidly marked by the prospect of EU accession forms the background in which transnational actors deployed their activities. According to Thomas Risse, the success or failure of transnational coalitions in influencing policy outcomes depend on two main factors: the differences in the domestic structure and the degree of international institutionalisation, i.e. the extent in which specific policy areas, in which they are involved are regulated by bilateral agreements and international organisations (Risse 1995: 6).

In an overview of democratisation processes in Europe, Laurence Whitehead described the EU as an important pole of attraction, which has led economic elites in transitional countries to an economic and political convergence with liberal standards (Whitehead 1996). The European institutions offer a strong normative context, which constitutes agents' identity and provides value and meaning to their action (Katzenstein 1997). This normative context has been progressively extended to the candidate states in the enlargement period, which has increased their demand for foreign advice. If we apply the analytical framework developed by

Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink to the EU enlargement, 1989 could be considered as the turning point, which led to an international norm cascade described by the metaphor of 'contagion' (Finnermore, Sikkink 1998). As in some previous cases of democratisation, most CEE states adopted liberal norms even without a clear perspective of EEC integration. The domestic pressure for change by internationally backed opposition movements started in the 1970s and 1980s (Chilton 1995), which could be qualified as a norm emergence period. International socialisation is the dominant mechanism of the norm cascade stage (Finnemore, Sikkink 1998). The motivation of state elites engaged in the process of socialisation cannot be separated from their identity and aspiration to be recognized as members of international society. While the acceleration of political change following 1989 may be considered as part of a norm cascade process it seems difficult in practice to separate both stages as well the mechanisms characterising each of them, i.e. persuasion and socialisation.[4] While socialisation and the related imitation were the dominant logics of normative change in the 1990s, persuasion intervened as part of a more or less direct conditionality.

The expectation of the EU-enlargement shaped the strategies of German political foundations. The empirical evidence from this process throws new light on the EU enlargement. While focusing strongly on the 'constraint' dimension of the processes, most of existing analysis have failed to take sufficiently into account the 'resource' dimension, and the way in which actors on both sides use the European pressures to promote their particular interests. Regarding EU enlargement, the question may be asked to what extent the constraint of compliance to the *acquis communautaire* by the candidate states was a resource for foreign non-state actors, i.e. to what extent German foundations used the structure of opportunities offered by the enlargement to enlist financial and symbolic resources. I argue the prospect of EU enlargement gave to transnational actors such as political foundations an important lever for the transfer of both political ideas and transnational legitimacy and provided them with huge resources in terms of receptivity and prestige. Thus, foundations could be considered as 'norm entrepreneurs' (Börzel, Risse 2000), which promoted different political values within a common hard core of liberal norms, support to European integration and individualism.

The activities of political foundations reflect the orientations of German foreign policy enhanced by the specific preferences of each political party. A kind of agreement is made between the foundations about their activity abroad, which completes their traditional division of labour linked to their political profile. Thus, the FES has a traditionally close cooperation with German trade unions;[5] the KAS puts stress on local government and decentralisation in accordance with the idea of subsidiarity and promotes the social market economy. The liberal FNS stresses economic and human rights problems,[6] the HBS concentrates on ecological and gender issues, while the conservative HSS specializes in professional training, administration and security questions. Beside these axes, the official strategy of all foundations aims at the promotion of economic stability and market economy, the strengthening of democratic institutions, the rule of law and party pluralism. All these objectives are part of their broader aims like the deepening of dialogue at bilateral level and helping with the preparations to join the EU.

All the foundations sent representatives to virtually all CEEC to build a network with representatives of political parties, but also with the so called 'independent' (in practice often party affiliated) research institutes, pro-European NGOs, professional associations, universities etc. Due to its traditional preference for financing the partners' structures, the KAS in Poland supported several European education centres at different universities, the pro-European Polish Robert Schuman Foundation (with close links to the Union of Freedom

party), the liberal Market Economy Research Centre (IBnGR) and the Centre for International Relations (CSM) specialized in strategic questions. This kind of investment brings benefits to both sides: strengthening of liberal expertise provides the KAS with access to economic and social data and to experts, who may take political responsibilities once their party wins the elections. Several ex-ministers (Janusz Lewandowski[7], Janusz Onyszkiewcz) and an ex-ambassador to Germany, Janusz Reiter (director of CSM) employed in these internationally financed research centres are often invited to Germany and become natural interlocutors in Poland for German delegations invited by the KAS.

The structure and functioning of these transnational networks is limited by existing legislation. Political parties in CEEC are usually not allowed to receive grants from a foreign organisation. Foundations also do not have the right to participate directly or indirectly in electoral campaigns. However, they can help develop the professional skills of social and political actors in providing media training or public relations courses. An important part of foundations' involvement is in the 'pre-political' field. In practice, foundations generously supported youth associations related to political parties or party related organisations such as for example, Young Conservatives or Young Democrats in the case of the KAS or the Young Social-Democrats in the case of the FES in Poland. This provides them with access to the younger political elite, potentially more receptive to ideas on European integration. The aim was to strengthen the expertise network of political parties, to promote support for European integration and to encourage exchange between German and Polish party elites.

The foundations organize numerous seminars – often with the participation of prominent politicians or experts – on bilateral, economic, but also strategic questions, foreign policy and above all the EU enlargement. Different transfers of experience and know-how may be studied in this context, among which judicial advice for local administration or constitutional reform can be mentioned, especially at the beginning of the transformation process, but also more exclusively party-oriented topics like training on the functioning of political parties or the organisation of electoral campaigns. To give an example, the Adenauer and Ebert foundations organized respectively visits in Germany for Viktor Orban from Hungary 1998 and to Leszek Miller from Poland 2001 before their nomination as prime ministers of their countries, to provide them with information about the functioning of the German chancellery and the coordination of governmental work.

In some cases, foundations' activity may be compared to a 'second track diplomacy' (*Nebenaußenpolitik*) (Nuscheler 1993). The regular and continuous dialogue carried out by foundations allows German representatives to enter the local political stage, of which they often have a much better knowledge than professional diplomats. When a new German ambassador is appointed to a CEE country, he usually meets the representative of a *Stiftung* to get his or her perception of the situation. Compared with the classical aims of diplomacy, some common features to state diplomacy and 'party diplomacy' can be outlined:

First, foundations partly share the representation function with the embassies, although in a much more informal way. They may invite German party officials on their visit abroad, however the informality is an advantage of such meetings. Secondly, like diplomats, they provide information about the political situation in the target country and send it to the ministries and politicians in Germany concerned with foreign policy issues. But there are also many differences: Foundations are not bound by protocol; they are not subject to an agreement between governments, so their contacts remain largely informal. Finally, the selection of foreign representatives of foundations is different from the selection of professional diplomats. Their duty is limited in time and they may leave the foundation after several years spent abroad.

A key point in understanding the logic of foundations' networking is to study their dynamics insofar as their engagement in CEEC is also a resource for German political parties. The strategy consists in cooperating with potential elites, not only current governments but also the 'governments of tomorrow'. This means that as far as this cooperation encompasses practically the whole political spectrum of a partner country, there are strong chances that one of the German foundations will have close links to the governing party. For German MPs, foundations are important platforms facilitating access to virtually the whole political scene of the partner country. In foundations' international activity, two kinds of resources serve the party directly: information and the capital of trust.

First, staying in constant touch with foundation representatives abroad allows direct information to flow to the parliament. Foundation offices provide a great deal of expert knowledge on foreign and domestic policy issues, especially the ones, which are too specialized or long-term to be elaborated by the usual party political advisors. Secondly, foundations' activity strengthens political links at different levels while guaranteeing the necessary attention to the sensitivity of some questions. The advantage of foundations, as compared with state assistance programs is their direct access to key decision-makers in host countries. Thus, foundations could advise their partners in decisions concerning a new reform project or even encourage coalition building, initiatives that could be judged unacceptable if coming from the German government.

Transfer of norms and ideas in a social learning process

In recent years, authors dealing with the role of norms in policy change provided evidence of a profound connection between rationality and norms. Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink speak of 'a "strategic social construction", in which actors strategize rationally to reconfigure preferences, identities or social context' (Finnemore, Sikkink 1998: 888). The periods of "critical juncture", such as the end of the Cold War, provide opportunities to question existing ideas about political order (Marcussen & al. 1999). In the process of socialisation, actors acquire new preferences and internalize norms and rules through the interaction with a broader institutional context (Braud 2000, Checkel 2001). The likelihood of social learning grows when individuals of a group share common professional backgrounds, interact regularly, face a context of crisis but remain insulated from direct political pressure (Checkel 1999) and also 'when the persuader is an authoritative member of the in-group to which the persuadee belongs or wants to belong' (Checkel 2001: 563). This was the case for foundations' representatives in CEEC, who due to their political profile were able to penetrate deeply into the local political spheres through frequent and informal interaction and who were perceived as representing German or European party networks.

A first problem with studying socialisation of CEE political elites to liberal or European norms is related to the number of participants and the complexity of pressures. It is impossible to make precise statements about the amount of change induced by an organisation when one knows that different foreign donors gave joint support to the most promising parties or institutes. Also the distinction between pressures due to globalisation, international organisations such ad the IMF and the European institutions is not always easy. The second problem is the highly complex, heterogeneous and sometimes contradictory identity of Central European political parties. Thus, their socialisation within a transnational network may imply choice among these different components rather than the switching from one – supposedly homogenous - identity to another.

An example of a party, which benefited from a significant international support but did not manage to establish a clear identity, is the Polish Union of Freedom - *Unia Wolności* (UW). Due to the intellectual and democratic profile of its founding personalities who played a leading role during the negotiated transition, the party had very diversified foreign contacts. Thus its leaders cooperated with Christian-democrat, liberal, and even social-democratic foundations. Being the most pro-European Polish party, the UW was divided into a Christian-democrat and a social-liberal wing. After initial efforts to preserve its ideological diversity, UW finally went for the Christian-democratic option, convinced among others by the KAS, and joined the European People's Party (EPP) 1998. However, after a split and the following defeat during the parliamentary elections in 2001, the UW leaders decided to switch to the European Liberals. So the important investment of the KAS in party-related organisations and milieus close to the Union of Freedom did not bring the expected stability. As soon as the UW decided to join the ELDR, the FNS, which already financed its party-related educational organisation (the Civic Club), offered its organisational and material (indirect) support.[8]

A more conclusive example was the help with the 'social-democratisation' of Polish post-communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) provided by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. While the FES transferred a lot of political knowledge and know-how (like the social-democratic party programme, information about political marketing and electoral campaign or some specific policy aspects) this evolution was undoubtedly facilitated by the pragmatic attitude of post-communist leaders who from the beginning sought international legitimation in the social-democratic family. As gaining the social-democratic 'label' was an essential stake for post-communist parties (De Waele 2003), the difficulty of the FES was less to persuade the SLD to adopt the social-democratic discourse and program, than to convince other international partners that the SLD may effectively be considered a democratic party.
Foreign transnational support may help the existing political or social forces wishing to strengthen their structures. Thus the Green HBS provided material and ideal support to feminist groups in Poland and tried to bring them closer together with ecological movements. While the HBS initially preferred a more societal than political approach, the building of the Red-Green coalition in Germany 1998 provided an important incentive to establish a foundation's office in Warsaw and provide help with the possible emergence of a Polish Green party. Finally, the decision to set up a Polish Green Party (*Partia Zielonych)*, supported by the HBS was realized after the EU referendum campaign 2003, to which the European Federation of Green Parties contributed.

Transnational party cooperation preceding the EU accession of new members

The EU Eastward enlargement may be analysed through the prism of European party cooperation. Authors investigating the transnational circulation of norms underlined the relationship between domestic and international socialisation after a regime change. 'International socialisation is important insofar as it reflects back on a government's domestic basis of legitimation and consent and thus ultimately on its ability to stay in power' (Finnemore, Sikkink 1998: 903). Focussing at this transnational networking, which makes an important part of foundations' activity, facilitates the forging of a link between the bilateral dialogue and the multilateral, European level. The international legitimisation of political parties by the admission of a new party to a Party International or a European Party Federation interferes with the bilateral dialogue as it is the threshold from which political cooperation can start. This means, a German foundation may engage in a friendly dialogue with a Central European political partner, but deeper cooperation does not occur before the association of that party to a European Federation or a Party International. This kind of

association is considered as integration into the family and provides the new member party with sufficient political legitimacy, allowing it to be accepted as an equal partner by German political parties.

To give an example, the cooperation between the German SPD and the Polish SLD during the 1990s is quite representative. The 1993 electoral victory of the post-communist SLD and the Peasant Party (PSL) in Poland was a significant incident in the legitimisation process of Central European post-communist parties. Yet, a close cooperation with the FES did not take place until the admission of the SLD to the Socialist International in 1996. Later, the FES briefed the SLD about the functioning of transnational party cooperation and introduced its leaders to the Party of European Socialists (PES) Congresses. Since that time, the SPD and the SLD have remained in a close relationship, embodied in a bilateral parliamentary group organized with the help of the FES in Warsaw, which enables communication and coordination of their positions.

One of the most spectacular cases of international legitimation was the KAS support to anti-Mečiar opposition in Slovakia. The KAS advised the democratic forces, encouraged building of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK) and promoted Mikuláš Dzurinda as the potential leader of the movement, guaranteeing his integrity abroad, providing him with contacts and advice before and following his electoral victory. This activity evolved also mechanisms (mentioned by Wolfram Kaiser in this book) to exclude leaders, which did not respect acceptable ideas and behaviour patterns. Thus, the KAS marginalized Ján Čarnogurský, one of the leaders of the Slovak Christian-democrat movement, because of his nationalist views and his negative attitude towards the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. A direct influence of the EU policy – which has to be confirmed, though – was the attempt of the KAS to influence positively the regular report of the European Commission following the election of Dzurinda in 1998 in order to support the transition.[9] The KAS representative in Prague and Bratislava arranged several meetings with high-ranking German politicians for Dzurinda. He invited leaders of the EPP to the region to provide the anti-Mečiar opposition with international backing.

The German political foundations have been traditional partners of transnational party internationals. 'In the case of large German political parties, the question is not so much about reciprocal influence, but about the overlapping identity of party and international. The SPD as well as the CDU dominate their respective transnational party organisation to such an extent that abroad the latter has often been identified with either one or the other West German party or their respective foundation' (Grabendorff 1996: 213). While the relative weight of German parties has evolved in the EU integration context, they have remained among the most important members within the European party federations. During the enlargement process, foundations were intermediaries between Central European parties and EU party networks. The European party federations consider the German *Stiftungen* as their embassies in CEEC.[10] Owing to their continuous presence in CEEC and their personal contacts in European institutions, foundation field representatives could influence decisions in an informal way. They helped West-European parties to identify their partners, observing (sometimes also supporting) their political evolution, finally assessing their readiness to be admitted as observer or associate member to a transnational party federation. By diffusing information through party networks they participated in the process of legitimisation of CEEC parties. German political foundations were an important source of information for both sides. On the one hand, they could advise their partners in Central Europe on the formulation of their party statutes and programmes and on the conditions that had to be fulfilled to open the association process. On the other hand, they informed the EU party leaders about the composition and

ideological setting of their CEEC political parties and also about the quality of contacts maintained with them. This was the case of Hungarian, Czech, Polish, but also Slovak, Estonian, Latvian and Bulgarian parties. As an example, the Czech Union for Freedom (US) has been recommended by the KAS to the EPP a few days after the US formal application.[11] The fact that the German Klaus Welle, who closely collaborated with KAS offices in CEEC was EPP Secretary General during the first applications from the region undoubtedly facilitated the process.

While participating in the enlargement of European party federations through the association of political parties from the candidate countries, foundation representatives helped their partners to adapt to the changing opportunity structure of the European Union. Making use of the EU institutional structure and providing political opportunities to domestic actors is an essential component of Europeanization (Goetz, Hix 2000). By their activity, foundation representatives helped the CEEC political leaders to perceive Brussels as an arena of negotiations and of searching for political support. In Poland, the FES supported the strengthening of social-democratic expertise on European affairs, structural funds management etc. The FES financed a series of reports on Poland's progress in fulfilling the enlargement criteria. The official presentation of these *EU-Monitoring* reports in Brussels increased the prominence of the FES and at the same time it opened influential channels for Polish experts to present their views to a wider public. Some of them like Jerzy Hausner became ministers and counsellors to the social-democratic government in Poland in 2001. When in 2000 Leszek Miller, the leader of the (then in opposition) SLD was invited to Brussels with the help of the FES, it enabled the Commission officials to get in touch with the prime minister to be.[12] At the same time, this visit had important domestic repercussions on Polish public opinion, as it triggered a political debate in the media whether opposition leaders should present their views about the ongoing accession negotiations in Brussels. Finally, this incident gave an opportunity to the SLD to forge its image as a pro-European party, which was well accepted by European decision-makers at a time when accession negotiations entered a decisive phase.

The informality characterising foundations' activity proved an important resource for European party federations, especially during periods, when the evolution of political parties in CEEC and the future of EU enlargement faced a high degree of uncertainty. The fact that foundations did not act officially on behalf of the party federations helped to overcome some internal dissent. Thus, foundations could be considered as agents for reduction of uncertainty and divergence. The structure of the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity (EFDS), linked simultaneously to the Socialist International and to the Party of European Socialists, is a good example of the use of party foundations by more formal transnational political organisations at the European level. Created officially in 1993, as a result of a joint wish expressed by the President of the Socialist International Willy Brandt before his death and of his successor, the leader of the French Socialists Pierre Mauroy, the EFDS, was charged with cooperation with CEE socialist parties. The creation of the forum reflects a moment when West-European political parties were profoundly divided regarding the strategy to adopt towards Central European post-communist parties. The fact that the activities of the EFDS were entrusted entirely to European political foundations[13] was a key element, which helped to promote cooperation without engaging the PES officially. As an example, when a representative of the Forum travelled to a CEE country, he could meet a wider spectrum of political representatives than he would be able to do when delegated officially by the PES.[14] The seminars organized by foundations in candidate countries dealt with issues of current reform implemented in the region, minorities' rights and gender issues. The EFDS could thus

be perceived as an international catalyst of ideas and contacts, helping political parties, which remained outside the European party structures to remain in close contact and to focus their priorities on a progressive rapprochement with the EU. One of the aims was to encourage the domestic cooperation of post-communist and other social-democratic parties, a strategy that partially succeeded in Poland and Bulgaria. Since the start of enlargement negotiations, the EFDS reoriented its activities in non-EU candidate states. It thus appears as a structure aimed at preserving ties between the EU and larger European parties.

This transnational party mobilisation shows the EU enlargement as a two-sided process, affecting both new member states political parties and the party federations at EU level. Political leaders from the candidate countries tend to be recognized by their European partners and to benefit from their material, but above all, nonmaterial resources (such as legitimacy or contacts). Party leaders in the European Parliament (EP) perceive their interlocutors from Central and Eastern Europe as future partners and allies, which could help them to overcome certain internal crises. The process of new members' affiliation to transnational party associations is closely related to the consolidation of European party federation identity (Devin 1993).

Bridging the gap between rationality and norms

Studying the mechanisms of these transnational contacts in an institutionalist perspective enables us to take into account the logic of expected consequences – based on exogenous preferences and interest calculations - and also the logic of appropriateness – based on endogenous identity, cognitive dimensions and rules (March and Olsen 1998).[15] By the mid 1990s, the European party federations had to face the failure of their initial aims, which comprised the association of historical social-democratic parties from CEEC or the Christian-democrat parties based on the Western model. After a few years of cooperation, they realized that most social-democratic parties of some importance in the region were of post-communist origin while the parties on the right of the political stage could hardly fit into the Western definition of Christian-democracy. The European party federations had to overcome the gap between the aims of associating stronger partners who were able to increase the weight of federations and the expectation of a basic agreement on common norms and values. In other words, they had to find a balance between their aim of increasing their stability and power on the one hand and preserving a common identity on the other.

The rational objective meant associating as many strong parties as possible, in order to enforce the federations' bargaining power and resources after their accession. Thus, the domestic weight of central-European parties was the prevailing factor influencing dialogue. Contacts with some conservative parties were pursued notwithstanding the objective criticisms that could be made regarding their structure (the dominant role of trade unions in the case of Polish Social Movement Solidarity RS AWS) or their ideational engagement (like the lack of conviction towards federalism). The power calculation may have prevailed in the case of the Hungarian Alliance of Young Democrats (FIDESZ), which was initially a member of Liberal International (LI), before applying to the EPP. FIDESZ was pursued actively by representatives of European People's Party and it was regarded favourably by the EPP Political bureau, while its statutes still placed the FIDESZ in the LI, of which Victor Orban held the vice-presidency. Thus, the FIDESZ became an EPP associated party at the end of the year 2000 (and full member after Hungary's EU accession and the following EP elections in June 2004). The KAS office in Budapest was very active during this process. It organized

visits and meetings for FIDESZ leaders and tried to convince them of the benefits of joining the EPP.

However, it may also be argued that European party federations carried out an in-depth survey of their partners' effective norm commitment. The programme, statutes and policy profile of each potential partner were screened. The party federations sent observers to the CEEC party congresses. It must be observed that these parties, whose strong commitment in favour of European integration and federalism were not in doubt, have been literally 'pursued' by the European party federations. When a potential member party respected all the normative criteria, the formal, technical barriers could be lowered. In the case of the Polish UW accession to the EPP, the observer member stage was by-passed for the first time. Once the UW broke its links with the EPP, the European Liberals launched several efforts to convince the party to cross over to the ELDR. They invited UW leaders (especially Bronisław Geremek and Leszek Balcerowicz) to their meetings. As usual, material support of the foundations was requested. In practice, the President of the FNS was asked by Pat Cox to back the liberal efforts and to strengthen its financial involvement in Poland.[16] The strong support of European Liberals to the UW has proved a successful strategy as, due to the mobilisation of Polish pro-European voters during the European elections on 13 June 2004, the UW managed to send four representatives to the EP, among whom its historical leader Bronisław Geremek.

It might be useful to distinguish between different stages of socialisation. The meetings and congresses, to which politicians from CEEC are invited prior to their association, are the first arena of socialisation. Formal association with a party federation requires organisational and political adaptation and fully exposes the new party to internal socialisation forums. Foundations intervened at both stages, providing organisational assistance and proposing training sessions on relevant topics. However, to be effective, exploring social learning mechanisms has to be based on an analysis of interactions (Checkel 2001). As a result of this transnational socialisation process, a transfer of discourse and perceptions seems indeed to have affected both sides. While politicians from candidate countries affiliated to the EPP have increasingly stressed their attachment to social market economy and subsidiarity, EPP leaders have supported some of their priorities in their declarations such as when the EPP Leader Wilfried Martens supported the FiDESZ position with regard to the Hungarian Status Law (concerning Hungarian minorities abroad) and criticized the Hungarian socialists' arguments advanced during their electoral campaign (EPP News 2002).

Conclusion

The research on German political foundations as transnational actors has several heuristic advantages. First, it allows an empirical refinement of the conceptual models of transnational networks' activity, showing that the relation to governmental agencies may be decisive for their impact. In fact, while German public ministries are key resource providers for the foundations, the symbolic support of the government members who are party leaders at the same time is an important legitimising factor for foundations.
Secondly, this research furthers the linking of bilateral and the multilateral level through the dynamics of international party legitimation. Finally, it refines our reflection on the EU enlargement process and the elite socialisation mechanisms. Observing the enlargement of European party federations through the association of new members provides empirical evidence to the entangled nature of the logic of consequentialism and the logic of appropriateness. Both the relative or potential numeric weight of CEEC political parties and the prestige expected from associating political leaders from the region, who were well-

known for their commitment in defending democratic ideas and for their pro-European convictions were decisive factors influencing the mobilisation of external actors.

As far, as foundations' activity analysis is concerned, the political and chronological re-contextualising provides a frame for any conclusive statements. Facilitating their partners' access to European arenas was critical at the early stage of partner identification and until the beginning of accession negotiations. At that time, due to the scarcity of information sources, the German foundations played a particularly important role. Since the first associations, in the second half of the 1990s, the net of contacts of all kind between CEEC political leaders and their European interlocutors have grown and the political foundations have no longer been considered as unique or vital information sources. However, this transnational communication channel has continued to function in both ways. Since the end of accession negotiations at the time of accession referenda and before the European elections including the new member states in June 2004, the foundations have sent political delegations for training in Brussels and supported those, who were still in process of political identification, looking for an appropriate political family to join. In CEEC, they helped their partners to assuage the painful process of persuading public opinion in the new member states to accept the social consequences of the transformation and accession as a necessary stage of the enlargement process. The results of the first European elections including these new member states have shown that domestic factors and veto players remain essential variables influencing political outcomes, which party leaders have to take into account it they wish to strengthen the democratic dimension of the enlarged European Union. The German political foundations remain useful observers and advisors of the ongoing evolutions in the new member states. Although the EU accession of ten new member states in 2004 is a turning point in the relations between both parts of Europe, this 'special relationship' between the German parties and foundations and their CEEC partners will have to be reconsidered as it is may develop and change though not disappear entirely.

Finally, this chapter offers a contribution to the reflection on the European Parliament in the EU integration process. Usually considered as 'backwater of Europeanization', the EP may also appear as a socialization arena worthy of further study and analysis. As far as the actors are concerned, focusing on bureaucratic or governmental institutions characteristic of some enlargement studies provides only a partial insight on the impact of EU governance outside the Union, especially insofar as the normative pressures and social learning are concerned. Generating compliance with EU norms may be a matter for socialising institutions such as party political transnational networks including the foundations.

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[1] Only the liberal *Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung* is a "real" foundation, the others have the status of a registered association (*eingetragener Verein*).

[2] For a more thorough analysis of foundations' origins, see the results of my research in different public and private archives in my PhD research project, *Les fondations politiques allemandes dans la politique étrangère: de la genèse institutionnelle à leur engagement dans le processus d'élargissement de l'UE,* prepared at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris.

[3] In 2001 the percentage was: KAS, FES: 32,5 per cent each; FNS, HSS, HBS: 11,66 per cent each (after the subtraction of 0,5 per cent of the whole sum for the RLS).

[4] For a typology of mechanisms of transnational socialisation, see the contribution of Frank Schimmelfennig in this book.

[5] In Poland, the FES supported the *Solidarność* trade union and tried to work with the post-communist OPZZ trade union, which was hampered by the disagreement between these two strongly politicised organisations.

[6] Among its partners in Poland were the liberal Adam Smith Centre, the Helsinki Foundation and the Union of Freedom (UW) affiliated Civic Club.

[7] In the European elections in June 2004, Janusz Lewandowski won a seat in the European Parliament from the Civic Platform (PO) list.

[8] Interview with a member of the UW board, Warsaw, February 13th 2004.

[9] Interview with a former KAS representative, Berlin, July 19th 2000.

[10] Interview with an EPP leader, Brussels, February 21st 2003.

[11] EPP archives, Fax of the KAS Prague office director, Reinhard Stuht to the EPP General Secretary Klaus Welle, October 26th 1998.

[12] The SLD internal journal published a photo of its delegation together with Romano Prodi; Tadeusz Iwiński 'SLD w Brukseli. Marzenia a rzeczywistość', *Współpraca międzynarodowa*, n°1/1, July 2000, p. 5.

[13] While the *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung* had the most important material resources, it cooperated with other foundations within this transnational network, such as the Dutch *Alfred Mozer Stichting,* the Swedish *Olof Palme International Center*, the Austrian *Karl Renner Institut*, the British *Westminster Foundation*, as well as the French *Fondation Jean Jaurès*.

[14] Interview with a PES adviser, Brussels, February 25th 2003.

[15] For a discussion of this relationship in party cooperation preceding the EU enlargement, see Dakowska (2002).

[16] FNS archives. Letter of Pat Cox, President of the ELDR to Count Otto Lambsdorff, Chairman of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Brussels, November 15th 2000.