

Review

Neutrality and the European Union: The case of Switzerland

Kate Morris and Timothy J. White*

Department of Political Science, Xavier University, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, Ohio 45207-5191, USA.

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Switzerland remains a neutral state outside of the European Union (EU). This paper examines realist, liberal, and constructivist theories of neutrality to explain Switzerland's unwillingness to join the EU after the cold war. Five other neutral states have decided to participate in the EU while maintaining their neutrality. The continued Swiss reluctance is best explained by a historic identity that the Swiss perceive is threatened by membership in the EU. Realism's focus on great power politics and state's pursuit of power offers little to explain Swiss neutrality. Liberalism offers an explanation for the enticement of membership, but it is constructivism that explains both the nature of Swiss neutrality and its continuing ability to shape Swiss foreign policy by preventing membership in the EU.

Key words: Neutrality, Switzerland, European Union, constructivism, realism, liberalism.

INTRODUCTION

A distaste for neutrality has existed throughout the history of the international system, especially among great powers. This aversion has increased in recent decades due to the belief that neutrality is increasingly obsolete given the benefits that come with regional and international integration. During World War II, critics claimed that neutrals were avoiding the necessary commitment to fight the fascist powers and their aggression (Carter, 1977; Duggan, 1985). In the cold war scholars believed that states needed to join alliances to gain security by balancing power or, as modified by Walt (1987), to balance threats. In the post-cold war world, the choice of states to remain neutral is deemed by some to be unnecessary and inhibiting cooperation in the international community. Nevertheless, Binter (1991:114) contends that neutrality might have become more viable in the wake of the superpower conflict. Why do some states maintain neutrality policies, especially in Europe where the EU has created a regional system of political, economic, and security cooperation? The thesis of this

paper is that Switzerland chooses to remain outside of the EU because of the continued popularity of a historic neutrality policy that is perceived by the state's citizens to be at odds with regional integration.

Switzerland is an interesting case that is defying the expectation that neutrality will become an outdated foreign policy option. For centuries, neutrality has been part of the Swiss national identity, and the Swiss fear losing this neutrality or adjusting it for the purposes of joining the EU. The EU currently has five neutral members: Sweden, Ireland, Austria, Malta, and Finland. They have all gone through the membership debate and have decided that the benefits of entering the EU either were more important than their historical policy of neutrality or they have found a way to reconcile their neutrality with EU membership. Neutrality and relations with the EU continue to be debated in many of these states, especially with the growth of common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Neutrality has historically assumed that neutral states would forego entering military alliances or taking actions or policies that might involve them in future hostilities with other states (Subedi, 1993: 244). To the extent that the CFSP commits states to be involved in military actions outside their borders there is a potential conflict with historic conceptions of neutrality. Neutrality thus continues to be an important part of the neutral states' domestic debates as they ratify new EU treaties. Despite the allure of the EU, neutrality

*Corresponding author. E-mail: white@xavier.edu. Tel: (513) 745-2997. Fax: (513) 745-1955.

continues to play a role in preventing some states from either joining the EU or agreeing to new levels of cooperation that threaten historic policies of neutrality. This article analyzes Swiss neutrality by assessing the perceived advantages of EU membership and the challenge this membership poses for its historic policy of neutrality. At the beginning of the twenty-first century many Swiss politicians believed by the end of the decade that Switzerland would be a member of the EU, but the likelihood of this decreased as this decade drew to a close.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many in the scholarly community view neutrality as an antiquated concept. "Neutrality is not seriously discussed anymore, but seen as a relic from the cold war, hampering participation in collective security endeavors" (Goetschel, 1999: 115). Much of the recent work on neutrality focuses on individual case studies instead of developing a theory of contemporary neutrality. Nevertheless, neutrality remains an important concept because states continue to choose to be neutral and their publics fear the possibility of abandoning this policy. Even if legal experts contend that permanent neutrality is compatible with membership in the EU (Subedi, 1993: 258-259), the political and historical realities of states may make this tension difficult to resolve. The concept and meaning of neutrality has evolved from a purely legal concept to a broader political concept that allows more ambiguity regarding the relationship between neutrality and membership in an international organization like the EU (Andr en, 1991).

The end of the cold war did have an effect on which theory came to dominate the analysis of neutrality. Historically, neutrality was often seen as a policy of small states seeking to preserve their sovereignty while avoiding entangling alliances with great powers (Hey, 2003: 5; Karsh, 1988; Rickli, 2010: 182). Small states historically have worried that committing themselves to alliances might jeopardize their autonomy (Goetschel, 1998: 17). The post-cold war world seemingly made small states less pre-occupied with being engulfed in a superpower conflict and thus more willing to join international organizations like the EU (Wivel, 2005). D niker (1992: 7) contends that neutrality is viable in the post-cold war world only when states have a favorable geostrategic location, a will to remain out of wars, and reliable defense forces. Because Switzerland continued to have these conditions, it was able to continue its policy of neutrality into the 1990s and beyond. Because realism has been the dominant paradigm to study world politics, and especially security studies since World War II, we will begin our review of the scholarly literature regarding neutrality with realism. Realists interpret neutrality as "the rational calculation of a small state's interests in the

state-centered, unfriendly, self-help environment" (Jesse, 2006: 7). Realists assume that neutral states rationally calculate that not engaging in wars better achieves national goals like survival than choosing to join one side or another in war (Altfeld and De Mesquita, 1979). The existence of neutral states in today's environment, especially in Europe, is problematic for realists because neutrals do not choose to participate in the balance of power that is the focus of so much realist analysis of world politics. Neutrality does not easily conform to realist theory that tends to focus on war and alliance structures. Nevertheless, Aguis (2006: 36-37) contends that realists made neutrality fit their theory by emphasizing that neutral states were following their own state centered interests. In the post-cold war world, the scholarly community has increasingly looked to other approaches to explain neutrality.

Liberal approaches offer an alternative to traditional realist explanations for neutrality. Liberals argue "that international norms and internal dynamics lead nations to seek and maintain neutrality" which remain relevant in the post-cold war world (Jesse, 2006: 7). For liberals, a state would "choose neutrality based on domestic factors or international normative considerations" and "contribute to international institutions that create collective security with or without increasing directly the neutral's own security" (Jesse, 2006: 14-15). The central enticement that liberals stress that might make historic neutrals abandon neutrality is the perceived economic benefit that come from trade, labor, and financial flows that come with integration in regional organizations like the EU (Gastegyer, 1990: 201-203; Waite, 1974). According to liberals, world politics has changed in the wake of the cold war, and the historic security concerns of states have given way to concerns about economic growth and international cooperation (Joenniemi, 1993). The liberal conceptualization of neutrality, however, by emphasizing the role of international norms would appear to make neutrality conform to the more general process of international integration and interdependence that liberals stress in their analysis of world politics. Greater integration, however, conflicts with the desire of neutral states to remain aloof from defense and security commitments associated with alliances. This contradiction means that liberalism alone cannot explain why states cling to their policies of neutrality if it appears to jeopardize the incentives that liberals claim international integration and organization offers.

Constructivists have played an important and constructive role in developing contemporary theories of neutrality. In the past scholars stressed the legal notion of neutrality, not the ideological concept of neutrality, which has become more popular recently. Constructivists such as Goetschel (1999) examine neutral states from a political and ideological standpoint instead of a legal perspective. They emphasize the relevance of a neutral foreign policy option and the valuable role that neutral

states can play in organizations like the EU. Goetschel (1998) suggests that the security identity of states plays a prominent role in determining a state's willingness to forego the autonomy that neutrality ensures for the advantages perceived by international integration. Agius (2006) and Luif (2001) also offer constructivist analyses of neutrality contending that each state develops their own unique neutrality based on their own history and identity. Instead of attempting to fit all neutral states into one historic and legalistic definition of neutrality, constructivists take into account the domestic factors that emerge from a state's history and identity to determine the meaning and policy of neutrality in a specific context. There is a complicated relationship between security and identity in the post-cold war European environment (Waever, 1996). Those European neutrals who have joined the EU after the cold war hoped to negotiate their entry into the EU to allow their historic neutral policy to remain intact (Subedi, 1993: 240). There is survey evidence that suggests that joining the EU does not necessarily reduce or diminish national or sub-national identity within the populations of member states (Opp, 2005). This means national groups do not forsake their identity even after their membership in the EU.

Because other neutrals have decided to join the EU, comparative analysis can help to explain how Swiss EU membership could be compatible with neutrality. There are frequent comparisons with other neutral member states that illustrate the policy choices that have been taken by other neutrals. A neutral EU member state that would provide a good point of comparison to Switzerland is Ireland. Like Switzerland, Ireland had developed a policy of neutrality that became controversial in World War II (Cole, 2006; Devine, 2008a; Dwyer, 2010; Girvin, 2006; Girvin and Roberts, 2000; Hachey, 2002: 31-35; Wills, 2007). Ireland has also had a population that came to embrace neutrality as a means of developing their own independence and national identity in the context of gaining independence less than twenty years before World War II began (Hale, 2002; Jesse, 2007; Keatinge, 1984; Keogh and O'Driscoll 2004; O'Halpin, 2002; Tonra, 2006; Tully, 2010; White and Riley, 2008). As Zeff and Pirro (2006: 160) argue, neutrality "has taken on a significance for Irish people over and above the essentially practical considerations on which it was originally based. Many have come to regard neutrality as a touchstone for ... their entire approach to international relations." Ireland has also come to identify itself as a neutral state, which is not ready to completely abandon its neutrality. Despite a history of neutrality since World War II, Ireland joined the European Economic Community (EEC), on January 1, 1973. Neutrality did not play a prominent role in the debate regarding Ireland joining the EEC. If it had, Irish support for membership would have been much more muted. Instead, the debate regarding Ireland's entrance into the European Common Market focused on the economic advantages that would emerge

from membership (Devine, 2008a: 158). The government that promoted membership argued that the question of neutrality would not be a concern and would be handled after economic integration was complete (Zeff and Pirro, 2006). Thus, Jesse (2006) claims that liberalism explains how Ireland has joined and participated in the EU because of the perceived benefits of membership. Other scholars agree that the improved trade and economic relations with other EU states is what motivated the Irish to join and ratify the treaties that have developed the institutions of the EU over time (Devenny, 2008; Salmon, 1989; Zeff and Piro, 2006). Not all agree that liberalism best explains Ireland's neutrality. Devine (2008b) claims that Irish neutrality is better understood from a constructivist perspective. Initially, some did interpret the EEC as a threat to the independence and sovereignty that Irish neutrality had stressed and feared that the EEC was "another domineering colonial entity seeking to replace Britain as Ireland's political and economic master" (Devenny, 2008: 23). Neutrality has continued to play a role in the debates regarding subsequent EU treaties, most recently the Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties. This is especially the case because the common foreign and security policy appears to conflict with the Irish conception of neutrality. Thus far, the Irish have been able to reconcile their historic neutrality policy with the growing agenda of the CFSP, but Doherty (2002: 2) contends that in the long-run the Irish will have to choose between their policy of neutrality and the CFSP of the EU. O'Brennan (2009) argues that because the Irish have a particular national identity which stresses neutrality anti-Europe groups use neutrality to convince the Irish population that further ties with the EU will destroy their national identity. Because of Ireland's history with neutrality and its EU membership, the Irish case provides a good comparative case to use in analyzing Switzerland's neutrality and potential EU membership.

Sweden is another historically neutral state that has joined the EU. Swedish neutrality was very popular in the cold war (Andr n, 1991: 67). Even after joining the EU, Sweden remains the most Euroskeptic nation in the Union. It continues to hold onto neutrality even though the state has modified its definition of neutrality and has become active in the CFSP. Lewin (2004) demonstrates that neutrality was a major consideration as the Swedes struggled with the decision to join the EU. Much like Ireland, Sweden joined the Union because of the perceived economic benefits of membership (Andr n, 1991: 68; Lewin, 2004: 136). Agius (2006) claims that Europeanization has occurred in Sweden but with a continued attachment to neutrality. From Agius' (2006: 183) constructivist view, Swedish neutral identity is "malleable, subject to change" and could evolve or be abandoned. Forsberg and Vaathoranta (2001) argue that Sweden is post neutral because of the country's strong commitment to CSFP. Sweden thus offers an interesting

comparative case study in the context of Switzerland's desire to maintain its historic neutrality and potentially join the EU.

Austria, Finland, and Malta have different histories with neutrality policies that are less comparable to the Swiss case than Sweden and Ireland. Austria and Finland became neutral states stemming from cold war pressures of their close proximity to Russia and Russian allies in Eastern Europe. Austria and Finland have reduced or modified their neutrality stance since the end of the cold war, Finland more so than Austria. Luif (2001) examines the history of Austrian neutrality from the state being forced to become neutral at the end of World War II through to its period of "active neutrality" more recently. Gärtner (2001) argues for Austria to play a more active role in EU security as neutrality continues to hamper the state. Finland also became neutral because of pressure from Russia. However, as soon as the cold war ended, Finland joined the EU primarily for security reasons. Henrikki (2005) contends that the Finns view their neutrality from a realist perspective and rapidly abandoned neutrality after the end of the cold war. Much like Sweden, Finland has experienced a Europeanization in its strategic culture. Unlike many of the other European neutral countries, Finland was enthusiastic to join the EU for security reasons and therefore does not have a history of neutrality similar to Switzerland. Although there is another neutral member state of the EU, Malta, which became a member in 2004, there has not been much analysis on this state's neutrality and decision to join the EU. As Malta has to confront the continued deepening of European ties through CFSP, the question of how to preserve neutrality in the midst of new European security cooperation will surely become a hotly debated issue.

As the literature above has shown, neutrality has played a major role in several states' decisions to enter the EU and continues to affect their relationship with the Union as a member state. Neutrality historically has played a role in preventing states from becoming members of the EU. Neutrality plays this role because, most commonly, this concept is attached to a state's national identity. Neutrality, as constructivists successfully demonstrate, becomes a national symbol or emblem of identity, which connects citizens to the state itself. The national identity and neutrality that emerges from a group's history as a small state can foster a strong desire to support the policy of neutrality, demonstrating the sovereignty of the state. Thus, it is difficult to enter an institution that could require the destruction or at least an adjustment of that constructed identity. Joining and belonging to a collective organization, such as the EU, seemingly threatens not just the policy of neutrality but how a national group may define its identity. For many neutral states, resolving the tension between preserving a valued historic policy of neutrality and potentially benefitting from the economic advantages provided by regional integration determines whether a state joins and

how a state participates in an organization like the EU. What follows is analysis of the Swiss case using case study methodology long identified in the social sciences to test the theoretical arguments of the different paradigms and compare the Swiss case with others who have historically been neutral and who have decided to join the EU (Bennett and Elman, 2006; Caporaso, 2009; George and Bennett, 2005; Gerring, 2007).

SWITZERLAND AS A CASE STUDY

Switzerland traces its use of neutrality back hundreds of years, but 1815 is the date of the official recognition of the state's neutrality (Bruner, 1989: 283; Ganser and Kreis, 2007; Neuhold, 1988: 103). Throughout history, numerous states have attempted to control Switzerland, and therefore the Swiss hold on tightly to their sovereignty. As a small state with a diverse population that includes French, German, and Italian speaking regions, neutrality has not only been a way of protecting the small nation but it has also given a population that does not have a common history or background an identity to unite them as a nation. Like many other multi-ethnic or linguistic states in the world, Switzerland is a state that needs to be concerned with maintaining unity among its diverse linguistic groups. This has made it difficult for Switzerland to join the EU, a body in which the Swiss not only fear losing their identity as a neutral nation, but also direct democracy and federalism, which are seen as uniquely Swiss institutions. Although the Swiss government continues to discuss Switzerland's eventual membership in the EU, the Swiss population may not yet be ready for this historic step. The economic incentive associated with EU membership that many other neutral states experienced before deciding to become member states may have been successfully overcome at least in the short-run by successful bilateral arrangements that allow the Swiss to maintain their historic neutrality and still have the advantages of economic cooperation with neighboring states. Thus, Switzerland has been able to maintain a dual and apparently contradictory foreign policy of neutrality stressing independence while at the same time benefitting from economic interdependence (Gabriel, 2003: 1). How long this can continue while Switzerland remains outside of the EU is open to question.

Historically, the Swiss policy of neutrality can best be understood as a reaction against the real and threatened domination from other larger more powerful states, especially its neighbors (Borchert, 2001: 161). The Swiss have long been cognizant of the "smallness" of their state (Gabriel, 2003: 5), and this has meant that neutrality was an important means of self-preservation in a territory surrounded by major powers. In addition, neutrality became an important symbol of common identity for the diverse Swiss population (Freymond, 1990: 186; Gabriel,

2003: 3; Reginbogin, 2009: 23) and became “the ‘vital principle’ which underlies Swiss foreign policy” (Freymond, 1990: 177). Swiss neutrality can be traced all the way back to 1515 after a defeat of the Swiss army in Marignano, Italy. After this, Switzerland signed a ‘perpetual peace’ with France (Church, 2004). In 1798, Switzerland had been invaded by France and fell under its control for 15 years, but in 1815, Swiss neutrality was officially recognized in the Treaty of Paris (Freymond, 1990: 180; Ganser and Kreis, 2007; Neuhold, 1988: 100; Reginbogin, 2009: 23). In 1848 Swiss neutrality was inscribed in the Swiss constitution (Freymond, 1990: 181). Since then, neutrality has helped to keep the state out of the devastating European wars that took place during the 19 and 20th centuries (Church, 2004; Neuhold, 1988: 105). Thus, by the time of World War II, Switzerland’s policy of neutrality was seen as more legitimate than other neutrals that had less of a history with this policy and were seen as using neutrality as a short-term means of avoiding conflict or invasion (Wylie, 2001). Since World War II the Swiss have clung to neutrality because it was seen as a successful means of avoiding the destruction associated with war in the neighboring states of Europe (Goetschel et al., 2005: 14; Wenger, 2003: 25). It has also come to be seen as a means of promoting world peace, reducing international tension, promoting human rights, and defending the independence of other states (Carrel, 1990: 81; Du Bois, 1984).

Switzerland was created from numerous small provinces with different linguistic and historical backgrounds. The linguistic divide in Switzerland is both a historical and contemporary problem. Today, the linguistic divide affects the EU membership debate with the German speaking population being more against Swiss membership in the EU, and the French speaking population more supportive of membership (Church, 2004). Historically, another important internal division historically has been the religious divide in the country. After the protestant reformation, some parts of Switzerland became Protestant while other parts of the country remained Catholic. This created a great deal of potential conflict around religious differences that could have easily triggered war between these different religious groups (Church, 2004; Spillmann, 1989: 162). Other divisions that have emerged in contemporary politics have been rural vs. urban, left vs. right, and differing levels of educational achievement. All of these differences contribute to the current EU membership debates with urban, highly educated leftists supporting integration into the EU and rural, right-leaning, less educated less supportive of membership (Church, 2004). Neutrality has become, along with federalism and direct democracy, a defining element of Swiss identity. These long held Swiss institutions and policies are what make the Swiss people unique from other Europeans. For the Swiss, neutrality is thus an important part of their identity

(Bruner, 1989: 284; Goetschel et al., 2005: 16), and it makes it difficult for the state to join the EU for fear that the Swiss identity is threatened by membership.

A neutral national identity has not only played a role in Switzerland’s political history, but it continues to have significance in contemporary Swiss politics with the EU. After World War II, the Swiss distinguished between technical and political cooperation, and by 1954, Switzerland chose not to be involved in international organizations such as the EU. The EU, as a “political institution,” violated neutrality whereas the Swiss could join “technical institutions,” like the Organization for EEC because they did not violate the Swiss conception of neutrality (Ganser and Kreis, 2007: 56). This was part of the “Official Swiss Neutrality Doctrine,” which included, “a rejection of ethical neutrality, a refusal to agree to any tariff union, and a ban on explicit war loans” (Ganser and Kreis, 2007: 56). During the cold war, Switzerland would debate the European question, but neutrality was the principal reason for Switzerland remaining outside the EU. This was not only the policy of the Swiss government, but also the popular will of the Swiss people. As Christin and Treschel (2002: 431) demonstrated in their analysis of 1999 Eurobarometer results, “attachment to neutrality does have a rather strong and direct effect on support for EU membership.” Even when arguments were presented to the Swiss population highlighting the advantages of EU membership, the Swiss public continued to support neutrality and reject EU membership.

On December 6, 1992, the Swiss people rejected joining the European Economic Area by a vote of 50.3 to 49.7% (Ganser and Kreis, 2007: 64), although this vote was not specifically on EU membership. (Switzerland, in its history, has never voted in a referendum on EU membership). Neutrality continues to prevent the Swiss from wanting to join the union “even though in 2000 two-thirds of the elite want Switzerland to join and two-thirds of the population expect Switzerland to be a member by 2010” (Church, 2000: 158). As Ganser and Kreis (2007: 55) state: “The concept of neutrality remains a central element of Switzerland’s self-conception and identity.” This is the continuing challenge for pro-European groups attempting to convince the Swiss population to vote for European membership or low level European integration. Neutrality is a part of the Swiss identity, and the Swiss population is told by Euroskeptics that this identity will disappear or be dramatically altered if membership is approved. Neutrality is part of what it means to be Swiss. “Originally a tool to prevent the country from getting embroiled in external conflicts which might threaten national cohesion, neutrality has become a value in itself” known as “Swissitude” (Church, 2000: 148). In 2008 92% of the Swiss continued to support neutrality (Rickli, 2010: 193). However, in the post-cold war context the Swiss have been able to redefine their conception of neutrality from a more passive conception to a more active and

cooperative one. This means that the Swiss favor staying out of wars in the contemporary context by promoting a civilian approach to peace making (Rickli, 2010: 194).

In the analysis of our case, Switzerland, the general consensus of scholars is federalism, the economy, direct democracy, and especially neutrality continue to stall the state's EU membership (Goetschel et al., 2005: 77-78; Schindler, 1992: 104). In their study of Swiss responses to the Eurobarometer, Christin and Treschsel (2002) find that there is a link in Switzerland between neutrality and the Swiss population's position on EU membership. For many years, neutrality has been used by Euroskeptics in Switzerland to dissuade their fellow citizens from joining the Union. However, Ganser and Kreis (2007) confirm that Swiss neutrality and EU membership are compatible. They arrive at this conclusion after reviewing the history of Swiss neutrality and the EU. Ganser and Kreis (2007), Chaevallaz (2001), and Church (2000) focus on a historical perspective of the relationship from the beginning of the European Union to the present. This history generally includes the slow progression of Swiss and EU relations and the changing attitudes of the Swiss people and government over time. These histories also include predictions for the future of the Swiss EU relationship. For Church (2000), Switzerland once had many options; however, it is now limited to the continuation of the bilateral agreements which are time consuming and difficult to negotiate or EU membership. For the Swiss, who have been unable to create popular support for European integration, the inability to take advantage of the mutual benefits of trade and financial flows that occur within the EU provide a challenge to a government trying to stay out of the EU but still take advantage of the cooperation and coordination with EU states (Egger, 1998). For Sweden and Ireland, neutrality was a closely held policy, part of each state's national identity. However, the populations of both countries were persuaded that for economic reasons neutrality had to be sacrificed or at least modified to take advantage of the economic benefits of EU membership. Because of Switzerland's historically strong economy, it is difficult to counter the argument that Switzerland can continue to prosper outside of the EU. However, according to many scholars, this could end if Switzerland does not eventually join. For example, Church (2000: 142) contends that because Switzerland remains outside of the EU Swiss firms face more administrative hurdles than their competitors and have more difficulty raising capital. If economic benefits have created a greater Swiss incentive for membership, the question of neutrality is surely to remain an issue. However, Switzerland might, like other neutral EU states, redefine its neutrality. After all, "[n]eutrality 'is what states make of it'" (Agius, 2006: 48). From the constructivist perspective neutrality is formed by "historicity, culture, and norms" (Agius, 2006: 48). Due to evolving interpretations of neutrality, states are able to "customize" the meaning of this policy for their

own national purpose. This ultimately results in the different meanings for neutrality. Each of the EU neutral states has unique histories and cultures, and all of them therefore have a different conception and meaning for this policy. This helps to explain the possibility for future EU membership for Switzerland. The Swiss have the knowledge of the policy decisions made by neutral countries before them, so they have the flexibility to create a new relationship with the EU that perpetuates Swiss neutrality in a way that is appropriate in the eyes of the Swiss people and government.

Not only are neutral states in the EU able to create a unique neutral policy path, they can also play an important role in organizations such as the EU. Goetschel (1999: 133) believes that neutral states bring an important perspective to international organizations. Neutral states add a sense of legitimacy to an organization, such as the EU, and can help to play the role of mediators and draw attention to humanitarian issues. With the end of the cold war some believe the importance of neutrality in international relations has declined, but states that choose to retain their neutrality have the potential to play an important role within the international community. As Goetschel (1999: 121) states, "role conceptions of neutral states linked to their non-participation in a military conflict (realistic roles) have lost their significance. However, the same does not apply to the role perceptions of neutral states which reflect an attempt to transcend traditional war conditions between states (idealistic roles)." Thus, the Swiss along with the other neutrals in the EU can play a role in continuing the historic role that neutrals have played in international relations – promoting cooperation while not engaging in military conflict outside their borders.

CONCLUSION

Scholars for too long have ignored or minimized the contributions that neutral states make in the international community. Realists and liberals have failed to appreciate the historic development of neutrality policy in states and how have they come to define a nation's identity. This neutral identity has made the relationship between neutral states and the EU difficult. Not only are there problems during the initial stages of membership, but they continue once the state has become a member. Because neutrality is such an important part of the national identity of neutral states, it becomes difficult for the people of these states to risk the loss of neutrality for potential cooperation within the EU through frameworks like the CFSP. However, the benefits that come from the economic cooperation in the EU often overcome historic concerns about compromising a state's historic neutrality. Because each of the neutrals that has joined the EU has been able to map out their particular neutral path within the Union makes it possible that one day the Swiss might

be able to redefine their neutrality so that it can conform to EU membership. The future of organizations, like the EU, is ultimately tied into their ability to recognize the role and perspective of members to whom neutrality is essential to their foreign policy.

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