INTEGRATIONIST APPROACH TO SECURITY AND THE NEW SECURITY ROLE

OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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The end of cold war influenced the security environment of Europe. Today the concept of security is defined wider than before and as such an important debate is now under way in international security theories. Integrationist approach to security versus neorealism is constituting the core of this debate. With a wider definition of security European Union's role has also an increasing importance. Yet, the EU is actually at the point of crucial choice between an 'integrationist approach to security' and 'traditional realist/neorealist thought'. The result of this choice will determine the future of European security. In order to maintain its growing role in the European security system, the EU should refrain from block politics and from creating new confrontations in Europe.

The end of the Cold War deeply influenced the security environment of Europe. On the one hand it provoked a theoretical debate on international security studies, and on the other hand it led to a reassessment of the role of the European Union and NATO in the post-Cold War European security environment. As well as developing along their own paths, there is also a link between these two debates.

Actually an important debate is now under way in international security theories. Realist/neorealist explanations of international politics were faulted with their failure to predict or anticipate the end of the Cold War and a peaceful transition to a new era, and criticism of the fundamental premise of neorealism regained momentum in the early 1990s[1]. On the other hand, one of the marginal approaches of the Cold War, the Integrationist Approach, in this change of climate, has managed to justify its hypothesis. In the climate of softening post-Cold War Europe , the rise of alternative understandings of the security concept and the challenge of the integrationist approach to neorealism can be observed[2].

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[1] MASTANDUNO, M., "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War", International Security, Vol:21, No:4, Spring 1997, s.49.

[2] JONES, R., W., "Travel without maps':Thinking about Security after the Cold War", in DAVIS, M.J.,(ed.), Security Issues in the Post-Cold War World", Vermont, 1996, p.20.

In practice, these theoretical developments coincide with the growing role of the European Union as a political and security actor in the changing European security environment. The increasing power and cohesion of the European Union as a political actor in the post-Cold War European security system also supports the arguments of the integrationist approach versus realist/neorealist traditionalism. Consequently, the linkage between the European integration process and its impact on European security and the growing capacity of the integrationist approach to explain the post-Cold War European security developments is obvious.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the new security role of the EU in the post-Cold War era in its conceptual, theoretical and practical aspects. Within this context, firstly we will give a summary of the conceptual and theoretical debate which has developed in recent years around the critics of neorealism, and then we will analyze the growing role of the European Union as a security-producing political actor in the post-Cold war European security environment. In conclusion we will demonstrate the link between theoretical debate and the European Union's prospective role as a political and security actor.

I. The Changing Nature of the Security Concept in the Post-Cold War European Security Environment

In the context of the international system, security concerns the ability of states and societies to maintain the independence of their life and their identity. The dynamics of security arise from the interplay of the threats and vulnerabilities that affect these goals. The bottom line is survival, but security also reasonably includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence[3].

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[3] BUZAN, B., WAEVER, O., DE WILDE, J., Security:A New Framework for Analysis, London, 1998, p.1.

Today the concept of security is defined far wider than previously, in both its referent objects and its content[4]. The previously neglected sources of conflicts are now on the agenda of international security, and there are also new opportunities for consolidation of peace and stability in Europe.

In this regard two rival views have become the main focus of academic discussion. The new view is the wideners' approach, and the old one is the military and state-centered view of the traditionalists. The state centrism of the traditional approach to security is a product of the fact that the whole is itself based on the foundations of a realist understanding of world politics[5]. Identifying the security issues is quite easy for traditionalists, who, broadly speaking, equate security with military issues and the use of force. But it becomes more difficult when security is moved out of the military sector[6]. The wideners' definition of security has included political, economic, social, and environmental elements. According to Buzan and Kelstrup "the clash of incompatible ideologies provided a framework in which many kinds of political, economic and societal insecurities were linked together"[7].

The developments which took place in Europe in the 1990's have had a far-reaching impact on the European security environment. No longer will the field of international security be overwhelmingly fixated on how to deter the Soviet Union or how to reduce the risk of nuclear war between the superpowers. The newly-revealed agenda is broader in its focus, giving much greater attention to previously neglected sources of conflict[8]. It is possible to identify these new threats to European security as oppression, ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, economic distress, the collapse of political order, the abuse of human rights and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction[9]. However, the new threats are not

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[4] SMITH, S., "The Increasing Insecurity of Security Studies...., p.72
[5] JONES, R.W., op.cit., p.199.
[6] BUZAN, B., WAEVER, O., DE WILDE, J., opcit., p.1.
[7] BUZAN, B., KELSTRUP, p.6
[8] JONES, R.W., opcit., p.206-207.
[9] The Alliance`s Strategic Concept, NATO Summit in Washington D.C.,23-24 April 1999, para.3, www.nato.int.

limited to these issues. It is also possible to extend the list to include issues such as terrorism, sabotage, organized crime, and environmental threats. The uncontrolled movement of large numbers of people, particularly as a consequence of armed conflicts, can be included among these new threats[10].

Hence, individual countries are unable to address these problems on their own or through classic instruments[11]. The management of the diversifying challenges of the European security in the post-Cold War era requires a broader, integrationist approach to security. The changing European security environment offers new opportunities to overcome the threats to peace and stability and to promote peaceful change. As a natural consequence, the crucial role of the military concerning security evaluations has decreased, and the importance of its civil dimension has increased to a great extent. NATO, in its new strategic concept in 1991 defined this fact as below;

> "A general war in Europe in the new security environment had become highly unlikely...and the potential of dialogue and cooperation within all of Europe must be fully developed in order to help to defuse crises and to prevent conflicts. To this end, the Alliance supports the role of the CSCE, the European Community, Western European Union and United Nations"[12].

As such, the NATO members have underlined the increasing importance of the non-military and cooperative dimensions of the security concept and the growing role of European organizations. In this context there is a need to move away from the dominant Cold War mind-set as a specific feature of the post-Cold War European security system. Today an

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[10] Ibid., para.24.
[11] Communication from The Commission on Conflict Prevention, Com(2001)211 final, Brussels 11.04.2001, European Commision, p.5.
[12] The Alliance`s New Strategic Concept, North Atlantic Council in Rome, 7-8 November 1991, para.33, 43, www.nato.int.

integrationist understanding of security seems obligatory. The creation of international organizational structures based on common values, such as the establishment of democratic institutions, the protection of human rights, and the peaceful resolution of disputes constitute the foundations of security in the new era.

A general theme in advocacy of that new approach is that international security has become interdependent. Building on this insight, it is argued that, contrary to realist and Cold War logics, security has to be achieved through cooperation rather than competition[13].

II. Rebirth of Theoretical Debate: Integrationist Approach to Security versus Neorealism

The integrationist approach to security is a theoretical effort to define conditions to establish peace and stability in the international system without recoursing the means of block politics. The integrationist approach underlines the importance of mutual binding of states in gradually increasing technical and trade relations to consolidate the necessary foundations of peace and security. The multiplying ties between the different societies will, on the one hand, create transnational common interests which will provide a strong motivation to maintain international peace and stability . On the other hand, these ties will greatly aid in dispersing common values and mutual trust and confidence within an emerging transnational society. Consequently, the stabilizing effect of that transnational integration and of the emergence of a new sense of community larger than the nation-state will consolidate international security.

The integrationist approach to security is not a monolithic, fully-constructed scientific approach in the field of international politics. However, it is a general name for different theoretical explanations of international security with a common base. Under this general title it is possible to accept many theoretical and conceptual explanations. However, three fundamental theories of international integration provide us with the guidelines of that

approach. These theories are "pluralistic security community" of Karl Deutsch, "functionalism" of David Mitrany and "Neofunctionalism" of Ernst Haas.

The "pluralistic security community" approach of Deutsch is founded on an effort to research the conditions of peaceful change in international relations. The main purpose is to assure the conditions of security and peaceful change by avoiding international war. In this way, the pluralistic security community theory adopts some principles, such as the sharing of common values, mutual predictability of behavior among decision-makers and mutual responsiveness, as fundamental conditions to establish a climate of security and stability over a large area. With these principles the pluralistic security community theory adopts an integrationist path in the field of international security studies[14]. In other words, Deutsch, by elaborating its communication theory on security studies, has greatly contributed to the evolution of an understanding of the integrationist approach in the field of the international security studies.

Within the framework of the "functionalist approach," Mitrany tries to define the conditions of a "working peace system" in a global network of cooperation relying on the notion of technical needs. David Mitrany's starting point is based upon a theoretical problem of international security. Having experienced the conditions of World WarII, Mitrany focuses his analysis on peace and stability in world politics. However, unlike the realist school, Mitrany prefers an integrationist approach to security and underlines the concepts of technical needs and functions as a conclusion of the technological change. Hence, he argues that organizations for functional collaboration might eventually supercede, or make superfluous, the political institutions of the past. Furthermore, the organizations will create the conditions

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[13] BUTFOY, A., Common Security and Strategic Reform: A Critical Analysis, London, 1997, p.1.
[14] DEUTSCH, K.W., BURRELL, S.A., KANN, R.A., et.al., Political Community and the North Atlantic Area, New Jersey, 1957, p.66-67.

for peace and stability in the international system[15]. This theory may be considered one of the major components of the integrationist approach to security concept.

"Neofonctionalism," the most important integration approach, played a crucial role in the evolution of an integrationist path in the field of security studies and of the EU as well. Neofunctionalism has its primary foundation in the writings of Ernest B. Haas, especially in his book "Uniting of Europe"[16]. According to Haas, nation-state and the nationalism are the primary sources of conflict in international relations. Therefore in its theoretical analysis Haas aims to find a way to reach a political community larger than a nation-state. To reach a new political community larger than the nation-state, it is necessary to start with the integration of economic sectors under a supranational organizational framework. The supranational organization, created on the principle of the delegation of sovereign authority, gains new areas in exercising its supranational control. Neofunctionalists anticipate that after the integration of national economies and markets into a single supranational organisational framework, the loyalty of peoples will be directed from the national level to the supranational level, thus creating a new regional political community that transcends the limits of a nation-state[17]. Therefore he deals with the conditions necessary to shape the loyalty of a population from the national level towards a supranational level. This is in reality a problem concerning international security. Neofunctionalism, as an initiative of a theoretical explanation of the European integration process, gives the fundamental elements of the integrationist approach to security as well.

The end of the Cold War has revived an old debate existing in international relations theory-- Realist/Neorealist school versus Liberal/Integrationist school. In the field of international security this debate has gained importance to explain the new conditions which emerged after the clash of block politics of the Cold War. On the one hand, the characteristics

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[15] MITRANY, D., A Working Peace System, Chicago, 1966, p.29-31.
[16] See HAAS,E.B., The Uniting of Europe, Standford, 1968.

of the post-Cold war European security environment has prepared a suitable climate for the adoption of the premises of the integrationist approach. On the other hand, it has reinforced the arguments against the realist/neorealist school in international relations. The most famous and accepted theoretical explanation of the Cold War international system was neorealism/structural realism. This was a theoretical explanation opened by the realist school of international relations. Kenneth Waltz formulated the principal assumptions of this neorealist theory in his book entitled "Theory of International Relations"[18]. Waltz developed theoretical explanations of international politics, conducted methodological discussions about social science, and constructed his theory on the positivist premises. In his opinion, in the field of international politics there was a lack of theory. He believed that the efforts of theoretical explanations before his work had been incomplete and had stayed at a conceptual level, far from creating a real theoretical framework for international relations[19]. Thus, his main purpose was to elaborate the "(unique) theory (without s) of international relations".

Waltz adopted the notion of system from other disciplines and adapted this notion to international relations. In his international system concept, the most important part is the "structure" of that international system. In the theory of Waltz, the concept of "structure" plays a central role. For him "structure" in international politics is the distribution of power across nations and the distribution of power has a special explanatory importance. According to Waltz this is an obligatory scientific omission to understand and explain the international system and the behavior of its units[20]. The starting point of neorealist tradition is the pervasive and durable effect of the anarchic political structure of the international system. An anarchic structure imposes competitive conditions of existence on the states within the system[21].

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[17] OZEN, C., op.cit., p.40-41.
[18] See Waltz, Kenneth, N., Theory of International Politics, London, 1979.
[19] WALTZ, K., N., "Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory", in Rothstein, Robert, L., (ed.), The Evolution of Theory in International Relations, Columbia, 1991, p.26.
[20] Ibid., p.31.
[21] BUZAN, B., KELSTRUP, M., et. al., The European Security Order Recast: Scenarios for the Post-Cold War Era, London, 1990, p.11.

The substantial difference between neorealism and the integrationist approach to security arises from this point: Neorealism takes the "structure" of the international system as a given, refined from the conscious intervention capacity of man. In the analytical framework of neorealism the nature of the international system has not been interrogated. In contrast, the integrationist approach searches for a way to change the existing type of relations between states. For the integrationist approach to security, the actual nation-state system and the power relations between them constitute the principal cause of insecurity in the international system. Therefore, the essential point is to develop interdependence, transnational relations and common interests between nation-states and crossborder interest groups to create a climate of security and stability in the international system. One must redesign the actual type of relationship to accomplish this. Thus, the integrationist approach rejects the analytical separation between "security studies" and "integration studies", because this has led to neglecting the complementarities and interdependence between integration and security[22].

In fact, neorealism is the theory of block politics. In the principal assumptions of neorealism there is an implicit acceptance and legitimization of the dynamics of Cold War bloc politics. However, the integrationist approach to security begins by criticizing these dynamics and then offers an alternative model of relationship to obtain a more secure international environment. In the analytical framework of the integrationist approach to security, the nation-state is not the unique and eternal actor of the international relations. It is important to note that the central assumption of neorealism, that the state is the key actor in world politics and that the main issue for the discipline is military security, is now less central to the discipline. There is no longer an "only" or "core" actor, and as a result, it is less privileged than before[23]. The concept of security is more widely defined than it previously

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[22] HYDE-PRICE, A., "The Antinomies of European Security:Dual Enlargement and the Reshaping of European Order", Contemporary Security Policy, vol:21, No:3, December 2000, p.161.
[23] SMITH, S., "The Increasing Insecurity of Security Studies: Conceptualizing Security in the Last Twenty Years", Contemporary Security Policy, Vol:20, No:3, December 1999, p.77.

was. In this context, the achievement of progress in international security, according to the integrationist approach to security, entails conscious efforts and interventions of human beings. Security is not something natural or given. The integrationist approach to security puts man and his capacity of conscious intervention in the unrolling of social events, in the center of their theoretical framework of analysis. Moreover, international security is something that can be constructed; therefore, insecurity is not simply the "given" condition of the international system. Security is what states make of it[24].

IV. Growing Security Role of the EU as an Integrationist Model

After our analysis of the conceptual and theoretical aspects of integrationism and international security, we will pass to the practical aspect of that issue, progressing toward our hypothesis. The European integration movement and the growing role of the European Union as a security actor in the post-Cold War constitute an example of the practical aspect of the integrationist approach to security.

The perceptions of security have changed in the wake of the end of the Cold War. This change first of all has deeply influenced, as has been mentioned above, the conceptual and theoretical explanations of security, and has made a considerable impact on the organizational structure of European security. The European Union, which has been accepted for a long time as an economic integration model, has targeted in essence a *suis generis* political model with its security components. The EU has opted to create the foundations of a secure Europe in the post-Cold War era. It is possible to describe this fact as the new security role of the EU.

The evolving security-providing role of the EU is not unconditional. The real basis of this role is that of an international civil actor with the capacity to treat all applicants and others equally, within the framework of universal and objective principles. The principal

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[24] Ibid., p.87.

quality of the EU in that context is its capacity to treat all the applicants of that integration process equally. In other words, the European integration project, as a peace, stability and prosperity project in Europe, is open to all candidates adopting the universal and objective principles described in the Copenhagen Criteria. As underlined by Smith, "It could also close off the path of fully embracing civilian power"[25]. The EU as an supranational integration model concentrated its integrative efforts on non-military, primarily economic means. It gave the priority of realizing a functional and transnational integration to technical sectors. This supranational integration project managed to consolidate peace, stability and prosperity in Western Europe after the Second World War. This project has also created a secure environment in its periphery by using non-military means of international interaction. The EU actually develops its security and defense aspects under the umbrella of the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). This process compels the EU to develop a military force to use as an instrument of intervention to keep or enforce peace and stability in Europe. The European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and the Rapid Reaction Force are integral parts of this new dimension of the EU. The question is whether the new military dimension will impede the EU as a civilian international power. On the other hand, the spillover of supranational integrative dynamics toward the political sectors of the EU existed in the neofunctionalist integrationist logic from the beginning. In other words the evolution toward a common foreign policy and a common security and defense policy is an estimated evolution of the European integration process. The emergence of a security and defense dimension inside the European integration process and especially its evolving military power will allow the EU to exercise influence. Therefore by intervening militarily or threatening to do so, the EU will be able to resolve crises, and prevent conflicts from erupting. Bosnia and

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[25] SMITH, E.K., "The End of Civilian Power EU: A Welcome Demise or Cause for Concern?", The International Spectator, Vol.35, No:2, April-June 2000, p.28.

Kosovo crises provide the justification and spur for the development of EU military capability[26].

On the other hand, the biggest danger to this foundation is to become a bloc. A European politico-military bloc closed to others, based on subjective norms and evaluations, will only be another element of balance of powers and will miss the opportunity to transform the nature of the international relations to create a peaceful and secure Europe. The EU is actually at the point of crucial choice between an "integrationist approach to security" and "traditional realist/neorealist thought". The result of this choice will determine the future of European security in theory and in practice.

As a perverse effect, growing efforts to redefine the role of the The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which was the only real security producing organization for Western Europe in the years of the Cold War, have also been witnessed. The redefinition of NATO's role in Europe does not mean it has lost its importance and efficiency for European security. NATO's continuing importance has been tested during the initiative it took during the Bosnia and Kosovo crises. On the other hand, the fact that NATO provides security for Europe, is true to a great extent in a narrow definition of the security concept. However, for Europe the shift in the area of security after the end of the Cold War with the removal of a Soviet threat has allowed the development of alternative approaches to security[27]. The European integration process which gained momentum after the end of the second World War was based on an integrationist approach to security. In reality the Schuman Plan of 1950 and the emergence of the EEC in 1957 were also viewed as being more important from a security perspective than from an economic perspective at the beginning[28]. However, the the security imperatives of the Cold War years limited the development of the EU on the security field.

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[26] Ibid., p.19.
[27] RICHMOND, O.P., "Emerging Concepts of Security in the European Order:Implications for Zones of Conflict at the Fringes of the EU", European Security, Vol.9, No.1, Spring 2000, p.41-42.
[28] Ibid., p.48.

The EU has found the opportunity to play a new security role in the post-Cold War era. European Integration process and has, in the meantime, proved to be a developing security model for Europe. While NATO is safeguarding its traditional collective security role in the background, the EU has found the chance to emphasize the different elements of security in the Post-Cold War era, such as the promotion of interdependence, human rights, economic development and democratization. The EU has helped also to change the process of collective identity formation and a sense of common purpose[29].

The elevation of human rights, liberal democracy and market-economy system has created crucial positive implications for European security. European Commission points out this fact in its report "Agenda 2000" by saying that

> "the Union will have to continue and step up its policy of providing support for democracy,
> and assisting the reform process and the transition to the market-economy system, which
> constitute longterm guarantees of security and stability"[30].

By creating economic interdependence among them, the EU model presents states with an opportunity for prosperity and development and fosters an atmosphere reinforcing the bases for security. The EU's importance concerning security matters, for those reasons, stems from the role it has played in facilitating the emergence of a "zone of stable peace" in Europe from the post-second World War until today. It does this by helping to reduce the friction generated by the interaction of sovereign states in international society. In other words, it facilitates a balance between European unity and diversity- which is the defining feature of a pluralistic security community in Deutschian terms[31]. A new European political order has been, and still is, growing out of these lessons. In part, this order marks a change in European international

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[29] HYDE-PRICE, A., op.cit., p.148.
[30] http://europa.eu.int/comm/agenda2000/public_en.pdf

society away from the unbridled balance of power behaviour of the old era and towards the war-avoidance priority of the new. Increasingly, in Europe as a whole the balance of power system has been replaced by a security community[32]. Richmond analyses this process by saying that :

> "The pax EU has successfully stabilised the relationships between France, Germany and Britain, while protecting the interests of the small Benelux countries. It successfully aided Ireland develop a stable economy despite the difficulties of its relationship with Britain over Northern Ireland. It also aided Spain (again despite its dispute with Britain over Gibraltar), Portugal and Greece in their search for internal stability...Cooperation and interdependence have the potential to remove from states and other interest groups or actors the fear of others"[33].

Along with its role as a bulwark of stable peace in Western Europe, the EU has had the opportunity to exert a significant degree of political influence on its neighbours in Eastern and Southern Europe. One can question whether without the positive effect of the EU, the economic and political transformation of the Central and Eastern European ex-socialist states could have been so rapid and easy. It is really hard to believe that these countries could have achieved such difficult transformation without the support of the EU.

The EU's last and the greatest eastward enlargement project actually provides an important opportunity to apply its stabilising influence upon the newly democratic countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This influence is also obvious for the countries of Southern Europe, especially for Turkey. The elements of that influence are economic development, growth of prosperity, European identity formation, reinforcement of the democratization process, respect of human rights, the peaceful resolution of disputes.

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[31] HYDE-PRICE, A., op.cit., p.148.
[32] BUZAN, KELSTRUP, op.cit., p.40.
[33] RICHMOND,O.P., op.cit., p.62.

The candidate countries aspiring to join the EU as soon as possible put this goal at first rank in their foreign policy priority list. They agree to transform their economic and political systems to be compatible with the requirements of the EU. Thus the EU has been able to exert its soft governance in Eastern and Southern Europe. Consequently, the EU enlargement process contributes greatly to the reinforcement of European security and facilitates the creation of conditions for a stable peace in a wider Europe. As European Commissioner Hans van den Broek has argued,

"Enlargement to the East is in the very first place a political issue relating to security and stability on our continent"[34].

The role of the EU to promote stability in Europe is not limited to the enlargement process. The EU, with its network of association relations, partnership and co-operation agreements, expands its stabilizing influence beyond Europe. In the same vein, we can count the European Stability Pact established in 1993 as as an exercise in preventive diplomacy. It aims, inter alia, to guarantee minority rights and the inviolability of frontiers in Europe. It completed these aims with technical assistance programmes in the form of PHARE and TACIS[35].

In this regard EU is a significant security -producing actor in the reshaping of post-Cold War European order, and, therefore, is well placed to address many of the broader, non-military dimensions of security, which figure so prominently on the contemporary European security agenda[36]. The EU is far better placed than NATO to address many of the non-military dimensions of security, due to its "civilian power" characteristic. The changing nature of the post-Cold War security concept, in which non-military aspects are growing, coincides with

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[34] HYDE-PRICE, A., op.cit., p.149-150.
[35] KIRCHNER, E., SPERLING, J., op.cit., p.34.

this civilian -power image of the EU and gives a natural advantage to this supranational organization *vis-à-vis* NATO[37].

Conclusion

The end of the Cold War and the demise of block politics in Europe have deeply influenced the European security environment. In this climate of systemic change, the approaches concerning security and especially the security concept have undergone a radical change. In this article we have tried to point out this systemic change in European security in theory and in practice. To this purpose we regrouped the alternative approaches to international security under the title of "integrationist approach to security". The hypothesis is that the realist/neorealist premises and the military -oriented definitions of the security concept provide us an insufficient base to understand and analyze the post-Cold War European security system. In a period of change and restructuring of the European security system we need a totally new approach to the concept of security. The integrationist approach to security, based essentially on the integration theories of international relations, is thus an effort to elaborate a new theoretical approach vis-à-vis the theoretical and conceptual needs of the post-Cold War European security system.

Integrationism is an important theoretical approach whose foundations go back to early studies of international politics. The effects of this scientific approach are obvious in all aspects of the international relations discipline. "International security studies" is one of the subfields of international relations that have been influenced deeply by integrationism. The rigid nature of the Cold War bipolar system did not provide a solid base for the evolution of

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[36] HYDE-PRICE, A., op.cit., p.157.
[37] KIRCHNER, E., SPERLING, J., op.cit., p.24.

integrationism in the field of international security. However, the softening climate of the post-Cold War has assured a suitable setting for the acceptance of its premises.

According to the integrationist approach to security, the actual nation-state system and the power relations between them constitute the principal cause of insecurity in the international system. The transformation of these relations and the structure of the international system are the principal goals of the integrationist approach to reach a stable and secure international system. For that reason integrationists base the relations between states upon a functional and transnational foundation. The essential point, for the integrationist approach, is to develop interdependence, transnational relations and common interests between nation-states and crossborder interest groups to create a climate of security and stability.

With these characteristics integrationists differ from the realist/neorealist premises. Realist/neorealist tradition takes its starting point from a conception of anarchic political structure of the international system and tries to explain the fact of peace and stability in international relations with the "balance of power" between major powers. Thus their principal denominator is power and especially the military aspect of it.

The effects of the end of the block politics in Europe have changed the understanding of security. The dominance of the military elements in the field of international security has been terminated. In this regard the the new European security system contradicts the premises of the neorealist perception of international security. In the post-Cold War European security architecture it is possible to observe the growing role of the integration models and hypotheses and especially in practice the European integration movement and the European Union as a security actor.

The integrationist model, represented essentially by the European Union, by creating economic interdependence among its members and fostering economic development, prosperity in Europe and stimulating the spread of common basic political values, contributes to a great extent to the reinforcement of peace and stability in Europe. The security role of the European Union is not limited only to its members. This is a regional integration model and thus this security role is effective for the continent. This fact is quite obvious at this time for the stabilization of Eastern and Southern Europe. The widening of the security concept and the adoption of a conflict -preventive attitude concerning international security issues have helped, by this way, to enforce democratic values in Europe and to spread democratic government among the Central and Eastern European countries which were completing their political and economic transformations. In this way one has seen the possibility to contribute to a great extent to the setting up of the conditions for peaceful change and the establishment of security in Europe.

The success of the European Union to promote peace and security in Europe demonstrates at the same time the explanatory capacity of the integrationist approach in the post-Cold War. One must consider the role played by the European Union in the process of economic and political transformation of the Central and Eastern European ex-socialist states. The eastward enlargement project of the European Union constitutes actually an essential element of the stabilization process in Europe. The candidate countries aspiring to join the EU as soon as possible put the goal of transforming their economic and political systems to be compatible with the requirements of the EU at first rank in their foreign policy priority list.

In this regard EU is a significant security -producing actor in the reshaping of post-Cold War European order and, is, therefore, well placed to address many of the broader, non-military dimensions of security. This fact justifies also the power of the integrationist approach to analyze the European security developments in the post-Cold War era.

As a conclusion we have to underline that the security-producing role of the European Union is not unconditional. The European Union takes its power from its stabilizing effect on Europe through its integrationist approach and constitutes an alternative to the realist/neorealist security model. In order to maintain its growing role in the European security system, the European Union should refrain from block politics and from creating new confrontations in Europe. A European politico-military block closed to others will only be another element of balance of powers and will miss the opportunity to transform the nature of international relations to create a peaceful and secure Europe.