FOREIGN POLICY OF LITHUANIA: LINKING THEORY TO PRACTICE

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Summary

In 2004, Lithuania successfully implemented its two most important foreign policy goals - becoming the member of both the European Union and NATO. However, the country now has to assert its status and position in the Euro-Atlantic community of liberal democracies. Lithuania faces an arguably more complex agenda, which has no clear end-goals or deadlines. The security challenges are difficult to identify and predict. The global and European strategic environment is best characterised by an ever-growing uncertainty: the transatlantic relations continue to be tense, Russia, paradoxically, is balancing between the perspective of disintegration and re-emerging as an expansionist imperial power, and the European Union is undergoing one of the most severe internal crises in decades.

At the same time, the major schools of international relations theory disagree on what to make of current world politics. Neorealist authors tend to give alarmist, apocalyptic accounts of the future, if the nation states would despise the iron logic of geopolitics, whereas reflectivist, constructivist authors argue that the world is "what we make of it", and thus, can be changed. These two visions of international relations inevitably lead to different policy implications.

This paper consists of two parts. In the first part, the authors address the current state of affairs in international relations theory, in particular, the rationalist -

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constructivist debate. In the second part, the authors interchangeably explore and compare the policy options that can be derived from the two different worldviews.

The article concludes that international politics for a small state are more complex than either of the schools would suggest. Although the nature of the world politics is increasingly postmodern, a lot of actors still live in a modern world of geopolitics. Lithuanian decision makers will therefore have to "play" in accordance with postmodern rules when possible, but to remember geopolitics, if necessary.

Grounding their view on theoretical synthesis of constructivist and neorealist approaches to foreign policy, the authors assert that Lithuania's Euroatlantism should not overshadow all other interests and problems of the society. The membership in the EU will have far reaching and long term consequences on Lithuanian society- the same cannot be said about membership in NATO, or relations with the US. Lithuania must internalize the EU as a part of its own corporate identity because Lithuania itself *is* a part of Europe's collective identity. Therefore, Lithuanian political elite should cease to consider Europe as an *object* of Lithuanian foreign policy, rather it should become conscious of itself as a *subject* of European policy, contributing to its formation.

Introduction

Lithuanian political scholars are often blamed for insufficient theoretical underpinnings of the analysis they present. This is especially true in the case of experts and analysts working in the field of international relations and foreign policy analysis. The problem is twofold. First of all, the publications of Lithuanian authors rarely, if ever, appear in the prominent journals of international studies. Participation of Lithuanian scholars in the academic discourse of global and European international relations remains very limited, despite some recent progress.[1] The barrier of language and the lack of resources do not provide the opportunity for being heard in other European countries or the USA.

Articles of Lithuanian international relations scholars have appeared in the Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Journal of the Baltic Studies, Electoral studies, publications of the Robert Schuman Center and the EU Institute for Security Studies, other international journals and publications as well as domestic publications in English (Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review, Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review, Lithuanian Political Science Yearbook).

On the other hand, the field of international relations itself is very fragmented. There are clear schisms between European and American scientific traditions (Waever, the Sociology of a Not So International Discipline) in the field of international relations as well as the schisms among different theoretical paradigms. Those schisms prevent international relations from becoming a "normal social science" and the critics reasonably make allegations about the belletrist or astrological nature of the field.

The authors of this article themselves pursue a rather venturesome task to overview certain aspects of the current state of affairs in international relations studies and evaluate Lithuanian foreign policy analysis and practice within this context. Accordingly, in the first part, the authors alternately examine the main postulates of currently dominant international relations paradigms - realism and constructivism. In the second part, while being sympathetic to different paradigms, the authors debate with each other on the potential alternatives of Lithuanian foreign policy on the basis of the theoretical assumptions of each school of thought.

Having joined NATO and the European Union, Lithuania had to rethink the goals and guidelines of its foreign policy. A somewhat renewed vision and mission of Lithuania's foreign policy is reflected in the conception of "the New Lithuanian foreign policy", advocated by some part of the Lithuanian political elite.[2] The main thrust of this "new policy" is the assertion that Lithuania should become the leader of the region. This vision was elaborated in the resolution of the Lithuanian parliament.[3] According to the resolution, the new policy would entail the efforts of Lithuania "to become an active country, visible in the world and influential in the region; [....]to benefit from all the opportunities and resources accorded by the European Union and NATO in order to turn Lithuania, within a reasonably short time period, into a secure, flourishing, competitive and modern economy; [...] to take an active part in developing and implementing the

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The concept was first proposed in a landmark speech by H. E. Mr. Artūras Paulauskas, Acting President of the Republic of Lithuania, at Vilnius University, "Lithuania's New Foreign Policy", 05 24 2004, http://paulauskas.president.lt/en/one.phtml?id=4995

See: Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. Resolution on Directions in Foreign Policy of the Republic of Lithuania following Lithuania's accession to NATO and the European Union. 1 May, 2004, Vilnius.

policy of the European Union, strengthening the economic and social coherence and world influence of the European Union". The Agreement of Political Parties of the Republic of Lithuania, „On States Foreign Policy Main Goals and Tasks for the 2004 - 2008"[4], repeats the same ideas that Lithuania should become "the active and attractive centre of interregional cooperation, which would spread the Euro-Atlantic values, the spirit of tolerance and cooperation and connect the cultures and civilizations". This document also suggests some means for achieving the goals of the "new policy", e.g. "to embed Lithuania in NATO, the European Union and other international structures, to ensure the complete and active Lithuanian participation in the decision making procedures of those structures; to employ Lithuania's historical, geographical and cultural peculiarities and develop the experience of the good neighbourhood; to strengthen the international role of NATO and the European Union, to ensure the efficiency of Euro-Atlantic structures, to encourage the Euro-Atlantic cooperation and promote the Euro-Atlantic values." The agreement also provides some concrete tasks for 2004 - 2008, like the rapid ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, fast accession to the Economic and Monetary Union and Schengen area, Lithuania's Presidency for the OSCE in 2010 and the membership in UN Security Council in 2014-2015.

However, the actual possibilities of implementation of such a vision were not fully explored either in the academic community or open public discussions. The assumptions of this vision, stemming from rationalist realism, were not critically evaluated and the potential of alternative foreign policy was not examined. The authors of this article maintain that critical review of the theoretical underpinnings of the Lithuanian foreign policy could provide some valuable insights for its practical implementation.

Statkus is a proponent of the contemporary foreign policy of Lithuania grounded in traditional neoclassical realism and geopolitics, whereas Paulauskas argues in favour of an alternative policy based on constructivist assumptions. While arguing among themselves, both authors seek to locate a "common ground" that would facilitate entrenching Lithuania in the regional, European and global structures.

See: The Agreement of Political Parties of the Republic of Lithuania „On States Foreign Policy Main Goals and Tasks for the 2004 - 2008". 5 October, 2004, Vilnius

International Relations: at the crossroads of theory and practice

The rationalist — constructivist debate

Throughout the Cold War, the realists and later neorealists held the ultimate authority over the international relations theory. They decided about the nature of international relations and defined the contents of the main concepts, such as "sovereignty", "security", and "interest". Critical approaches remained on the margins of the subject without any possibility to influence the policy of states or at a minimum to get published in the main journals of international relations studies (Booth, 83-121). The end of the Cold War struck a humiliating blow to the realist citadel. The Cold War "security dilemma" was the central thesis of the realist theory, but the realists failed to foresee the end of the Cold War, they were not able to explain it even post-factum (Gaddis, 5-58) and made further wrong predictions about the future. For example, in 1990, Mearsheimer (Back to the future, 5-56) predicted that Europe will sink to the new vortex of chaos and wars, because of the fall of the bipolar system, which guaranteed stability. The end of the Cold War had discredited realism to an extent that some of its apologists (Legro and Moravcsik in particular), began desperately asking: "Is anybody still a realist?"

The front line of academic struggles among different schools of international relations had changed with the end of the Cold War. While in the 1970s and 1980s the main debate took place among realism, liberalism and marxism, since the 1990s the realists were "fighting" constructivists and reflectivists (see table 1).

Table 1 .Three paradigms (metatheories) in current international relations

	Rationalism	Constructivism	Reflecti vism
Ontological basis	Reality is meterial and objective	Reality is social and inter—subjective	
Epistemological basis	Positivism: reality may be explored scientificall		Post-positivism (discourse analysis)
Fact — idea relation	Material factors are most important ideas are that of secondary importance	Ideas are inseparable from material factors, which exist despite of their definition	Material factors are most important, ideas are that of secondary importance
Structure — agent relation	Structure determines the actions of agents	Relationship between structure and agents is mutually co-deterministic	Structure is an outcome of the agent's actions

Waever argues that rationalism as a meta-theory of international relations emerged after the so called "neo - neo synthesis" - the complete convergence and merger of neorealism and neoliberalism (Neumann and Waever, 18). Such synthesis is recognized by the representatives of both theories themselves (Mearsheimer, A Realist Reply, 85). Realism had borrowed some postulates from neoliberalism, but also had absorbed the neo-liberalism as such. The realist international relations theory remains dominant within the paradigm of rationalism. Rationalism is based on materialist ontology and positivist epistemology. The reality is real and material, and does not depend on an observer's point of view. Such a stance enables a clear distinction between facts and ideas (including their normative evaluation) and objective, scientifically based exploration of the former. Rationalism holds an unambiguously holistic approach towards the structure - agent dilemma assuming that the structural factors determine the actions of agents.

Reflectivism as a legitimate approach in international relations studies was recognized by the International Studies Association in 1988 (Keohane, 379-396). Reflectivism is comprised of many schools of thought - postmodernism, feminism, critical theory, normative theories, radical constructivist approaches etc. Strict rejection of rationalist assumptions is common to all of them. Reflectivists assert that the nature of reality is social, subjective and therefore it could not be separated from observer and scientifically explored. Facts are indistinguishable from the normative evaluations. According to Anaæs Nin: "We see things not as they are, but as we are" (cited in Booth, 88). Reflectivism is based on methodological individualism, because it maintains that any structure is the outcome of agent's choice and so it may be changed by the will of individuals.

Finally, the supporters of "soft", or "middle ground" constructivism aspire to become the intermediary approach (Adler, 319-63; Wendt), which would connect the reflectivist ontology with the positivist epistemology of rationalism. However, this ambition makes constructivism vulnerable to criticisms from both sides. Contrary to reflectivists' point of view, constructivists acknowledge the existence of reality, which is independent from the observer, however, they stress that the meaning of reality is provided essentially by social environment. Mutually constitutive relationship exists between fact and idea. If there would be no object for observation, the society would be unable to ascribe any meaning to it; and vice versa: the object would be meaningless if the members of society would not ascri-

be some kind of inter-subjective (that is commonly accepted, conventional) meaning to it. The concept of "social fact" was invented by constructivists for the denomination of this reciprocal relationship. Constant social construction and reconstruction of reality does not mean that this social reality can not be explored scientifically and the causal relations among various social facts can not be established. According to the constructivists, mutually co-deterministic relations exist between a structure and an agent as well. On the one hand, individuals "socially construct" structures, however, structures determine the "identity" of agents and thus influence their choices.

To conclude, the first important "theoretical choice" confronting the policy makers of any country is the answer to the question concerning the basis of the foreign policy - is this policy based on pragmatic national interests or values, that exist in national identity and collective identity of a state? If the answer is national interests, then the priorities and ways for their realization should be explored. If the answer is identity, then the desirable values and norms should be identified.

Contradictive recommendations for a state's foreign policy

The status quo of current relation between international relations theory and practice is not promising. There are more problems created by realist theories in practice of international relations than resolved ones. Constructivists' aspiration to alter the nature of international relations fundamentally is praiseworthy, but their recommendations do not shed much light on how to achieve this honourable aim. The effort to challenge the rationalists in their own citadel of positivism attempted by Wendt, Adler, Katzenstein and a number of other prominent scholars did not led to a revolution in the hierarchy of international relations theory yet. They did succeed in bringing back the importance of normative aspects to international relations studies, but the "high" politics are still run according to the rules designed by Kissinger-type realists.

However, realism also does not provide unambiguous recommendations for a state's foreign policy course. There are a few competing approaches, which emphasize different aspects in this paradigm. First of all, it is important to mention the different viewpoints of neorealists and neoclassical realists on the *status quo* and the revisionist states (Elman, 5-7). Neorealists suggest that *status quo* states domi-

nate in the international arena. Therefore, the states should strive for security by supporting the current balance of power among states, because it would guarantee the stability of the international system (Walt, The Origins of Alliances, 18-19; 22-23). This recommendation maybe formulated as follows: the state should balance against a hegemonic power if it threatened the stability of the system; and balance against revisionist states, if these tried to weaken the hegemonic power and the stability of the entire system.

The neoclassical realists suggest that a state should strive to increase its power, because it is the only way to ensure state's self-security. The state should not care about the impact of its behaviour on the balance of powers, whether it threatens this balance or strengthens it (Schweller, 89-92). Various variants of realism highlight different factors, which incite aggressive behaviour of the states. Neorealism suggests that first and foremost a state would tend to balance because the anarchic international system prompts it do so. The states are forced to pursue an expansionist policy, as they feel the threat from other states and react antagonistically in return. If a real threat does not exist, such a foreign policy is counterproductive, since other states would balance against expansionist states instead of bandwagoning.

Aggressive behaviour of a state may be explained by its internal characteristics presuming that relations among states are conditioned by the power they possess. If a state has more power than other states, it would seek to increase it further. When one state is increasing its power, another will try to do the same. Competition between them would probably grow into a permanent accumulation of power because neither of them knows the capabilities of the rival for certain. Such competition may result in direct confrontation. If one state would not be able to compete it may succumb to the more powerful one and be defeated in the power race (Walt, The Progressive Power, 58-65).

Thus, the recommendations for a state on the best foreign policy course depend on its power and status in the international arena. Schweller distinguishes the strong and weak *status quo* states and strong and weak revisionist ones (Schweller, 100). The states may be classified into small states, middle powers, great powers and hegemonic powers according to their influence in the international arena.

Small states are status quo states, which are first and foremost interested in ensuring their self-security. They should have some power for avoiding (limiting)

the control of great powers over them and they acquire this power by bandwagoning with more powerful states. Such a weak status quo state uses the strategy of strategic surrender. It bandwagons the revisionist trying to appease it or bandwagons status quo states in an effort to ensure security against revisionists (Rynning, 14). Small states may use the tactics of bargaining while seeking for more favourable terms of "strategic surrender". Due to the limited resources, they are not able to offer a lot in the negotiations and therefore they have to bandwagon offering their benevolence and expecting to retain autonomy in exchange. As Morgenthau notices, independence of such a state depends which side of states - revisionist or status quo - it would choose (Morgenthau, 188-192).

Middle powers also tend to use the policy of bandwagoning. They tend to act through international institutions. The middle power may decide to bandwagon not only to ensure its security, but also to profit from the policy of revisionist (Rynning, 14).

Great powers are actively involved in the balancing politics, establishing alliances through balancing threats or interests. They are the initiators of various alliances and involve the smaller states into them by creating the regional formations for their own good. They may pursue active expansionist policy striving to achieve power, which would grant control of other states. Although used often, the strategy of balancing is not necessarily the dominant one. Sweeney and Fritz (428-449) argue that the Great Powers tend to bandwagon (establish an alliance with hegemonic power) if they believe they share the same interests (e.g. the United Kingdom after the Second World War).

The hegemonic power of the international system aspires to introduce itself as non-threatening and sharing similar interests and goals with the states it strives to control. It should convince the status quo states that it does not threaten their security and the revisionist states that they are powerless and unable to resist the hegemonic power. The hegemonic power actively increases its power at the same time trying to gain control over other states. The offensive realists emphasize the importance of increasing power and influence on the international arena, because they suggest that a hegemonic status is the most desired one by the state because it ensures the highest possible security. This statement is based on the assumption that small states tend to bandwagon the hegemonic power for profit and the Great Powers tend to avoid challenging the dominant state due to the lack of sufficient

power. The possibility that states would try to establish the counterbalance to hegemonic power, however, should not be rejected, especially if this power potentially threatens significant interests of the other Great Powers.

The "political" agenda of constructivists has a strong normative underpinning. According to the proponents of securitization theory (Waever, Securitization and Desecuritization; Buzan et. al.), states should seek to desecuritize problems and return them back to the normal politics. Some constructivists concede that in some cases it may be necessary to do "positive securisitization" - securitize those issues that require an increased public awareness about them and action on behalf of a state (e.g. the Darfur crisis). There is a clear constructivist attempt on expanding their influence on the decision-making process trough the articles and studies orientated to the policy analysis and practical recommendations. There is a high probability of constructivists' success to embed the terminology of "identity", "norms", "(de)securitization" in the discourse of international relations and, eventually, in practice, as it was done by the American strategists with such conceptions as "national security", "deterrence", "power politics", "security dilemma".

The conceptions of identity and securitization have a certain analytical and explanatory value, which facilitate the non-traditional view on the traditional issues of international politics. The values, culture, mentality of the society (including the political elite) are no less important factors as military capabilities and economic resources in international relations. The importance of power is not rejected by moderate constructivists. They suggest that the securitizing speech act would be more successful if a securitizing agent would occupy certain authoritative position. States, represented by statesmen, are historically and organizationally best placed to do so (Buzan et. al., 37-40). If the spread of HIV in Africa would be defined as a security problem by Tony Blair or George W. Bush the practical consequences to international relations would be different from those triggered by a member of "Greenpeace".

The main methodological instrument of constructivists is the discourse analysis. The discourse analysis could be defined in a broad sense as the qualitative and interpretative effort of revealing the meaning of speech used by the agents for explanation and perception of social phenomena. The discourse itself means the entirety of interrelated texts, speeches, written documents and social practices, which helps to create the meanings and organize the social knowledge. This met-

hod is very demanding for the researcher himself, unlike the quantitative, statistical, programming or modelling methods. The author must persuade his audience that his interpretation of certain meaning of the phenomenon and its context is useful for an explanation of this phenomenon's empirical outcomes (Abdelal et al., 21). The research in securitization means studying discourse and political constellations. The security conception is decided upon textual criterion, the specific rhetoric structure, which should be distinguished in the discourse according to some features. The analysis of discourse and official texts enables the researcher to identify who, how and when securitizes various issues.

In spite of its logical consistency, the application of the securitization theory for explanation of international relations *practice* has some gaps. The official texts often differ from the actual policy of the state and the main decisions are not made public, but rather in David Easton's "black box", behind closed doors. The representatives of the Copenhagen School recognize that discourse analysis is not very helpful in identifying the real motives of the agents (Buzan et al., 176). The constructivists emphasize the social and subjective nature of reality and thus problematize the ontological assumptions of rationalism, however, they "forget" to problematize their own tools, in particular language. For example, constructivists take the "speech act" securitizing one or another problem as social fact, which may be examined in the ways suggested by positivist epistemology. Such "objectivization" of language is not acceptable for more radical constructivists, since language is only one of the categories which construct social reality and it is as subjective as any other category, in particular *non-verbal*practice of international relations. Constructivists realize the limits of their methodology. Booth (107, 113) recognizes that a lot of studies "are books about books, articles about articles" while people continue to be killed or tortured. The academics must explore reality instead of sniping at each other "from the windows of ivory towers". The sense of insecurity people feel today in the streets of London or Baghdad is not a mere subjective social construct. For the people living in those cities insecurity is an objective, material reality of everyday live. The discourse analysis is neither capable to solve this security problem persuasively, nor change those living conditions.

In summary, it should be emphasized that, according to realists, weaker actors may increase their security in the international arena by implementing the policy, which would eliminate the hostile intentions of other actors of international sys-

tem or increase one's own power in order to prevent the realization of hostile intentions towards them. There are two ways for increasing own power: the internal balancing based on accumulation of internal resources (mobilization of resources, armament, etc.) or the external balancing based on alliances with other states (or subjects of international politics), which are hostile to the perceived enemy. More powerful actors in the international arena tend to rely on a self-sustaining increase of power (the internal balancing), though do not avoid forming alliances by attracting the less powerful states to their own side. The small states and middle powers lean towards external balancing by bandwagoning with the Great Powers (either status quo or revisionist ones) or hegemonic power.

It would be hard to propose unambiguous recommendations to foreign and security policy of a state on the grounds of constructivist assumptions. The supporters of the securitization theory are hostages of their own postulates. They do not deny the normative nature of their theory and put forward the desecuritization as the best long term solution to security problems. However, they also do not reject the possibility that securitization may become unavoidable in case an existential threat to the subject occurs (Buzan et. al., 29). The big question is, who should claim the ultimate authority to decide, which threats are existential? The realists have a ready answer - the states, whereas various schools within the constructivist paradigm still struggle with a clear answer. In addition, the problem of identity- the dichotomy of the *Selfand* the *Other*- also remains somewhat unresolved in constructivist thinking. For constructivists, identity and security are mutually constitutive concepts. Identity is what needs to be secured and security becomes meaningful as the protection of identity. The logic of identity requires borders - for identity and security to exist there needs to be a line separating "us" from "them" (Bishai, 158). This dichotomy leads to a security dilemma and conflict, which may only be overcome when the border between the Self and the Other disappears and the Self becomes a part of the Other as well as the Other are integrated into the Self- in other words, a collective identity of "We" is created. But this new "We" identity needs a new "Other".

At this point, the possibility for synthesis of realist and constructivist approaches becomes apparent. A certain issue becomes a security issue only if it is securitized through a speech act of a certain actor, which occupies an authoritative position. In this process, it is not important whether the speech act has a material foundation

(e.g. explosion of a missile or the violation of the airspace by a fighter jet). Both schools agree that after successful securitization of an issue specific means of discourse are activated to justify the use of force (including, military force). It is not important (sic!) whether the threat was "objective", existential or not. Once the problem *is on* the security agenda of international politics, the classical postulates of *realpolitik,* balancing and security dilemma come to work. The final solution of both theories is similar - collective security. Collective security is created either through the creation of alliances (the Self- Other dichotomy remains) as realists maintain; or through the transnational integration and the end of national politics (as well as the beginning of a supranational one) as constructivists suggest.

To date, the constructivists have not put much effort to relate the concept of (de)securitization (which is the main instrument of "security" policy) to the concept of transnational integration (which is the final goal of "security" policy). Linking the two may prove to be a powerful tool for the application of constructivist theories to the foreign policy practice of a state. The main question should thus be formulated as follows: which problems and in what context must a state securitize or desecuritize to weaken the conflictive nature of the Self - Other dichotomy and eventually facilitate the transnational integration.

Implications for the Lithuanian Foreign Policy Strategy

In between geopolitical and identity imperatives

The realist prescriptions to small states that were discussed above: allying with a hegemonic power or the strongest revisionist state, or pursuing neutrality to ensure security does not give much guidance to foreign policy strategists. Realist theory does not give answers to many practical problems. For example, under what circumstances should a small state ally with a hegemonic power and in which cases — with a revisionist state? While applying realism to the foreign policy of a concrete state, one has to take into account its geographical position and historical relations with its neighbours. In other words, foreign policy strategists must take into account geopolitics.

The studies of Lithuania's geopolitical situation indicate that Lithuania is situated at the periphery of the so-called heartland of the continental geostrategic

zone. Because of this, as well as other historical circumstances, Russia as the most powerful state of this zone can exert a multifaceted influence upon the Baltic States. For Russia, the eastern part of the Baltic sea region is a natural barrier protecting it from the power of the maritime states. In addition, this territory is a handy outpost to project its influence further into the Central Europe. Similarly, for the maritime states, this region may also serve as a barrier and an outpost directed against Russia. Under a different narrative, the Baltic States could also become a part of a geopolitical gateway between the West and Russia (Laurinavièius et al., 80-81). However, the function of an effective geopolitical gateway would imply geopolitical neutrality, therefore, Lithuania could only become such a gateway if Russia turned democratic and integrated with the Western political and economic structures. According to some Lithuanian experts on geopolitics, assuming that Lithuania could be a "bridge" that would bring Russia closer to Europe and facilitate the forming of a euro-continental EU-Russia alliance, would be unsubstantiated and dangerous (Laurinavièius et al., 226). Under such a scenario, the domestic and foreign policy of Lithuania and other Baltic States (while formally still a part of the EU) would be controlled by Russia. These Lithuanian experts on geopolitics assert that the main reason behind this argument is that the EU alone could not possible democratize Russia and therefore would seek for some sort of a trade-off at the expense of Central and Eastern Europe (Laurinavièius et al., 226-227). The states of the European "nucleus" are not capable (and perhaps even not interested) to counterbalance Russian influence in the Easter part of the Baltic Sea region (ibid.).

However, according to these experts, such dynamics would be possible only if the United States had lost interest in the destiny of the Baltic States (for example, in case the conflicts in the Middle East would escalate) or were forced out of Europe. Above-mentioned geopoliticians (226-227) believe that no state or group of states apart from the US currently is capable or willing to counterbalance Russia's influence in the Eastern part of the Baltic Sea region.

Lithuanian experts of geopolitics assume that the long-term interest of the US in Eurasia is the control of the continental zone *(heartland)*. The US and Lithuania's long-term interests towards Russia are essentially the same. Neither France, nor Germany, nor China alone can democratize Russia. The US alone would also be incapable to achieve this goal. Only together can the US and Europe fully democra-

tize and westernize Russia (Motieka et al., 56-57). Therefore, Lithuanian geopoliticians believe that the success of the American geostrategy towards Russia and Europe is in the best interest of Lithuania and the best possible security guarantee.

The geopolitical analysis of Lithuania's international situation makes the realist recommendations more concrete and offers a clear-cut conclusion: *Lithuania and other Baltic States must ally with the US.* Therefore, for realists and apologists of geopolitics it is obvious that this „theorem" of modern Lithuanian geopolitics should form the basis for Lithuania's transatlantic, European and Eastern policies.

Geopolitical logic dictates a clear fatalistic imperative: the country must ally with the US or it will be doomed again to disappear as a sovereign subject of international relations. However, geopolitics is only one of possible discourses to „describe" Lithuanian foreign policy, although it currently dominates over the alternative discourses. Yet, one can also offer a different interpretation of Lithuania's international situation.

The problem of geopolitics stems from theoretical gaps in its ontological basis - realism. The realists do not differentiate the states, the contents of states' identity are unimportant and they all seek the same - to survive. However, the identities *are* different and they do influence the foreign policy of states. When one refers to the European Union, the word „European" is no less important then the word „Union". Analogically, when one refers to „American hegemony", the word ‚American" is as important as the word „hegemony" (Gricius, Paulauskas, 68). Domestic politics are as important to the state's foreign and security policy, as the structure of international system. The features of international system, domestic factors and „objective" characteristics of the state - geographic location, demographic and geologic data - are all interrelated and affect each other. Under different circumstances, different variables may become decisive. Because of the same reason, in the era of globalisation, the concept of „independence", which has been so central in realist thinking, is losing its centrality. Who (the state? society? individuals? political institutions?) and from what (other states? societies? institutions?) must be made or remain independent in the context of increasingly interdependent global network, in which everything may depend on everything - an earthquake in Pakistan may trigger higher gasoline prices in Hawaii. What should „independence" (political? cultural? economic? social?) mean to Lithuania in the context of the European Union? It is possible to argue that in fact membership in the

EU strengthens actual rather than weakens nominal independence of Lithuania. At the end of the day, political independence cannot be a goal in itself - it is a means to ensure security, economic and social prosperity, and cultural self-expression of the individuals. For example, Lithuania has transferred a part of its national sovereignty to the EU and in this sense it is less "independent" than Serbia, Macedonia or Moldova; however the latter states are incapable to ensure the fundamental interests of their societies even though they are relatively more independent.

However, these theoretical gaps do not frighten the foreign policy makers because applicability of „the constructivist turn in international relations" in practice, is not sufficiently researched. Nonetheless, the constructivist logic could recommend to Lithuanian foreign policy makers some attention-grabbing insights. First of all, it is important to establish the main features of Lithuania's identity in the international system. Wendt's identity theory (224-233) suggests four types of a state's identity. According to Wendt, a *corporate identity* exists if the individuals share a common understanding of the state as a corporate organisation, which is different from other organisations. The Lithuanian state has all necessary attributes of a state: institutional and legal order, monopoly of organized violence, sovereignty, society and territory. The Lithuanian state thus has a corporate identity and aims to maintain and secure this identity; otherwise it would not be able to exist as a state. In terms of Wendt's *typical identities,* Lithuania is a small, democratic, parliamentary, market-economy state. Under different circumstances, different Lithuania's typical identities are activated: when Lithuania negotiated its membership in the WTO, it had activated the identity of market economy state. When Lithuania deals with Russia or the US it acts as a small state, etc. Obviously, typical identities may have significant influence upon the state's foreign policy - Lithuania is especially limited by the identity of a small state. On the other hand, this limitation is at least partially compensated by other important identities - those of democratic and market economy state. *The role identities* of Lithuania are directly related to Lithuania's foreign policy. Three main factors define the roles of Lithuania in international politics: 1) internal perception of the role; 2) expectations of other actors towards Lithuania (first and second factors are closely interrelated as they may influence each other) and 3) actual implementation of the role (which "feedbacks" into the first two). For example, the Lithua-

nian political elite picture Lithuania as an active actor in international politics and as a regional leader. The US ascribes to Lithuania a role of its buffer or agent in Europe. Russia would like to see Lithuania performing a similar role. In addition, financial, human, and intellectual resources also factors into the ability of Lithuania to pursue its foreign policy. All these factor in the end shape the role of the country in international politics. Lithuania's corporate identity (at least nominally) is also a part of the EU's *collective identity*. It is possible to assume that eventually Lithuania will internalize this European collective identity and the borderline between Lithuanian and European identities will disappear (although they will not neglect each other, but rather coexist) and this will definitely be reflected in Lithuanian foreign policy.

A constructivist critique of the Lithuanian foreign policy, which is currently built upon geopolitical postulates, could be threefold. First, Lithuania's foreign policy makers disregard the imperatives of Lithuania's European identity in pursuing its European policy. Second, alignment with the US is not the only alternative for Lithuania's survival - the level of attention Lithuanian foreign policy grants to the US is simply not adequate to the importance this country has to Lithuania's identity but also implementation of security, economic and cultural interests. Third, the omnipresent Russian threat in Lithuanian security policy discourse is a clear case of securitisation, but the way this securitisation is carried out is not necessarily the best policy alternative for Lithuania. Lithuanian foreign policy that would take into account constructivist insights would consist of:

- Creation and implementation of a *serious* European policy strategy;
- Review of the importance of the US in Lithuanian foreign policy;
- Reassessment of policy towards Russia.

Transatlantic policy

A majority of Lithuanian foreign policy makers and apologists of geopolitics, agree that the key element of the state's security is a full-fledged integration into the Western political, economic and military structures. The transatlantic rifts that became apparent after the Second Gulf war (Hoffmann, 1029-1036) are not very promising to Lithuania. From a realist perspective, the main problem of international relations is the place of Europe, as a single actor in the international

system. Will Europe become a full-fledged international actor? If so, will it be strategically autonomous or will it remain dependent upon strategic partnership with the US? (Bretherton and Vogler, 1-45).

From a constructivist perspective, it would be difficult to deny that integration with the West has been the fundamental goal of Lithuania's foreign and security policy. However, constructivists would emphasize a different aspect of this effort: security is a derivative function of identity. Lithuania's choice has been dictated by imperatives of identity.

Throughout the 1990s, the foreign and security policy of Lithuania was driven by the urge to dissociate from the past of the Soviet occupation and become an integral part of the Western community. Miniotaitë eloquently argues (214):

"the Baltic States *[...]* .7 have been creating narratives of belonging to the West, with the East as their threatening 'other'. The West is being associated with prosperity, security and democracy, whereas the East is linked with poverty, unpredictability and insecurity. Positive identification with Europe is accompanied by dissociation from non-Europe, with the emphasis on Russia's threats."

The EU and NATO for the Lithuanian leaders were two sides of the same coin. Membership in the EU symbolised political, cultural and ideational reunion with Europe as well as economic and social prosperity, whereas membership in NATO was seen as the most efficient "hard" security guarantee against perceived military threats. The buzzword for NATO-EU security cooperation at the time was ESDI - European security and defence identity *within* NATO. Landsbergis, the first leader of independent Lithuania, argues that semiotics was important for Lithuania: it was always about *Euro-Atlantic not* simply *European* integration (cited in Paulauskas, forthcoming).

However, Lithuania could not foresee that it would join a different Euro-Atlantic community from the one it aspired to join. The launch of a more autonomous European security and defence policy in 1999 at least nominally made the EU a defence actor in its own right. In the aftermath of 9/11, Russia became an important ally for the US in the war on terror and the NATO-Russia Council was created. In 2003, NATO went "out of area" defined by the Washington treaty after it took over the ISAF mission from the UN. NATO also transferred missions in FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina to the responsibility of the EU. These international dynamics were complex enough for the Lithuanian politi-

cians to fully apprehend, but the diplomatic rift over the Iraq war between the US and France and Germany was even a bigger challenge to the Lithuanian Euro-Atlantic worldview. As a result of these changes, the US and NATO and the EU should no longer be seen as two sides of the same coin, but as separate actors with different interests while Russia is considered a "strategic partner" by both the US and the EU.

The dominant Lithuanian foreign policy narrative is the vital importance of the preservation of the transatlantic link. Any other strategic configuration: either the EU aligning with Russia against the US or the US aligning with Russia against the EU would undoubtedly bring new troubles to Lithuania. What further complicates this puzzle for Lithuania is that both the bigger EU member states and the US seek to have special relations with Russia, albeit for different reasons. These relations could potentially jeopardise the vital security interests of Lithuania if the transatlantic link broke down irreparably. As mentioned before, the realists consider the presence of American military might in Europe to be of vital importance to the „hard security" of Lithuania, while a conflict within the Western collective security structures would pose an existential threat to Lithuania as a subject of international politics (Laurinavièius et al., 192).

Therefore, in accordance with the postulates of the modern Lithuanian geopolitics, Lithuania should support all the initiatives inside the EU and NATO and other international formats that seek to strengthen the transatlantic link and American involvement in Europe. Given certain stagnation of EU political integration after France and the Netherlands rejected the EU constitutional treaty, there is only one feasible way for the United States to reinvigorate the relations with Western Europe - to support actively those countries that seek to create politically unified Europe, which would be a global actor in the international arena equal to the US but also willing to maintain close strategic partnership (Asmus, Rethinking the EU). The options how to strengthen transatlantic relations vary from ideas to create new transatlantic institutions (Transatlantic community, Transatlantic council, Transatlantic free trade area - TAFTA, see European Policy Centre, Towards a Renewed), which would encompass all the NATO and EU states to proposals of transforming NATO into a central forum of transatlantic strategic dialogue.

On the other hand, realism and geopolitics would not suggest Lithuania to pursue its policies only through international institutions. Lithuania should deve-

lop its bilateral relations with the US. Lithuania should support America's global strategy of promoting the spread of democratic values and attempt to find a specific niche within the American global governance order, which is in the making (Lopata and Statkus). For example, Lithuania could specialize in spreading its experience in democratic institution building to the Western part of CIS. It could help those countries to develop their administrative expertise in certain areas of governance (for example, integration into the EU).

Lithuanian efforts should not be geographically limited to the CIS space. More significantly Lithuania's involvement not only in peace building, but also strengthening of civil administration structures in the „failed states" could be of mutual value for both the US and Lithuania. The Americans have faced major shortcomings in the civil administration of their efforts to build democracy in both Afghanistan and Iraq (Cohen, 49-63). Pursuing ways to strengthening the strategic partnership, some kind of bilateral, formal political-military alliance between Lithuania and the US could also be considered as insurance in case NATO is paralysed.

However, it is also possible to take an alternative look at the place of the US in Lithuanian foreign policy. Lithuania continues to perceive the strategic partnership with the US as vital to its security for a number of reasons. The US formally never recognised the occupation of the Baltic States, therefore the oppressed nations saw more hope in the American *Realpolitik* of destroying the "evil empire" than in the Western European *Ostpolitik* of appeasing the Soviets (Paulauskas, forthcoming). After the Cold War, the US became one of the most ardent supporters of Lithuanian membership in NATO while many Western European countries were hesitant.

At the same time, the EU was lacking a viable defence dimension, which led Lithuanian leadership to believe that the EU would be unwilling or simply not able to repel a major aggression had Russia re-emerged as an expansionist and revisionist regime. Conscious or not, "myopia" towards Russia is undermining the credibility of the EU as a strategic actor in the eyes of Lithuania and other Central and Eastern European countries. It is the factor that pushes them towards a closer alignment with the US on certain strategic matters, especially those concerning European defence - an area in which the EU seeks to become a more prominent actor. Ilves argues (191-202) that if some old member states resented the Central and Eastern European countries' pro-American attitudes, the new members view the old members' approach to Russia in a similar way.

The US has been reinforcing Lithuania's pro-American sentiments by symbolic gestures. During his visit in Vilnius in 2002, George W. Bush famously declared: "anyone who would choose Lithuania as an enemy has also made an enemy of the United States of America". Lithuania has never heard anything remotely similar from any of the Western European leaders. In sharp contrast, Jacques Chirac made his infamous comment on the Vilnius group communiqué[5] supporting the war on Iraq: "they missed a good opportunity to keep quiet". All in all, if there were a serious contingency in the Baltic neighbourhood, Lithuanian leaders would first dial Washington's number, not Brussels'. Lithuania's decision to send troops to Iraq was based on a simple calculation: Lithuania had to assist its most important strategic ally if it expected the help of this ally in times of trouble (Paulauskas, forthcoming).

However, the alleged Lithuanian pro-Americanism does not go far beyond "hard" security issues and relations with Russia. Even the importance of latter factor is also fading, because any military clash between NATO and Russia seems very unlikely. Therefore, the discourse of „vital importance" of American presence in Europe is becoming irrelevant. Apart from America's moral support on the historical question of the occupation and certain military assistance, there is little the US can offer Lithuania in other areas of crucial importance, such as the economic and social development or dependence on Russian energy supplies. In the Eastern neighbourhood (with the notable exceptions of Russia) the US has far less direct interests than the EU. Lithuania is also of no particular strategic importance for the Americans in terms of their number one priority - the war on terrorism. Lithuania was hardly even mentioned among potential candidates for the global realignment of the US defence posture from Western Europe to Europe's south and east (Paulauskas, forthcoming). Meanwhile, the importance of the EU to political, economic and social spheres of life in Lithuania will continue to grow. Lithuania inevitably has to reassess its approach to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) - the Lithuanian political elite cannot disregard the imperatives dictated by the European identity of Lithuania.

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[5] To see the entire document: 'Statement of the Vilnius group countries', http://www.urm.lt/ view.php?cat_id=9&msg_id= 1791

European policy

European policy could be defined as a state's foreign policy towards the EU. On the other hand, member states delegate certain functions and competences that are traditionally attributed to the domestic realm to EU institutions, and decisions made at the EU supranational level are directly applied in the member state's national legal and administrative order. For the purposes of this paper, constitutional and foreign policy, including enlargement, will be considered in more detail. For realists, the starting point of Lithuania's European policy is the preservation of the transatlantic link.

In the short and medium term, the US is interested in the deepening of the EU integration, boosting EU military expenditure, improving interoperability between European and American forces, attracting European support for the global war on terrorism, successful integration of new members while upholding their pro American worldview (Hunter, 91-110). According to some American strategists (e.g. Asmus, Great Expectations), the new EU members from Central and Eastern Europe can play a positive role in creating a pro-American EU confederation. A certain degree of centralization in the EU is beneficial to the US (especially in the area of foreign and defense policy) given that it is not directed against America's global and regional policies. The support of a centralized EU diplomatic corps would be of particular value for the global geopolitical projects of the US in the Middle East and Central Asia. The Americans would also welcome an efficient ESDP that would reinforce the capabilities of NATO.

To sum up, Lithuanian realists still consider Europe as an *object* of Lithuanian foreign policy. From a constructivist perspective, it is obvious that Lithuania itself is a *subject* of European policy contributing to its formation.

Membership in the EU has far reaching and more fundamental consequences on the domestic and foreign policies of the state than membership in NATO could possibly have (Gricius and Paulauskas, 83). For constructivists, the starting point of the European policy is a strong and unified Europe — the core purpose of EU's foreign policy. A strong transatlantic link is a secondary, derivative goal. Without a strong Europe, the meaning of transatlantic link as embodied by NATO would continue to lose its relevance. A weak and divided Europe is incapable of producing real military capabilities and supporting the US military adventures in

the Middle East. Europe's weakness diminishes Europe's importance to the US, as it was clearly evident in Afghanistan and second Iraqi military campaigns. And vice versa: when Europe acts as one and supports the US policy, it becomes an important, credible and irreplaceable strategic partner - as it is now evident in Afghanistan's reconstruction and stabilization phase.

The importance of the EU in the life of Lithuanian society and government is growing rapidly. The government has already synchronized its schedule with that of the European institutions. Economic cooperation with the EU was of the utmost importance for Lithuania in its quest to reverse all-around dependence on the Russian economy.[6]

The growing importance of the EU to Lithuania has been strongly reflected in the public attitude. The Lithuanians expressed clear commitment to the European project in overwhelming support for the membership in the EU: 91.04 percent voted "yes" in Lithuania in 2003. By September 2005, 57 percent Lithuanians considered membership in the EU "a good thing" (the EU-25 average was 50 percent, see Eurobarometer 64, 11). In addition, Lithuania became the first EU member state to ratify the EU Constitution.

The EU decision making process is becoming ever more complicated as the number of member states continues to grow. As long as the European Council and the Council of Ministers retain their decision making powers, national governments can defend their interests at the highest level and seek compromises with other states. The Nice Treaty gave the smaller states higher voting quotas relative to their size enabling them to block the proposals of the bigger states. The termination of ratification of the Constitutional treaty of the EU provides Lithuania with an opportunity to consolidate its position within the EU in accordance with Nice regulations, establish informal coalitions and enhance its negotiations skills.

For example, in 1996, Lithuania's imports from and exports to the EU stood at 45 percent and 38.5 percent respectively. Imports from the CIS constituted 32.2 percent and exports 39.3 percent of total Lithuanian foreign trade. By 2004, the trend had been reversed. Lithuania has boosted its trade with the EU: imports from EU stood at 63 percent and exports to EU at *66 A* percent of the respective totals in 2004, while share of trade with the CIS has significantly dropped (imports — 16.1 percent, exports — 26.9 percent in 2004). See: Statistics Lithuania, available online: http://www.std.lt/web/main.php

In choosing its allies within the EU, Lithuania should take into account the following criteria, based upon realist postulates:

1. the coalition must be significant in terms of power so that it allows to defend national interests efficiently;

2. preferably, the foreign policy interests of Lithuania and potential allies should be compatible both in the short and the long term;

3. the interests of potential allies should not contradict to Lithuania's geostrategy of alignment with the US;

4. seeking to weaken the dichotomy between *We* and *Other,* Lithuania and potential allies should have identity ties.

In accordance with these criteria, Lithuania should seek a strategic alliance with Poland. Such an alliance would boost Lithuania's structural power, the long term interests of both countries are compatible, both geopolitically lean towards the US and both see the same source of threat in Russia (Laurinavièius et al., 307). The existing obstacles to such an alliance are much less significant than other possible alternative options. Alignment with Germany or the Nordic countries would not enhance Lithuania's structural power or even could diminish its political autonomy under certain circumstances (Laurinavièius et al., 258-259, 289-291).

Working together with Poland, Lithuania could pursue an active and efficient EU and other foreign policy. Alignment with Poland as its strategic partner, would enable Lithuania to ensure its economic but also strategic foreign policy interests — preserving the transatlantic link.

A strong EU is unimaginable without an efficient CFSP. Lithuania's approach towards CFSP should also be consistent with its transatlantic and European policy. The fact that the second pillar of the EU — the CFSP — is carried out through intergovernmental negotiations is beneficial to Lithuania as long as it has not established itself within the supranational institutions of the EU. The other two dilemmas of the CFSP development are related to the issue of sovereignty of the member states and relation with NATO and the US, namely a new definition of NATO's role in the European security system. In other words, the first question

is should a state seek to preserve national sovereignty in the area of security or defence or should it gradually transfer it for the sake of greater political integration. The second question is will the EU seek to become an autonomous geopolitical subject by strengthening its foreign and security policies or will it seek to harmonise these policies with those of the US and NATO (Gnesotto, European Security and Defence Policy).

The answers would be clear to a realist - the CFSP is useful if it strengthens Euroatlantism and intergovernmentality. Lithuania has to be active in developing the ESDP and the EU battle groups and make sure they are compatible with NATO forces, do not duplicate them and if necessary, take part in NATO operations. Certain conditions should be observed: 1) the CFSP is a truly common endeavour of all the member states; 2) the CFSP is carried through collective European institutions, while the member states adhere to the decisions made.

The realist answers contradict to the implications stemming from a constructivist view. From the latter perspective, Lithuania's interests would be better served by an autonomous CFSP carried out by supranational institutions.

Public support in Lithuania for the common security and defence policy surpasses the average of the EU-25 (84 and *77* percent respectively, see Eurobarometer 64, 34). In addition, Lithuanians are more inclined to entrust the decision making on European defence to EU institutions (49 percent) rather than to NATO (17 percent) or the national government (16 percent) (Eurobarometer 62, 121). Yet, when it comes to the question of cohesiveness of the CFSP, the Lithuanian government does not seem to share the public sentiments: Lithuanian diplomats tend to prefer intergovernmentality and consensus principles as modus operandi of the second pillar over supranationalism and qualified majority voting. Such position relies on a wrong assumption that the development of the CFSP could somehow infringe on the future of the transatlantic link (Paulauskas, forthcoming). In fact, a strong CFSP could have less negative effects on transatlantic relations than the damage Lithuania is currently suffering because of a weak CFSP.

Intergovernmentally driven CFSP may guarantee more autonomy for Lithuania to make its own decisions in foreign and security policy, however, these decisions are of little if any interest to other actors and do not guarantee more weight and success in relations with Russia. It is also naïve to assume that the veto right the small countries enjoy under the consensus principle is a measure they could seriously consider let alone use in the European Council.

Lithuania should put all its energies in support of a stronger, more cohesive and more supranational CFSP. The choice for Lithuanian leaders is between pursuing narrow national interests they cannot attain alone and compromising in favour of common interests that have more chance of success. Again, it would be unrealistic to assume that the CFSP could replace the bilateral relations that individual member states pursue vis-à-vis Russia (or any other country, for that matter). Yet, a stronger CFSP based on commonly agreed goals and principles, which would be carried out by the EU foreign minister and European diplomatic corps, empowered by the European Council, would both diminish the necessity to pursue national interests bilaterally and increase the likelihood of attaining them. It is much more difficult for Russia to deal with EU institutions based on the common goals of all member states, than to pursue bilateral relations with individual countries. Such bilateral agreements as the Schröder-Putin pact on the gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea, which was reached at the expense of the interests of other EU member states, would become more difficult to achieve.

All in all, Lithuania has a vital stake in the success of the European project. Lithuania will never become a part of the US identity and therefore will always be an *object ofthe* US global policy, one among many. In the case of Europe, Lithuania itself is the part of an identity of a collective *subject* and it is up to Lithuania as to how much influence it will be able to exert upon the policy of this subject. The rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands was therefore a worrisome development. Although, the worst case scenario - the return to power politics in Europe, which would plunge the whole of Central Europe back to the status of a buffer zone and a playground for the big powers - does not seem likely, the global strategic equation remains highly uncertain. Lithuania should neither admire the idea of the *multi-polar* world especially advocated by France and Russia, nor should it be particularly happy with the *unilateralism* of the US, which would defy international norms. In a multi-polar system, where the balance of power dictates the rules of the game, the smaller countries become what Vladimir Putin once described as "expendable change". By the same token, whenever multilateral norms of international law collapse, the small states are the first to suffer. For example, after the second US invasion of Iraq that came at the expense of multilateralism, Russia was quick to include the possibility of pre-emptive strike into its own strategic planning - a move with which Lithuania was hardly happy. The doctrine of preventive strike is still in the early stages of theo-

retical development and in practice relies upon very subjective calculations of the likelihood of threat and possible damage. In this respect, the narrative the Bush administration created about the Iraqi WMD and ties with Al Qaeda is a classic example. Only some sort of *restricted unipoliarity* could best accommodate the security concerns of Lithuania (Paulauskas, forthcoming). Such a scenario would require the US to remain the dominant power, which would not pose a danger to Lithuania and would make sure all the actors adhere to international norms instead of breaking them itself.

Lithuania has yet to develop a clear long-term vision of what shape the CFSP should take in the future. So far, Lithuania has been pursuing an ad hoc, reactive policy rather than a coherent, principled and pro-active European policy. Lithuanian initiatives would be more likely to succeed if at least a few older members supported those initiatives. To do that, Lithuania has to follow the overall agenda of the EU and actively support the other countries when it matters to them. Although Lithuania is active in the Council meetings when relations with Russia or Belarus are discussed, it tends to disappear during any other discussion that may be of utmost importance to other members or even the whole EU (Paulauskas, forthcoming). Lithuania hardly has an elaborated opinion on Iran's nuclear program or the future of the arms embargo on China. As a result, Lithuania and other Baltic States are considered "one issue" countries.

Every EU country wants the CFSP to suit its own interests; therefore an ideal CFSP would require a policy that no member state would be completely happy with. A CFSP based upon the lowest common denominator will never turn the EU into a serious international actor - only constant compromises of all member states for the benefit of common interest can bring the EU's actual policy close to its declared ambitions (Peterson and Sjursen, 3-38). Therefore, aggressive attempts to force national interests onto the EU agenda usually provoke negative reactions - it is important to find more sophisticated means, informal alliances, and work hard behind the scenes in order to promote national interest as a common interest. Lithuania will have to learn to take into account differences of interest and political sensitivities existing among the 25 members of the EU, instead of trying to "break the wall with its head".

Poland is no doubt an important strategic ally of Lithuania both inside NATO and the EU. However, not always do the interests of both countries overlap. First

of all, the identity and roles of both countries in international politics is different. Poland is seeking for a status of a great power within the EU and an opportunity to play in the same league with Germany, United Kingdom and France. This factor alone presupposes qualitatively different Polish and Lithuanian foreign policy and goals inside the EU. During the last 15 years, both countries achieved remarkably little success in most areas of cooperation - social, cultural, economic or energy. They are united in a similar perception of the Russian threat, they both cherish the transatlantic link and they share a stormy common history, however these commonalities are not sufficient to fill up the vision of strategic partnership with significant content. Therefore, Lithuania should remain open to alternative alliances, first of all, with the Nordic countries.

For Lithuania, a closer association with wealthy and peaceful Northern European countries along the lines of similar identities would have clear merits in many areas. Nordic countries were instrumental in helping the Baltic States to achieve NATO and the EU membership. An informal 5N + 3B cooperation has already transpired into a much more cohesive NB8 framework, encompassing different levels and spheres of cooperation. Another format - NB6 - consists of the EU member states. The prime ministers of the NB6 regularly meet to coordinate positions before the European Council meetings. The NB8 is a microcosm of Europe itself: there are members of both the EU and NATO (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Denmark), there are non-aligned countries (Finland and Sweden) and there are non-EU countries (Iceland and Norway). All these countries are relatively small, they all seek closer cooperation between the EU and NATO, and they share geographic proximity to Russia with all the challenges that result from this neighbourhood. At the same time, the Nordic countries have long been an inherent part of Europe's collective identity - Lithuania should also seek to first of all become a *normal* European state and not perform the role of special case, buffer, Trojan horse or another unnatural, externally imposed foreign policy role. The NB8 and/or NB8+2 (including Germany and Poland) format could be more suitable to achieve this goal. Of course, an important precondition for the success of the NB8 group is the willingness of the Nordic countries to accept the Baltic States as equal partners, and not an object of assistance or charity.

A constructivist approach would also imply that Lithuania should not forget relations with the bigger EU member states. Lithuanian foreign policy makers

should in particular take into account the central role Germany plays within the EU. To a large extent, it is up to Germany whether the EU will succeed as a single and influential subject of international relations or not. Due to their specific interests and features of national identities, neither France nor the UK can become the headliners of further deepening of the EU at 25. France seeks closer integration of the nucleus of states and a two-speed Europe, whereas the UK is promoting the idea of a wider Europe, which is politically decentralized and based upon free trade.[7]

If realism is perceived in narrow, utilitarian terms, Lithuania and other new EU member states should not support further EU enlargement, as it would cut the significant assistance they are receiving through the structural funds because the current or future EU candidates - Turkey, Ukraine, Moldova, the South Caucasus, Croatia, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia & Montenegro - are even less prosperous. However, the EU enlargement would expand the zone of stability and democracy eastwards and would thus neutralize or alleviate „hard" and „soft" security threats (illegal migration, transnational organized crime, international terrorism). In addition, the expansion of the free trade area (new opportunities for the free movement of capital, goods, services and people) would open new markets for Lithuanian business and at least partially compensate for losses of structural funds. Lithuanian business is already taking the risks that Western European or American businessmen seek to avoid by investing in the neighboring countries of the EU, despite the uncertain economic environment. In the long run, these risks should pay off and strengthen the relative and structural power of Lithuanian state and society.

On the other hand, the activity of businessmen alone is not sufficient. For example, the countries of the newly established Community of Democratic Choice lack administrative capabilities to Europeanize their economic, administrative, and social-political systems and reach appropriate EU and NATO standards. Lithuania could well use its own integration experience. Lithuania has a lot of public administration specialists and could offer these experts to carry out a variety projects in the most problematic areas of the Eastern neighbours. The financing of

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7 Among many articles on the subject, see „Which way for Europe? After French „no" vote, the continent stands at a historic crossroads", The Independent, May 31, 2005

such projects would basically come from three sources: 1) Lithuania's foreign policy budget, 2) host nation funds; and 3) the EU "neighbourhood instrument".

Thus Lithuanian foreign policy would help solve certain domestic social problems. To paraphrase Napoleon, „the war must feed itself"- Lithuania should get to a point where its foreign policy would feed itself. In other words, realism and geopolitics imply that Lithuania must use the economic and political power of the Western countries and establish itself in certain economic and administrative niches in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the South Caucasus. Lithuania should pick one or two priority countries in which it would concentrate its resources so as to achieve a qualitative and visible breakthrough and make it clear that it happened because of Lithuanian efforts. On the other hand, Lithuania's activity in the EU neighbourhood should strengthen the state's positions within the EU structures. It is somewhat paradoxical that Lithuania consistently sought to disassociate from the Eastern neighbourhood, but now, after the double enlargement, it finds itself in a situation when it has to turn back East to ensure its security and earn respect for its interests in the West. Therefore, a geopolitical perspective would prompt Lithuania to support the EU's enlargement eastwards and negotiations with Turkey, as it would also open the possibility for Ukraine and other CIS to someday enter the EU.

If the EU would follow such a realist Eastern policy, it would be consistent in its long-term political and economic strategy of reuniting Eastern Europe with the West. Such a strategy should result in full-fledged or partial integration of most of the Eastern European countries into the EU. Politically, Lithuania would greatly benefit from such a scenario and would gain wide possibilities for practical cooperation with the Eastern European countries and would strengthen „hard" and „soft" security.

From a constructivist perspective, the recommendations for Lithuania's Eastern policy are not so clear-cut - identity imperatives dictate their own logic. It is no doubt that enlargement has been the most successful element of EU's foreign policy. Openness to ready candidates has been a part of EU identity itself- the EU has been asserting its identity via integration of the *Other* and creation of a common *We,* instead of isolation and securitization of the *Other.* On the other hand, in order to define the *We* identity it is still necessary to have a significant *Other.* If Muslim Turkey became the biggest member state of a Christian EU, it

would inevitably *change* the very identity of the EU, to say nothing about its institutional structure, social and cultural policies. It is possible to assume, that membership of Turkey, Ukraine, Moldova, the South Caucasus in the EU would undermine the foundations of the EU, which is already living through a rather severe crisis of legitimacy, increase its internal fragmentation, revive the ideas of multi-speed Europe or even their realization. Such a Europe would be easy to control for the US but also Russia. It is doubtful, that membership in the EU of unstable and corrupt countries, which are heavily influenced by Russia, is a security interest of Lithuania. These states are simply too unstable to expect membership in the near future. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) itself was to a great extent designed as a response to this challenge.

On the other hand, Lithuania has a clear practical interest to seek to desecuritize relations with the Eastern Europe and promote democratic reforms through EU institutions even without an early membership promise. This is the area of the CFSP, in which Lithuania could offer the most substantial contribution. The keen interest of the new members in the stability, economic and social development of the Eastern neighbours prompted the EU as a whole to pay more attention to this region. It still remains to be seen if this increased attention will transpire into substantial financial support for the new neighbours - the EU is still more preoccupied with the countries of the Mediterranean dialogue, which will never become EU members, than those of Eastern Europe. It is doubtful that Lithuania and other new members are ready to fight the older members about the financing of the new neighbours as long as the newcomers themselves find a very hard time to negotiate the size of their own structural funds. Lithuania must appropriately pack and sell its Eastern policy expertise. Lithuania's and other new members' initial stance of "we know better" how to deal with Russia or other neighbours did not fare well with the old members, and the new members were taught "a lesson in humility" (Paulauskas, forthcoming).

Today Lithuania's borders in the West (Kaliningrad region) and the East (Belarus) are external borders of the EU. These borders are vulnerable to the threats of smuggling, human trafficking, trafficking of drugs and guns, organised crime, HIV, illegal migration, not to mention the heavy militarization of Kaliningrad, perhaps, including nuclear weapons. These challenges could hit the EU ever more heavily if the development gap between the wealthy club of the West and the

rest widened further. Stability, peace and economic prosperity in Kaliningrad and Belarus should therefore be the top priority of the foreign and security policy of Lithuania.

Lithuania, together with Poland, claims to have put Belarus and the Kaliningrad region on the EU agenda long before they themselves became members. Even more remarkably, Lithuania together with the other Baltic States already for a few years have been supporting and promoting democratic reforms in the South Caucasus. In 2005, Lithuania has also established itself as an advocate of having the Ukraine inside NATO: it has organized two high level events devoted to Ukraine in Vilnius (meeting of NATO foreign ministers that launched the Intensified Dialogue with Ukraine and NATO-Ukraine consultations). Such activities help to diversify the foreign policy of Lithuania and avoid the status of "one issue" country.

Lithuania has the right instruments to aid the Eastern European countries. First and foremost it is the experience and expertise gained during its own transformation period. Lithuania knows better than Western or former Warsaw pact countries what challenges the former Soviet republics face. Lithuania knows how to shake off the Soviet legacies and transform centrally planned economies into free market economies; second, it knows how to adapt legal and political systems and meet other EU and NATO demands in order to become eligible for membership (Paulauskas, forthcoming). Lithuania must "sell" these advantages to the rest of the EU and NATO, and the EU and NATO has to find a way to exploit these strengths.

The main problem of Lithuania's Eastern policy is the lack of financial and administrative resources. Obviously, it has to find allies. The Nordic-Baltic forum could play an important role in this respect - the Nordic countries have financial resources, and the Baltics have fresh expertise. It is important that Lithuania take into account not only its national interests but also common European interests. Lithuanian endeavours should add value to the efforts of the EU institutions and other EU member states, instead of competing with them.

In addition, Lithuania cannot devote equal attention to all areas - clear priorities must be set in order to consolidate resources and achieve a qualitative difference. As argued in the introduction, a part of the Lithuanian elite is inclined towards grandiose visions, in which Lithuania is seen at least as a regional leader.

According to this vision, Lithuania should be active in all possible directions and lead everywhere: in the CFSP, in EU's relations with Russia, in the European neighbourhood policy, in transatlantic relations, in the OSCE disarmament initiatives, and even become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Such ambitions far outstrip the capabilities of the country, creating a potentially dangerous overstretch, which could result in inefficient use of scarce resources and failure to achieve priority objectives. After all, a "regional leadership" cannot be a goal in itself- it can only be one of the means to implement national interests. Taking into account the geopolitical code of Lithuania, or its typical identity, it is not necessarily the most effective means. To be or not to be a regional leader - any answer to this question would have no affect whatsoever on the strengthening of democracy and rule of law in the Eastern neighbourhood. It is also not clear which region one should have in mind. At the end of the day, the main foreign and security interests will always remain local and regional, not global in nature.

Eastern policy: relations with Russia and Belarus

It is obvious that the dynamics of Lithuanian-Russian relations to a large extent depends on EU-Russia and US-Russia relations. However, Russia will continue to be the main source of economic and political threats as long as Russia will continue to be a great power with global geopolitical interests and seek to recapture its influence in the CIS space (Motieka et al, 27-66). Unless Russia will transform into a regional state with regional interests and drops its ambitions to stay a global actor, Lithuania will have to pursue a strategy of selective and principled cooperation with Russia. It is important to remember the main maxim of Lithuania's „realist" foreign policy - to support the American policy towards Russia that seeks to turn Russia into a regional state and a constructive partner of NATO, which in the future could be involved in the transcontinental security system pursued by the US to contain China's rising power (Brzezinski, 68-71).

For realists (e.g. The Atlantic Council of the United States), it is self evident that it is important to support American initiatives aimed at the downsizing of the Russian armed forces and their reform in order to foster their interoperability with NATO's forces; supporting a centralized state structure, which would gua-

rantee the reforms of the Russian economy and armed forces, security of foreign investments and a stable supply of energy resources. It is of acute importance to Lithuania to boost security of energy supplies and diversification of their sources. Lithuania should also explore opportunities to invest in alternative and environment friendly sources of energy.

Lithuania is interested in the strengthening of economic ties between the EU and Russia, in particular the possibilities to Europeanize the Kaliningrad region. If Lithuania could get actively involved in this process, it could well expect significant political and economic gains. Lithuania needs to foster economic, cultural and academic cooperation with the Kaliningrad region and facilitate the entry of the region's inhabitants into the EU. Lithuania should also support the EU initiatives and projects aimed at bringing Kaliningrad closer to the EU even if Lithuania did not take direct part.

Realists believe that the authoritarian regime in Belarus is a threat in itself to Lithuania's territorial integrity and independence. The power of Belarus (first of all military) far surpasses that of Lithuania, therefore, the neighbourhood of potentially unstable and unpredictable state is a direct threat to the security and prosperity of Lithuanian inhabitants.

Geopolitically, it is important to Lithuania the perspective of democratization and *de facto* and *dejure* independence of this country. Lithuania is interested in an independent, democratic, and economically open Belarus. Lithuania should therefore exploit the slightest possibility to pursue an active role in the international efforts to democratize and Europeanize Belarus.

From a constructivist perspective, there is also no doubt that a flourishing European-style democracy in Russia is the most important long-term interest of Lithuania, which, if accomplished, would render most of the other security concerns irrelevant. Meanwhile, Lithuania should seek to desecuritize Russia and build more self-confidence into the cumbersome relations with Russia. Lithuania is now able to use new opportunities provided by the membership in NATO and the EU, but it should also mind new constraints. Membership of the EU and NATO gave Lithuanian decision makers a firm ground and structural power to deal with Russia.

On the other hand, Lithuania lost a part of its autonomous policy line towards Russia. It is important to realise that Lithuanian-Russian relations will now be

subsumed under the EU-Russia and NATO-Russia relations. Lithuanian decision makers will now have to negotiate, adjust and often to concede to common positions of the EU and NATO.

Lithuania may also have to review its ambitions: in bilateral relations it cannot play at the same level as Russia simply because of the different weight categories. Lithuania does not have sufficient resources to become an interlocutor or bridge between Russia and the EU. Such a role of Lithuania would not be acceptable either to Moscow or Brussels. Russia itself does not see the Baltic States or even the whole Central Europe as a "bridge" to Europe. For Vladimir Putin, the Baltic States are no bridge to Europe - he does not need advice from Vilnius, Tallinn or Riga - he flies directly to Brussels, Berlin or Paris. The only way for Lithuania to achieve its long-term goals is multilateral one - through the EU and NATO.

Dealing with the threatening *Other*- Russia - Lithuania should less dramatize the „threat" element, but seek to uncover and understand better the identity of the *Other,* in accordance with the good old principle „knowyour enemy". Russia, the way it is today, will not offer recognition of or compensations for the Soviet occupation. Raising this question to the state with regime of "managed democracy" and "controlled capitalism" simply has no future. Building relations with Moscow on the condition that Russia will redeem historical grievances of Lithuania is a *naïve an$_d$* counter-effective approach. Relations with Russia should be built not upon the hopes that Russia will accept the role of a democratic state, but on the understanding, that it is performing a role of an expansionist and authoritarian state. Instrumentalisation of history as a foreign policy tool and securitization of entire Russia in its entirety, as such, does not help Lithuania to solve a number of more earthly and more urgent issues: security challenges stemming from Kaliningrad, dependency on energy supplies and their security, activities of Russia's special services or the future of Belarus. Arguably, constructivism offers a somewhat more pragmatic strategy towards Russia than the one presupposed by realism or geopolitics. A comprehensive securitisation of Russia denies the possibility to identify *existential threats* among regular problems of normal politics. For securitisation to succeed, the audience must accept a certain problem as an existential threat (Buzan et al., 25). Lithuanian society, to say nothing about international community, hardly perceives Russia the same way as the Lithuanian apologists of realism and geopolitics.

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Today, there are three groups of countries in Europe: some countries that are further away from Russia, like France, Spain or Italy, have a romantic perception of the Russian image. They do not understand (or pretend to not understand) the processes taking place in Russia, or they are simply not interested. Another group of countries, first of all Germany and in part the UK, have a pragmatic and cynical view of Russia: they know all too well what is happening in Russia and with Russia, but they choose to disregard those processes or even use them to their own advantage. The Central and Eastern European countries *think* they have the best understanding of Russia, and, therefore, are afraid of it. Lithuania should seek to abandon the latter group and move to the second one. The policy of EU institutions towards Russia are *interest*- rather than value-based. Lithuania faces a dilemma: on the one hand, an interest-based, realist Western policy towards Russia is not encouraging its democratisation; on the other hand, Lithuania cannot push the EU and NATO too hard to change their attitude towards "strategic partnership" with Russia. Lithuania has got no significant political dividends from constantly securitising and, thus, self-imposing an anti-Russian image. If Lithuania insisted on a radical policy towards Russia, it risks ending up at the margins of the official EU-Russia and NATO-Russia dialogue, whereas to participate in this dialogue, Lithuania needs a constructive, pragmatic approach.

Conclusions

A synthesis of constructivist and realist approaches to foreign policy is not impossible. A problem becomes a security issue when an actor with appropriate authority and power performs a securitising act. In other words, both discursive and material factors are at play in the formation of foreign policy. In addition, both constructivists and realists agree that after a problem has been successfully securitized, specific discursive tools are activated to justify use of violence. In this process it is not important whether the threat is „objective", existential, or not. In this realm, classic postulates of *realpolitik,* balance of power and security dilemma come to the fore. The final solution to both schools is similar — collective security. However, for realists, it implies building of alliances; in which a dichotomy between *Myself* and *Other remains* valid, whereas for constructivists it implies transnational integration, the end of national policy and the beginning of supranational one.

Even transnational integration cannot offer the final solution to security problem. Although the dichotomy *Myself- Other* vanishes, but a new dichotomy *We-Other* comes into being. Any identity needs its threatening *Other,* and existence of the threatening *Other* always implies an inherent security dilemma, which can only be overcome through transnational integration and creation of a new collective identity - *We*. And again, for this new identity to exist, new *Other is* necessary. Similarly, in the case of realism, more powerful actors subjugate other actors and assimilate them into a new identity, based on their own. However, in this case collective identity is impossible. If, for example, in the EU many identities may coexist and have certain possibilities for autonomous self-expression (in the UK Scottish, Welsh, English, Irish, British and European political identities peacefully coexist), in the imperial powers, such as the US or the Soviet Union, regional and other sub-national identities are only nominal and have no rights or possibilities of political self-expression - a strict hierarchy of identities is in place. Moreover, two national identities cannot coexist with equal rights within a collective identity.

To conclude, in theory, the security dilemma cannot be resolved either from a realist or constructivist perspective. After all, theory cannot offer final solutions to practical problems. The actual situation of a concrete international actor will dictate specific solutions, which will inevitably have to encompass elements of both realism and constructivism.

It is rather impossible to turn rapidly Lithuania's foreign policy from a realist, geopolitical path towards a constructivist one. Realist thinking is still too deeply enshrined in the consciousness of both the academic and political elite. On the other hand, constructivist assumptions also have not been credibly tested in practice.

The most realistic and constructive way forward would be an evolutionary approach: critical reassessment of some of the old Lithuanian foreign policy axioms and a practical test of some new, constructivist insights. The main elements of synthetic approach, encompassing realist geopolitics and constructivism, could be the following:

1. Lithuania's Euroatlantism should not be the dogma of foreign policy that would overshadow all other interests and problems of the society. The membership in the EU will have far reaching and long term consequences on

Lithuanian society - the same cannot be said about membership in NATO, or relations with the US. Therefore, Lithuania needs to reassess its European policy.

2. Lithuania must internalize the EU as a part of its corporate identity - Lithuania *is* a part of Europe's collective identity. Thus far, for both the political elite and the society, the EU was an extraneous entity rather than a part of national identity. It is no longer about Lithuania *and the* EU, but Lithuania *in* the EU. The rules and principles the Lithuanian foreign policy abided by in bilateral and multilateral relations until membership in the EU, may not necessarily be applicable in the new situation. Even such fundamental con cepts as "sovereignty", "territory", "borders", "citizenship", or even "democ racy" gain new meanings once a nation state becomes a member state. All of this should be reflected in Lithuania's foreign policy - implementation of clearly defined common European interests should be more important for Lithuania than the implementation of global US interests, even if these inte rests would be in conflict. In other words, pro-American behaviour of Lithu ania should not be *unconditional* - the theorem of Lithuanian geopolitics should not become an axiom. The key words in this case are a *restricted uni lateralism of the* US constrained by multilateral norms supervised by effective international institutions.

3. Contrary to the assertion of geopolitics, which presupposes constant and universal mobilisation for war, today the security situation of Lithuania is not special, there will be no existential military threats to Lithuania in the foreseeable future (at least 10 years). The security question in terms of „high politics" and „hard security" has been solved and closed after Lithuania became a member of NATO. There are no reasons for Lithuania to seek re-securitisation of its situation in the region, which is exactly the idea behind the proposals of some radical Euroatlantists. Lithuania should see the big ger picture, despite the fact that immediate sphere of its influence is limited by the neighbouring regions. Lithuania should care about the questions of the EU member states care about. Lithuania should have a position on My-anmar or Kinshasa if it expects others to listen to Lithuania's opinion about Minsk or Chisinau.

4. Lithuania should consider more seriously its participation in the CFSP. A weak CFSP is not in the best interest of Lithuania. Only a strong and efficient CFSP can help implement the main interests of Lithuania, therefore, Vilnius should stand ready to sacrifice part of its sovereignty and rather empty veto power in favour of common interests. Finally, Lithuania should make more solid contribution to EU peacekeeping operations, so that its declarations about an active support to ESDP would gain a tangible form. It is crucial in order to be considered not only active but also a credible EU member state.

5. It is important to desecuritize relations with Russia. Problematic aspects of these relations should be moved from the security agenda to the agenda of normal politics. The perception of Russia as a threatening *Other* is related not only to real threats stemming from Russia but also internal perceptions in Lithuania that Russia will always be a threat. Such an unconditional position may prevent policy makers from identifying the most serious problems, for example, the weakness of consolidation of Lithuania's own political system, which makes it susceptible to the invasion of Russian capital in the state's domestic life making Lithuania Russia's Trojan horse inside NATO and the EU. At the same time, some issues that do not constitute an existential threat are intentionally or unintentionally securitized (for example, the commemo ration of the Victory Day in Moscow in 2005 or the SU-27 accident in Lithuania and the military threat of Russia in general). Inside the EU, Lithu ania should be constructive, in bilateral relations with Russia - pragmatic, but also assertive in its long term objective to encourage real, not managed democratic transformation of Russia.

6. In the end, Lithuania should seek to become a *normal,* ordinary EU member state safely locked inside of the united, free and secure Europe. Strengthening cooperation of the NB8+2 group would be the most natural way to achieve this goal. Other popular concepts, such as a "bridge", a "transit link", a "buf fer zone" or another ambivalent entity would only imply geopolitical uncer tainty and inherent insecurity.

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