Portraying the Other in International Relations

Portraying the Other in International Relations: Cases of Othering, Their Dynamics and the Potential for Transformation

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

OTHERING IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS

SYBILLE REINKE DE BUITRAGO

The other, as defined in difference to the self, can be observed in diverse contexts and dimensions within the field of international relations, as well as in other fields and in everyday life. Yet, as present as these processes of othering and self-other constructions into relations of difference and opposition are in the international arena and as essential as their scrutiny and understanding are, the analysis of such processes can only be found at the margins of past and current IR work. The reason for this underexposure may lie in the greater difficulty of examining this broad topic and partly in the fact that it is simply not mainstream IR but rather located at the intersection of IR and other fields. The interdisciplinary nature of the topic requires one to look beyond the own discipline and venture out into other areas, to link up with them and initiate exchange, which in this author's view increases both the potential for scientific knowledge and learning as well as the attractiveness of the topic. Due to the great significance of othering processes in the various relationships and forms of interaction at the international level and due to the stated analytic underexposure this book presents an attempt to move othering and its implications more into the centre of IR study and initiate debate on cases of othering and its dynamics and consequences.

Conceptually, this book is devised in the following perspective, applying ideas regarding the factors of influence, elements and dynamics of othering that have evolved during my research in the past years as well as out of my experience with othering itself. I see representations of difference inseparably linked with othering, both being a regular part of interaction between states, groups and individuals. Such representations not only affect interaction on the international stage in general, but also touch on issues of competition for leadership, the rise of new actors, levels

of friendship and hostility, and the perception of threats and resulting behaviour in policy, to name just a few of the relevant aspects–aspects that are elaborated in this book's contributions.

The other, or the constitutive other, is portrayed by utilizing different images and various stylistic and discursive means, typically interwoven. In discourse, for example, links can be constructed between current events and the past, where already existing visual or ideational content is used to compare distinct events and to point to or remind of past occurrences and the respective policy responses. These are attempts to legitimize certain policy options over others. In such cases, the collective cultural memory or repertoire of a group or a nation is tapped and utilized. Aside from using discourse to connect narratives or specific elements of a narrative, stylistic means are applied to compare, to liken or distinguish, to convince, to empower or devalue–in short, to construct relations between self and other in various ways. In this, also images play a significant role. While we are already socialized with certain images of ourselves and various others, images can change and/or be modified. Existing images of the other may be added to and adjusted. Images can also be newly created and constructed, even though there must be some link to a memory or to existing perspectives or ideas for those new images to be able to take hold in the minds of people and to thus be effective from the view of those promoting them. We can even find examples of mirror imaging, where mutual views of the other share elements of an image's make-up. When actively promoted in discourse, images and their linked discursive elements can unfold great strength in shaping self-other relations.

In the realm of international relations, states and various other entities engage in processes of othering and thereby affect both policy and interstate relations. Motivations for portraying the other in various ways and for engaging in dynamics of othering are diverse. But whatever the underlying motivations may be, the view and understanding of the self is always related to views of the other–for there could be no self without the other and no other without the self. In essence, defining the self always requires a differentiation from that which is not the self. Likewise, we can only name the other and comprehend what the other is to us by placing it in relation to the familiar, such as the self or, in extension, the own group. Representations are thus a product of mutual constructions of the self and other. To better understand othering and representations of the other, the challenge for IR scholars dealing with othering is thus also to include the self as analyst, their own position and their relation to the other in their

analyses. This need remains often unfulfilled, however, partly also due to lacking methodological tools. Some of the chapters in this compilation have nevertheless attempted to fulfil this endeavour.

While othering thus involves representations of the self and other as different, the represented difference does not always have to be filled with purely negative content, such as dislike, aversion or enmity. I would argue that difference can also be described with more positive content, such as elements of admiration for certain achievements, or at least some level of recognition and toleration. Positive and negative content can vary, and many cases show a mélange of elements in a complex relationship. Most often though, a view of hierarchy is part of othering processes, the self being typically placed above the other. Thus, seeing the other only as different–and in a neutral manner–is enormously difficult and empirically unlikely, since our ideas are subjective and come with a specific, laden cognitive and emotional content. Positioning oneself as neutral or refusing to take a position at all is extremely rare.

Furthermore, self-other constructions and processes of othering are constantly present and on-going. We respond to new situations, to events and to crises. We hear, see, read and learn new aspects that must be integrated into our existing ideas and fit into our held stories. This is the case for the various others that we hold, as we are engaged in multiple relations with others, thus creating and contributing to a constant interaction and exchange in views and narratives, all of which shape resulting behaviour and actions in one way or another. The implications are then manifold. Multiple consequences of othering processes are visible at the verbal level, others already in terms of actual policy and measures taken. One of the dangers of othering though also lies in the difficulty of knowing or noticing where othering processes are taking hold or where they have already taken effect. As othering has also constitutive effects, it initiates processes of its own, which makes a roll-back of othering or a transformation highly challenging. But where can we then see othering processes in place, in terms of action? Instances can be verbally expressed devaluations of another state, such as a perceived rival; of course also in categorizations of another state or group being the enemy or presenting a threat, such as in the label of rogue state, radical or terrorist; or more benign in portrayals of the own country as exceptional and as example to be followed by the rest of the world–each with constitutive effects being found in policy measures. Other instances can be hierarchically shaped policies, which are partly motivated by superiority-inferiority views,

include or aim for distinct treatment of groups and individuals and lead to exclusionary practices. More examples are illustrated in-depth in the following chapters. All of the aforementioned elements and dynamics, with their implications and complexity, make othering a fascinating and meaningful area of study.

The introduction to this book cannot do without mentioning some important scholars working on othering in recent years, scholars who have influenced my views and understanding of othering processes. One of the most prominent one, albeit not in the mainstream IR literature, is Iver B. Neumann. Neumann speaks of international relations as constructions between relations of self and other (1999b, 20), which occur and develop at different levels and various dimensions. Referring to a number of other authors, like Tzvetan Todorov, Michael J. Shapiro and David Campbell, Neumann highlights the need to consider the historical side of views of self and other, the political aspects of identity, and the attempt to represent oneself in relation to others without the distancing that is so often part of it, thus calling to respect differences and the idea of difference as such (ibid, 21-25). While doing so is highly difficult, as described above, the last chapter in this book elaborates on this worthwhile challenge.

Neumann points out that while thinking that the closer we know one another the less we are likely to engage in othering is comforting, there is also sufficient evidence against this relation. Because of the subjective use of cultural differences and groups' specific cultural aspects, any difference, however small it may be, can be used for dividing groups and distancing them from one another. In implication then, we are never safe from engaging in othering. Additionally, according to Neumann knowledge about another group, sympathy or empathy with it and proposals or actions for engaging or dealing with a group are distinct issues, and they can be linked in various ways (ibid, 34-35). This explains the sometimes, on surface, contradictory behaviour or the contradictions between statements and actions. Thus, while one group may be very knowledgeable about another group, even close to a deeper understanding of the other, it may still aim for and follow policies oriented towards domination of that group. Similarly, elements of sympathy or empathy can get lost or be submerged under different motivations, and action against the other is enabled.

As stated before, the manner in which the self is formed as well as formulated and expressed is linked with processes of othering. Thus,

identity formation and self-views carry with them the differentiation from others, in essence requiring the drawing of social boundaries. Self and other constitute one another and both are furthermore unbounded (ibid, 35). The forging of identities fits to states as well, states becoming existent also via discourse about them, which include ideas for future existing and being (Neumann 1999a, 223). Relevant in this are images of our own nation and of other nations, which are filled with reflections about events and experiences. Such national images also contain different degrees of friendship or hostility and thereby impact relations among states (Boulding 1996, 461-464; Fisher 1997, 75). States can be understood as larger group-units that need a national identity and an overarching story or narrative for their self-understanding and inner coherence in their representations towards other states.

Processes of othering are then also impacted by geographical proximity. When linked with other factors, geographical proximity may even motivate and strengthen othering (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 46). In fact, within the discipline of geography, a stream of critical geography has formed. Critical geographers study how space is symbolized and via discourse institutionalized and which effects of inclusion and exclusion such practices of spatial bordering, ordering and othering have. Borders, for example, define both territory and identity for a more cohesive and unique group, on the one side. On the other side, however, differences are also newly created or fortified (Houtum and Naerssen 2002, 125-126). There is then both inclusion and exclusion, both cohesion within and differentiation to the outside. Houtum and Naerssen also state that borders are the meeting place of different normative orders, a place where distinct systems act to govern and maintain their values (ibid, 129), at times in softer ways and at other times in a fierce struggle. Thus, othering often involves views and actions to place the own group above the other (Hansen 2006), initiating respective modes of self-other representation and interaction. Diez, however, points out that othering must not necessarily need to portray the other as inferior, but simply as different, a view that would allow balanced and more reflective behaviour towards the other (2005, 628-629). However, as elaborated above, a view of the other as simply different, without a better or a worse, is due to human psychology difficult and empirically not quite supported.

But we can find potential for adjusting or transforming othering. Narrative processes of othering create a larger story surrounding self-other relations. This story must be credible and it is constantly reformulated to

fit new situations affecting the self (Neumann 1999a, 218-219). When faced with dramatic, overwhelming events that sufficiently disturb held ideas, the stories and the views of self and other may collapse, not able to maintain their hegemony. In such times space is created for new ideas as well as new self-other constructions and relations (Laclau 2005). Such disturbance and the newly created space can positively affect a more balanced representation of the other.

Finally, Neumann also sees worth in gaining an understanding of how the observer–or the researcher–takes part in othering processes in terms of the ways he or she portrays self and other (1999b, 36). No less importantly, he argues that analyses of processes of othering and exclusion have a normative concern in that they ought to produce insights for facilitating joint existence of different groups (ibid, 37).

Attempting to expand the state of research on othering as well as to respond to some of the stated needs, this edited volume presents various cases of othering and self-other constructions in three thematic sections: I) cases of interstate and interregional relations, II) the specific policy field of terrorism and counterterrorism, and III) the important aspect of possible transformation of othering. While the contributions are a selection within a broad field, they take up the topic from diverse angles and with different conceptual approaches, illustrating the multiple forms othering can take. Contributions show how othering can be studied, its dynamics and consequences critically analysed and more comprehensively understood, but also the limits in these attempts. Various motivations for engaging in othering are elaborated. The images, ways of representations and stylistic means that are applied in processes of othering are exposed and their internal logic as well as effects on thinking and behaviour in the international arena examined. Furthermore, possibilities for modifying othering processes, that is, how negative self-other constructions may be transformed, with the goal of enabling the peaceful existence of different groups, are presented.

The contributions allow us to look beneath the processes involved in othering, to recognize linkages and patterns, and even to relate to and compare dynamics and elements to the interactions and relations we ourselves are involved in. Thus, on the one side, insights about specific and current othering processes are generated that allow for adjustments in rhetoric and the political process, thereby enabling improvements of these cases of self-other interaction. Policies could then be shaped in a more

comprehensive manner, with a more long-term view and greater awareness of local impact. As researchers we can become aware of and consider our own role in processes of othering when conducting scientific analyses. Keeping in mind that we construct our social world, our social realities, also in the manner we speak, our communication is an expression of our self-other relations. On the other side, each one of us can–on a smaller scale, but in our various roles and relations–utilize these insights in attempts to engage less in othering and more in building positive and constructive relations. We can become more aware of the images we hold of others and question their motivations; we can become more mindful of how we communicate with and about others; and we can become more sensible in our interactions with and behaviour towards others.

Lastly, the book is a product of a conference panel on processes of othering and self-other constructions in the field of international relations, entitled "Portraying the Other in International Relations", which was held at the First Joint Conference of the International Political Science Association and the European Consortium for Political Research, February 16-19, 2011 in São Paulo, Brazil. Based on the Call for Papers, a proposal for this book was solicited. The book includes works based on the panel papers as well as additional contributions. Not only does this compilation present a collection of the current research on othering, but an additional great value lies in the strong international background of the book's contributors.

Overview of book chapters

This compilation is structured in three thematic sections, analysing the dynamics of othering in diverse contexts and cases, while utilizing various theoretical perspectives and methodological applications. Common to all contributions is the interest in uncovering how precisely othering takes place, what its specific functions are and what it results in. Underlying is a further interest in making transparent the existing but not always open and fully known power relations and hierarchies. For example, othering is often a part of policy outcomes, but not in itself intentional. And yet, othering processes reflect underlying views of the other and conceptions of the self-other relationship. Thus, it is of importance to uncover where othering occurs as a by-product of policy, so that policy can be readjusted. On the other side, othering may be completely intentional. But also in these cases, we have unintended policy outcomes, often in terms of restricting policy options, which would normally not be in the interest of

policy and decision makers. Thus, beginning with the first section, *Processes of Othering in Interstate und Interregional Relations*, a variety of cases of othering and self-other interaction in current international relations are illustrated and analysed.

In Chapter 1, *Emanuel Crudu* and *Maria Eremenko* present othering processes in light of a supposed European division along an East-West line. Looking at the enlargement rounds of the European Union, they find othering as an integral part of EU practice. Not only were states in Eastern Europe othered before joining the EU, but also the EU enlargements, which aim at *including* new members into the Union, take the form of othering of the new member states in Eastern Europe. Crudu and Eremenko argue that this othering may even be strengthened now that these states are part of the EU. Driving this development is the need to 'Europeanize' and become like Western European member states, as it is those states that have formed and promoted their values as the core EU values and standards inherent in the Union's institutions. Becoming part of the EU and its institutions thus necessarily results in needing to adjust to their underlying values. However, in the process alterity-making results, along with a division of EU member states into core versus non-core, a division that must be overcome for the process of convergence within the Union to continue and be successful.

Lana Wylie, in Chapter 2, analyses othering within the setting of U.S.-Cuba relations. In this particular relationship othering has a longer and more apparent history. The U.S. and Cuba are two countries enormously different–and even opposed–in their size, political system, legitimacy claim, capacities and power potential. The short distance between the two furthermore accentuates the perception of difference and likely results in the need to further highlight the differences on both sides since decades. Precisely because the other, who is so different from oneself, is so close, othering is necessary to protect own identity. Thus, both countries engage in portraying an exceptional role for themselves, all the while othering the other state. Views of the own exceptional status is closely weaved together with views of the other as everything but exceptional and as necessarily opposed to oneself, thus the extreme other. These dynamics of perception and interaction, so the author, present an important factor in maintaining the U.S.-Cuban relationship as confrontational as it is and making a transformation highly difficult.

In Chapter 3, *Melody Fonseca* considers othering processes in the U.S.-Haiti relationship as one more example of a rather uneven relationship with many hierarchical elements. In her contribution she analyses the ways in which this particular type of othering has shaped the Haitian social imaginary as a political community. She argues that the U.S. military interventions in Haiti in the past century, American identity discourses such as the Monroe Doctrine, and the inherent self-other constructions have left a lasting impact on Haiti, its citizens and the Haitian self-understanding. The American construction of Haiti as the other is set against the civilized, liberal and expansionist American self, and Haiti thus appears in the American view all but civilized, liberal or expansionist. Whereas the aspects of civilization and liberal values do not necessarily have to go along with an expansionist stance, in the American case the expansionist drive may contribute to a greater missionary fervour on the one side and a stronger othering of all those that are seen to be lagging behind the self as shining example. These othering aspects towards Haiti create imbalances in the relationship of the two countries, which in turn enable and shape processes of exclusion to the disadvantage of Haiti.

In the last chapter of the first section, Chapter 4, *Stacey-Ann Wilson* takes up the case of reverse othering. In this very insightful example of othering processes, own experiences of becoming the other seem to have created an impetus for utilizing the marginalized position of the other to the own advantage, as if to rise above the label of the other. Perhaps one can even speak of a learning process or awareness creation of othering processes that has taken place. However, by dealing with own othering in a certain manner, new othering processes can be initiated, and in the illustrated cases those that were previously othered, are now othering in turn. In her examination of South-South cooperation and indigenous globalism, Wilson thus finds current processes of reconstructions of the other. Whereas developing countries and indigenous populations have been actively marginalized by dominant Western discourses, they are now engaging in a reconstruction of themselves as the core and the developed European countries as the other. By forming global alliances, previously marginalized actors are thereby gaining influence and status. However, they are also creating new forms of othering.

The second section, *Othering in Policy towards Radicalism and Terrorism*, examines othering in the field of terrorism / counterterrorism, in particular the labelling of terrorists or their narrative framing and

inherent (potential of) violence. Already before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 terrorists were othered as criminal, evil or irrational or described in other ways so as to distance the self from the terrorist and to justify policy measures against terrorists and the phenomenon of terrorism. But with 9/11 this othering visibly took a sharper turn, especially during the first administration of George W. Bush and the War on Terror. Language turned more emotional, and the legal space was adjusted–and sometimes also ignored–in a number of countries, not only the United States, in order to be able to 'hunt', catch and imprison terrorists, to get them to divulge information and in the larger frame to counter and reduce terrorism. But how does this affect own identity, or how does it impact those who may be randomly suspected to be in the 'terrorist corner'? Furthermore, how does terrorist othering and labelling unintentionally reduce policy options? The next three chapters take up these aspects.

Diego Santos Vieira de Jesus in Chapter 5 takes up the concept of civilization and its flexibility in regulating and redefining global boundaries. The meaning of civilization tends to depend on the respective perspective of those that use it in their, often morally-shaped, arguments. But arguing with a civilizational position comes with inherent othering, for the self is necessarily civilized and thus the others less so or not at all–civilization thus acting as a marker of boundaries. In his essay the author utilizes the idea of spatiotemporal localizations of difference, whereby the self, self-knowledge and own identity can be maintained intact and coherent to the self. These processes are then applied to American foreign policy narratives on Iraq and the various perceived threats, such as tyrants and radicals. Since threats need to be countered, new facets of threats must equally be responded to as well as integrated into the existing narrative. Thus, American decision makers can develop and justify solutions in the face of (new) threats, which take the form of disciplinary action against the other, without creating a disturbance in American identity and ideals.

In Chapter 6, *Jennifer Hoewe* analyses the use of the word terrorist in prominent U.S. news media, specifically in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, over a period of six years. The word terrorist has, arguably for most, a negative connotation. Because the word terrorist is not neutral, coming with 'heavy baggage', the manner of its usage contributes to meaning-making with possibly significant implications in terms of creating social realities and actions taken upon these meanings. By coupling the use of the word terrorist with the mention of a religion, in her analysis Hoewe was able to uncover a particular type of framing. She

found a high linkage between the word of terrorist in the headlines of news stories and mentions of Islam as religion within the stories, which has at least two disturbing effects. On the one side, the media's othering of terrorists as Islamic terrorists is revealed, while on the other side the othering of Muslims in general is shown. Such dynamics inform on media effects such as priming of readers, but also of writers, where such priming in turn plays a significant role in the maintenance of stereotypes and prejudices.

In Chapter 7, *Sidney Leclercq* looks at terrorist labelling and its unforeseen consequences for policy. In some ways similar to the contribution before, the label of terrorist with its negative connotation has, when applied to others, consequences in terms of perception of and understanding about those labelled as terrorist. Such a label not only shapes and restricts the view, but thereby also limits available policy options. Leclercq applies the case of terrorist labelling to the European Union's policy toward the Palestinian movement Hamas. He argues that the 2003 inscription of Hamas on the EU terrorist list has initiated a symbolic and political process that is unintentionally affecting the EU's policy effectiveness. While the labelling of Hamas as terrorist group has enabled the creation of new policy instruments, according to Leclercq the terrorist labelling has also reduced the options available to the EU. In effect, there is less coherence in EU policy, and furthermore less international recognition and autonomy of the Union. These results seem to question the usefulness of the EU terrorist list, putting up for debate both terrorist labelling and terrorist lists in general.

Finally, the book would not be complete without considering cases where othering is reduced or overcome. While othering seems natural to humans, and while it may even be an important part of our decision-making abilities–at least when within a smaller frame so as not to result in negative consequences for the self or for others–extreme othering should be avoided and relationships should and can be improved. When othering processes remain small or contained enough, dialogue and rapprochement are and become possible. Self-other relations can be adjusted and policy steps can be taken to support and further promote such readjustments. Importantly, also policy options are then increased again. Thus, the third section *Overcoming (Destructive) Othering: Transformative Potential* aims to illustrate the power of transformation processes in cases of othering, that is how past othering processes and their impact on societies

and nations can be overcome or how such othering can be avoided or minimized.

Elena Lazarou focuses in Chapter 8 on the role of media in the transformation of discourses of otherness. The media plays a pivotal role in shaping views, as already illustrated in another chapter. By setting the tone and using particular terminology in the description of the self in relation to others, the media can shape societal discourses on issues in a negative or positive manner. This also enables the media to change a specific discourse by introducing new elements, new terms and a new tone. Depending on the role played by media then, conflict discourses can be maintained, strengthened or transformed. Lazarou examines the impact of media on discourse and its influence on foreign policy developments in the relations between Greece and Turkey. In her case study of the role played by Greek media in the Greek government's policy towards Turkey she shows how the media has contributed to a construction of identity discourses and a reconstruction of perceptions of the other. The Greek media, according to Lazarou, played a crucial role in transforming the othering of Turkey. By impacting Greek foreign policy, relations with Turkey could be substantially improved.

In this book's last contribution, Chapter 9, *Erica Simone Almeida Resende* considers possibilities of dealing with difference constructively, that is without falling into the negative dynamics and traps of othering. Doing so surely requires great efforts, as humans tend to naturally engage in constant categorizations and evaluations of others, constructing their particular self-other relations with hierarchical dimensions. Yet, it is of utmost importance to gain awareness of such, often unconscious processes and to work towards a limiting of othering and negative stereotyping as well as a positive viewing of difference in general. By applying artistic-poetic language to international relations discourses, the author argues for a position of equality of various perspectives, where multiple interpretations are enabled and allowed, which would in consequence permit the consideration of both self and other as connected and interlinked. This, however, would require that we give up our points of reference by which we judge others in IR, but it would also, according to Almeida Resende, enable a more comprehensive understanding as well as an appreciation of complexity and rich difference.

I thus invite the reader to go on a journey–a journey not only through the various and multi-faceted contributions presented in this volume, but

also a journey in and with themselves, their perspectives and understandings of others, their self-other constructions and the appreciation of difference in our world.

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SECTION I:

PROCESSES OF OTHERING IN INTERSTATE UND INTERREGIONAL RELATIONS

CHAPTER ONE

'FACES OF ALTERITY': THE EASTERN EUROPEAN OTHER INSIDE THE EU

EMANUEL CRUDU AND MARIA EREMENKO

> [A] sense of identity can firmly exclude many people even as it warmly embraces others. The well-integrated community in which residents instinctively do absolutely wonderful things for each other with great immediacy and solidarity can be the very same community in which bricks are thrown through the windows of immigrants who move into the region from elsewhere. The adversity of exclusion can be made to go hand in hand with the gifts of inclusion.
> —Amartya Sen (2006, 2)

Introduction

Not a long time ago a British lady was considered bigoted by Gordon Brown upon asking "Where do all these Eastern Europeans come from?"[1] Maybe, despite her concern with the dangers of immigration for Britain, the lady was correctly pointing out that such a question still awaits answers in Europe. Ironically, the first answer to such a question would point to the fact that the Eastern Europeans come from the Western European imaginary. As Iver B. Neumann puts it, "regions are invented by political actors as a political programme, they are not simply waiting to be discovered" (Neumann 2001, 71). Larry Wolff (1994) skilfully showed Eastern Europe as invention emanating initially from the intellectual agendas of the elites of Enlightenment that later found its peak of imaginary separation during the Cold War. The enlargement, however,

[1] The exact question of Gillian Duffy to Gordon Brown was: "all these Eastern Europeans what are coming in, where are they flocking from?". See dialogue on BBC News online, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/election_2010/8649448.stm, accessed January 30, 2011.

was expected to make the East-West division obsolete under the veil of a prophesized convergence. It would have finally proven the non-ontological, historically contingent and unhappy nature of the division of Europe and remind Europeans of the wider size of their continent and the inclusive and empowering nature of their values. Still, 20 years after the revolutions in Central and Eastern European countries, Leon Marc, while arguing that the category of Eastern Europe is outdated and misleading, bitterly asks a still relevant question: "will Europe ever give up the need to have an East?" (Marc 2009, 161).

This chapter argues that the sedimented European reflexes are difficult to dismantle and that specific reifying tendencies let the traces of an East-West slope persist in the current European imaginary. The arguments here draw from and find their substance in following the dynamic struggle for meaning vividly depicted on the scene of the so-called European identity-making processes. Though reluctant about the reality and specificity of an existing or emerging European identity shaped peculiarly by the EU, this chapter makes specific theoretical choices in assessing the features of such an eventual identity and further tries to locate its exclusive determinants by looking at the identitarian narratives unfolding inside the EU. While a wide literature extensively addresses EU narratives of alterity-making, in terms of shaping its borders and delineating its outsiders, this chapter adds a focus on the *internal* dimension of 'making the other' inside the EU. It argues that the enlargement did not substantially alter the narratives that axiologically place Central and Eastern European countries on a lower scale of Europeanness.

The EU's endogenous identity or the 'Western genetic soup': A neo-medieval empire?

It is a widespread though not undisputed argument nowadays that the EU is or is becoming a normative power. That is to make reference to a variable normative commonality or to a set of shared values that the EU is empowering and promoting. Among many normative instruments of EU foreign policy, the enlargement was considered the most successful one, as it proved to be a powerful leverage through credible incentives to encourage political change and foster substantive democratization (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Vachudova 2005). Since the end of the Cold War, enlargement was understood more as a function of Western European institutions and particularly of the EU as an emerging pan-European policy shaper. Yet, enlargement also reminded most EU