

Central European University

**“Keeping All Doors Open...”
Neutrality and Non-Alignment
in Post-Cold War Finnish Security Policy**

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Summary

The end of the Cold War caused many changes in world's politics. In case of Finland, a small state on the periphery of Europe, it was a change from neutrality to its hard-core, military non-alignment associated mainly with the membership in the European Union and the beginning of a co-operation with NATO.

The main aim of this thesis is to answer the question about reasons and factors that made the change possible. The main argument is that neutrality had not become a core element of Finnish national identity, nor had a strong historical background to defend it. The thesis argues also that the change was not as drastic as one might have expected and nowadays' Finnish security policy has some sings of continuity.

Besides, the thesis explains also the meaning of neutrality in International Relations, its historical development and nowadays' condition, primarily in the context of Finnish security policy.

Keywords

Neutrality, non-alignment, Finland, EU, NATO, security, Cold War, identity, realism, constructivism, Russia

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List of Abbreviations

ALTHEA	EU mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
EC	European Communities
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EU	European Union
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EUBAM	EU Border Assistance Mission
EUFOR	EU Force
EUMM	EU Monitoring Mission
EUPOL	EU Police Mission
FCMA	Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (Treaty)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Association
NRF	NATO Response Forces
PfP	Partnership for Peace
UN	United Nations

1. Introduction

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Finland found itself in a new situation. This country has always been situated in a turbulent environment. Its history and geopolitical position between Russia, seen as a possible source of threat, and the West with its major institutions such as the EU or NATO, is rather unique.

The Soviet Union is no longer a “big brother” and a guard of Finnish foreign and security policy. Neutrality, forced by Russians in 1948, is no longer seen as a relevant option for ensuring national interests. The main task of Finland since the end of the Cold War has been to create an effective security policy that would ensure the survival of the nation and create the peaceful environment and conditions to realise national interests.

In the early 1990s the national consensus concerning neutrality broke down. The debate about membership in the European Union became very lively. Finland joined the EU in 1995, thus *de facto* giving up its neutral status. The only element left was military non-alignment, which is nowadays associated mainly with the long-lasting debate about possible membership in NATO. Although the Alliance is considered as “the most important military security cooperation organisation¹”, the current Finnish security policy is based on military non-alignment, an independent defence, and membership in the European Union.

When thinking about neutrality the first examples that come to mind are Switzerland with its long tradition of being a “classical” permanent neutral since 1815, or Austria with its neutrality being a “pure” Cold War relict.. These countries seem to dominate in a debate over this issue. Occasionally Sweden and Finland are mentioned.

¹ *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2009: Government Report* (Helsinki: Prime Minister's Office, 2009), 98.

It's mainly because the question of neutrality is very rarely investigated. The concept was more broadly discussed during the Cold War, but since the end of this period has been somehow forgotten. That is why one is more likely to find a book about neutrality and non-alignment from the 1960s than from the beginning of the 21st century.

Finland, a country situated on the periphery of Europe, and its neutrality is an interesting and important topic for research, especially if it is associated with the change that occurred with the end of Cold War. The specific character of the Finnish neutrality, which differs from that of Austria or Switzerland, is also worth mentioning. Finnish foreign and security policy options were to a large extent overshadowed by geopolitics, namely by being “adjacent to one Great Power which regard[ed] Finland as part of its security zone²”. The change in Finnish foreign and security policy that appeared due to membership in the European Union and debate about possible NATO membership caused neutrality to disappear from the public debate and be replaced with military non-alignment.

There are several reasons that justify the selection of the topic for my research. Firstly, the concept of neutrality has been very rarely reflected in scholarly debate and IR theory debate. Secondly, the relevance of the neutrality concept in modern IR has been questioned by many scholars, for example Max Jakobson or Tomas Ries. Thirdly, the topic covers both theoretical (concept) and empirical/practical (phenomenon) aspect of neutrality. Fourthly, thanks to its long tradition of specific relations with Russia and being a European peripheral country, Finland is an interesting case-study to discover the relevance of neutrality today. This is thanks to its membership in the EU, participation in NATO Partnership for Peace programme and debate about possible membership in this organisation.

² Hanspeter Neuhold, “The Neutral States in Europe: Similarities and Differences,” in *Neutrality. Changing Concepts and Practices*, ed. Alan T. Leonhard (Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1988), 107.

1.1. Literature review

Former Finnish president Mauno Koivisto stated once in his memoirs that “Non-alignment is an objective concept: a country either is a member of a military alliance or it is not. Neutrality is a relative term. One is neutral in relation to something...³”. The subjective nature of the concept of neutrality caused many problems with interpretations and with explaining the change that happened in Finnish security policy after the end of the Cold-War.

Efraim Karsh argued that since 1956 when Urho Kekkonen became president of Finland, “neutrality has become a cornerstone of Finnish foreign policy⁴”. He identifies the passive and active aspects of this concept in a Finnish way – avoiding any involvement in conflicts between great powers, lessening international tensions, as well as enhancing favourable conditions for *détente*. Pernille Rieker argues that, in contrast to Swedes, Finns have developed a pragmatic attitude to neutrality⁵ that helped them to easily adapt to new circumstances related to the abandoning of this status and shifting to its hardcore, namely military non-alignment. According to Gunilla Herolf, who refers to Tiilikainen, Finnish neutrality was rather “instrumental” and certainly not “ideological” as it was in Sweden⁶. Tuomas Forsberg and Tapani Vaahtoranta add that the “neutrality in war is regarded (...) only as an option, not as the only possibility⁷”.

³ Mauno Koivisto, *Foreign Policy Standpoints 1982-1992: Finland and Europe*, trans. Pearl Lönnfors (Henley on Thames: Aidan Ellis Publishing, 1992), 220.

⁴ Efraim Karsh, “International Co-Operation and Neutrality,” *Journal of Peace Research* 25, no. 1 (March 1988): 93.

⁵ Pernille Rieker, *Europeanization of National Security Identity: The EU and the Changing Security Identities of the Nordic States* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 91.

⁶ Gunilla Herolf, “The Nordic countries and the EU-NATO relationship: further comments,” in *The Nordic Countries and the European Security and Defence Policy*, ed. Alyson J.K. Bailes, Gunilla Herolf, Bengt Sundelius (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2006), 70.

⁷ Tuomas Forsberg and Tapani Vaahtoranta, “Inside the EU, Outside NATO: Paradoxes of Finland's and Sweden's Post-Neutrality,” *European Security* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 78.

The change in Finnish security policy after the end of the Cold War was not so obvious. In 1990 Finnish Prime Minister Harri Holkeri stated that becoming a part of EU would mean giving up Finnish independence. In 2008 foreign minister Alexander Stubb made clear that Finland is no more neutral due to its membership in the EU⁸. The change had taken place, although the issue itself causes some controversies and it is hard to find a single and coherent explanation of what happened.

However, Henrikki Heikka argues that the Finnish post Cold-War policy should be better understood not as a change, but rather as continuity. He argues that Finnish strategic culture “has always been based on a republican understanding of Finland’s role in defending an anti-hegemonic security order in Europe⁹”. This view is also supported by Hannu Himanen, who argues that the transformation of the early 1990s “was seen more as an expression of continuity in adapting to a change [the end of Cold War] than a break from tradition¹⁰”. In my thesis I will support this view and argue that the change from neutrality to membership in the EU and co-operation with NATO in the middle of the 90s, and therefore shifting to military non-alignment, was a limited change and it’s possible to observe some signs of continuity today.

Max Jakobson, a Finnish diplomat, characterised Finnish security policy as being “at the crossroads of two concepts (...) that are partly overlapping and complementary, partly competing in post Cold-War Europe¹¹”. In this context he mentions the EU integration as the soft power concept of security, and presence of NATO as a hard power security. These two organisations are perceived by Finland as key instruments

⁸ Stubb to Lavrov: “Finland is not neutral”: Finnish and Russian foreign ministers to meet in Moscow Tuesday, *Helsingin Sanomat*, November 10, 2008. <http://www.hs.fi/english/article/1135240964935> (accessed May 1, 2009).

⁹ Henrikki Heikka, “Republican Realism: Finnish Strategic Culture in Historical Perspective,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 40, no. 1 (2005): 91.

¹⁰ Hannu Himanen, “Finland,” in *Neutrality and non-alignment in Europe today*, ed. Hanna Ojanen (Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2003), 20.

¹¹ Max Jakobson, *Finland in the New Europe* (Westport, London: Praeger, 1998), 121.

of stabilisation and security in Europe¹². The paradox of the Finnish attitude towards these bodies, as Forsberg and Vaahtoranta claim, is best characterised by a slogan “Inside EU, Outside NATO”. This paradox caused that Finland and its security policy have been called by the World as both “Realist” and a Constructivist “good European¹³”.

In relation to the European Union, the importance of the values and identity in Finnish choices regarding its security was mainly supported by Himanen, who stated that “Finland’s membership of the EU was significantly connected with identity...¹⁴”, as well as by Teija Tiilikainen, who adds even that “the identity (...) formed a basis for Finnish EU policy¹⁵”. Also Rieker writes that the decision to join the EU was “a strategy for strengthening Finland’s western identity¹⁶”, although it was defined as incompatible with the neutral status as “Finland could not be impartial in a conflict between the Union and a third party”, as Kari Möttölä writes¹⁷. There seems to be a consensus among authors that the EU option in Finnish security policy is mainly perceived through Constructivist lenses that put more light on issues such as identity formation, socialisation, values and interests.

The EU option is less problematic than the non-alignment, or better to say “non-NATO”, option. Jakobson’s vague explanation that “because Finland is an EU member, it has not had an urgent need to join NATO¹⁸” seems not to be convincing. Rieker seems to explain the non-alignment choice of Finland in Realist terms, arguing that “geopolitics and the struggle for independence have a central place in Finnish national security

¹² Pertti Torstila, “Finland and NATO,” *Crossroads - The Macedonian Foreign Policy Journal* no. 3 (2007): 213.

¹³ Hanna Ojanen, “Finland: Rediscovering Its Nordic Neighbours After an EU Honeymoon?” *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 3 (2005): 407.

¹⁴ Hannu Himanen, “Finland”, op. cit., 22.

¹⁵ Teija Tiilikainen, “Finland - An EU Member with a Small State Identity,” *European Integration* 28, no. 1 (March 2006): 77.

¹⁶ Pernille Rieker, *Europeanization of National...*, op. cit., 97.

¹⁷ Kari Möttölä, “Finland,” in *Challenges to Neutral and Non-Aligned Countries in Europe and Beyond*, ed. Emily Munro (Geneva: Geneva Centre for Security Policy, 2005), 17.

¹⁸ Max Jakobson, *Finnish Neutrality...*, op. cit., 120.

identity¹⁹” and that the primary goal of Finland’s policy is to ensure that the country will not become an object in the great powers’ play, which is still regarded as a possible scenario²⁰. NATO is still perceived by many as a relict of the Cold War and possible membership would “upset Russia”, the big and still unpredictable neighbour.

1.2. Research question, hypotheses, methodology and theoretical framework

The main aim of this thesis is to analyse why change occurred in Finnish security policy, when it comes to neutrality, after the end of the Cold War. In order to answer this major question I am going to answer several other important questions, such as: What were the incentives of giving up the neutrality status, which has guaranteed Finland quite a wide range of possibilities? How was the neutrality connected with Finnish national identity? How the change was explained in domestic policy and what is the role of domestic incentives in formulating foreign and security policy? Why is Finland “keeping all doors open” when it comes to membership in NATO and why did this country join the Partnership for Peace programme? Finally, how is a policy of neutrality and non-alignment (in)compatible with the membership in the EU and close co-operation with NATO? What are Finnish security objectives and in what ways are they being realised?

Therefore, the main research question that I am going to answer in the thesis is: ***Why was there such a significant change in Finnish security policy after the Cold War when it comes to neutrality?*** In the thesis I will argue and explain that:

¹⁹ Pernille Rieker, *Europeanization of National...*, op. cit., 94.

²⁰ According to the Finnish government’s report, „the great powers have demonstrated that they are willing and able to use military force in defence of their interest as well as in strengthening their great-power status”. See: *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2009...*, op. cit., 37.

- a) *Neutrality has not become a core element of Finnish national identity nor had a strong historical background to defend it.*
- b) *Despite considerable change that occurred in external environment after the end of the Cold War, the change that occurred in Finnish security policy has some signs of continuity in its strategic culture.*

To test these hypotheses the following methodology will be used. First of all, the analysis of primary or secondary material (national security strategies, interviews, selected books and articles dealing with the topic, public opinion surveys) that is available in English and covers mainly the 1990-2009 period. Secondly, the material collected during in depth interviews with people directly involved in the process of creating security policies (politicians, researchers, public servants) that took place during my research trip to Helsinki in late April 2009.

Because the core element of this research is connected with security, two main International Relations theories will be used: Realism and Constructivism as they are mostly related to the concepts of power and identity. The change in Finnish security policy related to the concept of neutrality has been associated mainly to structural, institutional and ideational factors. These two theories reflect the “Janus-face” of Finnish security policy in the best, although not the only, way. Constructivism will be used to explain the integration process with the European Union. I will analyse the tremendous choice made by Finland concerning its membership and giving up neutral status by looking at Finnish identity and interests. I will then explain how the change from neutrality to its minimum, non-alignment, was rooted in Finnish identity.

To explain the NATO option and military non-alignment I will use Realist theory. Finland’s main goal has been to ensure its own survival. The main choice was to rely on no-one but itself and own capabilities. Therefore the NATO option was rejected as it would not help Finland in securing its own survival and interests. NATO has been

perceived as a relict of the Cold War aimed against Finland's neighbour – Russia, which is still seen as a great power. Neo-classical realist approach will be used to explain the foreign and security policy decisions also through the domestic incentives and domestic perception of the system.

1.3. The structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of Introduction, where I provide the background of my research, literature review, research questions and hypotheses as well as the structure of the thesis, as well as of four main chapters and conclusions.

In the second chapter I will briefly explain the historical development of the neutrality concept, provide various definitions as well as present the condition of neutrality/non-alignment today. The third chapter is a theoretical one, where I provide a framework for further explanations. The fourth chapter deals with a Finnish case, namely with the origins of Finnish neutrality and its importance for foreign and security policy. The fifth chapter is an attempt to explain the change that occurred after the end of the Cold War using several factors grouped in three areas: external, domestic and identity.

In the last part of the thesis I will raise the question of continuity in Finnish security policy and strategic thinking and briefly conclude my findings.

2. Towards understanding neutrality

In this chapter I will focus on the concept of neutrality and its hardcore non-alignment. I will first briefly present the historical development of the concept. Later on, I will try to present various definitions of neutrality present in the literature and choose the one that would be the most appropriate for my research. Finally, I will focus on the condition of neutrality in the modern world.

2.1. Historical development of the concept

Efraim Karsh stated once that the idea of neutrality was “developed as an addendum, a by-product of the concept of war, and not as a conceptually and judicially separate and independent idea²¹”. Neutrality, in most cases, has been linked to the war as there have always been people who opt for staying outside the conflict.

According to Alfred P. Rubin, one of the earliest and most famous disputes regarding neutrality was the Melian Dialogue from 416 B.C. Melos was politically and legally linked to Sparta, but tried to maintain neutrality in the Peloponnesian War. Athenians rejected these arguments because they were against the natural law that reflected the gods’ will that the man should rule wherever he can. Athenians killed all the people of Melos shortly after²². The similar situation happened with Corcyroceans who asked Athenians to remain neutral in their conflict with Corinthians.

²¹ Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (London, New York: Routledge, 1988), 13.

²² Alfred P. Rubin, “The Concept of Neutrality in International Law,” in *Neutrality. Changing Concepts and Practices*. ed. Alan T. Leonhard, op. cit., 11-12.

It is also impossible not to mention here the teachings of Aristotle from Athens who argued that neutrality is permissible only when it is acceptable by the legislator/ruler of the system within which it is asserted. Otherwise it was perceived as being reluctant, and therefore not acceptable. In the Middle Ages there were some signs of willingness to accept that certain states or rulers are neutral and even to legitimise their rights derived from that status. But for St. Augustine, father of the “just war concept”, neutrality was still morally reprehensible and illegal. According to his arguments there was a moral obligation to oppose unjust. Staying neutral in situations that required action was not acceptable.

Alberico Gentili, following the father of modern International Law Francesco Suarez, developed and elaborated technical rules of neutrality, mainly based on the Maritime law. According to these rules, any ship under “neutral” flag could go entirely free and trade even with enemies “without fear of capture and condemnation...²³”. Hugo Grotius perceived neutrality “primarily [as] a policy of value judgement²⁴”. According to him, the essence of this concept was changing according to the context and specific nature of a certain war. The value judgement was a key factor in understanding the neutrality in the 17th century.

The next century brought several important developments. Although not universally accepted, the ideas developed by Swiss philosopher Emerich de Vattel, made a significant contribution to the understanding of neutrality. According to Vattel, neutral states are “those who take no one’s part, remaining friends common to both parties, and not favouring the armies of one of them to the prejudice of the other²⁵”.

In 1780 a group of European states created “The First League of Armed Neutrality” in order to protect their neutral status. The League included Russia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Prussia, and later on Austria, Portugal and Sicily. In 1800-1801 Russia,

²³ Alfred P. Rubin, *The Concept...*, op. cit., 18

²⁴ Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality...*, op. cit., 15.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, 15.

Denmark, Sweden and Prussia founded the Second League. In 1856 the Declaration of Paris contributed to the codification of rules of neutrality related to the maritime warfare. But one of the most famous documents from the 18th century regarding neutrality was the American “Proclamation of Neutrality” issued by George Washington on April 22, 1793²⁶. The declaration led to “Neutrality Act” of 1794. Although the term “neutrality” does not appear in the text, the United States declared itself *de facto* neutral in the conflict between France and Great Britain and prohibited any help offered to those nations.

But it was the Vienna Congress from 1815 that made an important contribution to the institutionalisation of neutrality in International Law. Switzerland was imposed a permanent neutral status that was formally recognised by major players in a multilateral treaty. In 1839 same status was granted to Belgium and in 1867 to Luxembourg.

The first Geneva multilateral convention regarding the condition of the wounded persons in war was signed by most of the European states in 1864. According to the provisions of this convention, ambulances and military hospitals should be “*neuter*” and protected by all belligerents as long as they were used by civilians. Similar provisions were adopted in 1899 and 1907 Hague conventions. All the conventions, especially The Hague V Convention and Hague XIII Conventions, confirmed the legal status of neutrality and provided certain rights and obligations for neutrals. They are considered as “the ultimate institutionalisation of neutrality in International Law²⁷”.

During the World War I the great powers didn’t put much attention to the rules of International Law, and invaded neutral Belgium on the first day of the war. Nonetheless, the neutrality was generally respected during the war and the Hague Conventions helped to keep the military actions away from neutral territories. After the war there were several unsuccessful attempts to establish a political co-operation between neutrals in Europe. The

²⁶ For full text see: “The Proclamation of Neutrality 1793,” The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/neutra93.asp (accessed May 2, 2009).

²⁷ Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality...*, op. cit., 19.

best examples were so-called “Oslo States” in 1930s. This political co-operation included Finland as well. With the World War II the major powers respected neutrality even less than it was the case during the previous war and from more than twenty declared neutrals, only a few managed to stay outside the conflict. This caused the reduction in the number of European neutrals, which nowadays could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The post-war world with strong divisions between West and East, the Cold War, arms race made some leaders to think seriously about their uncertain future in the shadows of a great-power rivalry. In 1955 president Nasser of Egypt, prime minister Nehru of India and Yugoslav president Broz Tito created the Non-Alignment Movement that nowadays has 118 members, including mainly developing countries, such as Afghanistan, Chile, Cuba, Egypt, or Venezuela. The movement wanted to stay outside the bloc rivalry and emphasised mutual non-aggression, equality, peaceful co-existence or respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty²⁸.

2.2. Defining neutrality

One of the greatest political philosophers Niccolo Machiavelli defined once neutrality as a “zero-sum game”, saying that “The conqueror does not want doubtful friends who do not help him when he is in difficulties; the loser repudiates you because you were unwilling to go, arms in hand, and throw in your lot with him...²⁹”.

This policy is not free from controversies, contrasts, doubts and paradoxes. The Latin word “*neuter*” means “neither of two”. For ages neutrality has been treated

²⁸ These rules are called „Ten Principles of Bandung”. See: “Background Information (International context, founders, principles),” Non-Aligned Movement, <http://canada.cubanoal.cu/ingles/index.html> (accessed May 2, 2009).

²⁹ Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality...*, op. cit., 1.

as strange phenomenon and the will to reject the use of physical force in order to ensure foreign policy goals or own security has been perceived as immoral or even hypocritical. The concept is not a wide philosophical notion, but a legal institution developed throughout the ages in the social and political activities. It is an attempt, having its roots in international law, to guarantee realisation of state's national interests that include maintaining sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence. Yet, it's hard to find a commonly accepted and comprehensive definition of neutrality.

Efraim Karsh describes a neutral state as a state which “continues to view the advantages of neutrality as by far exceeding its inherent deficiencies” and sees the “aspiration to avoid being dragged into the wars of others as natural and logical goal³⁰”. Neutral state expects that his most fundamental values will be respected by others by avoiding any steps that might violate these values. Philip M. Brown adds that neutrality may be treated as a “right of a nation to remain at peace with other nations...³¹”. George B. Davis emphasises that neutral state “(...) shall continue to maintain the relations of amity that existed with the belligerents at the outbreak of the war, that only the most necessary restraints shall be imposed upon his domestic and foreign relations...³²”.

Karsh argues also that the International Law “conceives of neutrality as a two-way road, as a system of reciprocal and highly-defined rights and obligations between the neutral state and the belligerents³³”. Certainly it is not a “free ride”, but a very costly and difficult policy demanding a strong public support and consensus³⁴. That is why only a few countries decided to keep such status. Karsh focuses also on external and internal dimensions of violation of the neutral status. External dimension includes “any and all

³⁰ Ibidem, 2.

³¹ Philip M. Brown, “Neutrality,” *The American Journal of International Law* 33, no. 4 (October 1939): 726.

³² George B. Davis, “Neutrality,” *The Yale Law Journal* 24, no. 2 (December 1914): 89.

³³ Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality...*, op. cit., 21.

³⁴ Michael H. Haltzel, “The complex position of the European neutrals,” in *Between the blocs: Problems and prospects...*, op. cit., xix.

steps taken by the belligerent camps that in some way transfer the war to the territory of the neutral state (...) against it will...” and internal dimension is closely related to the principle of impartiality. This principle, which is regarded fundamental for neutrality, has two elements that neutral state can not breach.

- a) **active** – neutral state is obliged to prevent rival forces from using or exploiting its own territory for any military purposes;
- b) **passive** – neutral state is prohibited to deliver any kind of support to one of the belligerents in a way that may injure the other side.

According to Sigmund Widmer, there are several forms of neutrality³⁵. He distinguishes (1) **superpower neutrality**, when a large power often declares itself neutral towards a certain conflict in the world in which it does not want to participate and has no interests. The best example is US neutrality during the WWII until the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941; (2) **ad hoc neutrality**, when country does not want to oblige itself to remain neutral for a longer period and its neutral attitude is only occasional. This behaviour is often called neutralism; (3) **permanent neutrality** is the opposite attitude with a deeper meaning. One of the examples could be Malta which adopted this status in 1981. Within this group there are also several states, such as Belgium (1919-1939), Vatican (1929-) or Austria (1955-) that were neutralised by the decision of more powerful states and several that self-imposed the neutral status. These are Finland³⁶ after the World War II or Sweden since 1815.

According to Surya P. Subedi, there are several commonly-accepted rules of permanent neutrality: “a) Renunciation of the right to go to war; b) non-participation in war between belligerents, c) prohibition of the use of neutral territory for military

³⁵ Sigmund Widmer, “Forms of Neutrality,” in *Between the blocs: Problems and prospects...*, op. cit., 19-23.

³⁶ This example is debatable as it is not sure if Finnish decision to become neutral was done alone or under the strong pressure of the Soviet Union.

purposes, d) absence of foreign military forces/bases, e) prohibition of the use of neutral military facilities by foreign powers, f) non-participation in military alliances, g) duty to defend the neutrality, and h) impartiality towards belligerents³⁷”.

Finally, (4) **non-aligned countries** that during the Cold War were allies neither to Western nor Eastern bloc. Nowadays the term is used mainly in the context peace-time relationships and actions aimed on staying outside military organisations. Nevertheless, in the event of warfare, non-aligned states “would be obliged to declare themselves either as neutral or at war³⁸”. In this definition, provided by Karsh, we can distinguish one major difference between neutrality and non-alignment. The former relates mainly to the war-time and latter to the peace-time actions.

When it comes to the features of neutrality it is possible to distinguish, for example, armed **neutrality** which is a posture of a neutral state that makes clear that it will defend itself against any attacks. States such as Switzerland or Sweden have made significant steps in order to prepare the country to defend itself in case of war. The **neutrality of opinion** is a second possible feature. Usually, being a neutral does not prevent a state from making judgements about other states or from taking clear political positions. Some neutrals, like Switzerland, feels even obliged to take a position on important global issues, such as breaking the human rights.

For the purposes of this thesis, I will use the following definition of neutrality: Neutrality is a certain foreign/security policy behaviour of a state that is aimed to avoid confrontation, being involved in a potential conflict, taking a part in military or political

³⁷ Surya P. Subedi, “Neutrality in a Changing World: European Neutral States and the European Community,” *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (April 1993): 248..

³⁸ Here the distinction between neutrality in traditional sense and neutralism should be drawn. Neutralism was developed in the second half of the 20th ct. as a political movement focusing mainly on “non-alignment with a particular side in the confrontation between the two superpower blocs”. Traditional neutrality is more like a jurisprudential institution with a strong link to the concept of war and background in International Law. It does not make an obligation for a state to restrain from making ideological choices or expressing preferences. Neutralism is a political concept with no base in International Law treated as a foreign policy tool and with strong ideological background. See: Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality...*, op. cit., 28-29. Ibidem, 28.

organisations, and to maintain the best possible relations with other states, in order to realise and maximise own national interests and goals, including (but not limited to) territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. The military non-alignment is therefore a hard-core of neutrality and means staying out of any military organisations or bloc during the peace-time with the option to be neutral or at war when the conflict appears.

2.3. The condition of neutrality and non-alignment today

With small exceptions, neutrality as a concept used in foreign and security policy has remained mainly a European phenomenon. Of course there were many examples when neutrality was adopted *ad hoc* in a specific conflict. But in such cases the concept had not been rooted in states' policies. Therefore it might be useful to focus on Europe and European neutrals to portray the condition of neutrality/non-alignment today.

In October 1955 Austrian parliament adopted "The Neutrality Act" that declared Austria permanently neutral and contained an obligation that the country will never join any military alliances. Austrian neutrality is not a treaty obligation, but a sovereign act of a legislative body announced to all states with which the country maintained diplomatic relations in 1955.

During the Cold War the country adopted so-called "active neutrality" by joining the United Nations without serious reservations. UN members acknowledged the fact of Austrian neutrality and did not expect this country to "participate in any measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter that might stand in contradiction to Austrian neutrality³⁹". Active neutrality could be observed in sending troops to the UN peace-keeping operations, taking part in the sanctions on Rhodesia in 1966 or in granting over-flight rights to the

³⁹ Thomas Hajnoczi, "Austria," in *Challenges to Neutral and Non-Aligned...*, op. cit., 8.

forces fighting in Iraq in 1991. In 1994 two-thirds of Austrians voted in favour of joining the European Union with a special provision added to the Federal Constitution that Austria's participation in the CFSP would not be impeded by the Neutrality Act. Austria actively supported the development of the ESDP. Nowadays, Austrian neutrality has been reduced to its core, namely not participation in wars, joining military alliance or permitting foreign troops on its territory and is best described as “solidarity within the EU, neutrality outside Europe⁴⁰”.

Swiss neutrality, sometimes called “classical”, was recognised by major European powers during the Vienna Congress in 1815 and is explicitly mentioned in the Swiss Federal Constitution. Paul Seger argues that it has never been treated as a constitutional principle, but rather as a “means to protect Swiss independence in peace and security⁴¹”, including also a preventive measures to save the country from “dividing along cultural and linguistic lines⁴²”. As Philippe Welti argues, neutrality in Switzerland became an essential part of Swiss national identity⁴³. The main component of Swiss neutrality is based on avoiding any involvement in international conflicts or in situations that might lead to one. The country has been actively participating in international cooperation, also applying UN Security Council's resolutions even before becoming a member of this organisation as these measures were not considered “acts of war⁴⁴”. This pragmatic approach was confirmed when the country joined the NATO's Partnership for Peace programme in 1996 and the UN in 2002. The General Assembly accepted country's neutrality reservation with “silent” assent⁴⁵.

⁴⁰ Hanspeter Neuhold, “Comments on the Austrian position,” in *Challenges to Neutral and Non-Aligned...*, op. cit., 16.

⁴¹ Paul Seger, “Switzerland,” in *Challenges to Neutral and Non-Aligned...*, op. cit., 47.

⁴² Philippe Welti, “Switzerland,” in *Neutrality and non-alignment...*, op. cit., 53.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, 53.

⁴⁴ Paul Seger, “Switzerland”, op. cit., 48.

⁴⁵ Fred Tanner, “Comments on the Swiss positions,” in *Neutrality and non-alignment...*, op. cit., 58.

Sweden is one of a very few states in Europe that has enjoyed peace for more than 200 years. The most recent war experience is dates back to Napoleon wars in 1814. Since then, the country has been improving its own image through active neutrality policy and bridge-building activities⁴⁶. Nowadays, Sweden's security is based on military non-alignment, which replaced neutrality in public discourse at the beginning of 1990s. It was the time when Sweden submitted its application for membership in the EU without any reservations regarding its neutral status. Sweden was eager to actively participate in ESDP, co-operate with NATO through the PfP (since 1994) or offer military support to the Baltic States. Swedish government decided to participate in various UN, EU or NATO-led peace-support and peace-enforcement missions. Swedish neutrality/non-alignment have not been enshrined in the constitution or formally proclaimed, although there were such attempts in 1899 or 1902.

The Irish case does not differ much from others. Since 1922, when the country gained its independence, neutrality has been some kind of expression of sovereignty. The main characteristic of Ireland's foreign and security policy nowadays is military non-alignment. It's a matter of choice rather than permanent neutrality based on legal basis⁴⁷. The United Nations are considered to be the main guarantor of Irish national security since Ireland joined this organisation in 1955. Ireland has been far from being ideologically neutral and made clear that the country will "not follow a sweeping policy of 'neutrality in international affairs', the effect of which may have been to distance Ireland from European and North American countries⁴⁸". The membership in the EU has not been perceived as being against military non-alignment as long as this organisation has a primarily economic/political character.

⁴⁶ Bo Huld, "Comments on the Swedish positions," in *Challenges to Neutral and Non-Aligned*, op. cit., 43.

⁴⁷ Keith McBean, "Ireland," in *Neutrality and non-alignment...*, op. cit., 30.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 33.

Concluding, there are several interesting similarities between European neutrals or non-aligned states. It seems that their status still enjoys a wide domestic support despite changes in international environment. It is also a very active international dimension of their security policies, including sending troops to peace-keeping missions. Except Switzerland, all those states are active members of the EU and strong supporters of its CFSP/ESDP. They all agree that there are no contradictions between their neutral/non-aligned status and developments in these policies.

The main problem or challenge nowadays, especially for countries that are members of the EU, is the future development of the mutual assistance obligation included into the Lisbon Treaty. The obligation, similar to that of NATO's Article V, would even more hamper the non-aligned status and would certainly require further discussions and changes in security doctrines. Finland has already declared that solidarity clause strengthens mutual solidarity among the EU members and that the country "acts in accordance with the (...) clause, (...) will provide assistance to the other Member States and expects the others to act likewise⁴⁹".

⁴⁹ *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2009...*, op. cit., 72.

3. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I will focus on two main theories that will be useful in explaining the change in Finnish security policy after the Cold War. Firstly, I will present main features of Realism, also its neo-classical variant that could be applied on the Finnish case. Later on, I will present main features of Constructivism. Finally, I will also present two alternative theories that might be relevant in this case.

3.1. Realist approach

Playing a central role in the development of International Relations discipline in the 20th century, Realism provides a key theoretical framework for understanding Finnish security policy during the Cold War and after its end. It is also a theory that has always played an important role in Finnish strategic culture. Realist arguments and a way of perceiving the world, power and International Relations are widely present in Finnish mentality.

One of the fathers of Realism Hans Morgenthau claims that the state is a primary actor in International Relations. He argues that the concept of security is closely linked to physical integrity and sovereignty⁵⁰. Although nowadays survival “makes up a remarkably small part of the motivation of most states⁵¹”, this element is also deeply rooted in Finnish mentality.

⁵⁰ Anthony D. Lott, *Creating Insecurity. Realism, Constructivism, and US Security Policy* (Aldershot, Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 11.

⁵¹ Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 147.

All these issues are at the heart of states' national interests. A state is secure when there is no physical danger of attack from abroad. The feeling of security results primarily from material conditions and is followed by psychological ones. For Morgenthau one of the main tasks of state is to minimise the level of uncertainty related to the security. Foreign policy must defend state's national interests against interests of others.

In anarchic orders, according to Waltz, each state has to count on its own resources in order to realise its national interests. A state has to count only on itself as there is nobody that will do it; there is no higher authority that could impose the order. Waltz mentions "self-help" in which states operate in anarchy. They can enter alliances with others, but "today's alliance partner might be tomorrow's enemy, and today's enemy might be tomorrow's alliance partner"⁵².

States can never be sure about the intentions of others. John Mearsheimer argues that "Uncertainty is unavoidable when assessing intentions, which simply means that states can never be sure that other states do not have offensive intentions to go to war..."⁵³. This is more evident in great-power politics of multipolar world than in bipolarity where "who is a danger to whom is never in doubt"⁵⁴. Realist counting on own capabilities and resources is also a key element of Finnish strategic thinking. This is seen in Finnish defence policy which constantly relies on a huge number of 350 thousand reserves, which is a phenomenon in Europe⁵⁵.

This leads to the next concern of Realists, namely the balance of power. Power occupies a central place in Realism and it seems to be a prerequisite for security. According to Waltz, power equates with military capabilities of state to protect its own

⁵² John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95): 11.

⁵³ Idem, "The False Promise of International Institutions", in Michael Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Steven E. Miller, eds. *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995), 337.

⁵⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), 170.

⁵⁵ Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

interests.. Power may be required for survival in a world that is far from being perfect and is simply dangerous. States need to possess power in order to survive, protect territorial integrity, sovereignty, and to realise national interests.

Possessing power is a signal of danger for other states. Therefore, state has to balance its own power with the power of others. In anarchy states are keener to “balance” (pursue relative gains) rather than “bandwagon” (pursue absolute gains). Waltz argues that in hierarchic order states tend to get closer to the leading actor in order to receive benefits. In anarchic orders, states always have to be aware of their own relative power and the power of others is always considered a threat or risk. In case of neutrals the main aim was to stay outside the rivalry as their own power was considered to weak to oppose the great powers.

As Donnelly writes, “the logic of balancing sees the victor not as a potential source of shared gain, but as a rising threat likely to turn on her “allies” when the opportunity presents itself⁵⁶”. In the case of Finland this argument is true when it comes to the reluctant will of this country to join NATO and co-operate more closely with the US, which is considered the “victor of the Cold War”. In Realist thinking, NATO was a clear manifestation of the bipolar system during the Cold War, and it was the balance of power that helped to maintain peace in Europe, not this organisation. As Mearsheimer argues “NATO was essentially an American tool for managing power in the face of the Soviet threat⁵⁷”. This argument along with the one that NATO has not significantly changed after the end of the Cold War is still in use in Finnish domestic debates⁵⁸.

Although one could argue that after the end of the Cold War there is only one dominating superpower, no one can neglect that there are more players present and active

⁵⁶ Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International...*, op. cit., 61.

⁵⁷ John Mearsheimer, “The False Promise...”, op. cit., 14.

⁵⁸ Hanna-Leena Hemming says that “(...) it is sad that people here want to talk about NATO as if it was kind of an old NATO from the Cold War and Warsaw Pact times (...). We should start to discuss what NATO nowadays is about...”. Interview with Hanna-Leena Hemming, MP, 20/04/2009.

in international politics. According to Mearsheimer, minor powers, and Finland can certainly be included into this category, “have considerable flexibility regarding alliance partners and can opt to be free floaters⁵⁹”. In a bipolar system minor states had difficulties with remaining unattached to one of the great powers which demanded allegiance from the former ones.

The author makes several interesting claims that can be easily applied to the Finnish case. For example that in multipolar world, a major state can not put effective military pressure on a minor state situated in a buffer zone. Alliances are one of the ways of burden sharing and states may opt for looking protection from the allies. Some states may also opt out of the balancing because they firmly believe that they will not become a target by the aggressor. Post-Cold War multipolar system is also an area of potential errors, such as underestimations or overestimations concerning own relative power or potential help of allies.

One of the variations of realism, namely neo-classical one, allows including domestic policy to the analysis of change. According to Lobell, Ripsman and Taliaferro, neo-classical realism is a “transmission belt” between systemic incentives and constraints (...) and the actual diplomatic, military, and foreign economic policies states select...⁶⁰”.

Neoclassical realists believe that states do not always seek security, but rather focus on shaping their close external environment⁶¹. This theory tries to explore all the internal processes and factors that are relevant in determining states’ actions and responses to the changes in their close environment. These factors could include the structure of domestic apparatus, decision-makers’ perceptions of international relations, their assessment

⁵⁹ John J. Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future. Instability in Europe After the Cold War,” *International Security* 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 15.

⁶⁰ Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 4.

⁶¹ Gideon Rose, “Neo-classical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (October 1998): 150.

of possible threats, or their ability to mobilise the public opinion in a certain direction. Finally, it could also be the role of societal actors and interest groups⁶². Taliaferro argues also that because there is always a subjective element in leaders' perceptions and calculations, foreign policy of a state in a short term may not be "efficient" or predictable⁶³. What is even more important, also in the case of Finnish security policy, is that leaders face serious difficulties convincing the public to make sacrifices for national security as an "average citizen does not have the time or expertise to understand the subtleties of balance-of-power politics⁶⁴". That would be shown in the next chapters.

3.2. Constructivist approach

Constructivism focuses mainly on ideas, perceptions, norms, concepts, identities and interests. International relations are perceived as a social construction which means an act that brings into being a subject that otherwise wouldn't exist. Constructivists ask how threats are recognised, enemies are labelled, what constitutes identity, and how important it is in creating national interests.

In the context of this thesis I will focus mainly on explaining what Constructivists say about security, identity and national interest formation. These issues are of crucial importance for my research and will help to understand the choices made by Finland at the beginning of the 90s related to country's national security.

⁶² Some authors, like Moravcsik, argue that if realists use relations state-society to explain things they are liberals, and if they use ideological differences as an explanation of variances in state interests they are constructivists. See: Brian Rathbun, "A Rose by Any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism," *Security Studies* 17 (2008): 299.

⁶³ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "State Building for Future Wars: Neoclassical Realism and the Resource-Extractive State," *Security Studies* 3 (July-September 2006): 485.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, 491.

It is often said that security is connected to all areas of personal relations in everyday life. Bill McSweeney claims that “(...) identity, interests, and moral choice... appear to be inseparably linked in any delegate account of security and security policy...⁶⁵”. Although “security is not a primarily object of foreign policy”, it can be brought to this function only if it involves a prior differentiation of “what is alien, other, or simply outside the state and therefore threatens it...⁶⁶”. For constructivists security does not have a fixed definition as it is a permanent process. Its main aim is to secure citizens against external dangers, but also to legitimize the state project and to perpetuate particular interests⁶⁷. In this process a state draws boundaries around what is considered foreign/other. National security is not simply a tool to protect physical integrity of a state, but it also provides a meaning to identity.

Authors differ in their assessment on how much the issue of culture, norms or identity matter in understanding the sources of security or insecurity, but one thing is clear. Identities are a necessary component “to robust understanding of the sources of insecurity⁶⁸”. It is clear that the identity of state “implies its preferences and consequent actions”, as Ted Hopf writes⁶⁹. What states decide to do and what they count as a security concern is closely connected to their sense of self. That’s why constructivists try to illuminate how the empirical analysis of identities may contribute to the study of security.

⁶⁵ Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity, and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 198.

⁶⁶ Bartelson as quoted in Anthony D. Lott, *Creating Insecurity: Realism, Constructivism, and US Security Policy* (Hants, Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 27.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 28.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 43.

⁶⁹ Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics, Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2002), 175.

According to Wendt, identities are “relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self [that are] inherently rational...⁷⁰”. Each person or state may have many identities that may overlap. Wendt distinguishes, among others, two main kinds of identities – type identities and role identities. The former are categories of states that share some features or characteristic, such as regime type or forms of state. A state can be at the same time a European state, Islamic state, democratic state etc. The latter are products of relationship between states and are “uniquely social [as] they exist only in relation to others⁷¹”. Here we can have enemies, rivals or friends. Wendt argues also that in order to create an identity the ideas held by the Self and by the Others are required. According to him, identities are constituted by internal and external structures⁷².

Identities are the basis of interests that are not given, but rather constructed, or defined in the socialisation process of international and domestic politics. There are debates about which dimension plays bigger role. Wendt claims it is the international environment, whereas Katzenstein opts for identity arising from domestic national ideologies.

Katzenstein argues that states’ national interests related to the security are also socially constructed through the process of interaction with other actors or institutions that are reacting and responding to the impulses coming⁷³. Wendt argues that usually what states do to each other affect the social structure in which they exist, by logic

⁷⁰ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 397.

⁷¹ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001): 399.

⁷² Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 224-25.

⁷³ Peter J. Katzenstein, “Introduction,” in *The Culture of National Security. Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 2.

of reciprocity⁷⁴. Therefore social factors and social relations with others also have an impact on national security and its perception.

Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein argue that culture and identity constrain states' behaviour and give meanings to their interests. In order to understand states' behaviour, choices made and security interests it's necessary to apply ideational structure. Any variation or change in state identity may cause the change in its security interests and behaviour⁷⁵. The behaviour and identity of political agents are, according to Constructivist, "socially constructed by collective meanings, interpretations and assumptions about the world⁷⁶" around them. What is important here is the fact that agents (states) can make structures and transform them. Therefore the system does not constrain agents, but helps them to develop and shape their identity⁷⁷.

3.3. Alternative theories and explanations

One of the alternative theories that could explain the change in Finnish foreign and security policy after the Cold War, and especially the abandonment of neutrality in order to become a member of the European Union, is liberalism. According to this theory, economic considerations of states are a primary source of stability and give prospects for peace. Power in military terms is rejected. The most important desire of states is to achieve

⁷⁴ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20, no. 1 (Summer 1995): 77.

⁷⁵ Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norm, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in *The Culture of National Security...*, op. cit., 60.

⁷⁶ Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 3 (1997): 324.

⁷⁷ Wendt argued that "the anarchy is what states make of it", meaning that anarchy does not automatically create self-help states and that the key missing element in studying anarchy is identity. According to him, self-help is only one of the possible responses of states to anarchy. States formulate their interests and formulate their preferences according to their world views and the images of other they have. These views or images are shaped during a process of interaction or socialisation with others, they are socially constructed. See: Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States..., op. cit., 394.

prosperity and economic well-being of their citizens. Therefore, economic welfare is put far above all other concerns, also those related to security. Liberal economic co-operation among states leads to the creation of a barrier-free economic exchange which is a key tool to ensure stability.

One of the ways to foster liberalism is to create international regimes or institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund or the European Union. Such institutions help to promote further liberalisation, economic co-operation, they bolster prosperity and well-being of states⁷⁸. Participation in liberal economic organisations is also a way to increase country's prestige and influence as well as creates positive partner-like atmosphere among member states⁷⁹. This reduces the possibility of conflicts. Economic incentives were one of the most important ones for Finland seeking membership in the European Union. Being a member of this organisation was one of the ways to escape from huge economic crisis the country faced after the collapse of trade links with the Soviet Union that constituted almost 1/5 of all Finnish trade⁸⁰.

The second alternative, also useful in the context of Finland, is a theory of small states. Although there is some confusion on what a small state is, this term is usually applied either on states with small territory and population or low GDP level⁸¹, or on states which perceive themselves small in a particular context.

Finland with its 5,3-million population is a relatively small state when compared to neighbouring Russia. But from the perspective of Estonia, Finland might be a great

⁷⁸ John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future...", op. cit., 15.

⁷⁹ Liberal institutionalists would argue here that institutions really matter and they can alter state preferences and therefore change state behaviour. This theory focuses on explaining the reasons behind economic co-operation. Each state has strong reasons to co-operate and not to co-operate. The cost-benefit calculation is important. Liberal institutionalists deal mainly with economy and not with security, therefore this theory can not provide a comprehensive answer to the problem raised in this thesis.

⁸⁰ Haavisto argues that Finland, which was in a "double recession", had a strong need to become a member of the EU as it was "an excellent window for our industry to sell products in stable market (...) that could replace the Eastern one". Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

⁸¹ Iver B. Neumann and Christine Ingebritsen, *Small States in International Relations* (Reykjavik, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 6.

power. Small states are often defined as what they are not – not middle or great powers. And in a situation when there are only one or two great powers present in the world politics, it is possible to claim that all other states are small. Nevertheless, when assessing the “smallness” of the state one needs to take into account several factors, such as “the perception of leaders about their own state, other states and the link between self and other⁸²”.

Håkan Wiberg presents a typology of small states’ alignments related to security. In his opinion, the majority of small states are in a bilateral alliance with a major power; in an alliance of two or more small states; or they belong to a multilateral alliance around one or more major powers. They can also stay non-aligned with the aim of being neutral in any war or without any aims related to neutrality⁸³.

Due to limited capabilities and possibilities to influence the external environment, small states are very often treated as an object in the game of more powerful states. Small states very often find themselves under direct and indirect pressure coming from other states that aim to influence the domestic and foreign policies of “lilliputians”. Small states that have a powerful neighbour are in the most difficult situation as there are more ways to exert a pressure on them.

With the emergence of constructivist emphasis on ideational factors, small states may “be able to play the role of norm entrepreneurs influencing world politics⁸⁴” or perform many other roles, such as promoting peace, being a bridge-builders etc. Although Neumann and Ghstöl argue that with the end of bipolarity small states may gain

⁸² Fredrik Doerer, *In Search of Security. Foreign Policy Change in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden, 1988-1993* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2008), 13.

⁸³ Håkan Wiberg, “The Security of Small Nations: Challenges and Defences,” *Journal of Peace Research* 24, no. 4 (December 1987): 343.

⁸⁴ Iver B. Neumann, Sieglinde Ghstöl, “Introduction. Lilliputians in Gulliver’s World?,” in *Small States...*, op. cit., 14-15.

some room to manoeuvre, their situation is difficult and they always have to take into account their limited capabilities.

For Finland, a country with “small state identity⁸⁵”, one of the best ways to strengthen its position and make its voice heard in Europe was a membership in the European Union, where all states are treated equally⁸⁶. Membership was also considered a “security bonus”.

3.4. Expected findings

The first hypothesis that I will be evaluating in this thesis claims that neutrality has not become a core element of Finnish national identity nor had a strong historical background to defend it. Looking at this hypothesis from the constructivist point of view, one may expect that neutrality should be an integral part of Finnish national identity. Realism does not put much attention to national identity, culture, values and norms as it focuses mainly on power and structures. Therefore from, from realist point of view one may not expect that neutrality should be a part of Finnish identity. Summing up, the first hypothesis confirms realist arguments and disconfirms Constructivist ones.

The second hypothesis claims that the change that occurred in Finnish security policy after the end of the Cold War was not a drastic one and has some signs of continuity. Realism would assume that there should be a considerable change after the end of the Cold War caused by the breakdown of a classical power structure in close external environment. Constructivism would expect continuity. Therefore, this hypothesis confirms constructivist and disconfirms realist arguments.

⁸⁵ Teija Tiilikainen, “Finland - An EU Member...”, op. cit., 74.

⁸⁶ Helena Partanen points to his argument by saying „When you are sitting at tables where discussions are going on, it enhances your security and you are not affected so much by other capitals”. Interview with Helena Partanen, Ministry of Defence (MoD), 22/04/2009.

4. A “deviant case” – Finnish neutrality and its importance

This short chapter opens the crucial part of the thesis and serves as a short introduction to the Finnish neutrality. I will explain here the origins of Finnish neutrality with a special attention put on 1948 Treaty and try to assess its importance for Finnish security policy.

4.1. Origins of Finnish neutrality

After many centuries of being a part of Sweden and Russia, Finland declared its independence in December, 1917. Since the beginning Finnish authorities tried to avoid being drawn into conflicts and did their best to stay outside the growing tensions in Europe. Already in 1932, Finland made first steps in order to secure the country by signing a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union. In 1935, the parliament declared Finland’s adherence to the Scandinavian neutrality.

During the interwar period Finland became an object of political interplay between Germany from one side, and the neighbouring Soviet Union on the other. Soviet territorial claims and reluctance of the Nordic neighbours to support Finland made clear that Finns need to prepare for the worst case scenario and for “a prolonged period of pressure and tension⁸⁷”.

It also became clear that neutrality was not the best option to keep at that time as the Soviet forces attacked Finland in November, 1939. Finnish troops of 160,000 men

⁸⁷ Max Jakobson, *Finnish Neutrality. A Study of Finnish Foreign Policy Since the Second World War* (New York, Washington: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1968), 12.

had to fight with more than 460,000 Red Army's troops along the 1,200 km-long border. The Winter War is considered to be one "of the milestones in the history of independent Finland⁸⁸" together with the Continuation War from 1941-1944. This time Finland, together with the Germans, fought against Russians. These two wars and lessons learned from them became the foundations of Finnish security policy during the Cold War and made an impact on what we have nowadays.

After the sympathy the country received during fights against the Soviets, the Peace Treaty of 1947 was perceived by Finland as a bitter betrayal of the Western powers. Finland was treated with cautiousness as a former enemy and had to obey harsh reparations, territorial losses and military restrictions. For the Soviets Paris conference was also a firm occasion to warn Finland. Molotov's deputy Vyshinsky told Finnish Prime Minister Pekkala "Just try to move the frontier closer to Leningrad with the aid of the Western powers and you will see what happens to you...⁸⁹".

All these experiences made clear that Finland will always have to take into consideration the presence of its powerful neighbour on the East and that the security guarantees of the West are not useful as the world politics and power constellations often change. Finland was too small and weak to effectively oppose the Soviet pressures.

Tomas Ries draws several lessons that Finland learned. Firstly, Finland is a Western state belonging to the Western family of states and Russia is a completely different story. Secondly, because of the geography Finland will be always tied to its Eastern neighbour and isolated from the Western community. Thirdly, as Finland is "tiny" the "huge" Eastern neighbour can exert massive political or military pressure against Finland⁹⁰.

⁸⁸ Tomas Ries, "Lessons of the Winter War," Virtual Finland, <http://finland.fi/netcomm/news/showarticle.asp?intNWSAID=25937> (accessed May 11, 2009).

⁸⁹ Max Jakobson, *Finnish Neutrality...*, op. cit., 28

⁹⁰ Tomas Ries, „Lessons of the Winter War”, op. cit.

As Max Jakobson writes, “the Finns too were burdened with the lessons of history; all they wanted was to be left alone⁹¹”, therefore any kind of military co-operation was perceived as not possible and inconsistent with desired neutral position. War hero marshall Mannerheim resigned in 1946 and was replaced by Juho Paasikivi. The two-level game of new Finnish president had two aims. For the domestic audience the argument that the Soviets want only to secure their North-Western border was used. The message for the Soviet Union was clear. Finland desires to stay outside any potential conflicts between great powers.

4.2. The 1948 Soviet-Finnish Treaty

The Soviet-Finnish Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (FCMA Treaty), signed on 6 April 1949, is a milestone of Finnish post-War foreign and security policy. It provided the Soviet Union with security in the region and Finland with the formal recognition of its neutrality in a peacetime. The treaty in its Article One provided that if either Finland or the Soviet Union, through Finnish territory, is attacked by Germany or any of its allies, Finland must fight to repel the attack and *may* ask for Soviet military assistance to do so. Article Two stated that Finland and the Soviet Union shall confer with each other if the threat of armed attack is established, and Article Four prohibited Finland and the Soviet Union from concluding any alliances directed against each other. This article is considered to be an enforcement of Finnish neutrality and also “a key basis upon which the Soviets [could] influence Finnish foreign policy⁹²”.

⁹¹ Max Jakobson, *Finnish Neutrality...*, op. cit., 39.

⁹² Kalevi J. Holsti, “Strategy and Techniques of Influence in Soviet-Finnish Relations,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (March 1964): 68-69.

What is important and emphasised by many scholars is the fact that the military co-operation between Finland and the Soviet Union was limited only to one particular case – if the Germany or one of its allies would attack the Soviet Union using Finnish territory. Therefore, Finland could take a neutral stance in any other case, i.e. when its territory was not involved in the conflict. That clause gave Finns some more room for manoeuvre during the Cold War.

The so-called Paasikivi-Kekkonen line dominated Finnish strategic thinking for next decades. The main aim was to establish and maintain positive relations with the Soviet Union and to convince the Kremlin that Finnish neutrality is also in their best interest. By avoiding any military alliances Finland hoped that its independence and territorial integrity will be respected by Russians. Paasikivi's successor as a president, Urho Kekkonen, added another objective, namely to increase recognition of Finnish neutrality also by other powers by gaining more confidence from the Soviet Union. The second objective was to avoid any kind of involvement in the Cold War conflicts between the major powers. Such kind of behaviour, when one state is dominated by the other, is often called "finlandisation" of foreign policy, although the Finns don't like this term.

Although neutrality prevented Finland from becoming next Soviet republic, it also constrained several choices and decisions. Finland did not participate in the Marshall Plan of 1947 because it was perceived by the Soviets as an attempt to extend US sphere of influence to many European states. In 1955 Finland joined the Nordic Council, although the first reaction of the Kremlin was negative. In the same year, Finland joined the United Nations. The adopted policy of neutrality prevented Finland from recognising the division of Germany or participating in the creation of the Warsaw Pact in 1955 in order not to be drawn into the confrontation. There was also a problem of Finnish membership in the newly-created European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) because of Soviet suspicions

towards this structure. But in 1961 Finland was offered an associate member status with all benefits reserved for full members. Finnish neutrality and its role as a bridge-builder were internationally recognised during the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe that took place in Helsinki in 1975. Thanks to this successful event, Western states overcame their suspicions towards Finnish neutrality.

4.3. The importance of Finnish neutrality

The Soviet Union ceased to exist and the FCMA Treaty is no longer in force. It is now, when the Cold War is over, possible to argue that Finnish neutrality was a necessary policy line for small states like Finland. Neutrality was treated as an *instrument* to “secure vital national interests and gain room for action in the difficult and precarious geopolitical position...⁹³”. Finnish neutrality has to be treated as a very pragmatic choice and way of thinking, as there were no underlying “altruistic purposes connected with the world peace of with a change in bipolar system of power⁹⁴”. That is the main difference with Swedish neutrality which was strictly ideological⁹⁵.

Neutrality was *just* a policy line that was demanded by national interests and was introduced because of “geopolitical factors, the small size of Finland and its immediate proximity to a Great Power” growing from the realist doctrine and interpretations⁹⁶ and from the traditional Finnish down-to-earth profile. Finland clearly recognised the large military and political power of its Eastern neighbour. The cautiousness was widely spread

⁹³ Kari Möttölä, “Finland, the European Union and NATO - Implications for Security and Defence,” in *Small states and alliances*, ed. Erich Reiter, Heinz Gärtner (Heidelberg: Physica-Verlag, 2001), 104.

⁹⁴ Teija Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland. Defining the Political Identity of Finland in Western Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 153.

⁹⁵ Gunilla Herolf, *The Nordic countries...*, op. cit., 70.

⁹⁶ Teija Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland...*, op. cit., 152.

among the Finns and the “clear-eyed perception of realities” dominated the post-War politics⁹⁷.

Pertti Joenniemi calls Finland a “deviant case” when it comes to the model of neutrality⁹⁸. Finnish neutrality was treated rather as a pre-emptive measure to strengthen the peace and avoid the worst-case scenario. It was definitely active neutrality with several important benefits, such as the possibility to participate in international organisations, a unique chance to host conferences or participate in peacekeeping missions. Finnish neutrality differed from the classical model as it was not emphasising much the isolation, self-sufficiency or individualism. One of the main aims was to maintain good relations with all states.

Asked about the role of the neutrality in Finland, Pekka Haavisto stated that “neutrality and non-alignment were anyhow giving us some comfort”. He also perceives the neutral policy of Finland during the Cold War as a merely pragmatic one. “Our policy line is not a Bible; it’s an adaptation to the time, challenges, and risks. You analyse the security policy in time...⁹⁹”. The neutral position was indeed a result of a critical analyse of Finnish capabilities and possibilities to cope with hostile neighbourhood and a realist cost-benefit calculation.

⁹⁷ *Security and Insecurity. Perspectives on Finnish and Swedish Defence and Foreign Policy*, Försvarshögskolan Acta B3., ed. Gunnar Arteus, Jukka Nevakivi (Stockholm: Försvarshögskola, 1997), 29-30.

⁹⁸ Pertti Joenniemi, “The underlying assumptions of Finnish neutrality,” in *Between the blocs: Problems and prospects for Europe's neutral...*, op. cit., 51.

⁹⁹ Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

5. “Keeping all doors open...” – explaining the change

In this chapter I will try to test the hypothesis and explain why the change occurred. I will focus on the main factors that determined the change in external and domestic dimensions. I will focus also on identity questions.

Although the late 1970s were the most difficult years for Finland since the end of the World War II, president Kekkonen managed to keep Soviets out of Finnish security policy as far as possible. He never allowed Kremlin to interfere in the basic principles of Finnish security policy and made his best to strengthen national defence forces, organise material supplies or prevent Finland from any Communist takeover.

When in 1982 Mauno Koivisto replaced Urho Kekkonen as the president, nobody expected radical changes in foreign and security policy. Nevertheless, already then Finland started to move closer towards Europe and its institutions. In 1986 the country became a full member of EFTA and one year later it became clear that Finnish specific version of neutrality should no longer serve as a constraint from having closer ties with the West. Finland emphasised the European economic integration as the country was heavily dependent on trade and economic co-operation. Membership in the EC was not a question at that time, although in 1989 Mikhail Gorbachev stated that Finland has the right to decide itself about the possibility for integration¹⁰⁰.

The first signs of change in Finnish security and foreign policy could be observed in early 1990, when president Koivisto acknowledged that the possibility of large-scale conflict between superpowers became limited. However, as Doeser notices, at that time

¹⁰⁰ Fredrik Doeser, *In Search of Security...*, op. cit., 152, 156.

Finland was much more interested in the degree of possible threat coming from Moscow than in systemic changes in superpowers' relations¹⁰¹. Nevertheless, there were some voices suggesting that the FCMA Treaty should be changed or abandoned at all.

It happened only after the failure of the Moscow Communist coup in August, 1991. The new Finnish-Russian treaty on good neighbourly relations was signed already in January, 1992 without any articles concerning military co-operation. In the same year the treaty establishing European Economic Area (EEA) was signed between EFTA and the EC. President Koivisto officially announced that Finland was interested in becoming a member of the EC, although with retaining own power of decisions in matters related to foreign and defence policy.

5.1. Post-neutrality or pre-alignment? EU and NATO vs. neutrality

There were four main groups of questions related to the membership in the EU and neutrality that Finnish politicians tried to answer¹⁰². First one concerned the common foreign policy statements, which finally were not perceived as a fundamental problem as member states can still formulate their own positions while staying loyal to the other members. Second problem was connected with sanctions, which was also not a problem and the Swiss example showed that it is possible to participate in sanctions and remain neutral. The third question was military interventions and a neutral country had to make a decision whether it could participate in such missions, or not. The last problem was the emerging Common Security and Defence Policy and that was the most significant problem for a neutral state like Finland that has to stay outside a military alliance of any kind.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, 157.

¹⁰² Ibidem, 169

It was foreign minister Paavo Väyrynen that proposed the change from neutrality to non-alignment, meaning the hardcore of neutrality. That shift could help Finland in preserving its desire to stay outside military alliances and at the same time to join the EU and participate in its peacekeeping missions. This step, although significant for Finnish security, was relatively easy one. Neutrality, as it was mentioned before, has not become a strong element of Finnish identity and was not treated as a matter of principle¹⁰³. It was treated as an instrument that was available at the time of the Cold War and "the best possible option to mitigate the constraints placed on the Finnish policy and cushion the bilateralism of the relations with the great-power neighbour"¹⁰⁴.

The Cold War was over, the threat of the Soviet Union decreased. Moreover, the EU was willing to accept more members as it was stated during the Maastricht summit in 1991. There was no need to keep the instrument alive and the decision to reduce it only to the hardcore helped Finland to gain some more room for manoeuvre and action.

There are at least four basic reasons, why membership in the EU was found compatible with Finnish non-alignment¹⁰⁵. Firstly, Finland shared the same values and aims of the EU. Secondly, it was possible to keep independent decision-making as the unanimity prevailed within the EU common foreign and security policy. Thirdly, membership in the EU was not a barrier for retaining bilateral relations with non-member states. Finally, the responsibility for defence would remain national. The problem that appeared with the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty and CFSP provisions caused a hesitance within the European Commission regarding possible reluctance of neutral candidates towards common security policy. Finland stated that the country was ready to contribute constructively to the development of the defence dimension of the EU.

¹⁰³ Interview with Teija Tiilikainen, University of Helsinki, 23/04/2009.

¹⁰⁴ Kari Möttölä, "Finland, the European Union...", op. cit., 104.

¹⁰⁵ Hanna Ojanen, Gunilla Herolf and Rutger Lindahl, *Non-Alignment and European Security Policy. Ambiguity at Work: Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP* (Helsinki, Bonn: UPI & IFEP, 2000), 97-99.

And Finland indeed did it. Before the Amsterdam Treaty was adopted in 1999, Finland and Sweden proposed a more explicit incorporation of military crisis management tasks of the Union. It was also during the Helsinki European Council in 1999 when the Petersberg tasks were agreed. Finland has actively participated in EU-led missions, such as ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUMM in Georgia, EUBAM in Ukraine, EUFOR in Chad or EUPOL in Afghanistan. It is sometimes said that Finland became a “model member” of the EU and a motor of changes within this organisation.

Membership in the EU, which Finland achieved in 1995, is very often perceived through the constructivist lenses. And it is true that it was the identity, values and national interests that mattered. Finland, a country on the peripheries of Europe, was strongly willing to become a member of the “European family”, to have its voice heard at the tables where decisions were made. The EU gave such possibility and that’s why 57% of the Finnish population voted in favour of membership which, as Teija Tiilikainen claims, has become a core of the new Finnish identity¹⁰⁶. By integration with Europe Finland could contribute to the development of peace and stability, help to increase the welfare and ensure security, mainly in its soft dimension.

An obvious question appears here, namely why Finland has not decided to join NATO as well and why the “keeping all doors open” policy is still in use. This concept has been widely used especially by the current Finnish president Tarja Halonen and means that Finland has the right to choose the way to commit itself to any kind of European or Euro-Atlantic security co-operation. All options, including NATO membership, remain equally important.

Finland actively cooperates with NATO since 1994 when it joined the Partnership for Peace programme, followed by joining to the Planning and Review Process. Finland

¹⁰⁶ Teija Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland...*, op. cit., 163.

has participated in KFOR mission in Kosovo since 1999 and it was the biggest Finnish contribution to peacekeeping ever. The total strength of the Finnish personnel was about 440 soldiers. Since 2003 Finnish troops have participated in ISAF operation in Afghanistan, mainly by contributing to the Provincial Reconstruction Team in northern parts of the country¹⁰⁷. Since March 2008 Finland takes a part in NATO Response Forces¹⁰⁸.

It looks that Finland is willing to accept almost everything except the collective defence. As Helena Partanen from the Ministry of Defence says: “the political will to support all NATO operations has been really strong... we are in the burden sharing, we are in the operations (...), we are in all the rooms that we can only be in. But we still have the doors open¹⁰⁹”. This paradox has been explained very differently. The most common arguments that are heard include: NATO membership is not necessary as the threat coming from Russia does not exist¹¹⁰, NATO is a US-led organisation¹¹¹ and Finland is not going to behave in a way that Americans do, citizens oppose the membership¹¹² and there is a lack of reasonable arguments in favour or against NATO¹¹³, or that the membership in the EU and security provided by this organisation is enough (See: Table 1).

¹⁰⁷ “Finland's participation in NATO-led crisis management operations,” Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=32299&contentlan=2&culture=en-US> (accessed May 19, 2009).

¹⁰⁸ Parliament gives approval to NRF participation, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 31.03.2008. <http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Parliament+gives+approval+to+NRF+participation/1135235189990> (accessed May 19, 2009).

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Helena Partanen, MoD, 22.04.2009.

¹¹⁰ Tapani Vaahoranta, “Why the EU, but not NATO?: Finland's Non-Alignment in Post-Cold War Europe,” *Northern Dimensions* (1998): 4.

¹¹¹ Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

¹¹² Interview with Teija Tiilikainen, University of Helsinki, 23/04/2009.

¹¹³ Interview with Hanna Ojanen, Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), 21/04/2009.

<i>Main reasons to stay outside NATO</i>	<i>Percentage of answers</i>	
	2007	2008
Keep Finnish troops out of fighting in foreign wars	48%	48%
Increased Russian threat against Finland	40%	40%
Wish to remain outside great-power disputes	46%	39%
Excessive dominance of the US in NATO	43%	38%
Membership would increase budget spending	29%	32%
Membership would not bolster Finnish security	26%	30%
Finland would still be responsible for own defence	29%	26%

Table 1: Main reasons to stay outside NATO. Source: *Finns' opinions on foreign and security policy, defence and security issues* (Helsinki: The Advisory Board for Defence Information, 2008), 4.

But it looks that the old and static realist thinking prevails in Finnish debates about possible NATO membership. Hanna-Leena Hemming argues that within the debate about NATO people immediately tend to mention Russia, East-West confrontation, the Cold War. The Old-style thinking prevails. Finns do not want to join NATO because they are afraid of possible negative reaction of Kremlin, including military threat. Being a member of a military alliance that is led by the US could cause a situation when Finland finds itself against still powerful Russia. People in Finland do not want to destroy good relationship with their Eastern neighbour; they do not want to offend Russia. “Russia is the strongest argument in the debate (...), but we should start to discuss what NATO is nowadays... And people close their ears, they don’t want to talk about the reality...” – concludes Hemming¹¹⁴.

The situation nowadays looks paradoxically. Finland made a change in its security policy moving from the neutrality towards its hardcore – military non-alignment. The change was connected with the membership in the European Union. By joining this organisation and acceptance of the Maastricht Treaty with its provisions on CFSP, Finland de facto ceased to be a neutral country and entered the period of *post-neutrality*.

From the other side, Finland is moving closer to NATO with all benefits and burdens that are possible without formal member status. That makes Finland a “member without membership” or even pre-aligned state. The latest government’s security report

¹¹⁴ Interview with Hanna-Leena Hemming, MP, 20/04/2009.

considers NATO's goals as "compatible" with Finnish goals and includes a paragraph saying that there are "strong grounds for considering Finland's membership of NATO...¹¹⁵".

More and more people, including Pekka Haavisto, argue that by being a member of the EU, which security and defence component is strengthening more and more, as well as by working closely with NATO, Finland is "even not military non-aligned anymore¹¹⁶". This argument is confirmed by Teija Tiilikainen who argues that the main reason why the non-alignment has been erased from the government programme for the first time was the will not "(...) to send contradictory messages to the world about our security. We were forced to do that. Now we have to make a real commitment...¹¹⁷".

There is also one more problem with NATO. As Tuomas Forsberg notices, Finns are ready to participate in crisis management, but not in territorial defence. They are ready to join the "new" not the "old" NATO¹¹⁸. This view is confirmed by the last opinion poll by the Advisory Board for Defence Information, where 52% of Finns support Finnish participation in NATO-led crisis management operations and 59% favours efforts to participate in NRF exercises and development¹¹⁹.

5.2. Explaining the change (or continuity)

Revolutionary and rapid changes are rare in foreign policy. Nevertheless, the end of the Cold War brought a strong need to revise Finland's foreign and security policy.

¹¹⁵ *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2009...*, op. cit., 80-81.

¹¹⁶ Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Teija Tiilikainen, University of Helsinki, 23/04/2009.

¹¹⁸ Tuomas Forsberg, "Between Neutrality and Membership. Finland's and Sweden's Place in the NATO Family," *NATO 50. Mapping the Future*, 1999, 112.

¹¹⁹ *Finns' opinions on foreign and security policy, defence and security issues* (Helsinki: The Advisory Board for Defence Information, 2008), 6-7.

Finnish political elites, following the changes in power structures in country's immediate neighbourhood, decided to replace Cold-War neutrality by military non-alignment. That shift supposed to be a chance for a small state to gain some room for manoeuvre and securing own national interests and values.

It's not an easy task to explain the change that occurred in Finnish security policy. There is a need to apply a complex and many-sided approach as Finland is a "Janus-face" state, both realist and constructivist, sometimes liberalist as well. Finnish security, although still determined in a large extend by realist perceptions, has a growing constructivist elements as well. The role of identity and cultural factors are becoming more important, also for realist Finns.

Therefore, I have grouped the factors explaining the change into three categories: external dimension, domestic dimension and identity dimension. This will help me to explain the change using the theories mentioned in the theoretical framework.

5.2.1. External dimension

The most important factor determining the Finnish foreign and security behaviour is the collapse of the Cold War system of power and dissolution of the Soviet Union. The most powerful neighbour ceased to exist. Finland no longer had to be obeyed by the mutual assistance treaty signed with the Kremlin in 1948. As there no longer was a confrontation between the East and West, Finnish neutrality lost its importance. It seemed that the threat was away for a while, although there still was a huge dose of cautiousness among Finns.

During the Cold War, when the balance of power meant adjusting to the bipolar world, Finnish strategy was based on three elements: FCMA treaty with the Soviets, credible and independent defence as well as neutrality. With the end of the Cold War

Finland had to adjust itself also to the changes in the balance of power. And that means a combination of credible defence, military non-alignment together with political alignment, an active participation in the CFSP/ESDP, close links with NATO and participation in its PfP programme.

What is important is the fact that Finland still prepares itself for the “worst case scenario” and Russia is still perceived as a hypothetical threat to Finnish security¹²⁰. This country is considered “the most important factor in Finland’s security environment¹²¹” and the possibility of changes, including an armed aggression, in Finland’s neighbouring areas can’t be excluded. Hanna-Leena Hemming does not agree that the threat from Russia is serious, but she argues that if Finns “had to name a country they are afraid of, then it would be Russia”. Helena Partanen confirms this view and adds that “Russia is a very strong military power still present in Finnish mentality... This is that 20th century-like balancing between East and West¹²²”.

Moreover, Russia is present in almost every public debate concerning security and especially NATO membership. It was already used in the early 90s during the EU campaign, when then-minister for foreign trade Pertti Salolainen, said that becoming a member of the Union was a way to get out of Moscow’s hug. Nowadays, the debate concerns possible NATO membership and arguments concerning Russia’s potential reaction to this step are dominant. “Russia is the strongest argument in the debate (...), both for and against joining. People want to talk about Russia, yes we need more security against Russia, but also joining could offend Russia...¹²³”, says Hemming.

The end of the Cold War brought also several changes in international environment. Finland’s immediate neighbours, three Baltic States, gained their independence and applied

¹²⁰ Christer Pursiainen and Sinikukka Saari, *Et tu Brute! Finland's NATO Option and Russia* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2002), 8.

¹²¹ *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2009...*, op. cit., 74.

¹²² Interviews with Hanna-Leena Hemming, and Helena Partanen, 20 and 22/04/2009.

¹²³ Interview with Hanna-Leena Hemming, MP, 20/04/2009.

for the membership in the EU and NATO. Russia strongly opposed their desire, especially that concerning the Alliance. Once accepted to the organisation the Baltics constitute a unified north-eastern zone against Russia. Finland was observing also the situation in other European neutral states. A sign of change came from Austria which applied for EU membership already in 1989 and Sweden two years later, which was “a bitter shock” in Finland¹²⁴. Sweden traditionally plays an important role in Finland. Therefore, as Hanna Ojanen notices, the Swedish application was one of the most important reasons for Finland to join the EU and decide about the change in security policy¹²⁵.

The EU’s growing importance as a global player definitely played a role as well. It’s hard to find one explanation about the reasons that were important for Finland while seeking membership in political organisation and making a decision to shift towards military non-alignment. Former president Mauno Koivisto wrote in his memoirs that security reasons were the most important, although not expressed in public. Economy was on the second place¹²⁶. This view was confirmed in my interviews with Hanna-Leena Hemming and Helena Partanen. Pekka Haavisto and Teija Tiilikainen put economy on the first place, although Tiilikainen mentions also identity and impedance of Sweden. Hanna Ojanen argues that at the beginning of the debate no one could really show what the economic consequences would look like and that factors could not be used in a debate. When it comes to security that argument appeared only at the last stage, when “public opinion was getting scared and some politicians took an advantage to change the attitude and said that this was actually about security...¹²⁷”.

¹²⁴ Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

¹²⁵ Interview with Hanna Ojanen, FIJA, 21/04/2009.

¹²⁶ Christer Pursiainen, “Finland’s Policy Towards Russia. How to Deal with the Security Dillema,” *Northern Dimensions* (2000): 71.

¹²⁷ Interviews with Helena Partanen, Hanna-Leena Hemming, Teija Tiilikainan, Pekka Haavisto and Hanna Ojanen, 20-23/04/2009.

5.2.2. Domestic dimension

Domestic incentives are very often omitted when explaining the foreign and security policy of states. Neo-classical realism tries to fill this gap and adds an intervening variable – a domestic situation and incentives – to the whole picture. It is indeed interesting and valuable, also in this case, to have a look at the domestic scene, internal actors and processes that shape and influence the decisions concerning security policy.

What seems to have a real significance in case of Finland is the high rate of approval for the leadership. Since 1919 for more than 80 years Finland had a semi-presidential system with president playing a decisive role in foreign and security matters. After the World War II the system moved even to “despotism” with its zenith during the presidency of Urho Kekkonen (1956-81). Presidents in Finland resembled monarchs, “they were expected to be above party disputes and were not publicly criticised in the media¹²⁸”. This situation gradually started to change in early 1980s with a peak in 2000, when the new constitution reducing the presidential prerogatives was adopted.

Even though the system has been changed and the government plays a more important role, the personalisation of politics is a dominant feature of the Finnish political scene. It is mainly a heritage of the Cold War and, as Paloheimo argues, a result of “ideological convergence between the parties¹²⁹”. According to him, the leadership image matters even far more now than it was earlier. That is the reason why the majority of population supports the leadership and their choices regarding foreign and security policy (See: Table 2).

¹²⁸ Heikki Paloheimo, “Finland: Let the Force Be with the Leader – But Who Is the Leader?,” in *The Presidentialization of Politics. A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies*, ed. Thomas Poguntke and Paul Webb (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 248.

¹²⁹ *Ibidem*, 265.

This phenomenon has also a negative side which is crucial in understanding the change that appeared in Finland after the Cold War. Traditionally, the Finnish political elites have tended to exclude the people from foreign or security policy debates. In their opinion these issues are too remote and far too complex for average people. The top-down model prevails in Finnish politics. This is one of the features of Finnish political realism which says that “popular policy is not always good foreign policy¹³⁰”. Haavisto adds that there is also a tradition that the foreign policy debate is not so popular, also in the party politics. “From time to time there is an active debate, but maybe not on the security concepts¹³¹”. This shows that politicians acknowledge the public opinion, but tend to follow their own views on what should be done.

Finland is known for its media traditions and importance of opinions delivered by newspapers. But, very often the media fail to develop reasonable and objective arguments when it comes for example to the possible membership in NATO. Hanna-Leena Hemming points out another paradox, namely that there is no discussion in the media on what for example NATO is nowadays. And the media coverage tends not to reach people¹³². Nevertheless, Pekka Haavisto sees the potential for main liberal newspapers to start a successful campaign on this issue and mentions example of the pre-1995 EU campaign.

When it comes to the party politics the situation is rather clear. Almost all parties support the military non-alignment and only one party, conservative National Coalition, supports the membership in NATO. There is a strong consensus concerning the foreign policy as all parties strongly support what the government and president do in this area.

¹³⁰ Juho Rahkonen, “Public Opinion, Journalism and the Question of Finland's Membership of NATO,” *Nordicom Review* 28, no. 2 (2007): 83-84.

¹³¹ Interview with Pekka Haavisto, MP, 21/04/2009.

¹³² Interview with Hanna-Leena Hemming, MP, 20/04/2009.

<i>Political party</i>	<i>Support for military non-alignment</i>	<i>Support for a membership in military alliance</i>	<i>Developing EU into a military alliance a best option for Finland</i>	<i>Support for Finnish foreign policy</i>
Left Alliance	87%	2%	22%	73%
Social Democratic Party	60%	31%	25%	78%
Centre Party	68%	27%	8%	81%
Greens	61%	22%	20%	75%
National Coalition	31%	64%	15%	86%

Table 2: Support for security options and Finnish foreign policy. Source: *Finns' opinions on foreign and security policy, defence and security issues* (Helsinki: The Advisory Board for Defence Information, 2008),

There are debates on whether the public opinion plays any role in formulating Finnish foreign and security policy. From one side the negative approach towards abandoning the military non-alignment and becoming a member of NATO serves as an excuse for politicians and allows them not to take any steps in this direction. Public opinion serves as one of the main constraints for joining the Alliance. The only one change that was accepted by the slight majority of Finns (57%) was the membership in the EU.

From the other side, the public opinion is still reluctant in foreign and security debates. People are not pushing their leaders to make any further changes and tend to follow their decisions. It is interesting that many of my speakers confirmed the thesis that if one day the president and prime minister announced that Finland joins NATO, the people would blindly follow their decision¹³³, although Teija Tiilikainen argues that it is very unlikely that the leaders would come to such decision without a certain level of consensus or broader support. So far, socialdemocratic president Tarja Halonen and prime minister Matti Vanhanen from the Centre Party do not see the need to change current security policy. Only foreign minister Alexander Stubb and his National Coalition Party openly support the idea of joining NATO¹³⁴.

¹³³ Interviews with Pekka Haavisto, Helena Partanen, Teija Tiilikainen and Hanna-Leena Hemming. 20-23/04/2009.

¹³⁴ Stubb NATO comments raise questions, *Helsingin Sanomat*, September 2, 2008. <http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Stubb+NATO+comments+raise+questions/1135239120512> (accessed May 24, 2009).

Helena Partanen makes another interesting claim that might be a good conclusion for the discussion about the domestic incentives and its irrelevance in formulating foreign and security policy goals and demanding any changes. This argument disconfirms neo-realist claims that domestic politics strongly matters as an intervening variable in explaining the change:

“It’s self-evident that Finland would not be an EU member without a very strong leadership... If the leadership says that something is good for Finland that is good. In the Ministry of Defence we say that if we were going to join NATO today or tomorrow, nobody would see the difference...¹³⁵”

5.2.3. Identity questions

Constructivist norms, values, identities seem to be significant in case of Finland and especially in explaining the change connected with the membership in the European Union. As it was written earlier, identity is closely connected to security and what a state does is closely connected to the sense of self. Wendt argued that states may have multiple identities. This is also the case of Finland.

This country is unique in many dimensions and indeed has a multiple identity. First and foremost, Finland is a small state with a strong feeling of being on the borderland, on the periphery of Europe. Too far from the West, too close to the East. That is why the geopolitics has always played an important role in Finnish strategic thinking. As Teija Tiilikainen notices, Finland because of its small size had to “adjust itself to the political

¹³⁵ Interview with Helena Partanen, MoD, 22/04/2009.

conditions laid down by the Great Powers¹³⁶. Neutrality was a pragmatic choice and solution to Finnish demands for security and will to stay out of the confrontation. Neutrality treated as a tool never became an “in-depth element of [Finnish] identity as it as in case of Sweden. It was never an in-depth core value of our identity¹³⁷”. That is why Finland was able to resign from neutrality and adapt to the new circumstances easily. This shift is also connected to the Finnish pragmatism and, as Hanna Ojanen argues, a specific “desire for the new, willingness to change...Having the courage to propose something new¹³⁸”. Neutrality as such was a clear problem or limit to Finnish participation in the Western integration.

The change might be also explained by the strong desire to join the “Western family” of states belonging to the European Union. Henrikki Heikka called this “a return to Europe” strategy¹³⁹. By joining the Union Finland had a chance to sit at the same table with other European partners, to participate in decision-making process and have its voice heard and respected by the others. According to the Finnish Council of State’s report on security from 1995, membership in the EU brought an essential change. No longer had Finland had to worry about being left alone. And that for a long time has been an important concern present in the Finnish identity¹⁴⁰. A feeling of belonging, being a true European, unity with others seemed to be also significant in making the change¹⁴¹.

¹³⁶ Teija Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland...*, op. cit., 153.

¹³⁷ Interview with Teija Tiilikainen, University of Helsinki, 23/04/2009.

¹³⁸ Interview with Hanna Ojanen, FIIA, 21/04/2009.

¹³⁹ Henrikki Heikka, “Republican Realism...”, op. cit., 91.

¹⁴⁰ Helena Partanen argues that the will to defend the country, support for credible defence and conscription remains at very high level Finland. This may be connected to the feeling of being alone at the periphery with no help possible from the West in case of conflict. Interview with Helena Partanen, MoD, 22/04/2009.

¹⁴¹ But there are also voices who do not agree with this argumentation. Hanna Ojanen does not agree that Finns consider themselves Europeans. “Here you can still hear the expressions that something happens in Europe or in the EU and it’s something that is far away, excludes us”, says Ojanen. Interview with Hanna Ojanen, FIIA, 21/04/2009.

6. Conclusions: a drastic change or continuity?

Neutrality and non-alignment in post-Cold War Finnish security policy is a very demanding, but extremely interesting topic for research. It causes a lot of difficulties as Finnish case is a paradox or a “deviant case¹⁴²,” as Pertti Joenniemi calls it. Finland is at the same time realist and constructivist; it has a double “Janus-face” identity.

At the core there is an old realist tradition with the importance of power, geopolitics, security and survival. The old state-centric approach with a strong emphasis on national interests, sovereignty and independence dominates Finnish strategic thinking just like before the World War II and during the Cold War period. Then, neutrality was the only one possible instrument not to become a Soviet-satellite state and remain outside the great power rivalry. The Cold War is over, so the time of Soviet domination. But there is still a big and powerful neighbour that for centuries has played had an extremely important role in shaping Finnish security. And security has become one of the main elements of Finnish identity.

From the other side, there is a constructivist Finland with a strong emphasis on values, norms and identity itself. Being a peripheral state Finland wants to be European, belong to Europe and its core institutions. Wants to sit at all possible tables where decisions are being made and have its own voice heard in world capitals. That’s why the European identity has become a key element of change, also in security policy.

When it comes to the explanation of change in security policy it has to be emphasised that there was no rapid and drastic change. The shift from neutrality to military non-alignment that took place at the beginning of 1990s was gradual and bears

¹⁴² Pertti Joenniemi, *The underlying assumptions...*, op. cit., 51.

some signs of continuity. Finnish security, although without neutrality principle, “reflects continuity in sense of a pragmatic policy of adjustment to external pressures with active use of opportunities offered¹⁴³”. Neutrality – a pragmatic instrument used during the Cold War, without becoming a core element of national identity, appeared to be a hindrance for more active policy. And this argument is crucial for Finland as in case of small state “lack of power can be [only] compensated by a proactive policy¹⁴⁴”.

The lack of qualitative change from the perspective of strategic culture is best explained in the article by Henrikki Heikka who argues that Finnish security policy after the Cold War should be understood rather as an evolution than revolution¹⁴⁵. The main goal of Finland since the beginning of its independence has been to maintain a credible and independent defence in order to minimise a threat posed by other states, mainly by Russia. Heikka seeks to explain the continuity in security thinking in Johan Snelmann’s “separatist loyalism” from the time when Finland was under tsarist Russia’s rule. The main issue here was that Finland has reduced capacities and too powerful neighbour not to prepare for a credible defence. This thinking is still present in nowadays strategic thinking.

After the end of the Cold War one might have expected a radical change in Finnish security policy, namely completely giving up the neutrality policy. This hadn’t happened. The shift has been rather a cosmetic one or, as Hanna Ojanen stated, it is “continuity in some new clothes...¹⁴⁶”. Finland left a military non-alignment component and became a member of the European Union only. The debate about possible NATO membership is still open as well as other hypothetical “doors”. This is another paradox of Finland. Being a member of the EU which is gradually developing its security component and

¹⁴³ Hannu Himanen, “Finland”, op. cit., 25.

¹⁴⁴ Ibidem, 25.

¹⁴⁵ Henrikki Heikka, “Republican Realism...”, op. cit., 93.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Hanna Ojanen, FIIA, 21/04/2009.

mutual assistance obligation, thus becoming an organisation with similar commitments in defence and security to those of NATO and refusing joining the Alliance.

The apogee of change has not yet taken place in Finland. It would with the full membership in NATO. Hanna-Leena Hemming argues that that moment is coming and Finland begins to have a change. “It will take several years to see that there was a change...”.

In this thesis I tried to answer the question of why such a drastic change occurred in Finnish security policy after the end of the Cold War. By showing the historical development of neutrality and its significance for Finland as well as by explaining the change towards military non-alignment in the early 1990s in external, internal and identity dimensions, I argued that Finnish neutrality has not become a core element of the Finnish national identity. Therefore the change was relatively easy and acceptable. This conclusion disconfirms constructivist claims and support realist expectations.

I also argued that the change, although significant, was not a rapid one and has some signs of continuity. The full or drastic change is about to appear only when Finland joins the military alliance. This conclusions confirmed constructivist thinking and disconfirmed realist expectations towards the change. Also, in my thesis I showed that the role of domestic factors and public opinion has been very limited when it comes to formulating foreign and security policy. The public exists and has own opinion, but the elites tend to exclude it from their decisions. It would be also easy to change the perceptions of Finns by a strong leadership. Thus, the neo-classical arguments about significance of the domestic variables fail as well.

My hypotheses have been confirmed mainly by empirical data with the crucial role of interviews I had with experts on this issue. It seems that it is impossible to judge which theory, realist or constructivist, could explain Finnish behaviour regarding the neutrality

in a most comprehensive way. Both are relevant and at the same time both are limited. Finland is a special case, a “both-and” state full of paradoxes and interesting questions to answer.

Appendix

Short biographies of interviewed persons during my research trip to Helsinki that took place from 20 till 26 of April, 2009.

Politicians

Hanna-Leena Hemming

Since 2003 member of the Finnish Parliament, National Coalition Party. Member of the Defence Committee.

Pekka Haavisto

In 1987-1995 and since 2007 member of the Parliament, Green Party. Member of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees. Chairperson of the Green Party from 1993-1995 and the first Green minister in Europe (minister of environment and development, 1995-1999). Former EU Special Representative for Sudan.

Researchers

Teija Tiilikainen

Doctor in Political Science from Åbo Akademi University. Director, Network for European Studies at the University of Helsinki. In the 2002 - 2003 served as a Special Representative of the Prime Minister in the Convention on the Future of Europe. From 2007 to 2009 she served as a Political State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Hanna Ojanen

Doctorate in Political and Social Sciences from European University Institute, Florence. Programme Director, European Union research programme at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs in Helsinki. Her interests include: EU foreign, security and defence policy, the EU as an international actor. Author and editor of several publications on neutrality and non-alignment.

Civil servants

Helena Partanen

From 2004 to 2008 served as a minister-counsellor for political and military affairs at Finnish embassy in Washington, D.C. She now works as a defence counsellor, director of the International Defence Policy Unit in the Defence Policy Department at the Ministry of Defence of Finland.

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