

Stahl, Bernhard / Harnisch, Sebastian (eds) 2009: *Vergleichende Außenpolitikforschung und nationale Identität. Die Europäische Union im Kosovo-Konflikt (1996-2008)*, Reihe „Außenpolitik und Internationale Ordnung“, Nomos

Since the 1990s, the European Union (EU) has been playing a key role in keeping, building and even enforcing peace. The history-laden Kosovo conflict which erupted by the end of the last decade and remains virulent until today represents a striking example. The EU vainly attempted to broker a peace deal in 1998/99, participated in the bombing campaign against Serbia 1999, contributed significantly to the region's economic and political recovery and diverged on the question of Kosovo's independence (2008).

This book's ambition is to present a comparative analysis of five member states in the crisis: France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Theoretically speaking, the studies focus on the national identities' impact on the European Union's capacity to act ("actorness"). By so doing, the book is apt to contribute to three distinct research areas: First, by linking identities to discourses and foreign policy change some important insights for Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis can be expected. The premise here is that the compatibility (not the convergence!) of national identities serves as a necessary condition for foreign policy coherence. Building up on this, learning on conditions for the EU's actorness would contribute to a more coherent and effective EU-foreign policy. For instance, with the help of the findings a common (identity) ground for humanitarian intervention can be mapped. Not at least, the rising interest in *international security governance* will be met by examining the EU's role in the international community when dealing with stabilization processes.

The findings suggest that the EU tends to project its proper internal characteristics to any crisis solution. Both, the normative consensus on state-building and the dissent on state recognition affected the conflict parties' behavior – partly triggering unwanted consequences.