

Abstracts

Petr Kratochvíl: “Discursive Constructions of the EU’s Identity in the Neighbourhood: An Equal Among Equals or the Power Centre?” (pp. 5-23)

Using critical discourse analysis, this article explores the discursive self-representations of the EU in its official documents related to the European Neighbourhood Policy. Its main claim is that the EU’s position towards its neighbourhood basically oscillates between two contradictory positions – that of a power centre, asymmetrically dominating its neighbourhood, and that of an equal among equals, thus offering a more benign face to its neighbours. Two discursive areas frequently mentioned in the documents are analysed: the notion of joint ownership and the EU’s stance towards the frozen conflict, showing that each of the two facets of EU’s identity may become dominant under particular circumstances.

Elisabeth Johansson-Nogués: “Is the EU’s Foreign Policy Identity an Obstacle? The European Union, the Northern Dimension and the Union for the Mediterranean” (pp. 24-48)

The impact of the EU policies on its borderlands has been highly varied. We will argue that a valuable addendum on Rationalist explananda for such varied impact, can be found by exploring how the EU constructs its international identity vis-à-vis neighboring countries. We will use the Northern Dimension and the Union for the

Mediterranean to verify how the EU identitarian projection creates contradictions and/or dissonance with neighboring countries to illustrate the uneven impact of EU policies.

Florent Parmentier: “Normative Power, EU Preferences and Russia. Lessons from the Russian-Georgian War” (pp. 49-61)

The Russian-Georgian conflict of August 2008 proves to be a useful case in order to understand the functioning of the EU as a normative power in times of crisis. The core of the article is focused on the six EU major countries – Germany, France, Great-Britain, Italy, Poland and Spain – which embody different sets of preferences, and the way they want to deal with Russia. In the end, it tries to understand how preferences are linked with norms in that geopolitical context.