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When Values Meet: Recent European Experiences

Bernhard Stahl

Since the beginning of modern social sciences, values have been at the very center in terms of understanding human behavior. The notion behind most definitions of values is the evaluation of what is good and desirable and what is believed to be bad or undesirable (Reich and Adcock 1976, chap. 2). Another characteristic of values is their invisibility; as mental constructs they can be referred to only by interpreting human behavior (Harding, Phillips, and Fogarty 1986, 2). Whereas values refer to rather abstract, global phenomena, attitudes are more specific, referring to situations, objects, or people. By contrast, the widely used term *beliefs* implies a cognitive element, the focus lying more on thoughts and ideas than on emotions and feelings (Harding, Phillips, and Fogarty 1986, 4–5).

It has become increasingly clear that values, once merely linked to societal phenomena, are generated by groups in general. Individual behavior is strongly influenced by values. Individuals "have values"; they are able to change their values and are socialized by values. To put this differently, values are internalized by individuals and institutionalized by groups and societies (Meulemann 1996, 48). Values are transcendent norms, standards of behavior, and morals generated by groups. They are passed on from generation to generation, gradually being modified. So people undergo changes of attitudes and behavior, as in the "silent revolution," a certain Americanization of lifestyle (Inglehart 1990).

The reception of values in international relations literature is somewhat difficult and troublesome.[1] This is so for various reasons.

For example, values play no role in the theory that has dominated international relations for a long time, namely, realism. This, however, is not the place to discuss this in detail. Suffice it to say that some researchers beyond the mainstream have attempted to deal with value-inspired approaches. Be it "belief systems," "cognitive maps," or "images" theories, they share the assumption that political decisions are influenced by values to a certain extent (Boulding 1959; Holsti 1969; Axelrod 1976). Such studies focus on leaders of government, sometimes extending to a group of actors that can more or less be counted as being the government.[2] Because governments are still seen as the predominant actors in foreign policy, other groups and hence other values are mainly ignored. Only very recently have other analytical categories—such as cultures, regimes, institutions, and ideas—been "rediscovered" and found their way into comparative political theory, bringing values back into the picture.[3]

One underlying assumption of this chapter is that values become relevant to international governance via new actors. Another is based on the observation that values become apparent on different levels and among different groups of actors in international relations. Consequently, political conflicts can arise either between different coalitions of actors representing distinct values or within groups when values are challenged by some group members. Thus, I will begin by focusing on some political actors, concentrating on their ability to serve as transmitters of values in international relations. Not only governments, civil servants, interest groups, and supranational organizations but also the mass media and even the people help to reshape structures and processes of international governance. I will present three cases—the Danish referendum on the Maastricht treaty, the scrapping of the Brent Spar, and the "mad cow disease" crisis—that demonstrate the extent to which values influence the outcomes of foreign policy. Finally, I will discuss and interpret the cases and previous arguments.

Transmittance of Values

To make political analysis of a value-driven approach feasible, it is assumed here that values need a transmitter to become politically relevant.[4] Thus, in order to affect foreign policy outcomes, values need to be institutionalized in some way. This transmitter is a political actor that transforms values, which by definition are diffuse and abstract, in

a concrete political agenda. The classical transmitters are governments, serving as a kind of medium between society and the international sphere. Yet new actors have also appeared on the scene: Transnational companies, international organizations, and other situational actors like tourists or delinquent groups make foreign policy even more complex. In addition, formerly domestic actors may take part in the game, and some of their actions become increasingly relevant in terms of international effects. The verdict of a judge in Berlin in relation to the so-called Mykonos affair of 1996, which led to a deterioration of relations between Germany and the European Union on the one hand and Iran on the other, is a case in point.

In the following, I will refer to some of these transmitters, focusing mainly on their role as value mediators. The role of government leaders, governments, and interest groups as international actors is widely acknowledged. For that reason, I will concentrate on those actors that tend to be neglected in this context: international organizations, the mass media, and the people.

Classical Actors

First of all, heads of government are influenced by personal experiences. To some extent these reflect the value systems prevalent during their adolescence. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and French President François Mitterrand were strongly influenced by their personal experiences in World War II. Although the two men were essentially on two distinct sides, their common value of "no more war between our countries" let them take a common stand on the fields of Verdun. Their shared values not only were reflected in symbolic gestures but also led to the groundbreaking Maastricht treaty, which has aimed to achieve a common European currency by the end of the century.

Second, national governments have to adapt to diplomatic standards of behavior on the international level. These standards represent a globally agreed-upon value system that is partly articulated in international treaties (the United Nations Charter, the Geneva conventions) and partly accepted by mutual recognition.

Third, the impact of interest groups on international governance is widely accepted. In contrast to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), interest groups act on the national level in the first place. This is because they are usually present only at the domestic level. But here again globalization has an impact. When companies, employees, and consumers realize that they have become more and more dependent

on decisions that are no longer made by the nation-state, they react. Recently Switzerland was confronted with accusations by Jewish organizations in the United States, supported by a senator, concerning its reluctance for decades to reveal accounts of Jewish people who had been persecuted by the Nazi regime. The resulting loss of image was so striking that the Swiss government eventually overruled the economic interests of its powerful banking sector and published all accounts that might be concerned.

International Organizations

International organizations create values in a dual sense. On the one hand they act on the international stage, aiming for solutions to global problems. On the other hand there is an internal effect, since members of an organization are subject to its value system.

International Organizations as Actors It can be assumed that international organizations are more value driven than other actors in world politics. This is because the rationales of organizations, such as Greenpeace, the Red Cross, or Amnesty International, are embedded in such value concerns as the environment, health, and human rights. Their actions contribute to the creation of a network of values that are complementary to that established by diplomatic custom. Despite the fact that disregard for values, as well as violations of norms by more powerful actors, such as states, are quite frequent, even the latter must be aware of the damage violations can do to their image.

International Organizations as Institutions Every organization develops some sort of "organizational culture," which affects the thinking and behavior of its members (see Leister 1987). This organizational culture comprises norms that may be explicit and official or implicit and thus known only to insiders. The Charter of Human Rights developed by the Council of Europe is an example of the explicit sort. Each country that wants to become a member is obliged to subscribe to the charter's principles. The European Union (EU)–related Acquis communautaire represents at the same time principles of European common law and "appropriate" behavior with regard to other member countries and European institutions. In the sense of the latter, the Acquis represents a kind of official organizational culture, comparable to that of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Southeast Asia.[5] Whether these norms and standards of behavior thrive depends on

how far the organization is interwoven with and backed up by other institutions, especially the member states. The existence of such a value system was demonstrated when the then new Italian representative, a member of a neofascist party, first participated in a Council of Europe meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, he was explicitly reminded by the chair that the EU was a democratic organization and was requested by his colleagues to respect customary proceedings and behavior ("Namen und Notizen" 1994). Countries outside the EU are usually excluded from the Acquis, but it becomes relevant when they apply for membership. The provisions of the Acquis are not negotiable; they must be accepted in their entirety and implemented by new members.[6] Only temporary exceptions are open to discussion.

International institutions also affect the outcomes of foreign policy by the evolution of "supranational-minded" elites. Thousands of European officers and specialists work for the European Commission alone. Even if their influence does not suffice to explain the ongoing evolution of global regimes, some effect nevertheless should be conceded. "The Community system . . . has become a golden triangle of Community civil servants, national civil servants and interest groups based on élite interactions, trust and reputation, by people whose loyalties primarily remain national but modify their expectations and behaviour to hold this highly valued system together" (Wallace 1990, 98).[7] Furthermore, the EU may impose new norms that become relevant at the national level. For example, manipulating stock prices with the help of insider knowledge had not previously been prohibited in Germany but was objected to by a European legal act. Until recently, however, this method of harmonizing values within the EU was restricted mainly to economic issues, because the European Commission does not have the same power as states in the field of foreign policy. Hence, foreign policy outcomes can be only indirectly affected.

The Mass Media

The function of the mass media in Western democracies is twofold. On the one hand they serve as an intermediary between the public and the political system. On the other hand they are political actors in their own right, generating information on their own (Gerhards 1995, 156). The more financially and politically independent a newspaper or television network is, the more important the latter function becomes.

Though there is no room here to discuss current developments concerning the mass media at length, I will list some points that are crucial to the arguments presented here.

- There have been profound changes in the scope and reach of the international press (Serfaty 1990, 1).
- Short-term orientation dominates long-term orientation. Sudden, unanticipated events tend to outstrip continuous, steady trends (Serfaty 1990, 3; Gerhards 1995, 157).
- Speed is becoming more and more a factor determining the competitive edge in the news business (Schmitz 1995, 140), resulting in a lack of continuity in reporting (Gergen 1990, 50).
- The media—to put it bluntly—prefer reporting on violent, controversial, norm-breaking, and successful events to dealing with peaceful, consensual, and norm-obeying events (Gerhards 1995, 158).
- The mass media, especially TV, still serve primarily as a medium for government-initiated issues (Serfaty 1990, 4).
- Due to selectivity constraints, there are many blind spots: Coverage of national events dominates coverage of international events, the latter depending on the country's ranking in the eyes of the national public (Gergen 1990, 50; Gerhards 1995, 157).
- The public in general is hardly informed of and shows no interest in "basic" news, especially in relation to international topics (Gergen 1990, 52–53).[8]

It is hard to evaluate the mass media's influence on political decisions. Their ability to set agendas should not be underestimated. They can have a say even in matters of war and peace. In 1898, for example, some American newspapers succeeded in exploiting the shipwreck of the military vessel *Maine*—as we know today it was an accident—to push the American public and government into a war with Spain. The role of the press in the American government's decision to withdraw from Vietnam in 1975 is another example of independent mass media as a powerful actor. But the above-mentioned cases are exceptions to the rule. In general, the mass media either express public opinion, taking an intermediary and amplifying role, or mediate the other way round by serving government "food" to the public table.[9]

A final aspect should not be neglected. Topics are selected and interpreted for an entirely national public. Interestingly, there is no European public. The experiments with "European" TV channels have not been too encouraging, with the possible exception of sports and music

programs. It is therefore considered unlikely that a European consciousness will develop, at least in the medium term.

The People

Since values are created by groups, it is evident that the most enduring and lasting value systems appear at the societal level, at least if a classical nation-state development is assumed. At first glance, public opinion may appear to be an uninstitutionalized method of influence. Current beliefs, attitudes, and points of view expressed by public opinion are taken up by politicians, who use them to modify issues in political action. This does not happen constantly—otherwise we would speak of populism—but undoubtedly it represents a facet of the political process, and not only in democracies. The arena for this value-inspired political acting remains mainly national. But inasmuch as the national "umbrella" is being increasingly perforated by globalization, national values are expected to become relevant beyond national borders. This is particularly so when they are taken up and mediated by powerful political actors like interest groups, the media, political parties, and governments. These transmitters can help to transfer public issues to the international level. A striking example was the French announcement of the resumption of nuclear testing in the Pacific in 1995. Worldwide public protests, supported by various interest groups and some governments, led to isolation of the French government, even within the EU.

National values are expressed in and transformed by institutions like constitutions and other elements of the political system. These institutions contribute to the maintenance of the values that were decisive in their creation. Consequently, one traditional approach in political science deals with the development, comparison, and change of political systems (Almond and Verba 1980; Lijphart 1984).

People in European countries can influence the outcomes of foreign policy via institutions through direct political action, such as referendums. One must remember that the institutionalization of referendums in Europe differs from country to country. One can place Switzerland, which has a remarkable history of direct-democracy voting, at one end of the spectrum. At the other end can be found Britain, where the "sovereignty-of-parliament principle" allows little room for referendums. But in the European integration process referendums are quite common. This is because changes in European primary law need the placet of national legislatures. In some cases, the national

constitution requires a referendum as a condition to ratification of treaties. Thus, the Maastricht treaty required approval by the people of Ireland and Denmark in referendums.

Values vary within a society, for example, from milieu to milieu, as well as from country to country and over time. The second and third aspects can be quickly illustrated with the help of the findings of 1981 and 1990 World Values surveys. When asked if "one has a duty to love and respect one's parents, regardless of their faults," more than 70 percent of American respondents, approximately 80 percent of Japanese, more than 90 percent of South Koreans, but only 35 percent of British and Dutch agreed (Inglehart 1997, 382). In all these countries except the Netherlands, a slight rise in agreement was observed between 1981 and 1990. The percentages of respondents stating that "a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled" were 20 percent for Americans, about 75 percent for Japanese and South Koreans, 20 percent for British, and only 10 percent for Dutch (Inglehart 1997, 380). Again, agreement increased during the 1980s. But the simple suggestion that these figures affirm "continental" differences must be rejected: In the second case, 75 percent of French respondents and as many as 95 percent of Hungarians agreed. Thus, in this respect both countries appear to be more "Asian" than "European." On the whole, the surveys tend to demonstrate a more universal shift from materialist to postmaterialist values even if there are interesting exceptions, such as South Korea and Iceland (Inglehart 1997, 157). As Ronald Inglehart sums up: "The shift from Materialist to Postmaterialist values is not a uniquely Western phenomenon. It is found in societies with widely different institutions and cultural traditions. The rise of Postmaterialist values is closely linked with prosperity and seems to occur wherever a society has experienced enough economic growth in recent decades so that the younger birth cohorts have experienced significantly greater economic security during their formative years than did the older cohorts" (158).

When focusing on Europe alone, we see indications that common values exist, such as "primary commitment to family life." Views on gender roles, the role of the state in society, and attitudes toward economic issues are also quite similar throughout Western Europe (Ashford and Timms 1992, 109). Yet the existence of "European values" remains doubtful, since peoples' primary identification remains embedded in the nation-state; there is no indication that the differences in values among the peoples of Europe are about to converge over time (Ashford and Timms 1992, 109–112).

When we look at the dynamic perspective, we see that Europe is subject to a more universal trend. Values tend to "shift away from dutiful obedience and strict moral views towards greater individualisation and an expanded conception of acceptable behavior. . . . [There is] a shift from what might be seen as traditional values, emphasising hard work, thrift, honesty, good manners and obedience, towards values arguably more typical of a more secular, pluralist twentieth-century Europe, focusing on autonomous personal agency" (Harding, Phillips, and Fogarty 1986, 25). To interpret this trend in terms of societal moral decay would be misleading for two reasons. First, it would neglect the observation that the trend is likely to be a universal one; second, traits like "moral strictness" and "permissiveness" resist generalization, tending rather to vary depending on the type of moral issue in question (Harding, Phillips, and Fogarty 1986, 25). Such differences in values, though contributing to the functioning of domestic politics, have hardly ever been associated with foreign policy issues.[10] But, as the following examples demonstrate, this is no longer the case.

Values at Stake: Three Cases

Case 1: The Danish Referendum

The European integration process, at least in the form of a new treaty among the member states, has been a prolonged and complex affair involving many actors. The process usually starts with a statement of purpose by the heads of government (the European Council) expressing the intention of deepening European integration. Simultaneously, they set up a committee to prepare some nonbinding ideas, sometimes even containing concrete strategies. At this point, the so-called Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) convenes. Civil servants from the participating governments begin with a search for compromises. Supported by ministers and the permanent representatives of the member states at the EU in Brussels if necessary, a draft treaty is worked out, leaving only some final points to be resolved. These last obstacles must be surmounted by the heads of governments when they meet. If a compromise is reached, the formal part of the procedure gains momentum. The draft treaty is signed by the foreign ministers of the member states (the Council of Ministers). After that the ratification process starts. The signed treaty requires the approval of every national legislature, as well as that of the European Parliament.

Only upon completion of the last ratification can the treaty be put into force. The ratification requirements differ from country to country. In some countries, only a vote in the national parliament is required. In others, constitutions have to be amended and the country's highest courts or subnational political entities may be involved. Others, again, require additional approval by the people in a referendum.

In the case of the Treaty Establishing the European Union, the final agreement among the heads of government was reached in Maastricht, the Netherlands, in December 1991 after intensive discussions. On February 7, 1992, the foreign ministers of the member states signed the treaty, anticipating the end of the ratification process by the end of that year. Ratification did not cause a problem in the Danish parliament. The Folketing approved the treaty by a remarkable 130-to-25 vote. Yet the majority necessary to avoid a referendum was missed by 16 votes due to some abstentions. On June 2, the Danes rejected the Maastricht treaty by a close 50.7 percent to 49.3 percent.

An analysis identified several reasons for the *nej* vote (Thune 1993, 309). Some were mainly domestic, such as widespread disillusionment with the conservative-liberal coalition government and a certain lack of cohesiveness within the Social Democratic Party. Moreover, people were afraid of Denmark's possible loss of sovereignty. They disliked the idea of a common foreign and security policy and further integration of law and domestic affairs in the community system (the second and third pillars of the treaty). That mainly members of the "1968 generation," fishermen, farmers, and underprivileged people said no leads to the assumption that such values as solidarity were at stake, in some fashion at least. In addition, from the Danish point of view Denmark would run the risk of being dominated by major European powers, such as France and Germany (Nijenhuis 1992, 12).

The reaction from the other member states was mixed. On the one hand, critics of the Maastricht treaty were encouraged and gained increasing public support, especially in Britain, France, and Germany. On the other hand, there was a broad consensus among elites, governments, and analysts that the integration process should not be stopped merely because of the twenty thousand Danish votes. The treaty could not be put into force without Denmark's ratification. Immediately after the referendum, EU foreign ministers met in Oslo to search for a solution to the crisis. They decided to continue the ratification procedure while agreeing on a "special way" for Denmark. After a close

vote in France (51 percent) in favor of the treaty in September, the Danish opposition parties agreed on a compromise that was accepted by the government. The European Council, meeting in Edinburgh on December 11 and 12, approved the Danish wish for exemptions from the treaty in regard to monetary union and the second and third pillars. The Danes agreed to this compromise in a second referendum on May 18, 1993, by 56.8 percent to 43.2 percent. Six months after the anticipated date and after prolonged public discussion all over Europe, the Maastricht treaty could finally be put into force.

The Danish experience demonstrates that there is an increasing gap between populace and government in some member states as far as sovereignty and the necessity for supranational institution building are concerned. The feasibility of further integration depends to a large extent on the institutionalization of the domestic polity.[11] As mentioned earlier, no problems at all would have occurred if ratification had taken place solely in parliaments. The votes in national parliaments were overwhelmingly positive, with the exception of the British House of Commons (but that was due mainly to tactical and time-management reasons). In France, Mitterrand initiated a referendum on the issue that led to a fierce pros-and-cons-Mitterrand debate, with a close result at the end of the day. In Germany, ratification was possible only after an agreement between the Bund and the subnational Länder. In the end, ratification required a positive decision on principle by the Constitutional Court (the Bundesverfassungsgericht). Some members of parliament, joined by citizens who wished to safeguard their civil rights, brought the case before the court. In its positive decision the court addressed at length the question of whether "German" democratic values—guaranteed by the Constitution—were challenged by the European integration process.

Case 2: The Scrapping of the Brent Spar

The oil platform Brent Spar, owned by the big multinationals Exxon and Shell, was deployed in the North Sea in the 1970s to serve as a swimming tank for about three hundred thousand liters of oil. The construction of more efficient pipelines between oil fields and the Scottish coast made the Brent Spar obsolete, and at the beginning of the 1990s, Shell, which operated the platform, decided to scrap it in the Atlantic ocean. According to various experts, sinking it in the Atlantic was the best solution from an economic, technological, and environmental point of view. It was also around this time that Shell started

a social marketing campaign with the slogan "We want to change things!"

By February 1995, the British government had approved Shell's scrapping plan and informed other North Sea countries. The well-known environmental NGO Greenpeace entered the scene, asking Shell for more information about the plan. On April 30, Greenpeace activists, accompanied by some journalists, seized the platform, while Greenpeace International launched a campaign on the issue. In a press conference on May 2, Greenpeace blamed Shell and the British government for not having resolved the scrapping issue in a reasonable and acceptable manner. The following day the organization requested the German government to prevent the sinking. At that time, only regional newspapers close to the coast covered the incident. But gradually the clamor, especially in the German mass media, grew stronger. On May 4, the German TV magazine show *Panorama* informed people about the case, and four days later the nationwide newspaper *Die Welt* and Germany's number one weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*, published articles. In only ten days the issue became front-page news, and hundreds of articles were published daily.

When Scottish officials approved the scrapping on May 5, the last official hurdle was cleared for Shell. Formally speaking, Shell's project violated neither national nor international norms. Five days later, Greenpeace called for an action plan comprising letters from five hundred thousand supporters of the movement with a protest card attached. A hundred thousand of these cards, reading "Shell dumps North Sea!" were sent to Shell's British headquarters in London. On May 20, Greenpeace declared that many prominent individuals as well as political actors, including the Danish, Dutch, and German governments, as well as the EU commissioner, Ritt Bjerregaard, would take a stand against the sinking of the Brent Spar. Things escalated further when Shell succeeded on May 23 in recapturing the platform. In the Netherlands, fifty Greenpeace activists attempted to blockade Shell's world headquarters. In Germany, the minister responsible for environmental issues, Angela Merkel, publicly endorsed the Greenpeace standpoint. Things became worse for Shell when in the following days some regional members of the established German parties called for a boycott of Shell. Greenpeace supported this initiative, staging protests in front of service stations in Germany. On June 1, it published the results of a poll, conducted by the acknowledged national public opinion institute EMNID, indicating that 74 percent of Germans were willing to

boycott Shell. The commercial TV channel Pro7 issued a report on Shell's recapture of the platform, speaking of "an act of piracy in the twentieth century."

Meanwhile, a conference on the protection of the North Sea took place in the Norwegian city of Esbjerg on June 8 and 9. Belgian, Danish, Dutch, German, and Swedish delegations tried to persuade their British, French, and Norwegian counterparts to accept a resolution prohibiting platform wrecking in the future. But the conference ended with no concrete results, and on June 12 Shell started to tow the Brent Spar to its sinking place in the Atlantic, about 240 kilometers west of the Scottish coast. Since Greenpeace had announced a plan to prevent the sinking by any means, the British government even dispatched a military vessel to keep Greenpeace boats away.

In the meantime, comments in German newspapers became more critical of Shell, cynical cartoons appeared, and the tone of many letters to the editor grew bitter. Moreover, some radio stations called for boycotts of Shell. The next step on the escalation ladder was reached on June 14 with a shooting at one service station and riots around others. Two days later, there was an arson attack on a service station in Hamburg. The Brent Spar had become the number one topic on German front pages. Meanwhile, Greenpeace expanded its campaign to Britain and Switzerland. In Denmark, several companies declared that they would not do business with Shell any longer, and some members of the Dutch government endorsed the boycott.

The issue had grown so big that it even had an impact on the Group of Seven summit in Halifax, Canada. German Chancellor Kohl and some colleagues attempted to persuade British Prime Minister John Major to reverse the decision to sink the oil platform, but to no avail. Repeating his arguments in the House of Commons, Kohl was heavily attacked by Labour members, because Labour backed a possible boycott in Britain. Eventually, on June 20, Shell rescinded its plan to sink the Brent Spar, motivated not only by the growing resistance of European governments but also by the public and media campaigns, with their violent overtone. Because Shell had not shared its decision with the British government, cabinet members were said to be upset by the move. Minister for Trade and Industry Michael Heseltine expressed his discontent, saying he felt "betrayed" by the company ("Öl-Konzern Shell macht Rückzieher" 1995). Major explicitly blamed the Danish, Dutch, and German governments' behavior in the affair. On June 22, he stepped down as leader of the Conservative Party. Though this was

merely a tactical move, it was obvious that Major's government had experienced a tremendous loss of image, which would lead eventually to a Labour victory.

Case 3: The BSE Crisis

BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), or "mad cow disease," appeared in the 1980s among cattle in British herds. Since the BSE agent is unknown to this day, the origin of the disease is still in the dark. It is assumed, however, that it stems from a sheep's disease called scrapie that has been known for two hundred years. For economic reasons, sheep meat is burned and used as cattle feed in the form of bone meal. During the 1980s, British manufacturers lowered the temperature at which the meat was burned, so that the BSE agent survived and is assumed to have jumped to cattle. By mid-1996, about 160,000 cattle in Britain alone were infected (compared with only 1,000 in the other EU member states). The BSE problem would have been a calculable and limited one were there not a striking similarity in symptoms to the fatal human brain disorder Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD). This rare and enigmatic disease causes irreversible brain damage and invariably leads to a painful death. As long as not only the agent but also the method of infection remains in doubt, the connection between BSE and CJD remains unproven.[12] The dispute between Britain and the rest of the EU arose on the latter issue: How probable is it that humans can be infected with BSE?

Although German officials had wanted to ban all British cattle products since 1994, there was only an export ban on meat from "mad cows." Due to the EU principle of nondiscrimination, it seemed improbable that anything more would be achieved. Though Article 36 of the Maastricht treaty enables national governments to restrict the import of products for public-health reasons, exceptions to the nondiscrimination principle demand very strict interpretation supported by scientific evidence. An overview of the BSE crisis in the summer of 1996 follows.

On March 7, 1996, the European Commission approved a plan for an EU-wide network charged with epidemiological surveillance. On June 13, the Committee of Regions gave its placet to the plan. Also in March, a research committee set up by the British government (the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee) declared that a link between BSE and CJD could not be ruled out. At the same time, some new cases of CJD were discovered in Britain—surprisingly, affecting

young people. In a public statement, British officials conceded for the first time that BSE could pose a danger to public health. In response (March 25), the Veterinary Committee of the EU decided, in a 14-to-1 vote, to recommend an embargo on all cattle products from Britain (such as sperm, gelatin, embryos, and beef from cattle of any age). The European Commission immediately put strict measures into force (March 27, decision 96/239) to ban all cattle-related exports from Britain. This embargo meant not only that the member states would refuse to accept British beef but also that British exports to non-EU countries would fall under the ruling. While dealing with the revision of the Treaty Establishing the European Community relating to the IGC in Turin, member states' heads of government offered financial aid to Britain to fight BSE (March 29 and 30). Though the member of the European Commission responsible for agrarian issues, the Austrian Franz Fischler, proposed the slaughter of most of the infected herds, the British minister for health, Stephen Dorrell, considered the mass slaughter of British cattle unnecessary.

When the Veterinary Committee decided not to lift the embargo, Major declared that Britain would suspend voting in the EU's Council of Ministers. In addition, the British government declared that it would postpone participation in the IGC. Thus, from that time on all EU decisions, which required a unanimous vote, were blocked. By the same token, no revision of the EC Treaty seemed possible. On May 29, the commission reminded the British government of its duty to respect its obligations under the treaty. Even serious British newspapers saw the nation as going to war with Europe, stating that this was the biggest crisis since Britain's entry into the EC in 1973 ("Major Goes to War with Europe" 1996). In the following weeks, several dozen EU decisions were blocked, including aid for Russia and a commerce treaty with Mexico. Ironically, some of these measures had been initiated by the British government itself.

Britain's policy of noncooperation led to vocal reactions on the continent. Italy's minister for foreign affairs, Lamberto Dini, spoke of "blackmail," and European Commission President Jacques Santer criticized Britain's "policy of obstruction" and made it clear that Britain was "jeopardizing its own cause" (Lyall 1996, 7). He reminded Britain of the EU's value of solidarity, which ran counter to a noncooperation policy. Reaction in continental newspapers was relatively calm but showed increasing impatience with Britain. A comment in Germany's respected weekly magazine *Die Zeit* spoke of "mad minister disease"

(Sommer 1996), and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* claimed that Germany's withdrawal from the EU should no longer remain taboo (Hort 1996).

On June 5, the European Commission agreed to a relaxation of the embargo, allowing Britain to export bull semen, gelatin, and tallow, but only under certain conditions. Ten days later, the British government contributed to an improvement in the atmosphere by voting for some EU measures, among them aid for Bosnia ("Softened Brains," 1996). After Britain had blocked nearly a hundred decisions in the Council of Ministers, a compromise was reached at a summit of EU leaders in Florence (June 21–22). If certain conditions were met, the embargo would be phased out. The compromise included Britain's obligation to slaughter 120,000 cattle that had been born since 1989, to report regularly on the spread of the disease, and to remove bone meal and meat from farms and feed mills. In return, the EU promised to lift the ban in phases, accepting—among other things—meat from herds not at risk, embryos, and meat from animals younger than thirty months. In addition, up to 850 million ecu in funds was to be provided to British cattle breeders. Britain declared it would drop its noncooperation policy and would cooperate on EU reform. The most serious institutional crisis since the time of the Luxembourg accord in the 1960s was over.

Some Conclusions and Expectations

Some conclusions can be drawn from the cases above. First of all, the "classical" understanding of foreign policy is challenged. The more issue areas are transferred to the international level, the more actors appear. The rise of new actors can be observed in two of the three cases. The Brent Spar case demonstrates the power of new actors in world politics. A transnational company and an NGO were the protagonists in this affair. Governments also became involved later, but their performance was miserable and their image was even more damaged than Shell's (Adam 1995). Continental governments eagerly took a "free ride," profiting from the public outcry. In Britain, the Major government backed Shell's position all along but was left out in the cold when Shell's executives changed their minds. As a comment in the French newspaper *Le Monde* put it, the British government did not recognize changes in world politics and therefore was exposed to ridicule (Gherardi 1995). The role of the mass media in this affair should not be

underestimated. They primarily represented Greenpeace's point of view, stigmatizing the Brent Spar issue as a symbol of unscrupulous pollution, state arbitrariness, and Shell's moral double standard.

With the rise of new actors, a second tendency can be observed. These new actors transmit formerly domestic values to the international arena. As the Brent Spar case suggests, the mass media serve as an "amplifier of values." Whereas Shell and the British government stood for "classical" values—welfare orientation, tactical expediency, national sovereignty, and territoriality—Greenpeace, supported by the mass media, especially in Germany, aimed at "postmaterialist" values: environmental orientation, trustworthiness of principles, equality, and global responsibility. Despite the fact that even environmental scientists agreed that the sinking of the platform was the best solution, this seemed not to be transmittable to the public. For most people on the continent, who were used to laws that prohibit any public littering, it was hard to believe that Shell could be allowed to sink a whole oil platform. Nor was it understood that Shell sold petrol everywhere, initiating worldwide social marketing campaigns, but held press conferences in peripheral Aberdeen, Scotland, and excluded continental subsidiaries from the wrecking decision. Thus, in the eyes of the public, the famous marketing slogan "Think global, act local" had been perverted by the company: Shell acted global but thought local.

The same applies to the Danish referendum case. People's values not only influenced the foreign policy of their government but also caused a serious crisis for the entire European integration process. Whereas the government and most national interest groups and elites favored the Maastricht treaty, the majority of the people remained reluctant. For the former, values such as welfare orientation, progress, and international interconnectedness ranked high. The latter preferred national solidarity and conservation of the welfare state and feared a loss of national sovereignty. In this case, the people could finally be turned around because no mighty international actor shared their side. If the British government, the French people, or the German Constitutional Court had done so, the Maastricht treaty would have perished. Nonetheless, the Danish people gained exceptions for Denmark and delayed the whole process for six months.

The BSE case was different insofar as no situational new actors were involved. The conflict arose between one government protecting national interest groups and some other governments supported

by a supranational actor, the European Commission. The British government violated written as well as tacit rules of conduct of the EU, putting itself in a norm breaker's and outsider's role and confirming the image of the ever-reluctant member whose self-interest was paramount. Yet the "iteration of the game" argument derived from game theory should not be underestimated. Players stay on the scene and have a memory. As Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson said, "Britain will pay a very high price for this. Things like this will be remembered" (Buerkle 1996). From the initiator's point of view, the effects of Britain's noncooperation policy were not convincing. Major hoped to resolve the split within his own party by appeasing the Euroskeptics among the backbenchers in the House of Commons. Although the "yellow press" in Britain exploited the dispute, using pejorative stereotypes for some of the other member states, the eventual compromise revealed Britain's weakness and insularity, so from Britain's point of view the deal made in Florence was far from satisfactory. As widely recognized, Major achieved none of the goals he had aimed for when he embarked on a policy of noncooperation. Hence, the Major government's troubles on the domestic front continued and eventually led to a disastrous defeat in the 1997 general election. Again, the lesson is clear: Hazardous foreign policy does not serve domestic policy goals.

The rather shortsighted materialist, welfare orientation of the British government in the BSE case eventually led to a complete blockade of British foreign policy vis-à-vis the other EU member states and the EU. As far as the "hidden agenda" of the actors is concerned, values were at stake, whether national sovereignty versus common welfare or the income of a domestic interest group versus the health of people in other countries. But this case can also be interpreted another way. As British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind put it, the real issue was not public health but consumer confidence. Because sales of beef in Germany had decreased about 50 percent and sales in Britain only about 15 percent, EU measures aimed first of all at restoring consumer confidence on the continent. Following this line, this value should not have sufficed to justify a ban on British beef exports (Clark, Kampfner, and Peel 1996).

Another conclusion can be drawn. If governments cling to anachronistic reasoning for foreign policy actions that by and large ignore value-led interests of other actors, they run the risk of being confronted

by a counteralliance. Whereas the British government stuck to the principle of "scientific evidence" in the BSE case, the mass media, other governments, and above all the experts had already switched to the "precaution principle" (Winter 1996, 561–563). Since the British government was unwilling to follow suit, its behavior looked more and more like pure opportunism.

The unconvincing results of the North Sea protection conference in Esbjerg made the public think that politicians were unable to resolve the Brent Spar problem diplomatically. Never mind that the Brent Spar was not going to be sunk in the North Sea but in the Atlantic; the media put the issue in that context. In the end, the spontaneous alliance of a professionally acting NGO, governments that jumped on the bandwagon, national mass media, and the public overruled a Shell that was actively supported by a national government.

The following expectations for the future relationship between values and foreign policy issues can be articulated:

First, the more value-driven actors appear on the scene, the more complex foreign affairs will become and the more constraints international relations will experience. But the front lines of these conflicts are not at all clear. Most probably, disputes will arise in various issue areas affecting different actors every time. Which values prevail will depend initially on the power and alliances of the actors involved. However, it will be the institutionalization of domestic as well as international systems that determine which actors can take part in the game and which coalitions are probable.

Second, foreign policy will be increasingly influenced by the mass media. Their mainly national perspective, stereotyping, and misunderstandings, and the values of their "hidden agendas," will further complicate foreign policy.

Third, the more complex the international polity becomes, the wider the gap between government and citizens will grow. Ironically, the foreign policies of countries that are characterized by participatory political structures and civil societies will be affected first.

Fourth, the above ideas are driven primarily by a European perspective. Hence, whether some of these tendencies may also concern Asia should be discussed. Some recent events, such as the stories of Sarah Balabagan and Flor Contemplación,[13] demonstrate the rising impact of conflicting national values, transferred by the mass media to the international level and seriously affecting the foreign policy of governments and relations among states.

Notes

1. See, for example, the discussion in Singer and Hudson (1992).

2. See, for example, the discussion in Gaenslen (1992).

3. See, for example, Johnston (1995); Verheyen (1988); Goldstein and Keohane (1993); Rittberger (1993).

4. McElroy speaks of "norm entrepreneurs" (1992, 179).

5. For discussions of the "ASEAN way," see Thambipilai (1985) and Haas (1989, 6–9).

6. Things are similar in the case of ASEAN. Before new members are accepted, they are expected to subscribe to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Though not legally binding, the treaty contains standards of behavior for governments.

7. Wallace is referring here to Wessels (1990).

8. Gergen is referring only to the American public, but his points can be applied to European publics, as well.

9. In the United States, a world trendsetter, a thriving public relations industry tries to influence press reports. This is seriously spoken of as "news management," and the *terminus technicus* behind the scenes is "spoon-feeding" (Russ-Mohl 1991, 26). Some case studies demonstrate that even high-quality newspapers are strongly manipulated by government PR departments (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

10. Risse-Kappen (1991; 1994), however, analyzes the impact of public opinion on foreign policy outcomes via different domestic polity structures. In his view, the different ways in which liberal democracies responded to the vanishing Soviet threat in the 1980s can be explained only by distinct institutional domestic structures.

11. This is the general argument of Risse-Kappen (1991).

12. Recent scientific experiments on mice seem to confirm that a new variant of CJD is caused by the BSE agent (Bruce et al. 1997).

13. Sarah Balabagan was a Filipina domestic helper whose original death sentence in the United Arab Emirates in 1995 was converted to one year's imprisonment and one hundred lashes for murdering her employer. She was also ordered to pay US$41,000 in blood money to her employer's relations. Flor Contemplación was a Filipina domestic helper whose execution in Singapore in 1995 for a double murder to which she had confessed caused great outcry in the Philippines.

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