



**PhD Program in  
Political Science**

**Ph.D. THESIS**

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**Gasified Sovereignty**

**A study of the “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate in Hungary  
in the light of nation state sovereignty; European integration; and Russian  
imperial ambitions**

Abstract

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## 1. RATIONALE FOR SELECTING THE THEME AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Situated on the boundary of two large political spheres of interests – between the European Union, dynamically enlarging its territory but having energy sector vulnerabilities and Russia, seeking to retain and/or increase its power positions – and as part of the former, Hungary seeks to minimise its natural gas supply security risks by, among other things, diversifying its imports infrastructure.

Budapest has found itself caught in the middle of a large-scale international struggle in the case of alternative line construction projects, which has gone down as the “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate in the public mind. Although there may appear to be economic considerations at the bottom of the conflict, the discourse shows a typical foreign policy dimension pointing beyond economic policy concerns.

In my doctoral thesis, I will give a historical overview of the discourse over Hungary’s dependence on Russian gas supplies and analyse the “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate in the light of nation state sovereignty; European integration; and Russian imperialism. The constructivist underpinnings of these three aspects follow a triple division.

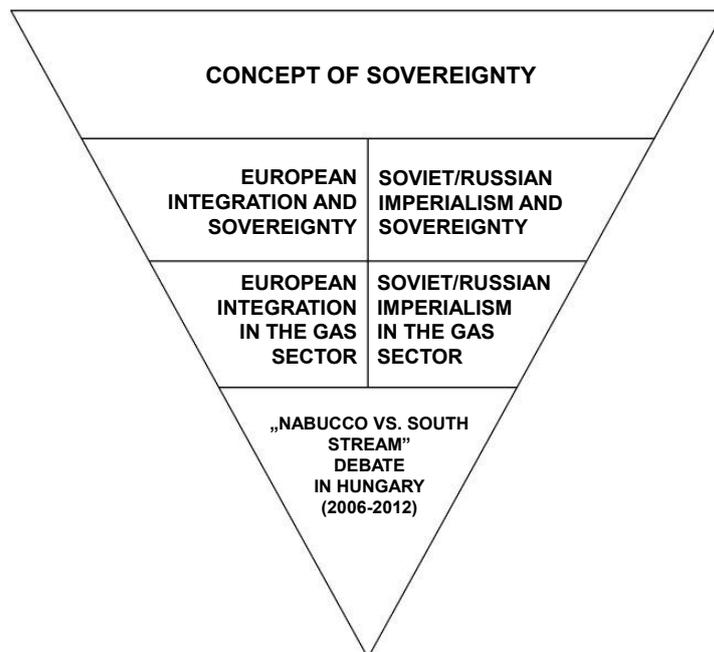


Figure 1 Thesis structure

In the first third of my thesis I will seek an answer to what historical processes gave context to the emergence and changes of different political discourses over sovereignty. It is followed by a shift in the focus of discussion from nation state sovereignty; European integration; and Russian imperialism to the issue of natural gas supply security. Finally, in the third large block I will analyse events between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 in the light of the “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate.

I will first operationalise nation state sovereignty. I will explore historical changes of the concept and prevailing European views of it (II. 1).

In laying down the historical underpinnings of the internal and external aspects of sovereignty I will present seminal theories of sovereignty in political philosophy and the history of ideas and their changes from the middle ages to the 20<sup>th</sup> century (II. 1.1; II. 1.2).<sup>1</sup>

That will be followed by a historical overview of the process of European unification (II. 2). The history of the European Union will be discussed by way of introducing *different integration theories*. The next chapter (II. 3) will focus on the historical relationship between Russian imperialism and the concept of sovereignty.

In the second third of my thesis, I will examine the evolution of the hydrocarbon policies of the EC; EEC (later European Union); and the Soviet Union/Russia, with special regard to the natural gas sector (III. 1–2).

In the final third of the thesis (IV), I will cover the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 discussing the processes of accelerating European integration and Russian cooperation in conjunction, with a special focus on the “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate.

## **2. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

The point of departure of my research is the fact that nation states continue to remain the key actors in international relations seeking to preserve/maximise their own security by diversifying natural gas imports. Understandably, however, these states seek to accomplish

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<sup>1</sup> In terms of the methodology of the approach, I will follow the outlook of the Cambridge School, according to which the attitude of political thinkers can be understood on the basis of their own historical age.

their ends by means of differing strategies, which in turn is determined by what concept of sovereignty underlies their political moves.

That explains the key role of prevailing discourses on sovereignty in determining nation state interests and making decisions.

Thus, apart from available resources, what individual states consider to be the ideal nature of nation state sovereignty can be regarded as a critical factor.

## **2.1. A discourse theory approach**

Social sciences used to represent a basically “discourse-averse” perspective for a long time (Szabó, 1996, p. 103). They considered language an idealised and abstract system of signals that could reflect facts and express meanings unambiguously (Shapiro, 1985–1986).

Later, however, an exclusively abstract linguistic approach was superseded by the examination of language also in its social use. This shift shed a new light on language. It was no longer seen as an abstract system but something that organised human action and not only named but also shaped and organised reality (Carver, 2002, pp. 50–51)

The linguistic turn eventually brought about a narrative or discursive turn, according to which narratives were ways of storytelling fixing and stabilising meanings and creating standard contexts (Szabó, 2003, p. 52).

As a result of the linguistic turn, discourse has become a key concept in contemporary social sciences. Discourses are sets of meanings and interpretations referring to historically changing themes that create social reality (Miliken, 1999)

The growing significance of the concept of discourse led to a new avenue of research in social sciences known as discourse analysis by the early 1990s. This approach views the production by society of texts as the practice of reality creation (Carver, 2004, p. 144)

The proponents of the new perspective questioning the exclusivity of the positivist view and pointing out the need to use different research methods sought to establish a discipline.

## **2.2. Discourse analysis in political science**

The post-modern perspective of discourse analysis also came into widespread use among political scientists as an increasing number of them began to appreciate the significance of

language in relation to power (Hajer, 2004, p. 161) and pointed out the importance of analysing narratives (Roe, 1994; Fischer – Forester, 1993; Stone, 1997). The political analysis of the effects of discourses has become a stable area of mainstream European political research (Mottier, 2004, p. 156)

The representatives of this approach revealed that different narratives are in fact political mechanisms themselves as there was no context without stories and no cognitive changes without narratives (Hajer, 2004, p. 163).

It was primarily Anglo-Saxon, North European and Dutch researchers who participated in working out political discourse analysis (PDA). Prominent representatives of this school of thought include, apart from Terrell Carver, Josef Bleicher; Matti Hyvärinen; and Jacob Torfing. In Hungary, Márton Szabó is considered a recognised authority in the field.

The Department of Government of the University of Essex, England and the Discourse Theory Centre of Roskilde University, Denmark stand out as leading institutions. Furthermore, PDA is now applied in several groups of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) (Szabó, 2004, pp. 139–140).

Discourse theory as an approach is also used in the field of international relations, where it has become a significant perspective through constructivism. Constructivists examine the changeability and social embeddedness of international actors' interests and preferences, for which an understanding of the given actors' system of historical and cultural premises is indispensable (Finnemore, 2003; Barnett – Finnemore, 2004). Discourse analysis is no longer considered unique even when examining borderline fields like security policy (Katzenstein, 1996) and environmental protection (Lifin, 1994, 1998).

The application of discourse analysis to the “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate in the field of energy is a novel feature of the thesis. The starting point of the research is that prevailing sovereignty discourses in politics are power factors themselves and thus contribute to shaping power relations in the field of supply security.

### 3. THE METHOD APPLIED

In studying the theme, I performed historical data and document analysis using the theoretical approach outlined above, with a focus on applying the techniques of text and discourse analysis.

However, with the discourse theory approach it is to be noted that it is not the method itself but the perspective outlined in the foregoing that is considered original. Discursive research is inductive in its nature and relies on qualitative techniques. Inductive logic means that the research is not about testing hypotheses. Qualitative analysis is based on widely differing discourses – texts, speeches, treatises and debates – related to the research theme.

As opposed to the positivist methodology, discourse analysis is focussed on narratives. Thus, research centres on language's ability to create reality, as opposed to factual data that can be derived from individual discourses. Accordingly, I studied rather than filtering out linguistic tools (metaphors; similes; enthymemes; etc.) used in texts.

Contrary to quantitative mathematical-statistical methodologies, I continued data collection and data analysis in parallel and iteratively until I reached what is known as “theoretical saturation”<sup>2</sup>.

Based on Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman, the main parts of qualitative research are as follows: 1. reduce, simplify and extract raw data; 2. represent information in an interpretable manner; and 3. draw and verify conclusions (Miles – Huberman, 1994, p. 10).

In my research, I relied on primary and secondary sources. Writings and models prepared by seminal thinkers and schools of thought on the subjects of sovereignty; European unification; and imperialism can be considered primary sources. In Hungary's case, my research into the gas sector focussed on parliamentary debates; policy-related programmes; and interviews with, and opinion articles by, relevant policy makers in the executive and legislative branches of power. In my study of the EU and Russia, I relied on official energy policy documents. In analysing their energy strategies, I examined the two actors' energy policy statements. I

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<sup>2</sup> The term refers to a state of research where new texts subject to study no longer provide qualitatively new information and thus do not contribute to expanding the theoretical framework (Glaser – Strauss, 1967).

looked at official energy policy core programmes; strategic documents; directives; and the documents of the energy dialogue taking place between them.

In the case of supply security; import dependency; and diversification projects, I relied on the documents of companies relevant to the subject and of internationally recognised research institutes, including Gas Infrastructure Europe (Gas Transmission Europe, Transmission System Operators, Gas Storage Europe, Storage System Operators, Gas LNG Europe, LNG Terminal Operators); British Petroleum (BP); Eurostat; the International Energy Agency; the Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook; the Customs Statistics of Foreign Trade of the Russian Federation (“Tamozhennaia statistika vneshnei torgovli Rossiiskoi Federatsii”); and the published materials of Gazprom.<sup>3</sup>

I used as secondary sources historical articles; studies; analyses; and conference materials published on the subjects of European integration and imperialism. In studying the gas sector, I made use of different international media, in particular Platts; Bloomberg; Moscow Times; NPR; Reuters; International Herald Tribune; the European Energy Review; Eurasianet; Robert M. on Energy and Eurasia; Голос России (Voice of Russia); and Kárpátinfó. Of domestic media, I drew on the dailies Magyar Nemzet, Népszabadság, Magyar Hírlap, Világgazdaság and Napi Gazdaság; the weeklies HVG, Heti Válasz and Figyelő; as well as Index.hu, Energiainfo.hu and Portfolio.hu.

In addition to desk research, I also had access to sources on the internet. During the research, I consulted stakeholders and experts in the field as well.

From the constructivist perspective, the subject can be analysed as a set of complex interactions between international and domestic politics. There are a great number of players involved in the field of energy; at the same time, based on their influence on decision-making, the range of relevant actors can be selected relatively easily.

At a subsystem (intra-state) level, I studied the public strategic, tactical and communication moves of Hungarian energy and foreign policy actors. With the gas sector, the representatives of dominant domestic economic players are also relevant in the study of discourses. The behaviour of public opinion is usually changeable, unstable and less coherent and therefore

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<sup>3</sup> It has to be noted, though, that energy policy, public or corporate, is informed by data of strategic importance and thus it is not easy to evaluate resources as most of them are not available publicly.

has a negligible impact on the prevailing foreign policy discourse (Holsti, 1992, p. 442). That was why I only covered Hungarian society to a limited extent.

#### **4. THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE THESIS**

##### **4.1. Sovereignty; European integration; and Russian imperialism**

Based on Part II “Theoretical Underpinnings” of my thesis, political theory perspectives can, as suggested by Tsimbursky’s dynamic sovereignty model (*Tsimbursky, 1992; Tsimbursly, 1993*), be divided into two distinct sovereignty models: a basically pro-cooperation and a basically pro-independence model. The primary difference between the two ideal types lies in which of the two main “components” of sovereignty is considered ideal for dominance: *de facto* sovereignty or recognition-based sovereignty, and also in what is seen by each perspective as the most important goal of the nation state in the case of international cooperation.

Of the *de facto* and recognition-based components of sovereignty, the collapse of traditional and modern empires has by today caused the latter to dominate the European space; however, the different schools of thought have differing views of its ideal composition. While, depending on their offensive or defensive stance, realist theoretical perspectives consider the extension of *de facto* sovereignty, or the preservation of its existing degree, appropriate, liberal schools consider it desirable to increase the recognition-based element of sovereignty.

With regard to the question of international integration, while the advocates of extending recognition-based sovereignty argue for the extension of cooperation, the proponents of preserving or extending *de facto* sovereignty make their case for the independence of the nation state.

Individual perspectives can vary by policy area. We find policies where the State was able to act sovereignly and even its own competences were left unquestioned. At the same time, depending on the historical age, there are examples of policies in whose case the sovereignty of the State was based on some kind of recognition, i.e. assumed a limited or divided character.

In the case of the integration of the European Union, we could see the blending of federal and inter-governmental elements, which is reflected in the practical decision-making and

institutional systems resulting from the divergent sovereignty concepts and inconclusive theoretical debates of pro-cooperation and pro-independence perspectives.

In Russia's case, it was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. the beginning of the volatile age of doctrines, that the question of the ideal nature of sovereignty had emerged in Russian political discourse. The questioning of the priority of the *de facto* sovereignty element could not emerge yet at the time.

Although under Stalin the primacy of *de facto* sovereignty may have seen successful in the empire, the endeavours of Soviet foreign policy leadership over time met with the strong resistance and sovereignty endeavours of Central and Eastern European nation states and also the opposite pole of the bipolar world order, the United States and its allies. Overall, after Stalin's death the recognition-based sovereignty element gradually superseded the *de facto* element.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the fundamental debate in Russia's case no longer revolved around imperialism; it was the ideal composition of sovereignty that posed the primary dilemma. Standing on one side are those in favour of the dominance of the *de facto* sovereignty element vis á vis protagonists of the strategy for Russia to extend the recognition-based component of sovereignty.

All in all, it can be concluded that nation state sovereignty is essentially a social construct changing in space and time. Different approaches are certainly not to be seen as exclusive perspectives having eternal validity; rather, they merely reflect the convictions of the key actors of international politics who change from time to time.

#### **4.2. European integration and Russian imperialism in the gas sector**

In Chapters III. 1 and 2 of my thesis, I explored the question of nation state sovereignty in a special field of energy policy, namely natural gas supply security. A discourse theory-based approach to this theme allowed me to analyse the changing practice of nation state sovereignty in relation to European integration and Russian imperialism.

Although at the start of European integration the founding treaties already addressed energy policy, Community documents still covered the hydrocarbon market to a limited extent in the 1950s. Initially, instead of Community-level institutions established on functionalist principles, it was EC member states – as principal territories from a nation state sovereignty

perspective – that sorted out their gas issues in the framework of realistic inter-governmental rivalry.

By the 1970s, EC member states had also realised political risks arising from growing energy dependence. As a result of oil crises, they primarily interpreted their supply security problems as a dilemma jeopardising their nation state sovereignty and thus attempted to deal with those issues basically on their own. That in fact hindered rather than helped to forge a Community/Union-wide energy policy based on neoliberal institutionalist principles.

Although the oil crises had a beneficial effect on Community-level thinking in energy policy, they failed to bring about a breakthrough in substantive cooperation; in the so-called realist-neoliberal institutionalist debate (also) taking place in the gas sector, the former prevailed in managing the crises. At the same time, deteriorating Middle-East relations contributed to developing bilateral cooperation with the Soviet Union.

While in the 1950s Moscow still looked on hydrocarbons as a decisive means to its imperialist ends, i.e. the preservation of the empire's *de facto* sovereignty and its extension within the COMECON, by the end of the 1960s its internal economic difficulties made it consider exporting newly explored reserves no longer exclusively to COMECON countries but also to the EC. That was how the deepening of energy links between Western Europe and the Soviet Union began. The process was further accelerated by the 1973 oil crisis.

Deepening cooperation finally led to a situation where by the 1970s the Soviet Union became irreversibly dependent on hydrocarbon exports, which became one of the main hindrances to imperial endeavours in the long run. The sharp decline in oil prices combined with the “star wars” threat from the United States in the second half of the 1980s also had a part to play in limiting the Soviet Union's trade to the EC and the COMECON. That finally played a key role in causing the empire to collapse.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Gazprom became the biggest player in the gas sector. The concern had a monopoly within the sector but it also had to face severe difficulties during the period of transition. It often led to open conflicts between Yeltsin's political and Gazprom's corporate leadership.

By contrast, EC member states' efforts to improve energy efficiency proved to be successful by the 1980s. After the energy crisis and a drop in the prices of energy, the dominance of the political sphere and nation state interventions was gradually superseded by market economy

logic and neoliberal views. That accelerated the process towards placing the EC energy policy on a community basis. Europe set as a central objective to reduce prices, which it sought to achieve by means of privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation.

In a White Paper issued by the European Commission in 1986, the Community declared that the most important task in the field of energy was to create a single energy market, which had two preconditions: the establishment of uniform energy networks within the framework of trans-European networks and the liberalisation of national energy markets being in a monopolistic situation. However, the endeavours included in the Commission directive were, in the majority of cases, either watered down due to resistance from nation states or in many instances were not realised at all or not to the extent required by the European Commission.

While the neoliberal institutionalist endeavours of the 1980s and 1990s did not cause supply security issues to disappear from the agenda, the weight of the problem diminished. By the 1990s, the issue of security primarily emerged from an environmental protection aspect.

As of the 1980s, the development of EU foreign relations was already accompanied by practical results realised on the basis of neoliberal principles. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a number of neoliberal institutionalist steps were taken in the European Union by Eastern enlargement resulting in many international agreements and much decision-making space, to which, however, no meaningful substance was added due to EU member states' divergent nation state interests and Russia's strategic endeavours. No Community-level single energy policy was put in place except for a few first steps taken in earnest towards one.

Energy supply risks appeared more frequently in the EU's strategic documents after 2000 accelerating the development of regulations promoting a single energy market and of programmes supporting infrastructural projects.

In addition, international discourses now included the need to enhance earlier international agreements and decision-making spaces. There were many reasons for this including a drastic rise in fossil fuel prices in the mid-2000s; a change in the Russian energy strategy; the EU's Eastern enlargement; and increasingly frequent disputes between Russia and the Ukraine over gas prices and their adverse consequences.

Russia's energy policy underwent significant changes in Vladimir Putin's first two terms as president. A substantive transformation of the public and economic sectors, in particular the

gas industry, began. That also meant the intensification of foreign policy-driven protectionist endeavours as opposed to the liberal economic policy in the 1990s. In the case of Gazprom, the primary goal became the setting up of a vertically integrated global energy concern capable of dominating the entire gas sector from production to reaching the final consumer. Following consolidation, the Russian company's management set increasingly ambitious targets as was demonstrated by the Russian energy strategy until 2020 adopted in 2003.

#### **4.3. The “Nabucco vs. South Stream” debate (2006-2012)**

Part IV of the thesis focusses on the period 2006–2012, in particular on debates over Nabucco and Russia-inspired alternative pipeline projects (Blue Stream and South Stream).

The start of the conflict was closely linked to the Russia-Ukraine gas crisis in January 2006. The disagreement between Moscow and Kiev gave impetus to the implementation of Nabucco. The project increasingly took centre stage in discourses on European energy policy.

The purpose of Nabucco's implementation pointed beyond EU-Russia relations as leaders of the United States was also monitoring developments around the project. That was because the USA's most important aims included the separation of former gas-rich member republics from Russia's sphere of interests. That was how the gas supply security dilemmas of Eastern Central European countries and the geopolitical interests of the United States came down to a common denominator in the case of the Nabucco project.

At the same time, however, chances of implementing Nabucco were limited by the unclarified question of where gas could come to the pipeline from. Although the US welcomed the project, it did not participate in it as an investor, nor was it able to give it a significant boost other than a communication offensive.

Seeing Europe's loss of confidence in it, Russia attempted to stabilise its regional superpower positions in the gas sector. Moscow therefore sought to achieve the following goals:

1. Prevent gas-producing countries in the Caspian region from getting their gas directly to Europe without Russian control.
2. Conduct smooth and uninterrupted gas trade with “gatekeeper” states situated between Russia and the European Union.

3. Regain the confidence of Western European consumers.

These goals were underpinned by a three-pillar strategy as follows:

1. Gain/retain a buyer's monopoly on sources of natural gas extracted in near abroad countries.
2. Gain/increase/keep control over the transit infrastructure by way of obtaining political influence or exerting political pressure.
3. Guarantee secure supply to European gas consumers by initiating natural gas projects involving Russian interests.

Russia began to implement its strategy through a series of complex tactical moves focussed on diversifying Russian transit routes or at least on its communication to exert pressure. For, the Blue Stream II and, later, the South Stream projects could contribute to four things at the same time. They could:

1. Limit the number of states feeding gas into Nabucco.
2. Be used to threaten and also discipline "gatekeeper" states serving as Western transit routes for Russian gas.
3. Be an alternative source of supply security for South-East European countries, which could weaken the case for implementing Nabucco.
4. Enable Russia to make the EU recognise Russian energy policy moves by seeking to engage Western companies in its own self-devised pipeline projects.

In respect of the Hungarian debate over the gas pipeline, it can be concluded that despite its predominantly foreign policy overtones the conflict also dominated the domestic political discourse. Fidesz basically engaged in a value-based debate and discussed events around the pipeline projects in the context of sovereignty and loyalty. The opposition party sought to pressurise the Gyurcsány administration into "laying its cards on the table", or at least to maintain an air of uncertainty around the government's position. It did so at the real risk of terminating a balanced relationship with Moscow.

Even though the government pointed out on several occasions that it wished to engage in interest-based and pragmatic talks with Russia, the rhetoric and the results achieved in energy policy, i.e. the wishes and reality were not going hand in hand. An IHT article publishing

Ferenc Gyurcsány's statement forced the government to remain on the defensive and stand its now discredited former ground based on the principle of "the more pipelines, the better". Concurrently, under constant pressure from Fidesz and official and semi-official American sources the government inadvertently found itself in the midst of an interest-based international debate. All that eventually led to the government's symbolic step in favour of Nabucco.

In the course of 2009, the "Nabucco vs. South Stream" debate could gradually die down in Hungary, for the following reasons:

1. A change in the official American position: Following the US presidential elections and shift in power, the Obama administration adopted a more consensus-seeking and pragmatic approach in its Russia policy as opposed to the confrontational stance of the previous Republican leadership. Moscow also confirmed improving US-Russian ties in the field of energy. Thus, Washington no longer considered Nabucco and South Stream as competing options.
2. Surgutneftegas's purchase of MOL shares: With Gyurcsány's "departure", a key figure of the conflicts over the gas pipelines was removed from the centre of the „Nabucco vs. South Stream" debate. Besides, the purchase by Surgutneftegas of MOL shares shifted the focus of the discourse over Hungary's energy policy sovereignty from the "Nabucco vs. South Stream" debate to the assessment of risks stemming from a Russian stake in MOL.
3. Settlement of Fidesz-Russian relations: Fidesz's election success in 2010 became increasingly certain by the second half of the 2006–2010 parliamentary term. Thanks to that, Fidesz took the first steps towards détente with Moscow in the second half of 2009. All that was publicly returned by Moscow before the first round of Hungary's parliamentary elections in 2010.
4. Growing dominance of alternative projects in international gas supply security discourses: Many countries in Eastern Central Europe saw increasing opportunities in ramping up alternative transit and production technologies, including in particular a focus on LNG imports and non-conventional natural gas extraction, as a means to deal with gas supply security problems. All these ideas were connected to the concept of a North-South energy corridor supported by both the EU and Eastern Central European member states. Regardless of party affiliation, the Hungarian political elite increasingly dealt with

promoting the build-up of so-called crossborder capacities. The Eastern European region took concerted action in order to develop the gas pipeline infrastructure during Gordon Bajnai's premiership and also continued to do so during the term of the second Orbán government.

Following the study of the "Nabucco vs. South Stream" debate, it can be concluded that in a political sense there is no more to it than promoting control over gas transmission routes and trade conducted on them. In the case of the discourse under review, business considerations are characteristically complemented with a foreign policy conflict pointing beyond the energy policy discourse. Ultimately, Nabucco and South Stream have become the symbols and yardsticks of two geopolitically distinct sets of goals underpinned by divergent sovereignty concepts.

Nabucco can be viewed as a project designed to weaken Russia's westbound gas transmission positions and as a compass in terms of whether it is possible to get Caspian gas to Europe by bypassing Russia. The concept of South Stream serves as a means to preserve Russia's status quo in natural gas transmission. It can be concluded, however, that the primary yardstick of the Russia-inspired project lies not in its implementation as such but in maintaining or strengthening the current power positions.

There are a number of reasons why the "Nabucco vs. South Stream" debate has faded into the background, including falling European demand for gas and gas oversupply caused by the global economic recession; the resetting of US-Russia relations; the prospect of building up LNG infrastructure in Eastern Central Europe; and the emergence of European discourse over non-conventional natural gas extraction.

However, in the case of the latter two factors – i.e. projects representing an opportunity to diversify gas transmission and extraction – new risks have emerged in respect of the Russian gas status quo in Eastern Central Europe. For that reason, the implementation of South Stream seemed to make more sense at the end of 2012 than any time before during the history of the debate over alternative pipelines as discussed in the foregoing.

The "Nabucco vs. South Stream" debate clearly demonstrates that different discourses can also function as power factors in the field of international relations. In my opinion, shedding light on the gas pipeline debates from a discourse theory perspective can have a stimulating effect on the domestic and international political, economic and scientific elite in that it

enables it to evaluate a theme so far handled primarily on economic grounds also from political aspects; revisit its assumptions and theoretical viewpoints; and thus respond to the challenges of transnationalisation affecting the gas sector.

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