Elements of a sociology of European integration

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Abstract

How can sociology contribute to the understanding of the social and political transformations that are affecting contemporary Europe? The article proposes that sociological accounts of European integration should focus around the basic problem of internal differentiation and external adaptation of an emerging European society. In revising the sociological tradition of theorizing modern society as a "unity in diversity", the contours and the macro-, meso-, and micro-structural consolidation of a European society can be made visible. Sociological insights are them needed to understand a) the "meaning" of European integration beyond rational design and purposeful action, b) the constraining and/or enabling factors of integration as a teleological project that stretches from market building to polity building and society building, c) the dynamics and mechanisms of integration and disintegration, of binding and un-binding, of internal differentiation and external adaptation that demarcate the conflictive field of the emerging European society.

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In search of a European society

When European integration was launched in the immediate post-war period, the so-called founding fathers of Europe were guided by the broad vision of a European society. They applied an encompassing and sociologically informed notion of "integration" in the sense of using the building of a common market as a catalyst for the unification of the people of Europe. "System integration" should be followed by "social integration". The establishment of a common market would go along with the creation of state like supranational political institutions, which – through a set of shared norms and values – would socialize individuals into Europeans, without necessarily discarding their national or regional belonging.[1]

This federal vision of a European society as a long-term achievement of European integration stood out against the short term concern with European integration as a practical arrangement of government. In the original treaties that laid the foundations of the European Communities, the scope of activity of the newly established supranational institutions was ultimately restricted to common market building. Given this clear priority of economic integration over political and social integration, the European federation and the European society were soon off the agenda.

As long as European integration proceeded at a slow pace, mainstream political science explanations referring to the European Communities as a problem-solving arrangement could be considered as sufficient. Early theorizing of European integration was still firmly anchored in the paradigm of International Relations with its focus on the interaction between states and with societies being locked up at the intra-state level. The dynamics of integration were thus located in the purposeful action of the governments of the Member States seeking to maximise national interests (the so-called realistic school). Alternatively the regulatory capacities of supranational institutions were emphasized which developed in partial independence from the states (the so-called neo-functionalist school).[2]

A clear turning point in theorising European integration was marked by the Single European Act of 1986, which set the schedule for completing the common market with encompassing free trade arrangements, free movement

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[1] The most powerful testimony of this trust of the „founding fathers" in the power of supranational integration can be found in Jean Monnet's auto-biography (Monnet 1976). For a more general account of the "lives and teachings of European saints" see Milward (1992).

[2] For the range of political science theories on European integration see the volumes of Rosamond (2000) and Wiener and Diez (2003).

of workers and capital and a monetary union. Substantial treaty revisions by the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties of 1992 and 1996 extended the body of supranational law and competences and included a range of new regulatory policies in the fields of environment, education, culture, welfare, social rights, immigration, security, defence and foreign policy. The freshly established European Union turned into a new kind of legal and political order with far reaching impact on people's individual and collective life chances. More importantly, these accelerated dynamics of integration had a deep normative impact on the perceptions of legitimacy of the European project. Legitimacy could no longer be derived from the permissive consent of the citizens, who profited from the outputs of the common market in terms of welfare and security (so-called output legitimacy). Legitimacy had to be generated also by providing specific inputs in the form of aggregating citizens' preferences and engaging them in political will formation (so-called input legitimacy).[3]

It is thus important to note that society came back in as a concern with the normative deficits of European integration. Elements of a normative order were outlined in the Treaties in the definition of European citizenship and extended rights of participation. At this point, it became inevitable to raise the question of a European social model that crystallizes the visions of the "good life" and of the "good society" that are common to the Europeans and that should guide their political project towards the future. The EU constitutionalisation process has intensified this search of legitimacy for a new type of political order. In practice, this meant entering a communicative process of justification and reason giving with society. For the European Union as an entity which subscribes to democratic principles (also applied unto itself) the ultimate source of legitimacy could only be grounded within society.[4]

If the post-Maastricht Europe can be described in terms of a transition from market building to polity building, it implicitly also becomes committed to a project of society building. Once again, the European society was primarily perceived as a normative desiderate that was indispensable to cope with the deficits of legitimation of the European integration project. It was, first of all, a corollary of a legitimate political order and a necessary social horizon for any debate on rights, justice, citizenship and identity (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 5). What counted was not the diagnosis of the absence or incompleteness of such a European society but the prognosis of its possible emergence.

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[3] The debate on input versus output legitimacy in EU-governance can be traced back in the work of Fritz Scharpf (1999) and Giandomenico Majone (1998).

[4] For the interpretation of EU-constitution-making as a turning point in the history of European integration see Weiler (1999) and Eriksen et al. (2004)

For sociology, this prognostic view on the European society as the normative horizon of integration is clearly insufficient. In applying a prognostic view on the future emergence of a European society EU studies have lost sight of the transformations that are affecting contemporary European societies. The research focus was mainly on institutional and constitutional designing, but not on the social dynamics and mechanisms that drive European integration or that put constraints on it. Society was merely conceived as a contextual variable, not as an intervening variable of European integration. EU-studies have, for instance, not paid attention to the possibilities of popular contestation that have unexpectedly brought the constitutional process to a standstill.[5] Society therefore remains the blind spot of European integration studies. While testing out the validity of a European normative order, there is still a "noticeable absence of any concern with an underlying theory of society" (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 3).

To shed light onto this blind spot of EU-studies is the genuine concern of the sociology of European integration. How then can sociology contribute to our understanding of the social transformations that are affecting contemporary Europe?

Europe: a social fact

Sociology starts with the insufficiencies of explaining European integration merely by reference to efficiency and functionality of governance. For sociology, society is more than wishful thinking. Sociology cannot be interested in the European society as the *telos* of integration. Sociology rather seeks to understand the distinct way of structuring social relations within the European space (Favell 2006). It identifies the regularities in the ways Europeans behave and enter relationships with each another. Sociology focuses on society as a *constraining factor* of European integration that shapes the present choices and preferences of the actors involved. It also analyses the conditions under which society becomes an *enabling factor* of European integration accounting for accelerated change in the behavioural patterns and expectations of the Europeans.

What is the specific way of looking at European integration that distinguishes sociology from political science and normative accounts of European integration? In identifying the legal and political order of Europe, sociology is

[5] See Hooghe and Marks (2006) who on the basis of the referenda experience formulate a "post-functionalist" theory of integration, which brings societal contention back in.

not limited to ad-hoc explanations of decision-making processes. It does not ask how political authority is applied but how it is constituted. This implies a broad view on political institutions, which are not only analysed as formal legal bodies with a particular mandate but as patterns of social relations. As such, institutions represent shared norms and expectations, and thus lay the basis for trust and solidarity among the members of society. Sociology reconstructs the belief systems that shape the practice of legitimation and de-legitimation as one of the driving forces of European integration. In identifying the normative order of Europe, sociology does not ask: What is the adequate and legitimate way of shaping the European Union? It rather asks: What kind of norms and ideas are held valid and how do they operate within the EU? It does not ask what should be the ideal contents of European citizenship but how and under what conditions can European citizenship as a formal legal category be transposed into citizenship practice (Eder and Giesen 2001). It does also not ask what kind of procedures of participation should be enacted by the EU but rather how new opportunities for participation become salient and how they are occupied by the people of Europe (Ruzza 2004). Finally, with regard to the long-term EU-constitutionalisation process, the sociology of European integration is not interested in the legal contents of a written constitution but rather in the possible shape of a European society as a *constitutient* of the particular kind of polity, which bestows it with legitimacy (Fossum and Trenz 2006).

The basic insight for any sociological theorising is that European integration is not only useful, it is also meaningful (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 3). It produces and reproduces *social sense*, which according to Max Weber (1978), is to be considered as the ground category of sociological thinking. The search of the "meaning" of European integration has turned the European Union from a common market into a political and social entity. The European Union has become committed to a normative project of society building. There is, however, a huge discrepancy between the concern with the normative deficits of European integration and the lack of a theory of society. The European society is not simply the object of utopian thinking, it becomes, to speak with another classic of the sociological discipline, a *social fact* (Durkheim 1982): European integration establishes stable patterns of behaviour between state and non state actors, it raises norms and expectations that bind these actors together into a unified whole that is independent from and that constrains individual responses and preferences.

One problem for contemporary social theorising is that most of social sciences' analytical categories were developed within the nation state framework. As such they account for mainstream "methodological nationalism" of the discipline, which considers nation states and nationally bounded societies as

their basic units of analysis (Beck 2003). The nation state model has also shaped the sociological understanding of the stability of society and the possibility of social order. By relying on some basic commonalities, such as language, culture and tradition, the national society was able to accommodate internal diversity and to appease redistributive conflicts. Its historical achievement consists further in recognizing its members as equals and thus laying the foundations for the trust and solidarity among the citizens.

The European Union is a double challenge with regard to this traditional thinking of society as a hierarchically organised and culturally homogeneous space. First, the European Union has consolidated as a non-state entity. In contrast to traditional forms of *government* as the realm of states and authoritarian rule over a given territory, European integration rather unfolds as a new form of *governance*, which is advanced mainly by independent regulatory bodies and agencies. Governance is also not located within one central authority but dispersed over a variety of state and non-state actors, administrators and experts at the regional, national and supranational level of political aggregation (Marks et al. 1996; Kohler-Koch and Jachtenfuchs 2004). From this new form of political organisation as a complex system of multi-level and multi-centred governance, it would be mistaken, to assume that the EU is also a non-society entity (Rumford 2002: 46ff). The overcoming of the traditional state focus rather becomes a dynamic element for societal forces to leave the national container behind. The dispersion of rule making is also linked to a new plurality of governance including different societal stakeholders, affected parties and social constituencies (Kohler-Koch 2007).

Second, the European Union is set out to accommodate enhanced social and cultural diversity within an open and still largely undefined societal space. It is committed to *positive integration* with the aim to guarantee the social cohesion and stability of the continent. The EU has, for instance, been particularly successful in promoting economic development in structurally weak regions. It has also defended the rights of workers, of women and of minorities. Hence European integration has direct and indirect redistributive effects, which reconfigure the space of solidarity among the citizens. At the same time, the European Union performs increasingly as a constraint to the integrity of the national society. These disintegrating effects are manifested in the opening of internal borders, the new mobility and competition in the labour market, the breaking of local traditions and solidarity, and a new heterogeneity of social milieus and practices.

These simultaneous processes of social opening and closure are highly relevant in sociological terms. They refer to two different mechanisms of fabricating the “unity” of society either through cultural bonds of similarity

(mechanic solidarity) or through a division of functional tasks (organic solidarity). Emile Durkheim (1984), who delivered the classical account of these two forms of integration, also emphasised that the stability of social order is based on an equilibrium between its collectivising and differentiating forces. European integration is experimenting with both modes of social integration. It refers to an encompassing process of social change; a transformation that is also labelled the *Europeanization* of the nation state and of the national societies.

Europeanization will therefore throughout this book be used as a key term for the sociology of European integration. Within political science Europeanization is generally conceived of as a one way process of domestic change that is *caused* by European integration.[6] In sociological terms Europeanization is not a one way causal relationship. It rather proceeds through the same patterns of social integration and transformation already identified by Emile Durkheim around a century ago. Accordingly; Europeanization can be defined as internal differentiation and external adaptation. It turns national societies more dynamic and accounts for accelerated social change. As such, it is linked to harmonizing processes through which national societies become increasingly similar, but it is also manifested in new heterogeneous practices, which increase internal diversity.[7] The sociological challenge here is to conceive social integration at a new level of abstraction and differentiation (Münch 2001: 233). The European society *integrates* by enhancing organic solidarity, i.e. the dependencies and functional links between the national societies. The national societies *differentiate* by lowering the threshold of mechanic solidarity, i.e. the primordial bonds and commonalities within the nation state (ibid.: 230ff.).

We can summarise at this point our introductory remarks and try to fix the possible contributions of sociology for an understanding of European integration as a *social fact*. Sociological insights are needed to understand a) the "meaning" of European integration beyond rational design and purposeful action, b) the constraining and/or enabling factors of integration as a teleological project that stretches from market building to polity building and society building, c) the dynamics and mechanisms of integration and disintegration, of binding and un-binding, of internal differentiation and

[6] In this sense, Europeanisation is defined and operationalised by Vink 2003; Börzel and Risse 2003. For an excellent overview of the different use that is made of the concept of Europeanisation see Olsen 2001.

[7] It is for that reason that sociologists prefer the more dynamic concept of Europeanization over the conventional and normatively loaded term of European integration (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 6).

external adaptation that demarcate the conflictive field of the emerging European society.

Unity and diversity as key themes of a sociology of European integration

Sociological accounts of European integration focus around this basic problem of internal differentiation and external adaptation of an emerging European society. "Unity in diversity" is the phrase that perfectly captures these social dynamics of Europeanization (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 60). The European Union today is caught in the contradictory situation of having to define a European commonness that is universal but nevertheless distinct from the global. At the same time, the European Union is committed to protect and even to enhance its internal diversity of cultures and social milieus (ibid.). This process of coping with differences and striving towards unity can be expected to be highly conflictive. In the following, I will argue that it is precisely this conflictive situation of negotiating the unity and diversity of a new political order, which makes the European society thinkable.

European integration accentuates diversity. It confronts a plurality of social groups and actors: different professions and classes, ethnicities and language groups, religions and ideological movements. As such, it gives rise to a new heterogeneity of practices, which are sedimented in new social and cultural cleavages within and between the national societies. Take, for instance, the case of new regionalist movements all over Europe, which are encouraged by the new opportunities offered by the EU to strive for recognition and to impose their "rights for diversity" within the nation state (Trenz 2007).

The enhancement of diversity is, on the other side, balanced by a new search for unity as manifested in the growth of EU-regulation and legal harmonization. The effects of these standardization efforts go far beyond the integration of the common market. Consider as an example the system of higher education and universities: The exchange of students between EU-member states through programmes such as *Erasmus* and *Sokrates* made it necessary to agree on common curricula and evaluation systems. This is partly embedded in more encompassing processes of international standardisation of higher education through the Bologna process (Maassen and Olsen 2007; Gornitzka et al. 2007). Institutional adaptation is, however, not steered from above, but takes place mostly through multilateral agreements between universities as largely autonomous bodies or through local and regional governments representing their interests. The effects of these smooth adaptation processes are nevertheless pervading: Within little more than one

decade, the traditional diversity of higher education within and between the nation-states had been broken up.

The unity and diversity theme refers to an old *leitmotif* of European philosophical thinking. It reflects the belief in the value of the individual before the general but also the insights of the embedding of the individual within the general. Europe has always been the „plural continent", in which the perception of diversity and pluralism was sharpened. At the same time, Europe stands in a long tradition to take up the challenge of overcoming its internal differences and of conceiving societal and political order in terms of „unity in diversity" (Olsen 2007). Evidence for this historical continuity can be found in the revival of the idea of empire as an encompassing political order based on higher principles that include and transcend regional particularities (Offe and Preuss 2007; Beck and Grande 2004). The European Union has also taken up the old belief in a civilising mission of the Europeans towards the rest of the world. The idea of a European civilisation is both defensive in delimiting the scope of legitimacy for expressing internal particularities and expansive in promoting a normative order based on the values of individual freedom, equality and self-determination as a model for world politics.[8]

Nineteenth century sociology has started out as the attempt to detach the idea of a genesis of unity through diversity from philosophical or religious contemplation. The claim of sociology for autonomy as a scientific discipline was precisely based on these efforts to separate metaphysical reflections on the problem of "unity in diversity" from scientific explanations of the unifying and/or diversifying laws of the social.[9] This resulted in the description of modern society as a structural field of diversity. The modernization of Europe could be described in terms of accelerated social change, individualization, and functional differentiation. From this historical perspective, European integration is not a rupture in European modernization but rather its continuation. It follows from this that traditional sociological accounts of modern society should, in principle, be also applicable as explanations of the emerging European society.

At this point, it will become necessary to revise the sociological tradition of theorizing modern society, to elaborate different concepts of social order and

[8] This links to the contested notion of the European Union as a civilian and normative power. See the contributions in Sjursen (2006).

[9] A „social fact", writes Durkheim (1982: 56), is of collective origin, it results from collective life and not from the aggregation of individual artefacts. „It is a condition of the group repeated in individuals because it imposes itself upon them. It is in each part because it is in the whole, but far from being in the whole because it is in the parts."

to test out their applicability to Europe. In the remaining part of the chapter, I will group sociological accounts of modern society along different lines of mapping the unity and diversity of the social space of Europe. The European society will then become visible from two angles: first, as a structured diversity of national societies and as a new heterogeneity of practices within the institutional space that is demarcated by the EU. Second, the European society will become visible as a unitary social order through particular integrating efforts and mechanisms, which are linked to new social imaginaries of Europe as a meaningful whole. The following table provides an overview of the different sociological perspectives on studying the diversity and unity of Europe:

Table 1: Mapping sociological approaches to European integration

Europe as structured diversity	**Europe as a unitary social order**	**Main authors**
The national configuration: Europe of nation states		
Socio-structural configuration: Comparison of national societies	Europe as social model	Therborn, Crouch
Historical configuration: Comparison of state and nation building	Europe as civilisation	Rokkan, Eisenstadt, Bartolini
The post-national configuration : Europe » sui generis »		
Macro-structural transformation: 1) Europeanization as system building (internal consolidation and external adaptation) 2) Europeanization as "reflexive modernisation"	Europe as federation Europe as cosmopolis	Durkheim, Weber, Parsons, Haas Beck

Micro-structural transformation: 1) Europeanization through border-crossing associations 2) Europeanization through new distinctive practices	Europe as social space	Abélès, Ross, Mau, Bourdieu Kauppi, Favell
Meso-structural transformation: 1) Europeanization through information flows and discourse 2) Europeanization through collective mobilization	Europe as network society Europe as public sphere Europe as civil society	Castells Habermas Eder Tilly, Tarrow

The national configuration: Europe of nation states

Social structural comparison of national societies: Europe as a social model

The concept of social structure is frequently used in sociology to describe the enduring and relatively stable relationships between individuals and groups *within* society. Micro-structural analysis explains individual behaviour defined through social positions and roles. Macro-structural analysis explains the relationships between larger entities of society, like institutions, social classes or ethnic groups. The point here is that social structural analysis can be also usefully applied to describe the patterns of social relationships and trends of development *between* societies. The building blocks that constitute our shared social world and that account for the regularities of our social relationships exist independently of the particular house that is sustained by them. As an example, consider the case of family as an element of social structure that is common to all societies. Notwithstanding the huge diversity of family patterns that exists today, sociology is able to distinguish global changes that affect family life worldwide.

Comparative sociology proceeds through the categorisation and systematic comparison of available statistical data along the classical factors of micro and

macro structural analysis like family, work, welfare and education. Data is provided by national statistical offices but the underlying indicators are increasingly standardised by international organisations like *Eurostat, The World Bank or the OECD*. Global surveys like *The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), The World Values Survey* and *OECD* surveys make very refined measurements possible (such as the comparative assessment of the performance of national school systems: so called PISA study).

The advantage of this sociological approach is that it can rely on relatively established research routines. The measurement of socio-structural variations puts societies in a hierarchical order, for instance along varying degrees of industrialization or education. Sociologists further distinguish particular clusters of societies. Classifications of European societies often result in dichotomous schemata like north versus south, atlantic versus continental European or protestant against catholic. Other possible groupings of societies refer stratification, social inequality and the accommodation of diversity. A well-known example is Esping-Anderson's (1990) famous categorization of the three worlds of welfare capitalism: the liberal, conservative, and social democratic regime-types represented by Anglo-American, Continental European and Scandinavian societies.

Applied to the European integration process, the idea is that European societies have developed structural similarities that group them together into one distinctive cluster of societies. In order to prove this European distinctiveness, sociologists usually seek to describe the existence (or the emergence) of a European social model that separates European from non European societies (Therborn 1995; Boje et al. 1999; Kaelble 1997; Crouch 1999; Lane and Ersson 1999; Vobruba 2005).

What elements of "European-ness" can be distinguished, which impart a certain unity to all Western and possibly also Eastern European societies? Colin Crouch and Göran Therborn, who have delivered the most comprehensive account, link the European social model to the major concern with social equality and welfare that distinguishes European societies from American society. The European social model would thus refer to a particular *European* way of relating to diversity: an "ordered, limited and structured diversity" as compared to the American way of "unstructured and pluralistic diversity" (Crouch 1999: 405). As such, the European social model has large implications on the system of values, on the design of the welfare state and a larger emphasis on social policies and on the accommodation of internal diversity, the dealing with minorities, mobility and immigration. Europe is also more vulnerable to internal cultural differentiation, it is in fact

characterized by exceptional cultural homogeneity in the world and a strong will to defend its cultural heritage.

European integration has clearly taken up this legacy of defending social rights and welfare from the perceived threat of globalization. Yet, this European social model evoked by the EU is so far not substantiated in a European society as a socio-structural entity of its own. It is rather referred to as a template: the sum of the structural similarities of the national societies. As such, it is also taken up in the programmatic writings of the European Commission to express a minimum value consensus in the fight for social equality and justice and a protective interest that is common to all Europeans. The European social model thus hardly exists, except in defensive EU rhetoric (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 106). It is thought of in an additive way as the plurality of national societies although the sum has no positive value of its own (Beck and Grande 2004). The European social model has therefore only little internal structuring effects on unifying the people of Europe, or on enhancing transnational solidarity and identity. The question of the possibilities of social integration beyond the national is not answered but only whether societies in a similar socio-structural, political and historical position can be characterized along parallel and isomorphic processes of structural adaptation.

Comparative sociology delivers in this sense merely a descriptive account of the *parallel* development of European nation states. The primary unit for comparison is still the national society. The research practice consists mainly in the aggregation of statistical data to cover the different dimensions of the socio-economical, political and cultural integration of national society. This results in a description of the plurality of European societies, which either looks at difference or at convergence. The cross-country comparison allows however only indirect conclusions about the possible demarcation of a European society in the singular. Particular findings, such as the specificity of a European family structure or of the European welfare state, rarely apply to the whole of Europe (Crouch 1999). In addition, one could criticize that these presumably European features of society are not much more than variables in social research. They are only discovered post-hoc from the analysis of statistical data and are rarely in the minds of the people who presumably should constitute such a society (Kaeble 1997).

Historical comparison of national societies: Europe as civilization

In order to arrive from the static view of social structures at an explanation of the more dynamic aspects of *structuration* comparative sociology needs to apply a historical perspective. Historical analysis is helpful to identify long

term developments that affect the constellation of European societies, and that constitute its internal value structure and belief system. A classical example of this approach is Max Weber's reconstruction of the link between protestant ethics and the development of modern capitalism in Western societies (Weber 2002[1905]). Against any materialistic explanation of social history, Weber emphasized the role of ideas and values as the driving forces in shaping the modern world. This refers to a general argument made in contemporary sociology that modernity takes multiple forms and that it is possible to follow a specific European path of modernization (Therborn 1999; Eisenstadt 2003).

Comparative historical sociology aims at an explanation of the distinctiveness of modern European society as compared to traditional societies and as compared to processes of modernization in other parts of the world. Historical sociologists of Europe often operate with the concept of *civilization* as a family of societies, which are shaped by basic cultural orientations and institutional settings. According to the Israeli sociologist Shmuel Eisenstadt (1987), the particularity of the European civilizational development lies in the parallel existence of multiple, competing centers. This has spurred competition across the European territorial and cultural space about who is the best within this civilizational constellation. European history reflects this continual experience of competition for hegemony in terms of ideology and power, although predominance of a single center was never achieved in practical terms. The major effect of this competitive framework in the relationship between European societies was the consolidation of a European space of dense socio-economic, cultural and political interchange. The formation of political centers, collectivities, and identities was closely related and developments within one sub-centre had immediate repercussions in others.

This basic understanding of the European civilizational constellation of ordered diversity and competition is also shared by the Norwegian social scientist Stein Rokkan. Rokkan (1999) reconstructs the emergence of the modern configuration of Europe through the comparative analysis of state and nation building. He used the analytical categories of centre and periphery to deliver a cartography of the European social space. The successful internal consolidation of plural centers followed a kind of master plan. In this historical mapping of Europe, parallel developments in the establishment of citizenship rights, the nationalization of collective identities or the structuring of religious and ideological cleavages could be made visible. The so-called Westphalian order of Europe is distinguished by a dual centre-periphery structure: first, *within* the sovereign territorial state, e.g. through cultural domination, the suppression of minority languages and cultures, the concentration of coercive means, and the establishment of an internal market. Second, *between* the sovereign states: the historical center along the so called city belt from Belgium

over the Rhine Valley, Northern France, Switzerland up to Northern Italy and the many peripheries East, West, North and south of the city belt. The founding nations of the European Communities were notably coincidental with this Carolingian center and European integration has been expanding since then into the historic periphery.

In contemporary sociology of European integration, several authors have followed these lines of historical comparison (Tilly 1990; Flora 2000; Stråth 2000). An important contribution has been delivered by Stefano Bartolini (2005) who analyses European integration in terms of new centre building. Considering the EU as an enlarged territorial and functional system, he recovers some of the classical themes of political sociology but also elaborates some fundamental differences of EU centre formation from traditional state building. The novelty of the European experience lies in its attempt at centre formation without nation-building. This alters fundamentally the nature of the European nation-states. Boundaries are removed at the national level, but do not necessarily reappear at the supranational level. In this sense, integration has introduced a new phase in the history of Europe that dissolves the taken-for grantedness of the national societies and rediscovers the diversity of the European space (both within and between the nation states).

The sociologically relevant question is whether the un-bounding of the national configuration of societies can be also related to the re-bounding of a post-national configuration of a European society "sui generis" (see table 1). To a certain extent European integration has already become a laboratory for testing out new forms of social integration. The European laboratory has not only launched a large scale experiment in political organization and governing. It has also experienced with new forms of democracy, with new forms of collective action and with the construction of new identities. But how can the political re-structuring and the social re-structuring of Europe be recombined? The answer goes beyond comparative historical sociology. The retrospective view on the European configuration is useful for understanding path dependencies and for modelling ideal types of social order. It is less useful for understanding the dynamics of European integration and the chances or limits of European society-building. At this point we need to supplement the perspective of the historical-retrospective structuration of Europe with a contemporary-prospective outlook of the structuring of an emerging European polity and a corresponding European society (Fossum 2006). Europe is then no longer the fragmented space of national societies but a unified space of new alliances or a polarised space of cross-cutting social cleavages and conflicts.

The structuration of the contemporary European social space can be analysed at the macro-, the micro-, and the meso-level (see table 1). Macro-sociology of European integration analyses the consolidation of the European Union as a large scale social system, as a polity and as a market. It also reconstructs the driving forces and dynamics of integration along new cleavages and constellations of interest. Micro-sociology analyses to what extent Europeanisation affects everyday life of the individuals, who inhabit the European space. It investigates face-to face interactions at the basis of the new social organisations that carry forward the European integration process. It also considers the elementary relations among the citizens of Europe and their attitudes towards the EU. Meso-studies of European integration are necessary to understand how the macro and the micro configurations of Europe are inter-related. This includes, above all, an understanding of the mechanisms of intermediation through communication, the diffusion of knowledge and the building of trust and legitimacy.

The post-national configuration: Europe "sui generis"

Integration as macro-structural transformation

The core concern of a macro-sociological approach to European integration lies in sheading light on the conditions for the emergence of a new form of post-national societal order. In the tradition of classical sociology, this includes a *static vi*ew on system building, internal consolidation and external adaptation and a *dynamic view* on processes of boundary re-definition, conflicts and accelerated social change.

Europeanization as system building (internal consolidation and external adaptation)

Inspired by the federal visions of the founding fathers of Europe, early integration theory began with a sociological insight. When Ernst Haas (1968) in the late 1950s tried to understand the dynamics of European integration, his expectation was that integration would unfold through functional spillover. "Neo-functionalism", as this early theoretical strand was labelled, is sociological in the sense that it assumes a link between political integration and social integration and describes the social forces that determine societal change. Functional theory postulates the existence of endogenous social laws that promote the unity of Europe. European integration is not only political, it is also consequential. It is not simply a political construction, depending on the good will and intentions of particular actors, but rather objective destiny, dictated by the laws of the social.

If neo-functionalism was ideologically inspired by the federal thinking of Jean Monnet, it was intellectually inspired by the grand social theory of Talcott Parsons. In this sociological tradition, society is conceived as an internally differentiated and externally delimited social system. It is stabilised through the interchange between different sub-systems each of it contributing to the maintenance of social order: the economic system through adaptation to the environment, the political system through goal attainment, the societal community through membership and the cultural system through value attachment (Parsons 1967: 3ff.). The European Union is a social system to the extent that it provides services with regard to each of these sub-systems. Neo-functionalism could therefore postulate the emergence of a European society as a structured entity in line with the national society. The European society would evolve as a new layer in a federal model of social and political order.[10]

It is evident at this point that sociological background assumptions entered political science vocabulary and informed the use that was made of the term *integration* at the heart of the newly established discipline of *integration studies*. In the classical definition of Ernst Haas the concept of *integration* was used in this wide sense comprising both political and social integration: „Political integration is the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states" (Haas 1968: 16). The optimism of early integration theorists referred to a societal perspective of European integration: "The end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, superimposing over the pre-existing ones" (Haas 1968: 16).

To trace back this unspoken sociological heritage of European integration theory it is useful to recall the basic categories that were introduced by Emile Durkheim to explain the integration of modern, differentiated society. In his classical work on the "division of social labour", Durkheim postulated already a spontaneous movement towards a "European society, which has, at present, some idea of itself and the beginning of organization" (Durkheim 1984:: 405). How could Durkheim in the booming years of European nationalism arrive at such a conclusion?

[10] During the 1950s the term European federalism was not contested. „European integration" and „European federalization" were often used as synonyms. Only later federalism („the f-word") became one of the most controversial terms in European integration (Morgan 2005: 11ff.).

Translated into contemporary political vocabulary, Emile Durkheim was a federal thinker. He stands at the beginning of a long line of tradition of conceiving the European society in terms of a federation: a society, which is held together by functional necessity and shared interests and which embraces several national communities under the common economic and political umbrella. This federal vision of a European society operates through the distinction between *society* represented by the heterogeneity of purposive and interest-based social relationships and *community* represented by the homogeneity of primary and more intimate social relationships (Toennies [1887] 1963, Weber). For Durkheim community and society are linked to two different mechanisms of social integration: one based on the primordial bonds of sameness between the members of the traditional (national) community (mechanic solidarity); the other based on the functional ties of difference between the members of a plural and multi-ethnic society (organic solidarity). The evolutionary process of modern society included further the transition from traditional collectivism to modern individualism. The segmental differentiation of societies as territorially confined units would thus slowly be replaced by functional differentiation of society as a unity made up of the mutual dependencies of its plural elements. The socially and culturally homogeneous nation-state is therefore only transitory to a higher level of unity in diversity. This is the background, why Durkheimian sociology was very attractive for American sociology, and in particular for Talcott Parsons, to explain the integration of the Unites States of America as a heterogeneous society based on plurality and difference. For the same reasons, Durkheimian sociology is highly relevant for explaining the integration of the European society as a "unity in diversity".

In the functional tradition, European integration is based on consensus. It transcends the ideological conflicts within the nation state and the nationalistic conflicts between the nation states. Against this trust in the integrative forces of the social, it should be reminded that Durkheim was also critical with regard to this process of functional differentiation. The division of labour was mainly driven by anonymous economic forces and tended to create a deficit of moral integration. What would be the Durkheimian diagnosis of the contemporary disintegrating effects of market opening? Europeanization refers to a process of differentiation through which ties of organic solidarity across national borders intensify, but ties of mechanic solidarity within the national borders are weakened. The logics of transnational opening and differentiation would thus put at risk the moral integrity of national society based on the fragile equilibrium between competing social forces of opening and closure. It was exactly this diffuse feeling of crisis that engendered the call for a European society as an antidote to unbounded economic globalisation (Habermas 2001).

Another influential theoretical tradition for laying the grounds for a macro-sociological approach to European integration can be found in the work of Max Weber. In contrast to his contemporary Durkheim, Max Weber was more interested in the rational aspects of social action. He was sceptical with regard to the possibilities of moral integration and the steering of social processes through political design and education. Nevertheless, his insights are highly relevant to understand European integration as an expansion of free market logics and capitalism. Weber (1978, chapter 8) has shown in an exemplary way how expanded capitalism needed to be tamed by state intervention and the consolidation of a legal order. The European Union repeats this experience of simultaneous de-regulation and re-regulation that characterised the late nineteenth century nation state. At the same time it establishes political authority and higher levels of secularized legitimacy. Weber's theory of political domination is thus particularly relevant to understand the present impasse in the consolidation of the political order of the EU and the specific type of constraints in terms of legitimation and delegitimation emanating from it (ibid., chapter 10).

Similar to Durkheim, also Weber can be applied critically to the European integration process. In his political essays he arrived at the conclusion of the crisis of the moral integration of modern society through the pervading effects of technical rationalisation and the submission under economic law (Weber 1994). The taming of expanded capitalism through modern bureaucracy and administrative rule, leads to a general restriction of individual life chances and a loss of traditional resources of meaning. To the extent that contemporary global modernity still follows the same paths, Weber's diagnosis draws attention to the loss of individual liberties and the restricted capacities for controlling global change. European integration would thus primarily be an expression of scientific-technical civilization and bureaucratic domination (Bach 1999). As such, it enhances new opportunities for expanding technocratic rule and bureaucratic organization but it also devalues existing resources of meaning and traditional social ties. In contrast to Durkheim, Weber would be more pessimistic with regard to the possibilities of catching up the moral integration of an emerging European society. European integration would rather unfold as a more or less civilized play of power and interests. The societal realm would be restricted to instrumental action, and the chances for the building of community as a carrier of democracy and collective self-determination are low (Münch 2001: 16).

Europeanization as “reflexive modernization”

Macro-sociology is not only concerned with the reconfiguration of the social and political order of society but also with general processes of societal development and change. Sociology of European integration needs to explain the dynamic aspects of European integration in relation to the general transformations which European societies are currently undergoing. A first crucial question is whether European integration is to be understood in terms of continuity or in terms of discontinuity of the project of modernity. A second question is how Europeanization is linked to more encompassing processes of globalization.

A comprehensive answer to how European integration relates to modernization can be found in Ulrich Beck’s theory of reflexive modernization. According to this influential author Western societies have entered a new period of “second modernity”, which is distinguished by applying a new logic of reflexivity to all forms of social life. Reflexivity points to the constant questioning of the taken for grantedness of the social, the consideration of alternatives and the need to revise political choices. This is fundamentally different from the logics of necessity, stability and fixity of meaning that characterized “first modernity”(as enshrined in the Parsonian social model). The ongoing transformation of the basic institutions of modern society also affects the available forms of political organization. The national constellation of societies (in the plural) is replaced by a post-national constellation of society (in the singular). The encompassing world-society nonetheless includes a plurality of meaning, which is not segmented but overlapping. It is within these shifting meaning structures that the European society becomes thinkable too.

What is the place of Europe in this emerging global order? First, European integration is seen as less specific, but barely as the expression of a general symptom in the transformation of modern societies. The European Union is a model of regional integration, but it is also part of the cosmopolitan society. Beck and Grande (2004) therefore propose to conceive the unity of Europe in terms of a cosmopolis, because it is only under cosmopolitan assumptions that Europe can uphold its internal diversity and stabilize its external relations. Europeanization is grounded in a partially institutionalised cosmopolitanism. This is manifested, above all, in the legal and constitutional order of the EU. Consider, for instance, the role of the European Court of Justice, which has a double integrative function: it enforces the supremacy of European law and it coordinates the mutual recognition of national law. A cosmopolitan Europe is further rooted in the awareness of multiple belongings of its citizens. The old principles of inside and outside are no longer valid: being European does not

mean that one cannot also be French, German, Bavarian or Turkish German (ibid.: 39).

How can this cosmopolitan Europe as a *society of societies* be given a political form? Beck and Grande (ibid. 100ff.) propose to conceive the European Union in terms of an empire. As such, it cannot rely on any hegemony of power of fixed hierarchies, but unfolds through a new horizontal, network type of power.[11] The European empire is further characterized by its open and variable territorial structure, its shifting borders with an inclusive tendency and its loose organisation of the territorial space).[12] Last but not least, the multi-national societal structure of the EU is characterized by asymmetric memberships, with rights being granted and opportunities for participation being offered at the supra-national, national and regional).[13]

Yet, there are also important differences of the emerging EU-polity to the traditional form of empire. Most importantly, there appears to be an intrinsic relationship between "reflexive integration" and democratic forms of governance. In contrast to an empire, the EU is unable to establish cultural dominance and hegemony. It is not held together by traditional authority but by democratic procedures of differentiated integration as a way to enhance reflexivity of governance (Eriksen 2005a). This is further manifested in the trust in deliberation as a way to trigger off reflexively organized learning processes, since it compels actors to justify their choices and to face critical opposition. Also the institutions of the EU become reflexive to the extent that they are responsive to societal problems.

A further likely effect of reflexivity applied to European governance is that European integration becomes conflictive again. The outcomes of European integration are no longer driven by functional spillover but by a contestation over political alternatives. Beck (1997) speaks in this regard of the re-invention of politics in the second modernity. In this sense, Europeanization can be expected to proceed through politicization, new sub-politics and mobilization from below (Fossum and Trenz 2006). Reflexive sociology thus highlights the contested nature of the emerging polity, its internal ruptures and cleavages.

The second question that needs to be addressed is how Europeanization links to the general processes of globalization. Sociology of modernity has always

[11] What political scientists have called horizontal network governance, see Eising and Kohler-Koch 1999.

[12] What political scientists have called variable geometry of the EU, see Wallace 1983

[13] What political scientists and sociologists have called post-national or fragmented citizenship, see Soysal 1994; Wiener 1997; Tambini 2001; Eder and Giesen 2001

highlighted the interconnectedness of European and global change. In this tradition, sociology of European integration can elaborate how globalization and Europeanization stand to each other in a dialectic relationship of opening and closure. Globalization is most commonly measured in terms of market opening. It is viewed as a centuries long process in the development of modern capitalist societies. "Economic globalization" can nonetheless be distinguished in extensity, intensity and impact from previous phases of economic internationalization (Held et al. 1999). This intensifies a parallel process of cultural homogeneization as manifested in the unblocking social life forms from the bonds of the national. The latter is frequently studied in terms of "cultural globalization" (Robertson 1992).

Europeanization adds to these dynamics of opening a new drive towards social closure. On the one hand, Europeanization is *negative integration* in the sense of removing the obstacles to free trade. As such, it enhances, what Durkheim (1984: 111ff.) has called *negative solidarity*: the granting of individual rights of freedom and the accommodation of these rights in a way to create distributive justice and to avoid conflicts between individual profit maximizers. On the other hand, Europeanization is increasingly turned into *positive integration* in the sense of developing new techniques of governance. As such, it refers to what Durkheim (ibid.) has called *positive solidarity*: the commitment to collective goals which opens possibilities for re-regulation through state intervention (Münch 2001: 180ff.).

Europeanization is distinguished from globalization to the extent that it facilitates positive integration over the negative integration of market forces. The particularity of the European Union in global politics is displayed by the fact that it takes up its mandate for the collective government of the shared social space. European integration is therefore not only expansive and inclusive but also protective and exclusive in the sense of reinforcing the boundaries of the social.

EU-governance research has consequently asked under what conditions Europeanization might act as an `antidote' to globalization (Graziano 2003). This confrontation of globalization versus Europeanization is helpful for appreciating the potential of European integration as a political project and its capacities to "organize" (civil) society. It is also partly misleading, however, as the global dimension has always been part of the European project. As the EU-constitutional endeavour has made evident, the legitimacy of the European political order is heavily relying on enforcing its cosmopolitan components. Europeanization therefore takes the form of "institutionalized cosmopolitanism" (Beck and Grande 2004: 76). To grasp this dialectic relationship between openness and consolidation, Beck (2006: 9) proposes the

term *cosmopolitanization* to be distinguished from economic globalization linked to the promotion on neo-liberal policies and from re-nationalization linked to enactment of new protective policies.

Beck's conception of cosmopolitanization might become crucial for explaining the ambivalent role played by anti-globalization or anti-EU movements, which blend the idea of global distributive justice with the idea of a European social model based on welfare and restricted competitiveness. The impact of this new counter-movement against disembedding market forces is only fully understood if it is related to the regulatory efforts of European governments and European institutions. Although the central rationale for the EU is to foster freedom of movement, we see it, at the same time reflecting a new social agenda that works towards the re-embedding of markets within society. The EU can therefore not easily be reduced to the institutional expression of market liberalization, but to some extent has also become part of the great counter-movement (Caporaso and Tarrow 2008: 1).

Integration as micro-structural transformation

A micro-sociology of European integration turns towards the individuals, who populate the European space. Eurobarometer provides an ample data set about citizens' preferences and attitudes towards the EU and its policies. Only little is known, however, about how attitudinal change is linked to behavioural change of European citizens. This regards, in particular, the question what kind of interpersonal ties and interactions develop between individuals and how they relate to political authority. Micro-sociological knowledge is important to assess how citizens can participate in European governance at different levels of political aggregation. It thus delivers information about how abstract citizenship rights are turned into citizenship practice (Wiener 1997).

Micro-sociological approaches to European integration can be broadly classified along whether they rely on structural-rationalistic or structural-constructivist presumptions. In the first case, it is analysed how individuals locate themselves within a given social structure (constituted by the European Union) either through purposeful action or through normative orientations and role adaptation. In the second case, it is analyzed how particular actor positions are distributed over the social space and stabilized in ongoing social practice.

Europeanization through border-crossing associations

Within the traditional structural-rationalistic paradigm of sociology, individual behaviour is situated within an established social order made up of power relations, rules and normative expectations. The activities of individuals or social groups are linked to the particular opportunities offered to them for accumulating resources and pursuing personal or collective interests. In this sense, also the European Union can be analysed as a new opportunity structure that is occupied by particular actors and groups, who begin to organise trans-nationally their interests. Bottom-up approaches to European integration frequently start with identifying those particular groups within society who are potentially affected by the EU and its policies. The work and life of farmers and fishers, for instance, is strongly regulated by the rules of the Common Market. To what extent do standardized life forms and expectations lead to trans-national alliances and solidarity?

The usual answer is that "ordinary people" delegate their interests. Farmers, fishers and other professional groups are represented in Brussels through the umbrella organisations of their national interest associations (like the *COPA, Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the European Union*). Participation at the EU level is classically analysed as lobbying by corporate actors and interest representatives (Greenwood 2002). European associationalism remains an elite endeavour, which is mainly driven by EU-experts, who have developed multi-lingual capacities and a specialized knowledge how to approach the EU and make sense of its policies. EU-associationalism further follows a sectoral logic, which conflicts with the existing territorial alliances as the prime orientation of European citizens (Marks and McAdam 1996).

A micro-sociology of European integration explains elite behavior. Bottom-up approaches use interviews and participant observation to analyze role perceptions of officials involved in bureaucratic decision-making (Egeberg 1999), the socialization of EU-civil servants (Ross 1995), competing role expectations among the Members of the European Parliament (Abélès 1996), associational behavior in transnational advocacy coalitions including NGOs and social movement actors (Ruzza 2004), or mind-sets of journalists and EU-correspondents (Meyer 1999). The research method employed usually consists of conducting in-depth interviews with key informants who are considered to be the source of ideas about Europe and the initiators of policies, which allow European integration to advance (Ross 2008).

All this raises the question whether there is also a bottom-up process of "ordinary Europeans" growing together and socializing across national

borders. The Commission's ambition to close the gap between the EU and its citizens has grown in significance after several defeats in referenda, where the majority of citizens rejected the proposed treaty reforms. In a White Paper on European communication policies published in 2006 the Commission laid down the objective to transform the EU into a "common project shared by all levels of government, all types of organizations and people from all walks of life" (Commission 2006). In line with the White Paper on Governance published in 2001 the Commission's approach towards society is guided by a consensual ideology with the ambition to transform opponents into partners, conflict into cooperation and the conviction that truly communicative efforts will lead to a deep understanding uniting all Europeans to stand for the common project. This partnership approach can be identified as the European way of doing things together and as such is the central ingredient of the success story of European integration. What for four decades has bound European elites together shall now be expanded to the level of ordinary citizens. The idea is that citizens should become partners empowered for participation and dialogue and well-connected among each other (Trenz and Vetters 2006).

How does European integration affect everyday life of the citizens? Diéz Medrano (in this volume) reports a rapid Europeanization of individual behavior through indicators such as cross-country marriages, changing identity patterns, social mobility and professional relationships across borders. In similar terms, Mau et al. (2008) were able to show that cross-border transactions on the individual level have become a mass phenomenon in Germany with approximately half of the population becoming engaged in regular private communication with people living abroad. Diéz Medrano (in this volume) nevertheless remains sceptical and concludes that such European behavioral patterns are not automatically turned into strong communitarian ties and new processes of group formation. For the time being, they are rather manifested in loose networks, whereas the development of European social groups in the strong sense meant by Max Weber is unlikely.

The question is further how these intensified cross-border relations influence the attitudes and values of the people involved. The before mentioned study of Mau et al. (2008) finds that people with trans-national experiences were more likely to adopt cosmopolitan attitudes. However, such new cosmopolitan lifestyles are not automatically turned into support for the EU and its policies. More recent findings point out to the contrary that the growing awareness of citizens of the impact of the EU on their every-day life chances is turned into opposition and open resistance to the EU (Harmsen and Spiering 2005). This rather critical attitude of the citizens puts the official

consensual approach of the Commission into question. Learning to become a citizen of the EU also implies learning to say "no" to the EU and its policies.

As it appears relatively certain by now that the Europeanization of behavioral patterns is not restricted to a new trans-national elite, a micro-sociology of European integration will grow in significance. More than partnerships with society, the EU has opened a new conflictual field, in which actors struggle for resources and legitimate positions. This requires a sociological perspective, which looks at the distinctive practices through which Europeanization proceeds as a struggle over social positions.

Europeanization through new distinctive practices

A structural-constructivist approach explains individual behavior as not simply causally related to pre-established social structures but as entrenched in particular routines and cultural orientations, which are constantly reproduced through social practice. The focus of sociological research is on how social practice unfolds over time and space constructing larger societal structures as well as subjectivity. This is the core of the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, which explains how specific subjective positions are defined through particular skills and capacities, which are distributed unequally over the social field. The ensemble of distributive struggles over power and resources constitutes the particular field of social practice and the actors' roles and positions within it (Bourdieu 1977).

In order to describe the European Union as a field of social practice, it is necessary to trace back the particular logics through which relevant actors position themselves within the field and relate to each other. In contrast to Marx, Bourdieu assumes that social positions are not simply determined by the distribution of economic capital, but by the complex entwinement of three additional forms of capital: social capital refers to capacities of social actors to occupy social positions and to make use of power and resources in social networks. It is objectified, for instance, in prestige or recognition. Cultural capital refers to capacities to make use of more or less institutionalized distinctive forms. It is objectified, for instance, in university diplomas (Bourdieu 1987). Symbolic capital refers to capacities to push through dominant interpretations of the particular historic situation and to set criteria for inclusion and exclusion. It is objectified, for instance, in historical narratives or in images of the collectivity (Bourdieu 1993). Through these three forms of capital, the social field is strategically constructed, culturally integrated and symbolically stabilized. At the same time, the social field is a battleground for the re-allocation of capital, but it is made clear that this battle follows rather strict rules, habits and routines and not individual strategies or

rational decisions. In this sense, the social field is nothing else than a perpetuation of social practice, in which actors are strategically, culturally and symbolically embedded.

European integration has a clear impact on the re-configuration of these three forms of capital: it re-distributes power and resources, it organizes knowledge and information, and it disposes over collective identities. Does this re-distribution within the European space establish new class distinctions and inequalities? Following the logics of the social field, such a class struggle would be organised in a bipolar way. A European elite is distinguished through trans-national power positions and privileged relational ties (social capital), it goes through a European educational career, acquires European masters and PhDs (cultural capital) and it develops particular cosmopolitan attitudes, lifestyles and identities (symbolic capital). This new class is distinguished from those, whom Zygmunt Bauman (1998) has aptly called "locals" and who are rather immobile and traditional with a low educational profile and a tendency to be stuck in backwards nationalism.

Inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Nilo Kauppi (2003, 2008) has drafted a political sociology of European integration, which does not focus on large processes of polity formation but on the positioning of political actors moving within the new institutional framework of the EU. A European political field is constituted by the habitus of new trans-national actors (like EU-parliamentarians), which struggle for the particular kind of social positions defined by the EU. In contrast to structural-rationalistic assumptions, it is not asked how these trans-national actors occupy strategically the new opportunities offered by European integration. The question is rather how European integration stabilizes norms of behaviour, routines and new distinctive forms that guide a particular type of social practice. In this sense, Kauppi (ibid.) uses Bourdieu primarily as a micro-sociological foundation to so-called constructivist approaches to European integration, which have become rather popular in recent political sciences theorizing. Bourdieu's political sociology presents another version of social constructivism, which explains European integration as a process driven by norms, ideas and the use of language and discourse (Checkel 2007). It is useful, above all, to bring social agents back in, who are not simply driven by ideas and institutional rules, but who are, above all, the carriers of a new form of social practice.

Along similar lines, Favell (2008) and Eder and Verwiebe (2006) have described how transnational mobility is turned into capital which distributes power positions over the European political field. The habitus of the new European-cosmopolitan elite is defined through the use of the privileges offered by European integration. As Calhoun (2001) nicely characterizes this

"cosmopolitanism of the few": "We could say of cosmopolitanism that it requires too much travel, too many dinners out at ethnic restaurants, too much volunteering with *Mèdècins Sans Frontiers*. Perhaps not too much or too many for academics (though I wouldn't leap to that presumption) but too much and too many to base a political order on the expectation that everyone will choose to participate." Favell (2003: 32) provides an equally strong image by typifying the new elite as the "Eurostars" (the frequent travellers between Brussels, London and Paris) "at the vanguard of European free movement" whose "lifestyles, consumer profile and cosmopolitan attitudes can be read off from the editorial content and advertisements found in the glossy on-board magazines."

The Europeanization of forms of capital is maybe best visible in the educational sector, where patterns of inclusion through cultural capital are defined. Schools and universities are no longer primarily the place to educate the national citizen. As Soysal and Schissler (2004) have demonstrated, the nation state has lost its monopoly in the definition of legitimate culture. Curricula and educational carriers are institutionalized trans-nationally pointing at the emergence of "world culture" (Boli et al. 1985). According to Bourdieu (1987), such processes of cultural integration are all the same linked to new distinctive practices. In contrast to "world culture", the identification of "European culture" always implies processes of exclusion of a common "illegitimate culture." Cultural policies in the EU therefore aim at identifying the specific European elements of culture and identity and to protect the European space, for instance, against the Americanization of culture. Europe is thus becoming a new market to determine the practical value of knowledge and culture, which is not universal, but has inclusive and exclusive effects.

At the end, the emerging European political field is not fundamentally different from the political scientist description of the EU as a multi-level governance arrangement (Kohler-Koch and Jachtenfuchs 2004). As such, it is also a field of domination, although it does not operate through traditional hierarchies but rather builds flexible partnerships and coalitions. The European Union has become the locus of political power struggles over privileged positions and the hegemonic definition of the common good. In contrast to political sciences' state- or Commission centric approaches, a political sociology inspired by Bourdieu grasps the whole ensemble of institutions, governmental and civil society actors that become engaged in the dynamic re-structuring of the emerging European field. Bourdieu's analysis of the enabling and constraining logics of social fields points in this sense already at a meso-sociology of European integration, which lies between the analysis of large scale social structures and small scale social interaction.

Integration as meso-structural transformation

Meso-structural approaches stand at the forefront of contemporary sociological theory with the intention to overcome the micro-macro split and sharing the conviction that the two levels of analysis are complementary and synthetic, not opposed (Alexander et al. 1987). In highlighting the interwoveness of the social, sociology needs to recur to middle-range theories to explain processes of intermediation, construction of meaning and signification. The practical turn in micro-sociology is accompanied by a constructivist term in macro-sociology, which focuses no longer at socio-structural determinants but locates society in a discursive field. Applied to the EU, this implies the need to go beyond the presumed congruence between state, culture and the people that makes up the national constellation of society. From Bourdieu, the insight is taken up that the emerging European society is not so much materialised in social structure but perpetuated in social practices, which again are activated by new social actors. Two complementary concepts applied to the EU grasp these intermediary processes: Europe as a public sphere and Europe as civil society.

Europe as a network society and Europe as a public sphere

This sociological approach locates society in the processes of communication and discourse that bind Europeans together. It is communication that accounts for the interwoveness of the European social space. Sociology describes how the social unfolds through networks and how it is represented in shared public spheres of communication.

The *network society* as described by Manuel Castells (2000) is principally global. It is about spaces of information flows that operate through new types of electronic communication. Networks of information flows are the basic infrastructure of economic globalization. The *network state* is the political response to these new challenges, and the European Union might be its clearest manifestation (ibid.: 364). Europe could thus be described as a particular nodal point in the global network of communication that is characterized by intensified communicative exchange. As such, it relates to other nodal points of the global network society for which it generates new information and becomes an addressable entity.

Castell's conceptualisation of the European network state reads as a variant of political science approaches, which have characterized the particular nature of the EU as a form of network governance (Eising and Kohler-Koch 1999). The idea of network governance is based on the insight that the European Union is functionally and normatively dependent on a well developed system of communication. First of all, this has to do with the decision-making structure

of the EU which does not rely on the authority of central actors but on the 'arguing' and 'bargaining' practices between plural actors and institutions seeking consensus and compromise in a non-hierarchical institutional setting (Kohler-Koch 2002: 4). Second, communication is needed to build basic legitimacy. EU-society relations do therefore not unfold hierarchically through centralized authority but horizontally through networks and participatory designs (Kohler-Koch 2007).

The model of the network society is useful to locate Europe within the dynamic and accelerated processes of global change. It is less useful, however, to describe the normative and institutional underpinning of the emerging European communicative space. This latter aspect is at the heart of *European public sphere* theorizing. The European public sphere refers to a space of mass communication that fulfils a particular function with regard to the cohesion of the EU-polity: it intermediates between rule-making at the supranational level and rule application at the national and sub-national level and it articulates various degrees of societal affection. The European public sphere makes European politics transparent to the citizens. Through its intermediary structures of communication, the performance of the political apparatus of the EU can be observed and evaluated (Trenz 2004). The European public sphere offers, at the same time, opportunities to become involved in common debates, to express shared concerns and to mobilize support or resistance. Ideally speaking, the public sphere is the space for collective opinion and will formation of the Europeans. As such, it fulfils an important function for the normative integration of the emerging European society (Eriksen 2005b) and, equally so, in the narrative construction of Europe's new boundaries (Eder 2006).

In the process of democratizing the EU and its structure of governance, the public sphere is needed as the principal arena to defend particular visions of the EU as a legitimate order. The "good arguments" about the shape and contents of a political order are generally developed within strong publics (e.g. the Convention that drafted a Constitutional Treaty for the EU or the European Parliament) but via public and media debates they must also be conveyed to the general public (Eriksen and Fossum 2002). As the constitutional experience has shown, such processes of intermediation from strong to general publics are not self-evident. They are relying on particular infrastructural requirements such as a well developed system of mass media communication.

The majority of authors have discarded the possibility for an encompassing European public sphere that is built along the template of the national public sphere (Gerhards 2000; Schlesinger 2003; Fossum and Schlesinger 2007). Most

importantly, the emergence of a pan-European media system is held to be difficult, if not impossible. Due to the diversity of languages, media cultures and traditions, European audiences remain nationally segmented. Political communication in Europe is still mainly channelled through national organisations, parties or elected representatives. This results in a differentiated practice of news production with regard to the EU. European actors and European issues appear, if at all, in domestic debates (Preston and Horgan 2006: 37). This has shifted the research agenda to the *Europeanisation* of public and media communication. The "European public sphere light" is observed by measuring different degrees of Europeanisation of existing national media spheres (Trenz 2004, Risse 2008).

Europe as civil society

Similar to the concept of the public sphere, also the idea of a European civil society refers to the intermediate sphere of public life that is allocated between official governmental or institutional actors of the EU and the private life of the citizens at the national or local level (Rumford 2003). When Tocqueville delivered his classical account on democracy in America, he described how civil society comes into existence through activating a collective way of "doing things together". As such, civil society is constituted as the autonomous sphere of collective action and associations among free and equal citizens. It is manifested in "voice" and not in the passive loyalty of the citizens. It requires a minimum degree of organization and it builds a particular kind of social capital which must be constantly renovated by holding the associational life and the communal practice alive (Putman 1993). In emphasizing these self-organizing dynamics of civic practice, it is possible to decouple civil society from the nation state. In analytical terms there is no civil society as a territorially confined unity, there are only civic elements of collective action (Rucht 2005). The vanishing point of civility is the world, without this cosmopolitan aspiration, civil society would not be "civic" (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 171ff.).

In the European Union, civil society building takes place in relationship to polity-building, i.e. the allocation of political authority and jurisdiction at the supranational level (Fossum and Trenz 2006. In most empirical accounts, the emerging European civil society is therefore attached to European institutions and decision-making procedures at the European level (Ruzza 2004). The question then is how often and under what circumstances the EU provides associational actors with opportunities to express their demands in the ongoing policy process.

Does “organized civil society” in the EU still reflect the spontaneous activities of free and equal citizens? The economic, social and recently also civic partners in EU-regulatory governance can hardly be described as “civil society” in the traditional sense of the word. Their strength in expertise does not counterbalance their weakness in terms of democratic representation. Expertise is also not relying on public support or the generation of trust within society. It is legitimate to the extent that it provides outcomes of efficient governance and regulation but not in the sense of relying on democratic procedures of collective will formation.

Against this official approach of European civil society as a partner in EU-governance some authors have proposed that European civil society should be rather located in the expressions of opposition and resistance to the EU. As Imig and Tarrow (2001: 7) have critically commented, “we know much more about participation in consultative committees in the five square kilometres of Euroland in Brussels than we do about contention over the effects of their decisions among the 375 million people who have to live with their consequences.” In the tradition of the work of Charles Tilly (1978), who analysed civic contention as a dynamic element of nation-building, contentious politics should thus become the motor for a process of Europeanization from below that is carried primarily by all those who feel in some way affected by European governance.

Studies on civil society further help to explicate the relational mechanism that account for the cohesion of multi-level European governance. Imig and Tarrow (2001: 10) speak of a “bifurcation between studies of how citizens at the base of Europe engage in contentious politics and how European-level interest groups operate at the summit.” “This bifurcation”, they argue, “has made it difficult to confront the question of whether – and if so, how – popular contention is being affected by the process of European integration. European lobbying might be completely unconnected to contentious politics; but if the students of European lobbying and scholars of contentious politics continue to focus on different levels with different methodologies, we are unlikely to discern their relationships. Are European lobbies directly representative of citizens in the member states? Or only of the particular national level groups that support them? Or are they ‘virtual representatives’: claiming representation on the basis of the policy positions they believe in but with no real relationship to those they claim to represent.” (ibid).

Conclusion

In many of the sociological approaches discussed in this chapter, the European society is still thought mainly in line with the national society. The view of comparative structural analysis has not really changed the national frame of reference but only multiplied it for the purpose of empirical investigation. The macro-structural view of social system analysis has put a strong consensual emphasis on social unity. Society is ultimately perceived as an internally differentiated and externally delimited entity, which is substantiated in an identitarian form (an ethnos) and in a political organisation (a demos or a state).

Sociology has a long and outstanding tradition in breaking this iron cage of socio-structural analysis of national societies (Gouldner 1970). More dynamic elements in the study of contemporary society are brought in by globalisation studies. Within the European-global framework major shifts in modernity occur and a new cosmopolitan model for the legitimation of political order is being shaped. Such generalised accounts of reflexive modernisation encounter however the reverse problem that the internal consolidation and external delimitation of the European societal space remain unfocused. At this point, micro-sociological approaches offer a useful supplement sharpening the view on new actors' relations across borders and changing forms of social practice.

The chapter has pointed out that European integration is a framework for re-establishing the micro-macro link of sociological analysis. To understand the encounter of competing logics of Europeanization we need a theory of society. A sociology of European integration adds to the understanding of the complex logics of Europeanization in several dimensions: Against political science's emphasis of Europeanization from above through the imposition of EU law and regulation, sociologists highlight the relevance of Europeanization from below, which takes place in the form of spontaneous associations of citizens, trans-national and inter-cultural relations and new contentious politics. Against political scientists' trust in Europeanization as a process of integration through deliberative design, which unifies the European space, sociologists focus on Europeanization as differentiation, which enhances diversity and contingency and which establishes new cleavages and exclusions.

Finally, a sociological account goes beyond the traditional understanding of Europeanization as interpenetration of national societies. As this chapter has repeatedly emphasized, Europeanization is more than simply interlinking existing structures and actors across borders. It is also and mainly about transforming these structures and actors and about the emergence of a new social entity. Sociology thus ultimately arrives at a constructivist

understanding of Europeanization as a form of reflexive creation (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 12). In this last sense, the European society is not simply the "other side" of EU governance to be addressed and domesticated by EU institutions. It is, above all, an emergent reality indicating a major reconfiguration of the European social, political, economic and cultural space.

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