



Brugge

College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik:

a dialogue on european integration,
the nation-state, democracy and identity

Quincy R. Cloet



DEPARTMENT OF
EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Natolin Best Master Thesis

03 / 2013

Dedicated to R.C. (1927-2012)



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Quincy R. Cloet

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Thesis presented by Quincy R. Cloet
for the
Degree of Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies

Academic year 2012 / 2013

DEPARTMENT OF
EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

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Published by the College of Europe Natolin Campus

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FUNDACJA KOLEGIUM EUROPEJSKIE

ul. Nowoursynowska 84 · PL-02-792 Warszawa · Poland/Pologne

e-mail: publications.natolincampus@coleurope.eu

First edition: 2014

Printed in Poland

Graphic design and layout: Wojciech Sobolewski

ISBN 978-83-63128-16-6

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KEY WORDS

European integration · democracy · European identity · crisis · nation-state

QUINCY R. CLOET

Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik:

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Summary

Over the years, Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik have both written an impressive collection of academic works and public literature, dealing with one of the most contentious issues in the socio-political field, namely the process of European integration. Despite their shared interest in subjects as the European constitution, the democratic deficit and a common European identity, little of their work has been examined from a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective. Therefore, this study confronts their main arguments through an intellectual dialogue. The aim is not to reconcile their views, it is rather an attempt to juxtapose their analyses, in order to make a critical assessment of the current challenges to the EU.

The two authors and their intellectual output about Europe are introduced and examined in separate chapters, focusing on the biographical background but also inserting contextual elements that elucidate underlying tendencies in their work. The crucial elements of their thinking are retained and extensively discussed in the final chapter that presents their arguments in the form of an indirect dialogue. Here, the aim of the study is to make a balanced evaluation of their work, using six overarching themes based on recurring topics. At the same time, Habermas and Moravcsik are also confronted with other authors, holding both similar and opposing views, in order to approach the issue of EU integration from a broader perspective.

The main conclusions of this study can be presented along the lines of three axes. First, Habermas and Moravcsik have opposed views with regard to the historical and future pathway of European integration. The German philosopher mainly emphasises globalisation as a transformative force, which eventually will lead to a post-national constellation, with the EU as a transnational democracy or a constituted world society. Moravcsik stresses the power and interests of member states in the integration process and foresees no further transformations in the near future, since the EU has reached a natural plateau.

Second, Habermas is worried by the executive role of heads of state and government and analyses this shift of power as a prelude to a post-democratic EU. Moravcsik is far

less worried about a potential democratic deficit, demonstrated with a comparison of national democracies. Third, while Habermas argues for the need of creating a common civic identity in Europe, Moravcsik sees little reason how this can be achieved. The essence of the debate resolves around the question whether or not a transnational (European) identity can be constructed in the foreseeable future.

The dialogue between Moravcsik and Habermas reflects on the observation that the EU can be approached and understood from a wide variety of perspectives – each of them holding merit and adding to the broader discussion of European integration. Habermas as well as Moravcsik have decisively shaped the debate and juxtaposing their views can only lead to new and fruitful insights in the workings of the EU.

The Natolin Best Masters' Theses Series

PROF. NANETTE NEUWAHL

DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

COLLEGE OF EUROPE (EIS PROGRAMME, NATOLIN CAMPUS)

The “Natolin Best Master’s Thesis” series showcases the best Masters’ Theses produced by the students of the Natolin campus of the College of Europe in any given year.

The College of Europe (CoE), founded in 1949 at the instigation and with the support of leading European figures, in particular, Salvador de Madariaga, Winston Churchill, Paul-Henri Spaak and Alcide de Gasperi, is the world’s first university institute of postgraduate studies and training specialised in European affairs. The idea behind this particular institution was, to establish an institute where university graduates European countries could study and live together, and the objective was to enhance cross-border interaction and mutual understanding. The Natolin campus of the College of Europe in Natolin, Warsaw (Poland) was established in 1992 in response to the revolutions of 1989 and in anticipation of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the European Union. Ever since, the College of Europe operates as ‘one College – two campuses’.

The European Interdisciplinary Studies (EIS) programme at the Natolin campus invites students to view the process of European integration beyond disciplinary boundaries. Students are awarded a ‘Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies’. This programme takes into account the idea that European integration goes beyond the limits of one academic discipline and is designed to respond to the increasing need for experts who have a more comprehensive understanding of the European integration process and European affairs. The EIS programme is open to graduates in Economics, Law or Political Science, but also to graduates of History, Communication Studies, Languages, Philosophy, or Philology who are interested in pursuing a career in European institutions or European affairs in general. This academic programme and its professional dimension prepare graduates to enter the international, European and national public sectors as well as nongovernmental and private sectors. For some of them, it also serves as a stepping stone towards doctoral studies.

The European Single Market, governance and external relations are focal points of academic activity. Recognised for its academic excellence in European studies, the Natolin campus of the College of Europe has endeavoured to enhance its research activities, as well as to encourage those of its students who are predisposed to do so,

to contemplate a career in academia. The European Parliament *Bronislaw Geremek* European Civilisation Chair and the *European Neighbourhood* Policy Chair in particular, encourage research on European History and Civilisation, respectively, the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood.

The EIS programme culminates in the writing of an important Master's Thesis. At the College of Europe every student must, in order to get his or her degree, produce a Thesis within the framework of one of the courses followed during the academic year. The research must be original and linked to European policies and affairs, on a topic chosen by the student or proposed by the Professor supervising the Thesis. Very often, a student chooses a subject which is of importance to his or her subsequent career plan. Masters' theses are written either in French or in English, the two official languages of the College of Europe, often not the native language of the students.

A scientific committee selects the Best Masters' Theses among more than 100 produced on the campus every year at the Natolin campus. By publishing them, we are proud to disseminate throughout the wider European studies academic community some of the most interesting research produced by our students.

La série des meilleures thèses des Masters du campus de Natolin

PROF. NANETTE NEUWAHL

DIRECTEUR D'ÉTUDE

COLLÈGE D'EUROPE (PROGRAMME EIS, CAMPUS NATOLIN)

La série « Meilleure thèse de Master du campus de Natolin » met en valeur les meilleures thèses de master rédigées par les étudiants du campus de Natolin du Collège d'Europe pour une année donnée.

Le Collège d'Europe (CoE), fondé en 1949 à l'instigation et avec le soutien de figures européennes de proue telles que Salvador de Madariaga, Winston Churchill, Paul-Henri Spaak et Alcide de Gasperi, est le premier institut universitaire d'études supérieures du monde spécialisé dans les affaires européennes. L'idée à l'origine de cette institution était de créer un institut dans lequel des diplômés universitaires issus de différents pays européens pourraient étudier et vivre ensemble afin de promouvoir la communication transfrontalière et la compréhension mutuelle. Le campus de Natolin du Collège d'Europe à Natolin, Varsovie (Pologne) a été fondé en 1992 à la suite des révolutions de 1989 et pour anticiper les différents élargissements de l'Union européenne prévus pour 2004 et 2007. Depuis lors, le Collège d'Europe fonctionne désormais selon la formule « un collège – deux campus ».

Le programme d'études européennes interdisciplinaires (EIS) du campus de Natolin invite les étudiants à analyser le processus de l'intégration européenne au-delà des frontières disciplinaires. Les étudiants obtiennent un « Master en études européennes interdisciplinaires ». Ce programme tient compte de l'idée que l'intégration européenne dépasse les limites d'une seule discipline académique et est conçu pour répondre aux besoins croissants d'experts qui conservent une compréhension globale du processus de l'intégration européenne et des affaires européennes. Le programme EIS est ouvert non seulement aux étudiants en économie, en droit ou en science politique, mais également aux diplômés en histoire, en communication, en langues, en philosophie ou en philologie désireux de poursuivre une carrière dans les institutions européennes ou les affaires européennes, en général. Ce programme académique et sa dimension professionnelle préparent les étudiants à intégrer les secteurs publics nationaux, européens et internationaux ainsi que les secteurs non-gouvernementaux et privés. Pour certains d'entre eux, ce programme constitue également une étape vers des études doctorales.

Le marché unique européen, la gouvernance et les relations extérieures sont des points majeurs de l'activité d'enseignement. Reconnu pour l'excellence de ses programmes en études européennes, le campus de Natolin du Collège d'Europe s'est engagé à améliorer ses activités de recherche, ainsi qu'à encourager ses étudiants les mieux prédisposés dans une carrière d'enseignement. La chaire de civilisation européenne du parlement européen *Bronislaw Geremek* et la chaire de politique de voisinage européen en particulier, encouragent la recherche sur l'histoire et la civilisation européenne, respectivement, et sur le voisinage avec l'Europe de l'est et du sud.

Le programme EIS se termine par la rédaction d'une importante thèse de Master. Au Collège d'Europe, chaque étudiant doit, pour obtenir son diplôme, produire une thèse dans le cadre de l'un des cours qu'il a suivi au cours de son année d'enseignement. La recherche doit être originale et liée aux politiques et aux affaires européennes, sur un sujet choisi par l'étudiant, ou sur proposition du professeur chargé de la thèse. Souvent, l'étudiant choisit un sujet qui est important pour le déroulement ultérieur de sa carrière. Les thèses de master sont écrites en français et ou en anglais, les deux langues officielles du Collège d'Europe, bien souvent une langue différente de la langue maternelle de l'étudiant.

Un comité scientifique sélectionne les meilleures thèses de master parmi les 100 dossiers produits sur le campus de Natolin chaque année. En les publiant, nous sommes fiers de disséminer dans toute la communauté enseignante européenne quelques-unes des recherches les plus intéressantes menées par nos étudiants.

Preface of the Master Thesis Supervisor

PROF. JOÃO CARLOS ESPADA
FORMER CHAIR HOLDER OF THE EP/ GEREMEK
EUROPEAN CIVILISATION CHAIR (2011-2013)
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This thesis is an importance contribution to a difficult and topical debate. Should the European Union be mainly perceived as a supranational undertaking, or should it be mainly based on the cooperation between nation-states? The author, Mr. Quincy Cloet, addresses the subject through a critical analysis of the works of two major contemporary scholars, Professors Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik. His analysis provides common ground for a critical conversation between the two scholars -- a conversation which has not occurred directly between them, but that Mr. Cloet develops with scholarly rigour and elegance. The author reaches his own conclusions on the debate and proposes his own guidelines for the continuation of a civil and civilised conversation between different views of the common European project. For those who are engaged, or want to engage, in this crucial conversation, this thesis is certainly a stimulus and a guide.

The general reader, as well as the scholar, will find in this work several helpful contributions. It provides a broad overview of the general work and intellectual evolution of the two major scholars, Habermas and Moravcsik, instead of simply aiming at a narrow approach to their more recent works on strictly European affairs. At the same time, though, the argument is focused on Europe and clearly identifies the main lines of argument in each author. These lines are then critically compared with arguments produced by other significant authors on the European endeavour. And they are finally organised in six themes, so that a rational and dispassionate comparison can be undertaken by any attentive reader.

At the end of his voyage of intellectual exploration, Mr. Cloet wonders whether the views of the two scholars can be reconciled. He then recalls that both Habermas and Moravcsik largely ask similar questions in areas of democracy, identity and state integration. This, Mr. Cloet maintains, provides room for common-ground. The latter, however, should be distinguished from uniformity -- "as contrasting views often offer fresh insights in old subjects", Mr. Cloet adds. This ability to perceive common-ground within a variety of views, and the corresponding ability not to ask for uniformity as a synonym of common-ground, is certainly not the least virtue of Mr. Cloet's work.

Common-ground within variety is certainly one of the greatest achievements of the Idea of a University, as it has evolved from Ancient Greece through the Roman Republic, Medieval Europe, the Renaissance and the Enlightenments to the present day. It has been argued that this union within variety has been possible mainly because Universities have learned to abide by stable and general rules, not by particular and changing purposes. Among those general and stable rules we have the rules of scholarly enquiry -- rules of openness, fairness, rigour, detachment. These rules have been strictly followed and applied by Mr. Cloet in this thesis.

This rule-abiding spirit has allowed the author to develop a rich intellectual exploration and finally to propose a common-ground for a conversation between different, sometimes rival, views on the future of the Europe Union. One may perhaps be allowed to wish that this scholarly spirit of conversation between different views may continue to inspire our civic and political life in the European Union. As the late Professor Bronislaw Geremek always emphasised, this idea of civilised conversation between different, often rival, views has been a distinguishing and enduring feature of European Civilisation.

Introduction

With an age disparity of almost thirty years, belonging to a different generation and growing up in separate environments, there appears to be no initial case of comparison between Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik. Two authors, who are separated not only by age, but also by geography and academic specialisation, create a great challenge to the purpose of this research study. Habermas is a continental European philosopher, an imperishable combatant for the sake of the public sphere and democracy, who devoted most of his academic work and political contributions to the betterment of modern society. In contrast, Moravcsik has rather limited himself to the scientific study of European integration, notwithstanding a few interactions with the wider audience through popular magazine contributions. However, both of them are the leading voices of different idiosyncratic schools of thought. Both of them are passionate about Europe, albeit wary of its ambitious dream of growing closer together.

Despite their common zest for the European integration process, they have refrained from any genuine direct interaction. Their active stances in the same academic debates, often opposing each other's views, have not culminated in a lively dialogue. Habermas has largely neglected the name of Moravcsik in his work, while Moravcsik makes few references to his German counterpart. In those rare references, there is little sign of reciprocal appreciation. The following citation written by Moravcsik illustrates this:

“Some democratic enthusiasts propose jump-starting EU democracy by incorporating hot-button issues like social policy and immigration, despite the lack of popular support for doing so. This is, in essence, Habermas's vision. Yet anyone except a philosopher can see that this is the sort of extreme cure that will kill the patient.”¹

This remarkable absence of dialogue – at most it is limited to the margin of their work – is the immediate cause that resulted in the conduct of this research study. It is an attempt to bring the writings of two distinct authors together, through analysis and an intellectual exchange of

1 Andrew Moravcsik, 'Europe without illusions – A category error', *Prospect Magazine*, 23 July 2005. Available at: <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/europewithoutillusions/> (consulted on: 22.04.2013).

arguments – presented as a form of constructed dialogue. In other words, finding common ground in their work. Yet, the prime motivation of the research is not necessarily to reconcile the arguments of Moravcsik and Habermas. In spite of their shared interest in Europe, its political systems and cultures – often resulting in research on identical subjects – it would be erroneous to perceive their notable differences through the spectacles of unity. Rather, individual views and arguments will be confronted and analysed, in order to attain their most important insights in the process of European integration. Moreover, pressing issues such as the healthiness of the democracy system in the EU and future trajectory of integration deserve a nuanced but vivid discussion, using the arguments of two intellectual heavy-weights. This study will attempt to create what Moravcsik and Habermas have never done in real terms.

Using their work, this study shall cast light on the versatile and multi-layered process of European integration. Where is Europe right now and where is it headed? Are we on the brink of achieving tighter political cooperation through economic assimilation and expansion? Tracing both the accomplishments and the weaknesses of the European Union, the wider implications of this establishment of a hybrid, post-national structure will be assessed. Questions shall be asked about the model of the European Union, the decision-making process and the identification of citizens with a non-national construction. The work is divided into three parts, with an assessment of the life and work of Jürgen Habermas, the background of Andrew Moravcsik and the dominant issues in his research, and culminating in an extensive dialogue based on overarching themes. The Habermas-chapter (1) traces the origins of the German philosopher's enthusiasm for Europe – that only in the last decade took a visible position in his work. It consists of a chronologic overview of his career while reflecting on his most important contributions – that are connected to his latest work on the European Union.

The Moravcsik-chapter (2) offers a brief look into the background story of the American political scientist, in order to understand his intentional choice for Europe. In addition, most of the chapter is devoted to the comprehension and analysis of his theoretical framework, i.e. liberal intergovernmentalism, and its compatibility with Moravcsik's more recent writings on the European Union architecture. The final dialogue (3) combines the discussed issues of the first two chapters into a framework of six overarching themes. Issues ranging from the European integration trajectory to the possible democratic deficit and issues with citizen identification are extensively discussed, relying on the work of Habermas and Moravcsik and often juxtaposing their views. In addition, personal judgments and comments are added, to exemplify the underlying trends or indirect references in their thinking. The versatility of the dialogue-format allows me to present a case of comparison, while distilling the most effective insights of their work.

Jürgen Habermas

The German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas (1929-...) is plausibly one of the leading thinkers of the present day.² During the career spanning for more than six decades, working mainly in Germany and for a brief period in the United States, the German scholar has influenced and inspired successive generations of academics and intellectuals, with his writings on critical social theory, communicative action and the public sphere. As a prominent public debater and the author of a multitude of political essays, Habermas has also become known to a wider audience as an intellectual who took public stances on such matters as military intervention and nuclear proliferation. Only in recent years, Europe has played a central role. Never before had Habermas exhibited a real animation for the continuing integration process of the European nation-states and the changing contours of the European Union. Yet, throughout the last decade the greater part of his monographs, articles and essays has been almost exclusively dedicated to the subject, whereby the European project became the amalgamation of his lifelong intellectual endeavours. So, what led to Habermas' rather unexpected shift of focus?

His 'turn toward Europe' at the end of the millennium brought Jürgen Habermas in chiefly uncharted territory. In 1999 he engaged the public by pointing to the lacklustre position of the nation-state in Europe and proclaiming the need to create a strong sense of (civic) solidarity that embraces all the citizens of the European Union.³ A few years later, in 2001, this idea was elaborated in a new essay, largely dealing with the question of a constitution of the European Union.⁴ These writings have not come up out of the blue, as there are two potential reasons to clarify why Habermas changed tack and chose to meddle with the intellectual debate of Europe's integration process.

2 Both *Foreign Policy* and *Prospect*, two influential magazines on international affairs and politics, have placed Jürgen Habermas in their list of most influential thinkers.

3 Jürgen Habermas, 'The European Nation-State and the Pressures of Globalization', in: *New Left Review*, I/235, 1999, pp. 425-436.

4 Original essay: Jürgen Habermas, 'Why Europe Needs a Constitution', in: *New Left Review*, No. 11, 2001, pp. 6-26. Reprinted as: Habermas, Jürgen, 'Why Europe needs a Constitution', in: Rogowski, Ralf and Turner, Charles (eds.), *The shape of the new Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006.

On the one hand, it can be perceived as a response to the important events taking place during that time-frame (*external dimension*). The initially elitist project of European integration, decided by senior government officials, gradually came under more intense public scrutiny as its competences were amplifying into new areas of policy-making.⁵ In the 1990s the European Union expanded its competences into the domain of economic and monetary cooperation, establishing new institutions and creating a set of monetary and economic policies, perceived as “a major step in a federalist direction”.⁶ This Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) included a strong symbolic component, namely the introduction of a common currency, the euro. Likewise, the disappointment about the agreement reached on the Nice treaty (2001), raised the issue of commencing a debate on the future of the EU, to tackle important but unresolved matters. In 2001 the European Council issued a statement, known as the *Laeken Declaration*, which called for the establishment of a *Convention for the future of Europe*, and at the same time stimulated public and scholarly debate on the future shape of the Union. The authors of the declaration opened the floor to a discussion on the competences, instruments, transparency and efficiency of the EU, while stressing the possible “adoption of a constitutional text of the Union.”⁷ It is in this contextual setting that Jürgen Habermas actively engaged himself in the intellectual debate surrounding the European integration project.

On the other hand, the historical time-frame also falls short of elucidating Habermas’ choice of turning his attention to the state of European affairs. His views related the European Union are strongly rooted in the ideas promulgated in his earlier scholarly writings, as in many ways they share the same theoretical framework (*internal dimension*). Understanding Habermas’ position on Europe thus requires an insight in his discourses on the public sphere, critical thinking, communicative action and globalisation, among others. Ahead of exploring his recent work on Europe, I shall give a biographical introduction, intertwined with a selective thematic overview of the bibliography, emphasising the relevant monographs and their included theories as well as the circumstantial events that induced Habermas’ current position on the state of EU affairs.

5 On the elitist nature of the European project: “the contractual nature of European unification as a sequel and system of treaties puts elites in a pivotal role.” From: Heinrich Best, György Lengyel, and Luca Verzichelli, *The Europe of Elites: A Study into the Europeaness of Europe’s Political and Economic Elites*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012, p.3.

6 Neill Nugent, *The Government and Politics of the European Union* (7th edition), Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2010, p. 57.

7 European Council, *The Laeken Declaration*, European Union, Brussels, 2001, p. 24.

Early years

Jürgen Habermas was born just outside Düsseldorf on the 18th of June 1929. At the time of birth he was diagnosed with a congenital disorder, a cleft palate that was the result of abnormal facial development during the early phases of pregnancy. Although he could communicate with his family, Habermas' medical condition made it hard to interact with other people, especially at school where he was confronted with the difficulties of social interaction. Two corrective surgeries eventually solved his speaking deficiency but the early age experience had a lasting impact on Jürgen Habermas. Stacy Clifford, a political scientist who published on the subject of disability and communication, believes that "these childhood experiences profoundly shaped Habermas' view of human nature, interpersonal relationships, and his communicative theory."⁸ It is a belief shared by Jürgen Habermas himself, as he expressed in a 2008 essay that "failures of communication direct our attention to an otherwise unobtrusive intermediary world of symbols that cannot be grasped like physical objects."⁹ It was his early day inability to speak – or in a broader sense his problems with communication – that confronted Habermas with "the power of language to forge a community."¹⁰ This reading of his personal experiences would mould him for the rest of his life, as he became increasingly conscious of the importance of language and communication in the life of human beings.

His congenital disorder was not the sole experience that had an impact on Habermas. As a young child and teenager he witnessed the rise to power of the Nazi Party in his country, the territorial expansion of a militarised Reich, whose chain of aggressive actions eventually brought the second grand-scale World War to the European continent. Ernst Habermas, his father, was a convicted admirer of the Nazis and for some years Jürgen Habermas was also a member of the Hitler Youth – as most of the young boys at the time.¹¹ At the age of 15, he was sent to the Western Front, an emotional event that would mainly lead to disillusion and revulsion. Especially the aftermath of the Second World War, the Nürnberg Trials uncovering in all detail the total annihilation of the Jewish people, left him with a sense of shock and horror.¹² Some years later, Habermas

8 Stacy Clifford, 'Disabling Democracy: How Disability Reconfigures Deliberative Democratic Norms', *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Toronto, 2009, p. 5.

9 Jürgen Habermas, *Between Naturalism and Religion: Philosophical Essays*, Polity, Cambridge, 2008, p. 15.

10 Lasse Thomassen, *Habermas: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Continuum, London, 2010, p. 5.

11 A. Dirk Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, p. 108.

12 'Jürgen Habermas', in: Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, London, 2013. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/250787/Jurgen-Habermas> (consulted on: 11.01.2013).

struck a rather critical tone towards the behaviour of his compatriots after the turn of events in Nürnberg:

“When others, instead of being struck silent by the ghastliness, began to dispute the justice of the trial, procedural questions, and questions of jurisdiction, there was that first rupture, which still gapes. Certainly it is only because I was still sensitive and easily offended that I did not close myself to the fact of a collectively realized inhumanity in the same measure as the majority of my elders.”¹³

Nevertheless, the above statement also demonstrates the fragility of Habermas as a young teenager, grabbed by these exceptional happenings. The first years after the war were a sobering experience: the whole European continent was in disarray, cities were devastated and national economies destroyed, peoples were divided by decades of international hostilities. Europe was in need of re-building, including the creation of post-war solidarity which would bring different nationalities together. When Habermas in the later stage of his life would dedicate an important monograph to communicative action, stressing a consensual form of social coordination, one cannot but see this in the light of the conflictual events at the European stage in his early years.

Studies and Frankfurter Schule

Jürgen Habermas concluded his secondary education shortly after the war and continued his studies at the universities of Bonn, Göttingen and Zürich. In 1954 he completed a PhD in philosophy at the University of Bonn with a dissertation on the German philosopher Friedrich von Schelling, as to the schism between the absolute and history in his thought. Habermas did not only concern himself with the nineteenth century philosophy but also studied the works of contemporary authors. He had a keen interest in Martin Heidegger's existential philosophy, although his initial enthusiasm would eventually evolve into strong criticism. During the post-war period Heidegger had never publicly distanced himself from his affiliation with National Socialism. When Habermas called in 1953 for an explanation, he was met with “a shameful silence” by the former rector of Freiburg University.¹⁴ Heidegger's inability to express regret brought Habermas to the inevitable conclusion that “German philosophical tradition had failed

¹³ Pauline Johnson, *Habermas: Rescuing the Public Sphere*, Routledge, London, 2006, p. 13-14.

¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, ‘Work and Weltanschauung: The Heidegger Controversy from a German Perspective’, in: *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1989, p. 433.

in its moment of reckoning”.¹⁵ Since then, he has shifted his attention to the practises of Anglo-Saxon philosophical thought, in a search for concepts that emphasise democratic principles and pragmatism – a fruitful shift with regard to the development of his ideas on reason, freedom and justice, among others.¹⁶

However, Jürgen Habermas did not leave Germany to study and work overseas but rather moved to the University of Frankfurt, where he became the first assistant of Theodor Adorno at the Institute of Social Research. Before the war, a school of interdisciplinary critical theory had established itself at the institute in Frankfurt, comprising researchers with a common interest in the dialectical philosophy of Georg W.F. Hegel and Karl Marx, and the shared belief to radically transform society.¹⁷ The so-called *Frankfurter Schule* was an attempt to overcome the barriers between various disciplines – such as philosophy, psychoanalysis and social science – with the ulterior aim to “understand critically the various elements comprising modern society.”¹⁸ The Heglian-Marxist school was, among others, led by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, two German professors from Jewish descent which fled to the US during the war period but returned to resume their activities at the university and to re-establish the institute in 1953. Despite the interruption, Horkheimer, Adorno and the other scholars continued their work on critical theory, although they had become more pessimistic about the chances of transforming society.¹⁹ Jürgen Habermas joined the Institute in 1956, as assistant to Adorno, mainly to participate in a research project about the political disposition of students. At the same time, he began his work on a habilitation thesis (the second but higher doctoral degree), by exploring the origins of the public sphere. Although Habermas established himself as a dominant and original thinker within the school in short time, it would quickly lead to a rift with the pre-war generation of philosophers.

At the heart of the conflict was Habermas’ gradual drifting away from the classic Marxist positions held by the members of the school. It was a change that resulted from his enthusiasm for the Anglo-Saxon style of thinking, stressing the philosophy of praxis and

15 James Bohman and William Rehg, ‘Jürgen Habermas’, in: Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford, 2011. Available at: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/habermas/> (consulted on 07.01.2013).

16 *Ibid.*

17 ‘Frankfurt School’, in: *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, London, 2013. Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/217277/Frankfurt-School> (consulted on: 11.01.2013).; James G. Finlayson, *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, pp. 5-6.

18 ‘Jürgen Habermas’, in: *Encyclopedia of World Biography*, Chicago, 2004. Available at: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3404702717.html> (consulted on: 11.01.2013).

19 James G. Finlayson, *Habermas*, p. 6.

democratic theory, ideas largely absent in the work of Marx. A 1985 interview in *New Left Review* illustrates the increasing uneasiness of Habermas, in that period, declaring he “lived with a sense of having grown into different, decisively broader horizons of experience, of having been freed from provincial narrowness and a naively idealistic world.”²⁰ Thus, Habermas dissociated himself “from an overstrained concept of theory derived from Hegel”, a move disapproved by Adorno and Horkheimer.²¹ Eventually, he broke away from the school, after Horkheimer’s criticism on his habilitation thesis, by relocating to Marburg University in order to finish the dissertation under the supervision of the historian Wolfgang Abendroth.²² Ironically, it would not be a final break with the Frankfurt school: five years later Habermas returned to succeed Horkheimer – in the meantime retired – as a professor of philosophy and sociology. Right after the publication, Habermas’ habilitation, named *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, gained a lot of praise in the scientific community for its detailed study of the development of the bourgeois public sphere.²³

His first significant book, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, 1962) is a detailed account of how the eighteenth-century salons decisively influenced the emergence of the public sphere, which in turn would be a strong weapon against the absolutist political order of that time. In the centuries before, there was no clear separation between public and private, as state and society were perceived as the same. However, during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the aged model of the feudal society underwent a structural transformation, which eventually brought a new political order in the nineteenth century. At the centre of this far-reaching societal change was the bourgeois salon, defined as an inspiring gathering of upper class elite, a sphere where they would come together as the public, to debate matters of politics, religion and society. Habermas’ sociological and historical work pointed to political, social, cultural and philosophical developments in a multi-disciplinary attempt to describe the success of the bourgeois society, the new political order of the nineteenth century, and a world marked by political liberalism,

20 Jürgen Habermas, ‘A Philosophico-Political Profile’, in: *New Left Review*, I/151, 1985, p. 76.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 77.

22 There was some debate over the disagreement that eventually led to a break-up between Habermas and the Frankfurt School. Craig Calhoun (1992) asserted that both Adorno and Horkheimer rejected the dissertation. However, Rolf Wiggershaus (1996) claimed that “Adorno, who was proud of him, would have liked to accept the thesis” and it was mainly Horkheimer that made some unacceptable demands for revision of the habilitation thesis. The latter would explain why Adorno was enthusiastic about Habermas’ return to Frankfurt in 1964.

23 James Bohman and William Rehg, ‘Jürgen Habermas’.

free-market capitalist thinking and a minimal state. Jürgen Habermas did not conclude his story with the nineteenth century, as he analysed more recent developments as the emergence of the mass society, the creation of the welfare state – and according to him the gradual decline of the public sphere. The latter implied a strong criticism to the post-war political culture of the 1950s and 1960s in West-Germany.²⁴

The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere also generated an intellectual framework that Habermas would eventually develop into a theory of communicative action. The way the bourgeois salon was portrayed in his habilitation thesis revealed his personal interest in a communicative ideal. Habermas presented it in 1962 as the idea of an inclusive critical discussion, completely free of any social and economic pressures, with discussion partners on equal footing. His communicative ideal is a consensus-seeking model, where a cooperative attempt is undertaken to reach an understanding in matters of common concern.²⁵ According to Todd Gitlin, a professor of journalism and sociology, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* was not only a key work that transformed the field of media studies “into a hard-headed discipline”, it also highlighted the belief that “reason is rooted in the ability to communicate clearly with one another.”²⁶ Habermas would establish his future theory of communication solely on rational grounds.

As a multi-disciplinary work, Jürgen Habermas’ habilitation thesis influenced research outside the fields of sociology and history. It is noteworthy to mention that, among others, European studies has benefited from Habermas’ proposed analytical framework. In recent years, there were some attempts to connect the notion of the public sphere to the status of European integration. Claes de Vreese summarised in 2007 the academic debate by examining whether or not the emergence of the European public sphere may “contribute to the public legitimacy of the EU polity and its policies”, as it was the case with national public spheres.²⁷ In his article de Vreese pondered whether EU media, citizens or institutions were the main cause for the supposed absence of adequate cross-country interaction and debate. Similarly, Nancy Fraser discussed the transnationalisation of the

24 Krista, Hegburg, ‘Habermas, Jürgen’, in: International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Detroit, 2008. Available at: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3045300982.html> (consulted on: 11.01.2013).; Jürgen, Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991.

25 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, 1991.; James Bohman and William Rehg, ‘Jürgen Habermas’.

26 Todd Gitlin, ‘Jürgen Habermas’, *Time*, 26 April 2004. Available at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,994032,00.html> (consulted on: 15.01.2013).

27 Claes H. de Vreese, ‘The EU as a public sphere’, in: *Living Reviews in European Governance*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2007, pp. 1, 14-16.

public sphere, which evidently has direct implications for the analysis of the European integration process and the impact on citizenship and identity.²⁸ The indispensable link between the two topics, the public sphere and European integration, also caught Habermas' attention, as he made references to the public sphere (and a shared political culture) in his work on Europe, an element which will be brought up in more detail further on.

After holding a position at the University of Heidelberg for two years, Jürgen Habermas returned in 1964 to Frankfurt to succeed Max Horkheimer as professor of philosophy and sociology. The publication and subsequent success of *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* had changed the minds of the critical theorists at the Frankfurt School and it was notably Theodor Adorno who supported his return. According to Rolf Wiggershaus, a German publicist who completed his doctoral degree under the supervision of Habermas in Frankfurt, Adorno was "ultimately able to bestow the crown of legitimate succession on the person who he thought was the most deserving and capable critical theorist."²⁹ From then on, Habermas became the leading voice within the School and he could steer its research in a novel direction, albeit keeping true to the Institute's tradition. During the 1960s he dedicated his main works to the status of critical theory and social science (which led to *Knowledge and Human Interest* in 1968), exploring ideas still rooted in the thought of Horkheimer and Adorno, while actively engaging himself with the German student movement.³⁰

Max Planck and the Theory of Communicative Action

Between 1971 and 1983, Jürgen Habermas took up the position as director of the Max Planck Institute for the Study of the Scientific-Technical World in Starnberg, a small city in the German state of Bavaria. Up until that point, when he changed career and chose to direct the institute in Starnberg, Habermas had only worked in an academic environment. The Max Planck Society, a non-governmental research organisation (though funded by the government) uniting more than 35 Institutes in Germany, represented a different branch of research, as it was mainly occupied with the funding of exact sciences, characterised by a high level of specialisation and long-term projects. Nevertheless, the

28 Nancy Fraser, 'Transnationalizing the Public Sphere. On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World', in: Transversal Multilingual Webjournal, No. 3, 2007. Available at: <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0605/fraser/en> (consulted on: 17.01.2013).

29 Rolf Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School*, 1996, p. 628.

30 Lasse Thomassen, *Habermas*, p. 8-9.

Society supported research in all areas of scientific importance, including humanities and social sciences. During the 1970s, Habermas was increasingly worried about the transformations taking place in contemporary society, and how these immense processes were influenced by science and technology. Since the institute in Starnberg was dedicated to the study of the scientific-technical world, Jürgen Habermas could focus there his complete attention on the question at hand. He gathered a team of scholars from various disciplines, ranging from anthropology to philosophy, with the ambition to understand the basic conditions of the contemporary society.³¹

The period at Max Planck is generally considered as the transitional phase in the career of Habermas. Between the books *Knowledge and Human Interests* and *The Theory of Communicative Action* Habermas kept elaborating on the relationship between social science and modern society, while rethinking the (Kantian) normative and philosophical basis for critique. Simultaneously, he produced new monographs on such topics as rationality and society. Nevertheless, the transitional phase was altogether marked by a 'linguistic turn', which had a theory of language and communicative action as its final outcome. The basis for his conception of communicative conception was closely related to Noam Chomsky's idea of linguistic competence.³² Habermas' linguistic turn is perhaps best illustrated by an excerpt from his inaugural speech in Frankfurt in 1965, and incorporated in *Knowledge and Human Interests*, which signalled his decisive orientation to language:

“What raises us out of nature is the only thing whose nature we can know: language. Through its structure, autonomy and responsibility are posited for us. Our first sentence expresses unequivocally the intention of universal and unconstrained consensus”³³

The short speech fragment from 1965 in large part sums up the basis of all of Habermas' future work on language and communication: an unequivocal belief in rational communication and the eventual prevailing ideal of consensus over dissent. Habermas' wider theoretical framework would only be expanded in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, 1981), a two-volume study on the concept of communicative rationality that combined elements of classical sociology with critical theory.

31 'Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science', in: Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, London, 2013. Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/370363/Max-Planck-Society-for-the-Advancement-of-Science> (consulted on: 18.01.2013).

32 James Bohman and William Rehg, 'Jürgen Habermas'.

33 Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Beacon, Boston, 1971, p. 314.

Similar to the 1960s, Habermas was not just an influential voice within academic and intellectual circles, he also stirred the public debate by responding to large political issues of its time. In the late 1970s the German society was agitated by the suspension of civil liberties after the threats of terrorist acts committed by the Red Army Faction. Habermas saw this government action as a serious menace to the democratic institutions and he feared that the hunt on the violent left-wing RAF-members would have consequences for other leftist non-violent intellectuals.³⁴ In these public actions, his personal view on human interaction, public debate (discourse) and cooperation predominated, as Habermas linked the various discussions to the necessity of reaching mutual understanding through rational means.

The Theory of Communicative Action gathered the myriad of subjects that Habermas was dealing with in those days. It was an extensive attempt to address all his intellectual issues with language, cooperative behaviour, philosophy, as well as the status of social sciences and the method of critical theory. On the whole, it reflected a methodological criticism of the large-scale macro-sociological and historical theories of the 19th century – with Marxism as the example of a broad but deterministic theory – and while the monograph dealt with grand societal processes, the analysis was not composed of a singular all-encompassing theory, but rather an amalgam of various practical concepts. James Bohman and William Rehg, two authors of the work on Habermas, define it as “a two-level social theory” that includes elements of rational communication on the one hand, and an abstraction of modern society and modernisation on the other hand. According to Bohman and Rehg, the latter is the key “to assess the gains and losses of modernisation and to overcome its one-sided version of rationalisation.”³⁵

The title of the two-volume monograph suggests that it is essentially concerned about language as a fundamental form of human interaction. The aim is to reason how speech situations function and in what way they should be taken apart and understood – although he considers communication as more than mere speech.³⁶ However, the two-volume work does also address other issues before placing language at the heart of the argument. Habermas initiates his research by returning to the tradition of critical theory, which stresses a practical and pluralistic mode of critical inquiry. In other words, Habermas believes that the participants in a discussion should be able to critically verify each other's arguments, as it is an imperative part of the process. Subsequently, the critical enquiry

34 Lasse Thomassen, *Habermas*, p. 10.

35 James Bohman and William Rehg, 'Jürgen Habermas'.

36 Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Beacon, Boston, 1984, p. 101.

of humans anticipates the necessity of a concept of rationality, which revolves around the question how speaking and acting subjects acquire and use knowledge. Humans articulate themselves through structures of communication, i.e. language, which means that speech cannot be separated from reason.

By closely tying communication and rationality together, Habermas can conclude that agreements based on reason are possible and desirable at the same time: mutual understanding can always be found through rational discussion. As such, Habermas exhibits the ideal type of 'communicative action': it portrays situations in a modern society where humans raise, accept, and reject various claims for truth, on the basis of rational arguments. In *The Theory of Communicative Action*, language is placed entirely at the core of the argument, assumed to be a rational medium to coordinate actions, as well as a practical approach to reach understanding. Thus, the ideal type combines rational behaviour with cooperative behaviour, and it is opposed to what Habermas defines as 'strategic action'. The latter is an approach that is solely based on the pursuit of individual interests, where mutual understanding and cooperative behaviour is unwanted.³⁷

For communicative action to thrive, it is necessary that human interaction is uncoerced and takes place within rational boundaries. It should in no way be limited by any unnatural external force. However, Habermas designed "communicative action" as an ideal type for a community, which means it can only be applied as a tool for analysis – a model for free and open public discussion and political participation within a liberal-democratic society – rather than being used as a realistic rule for daily human interaction. Habermas makes a remarkable connection with liberal democracy, which particularly highlights the influence of the Anglo-Saxon philosophical thought on his work – especially the tradition of democratic thinking and universal inclusion. In his words: "nothing better prevents others from perspectively distorting one's own interests than actual participation."³⁸ Is Habermas justifying the need for deliberative, liberal-democratic political institutions by constructing a model that solely relies on open, inclusive and rational discussion? Although that is not entirely clear in *The Theory of Communicative Action*, he does warn that liberal democracy in itself is not a sufficient guarantee for a communicative rationality. The risk of strategic rationality is always lurking around the corner, according to Habermas, as economic and bureaucratic forces push towards a more individualistic and a less cooperative way of thinking. Strong

37 James Bohman and William Rehg, 'Jürgen Habermas'; Stacy Clifford, 'Disabling Democracy', p. 5-6.

38 Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action. Vol I.*, p. 186.

influences of political power and economic efficiency can sway humans to change their behaviour.³⁹

Habermas pointed to the crux of the matter, by referring to the political and societal implications of his theory of communication. If an open and democratic society is reigned by an economic *pensée unique*, it shall disrupt the public sphere (“disintegration”) and restrain people from freely discussing ideas (“formation of opinion”) and coming to a mutual understanding.⁴⁰ In an indirect fashion, Habermas heavily criticised economic liberalisation, taking place in the 1970s and 1980s, and how modern society was increasingly subjected to a variety of economic institutions and structures, better known as markets. Here, the German philosopher was already bringing diverse pieces of his thinking together, which around the turn of the century would inspire him to write about the risk of (economic) globalisation, and how Europe and the international community can adequately respond to such a tremendous challenge.

In the margin *The Theory of Communicative Action* also dealt with the concept of discourse, which is a more reflective form of communicative action, and presented by Habermas as the process of argumentation and dialogue. James Bohman and William Rehg defined it as the ability “to recognise the intersubjective validity of different claims on which social cooperation depends.”⁴¹ In other words, humans implicitly test each other’s claims for sincerity and authenticity. Thus, discourse serves as a broader basis for Habermas’ theory of communicative action. As the two theories were woven together, both came under scrutiny after the publication of *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Critics of various tendencies, ranging from Marxist to neo-conservative, considered Habermas’ idealised, rational model of communication as an empty and formal shell, since it did not take the various distortions in democratic institutions and the importance of rhetorics and “compositionality of language”⁴² into account. While *The Theory of Communicative Action* tried to define communication as a broader concept, it confined itself in large part to the analysis of speech and language.⁴³ Also, the (rational)

39 Jürgen Habermas, ‘A Philosophical-Political Profile’, pp. 101-102.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 97.

41 James Bohman and William Rehg, ‘Jürgen Habermas’.

42 Compositionality is a concept in the philosophy of language and states that a complex expressing has meaning because it is shaped by the structure and meaning of its separate components. Thus, language can only be considered language when it contains meaningful expressions, constructed from smaller and indicative components. Zoltán Gendler Szabó, ‘Compositionality’, in: ZALTA, Edward N. (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford, 2011.

43 Roger Bolton, ‘Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action and the Theory of Social Capital’, *Meeting of Association of American Geographers*, Denver, 2005, p. 11.

assumption that all humans have the required linguistic competences at their disposal was considered as a problematic element of the theory. In the following years, Habermas would refute most of those criticisms while also expanding his theory to the fields of law, democracy and ethics.⁴⁴

Rupture and Continuity

Jürgen Habermas spent the late stage of his career again at Frankfurt, after his twelve year period as director of the Max Planck Institute in Starnberg, until he retired in 1994. From that time forward, he dedicated himself to giving lectures around the world – mainly in the United States – while inquiring into the global and structural transformations taking place after the end of the Cold War. Despite his seniority and eventual retirement, Habermas entered a period of prolific writing, as he published several influential essays deconstructing pressing issues as the changing international political system, the evaporating nation-state and role of democracy in a global economic context. Evidently, these subjects were in large part inspired by the events at the end of 1980s and the profound shake-up of the political world order. Both elements of rupture and continuation were characteristic for this period. Between the years 1989 and 1991, the Cold War came to an end – after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the tumbling down of the Iron Curtain – and the Soviet Union bloc had dissolved. These were two profound moments of rupture. The breach in the Berlin wall, separating the former German capital, provoked an unsustainable migration flow of East Germans to the West. After Gorbachev dropped his initial objections, the distinct possibility of a reunited Germany eventually became reality.⁴⁵

For the (West-)German philosopher Habermas, this sudden coalescence of the two territorial regions marked an important crossroads in the German history. At the same time, he was one of the first intellectuals to voice criticism of the “rush towards (re)unification”, as it could have unforeseen consequences, such as a “regressive re-traditionalising tendency” and the danger of creating a new “national identity” – instead of a “constitutional identity”.⁴⁶ His position was widely debated and provoked reactions from

44 James Bohman and William Rehg, ‘Jürgen Habermas’; Stacy Clifford, ‘Disabling Democracy’, p. 6.

45 ‘Germany’, in: Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, London, 2013. Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/231186/Germany/58219/The-reunification-of-Germany> (consulted on: 25.01.2013).

46 Howard Williams, Catherine Bishop and Colin Wight, ‘German (Re)Unification: Habermas and his critics’, in: German Politics, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1996, p. 214, 234-235.

both politicians and intellectuals from the right-wing spectrum. However, it encouraged an intense discussion on the future of the new Germany society, which ultimately was completely consistent with Habermas' view on discourse and communicative action:

“The philosopher who has preached the concept of ‘communication’ now practices this, arguing, debating, discussing, defending, explaining and fighting for discourse, against those narrators, historians, politicians and other figures who discourage it.”⁴⁷

While the end of the Cold War and the victory of the United States over the Soviet Union may have been sudden schisms with calamitous effects, both widely observed by people and reported in the media, other and rather structural – perhaps less perceptible – transformations were along the way of adjusting the shape of the world. Two of these elements shall be highlighted here.

The first movement to be considered as an element of continuity, is known and can be defined as globalization.⁴⁸ It is a widely-used concept even applied by Habermas to describe developments that have put the “entire [historical] constellation into question.” By that, he refers to the former constellation and perspective of the all-embracing nation-state, the fact that “state, society, and economy are, as it were, co-extensive within the same national boundaries” – a position that shall be analysed in more detail further on.⁴⁹ Both in the academic world and public life, many things have been said and written about globalization, and there is a huge variety of meanings given to the concept. Manfred Steger, a professor of Global Studies, explains that globalization has been used “to describe a process, a condition, a system, a force, and an age.” It is a conceptual chameleon that covers various societal spheres next to a set of social processes, which shifts “our present social condition into one of globality.”⁵⁰ Despite the difficulty to determine its cause and driving force, there is a growing consensus that the main characteristic of globalization is the movement towards greater interdependence (especially of national economies) and closer integration. This includes, among others, elevated levels of international

47 ‘Der Ulrich der Deutschen: “Staatsbürgernation oder ethnische Schicksalsgemeinschaft” - Jürgen Habermas über “Die nachholende Revolution”, *Die Zeit*, 18 May 1990. Available at: <http://www.zeit.de/1990/21/der-ulrich-der-deutschen> (consulted on: 14.02.2013). (Translation from: Howard Williams, Catherine Bishop and Colin Wight, *Ibid.*, p. 236.)

48 Note the choice here to use the more common American English alternative (globalization), instead of the British spelling (globalisation); this results from the fact that the majority of the scientific literature on the subject utilises the American spelling.

49 Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2001, p. 60.

50 Manfred Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003, pp. 8-9.

trade, increasing speed of communication and major advancements in technology and information systems.⁵¹

Globalization is far from a new phenomenon. The concept has been popularised in academic literature and public opinion since the 1980s and 1990s⁵², although the underlying process and defining the characteristics of globalization can be traced back further in time. In general, some scholars limit the process to the most recent decades – and the rise of the post-industrial society after the Second World War – while others believe its roots lay hundreds and even thousands of years back in time.⁵³ No doubt, there were some eras in the history of mankind where a heightened level of interconnectedness took place, which could be understood as early phases of globalization. From the spread of hunters and gatherers over the five world continents twelve thousand years ago, and later during the Classical Age with the trade links – eventually known as the Silk Road – between the Roman, Persian and Chinese empire, till the gradual emergence of capitalism in the modern period; all these epochs in time were characterised by an acceleration of global forces.

It follows that globalization should not be understood as a plain linear process of ever closer independence: epochs of intense global ties have alternated with moments of reduced interdependence and in-ward looking behaviour. John Maynard Keynes described in his work *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* of 1920 the common middle-class life before 1914, when the “inhabitant of London could order by telephone, sipping his morning tea in bed, the various products of the whole earth, in such quantity as he might see fit, and reasonably expect their early delivery upon his doorstep.”⁵⁴ The British economist, generating numerous examples of the benefits of a global economy, contrasted this situation of peace at the start of the twentieth century with the sudden backlash of globalization that erupted with the outbreak of the First World War. Manfred Steger shares the view propagated by Keynes, when he points out that we should avoid understanding globalization in terms of inevitability and irreversibility.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² The nGram Viewer of Google, which uses raw data from more than twelve million books in its catalogue, confirms that the concept “globalization” gained ground in the last quarter of the 20th century. Available at: http://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=globalization&year_start=1900&year_end=2008&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=

⁵³ Manfred Steger, *Globalization*, pp. 20-36.

⁵⁴ John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Project Gutenberg, Salt Lake City, 2005, p. 8.

⁵⁵ Manfred Steger, *Globalization*, p. 19.

To return to the original point: as globalization is widely understood as a process, it includes an element of continuity – without falling into the trap of a linear process. An increased openness in terms of communication and exchange was taking place, largely independent of the appearing fissures during the events of 1989-1991. For example, the Cold War had not prevented people and firms from establishing international connections and integrating elements of production, research and innovation – although the process was divided along the ideological lines of the two superpowers. In fact, it was the growing economic globalization, including technological development and productivity, which created a power disparity that would finally amplify the breakdown of the Soviet Union.⁵⁶

The second element of continuity rather deals with a regional process, namely the European nation-states adapting to a changing environment by continuing their process of integration. A part of Europe proceeded with a dual process of working closely together in a number of areas on the one hand, and shifting a part of state sovereignty to a supranational level on other. Despite world-changing events in the last decades, the actions towards closer integration have not halted. With each new challenge the European Union has tried to find an adequate solution. In that regard, the European integration process cannot be considered independently of what has taken place on a larger scale. As a matter of fact, there are two striking examples that illustrate this relationship between the regional (European) and the world level.

Economic and monetary integration, from the first draft ideas in the 1970s until its realisation in the 1990s, has been a response to ever stronger world-wide economic forces. From the start, it was an attempt to stabilise the volatile international exchange rate system, yet it eventually became a defence mechanism against the globalization of production, markets, industries, corporation, technology, and innovation. Another example is strongly connected with the events after the Cold War. The break-up of a bipolar world, the dwindling transatlantic relationship, made Europe more aware of its autonomous role in terms of foreign policy, development, migration and promoting civil norms. The Maastricht Treaty of 1992, including two institutional pillars devoted

56 While there was increasing globalization, especially in terms of global production Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth argue that it “took sides in the Cold War.” Because the Soviet Union and its allies were largely isolated from this increased (economic) interconnectedness, the superpower was unable to strengthen its innovative capacity, and consequently suffered from severe economic handicaps. “It is easy to see how isolation from the globalization of production increased the difficulty of keeping up with the West in terms of general economic and technological productivity.” From: Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, ‘Power, Globalization, and the End of the Cold War’, in: *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 2000, pp. 35-36.

to a common foreign and security policy, and cooperation in terms of justice and home affairs, demonstrate that a new geopolitical map forced the EU to change its focus.

Cosmopolitanism and European prospects

Jürgen Habermas' framework of thinking was profoundly shaped by the elements of rupture and continuity that simultaneously took place in the last decades of the twentieth century. To a large extent, his recent writings reflect a profound worry about the challenges posed by these sudden events or intensifying tendencies. As I have touched upon the periodical context, now it is essential to examine how Habermas incorporates them into his existing world conceptions, as well as his theories constructed in the preceding decades. In that regard, two major trends in Habermas' writing can be distinguished. On the one hand, Habermas emphasises the so-called post-national constellation and the potential emergence of a global political order – implying a sort of cosmopolitan thinking. Examples of Habermas analysis of these phenomena can be retrieved in the essay-collection *The Postnational Constellation* (2001), and the book chapter *The European nation-state: its achievements and its limits. On the past and future of sovereignty and citizenship* (from the publication *Mapping the Nation*, 2000). On the other hand, he discusses the European Union as a type of transnational political order – a step in the direction of a world order – reflecting an active and exertive response to global economic forces. In this case, the main sources are the essay *Why Europe Needs a Constitution* (2001) and the more recent book, *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response* (2012).

Although both trends address different questions, there is a strong overlap between them, and Habermas frequently tries to deal with both the post-national constellation and the European experiment in his analysis.⁵⁷ Since all these questions originate from one core observation – namely how contemporary (post-modern) problems to society are imposed on our world, at different levels, and what is the best approach to respond to them – Habermas can apply the same type of reasoning. As mentioned before, he associates these issues to a large extent with the term globalization. Also, when he addresses the functioning of democracy and the role of a constitution, or rather a constitutional identity, it touches upon the question of the post-national constellation as well as the European integration project.

⁵⁷ Jürgen Habermas, 'The European Nation-State and the Pressures of Globalization' (1999) is such an example, although most of the writings mentioned in this part reconcile to a certain extent the two trends.

The Postnational Constellation (Die postnationale Konstellation), originally published in German in 1998 but translated and printed in English in 2001, gives a most detailed account of the first trend, defined as adjustment toward an international political system – or a global political order. Habermas takes the first step by providing his view on modern society, i.e. a system based on a democratic community of “self-legislation” and “self-direction”.⁵⁸ Up until now, this democratic society has only been realised effectively in the context of nation-states, which Habermas refers to as a historical or national constellation. Although he elaborates on the success of the nation-state – from its origins as a strictly administrative state until the development of a legal and social state – in the way it has handled problems and challenges to society, he stresses that in recent time the nation-state has been called into question by forces known as globalization. “The increasing scope and intensity of commercial, communicative, and exchange relations beyond national borders”, or in other words a global economy different from the traditional forms of an international economy, is endangering the nation-state as an institution.⁵⁹ The so-called “locational competition”, which stands for increased labour productivity, rationalisations, reduction of labour forces and moveable business, has created a situation where markets dominate politics and the nation-state has lost its traditional capacity to intervene. National politics is no longer adequately equipped to address issues with regional, international or even global ramifications.⁶⁰ Habermas thinks that any reaction to globalization on the basis of a national perspective, either “a hardening of national identities” or a “multiplicity” of hybrid cultures, will be insufficient to respond to the challenge ahead.⁶¹ In another article, he adds that by just accepting globalization and its “neoliberal orthodoxy”, the world would see “a drastic increase in social inequalities and fragmentation” and a drain on democracy.⁶²

Habermas emphasises the necessity of a cosmopolitan “democratic order [that] does not inherently need to be mentally rooted in “the nation” as a pre-political community of shared destiny” as a potential way out for citizens and their societies.⁶³ Governance beyond the nation-state is considered to be the remedy, since protectionism on a national level (a defensive position) will not help the nation-state to regain its strength. He foresees the establishment of a global political order, relying on a similar type of

58 Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation*, p. 60.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 66-67.

60 Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation*, p. 67-70.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 72-76.

62 Jürgen Habermas, ‘The European Nation-State’, p. 51.

63 Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation*, p. 76.

democratic self-steering as it is present on a national level. However, the key for such a democratic order to succeed lies in the political participation of its (world) citizens. Every society requires a sort of mechanism that maintains the integrity of a differentiated society and avoids political fragmentation. This would give “political closure” to the “globally networked, highly interdependent world society.”⁶⁴ Habermas believes that the mechanism can be found in the combination of active citizenship and political participation, reflecting the underlying belief in a communicative ideal:

“It is the deliberative opinion- and will-formation of citizens, grounded in the principles of popular sovereignty that forms the ultimate medium for a form of abstract, legally constructed solidarity that reproduces itself through political participation.”⁶⁵

The second trend, the realisation of the European project, is inherently interconnected with the first trend as Habermas sees “the exemplary case of the European Union” as a potential realisation of “democratic politics beyond the nation-state”.⁶⁶ Habermas verified this connection already in the *Postnational Constellation*, but it was only when the question of the creation of a Constitutional Treaty for the EU led to a prominent debate in the media, that the subject also became dominant in his cosmopolitan thinking. For Habermas, the post-national constellation could materialise in the discussion and ratification of a constitution, which in turn would define the contours of the European project. The essay *Why Europe Needs a Constitution* from 2001 gives the core argument of creating a constitutional treaty, using nontechnical terminology. The book *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response* (2012, originally published in German in 2011: *Zur Verfassung Europas*) provides an updated account of this idea, as well as an extended argument built on a more conceptual framework. At the same time, the recent publication exposes the flaws in the present European institutional architecture, established after the Lisbon Treaty. Both accounts are used here as a guide to distil Habermas’ take on the politics of the European Union.

“Why should we pursue the project of an ‘ever-closer Union’ any further at all?” is a key question that is brought up in the 2001 essay *Why Europe Needs a Constitution*.⁶⁷ It refers to the debate on whether the EU should eventually become a real federation of nation-states, at the time a move met by sceptical responses all over Europe’s member

64 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 76

66 *Ibid.*, p. 88.

67 Jürgen Habermas, ‘Why Europe Needs A Constitution’, p. 6.

states. Habermas sees a constitution as a way to settle on various – political, social and economic – goals. While economic integration has advanced over the decades, a process completed with the single market and the single currency, political integration (especially the establishment of a legitimate process of decision-making), has lagged behind. Therefore, Habermas believes that Europe should refrain from decaying “into a mere market, sodden by globalization”.⁶⁸ His discourse on the European Union entirely relies on the earlier work about global economic forces – rapid structural changes that bring social costs and widen the inequality gap. Habermas asserts that a re-regularisation is needed to counterbalance global forces, especially within the framework of the European Union, the most promising platform in terms of joint action. A European constitution would help to address the lingering democratic deficit of the EU, breaking up the “opacity of [the] decision-making process”, while pursuing a European state-building “which does not reproduce the template of the nation-state”.⁶⁹

The second question is raised, when Habermas portrays the position of Euro-sceptics: can there be a European project when there is not yet a European people? It is here that Habermas introduces the “voluntaristic character of a civic nation”, which reflects a collective identity based on the democratic process – in contrast to an “ethnic” conception of the nation: “Democratic citizenship establishes an abstract, legally mediated solidarity between strangers.”⁷⁰ According to Habermas, a constitution would have the catalytic effect of stimulating a Europe-wide debate, taking place through transnational ties of communication. In other words, a constitutional debate along the lines of his model of communicative action, that holds the promise of creating a European public sphere. National media with multinational audiences already exist, as a type of transnational communication, although there should be an increased and consistent effort by national media to cover important issues and opinions from other countries. It is only through “multiple, horizontal flows of communication” that a public sphere can be realised.⁷¹ For Habermas, such a sphere must be embedded in a shared political culture, which relies on common values and the memory of European history.

The essay is concluded by Habermas’ design of a framework of a constitution, envisioning its main features and principles. It is an attempt to find “the combination

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁷⁰ In other contexts, Habermas has used the term “constitutional patriotism” to describe the phenomenon where individuals become citizens (with a shared identity) on an abstract and constitutional basis; Jürgen Habermas, ‘Why Europe Needs A Constitution’, pp. 15-16.

⁷¹ Jürgen Habermas, ‘Why Europe Needs A Constitution’, p. 19.

of a Europe of nation-states with a Europe of citizens”, or to balance the sharing of sovereignty between the federal and the national level.⁷² In brief, the Parliament would be strengthened (to resemble the American Congress), while a Chamber of Nations could act as a sort of Senate. The Commission should always remain less powerful – thus not acquiring all executive powers – whereas a European Court has the powers to interpret the constitution. For Habermas, the constitution could settle the difficulties over the distribution of competences, and overcome the problem of legitimacy.⁷³

The Crisis of the European Union: A Response was published approximately ten years after the essay on the European constitution and brought a wider view on the process of unification. Written at a time when a severe financial, economic and social crisis raged through Europe, it was immediately perceived by commentators as a critical response to the actions taken by European leaders in combating the societal challenges, by dealing with the structural deficiencies of the Union.⁷⁴ In the work Habermas castigates the European political class for what he believes is an attempt to establish a sort of “executive federalism” in times of crisis; a system of governance that intervenes in the core domains of the national parliaments and undermines the democratic “exercise of political authority”.⁷⁵ According to him, the European Council does not dispose of the necessary democratic legitimacy to dictate member states with its closed-door legal decisions. Also, the newly established policy of supranational budgetary control and discipline, without any democratic accountability, defeats the object of the creating a genuinely legitimate Union.⁷⁶

Habermas is of the opinion that the EU is moving away from the spirit of the Lisbon Treaty, which could have been a step towards a constitutional model (with a clear blueprint of competences and sovereignty and an extended basis for legitimation). The realisation of this European constitutional project holds the prospect of an eventual

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-24.

⁷⁴ Georg Diez, ‘Habermas, the Last European: A Philosopher’s Mission to Save the EU’, *Der Spiegel*, 21 November 2011. Available at (translated from German): <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/habermas-the-last-european-a-philosopher-s-mission-to-save-the-eu-a-799237.html> (consulted on: 06.10.2012).; Valentina Pop, ‘Habermas’ solution to the euro-crisis’, *euobserver.com*, 8 June 2012. Available at: <http://euobserver.com/reviews/116505> (consulted on: 22.02.2013).

⁷⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response*, Polity, Cambridge, 2012, p. viii.; Definition of executive federalism: “the processes of intergovernmental negotiation that are dominated by the executives of the different governments within the federal system.” From: Ronald L. Watts, *Executive Federalism: A Comparative Analysis*, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Kingston, 1989, p. 3.

⁷⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, pp. 43-44.

political constitution of the world – an underlying idea that was already present in his writings on the post-national constellation.⁷⁷ *The Crisis of the European Union* is a book divided in two parts: on the one hand, Habermas analyses the EU as an attempt to constitutionalise international law, and on the other hand the case of human rights is used as an example how to create a legal framework with a global institutional embodiment. For reasons of relevance, only the first part shall be discussed here.

The current crisis lays bare there is still a need for a European constitutional project, in the eyes of Habermas. A constitutionalisation of international law is not only a step towards a future of cosmopolitan rule of law, but at the same time a response to the challenges that the EU is facing. Habermas starts off by pointing to a political and legal dimension of the constitutional project. First, disembedded capitalism⁷⁸ has led to an imbalance between markets and politics, with increasing social inequality and status insecurity as a result. Up until now, the EU has stuck to a bureaucratic way of economic governance as a response to the economic crisis. Habermas argues that so-called joint decisions on an intergovernmental basis have an insufficient democratic legitimacy and do not address the ongoing problem of political fragmentation – while the world above all becomes more global and multicultural. Second, law and politics have always been coupled, as the former legitimises the latter. Habermas is of the opinion that this coupling also needs to be pursued on an international level: in the past the “juridification of international relations” has pacified relations and curbed the struggle for dominance of power.⁷⁹ He sees it as the only way forward, and a domain where the EU can play an importance role with its project of civilising through unification.

The core of the part on the constitutional project deals with the question whether the supranational level of (EU) governance can put the accomplishments in terms of civil rights and democratic legitimacy at risk. The uncoupling of politics from the level of the nation-state has extended the capabilities of decision-making, yet at the same time it has not been supplemented with the equivalent democratic procedures. Habermas asks whether the citizens should “pay the price of sinking levels of legitimacy for a form of governance founded on intergovernmentality” and he does not believe that a type of delegated democracy can offset the damage.⁸⁰ To find an answer, Habermas retraces the roots of state sovereignty and the building blocks of a political community. Subsequently,

77 *Ibid.*, pp. x-xi.

78 For this idea of disembedded capitalism, Habermas relies on the work of Karl Polanyi. More information: Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation*, pp. 84-85.

79 Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, p. 10.

80 Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, p. 15.

he highlights two innovations that have rendered the democratic exercise of political authority on a supranational level possible.

A first innovation is the so-called primacy of supranational law without state power. In the EU “a priority of European law over the law of the member states has become firmly established, even though the organs of the Union do not possess such an authority.”⁸¹ In other words, Habermas demonstrates that a supranational political community has established itself without the backing of the monopoly on the legitimate use of force. This is clear from the cases before the European Court of Justice, which has verified the primacy of EU law while also safeguarding some of the principles enshrined in national law. For him, this innovation is the main reason why the European continent was able to pacify itself after the Second World War.⁸² The second innovation is related to the sharing of power. Habermas explains that the EU has based its legitimacy both on the citizens of the Union – who elect members of parliament – and the members of the European peoples (represented by the member states). However, these two groups effectively consist of the same individuals, although simultaneously represented through two different “legitimation tracks.”⁸³ According to Habermas, this has culminated into a conflict of interest: what is best for a national people may not necessarily be the preferable option from the perspective of a citizen of the Union. Subsequently, he defends a simplification that would take EU citizens as the main source of legitimacy. Thus, Habermas hints again at his idea of civic solidarity as a fundamental part of popular sovereignty. In practise, that implies some of the “democratic deficits” should be addressed, such as fragmented electoral law, the asymmetric distribution of legislative functions and the peculiarities in the rights of the Council and European Council.⁸⁴

Even if the EU could gradually resolve its issues of democratic legitimation and establish itself as a supreme constitutional authority, nation states would not become redundant. Habermas acknowledges that citizens still want them, despite their artificial origins, because they are still needed to protect regional distinctiveness. However, equal freedoms and constitutional rights is something that should be guaranteed at a higher level.⁸⁵ To reach this “transnational democracy”, as opposed to executive federalism and bureaucratic rule, Habermas remarks that political elites should not hesitate any longer but rather work on adequate political steering for the economic project – based

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 26-28.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 37.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

⁸⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, pp. 41-42.

on more input legitimacy. For him the only way to successfully achieve a transition from negative to positive integration is when citizens are included in the transnational political process – stimulated through communication networks that reach beyond the borders of the single state.⁸⁶

In the final part of the discourse on the constitutional project, Habermas returns to the idea of a politically constituted world society, as formerly discussed in *The Post-National Constellation*. Here he still sees the European experiment as the possible precursor of his anticipated cosmopolitan community, a future prospect which could be based on the two innovations highlighted here. With *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response* Jürgen Habermas has consolidated his academic work on society, democracy and communicative action, through applying his concepts and ideas to the project of European unification.

86 *Ibid.*, pp. 44-50.

Andrew Moravcsik

Across the Atlantic, one of the leading voices in the academic and public debate on Europe and the integration process is the Princeton University scholar Andrew Moravcsik. His outspoken interest in the European Union and its institutional arrangement may come as a surprise, given that the average United States citizen remains rather ambivalent towards the prodigious events taking place on the old continent.⁸⁷ By tradition, commentators and scholars in the United States have always shown more interest in the individual European nation-states and their long histories, rather than their recent attempts of far-reaching sovereignty-sharing. The preference of transatlantic relations based on intergovernmental cooperation, visible from the sheer amount of bilateral ties, has inhibited a speedy development of regional ties between the United States and the European Union. Thus, with the European Union still under-exposed in comparison to the traditional nation-states, it is all the more startling that Andrew Moravcsik has dedicated his main academic work on the nature of the integration project. His doctoral dissertation about the importance of national interests during the negotiation of the Single European Act, which eventually was developed into the book *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, became one of the most widely read academic publications on European integration. The historian and book reviewer William Hitchcock defined it in 1999 as “an important work” and probably “most ambitious interpretation of its subject yet written.”⁸⁸ Moravcsik delved into the historical accounts of European negotiations to understand why exactly a group of nation-states decided to surrender part of their sovereignty in order to cooperate more closely together. This made him one of the first American scholars to heavily influence

87 Although there has always been support for European integration, empirical research has concluded that U.S. citizens remain wary of a future Europe that would act as one country. More information: Timo Behr, *US Attitudes towards Europe: A Shift of Paradigms?*, Research and European Issues No. 29, Notre Europe, Paris, 2003, p. 5.

88 William Hitchcock, book review: Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht’, in: *American Historical Review*, Vol. 104, No. 5, 1999, p. 1742.

an almost exclusively 'European' debate and also question some of the widely accepted notions of integration theory.

This chapter shall commence by tracing the origins of Moravcsik's enthusiasm for Europe, and his initial research that led to the publication of his grand work *The Choice for Europe*. To a large extent, the analysis of Moravcsik's work on European integration and the role of the nation-states will establish an insight in his theoretical framework, known as liberal intergovernmentalism in the field of international relations. Subsequently, the most prominent and noteworthy ideas of his current writings shall be presented, while linking them to Moravcsik's overarching theory of liberal intergovernmentalism. This last part will mainly put his views on recent issues forward, for instance Europe's status as a superpower, the democratic legitimacy of the European Union and the impact of the economic crisis.

A European root

Andrew Maitland Moravcsik was born in 1957 and grew up in Eugene, a city with ample population in the north-western state of Oregon. With the Pacific Ocean in the west as a natural border of the U.S. state, the daily reality of the inhabitants of Oregon has little to do with European politics. Yet, it is here that Moravcsik spent his early childhood and adolescent years. To understand how such a strong connection with Europe could develop itself during his studies, the origins of the Moravcsik family have to be retraced. The surname and family tree offer one strong indication of a relation with the European continent. Moravcsik's father, working as a professor in physics at the University of Eugene, was a Hungarian immigrant from Budapest. Moravcsik's father kept most of his European habits intact, as he "introduced the family to [the] intellectual life, art, and opera", the lasting remnants to his place of birth.⁸⁹ Moravcsik's mother had multiple origins, the result of Basque, Dutch, German, English, and Scottish ancestors. Both his parents were accustomed to Europe and its particularities, which in turn influenced Moravcsik's childhood.

His European ancestry can partly explain why Andrew Moravcsik commenced the study of physics at Stanford University but eventually decided to switch his major to history. A part of the programme included a semester of study in Berlin, which came to be the first of many travels to Europe. In subsequent years, when Moravcsik enrolled in a master's programme of international studies and eventually pursued a doctoral degree

89 Amanda Pearson, *Faculty Profile Andrew Moravcsik*, Princeton University, Princeton, 2001, p. 10.

in political science at Harvard, the European continent remained a pressing force in his life. He was in Germany on a Fulbright scholarship and for a brief stint he worked as a trade negotiator for the U.S. Department of Commerce in Brussels. Nevertheless, his original doctoral proposal in 1984 had no explicit connection to the European integration project. Rather, his academic work was going to emphasise the high-technology cooperation in Europe. It was a stroke of luck that completely overturned his research interest: Moravcsik received a three-week grant to visit the EU institutions and discover some of the European member states, a dense tour that would leave him deeply impressed by the strength and capacity of the European integration process.⁹⁰

Shortly after, Moravcsik felt that he had chosen the wrong subject and subsequently wrote the first article on European affairs, which was published in the journal *International Organization*. The article highlighted the relaunch of the European integration process, which took place in parallel with the negotiations and ratification of the Single European Act (SEA). Moravcsik's curiosity stemmed from two questions: why this particular moment to jump-start Europe and why did they succeed in agreeing on a reform package? His ulterior objective was to challenge the neofunctionalist idea that the SEA resulted from a coalition between the European officials and transnational business interest groups. In fact, Moravcsik seized upon the opportunity to defend an intergovernmental institutionalist view, which stresses the role of interstate bargaining in this type of international cooperation. According to him, domestic politics should not be ignored when interpreting the outcome of the negotiation of the latest European treaty.⁹¹

In the article "Negotiating the Single European Act", Andrew Moravcsik presents two explanatory frameworks, that have been dominating the regional integration debate since its origins, to interpret the proceedings of the SEA negotiations. On the one hand, supranational institutionalism amasses all the factors which find themselves above the level of the nation-state, such as the EU institutions, business lobby groups and political entrepreneurs, who could potentially shape the outcome of a treaty negotiation. This type of explanation is closely linked to the neofunctional theory, formulated by Ernst Haas and Jean Monnet among others, that stresses supranational (autonomous) processes and spill-over effects that spur continuing regional integration.⁹²

90 *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.; Andrew Moravcsik, *Short Biography*, Princeton University, Princeton, 2013, p. 1.

91 Andrew Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act: national interests and conventional statecraft in the European Community', in: *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No. 1, 1991, pp. 19-21.

92 *Ibid.*, pp. 21-25.; Neill Nugent, *The Government and Politics*, pp. 431-432.

On the other hand, intergovernmental institutionalism places the state power and interests at the core of its explanation. Intergovernmental theory foresees that interstate bargaining between heads of governments is the strongest influence on international negotiations. Moravcsik subsequently defines the three principles that constitute this explanatory framework: inter-governmentalism, the lowest common denominator, and the limits on the future transfer of sovereignty. It should be noted here that these two schools of regional thinking have remained a dominant force within the work of Moravcsik. More specific, his research has mainly been about challenging the ruling way of thinking of EU enthusiasts – shaped by supranationalism and neofunctionalism – through presenting an alternative approach on an intergovernmental basis.⁹³

Thus, it should come as no surprise when Moravcsik concludes in his interpretation of the negotiations “does not confirm the importance of international and transnational factors.” After a detailed overview of the historical records of the SEA preparations, he assesses both supranationalism and intergovernmentalism as explanatory frameworks. With regard to the supranational factors, Moravcsik determines that the European Parliament had a marginal role in the negotiations, and the importance of various business groups should not be overstated – given their small sizes and late development. In addition to that, he sees a problem of reversed causality regard to the role of Commission President Jacques Delors and Commissioner Lord Cockfield – author of the White Paper – who are considered to be the two most important political supranational actors. While the Commission was generally attributed the role of initiator, and main contributor to the agreement, Moravcsik asserts that heads of governments themselves generally “proposed, negotiated, and approved” the outlines of the main documents, “in advance of Commission initiatives”, and he adds to this observation that “Delors’ actions as Finance Minister of France may have contributed more to the SEA than those as president of the Commission.”⁹⁴

Moravcsik is remarkably more affirmative on the role of intergovernmental factors, as determinants of the SEA agreement. With heads of governments or their direct representatives leading the actual negotiations, Moravcsik observes a gradual convergence of domestic policy preferences – which has rendered a consensus possible. This convergence of preferences is mainly explained by the influence of national political parties (with their European alliances) and economic functionalism (the pressure to liberalise the struggling national economies). Besides that, the principles

93 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’, pp. 25-27.

94 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Negotiating the Single European Act’, p. 45.

of lowest-common-denominator and protection of sovereignty are, according to the author, the essential reason why the reform treaty is rather a limited or minimalist agreement. “The SEA negotiations can be interpreted as a process of limiting the scope and intensity of reform”, in order to assure acceptance of all negotiating countries.⁹⁵ Moravcsik specifies this by stating that significant reform was blocked in areas that were not directly linked to the internal market – thus confirming that the insistence of heads of government to keep their commitments limited to certain areas eventually prevailed.

Finally, Moravcsik does not give an outright rejection of the neofunctionalist answer to European integration. He merits it as an attempt “to fashion a coherent and comprehensive theory”, but concludes that the supranationalist argument – of European institutions and transnational interest groups playing a decisive role – is heavily overstated. Moravcsik declares that, concerning the SEA agreement, intergovernmentalism and inter-state bargaining were the crucial factors to renew the spirit of integration. Consequential, while the theoretical groundwork in “Negotiating the Single European Act” was devoted to just one period of European integration, Moravcsik would promptly expand his explanatory model to incorporate other events in the history of European integration. This first publication cleared the road for *The Choice for Europe*.

Liberal intergovernmentalism, state power and *The Choice for Europe*

Despite his new interest in the European Union, Andrew Moravcsik still had an unfinished dissertation on high-technology cooperation in Europe. Feeling reluctant to spend any more time on it, he made a hasty, albeit life-changing choice. Instead of completing the work on his original subject, he decided for himself to write in the period on one year a doctoral dissertation dedicated to European integration. In 1992, after succeeding to complete the task in just a year, he received his PhD in Political Science with the dissertation titled “National Preference Formation and Interstate Bargaining in the European Community, 1957-1988”. It was reworked and published six years later, in 1998 as *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, and quickly established itself as the new path-breaking book on European integration. The question to be addressed here is: what made it stand out from the crowd?

Neofunctionalism had regained strength with the agreement of the Single European Act, after almost two decades of stalemate and no progressive development in European integration. While original neofunctionalists such as Ernst Haas and Leon Lindberg

95 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

abandoned in the 1960s and 1970s some of their original positions, and introduced new notions as national demands and political leadership to explain the dire state of integration – a shift encouraged by criticism from intergovernmentalist scholars – the late 1980s saw a new generation taking up the neofunctionalist framework to explain the revived dynamism in Europe. Changes in the security environment and the *deus ex machina* role of (supranational) political actors were the main reasons to believe that neofunctionalism still had a theoretical value to explain the whole process of European integration. Just when scholars were rediscovering this grand theory, Andrew Moravcsik entered the arena with an ardent attempt to challenge the growing optimism within Europe's academic circles.⁹⁶

“This book should not be read as an evaluation of – let alone a wholesale rejection of – neofunctionalism or any other classical theory” was the principle message that Moravcsik included in *The Choice for Europe*.⁹⁷ However, the book largely consisted of arguments that challenged and refuted many of the ideas proposed by classical grand theory. To be fair, Moravcsik did not simply target neofunctionalists but also scrutinised the work of all of its critics. Alan Milward, an economic historian, is often recited as one of the authors that cleared the ground for the work of Andrew Moravcsik, with his largely economic reading of European integration history that contradicted the European idealism of neofunctionalist theory. Nevertheless, Moravcsik was one of the first authors to criticise Milward, in a 1995 book review of *The Rescue of the Nation-State*, for his one-sided causal explanation of economic goals and European integration – which had more in common with neofunctionalism than he had wished for:

“Milward's position comes perilously close to Haas's belief that a modern state must integrate to assure economic benefits to political coalitions of its citizens, without Haas's underlying technocratic presumption about economic development as a backbone.”⁹⁸

According to Moravcsik, Milward's economic rationality of European integration had not taken the full spectrum of domestic goals into account – not just economic but also political – that shape the policy stances of national governments in international

96 Neil Nugent, *The Government and Politics*, pp. 430-433.; Andrew Moravcsik, book review: Alan S. Milward, 'The European Rescue of the Nation State', in: *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 67, No. 1, 1995, pp. 126-128.

97 Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1998, p. 13.

98 Andrew Moravcsik, book review: Alan S. Milward, p. 128.

negotiations. The analysis of Milward had “a tendency to overlook evidence relevant to alternative [non-economic] explanations.”⁹⁹

With the publication of *The Choice for Europe* in 1998, it became clear that Andrew Moravcsik tried to establish himself as a sole proponent of a new direction in the theoretical debate on European integration. Nonetheless, his theory of liberal intergovernmentalism was loyal to existing concepts in the theory of international relations and would largely bring a continuation of the academic quarrel between grand theories.

The question addressed in *The Choice for Europe* is ambitious in its scope, since it devotes itself to the five most important negotiations in the history of the European Union (from Rome to Maastricht): how can these turning points of European history, where sovereign governments decide to coordinate policies and surrender competences, be explained in a consistent manner? In fact, Moravcsik intends to present an alternative grand framework of international relations, which revises some of the claims made by other theories. The theoretical foundation of his book is based on “a rationalist framework of international cooperation” which assumes that “states act rationally or instrumentally in pursuit of relatively stable and well-ordered interests.”¹⁰⁰ Moravcsik’s rationalist framework – as he opposes the words theory and model – revives some of the ideas posed in his 1992 article but consists here of three clearly separate stages of the negotiation process: national preference formation (based on various interests), interstate bargaining (the result of state power), and the choice of surrendering sovereignty (the type of international institutions).

The rationalist framework rests on a number of assumptions. First of all, state preferences are not always fixed and can change over time. Second, states pursue coherent national strategies and act as if they speak with a single voice, even though there can be domestic competition beforehand. Third, state governments generate before each negotiation a set of stable and weighted objectives.¹⁰¹ Along these strict rational lines, Moravcsik aims to explain generalise international cooperation between states.

The first stage for explaining the outcome of this cooperation is dedicated to national preferences, which are influenced by the underlying objectives of domestic groups. Moravcsik asserts that “Preferences, unlike strategies and policies, are exogenous to a specific international political environment.”¹⁰² In other words, they are independent of

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹⁰⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, p. 18.

¹⁰¹ Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

any particular negotiation. In addition, preferences are generally shaped by geopolitical and economic interests, respectively reflecting threats to national security and growing economic interdependence. For instance, domestic concerns over economic competitiveness, and the failure to tackle these pressing issues on a national policy level, are linked to the decision to cooperate in various core economic domains (agricultural and industrial trade liberalisation, removal of regulatory barriers, and exchange rate stabilisation). Subsequently, what makes these important decisions in international negotiations possible, according to Moravcsik, is how the merge of national preferences can result in a balance of common gains and distributional trade-offs, whereby every state is better off (Pareto-efficient).¹⁰³

The second stage concerns itself with interstate bargaining and the fact that bargaining outcomes should bring, on the one hand, more efficiency, and on the other hand, a better distribution of gains. For Moravcsik, these two bargaining issues are at the core of all international negotiations. Efficiency is relatively straightforward, as each government generally is favourable towards gains in this domain. Distribution of benefits is a more sensitive issue, as it is shaped by the relative power of national governments and consequently means that a power asymmetry is present in most cases.¹⁰⁴ Moravcsik emphasises the spectrum of bargaining instruments that some (powerful) governments have at their disposal: they can veto, exit or exclude other governments from the negotiations, or create linkages between separate issues and offer side-payments to others. With low transaction costs, states dispose of the power to push their preferences forward.¹⁰⁵

Institutional choice, or the question to delegate or pool decision-making power to supranational institutions, is the question at stake in the third stage. Moravcsik explains that sovereignty is *pooled* when decision are taken by non-unanimous voting, while sovereignty is *delegated* when supranational actors have to ability to take autonomous decisions. Due to the rich and complex institutional architecture of the European Union, Moravcsik believes that the current state of integration is the result of a deliberate design without historical precedent. As for the conditions under which national governments decided to pool or delegate sovereignty, the explanatory concept of credible commitments is put forward. In short, credible commitments reflect the existence of strong concerns of individual governments over compliance of other member-states. To

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

¹⁰⁴ This explains why Moravcsik is mainly focusing on German, French, and British behaviour in the negotiations.

¹⁰⁵ Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, pp. 50-54.

ensure that decisions on substantive cooperation – with joint gains – will not be in any way obstructed or logrolled (due to the individual incentive to defect), the delegation or pooling of sovereignty can emerge. Credible commitments also imply that national governments will carefully limit the scope of competence for supranational institutions, to avoid a potential derailment of surrendering sovereignty.¹⁰⁶

With this rational framework in mind, Andrew Moravcsik aims to revise the complete history of European integration in the remaining chapters of *The Choice for Europe*. By assessing all the negotiations, each time applying the same parameters, the book differentiates itself from works that limit themselves to single cases. Moravcsik has combined the use of historical records (observations from primary resources) and hypothesis testing, which he considers as “a synthesis between historiographical and political science methods.”¹⁰⁷ Despite its ambitious efforts to rewrite the history of European integration, *The Choice for Europe* has been heavily criticised for making perhaps too bold statements, based on often selective evidence and a method that reduces the complexity of history to a number of variables and rational concepts.¹⁰⁸ From its publication, it was seen as a divisive book because of its radical and uncompromising approach to European integration, in fact, a clever effort to establish a comprehensive liberal intergovernmentalist framework (but avoiding the definition of a ‘grand theory’). Moravcsik’s assertion that supranational actors and transnational groups had only a tiny role to play in past – and perhaps future – negotiations was a quite remarkable conclusion that at the same time would come as a blow to pro-Europeans. With the lacklustre outcomes of the Amsterdam and Nice treaties, doubts were again rising about the revived dynamism of European integration and the prospect of an ever-closer Union. Were Andrew Moravcsik and his views eventually proven right?

Post-Choice: Europe’s dilemmas and role in the world

The Choice for Europe sparked a lively debate on the question whether the “EU was designed to serve the interests of competing, dynamic national economies in Europe”¹⁰⁹, whereby Moravcsik engaged himself in the discussion and addressed most of the criticisms posed by reviewers and colleagues in the field. Nonetheless, the past fifteen years have also seen

¹⁰⁶ Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, pp. 67-68.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁸ William Hitchcock, book review: Andrew Moravcsik., pp. 1742-1743.; Neill Nugent, *The Government and Politics*, pp. 433-434.

¹⁰⁹ William Hitchcock, book review: Andrew Moravcsik., pp. 1742-1743.

an expansion into new areas of the EU studies field. Moravcsik gradually became more involved with the actual state of European integration, instead of limiting himself to the historical path. Since the early 2000s, he has devoted himself to the analysis of what takes place on the European continent – both as an academic and a public figure – therefore making him one of the most heard voices in the American debate about the integration process. As a regular opinion writer for *Newsweek* and a book reviewer of *Foreign Affairs*, he partly shaped the U.S. public perception and understanding of the EU – which perhaps can explain why liberal intergovernmentalism always held more ground on the other side of the Atlantic.¹¹⁰ In the academic sphere, Moravcsik's recent publications can be taken apart in three broad categories: (1) the constitutional settlement, (2) the democratic accountability of the EU institutions, and (3) Europe as a foreign policy player and world power. Each of these three categories will be discussed here.

(1) Before the financial and economic crisis, Europe was still largely concerning itself with the hapless constitutional project. A debate that excited Euro-enthusiasts, raged Euro-sceptics, but at the same time left the majority of the European people unmoved. For Andrew Moravcsik the question was not “whether the EU gets a constitution, (...)”, but how European economic performance can be improved in order to produce more jobs.”¹¹¹ He rightly pointed out that the constitutional project from the start struggled to create an interested and informed public, since there were more pressing socio-economic issues that had to be addressed by European politicians.

For Moravcsik, the constitutional debate was an unnecessary move, given the stable equilibrium the Union had reached. In the book chapter “The European Constitutional Settlement” (2007) he argued that any constitutional treaty could only be a consolidation of the current state of the EU, rather than substantive attempt of reform or a step in the direction of federalism. The reason for this, according to Moravcsik, is threefold. First of all, in terms of substance European integration has no longer a functional grand project that could significantly change the process of integration. Moravcsik states that actual challenges, such as global economic forces, social inequality and neo-liberal policies, are not plausible issues to rally all Europeans. In general, there is “no functional case of international cooperation” and often national reforms are preferred over EU reforms to deal with some of these issues.¹¹² Even in situations where there is a strong motivation

110 It is interesting to note that the main intergovernmentalist authors (A. Moravcsik, G. Garrett, J.M. Grieco, S. Hoffmann) are all either living or working in the United States.

111 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Europe Will Get It Right’, *Newsweek*, 25 December 2005. Available at: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2005/12/25/europe-will-get-it-right.html> (consulted on: 10.01.2013).

112 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The European Constitutional Settlement’, in: *The World Economy*, Vol. 31, No.

for coordination, Moravcsik believes that intergovernmental cooperation works well enough.

Secondly, there is a stable constraint on the competences of the EU, which means that the existing structure remains confederal rather than federal. The Union has limited legal competences, no tools for coercion and effectively no system to redistribute wealth. Moreover, national officials are still responsible for the implementation of the majority of the measures. Moravcsik concludes that there is no reason to believe that the EU moves towards centralisation. Instead, there is only a tendency to create a pillarised structure – given that the constitutional draft treaty did nothing more than “prolonging an incremental shift in intra-institutional power”.¹¹³

Third of all, Moravcsik demonstrates through polling results that support for EU integration is rather stable and there is no indication of a legitimacy crisis – that would require substantial democratic reform. What is more, he understands the current situation¹¹⁴ not as a problem of distance between Europe and the people. “[Citizens] do not choose to become involved”, and is in the eyes of Moravcsik the sole reason why the constitution has been a failure from the start, as it would never make the underlying pro-federalist dream of Euro-enthusiasts come true.¹¹⁵ For reasons of substance, institutional architecture and ideology, Moravcsik is of the opinion that the EU has already grown into a stable and mature system that renders discourse of continued integration outdated:

“We learn far more by viewing the EU as the most advanced model for international cooperation, a vantage point from which it appears as an unambiguous success story, rather than as a nation-state in the making, which encourages cycles of overambition and disappointment.”¹¹⁶

(2) In a different context, albeit linked to the issue of a constitutional treaty, Andrew Moravcsik took up the specific issue of legitimacy and democratic reform of the EU. His 2002 article “In Defence of the Democratic Deficit” offers a counterargument to the widely held view that the EU lacks a necessary democratic legitimacy. Moravcsik believes this is the result of a debate that limits itself to the abstract discussion of an ideal parliamentary democracy, instead of observing the concrete practises in various

1, 2008, pp. 28-30.

¹¹³ Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The European Constitutional Settlement’, p. 37.

¹¹⁴ Note here this reflects the situation before 2007, with no sign yet of an economic and social crisis in the EU.

¹¹⁵ Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The European Constitutional Settlement’, p. 43.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

advanced democracies. On the contrary, his analysis based on “reasonable criteria (...)” and empirical evidence shows that EU decision-making procedures are in accordance with existing conventions of democratic governance.¹¹⁷ Moravcsik discusses the main issues in order to defend the EU system; four of them are considered here.

The first point involves the observation that the EU is not above all a superstate. Its competences are restricted by the Treaties and the majority of state functions are excluded from the EU policy agenda. The Union faces severe fiscal constraints – it does not have the ability to tax – therefore it cannot by itself create any policy that requires high government spending. The decentralisation of policy implementation, “the separation of powers, the multi-level structure of decision-making and a plural executive” are other severe constraints. As a result, the EU can only focus itself on areas wherefore a broad political consensus exists.¹¹⁸ The second point demonstrates that the EU is not an unaccountable technocracy. Moravcsik asserts there is both direct accountability (via the European Parliament) and indirect accountability (via elected national officials). Moreover, “the rise of courts, public administrations and the core executive” reflect a broader trend, which emphasises a technocratic and semi-autonomous style of governance, and is also prevailing in other advanced economies.¹¹⁹

The third point deals with democratic deliberation and why the EU cannot expand participation. Moravcsik rejects the “ideal preference” that greater participation will lead to a deeper sense of political community in Europe and generate more support for the EU.¹²⁰ According to Moravcsik, insulated institutions – such as courts and bureaucracies – are often more popular than (elected) legislatures. In addition, expanding electoral participation will not overcome apathy towards low salient issues – such as trade liberalisation and technical regulations. Finally, Moravcsik also notes that various referendums, parliamentary elections and conventions have rather contributed to unstable politics (cf. the negative referenda on the constitutional treaty) and do not suggest there is some sort of common European identity and we-feeling. The fourth point refers to the so-called neo-liberal bias of EU policy making. Moravcsik does not agree with the idea that policies are targeted against social issues. He states there is little evidence that indicates social welfare provision is being constrained and social protection is driven downward – due to neo-liberal market liberalisation. Consequently,

117 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In Defence of the ‘Democratic Deficit’: Reassessing Legitimacy in the European Union’, in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 4, 2002, p. 605.

118 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In Defence of the ‘Democratic Deficit’, p. 609.

119 *Ibid.*, p. 613.

120 *Ibid.*, p. 615.

Moravcsik sees little reason to condemn the system, as long as they remain consistent with existing practises and have a “normative justification.”¹²¹

(3) The end of the Cold War era marked a decisive shift in the balance of world powers. For some analysts, it was clear that the United States of America had entered a “unipolar moment”, with its power unmatched by any other country in the next foreseeable time.¹²² Andrew Moravcsik has always stood against this realpolitik view. For him, the success of the European Union rather suggested a different power configuration: “the world is bipolar, and the other pole is Europe.”¹²³ Even when there have been considerable doubts about Europe’s resilience – due to demographic, economic and military factors – Moravcsik has kept to a positive tone with regard the continent’s role in the geopolitical balance. The 2010 book chapter titled “Europe: Rising Superpower in a Bipolar World” sums up most of the views he has previously expressed in his newspaper columns. Moravcsik presents five arguments, resting on a multidimensional view of power, in favour of Europe’s role in the world.

The first argument is that contemporary warnings for Europe’s decline are only based on a traditional realist worldview, which overestimates demographic, economic and military power. Instead, Moravcsik asserts that most global influence today rests on various forms of civilian power, and in this area the EU has remained dominant (even to the United States). “Europe and the EU have *gained* influence over the past two decades and are likely to continue to do so.”¹²⁴ The second argument assures that Europe is still the world’s second military power, accounting for 21 percent of the world’s military spending. They have used their regional warfare capability for various conflicts and UN peacekeeping operations. Third, Europe is the most important civilian superpower, with its “power of attraction” through enlargement, neighbourhood policy, trade relations and its support for multilateral ties and international law.¹²⁵

The fourth argument relies on the observation that Europe’s influence has increased over the past two decades. Despite slower demographic and economic growth, Europe still has a high per capita income, which generates economic and political, as well as cultural

121 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In Defence of the ‘Democratic Deficit’, p. 622.

122 Charles Krauthammer, ‘The Unipolar Moment’, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1, 1990-1991, p. 23.

123 ‘The Golden Moment: The EU at 50’, *Newsweek*, 26 March 2007. Available at: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2007/03/25/the-golden-moment.html> (consulted on: 10.01.2013).

124 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Europe: Rising Superpower in a Bipolar World’, in: Alan Alexandroff and Andrew Cooper, *Rising States, Rising Institutions: Challenges for Global Governance*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC, 2010, p. 156.

125 *Ibid.*, pp. 157-160.

influence. The continent is also well placed to interact with other governments on the basis of reciprocity – a method it has always supported. Moreover, European societal norms had a positive effect on long-term reform of countries in its region. Finally, there is also a striking transatlantic consensus and Moravcsik sees the US and Europe “more closely aligned than during the cold war.”¹²⁶ The fifth and final argument rejects the notion that the EU needs more centralisation in order to become a more effective superpower. Instead, Moravcsik moves the idea forward that the intergovernmental approach allows working as a decentralised network, which will benefit Europe’s flexibility in a post-cold war world and its particular security challenges. In conclusion, the world will remain bipolar in the foreseeable future and even the rising powers will not challenge this geopolitical balance immediately – but rather create a deepening interdependence and more potential for common problem solving.¹²⁷

Andrew Moravcsik has established in recent times the reputation of going against the grain in most of the debates involving the European Union. His liberal intergovernmentalist framework often makes him uncompromising in his argumentation, as he has respectively defended the EU’s democratic deficit, institutional architecture and role in the world. His challenging of ruling beliefs has not just received criticisms but also brought fresh insights in the current state of the European Union. Moravcsik’s commentaries on the European economic crisis only confirm this impression, which will be presented in the final part of the chapter.

Europe in crisis: a natural plateau has been reached?

When the financial and economic crisis crossed the Atlantic and severely affected Europe, it laid bare the weaknesses of the architecture of the European Economic and Monetary Union. The recession had saddled European governments up with an unsustainable amount of debt, which in turn led to wide-spread panic of a potential sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone. As a specialist in European affairs, Andrew Moravcsik was one of the best placed academics in the U.S. to assess the severity of the events unfolding on the European continent. For *Newsweek*, he wrote a regular update on the seemingly intensifying crisis and potential collapse of the euro-zone. Despite the worrying commentaries published around the time, Moravcsik was an author that insisted that

126 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Europe: Rising Superpower in a Bipolar World’, p. 168.

127 *Ibid.*, pp. 170-172.

any sort of “pessimism was premature” and the successive phases of crisis and restart were an inherent part of the history of European integration.¹²⁸

In the article “In defence of Europe” he mainly preaches for pragmatism, as opposed to idealism or pessimism: the crisis will neither bring collapse nor lead to an increasing centralisation of power in the EU. Moreover, the European countries shall find “realistic ways of working together”, through bail-outs, debt restructuring and national reforms, and an approach of cooperation that always paid off in the past. Why is that? Moravcsik considers Europe to be the world’s most economically interdependent continent. Thus, it is not high ideals that drive them together but rather necessity – influenced by domestic economic interests.¹²⁹

Even at the time when the euro-zone seemed on the brink of collapse, Moravcsik’s analysis in *Foreign Affairs* defended a pragmatic view of the crisis. The first part of “Europe after the Crisis” provides an insight in the underlying cause of the European crisis, namely disequilibrium within the currency zone – rather than public profligacy. Moravcsik asserts that, while the euro-zone was created with the aim of establishing an optimal currency area, it never achieved that due to economic divergence in the past decade. Countries as Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain had accumulated large current account deficits, while Germany was pushing for an increase in external competitiveness. Wage suppression and reduced public spending had stimulated trade imbalances and generated a surplus of capital – used by banks and investors to lend it to southern Europe.¹³⁰

For the optimal currency area to work, and to resolve the crisis, more economic convergence is required. Moreover, it is in the interest of all countries to reach a level of stability and avoid a collapse. In order to do this, Moravcsik does not believe that the answer can only come from harsh reforms and reduced public spending. The burden of austerity must be rebalanced, which requires “a shift in the domestic policies of Germany and other surplus countries.”¹³¹ However, all of this completely depends on the fact whether or not these countries are ready to make tough political decisions. On that point, Moravcsik reaches the core of the problem: while economic alignment may be

128 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In defense of Europe: Now more than ever, it’s not smart to be on the EU’s demise’, *Newsweek*, 29 May 2010. Available at: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2010/05/30/in-defense-of-europe.html> (consulted on: 10.01.2013).

129 *Ibid.*

130 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Europe After the Crisis: How to Sustain a Common Currency’, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, No. 3, 2012, pp. 54-59.

131 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Europe After the Crisis’, p. 65.

in the best interest of all European countries, since it would bring mutually beneficial cooperation, there is an increasing unwillingness to go further than required. Have the EU's leaders "pushed integration as far as it will go"?¹³²

Despite some intensification of European policy in certain areas, there are few new areas that have opened up to centralised European policy-making and there is no sign of a movement towards the ever-closer Union. In fact, the most important crisis-measures (such as the European Stability Mechanism and the Fiscal Compact) are the result of an intergovernmental agreement; they will be established outside of the EU's institutional architecture. Enough reason for Moravcsik to conclude that, for now and the foreseeable future, the process of European integration has reached a "natural plateau", based on a "pragmatic division between national policy and supranational policy."¹³³

With a liberal intergovernmentalist interpretation of the European crisis, Andrew Moravcsik has once again decisively oriented the debate in the direction of the state governments: what is their part in the current European crisis and how has their behaviour influenced the coordinated attempts of finding a resolution? For Moravcsik, state interests offer a solid and comprehensive explanation of the historical path of European integration, as well and the current state of affairs.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹³³ Andrew Moravcsik, 'Europe After the Crisis', p. 68.

Dialogue

A dialogue, in its literary form, should be understood as an informal exchange of contrasting philosophical or intellectual attitudes. Although it may somewhat resemble the tradition of the philosophical dialogue perfected in Ancient Greece¹³⁴ – one may consider this a tribute to that heritage – the objective here is to expand further on the views expressed by the two authors. In a similar way to the two preceding chapters, the key ideas of Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik shall be analysed. However, they will also be provided from a personal critical commentary and a comparative perspective, an attempt to put them in a broader societal context. The goal of this intellectual exercise is not to create an invented conversation, but rather to find some sense of common understanding of the deeper political and philosophical challenges posed to the project of a united Europe.

There are six overarching themes that will be discussed here, based on most of the overlapping ideas found in the bibliographies of Habermas and Moravcsik. Before addressing each of them in more detail, they shall be briefly introduced here:

European integration: past trajectories and future prospects

Perhaps the most important question of all is what exactly drives the process in regional integration in Europe. Are we today still feeling the seismic effects of the establishment of a single market or are other factors at play? Both authors not only shed a light on the past but also depict a future outlook of Europe.

The nation-state: a source of strength or weakness

Europe's history has largely been defined and described along the lines of its shattered nation-states and separate identities. A patchwork of countries is still at the core of the EU's architecture. How important is the nation-state still for Europe and will it sooner or later lose its significance?

¹³⁴ 'Dialogue', in: Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, London, 2013. Available at: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/161272/dialogue> (consulted on: 30.03.2013).

Democracy in the European Union: a failure?

Often seen as the cornerstone of a modern society, democracy is of great matter for the European Union. In recent years, the decision-making process of the EU has come under pressure due to reasons of alleged opacity and lack of democratic in- and output. Are these criticisms without any foundation or can some problems be detected? Both Moravcsik and Habermas have a take on the subject of democracy in the EU.

Constitutional identity and patriotism in Europe

After a decade that saw both grand optimism and considerable disappointment, connected to the debate on a constitution of Europe, the questions about a constitutional identity and a sense of civic patriotism are still warranted. Is there a reason to believe in a common purpose for Europe's citizens or are claims of a shared identity nothing more than an exaggeration?

Europe and the crisis

The recent financial and economic crisis has left many Europeans with a couple of complex questions: what has exactly gone wrong and how can this precarious situation be resolved? Moravcsik as well as Habermas have been actively engaged with these issues in the aftermath of the crisis.

New appraisals of European integration theory

With Andrew Moravcsik as the main exponent of liberal intergovernmentalism and Jürgen Habermas as an unfettered intellectual, two authors are presented here that have something to offer to the current state of the debate on European integration theory. What can be learnt from their recent analyses of the EU's affairs?

European integration: past trajectories and future prospects

In their interest for European affairs, Andrew Moravcsik and Jürgen Habermas have proclaimed a distinctive view on the matter of the causes of the evolution of European integration. In a nutshell, Moravcsik relies on a framework of states' rational choices that reflect underlying economic and geopolitical interests. Although a multi-causal framework, in practise the driving force the EU reform agenda has always been commercial interests: "the immediate substantive benefits of EU policies" in terms of trade liberalisation, competitive market position and efficiency.¹³⁵ Moravcsik has applied

135 Andrew Moravcsik, 'The Constitutional Settlement', p. 160.

this general framework to all past decision-making moments, a research project that can be characterised as a historical and empirical analysis of the integration history.

In contrast, Habermas views are less elaborated in terms of past integration. While there is some notion of the original aims of integration, such as the need to end warfare, ensure protection against extremism and minority discrimination, and economic reconstruction and welfare, Habermas' work deals with a more acute process of disruptive transformation, that acts a justification of a deepening of the European project.¹³⁶ What can be described as a transnational form of capitalism is by Habermas defined as the "perceived threats from globalization".¹³⁷ In itself a sort of uni-causal driver of European integration, globalization is treated as a broader phenomenon in comparison to the general economic expectations, as they are considered in the work of Moravcsik. Although globalization has brought economic advantages to Europe, seized through the establishment of a highly entangled market, it has put classical achievements such as the welfare state and democracy under pressure. The process has introduced the logic of the market in Europe, but also requires a harmonisation with a suitable political framework. Here, Habermas' argumentation reflects an encapsulation in the neo-Marxist logic, which focuses on the untenable relationship between capitalism and democracy.¹³⁸

A brief remark should be added on globalization. The use of the concept as a uni-causal explanation for various issues, such as the pressure on the welfare state and the spur towards European integration, has been criticised by a number of scholars. Notably John McCormick has questioned Habermas' "contradictory accounts of globalization": one the one hand, a structural rupture or transformation, on the other hand, a sense of continuity within the history of capitalism.¹³⁹ For McCormick, it is contradictory to give two different meanings to the same concept. To be precise, it appears that McCormick has some issue with Habermas' representation of globalization as a resurgent phenomenon that cannot be compared with previous eras of increased (economic) interconnectedness. What makes this era so unique and why is it so hostile towards the national constellation – unlike previous strives for globalisation? While Habermas emphasises some elements, such as the global economy and locational competition, there is an element of vagueness

¹³⁶ Jürgen Habermas, 'Why Europe Needs a Constitution', 2001, p. 7.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹³⁸ This is well demonstrated in the work of Wolfgang Streeck: 'The Crises of Democratic Capitalism', in: *New Left Review*, No. 71, 2011, pp. 5-29.

¹³⁹ John P. McCormick, 'Habermas, Supranational Democracy and the European Constitution', in: *European Constitutional Law Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2006, pp. 398-399.

that lingers in his argumentation, unable to explain why current intergovernmental efforts of cooperation and multi-level governance are all insufficient. Globalization may therefore be seen as a somewhat broad and imprecise framework to comprehend some of the mentioned structural changes that have taken place over the last decades. Here again, it seems that the underlying tension between capitalism and democracy is rather the main concern and Habermas' underlying argument to reason in favour of EU integration.

Although at first sight it may seem there is no strong case for comparison, both authors express strong awareness of the economic interdependence between states in Europe. Habermas discusses "the growing need for coordination, due to increasing interdependence, [that] is met by inter-state agreements" and at the same time Moravcsik displays a similar idea, shown in his concise overview of Europe's history of integration: "The interests of European governments consistently converged across a wide range of issues in response to a 50-year regional boom in intra-industry trade and investment, which made Europe by far the most interdependent region in the world."¹⁴⁰ Alignment between the European states is profoundly dependent on the conditions of the global economy, a past pattern likely to reproduce itself in the future.

In terms of future pathways of integration, Moravcsik sees no radical altering. As demonstrated in the second chapter, his recent writings depict the European Union in a state of equilibrium, with a stable balance between supranational and intergovernmental policy-making. Moreover, the crisis has exemplified that the evolution of European integration has reached a "natural plateau" and the idea of an ever-closer Union is rather a fallacy than realistic prospect.¹⁴¹ Moravcsik is certainly thought-provoking when he asserts that is not the right analytical question to ask what the end-state of the EU is, but rather how a decision of European states to coordinate their policies has developed into the most complex international political structure to date.¹⁴²

This sort of pragmatism cannot be retraced in the work of Habermas, which often reads more like a set of recommendations than a detailed scientific analysis. His main arguments are formulated in somewhat a disguised fashion, as they are not just isolated observations but rooted in his overall intellectual thinking – which is not known by most of the target audience. For instance, Habermas' discourse on the European Union is undoubtedly

140 Jürgen Habermas, 'The European Nation-State', p. 49.; Andrew Moravcsik, 'The Constitutional Settlement', p. 160.

141 Moravcsik, 'Europe After the Crisis', p. 68.

142 Moravcsik, 'The Constitutional Settlement', p. 47.

connected to the essays of the 1990s on the post-national constellation. Most of his advocacy of European integration has to be interpreted in that light. Habermas identifies Europe as the first experiment of creating a transnational democracy, which could serve as an example for the future establishment of a cosmopolitan community, often referred to as a world political system. In other words, transnational capitalism can only be complemented with a framework of public deliberation, which would bring increased democratic legitimacy through citizen participation and voting. For Habermas, the only viable future for Europe, or the world, is a condition of perpetual peace, originally envisioned by the main exponent of Enlightenment thinking Emmanuel Kant, and for Habermas achieved through a democratically legitimate global political community.¹⁴³

With vastly different end-states for the European Union, the question becomes all the more intriguing which author holds the most realistic alternative. From an academic viewpoint, Moravcsik's work is clearly supported by extensive evidence – referring to the main work *The Choice for Europe*. However, contemporary commentators have also noted that Moravcsik has a tendency to emphasise observations that fit into his intergovernmental framework. For instance, Helen Wallace expressed some concern over Moravcsik's strong reliance on “memoirs and witness” of national politicians – not drawing similar information from supranational actors – a remark eventually acknowledged by Moravcsik.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, an excellent empirical analysis of a historical process does not always provide certainty about future expectations. Given the fact that it is fairly impossible to extrapolate any prediction from a historical and rather a-linear evolution, there is no way to foresee the future of European integration and perhaps Moravcsik's statement of a natural plateau may have been too bold a claim to make.

Then again, Habermas' work offers only a normative vision of what the European Union one day could represent. For McCormick, it is “something less than an empirically- and historically-informed normative framework for a postnational future”.¹⁴⁵ Habermas establishes the preconditions of a future supranational political community, where democracy and capitalism can be reconciled, which is today no more than an ideal type. Thus, should his work only be interpreted in that light or does this also constitute the

143 Jürgen Habermas, ‘Kant's Idea of Perpetual Peace’, in: Ciaran Cronin and Pablo DeGreiff (eds.), *Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2000.

144 Andrew Moravcsik and Frank Schimmelfennig, ‘Liberal Intergovernmentalism’, in: Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez (eds.), *European Integration Theory* (2nd edition), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009, p. 73.; Helen Wallace, James A. Caporaso, Fritz W. Schampf and Andrew Moravcsik, ‘Review section symposium: The choice for Europe: Social purpose and state power from Messina to Maastricht’, in: *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1999, p. 158.

145 John P. McCormick, ‘Habermas, Supranational Democracy’, p. 422.

need to consider the building blocks that would make such a political system possible: transnational democracy, European-wide public sphere, civil solidarity and a collective identity? These are issues that will be addressed in the next themes. For now, the only conclusion that can be drawn from Habermas' writings is that a sense of realism seems to be absent, especially when it comes to the creation of a cosmopolitan community.¹⁴⁶

The nation-state: a source of strength or weakness

Few concepts are as divisive and inconclusive as the nation-state, though it has dominated theoretical thinking from the late 18th century until the present day. There is absolutely no consensus on a general definition. For each author, the nation-state encloses something different. Where does it come from? For Benedict Anderson, "disagreement over its origins is matched by uncertainty about its future."¹⁴⁷ Is the nation-state an everlasting phenomenon or set to disappear in the nearby future? Often, the debate on European integration has led to the question whether the European nation-states are slowly evaporating in a new type of political constellation. Answering this is a daunting task. Nevertheless, Moravcsik and Habermas offer some orientation in the expanding discussion on Europe's nation-state.

Given the importance of the European nation-states in liberal intergovernmental theory, acting as critical actors in the international environment, it is surprising that Andrew Moravcsik rarely mentions the word nation-state in his research. While his work deals a lot with state power, rational choice and national preferences, reflecting the position of national politicians and domestic society, he does not explicitly refer to the debate of the nation-state. However, his intergovernmental vision has implications for the nation-state, meaning that state sovereignty is kept intact and strengthened through EU membership. For Moravcsik, states are still at the core and in charge for what takes place at the European level. In other words, there is no indication that a post-national constellation is shaping itself, thus threatening the existence of the nation-state. In truth, Moravcsik asserts that by strengthening cooperation, the nation-state is reinvigorating itself.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ As mentioned in the first chapter, Habermas criticised the Frankfurter Schule for its idealistic conceptions of society. However, Habermas appears to make the same error when it comes to his idea of a world society.

¹⁴⁷ Benedict Anderson, 'Introduction', in: BALAKRISHNAN, Gopal (ed.), *Mapping the Nation*, Verso, London, 1996, p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ Gary Marks, Liesbeth Hooghe and Kermit Blank, 'European Integration from the 1980s: Static-Centric v. Multi-level Governance', in: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1996, p.

If we compare this to Habermas, it is interesting to note there is an implicit opposition between the two in how the nation-state's present role is perceived. The following citation discusses the rise and fall of the nation-state:

“The phenomena of the territorial state, the nation, and a popular economy constituted within the national borders formed a historical constellation in which the democratic process assumed a more or less convincing institutional form. And the idea of a democratic society as a whole has, until now, *been realized only in the context of the nation-states*. Today, developments summarized under the term “globalization” *have put this entire constellation into question*.”¹⁴⁹

To clarify here: perhaps Moravcsik would go along with the idea that globalization has shrunk the scope for national policy action, which would explain why domestic pressures have led to increased economic cooperation and integration. On that matter, the two authors still tend to agree in their analysis. However, the real opposition runs a bit deeper. In contrast to Moravcsik, Habermas does not conclude that the challenges are alleviated just by cooperating together, with a type of inter-state bargaining based on national preferences. In fact, intergovernmental cooperation is an insufficient answer to what he defines as globalization, as it does not stop the erosion of the greatest accomplishment of the last two centuries: a community based on democratic legitimation and social integration.¹⁵⁰ Only when “the modern republic, participatory democracy, and constitutional politics” are extended to the European level – implying a closer political union but not necessarily a European nation-state – there is a change of success.¹⁵¹ In fact, Habermas gives a predictive view of European integration: the traditional nation-state, even engaging in international cooperation, is set to become a historical phenomenon, due to its defencelessness against the present day challenges – although it remains somewhat unclear what makes these present challenges substantively different from the previous threats.

If the abstract discussion of the nation-state is formulated in a precise question, the dissenting opinions appear more explicit. What is the future shape of Europe? In his rejection of most neo-functional claims, Moravcsik has asserted himself as an author arguing in favour of the existing international configuration. A European federal state, or “superstate”, is highly unlikely as the member states will remain at the core of Europe's

342.; Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, p. 472.

149 Own emphasis. Jürgen Habermas, *The Post-National Constellation*, p. 60.

150 Jürgen Habermas, ‘The European Nation-State’, p.284.

151 Benedict Anderson, ‘Introduction’, p. 14-15.

integration project.¹⁵² Habermas, contrary to what is often believed, is not to be taken as a federalist. He often gives a blurry picture of his views, referring in different contexts to the post-national constellation, the “European nation-state”, a transnational community or a “world state”.¹⁵³ However, in 2012 Habermas wrote that the “constitutional model of a federal state is the wrong one for such a transnational democracy”, confirming that he is more worried about the democratic configuration of the EU, as a counterbalance to capitalism, than Europe’s transformation into a federal state.¹⁵⁴ It demonstrates well that Habermas means something different with integration and achieving an ever-closer Union, from what most of the contemporary writers say: there is a hope for the creation of shared political culture, based on a sense of civic solidarity and supported by a legitimate democracy, which is not just driven by the markets. Above all, he wants to avoid a relapse to nationalist thinking, which would only bring protectionism and exclusion. Nevertheless, it is remarkable to observe that he at once rejects the model of a federal state to realise his vision of a transnational democracy – which is probably connected to his strict interpretation of the EU’s executive federalism as a sort of intergovernmental, post-democratic rule.¹⁵⁵

An issue such as the nation-state certainly shows there is quite a disparity between Habermas and Moravcsik. At the same time, it leaves room for viable questions. For instance, what is exactly the balance between the nation-state and the post-national constellation? Moravcsik work often reads as an optimistic take on the future of the nation-state, while Habermas has expressed pessimism and frequent worries over the fate of the nation-state, including its democratic and welfare credentials. Perhaps the truth is somewhere in the middle: while the global economy is laying bare the limits of what nation-states can do in terms of policy, as to soften the impact of negative externalities, the existence of the EU not only indicates a supranational answer but also an intergovernmental attempt to cope with a changing world. After all, the nation-state is a tenacious phenomenon, and far from worn-out.

152 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In Defence of the Democratic Deficit’, p. 606.

153 Jürgen Habermas, ‘The European Nation-State’, p. 46.; Jürgen Habermas, *The Post-National Constellation*, p. 109.

154 Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, p. ix.

155 Jürgen Habermas, ‘The European Nation-State’, p. 56.

Democracy in the European Union: a failure?

The two authors have regularly touched upon democracy, one of the most prevalent issues at hand and often employed by Euro-critics to condemn present decision-making process of the EU. Andrew Moravcsik never agreed with these condemnations and has defended the democratic credentials of the Union. As stated before, he is unconcerned by a democratic deficit that is in line with the common practises applied by individual member states. “Most critics compare the EU to an ideal plebiscitary or parliamentary democracy, standing alone, rather than to the actual functioning of national democracies adjusted for its multi-level context.”¹⁵⁶ Moreover, the sharing of power and tasks guarantees sufficient checks and balances: the representation of national officials as well as direct control by the European Parliament can prevent European officials from carrying out reforms viewed unfavourably by the national electorates. Also, the EU is largely dealing with technical and non-salient issues, which are not considered to be important by the majority of the citizens.¹⁵⁷

Jürgen Habermas has become one of the fiercest opponents of the current decision-making process, and therefore seen by Moravcsik as one of the “[r]adical critics of the democratic deficit” for his proposals of “populist democracy”.¹⁵⁸ To summarise the work of Habermas again, it includes a strong rejection of the obscure decision-making process (referring to the Council and the informal meetings and various committees), and a criticism of what is labelled as executive federalism (intergovernmental negotiations led by the executive power of all member states). Habermas bemoans the fact that most of the elements of transnational democracy in the Lisbon Treaty have been diluted, due to the crisis, in favour for a post-democratic, bureaucratic rule. It is “[a] form of intergovernmental rule by the European Council, moreover, one which is at odds with the spirit of the Treaty. Such a regime (...) would enable them to transfer the imperatives of the markets to the national budgets.”¹⁵⁹ For Moravcsik, as stated in a short book review of *The Crisis of the European Union*, Habermas proposes “expanding, rather than shrinking, genuine democratic control” in order that the EU would permit “its member states to better govern their societies in the face of globalization”. And although Moravcsik seems to acknowledge that reality, he remains unconvinced by the arguments denouncing the decision-making process in the EU.

¹⁵⁶ Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In Defence of the Democratic Deficit’, p. 621.

¹⁵⁷ Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The Myth of Europe’s “Democratic Deficit”’, in: *Intereconomics*, Vol. 43, No. 6, 2008, p. 340.

¹⁵⁸ Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The Myth of Europe’s “Democratic Deficit”’

¹⁵⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, p. 52.

Moravcsik makes a strong argument when saying that the Union is not performing worse than most of its member states or other advanced industrial societies. This implies that the EU should be held to the same standard as other democratic societies in the world. However, the argument that the EU is generally dealing with non-salient and technical issues has become rather precarious. Ever since the crisis unfolded, national and European officials have closely cooperated together to find a common answer to the vast consequences of the economic downturn. For instance, the sovereign debts difficulties have resulted in broad measures (bail-out packages, deficit reduction plans and stability mechanisms among others) with a huge impact on the national government budgets – which in turn imposes additional pressure on the citizens. In addition, the majority of these decisions have been taken without any strong involvement of the European Parliament, the only directly elected institution. Also, the member-states affected by some of these measures, such as the bail-out packages, have little leverage over their content and implementation – often leading to great public anger.¹⁶⁰

In truth, it is a myth that measures taken at the European level by officials not directly elected by the European people are nothing more than low-salient issues. Recent decisions on banking regulation and economic governance have demonstrated that these issues hold large ramifications for national economies and societies.¹⁶¹ Additionally, while Habermas may have been too radical in his conclusions, he rightly voices doubts over some of the institutional peculiarities. For example: why does the European Parliament not have the same amount of competences as the Council – which would effectively make it a bicameral system? Is it acceptable that the role of the European Council is not clearly defined, even though it has acquired a lot of clout through political decisions and laying down policy guidelines?¹⁶² Why are the decisions of the European Central Bank kept secret, considering the important powers the institution recently has acquired? Habermas' critiques hold value and have far-reaching implications for the EU's institutional architecture, something that should not be immediately discarded because

160 João Carlos Espada connects the spread of political extremisms and the wholesale rejection of the European project with a perceived feeling of citizens being closed out from these important decisions: "The euro was beyond dispute, demanded balanced budgets, and decisively removed crucial national questions (...) from the hands of national parliaments and mainstream parties." From: João Carlos Espada 'The Sources of Extremism', in: *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 2012, pp. 15-22.

161 *EU economic governance*, 16 April 2013. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/index_en.htm (consulted on: 16.04.2013).

162 The former adviser to EC President Herman Van Rompuy, baron Frans van Daele, has described the European Council as "the most powerful and political body in the EU" today. Frans van Dale, *The European Council/Le Conseil européen*, Compact seminar, College of Europe (Natolin), 18-19 April 2013.

of pragmatic reasoning. Moravcsik's arguments do not always hold true in practise, as it has been observed that delegated democracy does not necessarily generate sufficient supervision, and policy outputs that reflect public preferences.¹⁶³ "The impossible standard of an idealized conception of Westminsterian or ancient-style democracy" should not be envisioned as the end-goal, but commentators should remain vigilant in exposing the pitfalls of the EU's decision-making process and insist on perpetual improvements.¹⁶⁴

To conclude this theme, the question of deliberative democracy should furthermore be considered here. In the past, Habermas has expressed himself often in favour of a deliberative model of citizen participation, with Switzerland as a notable example¹⁶⁵, which in turn could strengthen its democratic credentials of the European Union. The concept of deliberative democracy fits well in his overarching view of the public sphere, communicative action and the creation of a shared political culture. However, once more the question can be raised whether this has immediate relevance to Europe, where identification with the national territory, culture and identity is relatively enduring. To bring people together in a European sphere of political participation and joint deliberation, a sense of collective identity needs to be present – may it be civic, ethnic or something else. Is that the case in present-day Europe? Some experiments of deliberative democracy have been undertaken (e.g. the G1000-initiative in Belgium), though only the national level and with mixed results.¹⁶⁶ Perhaps the European Citizen's Initiative can be considered as a first European experiment in deliberative democracy, albeit a rudimentary and flawed system of citizen participation. Nevertheless, all of this is far away from the deliberative model that Habermas originally envisioned, in 1981, and given the current state of affairs it seems that Moravcsik's view holds truth: "Reform to increase direct political participation (...) would almost likely undermine public legitimacy, popularity and trust without generating greater public accountability."¹⁶⁷ At

163 Christopher Lord, *Politics and Policies of the European Union*, Course lectures, College of Europe (Natolin), October 2012.

164 Andrew Moravcsik, 'The Myth of Europe's "Democratic Deficit"', p. 332.

165 Roland Benedikter and Lukas Kaelin, 'The Swiss Miracle? Beyond Chocolate, Cheese, and Banking', in: *Foreign Affairs*, 9 April 2013. Available at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139142/roland-benedikter-and-lukas-kaelin/the-swiss-miracle> (consulted on: 10.04.2013).

166 Barbara Spinelli, 'European Union: Politics turns back to the Athens agora', *Presseurop.eu*, 25 March 2013. Available at: <http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/3577861-politics-turns-back-athens-agora> (consulted on: 26.03.2013).; In Belgium the G1000-initiative has presented its main conclusions although little action has since then been undertaken by politicians to implement the set of recommendations from public participants.

167 Andrew Moravcsik, 'The Myth of Europe's "Democratic Deficit"', p. 340.

a time when harsh economic measures are imposed on member states, when citizens are rallying against the call for increased austerity, more deliberation would almost certainly bring a rejection of the European Union.¹⁶⁸ A few small initiatives will not resolve the deep running issues of identification and participation.

Constitutional identity and patriotism in Europe

Jürgen Habermas has coined the concept of constitutional patriotism to define a form of abstract and legal solidarity, reproduced through political participation of the citizens. It rejects the notion that a democratic society needs to be rooted in a nation – or based on a majority culture – to create a sense of common purpose. Constitutional patriotism is Habermas' core concept, because it connects civic solidarity and political participation, with his theories of the public sphere and communicative action. Even today, what is the importance of a European constitution? As said before, a constitution is Habermas' preferred method to protect the balance between an abstract legal order and the various cultures and traditions within a community. In addition, people have rights and a constitution could make Europeans citizens actors in politics again – instead of being reduced to spectators while states and governments demand all the attention. For Europe, where the idea of civil solidarity has not yet materialised in practise, a European constitution (preceded by a European-wide debate) would act as a catalyst to bring citizens back in the limelight, create a sense of solidarity – that would develop into a shared political culture.¹⁶⁹

To reflect briefly on Habermas' notion of a shared political culture, incorporating a public sphere where freedom of speech and communication are highly valued, it is not hard to see the resemblance with the conception of an open society, imagined by the Austrian-British scholar Karl Popper.¹⁷⁰ While the two authors have often been considered as opponents, especially in the issue of scientific methodology, they share a common understanding of how a democratic society should be organised. Gregory Stokes, a political scientist that has examined their work, sees a convergence in Popper's idea of an open society and Habermas' concept of an ideal speech situation. "Both

168 Joseph Stiglitz, 'Citizens in Europe are rejecting austerity policies as deeply misguided', *The Guardian*, 6 March 2013. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/economics-blog/2013/mar/06/citizens-europe-reject-austerity-misguided> (consulted on: 06.04.2013).

169 Georg Diez, 'Habermas, the Last European'; Éva Biró-Kaszás, 'Habermas on European Constitution and European Identity', in: *Journal of Social Research and Policy*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2010, p. 82.

170 Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (7th edition), Routledge, London, 2002.

philosophers advocate a public sphere characterised by free dialogue and criticism set within a democratic context.”¹⁷¹ Popper’s idea of an open society is rooted in a strong belief of the rule of law, which includes the protection of human rights, political liberties and essential liberties. This is a view similar to Habermas’ abstract legal order, which strongly relates to the American Constitution. In turn, once more it exhibits the influence of Anglo-Saxon liberal and pragmatic thinkers on Habermas.

Although Andrew Moravcsik’s beliefs are rooted in a similar tradition of liberal and pragmatic thinking, and he would probably concur with Popper’s and Habermas’ ideas of a free and democratic society, he takes a remarkably different approach to the constitutional settlement in Europe. What may have been the case for the young and burgeoning American republic is not the same for today’s European Union. “[E]ven if a common European ‘identity’ and the full panoply of democratic procedures existed, it would be very difficult to induce meaningful citizen participation.”¹⁷² Moravcsik sees no indication of an expanding European identity and he rejects the idea of a constitutional debate acting as catalyst, on grounds of popular indifference and lack of trust. In general, Moravcsik remains quiet on the issue whether or not a common identity could realistically be established in the future. In a short book review, he renounces Habermas’ proposals to “enhance participation and deliberation”, arguing that it is based on “wishful thinking” rather than actual observations – without giving further comment.¹⁷³ For Moravcsik, a European constitution can only offer some sort of consolidation of the existing political structure, but would not generate a stronger sense of European belonging.

To avoid popular indifference, Habermas has proposed to include more high-salient issues in the constitutional debate. For instance, European citizens should also debate whether or not social welfare policy can be developed on a transnational level. Moravcsik disagrees with this type of proposal, since it is completely unrelated to the actual policy discussions taking place at the European level. He believes it is impossible to introduce issues as social policy and welfare redistribution, since “they lack a functional justification.”¹⁷⁴ For Moravcsik, issues that encounter strong opposition on the domestic level will not be easier to resolve on the European level. Opening a debate on social

171 Geoffrey Stokes, ‘Popper and Habermas: A Reappraisal’, *Philosophy: Problems, Aims and Responsibilities: Conference to mark the 10th anniversary of the death of Karl Popper*, Warwick, 2004, p. 1.

172 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘In Defence of the Democratic Deficit’, p. 616.

173 Andrew Moravcsik, book review: Jürgen Habermas, ‘The Crisis of the European Union: A Response’, in: *Foreign Affairs*, 18 February 2013. Available at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/138927/jurgen-habermas/the-crisis-of-the-european-union-a-response> (consulted on: 20.03.2013).

174 Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The European Constitutional Settlement’, p. 46.

welfare, that could lead to a mechanism of financial redistribution, would only meet hostility in most of the countries. Here again, there is a clash of visions. While Habermas' ideas seem to originate from a normative vision, an expression of an ideal, Moravcsik is mainly emphasising the empirical side of the story, and subsequently proposing pragmatic answers to Europe's challenges.

To sum up, one reflection should be added on the subject of European belonging. Just as the issue of democracy, the constitutional debate raises the identity question, and more specifically whether a constitution can insert the feeling of a common purpose in citizen's minds. As all identities are constructions of historical particularities, individual and collective experiences, and even the most adamant identifications have some fabricated roots¹⁷⁵, is it possible to envision that a European identity can be artificially created, for instance using a constitutional debate? As Habermas claims, does a constitutional debate have the capacity to establish and shape a common identity? Some authors suggest, by referring to recent historical cases, a sense of belonging can be imagined in a context other than the nation-state. Robert Kearney proposes the settlement of the British-Irish conflict in 1998 as an adequate example, where citizens of Northern Ireland started identifying to new constellations, after a long period of violence and nationalist struggle. "The irrepressible need for identity and allegiance gradually channelled away from the fetish of the nation-state, where history has shown its tenure to be insecure and belligerent, to more appropriate levels of regional and federal expression."¹⁷⁶ It may be a unique historical example that is difficult to reproduce; however, it also holds a lesson for the future of Europe.

Europe and the crisis

One subject that cannot be circumvented in the discussion of recent developments in the EU is the impact of the financial and economic crisis on a share of the member states. Over the last years European citizens have witnessed a stringent debate about the consequences of a situation where an unstable single currency and the rising deficits could pass into a possible break-up of the euro-zone, and even the EU. Some panic-stricken responses notwithstanding, most of the discussion has centred on sensible

175 On this regard, Habermas shares in his latest book that "[n]ations, too, just like all comparable referents, are not natural facts, even when they are generally not merely fictions either." From: Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, p. 47.

176 Richard Kearney, 'A Postnational Council of Isle? The British-Irish Conflict Reconsidered', in: Ralf Rogowski and Charles Turner (eds.), *The shape of the new Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, p. 179.

responses to the question how to manage the issues endangering the European project. As demonstrated before, Andrew Moravcsik and Jürgen Habermas have been keen in their efforts to steer the broad and often complex debate. The two authors offer their own analysis of the events, at the same time displaying an interest in specific issues.

Europe after the Crisis, Moravcsik's most detailed account of the events, strongly emphasises the flawed architecture of the common currency. The narrative revolves around the rising economic imbalances between surplus and deficit countries, which force the latter group to impose harsh measures in order to regain strength and competitiveness. Moravcsik rejects the idea that austerity will reach that goal, at least not without severe social punishments. "Policy proposals for budgetary austerity, the micromanagement of national budgets, fiscal federalism, bailouts, or large funds to stave of speculators are insufficient to solve this problem alone."¹⁷⁷ Moravcsik's account is generally one that reflects the strong economic interdependence of European countries, but incorporates an optimist take on the events: he believes the euro and the EU will prevail, although not necessarily in the shape most Europhiles have envisioned. Nevertheless, there are worries about the acute social aspects of the crisis, since the "political and social costs of adjusting to a common currency, meanwhile, have fallen disproportionately on the poor and the powerless" while "wealthy citizens, bankers, and the citizens of surplus countries" remain relatively immune to the budget-cuts.¹⁷⁸

Jürgen Habermas strikes a surprisingly identical tone, with regard to the austerity measures and the social consequences of the budget cuts all across Europe. A key element of his passionate pleas involves a strong criticism of the measures inflicted on member states. "It remains unclear how austerity policies imposed from above (...) can be reconciled with maintaining a tolerable level of social security in the long run."¹⁷⁹ Only when it comes to the future outlook, it seems that Habermas is somewhat more pessimistic, in comparison to Moravcsik, due to his belief that the crisis may threaten the historical project of European integration. Habermas holds an important issue in abeyance, when he implies that the current stale-mate paves the way for increasing discontent with the political class, and even a complete "disenchantment with politics" in the future.¹⁸⁰ This is a step that Moravcsik has not taken in his analysis of the crisis. Next, the work of Habermas deals only indirectly with the economic side of the events, i.e. the troubles of the common European currency.

¹⁷⁷ Andrew Moravcsik, 'Europe After the Crisis', p. 55.

¹⁷⁸ Andrew Moravcsik, 'Europe After the Crisis', p. 66.

¹⁷⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union*, p. 5.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

As made clear before, the greatest challenge for Europe lies in the configuration of the democratic decision-making process. While Moravcsik's crisis-narrative is less concerned with that, one passage does somehow reflect a position that is close to the view of Habermas: "This problem makes clear that a more balanced eurozone, in which as much is required of Germany as of debtor countries, is not just a pragmatic necessity; it is a democratic imperative."¹⁸¹ With regard to the crisis, the two authors show agreement that democracy is a key factor in stabilising the situation.

In general, there is little doubt that both Habermas and Moravcsik are genuinely worried about the events unfolding in Europe. In their own fashion, they have conducted a sound analysis of the flaws in the EU's architecture which are currently haunting Europe's political leaders. It is critical to note they are on the same page in relation to the social woes, threatening citizen's long-term support for Europe. Moravcsik's analysis of the failed attempt to create an optimal currency area, has been shared by prominent economists, such as Paul de Grauwe and Paul Krugman¹⁸², although a majority of European politicians still sticks to the flawed narrative of excessive public deficits and the need for budgetary discipline to rebalance the European economy.¹⁸³ Moravcsik is in line with a group of scholars that insists on exposing the grave impact of a one-sided austerity programme. A similar thing can be said about Habermas, although his work stresses more the long-term consequence of a fissure between Europe's citizens and political class: if the EU loses its people (some figures show there is an indication), it will no longer matter what decisions are taken. A real possibility, with grave effects, that an opinion article of the political scientist José Ignacio Torreblanca in *El País* accurately articulates:

"In June 2014, in just over a year, Europe's citizens will be called to the polls. If the citizens' confidence in the EU is not restored by then, we may be in for a rather unpleasant surprise. Saving the euro was essential; but the euro is a means, not an end. The end is the citizens: a euro without them does not make much sense."¹⁸⁴

181 Andrew Moravcsik, 'Europe After the Crisis', p. 67.

182 Paul De Grauwe, *Managing a fragile eurozone*, 10 May 2011. Available at: <http://www.voxeu.org/article/managing-fragile-eurozone> (consulted: 30.03.2013).; Paul Krugman, *Eurozone Problems* – *NYTimes.com*, 30 January 2010. Available at: <http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/30/eurozone-problems/> (consulted on: 30.03.2013).

183 Jack Ewing, 'Germany Resists Europe's Pleas to Spend More', *New York Times*, 8 January 2012. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/business/global/germany-resists-europes-pleas-to-spend-more.html> (consulted on: 04.04.2013).

184 José Ignacio Torreblanca, 'Europe has lost its citizens', *Presseurop.eu*, 11 March 2013. Available at: <http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/3522081-europe-has-lost-its-citizens> (consulted on: 11.03.2013).

New appraisals of European integration theory

Is it an unfair premise to compare the work of a major theoretician of European integration with a philosopher that only devoted a part of his time and energy to the same subject, thus treating them in the same way? Can the two of them be adequately compared? With regard to European integration theory, Habermas remains an enigma to unravel: he does not seemingly fit into any of the classical categories of grand theory. Moreover, he staunchly avoids to affiliate himself with one all-encompassing approach. In contrast, Moravcsik can be considered as the main exponent of a single school of grand theory, namely liberal intergovernmentalism. While that could be seen as an obstacle, it will be argued here there is sufficient base material to give them a righteous comparison. Before doing that, the theoretical background of both authors shall briefly be clarified.

Liberal intergovernmentalism has strongly established itself within the field of European integration theory, due to the work of Andrew Moravcsik. In the words of Frank Schimmelfennig, the author of a book chapter on the theoretical base of liberal intergovernmentalism, it is “a theoretical ‘school’ with no ‘disciples’ and a single ‘teacher’: Andrew Moravcsik. (...) LI is an application of rationalist institutionalism, a larger class of International Relations theories.”¹⁸⁵ The theory has quickly acquired the status of a workable alternative to the federalist integration logic, because it offers a clear and comprehensive picture of European integration. It consists of a transparent multi-causal framework, with a limited number of assumptions that explain the state behaviour in all of the crucial past negotiations. More interestingly, Moravcsik has applied the same way of thinking to recent events and even projects some of the theoretical assumptions on the future. Although Moravcsik originally rejected the label of theory in *The Choice for Europe*, his 2009 book chapter co-authored with Schimmelfennig defines liberal intergovernmentalism as a “grand theory that seeks to explain the broad evolution of regional integration.”¹⁸⁶

The main theoretical assumptions of Moravcsik's framework have already been discussed in the previous chapter. Yet, its critical reception and the successive debate on European integration should also be briefly addressed. Moravcsik's seemingly counterintuitive approach to the subject was at the same time received with praise and scepticism.

185 Frank Schimmelfennig, ‘Liberal Intergovernmentalism’ in: Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez (eds.), *European Integration Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, p. 75.

186 Note here this is a revised version of the 2004 book chapter. Andrew Moravcsik and Frank Schimmelfennig, ‘Liberal Intergovernmentalism’, p. 68.

William Hitchcock was one of the reviewers that lauded the book, adding, however, that “Moravcsik sometimes projects his own rational and calculated analysis onto the policy makers themselves, who may have cherished subtlety and flexibility over consistency.”¹⁸⁷ In a 1999 symposium on *The Choice for Europe*, which indicates the importance of its publication, three authors examined the work to assess its strengths and weaknesses in explaining European integration. The main criticisms of Helen Wallace, James A. Caporaso, Fritz W. Schampf involved the selective use of historical cases, the one-sided generalisations, the unclear explanation of how state preferences are formed, and the negligence of incremental change over time (by focusing on crucial moments in integration history). While Moravcsik seized the opportunity with the symposium to address most of the issues, some flaws remain exposed.¹⁸⁸ Let me briefly elaborate on some of them.

First of all, the grand theory, which explains the complete process of European integration with one single model, is bound to be flawed due to its incapacity to incorporate alternative explanations. By now, it has been well established that “supranational bodies seeking to enhance their autonomy and influence [are having] considerable success” in doing so.¹⁸⁹ Moravcsik often understates the role of these actors in the decision-making process. Secondly, despite the strong emphasis on state power and preference, there is little analysis of what the state actually incorporates. Moravcsik treats it as a monolith without separating it in individual components.¹⁹⁰ If national preferences really matter, it is important to explain how they are exactly formed. Third, with a historical account that focuses largely on the formal outcome and final stage of key negotiations, liberal intergovernmentalist theory ignores a lot of the changes that occur in between these decision-making moments, where supranational actors (i.e. Commission strategies and ECJ decisions) and transnational groups often hold more sway in steering the debate.¹⁹¹ Finally, the richness of empirical data facilitates the possibility to cherry-pick cases that suit the integration theory. Neill Nugent argues that Moravcsik’s “over-focus on historic decisions” may be distortional, since they always emphasise the role of national governments – in contrast to commonplace and routine decisions.¹⁹² This same criticism is also voiced by the three reviewers of the symposium.

187 William Hitchcock, book review: Andrew Moravcsik, p. 1743.

188 Helen Wallace, et. al., ‘Review section symposium: The choice for Europe’, pp. 155-179.

189 Neill Nugent, *Government and Politics of the European Union*, p. 434.

190 Helen Wallace, et. al., ‘Review section symposium: The choice for Europe’, p. 157.

191 *Ibid.*, p. 158.

192 Neill Nugent, *Government and Politics of the European Union*, p. 433.

One example illustrates the selection and distortion bias of cases quite well. In his breakthrough article on the Single European Act, Andrew Moravcsik largely rejected the idea that transnational business groups had any involvement, citing their small scale and limited influence.¹⁹³ However, the non-governmental organisation Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) adequately demonstrated in the past that the advocacy group European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT) had established privileged links with political decision-makers and, subsequently, had a significant impact on the content of SEA.¹⁹⁴ This example mainly shows that caution may be warranted, instead of altogether rejecting an explanation if it does not fit in the generalist framework. Moravcsik's transparent theory of European integration has not been able to avoid that pitfall.

However, the theoretical clarity displayed in Moravcsik's writing is largely absent in the work of Habermas, especially regarding European integration theory. It can be argued that the work of Habermas displays a market imperative (globalization) that causes spill-over effects in the form of a more supranational based decision-making process. Is such a vision somewhat compatible with the (neo-)functionalist logic (that stresses economic tools to achieve the political project of an ever closer union) and should Habermas be considered as a neo-functional author? Habermas never fully embraced the end-stage of a federal state based on a nation-state model, which is a crucial topic in this grand theory. As said before, his view rests on the emergence of a transnational democracy in Europe, a civilisational project rather than power centralisation, which shows little common features with the federal union of states. Thus, it would be inaccurate to categorise Habermas in the same (neo-) functionalist group as Jean Monnet or Ernst Haas. What are the alternatives? Perhaps there is more overlap with another historical figure that promoted European integration, namely Altiero Spinelli. His vision of "democratic radicalism" incorporated some of the issues Habermas has brought up, such as the constitutional method to enforce the Parliament's role and at the same time mobilise the European public opinion.¹⁹⁵ However, here again Spinelli was also largely driven by the goal to establish a federal Europe – and acting as one of the main strategic rivals of Monnet.

193 Andrew Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act', pp. 45-46.

194 Matthieu Lietaert and Friedrich Moser (dir.), *The Brussels Business*, Visualatlantics, 2012, min. 85.; Bélen Balanya, Ann Doherty, Olivier Hoedeman, Adam Ma'ant and Erik Wesselius, *Europe Inc. Regional and Global Restructuring and The Rise of Corporate Power* (2nd edition), Pluto Press, London, 2003.

195 Michael Burgess, 'Federalism', in: Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez (eds.), *European Integration Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, p. 32.

Some contemporary writers are closer to Habermas, as demonstrated by the following example. Wayne Sandholtz and Alec Stone Sweet somewhat shifted the neo-functionalist debate in 1990s in a direction that comes closer to Habermas' framework of European integration. Sandholtz and Stone Sweet were inspired by new perspectives, i.e. globalisation and transactionalism, to adapt their explanatory framework to incorporate recent transformations in the EU's institutional structure. The transnational society became a crucial element of the theory, although little was said about the democratic foundation of the European Union.¹⁹⁶ Here again, there were notable differences in the approach to the subject. What seems to place Habermas apart from scholars with similar analyses is the underlying normative vision in his work. European integration is not just the object of examination but also a subject of idealism and belonging. Here Habermas does not limit himself to the logical aspect of integration but includes a whole narrative of civilisation – leading back to the work of Kant and the heritage of the Enlightenment. Therefore, the literature of integration theory may offer some guidance for understanding Habermas' position, yet it is not sufficient to capture the complete aura of his work.

Understanding the core substance of Habermas' work possibly requires less of an academic analogy. Since his writings on European integration generally read less like a theoretical account and more like a collection of visionary documents, there is one other immediate reference that comes to mind. In 1923, an Austrian politician published a book on the future of the European continent, which had an impact on European intellectual milieus and brought about a popular movement. Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi's magnum opus *Pan-Europa* recollects the dire situation of Europe after the First World War. Threatened by rival economic and political powers, the European states had to act together in order to stand a chance against these global forces. It is a vision that resembles Habermas' idea of a globalized world and Europe's likely loss of importance – even though the concept of globalization was unknown to Coudenhove-Kalergi. Even more interesting, is the duality in *Pan-Europa* that a homogeneous economic union should be accompanied with a constitution, modelled on the example of the United States of America, laying down the basic liberties and rights and also creates a decision-making structure (a bicameral system including peoples and states).¹⁹⁷ The idea of an economic entity accompanied by an equally powerful political system can also be retrieved in the political essays of Habermas.

196 Wayne Sandholtz and Alec Stone Sweet, *European Integration and Supranational Governance*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998, p. 6.

197 Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Pan-Europe*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1988, pp. 122-123.

In 1923, Coudenhove-Kalergi already displayed a keen awareness of the contentious role of the nation-state on the European continent, a force of chauvinism and international rivalries. He was one of the few dissenting voices that envisioned a future where states would no longer be defined on the basis of a nation. In the eyes of Coudenhove-Kalergi, nation-states were a historical and not necessarily everlasting phenomenon, since one could learn and unlearn to be a national. Similar to Habermas, he envisioned a European United States that would be impartial and bureaucratic, where nationality is nothing more than a private matter – a comparable evolution with religion in Europe. Coudenhove-Kalergi's separation of nation and state can be connected to Habermas' concept of a civic nation, where affinity between Europeans is strictly based on a common belief in the rule of law and a set of shared (constitutional) principles. The real challenge for both of them, however, is how to create common feeling of belonging to an impartial European entity, i.e. the creation of a pluralist yet homogenised community. Here again, the question remains whether a constitutional debate or a shared public opinion can serve as a catalyst to create a sense of a common purpose. Both Coudenhove-Kalergi and Habermas stress the importance of transnational communication networks. Also education could shape the creation of a European culture, according to Coudenhove-Kalergi.¹⁹⁸

What Jürgen Habermas ultimately shares with his European compatriot Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi is an enlightened belief in Europe as a civilisational and modernist project, to overcome past woes, including rapturous conflicts and social devastation. It can be characterised as a grand vision of a united Europe. There is no doubt that this normative and perhaps teleological style of argumentation contradicts with the meticulous, rationalist approach of Andrew Moravcsik. Habermas' essays on the European project not only encompass a theoretical framework but also include a strong element of persuasion: a message to European citizens to avoid inaction and seize the opportunity of demanding a full-fledged democratic decision-making process in the EU, a step towards a world society.

This theoretical assessment of European integration has shown that the divide often runs deep between Moravcsik and Habermas. Yet it would also be a simplification to completely reject any similarities. This is well displayed in the following example, that shows both convergence and divergence in the work of the two authors: In their theoretical analysis of the current state of affairs in the European Union, Moravcsik and Habermas have paid a lot of attention to the changed decision-making process under the

198 Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Pan-Europe*, 121-133.; João Carlos Espada, *Nucleus Moments in Recent European History*, Compact seminar, College of Europe (Natolin), 30 January 2013.

Lisbon Treaty rules, especially reflected in the strong role of the European Council in setting the post-crisis reform agenda. This is demonstrated with the following quotation:

“Merkel’s chief adviser for European affairs, Nikolaus Meyer-Landrut, laid it out for her in the summer of 2011. Everything for which Brussels is responsible works just fine, he told her, while areas that fall to member states are in disarray. Thus it would be logical to grant Brussels more power. *But Merkel decided otherwise.*”¹⁹⁹

What does this exemplary fragment precisely indicate? Despite European high politics, supranational actors, the grand statements of the European Commission President concerning a federation of nation-states or “United States of Europe”, national politicians still pull the strings when it comes to a crucial decision, such as the competence-sharing between the political levels.²⁰⁰ In other words, Angela Merkel eclipses José Manuel Barroso in the exercise of European political power. Habermas and Moravcsik are exactly on the same wavelength when it comes to the theoretical abstraction of this power division. What Moravcsik describes as state power or the intergovernmental approach, is defined by Habermas as executive federalism. Their identical analysis of the facts, however, is often accompanied by an opposing interpretation. For Moravcsik, Merkel’s role solely reflects a natural balance in the European political system, while Habermas sees it as a sign of an emerging post-democratic order. It is staggering, yet fascinating how two authors with an identical analysis can come up with so diverging interpretations.

A final thought can be added to this. Each grand approach to European integration is marked by inherent flaws. There is no single encompassing framework that holds all truth, in assessing the evolutionary trajectory of the EU. General theories have a natural inclination to one-sided explanations of their examined subject. In discussing the six overarching themes of this subject, both positive as negative commentaries could be remarked with regard to how Habermas and Moravcsik have analysed the European Union. Often their resolutions would go in opposite ways, though their different interpretations were based on identical issues and cases. On other occasions, their analyses were characterised by a surprising overlap, although accompanied by personal interpretations. Such contradictions or similarities should be considered as a

199 Own emphasis. Jakob Augstein, ‘Stubborn and Egotistical: Europe Is Right to Doubt German Euro Leadership’, *Der Spiegel*, 25 March 2013. Available at: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/opinion-german-euro-leadership-stubborn-and-egotistical-a-890848.html> (consulted on: 26.03.2013).

200 Joe Weistenthal, ‘The President of the EU Commission just laid out his big vision for a United States of Europe’, *Business Insider*, 27 September 2012. Available at: <http://www.businessinsider.com/jose-manuel-barroso-lays-out-vision-of-united-states-of-europe-2012-9> (consulted on: 06.04.2013).

natural result of the academic and public debate, which serves to strengthen our insight in the fundamentals of the European Union. These observations induce to continue a comparative approach in the research of major European integration thinkers.

Conclusion

Europe is ever so present in the lives of the citizens of the twenty-seven member states. Each day EU legislation and secondary law affects more than 500 million consumers and people of the tight-knit continent. At the same time it has never been as openly contested as before. Euro-sceptic parties have acquired a solid basis in most of the member states, while some of the imposed austerity measures have been staunchly opposed by protesters in the debt-ridden countries. Politicians are grappling to find durable answers to combat the crisis, economies are struggling to regain competitive strength, and the unemployment rate has skyrocketed in recent months. All of this has sparked a debate on the following often-recurring question: where are we exactly heading with the European experiment? In the three preceding chapters, I have aimed to address most of the contemporary challenges and questions of the European integration process, guided by the work of two notable scholars and intellectuals.

The background story of Jürgen Habermas and Andrew Moravcsik has aided in understanding their way of reasoning, as well as their offered interpretations of the EU integration process. At an early age, Habermas immersed himself in the world of language, which decisively influenced his later work on communicative action and deliberative democracy. His belief in a rational model of interaction has shaped the substance of concepts as the public sphere, civic identity and constitutional patriotism. A similar analysis can be made when considering the life of Moravcsik. His early acquaintance with European culture has left its mark on his later interests as an academic researcher. Moreover, his affinity with the liberal and international schools of thinking strongly influences his actual views on international organisations and state actions.

A dialogue based on their main arguments, covering six themes, has resulted in a range of memorable conclusions. They shall be summarised here along three axes. First of all, the past and future trajectory of European integration has demonstrated considerable opposition in their views. While Habermas speaks of a constitutionalisation of the EU and foresees a future where the national constellation is dissolving into a European or

even world system, Moravcsik rather presents the idea that the EU has more or less consolidated, reaching a natural plateau where both states and supranational actors interact. Despite these different end goals, both of them formally reject the notion of a European federal state or nation-state.

Secondly, the present form of government has been recognised as a hot issue between supporters and opponents of the European Union. Is there a democratic deficit? Habermas bemoans the fact that the nucleus of a transnational democracy in the EU has not developed in a full-fledged structure where citizens can participate and deliberate. For him, the democratic deficit is one of the main challenges of the EU that needs to be addressed in order not to lose the support of its citizens. In contrast, Moravcsik sees little reason to overturn the actual decision-making process: the institutional balance as well as direct and indirect elements of representative democracy ensure a well-functioning international structure.

Thirdly, citizenship identification with the EU is often heralded as one of the missing pieces of a truly successful process of political and economic integration. Habermas embraces the notion of a common identity and shared political culture, established through a process of transnational communication networks, democratic deliberation and constitutionalisation of the Union. A civic identity, disconnected from the nation, is his solution to bring the European peoples together. In comparison, Moravcsik asserts that a common identity will not establish itself in the foreseeable future. There is no real reason to anticipate such an event, since the European nation-states will continue to drive and shape the process of European integration.

Through their arguments, the two authors have exposed their underlying vision on the European Union. Jürgen Habermas largely explains the contemporary situation of Europe not as what it is, but what it *ought* to be. His formation as a rational and neo-Kantian philosopher has induced this belief in a transformative process of modernity, where society is interpreted in the light of civilisational ideal – and the EU falls short in living up to the standards. The work of Andrew Moravcsik is also embedded in a rational philosophical tradition, but rather stems from a more pragmatic approach. There is less of a normative or civilisational component to be retrieved in his work. However, his view from across the Atlantic includes a refreshing element of outsider thinking. Unlike Habermas and many continental Europeans, Moravcsik does not evaluate the EU generally through its defects and shortcomings. Rather, European integration is the most advanced experiment of creating an international structure of deliberation and

decision-making. He largely observes a high level of accomplishments and keeps an optimist spirit for the future.

Are these two visions that somehow can be reconciled? Finding a common basis on their work may at first glance seem to be a challenge. Yet, the observable fact that both Habermas and Moravcsik are keen to understand the complexity of Europe's integration, demonstrates there is room for common ground. In fact, the two scholars largely ask similar questions in areas as democracy, identity, and state integration. Although they may not necessarily provide identical answers, the dialogue-component has shown there is definitely a case for comparison. Moreover, complete reconciliation may simply not be wanted, as contrasting views often offer fresh insights in old subjects. Contrasting Moravcsik with Habermas creates room to discuss and think about Europe, which in turn inspires citizens, experts and officials of the EU.

Thus, there are few reasons to evaluate one work in the light of the other, in the sense that it is troublesome to conclude which vision of Europe holds more truth and relevance. Both authors offer valuable lessons that capture some, albeit not all of the complexity of the subject at hand. Habermas is rightfully concerned about the possibility that Europe loses its citizens in the transformation to a post-national constellations. At the same time, Moravcsik has overturned the traditional assumption of an ever closer Union, by shifting the balance towards state interests and bargaining power. He sees the merit of the actual architecture of the EU, instead of solely interpreting the light of a future federal state. Although Habermas' pessimism might contradict Moravcsik's optimism, it also holds a lesson for the future research. A simple and straightforward answer will never suffice to understand the challenges of the European integration process. The European Union remains a paradoxical phenomenon, with its consecutive cycles of integration and stagnation, the result of a constant competition between multi-level actors and institutions.

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