Ben Rosamond
Open Political Science, Methodological Nationalism and European Union
Studies

Stefano Bartolini, *Restructuring Europe: Centre formation, system building, and
political structuring between the nation state and the European Union*, Oxford:
Oxford University Press, 2007, 415pp., paperback £21.99, ISBN 978-0-19-923187-4.

Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande, *Cosmopolitan Europe*, Cambridge, Polity Press,
2007, 311pp., paperback £18.99, ISBN 978-0-7456-3563-7

Johan P. Olsen, *Europe in Search of Political Order: An institutional perspective on
unity/diversity, citizens/their helpers, democratic design/historical drift, and the co-
existence of orders*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, 331pp., hardback £47.00,
ISBN 978-0-19-921434-1.

Vivien A. Schmidt, *Democracy in Europe: The EU and National Polities*, Oxford:
Oxford University Press, 2006, 317pp., paperback, £18.00, ISBN 978-0-19-926698-2.

Albert Weale, *Democratic Citizenship and the European Union*, Manchester:
Manchester University Press, 2005, 156pp., hardback, £55.00, ISBN 0-7190-4425-1.

Introduction

The relationship between European integration and political science has always
offered a very good case study of the intersection between novel developments in the
'real world' and the evolution of the academic study of politics. The area of political
science now usually dubbed EU studies has, of course, been driven routinely by the
unfolding story of the object it seeks to analyse. Put simply, without the EU there
would be no EU studies. The emergence of integration theory in the 1950s and 1960s
was a bold attempt to build a general comparative framework out of the inductive
study of the European experience that commenced with the inauguration of the
European Coal and Steel Community in 1951. Subsequent bursts of integrative
activity such as the single market project of the mid 1980s and the progress towards
monetary union and significant enlargement in the 1990s have provided cues for more
analysts of politics to ply their trade (at least partly) in relation to the EU. The EU's
importance as a supplier of binding decisions and as perhaps *the* key agent for the
governance of the European economy have demanded the study of the
polity/governance system through which such authoritative outputs emerge. By any
reckoning, the proliferation of specialist journals and the membership levels of
relevant professional associations suggests a field in robust health, even if some

sceptics openly question the overall quality or 'scientific value' of the aggregated output of EU studies.[1]

The EU and social science: the problem of methodological nationalism?

It is worth inserting two further general observations as a prelude to discussing this selection of recent book-length to EU studies. First, the EU itself has – at least since the defeat by French and Dutch referendums of the Draft Constitutional Treaty in 2005 – been in a difficult phase. It is often suggested that past phases of crisis or atrophy in European integration (particularly in the 1970s) have portended an equivalent scholarly retreat.[2] This cannot be said of recent scholarship though, which – if anything – seems to be proliferating in crisis-riven and highly politicised conditions. That the urgency of the European predicament requires equally pressing analytical input is obviously a key part of the story of the vibrancy of EU studies. Indeed, one striking feature of this selection of books is that they are all centrally concerned in one way or another with questions of the democratic dilemmas that may have been a good deal less acute 30-40 years ago, when adjudication of European supranational institutions was perhaps about little more that the extent to which they were able to maintain general integrative direction.

The persistence of scholarly interest also says something about the way in which EU studies as a field has become institutionalised and embedded within the academy, This lock in, with its associated publication and professional path dependencies, means that the 'progress' of scholarship on EU politics has become much less dependent upon the forward momentum of its object that may have been true in the past. It is inaccurate, as is commonplace, to assert that the classical study of European integration in the 1960s and early 1970s was a purely International Relations (IR) enterprise, with little input from mainstream political science.[3] But as these books show, the EU as a legitimate object of study is now well and truly assimilated into core areas of political analysis such as the new institutionalism, the study of territorial

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[1] Gøsta Esping-Andersen 'Leaders of the profession: an interview with Gøsta Esping-Andersen', *European Political Science* 7:3, 2008, pp. 247-249.

[2] John S. Keeler 'Mapping EU studies: the evolution from boutique to boom field 1960-2001', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 43:3, 2005, pp. 551-582.

[3] See Ben Rosamond 'The Political Sciences of European Integration: Disciplinary History and EU Studies', in Knud Erik Jørgensen, Mark A. Pollack and Ben Rosamond eds *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London: Sage, 2007, pp. 7-30.

state-building and normative political theory. This means that the EU is puzzling and interesting for a good many reasons, that it brings lessons to scholars within a range of research programmes and that these in turn throw back at EU studies a range of important analytical and normative questions.

This leads to the second observation, which is to make the basic, but often neglected, sociology of knowledge point that while the external driver of the developing EU can explain why in general terms EU studies has proliferated, it cannot account for the *type* of EU studies that has come to prevail. Asking research questions about EU politics does not occur in isolation from the broader social scientific context. These intellectual drivers will reflect levels of ontological and epistemological consensus or divergence, which in turn will influence which approaches, theories and methodologies are considered appropriate and admissible. This is not the place for a full-scale sociology of knowledge 'take' on the study of EU politics.[4] Rather the purpose of this observation is to draw attention to an important tension in the academic literature on European integration that helps us to read the books under review. Put straightforwardly, this tension boils down to the question of whether the EU is a novel entity or an instance of something familiar. The tendency in most academic enquiry is to render an object familiar – to ask, as Rosenau and Durfee recommend, a simple question: 'of what is this an instance'?[5] To bring the study of EU politics within the fold of political science might be read as the way to provide much-needed analytical purchase. But it could also represent a series of moves that turn what Jacques Delors once called 'un objet politique non-identifé'[6] into something perfectly identifiable and thus manageable within the confines of academic discourse. As a means of advancing knowledge this has some obvious advantages, but it also runs the risk of divesting a genuinely peculiar political experiment of its novelty.

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[4] See Rosamond 'The Political Sciences of European Integration' and Ben Rosamond 'European integration and the social science of EU Studies: the disciplinary politics of a subfield', *International Affairs* 83:2, 2007, pp. 231-252.
[5] James N. Rosenau and Mary Durfee *Thinking Theory Thoroughly: Coherent Approaches in an Incoherent World*, Boulder, CO: Westview.
[6] Cited in Philippe C. Schmitter 'Examining the Present Euro-Polity with the Help of Past Theories' in Gary Marks, Fritz Scharpf, Philippe C. Schmitter and Wolfgang Streeck *Governance in the European Union*, London: Sage, 1996, p.1.

Of the works under review, it is Beck and Grande's that is most bothered by this dilemma. Their point is made very early the book: We misconstrue 'Europe', they argue

> for the simple reason that it is still perceived within the outdated political and scientific framework of the nation, whereas the realities which are producing Europeanization represent *the* classic historical counter-example to the political and social ontology of the nation-state.[7]

The issue, of course, runs deeper than a mere question about how we go about classifying the EU. Beck and Grande's complaint is rooted in the view that the architecture of the social sciences and the form, practices and imaginaries of the nation-state are co-constitutive.[8] This supposes a performative relationship between the production of academic knowledge about (say) politics and the actual functioning of the political world which that knowledge purports to describe. Social scientific reflection that operates within the epistemic constraints of the nation-state thus contributes to a narrowing of normative alternatives because this 'methodological nationalism'[9] creates firm parameters around what can be construed to be politically possible. Beck and Grande's alternative of 'regional cosmopolitanism' is, as others have argued, rarely articulated as a vision for Europe's future by Europe's political elites.[10] Their argument is partly that the capacity to think otherwise about the EU requires a step away from hierarchical or monopolistic conceptions of statehood and nationally-rooted understandings of *demoi*, which are routinely reproduced by both conventional political discourse and standard social science. This matters because Beck and Grande read European integration as a project that is inscribed with cosmopolitan purpose, but suggest that this cosmopolitan promise has been 'deformed' by the ongoing and powerful logics of neoliberal economics, national egoism and bureaucracy. These in turn raise acute problems of input and output

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[7] *Cosmopolitan Europe*, p. 2.
[8] See Zygmunt Bauman *Intimations of Postmodernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.
[9] *Cosmopolitan Europe*, pp. 94-97. See also Daniel Chernilo 'Social theory's methodological nationalism', *European Journal of Social Theory* 9:1 (2006), pp. 5-22.
[10] See Chris Rumford 'Introduction: Cosmopolitanism and Europe', in Chis Rumford *Cosmopolitanism and Europe*, Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2007, pp. 1-15.

legitimacy, which potentially run counter to not only the particular project of cosmopolitanism, but also the possibility of democracy itself.[11]

The primary target of Beck and Grande's invective is sociology, within which debates about methodological nationalism are well advanced.[12] Political scientists may have had more practice at thinking about processes beyond nation-states, but the dilemma posed starkly and persistently in Beck and Grande's book is equally pertinent and puts the discipline squarely in the dock by virtue of its basis in theorising national state forms and practices. The 'political science' works examined here more or less fall into three general subfields or research programmes: new institutionalist approaches to politics, the investigation of state-building, political development and territoriality and normative political theory.[13] Put crudely, the question is whether – in light of the critique coming from social theory – there is still fuel in the political science tank when it comes to thinking about the EU.

The answer suggested here is that, these important intellectual challenges notwithstanding, political science continues to pose compelling questions and to generate important analytical and normative knowledge. The important rider to this general conclusion is that such political science should follow the broad example of the books discussed here by being open. The word 'open' here has at least three senses: (a) openness to a plurality of intellectual currents and not the exercise of tight disciplinarity,[14] (b) openness, moreover, to the broadest range of work within political science itself, and (c) openness to think normatively about the EU and politics more generally.

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[11] *Cosmopolitan Europe*, p. 154.
[12] It is also interesting to note an emerging side debate about the most appropriate ways in which to bring together sociology and EU studies. For alternatives see Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford *Rethinking Europe: Social theory and the implications of Europeanization*, London: Routledge, 2005 and Adrian Favell 'The Sociology of EU Politics', in Knud Erik Jørgensen, Mark A. Pollack and Ben Rosamond eds *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London: Sage, 2007, pp. 122-128.
[13] There is no supposition that this is a representative sample of recent political science work. Other recent work from the political science tradition sees a democratic route to the future of European integration in terms of reconceptualising the EU away from rather staid and unhelpful Westphalian terminologies towards thinking about it as a 'flexible neo-medieval empire'. See Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged EU*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007
[14] Alex Warleigh has labelled this impulse 'intradisciplinarity'. See 'In defence of intra-disciplinarity; "European studies", the "new regionalism" and the issue of democratisation', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17(2), 2004, pp. 301-318.

Institutionalism

There is no need here to recount the tale of the 'new institutionalist' turn that was first identified in political science in the mid 1980s[15] and the very influential three-fold classification of rational choice, historical and sociological subtypes that has been common currency for more than a decade.[16] The dense formal and informal institutionalisation surrounding European integration has seen the EU become a major empirical focal point for institutionalist research of all kinds, that helps political scientists understand how respectively institutions reduce the transaction costs faced by actors, create path dependent effects over time and act as important venues of socialisation and the renegotiation of interests and identities.[17]

The books by Schmidt and Olsen contribute significantly to the general corpus of institutionalist work in political science. Thus Johan Olsen organises his volume (which is a collection of his recent essays) around four typical dilemmas found in any polity: the dilemma of reconciling unity and diversity, dilemmas of citizenship – especially those that emerge from the management of the relationship between citizens and those with mandates to act on their behalf, dilemmas of institutional design and the dilemma of overlap between established and emerging political orders. All are acutely apparent in the EU case and all, according to Olsen, can be addressed through an institutionalist research agenda.[18]

For example, there is a very long-standing debate about whether it is best (normatively or technically) for human beings to address chronic uncertainty through the application of rational principles to institutional design. What those 'rational principles' might be is, of course, a pressing issue. Should there be a guiding constitutional philosophy at the heart of institutional design? Should such principles

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[15] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen 'The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life', *American Political Science Review* 78:3, 1984, pp. 734-749 and James G. March and Johan P. Olsen *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*, New York: Free Press, 1989.

[16] Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C.R. Taylor 'Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms', *Political Studies* 44:5, 1996, pp. 936-957

[17] For overviews see Mark Aspinwall and Gerald Schneider eds *The Rules of Integration: Institutionalist Approaches to the Study of Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001. Mark A. Pollack 'The new institutionalisms and European integration', in Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez eds *European Integration Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 137-156 and Antje Wiener 'Constructivism and sociological institutionalism', in Michelle Cini and Angela K. Bourne eds *Palgrave Advances in European Union Studies*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006, pp. 35-55.

[18] *Europe in Search of Political Order*, pp. 1-16.

emerge contractually through the expression of democratic will? Or should rationality in this context be reduced to a technical, managerial or bureaucratic rendition of what is imperative? The EU's story is a mixture of moments of institutional design (and re-design), reflecting a complex mixture of motives, perceived imperatives and competing values over time. The legacy has been a range of overlapping and perhaps competing methodologies of governance which apparently respond to different external dilemmas, reflect prevailing conceptions of how outcomes can be engineered and have inscribed upon them quite distinct logics. Thus the classical Community method, which relies upon a negotiation between strong purposive supranational bodies and intergovernmental institutions, differs from the transgovernmental techniques that have come to characterise the governance of monetary union or European security. These in turn are distinct from the apparently deliberative and soft governance techniques of the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) that has emerged in the wake of the Lisbon Agenda.[19]

At one level Olsen's point is that an institutionalist perspective, because it shies away from voluntaristic or overly agent-centred approaches is able to account very effectively for the messy and variegated institutional make-up of the EU.[20] More importantly, it also shows that there is scope for strategic intervention to bring about effective reform in the EU, but at the same time the recurrent agonising for a 'big bang' constitutional moment or for everything to cohere around a grand narrative is misplaced, despite what the EU's own self-image might suggest. The very messiness means that the EU possesses many in-built buffers that render fundamental conflict unlikely. Olsen's deepest point is that the EU is actually not that different from the advanced democracies that political science has studied and that it works best when it is most 'normal': '[l]ike other polities, the EU has been better able to cope with the tensions and disputes through routine politics than through single constitutive decisions'.[21] And, in this context, the book contains a couple of blistering (and, it has

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[19] See Helen Wallace and William Wallace 'Overview: The European Union, Politics and Policy-Making', in Knud Erik Jørgensen, Mark A. Pollack and Ben Rosamond eds *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London: Sage, 2007, pp. 339-358 and Manuele Citi and Martin Rhodes 'New Modes of Governance in the European Union: A Critical Survey and Analysis', in Knud Erik Jørgensen, Mark A. Pollack and Ben Rosamond eds *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London: Sage, 2007, pp. 463-482.
[20] *Europe in Search of Political Order*, pp. 165-182.
[21] *Europe in Search of Political Order*, p. 223.

to be said, in these times unusual) defences of the normalising importance of a renewed emphasis upon the virtues of Weberian bureaucratic culture.[22]

Olsen pulls off this thoughtful corrective to those who would rush too hastily to the views that the EU is a drastically new political form and/or that it is in urgent need of reinvention according to a process of constitutional grand design thanks to his astonishing breadth as a political scientist. The pieces that comprise the book are testimony to the value of an open political science that allows scholarly enquiry to span literatures in democratic theory, public administration and organisational studies to name but three subfields that rarely engage in meaningful conversations with one another.

Vivien Schmidt's book as rooted in the institutionalist tradition as Olsen's, but differs significantly in terms of approach and substantive argument. Schmidt's brand of openness sees her employing all three of the established institutionalisms together with her own 'discursive institutionalist' variant. The book is organised around the assumption that 'to understand the complexity of reality requires as many perspectives as possible and this as many methods as appropriate'.[23] But Schmidt's push to establish 'discursive institutionalism' as an essential complement to the three existing variants is easily her most significant theoretical move.[24] Attention to discourse allows us to factor in the communicative elements of human interaction and this, in turn overcomes the static biases of rational choice, historical and sociological approaches to explore questions such as: 'how are interests mobilized for positive, communal action? How are the constraints that institutions impose overcome? And how are interests reinterpreted or institutions reconstituted within any given culture'.[25]

This attention to discourse makes a good deal of sense given the core focus of the book, which – following the thrust of the literature on 'Europeanisation' – looks at the relationship between EU inputs and national institutional transformations and

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[22] *Europe in Search of Political Order*, pp. 135-161 and pp. 252-275.
[23] *Democracy in Europe*, p. 7.
[24] *Democracy in Europe*, pp. 248-265.
[25] *Democracy in Europe*, p. 250.

adaptations.[26] As such, Schmidt's volume asks important questions about the challenges for national democracy in light of the emergence of a European regime of governance, with the premise that any talk of democratic deficits should attend to those operating domestically in the member-states. Schmidt's point is that failures in discursive adaptation go some way to explaining these persistent democratic deficits.

To make this argument Schmidt considers a somewhat orthodox problem from the vantage point of the literatures on institutions and Europeanisation: the question of 'fit'. Institutional 'fit' is about the extent to which pre-existing national institutional structures are able to dovetail with the EU-level apparatuses of governance. It is here that Schmidt creates a simple, stylised distinction between 'simple' and 'compound' polities. The former, of which the UK and France are taken as cases, are characterised by an evolved structure and ethos of centralisation and singular authority while the latter – Germany and Italy for the purposes of the study – have established traditions of authority dispersal. The EU in turn is an extreme example of multi-level compound polity. It is a form of emergent 'regional state',[27] which (a) operates through a very complex system of dispersed authority and variegated forms of governance and (b) ensures ongoing tension between regional integration and diversity amongst the member states. Generally speaking, Schmidt's evidence – compiled from detailed engagement with sizable literatures on each of her four cases – indicates that compound polities fit rather better with the EU than simple polities. Thus simple policies face greater problems of isomorphic adaptation to EU practices. But, the fact that compound polities require more coordination than simple polities means that it is potentially more difficult for national elites to project national preferences upwards to the EU and more difficult to ensure compliance with EU policies across the national polity.[28]

The dilemmas of democracy in an integrating Europe in the context of an evolving regional state require that national polities adjust their understandings of democracy, sovereignty and identity. Schmidt's focus on discourse – in both its coordinating and

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[26] On 'Europeanisation' see Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse 'Europeanization: the Domestic Impact of European Union Policies', in Knud Erik Jørgensen, Mark A. Pollack and Ben Rosamond eds *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London: Sage, 2007, pp. 483-504.

[27] *Democracy in Europe*, pp. 8-45.

[28] *Democracy in Europe*, p. 234

communicating variants – highlights some of the complexities that emerge from simple pleas for a revolution in our attitudes to questions of democracy in the context of transnational processes and supranational governance. For while simple polities have the capacity for discursive coordination and communication, their overall lack of fit with the compound EU polity makes is difficult for them to undergo the necessary cognitive and ideational shifts. Compound polities, by contrast, fit well with the EU, but suffer from coordinative problem, which means that a clear communicative discourse of democracy to match the new realities is equally tough to achieve.

State and territoriality

The growth of explicitly institutionalist work on EU studies, as suggested already, makes sense in terms of both the institutionalised quality of the EU and the increasing centrality of institutionalism within political science over the past two decades. In contrast, work on the EU and European integration inspired by arguably Europe's greatest ever political scientist – Stein Rokkan – has been decidedly thin on the ground. This is extremely strange, as Lauri Karvonen has recently pointed out,[29] because Rokkan's work was directly concerned with the political development of western Europe and particularly with the historical processes of state-formation and nation-building in the context of territorial consolidation and legitimation.[30] The application of the rich repertoire of Rokkanian concepts to the EU might seem obvious, but it is only recently that the field has received spate of books, including the volume under review by Stefano Bartolini, doing exactly this.[31]

Like Rokkan before him, Bartolini's work is informed by an astonishingly rich reading of a vast literature across the social sciences and history. The book an ambitious, yet highly persuasive, exercise in thinking about the EU as a territorial system that is the latest phase in the *longue durée* of European political development. The historical contextualisation its subject through a lengthy re-presentation of the

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[29] Lauri Karvonen 'Europe's Spaces and Boundaries', *Comparative European Politics* 5:4, 2007, pp. 441-460.

[30] Rokkan's work is discussed thoroughly in Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle and Derek Urwin eds *State Formation, Nation-Building and Mass Politics: the Theory of Stein Rokkan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[31] The other notable examples are Daniele Caramani *The Nationalization of Politics: the Formation of National Electorates* and Party Systems in Western Europe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004 and Maurizio Ferrera *The Boundaries of Welfare: European Integration and the New Spatial Politics of Social Protection*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

500 year process of European territorial differentiation,[32] not only sets a framework for thinking about the dilemmas of the EU in terms of centre formation, political production through the creation and dissolution of territorial boundaries, centre-periphery relations and mass politics, but in so doing also throws into question those more shallow analyses that presume Europe in the early twenty-first century to be at a point of radical rupture from the past. In addition, Bartolini's book offers us yet another form of open political science that this time looks to a nuanced reading of its own past to investigate the present. There is nothing of the default assumption, found in so much contemporary work carrying a cheerfully Whiggish narrative of disciplinary progress, that conceptual schema produced four decades ago must have been surpassed by better and more advanced thinking.[33] Indeed the conceptual heart of Bartolini's work is announced very quickly with a heavy nod in the direction of the Weberian presumption of the link between the establishment of the external boundaries of a polity and processes of its internal differentiation and structuring. The framework that emerges in chapter 1 combines Rokkan's macro-historical theory of emergence and consolidation of bounded territorial state forms and Albert Hirschmann's micro theories of individual options in organisational contexts.[34]

Bartolini demonstrates very well, via his four core empirical chapters, how this framework allows us to deploy a rich vocabulary to audit, for example, the extent to which the EU constitutes a case of centre formation[35] and how and whether it is able to at the same time to develop external economic, security and cultural boundaries while undertaking to restructure and/or remove such boundaries internally.[36] Needless to say the resultant depiction of the EU is complex, but emphatically for Bartolini 'typical' of centre forming dynamics.[37] Bartolini shares with Schmidt an interest in the democratic implications of the situation where processes of centre formation and political structuring have created an accretion of competence to the EU centre with neither a functioning democratic apparatus to include necessary components like a

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[32] *Restructuring Europe*, pp. 56-115
[33] For a discussion of this tendency in EU studies, with specific reference to integration theory, see Ben Rosamond 'The uniting of Europe and the foundation of EU studies: revisiting the neofunctionalism of Ernst B. Haas', *Journal of European Public Policy* 12: 2, 2005, pp. 237-254.
[34] See respectively Flora et al eds *State Formation* and Albert O. Hirschmann *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
[35] *Restructuring Europe*, pp. 116-176.
[36] *Restructuring Europe*, pp. 177-247.
[37] *Restructuring Europe*, pp. 175

fully functioning party system nor a solid basis for legitimacy. Echoing Schmidt's epigrammatic formulation that the EU makes 'policy without politics', which in turn means that at the national level there is 'politics without policy',[38] Bartolini perhaps shows how difficult the task of democratising the EU might be. The simple application of democratic precepts to EU institutions is not enough because such calls fail to heed a simple Rokkanian lesson:

> EU institutions cannot substitute the national political institutions not because they are not democratic enough, but because they are not operating within closed boundaries, and here is little point – and many risks – in 'democratizing' loosely bounded and non-legitimate territories.[39]

In a telling passage, Bartolini attacks the misconception that there can be a straightforward division of competence between the EU and its component member polities, with the former effectively taking responsibility for the creation of market society in Europe independent of political pressure and the latter delivering necessary compensation either domestically or via inter-state bargains in accordance with national preferences. Aside from the fact that the unfettered development of the former is likely to progressively constrain the latter,[40] it also presumes a very thin conception of legitimacy at the European level. Effectively this boils down to the technocratic and highly depoliticised proposition that as long as market society is properly managed, then the agent of that management must in an of itself be legitimate.[41] As Daniel Wincott notes, in this formulation a compelling analytical category – the 'regulatory state' that is used persuasively to characterise the nature of the EU becomes normatively endowed and naturalised to the extent that it purports to settle further necessary argument about legitimacy deficits at the European level.[42] That necessary argument can, as Bartolini shows so well, commence with a serious

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[38] *Democracy in Europe*, p. 9
[39] *Restructuring Europe*, p. 408.
[40] *Restructuring Europe*, pp. 406-407
[41] Se for example Andrew Moravcsik 'In defence of the "democratic deficit": reassessing legitimacy in the European Union', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40: 4, 2002, pp. 603-624, Giandomenico Majone Regulating Europe, London: Routledge, 1996 and Giandomenico Majone 'The Regulatory State and its Legitimacy Problems', *West European Politics* 22: 1, 1999, pp. 1-24. For an alternative critique see Andreas Føllesdal and Simon Hix 'Why there is a democratic deficit in the EU: a response to Majone and Moravcsik', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44:3, pp. 553-562.
[42] Daniel Wincott 'Regulatory Governance and the European Social Model: the Challenge of Substantive Legitimacy', *European Law Journal* 12:6, 2006, pp. 743-763.

think through the application of Rokkanian insights to the evolution of European state forms and political space.

Political Theory

Talk of legitimacy also begs reflection on some deeply important normative questions. One of the most welcome developments in recent EU studies is the so called 'normative turn',[43] where the tools of political theory are deployed in response to anxieties surrounding questions of statehood and sovereignty in light of European integration, the appropriate form of polity that should hold in an integrating Europe, the sorts of values and objectives that this polity should carry, how questions of distributive justice might be settled in the EU and how borders and identity can be re-thought given processes of transnational and domestic restructuring.[44] If we take a key question like legitimacy, then there is no single normative political theory 'line'. Instead there are many possible conclusions that the toolkits of normative political theory can deliver.[45] Here is another example of the openness alluded to throughout this review. This time it is the increased openness of EU studies – a field that perhaps risks entrapment in a rather narrow technical and problem solving frame of analysis – to incorporate broader sets of philosophical questions into its project. The scrutinising presence of political theorists within and around the field has meant that standard accounts of the EU are now inspected and critiqued in terms of their normative and ethical content. It has also given political theorists licence to engage with concrete and urgent problems of governance.

Albert Weale's work is especially relevant in this context because he offers a good example of this kind of dialogic openness between portions of the discipline that have much to say to each other, yet often do not get the chance to have a decent conversation. Weale has combined the empirical study of public policy – especially environmental policy – with a large body of theoretical work on equality, justice and

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[43] Richard Bellamy and Dario Castiglione 'Legitimising the Euro-polity and its regime: the normative turn in EU studies', *European Journal of Political Theory* 2:1, 2003, pp. 7-34. For overviews of the literature see Andreas Føllesdal 'Normative Political Theory and the European Union', in Knud Erik Jørgensen, Mark A. Pollack and Ben Rosamond eds *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London: Sage, 2007, pp. 317-335 and Lynn Dobson 'Normative Theory and Europe', *International Affairs* 82:3, 2006, pp. 511-523.

[44] This list of topics comes from Føllesdal 'Normative Political Theory', pp. 318-319.

[45] See the discussion of the sheer range of political theory-informed perspectives on legitimacy offered by Føllesdal 'Normative Political Theory', pp. 323-328.

citizenship. In this volume, Weale is concerned with the compatibility of the EU as a project that is ever deepening in terms of the drift of policy competence and widening in terms of its territorial reach on the one hand and the basic precepts of democratic citizenship on the other. As Weale himself notes,[46] what he is holding constant a conception of the norms of democratic citizenship rather than using the excuse of European restructuring to open up debates about how these norms might be rethought (a strategy that would be especially favoured by Beck and Grande). While this may ultimately be the way to go intellectually, Weale's strategy is more cautious yielding a sophisticated thought experiment around three central questions about the reasons democratic citizens may have for respectively accepting the legitimacy of the EU, favouring the deepening of European integration and favouring the widening of the EU.[47] Why not run these questions first, before moving to radically new conceptions of citizenship? The answer is that working through these problems, via the construction of a theory of political association rooted in Rawlsian ideas of citizenship and the idea of 'practical reason'[48] yields a typically complex, if optimistic view of the EU's capacity to reconcile itself with democratic citizenship as construed historically in the evolution of the European nation-state.

Holding static (yet specifying precisely) what is meant by democratic citizenship allows the discovery that in some areas – notably environmental policy – the EU has citizenship-enhancing qualities. In this sphere, argues Weale, the EU positively 'enhances the value of freedom of political association, since it provides an institutional context in which groups of political actors can join together, with possible profit, to pursue a common cause'.[49] Although, the picture is different in other policy domains that Weale discusses, the key point is that our capacity to judge whether it is appropriate to delegate authority to a supranational body should not be a dry matter of functional fit built only around the idea that public goods occur at different levels of action.[50] Rather the delivery of public goods needs to be connected to the fundamentally normative question of how a shift of competence can augment

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[46] *Democratic Citizenship*, p. 14.
[47] *Democratic Citizenship*, pp. 13-14.
[48] *Democratic Citizenship*, chs 2 and 3
[49] *Democratic Citizenship*, p.144.
[50] This idea was classically formulated in early functionalist theories of post-national institution-building. See, most prominently, David Mitrany *A Working Peace System*, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966 [1943].

and better the existing scope for the exercise of citizenship rights through forms of political association.[51]

Conclusion

Through reading each of the political science contributions reviewed here, it becomes apparent that the idea of overthrowing conventional wisdoms about state space in light of European integration, while well intentioned and quite compelling, might be incautious and hasty. In their separate ways, the works of Olsen, Schmidt, Bartolini and Weale would all be convicted of the crime of methodological nationalism. But each of these contributions is a timely reminder that political science is still highly capable of building upon classical concepts as a way of delivering meaningful empirical research that, at the very least, throws back deep insight and oftentimes fascinating counter intuitive results. If the intuitions that are being countered are of the variety promulgated by Beck and Grande, then the corrective function of political science is reason enough for its continuation.

Yet, this cannot be a blanket defence of political science in all of its manifestations. As this article has tried to show, a necessary precondition for the collective excellence of the four volumes is a willingness to be open and pluralistic, be it Olsen's trans-disciplinary grasp of many literatures, Schmidt's propensity to theoretical and methodological eclecticism, Bartolini's mining of the archive of 'old' political science or Weale's skilful blend of policy analysis and political theory. Each shows that robust enquiry need not be closed around a series of tightly agreed epistemological precepts and methodological rules of thumb, which in turn runs the risk of taking the EU to be a 'normal' polity without doing the intellectual leg work that specifies the circumstances under which this might actually be the case.[52] Put another way, there is no need, nor will there ever be, to circle the wagons in pursuit of a 'normal science' of EU studies.

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[51] *Democratic Citizenship*, p. 94
[52] For elaboration see Rosamond 'The Political Sciences of European Integration'.

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