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ARTICLE

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# A Sociology of Knowledge Approach to European Integration: Four Analytical Principles

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**ABSTRACT** Scholars are deeply involved in the process of European integration, but we lack systematic understanding of this involvement. On the one hand, scholars, academic ideas and ideologies shape European integration and policies (e.g. the Economic and Monetary Union and the free movement of people). On the other hand, EU institutions, policies and practitioners produce particular forms of knowledge (e.g. the Eurobarometer and benchmarking of national performances) that inform social scientific choices of theories, methods and research topics. Drawing on the new sociology of knowledge as well as Science and Technology Studies (STS) and political sociology, this introductory article develops a framework for studying the entanglement of EU studies with the EU around four analytical principles: (1) the principle of symmetry, (2) the principle of rejecting the internal/external division, (3) the principle of situatedness and (4) the principle of contextualism. A sociology of knowledge approach provides alternative explanations of the EU's development and of our scholarly attempts to make sense of it.

**KEY WORDS:** EU studies, European integration theories, political sociology, sociology of knowledge, sociology of science, Science and Technology Studies

## Introduction

In terms of normative power, I broadly agree: we are one of the most important, if not the most important, normative powers in the world. (José Manuel Barroso quoted in Peterson 2008, 69)

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This was the response from President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, in 2007 when he was interviewed by Professor in International Politics, John Peterson, about Europe's role in the world. Few citizens probably understood what this 'normative power' was supposed to mean. Still fewer were aware that Barroso was paraphrasing one of the most quoted articles on EU foreign policy, entitled 'Normative Power Europe' (Manners 2002).<sup>1</sup> Manners argued that the EU had created a peculiar context in which nationalism was seen as a failure, and in which the Union stood as a particular and promising organization. In a later revision of his argument, Manners wrote: 'As José Manuel Barroso argued when asked to comment on my normative power approach, the EU might be one of the most important normative powers in the world because of its ability to establish normative principles and apply them to different realities' (Manners 2008, 60).

This direct exchange between Barroso — a European political leader — and Manners — a scholar specialized in EU studies — is not unique. The social sciences and the EU are deeply interwoven. On the one hand, European integration contributes to the production of particular forms of knowledge and specific research questions (e.g. the Eurobarometer, EU framework programmes, cross-national and cross-disciplinary mega-projects and various kinds of statistics used in benchmarking national performance). On the other hand, social science knowledge shapes European practices and institutions (e.g. the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the free movement of people and counter-terrorism).<sup>2</sup>

Different academic disciplines have helped produce the EU. Economics is perhaps the most striking example; a discipline that not only developed economic theories promoting harmonization of the single market and the establishment of the EMU, but also participated in their legitimation and sometimes gained from their establishment in practice (Barry 1993; Hay and Rosamond 2002; Mudge and Vauchez 2012; Ryner 2012). The single market and the EMU point us to the entanglement between the political, economic and cultural processes of European integration on the one hand and developments in the social sciences on the other. In short, it directs our attention to the co-production of theories and practices of European integration.

Notwithstanding the general agreement that the social sciences play an important role in shaping ideas and practices of European integration, the process remains understudied. Rosamond concludes his textbook on European integration theories by stating that 'a full treatment of theories of European integration [...] has to be attentive to "sociology of knowledge" issues' (Rosamond 2000, 196). Similarly, Saurugger insists on understanding the 'social, political or academic context' of European integration theories (Saurugger 2014, 3). Yet, so far, few scholars have picked up on these suggestions. Fifteen years after a path-breaking special issue promoted a constructivist (but not explicitly sociology of knowledge) approach to European integration (Christiansen, Jorgensen, and Wiener 1999), we still lack a systematic understanding of how academic ideas and social knowledge shape European governance and the other way around.

However, the last decade has seen the rise of various forms of critique and reflexivity, not only within European populations, reflected for instance in euro-scepticism, but also among scholars studying European integration. Following the ‘normative turn’ of EU studies in the 1990s, and the debate on the so-called democratic deficit, there has been a boom in critical and reflectivist works on European integration. Ranging from political theoretical analyses (e.g. Føllesdal 2006), legal critiques (e.g. Walker 1998; Vauchez 2008), political sociological accounts (e.g. Adler-Nissen 2008, 2014; Bernhard 2011; Favell and Guiraudon 2009; Kauppi 2003; Saurugger and Mérand 2010) to anthropological work (e.g. Abélès 1992; Shore 2000) and re-examinations of the integration process (and its aim of ‘an ever closer Union’), EU scholars are beginning to reflect more systematically about their own role in the production of knowledge about the EU. In this respect, Radaelli’s (1995, 1999) use of concepts such as ‘policy paradigms’ to understand the diffusion of economic ideas, agenda-setting and policy learning as well as Verdun’s (1999) work on how the Delors committee transmitted beliefs of central bankers into the project for a single European currency were pioneering. Both focus on the relationship between knowledge, power and policy, but their use of sociology of knowledge insights is often latent.

This article — and the special issue as a whole — seeks to introduce a sociology of knowledge approach to European integration. Building on reflectivist work in EU studies, the aim is to promote theoretical, methodological and empirical insights on the nature of EU studies and its theory effects. We seek to provide a first step towards an analysis of the co-production of social science research and European integration, understood broadly as a political, legal, economic, social, cultural and philosophical phenomenon. One caveat before we begin: as this introduction is intended as an accessible and brief introduction to a range of concepts and ideas from sociology of knowledge and science, we inevitably engage in a simplifying and reductionist exercise, grossly overlooking important works and ideas. For those interested in continuing the debate, we can only recommend revisiting the original works.

This introductory article is organized as follows. First, we account for some key insights from the new sociology of science and knowledge. We develop four inter-related and overlapping analytical arguments or principles that can be used in the analysis of European integration and EU studies: (1) the principle of symmetry, (2) the principle of rejecting the internal/external division, (3) the principle of situatedness and (4) the principle of contextualism. We do not claim that the four analytical moves are exhaustive or representative of all sociology of knowledge and science. However, we find they are particularly useful for analyzing the co-production of knowledge in settings where academic and politico-bureaucratic knowledge is closely interwoven as is the case with the EU. Below, we briefly illustrate how these analytical principles give rise to new questions and alternative explanations of both current and historical debates on the EU and show how the principles have guided the empirical analysis in the special issue. We conclude by providing an overview of the rest of the special issue.

### **Introducing Insights from Sociology of Knowledge**

There are many ways to present the disciplinary history of EU studies. One of the most common is to tell it as a chronological story of successive schools of thought. EU studies then appears as a progressive development of integration theories (for a discussion of ‘progressivism’ in EU studies, see Rosamond 2007). With each new approach, a problem encountered by a previous theory could be solved (see also Waever 1998, 690). For example, intergovernmentalism was presented as an improvement to neo-functionalism because it could explain both periods of radical change in the EU (due to converging governmental preferences) and periods of inertia (due to diverging national interests). However, many textbook introductions to European integration do not make as much of out the theories or ideas that failed or were marginalized as the ones that survived. Moreover, they usually pay little attention to the academic, political and social context and situational conditions within which the theories and debates emerged (for important exemptions, see Calhoun 2003; Rosamond 2000; Saurugger 2014; Wiener and Diez 2009; Smith 2011). As such, the established story (or myth) about the development of EU studies as a progressive academic field resembles the story told in most scientific fields about accumulation of knowledge and sophistication of theories through corrections and empirical falsification. But could we tell another story? How do other interests than the ‘pure’ interest in knowledge influence the production of social scientific knowledge about European integration? In the following sections, we indicate where such questions lead to a rather different understanding of EU studies.

### **From Classical Sociology to the New Sociology of Knowledge**

While a distinct field of sociology of knowledge and science emerged rather late in the history of sociological specialization, questions of sociology of knowledge were also raised by classical sociological theorists such as Marx, Durkheim and Mannheim. With varying degrees, their assumption can be characterized as social determinism of knowledge. This position is perhaps best exemplified by Marx’ analysis of ideologies as determined by the basis or substructure. Marx argued that ideas and knowledge are linked to specific material interests, class positions and the general mode of production (Marx and Engels 1970). Marx thus saw knowledge and ideas as inherently different from the real world, and the main function of ideologies and knowledge was to mystify or mask the real world and contribute to the exploitation and accumulation of capital.

In a different vein, Durkheim acknowledged the importance of common symbolic representations, collective identities and social categories for society (Durkheim 1982, 238). Durkheim stressed that collective ideas, including notions of time, space and causality, were products of the social organization and division of labour in society. However, he maintained that the symbolic systems of society are not just mere reflections of economic and material forces, but they are also means through which society becomes conscious of itself. Despite granting symbolic forms an important place in understanding modern societies, Durkheim stayed within the

dogma of social determinants of knowledge, stressing the difference between the real and ideational or symbolic forms. As Gieryn notes, neither the classical sociological thinkers nor the second generation, including Mannheim and Scheler, questioned the distinction between formal scientific knowledge and cultural and social phenomena (Gieryn 2001). This distinction was prominently challenged with Merton's work in the 1950s and 1960s. Merton's functionalist sociological approach examined the academic institutions within which scientific knowledge was formed, analysing stratification, meritocracy, growth in scientific production, productivity and specialization and not least analysing the norms and standards of sciences and norm conformity (Merton 1968, 1973; Zuckerman 1988). But Merton did not examine the production of scientific knowledge itself.

Kuhn's (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* began to question the nature of scientific knowledge more fundamentally. Kuhn's book swept through the social sciences, riding on the wave of student rebellion. Ever since, his concepts of 'paradigm' and 'incommensurability' have promoted the understanding that social scientific knowledge evolves not just through rational, logical exchanges of ideas, but in particular instances through scientific revolutions where entire worldviews change through intellectual battles between scholars that defend the old paradigm and those that promote a new one.

Within the broader constructivist-realist debate in the social sciences, scholars from what later became known as Science and Technology Studies (STS) and the new sociology of knowledge began to scrutinize everyday scientific knowledge production. The intellectual roots of this development were the so-called strong programme, in explicit opposition to Merton's functionalism (or 'weak programme'). This strong programme was developed in the 1970s at the Science Study Unit in Edinburgh by sociologists such as Bloor and Barnes (Bloor 1991). It also drew on Berger and Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) that argued that all knowledge, including the most basic, taken-for-granted common-sense knowledge of everyday reality, is derived from and maintained by social interactions. What makes the new sociology of knowledge 'new' is not only that it covers micro-sociological observations of individuals and groups working with particular interests and norms, but also that it includes more complex process-oriented questions of 'how kinds of social organization make whole orderings of knowledge possible' (Swidler and Arditi 1994).

Today, the new sociology of knowledge and STS serve as a reservoir for analysing social scientific knowledge practices. These fields of study recognize that scientific knowledge is neither a mere reflection of society nor the product of a detached and disinterested accumulative development (Camic and Gross 2001; Camic, Gross, and Lamont 2011; Ruppert, Law, and Savage 2013).<sup>3</sup> The subsequent sections develop four analytical principles from the sociology of knowledge and science, and STS illustrated with examples. Of course, other ways of presenting the new sociology of knowledge and science could have been chosen (see e.g. Callon 1995; Camic and Gross 2001; Lynch 1993). The four analytical principles do not amount to a theory as such, but they help us question and examine the relationship between the European integration and what is now known as EU studies.



### The Principle of Symmetry

One of the most important propositions in the new sociology of knowledge and science has been a call for *symmetry* in the analysis of scientific knowledge production. In short, the principle of symmetry prescribes approaching all scientific knowledge claims (both the ones we still hold as true and the ones that we now consider false) similarly to avoid writing off marginalized or unsuccessful approaches as examples of pathological or ‘failed’ science (Bloor 1991; Lynch 1993). This is in contrast to the traditional philosophy of sciences where scientific originality was conceived as an intrinsic evaluation of theoretical and empirical contributions. This first principle evokes an ambition of levelling the playing field so that what are (or were) considered as facts are taken as beliefs to be explained socially (see also Latour 2005). This does not imply that all cases should be explained the same way, but the analytical move seeks to avoid teleology.

One example is McLaughlin’s analysis of the rise and fall of Neo-Freudianism and its main proponent Erich Fromm (McLaughlin 1998). McLaughlin asks why some theoretical traditions and schools of thought fail or vanish after a period of relative success. He examines the intellectual trajectory of Neo-Freudianism and psychoanalyst and German *émigré* Erich Fromm. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Neo-Freudian theory and psychoanalysis were influential in both academic and public circles in the US, but failed to establish themselves as an independent and institutionalized school of thought. Rather than arguing that Neo-Freudianism provided poor scientific results or explanations, McLaughlin shows that the failure was an effect of complex processes within the Neo-Freudian tradition, changing institutional conditions in the post-war US university system, the specialization of psychology and social sciences, and the development of a mass market for intellectual products. In other words, the ‘failure’ of Neo-Freudianism was not just a consequence of its cognitive limits and problems. This example highlights the symmetry principle, underlining that the sociology of knowledge should avoid teleological explanations that take scientific knowledge and facts as mere products of a rational accumulative development, and that, rather, it should understand them as the outcome of complex historical and social processes.

In their contribution to this special issue, Matthijs and McNamara draw on the principle of analytical symmetry to analyse responses to the euro crisis. They show why alternatives to *ordo-liberalism* such as Eurobonds failed to take hold as the euro crisis evolved. In a similar vein, Penissat and Rowell’s contribution analyses why the EU’s attempts to create harmonized socio-economic statistics, as a way to measure ‘social Europe’, has so far not succeeded. They show that this is not just a question of lack of political will, but also the effects of conflicting legitimacies within expert networks, the experts’ lack of resources and contacts as well as an EU bureaucracy that is more oriented towards economic than sociological methodologies.

Turning to European integration theory with the principle of symmetry forces us to rethink the social and intellectual history of the field. Most obvious could be reconsidering the ‘cyclical challenges’ to neofunctionalism

in the light of the principle of symmetry. Ernst B. Haas' neofunctionalism (1958) was a dominant theory from the late 1950s to late 1960s, how did neofunctionalism fall and later rise again in the 1990s? The textbook explanation is that it overestimated the spillover effect and political tensions leading to the Empty Chair crisis in 1965–1966 (Jensen 2013, 61; Saurugger 2014), but as Ben Rosamond discusses in his contribution and elsewhere (2005), neo-functional ideas were also part of the Commission's strategic narrative. Such processes of entanglement contributed to its initial success and its later falling out of academic fashion.

### Rejecting the Internal/External Division

The analytical strategy of rejecting the *internal/external division* implies acknowledging that scholarly production is entangled with broader social developments. Traditionally, the sociology of science recognized the importance of material and institutional factors for the growth and production of scientific knowledge, but this restricted the sociology of science from explaining scientific knowledge as such, partly by viewing science an autonomous social institution guided by a set of norms ensuring a rational scientific development (Gieryn 1999; Lamont and Molnár 2002; Shapin 1992, 1995; Shapin and Schaffer 1985). As we noted earlier, classical sociology of knowledge largely focused on the social determinants of knowledge. For Mannheim, for instance, the main task was to distinguish 'socially determined' elements from 'immanent' elements (Mannheim 1985). Since the 1970s attention has shifted, and today focus is predominantly on how scientists, politicians and the public fight over the boundaries of science, how to distinguish experts from layman, science from non-science and one scientific discipline from another. By rejecting the internal/external dimension, the distinction between science and the broader society is turned into an empirical question: how do 'non-academic' resources, materials, viewpoints and ideas help transform and become transformed by scientific products and processes?

Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of German philosopher Martin Heidegger is an example of the rejection of the external/internal divide (Bourdieu 1991). In this book (that serves as a model for analysis of scientific or intellectual social 'fields'), Bourdieu shows how the philosophy of Heidegger was not only produced by dynamics within German philosophy in the first part of the twentieth century. Heidegger's philosophy was also influenced by the political and cultural context of the Weimar Republic through what Bourdieu designates as a 'homologous position', referring to a similar position in different social fields. Heidegger's work was shaped by his particular social trajectories, which were different from the established philosophers, as well as his usages of everyday words, concepts and dichotomies in the otherwise technical philosophical discourse. Bourdieu concludes that one can neither understand Heidegger's philosophy as merely formed by dynamics in German philosophy in the early twentieth century nor as mere reflection of the socio-economic and political environment of the Weimar Republic — Heidegger's thinking was both.

To overcome the external/internal distinction, we can ask how the relationship between different academic fields and specialties and European political and bureaucratic institutions have been established and developed.<sup>4</sup> How have resources in the form of finance, people and institutional recognition connected specific ideas, people and institutions? How has the boundary between sciences and politics been negotiated, policed and crossed and with what consequences?

Turning to EU studies, a number of cases illustrate the value of this analytical perspective. Most obvious is the development of economic ideas and theories that have informed (and have been produced by) the European Commission, as Rosamond shows in his contribution. Another example is the emergence of a distinct European legal order and *acquis communautaire*, as Vauchez shows in his article. In both cases, academic ideas have been closely linked with political ambitions and practical problems. A third example is educational student exchanges, sponsored by the EU, which have been a means to produce a European identity and strengthen personal and cultural bonds between peoples of the different Member States (see also Shore 2000). With the Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy in the 2000s, education and research became increasingly important parts of the European economic growth strategy. As Deem shows in her contribution and alludes to elsewhere (2006), the rise of research in higher education, also sponsored by the EU, has not only produced new insights on the actual workings of higher education, it has also been shaped by the EU's particular growth ideas. The analytical principle of rejecting the internal/external divide can also be found in some more recent work on policy paradigms, policy transfer and epistemic communities that focus on resources, networks and processes of intellectual socialization of elites (e.g. Cross 2013; Mügge 2011). However, this analytical principle takes such projects one step further in insisting on including questions of data access, scholarly traditions and the broader social field of academic knowledge production in the analysis.

This approach is also relevant when examining general theoretical trends within EU studies. As the EU developed towards a more integrated polity, comparative politics, public administration and governance scholars entered the field with different ways of approaching European integration (Aspinwall and Schneider 2000; Jönsson and Tallberg 2008; Bickerton 2012). The usual (internal) explanation is that the 'governance turn' was a reaction to the 'sterile' debate between intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism (Hooghe and Marks 2003). However, seen from the perspective of rejecting the external/internal divide, one of the particularities of much of the governance literature is that it often depends on material and data (quantitative and qualitative) that only the European Commission or national bureaucracies produce and possess. This raises interesting questions about boundaries: for instance, how have these studies and scholars contributed to constructing what is now known as the European Administrative Space (Olsen 2003)? How have the European Commission and other bureaucracies produced 'benchmarks' and 'best practices' and how have these notions become popular in European public governance studies?

Such questions highlight the importance of analysing processes of co-production and entanglement.

### The Principle of Situatedness

The production of scientific knowledge is often (re)presented as universal and accumulative activities, practised in global, or at least national, scientific disciplines (Camic 1991; Patel 2010; Platt 2010). EU studies, as mentioned above, also tells a progressive story about itself, where the different approaches and perspectives advance through universal theoretical innovations and empirical breakthroughs. Against this, the new sociology of sciences stresses that scientific knowledge is often shaped by local conditions in which it is practised and institutionalized — it emphasizes a *localism* or *situatedness* in knowledge production (Abbott 1999; Knorr Cetina 1999; Lynch 1993). The production of specific kinds of scientific knowledge, and their content and relation to other kinds of scientific knowledge production and institutionalization, is heavily related to situated factors that we need to reconstruct, often through the micro-history of scholars, conferences, meetings, departments and academic schools, to understand how social scientific knowledge was produced (Camic 1995). At the heart of argument for situatedness lies an ethnographic method deriving largely from an anthropological approach to science and knowledge. The argument is that even the most abstract and universally formulated ideas and knowledge claims are inescapably situated. Furthermore, it is argued that scientific knowledge is produced in rather small communities and that understanding the specific organization of and interaction within these small communities are crucial in understanding the social contours of specific knowledge-producing communities. In other words, scientific knowledge claims and facts are judged in the situation, and scientific credibility is thus largely locally produced (Shapin and Schaffer 1985). This directs the focus of research towards the local, often micro-scale, interactions between scholars and their within and between departments, at conferences and meetings. It also focuses on scholars' intellectual interactions through texts.

A programmatic example of this kind of historiography and sociology of social science can be found in Charles Camic's (1995) article about the early institutionalization of US sociology. Camic asks why sociology was conceived and institutionalized in the US in three very distinct ways in the early twentieth century. He shows that the three different approaches to sociology developed from different local circumstances in which scientific judgments were made differently. Thus, both choice of methods and research objects were highly influenced by relations to other disciplines and departments at specific universities as well as the sequence within which the social science disciplines were established at the different US universities. Consequently, US sociologists *in spe* had to relate and legitimate their own knowledge production against different epistemological cultures and disciplines.

Such micro-interactions and relations between scholars as well as non-academics have also played an important role in the development of EU

studies. Theories and approaches to European integration have been influenced by scholars from other disciplines — physically or institutionally located close to the offices of EU scholars. Moreover, concrete meetings between academics and agents outside academia (NGOs, bureaucrats, political parties and companies) have shaped both academic thinking and practical politics (for an interesting study of the role of experts in EU research policy, see Tamtik and Creso 2012). Moving to other issues, we could ask how different knowledge producers enter into close relations with policy-makers and bureaucrats and how first-hand experience and personal relations influence knowledge production. Furthermore, how do local epistemological landscapes, personal relations and organizational settings shape theory development in EU studies?

Such processes are described in a fascinating, but rarely quoted article about the interaction between neofunctionalists and the pioneering Hallstein Commission. Jonathan P.J. White shows how specific concepts such as ‘spillover’ and ‘the logic of integration’ were conveyed through personal meetings between central agents in the Hallstein Commission and neofunctionalists in Brussels (White 2003). Neofunctionalist theory played an important role, as a live ‘knowledge archive’, for how the Hallstein Commission made sense of the world and designed policies as Rosamond shows in his contribution. In Ole Hammerslev’s contribution, which provides an alternative analysis of the enlargement process, situatedness also takes centre stage. He shows how leading American and European lawyers competed locally in the emerging market of legal expertise in Bulgaria after the fall of the Communist regimes.

### The Principle of Contextualism

The fourth and last analytical principle we present here is the claim that scientific knowledge is *contextual*. Similar to the principle of situatedness, this principle emphasizes the historical, geographical and social specificity of scientific knowledge and insists that the meanings of knowledge and ideas are not immediately or universally understandable or transparent (Camic and Gross 2001). The new sociology of science and knowledge stresses that all knowledge is produced in relation to other knowledge claims and in specific knowledge cultures or civic epistemologies (Jasanoff 2005). Scientific knowledge products acquire meaning in relation to other scientific statements and knowledge claims. We therefore need to analyze social scientific knowledge as historical products in relation to their symbolic, linguistic and social context. We have to consider the discussions, debates and world views that researchers subscribe to and are located within. In practice, this often implies accounting for less-known researchers, non-canonized, marginal positions and long forgotten points of view to understand the meaning, intention and success of some scholars.

Michele Lamont’s (1987) analysis of the reception of French philosopher Jacques Derrida in France and the US shows the importance of taking the context of production, perception and evaluation of scientific knowledge products into account. Lamont shows how Derrida’s work was received

and gained prominence in the humanities, mainly philosophy and literary criticism, during the 1960s and 1970s. This took place through different channels of communication, in different academic fields and on different grounds in France and the US. In France, Derrida's work first gained its academic reputation through its connection to the prestigious phenomenological and German philosophical tradition in France, where Derrida's work was defused through cultural journals along with other prominent post-war intellectuals. In the US, Derrida's deconstruction was taken up by literary critics using its critic of logocentrism in western thought in a defence of interpretive humanistic sciences. Here, it gained legitimacy through professional literary criticism, journals and institutions. However, it did not find fertile ground in analytical and language-centred Anglo-American philosophy. Lamont analyses the difference between the two national academic contexts, both in regards to accepted epistemological styles, modes of knowledge circulation and institutional organization (Guetzkow, Lamont, and Mallard 2004; Knorr Cetina 1999).

The 1990s 'normative turn' in EU studies serves as a case for the importance of the context of knowledge production and the kind of questions and explanations it helps produce. What context in different national academic fields led to the surge of interest in legitimacy, democracy and the question of a European public (e.g. Bellamy and Castiglione 2003; Follesdal and Hix 2006; Habermas 2004; Lord and Beetham 2001; Lord and Magnette 2004)? Is this normative focus reflected in the relative decline of EU studies in the US (Andrews 2012)? Some argue that the growing interest in the relationship between democracy and European integration was primarily due to theoretical innovations (i.e. Warleigh 2006, 17). Others claim that the increasing interest in democracy and legitimacy among EU scholars was directly linked to the perception of a lack of popular support for the EU (Bickerton 2012). As Chris Lord writes, 'More than any other single event, it was the crisis in 1992–1993, provoked by the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU), which shattered any illusion that the legitimation of EU power was a 'non-problem'' (Lord 2000, 4). The turn to political theory in the EU made a huge impact, generating a whole new way of doing EU research, but its origins and context of development remain unclear.

Table 1 provides an overview of our four sociology of knowledge arguments or analytical principles.

### Structure of the Special Issue

The articles in this special issue approach the entanglement of EU and social scientific knowledge from the perspective of the new sociology of knowledge and sciences. While the contributors each have their distinct empirical focus, they all draw on one or several of the four analytical principles.

Ben Rosamond considers the entanglement of theories of international relations and international economics on the one hand and an emergent supranational policy actor on the other. The formation of the European Communities in the late 1950s and early 1960s is well known as a moment of radical supranational institutional creation. This is a period in which

Table 1. Four analytical principles of sociology of knowledge

	(1) Symmetry	(2) Rejection of internal/external divide	(3) Situatedness	(4) Contextualism
Focus	Ensuring impartiality and avoiding teleology in explaining success and failure of scientific knowledge	Socio-economic and political environment	Situatedness, local processes and micro-interactions	Interaction and relation between different forms of knowledge situated in particular spaces
Example	McLaughlin's work on the rise and fall of Fromm's Neo-Freudianism	Bourdieu's work on Heidegger's thinking as both reflecting German philosophy and the society of the Weimer Republic	Camic's work on the institutionalization of US sociology in three schools	Lamont's work on the reception of Derrida in the US vs. in France
Key questions	Why do we conceive certain scientific contributions as more true or original than others?	How do 'non-academic' resources, materials, viewpoints and ideas help transform and become transformed by scientific products and processes?	Where is knowledge produced — by whom and in what institution?	What is the academic environment in which scientific products are being produced and how do they relate to other academic products?
	Why are some theoretical and empirical contributions forgotten after periods of academic recognition while others only gain recognition later?		How do local epistemological settings, coalitions and conflicts, teacher-student ties, career strategies and so on influence knowledge products?	What are perceived as possible, legitimate and interesting research questions and/or conclusions in the specific epistemological community?



both economists and political scientists sought to theorize the processes of regional integration as it was happening. Guided by the principle of understanding science as inherently situated in political and social processes, the article shows that the newly formed European Commission, in both its communicative and coordinative discourse, drew selectively on the 'live' knowledge archive of both international economics and international relations to generate a strategic narrative about what European economic integration entailed, how it would be accomplished, and (crucially) what kind of actor it was. At the same time, the semi-inductive quality of academic knowledge production meant that the Commission's activities were simultaneously being theorized into the live archive from which it was drawing. The article examines the influence of two bodies of theory that led surprisingly parallel lives, but which both influenced the Commission: Balassa's theory of international economic integration and neofunctionalism. Rosamond concludes that the authority of social scientific knowledge is shaped by specific institutional situations and that it is not Economics per se, but rather the metaphors that it generates, that shaped the Commission's strategies.

Antoine Vauchez asks how EU law became widely acknowledged as a specific and self-standing 'body of law'. He tracks the origins of one of Europe's most ubiquitous knowledge instruments: the *acquis*. Instead of considering the *acquis* as a self-explanatory and transparent notion, Vauchez employs the principles of contextualism to understand the rich political meaning of the *acquis*, pointing at its instrumental role in shaping a law-centred and supranational definition of Europe. Rejecting the internal/external divide and digging deep into individual and institutional genealogies, the article follows the methodological entrepreneurs who crafted new knowledge instruments for calculating Europe's state of affairs (the Celex database) and analyses the process through which they have progressively acquired a monopoly in the calculation of 'the state of the Union', thereby encapsulating within the very rules of the European game itself a form of 'methodological Europeanism'.

Drawing on all the four principles sketched out in this introduction, Antje Wiener develops the concept of 'strategic blueprinting' as a distinct practice of norm transfer, thereby turning the 'normative power approach' on its head. Rather than transferring norms from the inside of liberal communities out, outsiders choose to copy parts of the *acquis communautaire*. The article compares this process with other types of norm transfer such as transplantation and diffusion. She shows that EU norm transfer is a much more contested and complicated form of knowledge co-production, where bits and pieces of the *acquis communautaire* are more or less strategically selected, copied and adapted within the constitutional or proto-constitutional framework of regions outside the EU. This underlines the importance in understanding how knowledge travels across national and regional borders and changes when used in new local and contextual settings.

Matthias M. Matthijs and Kathleen R. McNamara analyse the responses to the euro crisis and asks why austerity and structural reform won out over other plausible, and more 'systemic' solutions, like a pooling of



sovereign debt or the formation of an economic government? To understand this puzzle, their article draws on the principle of symmetry to argue that the response to the euro crisis was heavily informed by broader social logics. Mapping the fate of the Eurobond proposals in Germany allows them to trace the complex entanglement of economic policy-making and parse out the ways in which social realities are shaped to make particular policy choices seem inevitable when they in fact were the product of social processes. Looking at how the boundaries between economic and politics are negotiated and how economic knowledge was used politically, the article shows how the ‘solution’ came to draw heavily on ordoliberal (austerity and the adherence to strict fiscal rules) and neoliberal (importance of structural reform) ideas.

Ole Hammerslev provides an alternative analysis of the enlargement process. Against the backdrop of an empirical study about how leading American and European lawyers competed in Bulgaria after the fall of the Communist regimes, Hammerslev’s article builds on the principles of situatedness and contextualism to explore how western lawyers were involved in the reorganization of the fields of power in Eastern Europe. The transformation of the Eastern European countries from communist states to EU members was supported by massive investments in western discourses and social science knowledge, and export programmes for these from the west to the east. The article thus situates both the production and usage of the ‘model of the state’. In the west, and specifically in the US, a market for discourses and knowledge production professionalized and intertwined with institutions that exported specific forms of policy visions of US modes of the State. In the east, the importation of discourses and knowledge became pivotal in the struggles for power of modelling the state and its institutions, and thus as knowledge tools to guide and legitimize the path towards democracy and later towards membership of the EU.

Rosemary Deem examines the relationship between changes in European higher education (HE) and social science research on higher education arguing that studies of higher education in Europe are closely related to policy agendas of the EU. HE research is a new field that has been significantly assisted by European funding, the Bologna process and the massification of HE. The field is characterized by many doctoral researchers but fewer established researchers. Deem examines three recent major European-funded HE research projects as examples of co-production, specifically looking at the kinds of knowledge produced and the strategies adopted to ensure that research outcomes permeate the policy process. Deem’s articles thus draw on the principle of rejecting the internal/external division and show how the relation between studies of HE and the EU is not just a matter of economic and institutional support, but also shapes the research questions asked and type knowledge produced in HE studies.

The principle of symmetry underscores Etienne Penissat and Jay Rowell’s contribution. They analyse how, since the 1990s, the EU has sought to create a harmonized socio-economic classification scheme, which symbolically unifies the social structures of the 28 Member States in a common tool of description. Relying heavily on expert networks, this project, with

numerous potential policy applications, has so far failed to come to fruition. After examining the scientific networks and institutional resources of an initial model, which was at the centre of discussions for nearly ten years, the article explores the reason for its ultimate failure. Combining science studies and a political sociology approach, and focusing in particular on the rejection of the internal/external divide, the article highlights the effects of conflicting legitimacies within expert networks, the lack of diversified institutional resources and contacts of the dominant experts, the poor fit of sociologically based methods to an EU administrative culture more focused on knowledge based on economic methodologies, and the lack of a wider European debate and mobilization on inequalities which, in national histories, were key to the creation of national socio-economic classification schemes.

In the last article, Ian Manners analyses the entanglement between the EU's attempts to construct its external actions in global politics and research on the EU as a global actor. Manners traces the spread and use of his own concept of 'normative power' Drawing on the four principles from this introduction, Manners shows the diffusion of the concept between different localities and between scholarly and political contexts. The article argues that both the development of EU external actions and research on EU's external actions suffer from unnecessary dichotomization. Advocates and analysts of the EU's normative power have argued that the separation of norms and interests, both in terms of policy-making and policy analysis, is impossible. In contrast, advocates and analysts of the EU as a 'normal power', a great power pole in the coming multipolar world, have dichotomized the advocacy of policy-making and the analysis of knowledge production of EU external actions. The article shows through an examination of the interlinking of policy-making and policy analysis, how such false dichotomies can weaken both the (sociology of) knowledge about the EU and the production of the EU's external actions.

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### **Notes**

1. The article had received 1758 quotes according to Google Scholar (accessed 15 September 2015).
2. See Favell for an exemplary critical review of research on migration and European integration (Favell 2011).

3. In this introduction, we can only mention a very small selection of the literature. For important contributions, see the introduction in Camic, Gross, and Lamont (2011) and Callon (1998), Collins (1998), Desrosières (1998), Fricke and Moore (2006), Guilhot (2011), Igo (2009), Lamont (2009), MacKenzie (2006); Mirowski (2002), Porter (1995), Porter and Ross (2003), Rueschemeyer and Skocpol (1996), Steinmetz (2005), Wagner (2001), Whitley (1984), and Wittrock, Wagner, and Wollmann (1991) just to mention a few of the most well-known.
4. For an application of this principle to International Relations, see Büger and Gadinger 2007.

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