

The Europeanisation of immigration politics

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Amsterdam Treaty, European citizenship, europeanization, free movement, IGC 1996, immigration policy, lobbying, minorities, political opportunity structure, Schengen, Third Pillar, asylum policy, NGOs, police cooperation, sociology

Abstract


With the 1996-7 IGC and signing of the Amsterdam Treaty, immigration has moved towards the top of the EU policy agenda. This paper offers an overview of developments on immigration, asylum and citizenship. It goes on to develop a sociological approach to Europeanisation, which identifies the principle actors and organisations which constitute the emerging 'political field' of immigration at the EU level. In particular, it discusses in detail the growing presence of NGOs in Brussels, and their strategies for influencing EU policy making. It also relates the success of these 'transnational' organisations to other forms of transnational cooperation between networks of European police and security experts, and between region and city networks. To understand in sociological terms the specific forms of empowerment enabled to certain groups by European integration, it is necessary to show how successful actors in the European circles have created new forms of social and cultural 'capital' beyond the nation state.

Kurzfassung

Mit der IGC 1996/97 und der Unterzeichnung des Amsterdamer Vertrages wurde dem Thema "Einwanderung" auf der EU-Agenda höhere Priorität eingeräumt. Dieses Papier bietet einen Überblick über die Entwicklungen in den Bereichen Einwanderung, Asyl und Bürgerschaft. Es entwickelt darauf aufbauend einen soziologischen Ansatz der Europäisierung dieses Bereichs, der die Hauptakteure und -organisationen des in Entstehung begriffenen 'Politikfeldes' "Einwanderung" auf EU-Ebene identifiziert. Im Detail wird insbesondere die wachsende Präsenz von NGOs in Brüssel und deren Strategien der Entscheidungsbeeinflussung auf EU-Ebene diskutiert. Es stellt darüber hinaus den Erfolg dieser 'transnationalen' Organisationen in Beziehung zu anderen Formen transnationaler Zusammenarbeit zwischen Netzwerken der europäischen Polizei- und Sicherheitsexperten sowie zwischen regionalen und städtischen Netzwerken. Um in soziologischen Begriffen die spezifischen Formen des Einflußgewinns bestimmter Gruppen durch die europäische Integration verstehen zu können, ist es notwendig zu zeigen, wie erfolgreiche Akteure in europäischen Kreisen neue Formen von sozialem und kulturellem 'Kapital' jenseits des Nationalstaates geschaffen haben.

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I. Introduction: Immigration, Europe and the nation state

Of the many substantive sectors of EU politics and policy that might be used to gauge the question of 'Europeanisation', perhaps none poses such an intriguing range of issues as that of immigration. The question of Europeanisation is centrally concerned with the challenge to the European nation state as the predominant form of social and political organisation in modern Europe: the emergence of new institutions, new types of social and political action, and new forms of culture beyond or across national boundaries. It challenges bounded notions of state sovereignty; of state control over social processes; and of state legitimacy over political membership and participation. Immigration, paradigmatically, has also been a challenge to the nation state along exactly these lines (on this, see especially Joppke 1998). In the post-war period, post-colonial and other immigration has brought new kinds of ethnic diversity to old, culturally settled European nation states, and with it social conflict and social change. As dual and multiple citizenship and present day communications and travel allow immigrants to be increasingly 'transnational' in their social ties and activities, some immigrant groups in Europe are pioneering a way of life that only incidentally can be said to be located in any one national 'society'.

As an area of political debate and policy activity, meanwhile, the study of immigration also offers a privileged insight into the functioning of western liberal democracies, particularly their degree of cultural openness in the face of social change. At a national level, political reactions to post-war immigration have been immensely revealing of the varied and distinctive national political cultures across Europe: dramatically reflecting ideas of nationhood, belonging, tolerance and progress in the way nation states have dealt with the challenge of ethnic and cultural difference (Brubaker 1992; Soysal 1994; Favell 1998a). As immigration, asylum and citizenship have moved towards the top of the EU agenda in the 80s and 90s, EU policy making on immigration and the institutional forms it takes, may therefore also offer a guide to the EU as a potential political and cultural entity in its own right. Moreover, any such Europeanisation of immigration politics also increases the challenge to the

nation state on sovereignty and control over these issues.

In this paper, I will seek to combine concerns taken from the recent literature on immigration, citizenship and transnationalism, with that on Europeanisation. In the first section, I outline the range of issues faced by the EU over immigration, asylum and citizenship, and the kind of responses that have been forthcoming (for more detailed studies, see also Favell 1998c; Koslowski 1995, 1998a, 1998b; Guild 1995, 1998; Geddes 1995, 1998, 1999). As I then go on to argue, my main interest is in showing how these developments have opened up new kinds of opportunities for certain selected groups and organisations to develop political action beyond traditional national settings. Generalising from observations on what I call the emerging 'political field' of immigration-related activities at the EU level, it may then be possible to make some wider comments about how to understand the Europeanisation taking place as a result of dynamics within EU institutions. In particular, my findings challenge the dominant construction of empirical research questions and normative commentaries in most current approaches to Europeanisation.

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II. EU immigration politics before and after Amsterdam

Policies on immigration and the integration of ethnic minorities in post-war Europe have always in the past been the firm province of the nation state. The many immigrants who came to the continent – whether former members of the colonies or contractual guest workers – were dealt with as the exclusive responsibility of their host nations. European governments, meanwhile, were very careful about asserting control over the policing of borders, and the power to decide who is a member of the country and who is not (in citizenship and nationality laws). The continuing progress of European integration in the 1980s and 90s appears to have upset all this. Within the context of the EU, European nation states are no longer self-contained, bordered units within which immigrants must integrate. Common laws and new political institutions challenge the sovereignty of each state to make policies or assert political control over immigration issues. Economic interdependence and the prospect of monetary union have rendered many government powers obsolete. Open borders make free movement and labour mobility much easier. And culturally, Europe as a whole appears to be fragmenting into a collection of smaller regional units and transnational cultural ties, as well as moving towards a more Europeanised common culture, founded (potentially at least) on a political unity of multinational and multicultural citizenship rights.

Against this background, migrants and minorities can no longer be seen exclusively as immigrants who will eventually be integrated into their more or less reluctant national hosts. Europe as a continent has faced a new set of migration questions in the last two decades, dramatically different from those posed by the post-colonial and guest worker immigration of the 1950s, 60s and 70s. These new questions include new forms of migration from Eastern Europe after the end of the cold war; the explosion in the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers; and the increasing ease of mobility of migrants, with transnational communications, cultural diasporas and global transport systems. Former emigrant countries such as Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece now face novel immigration problems, and pressure from their northern neighbours to hold borders to the south; federal countries in central Europe, such as Germany, Belgium, Switzerland and Austria, are turning to international cooperation as the only way to deal with East-West migration, and the massive permanent presence of non-national residents; even old colonial nations, such as Britain, Netherlands and France, find themselves facing asylum and minority problems scarcely imagined by policy makers in the past.

Nationally-controlled immigration restriction plus nationally-defined immigrant integration may have been the dominant pattern until the 1980s, and it still dominates most immigration scholars'

conception of Europe. Yet in parallel to this picture, European Union integration has led to an opposite set of developments. European integration has been built on the idea of free movement within the European political and economic space; it has also encouraged the idea of lessening national cultural differences and breaking down boundaries, in favour of a common European identity. Clearly, then, the question of how to deal with migrants and minorities in this context will cause many problems. Should such groups also be able to benefit from free movement within the Union? If so, are nations to drop the requirement that immigrants integrate into the dominant national culture (become French, Dutch, etc) in order to become full citizens? What about the many migrants residing in Europe who do not yet have full citizenship of their country of residence (who are known in Eurospeak as 'third country nationals')? Will an overarching category of 'European citizenship' be used to overcome these problems (developing the status of citizenship of the European Union agreed to in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992)?

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European governments in the 1980s began to recognise that there was a real need to cooperate on these questions within the context of intergovernmental agreements and existing EU institutions. This has, slowly, led to the identification of a series of substantial policy questions for the European Union concerning migration and minorities, which are over and above those developed in each individual national member state.

The most central issue has been the attempt to resolve the free movement versus immigration control dilemma. In parallel with free movement accords (the 'four freedoms' of goods, services, capital and persons), the EU has sought to develop a co-operative agreement on external immigration control with free internal borders: the Schengen agreement, now signed by all members apart from Britain and Ireland (with Denmark opting out of certain new provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty). The Schengen agreement provides for open frontiers with closer customs and police cooperation, allowing European citizens to come and go, while monitoring tightly the movement of non-European nationals. Among other measures on criminality and drug trafficking, it also confirms the rule established in the Dublin Convention that asylum seekers, once rejected from one member state, are rejected from all and sent back to the country from which they came (often a transit country in East Europe). As enlargement of the EU to the East has moved to the top of the agenda, the free movement versus migration issue has only grown in importance. One of the key criteria for joining the EU is now acceptance of the Schengen *acquis* (established rules and standards), a tough requirement also made conditional on acceptance of existing minority rights and citizenship standards in the West.

Inevitably, the establishment of this framework has led to other questions coming to the fore. First, for obvious reasons, has been the question of the political and social rights of third country nationals, who now have an inferior status in comparison with EU nationals. Should they be able to benefit from the free movement agreements, even though they are not yet full citizens of the countries in which they reside? A related, but broader question, is that of the possible harmonization of formal citizenship and nationality (or 'naturalization') laws, and the growing practice of allowing dual nationality in each member state. The EU itself is not allowed jurisdiction in this matter, but the Council of Europe has intervened decisively on the question of nationality (see Checkel 1999). Third, has been the potential development of common anti-discrimination laws within European law. Existing laws vary greatly from country to country, and European coordination on this question is increasingly seen as an essential first step towards improving rights and protecting minority status (see Bell 1998; Lloyd 1999). Fourth, has been the possibility of developing substantial cultural or social entitlements and recognition for migrant and minority groups: using European social policy to intervene in a key area of immigrant and minority integration. Finally, there has been the question of supporting and encouraging immigrant representation and mobilisation at the European level, through formal

institutional channels such as the Commission sponsored 'Migrants' Forum' (Smith et al 1998).

Together, these potential developments could amount to a new common European migration 'regime' or 'policy framework' (scholars differ on their theoretical language here), which, if coherent, might supersede national differences and distinctions on the question. However, such a framework is as yet incomplete and compromised by inconsistencies and contradictions. The question of immigration moved to the centre of the immediate European Union agenda partly because of its anomalous status as a policy and legal issue. Many of the cooperative measures have hitherto been dealt with only within the intergovernmental 'third pillar' of the European Union (cooperation on Justice and Home Affairs), and hence outside the main Community constitutional and parliamentary structures (Guyomarch 1997). One of the central stated aims of the intergovernmental conference of 1996/7 leading towards the Amsterdam Treaty of June 1997, was to clarify issues relating to immigration and asylum within the third pillar, and move towards bringing them within the framework of the main treaty.

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As a result, the lobbying at this intergovernmental conference on immigration issues coincided with the general shift in attention from economic to political issues, particularly with the wider perception that the most important issue facing the Union was the question of 'democratic deficit'. A plethora of new political representatives and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – building a new coalition between immigrant citizenship issues and campaigners for the rights of women, consumers, homosexuals, disabled persons and animals – attempted to use the European Union for the first time as a progressive channel for promoting equal rights (on this, see Mazey and Richardson 1998).

On immigration policy, what actually came out of the Amsterdam Treaty in formal terms was rather limited. As yet, then, the crystallisation of a truly distinct European 'immigration regime' is on hold. Literal minded euro-sceptics are correct to point out that for all the talk, little substantive has been shifted formally to the European level, and that which has, does not seem to be particularly progressive in its direction. The Schengen agreement and new refugee and asylum provisions are now to be brought within the framework of the main European treaty. This, however, will not come into effect for several more years. Immigration related issues, therefore, will remain relatively insulated from the progressive-minded influence of the Commission or Parliament, who have been making strong efforts to push new thinking in this area in recent years; nor can it be affected by qualified majority voting. Little progress was made on the issue of political rights of third country nationals, who still have an anomalous status when compared to the freedoms enjoyed by European citizens, although restrictions on their movement were eased.

Other consequences of EU related immigration discussions also confirm this sceptical viewpoint. Because of its location in the agenda of justice and home affairs, immigration has been primarily discussed in terms of 'security' and 'control', as a problem analogous to drug-trafficking and terrorism (Lahav 1998; van Selm-Thorburn 1998). Among others taking an interest in immigration politics have been police and military specialists forging their own kind of transnational networks. The kinds of legal possibilities – through the European Court of Justice or the European Court of Human Rights – that have been so instrumental in powering political integration in other fields, have proved relatively useless for pursuing issues on behalf of non-nationals, and efforts still have to be concentrated at the national level (Guiraudon 1998b). Moreover, there is very little afoot to suggest the EU will ever begin to directly take responsibility for the kinds of integration issues that pre-occupy domestic treatment of immigration problems: ie, education, cultural policy, relations of church and state, etc.

However, it would be wrong to be too literal-minded – as lawyers and policy specialists are apt to be – looking only at treaty outcomes and legal jurisprudence. The politics of citizenship, that have come to be so characteristic of the Western world during the 1980s and 1990s, have by definition been concerned with crossing the boundaries of formal institutional law and politics. It is this kind of new political mobilisation, focused on the the extension or re-definition of political and social rights – at a time when nation states are being transformed by transnational currents and globalisation – that is characteristic of the new advocates of immigrant and minority politics, following on from women's, environmental and animal rights activists (Meehan 1993; Wiener 1997). This has been enabled by the disconnection – within the emerging European political and legal system – of the idea of European citizenship rights and entitlements and the old idea of citizenship as nationality.

Third country national's rights of free movement and the right to vote in local elections (as non-national European citizens are able to do), still apparently lack the weight of argument and political pressure to gain any foothold in new European provisions. However, European legal structures have institutionalised social and economic rights and entitlements for these non-nationals, which are not dependent on their being full political citizens of the country they live in. At the same time, other 'citizenship' issues building on women's and gay rights have prospered far beyond their range at the nation state level. Most notable has been the success of activists in opening up new provisions in the area of anti-racial discrimination, on the back of other 'equal opportunities'. In the European Year against Racism and Xenophobia (1997), huge amounts of money have now been available for research and information in this area (such as the new monitoring centre in Vienna), and it is very likely that a European wide accord will soon be achieved on an anti-discrimination directive, building on a new anti-discrimination provision (article 13) included in the Amsterdam Treaty. Meanwhile, it is often easy to overlook the fact that the EU's redistributory efforts in the area of regional and social policy is often an immigration-related question. Large amounts of money flow to urban problem areas and self-managing cities, in a direct link that short-circuits money and influence away from the nation state centres of government. This money is often targeted, directly or indirectly, at immigrant and minority populations – and their representatives – under the banner of fighting 'social exclusion' or inner city deprivation.

With these various new channels opening, the European dimension of immigration politics now permeates the action of politicians, bureaucrats and activists right down to the most local levels, and is everywhere transforming national level discussions on the subject. EU studies specialists have yet to write much on the subject, along the lines of studies in other sectors. Yet, as I hope to suggest, the study of immigration politics in the EU may – despite being a relatively marginal sector of policy activity – offer many insights into the workings of EU politics and institutions generally.

III. The emerging 'political field' of immigration politics

The study of EU politics is dominated by legal-institutional perspectives. What is often missing is a focus on the *people* that make European politics happen: the actors and organisations that power its dynamics, and populate its 'institutional terrain' (to borrow the terms of Fligstein and McNichol 1998). It becomes essential therefore to ask how institutional changes provoke or inspire action by different European actors. What new channels and opportunities are opened by Europeanisation for actors and organisations involved in immigration issues?

A number of scholars, combining an interest in social movements and the application of new institutionalist theories to the emerging European political space, have begun to chart the effects of the Europeanisation of political action: the way certain individuals, groups and organisations have

begun to deliberately shift their strategies and organisational forms from the state and its institutions at the national level to the new 'transnational' European one (Tarrow 1995; Marks and McAdam 1996). Theoretically, this literature has been informed by theories of 'political opportunity structure', that chart the interaction of actors and the institutional or political opportunities that their context and its evolution open up.

The big question these theorists raise is the relation of Europeanisation to traditional accounts of state-building. Europeanisation of the kind they investigate challenges what has been one of the cornerstones of their historical account of political action and social movements within western nation states. In these, under the influence of Charles Tilly's writings, POS theorists have emphasised how the organisational forms and strategies of contentious political movements – including unions, marginal parties, campaign organisations – have developed in close relation to the modern nation state and its steady accumulation of centralised power and legitimacy (ie. 'sovereignty') over a clearly bounded political territory (Tilly 1995; McAdam/McCarthy/Zald 1996; Tarrow 1998). Indeed, their argument has been these groups played a key role in state and polity building, as they were systematically institutionalised into the mainstream of national politics everywhere, thus leading to a steady democratisation of these societies. Democratisation, both in an explanatory and normative sense, is thus seen to proceed along a classic path of incorporation and citizenship, of the kind paradigmatically laid out in the work of T.H.Marshall (1950).

Europeanisation 'beyond the nation state' thus poses an enormous new question of its own to these theorists. If we are witnessing, as lawyers and political scientists claim, the emergence of a new polity and state-like 'thing' at the European level, two consequences follow. Firstly, Europeanisation will have dramatic effects on the forms of political action and organisation to be found within the European arena, because of the novelty of the post-national context. And secondly, the automatic link between political action or active citizenship and the nation state as its primary locus – something that has been at the heart of liberal democratic polity building for the last two centuries – will be broken. This indeed is the starting point of recent work by Marks and McAdam (1996), who explore, in relation to a variety of different union and campaign type organisations across Europe, the hypothesis that there is a new kind of political opportunity structure emerging at the European level, that is pulling these organisations into organising in function to supra- and sub-nation arenas and not the classic nation state institutions they have hitherto always focused campaign efforts on. Moreover, they argue that this is leading to a new kind of 'governance structure' of power and legitimacy in the European Union, in which the sovereignty of the nation-state is in decline, and politics becomes a multi-levelled game of interests and representation between the nation-state and other political arenas (Marks/Scarpf/Schmitter/Streeck 1996). The European Commission indeed has often played an active role in this process by giving access and institutionalising the participation of some of these groups at the European level, as a way of securing an alternative legitimacy for its policies to those of national governments.

Marks and McAdam conclude that these developments will indeed entail dropping future canonical distinctions in social movements thinking, between interest groups and social movements, as well as between institutionalised and non-institutionalised forms of protest and campaign. They find that different groups prosper or not at the European level, both because of the different degrees of access and participation allowed them by European institutions, and by the different nationally-based cultures and organisational forms they have inherited, some of which work negatively to hold back transnational mobilisations. Typically, then, labour unions have struggled at the European level, because they are so strongly defined by and bound up with their long-carved out national positions of representation and institutional status, have very nationally distinct organisational cultures, and

unsurprisingly have had little voice in the business-powered motion of the Single Market Project and European Monetary Union. Other campaign groups such as environmentalists, on the other hand, have been far more successful in mobilising transnationally and in getting access to European circles (see Aspinall and Greenwood 1997).

Finding evidence for these claims is certainly of key importance to the new governance literature's arguments. Yet beyond the debates of EU specialists, this work poses a crucial issue for mainstream political sociology generally. What of this challenge to the canonical link between the nation-state, liberal democracy and ideas of territorially bounded citizenship, representation and participation? Strengthening the new governance claims are the ever-strengthening powers of law and legal jurisdiction within the European Union, that has been one of the principle motors of integration and the shifting of sovereignty to the transnational European level (Burley and Mattli 1993). There has also been the emergence of new political actors, for example business interests acting as political agents to mobilise and organise interests at the European level (Mazey and Richardson 1993; Fligstein and Mara-Drita 1996); or the model of co-optive regionalism and regional development, that the Union has pursued so effectively as a diversion from national centres of political power (Hooghe 1996; Marks et al 1996).

What these works open up is a rich way of conceptualising the relation of conventional nation-state centred political activity (still by far and away the dominant form in western Europe) and the new transnational spaces that have opened up for limited but specific groups of people across the continent. By demonstrating that a new political opportunity structure does exist for certain groups and organisations, they offer a convincing account of how groups frustrated and marginalised within the central nation state institutions might turn their activities to the European level as a way of short-circuiting their frustrations at the national level. And when this is allied with significant sources of funding, privileged access to policy formulation, and the growing competence of European legal and political institutions to make decisions that have effects at national levels over and above anything national governments can do, this can indeed be a powerful source of action and influence. It can then be shown how the new institutional terrain of the European Union throws up new forms of organisation and campaigning, that have indeed transformed many of the traditional forms and cultures of political activity across Western Europe, and established a new and turbulent distribution of powers between the nation state and European institutions.

POS theories thus rightly direct attention to the question of *who* manages to get involved in, and get access to, new European opportunities. Where they are less successful is in explaining the shift in the sources of empowerment from the national to transnational level: *why* new European opportunities provide certain actors with leverage to change their established social role and position in their home national context. The question here is explaining new sources of social power, outside of their traditional nation-state locus (Mann 1997). Social movements theories rely here on an ideological commitment to the 'progressive' incorporation of marginal groups as the source of this empowerment: social change, in other words, is ultimately powered by the normative force of justice and equality, the pressure for 'inclusion'. Institutional theories, meanwhile, tend to leave the explanation with the institutions themselves: pointing to international law or universal rights as the grounding for the change observed. But why should the source of this have shifted to a transnational level? Some sociological institutionalists have attempted to discuss this in symbolic terms: how institutional isomorphism and the universalisation of norms of action, have progressively pulled distinct national norms into line with them (see, for example, studies on global environmental norms by Boli and Thomas (1997); political citizenship by Ramirez (Ramirez et al 1997); or citizenship and human rights by Soysal (1994) and Shanahan (1998); all of these authors were decisively influenced by the theories of John Meyer (ie. Meyer et al 1997)). But, again, these theories lack a convincing account of the sources of social power that does not rely on either on a functionalist understanding of globalisation (processes of convergence or isomorphism), or on a tacit normative assumption about the inherent 'goodness' – and therefore eventual triumph – of human rights or ecology, and so forth.

As an explanatory alternative, it is here that an approach which draws on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of 'fields' of social power in society might be used. Specifically it suggests how the emergence of a distinct 'political field' might explain where new sources of social power come from. In his theory, elites compete for social power in society by distinguishing themselves as a distinct group of people, through the enforcement of insider monopolies on the particular practices, contacts and cultural 'know-how' needed to succeed in any particular field of activity. Elites who constitute the 'political field' in society thus distinguish themselves from other powerful elite groups – such as economic or cultural elites – by monopolising the symbolic representation of other's interests in the political arena, and enforcing particular political forms of expertise and organisation (Bourdieu 1981; Gaxie 1978; Champagne 1995; Bourdieu 1996). The socialisation of new members to the group in the same set of specialised practices, over time ensures the 'reproduction' of the social powers among culturally and socially like-minded people. The self-enforcement of specific forms of 'know-how' – what Bourdieu refers to *habitus* – in turn sets up a hierarchy of power within the field, which generates strongly competitive relations between those actors and groups which make up the field.

In the national context of France, the long standing historical order of elites and social power within the nation state can thus be seen to have been reproduced through its 'universalist' institutions of education, social integration and citizenship. In a national political culture such as France, the order and hierarchies of such a social world are well-established and ingrained; the rules for success clear, the dominant forms of 'cultural capital' (the currency of a prestigious form of 'know-how') well recognised and understood (Bourdieu 1979). The most important institutions and social orders indeed are reproduced through the institutions of the education system, typically in Bourdieu's account, the hierarchy of elite schools and academies which prepare and culture the French administrators, politicians and public figures of the future (Bourdieu 1989). Bourdieu's theory is characteristically embedded in French institutions and culture, and much of the theory is perhaps dependent in key ways on itself being a (critical) product of that system. However, it is possible to extend the theory to something such as the emerging European sphere as a way of understanding freshly what is going on in Europe. The existence of a European dimension is a challenge to the ordered stable nation hierarchies, because although it is primarily a resource used by and for elites, 'Europe' as an idea and set of cultural practices nevertheless offers a repertoire of practices and values that differ significantly from those so heavily internalised by elite groups in national political cultures. To operate successfully in the transnational European context requires skills and cultural capital that are not necessarily those of the ingrained national power holders in any given national society itself. In other words, to become European – to 'go native', as the British euro-sceptics say – offers a set of symbolic resources, with which those frustrated or marginalised within national contexts can challenge the established order of national 'ways of doing things' (compare with contributions to Risse 1995).

What observers should be alert to, therefore, are the ways in which successful Euro-actors not only seize and use opportunities, but find ways of monopolising and reproducing them: reinforcing their own power and resources by excluding others, by the establishment of closed networks of social contacts and barriers of insider 'know-how' and expertise. Even more important than these organisational factors, are discursive, symbolic ones. Such actors may create legitimacy and credibility for their privileged roles by inventing justificatory discourses, which serve to ground the 'representation' they offer for others within European circles, and, over time, generate new opportunities and channels of action that are self-reproducing and self-perpetuating (a resolutely materialist way of looking at the influence of transnational ideas; compare with the idealist account of Klotz 1995). With this kind of theoretical perspective, what is most interesting is not so much measuring and explaining policy output (as political scientists typically do) – something which is only

a part of the significant action taking place – but measuring the concentration of people, organisations and activities enabled by opportunities opening up in a certain field. Crudely speaking, this means asking who is getting a piece of the action; who is able to make a living out of the opportunities on offer. Actors successful in getting involved in the European activities, and staking a place for themselves, thus begin to recognise one another as a distinct field of common interests, within which they compete intensely for relative power and influence. One example is the way in which disparate actors interested in pursuing immigration issues at the European level have over time come to constitute a distinct field of action of this kind.

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Turning then to the emerging ‘political field’ of immigration, what might be said about it? National immigration policy typically has always been a strictly defined competence of interior ministries (or home offices), combining immigration policing functions (border control and enforcement or social order issues) with legal and social policy functions (such as anti-discrimination commissions or integration policy). European cooperation on immigration and asylum, unsurprisingly then, developed initially as a network of *ad-hoc* interior ministry networks, focusing on special state functions, such as border control and monitoring of illegal cross-border activities: what was institutionalised over time as the Third Pillar of Justice and Home Affairs. These networks, as a straight transnational mirror of the existing national arrangements allowed no new openings to new actors. They were dominated by national state civil servants, and even closed in most cases to European politicians (the Parliament), European civil servants (the Commission), and European lawyers (the European courts).

This closure in itself was a predictable extension of the way in which immigration and integration questions have been predominantly taken out of the public sphere and managed by state elites and technicians (civil servants and lawyers) as a way of defusing their incendiary potential among xenophobic publics (Guiraudon 1997, 1998a). In general, a quiet consensus has ruled among elite political parties that immigration should be kept away from divisive party cleavages, and as much as possible out of the public eye. Their elite monopoly on the field was also enabled by the fact that few non-state actors, such as business interests, took much interest in European immigration: unlike in the US, where open immigration policy has often been driven by explicit labour market demands (Freeman 1995). Progressive policies on immigration and integration in Europe (ie. anti-discrimination laws, multiculturalism or ethnically sensitive policing) indeed were almost always developed paternalistically by state elites, well in advance of ‘xenophobic’ public opinion. In no European state is there an example of legislation pushed from below – in American civil rights fashion – by the mobilisation efforts of marginal or excluded groups. In so far as mobilisation of such groups exists, it has always been pre-empted by the elite construction of the institutional structures within which these groups campaign: French minorities campaign for better access to republican citizenship; British for better anti-racist legislation, and so forth. All of these activities are heavily structured by already existing national institutions, and the initial reflex in each respective country was to project these into co-operative measures at the European level. Despite all their ideological differences about the right ‘philosophy’ of immigrant integration, for example, French and British home office civil servants have long-standing personal relations and networks (on the above, see Favell 1998a).

However, co-operative efforts were not to evolve into a simple, inter-governmental structure of home office cooperation, free of political, public and legal scrutiny. Home office civil servants, national immigration officials, and co-opted national immigrant organisations were not able to monopolise the immigration field at the European level. One reason was that other figures within the Commission and European Parliament picked up on issues surrounding race, ethnic diversity and immigration, primarily as a source of ‘legitimacy building’. This included more marginal, radical figures, such as the British MEP Glyn Ford, whose reports on racism and xenophobia set the European level ball rolling. Part of

the whole new campaign about promoting the idea of European citizenship and attending to the so-called 'democratic deficit', has been the effort since well-before Maastricht to promote the EU as an alternative source of progressive social intervention in opposition to conservative national governments. As a 'political' as opposed to 'economic' agenda has begun to differentiate itself in the Commission's corridors, certain DGs less powerfully placed in the central drive towards EMU, have seized on alternative European 'public interest' agendas, following the path pioneered by the highly active and progressive-minded DG11 (Environment). Within the range of new citizenship-related issues, fall immigrant and minority concerns: a rich source of potential representational powers for idealist and ethically motivated NGOs. Efforts at bringing the Third Pillar into the EU's constitutional structures, and bringing under the Parliament's scrutiny clearly aimed at challenging the national intergovernmental monopoly on the field. In addition, pro-active sectors within the Commission itself, such as the Secretariat (for example, the so-called 'Third Pillar task force' and 'Cellule de Prospective', and DGs with large external budgetary powers such as DG5 (Employment and Social Affairs) and DG12 (Science, Research and Development) have got into the action, deliberately building partnerships with new actors (see Nentwich 1998 on the new POS associated with European citizenship reforms). Another example of indirect policy activity in this sector is the money devoted by DG10 (Information, Communication and Culture) to multicultural arts and cultural events, such as the European Cultural Capital programme which in 2000 will fund a number of multicultural city celebrations and festivals.

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Amidst these deliberate efforts to break open the field, were more unintended challenges. Despite attempts to cooperate, it turned out that the national policy ideas and objectives of civil servants and co-opted activists about immigration and integration were wholly incompatible and incoherent as a basis for European agreements. At an early stage, British representatives boycotted European citizenship proposals, arguing they were a step-backwards from the point of view of their already existing anti-discrimination legislation. This has opened great divisions in the field that could be exploited by new entrants. Meanwhile, at the control and security end of activity, state officials such as the military and police interested in cross-national cooperation have found the European meetings have enabled them to find common interests away from national governmental and civil service control. Police across borders find they have more in common with each other than with their domestic political masters, and have capitalised on this to create more space for action in service of their own independent interests.

Among the new transnational actors moving into the political field of immigration, three different groupings can be discerned: specialist NGOs campaigning on citizenship and anti-racism issues at the European level, based in Brussels and other centres of European institutions; new cross-national military and policing experts, specialising in security and control issues on a European scale; and, less directly, regional and city-level players, dipping into regional and structural funds, via a concern with social policy on integration and inclusion. It is worth here separating out these three new Euro-movements, and showing how each has come to take a successful stake within the emerging political field of immigration. I will concentrate on the first in greater detail, as the success of the second and third share a similar logic.

* * *

i. NGOs

The emergence of intense NGO activity in European circles has been a natural consequence of the Commission and Parliament turning to 'political' and 'democratic' issues as a source of alternative

legitimacy to the predominant economic logic of European Union. NGOs have also benefited from the powerful role models of the long-standing lobbying organisations in Brussels and elsewhere, who have effectively pushed policy and regulation through cooperation with the Commission. Essentially, NGO activities have been able to concentrate directly on the manifold budgetary opportunities (running into millions of ECUs) across a range of idealist and humanitarian activities afforded by various DGs: the cultivation of what are self-described in NGO circles as the 'EU's most colourful flowers'.

However, Brussels is not an easy environment for new actors and organisations unfamiliar with European circles to get access to. It takes years of expertise, personal contacts on the spot, and a difficult-to-master ease with transnational Euro-social cultures to establish this kind of living. The NGO world of Brussels is, therefore, a small one, controlled by a small number of key players, and located in only a few offices. NGOs tend to congregate together; and one office is often the location for a whole range of disparate campaigning on behalf of humanistic and public interest activities. Organisational forms across different activities duplicate according to successful formulae. The paradigmatic organisation in Brussels as elsewhere is Amnesty International, and it is interesting to note the fluid career movements of NGO workers through different campaign organisations (and, in one or two cases, 'promotion' into the Commission or Parliament), after some time with the formative Amnesty organisation. Even trades unions at the European level organise and campaign on this internationalist NGO blueprint, rather than how they would have operated within the party politics dominated nation state.

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Three or four such NGO offices, in close range of the important Commission offices, can be identified as the epicentres of this world in Brussels. One such grouping, ECAS (European Citizenship Action Service) – whose English director emerged from the Consumer movement of the 70s – also provides the main source of information to all NGOs seeking idealist and humanitarian budget lines. ECAS were commissioned by the Commission to provide a citizen's telephone hotline, as well as offering advice and legal expertise for individual European citizens seeking direct access to European institutions, and producing information on free movement and citizenship rights. The hotline was manned by 20 lawyers, and is said to have received around 20,000 calls for advice on European citizenship matters, or complaints about barriers to free movement. ECAS's service role is itself guided by the principle of legitimacy building through enabling acts of individual citizenship: the archetypal 'act' being a letter or telephone enquiry. The organisation's attention to 'micro-political' detail, is something mirrored by the intense public relations work of the Commission's own PR organs (information offices; internet sites; free publications), and the voluminous letter responding efforts of the Secretariat. Most recently, ECAS took a prominent role in the High Level Panel on Free Movement (chaired by Simone Weil), whose report sought to build a link between free movement rights for European citizens and those of third country nationals. Clearly a group such as ECAS is in a powerful position in Brussels: monopolising both the source and output of the information and progressive discourse within the NGO world orbiting around European institutions. Moreover, it acts as both gate-keeper and facilitator for national-based NGOs seeking contact with the EU; or with each other via common European circles.

This paradigm of NGO empire building has been used in the specific immigration field by the Migration Policy Group (MPG): again, a tiny organisation headed by a single skilful Euro-player (a Dutchman), located in a small office in the shadow of the old Berlaymont building. This group is the umbrella for a variety of other humanitarian and development activities (including the widely read Migration News Sheet). MPG's effectiveness lies in the way it positions itself at the centre of an extensive international network of immigration and ethnic minority activists looking for a port of access to the EU. It has thus become a conduit for a large proportion of the funds the Commission

has devoted to immigration-related subjects. The particular success of this group turns around its origins and its intelligent campaigning strategy in a field riven by differences between national policy perspectives and between different immigrant representatives. In fact, the Migrant Policy Group emerged from an ecumenical religious grouping called the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME). The Catholic church, one of history's most significant non-state, transnational actors, has long recognised the European Union as a potential source of empowerment and resources against secular national governments. And, as is typical in Southern European countries for example, the church often finds that humanitarian and idealist concerns are a powerful source of successful political activity. In these countries, immigrants do not pursue their interests through parties or the state, but find them mediated through unions, associations and the church. This intermediary role, therefore allows a kind of benevolent monopoly on action, itself outside of state-structured institutions (on this and what follows, see also Danese 1998). It is ironic that the EU institutional terrain mirrors the institutional conditions of southern European states, where weak central state powers allow space for all kinds of other associative and clientalist representation of interests, and hence strongly personalised relations and activities.

The Churches' Commission was an early attempt to translate this model into the emerging European institutional field. Indeed, as an early entrant in the field, it found fresh turf to plough. As immigration has risen in prominence, competition among NGOs interested in this field has heated up. But all national-based organisations find that they have to go through the CCME's successor grouping, the Migration Policy Group, to gain direct access to the influential DGs. In addition, the research focus of the Migration Policy Group, and its well-packaged information publications, has enabled it to monopolise academic production in this area, co-opting and coordinating much academic production via networks such as the Metropolis group. The MPG shaped the network of key national organisations into the Starting Line Group which was its well-honed attempt to push some of the more realistic NGO goals on anti-discrimination and third country nationals rights into the 1996-7 IGC. Indeed, its smart use of legal specialists and targeted lobbying has been claimed as an important contributory factor in the adoption of an anti-discriminatory clause in the final Treaty of Amsterdam. Prominent among the network were the British NGO Justice, the Immigration Lawyers Practitioners' Association and the Dutch Standing Group of Experts on Immigration and Asylum. In addition, the MPG has re-cultivated British race activists prepared to work with Europe, and helped enable the emergence of a new focus on anti-discrimination as a viable line of campaigning at the European level. With the Labour Party coming to power just before the ending of the IGC, a green light was given to the proposals for creating an anti-racist monitoring centre in Vienna, enabling many British activists to drop their long-standing scepticism towards EU campaigning efforts. This in turn, allowed the strongly Anglo-Dutch anti-discrimination coalition to ease out transnational campaigners seeking to push European citizenship rights for non-nationals (a predominantly Turkish-Moroccan agenda). While the Starting Line Group claims that the anti-discrimination breakthrough can still also be harnessed to citizenship campaigning for third country nationals, it becomes clearer that in fact the predominant focus of EU institutional efforts in the next few years will be on the kind of 'costless' grand gestures (as opposed to painful constitutional reform) that were characteristic of the European Year Against Racism 1997: public information campaigns, conferences, festivals and glossy publications. Many of these activities, again, involved, or were coordinated by, the Migration Policy Group, in a grand spread of European spending in search of PR-friendly legitimating activities.

A very different story is to be told about the elite MPG's main competitor in Brussels in the immigration field: the so-called European Union Migrants' Forum (EUMF). Inspired again by democratic 'public sphere' rhetoric, this Commission funded structure set out to explicitly build an umbrella network of immigrant representatives at the national level, which would have a single office

close to the Commission in Brussels. The early years of the Forum to 1995, were characterised by infighting and a series of political and financial scandals that thoroughly compromised the privileged position it had been given in European circles by influential bureaucrats in DG5 sympathetic to their agenda. At a national level, groups were far from representative, and only reproduced the existing patterns of officially recognised immigrant interests. Different national groupings, in particular the strongly transnational Moroccan and Turkish groups, argued over control. The British representatives opted out at an early stage, seeing no common cause between anti-racism and the citizenship campaigning being led by others. Others, such as the leading French activists, did not even get involved; seeing no point to campaigning efforts beyond the nation-state. Moreover, cross-national groupings such as the Anti-Racist Coalition spared no effort to systematically reject and denigrate the Forum – who were of course rivals in a crowded NGO field – in their literature and public presentations. The Forum found it impossible to package its campaigning in a way that could access true influence within the Commission, and over time its large funds have been used to stage events which act as little more than a ‘sounding box’ for immigrant association’s anger and frustration at the policy making going on without them: such as the shadow conference to the IGC before the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty. This exclusion from positions of power within the field, and problems with legitimising the kind of artificial organisation the Migrants’ Forum has proven to be, led it to reform its ways under new leadership in recent years. Now its strategies follow the blurring of anti-racist and citizenship campaigning pushed by the MPG, promoting a banal and benign form of multiculturalism, and seeking to build conciliatory links with the more effective and powerful NGOs in the field, such as ECAS.

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These examples suggest that any representation of migrants’ interests within European institutions can only be successful under very particular organisational arrangements, which in fact tend to exclude the very people they are representing from direct access. In itself, this may be a necessary evil – indeed a positive outcome – if elite NGOs use the power that their skilful know-how in the field, and carefully honed organisational forms, allows them (on the paradoxes of NGO work in the development field, see Fisher 1997). Some important advances have been made in this way, and the NGO world as a whole in Brussels is a live hotbed of progressive minded activity, that has seized what passing opportunities that have arisen from the EU’s peculiar institutional configuration and dynamics. Most significant of all, have been the wider socialisation effects of these many new Euro-actors, able to carve out a living from such alternative political activity in an environment very different from national political circles. Typically, they are often lawyers and academics (two typically insular national professional fields), who failed to build the desired career at home countries, and left in frustration to build a career in Brussels. Ironically now, as national political actors find it ever more important to get access to European circles, they are forced to turn to these new Euro-entrepreneurs, who are now able to interact with home country actors from a much enhanced and empowered situation. In other words the specialist expertise they have developed and their European cultural know-how, has provided them with a new form of cultural and social capital beyond the nation state, that can be used against people rooted in their home national contexts.

ii. Military and police

A very different set of people have simultaneously been constructing new opportunities for themselves within the emerging transnational immigration field: military and police experts with an interest in security and control issues (on this subject, see especially Bigo 1996, 1998; Anderson and den Boer 1994). The end of the cold war and the downgrading of many national armed forces that has followed, has pushed these groups into seeking new kinds of consultancy roles in western states. The secretive third pillar organisations and ad-hoc cross-national groups that were the initial fora for European

cooperative efforts on immigration control, provided the ideal venue for international police and security specialist meetings; as are some of the military organisations that have sprung up in the wings of the official European institutions (such as the West European Union, which remains outside of the structures of both NATO and the EU itself). The priority of security concerns has been reaffirmed in many of the central discussions of the IGC and Amsterdam Treaty: particularly the preoccupation with the agenda of Justice, Security and Freedom. This has encouraged a focus on border control, monitoring of illegal movements and drug trafficking, and on the securitisation of Western Europe against migrant and asylum flows from the south and the east (Huysmans 1995).

For such people who have traditionally been socially embedded in the national social order of their home countries, these groupings have provided a novel socialisation in transnational networks, in which they have found many common 'professional' interests across national borders. Although close to interior ministry concerns, what has been most remarkable about police and military transnational cooperation has thus been its tendency to progressively free itself from the state concerns it would normally be serving. In part this is because the goal of migration control is a hopeless one; except as a source of electoral political capital. The 'crisis' over immigration control – and the response of 'Fortress Europe' – is thus a very deliberately created political fiction, that suits a variety of actors who may benefit from promoting an idea of control that is literally impossible to guarantee. The phantasmic perception of the 'invading hordes' and the need to secure the 'fortress' thus helps guarantee the expansion of power and resources to these agents. Policing has invested in the promotion of expensive new technologies (such as the Schengen Information System), and building links with private actors, such as airlines, in order to engage in more control-based activities (see Lahav 1998). The logic of these moves lies in the space of autonomy it creates, justified by the perceived need for technical expertise outside of public and political scrutiny. It is thus legitimated by a discourse that by definition claims that such new control and policing activities must necessarily be 'beyond' public comprehension debate.

What is more, this amassing of new powers is indeed reinforced by the habitual activist rhetoric, which decries 'fortress Europe' in an inverted sense. Activist grouping such as Statewatch and the Anti-Racist Coalition have themselves benefitted greatly from taking a dramatic oppositional stance on the hugely symbolic stakes that revolve around these controversial control issues. The kind of rhetoric that both activists and security specialists use, enjoys such resonance because it is a symbolic image entirely disconnected from any need to justify itself in factual knowledge of actual migration phenomenon.

iii. Cities and regions

A third set of transnational actors investing in the immigration field, that I will briefly mention, are those engaging in action on behalf of cities and regions and Europe. As well observed by some of the new governance writers, the Commission has been very proactive in encouraging sub-national political actors to see European channels as a short-circuit around frustrations with their national state and government. Among the richer sources of fundings are those devoted to regional development, urban policy, and – in Southern European – development links with southern Mediterranean partners, that often use NGOs and associations as go-betweens. Driven by one of the Commission's other leading progressive banners – the socio-economic 'exclusion/inclusion' problem, and the fashionable focus on 'cities' as the essential venue for intervention in social policy – many funds have been linked to working for disadvantaged minorities and immigrants, present in disproportionate numbers in these targeted urban areas.

Such efforts have built themselves up on the strong cooperation between developing regions within Europe, and transnational pioneers of cross-border city networks in the several border areas in Europe where conurbations stretch across national borders. Once again, it is a dynamic which draws its power from the frustration of peripheral groups who have now found routes to resources and political influence that can by-pass the hitherto necessary route through the national capital. It is interesting that academics have also been able to make significant inroads in this field as experts and beneficiaries of resources. On urban research and social policy, international academic research networks can still claim a significant degree of credible autonomous expertise; and large amounts of money have been invested through the TSER Programme (research on social exclusion) to academic research projects close to the progressive agenda of parts of DG5.

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What is significant about the existence of these new sets of transnational actors in the political field of immigration, is that each has been able to thrive simultaneously, and in reference to the same sorts of questions, without it being any problem that their discourses are mutually exclusive and contradictory in many ways. That is, there is space within the field – and within the range of opportunities on offer within European institutions and their financial outlets in different DGs – for each to successfully take their place. Clearly the relation of each to policy influence differs. In terms of treaty outcomes, the IGC and Amsterdam treaty were undoubtedly dominated by the security and control issues closest to home office type concerns, against which only minimal progressive gains were insured for minorities, refugees and migrants.

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However, viewed in terms of budgets and activities, the range of NGO, cultural and social policy activity inspired and generated by EU opportunities is quite remarkable. This in itself has now come to be challenged by suspicious national governments, unhappy about the discretionary budget lines dished out regularly to unaccountable organisations on the Commission's payroll in Brussels. It is no small irony that some of the loudest advocates of Euro-democracy and citizenship are themselves organisations whose primary public legitimacy is the proximity of their offices to the DG that pays them, and the personal friendship of their directors with figures inside the Commission. When a longstanding legal challenge to this cosy situation by the former British government was upheld recently – that EU NGO budget lines contravened the subsidiarity principle – the whole of the Brussels NGO world panicked as its funding was suspended while the Commission reviewed its position. Thanks to benevolent and generous patrons, like DG5's Padraig Flynn, for the moment at least it is still business as usual for the EU's most colourful flowers. But the threat remains that national governments will find ways to curb the transnational activity that has made many European institutions a real challenge to the powers of the national state's traditional agents: the state bureaucrats, politicians and activists 'back home', for whom the new European actors are becoming serious rivals.

IV. Conclusions for EU studies

By way of a conclusion, it might be asked what could be meaningfully generalised for EU politics and institutions as a whole from this sketch of the Europeanisation of immigration politics. This new and highly active sector, despite its relative marginality to the big issues at stake currently in the EU does, I think, provide many indications of the typical dynamics of European political action and opportunity creating. It indicates how empowerment really works within EU institutions: how it encourages openly entrepreneurial actors, and specific forms of organisation and discourse, in the gaps that have opened up between Europe and the nation state. It also indicates what motivates certain people to get

involved in European activities that take them outside of the traditional national settings of social and political action.

This focus on the people who invest in and use 'Europe', may take us towards a more genuinely sociological understanding of present day EU politics. It is also, hopefully, a more realistic understanding of the dynamics of Europe institution building and integration. An approach of this kind may indeed challenge some of the assumptions and limitations that appear to pervade current EU studies on European integration and Europeanisation. Both empirically and normatively, current research tends to project onto Europe a teleological state of 'becoming': it is thought that to go 'beyond the nation state' must entail the emergence of some 'thing' that takes on the functions of the nation state at a higher transnational level. Via a form of counter-factual reasoning – pointing out the ways in which the EU lacks such legitimacy, sovereignty, democratic institutions, cultural identity, or state-like powers, and so on – studies then unsurprisingly focus on ways in which this is not happening. The research paradigm is here still implicitly being set by the old functionalist versus intergovernmental arguments which, in focusing on the relation of aggregate, individual nation states to some single supranational entity called 'Europe', rarely actually look to see how different actors and organisations within and across nations differentially use and create European or anti-European discourses and activities.

Recent studies on Europeanisation claim to offer both a rediscovered 'sociological' sense, and a differentiated picture of how national 'political cultures' and 'identities' relate to the idea of Europe (Eatwell 1997; Caporaso, Cowles and Risse 1999 *fc*). From a genuine sociological perspective, the focus on sweeping macro-ideas of 'political culture' and 'nation identity' lacks any micro-level sense of how the political Europeanisation they claim to study correlates with changes in *real* individuals' lifestyles, social behaviour and cultural choices. It remains a form of political science predominantly limited to studying institutions and party political discourses, not the sociological profile of individuals behind this. Moreover, such research fails to reflect on how this research question itself reproduces the fiction that there are in fact entities such as national 'political cultures' or 'identities' to unproblematically compare (see also Favell 1998b). Such work can only be operationalised by focusing narrowly on the discourses of national politicians – and the vague notions of public opinion they reflect (see for example Risse's forthcoming work on attitudes to EMU).

The first point that must be made here is that national politicians, of course, continually reproduce the idea of the nation and national identity in what they say about Europe because, in short, their profession depends on it. Lawyers or business lobbyists might speak very differently of the same thing. The truth is that such nationalist political discourses can coexist comfortably with a whole range of other discourses and actions by different professional groups, which point in totally opposite directions. The Europe Union is not a zero sum game between Europe and the nation state. It is, rather, an additional dimension to predominantly nationally-based politics that has opened up spaces for autonomous action for a whole range of new actors. In other words, it is by definition a fragmented and differentiated terrain, in which – as in the immigration field – a whole range of different groups with contradictory discourses can co-exist and prosper. The second point, then, should be that all such political discourses are self-reflexive; they cannot be relied on as reflections of any factual state-of-affairs. Just as politicians are trying to produce and reproduce the 'nation' when they speak of distinct national political cultures and relations to Europe, Euro-entrepreneurs such as Brussels NGOs are trying to create new opportunities by inventing new 'transnational' European research and policy agendas (on 'self-reflexivity', see Bourdieu/Wacquant 1992; and on the idea of nation as a 'performative event', see Brubaker 1996). Part of the success of European institutions has been grounded in the blatant and self-conscious way European actors have sought to invent and reproduce

an idea of 'Europe'. Each of these competing groups is struggling for a piece of social power; what is different in the current European situation, is that they are not all competing in the same nation state arena (and certainly not the same 'public sphere'). It is quite possible that some may succeed by simply stepping outside of the arena, where formerly they would have been constrained to compete in a much more structured way with other nationally structured organisations and professions such as political parties, trades unions, lawyers and other interest groups who dominate the political field of national liberal democratic states.

These points are important because so much of the research on the EU is driven by an explicit or implicit normative agenda, which seriously compromises a realistic understanding of how EU politics actually work. The dominant concern is that the EU take on some of the democratic, participative and representative features associated (ideally) with liberal democratic politics in nation states. Often, reflecting the all-pervasive Germanic, Habermasian influence on these discussions, it projects the (counterfactual) idea of a transnational 'public sphere' at the European level as necessary to ground the legitimacy of its political and legal powers and activities (Habermas 1992, 1995; see also the very influential work of Weiler, ie. 1995). A cursory glance at the new European politics reveals that it fails some of the most basic elements necessary to the emergence of the public sphere in the Habermasian account (Habermas 1989). What goes on in Europe, goes on largely outside of the media eye, beyond public knowledge or comprehension; many traditional channels of political representation are absent; and Europe works in a progressive sense, extending its powers and remit, by its systematic restriction of access to voice and participation, not by extending it. As the Bourdieusian account of successful activities by NGOs and others suggests, empowerment in the European realm is inverse to its accessibility, despite it paradoxically being an arena offering the globalisation and universalisation of transnational politics beyond the nation state. It is often enabled by the avoidance of communication between different actors. And its universalising and restrictive elitist tendencies are two sides of the same coin. Provocatively, this might even be said to be the great and innovatory thing about the EU; what makes it such a rich terrain for political entrepreneurs. The success of European lawyers in enhancing their relative social power and progressive legal powers through European legal institutions *by exactly these means* is well known (Burley and Mattli 1993; Schepel and Wessering 1997). Europe allows lawyers to behave with more freedom as lawyers, just as it allows police to be more like police, and tiny NGO activists to be taken seriously in ways they never would be at the national level. Each is enabled more autonomy to act as specialists, and hence in ways that need not be justified to other groups across the field.

The picture I am building towards here is one in which the specific novelty of the EU dimension of politics in Europe, is the way in which it allows certain professional groups, using particular organisational forms, to escape the structured positions and social roles they would normally be constrained to work within in traditional national settings. We are familiar with the idea of international lawyers doing this; so are we with business actors simply thinking outside of national contexts, and acting on behalf of interests that no nation state has defined or structured (see Sassen 1991). However, to step back a moment, this kind of action is in fact rather rare – despite all the colourful words that have been written by over enthusiastic academics about internationalisation and globalisation. For all the rhetoric in the European Union about the free mobility of persons and labour, it is still striking the degree to which most career opportunities in public life across Europe are still almost wholly structured by their traditional national context. High flying careers in politics, domestic legal systems, the civil service, even education, almost always remain inaccessible to foreigners, who may have the formal rights of residence and employment, but lack the specific social networks and cultural 'know-how' monopolised by the nationals of the country. This monopoly is usually created and sustained by how elites in each country are educated (ie. a long process of socialisation) and how

the state thereby organises the professional division of elite labour and social power. In this sense, Europe's Union of nation states remains very distinct to the United States of America, which is built on a constitutive idea of free labour movement coupled with low cultural 'start-up' costs to cross-state migration and relocation (for a classic statement of the American idea of free movement, see Walzer 1990).

Where successful European transnational action exists, it points towards specific spaces of freedom from national structures opened up by EU opportunities. For people who engage in such action the course is in fact often a difficult one, pushed by frustrations at home, and the need to invest huge energies in a as-yet-uncertain and unformed transnational European environment. For transnational NGO activists and others seeking out a living outside of their home nations, the personal is indeed very much the political. For the Europeanisation of identity to really effect the kind of change in values that lies behind the shift of symbolic power identified in my Bourdieusian approach to the EU, a nationally socialised individual has to make 'European' choices in their personal career trajectory at a moment where this investment is irrevocable (see also Abélès 1996; Tarrus 1992; Borneman and Fowler 1997).

The interesting sociological way of looking at Europeanisation would therefore be to explain European integration in function to the activity of these people. That all this furious institution and opportunity building at the European level is in fact a *cultural product*, produced by individuals in a precarious post-national situation, who face a cultural identity predicament of *permanent homelessness* – and with an energy and productivity proportionate to the insecurity and uncertainty that these highly able and educated elites feel as a result. It may be no exaggeration to claim, then, that 'Europe' is being produced in the cavernous night-clubs, sultry salsa bars, and noisy Irish pubs of Brussels; just as during the daytime, these same young elites are busy building and creating careers for themselves in the unformed institutional terrain of the European Union.

These new Europeans act in the spaces opened up between belonging and not-belonging, created by the European integration process. Although positioned in a very different strata of society, their situation and dilemma is not so different to the post-war immigrants who came to Europe and found they only could only thrive by being both in- and out-side the nation states which took them in and tried to integrate them. As new spaces of transnational action have opened up, their position – although always precarious – does open up new possibilities of sociability, experience, knowledge and social capital that ingrained nationals of European nation states can scarcely imagine (for studies on the transnational social capital of migrants see the work of Portes 1995, 1996, 1997; and Favell 1999). The nation state remains with us, and the almost crushing weight of its formation on individual, social and political experience remains predominant. But the hazy Europe beyond the Europe of nation states does at least offer a glimpse of a genuinely transnational and multicultural future for some.

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