

The Jean Monnet Action and the Development of European Integration Studies: International Relations 1989-2009

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The 20th anniversary of the Jean Monnet Action (JMA) is an important historical marker unto itself and deserves comprehensive reflections on objectives, milestones and future challenges. It is equally important to consider the context of the anniversary, particularly the fact that it coincides with other significant anniversaries. Thus, it is also the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, i.e., the beginning of the end of the Cold War and the division into East, West and Neutral and Non-Aligned Countries (NNA). Consequently, the JMA has developed in a highly dynamic environment, not least characterized by two significant waves of EU enlargement and a series of EU treaty reform processes, each one codifying existing practices or legally enabling further institutional dynamics. Furthermore, it is the 20th anniversary of the establishment of a professional network, if not quasi-association, of European international relations scholars, specifically the ECPR Standing Group on International Relations, launched in Paris in 1989. Actually, ECPR itself should be mentioned in this context, because even if the enterprise was established 40 years ago, it has first been during the course of the last two decades that the consortium of universities and political science departments has gained an impressive speed and scope of activities.

This chapter focuses on the cross-fertilization between the JMA and the evolution of different disciplines devoted to the study of the European integration process, in my case International Relations (IR). In many ways, it is courageous to choose such a topic for the ECSA World Conference, because disciplines are probably foremost characterized by their own norms, standards, rules and dynamics, and therefore relatively difficult to influence from the outside. Being a split person professionally – teaching and conducting research within both European Studies and International Relations as I do – I very much welcome this opportunity to reflect on the 20th anniversary of interaction between the JMA and the discipline of International Relations. The topic raises several intriguing issues; however, I will focus on just the following six issues given the limited space.

- How do disciplines evolve? A seemingly innocent question. But a hotly contested issue. Why? Because it involves defining the precious phenomenon we call progress. In other words, how has the discipline of International Relations progressed?
- To which degree has IR been devoted to the study of the European integration process?
- As European integration is about community building, what does the case of IR community building look like?
- What is the meaning of 'international'?
- Is the IR discipline really as Eurocentric as occasionally claimed?
- Conclusion and perspectives

How do disciplines evolve?

In the following, we will explore interactions between International Relations and the JMA by means of two different models. Within the first model, historians of the discipline of International Relations and meta-studies analysts more generally often make a useful distinction between external and internal factors explaining the evolution of the discipline (Schmidt 1998; Friedrichs 2004; Holden 2006, Valbjørn 2008). External factors include, for instance, shifting configurations of polarity in the international system. Two examples suffice for illustrative purposes. The so-called twenty years' crisis (1919-1939) was characterized by the failure of the League of Nations, liberal internationalism more generally, and the breakdown of the otherwise long-standing multipolar international order. Especially the two first features provoked fierce criticism and empowered realist positions and propositions (Carr 1939; Morgenthau 1946). In this fashion, the dynamics of world politics triggered changes in the balance of power among academic conceptions of the nature of the emerging discipline. The second example is the Cold War having a significant impact on the discipline and the theories that provide the discipline with a sense of identity. Specifically, the usefulness for state and society of various area studies was to some degree determined by East-West dynamics; hence, centres for 'communist studies' proliferated in the West, just as specialized centres popped up in the East, focusing on e.g. North America. In this perspective, we should expect the end of the Cold War also to have an impact on how we theorize international relations (cf. Allan and Goldman eds. 1992). For the same reason, the redirection of funding from 'Eastern' area studies to centres for Middle East studies is not particularly surprising. In this perspective, the 1989 launch of the JMA also makes sense, because Europe seemed destined to become whole and

free and in urgent need of 'European integration studies', without any accompanying additives, neither 'West' nor 'East'.

By contrast, internal factors are associated with the inner dynamics of disciplinary developments. So-called 'great debates' among academics have winners and losers. The winners are subsequently predominant in representing the discipline, outlining its evolution and defining progress. The 1940s and 1950s are often said to be characterized by a great debate between idealism and realism, and the realists won. At the very least, this applies to the trajectories in the heartland of the discipline during the Cold War: the United States. As a result, the discipline evolved and it is not surprising that the realist tradition has been predominant in North America. In Europe, developments have been significantly different (Jørgensen 2000). Second, early debates within American political science proved to spill over and inform the trajectories of International Relations, demonstrating the power of internal scientific determinants (Schmidt 1998). Third, according to the internal factor model, the development of International Relations has been marked by changing patterns of sources of inspiration. At times, developments within economics have served as such sources, explaining the import of templates created within Economics (e.g. rational choice, game theory and principal agent models). At other times and other places, Sociology has been mined for insights, and templates have been imported from Sociology (e.g. constructivism, sociological institutionalism, etc.). Finally, given the generalizing aspirations that characterize major parts of Political Science and International Relations, it is only logical that Area Studies characterized by empirics-sensibility and scepticism towards general models have been stigmatized. This tendency has included European Studies, and scholars have been told to forget about Europe-specifics and instead apply seemingly universal political science templates, created somewhere and for some purpose but usually not in Europe and not with the objective of understanding processes of European integration.

Obviously, some combination of external and internal can be imagined. However, such combinations would not alter the fact that the distinction between external and internal is bad for the theme of this chapter, because JMA is not external and the programme is not internal, either. As we have seen, changing configurations of world power suggest why the JMA was launched in the first place, just as factors internal to the discipline suggest that the JMA objectives have been countered by powerful trends within Political Science and International Relations.

As an alternative to the first model, I suggest the application of what has been referred to as a cultural-institutional approach to disciplinary dynamics (Jørgensen and Knudsen 2006: 3-6), i.e., a perspective emphasizing cultural factors such as the political and academic culture of countries or regions as well as the importance of institutional factors at different levels: department, university, national science bureaucracies and professional associations. More specifically, the approach comprises three explanatory variables: political culture; the organizational culture of both science bureaucracies, university systems and professional associations; and the habits and academic discourses within the social sciences and humanities. Clearly, the model provides considerably more room for manoeuvre for the JMA and enables potential impact.

The political culture of countries and regions appears to be of significant importance. After all, it was primarily the processes of political transition that made the introduction of western-style International Relations possible in East and Central Europe. Similarly, it was the 1993 promise of future accession to the European Union that created a huge demand for knowledge in the region about European integration and governance. While the impact of the JMA is hardly important in the context of political transition processes at the macro level, the impact of funding mobility programmes, syllabi development and the promotion of European scholarly networks should not be underestimated; on the contrary, it should be cherished as a major accomplishment. In the following sections, I will address the issue of organizational and discursive trajectories.

To what degree has IR been devoted to the study of the EIP?

From a bird's eye perspective, IR always has been and continues to be seriously devoted to the study of European integration. While being a fairly lonely rider – along with legal studies – during the early years of European integration, IR has now become one of several disciplines cultivating and contributing to European Studies. However, the emerging plurality of disciplinary perspectives should not conceal the fact that IR is among the prime disciplines aiming at understanding both the European integration process per se and the international context in which it takes place.

Historically, IR scholars were among the first to thoroughly theorize the process, producing some of the classic theories of European integration (neofunctionalism, transnationalism and intergovernmentalism). Part of the neofunctionalist theorizing enterprise consisted of the criticism of state-centric and power-focused approaches, e.g., balance of power theory, a criticism that

perfectly mirrored dominant EC self-images of ‘civilian power Europe’. By contrast, intergovernmentalist scholars were quick to point out that the European integration process unfolded in an international context; more specifically, a Cold War context. They also emphasized the context of a military alliance, NATO, providing a shelter against enemies and functioning as a lid on the security dilemmas possibly remaining within Western Europe. In general, theories of European integration became part of the IR theory portfolio. In addition to theorizing European integration, IR has contributed more significant case studies than possibly any other discipline. In the present context, there is no reason to commit any injustice by mentioning some and not the major share. In some studies, Europe is seen not only as a laboratory for global governance, but actually as a model for world politics. Generally, speaking, IR’s two main contributions have perhaps been studies of the dynamics in relations between EU member states and EU institutions and the relationship between Europe and the world, including the rather novel triangle of relations between the EU, global governance institutions and EU members states.

Finally, we should not forget research on the EU as an international actor and the institutions and policies characterizing EPC, CFSP, ESDP, ENP and several more abbreviations for both institutional and policy dynamics. In this context, actorness has been explored both in general and more specifically concerning relations between the EU and major world powers (Russia, China, the US, India and Japan). This kind of research also includes relations with major world regions (ASEAN, Mercosur etc.); inter-regionalism has actually been one of the major preoccupations among IR scholars. Finally, the research on relations between the EU and multilateral institutions has gained momentum. In summary, IR has a long and rightly proud engagement in understanding the European integration process, including its international dimensions.

However, IR has the entire world on its agenda. In this context, understanding the European integration process is a rather small – yet important – niche production. Beyond this niche production, we find topics such as superpower relations (during the Cold War), international system dynamics, international organization and global governance, international diplomacy and the dynamics of international society. In the future, we will probably witness an increase in studies of multipolarity (or multi-nodality), although it remains to be seen whether European states are willing and able to constitute the EU as a pole in the emerging international order. The topic is niche, also in a second meaning. It is foremost the scholars of the liberal theoretical tradition who have had

integration processes on their research agenda, i.e. leading theorists including Ernst Haas, Karl Deutsch, Robert Keohane, Donald Puchala, Peter Katzenstein etc.). Actually, when considering the main currents of thought within the liberal tradition, we will see a three-layered theoretical 'cake', providing the edifice of the European project:

- Peace-loving democracies (democratic peace theory)
- Interdependence (probably the most interdependent region in the world)
- Institutionalization (probably the most institutionalized region in the world)

By contrast, realists, English School theorists and international political theorists have largely neglected European integration and governance or, alternatively, simply focused on explaining its absence, insignificance or its reflection of underlying power politics dynamics. These scholars have traditionally been slightly delayed in their understanding of the dynamics of European integration and seem bound to run out of arguments some time soon.

Taking into consideration the commitment of IR to both European integration and governance and the wider world, it would be misleading to expect any particularly significant impact of Europe on the evolution of IR. Instead, we have witnessed how key features of the evolution of IR during the last 20 years include:

- Rationalism-constructivism debate, signalled by Robert Keohane's presidential ISA address in 1988 (Keohane 1988).
- A gradual professionalization, i.e., less and less emphasis on current affairs and policy, more science centric. Writing columns or policy briefs do not impress the bibliometric measurement of performance, i.e., the emerging fetish among politico-science bureaucracies. Contemplating the policy implications of research projects has no impact on scientific excellence. The demand for inter-disciplinary studies can therefore be seen as a recipe for diluting excellence and functioning as an obstacle to community building.
- An increase in the number of scholars. The number of attendees at international conferences has increased from around 2000 to around 6000. In Europe, the SGIR has been able to attract participation from 350 at the beginning (1992) to an expected 1000 in 2010.
- A changed balance of supply and demand of information. On the one hand, there has been an increase in demand, i.e., IR is popular among students. On the other hand, news media focus increasingly on national politics or infotainment and close their foreign affairs desks.

Hence, citizens with a wider outlook than media directors will identify other sources of information on international affairs.

Given that European integration is about supranational community building, what does the case of IR look like?

How can we characterize the nexus between IR and the JMA, focusing specifically on International Relations in Europe? One suitable point of departure appears to be the classic issue about the outcome of integration processes. Both Ernst Haas and Karl Deutsch focused on exploring the possibility of supranational community building. This leads us to explore the degree to which we have witnessed scholarly community building in Europe during the last 20 years. We know that communities are characterized by communication, organization, identities and mythologies; hence, we know what to look for. Do we see a European supranational community of IR scholars emerging?

Communication is carried out by means of meetings (conferences and workshops). IR scholars meet at the European level, but they are less than 1000 scholars meeting only every 3rd year. Moreover, the East and Central Europeans have been able to establish a regional tradition of annual conferences, attracting up to 200 each year. Finally, several major research networks operate with funding from EU research funding schemes, currently FP7. Combined, these accomplishments suggest the gradual emergence of a European research community. However, this emerging European community co-exists with IR scholars belonging to national communities, attending annual conferences in national settings, organized by national professional associations. These associations might be independent IR associations (e.g. British International Studies Association), political science associations (e.g. *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Politikwissenschaften*) or law associations (in e.g. Spain).

Do we read and appraise what we publish? To some extent we do, but significant language barriers remain. Furthermore, there is the reality of the massive American (domestic) market. Hence, there is only to some degree a European community. It is a predominantly English-speaking community, and English language journals function as the primary means of communication. In terms of organization, it is telling that we have national (and some regional) professional IR associations, but no European association. Though the European academic market is far from a single European

market, some mobility has been seen, and the genesis of a European IR community seems to be considerably supported by this transnational segment consisting of scholars who do not work in their fatherlands or work in their mother tongues.

As I do not want to be unnecessarily Euro-centric in the present context, let me add that, as usual, we have Europe situated between the national, the international and the global. This also applies to IR community building, although ‘international’ in this context really foremost means a transatlantic community, specifically the International Studies Association. It is easy to join, has an income-dependent differentiation of membership fees and provides many publication outlets together with other membership benefits. The association also runs extensive outreach programmes and other membership services. In short, the European IR community is fairly complex, overlapping and incomplete. The balance between different layers can be shaped, and JMP could become a catalyst. In a sense, the IR community almost perfectly reflects the situation of European states being caught between the powers of an emerging multipolar world and enjoying the symbolic sovereignty of more or less insignificant ‘Bantustans’; unable or unwilling to create a supranational entity that would be on par with the powers of the future.

In this context, what is the meaning of ‘international’?

What does ‘international’ mean in Europe? The answer that is probably most accurate is that ‘it depends’. For a considerable part of the European IR community, it means foremost European international relations, i.e., international politics among European nations. Some go back to international politics, vintage 19th century, and assume a state-centric (sub-)system in which the EU counts – if at all – as foreign affairs and an international organization (among other international organizations). Others are less radical and simply focus on ‘international’ topics within European horizons, e.g. conflicts in the Balkans or the Caucasus; Franco-German relations, European foreign policy or the dynamics of relations between EU institutions and member states. For others yet, ‘international’ means ‘global international’, an area in which the EU may or may not play a role as an international actor. In any case, this third grouping of scholars studies global international affairs e.g., relations between China and Japan, American foreign policy, or development issues in Africa. While the impact of the JMA promoting European Studies probably does not change the balance between these three groupings, the organizational pattern of national ECSA associations tends to reproduce images cultivated by the first two groupings.

Is IR a Euro-centric discipline?

Paradoxically, IR is occasionally regarded as a Euro-centric discipline. The primary reason IR is sometimes called euro-centric is that European conceptions of statehood define the units of the international system and that 19th century European power politics has been used as a template for realist images of international politics. The irony is that it is exactly this state of affairs – international power politics – that the EU aims at transcending both domestically, i.e., within Europe, and internationally. Hence, fertilizing IR theories by means of insights from contemporary Europe remains a major task. In most IR textbooks, the European Union is more or less absent, perhaps with the exception of a brief introduction to the European Union as an international organization. I am fairly convinced in this respect that the JMP could play a considerable role by organizing a series of conferences on the topic.

Furthermore, major segments of European IR scholars focus entirely on European affairs and can, thus, be said to be Euro-centric. In a sense, such preoccupations mirror the introvert EU institutions, being obsessed or overwhelmed by enlargements and treaty reform processes. Moreover, a major share of key IR concepts has origins in the European state system or European diplomacy: sovereignty, international law, alliances etc. Finally, some IR theories or theoretical traditions can also be traced to European origins: liberalism, realism, the English School etc.

However, counter-evidence can also be presented and actually constitutes a long list. Though there are exceptions, European IR scholars have not been leading in theory-building for a long time. Major contemporary theoretical perspectives – rational choice, social constructivism, principal-agent models, game theory and discourse theory – do not have particularly strong European characteristics. European IR scholars do not enjoy the volume of the American single market, and the European IR community is too diverse and dispersed to have a significant impact on disciplinary trajectories. While the European state system anno 19th century constitutes a template for some scholars, most scholars around the world find it irrelevant. Finally, IR is a discipline wherein major theoretical traditions hardly pay any attention to the EU as an international actor. IR textbooks routinely describe a state-centric world in which the EU drops out in terms of constituting a system unit; and therefore also drops out of standard, country-focused statistics. In short, charges of Eurocentrism seem largely to be unfounded, old-hat charges.

Conclusion and perspectives

Due to the Jean Monnet Action (and Programme), themes associated with European integration are probably now more present in university education than in primary or secondary schools. As the Jean Monnet Programme has become active in more than 60 countries around the world, the options for influencing European Studies have been significantly improved and an operational 'lessons learned' process might produce useful guidelines for future interventions. Given that Europeans perhaps tend to oscillate between the slightly introverted and global outlooks, the JMP is in an eminent position to further globalize our mindsets and promote mobility- and network-enhancing activities, including well-known means such as simply research visits at departments of colleagues and teaching European Studies to students in countries beyond Europe.

Studies of perceptions of Europe around the world are rather consistent in their findings: Europe remains largely an international nobody and only the rather small groupings of Europeanists find it worthwhile to pay attention to European dynamics and European values, interests and policies. While some of these perceptions should possibly be labelled misperceptions, they do have real effects in the real world. While it is beyond the duties of academics to promote Europe globally, their provision of information and structured debate of contending issues might have an impact on the current state of affairs.

In terms of the institutional affiliations of IR, Europe is characterized by fairly profound divisions. In northern Europe, the discipline is typically cultivated within departments of political science, whereas in southern Europe, IR belongs to law faculties or departments. By means of support to national ECSAs, which reflects these academic balances of institutional power, the JMA tends to reproduce existing divisions. This is not necessarily to be deplored, because it favours disciplinary co-existence and potentially even individual outlooks beyond one's own discipline. From the perspective of scientific excellence and increasing specialization, however, such reproduction looks less positive and appears to be an obstacle for independent disciplinary dynamics. The JMP is eminently suited to strengthen the emerging European IR community. Available means include the proven mobility support but also new means such as support to improved communication and organization facilities.

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