

# The Political Geographies of Europeanisation: Mapping the Contested Conceptions of Europeanisation

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## Abstract

This article questions why Europeanisation is such a contested notion, by exploring the different politico-geographical structures of meaning on which the different conceptions of Europeanisation can be mapped. It starts with the contention that the political geography of Europeanisation has long been determined by European Union (EU) integration alone. This produced an EU, inward-looking bias in Europeanisation research, which a paradigmatic shift towards governance perspectives helped mitigate. Such a shift is not only progressive in terms of concept formation; it also explains why the concept of Europeanisation has developed multifaceted contours. Using three ideal types of European governance (Westphalian, neo-Westphalian, post-Westphalian), the article shows that conceptions and spaces of Europeanisation are multiple in essence. It concludes that defining Europeanisation is a social act having politico-geographical motivations. But it nonetheless denies the claim that all conceptions of Europeanisation are equally good.

## Keywords

Europeanisation; EU-isation; governance; Westphalia

WHEN WRITING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS, EUROPEANISATION RESEARCHERS INEVITABLY devote some preliminary thoughts to defining this concept. Such academic cautiousness is anything but superfluous, considering the “many faces of Europeanisation” (Olsen 2002), the alleged “essential contestability” of the concept (Gwiadzda 2002), and the fact that its many “meanings vary according to the theoretical perspective adopted and the subject area chosen” (Quaglia, Neuvonen, Miyakoshi, & Cini 2007). For instance, some studies understand Europeanisation as a process of national adaptation through legal compliance. They investigate “the growing influence of European treaties, directives and case law on the substance of domestic legal systems” (Smits 2004: 229). Other studies encompass a wider ontology, and therewith examine all kinds of “pressures emanating [...] indirectly from EU [European Union] membership” (Featherstone 2003 cit. in Wouters, Nollkaemper, & De Wet 2008: 6), including “the impact of the development of transnational society [...] and supranational governance [...] on national process and outcomes” (Stone Sweet 2002: 13). Once concentrated on member states’ domestic polity, policy and politics, the scope of Europeanisation research has now grown so far as to encompass conflict resolution in Moldova and Abkhazia (Coppieters, et al. 2004). In response to this conceptual

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proliferation, some scholars declared Europeanisation “faddish” (Featherstone 2003: 3), conceptually overstretched (Radaelli 2000), and questioned its ability to serve as an organising concept (Kassim 2000).

In the face of this scholarly turmoil, little attention has been paid to understanding why so many conceptions of Europeanisation have mushroomed over the past fifteen years, and whether it is for the greater good of the discipline. Understandingly, because Europeanisation is a nascent, “emergent field of inquiry” (Goetz & Hix 2001: 15), its conceptual and spatial domains remain poorly delineated. But one could rightfully expect renewed efforts in dealing with definitional issues, not least because “we cannot measure unless we first know what it is that we measure” (Sartori 1970: 61). A meta-analysis of the existing literature recently performed by Exadaktylos & Radaelli, however, showed that to date, in Europeanisation research, “measurement features more prominently than conceptual development” (2009: 526). Rather than being an indicator of academic vitality, this profusion of Europeanisation conceptions may thus simply reflect the fact that the majority of Europeanisation studies “has not been reflexive about the concepts it is employing” (Buller & Gamble 2002: 4). It should then be examined critically, as a potential (and actual) source of confusion, which notably hampers the development and consolidation of cumulative knowledge in the field.

This is where this article aims to make a theoretical contribution. It is devoted to key definitional issues in Europeanisation research. It contends that the conceptual proliferation that strikes Europeanisation research today is rooted in Europe’s contested political geography; that the various conceptions of Europeanisation in fact reflect different social constructions of Europe’s geo-political order; and that conceptions of Europeanisation are not all equal in terms conceptual utility. In this article, the question “why are there so many conceptions of Europeanisation, and are they all equally good?” is rephrased into: “on which basis can the political geography of Europeanisation be constructed, and what does it entail in terms of concept formation?”. The purpose is to highlight the social connection that links the many conceptions of Europeanisation to three politico-geographical structures of meaning, conceived as ideal types of European governance. For each of them, it is to specify and delineate the conceptual and spatial domains of Europeanisation, as they can be deduced from EU integration and European governance theories, rather than inferred from the empirical literature, where semantic confusion prevails. It finally is to assess the utility of some conceptions of Europeanisation relative to others, especially with regards to their ability to travel outwards, across EU boundaries.

The remainder of the article is organised as follows. First, the article shows that notions of Europeanisation have long been connected to space through EU integration theories alone, and not for the greater good. It shows that a useful shift towards European governance perspectives has been initiated in Europeanisation research, and suggests that re-conceptualisations of the phenomenon should in the future draw more from this multifaceted approach. The article then proposes to use three ideal types of European governance (Westphalia, neo-Westphalia, post-Westphalia) as paradigmatic frames, upon which the different conceptions of Europeanisation can be mapped. Each of these ideal types commands a specific conceptualisation of Europeanisation, which is successively delineated in definition and space. The conclusion summarises the findings, and argues that Europeanisation has been very prolific conceptually over the past years, owing to the contested nature of the European “beast” (Risse-Kappen 1996) and its disputed modes of governance. In the absence of teleological design, the article concludes that it is ill-advised to assume the verticality of social processes in Europe. In their research, the scholarship would be wiser to rely on horizontal, post-Westphalian approaches because these are less normative and more inclusive.

## Europeanisation as a natural child of EU integration

The conceptual and spatial domains of Europeanisation have long been determined by European integration theories alone. After all, Europeanisation emerged as the “logical outgrowth” of the evolution of the European integration (Caporaso 2007), and the phenomenon, in many instances, is still defined as “the impact of European integration at the national level” (Knill & Lehmkuhl 2002: 255). In their scholarly debates, Europeanisation students, often, do not question the intimate relationship that connects European integration approaches to Europeanisation research. They concur that “Europeanisation would not exist without European integration” (Radaelli 2000: 6), and their discussions, then, rather revolve around the theoretical role one concept should play in relation with the other, i.e. whether Europeanisation shall be conceptualised as a problem or a solution *vis-à-vis* European integration (Goetz & Hix 2001). The assumption of an organic link between Europeanisation and European integration theories is also reinforced by the frequent transposition of the semantic confusion characterising EU/European integration theories. This roughly equates Europe to the EU, and allows for the indiscriminate use of both terms, especially in their adjectival form. All in all, this produced what Vink and Graziano (2007) called the “EU domination of Europeanization research”. Europeanisation, in this paradigm, is co-defined by EU integration; its conceptual space is determined by the extent to which the EU has widened in territory and deepened in competency; and its geography is ineluctably confined to that of the EU.

This EU bias in Europeanisation research has sometimes been criticised for conflating Europeanisation with “EU-Europeanisation”, “EU-isation”, “Communitization” or “Unionisation” (Goetz 2001: 1037; Lenshow 2006: 59-61; Emerson 2004: 17). For some, Europeanisation should instead denote a “wider process of political, economic and societal transformation” (Emerson 2004) involving the study of other forms of institutionalised cooperation (e.g. the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the EFTA). These institutions are “highly intertwined with the European Union in terms of organization and even identity” (Vink & Graziano 2007). But such re-conceptualisations, in practice, are hard to achieve, and they have rarely been followed by empirical applications (but see Callewaert 2008). This is because European integration theories have long been conveying a *sui generis* image of the European “beast” (Risse-Kappen 1996), which spilled over Europeanisation studies. If the EU is so unique, after all, why would its internal mechanics of institutional, behavioural and attitudinal change –i.e. Europeanisation– not be one-of-a-kind?

Resilient as it is, this EU bias bears untenable pitfalls. Although it favourably fostered the conceptual genesis of Europeanisation out of EU integration theories, it has subsequently prevented the newly formed concept from flying on its own wings, therewith constraining its sound development. First, the conceptual coalescence of the European and EU spaces neglects the spatial domain that exists between the two concepts –a “non-EU Europe” domain that Europeanisation research has no reason to discard. Second, European integration perspectives seem to indicate that Europe shall necessarily head towards its institutional apex, the EU. This teleological bias also suggests that that the former (Europe) is only a poor (though transitory) reflection of the latter (the EU). Third, the nature of the EU has profoundly changed in recent years, becoming for instance decreasingly homogenous internally and increasingly intertwined externally (e.g. Dyson & Goetz 2003: : 21). This makes the EU becoming closer to “Europe”, unlike (or perhaps in addition to) what many European integration theorists delve in demonstrating, i.e. the reversed dynamic of a “wider Europe” increasingly mirroring an integrated EU. These three reasons underscore the growing inadequacy of the EU integration paradigm in driving conceptual developments in the field of Europeanisation research. These also indicate that the

political geography of Europeanisation would gain in being re-constructed through an alternative approach –European governance.

### Europeanisation as a spiritual child of European governance

European governance perspectives conceptualise Europe as political and social order, or more prosaically, a system of formal and informal rules (e.g. Kohler-Koch & Eising 1999; Olsen 2007), and governance, as “the authority to make, implement, and enforce [these] rules in a specified policy domain” (M. E. Smith 2004a: 176). Unlike integration approaches, governance perspectives do not arbitrarily set boundaries to the system of rules they analyse –they may thus target actors with no EU accession perspectives. Nor do they provide it with a teleological design. These distinctions have a substantial effect on the premises upon which researchers seek to conceptualise Europeanisation. They are helpful to mitigate the conceptual limitations imposed by European integration theories, and all in all, also provide better frames of conceptual analysis. First, they free Europeanisation from its inwards-looking EU bias by opening up its field of inquiry to new geographical horizons (e.g. non-EU Europe); second, they offer plentiful opportunities for researchers willing to indulge in cross-boundary or divide-transcendent thinking, since politico-geographical lines in Europe, more often than not, are difficult to draw; and third, they shed some light on the concept of Europeanisation by emphasising the contestability of its spatial, and thence conceptual, domain.

Of course, the differences between European integration and European governance approaches should not mislead scholars in envisaging their incompatibility. EU integration (and EU enlargement), as processes underpinned by a set of formal and informal rules, can equally be approached through European governance perspectives, e.g. as specific modes of EU governance (e.g. Jachtenfuchs 2001; Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2004). Likewise, EU-isation (in an EU integration perspective) can also be considered as a specific case of Europe-anisation (in a governance perspective). The difference between the two approaches, however, is very palpable, as it comes to the study of the “external dimension of Europeanisation”, e.g. involving European states with no EU immediate accession perspective (e.g. Switzerland, Ukraine), or neighbouring spaces that have been targeted by European foreign policy actions and discourses (e.g. Transnistria, the Mediterranean) (e.g. Lavenex & Ucarer 2004; Schimmelfennig 2009; Börzel 2010; Jones 2006; Gawrich, Melnykovska, & Schweickert 2009; Coppieters, et al. 2004). Here, the emergence of a new strand of literature specifically investigating the transformative power of the EUrope in geographical spaces, i.e. regions, where EU integration theories exhibit strong limitations, is revealing. It is symptomatic of the way the conceptual domain of Europeanisation is trying to be extended and re-delineated. And it demonstrates that paradigmatic shifts in European studies can exert an influence on concept formation in the Europeanisation sub-discipline.

European governance approaches do give a new impetus to Europeanisation research, but they do not alleviate the confusion induced by the proliferation of Europeanisation conceptions in the field, and for good reason. The discrepancies between the different strands of European governance approaches cannot be played down. European governance is a multifaceted, contested approach. This is because it is based the disputed notion of authority, prescribing different logics of political action; because it relies on different representations of Europe’s political order; and because it problematises the notions of territoriality, sovereignty and society rather than taking them for granted. Classical governance, for instance, is premised on the legitimate exercise of power within a clearly demarcated territory (the state), which is also the container of a congruent society (the nation). Therein, hard territoriality, exclusive sovereignty and embedded society are mutually co-defining concepts. Yet, postmodernist views underlined that governance

need not be territorial, and even when it is, “the prevailing concept of territory need not entail mutual exclusion” (Ruggie 1993: 149; Agnew 1994). The multi-level governance approach illustrates an alternative conception, whereby Europe consists of a plurality of overlapping layers with human societies being connected rather than contained (Hooghe & Marks 2001). The governance network approach provides another illustration of fragmented territoriality and de-territorialised sovereignty (Eising & Kohler-Koch 1999; Ansell 2000). Today, different approaches to governance co-exist (and interact) in social discourses, and eventually, “any description of European governance participates in the struggle to fix the latter’s meaning” (Diez 2001: 91). Viewed as competing frames, these different approaches to European governance serve as constraining and enabling structures of meaning in the conceptual definition and spatial delineation of the notion of Europeanisation. They are the building blocks of the Europeanisation conceptual and spatial domains. And being contested, it is the multiplicity of, and discrepancies in, these European governance approaches that produce the puzzling diversity of meanings taken by Europeanisation.

The next section of this article substantiates this finding by reviewing systematically how the conceptual and spatial domains of Europeanisation can be delineated in three different “worlds” of governance. These three worlds are ideal-typical social constructions, each of them depicting an idealised, heuristic picture of the European political order, upon which conceptions of Europeanisation can be mapped. The labels used (Westphalia, neo-Westphalia and post-Westphalia) are examined regardless of their historical accuracy (for a critique, see Osiander 2001).

### Europeanisation in Westphalian Europe

In the Westphalian ideal, “Europe” is fragmented into sovereign states that neatly occupy the European continental space. States’ boundaries are defined on the basis of hard territoriality by the unambiguous disjunction of what is “inside” and what is “outside” of the state (Caporaso 2000: 10). In the inside, the state is sovereign –it can “claim absolute and final authority over a wide range of issues” (Biersteker 2002: 167). It contains the society from which it derives its legitimate rule. In the outside, states have no sovereign right to act, but they nevertheless seek to influence the domestic politics of peer sovereign states through the exercise of their foreign policy. This makes sovereign states both inceptors and receptors of external influences. But most importantly, it makes them the prime actors and incontrovertible channels of institutional change.

#### *Defining Europeanisation in Westphalia*

In Westphalia, states (being prime actors and incontrovertible channels), are transitive, proactive “europeanisers”, i.e. they incept the structural and substantive change in the system of rules that governs their relations. This places the Europeanisation *explanandum* at the European level, where change takes place, and its *explanans* at the domestic level, where changes originate from. The challenge for Europeanisation students, then, is to “identify the actors, and the motivations and forces that determine [the] choices” that state actors make in Europeanising their domestic structures of governance (Olsen 2002: 929).

Westphalian Europeanisation can accordingly take three different forms –all subscribing to the *bottom-up* pattern of institutional, behavioural or attitudinal change. To start with, it may denote a process of institution-building that accounts for the dynamics of EU regional integration. In this case, change is structural, and Europeanisation is anything but a governance approach to EU integration. Some definitions of Europeanisation corresponding to that approach can be found in the literature, as the “emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is, of political,

legal, and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalize interactions among the actors [...] specializing in the creation of authoritative rules" (Risse, Green Cowles, & Caporaso 2001: 3). This definition denotes a radical case of institution-building, which entails the structural empowerment of supranational institutions to act authoritatively from a distinct level of governance. It involves "the creation and consolidation of authoritative political institutions at the supranational European level" (Mair 2004: 340-341), the delegation of policy competences, the transference of Westphalian sovereignty from the state to non-statal actors (Stone Sweet & Sandholtz 1998; Lawton 1999), or the constitutionalisation of the European polity (Weiler 1997; Shaw 1999).

Institution-building may also be less radical, if states agree on an intergovernmental mode of Europeanisation, wherein they remain the incontrovertible inceptors of change in the principal-agency relationship they build at the European level, whilst cautiously strengthening the latter's organisational capacity for collective action. Europeanisation, then, is about intensifying the regulatory, socializing, democratic and welfare institutions that sustain intergovernmental cooperation (Olsen 2002: 931ff.). It is about "elevating policy-making" (Jørgensen 2004: 50) rather than subduing it to supranational agencies.

Whether conceived of as supranational or intergovernmental institution-building, Westphalian Europeanisation may additionally entail identity changes through the "development of common ideas, such as new norms and collective understandings regarding citizenship and membership" (Checkel 2001: 180; Marcussen, Risse, Engelmann-Martin, Knopf, & Roscher 2001). It more generally implies "constructing systems of meanings and collective understandings" (Sedelmeier 2004: 127), and for instance, the development of common procedural norms, as the "*réflexe communautaire*", i.e. the "institutionalised imperative of concertation" in policy-fields traditionally governed by member states alone (Glarbo 2001). Whether "radical" or "soft", Westphalian Europeanisation is still a process primarily driven by national *élites*, e.g. in intergovernmental conferences. But although party officials in exercise could formerly only rely on the "passive approval" of the public (M. E. Smith 2004b: 746), this "permissive consensus" requirement, increasingly, has transformed into accommodating "constraining dissensus" (Hooghe & Marks 2009).

Europeanisation may finally take even "softer" forms by altering the substance, and not the structure of the European rules norms. In this case, Europeanisation denotes a process of policy-uploading. It involves the "ability to participate in integration so as to best be able to 'project' national government's concerns", policy preferences and approaches onto the European level (Bulmer & Burch 2000: 3). The underlying motivation is not necessarily institution-building *per se*, but, for instance, the conduct of *ad hoc* "politics of scale" (Ginsberg 1999: 438ff.). The uploading dimension of Westphalian Europeanisation can lead to the formation of issue-specific coalitions with like-minded states, who voice out domestic concerns in multilateral negotiations, and attempt to "multilateralise" their domestic preferences in European forums (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008: 142).

### ***A Westphalian geography of Europeanisation***

The political geography Westphalian Europeanisation is primarily determined by the European (foreign) policy of European states, and it is bordered by two types of frontiers – one spatial, one temporal. First, there are the continental borders of *Europe*. Only the states located on the European continent can shape the Westphalian space of Europeanisation. This includes, theoretically, European non-EU member states as well, who may act as agents of Europeanisation through their membership in a variety of pan-European international organisations (e.g. Council of Europe). More unexpectedly, their

status of EU candidate may allow them to upload domestic preference onto the EU institutions, though with limited success (e.g. Král 2005). Among the spaces that are especially hospitable in crystallising europeanised policies and practices, the EU doubtlessly stands out, not least because it is “currently the core political project in Europe” (Olsen 2002: 927). But this apparent congruence between the EU and the Europeanisation spaces is misleading. European states may seek to europeanise their interests through non-EU institutional settings (e.g. through the OECD in the case tax evasion policy), or work at the consolidation of cross-institutional links between the EU and other European international organisations (e.g. EU’s Berlin-Plus arrangements with NATO).

The second frontier that marks an ending point for Westphalian Europeanisation is temporal. It is contingent on the stock of states’ interests and structures of governance that are still “europeanisable”, i.e. for which further Europeanisation is possible. In Westphalia, Europeanisation is a finite process of institutional change culminating with the full transformation of the state-centric political order into a supranational, state-like, neo-Westphalian mode of governance. Students of Europeanisation will investigate how policy-uploads are institutionalised in intergovernmental forums, how the authority of the latter is extended through supranational institution-building, and how supranationalism is consolidated beyond the EU, throughout the whole European continent. But the emergence of European-wide supranational institutions certainly marks both the apex of regional integration and the conceptual limit to Europeanisation. That Europeanisation is finite, however, does not mean that the process cannot be reversed; regional disintegration would create anew opportunities for re-Europeanisation.

### Europeanisation in neo-Westphalian Europe

The neo-Westphalian ideal type shares some assumptions with Westphalia, especially its commitment to territoriality, but it contemplates the European space from a very different scale, and reflects the “shifting conceptualisations of the EU, both as a political space and as an actor in the world system” (Scott & van Houtum 2009: 271). Here, Europe, or more adequately the EU, is conceptualised as a proto-state. Internally, supranational rules enable Community actors to exert supreme authority over a wide range of issues, and to authoritatively penetrate states’ domestic polities. Externally, the EU proto-state projects its interests through the conduct of a European foreign policy in its idiosyncratic capacity of “international actor” (Ginsberg 1999), “civilian power” (Whitman 2002), “ethical power” (Aggestam 2008), or “normative power” (Manners 2002). The distinction between internal and external action is assumed to unambiguous, since European external borders are posited as “recognizable, even impregnable” (Christiansen, Petito, & Tonra 2000: 389). Because it is presumed on the ontological existence of an institutional centre exerting sovereign authority both internally and externally, the neo-Westphalian ideal finds virtually no empirical support whatsoever in the pan-European studies literature unless it is applied restrictively to its EU institutional core.

### *Defining Europeanisation in neo-Westphalia*

In neo-Westphalia, it is the proto-statal system of rules giving shape to European internal and external governance that delineates the space of Europeanisation. This system of rules constitutes an EU-level *référentiel* acting as an identifiable source of adaptational pressures. These pressures, under certain circumstances, are conducive to “change in the core domestic institutions of governance as a consequence of the development of European-level institutions, identities and policies” (Olsen 2007: 79). This neo-Westphalian conceptualisation of Europeanisation, which the “goodness of fit model” seeks to theorise

(Börzel 2003; Green Cowles, Caporaso, & Risse-Kappen 2001), places the Europeanisation *explanandum* at the domestic level, where institutional change takes place, and its *explanans* at the European level, where changes originate from. It denotes a *top-down*, transitive, albeit passive, process of change, in which states are not *europeanisers*; they are instead europeanised *-by* the EU actors. These EU actors primarily consist of technocratic *élites*, acting as Community or intergovernmental EU principals *vis-à-vis* national agents. The role of the public in this process is notably constrained by Europe's democratic deficit.

Neo-Westphalian Europeanisation has both an internal and an external dimension. Internally, it involves the transformation of territorial states and the restructuring of their functions, and the internalisation by domestic actors of European norms and values (Checkel 2001). This supposes that the EU becomes "an embedded feature which frames politics and policy within the European states" (Wallace 2000: 370), alternatively constraining choices, providing incentives, generating expectations, framing actions. Europeanisation, in this sense, constitutes an international source of domestic change, a "second image reversed" (Gourevitch 1987), that re-orientates "the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national politics and policymaking" (Ladrech 1994: 69). Whether neo-Westphalian Europeanisation eventually leads, internally, to institutional isomorphism remains disputed. Most scholars contend that it rather entails "convergence towards moderate diversity" (Falkner 2001; Goetz 2006). As Europeanisation is a process mediated by domestic institutions facilitating and constraining change, its outcome is mostly likely institution-dependent (e.g. Green Cowles, et al. 2001).

The external dimension of Europeanisation is often addressed through the lens of European external governance (e.g. Lavenex & Ucarer 2004; Lavenex 2004; Lavenex, Lehmkuhl, & Wichmann 2009; Schimmelfennig 2009). Here, Europeanisation is about "the external projection of internal solutions" towards non-EU states (Olsen 2002: 937ff.). Scholars usually distinguish various concentric circles of external governance upon which the EU projects its foreign policy preferences. These circles differ from one another according to the type of institutional link they exhibit with the EU. For instance, Lavenex & Ucarer (2004: 423) distinguish close association (e.g. Switzerland, Norway), accession association (e.g. Croatia), pre-accession association (e.g. Serbia), neighbourhood association (e.g. Ukraine) and loose association (e.g. African, Caribbean and Pacific countries). Europeanisation, measured by policy diffusion, differs across these circles both in terms of effect and mechanisms (Börzel 2010). In candidate states, Europeanisation refers to "the impact of the EU accession process on national patterns of governance" (Grabbe 2001: 1014). It mainly operates (with remarkable effectiveness) through the hard conditionality regimes set up by the EU, in which little institutional discretion is left to applicant states as for the need to absorb the EU *acquis* (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2007). At the periphery, by contrast, the weak conditionality regimes that are set up in the framework of the ENP lead to comparatively superficial changes (Gawrich, et al. 2009), except perhaps in sustaining democratisation (e.g. Orlovic 2007; Emerson & Noutcheva 2005). In Switzerland, finally, Europeanisation involves deeply-rooted social learning, or *autonomer Nachvollzug* (Sciarini, Fischer, & Nicolet 2004). Beyond these intra-European circles of external governance, neo-Westphalian Europeanisation takes a softer form conveyed by EU foreign policy actions. It involves the external diffusion of European normative understandings, most notably through the worldwide promotion of regionalism (e.g. Murray 2010), constitutional norms (e.g. respect for human rights and minority rights, rule of law and democracy) (Schimmelfennig 2009; Manners 2002), and approach to conflict resolution (Coppeters, et al. 2004).



### *A neo-Westphalian geography of Europeanisation*

In neo-Westphalia, the political geography of Europeanisation is primarily determined by the EU and its sphere of internal and external governance. The main boundary to the phenomenon, then, is not territorial, since the EU has set up diplomatic, economic or political relations with most of the states in its external environment. Consequently, Europeanisation may virtually affect any political space in which it interacts with national agents. It is nevertheless limited legally by the principles of subsidiarity and competence conferral, and institutionally, by the (non) existence of EU norms to be downloaded. In policy fields where the EU has no competency, the EU neo-Westphalian proto-state is similar to a federal polity in which the central government has statutorily devolved powers to subnational authorities. In those policy fields, the EU no longer acts as a *référentiel* – which is a precondition, in neo-Westphalia, for the occurrence of Europeanisation. In other words, intense levels of Westphalian Europeanisation are a precondition to the exercise of neo-Westphalian Europeanisation.

### **Europeanisation in post-Westphalian Europe**

The third ideal type conceptualises “EUrope” as the “first truly postmodern international political form” (Ruggie 1993: 172-173; 140). It asserts the fundamental heteronomy of European communities, the “blurring of territoriality” (Biersteker 2002: 166) and the “growing irrelevance of states” (Ruggie 1993: 142) in contemporary politics. In post-Westphalian Europe, borders are characteristically permeable, leaky, and, most importantly, “fuzzy” (M. Smith 1996: 21; Christiansen, et al. 2000). This is, arguably, most obvious in the EU’s “near abroad” (Christiansen, et al. 2000), or in “wider-Europe” (Lavenex 2004), i.e. in those “intermediate spaces between the inside and the outside of the Union” (Christiansen, et al. 2000: 411ff.). But this also applies internally, within the “EU”, in the tentative (and often vain) demarcation of what is “national” and what is “European”.

### *Defining Europeanisation in post-Westphalia*

Post-Westphalia contends that it is of little pertinence to take the nation-state or the European proto-state as sole points of reference in approaching Europeanisation, or to forcibly draw analytical boundaries on a territorial basis as for what is internal Europeanisation and what is external Europeanisation (White 2004: 13; Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008: 21). Post-Westphalia rejects the conceptualisations of Europeanisation premised on the ontological emergence, or pre-existence, of a *référentiel*, and prefers referring to Europeanisation as occurring *through* EUrope, i.e. through a multi-dimensional arena, or “transfer platform” (Bulmer & Radaelli 2004), the contours of which are not given but constructed. This arena, accordingly, fosters all sorts of interactions between and among national, subnational, supranational and transnational actors, in a direction that is not purely hierarchical, and that transcends the principal-agent relationship. Preferences, in this *horizontal* understanding of Europeanisation, are neither uploaded, nor downloaded, but socially, normatively and discursively reframed and “cross-loaded” (Wong 2007). Although policymakers play an important role in this process, they are not the only actors in which the capacity to interact on the EU arena is vested. Other actors, organised in networks, or influential in discourse politics, may for instance be driving post-Westphalian Europeanisation.

Post-Westphalian Europeanisation is more than policy adjustment: it has a constitutive impact on the actors’ multiple, non-exclusive identities and preference formation (Hooghe & Marks 2001: 51ff.). It is an “interactive, ongoing and mutually constitutive process of ‘europeanising’ and ‘europeanised’ countries” (Major 2005: 175) constitutively linking

various levels of governance. It implies cross-level relationships, not only in a causal sense, but as a “matter of reciprocity between moving features” (Bulmer & Radaelli 2004), for instance, in a “process by which areas of domestic policy making and implementation become increasingly subject to systems of multi-level governance” (Bromley 2007: : 203). In foreign policy, Europeanisation for instance entails the “Brusselisation” of national foreign policies, and national diplomats “going native” (Allen 1998: 42, 54; Sjørusen 1998: 11ff.). Legally, Europeanisation, in post-Westphalia, implies the plural, postnational constitutionalisation of legal regimes in a “complex of overlapping, interpenetrating or intersecting normative systems or regimes, amongst which relations of authority are unstable, unclear, contested, or in the course of negotiation” (Cotterell cit. in Shaw 1999: 10; see also Walker 2002; La Torre 2000; Stone Sweet 2009). Post-Westphalian Europeanisation, as a result, shall not necessarily entail more uniformity and cross-national convergence around European norms. The fragmented and contested *loci* of authority that thrive in EUrope permits instead the elaboration of negotiating contexts, in which uniformisation is attenuated, and “domestic norms are not compromised” (Clark & Jones 2011: 362).

### A post-Westphalian geography of Europeanisation

Delineating the space of Europeanisation in post-Westphalia is difficult. Although the EU doubtlessly shapes its most influential contours (owing to the high level of institutionalisation of the EU arena), its institutional borders, in practice, remain poorly delineated owing to the plurality and the non-congruence of EUropean institutional settings. For instance, not all EU member states are part of the Schengen area (e.g. UK) or the Euro-zone (e.g. Denmark); some EU member states have negotiated transitory arrangements (e.g. Austria regarding free movement of Bulgarians), which others have lifted (e.g. Sweden). And, some member states have negotiated opt-out clauses (e.g. Poland regarding the Charter of Fundamental Rights), whereas others have few or no opt-outs on their record (e.g. Spain). The EU arena, thus, is far from unitary, even in its internal policy realm. To make the matter more complex, some European states use the Euro as official currency (e.g. Montenegro), or are part of the Schengen area (e.g. Switzerland), although they are no EU member-states. In so doing, they interact institutionally on a EUropean arena, though not in an extensive manner. But in a post-Westphalian world in which monetary and migration policies cannot be considered in isolation of other policy fields, the participation of non-EU member states to EU institutional schemes opens wide avenues to the study of Europeanisation in non-EU Europe.

Europeanisation may not only concern non-EU states, but non-EU pan-European international organisations as well, such as the Council of Europe, the OSCE, Nato, or the OECD, as well as subregional organisations, such as the EFTA, the Nordic Council, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Stability Pact (replaced by Regional Cooperation Council) (see Neuwahl 2005: 31). These organisations participate in the weaving of European rules and norms to a considerable extent, and they render difficult to isolate what norms and practices distinctively stem from the EU. Besides, many EU member states multiply cross-memberships. The Europeanisation space in post-Westphalia, is therefore best conceptualised as a set of overlapping spheres characterised by “varying degrees of EU-Europeanness” (Scott & van Houtum 2009) and variable institutional densities (Christiansen, et al. 2000: 192; Lavenex & Ucarer 2004: 423). But unlike neo-Westphalia, these spheres are not centred on Brussels, but admit “competing locations of authority” (Biersteker 2002: 169). The porosity of institutional borders is very well seen in the EU “near abroad”, where the EU shifted its governance focus from neo-Westphalian-style “exclusionary politics” towards “politics of inclusion” (M. Smith 1996). Politics of inclusion does necessarily not entail enlargement (Christiansen, et al. 2000: 412), but it entails “the extension of the legal boundary of authority beyond institutional integration” (Lavenex

2004: 683), and, in other terms, the extension of European governance beyond EU institutional borders. This extension may even penetrate other non-European spaces, i.e. other continents. Drawing from an historical analysis of the evolution of cross-border connections in Europe, Wallace notably observed that Europe has evolved into a “complex cobweb of interconnectedness” with some connections “radiating out into the near abroads in Africa and Asia” (2000: 374). She concludes that “these connections provide multiple opportunities for inference in, and influence from, across the borders” (ibid.).

What, then, if not territorial borders, delineate the political geography of post-Westphalian Europeanisation? The answer provided by the theory is: *interactions*. Interactions are both the constitutive and structuring factor that creates the spaces (and post-Westphalian arenas) in which norms are cross-loaded. This means that a series of actors may play a decisive role in Europeanisation, presuming they are endowed with some agency. State actors, whether located in the EU, in Europe or in the outer world, may for instance interact on a European arena, which they subjectively construct by nurturing a one-sided plan of EU accession, and anticipatively performing adaptational change (e.g. the case of Moldova in Nodia 2004). Delineating the spatial domain of Europeanisation then requires a measure of interpretivism. Europeanisation may finally take place on more structured transfer platforms, constructed intersubjectively. In this case, interactions follow patterned relationships organised as social networks. These networks admit a large variety of actors, not only statal and governmental ones. Their organisation and functional patterns have been studied in general terms under the various labels of policy networks (e.g. Falkner 2001), advocacy coalitions (e.g. Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier 1994; Keck & Sikkink 1998), epistemic communities (Haas 1992) and policy transfer networks (Evans & Davies 1999). But more research should be carried out to understand their specific contribution to post-Westphalian Europeanisation, not least because they are the clearest point of departure from neo-Westphalia.

### The way forward

For many researchers, Europeanisation is first and foremost “a model-building, not a definitional challenge” (Olsen 2002: 943ff.). The *raison d'être* of this “set of puzzles” (Radaelli 2004: 1) is not to pave the conceptual ground of inexistent theories of Europeanisation, but instead, and accordingly, to serve as an attention-directing device in the study of EU processes. Judging from the profusion of definitions that mushroomed in the field, many students seem to have taken this non-commitment very seriously. These welcome conceptual diversity as a testimony of the scholarship’s vitality in the field (Gwiadzda 2002), and too rarely wonder where this lack of conceptual clarity comes from, and whether it should really be discarded as secondary issue. This theoretical article brought some insights in this respect.

To begin with, the article showed that conceptions of Europeanisation that are premised on European integration in their definition are likely to suffer from an EU bias constraining their conceptual development. A natural child of European integration studies, Europeanisation would gain in cutting its apron strings with the EU integration discipline. This would not only benefit Europeanisation research by disjoining its political geography from EU integration. It could even contribute to normalising EU integration research, by relocating it under the auspices of governance theories. After all, if Westphalian Europeanisation, denotatively, is a governance approach to EU integration, then, theories explaining the latter may in the future be redesigned on a less *sui generis* basis, i.e. in better accordance with mainstream political sciences. This goal has already been formulated by Hassenteufel and Surel (2000: 20) –as well as Europeanisation’s expected contribution thereto-, but little attention has otherwise been paid to this tremendous potential (but see Exadaktylos & Radaelli 2009). To date, much of the conceptual reflection

in the field is driven by empirical concerns on how to extend the concept's denotation (e.g. by including eastwards' democratisation) without reducing the number of connotational properties (e.g. "domestic impact of EU integration"). Under such conditions, the firm anchoring of Europeanisation in EU integration theories necessarily bears the risk of conceptual stretching. Fortunately enough, a paradigmatic shift is on its way, which has been supported by research on external Europeanisation. This paradigmatic shift, driven by empirical curiosity rather than theory, takes the right direction, even though, in the short term, it magnifies the conceptual diversity that already characterised the field. European governance approaches, indeed, provide Europeanisation with a more fertile ground than EU integration.

European governance approaches, in their great variety, also better account for the conceptual diversity characterising Europeanisation research. Their competing claims, which have been studied here through three ideal types, draw rather different images of Europe's political order, and do not concur in their delineation of the conceptual and spatial domain(s) Europeanisation. This finding –that Europeanisation *cannot* be conceptualised in a unique manner because European governance is a politically and geographically contested notion– echoes Clark & Jones's article on the "spatialities of Europeanisation" (2008). In their thought-provoking contribution to the Europeanisation debate, the authors conclude that Europeanisation pertains in fact to socialisation and learning in different spaces of Europeanisation (on the construction of these spaces, see Jones 2006; Kallestrup 2002). Some (echoing Westphalia and neo-Westphalia) are autonomous spaces with hierarchical structures rooted in a well-bounded territory and with a clientele of their own, whereas others, cutting across scales, consist of more inclusionary networks, and resemble post-Westphalian arenas (for a comprehensive study, see Jones & Clark 2010). The present article supports this argument and further emphasises that geography (and space) are no exogenous variables. They are constitutive of the *conceptual* domain of Europeanisation. In substance, it questions the assumption that there is one concept of Europeanisation (may it be defined by learning, adaptation or convergence) that objectively transcends all the three worlds of European governance. Defining Europeanisation, it contends, is a social act having politico-geographical motivations. It is a research prerequisite, which not only defines the object of the research, but also, in the spirit of constructive idealism, contributes to build the social construction of Europe.

Does it mean that Europeanisation *is* an essentially contested concept? It is indeed remarkable that not one use of the concept can be "set up as its generally accepted and therefore correct or standard use" (Gallie 1964, cit. in Gwiadzda 2002: 4). The essential contestability of the Europeanisation concept may thus prove serious, and it certainly constitutes a fundamental challenge to researchers aiming at theorising genuine Europeanisation. There does not seem, indeed, to be an overarching construction of "European governance", which aggregates all spaces of Europeanisation into a single coherent domain. All three ideal types presented in this article co-exist in Europe's multiple realities. They are simple depictions of complex systems of rules admitting considerable overlaps. For instance, in foreign policy, White (2004) differentiates three "subsystems" of Europe's external governance: the foreign policy of European Communities (EC), of the EU and of the member states' (EUMS). Each of these subsystems is characterised by "different sets of actors and policy processes" (White 2004: 15-25), but their combination, he argues, defines what the European foreign policy is. Studying the Europeanisation of this European foreign policy, thus, would require the conceptualisation of Europeanisation in all spaces of Europeanisation, i.e. in Westphalian *EUMS* governance, in neo-Westphalian *EC* (external) governance, and in post-Westphalian (multi-level) *EU* governance. Finding a single conceptualisation of Europeanisation that cuts across these three governance subsystems is challenging, to say the least.

But such enterprise, i.e. the conceptual consolidation of the field, would be rewarded by the perspective of theory-building accomplishments. Since concepts are the “building-blocks of all inferences” (Gerring 1999: 364), their flaws are detrimental to the design of progressive theories. Despite brilliant attempts, Europeanisation research still neglects this outlook. It treats Europeanisation as a “phenomenon which a range of theoretical approaches have sought to explain” (Bulmer 2007: 47), not as an embryonic, would-be theory. Today, Westphalian Europeanisation is often explained by liberal intergovernmentalism or neofunctionalism; neo-Westphalian Europeanisation, by new institutionalist and international relations theories; and post-Westphalian Europeanisation, by still under-theorised discursive or interactionist approaches. The challenge of consolidating the field would thus not only enhance its conceptual clarity. It would make a theoretical contribution to a better understanding of social change, policy diffusion and political learning in institutional contexts.

Not only is more conceptual clarity desirable, but it is possible, despite the concept’s essential contestability, because all conceptions of Europeanisation are not equally good. Conceptions premised on EU integration approaches, it has been seen, are certainly not as good as those relying on European governance approaches. This is a first lesson to draw. But even among governance approaches, normative differences can be noted. If the aim of Europeanisation researcher is to consolidate the field and develop theories of Europeanisation, then, post-Westphalia is most probably the better starting point for this endeavour. First, it does not assume the verticality of social processes in European politics, and does not reify national and EU institutional structures as distinct agents. It thus paves the ground of the examination of “softer”, more reflexive conceptions of Europeanisation, where interaction structures like the Open Method of Coordination play a more substantial role. Second, its emphasis on interaction structures that are constructed and contested opens vistas that are more inclusive with regards to the ontological and epistemological positions upon which theories may be developed. Third, and most interestingly, its key determinant, the European interaction structure, can be problematised as a key determinant of what Europeanisation entails and how it proceeds as a process. Its variegated properties and the way it is constructed, transformed and reproduced shall therefore lie at the crux of future conceptual and theoretical research.

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