Elements for a Structural Constructivist Theory of Politics and of European Integration[1]

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Abstract

Pierre Bourdieu's structural constructivist theory of politics offers powerful instruments for a critical analysis of political power. In this paper, I explore structural constructivism as a theory of politics and of European integration. By structural constructivism I refer to a mostly French research tradition that develops some of Bourdieu's theoretical tools. In European studies, social constructivism has provided an alternative to traditional approaches such as intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism. Structural constructivism remedies some of the weaknesses of most versions of social constructivism, such as their diffuse conception of power and ideational notion of culture. This paper develops a structural constructivist approach that examines the European Union as a multileveled and polycentric emerging political field.

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Until now, the growing secondary literature on Pierre Bourdieu's work has neglected his theory of politics. Moreover, Bourdieu never himself studied the European Union, which he considered politically and morally condemnable in its current, neoliberal form.[2] However, several scholars have adapted some of Bourdieu's analytical tools to the study of political phenomena and, more recently, of the European Union.[3] In the first and

1. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Council for European Studies Conference in Chicago, 16 March 2002, at the "Pierre Bourdieu, Social Scientist and Public Intellectual" -Conference at Boston University, 19 October 2002, and at the visiting scholars' seminar, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University, 13 November 2002. Many thanks to the participants, especially Jim Ennis, Rick Fantasia, Peter Hall, Hélène Lipstadt, David Swartz, Thomas Zittel, and Vera Zolberg, for their comments. An abridged version of this paper will be published in *Theory and Society* (special issue on Pierre Bourdieu). Please send any comments to niilo.kauppi@helsinki.fi.

2. Cf. for instance Bourdieu, Pierre. *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998).

3. Cf. for instance Gaxie, Daniel. *Les professionnels du politique* (Paris: PUF, 1973); *Le cens caché. Inégalités culturelles et ségrégation politique* (Paris: Seuil, 1978); *La démocratie représentative* (Paris: Montchrestien, 2000); Gaxie, Daniel and Offerlé, Michel. "Les militants associatifs et syndicaux au pouvoir? Capital social et carrière politique," In Pierre Birnbaum (ed) *Les élites socialistes au pouvoir* (Paris: PUF, 1985); Muel-Dreyfus, Francine. *Vichy et l'éternel feminin* (Paris: Seuil, 1996). Studies on the EU using and developing some of Bourdieu's intellectual tools include Beauvallet, Willy. "Institutionnalisation et professionnalisation de l'Europe politique. Le cas des eurodéputés français," *Politique européenne* hiver/2003; Georgakakis, Didier (ed). *Les métiers de l'Europe. Politiques, acteurs et professionnalisation de l'Union Européenne* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2002); Kauppi, Niilo. "La construction de l'Europe : le cas des élections européennes en Finlande 1999," *Cultures & Conflits* 38-39 (2000): 101-118; "Power or Subjection? French Women Politicians in the

second sections of this paper, I provide a critical interpretation of Bourdieu's structural constructivist political theory, discussing his analysis of domination and the political field and contrasting these with other theories, especially Max Weber's. In the third part, I outline a structural constructivist[4] approach to European integration.

Bourdieu's structural constructivist theory of politics offers a powerful vision of society and new instruments for the study of domination and electoral politics. Drawing mostly on Max Weber and Karl Marx, but also on Émile Durkheim and Robert Michels, Bourdieu elaborated a complex but pessimistic and disenchanted view of politics. Indeed, towards the end of his life, he became a prominent political figure in the anti-globalization struggle. Bourdieu's theory of politics can be divided into three components: a general analysis of the social aspects of the political (*le politique*) and domination, a more specific analysis of politics (*la politique*), and the political practice that he developed at the end of his career. The first component elaborates chiefly on Weber's sociology of domination and its analysis of the political. In Bourdieu's Marx inspired framework, the struggle for domination takes place between the dominant and the dominated. The second component restricts political action to a specific location, the political field. Here, in contrast to the first component, and following Weber's phenomenological idea of life spheres, Bourdieu sees politics as forming an area of activity that can be separated from other areas of activity such as the economy, religion, education, and culture. For Bourdieu, the division of society into social classes forms the explanatory basis for the analysis of political activity, and the world of representation is one site of the political struggle between the dominant and the dominated.

I. Domination

> To conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, or upon one Assembly of men, that may reduce all their Wills, by plurality of voices, unto one Will ... this done, the Multitude so united in one Person, is called a COMMON-WEALTH, in latine CIVITAS.[5]

In Bourdieu's mind, the right that its citizens have to formulate political opinions and emit political judgments is the fundamental characteristic of any democratic regime. In theory, democracy is composed of citizens who, with certain age limits, are all equal. However, as Bourdieu demonstrates in his numerous studies on political opinion[6], socially the ability to produce a political opinion and to emit a political judgement is unequally distributed. The technical competence that has to do with political judgement is actually a social competence. This ability varies with educational qualifications and age, among other factors. Those endowed with cultural and economic resources

European Parliament," *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 6(3) (1999): 331-342; "European Union Institutions and French Political Careers," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 19(1) (1996): 1-24;s24 Mangenot, Michel, "Une école européenne d'administration? L'improbable conversion de l'ENA à l'Europe," *Politix* 43 (1998): 7-32.

4. Bourdieu, Pierre. "Social Space and Symbolic Power," *Sociological Theory* 4 (1989): 14-25; Ansart, Pierre. *Les sociologies contemporaines* (Paris: Seuil, 1990); Kauppi, Niilo. *French Intellectual Nobility: Institutional and Symbolic Transformations in the Post-Sartrian Era* (Albany: SUNY-Press, 1996), 53-68.

5. Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Edited by Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 120.

6. Cf. For instance Pierre Bourdieu. *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 397-465.

will also be to make political judgements. As in other areas of activity, in politics a concentration of the objectified or embodied instruments of production of political opinions can be observed. In this sense, Western democracies are already selective democracies, as only part of the population has the symbolic means to produce a political opinion, to access the order of political discourse, and thus to fully partake in political culture.

Not every answer to a question considered political is necessarily the product of a political judgement. Bourdieu differentiates three modes of production of opinion.[7] The first depends on class ethos, which enables the opinion provider to formulate coherent, common-sense answers that follow the logic of everyday existence. Political principles, "slant," or logos provide the grounding for the second mode of production of political opinion. Both modes are amenable to logical control and reflexive scrutiny. A third mode of production of political opinion consists of delegation of the formulation of political opinions to an organization providing a political line, such as a party, trade union, or other political organization. This delegation can be based on either class ethos or "slant."

What differentiates the first mode of production from the second and the third is that in the case of class ethos the principles of production of political judgement are implicit. The relationship between class and opinion is direct and unconscious. In Bourdieu's mind, this is very problematic, as "dispositions without consciousness are self-opaque and always exposed to seduction by false recognitions."[8] In contrast, the relationship between social class and political opinion is indirect in the second and third modes, mediated by the logos of either a specific political axiomatics or a political organization. Bourdieu provides a complementary division in the analysis of political opinion with production by proxy versus first-person production. He designates as production by proxy the delegation of the power to produce political opinions to a party or other political organization that represents the individual. By first-person production Bourdieu means that individuals use their own resources to formulate political opinions.

As the ability to formulate political opinions is unequally distributed, those with more educational resources are more likely to be able to formulate them than those who have none. In Bourdieu's words, "The probability of producing a political response to a politically constituted question rises as one moves up the social hierarchy (and the hierarchy of incomes and qualifications)."[9] Bourdieu also analyzes the mechanisms that influence the ability to produce an answer to a "political question".[10] Variations in this ability depend less on technical expertise or on knowledge of politics than on the social competence that translates into the feeling of having the right to have a political opinion.[11] In other words, the ability to imagine the political is as unequally distributed as political competence.

Bourdieu is interested in the role played by faith and trust in political judgement, especially in the case of production by proxy. An element of implicit faith is inscribed in the logic of political choice. Selecting representatives involves choosing not only among programs and ideas, but also among personalities. The first element of uncertainty concerns the object of judgement: is it a person or is it a set of ideas? Because a person is

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7. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 417-418.

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 Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 420.

9. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 427.

10. Bourdieu, "Questions de politique," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 16 (1977): 55-89.

11. Patrick Champagne, *Faire l'opinion* (Paris: Minuit, 1991).

endowed with a certain habitus, s/he embodies certain ideas that might not be expressed at the moment of choice. These unexpressed ideas and opinions exist in an implicit mode. On the one hand, the representative expresses the already formulated ideas of his/her electors, and, on the other hand, s/he follows his/her own "internal programme - or the specific interests associated with his position in the field of ideological production".[12] In some cases, there is correspondence between speech and spokesperson. However, even in these cases usurpation is possible, as the representative might bring into existence opinions that were not previously expressed and thus were not known by the mandators at the moment they made their choice.

In surveys, the least competent persons in matters of political opinion must choose between answers that take on their meaning in relation to a political issue, that is, to a political position in the field of ideological production. Because these individuals can produce a "yes" or "no" answer to a question but cannot necessarily grasp the political meaning of the question asked, those asking the questions can impose on them a political position. In this way, "the respondents are dispossessed of the meaning of their response",[13] a response which is totally alien to their own opinion but which is nevertheless presented as being their opinion. These least competent persons either then respond to an alien question or answer the question as they understand it, retranslating it into their own language. Thus, "'rationalization of budgetary options' becomes 'not wasting money'."[14] Through this mechanism, the respondent resorts to his or her class ethos and its unconscious presuppositions. Bourdieu underlines the conservative nature of these predispositions, tied to the world by practical logic. The task of formulating revolutionary political stances is left to political organizations.

The field of ideological production is the realm of professional politicians, an area from which the profanes are excluded. It is in this realm that political problems, programs, and ready-made solutions are produced. This production of political opinion and judgement attempts to achieve collective mobilization around common problems, to universalize certain particular interests by making their particular condition appear universal. However, part of the problem of translation of the implicit into the explicit is that there is a radical discontinuity between condition and discourse, between ethos and logos. That is, the unconscious character of practical logic, its inscription in bodily hexis, that is, in everyday schemes of perception and appreciation, and in the implicit political underpinnings of class habitus, do not necessarily translate into definite political stances or opinions understood as positions in the field of ideological production. It is precisely because of the indeterminancy of the relationship between ethos and logos that professional political agents of all kinds - politicians, journalists, publicists, etc. - play such a key role in the production of political opinion, shaping the world of the politically imaginable and the structures and main dividing lines of the field of ideological production.

Bourdieu's theory of electoral and democratic politics concentrates on analysis of political representation and symbolic political struggles. Following Thomas Aquinas, Bourdieu discusses the delegation of political power by the people to a representative as a form of alienation.[15] The people alienate their original sovereignty to a plenipotentiary representative, a party and/or an individual. An isolated individual cannot make himself heard in politics unless s/he transforms this isolated voice into group voice. But this means s/he must dispossess him- or herself of a voice in order to escape political dispossession. In a landmark study entitled "Delegation and Political

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12. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 424.

13. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 428.

14. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 428.

15. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2000), 101.

Fetishism," Bourdieu analysed the power of delegation as a purely political power that enables a group to form by delegating power to a representative.[16] In very Durkheimian fashion, the process of delegation becomes a case of social magic in which a person such as a minister, a priest, or a deputy is identified with a group of people: the workers, the nation, believers, etc. The group no longer exists as a collection of individuals but rather, through this representative, as a social agent. In this case, delegation signifies alienation implicitly consented to by those represented and dissimulated usurpation by the representative. As Robert Michels put it, "le parti, c'est moi".[17] Bourdieu reveals the double process of recognition and misrecognition inscribed in political delegation: "A symbolic power is a power which presupposes recognition, that is, misrecognition of the violence that is exercised through it".[18]

The representative exists in a metonymical relationship with the group. S/he is a member of the group, that is, a part of it, but at the same time s/he stands for the group as a whole, is a sign of the group. The representative represents the group and speaks in its name,[19] the relationship between representative and represented being similar to that between signifier and signified. But at the same time, those represented have a *fides implicita* in the representative. S/he is given a blank check. Bourdieu seems to say that this separation of rulers and ruled means that democracy is impossible. The paradox of the monopolization of collective truth is for Bourdieu the principle of all symbolic imposition: a person speaks in the name of the group and thus manipulates the group in its own name.[20] The organization quickly supplants the group. "People are there and speak. Then comes the party official, and people come less often. And then there is an organization, which starts to develop a specific competence, a language all of its own."[21]

In his discussion of how groups function, Bourdieu sketches two approaches to the problem of political opinion and competence. The first type centers on markets, votes, and polls. In such approaches, individuals are demobilized and groups are reduced to aggregates.[22] In the case of individual speech or of voice, to use Albert Hirschman's term,[23] the mode of aggregation is statistical or mechanical. It is independent of the individuals and the group does not exist politically, that is, as a political entity. Bourdieu contrasts this conception, which he calls liberal,[24] with Émile Durkheim's corporatist conception of political opinion. According to Durkheim[25] - and before

16. "La délégation et le fétichisme politique," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 52/53 (1981): 49-55; *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 203-219.

17. Robert Michels. *Political Parties* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 220.

18. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 209.

19. Bourdieu, "La délégation et le fétichisme politique," 50.

20. Bourdieu, "La délégation et le fétichisme politique,"52.

21. Bourdieu, "La délégation et le fétichisme politique," 54-55; *Language and Symbolic Power*, 218.

22. Bourdieu, *Propos pour le champ politique*, 85.

23. Hirschman, Albert O. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

24. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique*, 82.

him Jean-Jacques Rousseau - individual votes would ideally be animated by a collective spirit. They would express the community's opinion, will, and constitute a relatively permanent and coherent group. The elementary electoral college should be not a collection of isolated individuals but rather a permanent and integrated group, a body with a spirit animated by tacit accord founded on complicity. For Bourdieu, this corporatist philosophy is the implicit philosophy of electoral democracy.[26]

Bourdieu analyzes political action as consisting mostly or even exclusively of symbolic action: speeches, writings, and other symbolic interventions. A key concept in Bourdieu's sociology of domination is that of symbolic violence, the imposition of a cultural code. Here he is not referring to symbolic systems à la Durkheim. Symbolic power does not stem from the illocutionary force of speech, as it does for Austin or Searle. Rather, words have an effect when they confirm or transform the vision people have of the world. Behind the words is belief in the person who utters them and in the legitimacy of the words being uttered. Who is speaking? is the first question that should be asked when the legitimacy of a political message is being evaluated. Symbols make visible and make invisible. They reveal certain aspects of reality while hiding others. For instance, the working class does not exist as a physical entity, it is a symbolic construction that has become real because it has become an accepted part of political reality. The same goes for the state and most concepts that form part of political reality. These entities exist to the extent that representatives feel authorized to speak in their name, thus giving them real political force.

Symbolic violence is the basic mechanism by which domination is unconsciously reproduced by the dominated. In Bourdieu's theory, the dominated have to participate in the domination that is exerted on them, otherwise it would not be legitimate. Reproduction of domination takes place with the consent of those dominated. Symbolic violence is transmitted in language and in social practices, and can be found in all human interaction. It is everywhere. Theoretically, at least, it can be contrasted with actions performed voluntarily. In practice, however, it is difficult to separate the two. The concept of symbolic violence can also be contrasted with that of physical violence, which is the monopoly of the state. In contrast to Michel Foucault's work,[27] Bourdieu barely talks about physical violence and mastery over bodies,[28] though the public control of this kind of violence is a key feature of state formation. Instead, Bourdieu emphasizes the symbolic aspects of domination and the symbolic violence exercised by the schooling system, art, law, and more generally culture.

In Bourdieu's vision, political action means acting on the social world, often by attempting to break with the world as a natural entity. Radical political action engages a radical epistemology[29] that questions the world as it is usually interpreted. For Bourdieu, the object of politics *par excellence* is knowledge of the social world and the struggle for the legitimate definition of reality. In the political arena, the value of an idea depends less on its truth

25. Durkheim, Émile. *Leçons de sociologie: Physique des moeurs et du droit* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950), 138.

26. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique*, 83.

27. For instance, Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish*. Translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1977).

28. Bon, Frédéric and Schemeil, Yves. "La rationalisation de l'inconduite. Comprendre le statut du politique chez Pierre Bourdieu," *Revue française de science politique* 30/1 (1980): 1203.

29. For an elaboration of this epistemological doctrine cf. Bachelard, Gaston. *La formation de l'esprit scientifique. Contribution à une psychanalyse de la connaissance objective* (Paris: Vrin, 1980).

value than on its power to mobilize. Bourdieu states, following 19th French social philosopher Alfred Fouillée but without ever citing him, that in politics ideas are power-ideas *(idées-forces)*.[30] Power-ideas like "liberty" or "equality" cannot be proven true or false. The only way for opponents to refute them is to oppose to them some alternative power-ideas. The political weight of power-ideas will depend on their capacity to mobilize, or to universalize which is the precondition for mobilization. In politics, saying is doing only to the extent that a political agent is politically responsible and capable of guaranteeing that the group will carry out the actions that the agent requires. Only then will political agents consider a political statement to be equivalent to an act. But the truthfulness of power-ideas is not verifiable or falsifiable when the ideas are expressed. Only if a statement such as "I will win the elections to the presidency" is realized in the future, will it be considered historically true.

Bourdieu's analysis of political opinion, delegation, and the symbolic aspects of politics reduce politics to a struggle for domination. However, this conflict model is constructed on a harmony model based on the social characteristics of the agents involved in the struggle and their structural positions in various fields. The social field functions as the base structure of politics, the political game being the superstructure. In this vision, politics is about fetishism and the world of appearances.[31] The real game is backstage in the social field, connected to the political field by any number of homologies or structural equivalences. In the social field as in any field of social activity, social class is the ultimate determinant of success or failure for any individual. Instead of the Marxist dichotomy of the economic versus the cultural, one finds in Bourdieu's theory of politics the dichotomy of the social versus the symbolic or the political.

Although some might say that modern Western states keep a monopoly over physical violence through the army and the police, it is exaggerated to say that the state holds the monopoly over symbolic violence. This is because while physical violence can be monopolized and its existence empirically verified, the same cannot be said of symbolic violence.[32] The power over bodies is of a different nature than the power over minds, which cannot be dominated by just one institution. Families, religions, companies, the media, and various kinds of associations and organizations compete with the state and other public institutions for control of this kind.

II. The Political Field

> There are general laws of fields: fields as different as the field of politics, the field of philosophy or the field of religion have invariant laws of functioning. (That is why the project of a general theory is not unreasonable and why, even now, we can use what we learn about the functioning of each particular field to question and interpret other fields.)[33]

It is perhaps in Bourdieu's concept of the political field that his debt to Max Weber is the clearest, as he acknowledges himself: "[Max Weber was] the scholar who came the closest to the notion of 'field' yet, at the same

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30. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique*.

31. For a very similar vision of politics, cf. Jacques Derrida. *Spectres de Marx. L'État de la dette, le travail de deuil et la nouvelle Internationale* (Paris: Galilée, 1993).

32. Addi, Lahouari. "Violence symbolique et statut du politique dans l'oeuvre de Pierre Bourdieu," *Revue française de science politique* 51/6 (2001): 950-954.

33. Bourdieu, *Sociology in Question* (London: Sage, 1993), 72.

time, never reached it" (my translation).[34] Following Max Weber in his *Zwischenbetrachtung*,[35] Bourdieu analyses politics like any other area of social activity such as the economy, religion, or education.[36] In his theory the political field has the same structural characteristics as any other field. Political capital is symbolic capital in the field of politics, a type of capital that the agents involved in this field compete for. The political field has its own, autonomous logic, a formal binary logic that is substantiated by the historical development of political ideas, ideologies, and practices. Agents at the autonomous pole of the political field possess the most legitimate type of political capital, whereas agents at the heteronomous pole of the political field agents accumulate alternative types of political capital. The dominant have a lot of capital, the dominated relatively little. Through a process of sociomimesis, agents' political stances and political strategies follow their positions in the political field. According to Bourdieu, "It is the structure of the political field, that is, the objective relation to the occupants of other positions, and the relation to the competing stances they offer which, just as much as any direct relation to those they represent, determines the stances they take, i.e. the supply of political products."[37]

In contrast to Weber's social spheres,[38] Bourdieu's concept of the field is structural and relational. In his political theory, he conceptualizes politics topologically. The political field constitutes a space that is structured such that the value of each element of it is formed through the network of relationships this element entertains with the other elements in the field. In theory, then, the relative value of an element is determined by this set of relationships and not by any external factors, such international politics or the state of the economy in the case of the political field. Following Saussurean precepts, value is relational and not substantial. For this reason, distinction does not imply a search for distinction, as in Torstein Veblen's theory of the leisure class. An existing element is always distinctive, that is distinguishable in theory and practice from other elements in a structure. If it was not, it would not exist. For this reason, intentionality is not an issue in Bourdieu's field theory, or in his theory of the political field.

Like any field, the political field is subject to some general principles. The most important of these *modus operandi* is the field's organization around two opposite poles: the protagonists of change and the apostles of law and order, the progressives and the conservatives, the heterodox and the orthodox. This binary logic not only structures political parties and ideologies; it permeates the political field as a whole, from political parties and other political organizations between the progressive and conservative wings, all the way down to the habitus of an individual who might have evolved from a radical youth into a conservative party official. The tension between order and change is present in the activities of revolutionary movements at all times: for instance, in the hesitations

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34. Bourdieu, "Champ politique, champ des sciences sociales, champ journalistique," Cahiers de recherche 15, GRS (1996), 7.

35. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1922), 542; Gerth, H.H. and Mills, C. Wright, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1991), 323-362.

36. Une interprétation de la théorie de la religion selon Max Weber," *Archives européennes de sociologie* XII (1971): 3-21; "Genèse et structure du champ religieux," *Revue française de sociologie* XII (1971): 295-334.

37. Bourdieu, *Language and Political Power*, 246.

38. Weber. *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie,* 542; Gerth and Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber*, 331ff. For a sophisticated discussion of politics as an autonomous activity cf. Julien Freund. *Qu'est-ce que la politique?* (Paris: Seuil, 1965).

of their leaders about using violence against their own supporters in order to effectively combat state authorities. As the political field becomes more autonomous, these struggles are sedimented and institutionalized, eventually forming part of the objectified and materialized social unconscious. Each political organization and the field as a whole develop their own esoteric cultures that are alien to outsiders.

The resources that structure the political field are political capital, as the specific resource that agents attempt to accumulate in the political field, economic capital, and cultural capital.[39] "Political capital is a form of symbolic capital, *credit* founded on *credence* or belief and recognition or, more precisely, on the innumerable operations of credit by which agents confer on a person (or on an object) the very powers that they recognize in him (or it)."[40] Individuals are distributed throughout the field firstly according to the overall volume of capital they possess and, secondly, following the composition of their capital.[41] Those who succeed in accumulating the most political capital will be the dominant, while those who have the least capital will be the dominated.[42] The position of an individual in this structure determines his or her assets and discourses. An individual cannot occupy two positions at the same time. The structure is also a set of power relationships between individuals and groups in the political field. Moving beyond Saussure and Lévi-Strauss, who developed the dominant social scientific interpretation of Saussure's theory, Bourdieu innovates by adding power to structures. Relationships are not only linguistic or symbolic but also social, involving power relations.

Like rational choice theorists, Bourdieu emphasizes that agents maximize utility. He assumes goal-oriented behavior that is directed toward the accumulation of status and power in the field. But Bourdieu's approach is more flexible. Utility is field-specific, that is historically and socially constituted, and socially defined. Agents can be individuals, groups, institutions, firms, and so on. Not all agents succeed in accumulating status. Some resign themselves to subordinate status. Further, an agent's self-interest also serves the general interest because it reinforces the legitimacy of the field's values. In distinction to economic rationality, individuals often commit themselves to values, such as academic excellence, that can lead to reduced living standards for instance. Yet another difference between rational choice and Bourdieu's field-theory is that in the latter individuals are not necessarily consciously choosing between different alternatives. Rather, guided by their habitus in their actions, they just know what the right thing to do (or then not).

In a way, Bourdieu's logical framework for explaining the rationale of actions in a field shares some of the features with Simon's concept of bounded rationality.[43] Individuals do not have complete information and they also have perceptual limitations. In the framework provided by Bourdieu's theory these perceptual limitations can be attributed to three factors: the characteristics of fields, those of positions, and socio-cultural factors. In a field, certain aspects of reality are considered less important and are for that reason neglected. In some cases, their

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39. Caro, Jean-Yves. "La sociologie de Pierre Bourdieu. Éléments pour une théorie du champ politique," *Revue française de science politique* 30/1 (1980): 1171-1197; Gaxie, Daniel. *Les professionnels de la politique*.

40. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 192.

41. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 231.

42. Cf. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 451-453.

43. Simon, A.H. *Models of Bounded Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982-87) .

neglect might be a condition of possibility of the field as a whole, its "illusio". For instance, the rejection of worldly values can be considered as being a condition for the existence of the religious field. Limitations might also be due to an agent's position in a field. The agents and groups occupying the dominant positions in a field might not see the effects of their actions on the dominated agents, for instance. Limitations might finally be linked to what Simon calls subjective aspects. In a structural constructivist framework, these could be called factors having to do with upbringing, class, or more broadly habitus.

In his text "Champ politique, champ des sciences sociales, champ journalistique," Bourdieu discussed the political field as a microcosm of the social macrocosm. Like other areas of social activity it has its dominant and dominated, its "rich" and "poor", its right and left. As in other areas of social activity, the more autonomous a field is, the more closed off it is from the outside world. In a relatively autonomous political field, the position of an individual will determine his or her political stances. Political agents attempt to monopolize the legitimate means of manipulating the social world.[44] They compete with journalists and social scientists in the struggle for the "monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence",[45] a phrase borrowed from Weber's discussion of the priesthood having the monopoly over the legitimate manipulation of the means of salvation and the state's monopoly over legitimate violence.[46]

The political field is "understood both as a field of forces and as a field of struggles aimed at transforming the relation of forces which confers on this field its structure at a given moment".[47] It is composed of producers who have monopolized the production of political goods offered on the political marketplace. Ordinary citizens are reduced to the role of consumers exterior to this political field. The political stances of the moment, as seen, for instance, in electoral outcomes, are the result of an encounter between supply and demand. Both legitimate supply and legitimate demand are historically formed through social struggles between different groups to define them. Political supply consists of political goods offered by political enterprises, parties, trade unions, political clubs, and so on. These goods can be either symbolic, consisting of ideas and programs, or material, such as posts in the party hierarchy. The same applies to demand, which has been collectively and historically conditioned to take certain forms. Citizens have to choose among different types of political goods, problems, programs, analysis, concepts, events, and so on. Formally, consumers have equal access to political goods. In practice, however, social factors such as education and wealth limit access. Those who do have access to these resources become knowledgeable consumers, while those who lack these resources have no alternatives, and abstain in elections or rely totally on their political representatives.

The influence of Weber's discussion of the priesthood is also evident in Bourdieu's analysis of the relationship between political professionals and amateurs. As the political field gains in autonomy, the profanes become increasingly dispossessed of the properly political means of production. In France, professional politicians that have gone through elite French schools like the Instituts d'études politiques or the Ecole nationale

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44. Bourdieu, "Champ politique, champ des sciences sociales, champ journalistique," 13.

45. Bourdieu, "Champ politique, champ des sciences sociales, champ journalistique," 19.

46. Weber. *Staatssoziologie. Soziologie der rationalen Staatsanstalt und der modernen politischen Parteien und Parlamente* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1966), 27-28.

47. Bourdieu. "La représentation politique. Éléments pour une théorie du champ politique," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 36/37 (1981): 3; *Language and Symbolic Power*, 171.

d'administration gradually replace amateur political activists.[48] This way the criteria that regulate entry into the political field also change. Bourdieu does not theorize the levels of autonomy, but as the field becomes more autonomous its internal mechanisms play a more central role in political activity.[49] To understand the specific meaning of a political stance, one must situate it in a relational network composed on the one hand of the other stances formulated at the time in the political field and, on the other hand, of the structure of the demand.

As political capital becomes objectified into posts in the party apparatus, relative independence from electoral sanction develops. For individuals in normal times, the temptation to integrate into the political apparatus grows as the material and symbolic spoils accumulated by the party are redistributed to the followers.[50] Conversely, in exceptional or revolutionary times staying in the political apparatus can be risky.

Political agents are always, though to varying degrees, involved in a double game, the first internal to the political field and the second external to it, in the larger social field. In the political field itself professionals seek recognition from peers, whereas in the social field they seek support from the voters in elections. A political agent's power in the political field depends on his or her capacity to speak in the name of those exterior to it, the profanes. A political agent's dependence on the political apparatus varies according to his or her capital structure and volume. The less of other social resources such as education and personal wealth political agents have, the more dependent they are on the resources provided by delegation. The more they invest in the political apparatus, the more they become dependent on it.[51] Bourdieu has analyzed the social effects of this dispossession in the case of the French Communist party.[52] In contrast to intellectual groups or an aristocratic club, this type of political organization is built on both objective characteristics such as the posts it offers for its followers, and on subjective dispositions such as fidelity to the party and the convergence of its followers' vision of the world and that of its leaders and militants. As political parties get more professional and more bureaucratic, professionals enter into competition among themselves for control over the political apparatus. "The struggle for the monopoly of the development and circulation of the principles of di-vision of the social world is more and more strictly reserved for professionals and for the large units of production and circulation, thus excluding de facto the small independent producers (starting with the 'free intellectuals')."[53] Thus, according to the logic of monopolization of the supply of political goods, the relatively limited access to these political goods of those most deprived of economic and cultural resources is reinforced. The more socially incompetent agents are in politics, the more they will depend on the supply of political goods and the more readily they will delegate their power to political entrepreneurs and organizations. This mobilization requires, from professional politicians, a double game, one in relation to the citizens and the other aimed at their competitors. Bourdieu assimilates political parties to military organizations that mobilize their resources to defeat their competitors on the battlefield of political life:

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48. Cf. Bourdieu. *La noblesse d'état. Grandes écoles et esprit de corps* (Paris: Minuit, 1989).

49. Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 608.

50. Cf. Weber, *Staatssoziologie*, 63-64; Bourdieu, "La représentation politique,"19-21.

51. Cf. also Michels, *Political Parties*.

52. Bourdieu, "La représentation politique."

53. Bourdieu, "La représentation politique," 19; *Language and Symbolic Power*, 196.

In parliamentary democracies, the struggle to win the support of the citizens (their votes, their party subscriptions, etc.) is also a struggle to maintain or subvert *the distribution of power over public powers* (or, in other words, a struggle for the monopoly of the legitimate use of objectified political resources - law, the army, police, public finances, etc.). The most important agents of this struggle are the political parties, combative organizations specially adapted so as to engage in this *sublimated form of civil war by mobilizing in an enduring way*, through prescriptive predictions, the greatest possible number of agents endowed with the same vision of the social world and its future. So as to ensure that this enduring mobilization comes about, political parties must on the one hand develop and impose a representation of the social world capable of obtaining the support of the greatest possible number of citizens, and on the other hand win positions (whether of power or not) capable of ensuring that they can wield power over those who grant that power to them.[54]

The main object of struggle among professionals in the political field is recognition from peers, or political capital as a specific type of symbolic capital. Bourdieu differentiates between two types of political capital, that acquired by the individual and that acquired by delegation. Individual political capital is the result either of slow accumulation, as in the case of French notables, or of action in a situation of institutional void and crisis,[55] in which case the concept is close to Weber's charismatic legitimacy. Personal political capital disappears with the physical disappearance of the person holding this power. S/he is recognized and known for characteristics that are considered his or her own. Political capital is acquired by delegation through investiture by an institution, for instance, a political party or other political enterprise. A person such as a priest, a professor, or any official, receives from the institution a limited and provisional transfer of collective capital composed of recognition and fidelity.[56] Through this process the capital is partly transformed from collective to personal. Political capital becomes institutionalized in the form of posts and positions. Those in the service of political enterprises are their delegates.

Political capital by delegation thus refers to a situation where the power of a politician depends on the power of his or her party and of his or her position in the party. The leader of the party becomes, through investiture, a banker[57] and the party a bank specialized in political capital. The banker controls access to this collective capital, which is bureaucratized and certified by the party's bureaucracy. Citing Antonio Gramsci, Bourdieu writes that political agents such as trade union representatives are "bankers of men in a monopoly situation."[58]

Bourdieu presents the struggles of the representatives as offering nothing but mimesis of the stances of the social groups or social classes they represent.[59] Representatives are thus simultaneously conditioned by their

54. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 181.

55. Bourdieu, "La représentation politique," 18.

56. Bourdieu, "La représentation politique," 19.

57. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique*, 65.

58. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 194; Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Political Writings 1921-1926* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1978), 17.

59. Bourdieu, *Language and Political Power*, 182.

positions in the political field and their positions in the social field, at times miming one, at times the other, or even both at the same time. The homologies between their positions in the political field and the social field, and their locations in the political field and the field of production of political stances explains why they satisfy the needs of their electors without even consciously attempting to do so. As the congruence between representative and represented is of a semiotic nature, resembling the relationship between signifier and signified, congruence between what the representative says and what the electors think is necessary for representation to exist. This congruence also explains why, while competing with other politicians or political enterprises in the political field, representatives also satisfy the interests of those they represent. They serve themselves while serving others.

Bourdieu's theory is Durkheimian and functionalist in its holistic analysis of the political field, and Weberian in its attempt to think of social and political processes using economic terms as models. Following Durkheim, Bourdieu sees the political in functionalist terms as forming a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. The logic of the whole conditions the role of the parts, and the whole takes on a life of its own that is independent of the parts. The logic of the political field determines the stances taken.[60] Bourdieu also sees political activity in terms of rituals, institutions, and symbolic action. A central ritual in his theory is that of investiture, whereby an individual is chosen to represent and constitute a group. Like Weber, for whom the modern state is an "enterprise" or a "business" (*Betrieb*),[61] for Bourdieu the offer and demand of political goods and the monopolization of capital are the main processes of political activity. As a result, sociology and political science paradoxically become subfields of economics (types of *minor economics*) miming economic terms and thought schemes. Political action becomes an inferior, because less rational, form of economic action. In Bourdieu's theory of the political field, politics is seen as the realm of groups fighting for domination. Phenomena usually seen as political, such as the public sphere[62] and the rule of law, have no place in Bourdieu's theory. Incorporating them would require drawing qualitative differences and distinguishing politics from other human activities in non-formal terms.

Since the 1960s Bourdieu has been studying the state, and specifically the French state. In Bourdieu's theory of politics, the genesis of the state is "the culmination of a process of concentration of different kinds of capital, capital derived from physical force or instruments of coercion (the army, the police), economic capital, cultural, or better still informational capital, symbolic capital; a concentration which, as such, translates into possession of a sort of metacapital giving the bearer power over all the other kinds of capital and those who possess them" (my translation).[63] Through a process of privatization of public power prior to the existence of the state, certain social groups succeed in monopolizing various kinds of public authority. The new authority that emerges becomes responsible for calling the shots and deciding about the relative value of social resources and the exchange rates of these different types of resources. The state participates in a decisive manner in the production and reproduction of the instruments of construction of reality. In Bourdieu's formulation, the state seems to be a kind of grand organizer that "constantly exercises a formative action of durable dispositions," of *dauerhabitus* to use Weber's term.[64] It imposes fundamental principles of classification on everybody - sex, age, competence, and so on.[65] Its

60. Bourdieu, *Language and Political Power*, 184.

61. Weber, *Economy and Society*.

62. Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

63. Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), 109.

64. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, 541.

influence is everywhere. In the family, it controls the rites of institution; in the schooling system, it creates divisions between the chosen and the rejected, durable, often definitive symbolic divisions that are universally recognized and that often have determining effects on the future of individuals. The individual's "voluntary servitude" to the state order is the result of the harmony between cognitive structures, either collective or individual, and the objective structures of the world to which they apply. It seems to be total.

Public authority is thus always private authority disguised as public authority which has succeeded, through symbolic violence, in transforming itself and presenting itself as representing the collectivity. Competition and symbolic violence among various groups - *homo homini lupus* - are endless, instituted by society in Rousseaun manner but lacking the positive basis Rousseau's theory of primitive man has. There is no end to the struggle, no light at the end of the tunnel. In fact, it seems that in Bourdieu's theory politics is by definition stateless, understood as genuine shared public authority.

Bourdieu's account of political capital emphasizes its objectified nature. This is only one side of the story, however. Political capital as a symbolic resource has also to be used in order for it to be valuable. Capital gains are relatively modest and value is not just retrieved from a treasury. In this sense political action, which is curiously under- theorized in Bourdieu's political theory, is the necessary condition for the existence of this type of resource. As political capital is less objectified than certain types of economic capital such as money on a bank account, its' analysis has to concentrate on the political practices through which is it accumulated, and on the symbolic aspects of the political order. This poses problems for the objectification of political capital. As symbolic interaction contains to varying degrees emergent properties and elements of chance, the exact amount of political resources an agent has in his/her possession is difficult to determine. Further, as political action often involves bluff and, to varying degrees, the imposition of values ("symbolic violence"), value is to a large extent created through social interaction. Political reality is not just reproduced by agents, it is also created by them. In certain conditions the bluff is successful and reality is transformed to correspond to the goal of an action that initially was considered impossible or unlikely to be realized. In Bourdieu's version of structural constructivism, social transformation takes place through reproduction of the social order in time. However, in certain conditions, individuals as political entrepreneurs can change this reality. A recent solution to the problem of accounting for creative action is the concept of social skill.[66] But it is difficult to see how the concept of social skill differs from Bourdieu's concept of habitus (which includes skills) as they are both still embedded in a Aristotelian logic of potentiality/activity that does not take sufficiently into account the interactional qualities of symbolic resources.

Bourdieu's analysis of political capital as a type of symbolic capital suffers from other weaknesses that a developed structural constructivist approach must address. In his general theory of fields, Bourdieu did not draw qualitative differences between different types of fields, between types of capital, or between politics and other human activities. For instance what I would call "generic fields," such as the social field, have to be separated in terms of their properties from "specialized fields," such as the European political field. Social fields will exist as long as human societies do. Consequently, generic social resources such as social capital, valid (in varying degrees of course) in all areas of human activity and in all human societies, do not have the same properties as more specialized resources such as European political capital that exist only at certain times and in certain places. Generic resources also can be more easily converted than more specialized resources into other resources. Moreover, fields have to be differentiated from one another in non-formal terms. For instance, the political field

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65. Bourdieu, *Méditations pascaliennes* (Paris: Seuil, 1997), 209.

66. Fligstein, Neil. "Social Skill and the Theory of Fields," *Sociological Theory* 19(2)/2001: 105-125.

contains specific inventions, such as elections as a means of allocating political power, that differentiate it from other fields like the literary field.

Bourdieu's formal field-theoretical model enables comparison amongst different fields or a field's historical stages. However, it is an ideal-typical construction in Weber's meaning of the word. In reality, fields are always in formation in the sense that they are dynamic, incomplete entities subject to varying degrees of external influence. In reality, value is never totally Saussurean, that is, endogenously formed.

In Bourdieu's theory, the public domain appears as an area where various private interests, masquerading as group interests, try to grab the public interest for themselves, or transform their particular interests into the public interest. Perhaps because politics is identified with power struggle other, crucial aspects of modern politics are not taken into account. Bourdieu's version of a structural constructivist theory of politics does not elaborate on the specificity of democratic politics as a specific area of social activity. For instance, Bourdieu does not reflect on the specific historical meaning of elections. This is curious because, after all, the student does not choose his professor, children do not choose their parents, and workers to not choose their bosses. By law, public officials are supposed to further the public interest, although they sometimes use their legitimacy to further their particular ends. Political power is public power, and the state is the guarantor of public order.

In contrast to Weber, whose approach was historical, Bourdieu also does not distinguish among different kinds of political fields. For Bourdieu, the mechanism of power delegation operated the same way in the totalitarian Soviet Union as in democratic France[67] and in the religious and political domains. In the manner of Rousseau, he overemphasizes the profanes' blind belief in and total submission to the delegate. But people are not as easily duped as Bourdieu would have us believe, and the media regularly denounces politicians for their wheeling and dealing. Bourdieu's analysis of the state, to which he devotes a considerable amount of energy, is handicapped by insufficient analysis of the concept of the public.

In Bourdieu's theory of the political field, politics is a game. In many ways, Bourdieu's pessimistic analysis of politics is reminiscent of Plato's critique of the Sophists. Politics is the realm of the arbitrary and the symbolic: it is deceit and cannot be the realm of the true and the beautiful. Perhaps for this reason he saw himself until the end as a critical intellectual, as a man of science among the people, at a distance from the political establishment. Bourdieu's underlying ideal model of the political seems to be based on direct democracy in a polis composed of critical individuals, without parties or political organizations. Delegation of power and political representation logically lead to usurpation and manipulation, not to real democracy.

Bourdieu's model for analyzing delegation, the monopoly of production of political goods, and political power as symbolic power comes from Weber. So does his conception of politics as a separate life sphere[68] or field, which he developed using linguistic models adopted from Saussure and Lévi-Strauss. Political value is Weberian in the sense that it is fiduciary value, that is dependent on the legitimacy attributed to a person, organization, or idea, and Saussurean in the sense that it is relational value. But Karl Marx's (and Louis Althusser's) influence is also apparent. Apart from Bourdieu's analysis of political fetishism, which duplicates in another semantic register Marx's analysis of fetishism and merchandise circulation,[69] and his presentation of social value in terms of modes

67. Bourdieu, *Propos sur le champ politique*, 101.

68. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, 542; For a similar approach cf. Ben-David, Joseph, Randall Collins. "Social Factors in the Origins of a New Science: The Case of Psychology," *American Sociological Review* 31/4 (1966): 451-465.

69. Marx, Karl. *Capital. A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production. Volume 1* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), 72.

of production and capital, the division of society into social classes is the ultimate explanatory device by which Bourdieu analyzes the political. Class struggle in the social field takes a sublimated form in the political field.[70] Social classes structure the social field, a kind of superfield that is present in various forms in other spheres of social activity, including in politics. The social field and the political field are united by a pre-established qualitative harmony consisting of structural homologies. This harmony enables agents operating in different fields to find common interests tied to their relative positions in these fields. Thus for instance, those dominated in the field of power, the intellectuals, can, in certain historical circumstances, find common interests with those dominated in the social field, the working classes.

III. Structural constructivism as an approach in European integration studies

The political reality of the European Union is Janus-faced. On the one hand, it is an emergent system of governance that is networked, not hierarchical, and open, not closed.[71] On the other hand, the EU is far from being a power-free institutional and discursive space. Integration has produced new power centers, hierarchies, and political resources. Structural constructivist political theory systematizes some of Weber's ideas by underlining the construction of reality by agents who, constrained and empowered by structures that are material and symbolic, struggle to accumulate political resources and increase their own power. Structural constructivist scholars are interested in revealing the hidden power mechanisms behind European integration. The key question of a structural constructivist approach to European integration is through what mechanisms political agents reproduce and transform the European political order. Research inspired by Bourdieu's theory concentrates on specific objects, for instance new social groups such as Members of the European Parliament or European civil servants, connecting political strategies to structural location and social resources such as gender, class, and education, and linking these to broader social processes such as the professionalization of Europe and the constitution of a European political field.[72] These scholars develop some of Bourdieu's theoretical concepts, such as the field as a structured entity of analysis, structural homology as a tool that enables to connect fields to one another, and social resources as instruments of political struggles. They construct their objects of research through a critique of preconceptions, combining statistical data with in-depth interviews, and linking habitus to the structures of fields.

 Until the 1990s two models dominated scholarly discussion on European integration. The state-centric model emphasizes the role of nation-states in their attempts to strengthen and augment their power. According to some proponents of this intergovernmentalist and neorealist model,[73] the process of European integration has, in many

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70. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 182.

71. Zeitlin, Jonathan and Sabel, C.F. "Networked Governance and Pragmatic Constitutionalism. The New Transformation of Europe", paper presented at the workshop on the Open Method of Coordination and Economic Governance in the European Union, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University, April 28, 2003.

72. Cf. Beauvallet, "Institutionnalisation et professionnalisation de l'Europe politique"; Kauppi, "European Union Institutions and French Political Careers"; "Power or subjection?"; "La construction de l'Europe"; Mangenot, "Une école européenne d'administration?"

73. See for instance Andrew Moravcsik, "Why the European Community Strengthens the State: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31 (1983): 473-524.

ways, strengthened rather than weakened European nation-states, which are still the key players in European politics. A second model, propagated by neofunctionalists, is called the multigovernance model. According to this model, nation-states are losing ground in the face of growing transnationalization and regionalization of decision making. The European Union has already become the main decision maker in Europe.[74]

New institutionalisms of rationalist, historical, and sociological persuasions[75] have provided a third way to the neofunctionalist/ multilevel governance and intergovernmentalist approaches. Institutions are understood as rules and shared meanings that enable social interaction. Since the 1990s, a version of the new institutionalism, social constructivism or sociological institutionalism, has presented a social scientific alternative for the study of European integration. By introducing Anthony Giddens's social theory into international relations theory and European studies,[76] social constructivism opens new paths to scholarly work that emphasize socialization and the social construction of reality, following in spirit Berger and Luckmann.[77] In contrast to previous approaches, social constructivism underlines the symbolic aspects of European integration, that is, discourses, norms and, more generally, the power of words and symbols to construct two distinct political ontologies or legitimate political orders relative to Europe: a Europe of nation-states and a Europe of transnational processes.

According to some social constructivists,[78] the purpose of their research program is to study relatively neglected areas of the integration process, such as polity formation through rules and norms, the transformation of identities, the role of ideas, and the uses of language. Social constructivism focus on what practitioners call social ontologies, which include such diverse phenomena as intersubjective meanings, cultures of national security, and symbolic politics. By emphasizing social interaction, they are able to examine in a new way the structure of the international system, and the dialectics between states and the international order. According to some scholars,[79]

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74. For a recent presentation of these approaches see Gerald Schneider and Mark Aspinwall, editors, *The Rules of Integration. Institutionalist Approaches to the Study of Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

75. James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review* 78 (1984): 734-49; William Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, editors, *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 936-957; Junko Kato, "Institutions and Rationality in Politics - Three Varieties of Neo-institutionalists," *British Journal of Political Science* 26/4 (1996): 553-582.

76. Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (1992): 391-425.

77. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Harmandsworth: Penguin Books, 1966).

78. Thomas Christiansen, K.E. Jørgensen and Antje Wiener, editors, a special issue on social constructivism or sociological institutionalism, *Journal of European Public Policy* 6 (1999); Jeffrey Checkel, "Social Construction and Integration," *Journal of European Public Policy* 6 (1999): 545-560.

79. R. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt and Peter Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture on National Security," in Peter Katzenstein, editor, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

social constructivism is situated between rationalism, represented by such approaches as neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism, and reflectivism, which includes postmodernism and poststructuralism.[80]

Other approaches have supplemented and, to a certain extent, challenged these policy-oriented, high politics approaches to European integration.[81] Some of these anthropological and sociological institutional approaches look at integration processes from the bottom up, to use Simon Bulmer's terms, or at the level of everyday political life. French political anthropologist Marc Abélès has studied the European Parliament and the European Commission from the inside, analyzing the internal dividing lines and tensions of these institutions. By mapping the contradictions of transnational political representation, Abélès strives to present European political institutions as they reveal themselves to an outside observer.[82] The Member of the European Parliament has to represent both the national interests of his/her country and those of the transnational institution s/he serves.[83] The European parliamentarian is a new type of politician who can be contrasted with both the traditional nationally-elected politician and the international politician appointed to an international organization. In his study on the cabinet of the former head of the European Commission Jacques Delors, George Ross scrutinizes the strategies of Delors's cabinet in the Commission, and the numerous practical questions that arise when national politicians and civil servants end up serving common, European interests in the European Commission.[84]

While presenting an alternative approach, social constructivism also has its weaknesses. A major one is the absence of a theory of agency.[85] As social constructivism concentrates on the agency-structure interaction, giving priority to structure, it neglects political action as situated action, that is action in specific institutional settings. Another weakness of social constructivism is that, despite its stated aims to study the social fabric of European politics, it is only weakly sociological. Its protagonists are eager to examine the discursive processes informing European integration, identity, norms of behavior, and so on, leaving largely untouched the key issue of the social characteristics of the individuals and groups who, through their activities, construct this symbolic and material entity.

Compared to other approaches in European integration studies, one of the advantages of structural constructivism as a variation of social constructivism[86] is that it does not commit itself to either a state-centric or supranational point of view. As the European Union is a changing political reality that unites supranational and

80. Christiansen, Jørgensen, Wiener, *Journal of European Public Policy*.

81. See the special issue on the political sociology of the European Union, Virginie Guiraudon, editor, *Culture & Conflits* 38-39 (2000).

82. Marc Abélès, *La vie quotidienne au Parlement européen* (Paris: Hachette, 1992).

83. Richard S. Katz, "Role Orientations in Parliaments," in Richard S. Katz and Bernhard Wessels, editors, *The European Parliament, the National Parliaments, and European Integration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

84. George Ross, *Jacques Delors and European Integration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

85. Checkel, "Social Construction and Integration."

86. For a discussion of Bourdieu's political sociology and governance cf. David Swartz, "Pierre Bourdieu's Political Sociology and Governance Perspectives," in Henrik Bang (ed.) *The Governance Traditions of Political Science, Sociology and Political Theory*, forthcoming.

national elements a scholar sticking to one or the other approach introduces a significant bias in his/her research,[87] a bias which prevents him/her from accounting for the 'nature of the beast'.[88] Structural constructivism as a holistic approach requires painting with broad strokes the structural features of the emerging political field in which political agents act. In contrast to the traditional nation-state theorized by Bourdieu which forms a unipolar political field, the EU should be analyzed as a more or less structured multipolar political field where supranational, intergovernmental, national, and regional public, semi-public, and private institutions share power. In the following, I will present a preliminary analysis of the European Union using an adapted structural constructivist framework.

Currently the EU is a multileveled and polycentric emerging political field structured around two poles: EU institutions where transnational political resources are concentrated and which provide institutional sites where these resources can be acquired, and national decision-making centers. The main structural tension in the EU is between these supranational and the national poles, an opposition that takes a multitude of forms, enveloping institutional structures, ideas of the political order (confederation or federation), economic policy (regulated capitalism or neoliberalism,[89] political careers (European or national)[90], and so on. The process of EU-integration is one of transnational political stratification where certain interests have been favored at the expense of others, business at the expense of labor, consumers at the expense of citizens, elites at the expense of the people. The groups occupying central positions in the "Eurosphere," as Dusan Sidjanski has called the groups and interests tied to European decision-making,[91] mostly civil servants, experts, technocrats, and nongovernmental agents.

While the dimension supranational-national forms the first dimension of the European political field, political legitimacy constitutes its second dimension. Collective European symbolic political resources consist of two subtypes that correspond homologically to two types of national political legitimacy, executive and legislative legitimacy, or output and input legitimacy.[92] Executive legitimacy is held by agents in institutions such as the

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87. Mörth, Ulrika and Britz, Malena, "European Integration as Organizing. Alternative Approaches to the Study of European Politics," Score Rapportserie 2002:1, Stockholm University, available at http://www.score.su-se/pdfs/2002-1.pdf.

88. Risse-Kappen, Thomas, "Exploring the Nature of the Beast: International Relations Theory and Comparative Policy Analysis Meet the European Union," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 34 (1996): 53-80.

89. Marks, Gary, Hooghe, Liesbet and Blank, Kermit. "Integration Theory, Subsidiarity and the Internationalisation of Issues: The Implication for Legitimacy," EUI Working Papers RSC no.95/7, Robert Schuman Centre, Florence; Hooghe, Liesbet and Marks, Gary. "The Making of a Polity: The Struggle over European Integration," in Kitschelt, Herbert, Lange, Peter, Marks, Gary and Stephens, John (eds) *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

90. Georgakakis (ed), *Les métiers de l'Europe*; Kauppi, "European Union Institutions and French Political Careers"; Kirchner, Emil J. *The European Parliament: Performance and Prospects* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984); Scarrow, Susan, "Political Career Paths and the European Parliament," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 22 (1997): 253-263.

91. Sidjanski, Dusan. "Eurosphère. Dirigeants et groupes européens," in D'Arcy, François and Rouban, Luc (eds) *De la Ve République à l'Europe. Hommage à Jean-Louis Quermonne* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1996).

92. Scharpf, Fritz. *Governing Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

European Commission and the Council of Ministers, institutions that partly hold differing conceptions of the EU's future. Legislative legitimacy is located in institutions such as the Council and the European Parliament, or, at the national level, in national governments and ministries and legislative bodies such as the lower chambers.[93] The dominance of executive legitimacy over legislative legitimacy corresponds to the dominance of institutions such as the Council of Ministers, an assembly of Member State executives, the European Commission, a supranational bureaucracy, and national governments over elected bodies such as parliaments. The Commission, which can be considered the EU's main executive body,[94] presents itself as the privileged caretaker of the European interest.[95] Both the Commission and the Council have legislative, executive, and administrative competence. The European Parliament is relatively powerless, although lately it has been getting stronger. The main legislative body is still the Council. This political authority structure is isomorphic or structurally similar to the political structures of the established and homogeneous national political subfields, where the real decision-making centers have for some time been outside the direct control of legislative institutions.[96]

The double political stratification process between supranational/ intergovernmental and national levels on the one hand and between executive and legislative legitimacy on the other hand has been legitimized through incremental changes and by the myriad of political strategies applied by political agents at all levels of the European polity, making symbolic reversal of this European political authority structure very difficult, if not impossible. Supranational and executive stratification have developed in close symbiosis, reinforcing one another, creating new networks of power, furthering democratic erosion, and becoming more autonomous vis-a-vis national and legislative processes. At the same time, European integration is deepening and widening as decision-making becomes more communitarian through qualified majority voting and as new policy areas come into the sphere of the EU and new countries join the Union.

The European Union has taken over some of the functions of the nation-state, but a European civil society and an effective European democracy have not yet developed. In its current form, the European Union is undemocratic, a polity without a civil society, either dispensing law without legitimacy or providing some amount of output legitimacy and little input legitimacy.[97] In fact, it seems a division of political labor has developed in which the Commission and the Council provide output legitimacy and the state executives input legitimacy. While the EU does not possess the traditional attributes of a state, such as the monopoly of legitimate violence, or of a federation, such as a constitution and taxing and spending powers, it is nonetheless both a super-national political authority in the narrow sense of the term (the EU as a synonym for Brussels) and a relational power structure (the

93. Norton, Philip (ed) *National Parliaments and the European Union* (London: Frank Cass, 1996).

94. Marks, Hooghe and Blank, "Integration Theory, Subsidiarity and the Institutionalisation of Issues."

95. European Commission. "The White Paper on European Governance" (2001), available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/governance/white_paper/index.eu.htm.

96. Mény, Yves. *Le système politique français* (Paris: Montchrestien, 1996); Wessels, Bernhard and Katz, Richard S. "Introduction: European Parliament, National Parliaments, and European Integration," in Katz and Wessels (eds) *The European Parliament, National Parliaments, and European Integration*.

97. Moravcsik, Andrew and Sangiovanni, Andrea. "On Democracy and the 'Public Interest' in the European Union." Center for European Studies Working Papers no.93/2002, Harvard University, available at http://www.fas.harvard.edu/ces/papers.

EU as a multileveled political space) in which certain transnational groups and interests increasingly dominate the more established social political units that partly compose it. Nation-states and federal states are embedded in this larger political unit, becoming even more disjointed and fragmented as they transfer, willingly and unwillingly, some of their traditional privileges to a supranational bureaucracy and the organized interests that have developed around it. The EU as a constitutional order rests on a concept of sovereignty divided between European Union institutions seeking constitutional legitimacy through the Convention led by Giscard d'Estaing, and the national constitutional orders that compose the Union.

At the same time, struggles over the definition of Europe and over the value of European political resources are taking place. The European field of political stances is organized around the issue of federalism/confederalism. At the transnational level the EU bureaucracy, various powerful transnational interest groups (for instance industrial groups), and the political representatives of smaller Member States oppose the attempts by political representatives of some of the larger Member States to keep the EU a confederation of nation-states. The European Commission increasingly determines the rules of the transnational political game through institutional configurations (for instance, by reinforcing its position vis-a-vis the Council), the imposition of new principles of social classification (for instance through directives), rulings of the European Court of Justice (70% of new legislation is at the European level), initiatives and alliances with public and private actors, and so on. This transnational concentration of resources, the networks it creates, and the technocratic decision-making it reinforces also transform the political cultures of the national and regional political subfields, as the case of the European Parliament demonstrates. For instance in Finland, a member of the EU since 1995, this supranational concentration of resources and the EU's dual authority structure have reinforced the power position of political institutions such as the office of the prime minister in the national state machinery. Although dominated in the emerging European political field, national and European parliaments and elections still play a significant role in the legitimation of political authority and in societal mobilization around common issues. In this light, the EU is a regime of political domination in which certain interest groups have succeeded in stacking the cards, regularizing interactions favorable to them and delegitimizing others, while maintaining unequal resource distribution. As the EU has institutionalized and European governance developed, these groups have become more aware of their common interests, and more and more reluctant to change the political order on which their power is based. As long as this European ruling class does not have an interest in democratizing the system, it is difficult to see how the system could be democratized.

Although European Parliament elections have relatively little political significance in the sense that government formation does not depend on their results,[98] their effects may lie elsewhere. In Finland, the elections to the European Parliament have enabled individuals who wouldn't normally succeed politically to gain an electoral position.[99] At the same time, the last European elections in 1999 were characterized by a total lack of interest from top politicians, testifying to a more systematic strategy of delegitimation of European electoral legitimacy that was intended to safeguard the interests of a "cartel of elites," to use Ralf Dahrendorf's term,[100] and

98. Reif, Karlheinz and Schmidt, Herman. "Nine Second Order Elections," *European Journal of Political Research* 8 (1981): 3-44.

99. See for instance Kauppi, "La construction de l'Europe."

100. Quoted in Tsinisizelis, Michael J. and Chryssochoou, Dimitri N. "The European Union: Trends in Theory and Research," in Albert Weale and Michael Nentwich (eds) *Political Theory and the European Union. Legitimacy, Constitutional Choice and Citizenship* (London: Routledge, 1998).

the value of the European executive resources it controlled. For former Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen, what was important was what happened at the executive level, and more specifically at the level of the European Council and the Council of ministers of the European Union. This indifference toward the European electoral institution reinforced the structural marginality of the European Parliament in Finnish politics. However, it also enabled T.V. celebrities, former sports stars, and other citizen-electors known to the general public to win seats in the European Parliament, and, paradoxically, caused a real public discussion relative to European issues to emerge.

In France as in other domestic political subfields, the picture is not totally different, as there also the European Parliament is a marginal political institution that functions as a relatively weakly regulated access point to national political subfields, attracting a variety of political novices, mavericks, and wannabe politicians. While the European Parliament might have become a viable political alternative for some,[101] for the majority of the political class and the public it still is a relatively insignificant institution, an unidentified political object. In France, women politicians have been successful in these elections, as have regional politicians unknown to the national audience. The success of women politicians can be explained by the strategies of politicians like François Mitterrand, by the strong presence of women in parties such as the Socialist party, and by politicians' desire to show that France is, like other Central and Northern European countries, a modern democracy where women play a significant political role.[102] But many of the women initially elected to the European Parliament, where they could be out of the way and do as little damage as possible, eventually found their way to other, more central sectors of the French political field, even to become ministers. Likewise, for regional politicians the European Parliament has presented an alternative avenue to access top national positions in the Senate and the lower chamber, and to further their cause, a Europe of regions.

In Finland and France, the effects of European integration are formally or functionally the same. European elections provide a certain number of new electoral positions. The national political order has been integrated into a larger, transnational space, a space whose hierarchies and power structures politicians reproduce through their political strategies and career choices. In this political order, European deputies resemble technocrats more than politicians.[103] The denationalizing effect of European integration on political habitus is weak. For Finnish and French politicians alike, working in Brussels does not present an alternative to a national political career, and they do not all become federalists after having worked in the EU. In this sense, the European Parliament is not an identitive institution. For many, a transnational political career becomes an additional alternative to more traditional prospects at the national, regional, and local level. Transnational career patterns are thus still dominated by domestic structures, testifying to a strong path-dependency.[104] In general the political value of European legislative experience is weak, rarely leading to top political positions, whereas European executive experience is

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101. Beauvallet, "Institutionnalisation et professionnalisation de l'Europe politique"; Katz and Wessels (eds), *The European Parliament, National Parliaments, and European Integration.*

102. Cf. Kauppi, "Power or Subjection."

103. Katz, Richard S. "Role Orientations in Parliaments," in Katz and Wessels (eds) *The European Parliament, National Parliaments, and European Integration.*

104. Of course this does not mean that integration has not affected parliamentary careers in Europe, cf. Klaus Stolz, "Parliamentary Careers in Europe. Between the Regional, National and Supranational Level," paper delivered at the ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, April 6-11 2001, Grenoble.

relatively prized, as top national civil servants and politicians find posts in European institutions.[105] Politics has become increasingly dependent on European decision-making, but its capacity to structure domestic politics has not grown.[106]

While these structural transformations condition career patterns, individuals do shape outcomes. Some, who are likely to have had unconventional political careers, invest more than others in the European Parliament, but this investment is at the same time an investment at the national, regional and local levels. These do not exclude one another, because politicians use their assets to further their careers on all levels, their national careers being dependent in some cases on their local mandates.

Conclusions

Like Weber[107] and authors such as Michels[108] and Marx, Bourdieu assimilates political action with the continuous struggle for power. In this he follows the Macchiavellian tradition. The task of social science is to unmask and demystify the mechanisms of power. Because he sees the mechanisms of domination as universal, Bourdieu does not attempt to theorize a specific kind of democratic legitimacy that would take the form of a democratic political field based partly on public debate, deliberation, and the public sphere and partly on specific mechanisms of power struggle that would contrast with Weber's vision of charismatic, legal, and traditional rule. Instead, Bourdieu is concerned with demystifying the political game, showing how delegation leads to alienation and usurpation, and how the dominated reproduce their own domination. Politics as the noble activity of organization and regulation of human communities turns into domination. Bourdieu sees politics neither in terms of the institutional construction of a public sphere and public instruments that aim at promoting the general interest and preventing the private use of physical violence to settle accounts, nor as a process of adjustment to social pressures.[109] In this respect his theory of politics is very much tied to France and its political structures.

Following Max Weber's analysis of spheres of life, Bourdieu analyses politics like any other area of social activity such as the economy, religion, or education. Bourdieu's concept of field refers to a relatively autonomous sector of activity that could also be called an organizational field[110] or a game.[111] Each field has its specific capital, or resources. Concepts that come close are legitimacy, recognition, or status. Political capital as a scarce symbolic resource is what agents endowed with varying amounts of power fight for in the political field.

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105. For an analysis of some of the effects of integration on the French political field, cf. Kauppi, "European Union Institutions and French Political Careers."

106. Katz and Wessels (eds), *The European Parliament, National Parliaments, and European Integration*, 245.

107. Lassman, Peter. "Politics, Power, and Legitimation." In *The Cambridge Companion to Weber*, edited by Stephen Turner. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 83-98.

108. Michels, *Political Parties*.

109. Lipset, Seymour M. "Introduction," 32, in Michels, *Political Parties*.

110. Cf. for instance Powell and DiMaggio (eds) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*.

111. Bailey, F.G. *Stratagems and Spoils: A Social Anthropology of Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969).

Each field has its dominant habitus, a culture or internalized set of principles of action, preference, and evaluation that regulates resource accumulation, what is acceptable, and what isn't. This specific, internalized culture or set of "internalized institutions" constrains and empowers individuals, assigning them roles and providing guidelines for legitimate behavior. There is no empowerment without constraints. Far from value-free or power-neutral, this culture and its institutional supports are constructed in order to protect the value of certain resources and to institutionalize their access and usage. The board is tilted in favor of those with the most capital. The field is composed of positions that depend on the capital structures of the individuals and/or groups occupying these positions. Adapted from structuralist research, homology or structural isomorphism is the tool with which Bourdieu and structural constructivists draw qualitative parallels between position and policy stance and between different fields. The idea of structural isomorphism, or an interpretation of it, has been successfully applied by some organization theorists like Powell and DiMaggio,[112] and sociological institutionalists/social constructivists more generally.

In the political field, binary logic structures not only political parties and ideologies; it permeates the political field as a whole, from political parties and other political organizations between the progressive and conservative wings all the way down to the habitus of an individual who might have evolved from a radical youth into a conservative party official. Consideration of this structuralist binary logic differentiates the structural constructivist theory of politics from most forms of social constructivism, which analyse structures as regularities in social interaction, as partially organized along binary lines, or as culture.[113]

But the institutional location of an agent, for instance in the European bureaucracy, is both the result of resource accumulation and also a condition for the accumulation of resources. By being appointed to the Commission a national civil servant is transformed into a European civil servant, the carrier of collective European symbolic capital, which enables him to acquire even more of this type of resource. In a structural constructivist framework, similarity in political behavior and cooperation can be attributed to structural location, habitus (for instance certain experiences), or a mixture of the two. Indeed, some of the most interesting research questions relative to the European Union have to do with identity formation: have the structural transformations of domestic political subfields and the processes of homogenization of these subfields led to the construction of a European political habitus? What mechanisms regulate the stability of this habitus?

Scholars agree that the European Union is a unique political formation, a political field *sui generis*. However, studying the EU, most commit themselves to outdated theories and concepts. Adapting Bourdieu's structural constructivist political theory to the study of European integration provides scholars with a point of view that focuses on power relations in the constitution of a European polity. Who gets what, when, and how? Structural constructivism aims at analyzing how individuals and groups institute structured power relations by mobilizing resources and regularizing certain types of interactions and values at the expense of others. This approach has

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112. Powell and DiMaggio, *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*.

113. Cf. for instance Fligstein, "Social Skill and the Theory of Fields"; Fligstein, Neil and Sweet, Alec Stone. "Constructing Polities and Markets: An Institutional Account of European Integration," *American Journal of Sociology* 107/5 (2002): 1206-1244; Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (1992): 391-425; *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Jepperson, R., Wendt, Alexander and Katzenstein, Peter. "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in Peter Katzenstein (ed) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

several advantages compared to social constructivism and more traditional approaches such as neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism.

First, it presents a holistic approach to political processes that binds together behavior into a unified framework, emphasizing cultural and organizational aspects of politics[114] without committing itself to either a state- or Commission-centric point of view. In contrast to most variations of social constructivism, it offers a formal framework for the study of political behavior. Individuals and groups act in a structured environment in a goal-oriented manner to acquire political resources. The nation-state is not an unitary agent,[115] as even some social constructivists assume, but a structured political space where different interests fight over the right to speak in the name of the state at the transnational level. In the case of the EU, the European Commission and the Council of Ministers are not unitary political agents. Some representatives of national governments might share with some representatives of the Commission a federalist conception of the EU's future, while others might disagree and promote a more intergovernmentalist vision. Partly, this division is tied to the resources available to these agents, resources based on nationality (large versus small nation-states), on political ideology (left-right), on careers (pro-European politicians might envision European careers for themselves), and so on. The structural constructivist framework enables an analysis of the structuration of a European political order, composed of both a transnational/intergovernmental level[116] and more established national constitutional orders and regional units, public and private actors, forming a single structure that constrains and enables political action.[117] However, nation-states are not Weberian states. Rather, they are fragmented, disjointed, connected to the European level through various networks and unofficial authority structures, such as that provided by ENA alumni in the French case.[118] National political fields have exploded simultaneously with transnational political stratification. As European integration has advanced, especially through the introduction of the euro, the significance of this European symbolic and social space as the structured context of European political action has increased. National transformations are structurally linked to this supranational space and the system dynamic it provides. As political value is always context-bound, transformations at national level - such as the constitutional reforms in Finland and France in 2000 - have to be examined as elements of a broader transnational political field that is becoming more structured. Guided in their actions more by policy than by loss of national sovereignty, national politicians might have political reasons for not disclosing the full effect of the EU on their own political actions.

Second, like social constructivism, structural constructivism does not consider culture, norms, or institutions to be power neutral.[119] However, in contrast to social constructivism's ideational conception of culture, structural

114. Bulmer, Simon and Bruch, Martin. "The 'Europeanization' of Central Government: The UK and Germany in Historical Institutionalist Perspective," in Schneider, Gerald and Aspinwall, Mark (eds) *The Rules of Integration. Institutionalist Approaches to the Study of Europe*.

115. Contra Moravcsik, "Why the European Community Strengthens the State."

116. Which resembles a confederal consociation, Tsinisizelis and Chryssocloou, "The European Union: Trends in Theory and Research."

117. Cf. Corbey, Dorette. "Dialectical Functionalism: Stagnation as a Booster of European Integration," *International Organization* 49/2 (1995): 262.

118. Mangenot, "Une école européenne d'administration?"

119. Checkel, "Social Construction and Integration."

constructivists analyze culture "materially" in terms of power resources which are linked to variables such as political experience, class, education, gender, nationality, and so on.[120] Analysis is not restricted to class, as is often the case in Bourdieu's framework, as national origin for instance is a key factor when evaluating a political agent's weight on specific issues. There is no European social field behind or as the basis of the European political field as in Bourdieu's interpretation of the political field. Nor is analysis limited to a national context such as the French one, as was the case in Bourdieu's own empirical studies, or to general mechanisms of political representation. Individuals and groups use these resources in their political struggles to acquire status and recognition. Following elitist political theorists like Michels, Mosca, and Pareto, structural constructivist scholars' critical approach is sensitive to the power struggles that attempt to define the common good and the structural biases that favor some at the expense of others. The EU as a political system that is not limited to the supranational or transnational level[121] but that includes four levels of political activity, transforms some particular interests into European interests and stigmatizes others as "narrow-minded" and un-European.

Third, a developed structural constructivist framework that is more Weberian than Saussurean enables a refined analysis of political action. As the EU is an emerging political field, the properties of agents are, in certain cases, as important in explaining political strategies as are changing rules and institutional arrangements. The specificity of political resources as a type of symbolic capital can be examined only through analysis of situated action. As political capital is, to a certain extent, valuable only if used and is acquired only through political action its analysis has to concentrate on political encounters and political action as reproduction/ transformation of the structures of the political field. Generally, in structured encounters certain resources are bracketed, while emergent properties provide some agents with additional resources.

In order to account for political action, a developed structural constructivist approach to European regional integration has to address the temporal, polycentric and multileveled character of the EU. History is present when political agents adapt to the sometimes rapidly changing EU-field. Following their internalized political habitus, they legitimize their actions by referring to cultural models based on national traditions, for instance. Temporality takes also other forms. Various temporalities - such as fifteen national election cycles - create a complex internal dynamic. Fragmentation is not only temporal but also spatial. The EU's multilevel character requires that the multipositionality of agents be taken into account. In contrast to Bourdieu's interpretation of structural positions, where individuals occupy one position at the time, in a context like the European political field positions are always overdetermined as the individuals occupying them also belong to several other relational entities. This multipositionality provides agents with valuable resources. For instance, national ministers, as representatives not only of their Member States in Brussels but also of the EU in their domestic arenas, can use the information they have to further policies at lower levels. Multileveled political games are more complicated than the two-leveled games scholars such as Schneider and Cederman have studied.[122] The power of institutions to constitute preferences and agents depends on the structuration level of the area under scrutiny. Behavioral uncertainty can be linked to weak structuration, as in the case of the European Parliament. In this case, choice is not necessarily

120. Kauppi, "Power or Subjection?"; "La construction de l'Europe."

121. Scharpf, *Governing Europe*.

122. Schneider, Gerald and Cederman, Lars-Erik. "The Change of Tide in Political Cooperation: A Limited Information Model of European Integration," *International Organization* 48 (1994): 633-662.

institutionally set, which prevents an organizational analysis of choice.[123] Institutional structures constrain and empower to varying degrees.

The challenge facing scholars working in the same theoretical vain as Bourdieu is how to adapt and develop some of Bourdieu's intellectual tools to the transnational political context of the European Union. The European political field comprises both a transnational/intergovernmental level and national constitutional orders and regional units as well as public and private actors. Structural constructivism provides a framework for analysing this political field as a single structure that constrains and enables political action. By linking political strategies to broader structural transformations in the European political field, structural constructivists can enlighten processes such as the restructuration of national political fields.

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123. Egeberg, Morten. "An Organizational Approach to European Integration," ARENA Working Papers WP01/18 (2001).