

European Studies and New Regionalism Four Dialogues and the Funeral of a Beautiful Relationship

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Abstract

This paper engages in and contributes to the debate on (the study of) inter-regionalism by examining the nexus between European Studies (ES) and the field of (new) regionalist study. More specifically, the paper examines the possibility and implications of a *dialogue* between these fields of study. What the two fields are perceived as having on offer does, however, very much depend on how one is imagining this dialogue. Thus, different forms of conversations will be related to different assumptions of the purpose, procedure and product as well as of the associated promises and pitfalls. It is against this background, the paper lets the issue of *inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue* or, more specifically, *different* forms of such a dialogue function as the structuring principle for our discussion. As a point of departure the paper develops a typology of four different ideal-typical notions of dialogue: a *hierarchical*, a *reflexive*, a *transformative* and an *eristic* model of dialogue. Each of these forms of dialogue is then used to examine different ways of answering questions about why a dialogue between ES and the larger regionalist field of study should be or should not be of interest; what ES has to offer; what the coveted impact of such a dialogue is supposed to be and finally which promises and pitfalls such a conversation hold. In this fashion we outline the stage for future debates on inter-regionalism. However, we conclude that these futures look bleak, especially because the relationship is likely to come to an end and hence, awaits its own funeral.

Introduction

As part of a broader ambition of setting the stage for future debates on inter-regionalism, we provide an overview of European Studies perspectives. Given our focus on theoretical approaches, we leave political and diplomatic discourse on inter-regionalism for another time and outlet. However, this still leaves us with the question of how to structure such an overview of theoretical perspectives.

One possible way is to structure it according to a historical principle and then provide a reading of the evolution of this field of study (Warleigh 2004: 304; Rosamond 2007). Such a narrative could be divided into a number of stages based on claims about the rise and fall of various theoretical approaches and maybe go something like this: the 1950s and 1960s were characterized by normative federalist thinking, by Mitrany's functionalism and Deutsch's account of transnational security communities. The publication of Ernest Haas' *The Uniting of Europe* (1958) proved significant for subsequent developments, as *neofunctionalism* and other grand theories were created. However, by the mid-1970s neofunctionalism was by its own creator deemed obsolete (Haas 1975). A decade on, neofunctionalism was revived and updated, only to be challenged by liberal inter-governmentalism (Moravcsik 1993, 1998). In addition, the 1990s gave rise to comparative politics perspectives in European Studies (Hix 1994, 1998). At the turn of the new millennium, the focus changed to constructivism and the 'normative turn' characterized by an emphasis on issues of democracy and legitimacy (Warleigh 2004).

This narrative is however far from the only possible way to tell this story. As Ben Rosamond (2007: 20; see also Schmidt 1998, 2002) reminds us, the way the past is presented is often intimately linked to specific theoretical or social scientific preferences located in the present or projected into the future. Hence, a number of other stories can also be – and have been – told (for an overview, see Rosamond 2007). Instead of presenting yet another 'true but untold'-story about the history of European Studies another and more (self)critical strategy would against this background be to engage in 'double-readings' of existing narratives in order to uncover how the past is constructed through the perspective of the present (Rosamond 2007).

While both of these options may hold various merits, in this contribution, however, we refrain from both and do instead turn to a third way of structuring a theoretical overview of European Studies and (other) regionalist literatures. This owes to the specific purpose of making this exercise,

i.e. offering an overview of the various theoretical interpretations of the inter-regional phenomenon whilst also highlighting the EU's specific role in its development. In other words, the overview is supposed to bring European Studies into some kind of *dialogue* with various parts of the wider (new and old) regionalist field of study. It is far from the first time there have been such calls for exchanging insights from studies of the European integration process and studies of regional integration initiatives elsewhere. Recall for instance the promises of neo-functionalism which originally had the ambition of being applicable worldwide. What specifically European Studies is perceived as having on offer does, however, very much depend on how one is imagining this dialogue. Thus, different forms of conversations will be related to different assumptions of the purpose, procedure and product as well as of the associated promises and pitfalls. It is against this background, we find it useful to let the issue of *inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue* or, more specifically, *different* forms of such a conversation function as the structuring principle for the following overview of theoretical perspectives.

Following the next section's outline of a typology of four different ideal-typical notions of dialogue, the remainder of the paper relates each of these forms of dialogue to examining different ways of answering questions about why a dialogue between European Studies and the larger (new) regionalist field of study should be or should not be of interest; what European Studies has to offer; what the coveted impact of such a dialogue is supposed to be and finally which promises and pitfalls such a conversation hold. In this fashion we outline the stage for future debates on inter-regionalism. However, we conclude that these futures look bleak, especially because the relationship is likely to come to an end and hence, awaits its own funeral.

Four Variants of Dialogue between Fields of Study

In this section we outline a typology of forms of dialogues based on a distinction between the purpose, the procedure and the product of the dialogue. As explained above, the structuring principle of this paper's review of European Studies perspectives relates to the issue of *inter/intra-disciplinary dialogues*. When discussing dialogues focus is usually on *whether* or not some kind of exchange either between different disciplines (inter-disciplinarity) or between subfields within a given discipline (intra-disciplinarity) is something to strive for. While some are presenting such kind of dialogues as a way of creating 'the new scholar' with "two skills in one skull" (Ward 1975) others are perceiving it as nothing but a dead-end producing scholars being 'jack of all trades, but

master of none” (Nissani 1997: 212; see also Jacobs & Frickel 2009; Klein 1996; Beir & Arnold 2005).

This whether-or-not question is however not the only point of dispute related to the issue of inter/intra-disciplinary dialogues. At closer inspection, it thus appears that an agreement in principle of the desirability of inter/intra-disciplinarity does not necessary also turn into much consensus as to *why* and *how* such dialogues should take place or, for that matter, on *what* is supposed to be exchanged and with *which* outcome. Thus, along with the emergence of a ‘dialogical turn’ (Camic & Joas, 2004) ‘dialogue’ has turned into “a weasel word, one that inevitably ends up meaning different things to different people” (Burbules, 2000: 252). Besides disagreements concerning the specific level on which such a dialogue is supposed to take place, e.g. at an individual, institutional or disciplinary level (Valbjørn, 2008: 70) and the primary target for a dialogical enrichment, e.g. theories, paradigms or disciplines (Lapid, 2003: 129), this is also reflected in very different models of inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue associated with different notions about the purpose, procedures and product of this conversation. Following Yosef Lapid’s (ibid.) point about the importance also to engage in a ‘dialogue about dialogue’, the following section identifies and compares four different ideal-typical models of inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue.

The Hierarchical Model

The first of these ideal-types is the *hierarchical model* of inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue, which shares a number of similarities with some of the ideas in neo-classical economic theory on comparative advantages (Weldes *et al.*, 1999: 21). It takes its points of departure in a kind of complementary idea of a division of labour, where academia is perceived as being divided into a number of academic fields each endowed with different but trade-able ‘goods’ such as theories, concepts, methods or specific kinds of empirical data. From this perspective, the purpose of inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue is then about trading goods. For instance, if culture becomes a topic of interest to the study of international relations as the case has been during the Cultural Turn IR should thus turn to anthropology, who is the academic ‘possessor’ of culture. Anthropologists would then tell IR-scholars about culture and in exchange the latter will explain about the state and the international system (Weldes *et al.*, 1999: 22).

At the surface, this exchange may appear as a complementary process profitably to all involved. However, recalling the Marxian critique of the capitalist economy, at closer inspection this kind of trading appears to take place on uneven terms as the procedures of the exchange is

based on a hierarchical relationship. Some academic fields are considered ‘masters’ assuming the intellectual leadership, for instance because they are possessing what is considered as the most valuable goods and are as a consequence defining the terms of the relationship. Other fields of study in turn are only granted the role as ‘assisting junior partners’. They must submit to the wishes of their academic master and their value is defined by their ability as subcontractors to deliver ‘raw materials’. An example of this view can be found in the Area Studies Controversy, where advocates of a Disciplinary perspective sometimes compare the field Area Studies with a ‘gas station’, whose primary function is to provide ‘local empirical data’ to be used in the testing of (grand) theories developed within the superior Disciplines (e.g. Bates, 1996).

Compared with some of the other models the expected impact – or the product – of this exchange is rather limited. Thus, both academic fields are believed to remain sovereign, discrete and essentially the same, not least because the imported ‘goods’ are neither assumed to impact their identity, basic nature or existing key concepts, categories or theories. Hence, this exchange will, if anything, most likely only contribute to the reproduction of the already existing hierarchical academic division of labour.

The Reflexive Model of Dialogue

Instead of using an analogy about the (uneven) exchange of goods in a capitalist market, the *reflexive model of dialogue* is closer to some of the ideas found in recent years’ discussions about a ‘dialogue between civilisations/cultures/religions’ (cf. Dallmayr, 2002). This debate usually takes its point of departure in the recognition of a plurality of different but equal cultures/civilizations each marked with distinct values and visions leading to a Todorov’ian understanding, where dialogue is to be based on knowing and treating the ‘other-as-subject, equal to the I but different from it’ (Inayatullah & Blaney, 2004: 163; cf. Todorov, 1984). The purpose of these kinds of inter-civilization dialogues is accordingly neither to impose a superior civilizational vision upon the other nor to pave the way for some new universal civilization. Instead the aim is both to promote a more advanced understanding of the other and at the same time to catalyze a process of self-reflection leading to a better and less parochial understanding of one-self.

From this perspective, an intra/inter-disciplinary dialogue will appear as a two-way street conversation between peers that entails a dialogical play between taken-for-granted common sense of the participants and, as insofar they are testing their own prejudices against those of the other, they may end up undermining or transforming those prejudices (Weldes *et al.*, 1999: 24). Although

each academic field is assumed to continue existing as separate and distinct fields, this last dimension indicates how the expected impact – or product – of this kind of dialogue is more extensive than the first model. As the participants in this dialogue will not only come to know the other better but also reach a better understanding of themselves, it is assumed that this kind of dialogue will lead to changes *within* each academic field reflected in a reflexive rethinking and contextualization of own categories, theories and concepts. This was for instance the case, when Michael Barnett engaged Middle East scholarship and Constructivist IR in a interdisciplinary dialogue on Arab politics. As a result of this dialogue, it became clear how “IR theory can help us to better understand the making and unmaking of Arab politics and how its making and unmaking can help scholars of IR-theory think more analytically and creatively about global politics” (Barnett 1998: 24).

The Transformative Model of Dialogue

Much of the debate on inter/intra-disciplinarity revolves around the hierarchical and reflexive models of dialogue. If we imagine a continuum of models of dialogue, it is however also possible to identify (at least) two more ideal-typical positions situated closer to two each of the two poles. The first of these is the *Transformative Model of Dialogue*, which shares some of the assumptions concerning self-reflection also found in the former reflexive model. However, the purpose and intended product of this conversation is much more radical. Thus, this third model follows David Bohm’s (1996: 2) depiction of a dialogue as a “process of collaborative meaning making” and draws on the original Greek meaning of the term a *dia-logos*, that is ‘meaning-through’, to be understood as “an effort by two or more people to make something *new* together” (Lapid 2003: 130; our italics).

Against this background, the purpose of an inter/intra-disciplinary dialogue is to make what Gunther Hellmann (2003: 150) coins as a ‘dialogical synthesis’. In other words, instead of only striving for changing *within* specific academic fields the intended impact or the product of this dialogue is changes *of* these fields as part of a more fundamental transformation of academia as such. This much more radical vision is for instance represented in Immanuel Wallerstein’s call to *Open up the Social Sciences* (1996). Here Wallerstein makes an argument about how the existing academic division of labour rests on obsolete ‘meta-boundaries’ from the 19th century. In order to make these fit the 21st century it is in his view necessary to restructure the Social Sciences in a fundamental way. Such kind of restructuring can give rise to new fields of study such as what Neil

Water (2000; cf. Kasaba, 1998) calls ‘New International Studies’, which is the product of a ‘dialogical synthesis’ between IR and Area Studies, or it can pave the way for what Stephen Rosow (2003) presents as ‘anti-disciplinary Global Studies’, which calls into question the very idea of academic disciplines in favour of an academic world of networks, where multiple forms of knowledge are possible without the building of some secure body of sovereign disciplines.

The Eristic Model of Dialogue

At the other end of this imaginary spectrum of models one finds the fourth ideal-typical form of intra/inter-disciplinary engagement, which is the *Eristic model of Dialogue*. ‘Eristic’ emerges from the ancient Greek word *Eris* that refers to a wrangle or strife. Contrary to the former models, where a dialogue has been related to the trade of academic goods, de-provincializing self-reflexions or synthesis-making, in this last model dialogue is first and foremost about arguing for the sake of conflict, fighting, and seeing who can yell the loudest. This does not mean that this is nothing but a pseudo-dialogue without any distinct purpose. Following constructivist notions about how the construction of a stable identity is associated with a process of othering, where a Self is delimited from an ‘Other’, which is represented as different, the purpose of a dialogue is from this perspective to (re)produce a distinct (sub)disciplinary identity. Although the ‘partner-in-dialogue’ function as the ‘significant other’ in this process, the actual conversation often takes place among members within the *same* academic field discussing how ‘we’ are different from (and superior to) ‘them’.

Although this kind of dialogue has only received limited attention in discussions on inter/intra-disciplinary dialogues, it appears nevertheless to be much more prevalent than usually acknowledged. Just as much of recent years’ dialogue between Disciplinary-oriented scholars and regional specialists within the aforementioned Area Studies Controversy have assumed this form of mutual mudslinging, in which both fields have reproduced their respective identities (Tessler *et al.*, 1999, cf. Valbjørn 2004), it is also natural to perceive many of the so-called ‘Great Debates’ within IR in these terms (Wæver, 1996). Recall for instance the classic Rationalist/Reflectivist-‘debate’ (Keohane, 1989), which in the 1990s was supposed to be one of the most important dialogues between two major strands on how to perceive and study international relations. However, at closer inspection it appears that the contestants seldom have been in direct dialogue with each other. Instead, they have been speaking about their opponents with like-minded fellows and through this confirmed their distinct identity and difference from others. Hence, the dialogue has been carried out in separate panels, where post-colonialists/modernists/structuralists have had a dialogue with

of labour between IR and the field of Area Studies, where the latter is perceived as a ‘gas station’ of local empirical data (but without possessing theories or concepts of any significant value) to be appropriated in the application and substantiation of general abstract theoretical models produced by the allegedly superior ‘IR-master’ (Valbjørn 2004). In this context, both European Studies and New Regionalism count as Area Studies. Concerning specific European Studies-New Regionalism dialogues, there are four major examples of hierarchical dialogue.

First, we find the argument that European Studies scholars should acknowledge that Europe is just one among several regions and therefore just a case of more global regional integration processes. The master proposition is that we all share an interest in the same phenomenon, i.e. processes of regional integration, and European Studies should therefore abandon research suggesting that the EU has developed – and more than any other region, except perhaps what is known as the United States of America or China - the precious characteristics of a polity. Hence also approaches that are meant to explore the dynamics of this polity and comparisons to other polities are considered inadequate. In short, in order to make the European Union comparable (or similar) to other instances of regional integration, the insights of European Studies should be ‘rolled back’ to previous phases. Otherwise, the European case will not be comparable to other cases of regional integration (Warleigh 2006). The problem with this argument is that the introduction of governance perspectives in European Studies triggered a second wave of Europeanization literature – different from the first wave focusing on the potentials for supranational community building – i.e., analyzing how the euro-polity has an impact on national institutions and policy-making processes. This second wave can hardly be applied elsewhere as polity-building in most global regions has been minimal. In turn, this leads to theories of European and global governance and the associated idea that European governance can serve as a model of global governance (cf. Jørgensen and Rosamond 2002) and, logically, that theoretical perspectives on European governance can be used to explore dynamics of global governance. Similarly, EU studies can be seen as an early prototype of globalization studies. Hence, students of globalization need not invent the wheel as students of European integration have been there before, seen it, done it and produced the necessary insights. In both cases, global regions drop out as the focus is on global governance and processes of globalization.

In the second example, (junior partner) European Studies finds itself in a most peculiar relationship to (master) Political Science. Hence, scholars within European Studies – and European Europeanists in particular – should make all sorts of efforts “to appear on the radar of the

more general political scientists as well as American scholars with an interest in EU studies, these approaches need to be more outward looking and consider how their theories can be applicable to cases other than that of Europe” (Verdun 2003: 96). The masters of this dialogue/game are general political scientists and American Europeanists whose master insights are by definition applicable to the case of Europe. The plea is based on the assumption that theories of European integration have been developed separately from political science and, more generally, that Europeanist scholarship is not political science. However, when for instance neofunctionalism was built, it was not built from scratch. On the contrary, it was partly applying one of the most sophisticated political science theoretical frameworks at the time, specifically American pluralist theory. Europe, gradually coming out of the ashes of WW2, seemed capable of playing the role as gas station, delivering the raw empirical data necessary to explore the dynamics of regional (European) integration.

The third example is a combination of the two first examples because both European Studies and New Regionalism can be seen as assisting junior partners, providing local knowledge to the Political Science master. In other words, not only European Studies but also New Regionalism should make efforts to appear on Amy Verdun’s radar screen. Put differently, when exploring the dialogue between European Studies and New Regionalism, we are not witnessing an example of intra-disciplinary dialogue but a dialogue among junior partners within a master discipline, Political Science. The slightly alternative set-up is that European Studies and New Regionalism to a certain degree share the fate of having a demanding master, Political Science and International Relations, respectively.

In the fourth and final example of hierarchical dialogue, it is European Studies that is perceived as the master, whereas (New) Regionalism is the junior partner. Hence, scholars cultivating the (new) regionalist field of study should apply the superior insights of European Studies. Indeed, New Regionalism was invented in order to escape the identity as junior partner. Isms are usually concepts that have been designed in order to cover up or paper over something that should not be unpacked or exposed to further scrutiny. New Regionalism seems not to be an exception as it is, in reality, a misnomer. First, the absence of a fairly significant region, North America, is blatantly striking. Furthermore, it is a misnomer because a second fairly significant region, Europe, mainly plays a role as the significant other. Hence, we are left with certain features characterizing regions in the global South.

In general, the nature of the exchange has changed over time and has, thus, not been unidirectional hierarchical. To be more precise, European Studies has served as both gas-station and provided intellectual leadership. The outcome – or product – of this first form of dialogue will be rather limited. Each field of study will remain sovereign, discrete and essentially the same as they were before in terms of identity and basic nature. Moreover, the existing academic division of labour will only be reproduced in this exchange. The most significant impact of this dialogue is that a body of theoretical literature gradually emerged, conveniently called theories of (European) integration. As it is well known, they come in different content and form. Whereas ‘theories of integration’ are general, abstract generic theories on processes of integration, ‘theories of (universal) integration’ are specific theories on global dynamics (cf. Mitrany’s functionalism) and ‘theories of regional integration’ are general theories or theories having generalizable objectives, cf. the comparative regional integration project.

It is a clear pitfall that hierarchical dialogue aims at squeezing dialogue into unidirectional monologue. Fortunately, the various masters have been largely unsuccessful in their endeavours and variation has been pronounced. Even more importantly, directions have not been unidirectional. A second pitfall is that world regions tend to drop out. A final pitfall is that those cultivating global governance and globalization studies tend not to listen or learn from European Studies. To the degree they do listen there are potentials and promises. Among promises we also count the potential of comparative region studies as a means to wake up introvert or second-image minded scholars from their convenient yet intellectually lazy neglect of global contexts of European integration and governance.

A Reflexive Model of Dialogue

The unwarranted state of affairs within hierarchical dialogues speaks in favour of reflexive dialogues, i.e., dialogues where both parties are mentally prepared to both listening and reconsidering their own positions. Hence, the purpose of reflexive dialogues is not the imposition of a ‘superior’ or ‘normal’ political science. The purpose is also not the default teleological use of Europe or any other global region. Rather, the purpose is to gain understanding of the other perspective, whether European Studies, New Regionalism, Political Science or International Relations – and engage in critical self-reflection, screening for prejudices or parochial assumptions even if they are presented as eternal truths.

The nature of reflexive dialogue highlights understanding, critical self-reflection and a professional preparedness for reconsideration. If the charge is that European Studies, specifically concerning assessments of regional integration in Europe and elsewhere is profoundly Euro-centric and teleological, then Europeanists should pause and consider the criticism. One response has been that new regionalists' criticism is largely unfounded and, in any case, based on a selected reading of the literature of yesterday (Rosamond and Warleigh-Lack 2010). If the criticism is contemporary political scientists claiming that neofunctionalism is a different word for 'thick description', then one response has been an invitation to actually read the classics (rather than caricature textbook interpretations) and acknowledge that neofunctionalism was sophisticated political science of its time (Rosamond 2007). If Europeanists have dived so deep into their region's specificities that they have forgotten it is just one of several world regions, then it might be time for an awakening. A solution based on reflexive dialogue might be acknowledging Europe's dual existence: both a region (comparable to other regions) and a polity (comparable to other polities).

After processes of reflexive dialogue (if they come to an end), European Studies, New Regionalism, Political Science and International Relations will continue to exist as separate fields of study. None of these fields will have been the target of imposition of exogenous standards or perspectives. However, the fields of study might well have changed internally as encounters with own prejudices might trigger – though this is unlikely – reconsideration of fundamental assumptions or parochial tacit understandings. Changes from studies of regional dynamics to studies of the dynamics of interdependence and globalization seem to leave regional perspectives behind. However, if we check for patterns of FDI, it is in fact two unusual 'regions', the US and the EU, who operate behind the early scenes of interdependence and globalization. Hence, important dynamics within international political economy has been driven by two exceptional regions in the world.

Are there really any pitfalls to this dialogue model, except for nostalgic minds that are unprepared for change? One thing is certain, the process of determining 'pitfall' and 'promise', respectively, will be an essentially contested process. Is it a pitfall or a promise if Europe in our analytical frameworks drops out as a region and is being substituted by the EU? Moreover, some new regionalists might deplore New Regionalism losing its significant other, not least because the loss makes it significantly more difficult to identify New Regionalism's identity as a field of study. Finally, what will happen to the ambitious 'generalizers', whether in Political Science or

International Relations, if they rigorously encounter their prejudices and parochial insights, cherished as universal certainties?

A Transformational Model of Dialogue

Let us begin our review of the transformational model of dialogue by observing that one of the EU's traditionally important inter-regional relationships, EU-ACP relations, has been thoroughly redefined. Moreover, we have seen that several inter-regional relations have been downplayed or complemented by bilateral relations. Thus, ASEM remains an important forum, yet is being complemented by a strategic relationship with China. Similarly, the multilateral Barcelona-process has been replaced by bilateral ENP. Within international institutions, inter-regional cooperation has been replaced by political and ideological in-fights cf. OIC-EU relations in the UNHRC, G77-EU relations in the UN and EU-Cairns Group relations in the WTO. Finally, processes of globalization and the emerging power dynamics of the early 21st century suggest new states of affairs will characterize the future. In short, the 21st century seems to be radically different from the previous century and in order to remain relevant, our fields of studies, the fault lines of positions and our professional debates should obviously reflect such changes. The purpose of transformational dialogues is to point out outdated disciplinary boundaries and to suggest radical transformation of fields of study. In this light, one question concerns whether European Studies or New Regionalism should be given up as discrete fields of study and replaced by something radically new and different. Such thinking has not been entirely absent from European Studies. Notably, Ernest Haas (1975, 2001) did contemplate whether neofunctionalism should be subsumed by research on interdependence or constructivism. However, this outcome concerns just a theory, not an entire field of study or discipline. Seemingly, European Studies and New Regionalism have not produced examples of transformational dialogue, yet something else is at play.

The nature of the transformational dialogue depends crucially on the point of departure. Basically, there are two important perspectives. The first perspective is not unaware of the fact that the late-1980s were characterized by a certain revival of integration theory. The procedure was to observe significant changes regarding European integration and reflect on possible theoretical consequences, whether reconsidering classical theories of integration or building new theories. However, this period is also characterized by something else, hinted at above, something that in the context of the transformational dialogue model is much more important. Universal theories developed elsewhere, whether in political science (rational institutionalism); in economics (principal-agent theory and rational choice) or in sociology (constructivism) were imported and

subsequently applied in studies of the EU. Armed with templates for research on the American Congress, some began cultivating ever more fine-tuned specializations. Generally, this import of universal studios erased by means of one single stroke all the Euro-centric features New Regionalists found unattractive in old regionalism. Moreover, Europe disappeared as the natural born comparator, a second feature irritating New Regionalists. However, one problem remained for new regionalists scholars: universal studies were also relevant for their interest in global South regions for which reason their own *raison d'être* also disappeared and all the identity-building efforts proved to have been in vain.

The second perspective is as different as a perspective can possibly be. The point of departure is here the disciplines of the social sciences but perhaps particularly Political Science and International Relations. Scholars with an interest in European integration or regional integration more broadly observed with increasing concern how most of their colleagues within political science simply neglected processes of integration and proceeded with weather proven templates as if nothing had happened in Europe during the last 50 years. Comparative Politics ignored European integration well into the 1990s when some (few) brave pioneers began to seriously consider the European political system a comparable unit. However, most comparativists soldiered on by means of comparing national political systems, completely unaffected by processes of European integration and globalization. Journals on European politics did simply not accept articles on European Union politics and it was difficult to have panel and workshop proposals accepted by the professional associations who guarded professional dynamics. In this respect the ECPR is foremost a corporation for European comparative politics research. It is telling that its two biggest standing groups are International Relations and European Studies and that both groupings have organized semi-associations, more or less complete with the infrastructure characterizing professional associations. Against this background it is perhaps not difficult to understand why European Studies did not find general political science particularly attractive or superior. A somewhat similar story can be told as regards new regionalism, a field of study that took off when processes of European integration and globalization gained speed. Nonetheless, the age-old state-centric perspectives within IR seemed unaffected and European Studies scholars seemed to be completely absorbed in intra-European Union affairs – at the cost of global outlooks. In short, both European Studies and New Regionalism can be seen as outcomes of a transformational dialogue on political science and International Relations. However, some new regionalists have not lost hope in transforming International Relations and therefore make frequent pleas to re-integrate with the discipline rather

than enjoy (marginalized) independence. Similarly, some European Studies scholars still see prospects for informing political science about the contemporary state of affairs in Europe.

The Eristic Dialogue Model

Several instances suggest to us that the dialogue between European Studies and regionalists scholars sometimes has turned into an eristic dialogue, or, is best seen as an eristic dialogue. As regards the purpose of the dialogue, we do not see a shared understanding, indeed it is difficult to identify a genuine dialogue as one party, European Studies, is largely disinterested in dialogue and the other party – of regionalist scholars – seems primarily interested in criticism of the first party. To the degree a purpose can be identified, it seems that some new regionalism scholars try to avoid what they see in European Studies as intellectual imperialism, triumphalist attitudes and Eurocentric arguments, perhaps epitomized in the n=1 problem (Acharya 2002; Marchand, Bøås and Shaw 1999). Moreover, the purpose of the exchange seems foremost to be “othering” European Studies. However, whenever we find processes of othering, we also find instances of identity formation. The new regionalist scholars simply wanted to create new, not old regionalism. Hence, they were bound to be critical of old regionalism and therefore have focused on what not to do.

The nature of the dialogue shows in the fact that the alleged dialogue hardly reflects advances within European Studies, specifically the insight that the EU’s cultivation of inter-regional relations has been complemented by EU foreign policy strategies, whether multilateral or bilateral (on inter-regional relations, see Regelsberger ed. 1990; Wunderlich 2007). The inter-regional perspective is based on the assumption that two or more regions interact, most often in non-conflictual fashions. However, though Europe perhaps remains a region, research within European Studies concerns foremost the EU. In many ways, the region has become an international actor pursuing various foreign policy strategies, including but not exclusively relations with a range of regions (cf. Telo ed. 2007).

Alex Warleigh-Lack (2007; see also Rosamond and Warleigh-Lack 2010) has described how New Regionalism (in his view wrongly) has perceived European Studies as the significant other for which reason New Regionalism has ignored potentially useful insights from European Studies. However, for better or worse, the impact of the eristic dialogues has been marginal and most likely to be the result of unintended consequences. New Regionalism has proved to be a highly dynamic enterprise that during the last decade perpetually has been engaged in self-critical reflection, shuffling and re-shuffling notions of ‘region’ and ‘region-ness’. ES scholars have

largely ignored the eristic dialogue and generally have been quite unwilling to engage in debates with NR scholars. ES self-critical reflection has concerned other dimensions and even the global outlook has largely been missing.

As mentioned above, both ES and New Regionalism remain largely unaffected by the dialogue – and this outcome is reflected in the pitfalls and promises. New Regionalism seems content to celebrate its role as opponent to an imagined other or cherishing its wider global outlook and, in turn, its interfaces with some of the debates within International Relations. Furthermore, NR seems unprepared to copy analytical success, or, at least try out the usefulness of analytical templates. The good news is that NR is dynamic, constantly on the move. The bad news is that ‘dynamic’ seems to be just another word for being unable to create an *acquis academique*, that is, established insights for which reason even the key word regions remains highly fluid. NR is therefore left with second-best solutions, while enjoying praise of less-than effective multilateralism or copying European Studies’ inside-out biases, now just from a different inside. Promises concerning European Studies include acknowledging that the EU is perhaps not as unique as is often assumed; furthermore, the dialogue highlights Europe in global context – a dimension that has been consistently downplayed. Finally, the dialogue has potential to question the way Europeanists tend to reproduce inside-out biases in political practice, i.e., conceptual blinders as regards global perceptions of EU politics, including EU promotion of effective multilateralism.

The Funeral of a Beautiful Relationship

The field of European Studies has been characterized by two broad movements from first deductive to inductive and subsequently from inductive to deductive approaches. The notion of theories of European integration suggests that findings have been reached by means of an inductive approach and that theorizing is the outcome of inductive research strategies. It is commonly believed that Ernest Haas did research on the European Coal and Steel Community, on the basis of which he then built neofunctionalist theory, one of the first prominent theories of European integration. By contrast, Ben Rosamond (2007) points out, rightly in our view, that Haas applied pre-existing theoretical bits and pieces on the case of Europe and subsequently called the theoretical outcome, neofunctionalism. In specific terms, neofunctionalism is a mixture of thoroughly revised Mitranian functionalism elevated down to the regional level plus a 1950s vintage American comparative politics pluralist theory, applied to the case of Europe. However, its propositions could, in principle, be applied to any region in the world. In other words, the taboo region in new regionalist literature,

North America, delivered part of the template for neofunctionalist theorizing of regional integration. In this perspective, neofunctionalism is less Eurocentric than it is frequently claimed to be.

At the general level, we are dealing with the classic issue of relations between the European and the universal process of international integration (Haas 1961). When European Studies took off in the 1950s and 1960s, it was part of a wider ambition to look at regional processes of integration. Europe was just one case among several cases, cf. Joseph Nye going to East Africa and Central America, in order to do research on the dynamics of regional integration (Nye 2004: 219). The main guiding idea was that several parallel processes of regional integration would gradually transform the international system and its state-centric, balance of power dynamics. Hence, with theories of regional (European) integration, we are squarely within the liberal theoretical tradition, suspicious of and hostile to theoretical balance of power politics perspectives (whether realist or English School vintage). The regional case of Europe triggered theoretical perspectives such as neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, pluralistic security communities.

Eventually, this phase came to an end and some cases around the world ran out of steam earlier than others. For some time, Europe was celebrated as the most ambitious and successful lab of processes of regional integration. Even if various attempts at initiating regional integration failed, and European Studies ended up with the $n=1$ problem, not of the making of Europeanists but the combined outcome of real processes in real world politics and so-called general political science characterized by a well developed phobia concerning single case research design. To be sure, the *political* idea that Europe could lead a global process endured and was perhaps the first example of the later on prominent idea of soft power. According to the political rationale, Europe does not need a foreign policy, just be a model and others will, if they are conscious of their self-interest, copy Europe's successful achievements. Europe does not need significant military power as civilian power will be sufficient to do the trick (subsequently changed to normative power by Ian Manners 2002). Then came a moment of truth when the so-called doldrums 1970s years of European integration seemed to lead to nowhere, in any case lost momentum and Ernest Haas decided to abandon his neo-functional perspective, declaring it obsolete as it were. More correctly, it was subsumed under the new rubric of interdependence (studies), focusing notably on global rather than regional dynamics. Regional integration (and European Studies) is dead – long live interdependence studies (Haas 1975).

Subsequently, as most global regions did not live up to theoretically derived expectations, *sui generis* reasoning popped up, leaving Europeanists with the famous N=1 problem and the derived political idea that if there is only one N, at least this unique N can be a model for possible future regional integration elsewhere. By contrast, an exceptionalist camp claimed that the European experience is exceptional and therefore inapplicable elsewhere. The exceptionalist camp contains some strange bedfellows as both ES and New Regionalist scholars have put up their tent in the camp, sharing the conclusion but not the analysis.

In many ways, the prime purpose of the engagement in theorizing regional integration countered the realist theory tradition emphasizing state-centrism, cultivating balance of power reasoning and the pronounced non-progressive view on international affairs. However, it could be argued that power and geopolitics is back, leading us to approach the European dystopian scenario: “let 100 regional approaches/models blossom – except the EU model”. In this perspective, the EU is being overtaken by China, organizing regions in South East Asia and beyond; Russia, handling the CIS region; South Africa, taking responsibility for dynamics in Southern Africa and India doing similar services for South Asia. This might also apply to Brazil, being the preeminent Latin American state and also representing the global South in global trade negotiations. What is left for the US remains to be seen. Hence, from this perspective, the EU is a failed global wannabe region-builder. As Arvind Virmani’s scenario demonstrates, there is in the future international order no role for the EU (cited in Pisani-Ferry 2009: 21) – and European Studies will sooner or later get a pronounced provincial niche-production feel to it.

Ever since political science, comparative politics included, in the early 1990s (re-)discovered European integration, so-called universal theories play an ever more important role in guiding empirical analysis of European issues. Such theories range from Principal Agent Theory and Rational Choice models to generic universal theories of identity and discourse. Findings of such theory-informed studies might be interesting as regards Europe and the European Union but utterly uninteresting as regards various regional settings. Indeed Europe – the region – has largely been substituted by the European Union’s political system. Put differently, the region drops out and the EU has left the phase of international organization and regional integration behind, and entered a phase in which it makes (more) sense to compare the EU to (other) states. In order to understand the dynamics of various non-European regional settings – Asian, African or American – analysts of new regionalism could, if they so wish, begin applying relevant and adequate universal theories. However, as European Studies are strictly focused on EU issues, new regionalist should not expect

or fear European Studies scholars starting lecturing about appropriate avenues of enquiry. Hence, there is no lecturing to reject or to be in opposition to. In any case, within this perspective, application of, for instance Andrew Moravcsik's (1998) liberal intergovernmental framework, would prompt analysts of regionalism in ASEAN, Mercosur or the African Union to ask questions about processes of domestic preference formation, strategic bargaining and choice of institutional design. The interregional perspective would then be reduced to wondering about why similar questions trigger different answers in different regional contexts or questions about factors possibly explaining variation among regions.

Conclusion and Perspectives

It should be clear from the above review of the four dialogues and the funeral that the purpose of the paper is a noble one: hopefully provoking a more reflexive mode of dialogue, inviting to occasionally listening, sometimes revising and possibly give up some of our precious claims. We believe the paper demonstrates the usefulness of the four dialogues model and the value added it brings to meta-study reflections, for instance when compared to historical narratives that are usually told by means of loaded dices. In terms of perspectives, we end up where we started, i.e., with questions: Has the old continent become a vanguard for regional integration; is it one among many different examples of regional integration; or, rather, a *sui generis* example of regional integration. What is the nature of European Studies? Is the field of study a provider of general universal theory on integration; a provider of local empirical data to universal IR theory, general political science or a superior new regionalist research agenda; perhaps a 'destabilizer' of claims about general theories on regionalism. Finally, what is the purpose of inter- and intradisciplinary dialogues? Is it testing universal theory on regionalism based on European experiences and applied to rest of the world; de-Europeanization/provincialization of theories on integration in favour of more context-sensitive general theories; destabilization of the very project of making general universal theories on regionalism.

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