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Title: Neo-Weberian Historical Sociology, the English School and Differentiated Integration in the EU

Abstract: This paper explores the potential contributions of Neo-Weberian historical sociology of the state and the English School of International Relations theory to our understanding of differentiated integration in the European Union. In doing so, it turns to the English School concept of 'radial empires' to establish differentiation as a structural feature of all centralized entities in international society such as the European Union. It then turns to the concepts of 'socio-spatial networks of power' and 'despotic vs. infrastructural' forms of state power from the Neo-Weberian literature to discuss why empires function radially. Subsequently, it links vertical differentiation to the interplay between socio-spatial networks of power and horizontal differentiation to the interplay between despotic and infrastructural forms of state power in the member states of the European Union.

Neo-Weberian Historical Sociology, the English School and Differentiated Integration in the EU

Not long ago, the European Union (EU) was compared to a train: you needed to decide if you wanted to be on it or not. In more recent years, however, it feels as Mardell (2016) says more like ‘being stuck in a traffic jam on a motorway, with the kids in the back moaning “Are we there yet?”, the driver fulminating about the impossibility of turning round or backing out’. To take a step back from what is perhaps an annoyingly accurate description of the current disarray in the EU, we face the prior question of ‘Are we where yet?’ Indeed the *there* vs. *where* of EU integration still remains an uncertain issue. Even at the time when the train metaphor still made sense, the question of whether or not there existed a final destination for the EU could not be answered in unambiguous terms. If anything, the terms of the debate have become more ambiguous since then as the question of *with whom* has started to put increasing pressure on the EU. We should not confine our thinking to enlargement when considering the issue of who is involved. The *with whom* question also covers the increasingly more urgent issue of differentiated integration in the EU which this paper seeks to conceptualize by drawing on macro-historical and sociological theories.

In more precise terms, I seek to register the potential contributions of Neo-Weberian historical sociology (NWHS) of the state and the English School of International Relations (ES) theory to our understanding of differentiated integration in the EU. As Manners and Whitman (2016) have noted, we are facing a double crisis at the moment: one within the EU itself and the other within the field of EU studies. A wide gap has opened between the practical realities and the dominant theories of the EU. This gap, as they note, requires us to come up with newer ways of theorizing EU integration. This paper is one attempt toward bridging this recent theory-practice gap in EU studies and proceeds in three sections. The first section elaborates the rationale for resorting to these two particular schools of thought, NWHS and the ES, in our attempts to theorize EU integration. One difficulty that needs to be conceded at the outset in such an attempt is that of connecting broad macro-historical theories with contemporary cases on the ground. The resulting analysis often fails to make immediate sense. Yet the very same broad approaches also equip us with the means for avoiding parochialism in our analyses which is an intrinsically beneficial move. Section II examines specific concepts from the ES and from NWHS that are useful for considering the question of differentiated integration in the EU. I turn in particular to the ES concept of ‘radial empires’ (Watson 1992) and to the concept of ‘sociospatial networks of power’ from the NWHS literature (Mann 1986). An additionally useful discussion within NWHS for our purposes is the ‘autonomous power of the

state' conceived as a dialectical interplay between 'despotic' and 'infrastructural' forms of power (Mann 1984). Each one of these concepts takes us a step closer towards noticing that whenever and wherever it happened throughout history, supranational integration has always been differentiated. Furthermore, the distinction between despotic vs. infrastructural forms of state power can help us understand why uniform supranational integration is difficult to achieve in the first place. Section III, finally, offers an overall assessment of the utility of bringing in the ES and NWHS into the debate on differentiated integration in the EU.

I. The English School, Neo-Weberian Historical Sociology and EU Studies

Since the early 1990s, there are growing concerns within the scholarly community that theories of EU integration have remained isolated from other disciplines and broader research agendas in the social sciences. In earlier decades, the main referent for theorizing the European Community/Union has again been the Community/Union itself. A perhaps inevitable outcome of this tendency toward self-referential theorizing has been the conclusion that the EU is too unique. Over the years, this uniqueness assumption has traveled so far and wide that coming up with 'complex epithets and neologisms' which attempted to describe the mysterious nature of the EU has turned into a 'minor industry' within the academia (Shore 2006, p.717). As Diez and Whitman (2002) note, scholars of EU integration have at the same time been aware of the inherent dangers of isolationism in their analyses. Within the last two decades or so, efforts to connect EU integration studies to wider subject areas have gained a welcome momentum.

Particularly influential in this context has been Buzan's (2001) call for a closer engagement between the ES theory and EU studies. As part of his efforts to re-direct attention to ES scholarship, Buzan has noted that the School's research is 'admirably suited' to the task of analyzing the EU under a comparative/ historical framework as the organization offers, on a regional scale, the most developed example of an international society the School has extensively examined in its research (2001, p.485). Various scholars have subsequently conducted analyses that pose central concepts and questions from the ES research program within the context of the development of the EU (see Diez and Whitman 2002; Eleftheriadis 2007; Behr 2007; Stivachtis and Webber 2011; Diez et al. 2011; Stivachtis 2013). These analyses variously ask, among other questions, what kind of an international society the EU is becoming compared for instance to those other societies in Martin Wight's (1977) historical sociology of systems of states; what the specific institutions of the EU international society are and how they differ from Hedley Bull's (1995) classification of the main institutions of international society or how far the EU has transformed the concept of order in international society.

While a stimulating debate does continue between the ES theory and EU integration theory; there seems to be a less of a dialogue between either one of these research programs and scholars of the state. Statehood is a central problematique that underlies the puzzle of the formation of supranational systems such as the EU. As I explore in more detail below, the ES does literature does supply us with particularly apposite concepts for exploring European integration and indeed differentiated integration. However, one of the issues in that School's research is its insufficient attention on the unit-level of analysis with a focus on the question of statehood (Ruacan 2014). When deployed together with an analysis of the units, these same ES concepts can be rendered more useful in understanding supranational systems. Theorists of the state, for their part, have largely been unenterprising when it comes to theorizing the international. As Albert and Buzan have pointed out, there exists a problem of lack communication between the disciplines of sociology and international relations which is limiting our ability to understand the wider 'social whole' (Albert and Buzan 2013). The EU constitutes one such social whole, and the two disciplines of sociology and international relations should improve our understanding of it when placed under closer communication.

I chose to this end to focus on the works of Adam Watson and Michael Mann in particular and the ways in which they can be synthesized. Of course this has not been a random choice of two names from a cursory search result. As a number of scholars have suggested (Lawson 2006; Halliday 2005; Hobson 2005a) and Mann (2005) himself quickly conceded, theorizing the international has been the weakest aspect of Mann's research when delivering a Neo-Weberian historical sociology of the state. Were the international to be developed more thoroughly in Mann's work, Hobson (2005b) notes, much of it would have to align with the ES theory. Watson's own research into the historical evolution the system of states, meanwhile, bears similarities to that of Mann's. As Watson himself put it, *The Sources of Social Power* by Mann (1986) is an 'exceptionally thoughtful sociological study of the ancient systems' (1992, p.327) that

arrives at conclusions, coming from another angle, which closely accord with those which I had tentatively reached. For like myself he is clearly interested not only in the generation of power but in how it operated, its radial nature, its limitations and the shifts and compromises which it made, and therefore in the characteristics and functioning of the systems of states, some more imperially organized than others (Watson 1992, p.10).

Given the affinities, there is a particular opportunity to be seized by combining Mann's insights into the historical development of the state with Watson's insights into that of the system of states.

Neither Mann's nor Watson's work is about EU integration as such. Mann stated that his objective is to develop a 'history and theory of power relations in human societies' (1986, p.1). Watson stated that his objective is to contribute to our 'understanding of how systems of states function' by extrapolating from the experience of past systems of states (1992, p.1). That they are not about the EU as such is precisely why the ES and NWHS can be useful in understanding it. Drawing historical comparisons between past cases of international political organization and the EU will help 'de-mystify' it as Shore (2006, p.717) suggests. Operating within a historical-comparative framework does not mean assuming that social phenomena remain the same across centuries of history. The assumption is rather that these phenomena occur within a more or less predictable range, and that the experience of the past can become a guide for understanding the future. On this basis, Watson proclaimed that the European Community exhibited 'an unmistakable family resemblance' to the Holy Roman Empire (1997, p.23). Responding to the debate on the Community's prospects for success or failure, Watson noted that the Empire's predicament could offer possible a line of inquiry. Just like the Holy Roman Empire had to, the European Community would have to successfully 'order and balance fragmented institutions and multiple loyalties' in Europe to succeed (Watson 1997, p.35). Likewise, Mann has intervened in the debate on the question of the decline of the nation-state in Europe (and elsewhere) by turning to history. To those who pronounced the end of the nation-state, he responded that '[w]ith little sense of history, they exaggerate the former strength' of the entity to begin with (Mann 1997, p.494).

Is it possible that we are just as well exaggerating the business of differentiated integration in the EU? Across the literature, differentiated integration has been considered by some as a threat to the cohesiveness of the EU or as a source of weakness (Adler-Nissen 2011, p.1094). Others consider differentiated integration as a source of strength since some objectives of the EU are better achieved by excluding some member states which are unable to contribute effectively (Lord 2015). Yet there is no need to pass judgment as to whether differentiated integration is an anomaly, a threat, a strength or a weakness for the EU. Instead, differentiated integration can be conceptualized as an 'essential and, most likely, enduring characteristic of the EU' rather than as a 'temporary, accidental or non-systemic feature' of it (Schimmelfennig et al. 2015, p.765). Indeed, what we now call differentiated integration has been the natural order of things wherever and whenever a number of political communities have regulated their mutual involvement as closely as in the EU today.

This paper aims at adding further weight to this argument through the use of ES and NWHS concepts. Watson's (1992) notion of 'radial empires' will be the key to the analysis which is a particularly

appropriate notion for understanding differentiated integration in the EU. It tells us that uniform supranational integration has never been possible in the past as the reach of an empire's power and influence cannot be absolute all throughout. The term 'empire' here is not necessarily a reference to entities such as the Roman Empire or the Ottoman Empire but a metaphor for centralization of authority in the management of international society. The EU is one such centralized international society, and we can assume by extrapolating from the past that neither can its power and influence reach all throughout its membership in absolute terms.

Yet the 'social whole' (Albert and Buzan 2013) of the EU remains incomplete if we simply note down that it is a radial empire and conclude our argument. For Watson's (1992) concept does not sufficiently tell us why empires operate radially – except that they do. Why, for instance, is it that certain parts of an empire are more resistant to integration than others? Conversely, what makes its other parts more prone to integration? What conditions, if any, can we identify that explain the variation in the levels of integration inside an empire? The units that make up international society, as already mentioned, are not adequately theorized in the ES and these questions inevitably call for a closer examination of the units in the EU. It is here that Mann's insights into the historical/sociological development of the state becomes crucial. His concepts of 'socio-spatial networks of power' (Mann 1986) and a state's capacity to organize its despotic vs. infrastructural forms of power (Mann 1984) can be particularly useful for understanding why it so happens that empires function radially. Mann considers societies as socio-spatial networks that are organized around four sources of social power. There is, furthermore, an ongoing interplay among these four. As for states; Mann argues that they exercise some of their powers with the participation of civil society while others without civil society. State powers that can be exercised with or without the participation of civil society are referred to as infrastructural and despotic powers of the state respectively. I propose three hypotheses before proceeding to the details of Mann's concepts in the next section. First, however, it is essential to note what differentiated integration precisely is and in what forms it appears. Differentiated integration refers to a 'polity that displays variance across policy areas and across space, while maintaining an institutional core' (Schimmelfennig et al. 2015, p.770). Two specific forms of it can be noted: vertical and horizontal. Vertical differentiation occurs when policy areas are integrated at different speeds. Horizontal differentiation occurs when integration in a given area excludes some member states or includes non-member states (Schimmelfennig et al. 2015, p.765). Based on these definitions, it is possible to claim that:

- I. Differentiated integration has been a structural feature of all centralized entities in international society, including the EU, as suggested by Watson (1992).
- II. Vertical differentiation in the EU results from the constant re-organization of the sociospatial networks of power in human societies as suggested by Mann (1986).
- III. Horizontal differentiation in the EU results from the varying degrees of despotic vs. infrastructural forms of power in different EU member states.

Let us now turn to the details of the concepts of radial empires, sociospatial networks of power and despotic/infrastructural forms of state power, and then connect all of them to the subject of differentiated integration in the EU.

II. Radial Empires, Forms of Social Power and Differentiated Integration in the EU

IIa) The EU as a Radial Empire

Differentiated integration, that is variance in integration across policy areas and across membership in them within the EU, poses a challenge to predominant approaches to theorizing the EU which have presumed that integration would proceed uniformly as Andersen and Sitter (2006) remind. As it stands, the EU is anything but uniform so much so that it appears to be plunging down the road toward disintegration. Lord, however, suggests that differentiated integration may not necessarily lead toward disintegration. Indeed, in some policy areas, differentiation can be better than uniformity in that the externalities of integration can be more effectively managed by leaving some members out. As an example, he points to the case of the banking union which overcomes weak banking regulations in some member states (Lord 2015). Yet this is precisely the kind of integration those that are excluded are worried about. Over a decade ago, many such worries were raised during the Convention on the Future of Europe (2002-3) that gathered to draft a Constitutional Treaty for the EU. The inclusion in the draft Treaty of 'enhanced cooperation', a mechanism of differentiated integration in which the willing member states can pursue further integration schemes in specific policy areas, received strong opposition particularly from the smaller candidate states back then. A Maltese speaker at the Convention, among other speakers, insisted that such schemes would create multiple Europes; and that the principle of solidarity would have to be added to the Treaty as a 'constitutional counterbalance' to enhanced cooperation to protect the non-participating member states (Frendo 2003, p.2).

Differentiated integration can be a creative response to the challenges of integration in some cases but it inevitably leads those left behind to worry about 'equality' among member states. Mechanisms such as enhanced cooperation can lead to the creation new institutions that exclude some members and at times include non-members, and may then threaten the already delicate institutional balance of the Union. The fear that new institutions will subsequently sideline especially the European Commission, that body of the Union which is seen as the ultimate provider of equality among member states, has likewise been expressed on numerous occasions by the representatives of smaller member states of the Union during the Convention talks (Ruacan 2014). Yet even not so small member states have concerns of their own originating from the existence of diverging sets of rules within the EU. The United Kingdom, for instance, has recently obtained a long sought-after guarantee that the business interests of its companies cannot be discriminated against in the Eurozone on the basis of the country's non-participation in the scheme (BBC News 2016). As differentiated sets of rules continue to proliferate in the EU, worries that they will damage the intricate institutional architecture and create 'more equal' member states also proliferate.

In a practical sense, uniform integration may simply not possible in such large and diverse entities as the EU. To put this matter in absurd terms; a member of the European Parliament once questioned a compulsory EU regulation requiring that a strawberry be more than 23 millimeters in diameter to be sold on the markets by noting that in the 'Northern part of the Nordic countries, God has arranged it so that strawberries are not the same size as in the countries in the center of the EU' (Bonde 2002, p.58). Indeed, the inevitable link between differentiation and the increasing diversity and enlargement of the EU has already been pointed to (Schimmelfennig 2014). Differentiation is thus a logical consequence of integration in some senses. However, not all areas that are subject to differentiation at the moment are as technical ones as in the case of the size of strawberries. Increasingly, differentiation is occurring in a wider set of areas that are politicized in nature such as immigration or welfare. A recent example is the United Kingdom which will soon start restricting the welfare entitlements of EU immigrants in the country (BBC News 2016). And it is again the United Kingdom's upcoming referendum on membership in June 2016 that forces the question of whether or not the EU is about to disintegrate one member state at a time. Voluntary withdrawal poses yet another major challenge to EU theories as they have not foreseen such a possibility. Even Haas (1967, pp.327-8) admitted that when he first started dealing with the question of unification in Europe, he built too deterministic a theory that did not predict possible reversals in the process. How, then, are we going to make sense of all of this variation and even potential disintegration of the EU in theoretical terms? The challenge is to connect 'islands of theorizing' that focus

on this or that aspect of differentiation into a more coherent theoretical framework (Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012, p.303). The ES can indeed be that coherent theoretical framework.

The ES' particularly useful concept of 'radial empires' emerges from Watson's (1992) pendulum metaphor. Watson has long been skeptical of the main presuppositions of the discipline of international relations. More precisely, he doubted the Westphalian version of the discipline which presumes that international affairs are conducted by absolutely independent states. In practice, independence has never been absolute, he argued, and that it can only be treated as a matter of gradation. His pendulum metaphor indicates the four degrees along which independence is exercised in international society: multiple independences, hegemony, dominion, empire. These four points of independence are not absolute conditions either. It is better to consider them as ideal-types which blur into another in practice. Hegemony and dominion, for instance, can be difficult to distinguish in practice. Likewise, there are not sharp distinctions between multiple independences and hegemony. As members of international society regulate their mutual involvement, they also restrict one another's capacity for independent action along some region of the pendulum. The degree of independence states enjoy in international society starts to decline as we move along in the pendulum from multiple independences onwards - reaching a maximum at the empire point. According to Watson, there is a constant to and from movement in international society along this pendulum. Multiple independences and empire represent respectively the lowest and highest degrees of restrictions on the independence of the members of international society and they are both unsustainable. Where the pendulum swings toward either end, there will eventually be a return to its middle area of hegemony/dominion (Watson 1992). The EU resembles a dominion along this scale of systems where 'an imperial authority to some extent determines the internal government of other communities' but those communities nevertheless maintain a separate identity from that authority and manage some of their affairs themselves (Watson 1992, p.15). 'Empire' in Watson's terminology covers both historical cases such as the Roman Empire and a form of rule that exists in contemporary times as well. In theory, empire refers to the 'direct administration of different communities from an imperial center' (Watson 1992, p.16).

Yet such theoretical absolutes rarely occur in practice. Throughout history, imperial systems have been 'radially managed rather than territorially administered' (Watson 1992, p.125). Ever since the Assyrian Empire, there existed the 'general rule that imperial authorities do not in practice administer the entire area which they dominate or influence. The inner core of direct administration is surrounded by a ring of dominion with a degree of local autonomy' in Watson's (1992, p.37) analysis. For example, the Persian Empire reached the

climax of the methods involved in the pre-Roman ancient world to manage many different communities in an imperial system. It exercised a radial rather than a territorially delimited authority; and at or beyond the fringes of that authority it also played a major part with the Greek city-states in the Greco-Persian system and profoundly influenced the Indian system' (Watson 1992, p.40).

Hence, Watson (1992, p.38) concludes that '[h]istorical atlases which paint empires of the ancient world one uniform color are misleading. The ancient empires had no clearly delimited boundaries. Their activities and their authority were radial rather than territorial, and spread along lines of penetration'.

Watson contends that if we stop theorizing international relations on Westphalian terms, that is if we drop the assumption that international affairs take place among independent states, we will be struck by the continuities between pre-modern and modern times. Indeed, such ancient forms of imperial rule continue to characterize relations between the entities in international society today; as for instance was the case between the USSR and its client states (Watson 1997), and is still the case between the United States and several Caribbean states (Watson 1968). Imperial systems continue to exist in international society since pre-modern times in the shape of:

(i) concentric areas of direct administration; (ii) dominion (iii) loose hegemonial control of domestically autonomous realms; (iv) agreements with wholly independent powers beyond the reach of imperial authority (Watson 1992, p.115).

As Wæver (1996) has maintained; Watson's description of imperial systems fits the shape of post-Cold War Europe particularly well where the EU constitutes an imperial center and exercises varying degrees of influence across the European continent and beyond. Referring to the EU as an 'empire' can 'raise hackles' as Marks (2011, p.2) reminds due to the negative connotations associated with the word emanating from history. That argument has nevertheless been made numerous times (Gravier 2009; Foster 2010; Marks 2011; Zielonka 2008, 2012; Del Sarto 2016). Like historical empires, Marks (2011) maintains, the EU is a 'composite polity' (p.1) that 'encompasses countries and their regions in a continental system of economic exchange, individual mobility, dispute resolution, basic research and external representation' (pp.3-4). The EU also shares with historical empires a 'civilizing mission' in its environment (Zielonka 2012, p.509) and an increasingly more visible core-periphery structure as a result of enlargement (Gravier 2009, p.633). The debate as to whether or not the EU is the 'first non-imperial empire' in history as Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso once suggested (The Telegraph 2007) is

beyond the scope of this paper. What matters is rather that the EU walks and talks like the empires of the past in terms of its structure and more crucially its radial mode of operation.

What does a radial empire look like more precisely? Historically, it looked like 'concentric circles on a diagram rather than a map' whereby imperial penetration is stronger in some areas than in others (Watson 1992, p.16). Imagining the EU in the form of a diagram rather than a map captures its differentiated structure quite well. Furthermore, the imperial authority's degree of penetration across the territory corresponds to the concept of 'vertical differentiation' (Schimmelfennig et al. 2015). To turn to history again, the member communities in radial empires 'do not all stand in the same relationship to each other, or to an imperial power' (Watson 1992, p.16). This is because each entity in a political system has its own peculiar characteristics. In the past, for instance, the members of European international society ranged from 'the many communities under the very real sovereignty or Hausmacht of the Habsburgs in Vienna, to states like Parma and Schaumburg-Lippe that were no more than the estates of petty princes' (Watson 2007, p.21). Today, likewise, 'Europe's states all stand in some kind of relation to the European Union, be that as core member, member, honorary economic member, almost-member, or whatever' (Neumann 1998, p.414). Lavanex (2011) has similarly maintained that there are 'concentric circles' of EU membership and functionally-integrated members beyond the EU in the rest of Europe. These divergences within membership correspond to the concept of 'horizontal differentiation' (Schimmelfennig et al. 2015). The EU thus follows a general pattern in history: like previous imperial systems in international society, it too spreads its power radially and constitutes a vertically and horizontally differentiated entity.

Registering the EU as another example of a radial empire in history can liberate us from those 'islands of theorizing' (Holzinger and Schimmelfennig 2012, p.303). We can then assume that differentiated integration is not an anomaly or an unexpected puzzle but a recurring feature whenever a number of political communities arrange their mutual involvement as closely as they do in the EU. Differentiation has been a structural feature of such involvement throughout history. Moreover, the ES approach also allows for the possibility that integration will loosen at times. This possibility is contained in Watson's (1992) assertion that the pendulum constantly swings across its four points. It can therefore shift away from its heavily centralized point of empire toward somewhere in its less centralized area of hegemony. Watson's pendulum analogy thus enables us to overcome the rigidity of EU integration theories which presume an ongoing and homogenous path toward further and further integration. The

value-added of analyzing EU integration within an ES framework is indeed this ability to connect the EU to broader human phenomena, and adopt a flexible approach to integration while we do so.

What needs to be mentioned, however, is that the ES approach is also too broad to understand why imperial systems function radially. Watson (1992) does not tell us much as to the causal mechanisms of differentiation. He makes reference to a general trend that there emerges a 'propensity to autonomy' in imperial systems as a response to heavy centralization (Watson 1992, p.124). He also notes briefly that geographical distance to the imperial center is not the only reason why differentiation occurs (Watson 1992, pp.66-7). Yet he falls short of elaborating what the other reasons might be. It is possible to infer from his overall work, as well as from the writings of other ES scholars like Martin Wight (1977), that what Watson implies is that different cultures simply do not integrate. Taking this line of thinking further; the ES argument would be that differentiation occurs because an empire increasingly comes into contact with culturally alien territories as it expands which cannot be absorbed inside the original cultural core. It is difficult, however, to pursue this line of thinking further since differentiation is increasingly characterizing the more or less homogenous cultural core of the EU. What, then, are the particular circumstances that are stimulating a 'propensity toward autonomy' even within the founding circle of EU membership? Furthermore, why is that the EU's penetration is stronger in some policy fields than in others? Why, also, is it that the members are all standing in different relationships to the EU such as in the form of full members, honorary members and the like? In seeking answers to these questions, we have to examine more closely the units that constitute the EU system more closely. As I maintained earlier, the ES is not useful for this purpose but NWHS does allow us to do precisely that. Let us then turn in particular to the concepts of 'sociospatial networks of power' (Mann 1986) and despotic vs. infrastructural powers of states (Mann 1984) and connect them to the subject of differentiated integration.

IIb) Differentiated Integration, Sociospatial Networks and Forms of State Power in the EU

We have so far arrived, with the help of the ES theory, at the conclusion that the EU is one among history's other radially functioning empires. We now seek to go further and understand why precisely the EU is functioning in radial terms. I will attempt in this sub-section of the paper to connect vertical and horizontal forms of differentiated integration to Mann's concepts of 'sociospatial networks of power' and despotic/infrastructural forms of state power in the EU. More precisely, I will advance the claims that (i) vertical differentiation in the EU is resulting from the ongoing interplay among the four specific forms of social power as laid out by Mann and that (ii) horizontal differentiation is resulting again from the interplay between despotic vs. infrastructural forms of state power in different EU member states. A further

observation to be made is that horizontal differentiation is on the rise in recent years since the EU is increasingly intruding into member states' own infrastructural power. EU member states with low infrastructural power more easily transfer their powers to the supranational level. Conversely, EU member states with high infrastructural power find it more difficult to transfer their powers to the supranational level. Therefore, (iii) member states with high infrastructural power are more likely to seek exemptions from EU rules and regulations.

Mann (1986) set out to build a 'history and theory of power in human societies' (p.1) which are organized around four sources of social power: ideological, economic, military and political. Human societies are 'constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks' (p.2) of social power and they need to maintain a 'sociospatial capacity for organization' (p.3) of these powers. There is, as Mann notes, a constant re-organization among the four sources of social power and this is how the historical process continues. Each particular form of social power gives rise to its own organizations or institutions. At any given time either one of these organizational forms then comes to dominate over the others and shapes the remaining elements of social life (pp.28-30). The 'ultimate primacy' of one particular form of social power cannot be established. Societies are sites where the ideological, economic, military and political forms of social power, and the institutions associated with each one of them, continually re-arrange themselves (Mann 1986). The domination of the economic form, in particular, is the key to understanding the unification of Europe at this moment in time from Mann's (1993) perspective. More specifically, the capitalistic organization of economic power has homogenized Europe in a geopolitically secure environment in the post-War period. There is also a historical trend underwriting this European process of integration for Mann. Throughout history, not a single political entity has provided for all the functions of social life such as macroeconomic planning or militarism until the state has emerged. In Europe, what is happening is the re-emergence of this historical trend whereby different political entities are again providing for different aspects of social life (Mann 1993, pp.137-139).

Mann further notes that a society's struggle to organize different types of social power is not merely an internal issue. For a society has '*never* been merely national. It has also been transnational - involving relations that freely cross national boundaries. And it has also been geopolitical - involving the relations between national units' (Mann 1993, p.118, emphasis in original). As noted earlier, however, the chief weakness in Mann's research is his under-theorization of what he calls the 'transnational' and the 'geopolitical'. According to Hobson, the central issue here is Mann's 'conflation of the international with geopolitical anarchy' (2005b, p.519). Mann (2005, p.543) himself admitted to this issue, and maintained

that it was because earlier in his research he adopted realist ideas about the international which he subsequently dropped. The under-theorization of the international is not only an issue for Mann. As Parker suggests, other works in historical sociology have likewise been weak when it comes to theorizing the international (Parker 2010). Mann's research in particular can be strengthened in this respect by turning to the ES theory. It appears that the later non-realist Mann is postulating the existence of an international society understood on ES terms without saying so. To put it differently, the logical conclusion to Mann's arguments about how human societies function is that there exists an international society defined on ES terms where

a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and certain common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another and share in the working of common institutions (Bull 1995, p.13).

Only this particular definition of international society allows Mann's approach to human societies to hold. A geopolitical anarchy, which is what Mann appears to be assuming about the international, is an asocial environment that lacks any of the social qualities incorporated into Bull's definition. In an asocial environment, societies will be merely national and not involve the 'transnational' or the 'geopolitical' that Mann suggests are always present. Again if we presume such an environment, we cannot understand how the member states of the EU for instance have developed a nearly-continent wide sociospatial capacity to organize various forms of social power. It is only in an *Anarchical Society*, to borrow Bull's (1995) famous title, where the type of human society that always incorporates the transnational/geopolitical that Mann talks about can exist.

Mann's theory of the international can thus be greatly strengthened by insights from the ES theory. The weaknesses regarding the international notwithstanding, his model is quite valuable for considering differentiated integration in the EU. If the EU is taken to constitute one broad human society along the lines Mann describes, then there will be a constant re-arrangement among the four sources of social power of ideological, economic, military and the political within it as well. The question of vertical differentiation in the EU or different speeds in integration across policy areas can in particular be analyzed under this framework. The primacy of the economic, as Mann (1993) himself points out, has been the dominant so far, and it has indeed given rise to the thickest set of institutions in the EU. As the economic has gained primacy, the relevant institutions have been integrated at a greater speed than other policy areas. The ideological might as well come to dominate in the not so distant future. About two decades

ago, Mann had suggested that immigration and racist responses to it could re-introduce strong state sovereignty in Europe (Mann 1993, pp. 132-3). The current migrant crisis at the EU's borders and indeed quite racist responses to it give enough reason to be convinced of the force of this argument. As each source of social power gives rise to its own set of institutions, the primacy of racist ideologies can give rise to increasingly more protectionist institutions in the EU. We can thus arrive at the general conclusion that whichever type of social power gains primacy in the EU, integration in the respective policy areas will take place at a higher speed. Vertical differentiation in the EU, then, can be considered as resulting from the constant re-organization of the different sources of social power as outlined in Mann's (1986) model. We further know from his model that the ultimate primacy of any one of the forms of power cannot be established. At any given time, one or the other source of power will be more dominant than the other three. In this sense, vertical differentiation can also be assumed as a permanent or structural feature of the EU as well.

Of course, vertical differentiation is not the only form of differentiation in the EU. There is also horizontal differentiation whereby some EU member states sometimes exclude themselves from certain rules and regulations. At other times, non-member states can include themselves as in the case for instance of the Schengen visa-free travel area. What accounts for such opt-outs except when they are necessitated by the inability to meet technical criteria in a specific scheme? What are the sources of explanation that we can turn to when a member state voluntarily stays out of a certain EU arrangement? I propose for this purpose to engage with Mann's insights into the meaning of state power, and conceive of horizontal differentiation as a function of different meanings of state power in different EU member states.

Mann (1984) points to two different meanings of state power: despotic and infrastructural. Despotic state power refers to the 'range of actions which the elite is empowered to undertake without routine institutionalized negotiation with civil society groups'. Infrastructural state power, meanwhile, refers to the 'capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm' (Mann 1984, p.113). A state can be strong in both despotic and infrastructural terms, be weak in one and strong in the other or be weak in both. In general, democratic states tend to be less strong in despotic terms and developing states tend to be less strong in infrastructural terms (Mann 2008). Yet there is also an ongoing dialectical interplay between despotic and infrastructural forms of power in more or less all states. States territorialize and centralize society by increasing their despotic power. However, despotic power does not last for too long unless infrastructural

power is also developed at around the same time. The dilemma is that in the course of developing more infrastructural power, states also lose some of their powers to civil society and become weaker (Mann 1984, pp.134-6). The autonomous power of the state from civil society may start to decline as a result (Mann 2008). To put this argument in a more simplified way, we can note that a state with high infrastructural power is less autonomous from and more constrained by its civil society. Conversely, a state with low infrastructural power is more autonomous from its civil society but also a less effective state. In this respect, infrastructural becomes both a strength and a weakness for states.

In Europe, a group of states have been transferring some of their infrastructural power to the EU level (Mann 2008, p.360). In the initial years of integration, and certainly until the 1980s, the powers transferred to the European Community were not too much of an issue for the nation-state as Mann suggests. However, and especially since the Treaty of Maastricht, this has been changing. The European Union has been cutting deeper into member states' sovereignties and has started 'subverting political functions' of the nation-state (Mann 1993, p.121). In other words, we can suggest that the European Community assumed 'despotic powers' around those issues under the so-called 'permissive consensus' of integration. The European Union, for its part, has been assuming on its own the infrastructural power of the member states. The increase in recent years in horizontal differentiation in the EU can be related to the competition or tension between the Union and member states over infrastructural power. We can expect that horizontal differentiation will increase further as the Union seeks to gain more infrastructural power and some member states seek to hold on to theirs with a view to avoiding the state-subverting impacts of integration. Member states with stronger infrastructural power are naturally more likely to seek exemptions from EU rules and regulations in this process.

An example of a state with particularly high infrastructural power together with particularly weak despotic power Mann provides is the United Kingdom. Indeed, Mann gives the United Kingdom as well as the United States as ideal-typical cases of states with weak despotic and high infrastructural power (Mann 2008, p.356). This means that the United Kingdom is a state with little autonomy from its civil society and, once we connect the question of the autonomous power of the state to the subject of EU integration, that it is much more difficult for London to transfer its powers to the supranational level. In states with high infrastructural power such as the United Kingdom, the resources the state provides are very deeply diffused into civil society. Ceding them to an alternative authority thus becomes a particular challenge. Caporaso's (2000) remarks on the supremacy of parliamentary sovereignty in the UK can be further linked to the strength of that state's infrastructural power. As he explains, the supremacy of parliamentary

sovereignty over domestic legislation, the absence of judicial review and the absence of constitutionally entrenched rights are the three central principles of the UK domestic order. The supremacy of Union legislation, judicial review of domestic legislation by the European Court of Justice and the constitutional entrenchment of rights as a result of that review process constitute a direct challenge to the principle of supreme parliamentary sovereignty in the UK (Caporaso 2000, pp.19-21). The UK's strong infrastructural power can be emanating from this tradition of supreme parliamentary sovereignty over the land upon which the EU poses a perceived threat.

As in the case of the UK, the tension over the assumption of infrastructural power by the Union vs. member states can be proposed as one possible line of inquiry into theorizing horizontal differentiation. There remain challenges, however, before fully advancing this inquiry. The first challenge is to develop rigorous empirical criteria to measure infrastructural power in the EU member states. The United Kingdom is offered as an ideal example of a state with strong infrastructural power by Mann himself. Let us assume for a moment that the United Kingdom is also that EU member state with the highest degree of infrastructural power. How can we place the remaining 27 EU member states in terms of their respective degrees of infrastructural power? No such criteria, at least to my knowledge, is in place at the moment. Once those criteria for measurement are developed, we can then determine how strong a correlation there exists between the possession of high infrastructural power by a member state on the one hand, and the extent to which that member state seeks exemptions from EU rules and regulations, on the other. The second challenge is to the very concept of infrastructural power itself posed by the 'increasing autonomistic, micro-regionalization of Europe' (Lungu 2003, p.479) in recent years. The regionalization of Europe undermines states' infrastructural power in a new way. It is true that states have always lost some of their infrastructural power but they have lost them to civil society. On this occasion, however, they are their losing infrastructural power to regions in addition to the Union. The loss of infrastructural power to regions seems to be, at least in modern times, an unprecedented development. Is there a need therefore to re-define or revise the concept of infrastructural power to accommodate this new development? Could member states seek to advance their despotic power to compensate for the loss of the infrastructural? If they did, how would the rise of despotic power in member states impact upon the course of integration or indeed differentiation integration in the EU? We also know that states with high despotic power have been historically less successful states. Are the member states permanently at loss then as a result of EU integration? These are some of the questions that spring to mind in what promises to be a fulfilling research agenda once we put EU integration and NWHS into a closer dialogue.

III. Conclusion

I attempted in this paper to connect the subject of differentiated integration in the EU to two broad macro-historical theories: the English School of International Relations and Neo-Weberian Historical Sociology of the state. Adam Watson and Michael Mann have been the two central figures in the analysis from the two research programs respectively as there is a particular overlap between their works. Both Watson and Mann, enable us, from different and complementary angles, to relate EU integration to the rise and fall of different conditions. Using Watson's (1992) inquiry; EU integration (and potential disintegration) can be related to a constant to and fro movement along a metaphorical pendulum of increasing degrees of central authority in international society. Watson's (1992) concept of 'radial empires' further allowed us to capture the differentiated nature of integration in the EU. Indeed we could then place the EU next to previous cases of imperial systems in history that also functioned radially. Mann's (1984, 1986) inquiry provided us with further insights as to the reasons why imperial systems may be functioning radially. Using Mann's approach, I linked vertical differentiation in the EU to the constant re-organization of the four sources of social power in human societies, and horizontal differentiation to a competition over infrastructural power between the Union and member states.

This was in a way an attempt to complete the 'social whole' (Albert and Buzan 2013) of differentiated integration in the EU through utilizing the insights of sociology and international relations jointly. Without sociology we fail to understand precisely what is going on inside a radial empire such as the EU. Without international relations we fail to understand the EU as a 'pattern of order with geopolitical effects' on the map of the world (Parker 2010, p.109). There is an obvious need for more studies that approach the EU at the intersection of these two disciplines as prevailing approaches to the EU seem to have arrived at a theoretical cul-de-sac at this particular moment in time.

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