

Habermas and European integration

**Social and cultural modernity
beyond the nation-state**



SHIVDEEP GREWAL

HABERMAS AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



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SHIVDEEP GREWAL

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For Silvia

CONTENTS

Figures and tables	<i>page</i> ix
Preface and acknowledgements	xi
Abbreviations	xiii
 Introduction: Modernity, welfare state and EUtopia	 1
 Part I Social modernity	 11
1 Habermas on European integration	13
2 Metatheory	23
3 Integration theory	33
4 Democratic theory	47
 Part II Cultural modernity	 55
5 Rationalisation	57
6 Neoconservatism	64
7 Cartographies of disenchantment	71
 Part III Empirical research	 87
8 The conceptual landscape of the Constitutional Convention	89
 Conclusion: An unfinished project?	 97
Afterword <i>John Goff</i>	100
Appendix: The writers of social science	110
 References	 112
Index	123

FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures

3.1 The constructivist continuum	<i>page</i> 34
3.2 The constructivist continuum	39
3.3 The underlying principles of the constructivist continuum	41
3.4 Social Europe and the constructivist continuum	44
5.1 Three conservative types	63
6.1 Situating neoconservatism	64
7.1 Nietzsche's influence	71
7.2 The dark and the black	77
7.3 Mapping antimodernism	81
A1.1 The writers of social science	110

Tables

4.1 Lifeworld reproduction processes (adapted from Habermas, 1995: 142–4)	<i>page</i> 49
4.2 Lifeworld pathologies (adapted from Habermas, 1995: 143)	50
7.1 Antimodernism in the early 1980s and today	72

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study builds on doctoral research conducted at the Universities of Reading and Essex, yet its origins lie further back. As an undergraduate, I studied English Literature. The critics impressed me as much as the writers, and it would not be inaccurate to say that my work to date has been marked by early readings of Susan Sontag and Marshall McLuhan, the French post-structuralists and the Frankfurt School. My attention soon turned to the work of Jürgen Habermas. I was inspired by the affirmative account of modernity at its heart. This has been the object of critique for some time, and in recent years it has seemed difficult even to articulate. That it still remains plausible to me – despite everything, a declaration of hope – is the reason I have persisted with the present avenue of research.

I had originally intended to produce an account of the ‘democratic deficit’. This would have been structured by a selection of Habermas’s concepts, particularly those of his later, legal-democratic, theory. After the tragic events of 9/11, however, I was forced, like many others, to question my most basic assumptions. It gradually became apparent that Habermas’s work was not rendered obsolete by the dramatic occurrences of the time, which in a sense marked the passing of the postwar context in which he had developed his major ideas. I would have to broaden my investigation, I realised, not abandon it.

Habermas (2001c: 75) has written of the ‘densely populated, ethnically mixed suburbs in the vicinity of Heathrow Airport’. I grew up nearby, and it was to the suburbs that I returned to do the bulk of the writing. More than once a key sentence or idea has come to me on an evening stroll (in unconscious homage to Walter Benjamin, perhaps), and the importance to my research of the European *lifeworld*, the experiential rather than market-administrative aspect of the integration process, probably stems from this peripatetic orientation. I also worked in the vicinity of Heathrow Airport, as a visiting lecturer at Brunel University – my warmest gratitude goes to Professors Justin Fisher and Alex Warleigh-Lack for inviting me back each year.

Thanks are due to a number of people. To begin with, Professor Richard Bellamy – I could not have asked for a better supervisor. My gratitude also goes to Professor Emil Kirchner and Professor William Outhwaite, both in relation to my doctorate and this study. Along with everyone at Manchester University Press, I am indebted to Professor Thomas Christiansen for his

positive early comments. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewer for a supportive response to my initial proposal. Parts of this study appeared in *Politics*, the *Journal of European Integration* and the *Journal of European Public Policy*; reprint permissions granted by Blackwell, Routledge, Polity and Suhrkamp are gratefully acknowledged. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Habermas, whose words of encouragement came at a perfect time.

Reclining in a wicker chair in Bangkok, I began reading William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984). I was somewhat encouraged to learn that the author had completed it at the grand old age of thirty-six, and that I therefore had twelve solid years to produce a comparable work of my own. It remains unwritten. The engagement with geopolitics and philosophy that seemed a prerequisite for the task was compelling in itself, and, twelve years on, this study exists in place of the envisaged novel, though the worldviews of Habermas and Gibson are, of course, quite different. Another work that inspired me was John Goff's *The Last Days of the Most Hidden Man* (1992). Just as it exceeded *Neuromancer* in prescience, John's philosophical prognoses have consistently been a decade ahead of everyone else's. I owe him thanks for introducing me to Habermas's work in the first place, and a great intellectual debt besides. He has kindly contributed an afterword.

Finally, I am grateful to my family and friends, who have been with me through so many challenging times. If I began to list them all, and the debts of gratitude I owe, this preface would run to a volume in itself. And there is Silvia, without whom I would conceivably be nothing at all. This book is dedicated to her.

Shivdeep Grewal
London

ABBREVIATIONS

BFN	<i>Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy</i>
BEUC	European Office of Consumer Unions
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CEPLIS	Conseil Européen des Professions Libérales
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CLS	Council Legal Service
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
DG	Directorate General (a department of the European Commission)
EC	European Community
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EMCEF	European Federation of Chemical and General Workers' Unions
EMU	European Monetary Union
EP	European Parliament
EPP-ED	European People's Party
EPU	European Political Union
ESC	Economic and Social Committee
ESM	European Social Model
ETUC/ETUI	European Trade Union Confederation/European Trade Union Institute
EU	European Union
EUW	European Union of Women
FEANTSA	European Federation of Organisations Working with the Homeless
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GMB	General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union
GUE-NGL	Group of the United European Left/Nordic Green Left
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MLG	Multi-level governance
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NSM	New Social Movement
PDM	<i>The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures</i>
PES	Party of European Socialists

PNC	<i>The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays</i>
SEA	Single European Act (1987)
STPS	<i>The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society</i>
TA	Treaty of Amsterdam (1999)
TCA	<i>The Theory of Communicative Action</i> (Volumes I and II)
TR	Treaty of Rome (1957)
TEU	Treaty on European Union (1992, also known as the Maastricht Treaty)
UNICE	Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations
WTO	World Trade Organisation