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The European Union:
Readings on the Theory and
Practice of European Integration

FOURTH EDITION

edited by
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and Alexander Stubb

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Introduction

Brent F. Nelsen and Alexander Stubb

More than a decade has passed since the third edition of this book was published. Faithful users of the book will immediately realize that this new edition has a new structure. We still have sections presenting “visions” of Europe, early currents in theory, and contemporary theoretical debates. But we have added a section called “Europe Relaunching” containing pieces from the mid-1980s to the end of the twentieth century—a period of increased integration in Europe and new efforts to explain it. We felt that to jump directly from classic theoretical statements of the 1950s and 1960s to the present without providing a few of the “greatest hits” of the relaunch era would mystify rather than enlighten students and scholars. The new Part 3 thus opens the door to the intense—and intensely creative—debates of the late twentieth century by bringing back seminal works from previous editions of the book.

Crisis is the theme that unites the new selections reprinted in this edition. In Part 1, Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida (Chapter 11) explore a possible new identity for Europe after the mass protests against the Iraq War put the United States and much of Europe on different foreign policy trajectories. The following chapter takes up the constitutional crisis of the first decade of the twenty-first century by presenting the controversial preamble to the failed constitutional treaty and the very brief preamble to the successful Lisbon treaty. Part 1 concludes with a chapter on the euro crisis, featuring the conflicting views of several prominent politicians as they outline their suggestions for heading off catastrophe.

Several of the selections featured in Part 4 are connected by their attempts to make sense of the EU’s current economic and political woes. Nicolas Berggruen and Nathan Gardels (Chapter 27) chart a federalist course through the turmoil, while economist Enrico Spolaore (Chapter 32) explains the crisis in terms of the costs and benefits of integrating heterogeneous peoples and economies. Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (Chapter 29) with their

“postfunctionalist” theory of integration and Gary Marks (Chapter 31) with his discussion of the European Union as an empire examine the political blowback against integration. They seem to agree that efficient governance has bumped into identity. Ideas may also play an independent role in the construction of Europe, as Craig Parsons argues (Chapter 28), making the way out of the European crisis more than a matter of cost-benefit analysis.

As with previous editions, the book records a conversation among political leaders and scholars about the possibility, purpose, and process of unifying Europe. From the close of World War II, European politicians have been articulating a vision of a united Europe and taking practical steps to achieve it. Scholars have also been known to prescribe courses of action for Europe, but more often than not have confined themselves to describing and explaining the process and progress of integration. The conversation has never been one-way: officials have very often taken their cues from theoretical work done by scholars, and scholars have often allowed political notions to inform their theoretical ruminations. Nor has the conversation proceeded without heated debates. Some of the heat has come from scholars who look to the politicians for greater progress toward integration; some has come from policymakers who lament the abstract nature of much of the scholarly work (a familiar refrain). Most of the conversational heat, however, comes from internal debates. European politicians have disagreed deeply over the nature and purpose of postwar integration, and scholars have divided over everything from the best method of integration, to who controls integration, to what the EU actually is. This book offers a window on this conversation over time and allows readers to enter the debate that continues to shape contemporary Europe.

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Readers should be aware of several protocols that we employed when constructing the book. First, the introductions that begin each chapter set the context and summarize the argument of the selection. These prologues are designed to amplify the dialogue among the authors of the selections. They should not substitute for a broader discussion of the historical or theoretical contexts, nor should they replace a close reading of each piece. Second, we have abridged each selection. Centered bullets mark significant abridgments; less significant abridgments (i.e., less than a paragraph) are marked with ellipses; brackets mark our own additions; and notes are omitted to save space. We have taken great care to preserve the core—and much more—of each author’s argument, but readers should consider the original sources before making definitive (i.e., published) statements about the selections reprinted here.