



# Narrating European Society: Toward a Sociology of European Integration

*Hans-Jörg Trenz*

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## **Narrating European Society: Toward a Sociology of European Integration** Hans-Jörg Trenz

Trenz introduces a sociological perspective on European integration by looking at different accounts of Europeanization as society building. He observes how Europeanization unfolds in ongoing practices and discourses through which social relations among the Europeans are redefined and re-embedded. The chapters describe how the project of European integration has been powerfully launched in postwar Europe as a normative venture that comprises polity and society building, how this project became ingrained in everyday life histories and experiences of the Europeans, how this project became contested and confronted resistances and, ultimately, how it went through its most severe crisis. A sociology of European integration is thus outlined along four main themes or narratives: first, the elite processes of identity construction and the framework of norms and ideas that carries such a construction (together with notions of European identity, EU citizenship, etc.); second, the socialization of European citizens, processes of banal Europeanism, and social transnationalism through everyday cross-border exchanges; third, the mobilization of resistance and Euroskepticism as a fundamental and collectively mobilized opposition to processes of Europeanization; and fourth, the political sociology of crisis, linked not only to financial turmoil but also, more fundamentally, to a legitimization crisis that affects Europe and the democratic nation-state.



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