

Integration through Disruption?

1. Of frictions and disruptions

European integration theory has always been reflective of the reality by which integration dynamics have been driven (reactive integration) on the one hand, and the reality which integration efforts have tried to shape (proactive integration) on the other.¹ This holds true for early functionalism and its assumption that closed nation states, facing the modern world's increasingly complex mutual interdependencies, can no longer fulfil their tasks in exclusive autarky. When prosperity and security, economic growth and ecological sustainability, to name only some of the most obvious examples, depend on effective action as well as resilient infrastructure beyond state borders, supranational forms of organization are intended to compensate for this loss in "functioning autonomously."² Neo-functionalism goes one step further when relying not only on the functionality but also the adaptability (or the learning ability) of organizations.³ Federalists and realists have aimed at both describing and analytically capturing the integration processes taking into account constantly changing realities.⁴ The same holds true for multi-level governance ideas,⁵ constitutionalist readings of the Treaties,⁶ or crises-driven de-constitutionalization approaches.⁷ The list could go on, but let us turn to current and quite disruptive realities that somehow act as extrinsic shocks of a new dimension to the integration process. Future historians

¹ For an instructive overview see: *European Integration Theory*, eds. A. Wiener, T.A. Börzel, Th. Risse, Oxford 2018.

² D. Mitrany, "The Prospect of Integration: Federal or Functional," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 1965, vol. 4, no. 2, p. 119 ff.

³ E. Haas, *Beyond the Nation State. Functionalism and International Organization*, Stanford 1964.

⁴ B. Rosamond, *Theories of European Integration*, Basingstoke 2000, pp. 23, 120.

⁵ M. Jachtenfuchs, B. Kohler-Koch, "Regieren in dynamischen Mehrebenensystemen" [in:] *Europäische Integration*, eds. M. Jachtenfuchs, B. Kohler-Koch, Wiesbaden 1996, p. 25 ff.

⁶ I. Pernice, "Multilevel Constitutionalism and the Treaty of Amsterdam: European Constitution-Making Revisited?," *Common Market Law Review* 1999, vol. 36, p. 703 ff.; P. Häberle, M. Kotzur, *Europäische Verfassungslehre*, 8th ed., Baden-Baden 2016.

⁷ *Zur Konzeptualisierung europäischer Desintegration: Zug- und Gegenkräfte im europäischen Einigungsprozess*, eds. A. Eppler, H. Scheller, Baden-Baden 2013.

might identify two interdependent disruptions in particular as decisive turning points in the European Union's integration history: first, when the United States denounced the value-based transatlantic partnership which has, notwithstanding some ups and downs, been conceived as a "Western commonality" since the end of the Second World War, and second, when the inherently contradictory concept of illiberal democracies, that challenged the liberal creed of Western constitutionalism at its very core,⁸ was put forward as an alternative to an allegedly decadent and failed form of traditional liberalism.

Before going into further detail, let us briefly explain how this article understands the difference between frictions and disruptions. Both effects are usually caused by crises. However, while the former signifies only temporary disturbances of a generally continuing normality, however defined and notwithstanding permanent reform demands, the latter stands for the transformative replacement of the existing with something new, the exact contours of which cannot be precisely grasped yet. Admittedly, neither frictions nor disruptions are *per se* morally good or bad, politically progressive or restorative. There should be no doubt, however, that the disruptive variant has the potential to destroy. It would be fatal to euphemistically reinterpret this destructive power into a vital force⁹ which, through, one might assume, unrestrained out-of-the-box thinking and correspondingly unrestrained action, creates a new "constitutional moment" for a given political community.¹⁰ When we reflect about disruptions as means of integration, it is not in the sense of a positive stimulus, but in the sense of a turning point requiring fundamental reorientation and reorganization. The "ever closer union" (Article 1(2) Treaty on European Union) is forced to reassure itself of its own identity and capacity as a political actor. Unsolicited disruptions might be transformed into an opportune catalyst for dynamic further integration, not more and simply not automatically but not less either.

2. Integration through disruptions: A new narrative of European integration?

Without losing sight of a catalytic "integration through disruption," let us first briefly recall two of the most prominent integration narratives: "integration through law" and "integration through crises."¹¹ As far as the former is concerned, Walter Hallstein, the European Economic Community's first Commission's President, was one of its best-known proponents: "The European Community is a remarkable legal phenomenon.

⁸ See, e.g., J. Habermas, *Zur Verfassung Europas*, Berlin 2011; J.H.H. Weiler, *The Constitution of Europe*, Cambridge 1999.

⁹ M. Martin [in:] *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 February 2025, p. 10.

¹⁰ B. Ackerman, *We the People. Foundations*, Cambridge 1991, p. 59.

¹¹ R. Koselleck, "Krise" [in:] *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 3, eds. O. Brunner, W. Conze, R. Koselleck, Stuttgart 1982, p. 635.

It is a creation of law; it is a source of law; and it is a legal system.”¹² Even though the conceptual consistency and explanatory strength of this notion have never been beyond doubt, law’s relatively depoliticized nature makes it an attractive integration instrument since it is supposedly neutral.¹³ This worked quite well for the above-mentioned functionalist theories dealing with an early market-based and expert-driven European Economic Community. In its struggle for democratic legitimacy, the post-Maastricht (let alone post-Lisbon) political Union would hardly be conceivable without political contestation.¹⁴ For today’s Union, thus, integration through law means much more than a simple reliance on a legal toolkit. Conceived as “an antidote to force and a means to achieve peace,” law serves in a much more complex way as “medium capable of containing political, economic, and social forces” and is, finally, “the cement capable of holding these divergent forces together.”¹⁵

That crises can work as such a cement, too, is anything but obvious. It nevertheless has often been argued that a political community shows its strength when intrinsically or extrinsically challenged. The European Union makes no difference in this regard. In times of crises, the European citizens might feel inclined to get closer and have the desire to stand united. The double narrative relating to crises of integration and crises in integration is based on a consequentialist “logic of challenge and response.”¹⁶ Therefore, European politicians as well as academics have often conceptualized “the history of European integration around the assumption” that integration as such builds upon “a series of continuous efforts to conceive appropriate responses in reaction to contingently changing challenges to all EU Member States.”¹⁷ One can, of course, argue that neither the narrative of crisis-driven progress, nor that of integration through law can be supported by unequivocal empirical evidence. That alone, however, does not prove those narratives wrong and such a lack of empirical data may be inherent in the nature of narrative itself. Narratives explain and encourage. By linking the “law” and the “crisis story,” “integration through disruption” tries to encourage determined reaction to disruptive experiences, explain the driving forces behind this reaction, and emphasize that the rule of law is non-negotiable for any legal community.

¹² W. Hallstein, *Europe in the Making*, London 1972, p. 30.

¹³ See: D. Augenstein, M. Dawson, “Introduction: What Law for What Polity? ‘Integration through Law’ in the European Union Revisited” [in:] *“Integration through Law” Revisited. The Making of the European Polity*, ed. D. Augenstein, Surrey–Burlington 2012, p. 1.

¹⁴ A. Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, Heidelberg–New York–Dordrecht 2014.

¹⁵ L. Azoulay, “‘Integration through law’ and us,” *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 2016, vol. 14, no. 2, p. 450.

¹⁶ M. Reiser, K.U. Schnapp, “Jenseits der Linearität – Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Challenge-Response-Perspektive” [in:] *Herausforderung – Akteur – Reaktion. Diskontinuierlicher sozialer Wandel aus theoretischer und empirischer Perspektive*, eds. D. de Nève, K.-U. Schnapp, Baden-Baden 2007, p. 25; L. Kühnhardt, “European Integration: Success through Crises” [in:] *Crises in European Integration. Challenges and Responses, 1945–2005*, ed. L. Kühnhardt, New York–Oxford 2011, p. 1.

¹⁷ L. Kühnhardt, “European Integration...,” p. 4.

3. The value-based transatlantic partnership at stake

How should the European Union then deal with the end of the “Pax Americana” brought about by the Trump Administration? Political scientist Herfried Münkler describes the scene on 28 February 2025, when US President Trump kicked President Zelensky out of the Oval Office after denouncing him and the entire Ukrainian people, as “iconic.”¹⁸ One might add, it is emblematic of the decline of the Transatlantic Alliance. The well- (or better, ill-) orchestrated humiliation of Ukraine and its President followed an outright populist playbook.¹⁹ The “international rule of law,” thus, seems weaker than ever before.²⁰ Even the prohibition of the use of force (Article 2(4) UN Charter), a norm of so-far undisputed *ius cogens* character, does not stay untouched when – let alone the recent Iran war – the UN Security Councils adopts a resolution strengthening the Russian aggressor.²¹ Kaja Kallas, the Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy sees the United States and the European Union as having arrived at very unwelcome crossroads of transatlantic history: “Today, it became clear that the free world needs a new leader. It’s up to us, Europeans, to take this challenge.”²²

It needs little imagination to read the High Representative’s statement as an implicit endorsement of “integration through disruption.” Kallas, however, knows that such new leadership is anything but trivial. On the contrary, the Europeans, whilst struggling for strategic sovereignty or at least autonomy,²³ are facing a most challenging return of geopolitics. The Russian Federation, pretending to fear NATO, is primarily concerned with destabilizing the EU. On the other side of the Atlantic, the power strategists behind the Trump Administration have succumbed to the mistaken belief that a pro-Russian policy can detach Russia from China and make it their ally in the long run. To achieve this goal, Trump does not refrain from a perpetrator-victim reversal, one that is as oblivious to the law as it is morally unscrupulous. China, on the other hand, is seeking to strengthen its position vis-à-vis its two strategic rivals, the United States and the European Union and it is doing this with confidence. During President Trump’s state visit in May 2026, Chinese President Xi expressed his expectations regarding the Taiwan issue in very forthright terms.

¹⁸ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8/9 March 2025, p. 20.

¹⁹ H. Aust, H. Krieger, “Once Populist, Now Mainstream? How It Has Become Fashionable Among German Politicians to belittle International Law and European Law,” *VerfBlog*, 13 February 2025, <https://verfassungsblog.de/once-populist-now-mainstream> [accessed: 3.03.2025].

²⁰ *The International Rule of Law: Rise or Decline?*, eds. H. Krieger, G. Nolte, A. Zimmermann, Oxford 2019; K. Gorobets, “The International Rule of Law and the Ideal of Normative Authority,” *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 2020, vol. 12, p. 227 ff.

²¹ UN Doc. S/RES/2774 (2025).

²² A. Gray, “European leaders show support for Zelenskiy after Trump clash,” *Reuters*, 28 February 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/european-leaders-show-support-zelenskiy-after-trump-clash-2025-02-28> [accessed: 11.03.2025].

²³ European Parliament, *Briefing – EU strategic autonomy 2013–2023: From concept to capacity*, July 2022.

The shifts in power brought about by rapid population growth on the African continent shed light on yet another aspect. Facing these global power struggles, the European Union and its Member States, in close defense and security-cooperation with the United Kingdom, must take their political fate into their own hands with greater determination than ever before. The media already speak of an “awakening giant.” Giant efforts, indeed, will be needed, for the European Union to engage in the inevitable reorientation of its political self-image and to transform itself from a primarily “normative”²⁴ to a “real” power, including a military one.

The constitutional European Union is not in such dire shape as many claim and can boldly test the potential of its autonomy and strategic capacities for transformation. This might very well offer some momentum for French President Emmanuel Macron, whose demand for exactly such a kind of strategic autonomy (or even strategic sovereignty)²⁵ was deliberately ignored by other Member States, including Germany, for too long. Macron talks about sovereignty or autonomy as a concrete power to act and, in particular, as a potential to become a serious global player in matters of security and defense. The EU has long seen itself as a pure force for peace but has suppressed an important moment in this “soft” or value-oriented “normative” peace power-narrative.²⁶ A peacekeeping power must be ready for defense in the sense that it must be just as capable of military action if it wants to be taken seriously as a peacemaker.²⁷ The “geopolitical awakening” or the “tectonic shift” caused by Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has made this clear beyond any doubt.²⁸ Europe’s role as little more than a bystander in the Iran war – and, to some extent, in the Gaza conflict as well – provides further confirmation of this.

The Union’s strategy papers reflect such a new notion already. While the “Global Strategy” from 2016 spoke a full-bodied language of values,²⁹ the Strategic Compass of 2022³⁰ takes a much more interest-oriented approach. The latter document declares: “In this contested multipolar world, the EU needs to take a more active stance to protect its citizens, defend its interests, project its values, and work with partners

²⁴ *Norm- und Regeltransfer in der europäischen Außenpolitik*, eds. D. Göler, E. Stratenschulte, Baden-Baden 2018.

²⁵ E. Macron, *Speech on new initiative for Europe*, 26 September 2017, <https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2017/09/26/president-macron-gives-speech-on-new-initiative-for-europe> [accessed: 12.03.2025].

²⁶ S. Lavenex, F. Schimmelfennig, “EU Rules Beyond EU Borders: Theorizing External Governance in European Politics,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 2009, vol. 16, no. 6, p. 791 ff.

²⁷ C. Moser, “The Impact of the War in Ukraine on the EU’s Common Security and Defense Policy” [in:] *The Common Security and Defense Policy of the EU*, eds. S. Kadelbach, R. Hofmann, Baden-Baden 2024, p. 23 ff, in particular p. 25.

²⁸ S. Kadelbach, R. Hofmann, “Introduction: Common Security and Defense Policy – Perspectives from the Member States” [in:] *The Common Security...*, p. 9 ff.

²⁹ R. Pedi, “The (Small) State of the Union: Assessing the EU’s ability to implement its global strategy,” *New Perspectives* 2019, vol. 27, no. 1, p. 43 ff.

³⁰ Council of the EU, *A Strategic Compass for Security and Defense*, Outcome of Proceedings, 21 March 2022, Doc. 7371/22.

to provide security for a safer and more just world.”³¹ Of course, this does not mean a *carte blanche* for a defense and security-oriented Union to ignore the values laid down in Article 2 Treaty on European Union. However, it must not ignore the hard facts. It must articulate its interests, and it may not comfortably hide behind its values when precisely these values require uncomfortable but necessary action to defend freedom and security in and for Europe.

One should recall: The present legal framework permits dealing with disruptions and provides at least some room for maneuver. The EU, both empowered and constrained by the principle of conferral in Article 5 Treaty on European Union, can rely not on unlimited but, nevertheless, rather comprehensive competences. As Article 24(1) Treaty on European Union states, the norm extends to “all areas of foreign policy” and to “all questions” of security, including a common defense policy. First steps were already taken by 26 Member States (with the exception of Malta) establishing a “Structured Permanent Cooperation” (“PESCO”) on 11 December 2017, based on Articles 42(6), 46(2) Treaty on European Union and Protocol No. 10 on Permanent Structured Cooperation.³² While the debate about the follow-up step from structured cooperation to a genuine European army may be worthwhile in the long run, it is of little help in the short term. The European Union and its Member States should waste no time in developing a “strategic culture,” with very practical and also financial consequences, and in convincing their constituencies as to what hardships the protection of liberal democracies require and that undergoing these hardships will pay off at the end of the day.

If Europe takes a self-confident stance, this does not automatically mean the end of all transatlantic cooperation as we have known it in recent decades. On the contrary, the European Union must continue to strive for a resilient partnership with the United States; but the parameters for this have changed significantly. Europe can no longer take shared values, shared geostrategic interests, a firm alliance, and America’s role as a protector for granted, but Europe needs to confront the United States as a strong, capable actor with its own interests, agenda, strategic capacities, and finally, its own military. This, for sure, is a hard awakening, but not a mission impossible, if Europe relies on its economic strength, capacities for innovation, and, finally, its proven ability to develop new integration dynamics in response to crises. When, if not now, would the time have come to get serious about the “ever closer Union” (Article 1(2) Treaty on European Union)? “Integration through disruption” is a warning memento and provides an enticing incentive.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³² R. Bieber, A. Epiney, M. Haag, M. Kotzur, *Das Recht der Europäischen Union. Europarecht und Politik*, 16th ed., Baden-Baden 2024, § 38 para. 3.

4. Liberal democracies at risk

Citizens become alienated from democracy when they lose confidence in the competence of political actors, when they no longer feel taken seriously in their everyday worries, and when they feel disconnected from their Parliamentary representatives. Democracy is not only a question of fair participation and open deliberation, rules and procedures, but also of trust.³³ Trust plays a decisive role in any form of democratic governance since this kind of exercising powers depends on a connection of responsiveness and accountability between the legitimizing subject and the “rulers.” Those who as members of the legislature, executive or judiciary exercise the sovereignty of the people and thus depend on input-legitimacy by the people, should be aware of and respond to the ideas, needs, concerns, anxieties, hopes and fears of “We, the People,” in particular if they want to act for the people.³⁴ Insofar, responsiveness and responsibility are not only semantic twins.

The manifold crises the European Union has had to experience in recent decades fuel a precarious tendency towards democratic self-doubt. The consensus on the conditions for the success of political community building is becoming fragile, and the absolutization of one’s own ideas of political order, resonating in the echo chambers of social media, is becoming attractive. The longing for supposed “certainties” is growing in a world of uncertainties. National-identarian models claim access to the “true” will of the people, which they underpin with hate speech, fake news, and conspiracy myths. The claim of illiberal democracy³⁵ suffers from an inner contradiction, since democracy is the rule of the free and equal.

There, for sure, is no perfect remedy. A starting point, however, might be correct labelling. If ongoing political challenges, changing realities, and new normalities are classified as crises, this is not only conceptually imprecise, but also raises false expectations. Crises may be solved (selectively), but new realities require continuous piece-meal social engineering (K. Popper) based on trial and error. Realities cannot be solved; they must be dealt with. Take the so-called climate crisis or the migration crisis as examples. Both represent permanent realities calling for political answers and not the false promise of being able to cut the Gordian knot through crisis-driven activism.

Where the Union law is perceived as just an “appendage to economic forces,” “undermining (...) social structures” both on the European and the national plane, “producing social commodification and cultural standardization,” “the narrative of an intimate and positive relation between law and integration is over.”³⁶ Many believe,

³³ J.H. Ely, *Democracy and Distrust: A Theory of Judicial Review*, Cambridge 1980.

³⁴ See Abraham Lincoln’s famous “Gettysburg Address” (“Speeches and Writings 1859–1865” [in:] *Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings, Presidential Messages and Proclamations*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher, New York 1989, p. 536). Lincoln advocates “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

³⁵ *Vom Umgang mit Fake News, Lüge und Verschwörung. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven*, eds. S. Eleftheriadi-Zachariaki, S. Hebing, G. Manstetten, S. Paganini, Baden-Baden 2022, p. 2.

³⁶ *Ibid.* English translation of the original German text provided by the author.

along with their mistrust in democracy, that the law has shown its ugly face. Instead of being the peaceful and democratic means to create a better world of cooperation, loyalty and solidarity, law seems primarily to empower strong supranational agencies such as the Union's Commission or, in the case of the Banking Union, the European Central Bank. It, thus, disregards democratic sovereignty on the national and the European plane. Given this mistrust in the very foundations of liberal democracies and the (European) law ordering them, the Union is well advised to use the present disruptions as incentives for an honest, open and unapologetic democratic discourse.

Above all, liberal democracy should not shy away from imposing certain demands on its citizens. It should make it unmistakably clear that the promise of easy short-term solutions will fail where thinking in the long term is required. And it should not deny that "We, the people" do not exercise unbound power. Neither "*rex*" nor "*populus*" may be "*legibus absolutus*." That is: Neither king nor people can be "above the law." Only where democratic and nomocratic principles, particularly the rule of fundamental rights, mutually strengthen and limit each other, will the rule of the free and the equal prevail.

5. Concluding remarks

Donald Trump may think the European Union is weak and divided, but the Union can prove him wrong and stay strong and united. The signs from Brussels and the Member States are promising. The Union is taking more decisive action than most people recently would have given it credit for. Viktor Orbán's Hungary remained largely isolated and Péter Magyar's election victory has been warmly welcomed in Hungary and far beyond – a development that is undoubtedly accompanied by high expectation, too. If the current United States policy abandons the Western Alliance, renounces the "Pax Americana" and flirts with authoritarian varieties of illiberal democracy, the disruptive work of destruction, as such, will certainly not automatically develop any creative power. Such policy, however, unites and strengthens those who oppose its disruptions out of a sense of responsibility, based on values they have not given up yet. Most importantly, driven by vital self-interest, they are just about to (re-)discover those values. The idea of "integration through disruption" aims to encourage this process of self-discovery and self-empowerment. Whether or not it is suitable as an overarching theory of integration, will be seen in times to come.

Literature

- Ackerman B., *We the People. Foundations*, Cambridge 1991.
- Augenstein D., Dawson M., "Introduction: What Law for What Polity? 'Integration through Law' in the European Union Revisited" [in:] *"Integration through Law" Revisited. The Making of the European Polity*, ed. D. Augenstein, Surrey–Burlington 2012, pp. 1–14.
- Aust H., Krieger H., "Once Populist, Now Mainstream? How It Has Become Fashionable Among German Politicians to belittle International Law and European Law," *VerfBlog*, 13 February 2025, <https://verfassungsblog.de/once-populist-now-mainstream> [accessed: 3.03.2025].

- Azoulai L., "Integration through law' and us," *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 2016, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 449–463.
- Bieber R., Epiney A., Haag M., Kotzur M., *Das Recht der Europäischen Union. Europarecht und Politik*, 16th ed., Baden-Baden 2024.
- Eleftheriadi-Zachariaki S., Hebing S., Manstetten G., Paganini S. (eds.), *Vom Umgang mit Fake News, Lüge und Verschwörung. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven*, Baden-Baden 2022.
- Ely J.H., *Democracy and Distrust. A Theory of Judicial Review*, Cambridge 1980.
- Eppler A., Scheller H. (eds.), *Zur Konzeptualisierung europäischer Desintegration: Zug- und Gegenkräfte im europäischen Einigungsprozess*, Baden-Baden 2013.
- European Parliament, *Briefing – EU Strategic Autonomy 2013–2023: From Concept to Capacity*, Brussels, July 2022.
- Göler D., Stratenschulte E. (eds.), *Norm- und Regeltransfer in der europäischen Außenpolitik*, Baden-Baden 2018.
- Gorobets K., "The International Rule of Law and the Ideal of Normative Authority," *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 2020, vol. 12, pp. 227–249.
- Gray A., "European leaders show support for Zelenskiy after Trump clash," *Reuters*, 28 February 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/european-leaders-show-support-zelenskiy-after-trump-clash-2025-02-28> [accessed: 11.03.2025].
- Haas E., *Beyond the Nation-State. Functionalism and International Organization*, Stanford 1964.
- Häberle P., Kotzur M., *Europäische Verfassungslehre*, 8th ed., Baden-Baden 2016.
- Habermas J., *Zur Verfassung Europas*, Berlin 2011.
- Hallstein W., *Europe in the Making*, London 1972.
- Jachtenfuchs M., Kohler-Koch B., "Regieren in dynamischen Mehrebenensystemen" [in:] *Europäische Integration*, eds. M. Jachtenfuchs, B. Kohler-Koch, Wiesbaden 1996, pp. 25–44.
- Kadelbach S., Hofmann R., "Introduction: Common Security and Defense Policy – Perspectives from the Member States" [in:] *The Common Security and Defense Policy of the EU*, eds. S. Kadelbach, R. Hofmann, Baden-Baden 2024, pp. 9–22.
- Koselleck R., "Krise" [in:] *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 3, eds. O. Brunner, W. Conze, R. Koselleck, Stuttgart 1982, pp. 617–650.
- Krieger H., Nolte G., Zimmermann A. (eds.), *The International Rule of Law: Rise or Decline?*, Oxford 2019.
- Kühnhardt L., "European Integration: Success through Crises" [in:] *Crises in European Integration. Challenges and Responses, 1945–2005*, ed. L. Kühnhardt, New York–Oxford 2011, pp. 1–18.
- Lavenex S., Schimmelfennig F., "EU Rules Beyond EU Borders: Theorizing External Governance in European Politics," *Journal of European Public Policy* 2009, vol. 16, no. 6, pp. 791–812.
- Macron E., *Speech on new initiative for Europe*, 26 September 2017, <https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2017/09/26/president-macron-gives-speech-on-new-initiative-for-europe> [accessed: 12.03.2025].
- Martin M. [in:] *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 February 2025, p. 10.
- Mitrany D., "The Prospect of Integration: Federal or Functional," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 1965, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 119–149.
- Moser C., "The Impact of the War in Ukraine on the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy" [in:] *The Common Security and Defense Policy of the EU*, eds. S. Kadelbach, R. Hofmann, Baden-Baden 2024, pp. 23–54.
- Pedi R., "The (Small) State of the Union: Assessing the EU's ability to implement its global strategy," *New Perspectives* 2019, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 43–72.

- Pernice I., "Multilevel Constitutionalism and the Treaty of Amsterdam: European Constitution-Making Revisited?," *Common Market Law Review* 1999, vol. 36, pp. 703–750.
- Reiser M., Schnapp K.U., "Jenseits der Linearität – Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Challenge-Response-Perspektive" [in:] *Herausforderung – Akteur – Reaktion. Diskontinuierlicher sozialer Wandel aus theoretischer und empirischer Perspektive*, eds. D. de Nève, K.-U. Schnapp, Baden-Baden 2007, pp. 25–53.
- Rosamond B., *Theories of European Integration*, Basingstoke 2000.
- "Speeches and Writings 1859–1865" [in:] *Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings, Presidential Messages and Proclamations*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher, New York 1989.
- Weiler J.H.H., *The Constitution of Europe*, Cambridge 1999.
- Wiener A., *A Theory of Contestation*, Heidelberg–New York–Dordrecht 2014.
- Wiener A., Börzel T.A., Risse Th. (eds.), *European Integration Theory*, Oxford 2018.

Summary

Markus Kotzur

Integration through Disruption?

This article discusses new dimensions to the integration process of the European Union in times of multiple crises. It argues that frictions and disruptions caused by crises might be transformed into a catalyst for dynamic integration in the spirit of an "ever closer union" (Article 1(2) Treaty on European Union). In this regard, the Union must change its political self-image and transform itself from a primarily "normative" to a "real" power, including one that possesses military power.

Keywords: European Union, integration, crisis, normative power, transformation, security and defence.

Streszczenie

Markus Kotzur

Integracja za pośrednictwem zakłóceń

Autor omawia w artykule nowe wymiary procesu integracyjnego Unii Europejskiej w czasach licznych kryzysów. Twierdzi, że napięcia i zakłócenia wywołane kryzysami mogą stać się katalizatorem dynamicznej integracji w kierunku „jak najściślejszej unii” (art. 1 ust. 2 Traktatu o Unii Europejskiej). W tym kontekście UE musi zmienić swój polityczny wizerunek i przekształcić się z potęgi o charakterze przede wszystkim „normatywnym” w „rzeczywistą” potęgę, w tym również militarną.

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska, integracja, kryzys, władza normatywna, transformacja, bezpieczeństwo i obrona.