

The nature of the beast

**Supranational organization,
intergovernmental administration
union,
multilevel governance framework...**

**Ontological debates and
epistemological consequences**

Traditional Approaches to the European Integration Process (or: the dialectic of Supranationalism and Intergovernmentalism)

Supranationalism

National states transfer certain rights or parts of their sovereignty to a supra-national authority constituted as an independent international actor by international treaty

Intergovernmentalism

National states cooperate on the (inter-) governmental level without formally questioning parts of their sovereignty or limiting the execution of their sovereign rights

Different Perspectives on the Integration Process

Functionalism Neofunctionalism

Moves towards closer integration gradually/incrementally advanced by a multitude of political and economic actors on the basis of individual/organisational learning processes leading to (integration-friendly) positive changes of political and socio-economic preferences



Process of collective decision-making in a network of actors



Common Aim

Federalism Intergovernmentalism

Integration as a result of political negotiation processes consciously entered into by national actors on the basis of previously defined political and socio-economic preferences



Process of multilateral decision-making in an administration union of states („Zweckverband“)



Development of shared solutions to shared policy problems
(Helen Wallace)

A possible compromise – Neoliberal Institutionalism

- **Premiss:** Increasing levels of interdependence generate (in-creased) demand for international cooperation
- **Institutions** are purposively generated solutions to (different kinds of) collective action problems → established by states to achieve their purpose („institutions matter“)
- ***„Facing dilemmas of coordination and collaboration under conditions of interdependence governments demand international institutions to enable them to achieve their interests through limited collective action“ (Keohane)***

Neoliberal Institutionalism II

- **Characteristics:**
 - **States are effective gate-keepers between the domestic and international spheres.**
 - **The successful collaborative management of common problems strengthens the role of the state.**
 - **Institutions matter because of the benefits they provide and because they have an impact on the interest calculations of actors.**
- ⇒ **provision of information**
 - ⇒ **reduction of transaction costs**
 - ⇒ **development of convergent expectations**
 - ⇒ **facilitation of issue-linkage strategies**
 - ⇒ **development of mechanisms to discourage cheating**

International Politics

IGO

Internationale
Politik

Foreign Policy A

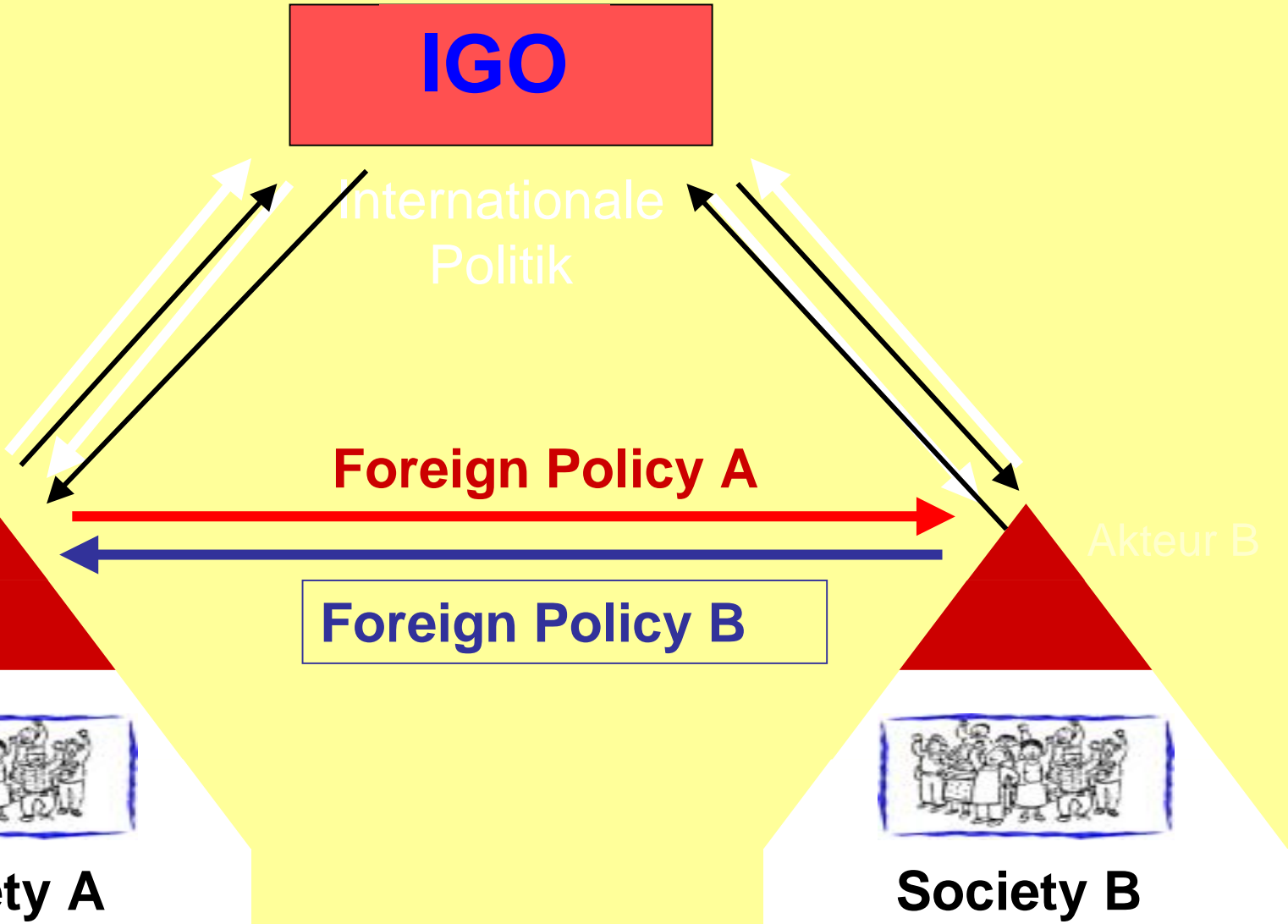
Foreign Policy B

Akteur A

Akteur B

Society A

Society B



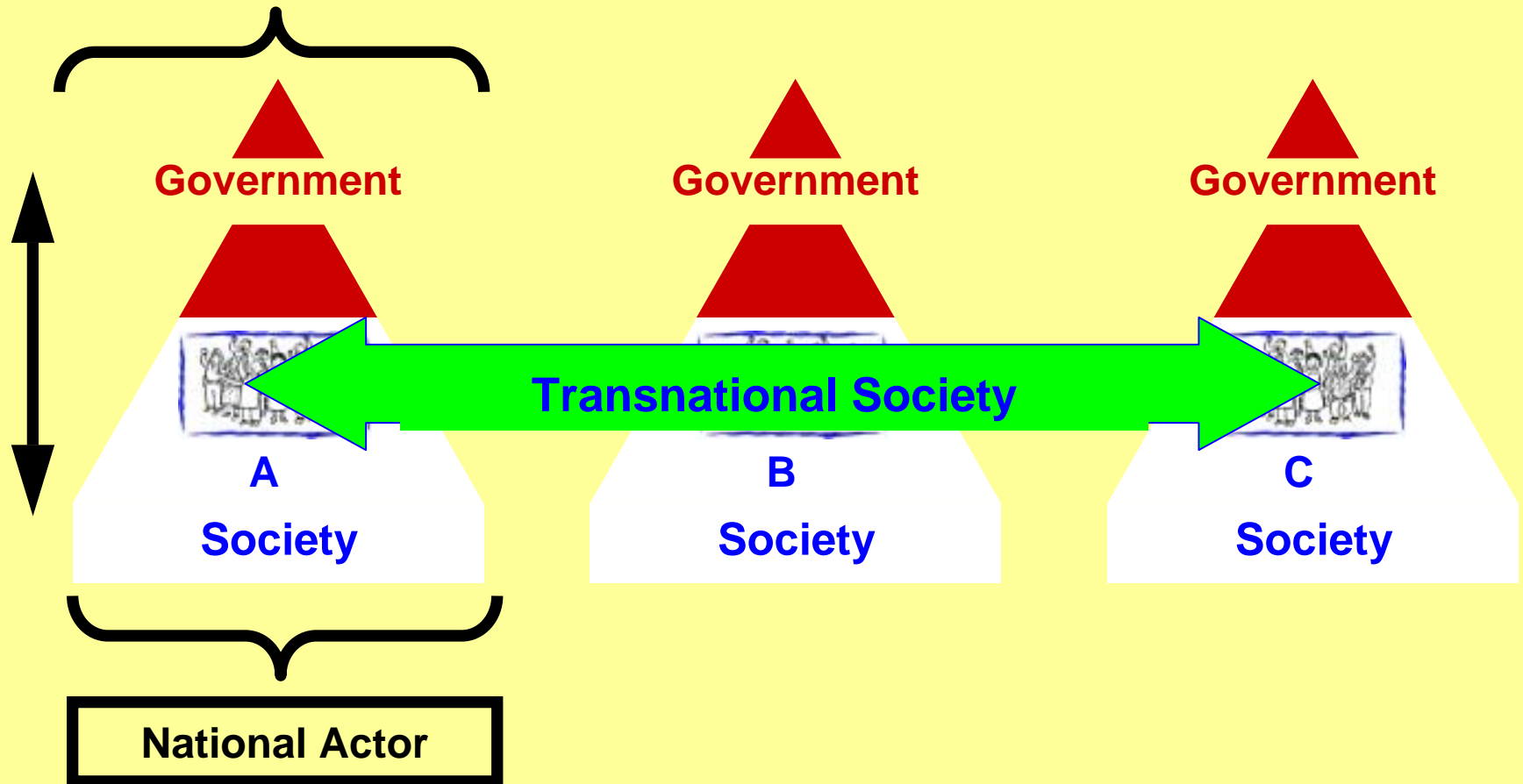
LOOKING AT THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM FROM A RECENT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PERSPECTIVE

For some time already, the analysis of International Relations is characterised by a change in perspective

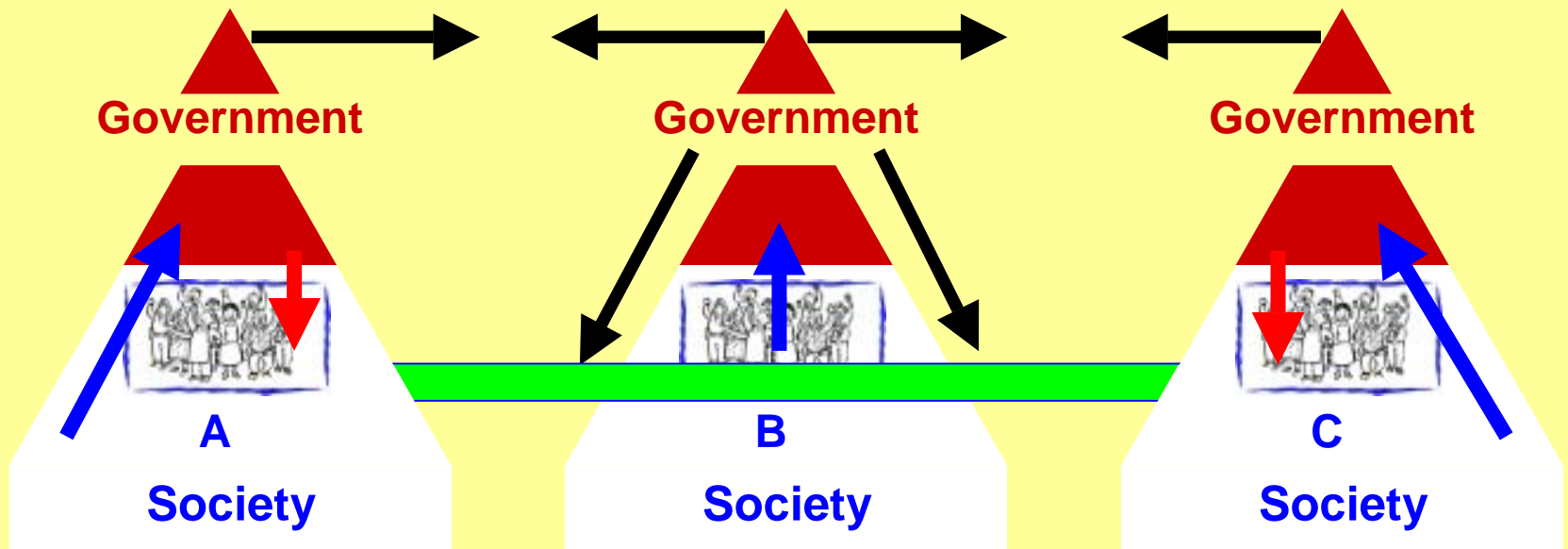
- away from the state as a unitary actor acting as a gatekeeper between the domestic and international policy areas**
- up, down, and sideways to supra-state, sub-state, and non-state actors.**

From the society of states, our focus of attention has consequently shifted to transnational and transgovernmental societies which take the form of boundary-crossing networks amongst individuals and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

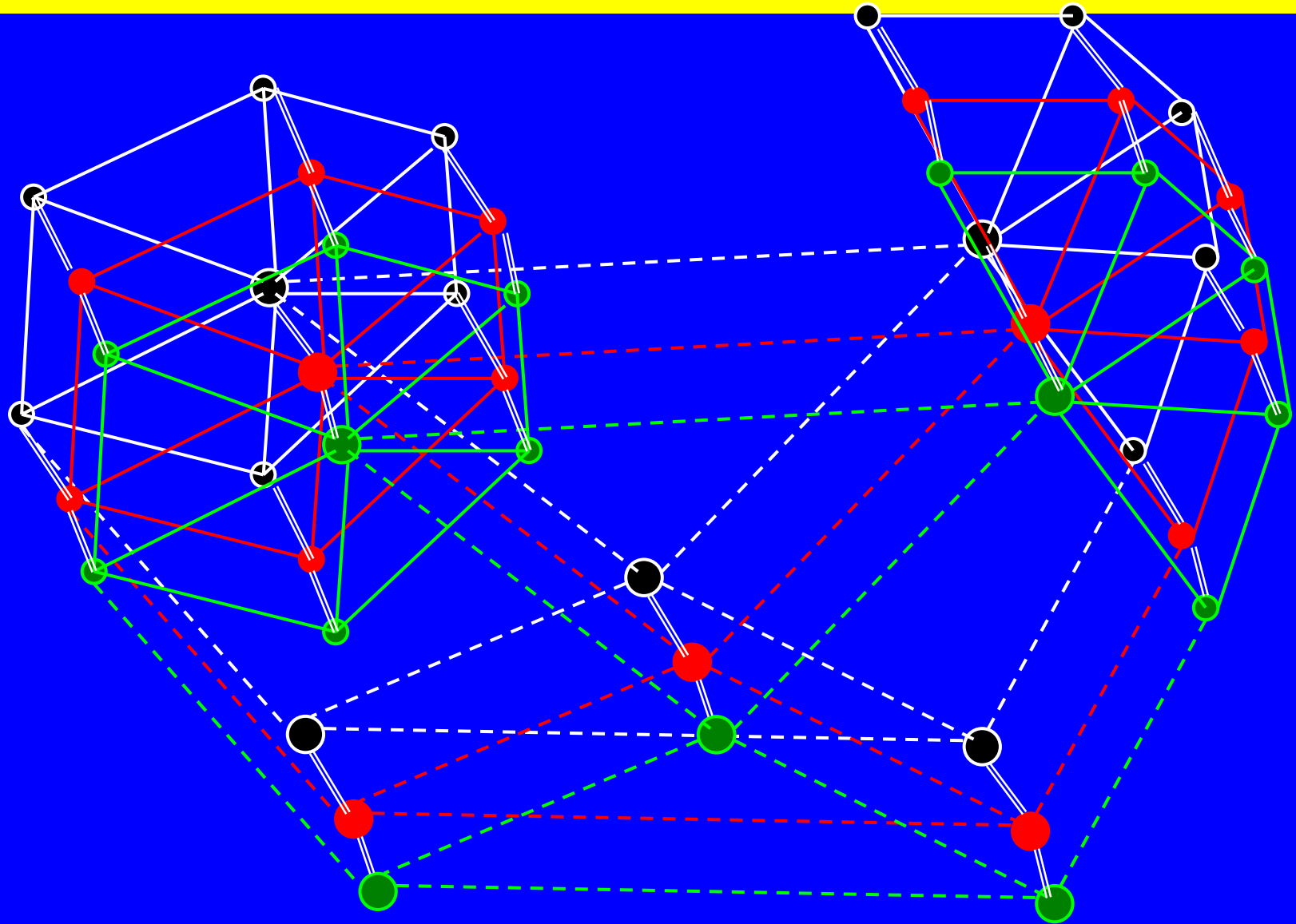
Transnational Society (of Actors)



Transnational Politics

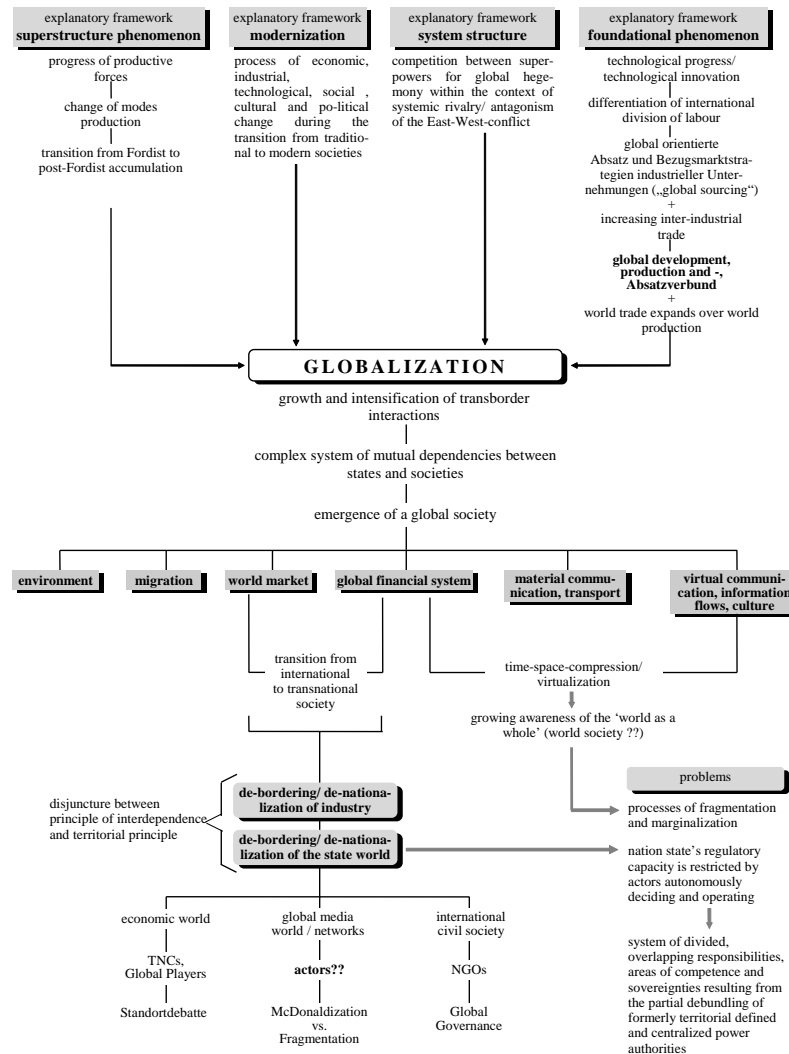


Cobweb model of international Relations

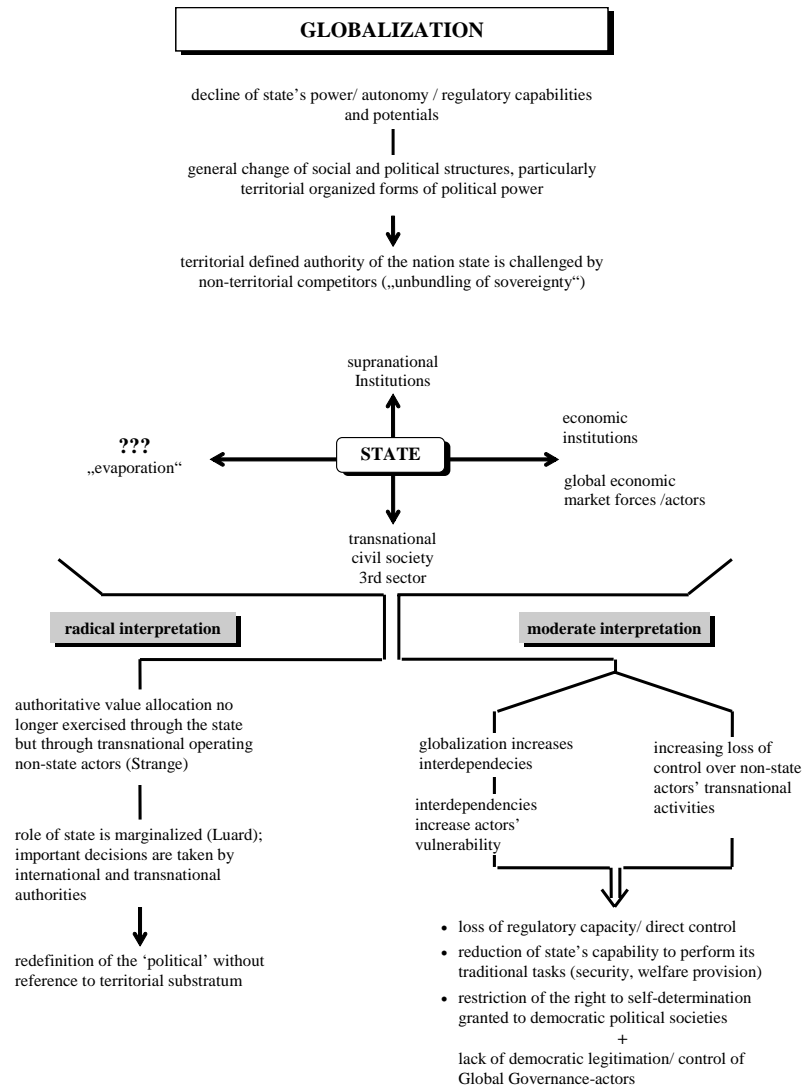


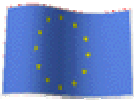
- **No doubt, this change of perspective resulted from the very real changes of the international system which on the one hand caused, and on the other were driven by Globalization**

Globalization: Explanation & Phenomena



Globalization and the State





Looking at the European Union from a Recent International Relations Perspective

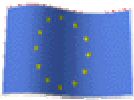
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- **The aforementioned debates resulted in the rise of two analytic approaches new in integration studies – multilevel governance analysis on the one hand, decision-making analysis on the other (the latter approach, however, though perhaps new to integration studies, was already well known in the study of foreign policy...)**



What is the European Union (I a) ?

More than

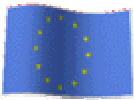
- a traditional international organization
- a functional administration union
- an international regime*
- a federation of states

Less than

- a federal state
- a unitary state

**An integrated (or interlocking) system of states („Staatenverbund“)
(German Constitutional Court on the constitutional legality of the
Maastricht Agreement)**

** international regime: a set of rules, norms, principles, and procedures that focus expectations regarding international behaviour [an “informal” international organisation that is based more on usage, case law, and individual resolutions than on a complex written treaty ratified by all participants]*

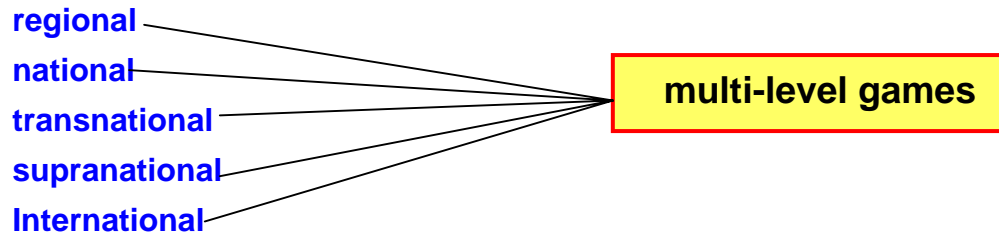


What is the European Union (I b) ?

The EU is a multi-level system of governance: a confederation located between inter-state and intra-state patterns of rule. (Armstrong/Bulmer 1998)

Structural characteristics:

An increasingly intensified combination/linkage of



levels of decision-making and policy execution including a large variety of actors, resources and functions in a diversity of policy areas

Procedural characteristics:

Standard decision-making procedure is the negotiation process by which national political and societal actors strive for consensually agreed compromise solutions and package deals

Phenomenological characteristics:

Governance refers to a *process of exercising power*, i.e. the art, manner, style, or method of governing [NOT to the Government as a formal institution], the *novelty* of which lies in the inclusion of civil society actors on all decision-making levels (local, regional, national, international)

What is the European Union (II) ?

More than a regime, less than a federation ... – but why ?

We name *four characteristics*:

- 1. The Commission as guardian of the Treaties and motor of the integration process which can – unlike secretariats in a regime structure – exercise a right of control over EU Member States and can take them to court if they do not fulfill their treaty obligations**
- 2. The existence of a supranational legal order which – as is customary in international law – not only addresses itself to the Member States, but equally to individual EU citizens who can claim rights directly from the norms of this supranational order. Equally, in all Treaties interpretation matters as well as in respect to secondary EU legislation, the European Court of Justice overrides the court system of the Member States; on the other hand, the execution of ECJ decisions is left to the national legal systems**
- 3. The EU has its own budget and its own sources of income, does not depend, in other words, solely on the contributions of the Member States**
- 4. Within the EU decision making framework, decisions can be made by (qualified) majority, whereas in classic international law decisions regulating the relations of states have to be made unanimously**

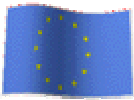
Finally, the EU is not only a legal body set up by international treaty – it is also a body which can formulate internationally valid norms and rules itself (constituted by primary Community law, it produces secondary Community law as its main occupation) – its main political function is regulatory, not so much distributive or redistributive.

What is the European Union (III) ?

More than a regime, but less than a state...- but why ?

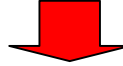
We name *four characteristics*:

- 1. the lack of territorial sovereignty, which still resides in the member states**
- 2. the lack of a monopoly of armed power, which is still exercised by the member states**
- 3. the lack of a European *demos*: despite the Union citizenship introduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam (Art. 17 – 22 ECT), national citizenship still comes first (Art.17); Union citizenship is only supplementary**
- 4. the lack of major redistributive economic power (with only 1. 27% of the European GDP spent by Brussels, redistribution in favour of public functions does not make much of an impression on national economies)**



What is the European Union (IV) ?

The core of the emerging European polity's novelty lies in the



growing dissociation between territorial constituencies and functional competences

In the classic model of the state, the exercise of public authority in different functional domains is congruent with a specific territory - or: when one arrives at the state's borders, the legitimate exercise of coercion in all its functional domains ends. In other words: the foundation of stateness is based on the indispensable coincidence of territorial and functional authority.

In the development of the EU, the functional and territorial domains of authority have become less rather than more congruent over time. What seems to be asserting itself is a plurality of polities at different levels of aggregation – supra-national, national, subnational – that overlap in a multitude of policy areas or functional domains. The EU authorities have few exclusive competences and hardly exercise hierarchical control over member states (with the notable exception of competition policy); rather, in the execution of their legal instruments they depend on the member states to an inordinate extent.

It is these multiple levels of political aggregation – or more precisely: the actors located on them/representing them – which continuously negotiate with each other in order to perform common tasks and resolve common problems across an expanding range of issues. Without a monopoly of coercion, without a center for the definitive resolution of conflicts, without an agent for the authoritative allocation of public goods, there are only a number of policy-making processes (admittedly solidifying over time into more permanent structures). The participants in these processes are not just a fixed number of states, but an enormous variety of sub-national units and networks, transnational firms, supra-national associations and the like.

**multi-level governance approaches
to European Union politics**

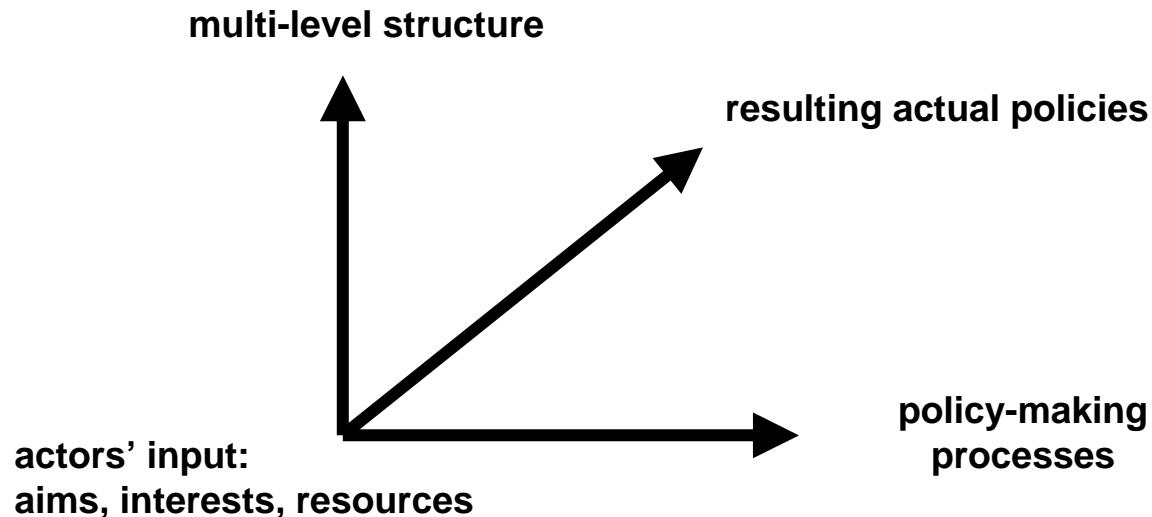


**efforts to catch the real existing
complexity
of European integration and its policy processes**

**decision-making approaches
to European Union politics**



**efforts to catch the process-ness or *procedural characteristics* of
European integration and its policy processes**





Multi-Level Governance

Flexibly organised common problem solving among different communities from the local via the regional and state to the international level (and vice versa)



In International Relations:

Concept covers the mechanisms, agreements, and patterns necessary to insure, in an anarchical international system

- * transnational cooperation
- * balances (of power/influence)
- * stability

without formalised and institutionalised organisations and treaty systems

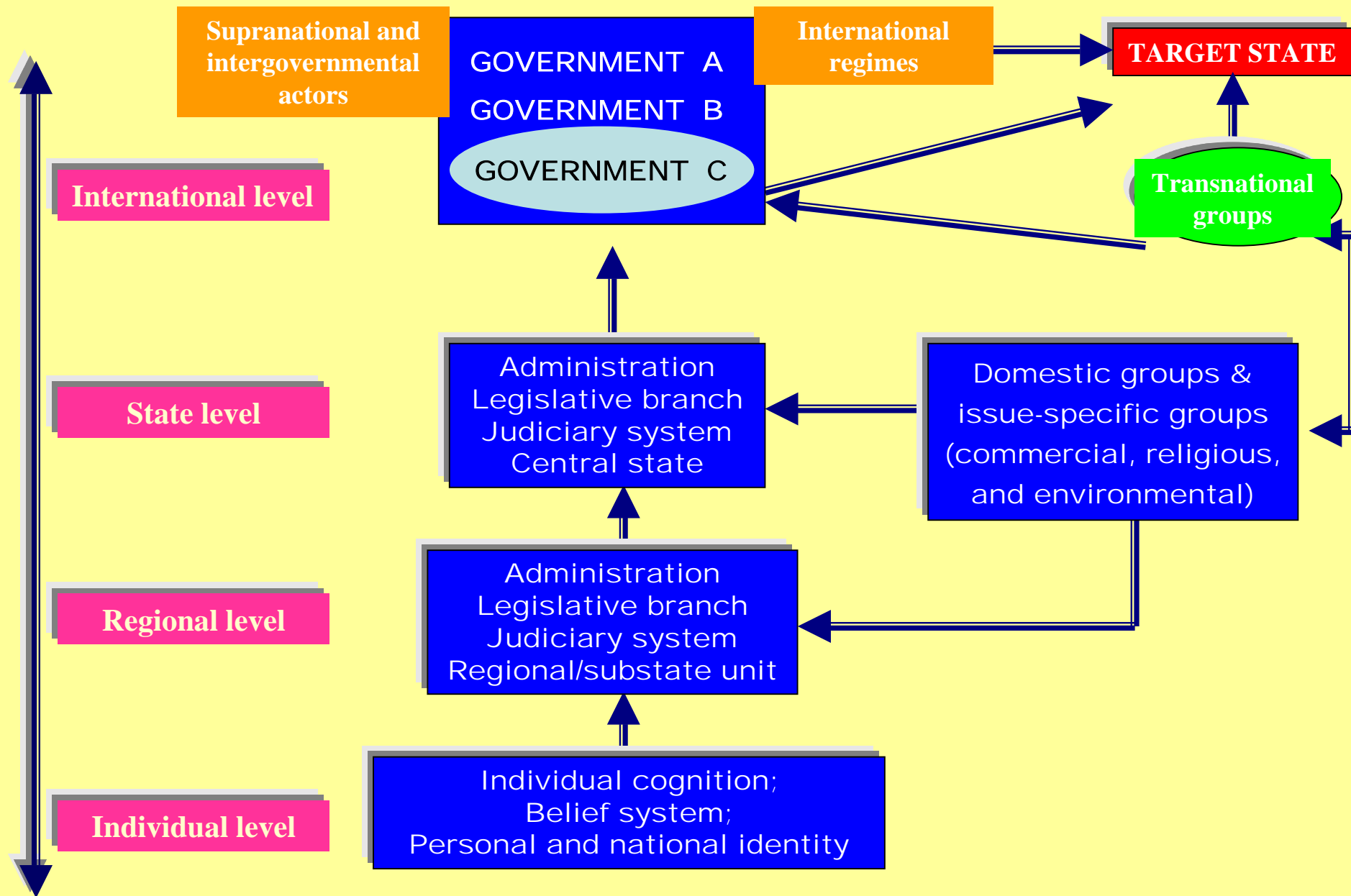


governance without government

In Domestic Politics:

Concept gains importance in contexts in which political institutions and their decision-makers lose part of their autonomy to act; political direction and problem solving has to rely on cooperation of political AND societal actors in networks and negotiation systems (Round Tables etc.)

MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE: MAIN ACTORS AND LEVELS OF ANALYSIS



Goodbye for tonight ... and enjoy your dinner

