



Focus

The Department of Political and Social Sciences

This special issue of the EUI Review on the Political and Social Sciences Department comes at a moment when the department is riding high. Currently, we can claim:

- to have been ranked as the best department in the field in Europe and the fifth best in the world (Hix, S., 'European Universities in a Global Ranking of Political Science Departments', *European Political Science*, 3.2, spring 2004).
- to have had for several years the highest number of applications among the Institute's departments for the doctoral programme - see page 14.
- to have a lively group of researchers completing theses in good time.
- to have a superb support team of administrators and secretaries who make all this possible, and keep researchers and professors alike on track.
- to have particularly strong relations with the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, within which some of our professors work, and which provides a further resource base for much of the work of our professors and students - and, particularly important, one where we can break down the barriers that can grow up between disciplines in a departmentally organised institute.

In the coming years the department can look forward to continu-

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ing progress, with the following additions to our capacity, as recent and prospective new appointments to chairs have opened new areas of work:

- Thanks to the generosity of the Swiss government, the department has very recently gained an additional chair - for the study of federalism and democracy, highly appropriate topics for a Swiss chair. We have had temporary, part-time chairs in this field for the past two years, filled by Alexandre

Trechsel (University of Geneva) and Jürg Steiner (University of Bern). The full-time chair now enables us to continue the major research line on democratisation that Philippe Schmitter - who retires this summer - has pioneered; an issue which takes us far beyond our western European base.

- The chair in Social and Political Transformations, now filled by Laszlo Bruszt, also reflects a move to embrace broader horizons than the



SPS researchers in the Department's new social area

study of western Europe. It enables us to study the kinds of major change taking place in central and eastern Europe, and other parts of the world. The move has already been anticipated by the changing concerns of our researchers - both those from 'old Europe' as well as from the growing numbers that we are recruiting from central and eastern Europe, especially Poland.

- Pascal Vennesson is taking up the new chair (joint with the RSCAS) in the Security of Europe. This is a new issue for research concentration, and again one where the interests of our researchers are also moving.
- Study of the governance of science and technology has arrived at the Institute in the form of Rikard Stankiewicz. Discussion within the department on the importance of this area for a potential chair dates back to the early 1980s. Thanks to joint funding with the RSCAS, it became possible in the early 2000s.
- The department and Virginie Guiraudon (from the University of Lille) have together successfully won a Marie Curie chair in the European Commission's current competition. She will be at the Institute for three years, teaching and researching on European countries' immigration policies. This is a theme of



Pascal Vennesson and Friedrich Kratochwil

considerable interest among our researchers, and fits well with the Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) recently established in the Schuman Centre under the leadership of demographer Philippe Fargues.

So what's wrong?

But, if social scientists are incapable of anything, it is indulging in unremitting good news. If we were not critical, including self-critical, we should all be earning easier money writing advertising copy. So, behind the celebrations, what are the dark sides of the SPS department?

In his contribution to this special issue (pages 4-5), Jean Blondel identifies some dark sides from his time in the



The Swiss ambassador Alexis Lautenbach and EUI President Yves Mény on the occasion of the inauguration of the Swiss Chair

department (1985-94). He complains that there was no structured teaching programme, and certainly no means of ensuring that courses met researchers' needs. Here - and also on the specific point of training in quantitative methods - we can claim real progress. For several years the seminar programme has been organised as a true teaching plan - a development now general across the Institute, at least for first-year researchers. And every December supervisors and researchers meet to consider needs not being met by the seminars; these are then the subject of some of the workshops that today constitute the third term's teaching.

But Jean also talks about the need for training oriented towards a future career, and not just to assist completion of the thesis. This raises a highly ambiguous question. Like many other universities, the Institute today has followed the British approach of seeing virtue in the rapid completion of theses, of frequently measuring progress in this, and of putting serious pressure on researchers to finish.

This has major positive features. It prevents theses hanging around unwritten for years. It encourages researchers to get started on their careers and to avoid becoming *ewige Schüler*. It forces professors to think seriously about the contribution they are making to their researchers' progress; concern for a structured teaching programme followed rapidly on the new pressures on thesis completion.

But there are two casualties of this progress. One is Jean Blondel's concern for a broader education than thesis completion. How can one tell a researcher one week that she should be concerned with broader matters than her dissertation; and then remind her the following week that she has a maximum of five years to complete that dissertation?

The second casualty presents a similar contradiction. The supervisor has to be both helping friend and stern judge. This is unavoidable, but the more we measure progress on the way to completion and introduce hurdles for passage into successive years, the more difficult it is to

separate the roles. On the other hand, without the hurdles we cannot help researchers complete their dissertations in good time.

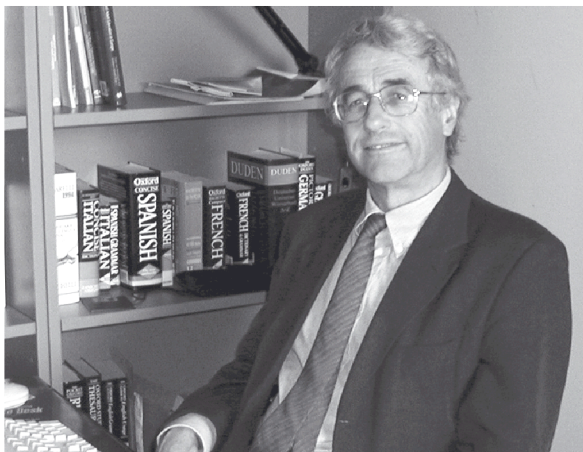
The more prominent the role of the supervisor as judge, the more difficult the role of helper. Researchers start concealing difficulties they are experiencing, because admission of them might lead to the professor taking a less positive view of their progress.

On the surface we have good, informal, friendly, relations with researchers, both collectively and individually. But this conceals the elements of power and subordination at the heart of the relationship. Occasionally one becomes aware of the deference that lies behind the outward show: the occasional indication of fear that a supervisor might learn of a criticism expressed; the anxiety that a researcher is 'disturbing' a professor by asking him/her to do something that (s)he is in fact paid to do - like help with a difficulty.

I do not think that SPS is worse than any other department in this; nor is the Institute different from most institutions of doctoral students; nor am I naive enough to think that the relation between supervisor and researchers can be freed of the power imbalance inherent to it. But we can at least confront the issues openly; and we must never exploit researchers' dependency by neglecting them, knowing that they are unlikely to voice a complaint.

Too European?

Jean also complains that the department is too much concerned with Europe. We have to have a European focus.



Colin Crouch

A small department cannot cover everything; and given the nature of the Institute, Europe is our obvious point of emphasis. But we can and do interpret this in a broad way that ensures that we do not become obsessed with minutiae of Brussels policies or with narrow comparisons. This has been achieved in several ways.

First, when he was head of department, Stefano Bartolini developed a concept of Europeanisation as meaning broad political and social changes, not just developments

in EU policy. Here the coming together of sociology and political science within the one department is a great advantage. Most members of the department work somewhere at the crossroads of those disciplines, benefiting from multiple perspectives.

We have also pushed the geographical range of our interests beyond Europe, but doing so in ways that builds on established expertise. Until now this has mainly happened through Philippe Schmitter's work, but as noted above it is now being extended in several ways through new professorial appointments. We have also recruited researchers from the southern Mediterranean, Latin America and elsewhere.

Conflicts

Finally, we must admit that we do have fights in the department, usually over the definition of professorial appointments. There always seems to be a Big Issue on two sides of which professors and researchers alike care passionately. At one point it was political science versus sociology; now a zone of peace and mutual understanding. Then it was qualitative versus quantitative methods; that was resolved. More recently it has been theorists versus empiricists, or constructivists versus rationalists. The fact that the issue changes while the fact of a big divide remains suggests itself a constructivist interpretation: the need to have a big issue seems to be more significant than the substantive disputes ostensibly at the heart of it.

What would a structuralist anthropologist conclude from this? Primarily that it shows that people care, and want to be seen to care, deeply and passionately, about the department and how it develops. We are all - professors and researchers - highly temporary residents of the Badia. And temporary residents are always under suspicion, not least by themselves, of not caring about the place where they for a while find themselves. One of the clearest ways that one can demonstrate that one cares, deeply and passionately, is by getting upset and angry.

So I am not so much confessing as boasting when I say that we can have some big fights. The time to worry will be the day when a head of department proposes a chair definition to a thinly attended department meeting, which shrugs its collective shoulder and asks to move on to the next item of business. That is not an SPS department that I would recognise!

In the following pages I have assembled some material on the development of the department over the years; as in this piece itself, any opinions expressed are solely my own. There are also, in addition to the piece by Jean Blondel, some short articles by current colleagues, describing their current projects.

COLIN CROUCH,
Chair of SPS department, 2001-2004

SPS: A view from the past

I joined the SPS Department in September 1985, replacing Ian Budge who had been a colleague at the University of Essex for many years and who had suggested to me that I should apply. To this day, I feel profoundly grateful to him as my years at the EUI and in Florence have been so rewarding that I dread to think what I would have done had the selection Committee not decided to appoint me.

This does not mean that I was uniformly impressed by the characteristics of the Department when I joined it. The Institute was clearly a marvellous place to undertake joint comparative research, not just because there was money to invite colleagues from all over (Western) Europe, but because there was no or very little feeling elsewhere that, by doing so, one was attempting to build an 'empire', a criticism to which I had often been subjected in my previous twenty years in the Government Department at Essex. The ECPR in particular, in whose foundation I had been closely involved, was often regarded as part of the 'empire' of that institution.

Coming from Essex and most recently from New York, I rapidly realised that the EUI and the SPS Department in particular were not without problems. The pioneering years were over, admittedly: the Department functioned as an institution (even if the chairmanship rotated on a yearly basis - a practice to which I did not object, as a matter of fact). There were by then a substantial number of professors, Jean Monnet Fellows and students. The Institute was a true community: it was lovely to be able to come to know and have discussions with colleagues from other Departments (all four were at the Badia then - and only an embryonic Robert Schuman Centre, then known as the 'European Policy Unit', had been very recently set up). Yet there seemed to be

an academic price to pay for the facilities which one enjoyed. The 'downside' concerned - I hope it does no longer - the training 'programme' of the already rather large number of PhD students joining the Department (and perhaps of other Departments, Economics being the only one which was seriously trying at least to cope with the problem). It is therefore on the problems posed by training at the time that I wish to dwell, though I also wish to remark on what I felt to be, at least during my years in SPS, which ended in 1994, a kind of 'euro-parochialism' in the Department's approach, even if it was not strictly 'country-parochialism'.

I trust that the students who were in the Department at the time will forgive me - I venture to think that some might even agree with my views - if I say that, from two



Giandomenico Majone

points of view, training was deficient: I hasten to add, however, that I understand that much has been done since then to remedy that situation.

The first problem was the fact that there was no 'PhD programme' in the true sense of the word. There were courses, which the various professors offered to the first year students in their area of specialisa-

tion: but this never amounted to a 'programme' as there was no attempt to turn these courses into a coherent whole, no attempt to dis-



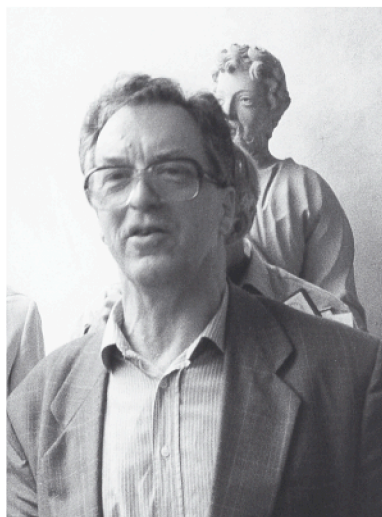
Jean Blondel

cover whether students had gaps which needed to be filled, no attempt to determine whether courses were or not overspecialised. The choice was entirely the students' decisions: to be sure, students were likely to take a course or courses which were close to their dissertation topic (they naturally did not forget their supervisor!). However, as I repeatedly said at the time, courses were not given in a graduate programme just to contribute to the preparation of dissertations, but towards research (and indeed teaching) for a lifetime. I have to note at this point that the solution of the problem was not facilitated by the fact that the Department was a Department of 'political and social sciences': in such a broad context, it is almost impossible to organise an integrated graduate course (whatever the merits of such a structure for undergraduate teaching and for staff academic exchanges). The notion of creating a 'political science' stream and a 'sociology' stream was mooted, indeed discussed at some length at the end of my tenure, but nothing came out of it.

The other problem posed by training concerned the perennial ques-

tion of statistics and mathematics teaching. It was never possible in my time to secure agreement from the staff and the researchers in the Department that courses in these fields be made compulsory. Many arguments were put forward against any such move, one of those commonly made being that “such a course is not necessary for my dissertation topic”, as if the research life of the students stopped once the dissertation was produced and as if there was no realisation of what was happening in the world around us. Reading the APSR is simply impossible without some training in statistics and mathematics. Various formulas designed to induce students to take such courses were mooted (as if what was in question was the administration of an unpleasant pill), but the result was, in my time, inconclusive. I gather that things have changed since then.

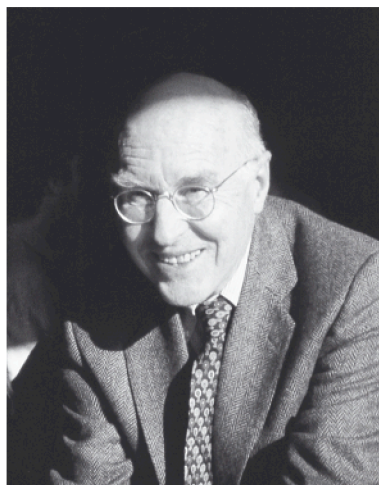
The lack of a systematic course arrangement and the lack of training in statistics and mathematics were of course a form of parochialism: it was as if the world of political



Roger Morgan

and social science, especially in America, but also elsewhere, did not really exist or at any rate did not matter. Another form of parochialism, which I referred to earlier as ‘euro-parochialism’, consisted in being interested or concerned exclusively in (Western) Europe. There were so few non-European students (and professors) that

it was possible to remain in the cocoon of either Brussels politics or Euro-comparative politics. Interest in the United States was not very large, interest in Japan was minimal (although Susan Strange did begin to make a move in that direction) and interest in other areas was almost non-existent. This parochialism (which was often not perceived on the grounds that European analyses could be labelled



Alessandro Pizzorno

‘comparative’) had in part the effect that the Department (and perhaps for the same reason the whole EUI) was ultra slow in being seriously concerned with Eastern Europe. Although the Department appointed a specialist of the area very quickly after the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, there remained little interest in the field among staff and students. Genuine exchanges on Eastern Europe only took place after I left in 1994, and, even then, rather slowly.

Things have changed, I know, and much has been done to improve what I feel was a bit of a slow beginning and unquestionably a delay in seizing the opportunity to render the Department a true leader worldwide. I take my share of the blame for this state of affairs: ‘crying in the wilderness’ is no fool-proof excuse! And perhaps one had become a little selfish, having benefitted from the immense advantages which the EUI provided for one’s research and one’s contacts. Yet efforts to introduce change were made at the time and



Susan Strange

one may draw some comfort from the fact that these efforts may have had the effect of bringing about some of the changes which, by now, have occurred.

JEAN BLONDEL

Changing themes of professors and researchers

Over the department's first 30 years one can discern just a few clear trends in the preoccupations of its professors and researchers. Relatively quickly, but not immediately, a concern with primarily European comparative research was established. European integration followed later; the limited European Economic Community of the 1970s and 1980s did not attract much interest. There has always been a firm core of study of central political institutions: legislatures, parties, voters. The welfare state and minority identities were early and continuing representations of political sociology, and this was joined in the 1980s by sociology as such: social stratification and mobility, occupational structure. Some themes have arrived, departed and returned: sub-national and ethnic minority questions, social movements, and the socio-political study of the economy.



Maurice Cranston

Theory has always been present, but sometimes as the history of social and political thought and at other times as modern theoretical inquiry. A serious concern with research methods appeared at the end of the 1980s, and has always been seen as a particular responsibility of the sociologists. Inter-

national politics and international political economy did not fully arrive until the 1990s. The current strong emphasis of the department on policy-related research was not present in the early years, though it made a temporary appearance in the late 1980s.

By the late 1990s there was some concern that applicants for researcher positions saw the department as primarily one for the study of formal European integration *à la mode de Bruxelles*. To demonstrate that our role was much wider than this, while still retaining Europeanisation as a core unifying concept, we started to promulgate our shared understanding of what Europeanisation means as a broadly based socio-political field. In a text repeated in our annual publicity brochures and inscribed on the inside front covers of those publications in our working paper series that deal with European themes, the department announced:

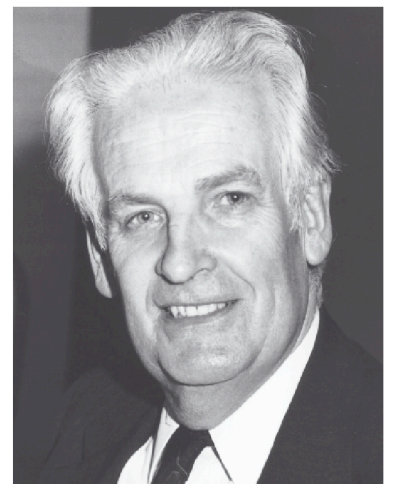
'The [department] is committed to the study of Europeanisation in its broadest political and social terms. We do not treat Europeanisation solely as a process centred on the work of the formal European institutions, important though these are. Europeanisation refers to all processes whereby various European populations discover and develop shared ideas, cultures, institutions and approaches. Equally important for study are situations where such processes do not take place, or where previous divergences persist or new ones appear.'

The following presents a rapid survey of the preoccupations of the department's professors and researchers during its first three decades of existence. The evidence presented of researchers' thesis topics depends heavily on thesis titles; these are not always accurate

reflections of a thesis's contents, and therefore cannot be used with complete confidence.

The 1970s

The small number of professors that constituted the department during the 1970s - no more than three or four at a time - did not stay more than four years. Their research concentrated on the core themes of governments and parties (Hans Daalder, 1976-1979; Jacques Georgel, 1976-1980; Lars Johansen, 1977-1979); and classical political theory (Maurice Cranston, 1978 to 1981). Their years at the Institute saw the production in particular of Daalder's *Parties and Party Mobilization* (1982).



Hans Daalder

The year 1979 saw the arrival of Peter Flora (until 1982) and Athanasios Moulakis (until 1986), and the first appearances as junior professors at the Badia of Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair, who both stayed until 1985. They reinforced the emphasis on parties and voters, while Flora introduced the study of welfare states. His massive two edited volumes of statistical data on European societies - *State, Economy and Society* (1987) - was a treasure chest for early European compara-

tivists, and represented one of few truly collaborative SPS projects. As such it did much to give the department a profile as a leading place for comparative European research. Moulakis represented the theoretical line after Cranston's departure, his publications including *The Promise of History: Essays in Political Philosophy* (1986).

Eighteen of the researchers who started theses in the first five years completed their doctorates. An overwhelming characteristic of these first cohorts is their concentration on single-country studies, half of them on Italy. There was only one comparative thesis and one dealing with Europe. But their themes were diverse, given the small number of professors available to supervise: in addition to political theory and studies of parties and elections, there were several dealing with sub-national issues and others concerned with the welfare state - both themes anticipating the longer-term future of the department.

The early 1980s

Rudolf Wildenmann and Vincent Wright had joined the department in 1980, both staying until 1983. The former reinforced the major parties and election themes initiated by Daalder and on which Bartolini and Mair were also working. His *Study of the European Parliament* appeared in 1984. Ian Budge (1982 to 1985) further reinforced work on elections, parties and governments (for example *Parties and Democracy: Coalition formation and government functioning in twenty states* (with Hans Keman, 1990)).

Wright introduced the study of economic-related policy studies (for example, in *La crise de la sidérurgie européenne, 1974-1984* (written jointly with Yves Mény, 1985). Jean Padiou (1983-1986) had also written on steel policy. Philippe Schmitter (1982-1986) and Bernd Marin (1984-1987) further strengthened Wright's economic emphasis, but concentrating on corporatism and



Gøsta Esping-Andersen

organised interests (business associations and trade unions). Schmitter's stay initiated a large wave of studies in this field.

Between 1981 and 1985, 41 researchers who entered the department completed theses. A comparative European focus was now more clearly evident, featuring in about 20%; very few dealt with European Community questions. Single-country studies concentrated, in addition to Italy, on the UK and Germany and, perhaps surprisingly, Ireland. Only two theses were non-European, dealing with Africa and the USA respectively. Parties and voting remained prominent, as did the sub-national interest. Theory was still strong, but solely as the history of thinkers and thought. The new professorial interests of Wright in economic questions in general (about 20% of topics) and Schmitter and Marin in organised interests in particular (about 15%) were clearly reflected.

The later 1980s

The department grew slightly to nine or ten professors during the following five years, but there was considerable growth in the subject range. Bartolini, Budge and Mair had gone, but Jean Blondel (1985 to 1994) and Birgitte Nedelmann (1985 to 1989) continued the comparative politics tradition. Blondel's *Comparative Government: An Introduction* (1990) was one landmark, but he was also responsible for a stream of studies on cabinet government and political leader-

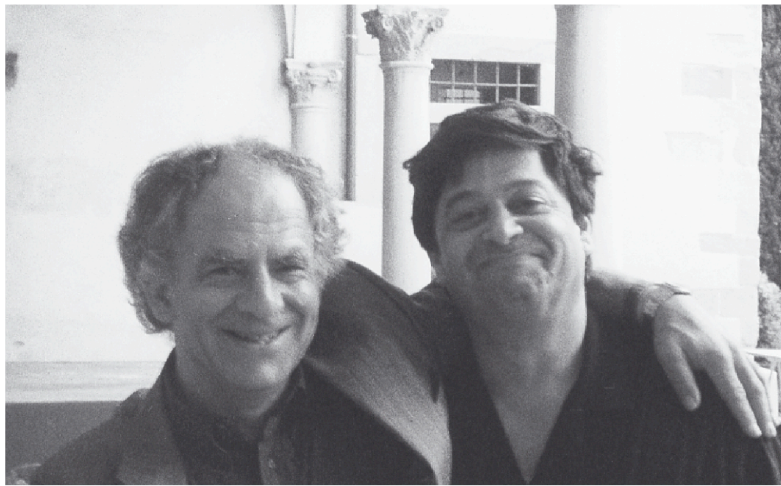
ship (including *Decision-making Processes and Conflict in Cabinet Government* (1988)). Political theory was represented briefly by Brian Barry (1986-1987).

The economic and organised interest themes of Schmitter, Marin and Wright temporarily disappeared. The major new developments were in sociology and international politics. Sociology arrived as sociopolitical theory in the persons of Alessandro Pizzorno (1986 to 1994), Steven Lukes (1987 to 1995), and Arpad Szokolczai (1990 to 1998). Szokolczai, the department's first professor from central Europe, also introduced some study of that region. Sociology was also represented as empirical research by Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1986 to 1994) - who continued Flora's line of welfare state research - and by Peter Blossfeld (1989-1992) and Klaus Eder (1989-1997). Esping-Andersen's work, *The Three Worlds of Welfare* (1990) rapidly became a leading text in its field. International relations made its first



Peter Blossfeld

appearance with Roger Morgan (1988 to 1996) and - with respect to economic international relations - with Alan Cafruny and Susan Strange (a number of part-time contracts between 1987 and 1992). Her *Globalisation and Capitalist Diversity* (1997) was an early contribution to what was to become a major research field in Europe and North America. Giandomenico Majone (1987 to 1994) introduced the study of European integration



Steven Lukes and Yossi Shavit

processes and a rational choice approach to policy analysis.

The number of doctorates completed by the 1986-90 cohort of researchers rose to 53. About 20% of these continued to be comparative European dissertations, with a further 16% relating to European Community questions. The number of single-country studies had become very small, and there was an evident growing interest in central and eastern Europe. Reflecting the arrival of modern social theory professors, about 20% of dissertations were concerned with theory issues. The study of parties (10%) and legislatures (about the same) remained strong, as did that of economic topics, but that of interest groups was not sustained following Schmitter's departure. Environmental issues made a strong appearance (about 10% again), mainly reflecting Klaus Eder's interests. International relations made a small appearance.

From 1991 to 1995

Overall professorial numbers did not grow during the next half decade, though the department benefited from the additional membership of the director of the newly formed Robert Schuman Centre, Yves Mény. Professors could now stay for up to eight years, which enabled Blondel to sustain comparative politics until the second arrival of Bartolini in 1995; he was to remain for a full decade, as the first chairman of department to

serve for at least three years. Majone also remained for most of the period, pioneering the study of the regulatory state and the passage from deregulation to reregulation in the now rapidly developing European Union. The EU as such, in particular European public policy, was now a major focus of the department's work. Majone was succeeded in this field by Adrienne Héritier (1995 to 1999) – see her *Policy-making and Diversity in Europe: Escaping deadlock*, 1999. Daniel Verdier (1995 to 2002) replaced Strange in the field of international economic relations, though with a more rational choice approach. Morgan remained responsible for international politics. Lukes and Pizzorno sustained socio-political theory throughout the period.

Esping-Andersen stayed until 1994, after which he was replaced by Colin Crouch. Like Bartolini, he was to remain until 2004. He reintroduced research on organised economic interests and developed economic sociology and the general study of western European societies (*Social Change in Western Europe*, 1999). Yossi Shavit (1993 to 1997) replaced Blossfeld. The two were in fact co-authors of a book resulting from a major SPS collaborative project on social mobility and education: *Persistent Inequalities* (1993). Shavit went on to produce a further volume from the project in 1998, *From School to Work*. This smooth succession ensured continuation of the core sociological topic of social mobil-

ity, and established the 'tradition' whereby sociology was responsible for providing teaching in quantitative methods for the whole department. Eder continued work on social movements and environmental issues. At the end of the period there was a further growth of sociology with Christian Joppke (1995 to 2002), who introduced the study of ethnic minorities and European citizenship, already a theme among researchers. His joint work with Lukes, *Multicultural Questions* (1999), signalled another SPS collaboration.

The number of thesis completions by researchers of the 1991-95 cohorts reached 94. Studies of the European Union accounted for 20% of these, reflecting the new professorial interest, and cross-country European comparisons a further 16%. Single-country studies, particularly of Germany and Italy, continued. About 10% of theses included central and eastern Europe, and less than 10% were extra-European. Expansion in the range, but not overall size, of the professoriate necessarily implied a decline in the former 'core' political fields of parties, elections and parliaments: these now together constituted only 10%. Both policy topics and economic ones accounted for 15% of dissertations, with 10% on modern theory subjects. Following Eder's arrival, studies of social movements were growing fast to reach around 10% of the total, as were those of environmental and science questions. International relations, political and economic combined, also accounted for about 10%; and



Helen Wallace