Introduction

Chapter 1 identified abstract notions of human and international relations and argued that European integration theory and practice could be based on philosophical perspectives identified by Kant and Hegel. That there was a Hobbesian perspective of Hegelian thought in terms of realism, which dialectically moves towards a Kantian perspective, Hegelian ‘recognition’ and an objective as well as subjective consciousness in the formation of a ‘civil constitution’. Civil constitution and recognition provide a philosophical framework, which can be used to explain motives and rationales for European integration. Cause and effect or dependent and independent variables may be posited but are impossible to verify, prediction is asserted in some parts of the philosophies, for example, the guiding hand of history, but are difficult to test from a positivist perspective. Indeed, it may be argued that the best these frameworks can achieve is to provide general explanations that point in the direction of grand theories of European integration and international relations. This chapter deals with these theories in more detail and identifies the extent to which functionalist and realist perspectives may be considered as explanatory frameworks or predictive tools.

Over the last 50 years the drivers of European integration and rationales for the process have been discussed and debated in terms of perpetual peace and economic regeneration. Indeed, the concept of perpetual peace underpins the notion of the Kantian civil constitution and economic regeneration formed the basis of recognition.
Initially, the discussions revolved around functionalism (Claude, 1965; Mitrany, 1943, 1944, 1965, 1970, 1975a,b,c; Sewell, 1966) and neo-functionalism, which seemed to provide a succinct explanation of European integration (Haas, 1958, 1964, 1971, 1975, 1976; Lindberg, 1963, 1967). However, during the 1960s understandings of European integration based on functionalism and neo-functionalism were challenged. It is generally considered that the actions of Charles de Gaulle during the 1960s, led to the reassertion of realism through an emphasis on intergovernmentalism as neo-functionalism was challenged for its deterministic nature and absence of a dependent variable.\(^1\) However, George (1976) argued that the main impetus behind the challenge to neo-functionalism was related to a criticism of grand theories in general and recognition that a positivist approach to social science was flawed. This chapter identifies differences and similarities between grand theories that have an international dimension and grand European integration theories. Realism and functionalism attempted to explain at the international level – intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism at the European. Indeed, through a change in emphasis that is, from the international to European we witness an attempt to provide specificity and positivist explanation. However, with changes in the empirical nature of the EU and because of their abstract dimensions both neo-functionalism and intergovernmentalism were unable to provide positivist explanation in terms of prediction and cause and effect and were consequently criticized as European integration theories. Furthermore, the chapter also introduces meso level theories such as Europeanization, multilevel and state-centric governance, which especially in the context of Europeanization and substantive theory, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

**Grand theories of international relations and European integration**

The realist critique emphasized the importance of the nation-state in the process of international politics and is based on a Hobbesian model of anarchy and power. Indeed, this interpretation provided the basis for one of Hegel’s interpretations of international relations.

For realism, theory consists in ascertaining facts and giving them meaning through reason. It assumes that the character of a foreign