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POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN EUROPE

The Cultural and Structural Limits of the European Public Sphere

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The Cultural and Structural Limits of the European Public Sphere

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To my Mother, María del Carmen Pérez Pérez (21 March 1950–24 April 2008), in loving memory

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Acknowledgements

Journalists who become academics often try to hide their origins as reporters. In the popular, but also in the scholarly, mind, journalism is synonymous with sloppiness, oversimplification and sensationalism. Few know, as Rolf Lindner reveals in his masterful biography of journalist-cum-sociologist Robert E. Park (*The reportage of urban culture*, Cambridge University Press, 1996), that urban sociology (and, one would add, social anthropology) owes much to the craft of journalism. I do not mind saying that I have been a journalist and that, very much like the father of the Chicago School of Sociology, I somehow keep on doing journalism while attempting sociological research. This book is a work of political anthropology carried out in a very journalistic fashion, through interviews, observations and simple statistical analysis of documents. It tries to explain why the European Union (EU) is so distant and bureaucratic, and whether a putative "communications deficit" is in any way responsible for such remoteness and apolitical character.

To my surprise, many of the answers to these problems were not to be found in the literature of mass communications, but in the *acquis* of European integration studies. For a newcomer to international relations and European integration theory, it has been a great advantage, as well as a great honour, to have conducted this research under the guidance of Professor Juliet Lodge, whose scholarly work has dealt, precisely, with issues like the transparency and legitimacy of European institutions. During the course of my investigation, I have also enjoyed the valuable advice of Dr Myria Georgiou, who encouraged me to write a book I would like myself to read, and Dr Robin Brown, with whom I have enjoyed discussing the contemporary relevance of neofunctionalism and Carl Schmitt. Dr Katharine Sarikakis deserves a special mention too, as my assistantship to her edited publication, the *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, has been an uncanny learning ground.

In this research, I have crawled up the network of EU political actors from two contrasting regions – Eurosceptic Yorkshire and pro-EU Galicia – to the EU's capital, Brussels, by way of the regions' respective national capitals, London and Madrid. In most cases, my interviewees have spoken on condition of confidentiality, so I cannot acknowledge them by name. But I do thank all of them for their time and cooperation.

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I dedicate this book to my Mother, who has been the great force behind my academic career. I find it very difficult to follow her example, as her resilience, intelligence and generosity are impossible to match. Her nobility obliges me not to ever give up, and to stand up after every fall. I just hope I can live up to that challenge so as to deserve to be called her son.

Introduction

This book aims to explain the proverbial gap between European Union (EU) institutions and European citizens, discarding one of the standard interpretations among academics and journalists, the so-called "communications gap", and suggesting instead a cultural and structural explanation of the distant and apolitical character of European institutions. It is my contention that the European public sphere is not dysfunctional because of the lack of commitment of national leaders or the episodic and superficial coverage by journalists. The problem is deeper, and is related to a twin deficit: a combination of lack of domesticisation (the EU is always seen as something remote, out there) and lack of politicisation (the EU is about diplomatic compromise and technocracy, not about the fray of ideological clashes that characterises politics in traditional national democracies).

Indeed, the two deficits are intertwined: the absence or incompleteness of a European demos, a continent-wide "we feeling", makes it very difficult to ground European governance on democratic, people-dependent procedures. Instead, the Continent is held together by a series of depoliticising, conflict-avoidance modes of government: technocracy, diplomacy and corporatism. Communication is a handy scapegoat for any government in trouble, and blaming it is a recurrent practice among well-intended pro-Europeans. But the suggestion that the institutional disconnection with citizens lies in bad journalistic performance and lack of interest from national elites in "explaining the EU" has reached the status of a "public lie" (Kuran, 1997), an argument that only a few believe in private but that everyone publicises as the handbook-like response to all the EU's ailments. This book is an invitation to face the challenge of a more popular Europe in a more honest way, acknowledging the close linkage between mass

democracy and nationalism, and therefore rendering European democracy as elusive – and as likely – as a European nation. A common solace for those signalling the shortcomings of the current pseudoconfederal arrangement in Europe is its "ever-in-the-making" condition. Europe is always being "built", even if it is far from clear what kind of building is being erected. To this argument, this book also offers a non-evasive response: the EU is already doing things, drafting, approving and enforcing (through the European Commission or the European Court of Justice, or via transposition by its member states) continent-binding legislation, and it is doing it through a system that is, by its very origin and current procedures, biased against public involvement. Although national governments have a crucial say in European policy-making, and despite consensus and inclusion presiding during all diplomatic negotiations at the countless committee meetings in Brussels, legislation produced by the EU is not the work of the delegates of a European popular sovereign. This needs to be acknowledged and debated without delaying responsibilities by pointing at the EU's ever-changing features. The EU does not need a blank cheque to see what it renders in the future. It is a sophisticated system of transnational government that needs to be thoroughly described in order to understand the reasons why it is so difficult to "popularise".

This book suggests that public disengagement with the EU is a consequence of the sort of cultural community Europe is (an interdependent continent which nevertheless is not a nation) and the sort of political regime the EU is, a pseudoconfederation full of antipublicity bias: elite-driven integration, corporatism – interest groups and associations cogovern with elected politicians and the bureaucracy – and diplomacy, which demands some degree of secrecy in order to reach consensual outcomes. Under these constraints, the EU has become what sociologist Niklas Luhman would call an "autopoietic" system (King and Thornhill, 2003). It is only understandable (and even lovable) by its own players, be they Eurocrats or what I call "the Eurominati", the large network of those who know the ropes of Europe: from farmers to academics, by way of business consultants and environmental activists.

The main claim of this book is that the problem with Europe is not one of communications. It is, at its core, about the aporia of wanting a European democracy without a European nation. Interestingly, the problem of Europe reveals the intimate connection between mass democracy and nationalism, and the frigid beauty of a liberal regime with no defined boundaries and, as a consequence, weak political substance. It is the perfect world for the private, bourgeois traveller, but

it will never mobilise collective passions. The EU, I suggest, proves controversial political scientist Carl Schmitt right: "the political" is about identity and conflict. The EU is distant and apolitical. The EU wants to be cosmopolitan and universal, but the political world – Schmitt has said – is a pluriverse, not a universe.

The claims made in this book are supported by empirical evidence – namely, by interviews and observations with members of the European public sphere at three steps on the geographic scale: the EU, national and regional levels. My method, known as "network ethnography" (Howard, 2006), allows for the squaring of the circle: studying in depth a community of actors who are geographically spread. The method involves two steps: a selection of informants through social network analysis, and the subsequent observation and interviewing of the relevant "nodes" in such a network. My informants were selected through a social network analysis of EU-related news stories in two regional newspapers (*The Yorkshire Post* in the UK and *La Voz de Galicia* in Spain). These two regions were chosen as the "generative" case studies because they represented the two extreme poles of popular acceptance of the EU: Yorkshire is quintessentially Eurosceptic, whereas Galicia is consistently pro-EU (public opinion figures from these two regions can be consulted in Methodological Appendix III). EU-related political actors were also interviewed at the national (Madrid and London) and supranational level (Brussels). Empirically, I offer a multilevel ethnography of the EU political sphere, which is formed by elected politicians, bureaucrats, journalists, business groups, trade unions, environmental associations and other individuals "in touch" with the EU. Interviewees were asked to explain their reasons for the distant and bureaucratic character of the EU. Most sided with systemic and cultural explanations and only a few supported media-related arguments. Not surprisingly, these latter were committed pro-Europeans or European federalists.

This book, then, argues to move the debate on the unpopularity of the EU forward. It discards, with evidence, one of the main explanations given to the EU's distant and bureaucratic character, the so-called "communications gap", and suggests instead an explanation based upon a twin deficit of domesticisation (lack of identity) and politicisation (lack of ideological conflict, which ultimately comes from the separation of politics from economics).

The concern about the distance between European integration and Europeans themselves began as soon as the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957. Since the very first moment, the need for a popularly elected European Parliament (EP) to control European institutions (the

Commission and the Council of Ministers) was seen as the first step in addressing the much-debated democratic deficit of the EU. The difficult ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 brought the idea of a "communications gap" to the fore, with national and EU leaders arguing for a better explanation of the European integration process that would encompass the people as well as the elites. The definitive blow to the elite-driven EU came, rather paradoxically, with its most ambitious attempt to democratise itself – that is, during the rounds of national referenda in 2005 to ratify the European Constitution. The resounding "noes" by founding countries such as France and the Netherlands were explained in many ways – a punishment to national governments, a reflex response to the fear of increasing immigration, a rejection of the alleged neoliberalism embedded in the text – but rarely (except by Eurosceptics) as a call to question the nature and the rationale of the EU in the 21st century. Most pro-Europeans and European studies scholars are cosmopolitan liberals themselves, and therefore carry the paradigmatic blinkers that prevent them from seeing that mass democracy demands cultural homogeneity. When demanding EU reforms, they usually focus on procedural matters (a typical liberal posture) instead of acknowledging the disappointing fact – to those who hold the universalist ethos of liberalism – that popular allegiances cannot be created by rules of procedure. Not surprisingly, the institutional response by the European Commission to the constitutional referenda crisis, supported by national governments, was to talk, yet again, about a "communications problem". If Europe were better explained, the reasoning goes, commonsensical yeses would have sprung from national referenda. A striking thought, considering that research has shown that popular knowledge of the EU does not necessarily lead to its support (Karp, Banducci and Bo, 2003), and that the longer a country has belonged to the EU, the more sceptical it becomes about it (Haller, 2008). Is the EU, then, seen as an elite conspiracy running against European peoples' interests, as Eurosceptics have long claimed? Not at all. Even after the negative referenda, the populations of France and the Netherlands showed themselves to be supportive of the idea of a European union (Aarts and van der Kolk, 2006). And Europeans at large seem happy with the openness of internal borders, academic exchange programmes like Erasmus and low-cost European airlines that owe much to the dreams of the often-maligned Euromandarins. The European Commission thought that trumpeting EU achievements like the lowering of roaming costs for inter-European mobile phone calls would make Europeans "love" the EU. But, as this book will explain, the

brand of citizenship extolled by the EU – confederal in nature due to its conferment through member-state nationality, and private, aimed at unleashing the joys of the individual cosmopolitan traveller but never demanding blood-shedding in the battlefield against an enemy – is not likely to make the EU closer. Rather than improving its propaganda operations, or earning the allegiance of national governments, the EU needs to fix far more demanding problems if it wants to become "democratic": a problem of identity and a problem of politicisation. It is not an easy call because these problems are the result of what Europe is and the way it has been integrated and run so far. What's more, the elitist pattern of integration might have been the only one likely to succeed given Europe's economic interdependence but high cultural and linguistic diversity.

The two deficits of domesticisation and politicisation have become yet even more visible after the 2008 global economic downturn, which led to a European sovereign debt crisis and the questioning of the euro's own survival. The EU has become a daily topic of conversation for the average European citizen, but perhaps Europhiles might be repenting from having one of their dreams fulfilled: that of making the EU "popular". The debates largely held within the walls of academia, such as what sort of federation Europe could or should become, have jumped onto opinion-editorial pages of benchmark newspapers and then have spread to the crisis-laden European citizens, who for the first time are weighing the pros and cons of integration. The issue of "sovereignty", a long-time concern in the UK, has become a recurrent debate in Eastern European post-communist countries, and has even reached largely pro-EU countries, such as Spain. In popular jokes and in news media debates, Spaniards shrug their shoulders saying that whatever their national government does matters little because the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, is the one in charge. The crisis of the eurozone has led to the EU-level oversight of national budgets, which were supposed to be the staple of national sovereignty. The replacement of Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi by Mario Monti, a former commissioner, symbolised the transition from national populism to transnational technocracy. These two issues (the sensation of being ruled by a "foreigner" and the new command of technocracy over democracy) are directly related to the domesticisation and politicisation deficits. The first is a deficit of identification between the rulers and the ruled; the second is a deficit of politics, with ideology and popular mandates being replaced by technocratic designs. This book underscores how close to the EU's DNA are these two features (weak identity and technocracy), how they

can explain much of the popular uneasiness with the EU and, perhaps disappointingly, how inevitable they are given the constraints of an interdependent continent that is not yet, and may never be, a national community.

To the despair of the European Commission and other European bodies like the EP, it is time to realise that no *Twitter* or *Facebook* accounts, no well-crafted press releases or exciting speeches, will make the EU more engaging. The focus on mediation matters obscures the true reasons why there is not a European public sphere: the *sui generis* conditions of the EU political regime, which are different from those of a traditional liberal democracy, and the immaturity or inexistence of a European collective identity. The EU is a pseudoconfederation that combines diplomacy, technocracy and corporatism. All of these components, as European integration scholars have argued but communication researchers seem to forget, are biased against the development of a European public sphere (Schulz/Forberg and Stråth, 2010). The constituents of confederations are not individual citizens but states, which hinders a direct relationship between the EU citizen and the EU institutions. Despite the recent popularity of the term "public diplomacy", traditional diplomacy is in essence not public, not at least in the way parliaments are. Although the intergovernmental school of European integration has despised the role of technocracy, putting national governments in control of EU policies and easing any democratic concerns by stating their accountability to their respective electorates, the legislative initiative at the European level does not come from the EP, but from the aggregation of national government interests and, to a lesser extent, from the commission. That is, EU law is not the result of an explicit popular mandate channelled through elections, or the consequence of a given political option becoming the government of the EU, but the creation of EU and national bureaucracies. This does not mean that EU law is opposed to Europeans' wishes, but a basic principle of any democracy – that citizens should feel themselves to be the authors of the law under which they are ruled – is fairly weak in the European case, despite the attempts of MEPs such as Altiero Spinelli or David Martin to redress this situation. The absence of a European public opinion, related to the incompleteness of a European identity and the ever constant enlargement of the European "project" to new national public spheres, makes a common feature of modern democracies (corporatism, that is, a close relationship between decision-makers and interest groups) even more acute at the EU level, as the aggregation of organised civil society interests is not modulated by the preferences of individuals or street-level citizens.

The literature on the EU "communications deficit" has mostly been concerned with the design of institutional public relations (e.g. the commission's communications policy), or with the role of the news media in reporting EU policies, assessing the possibilities of a European public sphere through "Europeanised" national media (Risse, 2010). These contributions are valuable, but are affected by a common syndrome: a focus on mediation, with few critical evaluations of what is being communicated. The literature on European integration, from which I draw most of my insights, is far richer in providing explanations for the so-called "communications gap". I hypothesise that the way in which the EU has been built, the way in which the EU is governed and the sort of cultural community that EU citizens form are the three main factors (the first two structural or systemic, the third cultural) that explain why Europe lacks a European public sphere comparable to those of its constituent member states. The key to explaining the poor popular engagement with the EU is not to be found in the news media or with the journalists, but with the sort of political regime and cultural community that "Europe" is. The EU is not a state (though it has some traces of a regional state, as there are supranational institutions and EU law is binding to its member states) and Europe is not a nation (though it is a form of cultural community, in which European identity, as Eurobarometer figures have historically shown, is second or third in the scale of popular loyalties. The understanding that the EU is not a liberal-democratic state, but a *sui generis* polity, should be at the forefront of any examination of the European public sphere.

However imperfect it might be, the EU political regime is already in operation and has real effects. National governments pay fines for not abiding by EU law, and national and substate regional parliaments have to, depending on their share of competences, transpose the directives approved at the European level. MEPs are elected every five years, national ministers meet in Brussels several times a year, and in some cases, as happens with the ministers of economy and finance (Ecofin), they meet at least 11 times a year – that is, almost once a month – but often more frequently. All have senior civil servants operating in the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER), where major decisions, often of a technical nature, are hammered out. The national mainstream news media send its journalists to Brussels. European cohesion and competitiveness funds permeate the national and regional budgets of the EU's member states. European universities compete to lead, or at least participate in, the European Commission's Framework Programme (FP) projects. Policy sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and

the environment are more "European" than national, and other policy areas that seemed to be an exclusive of member states (like social and labour policy, or even education and health) are strongly influenced by European-level decisions. The crisis in 2008 has forced Europe to face the dilemma of designing a similar fiscal policy (the so-called "economic government") or to dissolve the euro. In sum, whatever is decided at the EU level has real, daily-life implications for Europeans. However, the capital that harbours more journalists than Washington, D.C. – Brussels – still complains about a communications deficit, about an incomplete or negatively biased coverage of EU affairs.

The very expression "communications gap" is biased, logically, towards a communication or media-related explanation to the psychological remoteness and bureaucratic shape of the EU. This is why I would like to move beyond this concept, which I deem to be too constraining and inherently biased to a self-fulfilling prophecy: that the problem is not in the EU but in the way it is communicated. Instead I would like to draw from Carl Schmitt and Jürgen Habermas to define the two functions that a public sphere should fulfill: an identification between the governed and the government through the building of a "we" (domesticisation) and the exhibition of the alternative conceptions of the good that compete to achieve a hegemonic position through political contestation (politicisation). As I shall demonstrate, even in those cases where there is a positive domesticisation (the EU is seen as part of the "we"), European politics is difficult to politicise in an "agonistic" or left versus right fashion. This is an indication, I suggest, that EU politics is not politics as usual: the problem lies not in communication but mainly in the sort of political regime that the EU is.

Chapter 1 introduces the theoretical roots of the twin deficit of domesticisation and politicisation. The two concepts are an evolution of Geraldine Muhlmann's (2008) notions of "centering" and "decentering", but they are grounded on Jürgen Habermas' reflections on the public sphere and constitutional patriotism, and on Carl Schmitt's criticism of liberalism. For Mulhmann, journalism should play a role of community creation and re-creation (centring) and should provide an outlet for the public display of dissent within that community (decentring). These are precisely the two ideal functions that journalism cannot perform at the EU level, and this is because of the two deficits related to each of those functions: the lack of domesticisation and politicisation.

Chapters 2 and 3 dwell on the systemic factors that prevent the development of a European public sphere: the way in which the

Continent has been integrated after the Second World War, following a "functionalist" logic (Chapter 2), and the way in which the EU is governed, through a mixture of technocracy, diplomacy and corporatism (Chapter 3). In Chapter 2 I describe how the elite pattern of European integration has brought about a political regime that is mostly independent from public opinion. In Chapter 3 I describe the two "governing styles" of the EU, which happen to have strong incentives against public involvement: consensual diplomacy and associative corporatism.

Chapter 4 deals with the cultural factor that hinders the growth of a European public sphere: the so-called "no demos" problem. I review the intimate linkage between mass democracy, nationalism and monolingualism.

Chapters 5 and 6 report on the empirical findings of this book. They draw on interview and observational evidence to explain, respectively, the domesticisation and politicisation deficits of the EU. The testimonies from my informants confirm that the twin deficit of remoteness and bureaucratisation is better explained by structural and cultural theories, rather than by the standard "communications gap" theory. In Methodological Appendix I, I also report on the results of a comparative content analysis of *The Yorkshire Post* and *La Voz de Galicia*. The two newspapers and the regions that they represent are paradigmatic cases on their own. Yorkshire represents a failure of domesticisation, picturing the EU as the "other", as the Schmittian enemy, and politicising the EU in an antagonistic way, as an existential fight for the survival of one or the other, the UK or the EU. In Galicia, the EU is seen as the upper layer of a multilevel political structure that adds one level more to the already federal-like polity that Spain is. Although still somewhat distant and elitist, the EU is a legitimate part of the "we feeling" in Galicia. However, despite this positive domesticisation, the EU is not political in a traditional left versus right axis. It is simply a bureaucratic power that either punishes through fines or feeds with money, but is rarely a venue of public contestation or deliberation.

Finally, Chapter 7 reflects on the conclusions of the study, which confirm in part the fears of Carl Schmitt, with technocracy becoming the end-point of a liberalism that has been set free from the identitarian constraints of democracy. I also evaluate the double-edged nature of subsidiarity, a principle that releases member states into the European integration process at the high cost of making supranational institutions invisible to the populace. In the end, the elitist pattern of European integration might have been the best, or even the only viable, way

of uniting Europe, but it has come at the price of popular legitimacy and electoral engagement. The way in which the EU has been built, the way in which the EU is governed and the immature condition of the European demos are far more relevant to the explanation of the twin deficits of domesticisation and politicisation than any media or national elite behaviour, which in any case would be a consequence of the previous cultural and structural conditions.

The research design of this investigation, including the questionnaires used in my semistructured interviews and the coding protocol designed for the analysis of newspaper content, can be found in the Methodological Appendix I.

The mantra that "better communication" from the part of EU institutions, national governments and journalists will bridge the gap between EU citizens and European institutions is less and less credible. To be fair, recent initiatives like the "Europa" supplement, published in the respective national languages by six leading European newspapers (*El País*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Le Monde*, *La Stampa*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *The Guardian*) and aimed at explaining and debating European affairs, are welcome and noble. However, it is very unlikely that media-related initiatives will be the panacea for fixing the low political engagement of EU citizens with European institutions. The problem, as I argue throughout this book, is systemic and cultural. Not only because Europe is not (yet) a nation, and the EU is not (yet) a federal state, but also because the original response for governing this interdependent continent, perhaps due to its intrinsic diversity, has been biased against any popular involvement.

Liberal democracies are a mixture of constitutionalism and nationalism, a mixture of individual rights and collective decisions. To the extent that democracies need homogeneity in their populations in order to make redistributive decisions acceptable to a majority of their citizens, the heterogeneity of the EU (mainly its linguistic diversity) hampers any democratic approach. Weak on the democratic side, the EU has been growing its liberal half, to the point that rational deliberation, conflict avoidance, liberalisation of markets and concern for the individual have been the driving forces of the integration and governing processes, with bureaucrats and politicians taking organised civil society interests as their allies in neocorporatism governance.

Instead of talking about communication, the frigidness of the EU can be better understood by looking at the two preconditions that make a public sphere functional: domesticisation (the government and the governed feel part of the same community) and politicisation (ideological

conflict is enabled when inimical clashes between enemies are subdued by a common identity).

Eurocosmopolitanism is indeed an attractive creed. Like liberalism, it represents the avoidance of identity and politics. But public life is different from private life. As Pierre Manent (2006, 2007) argues, political communities demand such gruesome attributes as a body, identities and enemies. As a project to eradicate animosity, the EU has been successful. If it is not loved by Europeans, it is not because whatever is done in Brussels is badly communicated but because the sort of community Europe is and the sort of political system the EU is are *sui generis*. There is no European nation, and the EU is a managerial state full of antipopular biases: technocracy, diplomacy and corporatism.

If all of the energies of pro-Europeans are consumed in defending the communications gap theory, without admitting the cultural correlates of mass democracy and the intrinsically antipopular foundations of the European institutions (the two are conditional upon each other), the European dream has a weak defence against the turbulent times that it must face.

1

The True Deficits of the European Public Sphere: Domesticisation and Politicisation

The expression "communications gap" is, as noted in the Introduction, a loaded term that implicitly attributes to a mediation problem the distance between EU institutions and their citizens. In order to consider the "communication deficit" as one of the potential explanations and not the only explanation for the lack of popular engagement with EU politics, I derive from the literature on political publicity two concepts – "domesticisation" and "politicisation" – that account, without implying any media-related judgement, for the sociopsychological remoteness of the EU and the prominence of bureaucracy and administration over ideological conflict.

The two key issues where which I expect the European public sphere to be dysfunctional are a) its ability to enable domesticisation (the ability to facilitate an identification between representatives and represented) and b) its capacity to encourage politicisation (the capacity to visualise conflict between/among alternative/optional ways of governing a society). The term domesticisation draws heavily on Carl Schmitt's concept of democracy as identification between the government and the governed. The term politicisation is also very much a Schmittian expression, but I rely on one of his interpreters, Chantal Mouffe, to distinguish between antagonistic politicisation (between enemies, such as the USA and Iran) and agonistic politicisation (between rivals, such as the UK's Labour and Conservative parties). There is a tight relationship between the two concepts. As will be explained in the following chapters, a low level of domesticisation or identity is linked to antagonistic politicisation (e.g. the enmity between two countries), whereas a high level of domesticisation or identity should be related to an agonistic politicisation – an ideological, not existential conflict, between

different conceptions of the public good – usually encapsulated in the ideological poles of left and right.

As Müller (2003) and Kennedy (2008 [1998]) indicate, Jürgen Habermas' seminal work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, was clearly inspired by Schmitt, who is explicitly cited at the beginning of the book. Habermas' denunciation of bureaucratisation and neocorporatism as the twin processes behind a "manipulative publicity" in which the citizens of contemporary democracies are invited to see but not to participate (Habermas, 1994 [1962]) echoes Schmitt's criticism of Weimar-like parliaments in which rational discussion among a previously cohesive class – the liberal bourgeoisie – is replaced by backdoor dealings among sectoral interest groups.

Habermas' work became more concerned over the years with the ideal forms of speech that should serve deliberative democracy best, leaving aside the inherent incompatibility between a refeudalised state (whereby the administration and corporate private interests reach a consensus that is later sold to the public) and an autonomous sphere of public and rational deliberation (whereby citizens criticise state affairs and become participants in the dealings that are now reached behind closed doors). His criticism was directed against the neocorporatism of the Adenauer governments in postwar Germany (1949–1963), but it could readily be applied to explain the EU's current hurdles in its own popular legitimation. As a matter of fact, the "representative publicity" that Habermas sees replacing the bourgeois "critical publicity" is even more pervasive at the EU level due to the absence of true mass politics. The medieval publicity, based on the showing of status, on the embodiment of a power that is usually absent, is even more accurately attributable to the contemporary EU than to any national government.

The meetings of European leaders, specially the European Council meetings, are one of the finest examples of representative publicity. For Habermas, in the Adenauer age, parliamentary elections were the only remains of critical, bourgeois-like publicity, as electoral periods recreate, albeit weakly, the public's chance to deliberate and decide on state issues. In the EU context, parliamentary elections are an even more imperfect mechanism of public control than at the national level, as the future of the community that is at stake – Europe – is rarely discussed, being replaced instead by national concerns. For Habermas, already in the Adenauer years, publicity had regained feudal features, becoming "representative" instead of "discussion-oriented". This is still true at the national level, but even more true at the EU level, given the absence of that episodic electoral arousal of public deliberation.

Schmitt is relevant for the two dimensions under study (domesticisation and politicisation). On domesticisation, he deemed identification between populations and rulers as key to any democracy's success (Schmitt, 2008 [1926]). On politicisation, his critique of the decline of parliament and liberalism's rational discussion was influential on Habermas. But while for Habermas the key to contemporary democracies was to recover that missing rational deliberation, for Schmitt, liberalism's search for consensus was apolitical (in the sense of not devising a friend–enemy division) and the Trojan horse of technocracy. According to McCormick (2008), liberalism could be defined in the following way: "Governmentally, the constitutional and institutional guarantee of limited government and individual rights; culturally, the emphasis on compromise over conflict, and the individual over the group" (p. 6). Liberalism's scientific, rational, passionless and non-partisan pursuit of the best solution for public problems is closely linked to the apolitical and technocratic management of contemporary democracies, and in particular the "regulatory state" that the EU is claimed to be (Majone, 1994).

Habermas: Demonstrative publicity and constitutional patriotism

Few concepts have been so profusely discussed in contemporary political communication research as the "public sphere". There is little doubt that German sociologist Habermas has been the great populariser of the idea, but the many uses of the concept have rendered the "public sphere" a "rhetorical token" (Benson, 2007), open to the most varied meanings and interpretations. Defined by Habermas himself as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed" (1974, p. 49), the public sphere has been identified in contemporary societies with the (commercial) mass media, a far less critical and deliberative atmosphere than the political newspapers and the bourgeois coffee houses, where Habermas places the ideal form of active citizenship that he would like to bring back to our present times.

Much of the theoretical and empirical production that sprang out of Habermas' seminal work, his 1962 *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, has taken two roads. On the one hand, it has encouraged a reflection on the ideal forms of speech (the "ideal speech situation", in Habermas' language) to facilitate a "deliberative" form of democracy. The closest practical application of these ideals is said to be found in the so-called "civic journalism" movement, a US development very popular

among US metropolitan newspapers in the 1990s (Haas, 2007). Second, Habermas' decrying of the commercialisation of mass media sparked much criticism about media ownership. With the presumed democratisation of communication enabled by the Internet, much hope has been pinned on a public sphere reliant on alternative, non-corporate media as a means of enabling a more inclusive, participatory and democratic debate (McChesney, 1999).

My focus on Habermas is nevertheless motivated by a third thread of his seminal book, perhaps the more substantive of all but nevertheless the least explored: the "refeudalisation" of the public sphere due to the fusion between the state and society, between public and private, between governmental bureaucracies and organised social interests, be they those of business or labour. This third thread has clear implications for my study of the EU public sphere. If, as I contend, concepts like "networked multilevel governance" are the politically correct labels for old-fashioned bureaucratisation and corporatism, Habermas' central concern – the transformation of the public sphere from "critical" to "feudal" – deserves far more attention for the EU-minded communication scholar than the ideal forms of speech or the commercialisation of mass media.

In hindsight, this surprising academic neglect of this core Habermasian discussion might have been due to several circumstances. First, Habermas' work was originally published in 1962 and, though not explicitly named, Adenauer and his neocorporatist way of running Germany were the key targets of his criticism. The English translation of his book did not see the light until the 1990s, a decade in which the "deliberative turn" in political theory somehow pushed into the background the reflection on neocorporatism. Second, although the "hollowing out of the state" by contracting private companies implementing public services has been the source of much academic reflection in recent years (Rhodes, 1997, 2007), Habermas' reference to the (then, in the 1960s) new age of "social welfare state" might have limited the universality of his critique on corporatism, as it may have been regarded as only applicable to certain European countries. Interestingly enough, given that the EU has been seen as a machine for the replication of the European (welfare, neocorporatist) state model across the Continent (Müller, 2007), I see Habermas' seeming Europarochialism as an advantage, and as further evidence of the applicability of his critique to the EU case. Third, Habermas has declared himself very sympathetic to the European project (Habermas, 2009), which might have prevented him from criticising the EU for the same reasons he criticised Adenauer's Germany.

Schmitt's visions regarding publicity and politics played a strong influence on Habermas' historical review of the evolution of the public sphere in the 1960s, but the vitality of the "deliberative turn" in political science has diluted the Schmittian influences on his thought, reinforcing instead the legacy of Karl Jaspers and his idea of constant debate as the legimating force of democracies (Müller, 2007, p. 18). This is a shift favoured by media scholars, who have focused on the ideal role that media or journalism could play in a more deliberative democracy. However, my work is an attempt to revitalise the Schmittian traces in Habermas, which in turn moves us away from the narrow focus on the mass media, contextualising journalistic practices within a broader scope, including state bureaucracies and civil society actors, the previously separated realms that Habermas saw dangerously mixing up.

I will now discuss Habermas' concept of feudal, representative or demonstrative publicity, which I see as rightly applicable to the contemporary EU public sphere. Actually, I consider it as the key to explaining the depoliticisation of European politics. Then I will review Habermas' idea of a European "constitutional patriotism", linking it to my – admittedly Schmittian – concern about the differentiation between the representatives and the represented.

Demonstrative publicity: Is the EU's public sphere "feudal"?

The "transformation" that Habermas deals with in his seminal work has to do with the shift from a critical public sphere, typical of the bourgeois times, to a refeudalised public sphere in the age of mass democracy, where critical deliberation over state matters is artificially aroused in electoral periods, and is not geared towards the best solution but to the commercial-style choosing of political options in the marketplace of ideas. The public sphere of mass democracies is feudal because the separation between the public (the state) and the private (society) is over: the welfare state, in response to mass demands, intervenes in the economy to a degree not seen in the liberal age, making more and more features of private life depending on the state. Likewise, private actors, namely corporatist associations, assume public functions. For Habermas, collective bargaining is one of the most prevalent features in this mixture of the public and the private: "Collective agreements between employers' associations and trade unions lose their private character; they must have a public character, because the regulations they produce act as if they were law" (Habermas, 1994 [1962], p. 180). There is a transition from liberal discussion to corporatist bargaining, a shift from publicity – where power, in Habermas jargon, is "rationalised" – to

backroom dealings that are later "sold" to a passive public. The parliament, the quintessential institution of liberalism, is weakened in favour of the dealings between the administration and trade unions or employer's organisations. And, just as in the Middle Ages, publicity or the public sphere of mass welfarist democracies becomes "demonstrative" again. The public sphere is not that independent realm where the bourgeoisie assembles to criticise state affairs. In the age of welfare mass democracies, notoriety comes only after agreements have been reached between the state and corporate organisations. Publicity is not about debate but about public relations to win the public's acquiescence. Publicity becomes medieval – "representative", "demonstrative" – again, with political actors representing an idea (God-like power) rather than their citizens. Publicity is no longer about rational discussion. The modern prince (the government, the bureaucracy) and the modern estates (business groups and labour unions) "represent their power "before" the people, instead of for the people" (Habermas, 1974, p. 51). That is, "publicity imitates now that aura of personal prestige and supernatural authority so characteristic of representative publicity" (Habermas, 1994 [1962], p. 222).

The view of the EU as a neocorporatist pseudostate has a long tradition in the literature (Schmitter, 1974). It is not hard to tell in the real world either, as both local chambers of commerce and trade unions receive money from the European Social Fund to retrain, respectively, small business owners and workers. The European Council, which seems to have replaced the European Commission as the main policy initiator in the EU, is still not collectively responsible for its decisions, as European governments are reluctant to make themselves accountable to the EP. Much of its publicity is limited to press releases and family photos of strong monarchical reminiscences. EU publicity is much about a medieval "showing of power", the European Council of heads of state and government being its finest exponent. The COREPER diplomats, whose task is to prepare the groundwork of legislation that is later passed at Council of Ministers meetings, are at least as decisive as MEPs, but their workings are not apparent to most Europeans. The COREPER, Lodge has criticised, is a bureaucratic decision-maker that acts as an invisible legislature (Lodge, 1996).

This said, it would be fair to admit that, as many critics have warned, no liberal democracy can meet the ideal requirements of strong and inclusive deliberation advocated by Habermas. After all, EU neocorporatism is just a pan-European translation of what has been going on for years in its respective constituent states. However, at the

EU level the "emergency brake" of ousting governments through popular elections is unavailable to Europeans. If elections change little at the national level, they change even less at the EU level. This, I will argue, is in great part due to the two deficits that I want to highlight, those of domesticisation and politicisation.

Habermas offers a good explanation for the depoliticisation of the EU: corporatism does not want notoriety, or at least it wants it only to gain acquiescence, not to publicise debates. Nevertheless, the recipes he has provided so far are not as convincing. Habermas himself deemed naïve his call for a democratisation of the organisations dealing with the state, such as political parties, unions and other associations. The resuscitation of a liberal public sphere in an age when the public are not restricted to the well educated and property owners – the bourgeoisie – might indeed be doomed. As I shall discuss below, politicisation does not come from inclusive deliberation. Consensus and rational deliberation are usually better reached in secret than in public (Naurin, 2007). On this, the EU is very liberal – so liberal that it has many of the features of that hypertrophy of liberalism known as technocracy. Although Habermas criticises corporatism because it is depoliticising, in Mouffe's view his remedy – rational deliberation and consensus – is also depoliticising, as politics would imply passion and conflict.

Habermas' contribution to the domesticisation debate is also, like his recipe for democracy, highly rational, very liberal and passionless. In an indirect way, by urging a constitutional civil nationalism for the EU, he is giving his own reply to the "Schmittian imperative" (Müller, 2007, p. 79): that in order to work, democracies need some sort of homogeneous demos. That's the task of constitutional patriotism.

Constitutional patriotism: A civic nationalism for the EU?

Constitutional patriotism is one among the many "Germanisms" that characterise the EU. The indirect German federalism, which endows *Länder* with the task of implementing the law of an elusive federal power, is said to have been copied onto Europe by the EU and its member states (Smith, 1999). Up to a point, with constitutional patriotism there is a similar German-to-EU translation.

After the Second World War, Germany was divided, and German nationalism was still tinged with the excesses of National Socialism. Popular loyalty to the new federal state could not be based on traditional nationalism but on an allegiance to the values and procedures enacted by the constitution. Jan-Werner Müller, author of the most comprehensive survey on constitutional patriotism available (2007), defines it

as "the idea that political attachment ought to center on the norms, the values and, more indirectly, the procedures of a liberal democratic constitution" (p. 1). Though still quite abstract and, as Müller puts it, "bloodless", German constitutional patriotism is nevertheless grounded on two sentimental assets: memory and militancy (Müller, 2007, p. 10). Germans share a "self-critical remembering of the Holocaust"; they are negatively defined by a genocide. The German constitutional "we" comprises those who regret and will never repeat the killing of Jews. Also, the German "we-ness" springs from a "militant democracy" that renders the "enemies of democracy" incompatible with the democratic game – hence the banning of the Nazi and Communist parties by the Constitutional Court in the 1950s.

Habermas is not the father of German constitutional patriotism, although he has been one of its main definers over time. What he can claim is his proposal to endow Europe with its own version of constitutional patriotism, linking the identity of Europeans not to their particular nations but to the shared values enshrined by the failed and then resuscitated Constitutional Treaty (Habermas, 2012).

The first reference to a "constitutional patriotism" (*Verfassungspatriotismus*) is credited to Dolf Sternberger, who introduced the concept during the 30th anniversary of the German post-Second World War Federal Republic (Müller, 2007). He talked then about "state friendship", "a kind of civic reason that would make citizens identify with the democratic state and, not least, defend it against its enemies" (Müller, 2007, p. 21). He also claimed that until the arrival of Romanticism and its political correlate, nationalism, all patriotisms were constitutional.

Habermas vindicated the concept of a constitutional patriotism during the so-called "historians dispute" (*Historikerstreit*) (1986–1989). On one side, there were voices who wanted to recover a German national pride by claiming that the Holocaust was a reaction to Stalin's Gulag deportations. Habermas was on the side of those who wanted Germans to acknowledge the past and posited constitutional patriotism as the more convenient form of political identification for Germans.

Interestingly, Habermas' constitutional patriotism is intimately linked to his ideal of an ever-deliberating public sphere. Just as the liberal public sphere was an attempt to "rationalise power" through the publicity of state proceedings, constitutional patriotism can be understood as a "rationalisation of collective identities" (Müller, 2007, p. 29). For Habermas, constitutional patriotism relies on a constant debate that gives way to a "reflexive identity" that questions tradition and is renegotiated in the public sphere: "Where Steinberger's civic friendship had

essentially focused on the state, Habermas envisaged civic solidarity as an outcome of unconstrained discourse leading to mutual civic recognition, and an ongoing process of mutual learning" (Müller, 2007, p. 31).

Although Müller (2007) is convincing in differentiating constitutional patriotism from cosmopolitanism and ethnic nationalism, it is not yet clear to me why it should not be considered a form of civic nationalism. Constitutional patriotism is not linked to the whole of humanity or an ethnically homogeneous people; it is a form of political bonding that relies on commonly shared, civic values. More convincing is his adaptation to the European context, as he rightly points to a "transnational memory" (p. 108) of historical events to be avoided (the Second World War, or the more recent ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia), and a "supra-national militancy" (p. 113) against the enemies of democracy, which had its most clear example in the diplomatic isolation of neofascist Jörg Haider's Austria.

It is very unlikely, if not impossible, that Europe will ever find its own continental version of traditional nation-state nationalism. Europeans are not, and may never be, ready "to die for Brussels", as Müller comments with a grain of sarcasm (2007, p. 128). Constitutional patriotism might therefore be the only sort of political attachment valid for EU citizens, but also for other diverse, multicultural democratic polities. However, and also according to Müller, this "post-patriotic" EU (p. 128) has yet failed to address the two key Schmittian questions: Who decides and who is the enemy? Müller's response strongly resonates with my discussion on the domesticisation and politicisation deficits of the EU: "The Union has *no* single identifiable locus of sovereignty, and it *does* displace "the political" into the economic and the ethical – just as Carl Schmitt claimed liberalism always would" (p. 127). And, further to this point, "the Union is a *liberal* civil association, which is designed to liberate its members from the political, if the political is understood in a Schmittian manner" (p. 128). So, risking a daring interpretation of Müller's words, it could be concluded that the EU was invented to liberate Europeans from politics, from enemies and from "the others" inside. This was the purpose of the so-called "Monnet method" of integration, the aim of functionalism and technocracy. But in ruling out war, the EU ended up ruling out politics. The EU, following Schmittian language, is highly liberal – in the sense of conflict-avoidant – but poorly democratic: people do not feel as the true sovereign of the polity due to lack of identification with a state authority that is felt as part of the same "we" as the electorate.

Constitutional patriotism might be the only form of identity that can render democracy at the EU level viable. However, grounding this identity on a constitutional culture might not bring about the passion politics needed. The EU is yet to make the transition from a hyper-liberal to a liberal-democratic regime. Constitutional patriotism offers some hope, arguing for building civic identity with the foundations of "critical reflection" and "complex emotional attachment" (Müller, 2007, p. 141).

Schmitt: Identity and the political

The work of German constitutional theorist Schmitt has been the object of a love–hate relationship among scholars in recent years. Schmitt was one of the most active and respected figures in the debates surrounding the constitution of the Weimar Republic in the 1920s, but his name was tarnished owing to his early collaboration with the Nazi regime. The 1990s witnessed a revival of Schmittian theories, especially in those referring to his criticism of liberalism, of great relevance for my purposes here. The latest resurgence of the German author came along with George Bush's "war on terror", as Schmitt's insights into the permanent state of exception as the prelude to an authoritarian regime were thought to have worrying echoes in contemporary society's creeping securitisation (Balzacq and Carrera, 2007; Bigo et al., 2010).

Despite the fact that the concepts of "domesticisation" and "politicisation" as I shall use them in this work were initially an adaptation of Muhlmann's "centering" and "de-centering" qualities of journalism (Muhlmann, 2008), they find in Schmitt an even clearer and more accurate precedent. My first move was to extrapolate Muhlmann's contradictory ethos of journalism to the public sphere in general. That is, I transformed Muhlmann's journalism's centring and the decentring functions (respectively, "building a we" and "allowing for the expression of dissent") into "domesticisation" and "politicisation" categories, as I saw a feeling of "we-ness" and the constant dialectic of differing solutions to public problems as the twin preconditions of a healthy public sphere.

My review of Schmitt is highly influenced by one of his renowned interpreters, political theorist Chantal Mouffe (2000), who has used Schmitt's antagonistic conception of politics to build one of the most consistent charges against the deliberative model of democracy. Like Mouffe, I would like to use Schmitt against Schmitt. That is to say, I would like to distil some of his valuable insights without following

him blindly to his suggested solutions. Therefore my Schmitt-inspired critique of liberalism and bureaucracy at the EU level should not be equated with a plain rejection of liberal democracy and the rule of law.

Schmitt's thoughts on the need for homogeneity to sustain democracy do have relevance for the current debate about the elusive "European demos". And his criticism of liberalism as depoliticising and technocracy-friendly is perhaps even more pertinent if we consider that the EU has been defined as a regime of "policy without politics" (Schmidt, 2006). Schmitt's admonitions are clear on both identification and politicisation. For those who think democracies can become universal, humanity-binding, Schmitt warns that every democracy needs a people. For those who insist on consensus and the passionless management of public affairs, he contends that the very nature of politics is conflict and antagonism. If there is no conflict, there is no politics. As I shall try to explain, in Schmittian terms, the EU would be highly liberal – too liberal actually – but hardly democratic (if democracy is understood as a regime of identity).

Any approach to Schmitt's thoughts should be preceded by an examination of his personality, strongly influenced by Catholic theology, and the historical contextualisation in which his writings saw the light: the turbulent years of post-Versailles Germany and the Weimar Republic.

Schmitt's Catholicism is explicit in his book on the visibility of the Church (2011 [1925]) and implicit in the rest of his subsequent work. Catholic theology has a strong influence on his political theory. What's more, for him, as he famously claimed, most theoretical concepts in politics enjoy a theological origin: reflections on power are akin to reflections on God. The Catholic Church was for Schmitt the ideal model of authority: it was truly "representative" (in the sense of embodying a set of values shared by the larger community of believers) and, as compared with the liberal, technocratic model of the state, its acts were visible and its decisions were definitive, infallible (Campderrich Bravo, 2001). In Schmitt's view, the Catholic Church combines the spiritual and material condition of human beings, whereas secular (liberal) politics only pays attention to the material, as if law could be independent from God, or as if evil could be eliminated from the world. Liberal, positive-law-based politics is for Schmitt a denial of human's sinful condition, a dangerous neglect of the simultaneous presence of good and evil on Earth. Liberal law's telos aims to rule out politics, but politics, like our finite bodies, is in Schmitt's view "the mark of sin and our fallen condition" (Storey, 2006, 17 April, p. 25). Schmitt saw both liberalism and communism as fetishisers of materialism. Politics, antagonism, like

the tension between good and evil, is ignored by humans at their peril, at the peril of bureaucratic or technocratic domination, at the peril of losing their own human individuality (McCormick, 2008).

The historical context of Schmitt's writings is that of the crisis of liberal democracy. In the 1920s and 1930s, liberalism and democracy were thought to be incompatible. Democracy was identified with mob rule, a threat to liberalism and constitutionalism, which were deemed to be best defended by other forms of power, such as monarchy. The bourgeois class was under siege. The enfranchisement of the masses was feared to come at the high price of overriding private property and other liberal achievements.[1] At the time, Mussolini's fascism, itself the embryo of the corporatist state that would assuage the tension between employers and labour, was regarded by many European (and American) liberals as an acceptable solution to civil unrest and a good alternative to Soviet communism, despite both fascism and communism being anti-bourgeois movements.[2] Still, when compared with communism, fascism was considered to be the saviour of capitalism, religion and the nation (Diggins, 1966; Cassels, 1969; Eco, 1995).

Schmitt's critique of liberalism, despite its current relevance, should also be read in the context of this questioning of the marriage between liberalism and democracy. Although nowadays both concepts are so intimately woven together that any threat to a liberal value (e.g. freedom of expression) is thought to be an attack on democracy, in the first quarter of the 20th century, liberal values were believed to be poorly guaranteed by democracy. The idea of a "demo-liberal" regime combining liberalism and democracy, whereby majoritarianism would be limited by respect for liberal, individual rights (usually enshrined in a constitution), was feared to be doomed.

It is my contention that many of Schmitt's critiques of liberalism can be applied to a highly liberal (in the Schmittian sense of rationalist, technocratic, apolitical) regime like the EU. It is in these critiques that we can find a good explanation for the domesticisation and politicisation deficits of the EU. Borrowing from Mouffe's adaptation of Schmitt (Mouffe, 1998, 2000), I would argue that the distant and apolitical nature of the EU can be explained by resorting to Schmitt's thoughts on the importance of identification and politicisation.

Homogeneity as a precondition for democracy

In a multiethnic and multicultural world such as ours, Schmitt's claim that homogeneity is an essential principle in democracy may stand out

as anachronistic at best and xenophobic at worst. After all, modern democracies are proud of their ethnic and religious diversity. However, as the important electoral gains of xenophobic parties in countries like France and the Netherlands show, the survival of multiculturalism owes more to liberalism (and a constitutional order guaranteeing freedom of worship and no racial discrimination) than to democracy. This is the often difficult equilibrium between liberalism and democracy, the "democratic paradox" in Mouffe's terms (Mouffe, 2000), that Schmitt believed to be impossible or hardly sustainable in the early 20th century. Despite its stridence to cosmopolitan ears, Schmitt's defence of the inextricability of homogeneity and democracy enjoys considerable support in the literature of history and European studies.

In contemporary studies on European integration, the idea that a lack of homogeneity inhibits the existence of a true European democracy is far from outlandish. For Majone, the decreasing participation in European elections is largely related to the absence of a true "European demos" (Majone, 2005). For Jolly, the psychosociological deficit of the EU – the lack of a "European political people" – should prevent the EU from taking decisions with truly distributive consequences. After examining public opinion data, Jolly concludes that "Europeans do not see themselves a part of one democratic whole, but rather constituent units cooperating within an institutional framework called the EU [...] Areas that demand a high degree of solidarity should not be subjected to supranational government" (2007, pp. 237–238).

Multiethnic democratic states are, indeed, difficult to hold together. European empires were indeed multiethnic, but perhaps they managed to be so because they were not democratic. The transition from empires to nation states brought democracy to Europe, but it seems as if, for democracy to settle, homogenous nation states had to be built, sometimes through ethnic cleansing. According to historian Niall Ferguson, Europe did not achieve peace in the 20th century until it was broken up into ethnically homogeneous states (Fergusson, 2007). Yugoslavia was the only multiethnic state remaining, its peace being conquered only after a civil war resulting in ethnically homogeneous states. Even in the contemporary Middle East, it is still to be seen whether democracy can survive in multiethnic states such as Iraq and Lebanon.

In order to work, Schmitt claimed, democracy needs homogeneity. Heterogeneity has to be ostracised, ignored or annihilated. Schmitt's own collaboration with the National Socialists endows this claim with shivering overtones. However, when stripped of Schmitt's personal story and seen in the light of European history, the homogeneity thesis enjoys

a sad validity ("sad" from the point of view of universalist liberalism). Even if we consider civic nationalism (a non-ethnic, values-based, "constitutional" patriotism) as the only nationalism worth defending in this day and age, the need of homogeneity (a shared belief in a given set of values) stands out as unavoidable for the cohesion of the polity or, in Schmitt's terms, for its "substance".

According to Schmitt, democracy needs homogeneity because democracy is built upon a series of identifications. These identifications are easier to hold with homogeneity. Schmitt admits that no population, big or small, can be completely homogeneous, which means that most democratic identification will be fictional: understood to be true, even if not. Therefore, although what the majority decides might be far from just, the ideal of democracy is grounded on the belief that majoritarian decisions are the best, the fairest and the most desirable – an idea close to the utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. In the same vein, despite the fact that the educational background of parliamentary representatives or an elected president may not resemble the average education level of the population represented, democracy is sustained by the fiction that representatives are "the people". In Schmitt's words,

> All democratic arguments rest on a series of identities. Belonging to these series are: the identity between governors and governed, sovereigns and subjects, between the subject and the object of state's authority, between the people and its representation in the Parliament, between the State and the voters, between State and the law and, eventually, identity between the quantitative (the majority or the arithmetic unanimity) and the qualitative (the fairness of the law).
>
> (Schmitt, 2008 [1926], p. 57)

In sum, although the liberal half of our liberal democracies is nation-free and universal, the democratic half calls for a people, for identification and for homogeneity. A "world democracy" would make no sense, according to Schmitt: "The equality among all men as persons is not democracy, but a given kind of liberalism; is not a form of State, but a moral and a worldview of the individualistic and humanitarian sort. Modern democracy is based upon the confusing linkage between the two" [that is, between these two conceptions of equality: the "liberal" equality as humans and the "democratic" equality as members of the same people] (Schmitt, 2008 [1926], p. 31). For Schmitt, the

liberal conception of human equality (individuals are all the same when considered as human beings) is not sufficiently "political" to sustain a democratic regime, which is based on a people who are always in opposition to other people. This is why, for Schmitt, universal suffrage only makes sense when there is homogeneity. Inviting every other human being to decide upon the public affairs of a given territory would make the political equality of the citizens of that territory useless. Hence the need of a more "substantive" equality, that of national homogeneity. Equality is then related to identity, and identity to alterity, to the existence of a foreigner.

As I try to demonstrate in my empirical study, the need for identification for polities to be felt as legitimate is helpful to understanding the UK–EU relationship. When the Eurosceptic wing of the British Conservative Party says that it wants to renationalise regional policy, it argues that Brussels is doing things in Britain that the British would not do if they were given the chance to autonomously manage regional development funds. This is a denunciation of an alien power mingling in the internal affairs of a state. In this view, Brussels is seen as "the foreigner", and therefore an illegitimate authority. This is a clear example of the Schmittian lack of identification between the governed and the governors, a lack of identification that has nothing to do with race or language (albeit some would argue that there is some underlying Germanophobia, as the Continent and the EU are, in some extreme cases, identified in Britain with the former Second World War enemy). It can also be seen as a consequence of the EU being the result of a "plural constituent power" – as compared with a single or "national" power – that is likely to "reassert itself against the executive elites which drive the European project" (Müller, 2000, p. 1794).

Liberalism as depoliticising and technocratic

How can we tell "the political"? Schmitt's view: when we see categories of opposites, of entities whose existence is challenged by the existence of the other. This can happen within a state (e.g. left versus right) or among states (e.g. the UK versus Germany). A relationship can be qualified as political when a friend–enemy opposition can be delineated, when a distinction between existential opposites can be made. This is why Schmitt derides liberalism as apolitical. Liberalism calls for the equality of humans as human beings. It is hardly compatible with a friend–enemy distinction. The political for Schmitt is also a matter of degree. At its most extreme point, the political implies the chance that enemies could kill each other (antagonism). In its weakest form, opposition can

become "agonal" or, in Mouffe's words, "agonistic", when the victory of one side over the other implies not its annihilation but a temporal ruling. This is what Mouffe deems as ideal politics: a contest of radically – not amenable – political options that nevertheless compete peacefully for the temporal hegemony of its ideological programme, without challenging the essentials laid out in a constitutional text.

The parliament, the typical liberal institution, is for Schmitt all about discussion and consensus. For him the quintessential political act is to make a decision, and that is usually the task of the executive power, not the parliament. Rational discussion is a close relative of technocracy. Rule by experts is impersonal, diffusing the responsibility for the decisions taken. Liberalism, therefore, is a sort of Trojan horse of technocracy in liberal democracies. A true political contest, according to Schmitt, is about a "you or me" existential battle. Left or right. Britain or Germany. Liberalism dissolves the political, the antagonism, by appealing to negotiation, to bargaining. In Schmittian politics, the goal is victory. In classic liberal (bourgeois) parliaments, the goal is consensus or compromise. Schmitt's scorn of parliaments comes from the Weimar Republic's seeming inability to eradicate communism by trying to enter a dialogue with it instead of fighting it (Campderrich Bravo, 2001).

When discussing EU politics, the "drama" of national politics is often contrasted with the consociational politics of the EP. Indeed, the EP has been defined as a 19th-century-style parliament.[3] It is my argument that much of the EU's "communication deficit" is due to the liberal bias of European politics. EU politics is deliberative (in private), technocratic and apolitical. It believes in the possibility of managing human affairs from a scientific point of view (Campderrich Bravo, 2001). In order to be engaging, scholars like Simon Hix (2008) have argued that EU politics must find a way of identifying governors and the governed, and a way of agonising politics, of encouraging partisanship, of creating rivalry between "authentic principles that lead to very different approaches to governing" (Dionne, 2010). What I attempt to do in this book is to link this lack of political conflict, a structural problem, with the "communication gap" idea, which is usually restricted to mediation problems, as if popular political engagement only depended on journalistic mediation and not also on the sort of political regime at hand.

My Schmittian suggestion is not 100 per cent Schmittian. It is actually closer to Mouffe's revision of Schmitt's theories (Mouffe, 2000). Observing the rise of "deliberative democracy" and what she saw in the

1990s as the end of the distinction between left and right brought about by Clintonism and Blair's (or Giddens') Third Way, Mouffe reacted by claiming that such depoliticisation favoured the rise of the extreme right in European countries, which was introducing itself as the only authentic alternative to the establishment.[4] Inspired by Schmitt's concept of the political, Mouffe argued for an "agonistic" model of democracy, whereby the friend–enemy distinction is transformed into a contest between rivals with radical differences that must result in the temporary "hegemony" of one of them – that is, on the implementation of a given political programme, as long as constitutional guarantees are respected. Mouffe's victory over a rival is not Schmitt's annihilation of the enemy. It keeps the antagonistic (or, in Mouffe's terms, agonistic) nature of politics while keeping the common ground of a liberal constitution intact. Taking agonistic politics to the European level would imply believing in some sort of European demos, where opposition between Europeans is based on left–right divisions rather than on ethnic or national confrontations (e.g. Eurosceptic countries versus federalist member states). This is a move that Mouffe herself is not likely to make, as thinking of ourselves as Europeans instead of nationals of our particular countries would be too strong a "libidinal reversal", in her own words.[5]

Mouffe rescues Schmitt's warning that politics, or antagonism, is not something that can be ruled out from this world. Politics exists precisely because there is not a definitive rational solution to social problems. Both Mouffe and Schmitt claim that if the political is not made explicit, if sides are not allowed to fight and declare victory or admit defeat, the political will somehow come back, sometimes in undesirable and unexpected forms. For Mouffe, the left's contemporary surrender to neoliberalism, its denial to confront the right with a radically different political project and instead its disguising itself as "centre-left" or "third way", is making the labour class turn to extreme-right parties because these are regarded as the true alternative to "the system".

As I will show in my empirical study, the EU is rarely politicised in left–right terms, at least in the two cases examined: Eurosceptic Yorkshire and pro-European Galicia. In Yorkshire, there exists a true politicisation of the EU, but the friend–enemy distinction is not displayed along party lines. It's a political fight between the UK and Brussels. It's a politicisation conditioned by the identification deficit between the British and the EU superstructure. In Galicia, identification with Europe works relatively well, but politicisation is not a matter of ideological

opposites: it merely consists of the defence of the regional interest, in the fight for limited resources (namely regional development aid).

Schmitt's report on the crisis of parliamentarianism, though partly bound to the particular conditions of the Weimar Republic, is said to have foreseen the contemporary empowerment of executives vis-à-vis parliaments. However, I would like to apply Schmitt's insights to the public communication of EU politics, in particular those politics played out at the EP.

According to Schmitt, the two basic pillars of the institution of parliament – discussion and publicity – are being eroded by universal suffrage. When the bourgeois "demos" gives way to the national "demos", heterogeneity gets in through class differences. Discussion is no longer aimed at reaching the best solution because the multiclass parliament represents many different interests (or political identities) that are not easily reconciled. Discussions or, better said, brokering bargains move away from the publicity of the plenary to the privacy of parliamentary committees. The very reason why parliamentarianism was born, to tame the "brutality" of power through discussion and publicity, to fight against cabinet arbitrariness, is betrayed in the age of mass democracy. This leads Schmitt to conclude that "publicity and discussion have been transformed into [...] an empty and futile formality" (2008 [1926], p. 106).

Although the committees of the EP are actually open to publicity (something that does not happen in all national EU parliaments), with EU politics the sensation that the truly important things are happening in the background and not in the limelight is even more present, perhaps because the EP does not yet have the right of universal legislative initiative, and key legislative procedures, like COREPER meetings, are held behind closed doors. Although the European Commission has the sole right of legislative initiative under all of the treaties, authors such as Moravcsik (1998) underscore its diminishing manoeuvring capacity, suggesting that the authentic law initiators are to be found in the national bureaucracies and their permanent representations in Brussels. At the EU level, power assumes all of those qualities that Schmitt attributed to liberalism. Power is, in fact, impersonal (which makes popular accountability very difficult), and lawmaking, despite the changes that have granted the EP with more powers, is still only partially in the hands of elected representatives. I would argue that in Schmittian terms, the EU situation could be conceived as a hypertrophy of liberalism, with technocrats and bureaucrats stealing politics, antagonism, from the

public light. If in the Weimar Republic the main challenge to the system came from democracy – with undisciplined splinter parties threatening the liberal bourgeois freedoms – with the EU the problem is reversed: it is liberalism (in the form of its hypertrophy, technocracy) that is taking over democracy. This does not mean that politics is ruled out of existence. Politics comes back through difficult bargains that, in many cases, are the result not of public-spirited discussion but of the trading of interests. This is why for some of the political actors in my empirical study the EU seems to be "a system with a life of its own", something already anticipated by Schmitt in his critique of liberalism. For him, "procedural democracy" (a democracy subordinated to the logic of legalism and bureaucracy, with weak popular inputs) causes institutions to "acquire a total autonomy, functioning according to their own logic, independently of the will and action of the constituent power of the people" (Kalyvas, 2000, p. 1556).

The combination of the enlargement of the public sphere with the loss of its critical-rational teeth in the era of mass democracy was precisely Habermas' main concern in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. In her introduction to the English translation of Schmitt's *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, Ellen Kennedy notes that Habermas' reflections parallel Schmitt's concern about the universalisation of suffrage and the rise of corporate interests. For both Habermas and Schmitt, their contemporary parliaments stood as a poor resemblance of their authentic liberal, bourgeois-time originals (Kennedy, 2008 [1998], p. 215).

The empirical task at hand

In this book, I take the risky strategy of mixing two seemingly antithetic authors as the bedrocks of my theoretical framework: Schmitt and Habermas. What I draw from them is not their divergent view of politics and law but their analytical categories. In the first case, I borrow from Schmitt the concepts of domesticisation and politicisation. After all, these are the two elements that give shape to the touchstone against which the viability of any liberal democracy may be judged. Is there an identification between the government and the governed that allows for the implementation of redistributive policies? And once this underlying identity is settled, can politics be agonised – that is, subdued from the friend–enemy clash to an ideological conflict between left and right? From Habermas, I borrow his concern about corporatism's influence in removing politics from the public realm, a tendency that may be

even more present today at the European level than in 1950s and 1960s Adenauer's Germany. Habermas also provides me with a categorisation of the members of any public sphere: politicians, the judiciary, the executive, journalists and interest groups (Habermas, 2006).

My aim is to look at the underlying causes of the distance between EU institutions and their citizens. Are these causes related to communications – that is, to biased or incomplete journalistic mediation, and to a feeble commitment on the part of national elites to explain Europe? Or are these causes more structural, meaning related to the way in which the EU has been integrated, the sort of cultural community Europe is, and the modes of governance under which the EU is run?

As can be seen in more detail in the methodological appendices, I have investigated the lack of identity (domesticisation deficit) and lack of ideological conflict (politicisation deficit) of EU politics by resorting to a multimethod strategy known as "network ethnography" (Howard, 2002, 2006). This approach is particularly applicable to those contexts in which the "community" under study is geographically spread, as is the case with the members of the European public sphere (politicians, journalists and interest groups at different geographical levels). Rather than spending months or even years at a particular setting with a given community as a traditional anthropologist would, I decided to interview and observe the members of the European public sphere, and to ask for their lay theories about the proverbial distance between the EU and its citizens. Conducting in-depth interviews with subjects from 27 member states, along with their national representatives in Brussels, would have made my work more representative but probably unfeasible. I decided to select two European regions with opposing views on the EU: Galicia in northwest Spain, largely pro-European, and Yorkshire in the north of England, a beacon of Euroscepticism. These are, admittedly, two extreme cases that may not represent the different shades of public opinion across the Continent. However, my choosing of these cases goes beyond convenience or feasibility: following Schmitt, it could be argued that the essence of the categories under study becomes sharper when extremes are compared.

The European public sphere is multilevel, as was my approach. Network ethnography proceeds in two steps. First, a network analysis of the interactions within the community under study serves to reveal the key nodes to be approached for further observation and interviewing, a task that would constitute the second step. In his seminal study on the "e-politics" community in the USA, Howard (2006) used conference

brochures to analyse the recurring connections between individuals, businesses, foundations and activists involved in online politics. Instead of industry conferences, I decided to analyse the two benchmark newspapers in the regions under study: *La Voz de Galicia* and *The Yorkshire Post*. My use of regional newspapers as my sources for network data is grounded on two arguments. First, at least among the non-sensationalist press, these are the most widely read newspapers in their regions. Self-defined as "Yorkshire's national newspaper", with a daily circulation of 47,760 copies and a daily audience of 119,000 readers in 2008, *The Yorkshire Post* reaches a wider audience in the region than any of the other "serious" national newspapers (*The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Times* or *The Independent*). *La Voz de Galicia* has an even more dominant position in its region, with a daily circulation of 105,000 copies and a daily audience of more than 0.5 million readers. As a matter of fact, half of those reading a newspaper in Galicia read *La Voz de Galicia*.[6]

Second, studying the network of sources in EU-related news stories that linked the EU to the two regions was at once instrumental and innovative. It was instrumental because I could select the nodes (the most central sources in the network) for interviews and observation. It was innovative because it allowed me to take a look at a usually neglected but fundamental geographic and administrative level when dealing with EU politics: the substate regions. Nearly half of the EU budget is spent on regional development (the 2010 EU budget devoted 45 per cent of its €141.5 billion to the "cohesion & competitiveness for growth and employment" category). Regional is the scale at which European electoral constituencies could become uniform, as Europe could be united not only through member states but also, and perhaps primordially, through substate regions, which would link up directly with Brussels, as many nationalists in Scotland or Catalonia dream of doing. Without necessarily giving credit to these irredentist claims, the idea of a "Europe of the regions" was conspicuously promoted by the EU in the 1990s. The dream of building a Europe of regions, rather than a Europe of nation states, has a long tradition on the Continent and proponents in almost every member state.

Network analysis was not my only sampling method. When conducting interviews, I asked my subjects to name other colleagues who they thought could help me in my research, so my method also made room for snowball sampling. This allowed me to access voices which might be highly relevant but might never, or only rarely, be quoted in the press. When coding the news stories for sources in order to perform

an analysis of their relationships, I also coded for the topics covered in the news linking the regions with the EU. And, more importantly, I operationalised the concepts of "domesticisation" and "politicisation" as a series of news frames, which offered me a relevant finding: even in those regions where the EU is positively domesticised – that is, where the EU is seen as an institution identified with the goals of the region and its people – ideological or agonistic politicisation is absent. In Galicia, where the EU is positively regarded, European politics is not a matter of left versus right but a matter of resource mobilisation in order to keep the existing stream of EU subsidies. This finding challenges one of the most prevalent views in the UK among pro-Europeans: that if the EU were fairly covered by the news media, EU politics would be "normal" – that is, akin to national politics. That's not the case, as I show in the empirical chapters of this book.

Conclusion

From a Schmittian perspective, it is indeed a great irony that the EU founding fathers were such devout Catholics yet gave Europe such a liberal regime. As a Catholic, Schmitt was on the side of natural law, a law that would be in accordance with pre-existing, God-given values. On the other side stood positive law, which is said to be manmade – the liberal law, the law that challenges God, as Prometheus did by stealing fire from divinity (Ruíz-Miguel, 1996).

However, Schmitt and the founding fathers of the would-be EU shared the same concern about the weakness of parliaments. A mischievous Eurosceptic wanting to connect Schmitt with the EU might even point out that, after all, Schmitt's call of Catholic unity against the Soviet enemy would (2011 [1925]) have had a fairly concrete realisation in the European Community, commanded in its early years (and arguably today) by anti-communist Christian democrats.

Schmitt and the EU founding fathers may have agreed with regard to the low esteem in which they held parliaments. The Second World War made obvious that Schmittian "decisionism" could not come from a hypertrophy of democracy (populism), at least not through peaceful means. However, the opposite solution (liberalism's hypertrophy, technocracy) was yet to be proved wrong. And, apparently, it was not. Europe was successfully integrated from above, almost imperceptibly. The French and the Germans no longer see each other as enemies, but this transformation has come at the price of technocracy taking

over democracy at the level of supranational government. Perhaps it could not be otherwise, given democracy's intimate relationship with nationalism (Kuehnelt-Leddihn, 1952).

In the next chapters, I will describe the way in which the EU has been integrated, and the way in which the EU is governed. I will also try to ascertain the sort of community that Europe is. Each of these three issues needs to be thoroughly explained in order to understand why the EU is distant and apolitical. As I will demonstrate through my interviews with EU-related political actors, the systemic-cultural factors are far better suited to explaining the twin deficit of domesticisation and politicisation than the "communications gap" argument.

2
The Antipopular Bias of Integration by Stealth

"Do you think a federation would be the solution for Europe's economic problems?", asked the journalist of the princess of an imaginary European country at a crowded press conference. "Any initiative to encourage the cooperation among European countries would be welcome", replied Her Majesty, with the political correctness and opacity of a European commissioner. The princess of this story is played by Audrey Hepburn in *Roman Holiday*, a film by William Wyler released in 1953, one year before the parliamentary rejection of the European Defence Community (EDC) in France, considered the turning point from a timidly political to an almost exclusive economic European integration.

Since its inception in the 1950s, the construction of Europe has been elite-driven, indirect and incremental. This makes the contemporary concern about "reaching citizens" on the part of EU authorities intriguing, by either its naïvety or its cynicism. As I shall argue in this chapter, citizen disengagement from EU affairs should be seen as the most likely consequence of that antipopular process, not as an elusive enigma. Putting the blame on communication (on the journalistic and political mediation of EU affairs) diverts attention from the twin deficits of domesticisation (lack of identity) and politicisation (lack of visible political conflict). The etiology of Europe's citizen malaise is complex but could be traced back to three factors: the way Europe has been integrated (the topic of this chapter), the way Europe is governed (the topic of Chapter 3) and the problem of the inextricability of democracy and community (the topic of Chapter 4).

Being counterfactual is one of the traditional scholastic ways of detecting the root causes of a problematic issue. So if citizens were to

participate actively in European elections and the public sphere, what would Europe look like? Citizens would have to be content with the opaque law-making process of the EU, where most of the action occurs below the interministerial level of the Council of Ministers, in non-public meetings between the European Commission's civil servants and the permanent representatives of the national governments in Brussels. Citizens would also have to believe in the alleged pan-European vision of a European Commission that, nevertheless, is tightly controlled by the national interests of the member states. With the EU determining the macroeconomic policy of the Eurozone members states and, since the Euro crisis of 2010, posed to oversee their national budgets, the informed European citizen might feel powerless due to their inability to interact with the untouchable European layer of power. As will be shown in the closing section of this chapter, dealing with public opinion and European integration, survey data suggest that Europeans are not so much against the idea of a European union as against the EU as it exists today.

From the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1950 to the first popular referendum on accession (in the UK in 1976), European integration progressed for 26 years without the minimum popular input (Anderson, 2009, p. 16). Pan-European elections for a multinational chamber were introduced in 1979, but their procedures are not yet uniform and are played within a national framework, with regional or national, but not cross-European, party lists. The national interest still trumps the traditional political cleavages, with, for instance, socialist EP candidates openly supporting the election of a conservative commission president (that was the case of Spanish and Portuguese Socialist candidates in the 2009 European Elections). Furthermore, the understanding of what "conservative" or "socialist" means varies according to national culture. If Majone's idea of the EU as a confederation is accepted (Majone, 2005), it can be concluded that the EU's much-debated "democratic deficit" is just a natural consequence of its confederal nature: the EU's constituents are not individuals but corporate bodies, be they states or, as in the case of the EU, also private non-governmental civil associations and interest groups.

A confederal power structure hinders identification with the supranational centre and discourages its politicisation along a left versus right axis. The corporate bodies, not the individuals, are the ones relating to the supranational layer of government. Identity and politics have difficulties reaching above the national level. Tsoukalis (2005) terms the EU as a successful example of enlightened despotism: "Integration has

been mostly the product of an elite conspiracy, with good intentions and pretty remarkable results" (p. 224). But given its influence on the everyday life of Europeans, the time has come for more democracy if the project is to survive with popular consent: "The elitist character of European integration has been rapidly reaching its limits. Although political leadership may continue to play an important role, especially on the big issues, the European project needs to become more democratic and hence more explicitly political" (Tsoukalis, 2005, p. 224). The need to "politicise" the EU has been a persistent call among scholars for years now. This is why it has to be said how "anti-political" European integration and governance are, and why no communication campaigns can fix the antipopular constraints of a polity built by elites, governed as a confederation and still in search of a demos.

Of the several theories or lines of thought explaining European integration, three of them stand out: neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism and federalism. According to these, the construction of Europe may be seen as either the product of technocratic planning of interstate bargaining, or the quest for a United States of Europe. In fairness, European integration can be understood better if the three theoretical approaches are all taken into account. The EU is certainly a union of states, but its proper functioning would probably be quite difficult without the work of a caste of international civil servants popularly known as the "Euro-mandarins" (Enzensberger, 2012) or the "Eurocrats" (Spinelli, 1966). The very existence of a European parliament and the attempt to endow the Continent with a "constitution" are the result of a federalist vision.

In my review of these three integration theories, I will pay special attention to the place of a European public or "demos" in them, as this will be key to explaining European citizens' lack of involvement with the EU. Only federalism pursues explicitly the creation or reaffirmation of a European people. For neofunctionalism, the creation of a European community is a by-product of previous, more concrete and smaller "*de facto* solidarities". For intergovernmentalism, the European people are a rather futile pursuit, as nation states continue to be the main players, the "masters of the treaties" in the process of European unity. This focus on the role of a European people in European integration is needed in order to stress that both neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism are biased against popular involvement. It also relates to the problem addressed in Chapter 4, the seeming inextricability of democracy and community/nation: without a European nation, the only way of having a European polity might be by sidelining democracy.

Neofunctionalism

The interwar period (1919–1939) was fertile in reflections on a world federation as a means to avert a new world war. The League of Nations was the embryo of that global government, but its member states never relinquished a grain of their sovereignty to this international organisation. In 1943, David Mitrany's pamphlet *A Working Peace System* advanced a new proposal for the management of international relations and the prevention of conflict: the creation of functionally specific international organisations to which its constituent member states would transfer their sovereignty in the management of a particular task or policy area (Mitrany, 1966 [1943]). Mitrany's original intention was conflict prevention and not political integration, but this supranational sector-specific recipe for the regulation of policy areas that calls for transnational cooperation would later be applied to the case of the European Community. Neofunctionalism, of which Ernst Haas (2004 [1958]) is a key proponent, is the application of transnational task management to a particular region. Although Haas and his disciples looked for functionalism in Latin America and other regions of the world, it was in Europe where technocratic integration seemed to be more successful.

Functionalism and neofunctionalism are full of antipopular biases. Although in neofunctionalism sectoral integration could be seen as conducive towards some sort of European state, Mitrany's functionalism had among its main virtues the capacity of uniting, for the purpose of a specific task, irreconcilable enemies. It was precisely because of its avoidance of identity and politics that functionalism worked. Actually, Mitrany himself saw the then European Community as an old type of political association, aiming towards a regional state. A European federation, Mitrany claimed, was an idea of the past. Functionalism did not ask for loyalties but for elite agreement. It did not seek popular consent but elite co-optation. Europe (or the world at large) could work together on sector-specific transnational tasks without the need of a European people or a world community. For Mitrany, identities could get in the way of collaborative partnerships that would make sense from the pure rational point of view. Functionalism allowed for partnerships that, despite being beneficial for the countries involved, would most probably be rejected by their populations on the basis of emotions or political identity if they were made explicit or subject to popular approval:

> Has it not been proved that the mere mention of political union between the two Irelands, of federation between Pakistan and India,

> causes the two sides to raise the barriers and bolt the gates more firmly against each other? Is the reluctance to join in visibly beneficial practical arrangements not due precisely to a fear that these might overlay old political spites in the minds of their peoples?
>
> (Mitrany, 1971 [1969], p. 538)

The so-called "father of Europe", businessman and diplomat Jean Monnet, has been named by Haas (2004 [1958]) as the forerunner of neofunctionalist integration. Monnet had devised the collaboration of supplies and the pooling of resources of the allies in the First and Second World Wars. The offices of dignitaries and ministers, not the hustings, were his natural landscape. After the debacle of the EDC, Monnet adamantly held that European integration would be easier to attain in those areas amenable to state planning (e.g. transportation, nuclear energy or technology research). He built on previous experience and success, as he had been the architect of the French system of indicative economic planning. To his surprise and disappointment, national governments went for a more sensible area of cooperation (a common market) that, ironically, would generate even more opportunities for "sectoral expansion" or "spillovers" from one policy area to the other. A central concept in neofunctionalism, "spillovers" consist of unintended policy takeovers by the functionally specific international organisation due to the intimate relationship between the new policy area and others previously managed by the functionally specific supranational institution. Monnet himself was amazed by the progress towards a common market without the harmonisation of labour conditions and industrial standards (Anderson, 2009, pp. 15–16).

The "unintended consequences" of functional integration have always been one of the most contentious features of what would later be known as the Monnet method of integration. On the one hand, it has fed the conspirational theories of Eurosceptics, as functionalism lures national governments into an integrationist trap that they could not foresee. For intergovernmentalists like Moravcsik (1998), these unwanted side-effects are one of the greatest fallacies of neofunctionalism, as in his view the national governments have been at all times in control of their own decisions, and aware of their consequences. Very tellingly, as Moravcsik (2006) presciently notes, whereas Haas's seminal book has a passive title, *The Uniting of Europe* (1958), implying the almost inadvertent and almost automatic pace that neofunctionalism attributes to European integration, Moravcsik's

reference treatise on European integration stresses the agency of national governments, as they actively and repeatedly have bet on *The Choice for Europe* (1998).

Determinism and automatism are, indeed, core features of neofunctionalism. Once a bit of sovereignty has been transferred to the supranational agency, further transfers of sovereignty will follow in other related policy areas or industries. As Haas (2004 [1958]) explained, sectoral integration enjoys an "expansive logic" of its own. The reason why more and more policy areas are integrated is not a federalist zeal on the part of the member states. It is because of mere efficiency, not ideology: sector expansion favours further integration even in the absence of an ideological pro-federal or Europeanist impetus. For a European common market to work effectively and to avoid unfair competition, industrial standards have to be harmonised. Working hours of lorry drivers have to be regulated. The health care of a sick worker in another member state has to be taken into account.

Functionalism, therefore, seemed the most applicable treatment for post-war Europe. Former enemies could be integrated. Only elites would have to be persuaded. Passions and identities would not matter, or at least they could be subdued. And, in case of opposition even within the elite establishment, the case for aseptic efficiency could be raised to justify further sectoral expansion.

Much has been said about Monnet's scorn for parliaments and his preference for organised supranational groups of industrialists to sense societal concerns. The weakness of parliaments, or their sidelining, and the reliance on non-governmental groups for consultation, is a key principle of functionalism. It is also a product of Monnet's experience of the chaos of the French Fourth Republic's weak parliaments and the disintegration of the Weimar Republic. Nevertheless, it cannot be stated that Monnet did not care at all about having an operative transnational parliament. After all, he did want a federation for Europe, not the network of sector-specific organisations envisioned by orthodox, Mitranian functionalism (Anderson, 2009, p. 117). In any case, Mitrany's view of democracy and parliamentarism is worth recalling, as it can reveal the position of functionalism on the "politicisation" debate. For Mitrany, the traditional political structures (government, parliament and judiciary) were ill-equipped for dealing with a continuously changing environment in which technology and science made national borders useless or even counterproductive. The new sector-specific agencies would need small "functional parliaments" to have their activities scrutinised. These mini-parliaments would be formed

by experts and would act as a review committee to hold the agency accountable: "Such functional representation offers a valid remedy for the growing power and insulation of the administrator: it brings together those who know with the things they know, and in which they can both initiate policy and judge its performance" (Mitrany, 1971 [1969], p. 540). The representatives in the traditional national parliament are not experts, and therefore would not be qualified enough to control the new sectoral agencies. For Mitrany, policy should be determined by experts, as most contemporary issues were too technical for the average citizen to decide upon: "Given the present fluidity of economic and social life, policy has to be a matter of continuous and adaptable choice and action, not a grand one-time political act, like a general election. In the incipient vast ranges of international government no other way of real participation appears evident" (Mitrany, 1971 [1969], p. 540).

Therefore, for Mitrany, politics has no sense in the world of science. The expert knows the right solution. McLaren (1985) calls this "the fallacy of technical self-determination": "Even after scientific research has been done, technical experts often cannot agree on conclusions" (p. 144). Although in today's EU the EP offers a formal ground for the expression of conflictive political views, the fact that policy initiation is still formally granted to a technical body, the European Commission, could be understood as part of the functionalist legacy. Law is not tarnished by ideology or popular whims but emerges, ideally, out of the superior judgement of the international civil servant, who is assumed to be ideology-free and not interested in the power politics of interstate quarrels. This shunning of traditional politics, the narcotisation of ideology by technocracy and bureaucracy, is key for the explanation of the politicisation deficit. Imber (1984) has termed this "the problem of separability of functionalism and politics" (p. 114). There are certain policy areas, it is argued, that do not need politics, as there are no winners or losers but users and consumers. For McLaren (1985), however, there is no possible escape from politics and values. The most technical or functional decisions can have redistributive consequences: "Functionalist solutions, no matter how technically rational and objectively efficient they may be assumed to be, will confer monetary gains on some people, groups, or countries, and monetary losses on others" (p. 146). In his view, politicians know as much or even more than experts what citizens may want or need. Since politicians are accountable, it is in their own interest to be in tune with societal preferences: "Politicians have just as much expertise as any of functionalism's administrative experts when it comes to judging how citizens want their society shaped" (p. 150).

McLaren also criticises functionalism's idealisation of the technocrat, as if international civil servants had all the same values and world vision (1985, p. 147).

At this point, the following question should be answered. To what extent is the EU neofunctionalist? According to Haas (2004 [1958]), there are several ways by which European integration can be said to have proceeded along functionalist lines:

- The High Authority of the ECSC was the realisation of the functionalist principle of creating a supranational body that goes beyond mere intergovernmental cooperation. The High Authority then, and the European Commission today were supranational (not intergovernmental) and (at least in theory) independent from governments (Haas, 2004 [1958], p. 246).
- The Founding Six were interested in achieving a form of close cooperation that would bind them to adhere to common decisions, but for different reasons. There was not a commonly shared European ideology among them. As typically in functionalism, sectoral integration can proceed in the absence of a shared identity. In Haas' words, "the acceptance of ECSC is best explained by the convergence of demands within and among the nations concerned, not by a pattern of identical demands and hopes" (2004 [1958], p. 286). In any likelihood, the "doctrinal vagueness" (p. 290) of the Paris Treaty (1951) was more an advantage than a hindrance for integration.
- Although Moravcsik and the intergovernmental school will dispute the role of technocrats in the drive for European unity, for Haas European integration owes more to technocrats and interest groups than to charismatic politicians or federalist ideologues: "The economic technician, the planner, the innovating industrialist, and trade unionist advance the movement [for European unity] – not the politician, the scholar, the poet, or the writer". (Haas, 2004 [1958], Preface to the 1968 edition, p. xix)
- The deliberate piecemeal path towards integration outlined in the Schuman declaration (Europe shall not be built in one day, but step by step) is obviously functionalist. It is based on the core principle of sovereignty transfers. Haas' neofunctionalism added the expectation that sovereignty transfers would be accompanied by a transfer of loyalties towards "a new centre". Although Haas presciently talked about "multiple loyalties", the shifting of allegiances did not occur as swiftly and as completely as expected, as Haas himself would acknowledge: "Not cultural unity but economic advantage proved to

> be an acceptable shared goal among the Six [founding states]". (2004 [1958], Preface to the 1968 edition, p. xix)

Surprisingly, more than 50 years after the Schuman declaration and after several significant treaty amendments, the EU of today is not that different from the ECSC. Both the EU and the ECSC are a combination of supranationalism (high authority/the commission), and intergovernmentalism (Council of Ministers and intergovernmental conferences), with a scent of federalism (common assembly/EP). Even in those policy areas that are supposedly the exclusive competence of member states, such as health care and education, the European dimension is inevitably sneaking in, encouraging the harmonisation and electronic sharing of health records, and the standardisation of educational curricula. Functional pressures are there. The different cost of medical operations in the member states has given way to a development known as "medical tourism" (a search for the cheapest surgery) that had to be stopped by member states in 2010. The mobility of students and university professors is a challenge for the academic communes of the Latin European countries, which have erected new national walls (national accreditation boards) to keep the old privileges under a façade of quality supervision. Even if one admits the basic tenet of the intergovernmental school (that national governments set the pace of integration), the seemingly unstoppable tide of sectoral expansion predicted by functionalism can hardly be neglected. The latest dilemma, brought by the 2008 global economic crisis, is whether monetary union can continue to exist without fiscal federalism (tax harmonisation and interstate transfers to defaulting states).

Intergovernmentalism

The mere thought of a "democratic deficit" in Europe, Majone (2005) contends, is an implicit political judgement over the finality of the EU. It is only when one desires a European federation that pan-European democratic concerns arise. If one sees the EU as a confederation where most vital issues are managed at the state level, the democratic deficit disappears. From the perspective of intergovernmentalism, low-popular involvement with EU issues is to be expected: European matters like industrial standardization and food safety regulations are important, but boring and low-salient for voters. National governments are always in control, the EU technocracy has no better information than any national bureaucracy (therefore the role of entrepreneurs like Monnet

and Delors is called into question), and sovereignty is pooled or delegated to the commission when governments want to guarantee the future communal compliance with a given commitment through a third institution (Moravcsik, 1998). There is no creeping loss of sovereignty but conscious and controlled cooperation. After a short federalist spell in the 1950s, supranationalism would have steadily lost more and more power, with national bureaucracies taking control of the legislative process (through the COREPER) and national governments becoming the indirect policy-initiators. Economic interdependence, commercial and national interest-group interests would be the main drive for integration. The EU, then, would be a conscious response of national governments to the unique economic interdependence of the European continent (Milward, 2000 [1992]). Paraphrasing Adam Smith, one could say that just as the baker brings you bread in time because of his own self-interest in making money through an efficient service delivery, European governments have created the EU for their own national benefit, not because of any federal ideal but because they had no other choice than to find a means of managing their economic interdependence effectively. The drive for European integration was not geopolitical (achieving peace or a continental power status) or ideological (federalism) but economic (Moravcsik, 1998, p. 473). European unity would be the consequence of the "very strong pressures for trade liberalisation in Europe" because of the relevance of intraregional and intra-industry trade on the European continent (p. 495).

Moravcsik's theoretical contribution to the intergovernmentalist tradition, known as "liberal intergovernmentalism" (LI), refines previous "realist" accounts by stressing the importance of private actors in politics, who, like states, shift their preferences depending on the historical context. Rather than being the result of the unstoppable phagocytosis of policy areas by the Euro-ameba, LI explains European integration by resorting to a multistage model, whereby a) the preferences of member states are defined; b) agreements are reached through bargaining; and c) institutions are created or adopted to guarantee the interstate commitments. For Moravcsik, integration is the result of interstate bargaining, not the consequence of central planning from supranational institutions. Still, Moravcsik gives credit to ideology, and admits that part of the reason why the EU is more than a free trade association lies in the federalist zeal of some of its founders and its lingering presence in some members, like Benelux or Germany: "Federalist ideology is still required to account for the general institutional structure of the EC: its quasi-constitutional form, and the modest tendency of

more 'federalist' countries to favor greater transfers of sovereignty" (1998, p. 157).

A key author from which Moravcsik has, admittedly, drawn much inspiration is Alan Milward. Along with Stanley Hoffman and Robert O. Keohane, Milward has been among the most prominent scholars in holding the counterintuitive argument that, contrary to a challenge to the old nation states, the EU was the deliberate creation of European states with the purpose of, precisely, guaranteeing their survival as welfare providers in an increasingly global economy (Milward, 2000 [1992]). An interdependent continent needs a regime of policy coordination, and that regime is the EU. Intergovernmentalism assumes that Europeans do not see the European layer of politics as relevant enough to be involved in, and that there are no accountability problems with EU decisions, given the mutual control that member states exert on each other. Interestingly, intergovernmentalism deems institutional checks and balances sufficient for the eradication of corruption in the system. It is assumed that the diversity of interests in such a plural union serves as an autoregulatory watchdog. No EU-wide public sphere or European popular debate is missed.

Moravcsik defends the idea of a European constitutional settlement, by which the division of competences between European and national issues has reached a point of stability, calling "integration" to an end. By virtue of this constitutional compromise, the issues that are most dear to voters (pensions, taxes and welfare systems) are managed by the member governments, whereas the issues related to the common market (competence, harmonisation and industrial standards) are dealt with at the EU level. In the words of Alesina and Spolaore (2005), there would be European centralisation where "economies of scale and externalities are important", and dencentralisation where the "heterogeneity of preferences" among EU states is high (p. 206). European elections would deserve the low-key status that they enjoy, as the issues at stake are of very low-relevance for the average voter. Interestingly, after the 2008 crisis, it was precisely those allegedly untouchable national competences that were affected by decisions at the extraordinary Council of Heads of State or Government of the Euro Area of 7 May 2010. National annual budgets will be reviewed by Brussels before their approval in the respective national chambers, and some states have been kindly warned to reduce their public deficits and raise the age of retirement. Up to a point, this is still consistent with intergovernmentalism, which foresees integrative pushes driven by external shocks, such as economic crises. However, the extent of these changes (the Brussels

oversight of a core national law, the annual budget) put into question the alleged low-prominence of EU affairs. Even in pro-EU Spain, the Brussels-induced economic reforms of 2010 were seen by the conservative opposition party as the effective transformation of Spain into a "protectorate" under the surveillance and control of the European Commission.[1]

From an intergovernmentalist perspective, national interest is behind seemingly European-minded programmes like the regional development funds. Instead of a mark of European solidarity, they are a compensation measure to lure into the EU those states that are less initially inclined to benefit from membership. That was the case with the UK (where regional funds were a compensation for the Common Agricultural Policy) and Spain (which received money for infrastructure in exchange for unfavourable quotas for its fishing and farming industries). Moravcsik calls this "asymmetric interdependence", where the most developed states gain market share for their products, and the newcomers receive compensations for accepting the rules of the Euro-game. There is a loss of politicisation in this bargain. The actors of the communitarised sectors affected by these dealings (fishermen, farmers) form strong corporatist alliances with the respective national governments, who act as their champions in Brussels. As long as the "stakeholders" are satisfied, fisheries and agriculture are kept out of the public debate.

Another depoliticising force is that of unanimity. Whenever possible, the Council of Ministers tries to avoid voting. When voting is necessary, rulings have to be approved by supermajorities of 70% (Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig, 2009, p. 74). If this is paired with the fact that it is the member governments that implement what is decided by the council at the EU level, the result is a series of decisions from which conflict has been removed (by an appeal to compromise) and whose origin is difficult to trace by the average European (given that it is the member governments that appear as the executors of those rulings, blurring the face of the council). Intergovernmentalism does not see as problematic the role of the Council of Ministers as the primary legislator in the EU, despite this body being collectively accountable to no one. Actually, Moravcsik openly admits that the great advantage of the council for national governments is that it can "bargain free of domestic constraints" (1998, p. 311).

Although LI is usually read as a straight rejection of neofunctionalism, Moravcsik has called Haas a "visionary" – not because of the accuracy of his theoretical tenets (LI denies the role of political entrepreneurs and unintended consequences) but because he agrees with Haas that

the path to a successful European integration would not, and should not, involve the Europeans:

> In the 1950s Haas correctly perceived that the EU would not become a success by pursuing the federalist strategy of public debate, elections, and other techniques for building popular democratic legitimacy [...] Instead, as we now know, it established itself by helping to meet concrete functional challenges within the context of the power that national governments delegated to or pooled in it.
>
> (Moravcsik, 2006, p. 161)

Federalism

Prejudices usually get in the way of understanding, and this can easily be felt whenever the issue of federalism in the EU is discussed. For the British political class and mass media, federalism means centralisation. For Germans or Spaniards, it means just the opposite: decentralisation and empowerment of the periphery. Federalism is built upon the contradictory principle of a unity of diversity, of a pact (*foedus*) to centralise some decisions while respecting local autonomy. Although the EU and the USA share a similar motto ("united in diversity", "*e pluribus unum*"), Eurofederalists usually try to assuage the fears of nationalists by resorting to the argument that a federation can be multinational, multilingual and multicultural, like India or Switzerland.

Monnet himself could be deemed responsible for the identification between the EU and the USA. He actually headed a Committee for a United States of Europe and was an advocate of US governments in Europe. For decades, Eurofederalists have been showcasing other models of federalism for the EU, like the highly decentralised Germany, or the fragile federal states of Belgium and Spain (this latter being federal *de facto* though not *de jure*).

At the heart of the debate about a federal Europe is the possibility of multiple identities and loyalties (Lodge, 1978), which is what can facilitate a direct link between the individual and the federal layer of power. Such a link is conspicuously absent in the European case, and accounts for much of the domesticisation and politicisation deficits. The federal principle of unity and diversity can bring about either a confederation or a federation. A confederation is a union of states; a federation is a "union of individuals in a body politic, suggesting the unity of one people or nation" (Burgess, 2000, p. 30). Despite much rhetoric about a "European citizenship", the constituents of the EU are its states, not its individuals.

As a matter of constitutional fact, European citizenship is granted only to those who are already nationals of an EU member state. Those immigrants pursuing the "European dream", if there is such a thing, cannot hope to become Europeans without first becoming a national of one of the EU member states.

At all times the intermediate layer of the member state is present, making the EU closer to a confederation than to a federation. MEPs usually carry two voting lists to the plenaries: that of their parliamentary group and that of their national delegation.[2] There is no such thing as a European political career: the way to the EP is always mediated by the national parties (Siedentop, 2000). National quotas are the first striking fact that a Euro-minded EU job applicant finds. National delegations to the EU, especially those of the biggest states, are staffed by hundreds of civil servants and diplomats to uphold the national interest in all areas of legislation. In some cases, as will be revealed in the empirical part of this book, the national permanent representations exert a close control over national press correspondents to make sure that their point of view is closer to the national than to the wider European interest.

Because nation states are the main locus of power in Europe, there could not be a European federation without them being principal actors. After the difficulties in ratifying the Maastricht Treaty via referenda in a few states, scholarly and media commentary concluded that the Monnet road to federalism (indirect, incremental, technocratic) was exhausted (Featherstone, 1994). Some suggested a return to the ideas of Europe's quintessential federalist, Italian politician Altiero Spinelli, who advocated a more explicitly federal Europe. For Monnet, the European federation was the endpoint of incremental transnational cooperation. For Spinelli, the European federation should be a starting point. Strong, visible, powerful central European institutions should be constitutionalised, and Europeans should be invited to take part in them more actively. Contrary to Monnet, Spinelli did not believe that functional integration would automatically lead to a European federation, as functionalism leaves the European political centre very weak. Nationalism would be set to prevail without strong European, popular-based institutions. Instead of organic growth, Spinelli claimed, Europe needed institutional reform (Burgess, 2000, p. 36). Without strong central European institutions, there cannot be a true European perspective (only a national one) to address Europe's challenges (Burgess, 2000, p. 117).

A recurrent issue for Spinelli was that of a décalage between the unavoidable interdependency of the Continent's countries (in

economic, cultural and military terms) and the narrow scope of Europe's politics and institutions, which were still bound to the limits of the nation states. His Ventotene Manifesto, co-written with Italian politician Ernesto Rossi while in exile, was admittedly inspired by the ideas of Italian economist Luigi Einaudi and British federalists William Beveridge and Lionel Robbins (Pinder, 1998). Federalisation of nation states was a logical historical leap, akin to the transition from the medieval anarchy to the modern nation state. In both cases, the previous order had become obsolete, and further economic development demanded a bigger scale of political organisation. In Robbins's words,

> The existence of restrictions to trade and movement between the different states of Europe today is as absurd as the existence of similar restrictions between the different provinces at earlier periods [...] As gunpowder rendered obsolete the feudal system, so the aeroplane renders obsolete the system of the independent sovereignties of Europe. A more comprehensive type of organisation is inevitable.
>
> (Robbins, 1939, in Pinder, 1998, p. 66)

The intergovernmentalist school has managed to leave the impression that federalist ideologues such as Spinelli or Euro-entrepreneurs such as commission presidents Hallstein, Mansholt and Delors were naïve idealists whose influence on European unity has been largely exaggerated. Michael Burgess has tried to restate the role of federalism and federalists in European integration: as much as it diverged from Spinelli's and Monnet's desires, the Treaty of Rome (1957) was a refined version of the pro-federalist Spaak Report of April 1956; Spinelli's own proposals for constitutional reform, that took shape in the first elected EP culminating in the EP draft European Union Treaty (1984), prepared the ground for further advances into European integration, such as the Single European Act (1987), the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the Treaty of Amsterdam (1998).[3]

Because of its pan-European scope and its representative nature once it became popularly elected after 1979, the EP, and its empowerment, has been one of the main agendas pursued by federalists like Spinelli. Paradoxically, the increase in its powers has been inversely proportional to popular participation. Voters' indifference might be granted, according to Anderson (2009, pp. 23, 60). There is no uniform electoral system (so the Europeanness of elections is diluted). MEPs do not vote on their own legislation but on that drafted by others (commission and council). Commission members take office after a vote of investiture by the

EP, but they are first selected by member governments. For Anderson, the EP "functions less like a legislature than a ceremonial apparatus of government, providing a symbolic façade not altogether unlike, say, the monarchy in Britain" (2009, p. 23).

Besides these well-known deficiencies, a further one, close to the core of the European project and to a certain idea of federalism, might be signalled: the ambivalent role of subsidiarity. As Burgess notes, in subsidiarity there is a chain of links between the federal power and the citizen, but a direct link between them is missing. Subsidiarity is closely related to corporatism, and it is in their combination that an explanation for the twin deficit of lack of identity and lack of conflict can be found. If the contemporary European political regime is an evolution of the "organic society" preached by both Calvinist thinkers such as Johannes Althusius and the Catholic Church (Burgess, 2000, p. 7), there are strong inbuilt roadblocks against individuals' involvement in such a political system.

First, subsidiarity makes the central authority invisible to the citizens, as the federal authority's presence is always mediated by a layer of power that is closer to the individual. Subsidiarity is not about a clear division of competences, with different administrations offering different services, as in federalism; it is about ensuring that decisions are not taken at a higher level of authority than is necessary. An ambiguous principle that serves both to allay the fears of antifederalists and to keep the flame of federalism alive among pro-integrationists is as follows:

> In areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community shall take action, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the member states and can therefore, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved by the Community.
>
> (Treaty on the European Union, 1992, Article 3b)

A key element of the subsidiarity principle is its indirectness. The EU comes into existence through its member states, not directly by itself. There are not competing bureaucracies (the federal and the state ones). The tendency is towards "substitute bureaucracies" (Haller, 2008) – that is, member state bureaucracies taking care of their own and the federal's tasks.

Second, in the organic society, representation is not based on the individual but on the territory and/or the functional, corporatist group. It is

the territorial constitutive organisation (the member state), not the individual, the one authorised to relate to the federal layer of power. It is the corporatist organisation, a functional body of people but not "the" people, the one that can be heard by the con/federal administrator or legislator.

Unable or unwilling to devise a direct relationship between the European citizen and the European government, Burgess contends that the EU is a new type of confederation, "a different type of union from those much-maligned confederations, more muscular and integrated in some respects, but less centralized than many modern confederations" (2000, p. 269). For him the difference between a confederation and a federation is more "a question of degree than principle" (2000, p. 264). The elusive direct link between the citizen and the federal government is eventually given up by Burgess. This surrender is akin to accepting that European democracy is impossible. For between a confederation and a federation, there is much more than a difference in intensity. There is a qualitative difference, the one between "mixed government" (individuals represented by the states) and democracy (individuals represented by themselves).

The inability of the European Communities to become a federation through the work of supranational technocracy was signalled by economist Ralph Dahrendorf as early as 1973, when he wrote that it was time to leave behind the dream of what he called the "First Europe" (a federation through technocratic means) and to acknowledge the unavoidable arrival of the "Second Europe" (intergovernmental, confederal) (cited by Taylor, 1983). For federalists such as Altiero Spinelli (1966), the "Europe of the offices" created by functionalists had already reached a point of necessary politicisation in the 1960s: "It is impossible to move too far ahead along functionalist lines without arriving at the point where either a federal or confederal choice has to be made" (p. 204). Although Spinelli envisioned an "anticonfederal consensus" at that time, it was Dahrendorf's confederal Second Europe that won over supranationalism.

Conclusion: Facing public opinion

Of all the possible readings of the negative referenda on the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands in 2005, there was one that was omitted by European leaders: the possibility that poll results were an actual popular verdict on what was being asked, a decision on the proposed constitutional shape for Europe. European leaders (both

EU-level and member-state representatives) were reluctant to read the referenda results in the same way as scholars such as Anderson (2009) or Haller (2008) have: as a demonstration that the French and Dutch did want to be part of a European union, but not the kind that was being offered: bureaucratic, elitist and opaque. Seen in this light, citizen reaction might not have been the product of fear (towards uncontrolled immigration, towards a European superstate) but the result of active and careful thought, as if the sort of Europe that the French and Dutch would like to see constitutionalised was different from the one that they were asked to ratify through popular vote. According to post-referenda Eurobarometer data cited by Haller (2008, p. 322), more than 80 per cent of the French and Dutch considered EU membership to be a good thing. In France, 75 per cent of those surveyed considered "essential" a constitution for Europe (this percentage was much lower in the Netherlands: only 41 per cent). But a clear majority in both countries (54.8 per cent in France, 61.6 per cent in Holland) rejected the European Constitution, and the overall turnout was high (70 per cent in France and 63.3 per cent in the Netherlands), indicative of the importance given by voters to the issue. If in the Netherlands the immigration debate could have obscured a true debate about the constitution, in France the public-mediated deliberation about the text was among the most lively in memory (Bruell, Mokre and Pausch, 2009).[4] The constitution was discussed, the media played their role, the public participated and the European Constitution was rejected. What if it was not the French national government (advocate of the constitution) that voters wanted to punish at the polls? What if the electorate had not been prey to myths about a Euro-induced rampant neoliberalisation of France? What if the French "no" was a "no" to the European Constitution? This seemed an unlikely event (or an uncomfortable thought) for the political establishment (in the member states and in Brussels). The blame was not to be placed on the text and the sort of political regime that it embodied but on the "communication" of its products.

The constitution's substitute, the Lisbon Treaty, was ratified by national parliaments, carefully avoiding further public consultations except in Ireland, where a substantial amendment of the European Treaties demanded a constitutional change, which itself required endorsement through a referendum. Historically, parliamentary representatives have been readier to accept and pursue European integration than the citizens they represent (Haller, 2008). National political leaders, despite their frequent complaints about Brussels-made decisions, are the most forceful supporters of integration. Political and administrative

elites in almost every EU member state "get it". Socioeconomic elites do too. But populations as a whole are more hesitant. More troublingly, it is in those European countries with more democratic tradition where a widespread critical stance towards the EU is developing (Haller, 2008). It is not a gut-reaction product of narrow-minded nationalism. It is a critical rejection of seemingly unaccountable and untouchable political managers:

> The public throughout the EU [...] is becoming more and more aware of the influence of powerful economic interests and of the close networks between the economic and the political elites. This critical perception is one of the main reasons for the sceptical attitude toward integration which is spreading out in many EU member countries.
>
> (Haller, 2008, p. 112)

For Anderson (2009), "the Constitution was rejected, not because it was too federalist, but because it seemed little more than an impenetrable scheme for the redistribution of oligarchic power, embodying everything most distrusted in the arrogant, opaque system the EU appeared to have become" (p. 58).

It is uncertain whether a natural alternative (a democratic European federation) would succeed because, as I shall explain in the next chapter, democracy needs identity. If majoritarian decisions are to be accepted by the losers, the losers have to see the winners as part of them. Recent European regulations like the working time directive are putting much stress on the political regime of the EU, as the political dividing line is not entirely ideological but territorial (the employment ministers of Spain, Belgium and Greece were against the so-called 65-hour directive that would eventually be approved at a Council of Ministers meeting on 9 June 2008; the UK government led the winning coalition) (Euractiv, 2008, 10 June). The current institutional framework of the EU leaves member states and national governments as the key players of European politics, but their collective decisions at the EU level cannot be rewarded or punished by Europeans. They are just out of reach. European decisions can be influenced only through elite networks of well-organised lobbyists and interest groups. The last resort of electoral punishment is simply not available.

Elite-driven, incremental and indirect or "stealthy" integration is inherently biased against popular involvement. It is not strange but actually quite understandable that European populations feel that the European system of government is remote and unfamiliar. Integration

is behind the lack of domesticisation. Furthermore, the sort of institutional setting coming out of the process of European unity is a pseudoconfederal regulatory regime that, as Anderson warns, converts "the open agenda of parliaments into the closed world of chancelleries" (2009, p. 62), contributing to the politicisation deficit:

> What the trinity of Council, Coreper and Commission figures is not just an absence of democracy – though it is certainly also that – but an attenuation of politics of any kind, as ordinarily understood. The effect of this axis is to short-circuit – above all at the critical Coreper level-national legislatures, which are continually confronted with a mass of decisions over which they lack any oversight, without affording any supranational accountability in compensation, given the shadow-play of the Parliament in Strasbourg. The farce of popular consultations that are regularly ignored is only the most dramatic expression of this oligarchic structure, which sums up the rest.
>
> (Anderson, 2009, p. 61)

This political system is not only difficult to "communicate". It also creates strong incentives against transparency, as the informal rule of consensual decision-making at the council (where majority votes are avoided as much as possible so as not to alienate any government) is more conducive to secrecy than to publicity. Anderson defines consensus as "the modus operandi of a continuing elite consolidation. It has nothing to do with popular consent, which it functions to circumvent" (2009, p. 535).

European integration might have been the result of national governments pursuing the economic interest of their respective commercial interest groups, as intergovernmentalism argues. It might be the consequence of automatic sectoral expansion to more and more policy areas, thanks to the work of international civil servants, as neofunctionalism contends. Or it could also be influenced by the federalist thinking of some of its leaders, be they politicians or technocrats. In any case, the real EU has largely come about by shunning popular input. There might have been no other way for European unity, considering the lack of a European identity, than to proceed in this indirect, technocratic and antipopular way. This was Monnet's position, which he held unabashedly. Its side-effects are well known (popular uneasiness with the elusive European Leviathan) and have little to do with the work of journalists or the ability of European institutions to make their

proceedings and decisions understandable. Ironically, and despite much self-flagellation on the part of European leaders, what may allow the present EU to go forward is its lack of clarity, its calculated ambiguity and its lack of democracy (if democracy is understood in a purely Schmittian way, as a regime of identity between the governors and the governed).

3

Governing the EU: Consensus Diplomacy and Associative Corporatism

Among European studies scholars there is a recurring fight between those who see the EU as a *sui generis* political system, with no paragon in this world, and those who try to explain it by resorting to generalisable theories from the body of international relations. To these latter, the behaviour at European Council meetings could be comparable to (or even predictive of) behaviour at, say, G-8 or G-20 summits.

Although game-theoretical paradigms are, no doubt, of great use in understanding decision-making in the EU (as quantitatively oriented political scientists argue), and despite the EU itself could be seen as the rational and explicit pursuit of European governments and not as an elite conspiracy of pro-federal international bureaucrats (as intergovernmentalists claim), in this book I argue that the EU is a pseudoconfederation that is indeed unique, or *sui generis*. It is an institutional regime in which functional technocratic integration and confederalism have won, so far – and perhaps forever – over federalism. The implicit won over the explicit: a European directive is a European law, but by calling it a "directive" it sounds less threatening. Mutual recognition won over harmonisation, empowering the qualified mediators – lawyers, consultants – who know how to navigate the complex system of legal interoperability. Elite co-optation won over public involvement, with the "Eurominati" (e.g. farmers and university professors) knowing the nuts and bolts of EU subsidies, while the rest of Europeans enjoy a private citizenship of borderless mobility and cheap flights, but no sacrifice in foreign wars or public debate on European expenditures. The EU reached a devil's bargain: continental peace and cooperation at the expense of politics and popular engagement.

Instead of being a federation in the making, the EU is an acting political system with surprisingly enduring features over time: i) a supposedly

independent and European-minded bureaucracy expected to think the way most Europeans don't: European; ii) a concert of European governments that provide what international bureaucrats can't: political clout and executive power; and iii) a Cinderella parliament that represents a popular sovereign that is not such, partly because it is mostly a fiction of law: the European citizen. In this chapter, I would like to point out the relatively stable institutional features that get in the way of a more "popular" Europe. As I argue throughout the book, it might be the case that we enjoy the most democratic, transparent and open Europe we could have if we want to keep on having a united Europe. For as long as there is no unifying European identity, a popular system of European government would disintegrate or become highly dysfunctional.

In this chapter, I describe European diplomacy as "consensus diplomacy", following a (contested) tradition of scholarship on the European Council and the Council of Ministers. The replication of nation-level corporatism in Brussels, a dream of functionalists, did not eventually happen, but there is a sort of "associative corporatism" in the EU capital, with trade unions and business associations not as the "peak associations" traditional in classic corporatism but as part of mêlée of interest groups that, in some extreme cases, may not only influence but informally colegislate with the most accessible EU institutions: the commission and the parliament.

Consensus diplomacy and associate corporatism are inherently biased against publicity. There is no journalistic operation, nor any savvy public relations strategy, on the part of European institutions or national governments that could counteract these structural features of the European political regime.

Consensus diplomacy

After the role of functional technocratic integration, which was analysed in the previous chapter, the two further systemic features of the EU that have in-built antipublicity biases are the diplomatic relations among member states and the corporatist ensemble that mixes two realms which ought to be separated in a liberal democracy: government and interest groups, be they "concrete" (trade unions or business associations) or "diffuse" (environmentalist, women or elderly issues lobbyists).

Labelling the EU as *sui generis* is for some an irresponsible move, a denial of the potentially universal and comparable features of the EU regime. I do make the case for the *sui generis* condition of the EU, but not

out of a desire to deem it unexplainable or non-comparable to any other political regime. It is precisely in comparison with other diplomatic settings and institutional systems that the EU stands out as unique, as a pseudoconfederation that mixes up supranational and international features, with relevant legitimacy deficits that should be traced back to the sort of community that Europe is and the non-publicity incentives of European diplomacy and corporatism.

According to the so-called "ordinary legislative procedure", lawmaking in the EU works in this way: the European Commission, endowed with legislative initiative, proposes a draft text to be considered by the Council of Ministers (representing the member state governments, elected by their respective national constituencies) and the EP (directly elected by the peoples of Europe). If the council and the parliament do not agree, they are given the chance to solve their differences on conciliation committees, which may decide to give the law proposal a green light or to reject it.

The Council of Ministers exists in many formations, one for each of the main issue areas that ministers deal with (finance, justice, employment, etc.). However, the groundwork of their decision-making is not done at the meetings of national ministers held in Brussels or Luxembourg but at the gatherings of specialised working groups and at the COREPER, which assembles diplomats from the member states who are permanently based in Brussels and specifically care about European legislation.

The very frequency of meetings – the Council of Ministers has been said to be in permanent formation, with more than 4,500 meetings yearly (Werts, 2008, p. 57) – is one of the most striking differences with other diplomatic settings, such as the United Nations, where permanent delegations from members also exist, but do not meet as frequently and, more importantly, do not legislate about measures that bind all Europeans. Here's where the issue of collective identity challenges the institutional setting. What if a given legislative proposal is opposed by a given member state? If outvoted, would that member state have to comply with a decision that goes against the criteria of a nationally elected government? Although qualified majority voting exists, and has been seen as a way forward in the communitarisation of the EU (as individual member states could not stop decisions agreed by a majority of member states), consensus and unanimity are said to be the norm in council meetings.

The collegiality of frequent meetings and the binding character of many of its decisions makes the Council of Ministers not an ordinary

diplomatic ensemble. An informal culture of consensus-seeking and cooperation explains better its behaviour than the formal voting records, as "explicit voting is relatively infrequent and almost certainly does not give us hard evidence about either the nature of contestation or about relative success" (Naurin and Wallace, 2008, p. 18).

When reviewing the literature on the reasons for the council's consensual character, Mattila (2008) finds two main justifications for such a culture of consensus. First, unanimity (even if it is the result of intense diplomatic bargaining) has a legitimising effect. The EU gains popular acquiescence by not publicising who's the loser (should there be such) in a diplomatic negotiation. Thus consensual decision-making obscures the extent of initial disagreement among states. Second, if consensus is truly the result of concession by all conflicting parts, the implementation of EU-level decisions should be easier, as any opposition has been softened by acquiescence. However, as Mattila rightly notes,

> both justifications are problematic from the point of view of democratic accountability and transparency. The representatives of member states should be held accountable to their national parliaments and, ultimately, to citizens. Democratic accountability can hardly function properly when real political disagreements are masked behind the practice of consensual decision-making.
>
> (2008, p. 25)

For those who have doubts about the *sui generis* condition of the EU as a political system, it should be noted that the culture of consensus was there since the very first incarnation of the Council of Ministers, the Council of the ECSC, as noted by Haas in the 1950s (Haas, 2004 [1958]). "Consensus diplomacy" is therefore a constant feature of European decision-making, probably because since the very beginning national governments were forced to find an agreement on how to implement mutually binding legislation.

At first sight, the insistence on consensus may lead the reader to think that all legislative outcomes at the Council of Ministers would be the result of the lowest-common denominator, as it happens in other consensus-run organisations, such as the Commonwealth. But the council usually agrees on measures that go above that threshold of minimum agreement, and not just because of the resort to voting. Two processes are key in understanding this slight pro-integration bias in a diverse 27-member group: issue linkages and information asymmetries.

The famous expression of "horse-trading", which defines the exchange of voting power between states when a given issue is of low importance for the first but of great relevance for the second, refers to a practice that is far less common than is popularly assumed. McKibben (2010) held interviews with more than 100 diplomats from the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Brussels and found that issue linkage across areas (e.g. fisheries and immigration) was rare, whereas the linkage of issues within the same legislative proposal (e.g. Working Time Directive) was almost a daily practice. Therefore instead of exchanging voting power to favour a given member state in exchange for support from that member state in a future negotiation, diplomats exchange concessions within the same text, linking issues within the same legislative draft. Whichever the case (issue linkage across areas or within a given proposal), the publicity of negotiations would be detrimental to the goal of reaching a mutually satisfactory outcome, as some concessions would be difficult to justify to particular constituencies directly affected by the draft legislation under discussion.

In any case, irrespective of how further the discussion goes behind closed doors, within a diverse group of member states there will be times when the moment of closure in a bargaining process will not satisfy all of the parts. However, an outright rejection of the proposal or the passing of the proposal through a vote that would alienate the losing minority would be too difficult to bear, be it for the importance of a text that might have been in the agenda for months or even years, or for the eager embrace of the proposal by relevant member states. In such a case, the informal culture of consensus has led to an increase in "recorded disagreements", by which the proposal is passed with the written expression of dissent or reservations regarding the legislative text. According to Sara Hagemann, these recorded formal statements "reflect a two-sided game by governments: by differentiation between voting and formal statements governments are able to adopt legislation while still sending a political signal of preserving their preferences in the formal statements recorded in the minutes" (2008, p. 36).

Information asymmetry (the superior knowledge of some partners in a negotiation about others' preferences, or the superior resources of a given set of partners – say, bigger member states – as compared with the rest: smaller member states) is a common feature of diplomatic negotiations (Ruse, 8–10 September 2010), albeit contested in the European case. Due to the close contact and the relative familiarity of negotiating partners, and due to the number of member states

(27), which creates opportunities for information leaks, the idea of information asymmetries has been put into question at the EU level (Moravcsik, 1998). In the age of the Internet, with easy horizontal communication among member-state diplomats, and with easy access to intelligence on public and published opinion in each of the member states, the presumably superior knowledge of the European Commission, which could be expected to be the only actor with a comprehensive or bird's-eye view of the process, has been put into question. Nevertheless, the literature is not conclusive on this, as the countries enjoying the rotating presidency of the Council of Ministers (and now the permanent president of the European Council), along with the Council Secretariat (the council's own small bureaucracy), are said to enjoy a privileged position in the intergovernmental bargaining process (Beach, 2008; Tallberg, 2008; Warntjen, 2008).

The six-month rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union has been considerably downgraded by the permanent presidency of the European Council established by the Lisbon Treaty in 2007. The "shuttle diplomacy", or the touring of national capitals by the country holding the presidency of the Council of Ministers in order to forge consensus and to smooth out differences, is now carried by the president of the European Council or, as has been seen in the months after the 2008 credit crunch crisis, by the heads of government of key influential players , such as Germany and France, who have held bilateral "confessionals" with each other and with other member states before and during European Council summits. According to Tallberg (2008), in the pre-Lisbon EU, the presidencies of the council would "exploit the privileged information about state preferences obtained through bilateral confessionals and *tours des capitals* to extract concessions from adversaries" (p. 198). Again, in order for those concessions not to be felt as a lost battle by the government in question, these negotiations must be kept under a veil of diplomatic secrecy.

Other authors, such as Beach (2008), have pointed to the superiority of the council secretariat over the rotating presidency of the council when it comes to hammering out agreements among member states. There are, according to Beach, three reasons why the secretariat's leadership can be superior to that of the presidency. First, its permanent presence in Brussels allows the secretariat to follow proposals "from genesis to adoption" (p. 222), compared with the six-month length of the rotating presidency. Second, small countries with limited diplomatic resources will need the expertise of the secretariat. Third, small states will always prefer the council secretariat to be involved in reaching

an agreement, rather than leave a final accord in the hands of a big dominant capital, such as Paris or Berlin.

Given the multiple concessions that all states have to allow in order for negotiations to reach a satisfactory consensus, and considering the informational asymmetries that some authors enjoy over others, it is easy to understand that the publicity of procedures would end up politicising the debates in the respective national public spheres. This is why I claim that the European interest is better upheld in secret, as the lack of a unifying European identity would make negotiations stall: the public outcry over concessions would make member states refrain from giving up on a certain aspect in order to achieve a moderate final gain in the process. It is true that, when adopting legislation, the Council of Ministers must proceed in public. But most of the decisive groundwork still happens behind closed doors. Although national ministers are in the limelight, they only show up at the end of the negotiation process, after the working parties (the expert diplomats on a given area) and the COREPER (in its two big formations, COREPER I and COREPER II)[1] have discussed which aspects of a given proposal are acceptable and which points need to be left to the upper executive level. As Hagemann explains, "to the extent that voting takes place, this occurs implicitly rather than explicitly, operates mostly at the level of officials rather than ministers, and is not recorded systematically in public accessible form" (p. 38). According to this same author, only 20 per cent of legislation is discussed at the ministerial level (the so-called "B points", or points in which an agreement could not be reached at the COREPER level). Most of the legislation (80 per cent) is "nodded through" by ministers, as COREPER diplomats have deemed it non-controversial (Hagemann, 2008, p. 45).

As Naurin (2007) discovered in his study of the relationship between interest groups and the European Commission, publicity politicises – that is, engages – the constituencies of the negotiating partners, therefore making difficult or impossible any concession. This in-built antipublicity bias of European diplomacy is widely acknowledged by scholars in European studies but rarely mentioned by academics from the field of communications. Actually, the secrecy of deliberations is what encourages a nearly Habermasian honest deliberation. "More private, insulated settings are regarded as conducive to truthful arguing [...] because negotiators need to worry less about the (immediate) reactions of certain constituencies or principals and superior evidence [...] or better arguments," says Niemann (2008, p. 124) referring to other authors (Checkel, 2001; Stasavage, 2004). According to Niemann (2008),

deliberation is more likely to occur at the official (working group) rather than at the political level (Council of Ministers or European Council), and with technical, complex issues that require the input of experts.

European diplomacy is different from international diplomacy because it demands from members a kind of transvestism, double-loyalty (European and national), or what the literature terms as "double hatting", which involves "acting as representatives of a member government or constituency while at the same time having a responsibility to the Union as a whole" (Lewis, 2008, p. 167). A member state minister may not behave in the Council of the European Union as if they were at any other, non-EU diplomatic setting. Lewis explains how Sweden learned this painfully after its accession in 1995. In the first instance, Swedish representatives would read out their national position and then cast their vote, without being aware of the culture of consensus. It was only later on that "Sweden's representatives learned that in this institutional context, arguments matter as well as votes [...] and willingness to compromise can yield influence disproportionate to the number of votes involved [...] Influence is partly a function of learning and adhering to the Council's informal culture of deliberation" (Lewis, 2008, pp. 177–178).

The intuitive but counterdemocratic argument that secrecy helps the reaching of a consensus also applies to the meetings of the higher institution of the EU, the European Council, where the heads of the member-state governments gather to agree on the most politically decisive measures to be taken by the EU. However, with the European Council, the level of secrecy reaches its climax. As compared with the Council of Ministers, which has to meet in public when discussing or adopting legislation under the codecision procedure, the European Council meetings are completely closed to the public. Paradoxically, the meetings themselves are the most publicised media spectacle of the EU, to the point where, for many European citizens, the European Council has come to symbolise the EU itself (Werts, 2008, p. xvii).

In his double position as journalist and academic, Jan Werts (2008) provides one of the most comprehensive yet accessible accounts of the history and workings of the European Council. He claims that this concert of European governments was in a nascent state from the beginning of European integration in the 1950s. The European Council was officially set up in 1974 as a parallel institution to the commission, the parliament and the Council of Ministers; it had no legal basis of operation until the Single European Act (1987) came into force. It was not

until the Lisbon Treaty (2007) that it became part of the institutional framework of the EU. Werts argues that the creation of this "European government" was much needed because the existing European institutions lacked the power of executive decision-making: "From the beginning of the integration process there was a need for a body which, within a framework of relations with the Union's institutions, would be capable of implementing crucial political decisions" (p. 1). That is, the European Communities were missing the "political element", according to Werts (p. 14). Read in Schmittian terms, as is the goal of this book, politics at the European Council level would be midway between the antagonistic and the agonistic poles. National interests trump ideologies, without those interests being laid out as death-threatening for any of the parts. However, if politics is considered in ideological terms (left versus right), the European Council meetings could be considered as depoliticising. According to Werts,

> the negotiating process tends not to follow the lines of the political divisions/parties in Europe. Neither in my research nor in 35 years' coverage of the meetings has any trace of ideological conflict (or harmony) been ascertained initially. The purely national interests of member states and of their governmental leaders have rather been the main force.
>
> (2008, p. 32)

The European Council's unstoppable rise to the apex of European institutions is for Werts evidence that intergovernmentalism, not federalism, has been chosen by member states as the best solution to the increasing sovereignty impingements brought by European integration (2008, p. 149). The European Council began as a "court of appeal", where the deadlocks from the Council of Ministers were broken, thanks to the consensus reached by the heads of government. It has now become the true agenda-setter of the EU, withdrawing that power of legislative initiative from the commission.

However, instead of undermining the so-called "community method" (by which the commission proposed, the parliament gave an opinion and the Council of Ministers decided on whether to pass that piece of legislation or not), Werts claims that the European Council saved this method, as the lack of true political drive had made the communities stall in the 1970s. The European Council is an agenda-setter, a decision-maker, a supervisor and an implementer of legislation (Werts, 2008, p. 198).

With the growth of the EU to 27 members, the leadership of France and Germany is still important, but the new permanent president of the council, along with his associated bureaucracy, has a key role in reaching consensus. With 27 members the council plenaries are too crowded and of little use, so compromises are reached through bilateral "confessionals" (between the presidency of the council and the concerned partners). Werts notes that the European Council room for meetings is "larger than a tennis court" (p. 167) and that "the Heads of Government no longer have the eye and voice contact required for negotiations. The crucial negotiations nowadays take place of necessity outside the main conference room and so outside the plenary meeting" (p. 163).

The preparation of the meetings is also very demanding, and for important negotiations, member states appoint "sherpas", expert diplomats in the areas under discussion, to defend the national interest in the discussions leading up to the meetings (Watt, 17 October 2012).

The European Council meetings, then, are not ideological (there is rarely a left versus right divide) but diplomatic (a contest among national interests or clusters of them). As with the Council of Ministers, consensus is the goal no matter what the voting provisions the treaties may include. Again, and echoing the authors reviewed so far, Werts also indirectly endorses Naurin's idea that publicity politicises, undermining the prospects of consensus. Council meetings are not round-table meetings but a series of bilaterals between heads of government and between the President of the Council and key heads of government. These are essential for achieving a mutually agreeable solution: "Meeting face-to-face an obstructive PM is prepared to disclose his minimum position, but not in the plenary meeting. On the basis of this "confessional" procedure, the President arrives at a final balanced proposal" (Werts, 2008, p. 165).

Ironically, despite their secret character, European Council meetings are, according to Werts, the clearest link between the EU and the citizens, as they are widely covered and easily understood (who wins, who loses). Indeed, the European Council is the EU's most media-friendly institution, largely because it is the most political institution of the EU (decisions are taken here), even if it is "political" in the sense of national interests rather than party options. That is, the European Council is "apolitical" or "depoliticising" in the sense of left versus right divide, but crudely "political" in the Schmittian friend–enemy distinction and in its "decisionism". The media-friendly character of the European Council is also a reflection of the cultural limits of the European public sphere that I want to underscore in this book. As compared with the

EP, where largely unknown MEPs legislate for a community that does not see itself as such, at the European Council, journalists have a community to report to (their "nation") regarding how well those national interests have been preserved. It is a telling proof of the council's confederal nature that press conferences by the different national leaders are more widely attended by journalists of any nationality than the press conference by the presidents of the European Council and the commission, who would be giving a more European or federal view of the negotiations.

The European Council, as a European government made of national governments, Werts notes, was a French idea that was not accepted at the beginning of European integration but that eventually won the day, becoming the most powerful actor in European integration. As Spinelli (1966) had presciently advanced, the combination of functionalist integration and confederalism has undermined Europe's federal dream, and with it the idea of a Europe-wide democracy.

Associative corporatism

Corporatism – that is, the coordination of economic and political power through tripartite bargaining between the state and "peak associations" of capital and labour – has been declared dead several times (Thelen, 1994; Lange, Golden and Wallerstein, 1995; Molina and Rhodes, 2002; Arnold and Pennings, 2004). It seemed to be over in the 1980s, when neoliberalism deemed old-fashioned the empowerment of trade union leaders favoured by the seemingly paternalistic Rhineland capitalism. It looks old-fashioned today, when the old "peak associations" (be they labour or business type) are questioned from all sides due to their inability to adapt to an increasingly diverse workforce, and to a more investor-reliant managing class that has lost most of its local affective ties.

Despite all of its ailments, corporatism (or neocorporatism) is still the major "public philosophy" of most European countries. It is also the major social doctrine of the EU, which has imported the jargon of German corporatism (defining Europe as a "social market economy") and, with the active collaboration of the academia, has diluted the dirty word of corporatism into the wider and less controversial concept of "governance", of Scandinavian origins. Historically, the transformation of "corporate elite bargaining" into "governance policy networks" does indeed imply an evolution from a more hierarchical to a more horizontal brand of corporatism, but it cannot disguise that the way the EU

is run is a composite of the way most of its constituent member states are run: through a system of "accommodation" or "concerted action" between government and socioeconomic actors.[2] It is a system which is understood to be different from the US regime of interest group influence, "pluralism", where lobbying groups compete to influence policy, not to govern in partnership with the state (Parri, 1987, pp. 71–72). The liberal separation between public and private, between state and society, is said to be violated in Europe by a continuous attempt of "concertation" to tame capitalism and make it compatible with the welfare state. Corporatism is, for Lowi (1979 [1969]), the social doctrine of paternalistic, secure-seeking and market-suspicious societies. When it works, it provides social and economic stability at the expense of the separation between politics and economics, and the depoliticisation of socioeconomic relations. The agreement between capital and labour elites is a powerful antidote to – or a narcotic of – social conflict. In the context of the EU, when this depoliticisation (common to many European countries) is paired with the lack of identification with the European institutions, the depoliticisation of socioeconomic relations is made more acute, and the separation of "peak associations" from grassroots members (be they workers or business firms) is even greater. This reinforces the feeling of elite networks agreeing on something over which lower and most local tiers of civil society have little sense of control.

Eurocorporatism parallels with elite-driven integration. Although European-level federations (European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC] – for labour, Business Europe for business) do not have the ability to sign binding collective bargains, they are considered both "social partners" by the governing EU treaties and legitimate peak-level associations by European institutions. The European Commission encouraged since the early days of European integration the European Community-wide organisation of lobbying associations so as to make it easier for the aggregation of national interests (Spinelli, 1966, p. 127). By giving preferential access to Europe-wide organisations, national bodies were encouraged to seek agreement and consensus before they approached the commission.

Political and economic coordination at the elite level is also typical of consociational democracies, where no clear majorities rule and diverse cultural interests are represented in parliament. This would be a situation of depoliticised government (where no ideological leaning can clearly carry out its political programme), which would work in parallel with the depoliticised management of economic relations that corporatism represents. This has important implications at the EU level,

because one could think of corporatism as the most appropriate correlate to a diverse European polity that needs elite bargaining (detached from popular whims or the factionalism of its constituent subcultures) in order to keep its cohesion. Corporatism makes globalisation friendlier by trying to find a satisfactory compromise for managers and workers. Consociationalism holds diverse cultures together within a single state. At the EU level, this combination allows for the relatively smooth functioning of a Continent-wide political regime at the expense of its popular legitimacy.

Corporatism does not need a public sphere because the mere concept of "public sphere" presupposes a neutral arena where the public (the state) and the private (civil society) meet, debate and often clash. When the public and private are mixed, and when elite dialogue runs all year long, there is no need for publicity, for dramatisation or for the engagement of public opinion. Publicity is only actively sought when one of the partners seeks an improvement in the terms of their "contract", or when the existing settlement is under threat. If milk prices fall to below-profit levels, farmers may demonstrate in the streets. If the yearly "total allowable catches" for a given fish species are below the demands of the fishing sector in a particular country, fishermen may protest in public. But for the rest of time, the relationship between agricultural and fishing interests with their respective governments – and with the European Commission – is fairly fluid, and private. Corporatism is even more warmly welcomed by other recent economic sectors, such as telecommunications and biotechnology, as their highly specialised nature nicely fits the technocratic feature of EU government and lawmaking (Hohn and Lautwein, 2003; Anderson, 2004).

Corporatism can be sold as desirable by appealing to the continuous flow of communication between the state and the governed (although it is a relationship between political elites and interest groups, not between a government and the public at large). It can also be understood as more accountable because policy-making enjoys important inputs from those groups that are more likely to be affected by the legislation being drafted (but the regular citizen is missing here). Ultimately, public affairs are "managed" and administered in partnership with "stakeholders" (Clarke and Newman, 1997). Politics loses its moral dimension. It is not about the underlying philosophy of a given policy; it is about keeping interested partners happy. It is not about changing the course of public affairs under the guidance of a political programme or a political option; it is about delivering goals (e.g. economic growth) without discussing or making explicit the plans for how to reach the desired outcomes, which

are always stated in generic terms (welfare, employment, competitiveness) or through neologisms like "flexi-security", which are inherently depoliticising, designed to be adopted by everyone and not offend anyone.[3]

Why "corporatism" became a dirty word

Corporatism was popularised by fascism, hence its subtle replacement by other expressions, like "concertation" (Pérez Díaz, 1987) or its recent mutation into the more fashionable, less loaded term of "governance". Its origins can be placed further back, as far as the late medieval guilds system where access to crafts was strictly regulated by those in the exercise of a particular trade. It nevertheless came closer to its current form in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with authors like Hegel and Durkheim extolling the virtues of a "functional democracy" where governments and interest groups would run society in an organic form (Hirst, 1996 [1994]). Corporatism is indeed compatible with democracy (as it happens in many European countries and, if Lowi's concerns are to be believed, in the USA) but it has also historically partnered with socialism (as in Harold Laski's guild socialism) and with fascism, the political ideology that made it famous, to the point of turning corporatism into a dirty word.

Like social democracy, fascism was a third way between the insecurities and social imbalances of market capitalism and the obliteration of social difference championed by communism. Both social democracy (which, it must be noted, represents the political centre of gravity in contemporary Europe) and fascism have aimed at taming capitalism, and both have used the same instrument: corporatism. To a lesser degree in social democracy, and to a maximum degree in fascism, in both regimes there is a sacrifice of competition for security, and a fusion between state and economic power, between public and private. In the words of Karl Ove Moene and Michael Wallerstein, "the connection between [the] corporatist wage setting [of Nordic countries] and [the] economic autarky [of fascism] is not merely an accident of history. According to the standard understanding of trade unions in economics, union power and protection from competition in the goods market are closely linked" (Moene and Wallerstein, 2008, p. 382). At its core, the instruments of social democracy and fascism used to tame capitalism have been fairly similar. Due to its fascist lineage, corporatism has always been an uncomfortable partner, hence the constant need to qualify it when speaking about its presence in liberal democratic regimes (neocorporatism) or to rebrand it as "concertation".[4]

Neocorporatism took shape in Europe after 1945, and it was credited for the stability and progress of Western European countries until the economic crisis of 1973. Each European country has its own kind of corporatism, but European neocorporatism shares a common spirit: it is an attempt to "organise" capitalism, prioritising coordination over competition. One of its most popular examples is its Germanic variety, also known as Rhineland capitalism, which ideally presents a socially responsible capitalist class locally tied to the region where it operates, and a working class equally responsible, willing to compromise on wages or working hours as long as employment is guaranteed. The state usually acts as a consensus-seeking third party. In order for this organised capitalism to be viable, both capital and labour need to endow "peak associations" with binding power so that they can arrive at "collective agreements". These agreements exemplify the fusion between public and private: they are the product of a tripartite discussion among private parties (management and labour) and the government, and (even more tellingly) have the force of law.

Neocorporatism presents, therefore, a series of organising principles that have been thoroughly described by authors such as Phillip Schmitter (1974): "peak associations" must be few, very centralised, highly representative (a majority of the labour and business class must be officially represented by them) and inclusive of the most diverse interests (usually national associations supersede in importance the sectoral organisations, which might be federated to the former). Modern business and labour organisations are bureaucratic and may resemble parastate institutions, given their cogoverning functions. This situation, so common in the European nation states, is replicated at the EU level, with the European Trade Union Confederation and Business Europe being the main means of representation for their respective constituencies. As noted, the role of these peak European associations is not nearly as relevant as that of their national counterparts, which are the main focus of "concrete interest" lobbying. This is why I prefer to talk about "associative corporatism", to include not just the labour and business associations but also other interest groups (e.g. industrial and trade associations of several kinds, from renewable energy producers to environmental pressure groups).

Neocorporatism could be defined as "a system in which socio-economic decisions are authoritatively made by, or with the major participation of, an oligopolitistic set of centralized interest organisations which have received a mandate from the state" (Scholten, 1977, cited by Brande, 1987, p. 97). The main difference with fascist

corporatism (e.g. Mussolini's *stato corporativo*) is that instead of being an outright "clientilistic and selective protectionism" of the national industries (Marin, 1987, p. 59), modern European corporatism implies a systemic modulation that asks for sacrifices (and compromises) to all partners (industrialists and labour). Neocorporatism is not autarchic. It is not about shielding national industries; it is about making globalisation compatible with stability and security, about taming capitalism through the concerted agreement of public and private socioeconomic actors.

Although authors such as Coultrap (1999) have tried to establish some parallels between the EU and the USA as "pluralist" political systems where popular input is low and interest group lobbying high, the literature on neocorporatism of the 1980s actually developed as a reaction against the applicability of the US paradigm of public policy relations to the European context. Authors such as Arend Lijphart (the academic father of consociationalism), Justin Greenwood (an expert on interest group mediation at the European level) and Philippe Schmitter (with relevant contributions to the literature of European integration and neocorporatism) draw a clear distinction between US pluralism and European neocorporatism. In US pluralism, there are "fire trenches" between state, society and economy, whereas corporatism consists of a "multi-level integration of state, society and economy" (Scholten, 1987a, p. 21). US pluralists later defined neocorporatism as just a form of "restricted pluralism", and Lowi (1979 [1969]) famously decried the neocorporatist drive of US politics in the Kennedy and Nixon years. This notwithstanding, in the US case the primacy of economic liberalism makes public authorities and society more trustful of the goodness of the market. Market logic is understood to be the best social logic. In Europe, in contrast, the social democratic logic asks for some public intervention in economics, or at the very least for some sort of coordination between the political and economic powers. The USA may become neocorporatist at times, and Europe may become pluralist for some periods. But their respective natural status is that of public–private separation in the US, and public–private partnership in Europe; of interest competition in the USA, and interest coordination in Europe.

The political correlate of a corporatist economy is not a liberal but a "functional" democracy, "based on the major social interests represented through corporatist structures" (Hirst, 1996 [1994], p. 16) as advocated by authors such as Hegel, Durkheim, Cole and Laski, who deemed as ideal that political regime where power would be "dispersed

into specific functional domains and controlled primarily by those directly involved in those domains" (Hirst, 1996 [1994], p. 105).

The dark side of neocorporatism: Depoliticisation

The two main criticisms cast upon corporatism are depoliticisation and lack of democratic legitimacy. Not by chance, these are criticisms that have commonly been cast against the EU too. This occurs because the EU has applied a neocorporatist social doctrine to the management of socioeconomic relations, with all of its advantages (macroeconomic stability, elite contentment) and drawbacks (popular detachment and suspicion). As Hirst (1996 [1994]) puts it, on the one hand, corporatism facilitates "elite communication, state access to societal elites, and social compromise [...] resulting in low direct state coercion, high compliance of affected interests and effective coordination between them" (p. 36). But, on the other hand, "the question is whether they [the corporate interests] represent any kind of "democracy" at all, or rather a system of interlinking hierarchical management that is meliorated by elements of consultation with the grass roots of the distinct organized interests" (p. 36).

Neocorporatism contributes to the two deficits of domesticisation and politicisation that are usually blurred behind the smokescreen of a "communications problem". Neocorporatism is a system of indirect coercion, very much like neofunctionalism is a system of indirect integration. Both are inherently biased against publicity, in the sense that what is required from the public is not participation or assessment but acquiescence. In both cases, there is an element that is not universally popular (supranational government, capitalism) that needs to be carefully modulated through elite management. By means of a sort of two-step flow in communications, it is hoped that the perception of agreement among elites will generate acceptance – or at least compliance – among the whole population. This explains the recurrent complaint among Brussels-based journalists (even among the pro-European Spaniards) that European institutions engage in propaganda and not in communications. In the EU, there is usually an agreement or an initiative to be sold. There is rarely an argument or a debate to be won. In a neocorporatist regime, there is true debate, but among the partners in the process of "centralized corporatist consultation" (Hirst, 1996 [1994], p. 36). This debate, given that it is usually aimed at compromise and cooperation, is rarely public and is carried out in the highly specialised language of the participants. It is hard to find a "communications problem" here because (due to the absence of a

larger watching public) there is not an attempt to translate the technical language of policy into the moral language of politics.

Putting policy almost exclusively in the hands of those sectors most likely to be affected by it is one of the main virtues of corporatism according to its advocates. A permanent contact with socioeconomic elites would allow for early warnings regarding a wrong-headed regulation, and would facilitate its implementation in the future, as those groups are also called upon to coadminister with the state the laws ratified by parliaments. According to "associative democracy" promoters such as Hirst (1996 [1994]), this would correct the lack of public participation in politics by "publicising" civil society – that is, by giving state-like power to civil associations. Associative democracy seems to conceive an average citizen with enough free evenings to implement the governing tasks that the hollowed-out state is seemingly incapable of doing. The "citizen" is mistaken for the "civic leader", very much like in pro-corporatist EU jargon where "organised interest groups" are mistaken for "society". Contrary to its rhetoric of involvement, this conception of policy-making and policy implementation steals from the average person the direction of public policy, leaving it in the hands of the "stakeholder", or imposing on the private citizen the need to become "connected" to one of the groups with privileged access to the institutional power-holders. The organisation of interests in bureaucratised groups is a fixture of modern society and not an exclusive creation of neocorporatism. But the insistence on leaving politics for "the most directly affected" is more likely to co-opt socioeconomic elites than to bring about public policy inspired by a given political programme. It is precisely this disconnection between policy and politics that is one of the most damaging consequences of neocorporatism, and perhaps one of the main reasons behind the citizen disconnection with the EU. In its desire to alleviate conflict and provide stability, corporatism steals economics out of the realm of politics. This is openly admitted by Hirst (1996 [1994]), in whose ideal "associative economy" "there is some prospect that issues of productive property and corporate governance may be depoliticized, in that they will in Carl Schmitt's terms cease to be the source of fundamental socio-political antagonisms" (p. 152).

In his critique of the corporatist drive of the US government after Kennedy, Lowi (1979 [1969]) presciently stated that "interest group pluralism" favours the separation of economics from politics: "In the pluralist system, modern developments have brought a discontinuity between that which is socioeconomic and that which is political. Politics in the pluralist system ceases to be an epiphenomenon of socioeconomic life.

Politics becomes autonomous as the number of autonomous and competing social units multiplies" (p. 34). Echoing the concerns of the early Habermas (1994 [1962]), Lowi worries about the destruction the liberal principle of a separate government from interest groups, and warns that modern democracies are coming close to the "doctrines of fascists, syndicalists, corporativists, and guild socialists because it was these doctrines and experiments that sought to destroy the distinction [between government and civil society]" (1979 [1969], p. 40).

Lowi's criticisms, which at that time applied to the USA, reveal that the dangers of "private interest government" are not exclusive to the EU. However, in the EU context, these dangers are radicalised by the absence of a national identity that would at least connect the political leadership (however infiltrated by interest groups it might be) with the citizen. Identity with government institutions and fellow citizens is a strong politicising force, as Carl Schmitt suggested (2008 [1926]). In the EU context, neither (an encompassing European) identity nor (explicit) socioeconomic conflict is available. Interestingly, even within the US context, Lowi is able to charge "interest group liberalism" (a rough equivalent to neocorporatism) with a strong depoliticising drive: "The decline of a meaningful dialogue between liberalism and conservatism has meant a decline of a meaningful adversary political proceedings in favor of administrative, technical, and logrolling politics. In a nutshell, politics became a question of equity rather than a question of morality" (p. 43). As my empirical analysis of the newspaper coverage of EU issues in the regional press shows (see Methodological Appendix I), even in the most pro-EU regions such as Galicia, EU affairs are more about how much funding one can get (equity) rather than about the kind of Europe one may want (morality).

The reasons why Lowi (1979 [1969]) says that corporatism is appealing to political elites are also applicable to the EU context: "It fits the needs of corporate leaders, union leaders, and government officials desperately searching for supports as they were losing communal attachment to their constituencies" (p. 53). Furthermore, Lowi says that corporatism allows for the subtle expansion of the (federal) state, helps politicians to "displace and differ and delegate conflict" (p. 55), and creates the sensation that power is not coercive because "sovereignty is parceled out among groups" (p. 55). But corporatism, Lowi warns, can only get so far. It spreads "a sense of representation at the expense of genuine flexibility, at the expense of democratic forms, and ultimately at the expense of legitimacy" (p. 63). It turns governments "from a moralistic to a mechanistic institution" (p. 63).

Lowi's diatribe against corporatism in the USA of the 1960s, which looks strikingly applicable to the EU of the 2000s, includes a denunciation of the "atrophy of institutions of popular control" (1979 [1969], p. 59) that accompanies interest group pluralism. If policy-making power is given to groups, Lowi admonishes, the public will be put aside at the problem-definition and accountability phases. In his interpretation, when "conflict of interest is made a principle of government rather than a criminal act", the situation is ripe to facilitate "a self-conscious conspiracy to shut out the public" (1979 [1969], p. 59). Lowi's admonitory claims come closer to the causes of the "depoliticisation" deficit of EU politics than any "communications problem".

Corporatism's issues with public legitimacy are well known in Europe, even at the nation-state level. When discussing the Dutch case, Scholten calls parliaments "the sacrificed lamb" of corporatism (Scholten, 1987b, p. 140). In its fascist version, corporatism was a deliberate attempt to sideline parliaments, which were regarded as ineffective, raucous and a source of national instability. Corporatism was one of the most effective ways of delivering results in the form of social stability, full employment and wage regulation (what political scientists call "output legitimacy"). Its weakest point was "input legitimacy" (the participation of a citizen, or the control of the representatives by the citizen). However, this was balanced with the emotional identification with the nation. In the EU situation, there is a similar sidelining of the parliament, an insistence on output legitimacy (on "delivery") and no means of true input legitimacy other than European elections, in which the preordinance of the legislative over the executive power is absent (the EP does not elect a European government) and parliamentary sovereignty is parcelled out in national units, with MEPs still divided between European and national loyalties. Where there is a national collective identity, corporatism is better suited to survive and hide behind the wellness of the nation. Where a national identity is absent, corporatism has a harder time to hide its elite-bureaucratic nature. In the EU case, member-state leaderships still capture most of the popular allegiances, helping Eurocorporatism to go unnoticed in the background. Still, whenever EU politics are discussed, corporatism's lurking presence generates suspicion, a sense of remoteness and a lack of accountability. In one of the chapters of a collective volume tellingly entitled *The Illusion of Accountability in the European Union* (2009), political scientist Heidrun Abromeit contends that, by principle, corporate actors are difficult to hold accountable: "Whenever a system of collective decision-making features a plurality of veto-players, thus generating elite cartels whose dealings remain opaque

to citizens, the mere existence of an elected parliament will not suffice to ensure democracy" (Abromeit, 2009, p. 32).

Conclusion: Governance and the "Europeanness" of corporatism

Neocorporatism might be found wanting when it comes to democratic legitimacy, but it is not a Brussels or an EU invention. It is actually a very European development with a long history and tradition in Western Europe. Although varied in its manifestations, corporatist arrangements can be found from Scandinavia to Italy, and from Portugal to Austria. Just like the EU administration has added the Nordic insistence on transparency to its original French organisation into "directorates", socioeconomic relations at the EU level have lately added a Scandinavian rhetoric (governance) to its German (Rhineland capitalism) and Dutch core (the EU's Economic and Social Committee was originally modelled upon the Economic and Social Committee in the Netherlands) (Lodge and Herman, 1980).

Corporatism is easily readable for insiders but impenetrable for outsiders. The main problem is that in the EU's case more than in any of corporatism's national versions, the outsiders are the citizens at large. The insiders conform to what Scholten (1987b) calls "sub-governments", "coalitions between civil servants and interest group representatives [...] whose cohesion and power is the direct result of the continuous strengthening of mutual interests" (p. 133). Scholten (1987b) also makes an intriguing mention to the concept of "spillover" when applied to corporatism (p. 135). In an analogy to the sectoral expansion of progressively supranationalised policy sectors, the partnerships between public officials and representatives of the most diverse socioeconomic sectors are bound to become more frequent, spreading from sector to sector. This creates an expanding network of actors who get to know the "rules of the game", a network that is exclusionary of those who do not have the resources or ignore how to become connected. It is only when one is part of the network that one can be influential, introducing favourable measures or stopping unwanted developments. For outsiders, changing or modifying the flow of the administrative river is almost impossible: "In such a system only organizations or expensive professionals can be adequate opponents. Everybody who is unable to fire an army of private specialists becomes an incompetent bumbler" (Scholten, 1987b, p. 134). When the goal is coordination and not victory, when the overall philosophy is

accommodation and not competition, actors have strong incentives not to "communicate". There is not a contest of persuasive arguments after a public, but a game of influence that works at its best in the absence of publicity.

The claim of the existence of neocorporatism at the EU level has been challenged, as the features present at the national level have not scaled as easily as foreseen by neofunctionalists (Greenwood, Grote and Ronit, 1992a, 1992b). The ideal tripartite bargaining between state, labour and capital is thwarted by a still insufficiently cohesive labour confederation (ETUC), the national differences in employment legislation, and the fact that most decision-power at the EU level is still intergovernmental (council and COREPER), which prevents the European Commission from playing the role performed by the state at the national level. Nevertheless, the EU of the 2010s has become more socially binding than that of the early 1990s as the mobilisation against the Working Time Directive before the 2009 European elections has made clear. It is doubtful whether the traditional separation of a supranational common market and a mostly national labour legislation can persist. This "decoupling" has, until now, contributed to the separation of economic and social affairs, of economics and politics (Visser and Ebbinghaus, 1992, p. 229).

The existence of several national interests makes a Eurocorporatist system less coherent, as in some policy areas (namely agriculture and fisheries) there is not a true sectoral, but a member-state, national interest. On these sectors, there is not a competitive neocorporatism (competitive in the sense of competing in the global economy) but a corporatism of the old kind (not aimed at coordination and modulation of diverse interests but at national protectionism).

In sum, the expansion of European policy-making to ever more economic sectors is a vector working towards the formation of some sort of EU-level neocorporatism. Even when national interest persists, corporatism is there in its most traditional fashion.

In the mid- to late 1990s, with the accession of Sweden and Finland, the EU imported the Scandinavian concept of "governance". Contrary to corporatism, "governance" has positive because it is associated with participation, deliberation and citizen empowerment. Scandinavian countries have traditionally enjoyed a high level of unionisation – above 75 per cent of the working force, according to Visser and Ebbinghaus (1992, p. 210) – so the embrace of governance was a logical step for a neocorporatist regime that relies on centralisation, unionisation and elite co-optation.

Governance has also been tied to the attempts at local devolution in the UK, namely through the work of one of its main students and ideologists, Australian and British political scientist R.A.W. Rhodes (1997, 2007). The interpenetration of civil society and government seems to be a fact of life that has been there for decades if not centuries. Whereas liberal political theory struggles to separate both domains – as the authority of the state is actually possible due to its separation from private or organised interests (Lowi, 1979 [1969]) – governance theory sees the interweaving of organised civil society and government as unavoidable and positive, as such collaboration can "reinvigorate policy formulation and implementation" and "broaden participation to include publics who reside outside the traditional iron triangle of administrators, organized interest groups, and legislative staff" (Bogason and Muso, 2006, p. 14). In the world of governance, politics and antagonism are replaced by a coordinative administration in which public officials "steer" organised interests and "everyday makers", defined as deideologised citizens who get engaged in community affairs that affect them directly (Bang and Sørensen, 1997).

Scandinavian governance, with its discourse of efficiency, lack of political conflict and citizen involvement is a philosophy more publicly defendable than neocorporatism, even if at its core both proposals share a belief in elite coordination and the end of politics (understood as antagonism and the unyielding of ideological differences). Governance wins over neocorporatism in its appeal to continuous citizen involvement, even if it is unclear how this conception can be applied above the municipal level.

In sum, neocorporatism, a tradition already present in European member states, has been imported to the EU level because of its comparative advantages. It is good at managing complex, culturally divided polities (hence the usual correlation between corporatism and consociationalism). It is the social doctrine of choice for security-seeking societies that fear capitalism and competition in its rawest forms. In favouring the co-optation of socioeconomic and political elites, neocorporatism is a crucial aid in the process of indirect, elite-driven European integration. Its secondary effects are also well known: depoliticisation, separation of economics and politics, and absence of input legitimacy or opportunities for effective (policy-changing) popular participation. Neocorporatism is largely independent of parliamentary majorities because it operates in parallel with liberal democratic institutions. Neocorporatism has no contemporary advocates as such, but the proponents of an "associational democracy", in which everyday local

voluntary associations would share the power of the high-ranking elites of old corporatism, are far more popular. Interestingly, as compared with other modern calls for citizen participation and involvement, like Republicanism, associationalism does not deem necessary an identification of the state as the community to which the citizen belongs. Whereas "Republicanism claims the larger part of the citizen and demands identification with the state as community [...] associationalism allows the citizen to choose the communities he or she will create with others" (Hirst, 1996 [1994], p. 202). This principle can be reinterpreted as corporatism's ability to get by without much loyalty from the citizen, and ultimately without any political identification, be it ideological (left versus right) or communal (the nation). Corporatism finds problems when one tries to make it compatible with liberal democratic procedures. Liberalism wants separation of public and private interests, and democracy implies a community of destiny. Neocorporatism is in fact a denial of the liberal separation, and, although it benefits from nationalism, it is also compatible with consociational, complex, fragmented polities.

Neocorporatism is a feature not only of the EU but also of many of its constitutive member states. The main difference between the former and the latter lies in the inability of the EU polity to connect aggregate citizen preferences with political options. Corporatism is only partly responsible for the "apolitical" shape of the EU; the "no demos" deficit, the "consensus diplomacy" and the "integration by stealth" strategy are to be blamed as well.

4
The "No Demos" Conundrum

Let us consider a fictional scene. At the end of a pan-European presidential election night, the directly elected President of the EU addresses the masses gathered at the Parc du Cinquantenaire in Brussels. Following some suggestions discarded during the negotiations of the European Constitution in the early 2000s, the presidency of the council and the commission have been merged through a new amending treaty, and Europe finally has a face, a single face. The scene vaguely reminds us of Obama's victory speech at Chicago's Grant Park in November 2008. The European flag is accompanied by those of its member states, as loyalty towards Haas' "new centre" (2004 [1958]) is still not complete. Most of the millions of citizens who are listening to the victory speech have to do it via translation, especially the older European constituents, the majority of whom do not speak Europe's lingua franca, English.[1] Each of the main candidates for the EU presidency was supported by the respective national leaders of the main ideological groups and parties (social democrats, Christian democrats, liberals, greens), enabling an emotional link between the Estonian presidential winner and the various national and regional constituencies across the Continent. European democracy has finally come to be, through direct presidential elections and truly European parliamentary elections, with national candidates running as European candidates (all campaigning under the banner of a European party) and debating issues like transnational mobility, common market reforms, energy provision and foreign policy. A European political career has become attractive for the most ambitious national politicians, who like to deal with the grand policy choices of the time at a scale (European) that is commensurate with the size of a continental

integrated economy. European popular debate is aided by Europe-wide media. Euronews and other private television companies offer their programmes in several languages simultaneously, although the younger generation are able to follow most debates in three languages: their mother tongue, the lingua franca (English) and another European language. Prestigious mass media have emerged, with a monthly magazine called *Der Spiegel Europe* playing a similar role to that of *The Atlantic Monthly* or *The New Republic* in the USA.

Utopia for some, dystopia for others, the imaginary scene presented above shows the distance between the EU of today and what a fully democratic EU could look like. Those who argue that the EU is already fully democratic may find a point of contention with Simon Hix (2008), who differentiates between procedural and substantive democracy. From a procedural point of view, the EU may be deemed democratic indeed. There are free elections, freedom of speech and universal suffrage. However, from a substantive point of view – that is, whether elections change political outcomes or not – the EU is not a democracy: "There is no electoral contest for political leadership at the European level or over the direction of the EU policy agenda" (2008, p. 77). Whether this coming of age to democracy must be preceded by the building of a European community of solidarity and feeling, or whether such a community can be induced steadily through institutional incentives to popular participation (such as the reliance on popular inputs for the election of an EU president, or pan-European referenda on policy choices like in Switzerland), has been a matter of scholarly debate for nearly a decade. In these debates, the elusive European demos, or the European political people, is at the centre of the discussion. Its existence or, at least, its generation in tandem with institutional change is seen as the necessary precondition for any further democratisation of the EU. In this chapter, I deal with the European demos challenge, delving first into the DNA of democracy. Just as in any DNA double-helix, where adenine forms a base pair with thymine, and guanine with cytosine, in any strand of democracy, I suggest, rule by popular majority would form a base pair with a political community (a demos), and active citizenship (understood as collective self-governance) would form a pair with the popular legitimacy of the polity's institutions, of which identity is one of legitimacy's main components.

Historically, nationalism has been the most effective creator of political communities. Mass democracy and mass politics can hardly be understood without nationalism. The greatest virtue of democracy (the popular legitimacy of government, as compared with the divine

legitimacy of dynastic rulers) comes at the high price of community homogeneity, be it ethnic or moral, cultural or civic, real or fabricated. A government is popularly legitimate when it is seen as representative of the interests of a contingent majority of individuals inside a given (national) community. What keeps the losing minorities happy (often millions of citizens) is an overarching sense of commonality with the winners, along with the preservation of constitutional rights – such as the right to private property, or the principle of non-discrimination by race or gender – which are constitutionally protected and cannot be affected by majoritarian decisions. Whenever democracy and nation do not match, all sorts of problems are likely to arise. Hence the complex situation of multinational states, which must create some sort of transnational state-wide identity in order for their democracies to be popularly legitimate, as is the case in the UK and Spain. Where this transnational state identity has failed (as in the case of Belgium), the political system is in jeopardy. In the case of the EU, the absence of that national pan-European community is usually presented as one of the main reasons why pan-European democracy and its logical correlate, a European public sphere, have not yet emerged. Economically interdependent but divided by language and national sentiments, Europe would seem inevitably geared towards what it is today: a pseudoconfederal technocracy.

In this chapter, I will first delve into the apparent inextricability of democracy and the nation. Addressing the intimate relationship between democracy, nationalism and communities of communication is key to understanding the prospect of a European public sphere. Considering that most researchers have already given up the chance of a truly Continent-wide public sphere in exchange for Europeanised national public spheres, a critical evaluation of the consequences of this seemingly unavoidable national framing is needed. I continue with an exploration of the role of identity in the legitimation of the EU polity, concluding with a summary of the debate in the literature about the convenience of enhancing a European demos through more politicisation and institutional incentives to Europe-wide participation.

Democracy, nationalism and the public sphere

In his seminal book about nationalism, Benedict Anderson suggested that those states that refuse to bear the name of a nation, like the UK or the Soviet Union, reveal simultaneously a pre- and postmodern condition:

> The fact that the Soviet Union shares with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland the rare distinction of refusing nationality in its naming suggests that it is as much the legatee of the prenational dynastic states of the nineteenth century as the precursor of a twenty-first century internationalist order.
>
> (Anderson, 2006 [1983], p. 2)

The EU could be seen, in the same vein, as the re-edition of an old empire (Zielonka, 2006), or as a novel form of transnational governance, a "regional state" (Schmidt, 2006). Both forms, the empire and the regional state, have a problem with democracy. Empires, as Calhoun (1997) insists, were multinational and undemocratic. The regional state faces the much-debated "democratic deficit", which can be read in procedural (transparency, accountability) or identitarian terms (the absence of a European demos).

The multinational EU presents one of the best test cases for the study of the possibility of democracy beyond the nation state, or beyond nations or nationalism. It is not an easy experiment, given the intimate relationship between government by popular majority (democracy) and the communitarian identity that can endow democracy with popular legitimacy (nationalism). To put it simply, democracy needs a demos. A European democracy, then, may need a European demos, or some sort of European nation. The alternative would be to legitimise non-democratic forms of governance, such as technocracy, something that has already been tried by focusing on the EU's capacity to deliver results (output legitimacy) through technocratic government. A Europe-wide democracy might be as (im)possible and (un)desirable as a European nation.

Despite the seeming interdependence of democracy and nationalism, the process by which large communities become sufficiently homogeneous to form a nation has rarely been democratic. What's more, it has usually been contentious (revolutions, linguistic harmonisation from above) and often genocidal, with minorities being killed or deported (Mann, 2005). The great innovation of European community formation is the community method, with its reliance on interstate bargaining and elite persuasion. "There is no precedent for the citizens of a fully formed nation – Amitai Etzioni argues – to consent to its being absorbed into a more encompassing community" (2008, p. 330). The European "regional state" has not been built through conquest and domination but through specific cooperation. Part of what is seen today as a "democratic" or "demos" deficit is due to the first priority of Europe's founding

fathers: the stability of the Continent was prior to any dreams of a federal Europe. Neofunctionalists hoped that a European feeling of community would emerge as the end-product of increased business and cultural exchanges, allowing for a steady democratisation or popularisation of the EU. Although a sense of European identity has clearly arisen among the youth and white-collar professionals (Fligstein, 2008), nowadays Europeans are roughly divided between those who profess a national identity only and those who add a European dimension to their national identity. For Schmidt (2006), European identity can only be an "add-on" to national and regional identities, and it will never replace them, for three reasons:

- "It [the EU] depends in large measure on its member states to build a sense of Europe, given a lack of a common language, Europe-wide mass communication system, political leadership with Europe-wide election campaigns, and so forth."
- "it is imagined mainly through the different lenses of national identity and purposes."
- "it lacks the levers of constraint used by states, such as conscription, forced language and educational policies, and so on." (Schmidt, 2006, p. 18).

The question, then, is whether a light European identity can form the basis of a European-wide democracy, in a context where Europeans cannot see themselves reflected in any popular form mass-media as Europeans, and not merely as nationals of a particular country (Thiesse, 2010 [2001]). Europe-wide deliberation about continental public affairs is hampered. "Virtually no public space of debate is available for European issues," claim Magnette and Papadopoulos (2008, p. 8), which prevents the development of a "politique d'opinion" in Europe.

Two recent developments in EU studies point to the abandonment of the idea of a European community that is not merely the sum of its member states. First, the need for pan-European mass media to build a European public sphere seems to have been discarded. The Europeanisation of national public spheres, despite being always limited by the particular national lenses, has been suggested as the most viable way of building a European space of debate (Risse, 2010). Second, Europe has been identified with post-nationalism and "cosmopolitanism", an attractive identification in this borderless world (Beck and Grande, 2007). But the idea of a European community of shared values is sidelined, as if the acknowledgement of the existence of something characteristically European were akin to building a new national project.

Nevertheless, if Europe-wide democracy is ever the goal, the idea of a European demos (and not merely the sum of European demoi), along its condition of creation and maintenance (a Europe-wide public sphere), must be taken into account. Otherwise, Europeans may never think of themselves, or act, as Europeans. A European political public and a European democracy may only emerge through the existence of a (continental, and not merely national) European public sphere.

On this point, it is worth recalling the role of nationalism in creating the idea of a public, and the mutually constitutive role of public spheres and national communities. According to Calhoun, "nation-building has been closely related historically to the very rise of public life that has helped make modern democracy possible" (1997, p. 80). From nationalism also comes "the notion that there is [sic] some people that constitutes the proper referent of public discourse and the ground of democratic claims of self-governance" (1997, p. 80). When sovereignty left the monarchs to become popular, nationalism was there to create "political publics" (1997, p. 100). The way such publics would come into being was usually through the creation of a public sphere of communication. Ernest Gellner explains the role of mass media as nation-generators in his classic work on nationalism:

> The media do not transmit an idea [nationalism] which happens to have been fed into them. It matters precious little what has been fed into them: it is the media themselves, the pervasiveness and importance of abstract, centralized, standardized, one to many communication, which itself automatically engenders the core idea of nationalism, quite irrespective of what in particular is being put into the specific messages transmitted. The most important and persistent message is generated by the medium itself, by the role which such media have acquired in modern life. That core message is that the language and style of the transmissions is important, that only he who can understand them, or can acquire such comprehension, is included in a moral and economic community, and that he who does not and cannot, is excluded.
>
> (Gellner, 2006 [1983], pp. 121–122)

Nation, public sphere and democracy are therefore entwined. How can this be translated to the EU, if there are multiple nations, languages and public spheres? The EU has often been compared with multilingual democratic states such as Switzerland, with the hope that Europe would resemble the sense of unity in diversity of the Helvetic Confederation. This reasoning implies that there is a Swiss public sphere, an

argument that Ipperciel (2008) considers to be flawed. In his view, Switzerland has not one but three public spheres or "communicative nations" (p. 563). For him it is the public language of communication that defines a nation. "Since language is a sine qua non of common public discussion [...] the communicative nation must incorporate a linguistic dimension. Following this logic, a country counting more than one public language must be thought of as multinational [...] Public multilingualism does lead to multinationalism" (p. 563).

Ipperciel also contends that a public sphere is what allows for the cohesiveness of a nation: "What binds the national space" is "the access by all to a public debate presenting views on which they can take a stand" (2008, p. 571). For him the Swiss referenda are not the result of a Swiss national will, because will formation has been conducted in different arenas of public discussion.

In this sense, Ipperciel would agree with Siedentop (2000, p. 11) that no European mass politics can exist without a shared common European language. English has become the lingua franca of Europeans (Seidlhofer, Breiteneder and Pitzl, 2006) but, as Ipperciel himself reminds us, bilinguals only participate in two public spheres when they actively and regularly consume mass media from each of the linguistic spheres that they access (2008, p. 568). So the condition for a truly Europe-wide public sphere would be the universal knowledge of English by Europeans and their attentive consumption of media of such a pan-European public sphere.

This is a tall order, even considering that most European pupils learn English at school. In the meantime, Europeans do not feel "confidence of community in anonymity" (Anderson, 2006 [1983], p. 36), or at least they do not report so in the Eurobarometer surveys. Actually, in this book, I argue that the EU is the opposite of a community of anonymous beings. It is a large network of interconnected sociopolitical actors who are not united by a communicative public sphere but by the structural opportunities and challenges offered by the supranational layer of European power. They do have an influence on the European public at large, but Europe's grand public is like Plato's chained men against the cavern's wall: condemned to see the shadows of real affairs.

European identity, language and its public sphere

The academic discussion of the so-called EU's democratic deficit has usually focused on the need for institutional reform in order to make the EP more powerful, make the council share legislative power with the EP,

and make the council deliberations more transparent. It is only recently that scholars have insisted on the necessity of looking at both institutional and cultural (identitarian) matters. According to Kraus (2008), most institutional reform proposals (like linking the election of the commission president to the results in the European elections) depart from the underlying assumption that institutional opportunities for popular participation will generate a demos. That is, there would be an induction of a European demos by institutional means. This strategy is utterly flawed, according to Kraus, who claims that the negative results of the constitutional referenda were evidence of a rejection of an abstract, identity-less Europe (Kraus, 2008, p. 20) – a "frigid Europe", in Barnavi's (2008) words, that can no longer rely on technocratic efficiency to obtain the consent of its citizens.

In terms of identity, Europeans are roughly divided between those who feel like nationals of their respective member states (40–50 per cent) and those who identify primarily as nationals but also see themselves as Europeans (35–40 per cent). Only a minority (10–15 per cent) feel European in the first place (Katzenstein and Checkel, 2009, pp. 215–216). There is a division between what Risse calls inclusive and exclusive nationalists: those who make room for Europe in their sense of being, and those who don't (Risse, 2010). What explains this division? According to Fligstein (2008), class and education matter. Although there are certainly very well-educated Eurosceptics – and, as Haller (2008) has shown, mistrust about the EU is greater in those countries with more democratic tradition – survey data show that European identification is greater among those who have benefitted the most from European integration (white-collar workers, educational and professional elites, and the youth), whereas blue-collar classes identify the EU with immigration and neoliberal economy, and cling to the nation state as their main focus of loyalty and allegiance. European identity, then, is in Fligstein's view "class-based", a feature that is not conducive to the construction of a European nation, as a "nation" is by definition cross-class (i.e. both the poor and the rich feel part of it). Fligstein foresees two possible scenarios for European identity: i) that it has reached its limits (being confined to that small elite, around 10 per cent of the total European population) and ii) that this is just the beginning, and younger generations will increase their interaction with fellow Europeans, therefore creating a more encompassing and popular European identity.

However intense, some sort of European "we-feeling" is deemed necessary for the existence of a European democracy and the forum where

European public affairs might be debated: a European public sphere. Dieter Grimm (1995), expert in constitutional law and former member of the Federal Constitutional Court in Germany, voiced one of the most powerful diatribes against the possibility of a European demos and a public sphere. His chain of reasoning was as follows: there's no European language, therefore there's no European demos, therefore there's no European public sphere, therefore there's no European democracy:

> Communication is bound up with language and linguistically mediated experience and interpretation of the world. Information and participation as basic conditions of democratic existence are mediated through language. [...] The large majority of Community citizens can communicate only in their own mother tongue, and thus remain cut off from direct understanding of communication in any Europe-wide communication. This is not just a private loss. They are instead "participatively restricted" and therefore disadvantaged in the European opinion-forming and interest-mediation process, which suffers much more than any national one from remoteness from its base.
>
> (Grimm, 1995, p. 295)

Grimm's claim echoes Ipperciel's assumption that public spheres are essentially monolingual – that is, dependent on a language of public communication. For Grimm, Europe's language diversity hinders the possibility of "mediatory structures" (1995, p. 294) like a true European media or true European political parties, which would be key to linking the popular sovereign (the people) with the representative and popularly responsive agencies to which such power is delegated (a parliament or government). Institutional reforms, such as empowering the EP, could actually be counterproductive, as member states, not the European assembly, are the ones with real emotional ties to the public. In sum, the EU is doomed to be a "kratos without a demos"[2] until a stronger collective identity and a shared language are in place. More than ethnic homogeneity, Europeans need to feel themselves as one, and have the means of communicating with each other fluently: "What obstructs democracy is [...] not the lack of cohesion of Union citizens as a people, but heir weakly developed collective identity and low capacity for transnational discourse" (Grimm, 1995, p. 297).

Thomas Risse (2010) offers a radically different point of view. For him a European identity and a European public sphere are not future dreams but current realities. The keyword to understand both is

"Europeanisation": there has not been a replacement of national public spheres or identities by a new European community of communication separated from those of their constituent nations. Instead there has been a progressive infiltration of Europe into the different national identities and public spheres that coexist in the European continent.

This amalgamation of the national and the European explains in part why the intensity of European identity is not uniform across Europe. Western and Southern Europeans have managed to integrate Europe into their identities, whereas the majorities in Scandinavia and the UK are still more exclusionary nationalistic (Risse, 2010, p. 5).[3] European identity is also a matter of degree: it can be an "onion layer", external to a more internal national or regional feeling, or it can be indissociably merged with one's feeling of nationality (the marble cake model of identity), whereby being French inevitably implies being (and feeling) European (Risse, 2010, p. 45).

Risse (2010) is one of the most forceful defenders of the existence of a European public sphere through Europeanised public spheres. He applies the "Eder–Kantner criteria" (Eder and Kantner, 2000) for determining the existence of a European public sphere: i) debating the same issues at the same time and ii) giving those issues the same relevance. To these he adds a third condition: that those issues are framed through similar points of view, treating Europeans and not only the nationals as the subject of the news stories or comments. He uses the case of the isolation of Austrian populist politician Jörg Haider by European governments as one example of pan-European debate through national mass media which reported the victory of a racist politician as a challenge to European values, and not merely as a matter of importance for Austria.

It is through the discussion of these issues via those European lenses that a European public sphere can emerge, according to Risse. For him there is no need for a pre-existing European community. The actual debate in the news media about European affairs is what will eventually create, step by step, the European public sphere and its community. Pan-European media are not a requirement as long as the "same frames of reference and meaning structures" (p. 119) appear in the different national news media: "A sense of community and of collective identification ought not to be treated as a prerequisite for a communicative discourse. Rather [...] it can emerge in the course of a debate in the public sphere [...] 'debating Europe' actually builds a community of Europeans and a transnational public sphere" (Risse, 2010, p. 121).

For Risse, then, the problem with Europe is not one of identity or communication – for him, "a European sense of community as well as

a community of communication is in the making" (p. 230) – but of politicisation: "The much talked about 'democratic deficit' of the EU does not refer to the lack of a sense of community among European citizens. Rather, it concerns the insulation of EU decision making from mass politics and political mobilization" (p. 227).

Surprisingly, although Risse points to the décalage between the European and the national levels of decision-making as the main source of the democratic deficit, he does not advocate any form of institutional reform to facilitate politicisation, and endorses Moravcsik's constitutional settlement by saying that federalist solutions would not find popular support in the Europe of the early 21st century (Risse, 2010, p. 233). Risse has faith in public discussion as a means of politicising the EU. He actually calls on pro-Europeans to take up the public battle against Eurosceptics, as the latter are monopolising the politicisation of the EU, and he invites the media and political actors to discuss European policies, instead of discussing the benefits of European integration itself.

Risse's (2010) proposal, however well intentioned, underestimates the incentives for non-communication that are in-built in the institutional design and political practices of the EU. The media can do little against the secrecy and carefully planned publicity of neocorporatism and European-level diplomacy, as I will try to demonstrate in the empirical part of this book. Although the most comprehensive overview available on European identity and its public sphere, Risse's book hints at but does not fully address the root causes of what has traditionally been seen as an identity or communication gap: the particular nature of the EU polity, where state and organised civil society are more interlinked than in any other of its national members, restricting the conditions of a meaningful public sphere.

Risse's most characteristic suggestion (that a European public sphere already exists in the form of a Europeanised public sphere) is also one of the main targets for criticism. For Kraus (2008), the possibility of a transnational sphere of communication in Europe is dependent on a considerable degree of linguistic competence on the part of its citizens: "As long as a significant portion of the population in the member states lacks the communicative means to participate in trans-European political discourses, the status of citizenship of the Union will necessarily remain on shaky ground" (p. 168). Kraus does not support English monolingualism in Europe but a "converging multilingualism", "based on varying sets of two to three languages [. . .] The 'canonical' European repertoire of languages should include English without reservation, but

it should also cover other languages wherever possible" (Kraus, 2008, p. 177). In sum, in order for a European public sphere (and a European sense of community) to be viable, the language issue cannot be ignored. Europeans should know English and two other European languages. Institutionally, Kraus suggests the following reform for EU institutions: reducing the number of languages chosen as working languages to English, French and German, "for reasons of pragmatism and efficiency" (p. 135). The sort of European public sphere these ideas would bring is yet to be known. Kraus (2008) himself points at the double nature of language: its instrumental and expressive features. One thing is using a language to make oneself understood; another thing is to use a language to persuade, tell jokes and strike the emotional chords of the communicative partner. The political engagement that a democracy needs might go beyond the instrumental dimension of a language. In other words, for democracy to work, the language of politics might need to be the same language that people use to express their innermost feelings. Therefore the degree to which an English-speaking president can rally the masses in Europe, Obama's success in Berlin notwithstanding,[4] is a matter of debate. A new breed of European English could emerge, with Europeans beginning to use it for expressive and not only instrumental reasons. Or a new diglossia may be born, with English as the language of European politics, and the native language as the one for national politics and expressive uses.

Language is not, however, the only means of community creation. The US, the UK and Australian citizens share the same language, but they do not constitute a common public sphere. The same goes for most of Latin America and Spain, or Brazil and Portugal. The institutional setting and the boundaries of the legal community matter too. In this sense, the EU is a community of law and commerce, or even values, but not a community of language. The British and the Portuguese are bound by a common legal framework, but the opportunities they have to debate the direction of European policy on a European scale are scarce, largely due to the much-appreciated linguistic diversity of the Continent. They may have the right to live and work in each other's countries, but the chances of them actually doing it are much smaller than for those living in large federations that share a common language, like the USA. Interstate mobility rates in the USA (the percentage of people living in a different state from that in which they were born) is around 40 per cent (Pew Research Center, 2008). In Europe, it is about 2 per cent (Faist, 1997). Without a common language of communication, a community of communication may not emerge, and the popular

control of government (which is largely possible through a community of communication) might be difficult. If there is such a popular control, it is through the national public spheres.

The degree of Europeanisation of national public spheres in the past two decades has been carefully measured by Wessler et al. (2008). The authors analysed the content of the benchmark newspapers in five selected countries of Western Europe (France, the UK, Germany, Austria and Denmark) by paying attention to four dimensions of Europeanisation: i) monitoring governance (the degree to which EU institutions are discussed in the press); ii) discourse convergence (the degree to which different national discourses converge when dealing with roughly the same EU topics, and framing them in a similar fashion); iii) discursive integration (the degree to which the nationals of second European countries are given a chance to participate in the news stories dealing with EU news); and iv) collective identification (the degree to which news stories in the national press are framed from a European perspective, either acknowledging the existence of a collective known as "the Europeans" or, even more importantly, identifying the "we" of the news story with the European (e.g. "we Europeans are different from Americans because . . ."). Since the period analysed (1982 to 2003), the references to EU institutions have increased but the monitoring of EU legislation always comes late, at the implementation phase in the nation state, not at the policy-making phase in Brussels. Discourse convergence presents positive figures, with national newspapers dealing with the same topics from a roughly similar perspective. The references to "Europeans" as an identifiable collective or as the subject of the news stories have increased steadily, if remaining small. The major source of a "communication deficit", according to the authors, has to be placed in the discursive integration dimension: sources from other countries do not follow a European but an "elite nation" pattern. That is, the criteria for citing sources from other countries is not their belonging to the EU but their general importance in world politics (so the USA and the UK are quoted regularly, and Slovenia and Romania never or very rarely).

On the feasibility of a European public sphere, Wessler et al. (2008) identify two schools: i) the "impossibility school" (Gerhards, 2001), which posits that demand for public debate on EU issues (from either the public or the news media) will continue to be low as long as the possibilities for real citizen participation in EU politics remain low, and ii) the "automatism school" (Trenz and Eder, 2004), which contends that European institutions transform themselves and become more

accountable through the assessment of public reactions. Neither of these schools seems to be fully supported by the authors' data, as national discourses have become slightly more Europeanised over time (therefore putting the impossibility school into question), though it is true that the opportunities for direct feedback from citizens to European institutions are minimal, and public opinion effects (like the constitutional referenda stalemate) stop processes (like the European Constitution) but do not influence them in a given way (the Lisbon Treaty was not the product of increased citizen deliberation), therefore questioning the plausibility of the automatism school. Apart from the diachronic study, the authors test their hypotheses with two case studies on the convergence of European discourse, one focusing on military intervention in Kosovo and Iraq, the other on genetically modified (GM) food. Not surprisingly, the discourse is more Europeanised in the GM food case than in the military intervention study, which indicates that the Europeanisation of public discourse follows the Europeanisation of policy areas (communitarised in the case of GM food, intergovernmental in the case of security and defence).

Once again, structural issues (the limited opportunities for political inputs into the system) and cultural issues (the weak European "we") are placed behind the so-called European communications problem. Given the difficulties of creating a Europe-wide identity commensurate with the reach of European institutions, it has been argued that the legitimacy of the EU could be grounded on shared civic values, with no need for a communicative community of a European scale. If it is believed that much of what the EU does is of a technical and regulatory nature (Majone, 2005), leaving politics for the nation states, the limited opportunities for popular input could be seen as negligible and even positive, as the EU's legitimacy would rest on output efficiency, not on popular participation. This begs the question of the (in)dissociability of cultural and civic values as components of political identity, on the one hand, and the (in)dissociability of democracy and nation, on the other. These two issues have been dealt with at large by Pierre Manent, to whom I now turn.

Can democracy exist without a nation?

Echoing Carl Schmitt, Manent (2006) argues that democracy, nation and the individual are intrinsically related. Political communities need borders and identity in order to be meaningful. Democracy is not only about procedures or values but also about people. For Manent, civic and

cultural values are intimately related to each other, and both constitute political identity:

> What the Europeans are trying to do is to separate the democratic regime completely, or rather the machinery of democratic politics (composed of "institutions" and animated by "values") from any underlying conception of what it means to be a people. However democratic its regime, a people is never simply defined by its democratic character: its members are attached to a circumscribed territory, accustomed to particular mores, molded by a more or less ancient religion. But Europeans have embarked on the bold adventure of building a democracy without a people.
>
> (2006, pp. vii–ix)

Authors such as Habermas and Hix would certainly challenge this vision: the popular preference for a "welfare state", with moderate intervention on the economy to provide a generous safety net ("social-market economy"), the strength of secularism and the unpopularity of capital punishment are, among other features, civic-cum-cultural values of the common European identity. But Manent claims that the EU is managing to separate the civic from the cultural, the individual from the collective, the legal from the identitarian, policy from politics, democracy from the nation. Because democracy, Manent insists, is both about individual rights (personal autonomy, the purview of the individual) and self-government (collective autonomy, the purview of the citizen). In his view, the EU expands individual rights but limits self-government:

> There is no doubt that the "construction of Europe" signifies an extension of the rights of the individual, of the possibilities open to him, and therein lies part of the attraction of Europe for the citizens of the European nations, at least for those who feel they are capable of taking advantage of these new possibilities. Yet, the "construction of Europe" means – for the moment at least and assuredly for a long time to come – a diminution of the powers of the citizen. Life for the European citizen is determined more and more not by the familiar national debate, as conflictual as it may be, but by the outcome of a European process that is much less comprehensible.
>
> (pp. 61–62)

Instead of walking towards a new grand nation or federation, Manent contends, the EU seems to be evolving towards a great depoliticised space for commerce and culture.

> A European Union organized on these foundations would be a vast space of civilization, subject to rules, offering immense possibilities to individuals capable of acting to their own advantage in accordance with uniform rules, but not a body politic that affords its citizens a common adventure, a "community of destiny."
>
> (2006, p. 63)

Manent's conclusions have some empirical support. In his study of the emergence of a European identity, Bruter (2005) found that most EU citizens see their identity as "civic", based on rights like the freedom of movement across the EU member states. Those seeing their European identity as "cultural" (based on common history and homogeneous social features) are to be found, paradoxically, among those nation states where the domesticisation of the EU has largely failed, as in the UK – that is, where it has succeeded in its legitimacy, the EU has managed to create a civic space (and an identification of citizens with such a legal structure). Where it has failed, those seeing themselves as Europeans do so because of the traditional incardination of their country within the European continent, not because of the benefits of the EU's famous four freedoms.

For Manent, again, such division between the civic and the cultural, the possibility of living in a civic system that is not intimately related to a cultural or identitarian tradition, is an act of depoliticisation. It is the division of human diversity into more or less homogeneous communities, Manent contends, that allows for a collective self-government within limited boundaries: "Democracy, in order to become a reality, needs a body, a population marked out by borders and other characteristics, namely a defined realm" (p. 68). The EU is deeply unsettling to Manent because of its political indefinition, in terms of both boundaries (external borders) and competences (a clear division of tasks between the EU and the member states): "It seems that democracy, in the European construction, is striving to escape the sad necessity of having a body. So it gives itself a body without limits, this Europe with indefinite expansion, a Europe defined paradoxically as an indefinite expansion" (p. 68). If such indefinition continues for too long, the EU, claims Manent, is risking its very existence. The EU must "become a new body politic with territorial limits and a spiritual physiognomy, or it will fail. If Europe fails too often and too long in the political domain, it is not certain that it will be able to survive as an economic and monetary community" (p. 69).

Manent is not alone in his view about the indissociability of democracy and the nation. However, authors like Majone (2005) and

Jolly (2007) see the current gap between the European size of government and the national scope of Europeans' identities as largely unproblematic as long as the EU keeps its hands away from redistributive policies. In Majone's view, the EU is a "regulatory state" whose legitimacy, absent a European demos, cannot be democratic (based on inputs from citizenry) but efficiency or output related (grounded on its ability to deliver economic prosperity to the populations of the constituent states). The absence of a European identity means for Majone that such a thing as a "EU democracy" is impossible:

> Democracy as we know it – a system of government responsive to the wishes of the citizens – could not thrive in a European federation, or in any other transnational polity whose component units are deeply divided by various cleavages. The absence of a strong feeling of solidarity means that social and other policies, which historically have legitimated the national welfare state, could not be transferred to the higher level of governance.
>
> (Majone, 2005, p. 192)

In a similar vein, Jolly (2007) uses evidence from survey data to argue that there is no demos in Europe to sustain a European democracy, but (separating again the civic from the cultural, a violation that Manent would not allow) concedes that there might be a "minimal demos sufficient to justify a certain amount of supranational governance" (p. 61). Therefore "the subjective-emotional dimension of the demos is weak but [...] the idea of a European procedural political identity is not entirely utopian. Again, the consequence for integration is that the areas that demand a high degree of solidarity should not be subjected to supranational government" (p. 238).

In any case, Jolly and Majone see the major source of EU legitimacy in their nation states. It is at the national level where redistributive policies (e.g. social policy) should be kept, leaving for the EU those regulatory issues that do not demand popular involvement (e.g. market competition regulation) and those cross-border matters that require transnational cooperation to be solved efficiently (e.g. climate change). These authors imply that, much to the despair of utopian Eurofederalists, Europeans are happy living in the paradox of wanting the four freedoms of the Rome Treaty but not being willing to engage in European-level politics: "Despite considerable interest in travel for pleasure, and increasingly also work and studies (all of which may have been generated by increased opportunity), most people are

not particularly interested in transnational civic participation" (Jolly, 2007, p. 1).

The relationship between identity and legitimacy

One of the main consequences of the EU's lack of a corresponding demos is the impossibility of the EU to have a direct legitimacy through a European electorate. For authors such as Majone (2005) and Jolly (2007), there would be not enough homogeneity of solidarity among the peoples of Europe to withstand the redistributive policies by a winning majority (of any political persuasion). In this line of reasoning, it is the national sentiment that allows for democratic (majority-based) solutions. Given the multinational feature of the European continent (or the absence of a strong enough European demos), the legitimacy of supranational governing institutions must be indirect, through the constituent member states, and based on output (results, delivery, efficiency) rather than on input (popular mandates).

It is worth noting that even historic Eurofederalists, such as Spanish diplomat Salvador de Madariaga, though favourable to multinational states, saw the existence of a Europe-wide electorate as something impossible, as for him Europe was not a nation but "a garden of national flowers" (Madariaga, 2010 [1951], p. 57). In Madariaga's view, the sum of votes in a European electoral contest would be like the sum of oranges and apples. For him, Europe had the challenge of uniting institutionally while preserving the particularity of its peoples:

> Europe is not and will never be a nation, but a cluster of nations on the vine [*racimo de naciones*, in the Spanish original]. There will never be a European electoral body [...] The European federalists should try to make an original work, neither imitating a centralised country like France or a federated country like Switzerland or the United States. Europe is sui generis, it does not resemble anything else. It has to create its own original institutions.
>
> (Madariaga, 1977, p. 204)

The argument that there is no other way for the EU than to be legitimised indirectly has been challenged by authors such as Beetham and Lord (1998). As they argue in their comprehensive review of the EU's legitimacy, an exclusive reliance on the member states' popular mandate cannot be sustained for long because "the EU [...] has taken over numerous functions that were previously the preserve of

its member states, and which [...] impinge directly upon the lives of their citizens" (1998, p. 14). It is precisely because the EU cannot be legitimated only indirectly (through its member states or through an aseptic regulatory technocracy) that Beetham and Lord (1998) claim that the EU suffers from a "legitimacy deficit." Since, unlike other international organisations, EU supranational institutions have power of their own, independent from that of the constituent member states, and because technocratic management does not prevent decision-makers from engaging in value choices with potentially redistributive consequences, the legitimacy of the EU must come closer to that of a normal liberal democracy. That is, it must be based in what Beetham and Lord (1998) define as the triple normative criteria of identity, democracy and performance.

According to these authors, for a liberal democratic polity to be legitimate, its members must feel part of a unity of destiny (identity), the rulers must be authorised by the popular sovereign (democracy) and the system itself must be found to be effective (in terms of security and welfare provision) for its constituents. The three criteria must be met simultaneously, as a political system relying on only one of them will always be vulnerable. Such is the case of the EU and its almost exclusive legitimation through performance: invariably, the popularity of the EU is less in periods of economic crises. As a consequence, the whole institutional setting, and not a particular governing majority or coalition, is challenged.

Beetham and Lord (1998) admit that, for the time being, as long as the absence of a European identity makes identitarian and democratic legitimacy impractical, there is no other way forward for the EU than to balance the indirectness of intergovernmentalism and the directness of supranationalism. Nevertheless, instead of seeing the EU's legitimacy problems as "deficits", the authors prefer to talk about "dilemmas" that must be managed by policy-makers in order to move the EU from legitimacy by performance (for the protection and progress that it enables) to legitimacy by democracy and identity (a more direct relationship between the citizen and the EU). The main obstacle towards building a European democracy in its own right is, the authors acknowledge, the no-demos issue: "The difficulties of constructing a single democracy at the European level relate to a common theme: that of the absence of a European demos – the cluster of shared identities, meanings and communications" (p. 76).

Beetham and Lord (1998) review several "pathways to European identity formation" (p. 35): the institutional cultivation of identity through common symbols and opportunities for transnational participation like

the EP elections, the building of an identity based on shared values (constitutional patriotism), and the "thin identity" that comes out of the mere interaction with the European level of political decision-making. All in all, the authors admit that the EU is still haunted by "a major gap" – that "between the political requirement for a governmental authority beyond the nation state, and the popular loyalty needed to support that authority" (p. 124). "It is as if", they write, "the nation state is over-supplied with loyalty and the EU undersupplied, and some rebalancing is needed. Yet this above all requires time, and in the meantime the imbalance provides the locus for recurrent doubt and questioning" (p. 125).

Such is the important attributed to identity in the legitimation of the EU that Amitai Etzioni, renowned communitarian sociologist, calls for a stop in the process of European integration unless the "community deficit" is solved:

> The main challenge currently facing the EU is a community deficit: the low valuation the majority of its citizens accord the evolving collectivity. The EU is challenged by the mismatch between its increasing supranational decision-making and the strong loyalties of its citizens to their respective nation states. To deal with this community deficit, the EU must either introduce strong measures of community building or else significantly scale back its plans for action in unison.
>
> (Etzioni, 2008, p. 324)

Among the measures that Etzioni suggests to "reduce alienation" (p. 326) are a deference of enlargement, a delay in the deepening of integration (avoiding redistributive policies) and more consensus-building on the part of the commission when drafting legislation. To "build community" (p. 328), the author argues for EU-wide public dialogue and referenda, and the creation of a European BBC, offering news from a European perspective – in English. "If the EU is to move toward become more of a community, it would be much assisted if all the citizens would share the same language," Etzioni comments (p. 329). For him, English is "the only serious candidate" as the common second language of Europeans.

Conclusion: Identity-building through politicisation?

The literature on European identity and the European public sphere is not very optimistic about the existence of a European demos. Only a

minority of Europeans feel as such, but they constitute a highly educated, well-travelled minority of "Eurostars" who, nevertheless, must comply with the still numerous national barriers that hinder European mobility (Favell, 2008). The main exception to this "no-demos" trend is Thomas Risse (2010), who claims that a European people is emerging through the Europeanisation of national identities.

The reasons why a European demos has not convincingly emerged in 50 years of European integration have been widely and repeatedly mentioned in the literature. Among the most relevant is the absence of a common language or at least a lingua franca shared by all Europeans in order to enable what Deutsch called "a community of social communication" (1966, p. vi). As he warned, it is communication that constitutes a people: "Membership in a people essentially consists in wide complementarity of social communication" (1966, p. 91). The no-demos deficit has also been attributed, as I do in this book, to the antipopular bias of the "community method" (which, nevertheless, endowed European integration with much of its success), and to the depoliticising pulsions of neocorporatism and diplomacy, which bring secrecy and horse-trading to policy-making. Others, such as Madariaga (1977), point to the irreductible multinational condition of the European continent. This would explain why Europeans seem to applaud the benefits of a continental space of economic and legal cooperation, but shun the possibility of participating in transnational politics, as the identity that can sustain democracy stops at the national level. It would also explain the emptiness of such a grandiose category as that of "European citizenship", introduced after the Maastritch Treaty in 1992. To put it in Majone's words, "the very way in which the citizenship of the Union has been derived from the possession of nationality in one of the member states implicitly denies the existence of a European people" (2005, p. 27).

If the inextricability of democracy and nation are accepted as valid, the only way of having a democratic EU is by creating a European community of destiny and feeling, a kind of European nation, however weak it might be in its early stages. Creating a European identity through more popular involvement in the EU decision-making process is a prospect that generates much division among authors. For pro-federalists like Simon Hix (2008), the introduction of "limited democratic politics", like the election of the commission president by the winning party coalition in the European elections, would create an institutional incentive for a Europe-wide debate on the future of Europe as a political community. For intergovernmentalists such as Andrew Moravcsik, more popular involvement in European affairs would be

counterproductive given the limited power of European institutions in the issues that are most salient to voters. This would render democratic consultations vulnerable to extremists (mostly Eurosceptics) due to the indifference that they would provoke among the wider electorate. A similar view is shared by Stefano Bartolini (Hix and Bartolini, 2006).

Magnette and Papadopoulos (2008) have argued for a middle-of-the-road position between the bipolar politicisation (left versus right) that they attribute to Hix and the limitation of popular inputs that Bartolini and Moravcsik defend. The EU would be too "consociative" to become politicised on a left–right basis, but not politicising it at all would be equally misguided. The authors suggest a "consociational politicisation", whereby debate and conflict would be "organised around a maximum of six or seven political identities (extreme-left, greens, social democrats, liberals, Christian democrats, conservatives, national-populist right)" (p. 18). Some embryo of European demos would emerge through periodical Europe-wide referenda, following the example of Switzerland. For Magnette and Papadopoulos, politicisation is compatible with the "centrist compromises" typical of the EU and other consociational democracies. Pan-European referenda – that is, direct democracy – would encourage political parties to take a stand on Europe-wide policy issues, helping them to truly become the transnational party federations that they are on paper.

More than half a century ago, Karl Deutsch suggested that Europe had not become a continental nation but a "security community" (1996 [1953], cited by Taylor 1983, p. 56). As such, Deutsch understood a community in which there is enough mutual trust and understanding so as to eradicate the prospect of war among its members. But this solidarity cluster falls short of the ideal of a community in which communication creates the imagined fellow citizen, endowed with the same emotional allegiance as a conational.

In any case, if Hix advocates "limited democratic politics" (and not fully democratic politics), and Magnette and Papadopoulos advocate pan-European referenda as "demos-enhancing institutions" (2008, p. 20), it is because the European demos is not yet there, or at least it is far from its functional completeness. The two roads envisioned in the literature (giving up the quest for a European demos due to the irreducibility of national demoi or inducing it through institutional incentives) acknowledge that the European grand political public is, still, to borrow Lippmann's expression, a "phantom public" (Lippmann, 1993 [1925]).

5
Explaining the Domesticisation Deficit

The twin deficit of domesticisation (lack of identity) and politicisation (lack of agonistic conflict) substitutes in my approach the concept of "communications deficit". Rather than considering Eurosceptic media and uncooperative national politicians as the source of the lack of popular political engagement with European politics, I move the target away from the senders and mediators (politicians and journalists) and put the focus on the cultural and systemic constraints of the EU: the absence of a European demos and the curious mixture of neocorporatism, functionalism and diplomatic rule that inspires the government of the pseudoconfederation that the EU is today.

The domesticisation deficit is defined as the incomplete or absent identification between the government and the governed. Domesticisation, like politicisation, can be seen as a continuum. At one extreme a total lack of domesticisation means that government institutions are seen as alien intruders. At the other extreme, government institutions would be seen as an appropriate and convenient channel for the representation of the will of the community. The UK would be placed close to the low domesticisation pole. Spain would be far from that extreme but not close to the opposite side either, as European institutions are accepted but not yet seen as the right vehicle for popular sovereignty. The EU is not fully domestic (a home, family reality) in Spain. The EU is only domestic to the community of actors closely involved in its policies. Hence my claim that the most European thing in Europe is the network of EU actors themselves.

As noted in the content analysis chapter, domesticisation and politicisation are closely related to each other. A high degree of positive domesticisation should lead to agonistic politicisation (there is an agreement on the representivity of the institutions, so political conflict

is geared towards achieving temporal hegemony over the community), whereas negative domesticisation would be related to antagonistic politicisation (if institutions are not felt to be the right vehicle for popular sovereignty, their legitimacy will be contested and the political fight will not be between or among community members but between members of different communities).

My concern with the domesticisation of EU political institutions is inspired by Carl Schmitt's claim that democracies are, in essence, a regime of identity between the ruler and the ruled (Schmitt, 2008 [1926], 2009 [1932]). If in a democracy the ultimate power-holder is the demos, the government must be seen as representative of that political community, to the point that the demos feels that it is being governed by itself. In the case of the EU, the distance between the governing institutions and the people is so wide that, according to Eurobarometer figures, half of Europeans ignore the fact that the EP is a popularly elected institution (Farrell and Scully, 2007).

The constant clash between Europhiles and Eurosceptics in the UK obscures the fact that full identification with the EU is not a matter of positive or negative feelings towards their institutions or towards the idea of Europe. In Spain, the EU is positively regarded, but it is still seen as remote and distant. There seems to be a glass ceiling of identification and politicisation with regard to the EU. It can never be felt as domestic, as a home reality; nor can it be easily politicised on a left versus right axis. The reason is disappointingly simple, and has been much debated in the political science literature but frequently ignored by communications scholars: the no demos problem, or the absence of a European people.

In this chapter, I draw on interviews and observations with the EU network of political actors to report on the cases where I found positive and negative domesticisation of the EU (see the Methodological Appendix II for details of the selection of informants). A sense of failed domestication prevails, even among the pro-EU Galician actors. My informants have some indigenous explanations for this: the elusive European identity, the lack of a common language and the inexistence of a European space of communication. Interestingly, I detected some instances of a conscious separation of the civic and cultural identity, which offers dim prospects for a European democracy but a stable basis for the current managerial state whose legitimacy is grounded on efficiency and delivery rather than on direct popular sovereignty.

To some MEPs, and also to some relevant EU scholars such as Andrew Moravcsik (1998), the remoteness of European institutions is

unavoidable. This would be because the EU takes care of important-but-non-vital issues. Most basic services, such as education, health care and pensions, are still managed at the national level. According to the intergovernmentalist school, the EU would be just a framework for international cooperation among commercially interdependent nations.

This rationale has been the object of much contention. To begin with, there is not a clear division of competences between the EU and its member states. Competences that intergovernmentalists hold as exclusively national, such as education or health care, are largely determined by EU-level regulations.[1] The entire higher-education system of the EU member states has been reformed through the Bologna Process, ending with the Italian *laurea* and the Spanish *licenciatura* in favour of Anglo-styled degrees. In the spring of 2010, the health ministers of the EU agreed to limit the so-called health tourism among European member states, as EU citizens were taking advantage of their right to free movement within the continent to search for the cheapest surgery. Nation states therefore do not have the ability to exercise exclusive competence in areas of policy which rely on freedom of movement treaty rights. Much to the despair of the UK Eurosceptics, national labour legislation has a clear EU imprint on every member state.

The EU, then, takes care of important and highly salient issues, but it is a framework that also involves the nation states, who thanks to subsidiarity preserve their protagonism among their domestic audiences, while at the same time managing politics at a pan-European level in a unique combination of corporatism, diplomacy and technocracy.

The domesticisation deficit (the incomplete identification between Europeans and EU institutions) is explained in large degree by the absence of a European demos. Europe is still, to borrow an expression from Bellamy and Castiglione (1997), a bricoleur of "bits and pieces".

Evidence

Negative domesticisation

Picturing Europe and the EU as an outside entity

The UK, or at least England, is placed at the negative pole of the domesticisation continuum. The EU is effectively seen as "the other". That's why, from a Schmittian point of view, it could be said that the UK–EU relationship is more political (the EU is sometimes even the enemy) than the Spain–EU liaison, which is not yet at the opposite pole of positive domesticisation (the EU is still remote and unfamiliar) but

is certainly closer to it. The EU political system is distant for Spaniards, but at least is not regarded as a force of foreign domination. Quite the contrary: the EU is surrounded by an aura of prestige that, nevertheless, though still strong, has been quietly eroding through the years of Spanish membership of the EU. The austerity policies commanded by Germany after the 2008 financial and sovereign debt crisis seem to have further deteriorated the image of Brussels in Spain and Southern Europe to a degree which is yet to be properly studied.

The UK is, in any reading, an extreme case. It is the vivid proof of a domesticisation failure leading to antagonistic politicisation. EU institutions are, to a degree, foreign parasites:

> You have a political capital here [in Brussels], where laws are being made . . . but it still feels like it is abroad. In Britain we've always regarded ourselves as an island. So it doesn't come naturally to see binding laws coming from a seeming foreign place [. . .] As compared to Spain, we don't see the EU in terms of subnational, national, and supranational. The very fact that we talk about "going to Europe" is indicative.
>
> (United Kingdom Permanent Representation to the EU [UKRep] official, Brussels, 29 April 2010)

Whereas in Spain, EU membership is an unquestioned fact of life, in the UK, belonging to the EU is still a matter of hot political debate, 40 years after the UK's accession to the European Economic Community. In a way, EU-bashing has become a means of national self-affirmation. The situation is so tense (so extremely political, in Schmittian language) that EU institutions have to proceed with caution so as to diffuse that animosity. The Brussels correspondent for the British Press Association recalled a conversation that he had with an official from the European Commission Representation in London. He wanted to know why EU institutions were so slow to respond to sensationalist reports in the yellow press. The commission replied by recalling its original remit of limiting itself to providing information without engaging in debates, and by admitting its condition in the UK as a "foreign embassy":

> This is what they [the European Commission London officers] said: "We have to tread very carefully. The Commission in London is not part of the British establishment. We are like a foreign embassy. We can't go around publicly saying: That story on *The Sun* or the *Daily Mirror* is completely nonsense." So I said: "Why? Isn't that what you

> do?" No. Our official role in each member state is to inform, to get EU material into libraries, to visit schools, to educate. We cannot engage in the debate in a direct way." And I said: "Why can't you?" They don't want to, because it upsets the factions within national politics in whatever country that don't necessarily think the EU is doing a great job.
>
> (Press Association correspondent, Brussels, 19 May 2009)

The UK Eurosceptic discourse about the EU (self-justified with affirmation of the type "we are pro-European but anti-EU", "we love travelling to Europe, we are married to European spouses, but we want to be ruled by our own rules, and we don't want to rule over anyone else but ourselves") allows for several readings. On the one hand, the willingness to form a European Free Trade Association (EFTA) like trading block but not to engage in any supranational legislation reaffirms the separation between the civic and the cultural that will be analysed more carefully below. On the other, it follows almost to the letter the Schmittian theories about democracy as a system of government inherently bound to a highly homogeneous community. Supranational democracy, from the Eurosceptic point of view, would be a *contradictio in terminis*. Whereas other European countries, Spain among them, seem to be content, or at least not uncomfortable, with the unending transitional stage of the EU as an institution, in the UK, precisely because identity and democracy are more clearly related in the public discourse, there is an urgency to make the political system and the community comparable and compatible. The indivisibility of sovereignty, a recurrent claim since the first UK engagements with the European Community, has polarised the political class between Eurosceptics (supporters of exclusive commercial agreements like the EFTA) and Europhiles (advocates of a European federation). The actual shape of the EU is midway between these two extremes, which arguably makes both sides unhappy.

The leading voice of a London-based electoral reform pressure group expressed the situation vividly. He actually confirmed, in his own words, that negative domesticisation leads to antagonistic politicisation. The debate over the basics (EU membership) prevents a left–right divide in the UK political spectrum, which in turn becomes polarised between the pro-EU and anti-EU camps:

> We are not having the debate about what kind of Europe do we want to be a part of, because we haven't decided if we want to be part of it yet! And, therefore, our debate is always seen through that prism.

> We divide the world between Eurosceptics and Europhiles, in a way that means the European debate is a strange one. It's like having some kind of prism, and you put it [the debate] through that prism, and it breaks it up, but it breaks it in a way that is completely different. So a balanced debate in the UK is to have a Eurosceptic and a pro-European, rather than having people who are talking about whether or not there should be more regulation, or less regulation, or . . . You know, any debate becomes about that issue. And that's what I mean when I say we are not having a proper European debate . . . or a normal European debate.
>
> (Electoral reform pressure group leader, London, 27 March 2009)

The consideration of Europe as an entity of its own, different from the nation state, is not privative of the UK. It is actually quite popular in Spain, despite its mostly pro-EU condition. For Spaniards, the EU is not the enemy, but it is not yet a normal part of the collective self. As if Spanish affairs were not European affairs,

> They [Spanish national ministers] keep on talking about Europe as something that is outside, as if Spain was not part of Europe! Our government does not seem to realize that this [the EU] is something of its own, not something apart. Part of our sovereignty has been centralized in Brussels, so now it's time to exercise it. European affairs are, as a matter of fact, Spanish affairs.
>
> (*El Mundo* correspondent, Brussels, 30 April 2010)

The domesticisation of the EU in Spain is as positive as it can be. Accessing the European Community was the culmination of the Spanish transition to democracy, but the distance and the remoteness of the European layer of power are pervasive. Since European integration has not been explicit or popular (i.e. constitutional and federal) but indirect, elitist and pseudoconfederal, the true constituents of the European polity (the state apparatuses, their respective bureaucracies, and the neocorporatist and neofunctionalist networks of business organisations and non-governmental organisations [NGOs]) are the only ones that can feel the EU closer. Given that all confederations suffer inherently from a democratic deficit (as its constituents are corporate bodies, the states, but not individuals), it could be said that Spain has reached the apex of Europeanisation – it has moved as close to the positive domesticisation pole as it can. Quite tellingly, an official administering EU funds in

Galicia said the EU was only present as a regulation enforcer and a money supplier, and little else:

> For the people from my generation, Europe was a space that enjoyed the freedoms we didn't have here [in Spain]. It is true that Europe also represented a common market, but for us the space of liberties was more important than business opportunities. [...] [After the 1986 accession] we came to see the EU as an opportunity to get money from the rich [European countries], and at the same time we suffered the EU because it established uncomfortable rules for our production model, especially in what refers to fisheries and agriculture. Europe either creates us problems or gives us money; for the rest, we feel it is far away from us.
>
> (EU regional funds administrator in Galicia, A Coruña, 29 October 2009)

Picturing the EU as "the other" or "the enemy"

"Europe is still something that happens on the continent of Europe. Europe for us is 'the other'." This reflection by an officer from the regional development agency Yorkshire Forward, himself considered pro-European, is an acknowledgement of impotence (Leeds, 5 May 2009). The lack of identification between the UK and the EU showed up in almost every conversation I held in the UK. There was even one case in which one of my interviewees, perhaps identifying me as someone close to the EU, apologised to me for not feeling European enough. One journalist from *The Yorkshire Post* justified the farmers' uneasiness with EU regulations because they were issued "by outside forces, from outside the country" (Leeds, 8 June 2010).

This alienation from the EU system creates odd effects on the perceived accountability of EU funds in the member states. In the UK, the "EU other" is accused of spending money from the UK on projects that native-elected representatives would never support. EU investments are seen, in the most extreme versions of Euroscepticism, as an illegitimate use of the UK money on the UK territory by foreign administrators. In Spain, the psychological distance of the EU turns EU money into "European money" (as if Spain did not contribute to it). In other words, lack of domesticisation breeds paranoia or fraud in the UK (depending on one's political view) and irresponsibility in Spain:

> My impression is that EU aid often goes to projects that elected representatives wouldn't have chosen for themselves. Often it goes to

> schemes whose purpose is to advertise the European Union, like the road schemes where you get the prominent sign, as you say, or is seen as additional money on something that you wouldn't spend your tax revenue on because your tax revenue is precious to you. The United Kingdom pays at the moment something like 12–13 billion pounds into the EU budget to get something like 8 or 8 and a half billion back. So people say our net contribution is one and a half billion, but that isn't really true, because that assumes that the 8 billion would have been spent on things we would have chosen by ourselves. And it blatantly isn't. It's being spent on make-work schemes for a small class of favoured EU contractors.
>
> (UK Conservative MEP, 26 April 2009)

> The average people here have not assumed, are not aware, that Europe affects us. They speak about European funding as if they didn't pay for it. European funds are our funds too! The EU is not seen as an administration we belong to.
>
> (Consulting business owner in Galicia, 14 January 2010)

The historical construction of collective identities in the UK and Spain certainly has something to do with the different degree of domesticisation. The UK, whose dominions at some point ventured into the Continent, has for centuries built its identity against "mainland Europe". Events like the separation of the Church of England from the Church of Rome have had a lasting effect, to the point that anti-European Economic Community campaigners in the run-up to the UK referendum on accession in the 1970s feared the "Vaticanisation" of the UK.[2] Its condition as head of an empire that spread the UK civilisation around the world has also contributed to the UK's own view as an island that can perfectly stand alone in the global world. Actually, the doctrine of globalism, which held that commercial unions should be global rather than regional, still informs the UK's opposition to the EU. It should be recalled that the pan-Europa of Coudenhove-Kalergi (2010 [1923]) did not initially include the UK, and that Churchill's famous call for European unity at the Congress of Europe in 1948 was done from the standpoint of a country that saw itself as an observer rather than as a participant.

The Spanish Empire was already a fading memory at the time it lost its latest US possession, Cuba, in 1898. The generation of liberal intellectuals known as the 1914 Group, which included fervent pro-European figures such as José Ortega y Gasset, Gregorio Marañón and Salvador de

Madariaga, built an alternative brand of Spanish civic nationalism than the one that would eventually become victorious after the Spanish Civil War (Holguín, 2002). It was not the Francoist nationalism allied with tradition and Catholicism, but with liberalism and Europe.

The nationalist movement in 20th-century Galicia, the Spanish region that we take as one of our case studies, was also aiming to consider Galicia as a European nation. Alfonso Daniel Rodríguez Castelao, the key figure in Galicia's nationalist movement, advocated a federation of Iberian peoples within a larger European federation, which itself would be the precedent of a world federation (Castelao, 1992 [1944]). Although the state-based nationalism of Madariaga and the substate nationalism of Galicians, Catalans and Basques would often clash, both had in Europe a key point of reference, a cultural framework that they felt part of. This is why, no matter what the internal political differences in multinational Spain, the end of Franco's dictatorship was seen as an opportunity to rejoin Europe.

These historical differences in identity construction are surely behind the popular appeal of national interest defence in the UK, whereas in Spain, prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero ended José María Aznar's gridlock over the voting weights in the Nice Treaty with barely any opposition, even among the Spanish elite news media. At the Conservatives' Spring Conference in Cheltenham in April 2009, on the eve of the latest European elections, the stand of the Conservatives in the EP was tellingly named "Delivering for Britain". According to the conference programme, the stand provided "information on the achievements of Britain's Conservative MEPs as they seek to promote and defend British interests in the European Parliament". The lack of identity between the UK and Europe frames European representation as mainly confederal: the UK representatives are there not to codecide with European partners, the common future of Europe but to uphold the UK interest. The Conservatives' estrangement from their European partners was symbolically ratified by the new party leader's pledge to abandon the Christian democrat group in the EP, too pro-integrationist for the British. The fact that such a separation was announced well in advance of the EP elections in 2009 is evidence of the perceived popular appeal of Euroscepticism. As a matter of fact, two conservative MEPs were already outside the European People's Party-European Democrats (EPP-ED) group in the 2004–2009 legislature – Roger Helmer and Daniel Hannan – who were non-attached members. At this same conference, the party campaign organiser, Eric Pickles, said in his welcome speech to Conservative candidates and supporters: "We left the EPP group because

our membership asked for it; now your friends don't have any excuse to vote for UKIP [the UK Independence Party] instead of Conservatives" (Cheltenham, 25 April 2009).

The Conservative Party European manifesto, also entitled "Delivering for Britain", did not mention the word "Europe" in any of its main points, which were: globalisation and economic competitiveness, global warming, global poverty, democracy and accountability, and looking after British interests. Again, the EU was seen as a framework for global, not European, management. The reference to the EU's democratic deficit, which is discussed below, could be understood as another consequence of the domesticisation deficit. However plausible, the constant demand for transparency and accountability at the EU level has as much to do with a lack of identification as to the uneasiness with systemic and procedural imperfections. The persistent references to "delivery", to output legitimacy, to the cost-effectiveness of EU membership, to the "value for money" are also another staple of the UK discourse over Europe. Lacking in input legitimacy (due to the absence of a European demos), the main justification for the EU's existence has to be grounded not on the representativeness of its rulings but on its effectiveness for economic growth and trade facilitation.

Perhaps one of the most significant artefacts that I collected at the Cheltenham conference was a campaign brochure for Conservative European parliamentary candidate for the East of England John Flack, whose campaign motto was: "I'm on YOUR side not Brussels". Besides a pledge to "NEVER abandon the pound", the candidate said in a letter that, if elected, he would "work with all like minded people to halt and then reverse the drive to a single European super state. Lets [sic] bring back powers from Brussels./To be on YOUR side, not Brussels'."

A key battlefield between the UK national identity and European integration is the prospect of adopting the euro as a currency that would replace the pound. Whereas in most of Europe the euro has been criticised for introducing inflation, but has rarely been seen as a threat to national identities, in England there is keen awareness of the euro as a political project. "It was about putting Europe in your hands, a very political statement", recalled for me an official from the UKRep in Brussels (29 April 2010). At the party conference of the Liberal Democrats (LibDems) in Harrogate (March 2009), field campaigners asked party leaders what they should respond when asked about fears about losing the pound. At a citizens' forum that the European Commission organised in London with a representative sample of the UK voters, the call by Conservative MP Anthony Samuels to keep the pound

aroused the applause of a significant portion of the audience. At the time this forum was being held (March 2009), the media reported on the European Court of Human Rights' decision to not let radical Muslim cleric Abu Qatada be deported from the UK. Although this court is not an EU institution, the issue was of considerable concern among the debate participants. On a related topic, the citizens at the table I was observing circulated a newspaper clip from *The Daily Telegraph* by Alasdair Palmer entitled "You can forget about getting British Justice" (published on Friday, 20 March 2009), on the dangers of a British citizen being convicted by a court from an EU country like Bulgaria. Soon afterwards, Conservative MP Anthony Samuels' call for "a national court" received big applause from the audience.

Whereas in Galicia and Spain, environmentalist groups have used European justice to force the compliance of environmental law in their own member states, from the UK perspective the lack of domesticisation makes the European layer of justice illegitimate, an alien overlay that generates anxiety. The citizen forum participants wondered why the UK could not deport a convicted terrorist who claimed he would kill more Britons because of the ruling of "Dutch judges". The debate participants' uneasiness about the chance of being put on trial in another EU country surely underlies the belief that the due process guaranteed for British courts is not available in other EU member states.

On the issue of law, Eurosceptics like to stress the differences between the English system of case law and the continental *corpus iures*, which is portrayed as more prescriptive and comprehensive. The English way of understanding law, according to this version, would be based on negative freedom (the law would state that which cannot be done), while the continental law would also impinge on positive freedom (that which must be done). For British Eurosceptics, the continental understanding of law is behind the much-decried overregulation coming from Brussels. At a talk in an agricultural college in Yorkshire, the UKIP leading candidate used the conceptual divide of the two legal systems as a means of stressing the otherness of the EU. This is what he explained to the students:

> The continental system is different, and your task is to decide if you want to embrace this system, if this is the system we want for the next 30 years [...] The continental system is the Napoleonic code, the *corpus iures*. It has a prescriptive concept of law. This is the code for the EU system. And remember that EU law overrides British law. Now here's the big difference: the EU law tells you that which you

> may do. The British law tells you that which you may not do [...] Conclusion: you need more law. At the EU we have 2,000 new laws a year, with directives, regulations... It's like a factory of law. MEPs don't know what they vote, the law floods across. Now reflect about this: we've had as much law from 1970 to today as from the Bill of Rights to 1997. Some MEPs may tell you in their talks the bendy bananas is a myth, but it's not a myth. I can show you the piece of legislation, it's 30,000 words long! [...]. It's an avalanche of law. Even the employment law comes now from the EU. Gordon Brown, when he as a Chancellor of the Exchequer, said he couldn't change the employment law to ease the burden for small business because it was not in his remit. It's the EU's. So we don't even have control over our own employment law!
>
> (UKIP Yorkshire MEP, York, 20 April 2009)

The electoral system

Very much like the case-law legal system, the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral model is considered by the British as a key element of national identity and democratic accountability. It indeed offers a close geographical proximity between representative and constituent, at the cost of proportionality and inclusion of minority parties. In recent times the LibDems, as the third national party in the UK, have been the greatest advocates of electoral reform to introduce proportionality in the UK national elections. The single-member constituencies of the Westminster model make elected MPs highly visible figures, especially if they leave partisanship aside to become the local advocates of the constituency interests at national parliament. This closeness usually brings with it some degree of clientelism – that is, a sort of transactional relationship between the representatives and the represented, these latter promising voting support in exchange for local favours. This dark side would be compensated by a sense of electoral accountability, as the representative would try to be widely representative of constituents' interests in order to be re-elected. The supporters of the FPTP system argue that voters decide on the record of an individual, not on a party-prepared list where the individual figures become diluted.[3]

Such is the high regard for the FPTP system in the UK that, in my observations at party conferences and during my interviews, I heard claims about the "undemocratic" character of proportional representation. Given that proportional representation was introduced in the UK for the 1999 elections to the EP, the discomfort with the electoral

system generates further alienation with the EU. "I don't know who my MEP is", voters often claim. Proportionality in the UK was introduced through regional lists. Had it been introduced through a national list, as in Spain, where no geographical differences are taken into account, the distance between the represented and the representatives would have been even greater. Perhaps a major source of alienation is the artificial character of European electoral constituencies, which in England rarely coincide with any regional identity, with the exception of Yorkshire.

At the Conservatives' spring conference in Cheltenham in April 2009, I attended a roundtable discussion about the prospects of a conservative government reform of the electoral system for European elections. As the moderator recalled, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1998) requires European elections to be conducted under proportional representation, so the party activists were gathered there to discuss a proportional system that would bring the representative closer and make them more accountable to the electorate by allowing the voter to elect an individual rather than a party. In particular, a speaker from pressure group Electoral Reform Society argued to extend to the rest of the UK the single transferable vote system used for European elections in Northern Ireland. This electoral model allows voters to rank their representatives in their favoured order, choosing candidates from any party list. Some party activists said that this would allow them to support Eurosceptic Conservatives. Others saw in the requirement of proportional representation "another example of bullying by the EU" (26 April 2009).

For Conservative supporters, one of the great dangers of proportional representation was the empowerment of minority parties, which could become the key to the formation of a coalition government, another undesirable outcome for the supporters of majority parties. Both Labour and the Conservatives oppose PR because it would weaken them significantly inside the House of Commons as more seats would go to other parties, especially the LibDems, at their expense. The 2010 UK parliamentary elections, however, broke one of the myths associated with the FPTP system: that it would prevent the formation of coalition governments. This relates to a further source of alienation between the British and the continental system: the alleged consensualism of European politics. Conservative activists commented with great alarm on the strange left–right coalitions that they had observed in Germany. A former Labour MEP from Humberside nicely captured this feeling of estrangement when he expressed that the worst issue about EP politics is that "nobody can actually win" (Hull, 6 March 2009).

In the past few years, especially since the growth of the LibDems as a national force in the UK, the case for the FPTP system has weakened, as the UK is no longer a two-party country. Proportionality is seen by sceptics and majority party supporters as another form of alien Europeanisation, whereas it is seen as the right electoral model for non-majority parties such as the greens and the LibDems.

In Spain, the electoral system used for European elections is highly proportional at the national level, as the whole country forms a single constituency. This favours small parties with a national scope and limits the representation of regionalist and substate nationalist parties, which must form national coalitions in order to maximise their chances of representation. Interestingly, it was only among the Spanish network that I found calls for European, as compared with merely national, party lists. One of the socialist MEPs I interviewed argued for at least linking the national party list with the European party federation in order to make more visible the European character of EP elections (London, 16 June 2009).

Neofunctionalist integration and the need for qualified mediation ("interface")

The EU could be thought of as an enormous network, with all of its virtues and shortcomings. A network, however great it is, is exclusionary. The actors related to the EU, the substitute bureaucracies in the member states, and the regional and national elites involved in European projects form a web that covers the whole of the EU and its citizens. The citizens, however, can rarely touch the EU, as it disappears behind the administrative layers of subsidiarity, is hidden in technical government agencies or is far away in Brussels. This setting, a consequence of a pattern of stealthy and elitist integration defined as "neofunctionalism" in the literature, has, very much like subsidiarity, two faces: on the one hand, it allows for a relatively quick continental integration through the co-optation or "engrenage" of local elites; on the other hand, it is intrinsically an antipopular method of integration, as it largely operates outside the realms where the citizen or the public are involved. Elites, like the happy families of the opening sentence of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, are more similar to each other than the remaining mortals, and present a more cosmopolitan profile than larger populations. The downside is that, whereas anyone can love Obama or Sarkozy without ever having met or seen them in person, emotional identification with the EU is most apparent among those who are closely involved with it. That is, those who "love" the EU are very likely part of it (García Faroldi, 2008).

Although neofunctionalism has lost much of its credibility due to the resilience of member states and its failed prediction of loyalty transfers to a new centre, my evidence does show relevant signs of the presence of neofunctionalism patterns of integration at the regional level. The EU looks indeed very intergovernmental at council meetings, but in the regions the EU shows a purely neofunctionalist face: the consultant who helps with the preparation of EU grant applications, the university professor who knows how to influence framework programme calls before they are issued, the local or regional civil servant who manages the implementation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the chambers of commerce and the trade unions that use EU funding to run some of their training programmes – they all form a network of "those who know the rules of the EU game" because they are part of it. This network, which I would like to define as "the Eurominati", is replicated in every member state with great fidelity, to the point that it constitutes a truly European phenomenon. Although not popular, it is firmly infiltrated into the backbone of every state apparatus in Europe (e.g. regional governments and universities) and touches the key elements in organised civil society (e.g. business associations and NGOs). No wonder, then, that the civil servant in Galicia's Xunta and the official in Yorkshire Forward speak almost the same language without ever seeing each other. The Eurominati network is linked by the structure of opportunities offered by the EU.

In one of my conversations with a European Commission official who had had responsibilities in the administration of the EU's FP (the major funding scheme for research and development, which was multiannual and managed at the European level), I was reassured of the independence of scientific project reviewers. But the same official acknowledged that the programme was not reaching beyond a broad but restricted number of universities and companies, despite the latest attempts to boost the involvement of civil society organisations and small and medium enterprises (SMEs):

> Among our applicants we always deal with the same 20,000 people. They might seem many, but in Europe we have 20 million SMEs. No matter how much advertisement we do, I don't know how can we reach to them. In the end, everything is decided among the Commission, the member states, and the same old folks. It is very difficult to get out of this circle.
>
> (European Commission civil servant, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

At the other end – that is, at the side of the applicant – the perception is similar. The EU programmes only reach a very specialised segment of the business and academic communities:

> Of the group of people who would potentially contribute to the economy, the [EU FP7] call only covers a tiny fraction. I have been speaking to business for a few years now . . . and what interaction do they have with the Europe Union? Not at all! There's only very savvy, very wise, or a large or a high-end SME, that would tap into that. Because local business don't have the time to, and certainly don't understand it. There's been various situations of simplification of Europe, and still doesn't seem to get any clearer. [. . .] How many people know about the Lisbon Agenda? And it's many years old now! That was supposed to be absolutely key for the European economy, wasn't it? But I can't tell you in the last two years what's happened to that, and I'm supposed to be close to all that kind of enterprise and innovation in the economy.
>
> (Leeds City Region official, Cheltenham, 25 April 2009)

Although the institutional appeal to get more individuals involved in the EU-funded research projects might be sincere, the administrative settings that allow potential candidates to be funded require a relatively long period of learning and engagement with the EU and its substitute structures in the member states. The process by which a European research project is funded is not as simple as a successful grant application. The candidates must go through a typical process of neofunctionalist acculturation: they must know the right intermediary agencies (be they public outposts of the commission in the member states or private consultancies) that can translate scientific language into EU-appealing jargon. They must know about the stages where future calls for grants are discussed, so that they can lobby the proposal drafters in order for the call to include one of the candidate's points of strength. "There are four stages in every European project: Committee, Work Programme, Call, and Submission," explains the spokesperson for the international research office of the Galician government; "you have to make sure to include your areas of strength in the Call" (A Coruña, 7 January 2009). "When a grant call is published, for us it has already expired; all the work has to be done before", admits the spokesperson of a business association in Galicia (Santiago de Compostela, 7 October 2009). The EU, as one of my interviewees vividly reported, "needs interface, it does not speak the language of any of its member states" (Atlantic

cities association spokesperson, Vigo, 5 January 2010). Successful applications are usually the result of a passing rite of acculturation that includes the use of authorised intermediate agencies, like private consultancy firms or government agencies in the member states. "There are ways to apply, there are ways to get the boxes ticked . . . there is a whole industry set up on how to complete forms to get money," a National Farmers' Union (NFU) spokesperson said (York, 19 June 2009).

Such is the effort involved in learning the EU jargon and the key moments at which applicants can exert some influence through lobbying that those who have paid their dues are, naturally, not willing to share the secret with everyone else. "Europe is for those who work it," said a business association representative from Galicia (Santiago de Compostela, 7 October 2009). She actually compared the complexity and arcane character of EU applications with that of medical language:

> You can't pretend to apply for an EU grant from morning to night. It's as if I went to a hospital and entered the theatre of operations while surgeons discuss how to do a by-pass. I would not understand half of what they're saying. So if you want to get EU funding, you have to make the effort, you have to get the training.
>
> (Galician business association spokesperson, 7 October 2009)

That "training", according to the perception of my interviewees, could consist of attending an FP workshop at the local university or, even better, attending one of the open days in Brussels, where a more direct relationship could be established with potential applicant partners. In all processes of elite co-optation, the passing through an authorised sifter and networking with like-minded people are everything. This is also true in the EU case. The need for authorised intermediation is such that, in 2010, the regional government of Galicia announced a contract with a consultancy firm in order to maximise its chances of getting EU funding (Pérez, 8 August 2010). This to me is an obvious neofunctionalist strategy: those who get EU funding do it after learning the ropes of the EU game, which requires them to build transnational partnerships, and may lead them to request the services of usually successful consultancy firms, to make a phone call or pay a visit to the civil servant drafting a future call for grants. The result is that someone who wins funding becomes part of the Eurominati network. Authors such as Schulz/Forberg and Stråth (2010) argue that "building Europe" through academic networks is more important than the scientific quality of the proposal: "The importance of the FPs is rather on the contact and

networking side than on the output of intellectual substance" (p. 142). Perhaps because, as Majone (2005) said about most EU policies, they are epiphenomenal, the goal of getting EU academics to work together transnationally is more relevant than whatever they might eventually produce.

An expert on regional funding openly admitted the need for "immersion", of getting "soaked into the EU experience" before ever attempting to play within the system:

> I compare this with the learning process of a baby. Before talking, before ever uttering the first word, a baby must set his brain in order to talk. Since the first months of life, the baby soaks up his/her environment, and that's how the baby learns the language. With the EU is the same. Before getting in you have to get soaked. Anyone getting into the EU has to get soaked, assume the new rules. You could attend a thousand courses on European legislation, but if you don't get soaked in it, if you don't experience it, the courses are useless.
>
> (Expert on regional funding, A Coruña, 11 November 2009)

A consultancy firm in Yorkshire helping applicants with EU grant-writing clearly suggested that incremental involvement in research projects was the key to attracting companies into EU projects. The following quote is lengthy, but it clearly captures the importance of informal networking and the progressive "engrenage" of first-timers into successive projects that turn them, perhaps unknowingly, into members of the Eurominati network:

> In terms of getting companies interested into the Framework Programme, our key thing to do is to give them a tiny taste of it, just get them doing a tiny piece of work . . . We have a kind of sector strategy, and one of the things we are trying to do with Yorkshire Forward to get them [the companies] more interested is to take one of their sectoral managers to a meeting somewhere in Europe. Because when you are at these meetings, and there are all these different cultures, and people chatting over coffee . . . all of a sudden, you think: "The possibilities here are endless." Sat in the office in Yorkshire, it all looks very unappealing. But when you actually go to a European conference on metallurgy, or whatever it happens to be, where these companies, all talking, all trying to solve similar issues in their own different ways, and trying to work together . . . All of a sudden, everyone thinks:

> "Wow, we could do something here." And the guy from Yorkshire says: "Wait, hold on, we do that! I didn't know you were interested in that." So a lot of what we do is just trying to get the company in through the door, and then they'll want to go back for more and more. The first time, if it's a framework project, they just need to participate and do a tiny package of work [...], the next time they can lead a work package, the next time they can lead a consortium, and time after that they are in charge of policy at the European level, or whatever [chuckle]. It works like that. A lot of our work is trying to get people through that first door, and then their enthusiasm really builds. You see over and over that rarely does someone participate and then say: "No, I'm not doing that again." A lot of people say: "It's terrible, it's bureaucratic, it's a nightmare to take part in ... I'll do it again." So there must be something good in it.
>
> (Yorkshire consultant, Leeds, 8 May 2009)

At a university workshop on how to obtain EU funding from FP7 projects, the research director of a UK university clearly pointed out the need to scale up into the hierarchy of research consortiums in order to enter a virtuous circle of privileged access to key information:

> We [as a university] are a partner in many EU-funded projects, though we coordinate very few. Coordinating a project is crucial, because the value of funding is much higher, and you are in a position to make more and better contacts at the international level. Scholars are reluctant to coordinate projects because it implies more work and, they might be right on this, they often say EU funding is a pain. But if you are a coordinator, you start to get an *insight track* into the development of the European research agenda. You start to get invited to attend strategy meetings in Brussels ...
>
> ("How to get EU funding" seminar, Leeds, 4 June 2009)

This process of acculturation is obviously related to the elitist pattern of integration envisioned by Jean Monnet (Shore, 2000). Belonging to the EU network of the knowledgeable, the Eurominati, is like belonging to an Ivy League alumni association. It costs a lot to get in, so the incentives for sharing the little secrets are few. The Galician expert on regional funding quoted above recalled how his mentor unveiled the contents of an EU grant application at the very end of an MA programme in European studies. For the students, it was like "touching the Shroud of Turin":

> I took an MA degree in European Studies and, during 500 hours of lectures we did not get to see a single European project. It was like touching the Shroud of Turin. Our instructors had those projects away from our view. It is only when you get into the circle of trust that you can get to see it. And then, of course, you say to yourself: "Why would I share this knowledge with anyone if it took so much effort to get it?" After all, we came to be part of the privileged few, and there is some resistance towards sharing the tricks of the trade. You tend to preserve your turf. And the system lends itself to it, because it's a very closed circle. This goes against all the transparency doctrines of the EU . . . but this is life. It is very important to know somebody.
>
> (expert on regional funding, A Coruña, 11 November 2009)

Up to a point, then, the Eurominati network becomes "a self-serving in-crowd", as one commission official admitted (Brussels, 27 April 2010). But this is not incongruent with the elitist design of neofunctionalism. Keeping the right filters ensures that those getting in are, to a certain degree, moulded by the same pattern. And that pattern is indeed European. So the various national elites, be they university professors, businesspeople or high-ranking civil servants, are at the forefront of the construction of Europe. It is an elitist construction, and it has biases against popular involvement (as my interviewees have eloquently explained). But it might be the most effective of all methods of integration.

The elite recruitment pattern of neofunctionalism, subtle and incremental, lends itself to conspirational theories. It is particularly annoying to the UK Eurosceptics, who see the neofunctionalism method as the silent killer of the Europe of nations. Regional development agencies (RDAs, scrapped by David Cameron's Conservative government) and would-be regional parliaments are seen as fifth columns of Europeanisation, commission outposts that are parcelling the UK into pieces to make it more easily managed from Brussels. This *Yorkshire Post* story, reporting on a campaign by Yorkshire millionaire Paul Sykes against the prospect of elected regional assemblies, is illustrative of the sort of conspiracy theories encouraged by stealthy integration:

> Yorkshire tycoon Paul Sykes last night vowed to "fight tooth and nail" against a Yorkshire regional assembly after propelling the UK Independence Party to spectacular success in the European parliament elections. The Harrogate-based businessman condemned the

> proposed assembly as "puppets of Brussels" and said that if it became reality it would be "the low point of my life". He is now poised to launch a massive campaign for a "No" vote via UKIP in this autumn's referendums on setting up assemblies in Yorkshire, the North-East and the North-West in the belief that voters will turn their backs on regional parliaments because they see them as tools of the European Union [...] He added that areas identified by Deputy Premier John Prescott for assemblies matched those drawn up in Brussels by those who wanted to see a stateless Europe made up of individual regions. "The strategic planning for the EU created those regions and they are drawn up in Brussels, not Britain. It is yet another tentacle of Brussels rule and ultimately they see that as a way of bypassing national parliaments and that's why they want them elected – so they can say 'We have got elected assemblies now that can impose major strategies, bypassing local authorities' ".
>
> (Andrew Vine and Brendan Carlin, 15 June 2004, "UKIP backer vows 'tooth and nail' war on mini-parliament", *The Yorkshire Post*)

At his speech at the Conservative conference in Cheltenham (April 2009), a noted Eurosceptic Tory MEP expressed his anger at the fact that the UK was taking the road to a European superstate with the full consent of most of its political class, which he claimed was being complicit in this silent revolution. Although Moravcsik (1998) and other intergovernmentalists have always argued that nation states are very aware of their moves and never fall into integrationist traps due to the side-effects of unwanted previous decisions, for British Eurosceptics this is precisely what is happening. The UK representatives were being driven inexorably, as if under the spell of a snake, into the melting pot of a new European federation:

> Under this Constitution [the Lisbon Treaty], the EU will no longer be simply an association of sovereign states in free association, and rather will become a single entity with our country as a subordinate province. This is a revolution in how Britain is governed. But is a revolution brought about, not as a result of social unrest or bloody insurrection, not as a result of defeating war or foreign occupation. A revolution rather perpetrated by our own elected representatives, all them in plain violation of the promise that they made to us when they sought our votes in the last election.
>
> (UK Conservative MEP speech, Cheltenham, 26 April 2009)

The neofunctionalist method of integration, which as shown is still alive at the regional level, is inevitably antipopular and therefore contributes to the domesticisation deficit, to making the EU structures remote and detached from the average citizen, though somehow familiar to a key minority of "movers and shakers" in almost every European region, which is not a small achievement. This engrenage of elites that parallels the general population detachment can be sensed everywhere in Europe, even in pro-EU regions such as Galicia. In anti-EU or Eurosceptic regions, neofunctionalism feeds conspiracy theories about European integration, and renders pro-Europeans easy targets of "prevarication", of trying to build a federation in non-explicit ways while denying any federative purpose.

In any case, one of the best summaries of the double-sided condition of neofunctionalist integration comes from one of my interviewees in Galicia, who admitted that elitism integration had torn down physical, but not mental, borders:

> In the 1950s, after the Second World War, the goal of the founding fathers was to avoid another war, and that was the reason they focused on eliminating borders. Along the way the physical frontiers have been diluted, but the borders remain in our minds. After all, whatever we do for Europe, we do it for the European citizen, for our neighbour from the fifth floor, who has no idea what this is all about. We have a big problem of presence and visualisation.
>
> (EU regional funds manager, A Coruña, 29 October 2009)

Those are the wages of sin, to use a famous saying. Elitist integration was perhaps the most effective method in a continent divided by languages and national sentiments. But its by-product is a Europe of elites, a detached EU that covers everyone but is only reached by the privileged few.

Subsidiarity: Making the supranational authority invisible

Subsidiarity, like neofunctionalism, is Janus-faced. It has a positive and a negative side. On the positive side, the doctrine of administering policies or delivering services at the appropriate level, preventing upper layers of power from controlling issues that could be managed perfectly at the local level, has involved member states in the construction of Europe. Much EU legislation is implemented by its constituent nation states and their administrative subunits. Without member-state cooperation, there would be no possible EU. On the other hand, the absence of a clear division of competences as in a federal state makes

the supranational layer of power invisible most of the time. Attribution of responsibilities and accountability is not clear, and the more powerful actors (the member states) can always save face by blaming the elusive European Leviathan. Citizens are used to interacting with their local, regional and national administrations, but the European power only comes into existence under disguise, through its member states.

Although subsidiarity is sometimes defined as a federal concept, it should be seen as a confederal or a mixed-government doctrine, by which sovereignties are overlapped rather than clearly delimitated. It is a very European invention indeed, with precedents in both the Protestant and the Catholic traditions (Burgess, 2000). However, when it comes to controlling a government through a public opinion that attends the debates happening in a public sphere of communication, subsidiarity contributes to the parcelling-out of Europe into as many significant units as those that form the multilevel polity. Subsidiarity invites member states to build Europe, but makes them the main protagonists of the adventure, which allows them to live in a sort of pre-EU fiction: they show themselves to their constituents as the ones in command, the ones that can decide. And they are helped by the mostly national character of all public spheres on the Continent. In this section, I will provide evidence about how the subsidiarity principle, which builds upon Germany's indirect federalism, makes the supranational authority of the EU invisible, contributing to a subjective feeling of distance and, ultimately, to the domesticisation deficit.

The communications gap theory is right in pointing to the abdication of national politicians of their role as pedagogues of the European project, but does not relate this behaviour to its ultimate cause: subsidiarity's use as a wild card. It can be used to hide under Brussels' seemingly unstoppable powers or it can be used to present oneself as the single and main decider of the country's fate, leaving the European dimension of national everyday life (and the substantial financing of regional policies with EU funds) aside.

The invisibility of the federal administration in Europe is older than the modern conception subsidiarity (after all, although the principle has a long tradition in Europe, it was introduced constitutionally in the 1990s). It can be traced back to German indirect federalism. According to a law professor I interviewed in Galicia (15 December 2009), Germany's cooperative federalism leaves much of policy execution in the hands of regional administrations, the *Länder*. The US federalism, by contrast, has delegations of the federal government in every state

of the federation. "The EU", said this professor, "has few civil servants, and they are all in Brussels. Therefore the average citizen cannot see the face of the EU, hence their lack of acknowledgement and engagement." European citizens, such as German citizens, rarely establish contact with a federal civil servant, and this makes the central power invisible. However, the operation of the EU through substitute national and regional bureaucracies has a bright side: the implementation of law is carried out by local agents, which encourages compliance among the local populations. The professor illustrated his argument with a lively anecdote:

> As you know, in rural Galicia there are still quite a few families who breed and slaughter pigs in their small, family subsistence farms. At the European level it has been agreed that pigs should not suffer when being slaughtered, so killing them with a knife is no longer allowed. Now imagine that the implementation of this regulation were carried out directly by European civil servants. You would have, say, a German guy arriving to a remote village to stop a farmer from killing his own bred pig. The poor German fellow would be lucky not to be the one sacrificed there. Villagers would say "Who's this guy to prevent me from killing my pigs the way I have done all my life? Down with this EU thing!" But thanks to the indirect administration, the only person showing up there will be a local policeman. If the farmer is upset, he will protest to the local mayor, and the mayor will tell him that this is a law coming from Madrid or somewhere from above. Eventually the mayor may tell his constituent to kill the pig with as less fanfare as possible so that nobody notices. This is the good part of indirect administration.
>
> (law university professor, Santiago de Compostela, 15 December 2009)

The facelessness of the European administration was noticed by other interviewees. An environmental activist actually argued for the EU to open delegations in every European city to deal with European affairs. That would be, indeed, a very federalist aspiration:

> I think the EU should become more decentralised. There should be an EU outpost in every city, a unique office to deal with European issues. I would like to have a person with whom I could discuss, at a local level, European matters.
>
> (Asociación para a Defensa Ecolóxica de Galicia [Adega] spokesperson, 14 December 2009)

The literature is clear about the accountability problems generated by complex states such as federations. Decentralisation opens the door to more corruption, hence the recurrent calls for decentralised service provision but centralised account controls in order to prevent fraud (Warren, 17–19 November 2005). My interviewees in Galicia acknowledged the accountability problems related to multilevel government structures:

> We need to be vigilant about the experiment of subsidiarity's "single window". The EU works with civil servants who are not its own. This is something similar to what happens in Spain with the financing of municipal authorities, which is indirect. That indirectness prevents the citizen from making a connection between the efficiency of his/her local administration and the taxes he/she pays. Because of this lack of clarity, the local mayor can always present himself as a divine money-grabber, someone who always knows whom to talk to, be it the Pope or Zapatero [Spain's PM from 2004 to 2011].
>
> (former vice-president of the Xunta, Santiago de Compostela, 20 October 2009)

> As happens with every multilevel government system, the attribution of competences is not clear. Decision centres are too spread out, and it is difficult to know who is responsible for what. The EU is a democratic project, I have no doubts about that, but it's a multilevel democracy, and this demands a highly sophisticated citizenry.
>
> (political science university professor, Santiago de Compostela, 18 January 2010)

Subsidiarity is itself a complicated matter and, in the cases where it becomes an issue of public debate, the European Commission and the member states may accuse each other of non-compliance. Member states may warn the commission to take its hands off a national issue on the grounds of subsidiarity, and the commission may encourage member states to take action on a problem that they would rather not deal with. During my fieldwork in Brussels in the spring of 2009, the European air space had to be shut down because of the ashes coming from a volcano in Iceland. When European airports began to close, the European Commission reacted quickly and issued a press release stating that EU passenger rights (e.g. reimbursement and care) still applied during those extraordinary circumstances. I attended the commission's midday press conferences at the Berlaymont building in Brussels on those days,

and I had the chance to record one of those rare moments in which the European dimension of Europeans' lives becomes explicit, forcing authorities to clarify their competences.

At the press conference held on 22 April 2010, the commission's spokeswoman faced the following questions from journalists:

> In case of judicial procedures against an air company, where would they happen? For example: Should Ryanair be sued in Ireland, or can an Austrian costumer sue the company from his home country? Which authorities will have to act and respond in case of non-compliance? Haven't the Commission thought of opening desks on airports to apply passengers' rights?

She replied:

> EU passenger rights are implemented at the national level, like most of what the EU does. Nevertheless, at every airport passengers can call to a free phone number managed by Europe Direct. There are also European Consumer Centres to deal with cross-border claims. Legal response is a matter of subsidiarity. At the European level our job is to make sure that legislation is applied and fully enforced by member states.

There is little doubt that the great beneficiaries of subsidiarity are the member states. They are ready to blame the EU when an unpopular decision has to be taken, and are happy to hide EU contributions to their budgets so as to present themselves as the most relevant administration to their constituents. A European commissioner or a high-raking EU official rarely shows up to cut the red ribbon at the inauguration of an infrastructure funded by the EU at the 80 per cent level. The local politician is the only one likely to smile for the press at such a photo opportunity event:

> In Yorkshire they get millions and millions of pounds from Objective 1 money, which have done a massive difference. But if you ask anyone in the street: "Who's responsible for this?" They would say the local council, private companies, or the government. I'm sure not many would actually go and say "Thank you to the EU." And that again brings me back to the failure to sell the EU as an institution that actually does well, because people have in the back of their minds they don't know much about it. One thing they do know is that it's

> this evil institution over there, so in their mind the EU couldn't create jobs or improve the local economy.
>
> (*The Yorkshire Post* journalist, Leeds, 16 June 2009)

> European regional funds need more visibility. They are used in the policies of regional administrations. Not only for infrastructure, but also for public health and social and environmental policy. The average citizen does not see that part of those policies are financed through European solidarity. The average citizen does not perceive that with the money from Germans, Belgians, and the like, lots of things are being changed in Galicia.
>
> (EP spokesperson, Brussels, 12 May 2010)

In most cases, according to my informants, the hiding of Europe by national politicians is intentional. In our interview, *The Economist* correspondent talked about the hypocrisy of member-state premiers:

> National politicians in Europe are extremely guilty of failing to make the case for the liberal things that they come here and do. They come here and they agree to open their labour markets, and then they go home and don't talk about it [. . .] Part of the blame lies with national governments for being so cowardly for so long about signing up to things like enlargement, or signing up to things like the Single Market, or signing up to things like state aid rules . . . and not making the case for that back home.
>
> (Brussels, 20 May 2009)

The Economist correspondent recalled an anecdote from the times when Italian Mario Monti was the competition commissioner. A national leader said he was being pressurised to give aid to a dying industry, and he asked the commissioner not to let him do it. At the same time, the national leader said he would play the victim for the news media and that he would attack the commissioner. Monti agreed with the game, and EU law was enforced by request of the member state itself, even though publicly the event was publicised as another drastic measure from the callous European bureaucracy.

Subsidiarity is thus a key component of the success of the EU in the sense that it makes member states the main protagonists of European integration: they partially transfer sovereignty to a federal level but they remain the ones implementing EU law. However, at the same time the member states completely overshadow the European layer of

government, and in many cases they place the blame on it for measures that they have consciously agreed at council meetings. Subsidiarities, like elite co-optation, are key elements in the inception, progress and survival of the EU. But they both contribute to the domesticisation deficit, making the EU invisible, remote and, in some cases, insensitive to the survival of local industries that governments are eager to eliminate under the cover of Brussels.

Positive domesticisation

In Galicia and in Yorkshire, the main force of positive domesticisation of the EU has been the impact of EU cohesion and structural funds on the improvement of their respective infrastructures and economies. In both regions, I heard tales of "great transformation" that, in all fairness, were sometimes tinged with a concern about the proper use of EU funds:

> I always tell my Masters' students that, if we made disappear everything the EU has done for our city and Galicia with the snap of a finger, we would not be able to recognize them. However, considering the money that has been invested, we should be better off, to be honest.
>
> (Galician regional government former official, A Coruña, 15 December 2009)

> The anecdote of two or three failed projects should not call into question the great developments that have transformed and are going to transform Galicia: the high-speed train of the Atlantic coast, the cleaning up of our bays and the installation of sewage treatment plants, the research centres, the outer ports like the one in A Coruña . . . The EU has been key in the transformation of our productive structure.
>
> (Galician regional government, DG European affairs official, Santiago de Compostela, 23 December 2009)

> Yorkshire, and particularly South Yorkshire, is a primary example of a region who has gone through years of ERDF funding. How wisely it has been spent is another issue. There are a hell of a lot of roundabouts in South Yorkshire and roads that don't go anywhere, but there are quite a few good projects.
>
> (Yorkshire EU funds consultant, Leeds, 5 May 2009)

In my first visit to Sheffield to observe a European festival organised by the EP representation in the UK (13 September 2008), my fieldnotes

recorded a few instances of the much-publicised urban regeneration of South Yorkshire, which like Galicia has been an Objective 1 region for EU structural funds. Close to the city centre, a commercial and residential development known as The Square was being built, signalled by a prominent sign that read: "Objective 1 South Yorkshire. This project has been part funded by the European Union and has been supported through the South Yorkshire Objective 1 programme." Opposite Sheffield Cathedral, the Crucible Theatre was being refurbished. Again, the EU flag and the Objective 1 South Yorkshire logos were highly visible, stating that the project was "part-financed by the European Union Regional Development Fund" and supported by Yorkshire Forward, whose logo appeared on the sign, as well as the "Yorkshire, Alive with opportunity!" logo. Radical Eurosceptics aside, most political actors in Yorkshire admitted the transformative effect of EU regional funds in South Yorkshire:

> The most deprived areas in Yorkshire, especially in the south, have received huge amounts of EU funding over the years. The city of Sheffield, especially in the area surrounding the train station, has been completely transformed. Most people in Sheffield agree that, without EU funding, the city would be today an industrial wasteland. EU funding changed the dynamics of South Yorkshire. The change was not only aesthetic, however important the regeneration projects have been for the improvement of the city centre, but also and more fundamentally economic. The economic model was changed. Now they are trying to concentrate the funding on a broadband project so as to attract the gaming industry and other biotech medical industries. That would not happen without European funding. Other parts in Yorkshire have also received EU funds, notably the East of Yorkshire, in the Humberside area, but the changes have not been as dramatic as in the South.
>
> (*The Yorkshire Post* reporter, Leeds, 29 May 2009)

In both Galicia and Yorkshire, there is the conviction that their respective national governments would not have cared as much for them as the EU has. The requirement for substate partnerships in the management and planning of European regional funding clearly empowered the regions. They became less reliant on the national government of the day, as the criteria for wealth redistribution were set at the European level.

> The EU does more for us than our central Spanish government. The German doctrine of cohesion, of not allowing great differences

> between territories, is the philosophy that inspires the European cohesion funds. The Spanish state does not care about Galicia or Castile and León being depopulated. But the EU cares. The EU has invested more in the poor regions of Spain than the Spanish government itself.
>
> (law university professor, Santiago de Compostela, 15 December 2009)

> Historically, people remember when the Conservatives were in power. They essentially cut off national regional aid, and the whole industries in this region (steel, coal, and so on) sank overnight without bringing in any compensatory measures. The only lifeline we had in this region was Europe, which came through schemes like the Resider programme for the steel areas, and then bringing in structural funds more generally. [As compared to relying on the national government for regional funding] with a European programme you have a greater security, because it's there for a number of years.
>
> (Yorkshire Socialist MEP, Leeds, 26 February 2009)

A further innovation of EU regional policy, then, was that funding schemes would run for several years, making investments more independent of the whims of electoral cycles. In both Yorkshire and Galicia (and this confirms findings already reported by Bache [2008]), regions engaged in a learning process of long-term strategic investment:

> What the EU offered us, through the cohesion fund, was an instrument of financial planning. Their demands helped us modernize our administration. When I was in Brussels I would have to take an exam, so to say. They would ask: What's your strategy? Until we accessed Europe, the regional ministry of economic affairs was pure accounting, you would just register the money in and the money out. But we lacked a strategic vision, the annual installments of a multi-annual programme. That's what the EU asked from us and what we lacked here: Strategic planning.
>
> (Galician former regional minister, Bueu, 7 January 2010)

> One of the problems you'll quite often get is that you find local authorities that want to use the European money to do what is known as 'public realm' . . . It's about investing in public infrastructure to make it look nice. Those sorts of things are worthwhile doing, but they don't deliver you any outputs. You don't get any jobs out of that, you don't get any business turnout increases [. . .] So it's always

> a difficult position [for us] [...] Quite often those sorts of things are driven by local political interests, because every local politician would like to say "I have arranged this European money to make the shopping centre look better."
>
> (Yorkshire Forward official, Leeds, 26 February 2009)

Despite this common positive appreciation of EU funding in the two regions studied, there is a sign of positive domesticisation in Spain that is less likely to be found in the UK. European institutions (especially the European Commission) are seen as legitimate enforcers of the laws that are not respected by the national or regional government. In particular, Galician and Spanish environmentalist NGOs are very active in reporting their own regional and national authorities to the European Commission for non-compliance with the environmental standards set in European directives. On this point, it is worth recalling a testimony from a Galician environmental activist who explained to me why "addressing Europe" was useful:

> Addressing Europe is useful, because we get lots of funding from Europe, and a minor infraction of environmental rules can make our governments lose quite a lot of money. Sometimes the best way of redressing a local malpractice is reporting our own authorities to the EU. Let me put you an example: the Xunta [Galicia's regional government] will get €400 million for funding the construction of aquaculture plants. We are against these plants being built on protected coastline, so if we blow the whistle and get the EU not to fund these developments because of the environmental damage they would cause, private companies won't build the plants on their own, as EU funding sometimes comprises 50% of the full investment. We also found that the Spanish government was not applying a directive on sewage treatment. We reported this to the EU and the threat of being fined with €90 million has forced the government to present a plan to build a sewage treatment plant in Vigo.
>
> (Asociación para a Defensa Ecolóxica de Galicia [Adega] spokesperson, Santiago de Compostela, 14 December 2009)

In contrast, in the UK, EU directives limiting working time or expanding holidays have been opposed by the UK business. European-level workers' legislation is seen in the UK media circles as another continental meddling in sovereign affairs. The UK trade unions and the Labour

Party, however, have traditionally been supportive of Europe-wide working regulations. At a public debate in Sheffield (13 September 2009), one of Yorkshire's socialist MEPs said that had workers not been protected by European legislation, "the UK would have gone back to a sweat shop economy". This is in contrast to the discourse held by UKIP, which sees in the "overriding" of the UK law by EU law one of the main reasons for abandoning the EU.

Identity, language and the public sphere in the domesticisation deficit

No common language of public communication

One of Europe's major cultural boons, its linguistic diversity, is nevertheless one of the main impediments for the existence of a European public sphere, and therefore a more successful domesticisation of the EU as a political system. The language of Europe is translation, said philosopher Etienne Balibar at a public event in Leeds (13 May 2009). But it is difficult for a public sphere to operate in translation, and it is indeed a major domesticisation drainer. After all, translation makes the original speaker somewhat a foreigner, an alien different from the linguistic community of the listener. And even when the original speaker uses Europe's contemporary lingua franca – English – the listeners experience a sensation of artificiality. The best empirical example of the importance of the emotional function of language, compared with the mere instrumental function of getting a message across, comes from an interview that I had with a Yorkshire consultant for European aid:

> The Commission produced a video with a case study of cooperation between a Swedish and an Italian company. It's funny to watch, because it just doesn't work. The over-dubbing has that . . . it sounds silly, but it has a European feel to it. The voice over doesn't sound like an English person. It doesn't sound like anyone . . . it just sounds "European". The whole thing has a kind of air of Europeanism about it, and so appeals to nobody. I would never show that video to someone in England to encourage them to look for European partners, because they would laugh at it. And I get the impression the same would be on any other country. Somewhere in Brussels it looks good, [but] nowhere else does it look good. And I think that's the issue. By trying to appeal to everyone, Europe is appealing to nobody.
>
> (Yorkshire business consultant, Leeds, 8 May 2009)

That English that "only makes sense in Brussels" could be a new breed of European English, what sociolinguists call a koiné, a sort of new standard that, as such, sounds odd to the ears of English native speakers:

> Some of the time I think it is a disadvantage that the main working language [in the EU] is English. If you get to European meetings, which happen in English, a lot of time it is the English language, but the meaning of words is now different. There is now the development of a European English, with its own meaning. And for average people in this country they don't have that meaning. So, you know, if I talk about a bureau, most English people think a bureau is a desk. But it isn't. In the European slang it is an executive or something.
>
> (electoral reform pressure group spokesperson, London, 27 March 2009)

In its discourse to the European nation, Julien Benda (1993 [1933]) argued for the use of the French as Europe's national language. French was indeed the language of international diplomacy until at least the first quarter of the 20th century, and was, along with German, the main working language of European institutions until English became the definitive lingua franca of Europe with the 2004 enlargement, as Eastern European countries favour English as their language of international communication. The role of English as a global language has somehow deprived Europe of a distinctive lingua franca. In the view of a Spanish diplomat whom I interviewed during one of the European Council summits, the language diversity of Europe is a key factor in preventing a European communication space:

> The interesting thing would be that, for instance, after a Council of Ministers on employment, the French minister for employment would brief the Spanish press, and the Spanish minister would report for the French journalists. But this is not possible because there is not a European public opinion, nor a European space of communication. You have to take into account Europe's intrinsic complexity, which is in great part due to its linguistic diversity. As Europeans we do not have a common language. There are four or five important languages, and increasingly the most widely used language is English, itself is a language of universal use, which somehow dilutes Europe in the global world's magma. It is no wonder, then, that a European communications strategy is so difficult when there is no common

> language or a European space of communication. We are many and very diverse.
>
> (Spanish diplomat, Brussels, 7 May 2010)

The press officers working for the EP and the European Commission also pointed to linguistic diversity as one of the impediments to the local coverage of EU affairs. Despite the effort that EU institutions make in offering multilingual speakers, there would be a point at which the local journalist, in order to speak with the civil servant in charge of the file that they want to investigate, would have to at least be able to communicate in English. This simple situation is indicative of the separation between administrative apparatus and community: a European civil servant may have key information related to an EU project being developed in Spain, but a Spanish journalist with no linguistic competence other than their own language will not be able to perform a watchdog function. This linguistic barrier is, then, another source of negative domesticisation:

> Brussels is not Madrid, London, or Paris. There's a physical distance. If a Spanish journalist is interested in a topic, but the person picking up the phone responds in French . . . that's quite a turn off.
>
> (EP press officer, Spanish service, Brussels, 19 May 2009)

> Linguistic diversity is a key impediment that makes European institutions very distant. That's one of the main reasons why local or national journalists don't phone the Brussels administration. That's why we [the national representations of the European Commission] exist. If we all spoke the same language, European integration would have gone considerably faster. Language makes a big difference.
>
> (European Commission press officer, Madrid, 17 December 2008)

The need to operate in translation not only hinders journalistic enquiry but also slows down bureaucratic processes and, in some cases, creates confusion, contributing again to a sense of distance or, in some cases, as with the video anecdote referred above, to the identification of the EU with a language devoid of any emotional meaning, as cold and instrumental, as identity-less as the very institutions that produce it:

> If you ever look, and I am sure you have, to some of the documents that the EU produce[s] that you can go and read, you know, they are not easy to understand by any means, are they? It's not written in

> clear, concise English. I sat in a debate once, when I was last there [in Brussels], I can't remember what the debate was about, but it was amazing that the person who was arguing was from one of the new members, the Czech Republic or something like this, and he said that because all the translation that has to take place as well, and as good as the linguists are, there must be bits of it that must not be translated properly, so you are, as in the film, lost in translation. I'm sure that applies with there as well. There are times when the final documents have been written in whatever language is written in, it's not quite right as perhaps it should have been.
>
> (Fish Merchants Association representative, Grimsby, 9 June 2009)

> When I get stuff from Brussels, I'm very glad that my headquarters got it down into language I can understand. Because, you know, there are some clever people in our headquarters who go through this thing line by line . . . and I couldn't do it! [. . .] And then you find that the whole sense has changed because it was originally written in French and it hasn't been translated correctly!
>
> (NFU representative, York, 19 June 2009)

Although it could be argued that the unsexiness of the EP comes more from its limited powers than from any language-related issue, the multiple languages spoken prevent the rapid exchange of impressions that is common in other national chambers. The Babel of Europe often manifests itself in humorous ways. As one of the Yorkshire MEPs likes to recall when addressing constituents, when a European parliamentarian tells a joke, there is a time lag for the translation, so laughter may still be heard in the hemicycle when the speaker moves on to address a serious point.

Interestingly, one of my interviewees made an unconscious connection between language and nationality, which in hindsight is revealing of the usual alignment between language and nation, and between language and political community:

> The United States of America have it very easy: they only speak one language. Part of the difficulty in building Europe lies in the scrupulous respect towards the various nationalities.
>
> (Vigo Association of Shipbuilders representative, Vigo, 10 December 2010)

On the possibility of having a single demos with several languages, a topic still contested in the literature as referred to in Chapter 4, my

informants offered contrasting opinions by using, ironically, the same example. The Yorkshire UKIP MEP defined the EU as just as culturally diverse as the Soviet Union, and anticipated that it would eventually dissolve, as it did (20 April 2009). A former MEP for the Galician Nationalist Bloc compared the European people with the Russian people: "In Russia there are several states with different languages, but nobody questions the existence of a Russian people [...] Why does a people have to speak a single language?" (4 December 2009).

Most European students learn English as their second language from their early years of schooling,[4] so the road towards an EU that embraces English as its lingua franca might be unstoppable, despite the Council of Europe's recommendation for a European standard of language learning that would allow for any speaker to know their native language and two other EU languages (Council of Europe, 2001). In any case, the EU of the early 21st century operates either in translation or in the somewhat artificial language of international or European English (Martín Gutiérrez, 2010). This latter works well for instrumental purposes (getting a message across) but badly allows for any emotional use, which is of great importance in persuasive political discourse. As a koiné, Euro-English is understood by everyone but it cannot be claimed as anyone's own language.

Perhaps one of the most interesting artefacts in this respect is the voting console that MEPs use to cast their votes from their seats. They press buttons with the arithmetical signs +, −, 0, which mean, respectively, yes, no, abstention. This is done to avoid any possible confusion, as in Greek the word "ne" means "yes", whereas in Dutch it means "no". The Babel of Europe needs the universal logical language of mathematics to operate effectively.

Weak common identity, no demos

The no demos problem, the absence of a European political people that sees itself as one, is one of the main reasons behind the domesticisation deficit. Among my interviewees, there was wide agreement on the immaturity and elusiveness of the European demos, with only a few exceptions, most of them coming from the Spanish sample. Perhaps the most intriguing finding for me was that the majority of interviewees at all levels of the EU polity conceived European citizenship as a civic, not as a political, attribute. European citizenship empowers the citizen to lead a private, not a public, life. It empowers the citizen in travelling, in doing business, in studying abroad but not in deciding the fate of the European Community. Mass politics stops at the national level. At the European level, there is diplomacy, lobbying, the politics of corporate

bodies (be they states or interest groups) but not the politics of the individual.

A demos is not a natural creation that has been there since the beginning of time. Although the discourse of nationalism likes to ground the origin of nations into an immemorial past, the cultural cohesiveness of nation states has not come to exist as naturally as school textbooks like to portray (Hobsbawm, 2000 [1991]). Is the European demos a matter of time, of generations of student exchanges and cross-country marriages? Will it come to be through an external negative definer, an outside enemy such as, say, Islam? Is it already being built through a tandem process, by which cross-border mobility creates demands for homogeneity of health records and academic degrees, and in which this homogeneity in turn facilitates further mobility (Cederman and Kraus, 2005)? If a European demos exists, how homogeneous will it be? How homogeneous should a demos be in order to withstand majoritarian decisions?

For some of my interviewees, however, the dream of a European demos is a futile delusion. What's more, for some the essence of Europe is the experience of difference. If this is the case, if a European demos is impossible or even undesirable, the normative quest for a European-level democracy might be wrong-sighted. The management of European interdependence would not be people-dependent, at least not directly, and the system of preference aggregations would be similar to the one existing at present. Technocracy would have to be acknowledged by political scientists and the public alike as a legitimate form of government for diverse polities that need to live together but do not want to (or cannot) see themselves as a community of fate. If the civic demos is the only possible demos in Europe, the cosmopolitan dream would be close to its fulfilment. However, if Carl Schmitt was right in his appreciation that politics and antagonism cannot be ruled out from this world, the cosmopolitan dream of Europe would only be sustained for as long as its main guarantor (the USA) was willing to protect the old continent. Not naming enemies, Schmitt argues, does not mean one is free from hostility (Schmitt, 2009 [1932]). As of today, European citizenship is a premium card for travelling and entertainment. It has only advantages; it requires no duties.

An alternative view, held by the UK Eurosceptics, defends the idea that economic exchange should not, and needs not, be accompanied by any supranational regulation. The Eurosceptic creed denies the basic tenet of the EU: that in order for European countries to be viable economically, there needs to be an international organisation with supranational

institutions endowed with decision-making powers which are binding for the constituent member states. Disintegration, or the unravelling of supranationalism, does not look to be a likely prospect for the majority of interviewees, however. Even those questioning the existence of a European demos, like the UK farmers, demand a strong European Commission. There is a frequent call for a respect for diversity, yet at the same time the famous European four freedoms (of people, goods, services and capital), still unfulfilled after more than 50 years of unity, are taken for granted as irrevocable. The way forward is uncertain, but the conviction that there is no going back to some of the present achievements is firm.

One of the best testing grounds for the existence of a European demos is the EP. The testimonies I could gather from journalists, diplomats and civil society actors reveal a chamber prey of national interests and divided loyalties. The phone calls to MEPs from national governments before Strasbourg plenary votes epitomise the former; the carrying of two voting lists (one distributed by the national party whip or the member state permanent representation to the EU, the other by the EP group) symbolises the latter. The inexistence of a European political career (candidate selection is done by national parties) and the national character of European elections make MEPs highly dependent on home interests. To be sure, there are MEPs who are able to put Europe first, and in fact some Brussels correspondents have told me about a process of acculturation by which European representatives come to find their way as upholders of the European interest. However, since the European interest they defend is usually corporatist or only beneficial for the minority of Europeans who live a transnational life, their modes of operation become highly specialised and bureaucratic to the point of making themselves indistinguishable from European Commission officials, their allies in the defence of the European interest. When asked "Whom do you feel you represent, the Europeans or the Spaniards?" in an online questionnaire, the addressed MEP office considered that my question was outside the specialised remit of the representative (fisheries) and suggested that I should contact MEPs serving on the Constitutional Committee. Although anecdotal, this reaction is highly revealing of the bureaucratised mannerisms of many European representatives.

The divided loyalties of MEPs, perhaps reflective of the incompleteness of the European demos, are also echoed by the communications policy of the EP. On the one hand, the EP consciously sends journalists a nominal voting list, without reference to the countries to which MEPs belong. Those journalists keen to know if a particular proposal has been voted on national rather than ideological grounds have to do that

work on their own. On the other hand, in order to increase its visibility, the EP press services maintain a section called "National angle", which is sometimes the only way to appeal to the interests of news media, mainly national in their character. In other words, there is an institutional will to portray the EP as a European institution (by erasing or not publicising the nationality of MEPs), but in many cases the condition of the institution's visibility is only granted through an appeal to the national interest.

The private character of European citizenship, the debate about the possibility and desirability of a European identity, and the divided loyalty of the EP – all of these themes, to be analysed in the pages that follow, put into question the existence of a solid European demos on which a European democracy and a European public sphere could be built.

Civic demos, private citizenship and the cosmopolitan creed

European citizenship is all benefits and no sacrifices. It is an invitation to live a borderless private life of study, leisure and business, but not a political life. European citizenship is a passport for private opportunities, but not for collective deliberation and political participation. Certainly being an EU citizen allows one to vote in the local elections of a second EU country where one is resident, and also on the European elections. But given the highly limited power of the European vote (electing a chamber with codecision on laws not initiated by any popular sovereign), EU citizenship could be deemed as a call to lead an apolitical life.

> Think about a young person who takes a flight to London for 10 euros, and on arrival there he breaks a leg. But since he is taking with him the European health card and his national ID, he is assisted in hospital like any other Briton. Do you think that this young fellow is worried about the presumed democratic deficit of the EU, or would like to directly elect the president of the EU? Democracy is something more than voting. It is, above all, the guarantee of a given set of rights. And the set of rights endorsed by the EU is first class. What the average European wants, more than participating in European elections, is to phone his brother who is studying in France for the same cheap rate he would pay for a call to Zaragoza in Spain.
>
> (expert on EU regional funds, Santiago de Compostela, 20 November 2009)

> True, I have few things in common with an Estonian, and I would not call him my co-patriot. However, we both share our desire for a borderless continent, for sharing a common market, for enjoying more job opportunities . . . I don't think we will ever feel as a single people, but I do believe that all peoples in the EU share a series of common wishes that justify the existence of the EU.
>
> (EP press official, Madrid, 23 November 2009)

> The EU is just about business. If it were true that we share the same values as Europeans, the first logical step would be to harmonize all issues related to civil rights: to homogenize the legal code on asylum seeking, on homosexual marriage, on freedom of expression . . . If we really shared our values, that would be the easiest part, wouldn't it? But the market is the priority, it's what really counts.
>
> (former Galician nationalist MP, Santiago de Compostela, 5 April 2010)

Although there was speculation that the European Constitution had been rejected by voters because they demanded a more accountable EU, most national governments (the UK government first) insist on the idea that debates about the institutional workings of the EU are counterproductive. Citizens, this argument goes, demand results, services. They could not care less about processes of decision-making. Alas, as is shown in Chapter 6, members of the public (especially in the UK) rank democratic deficit issues among the first of concern to them:

> If you are born in Leeds, you can study in Stockholm, or get medical attention in Barcelona, or export your product to Bucharest without getting involved in endless custom clearance forms. The problem with the institutional discussions about the EU is that they obscure a simple truth: that Europe should be about delivering services.
>
> (Caroline Flint, former UK Minister for Europe, Leeds, 24 October 2008)

European citizenship is a call to enjoy services, never a call to pay service. In most member states, this is the case too. The difference is that, at the European level, the citizen is almost purely civic and private. The individual is not exactly part of a European society or a European political people, but a constant traveller with safe conduct who can only be truly political at home, within their government-changing demos.

When asked to define the identity of Europe, MEPs resort to exclusively civic, liberal values, with universal health care as the only truly particular tenet. But the most striking issue is that they don't seek to make Europe a paradise on earth, setting it apart from the rest of the world. The EU is seen as a transitional step towards world governance. There is no Monroe declaration in Europe. The creed of the EU, like that of liberalism, is universal, understands no borders, and seeks to expand and to make its model imitable on a world scale:

> Europe is a step towards a democratic global governance. It is probably the most advanced project in this sense. I see the European project on that scale.
>
> (Spanish Socialist MEP, London, 16 June 2009)

It is not coincidence, then, that the most European and most cosmopolitan of all political formations, certainly in the UK and perhaps in the whole of Europe, are the British LibDems. In the videos shown at the LibDem conference in Harrogate on 6 March 2009, party supporters explained the reason why they belonged to the party: "No national boundaries", "The best way of dealing with the unfairness of the world, especially in Palestine", "Because I care passionately about human rights", "Internationalism, protection of the environment."

Salvador de Madariaga, the great Spanish diplomat who presided over the Liberal International, conceived the world as a series of federations, with the strongest popular participation at the local level. Something similar could be said about the British LibDems. At the stage of the conference party, Baroness Scott defined the principles of the party as "fairness, individual liberty, internationalism, localism, and environmentalism". Nick Clegg, the party leader, voiced a cosmopolitan appeal: "This is no time for ignorant nationalism, if you believe in human dignity, join us." In my talks with party activists, they said that the unifying glue of the LibDems was their concern about human rights. They also stressed the right for individual initiative, and especially the right to privacy.

In a similar vein as the Spanish MEP quoted above, party leader Nick Clegg explained to his supporters the rationale for supporting the EU: "It is our best bet to push forward the international institutions needed to regulate global capitalism. It is our best bet to promote peace, democracy and human rights across the world. It is our best bet to secure global agreements to stop dangerous climate change" (Harrogate, 8 March 2009).

The intellectual discourse that supports the EU declines to define any closure of boundaries. Instead of a European nationalism, intellectuals such as Zygmunt Bauman, Étienne Balibar, Edgar Grande and Ulrich Beck call for a kind of Western cosmopolitanism whose earliest finest manifestation is the EU. For Étienne Balibar, "Europe must become a province of the universal" (Leeds, 13 May 2009).

In the creed of cosmopolitanism, creating a European citizen is akin to creating the would-be "world citizen", divorcing the particular national identity from the universal values of individual rights. Every country in the world could qualify as an EU member, every individual in the world is a European/world citizen in potency. In the cosmopolitan world, antagonism would be over, there would be no true need for public life, nor for politics. The scientific management of the state would leave citizens free to enjoy a private life.

The EP's divided loyalty

In one of his experiments on deliberative polling, political scientist James Fishkin (18 August 2005) suggested holding a focus group with a representative sample of the European population. The brochure advertising the event suggested that it could "put all of Europe into one room". The expression could be a good definition of the EP. Ideally it should be Europe put in a room. The literature of European integration has favoured so far the view that the EP is increasingly becoming more like a normal parliament. That is, its main divisions would run along ideological, not national, lines. To my surprise, most of the observers I spoke to, including the – in theory – pro-European Spanish correspondents, pictured the EP as a grouping of national interests. Perceptions can be easily compared with actual voting records, as Simon Hix and others have done (Hix, Noury and Roland, 2007). However, the strength of this perception invites further research on voting records in the EP, enquiring whether national divisions are more important the more political and less technical the legislative proposal is. Highly contentious issues like the Working Time Directive showed that the parliament was divided along national, not ideological, lines.

In the view of the Brussels correspondent for *La Voz de Galicia*, the EP is reflective of national, not European, interests. This perception calls into question the existence of a European demos:

> In the Spanish Parliament you may find specialized representatives or not, but each of those guys represents the whole 45 million Spaniards. In Spain representation is like this: a single member

> represents all the electoral body, not only his/her constituency or his/her province. But here in the European Parliament is not the same. We vote our representatives in closed lists by country. And they represent, exclusively, the interest of their country of origin. You can't ask a Danish MEP to defend the interests of the Galician fishing sector. Nor you can ask the EP to be other thing than the sum of the particular interest of each country.
>
> (*La Voz de Galicia* correspondent, Brussels, 18 May 2009)

The Brussels correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*, Bruno Watterfield (who requested to be cited by name), deems the name "parliament" inappropriate for the European chamber. The EP, he said, "is about international cooperation; the DNA of the EU is international cooperation" (Brussels, 20 May 2009). Although MEPs sit in the European hemicycle by political grouping and not by country, even the EP officials' touring visitors admit that these groups have "a similar, but not identical, ideological orientation" (observation of a students' visit to the EP, 26 April 2010). The uneasy relationship that the EP has with nationalism can be seen in the contrasting attitudes of the pro-European majority groups – the Christian democrats (EPP) and the social democrats (Socialists & Democrats), along with the liberal democrats (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats) – and the Eurosceptic Conservatives and the Freedom & Democracy Group, which count among their ranks Hungarian members who may show up dressed in their national uniform, or may put their country's flag on their seat.

At the historic EU Council meeting that agreed on the rescue package for the euro (7 May 2010), I had the chance to interview a high-ranking Spanish diplomat who was serving at that moment the Spanish presidency of the European Council. She said that there was not any (European) popular legitimacy that could hold the existence of a popularly elected supranational leader. The EP was formally democratic, "but in the end, you represent your country and I represent mine", she said. However, far from discrediting the European institutions, this seasoned diplomat said they were essential, even if they could not be democratic:

> The legitimacy of governments is a national legitimacy. However, problems can only be solved at a supranational scale [...] Legitimacy comes from below (from the nation states), but solutions come from above (from the EU). It's a difficult dilemma, because we need supranational decision structures, but I don't see how a

> Latvian politician could be elected by universal suffrage to become the president of the EU. Honestly, I don't see it.
>
> (Spanish diplomat, Brussels, 7 May 2010)

Legitimacy, then, is not only procedural. It is not only about having universal suffrage. It is also identity-related. Whether that identity substrate can be induced institutionally is a matter of debate. A Spanish radio correspondent commented on an ongoing debate about the possibility of electing 25 EP seats for a European constituency, in order to build some sort of European consciousness beyond the national character of EP elections. "This would have avoided", she said, "the odd situation of MEP Monica Frasoni, a multilingual MEP who would usually appear in several national media, contributing to Europeanise the discourse. However, she was not elected in her own country of origin in the last elections" (Brussels, 11 May 2010). The anecdote is also revealing of the few benefits that a truly European career can earn, given the absence of a significant European public sphere.

A further point of evidence that the EP is more liberal than democratic can be deducted from its supportive groups. Environmentalists and transnational corporations demand European law because their activities do not understand about borders. But other well-entrenched interest groups, such as farmers, especially those in the UK, would not mind having the EP scrapped. A former vice-president of the NFU said that it was enough to have a Council of Agricultural Ministers, as they have a democratic mandate to look at their countries' interests. "Why do we need then a European Parliament? It isn't democratic in a sense, because there are so many disparate bodies in it" (Yorkshire, 11 June 2009). The idea of a European interest, of a European identity, does not look strong enough to maintain the EP. The question is whether direct elections to the EP are a historical mistake that should be acknowledged, as an *Economist* leader said on the eve of the EP elections (*Economist*, 4 June 2009), or whether a true European identity can grow with time and further institutional reforms.

For Salvador de Madariaga, Europe was "a garden of national flowers" (Madariaga, 2010 [1951], p. 57), which in his view hindered the prospect of a coherent European electoral body, as the components of the addiction would not be equal parts (Madariaga, 1977, pp. 203–204):

> Universal suffrage elections over the whole European area would produce a horrible cacophony of incoherent trends disguised as

> ideas. The peoples of Europe are indeed supportive of each other in their common destiny, but this does not prevent them from being wonderfully diverse in their natural gifts as well as in their evolutionary phase. The languages they speak are different; their mental idioms are even more different. A European-wide election would be like the nominal sum of incoherent and incompatible quantities; something so absurd as the famous memorial an old farmer presented to Napoleon during a troop inspection: "Joseph Durand. Age: 53; years of service: 26; campaigns: 14; wounds: 5; children: 8. Total: 106. Requests the Legion of Honour." [...] Europe is not and will never be a nation, but a cluster of nations. There will never be a European electoral body. European federalists should try to make an original work, and not attempt to imitate a centralized country like France or a federalised country like Switzerland or the United States. Europe is *sui generis*. It resembles nothing. It has to create original institutions for itself.

European identity and European demos: Possible? Desirable?

In his famous book *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976), Eugen Weber tells a story of demos creation through administrative homogenisation. As advanced in the literature review of the EU's no demos conundrum, most demoi have been the result of forced homogenisation, either through institutions of socialisation such as the national school, the national administration, conscription and the national mass media, or through deportations, genocide and conquest. If anything, the EU has been just the contrary: peaceful and piecemeal incremental cooperation that has respected collective identities to a degree unknown in their own constitutive member states.

In this section, I will explore my informants' views on the existence of a European demos. Most of them agree that European identity is somewhat different from any other national identity. It is more civic, grounded on general Western values, plus a bit of truly European longing for a safety net guaranteed by the state. It is yet unclear if this sort of civic homogeneity could withstand a European government elected through universal suffrage. Meanwhile, the EU institutions, like the city of Brussels itself, try to subdue the national feeling in order to survive, creating a rarefied atmosphere of repressed passions and identities. The times for nation-building seem long past, a call for a European version of Italy's unifier Giuseppe Mazzini seems ridiculous, so the condition for the survival of supranational management might be the anaesthetisation of the political (of identity and conflict). The

EU has managed to create a regional, continental polity without erasing differences. This is why the EU is closer to a world government than to a large federation like the USA. This is why the EU's national feeling, cosmopolitanism, is antinational. This is why the universalism of liberalism fits so well with the EU, whereas the particularism of democracy (which calls for boundaries, identities, exclusions) fits so badly.

The question is whether the EU will follow the process of demos generation through institutional induction, which in any case would be slow and indirect given the very presence of nation states and identities, or if the EU will be just a consolidated version of the contemporary political regime based on the current confederal and technocratic arrangements, confirming the long-held view among political scientists that democracy is not easily compatible with multinationalism.

Identities, in any case, are the result of centuries of acculturation. For my interviewees and observed subjects, building a European demos is a far more difficult task than building European institutions. Europeans might urgently need to cooperate in order to survive in the global world, but their identities cannot be homogenised so quickly as currencies:

> I don't think it [a European demos] exists at all. I don't think that's intellectually credible. You can't have this homogeneous Europe. Margaret Thatcher speech in Bruges in 1988, which is widely seen as tearing this place [the EU] to bits, had some basic truths in it. Whatever you may think politically, and whatever Europe does or tries to do, you will not create this homogeneous Euro-man and woman. There will not be this single identity [...] The mathematics of the European equations are not reaching to a conclusion where he or she is a Euro-person. You can do that with currencies, to an extent you can do it with single policies, like common policies on climate change, but you can't do it with people's thinking.
>
> (Press Association correspondent, Brussels, 19 May 2011)

> We invariably try to compare ourselves to the United States of America, but I think that's one of the fatal mistakes of the Commission, constantly thinking we're gonna become more European as European decisions [are taken]. I think they are constantly swimming against the tide. What is so impressive about Europe is that we are, collectively, so different in our makeup as countries. And to ignore that fact has been important to everyday people. [...] They [the people] want the world on a scale that means something to them.

> To try to blend everything together, to think that Lithuania is the same as Greece . . . it is crazy.
>
> (National Farmers' Union former vice-president, Yorkshire, 11 June 2009)

> Habermas talks about a post-national Europe, a Europe of post-national identities, where national and regional identities would be progressively abandoned in favour of a European identity. I don't think that can work. The relevance of collective identities, the *we* against *them*, the mobilisation of passions . . . cannot be underestimated. Regional and national identities are too important. To sacrifice them for the benefit of a European identity would be, in psychoanalytic terms, a too strong libidinal reversal. Habermas dreams of us identifying as European citizens, but in my view it is very dangerous to ignore the strength of national and regional identities.
>
> (Chantal Mouffe, Santiago de Compostela, 18 December 2009)

Instead of a supranational state, a sort of the USA, Mouffe contends that European democracy should be thought of in a different way. At a conference in Santiago de Compostela, in response to my query, she said she was drawing on two sources of inspiration to build that alternative way of envisioning an EU democracy: on the one hand, scholar Kaypso Nicolaïdis' concept of "demoicracy", whereby the different demoi would be put in relationship through the various public spheres, and on the other, philosopher Massimo Cacciari's bottom-up federalism, where regions and cities would play an important role. "Rather than thinking about Europe as a post-national Europe with a single demos in which regional and national identities would be left aside", Mouffe said that "the different forms of identity would be acknowledged and an agonistic relationship among them would be established".

It is difficult, however, to see how such a plural Europe would become a "European democracy", something beyond the current stage of highly indirect popular control of the European layer of government, in which nation states and even regions already have a say. It is also hard to imagine a vital and vibrant regime based upon the agonistic conflict among identities. Mouffe seems to contradict herself here, as in my reading, agonism is only possible when an overarching identity is agreed upon (allowing for a non-existential fight between left and right), or when the different identities are repressed and tamed, as happens with the

original combination of intergovernmental bargaining and technocracy that the EU is.

The UK Eurosceptics (of whichever party) have a more clear-cut view about the possibility of a European democracy. For them, democracy can only exist in the context of a single nation. Given their scorn of a federal Europe, I asked a noted Eurosceptic Conservative MEP whether he thought a democratic EU would be possible without a federation:

> No, because to have a democracy you need a demos, you need a unit with which people identify when they use the word "we". And if you don't have the demos, you have only the kratos, you have the power of the system that has to compel by law what it can't ask in the name of civic patriotism.
>
> (Conservative MEP, Cheltenham, 24 April 2009)

The inexistence of that European "we", rather than the role of media or national leaders, then, would be behind the difficulty of "communicating Europe", of making it understandable and relevant in people's minds. It would also be behind the difficult prospect of having a European democracy, with European parties and a European public sphere:

> There are things that are intrinsic, and there's little that can be done about them: you have the issue of language, of distance, and the absence of a European demos.
>
> (Missouri School of Journalism professor, Brussels, 19 April 2010)

> I think that what I'm trying to say is that one of the problems with communicating Europe is that there is not a single European demos, and there is not a single European polity. Appeals to the pro-European or anti-European are completely different in each different country, because everyone has a completely different reason for wanting to be in Europe. And Europe means completely different things to different countries.
>
> (*Economist* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

> At the core of the problem is that there is no European identity or demos, which makes EU institutions difficult to cover, because you are divorced from the sort of local identity or national identity which makes people understand politics.
>
> (*Financial Times* former Brussels correspondent, London, 12 May 2009)

Interestingly, although the UK Eurosceptics like to portray the EU as a superstate in the making, the pro-Europeans in my sample supported the EU precisely because it was the opposite of a homogenising state. For them, the EU was the institutional framework that allowed the plurality of European identities, including the substate ones, to achieve a degree of recognition that had been denied by the traditional nation states:

> To have the creation of a European nation as a goal seems to me deceiving, useless, capricious. Centuries would have to pass by in order to reach to the chemically pure European. Europe is not uniformity, but universalism. It is not about us being all the same, but about respecting each other in our differences. Italy does not have to be the weighted mean with anyone, and neither do we. [Jaques] Delors used to say that what Europe could sell as its own product is the respect to identities. Let me put an example for you. When the accession of Poland was a close prospect, I went to Krakow with [Manuel] Fraga and other delegates. The Polish had been subjugated by the Germans and the Russians. For them, the accession to Europe meant that, for the first time, they could be treated as equals. Becoming Europeans was for them to take proud again in being Polish.
>
> (former Galician regional minister, Bueu, 7 January 2010)

> One of the great merits of the EU is the motto of diversity. Against the criteria of the Jacobin and centralist state, the EU allows for maximum diversity. If Spain considered Galician, Catalan, and Basque as state official languages, the EU would make them official languages. If Andorra became an EU member tomorrow, Catalan would be an official EU language.
>
> (former Galician MEP, Santiago de Compostela, 4 December 2009)

Perhaps, as sociologist Zygmunt Bauman said at a public debate with Étienne Balibar at the University of Leeds, "the power of Europe is to have undefined identity. It is an adjustable identity" (Leeds, 13 May 2009). The EU is constantly facing the challenge of managing interdependence, which inevitably requires some standards and homogenisation, without offending the individuality of its constituent cultures. However, it would also be reasonable to think that if national interests can be compromised, it is because of the existence of an underlying commonality that makes the sacrifice of difference more bearable. Not surprisingly, it was in the Spanish sample where I found more

interviewees defending the idea of some nascent European demos, and the belief that a demos is mainly a political, not a natural, construction:

> One-hundred and fifty years ago half of the demoi we have today in Europe didn't exist. The oldest ones are Spain and France, but Italy is very recent. The demos is an strictly political creation. What does unite a Galician with an Andalusian? We speak the same language, we pay the same taxes, my academic degrees are recognised here and there . . . and if we have an intestinal obstruction, we can go there with the same health insurance card we use here. That's always the consequence of political action, and at this moment there are two fundamental issues going on in Europe. First, there is a high coincidence among our cultures, and second, there is a general conviction that individual countries cannot go alone on their own.
>
> (Galician government former vice-president, Santiago de Compostela, 20 October 2009)

> Wondering what Europeans are is like wondering what we are as Spaniards. It's not easy to give an answer. In the European case there has been an extremely rapid enlargement to, precisely, prevent the settlement of the original EU, a process favoured by the UK. We are still digesting a series of very poor countries with little democratic tradition. Everything depends on the moment you want to take the picture. But there is a background, a social model, a welfare state (which is alien to the neo-Yankeeism of Eastern member states), a cultural pluralism . . . the understanding of unity in diversity has to be worked out. This message is also missing in Spain, by the way.
>
> (political science university professor, Santiago de Compostela, 18 January 2010)

At a public lecture, the head of the European Commission in Spain also referred to the quick enlargement of the past few years as a diluting force. But, perhaps unconsciously, he also gave me more evidence about what I call the hypertrophy of liberalism when he said that the "homogeneity of interests" of the pre-2004 EU "allowed us to be concerned exclusively about business" (A Coruña, 28 October 2009). The Eastern enlargement has broadened the commercial scope of the EU, at the expense of inviting into the club countries that are still battling with taming corruption and upholding basic human rights. When the liberal tenets of separation of powers and individual rights are present, the EU

can go on without questioning its own identity. When the rule of law is weak, and when member states have clear enemies (Baltic states versus Russia, Cyprus and Greece versus Turkey), the call for identity (who we are, who's the enemy) is stronger and more difficult to avoid.

The former vice-president of the Galician government whom I interviewed (Santiago de Compostela, 20 October 2009) said that there were two main reasons why the European demos was having difficulties in making itself visible. The first was the absence of pan-European media. Even if national media frame issues in the same way across Europe, the audiences of those national media outlets do not have the sensation of being one grand European audience. The second was the unanimity processes, which prevent Europeans from having the feeling that they are a collective group making decisions. "If we voted the European Constitution on the same day, instead of going state by state, everything would have been solved in eight hours. Instead of showing the grandiosity of the event, the stress was on its complexity" (Santiago de Compostela, 20 October 2009).

Europeans, then, would not have a mirror to see themselves in all of their greatness. But the same regional vice-president, in the quote cited above, mentioned a non-administrative item to build a demos: a common language. A law university professor from my Spanish sample said that the EU was building a polity instead of a demos, because a truly cohesive political community would imply erasing differences that Europeans are not willing to relinquish. It would also require declaring others as foreigners, an anathema for the cosmopolitan liberal creed that informs the EU:

> We should be aware about the consequences of involving people. Involving people means that a Galician will feel as its own what is going on in Murcia, but will feel that whatever is going on in Portugal, which happens to be physically closer, is happening in foreign land. To build that sort of demos implies erasing many differences, many identities in your path. A demos of that kind means that I feel a square metre of land in Murcia is as mine as a square metre of land in Galicia. If you want me to feel Latvian land as my own and vice-versa, how much difference would we have to erase?
>
> (law university professor, Santiago de Compostela, 15 December 2009)

This same professor, however, was confident that a demos is usually the result of political will, and that all successful confederations end

up becoming federations. For him, a constitution is a legal text whose purpose is related more towards establishing a division of powers than to establishing a people.

In conclusion, the weight of the evidence leads one to think that there is already some sort of a light civic demos, but there remain doubts about whether it can ever become cohesive enough to sustain a European government subject to pan-European majorities. It could be argued that there is a "communication deficit" in the absence of pan-European media, but this shortcoming could be a consequence of the missing demos, not of media behaviour, as the original communication gap theory suggests. The low commitment of national leaders in making the EU visible to their audiences, the second tenet of the communication gap theory, could also be related to the no-demos issue: national leaders are rarely willing to put Europe first because at the end of the day their legitimacy comes from a national, not a European, demos.

No European public sphere

The literature on the European public sphere, and the discourse of pro-European journalists and scholars, is full of lamentations about a need for better coverage of European affairs. As I attempt to demonstrate in this book, the blame should be removed from newspaper editors and media owners, however Eurosceptic they might be. The absence of a European public sphere is cultural (there is not a European public out there to listen, only a series of national publics) and structural (perhaps because of the absence of a demos, the EU is not yet a state with a government directly dependent on public opinion). Media coverage of EU affairs is closer to a strategic intelligence gathering for mutual national control than a means of empowering the European public with information that they can use to influence the direction of a continental government. The closest thing to a "European public" is the minority of Europeans whose lives have an international or continental scope, be it for past experiences or for professional-related issues (businesspeople, academics, NGOs). And the closest thing to "European media" are the international elite news outlets like *The Economist*, *The International Herald Tribune*, the *Financial Times* and the *Wall Street Journal Europe*. The possibility of having a European public sphere through Europeanised national public spheres has some support in the literature, but the evidence I gathered from my interviews contrasts with the highly optimistic results of content and frame analyses of the benchmark European newspapers. Instead of a European public sphere that speaks different

languages, Brussels correspondents only see a cluster of national public spheres with common topics but nationally bound interpretations. As one correspondent said, "we work for different societies":

> You already have think-thank publications with that European scope (e.g. the *European Review*), but those are for insiders. And the previous efforts to create a pan-European media outlet, like *The European* newspaper, failed. There's not European media because there's not a European polity. We are still defined through regions and nations. And this is still true 60 years after the Schuman declaration, which is due in a couple of weeks.
>
> (journalism professor, Missouri School, Brussels, 19 April 2010)

> There is not a proper European space of public debate. Despite all the grand rhetoric, the European citizen does not exist. We the media correspondents work in Brussels, but we work for different societies.
>
> (Spanish radio correspondent, Brussels, 11 May 2010)

> The EU is not a state, there is no European public opinion or European political parties.
>
> (EP spokesperson, Brussels, 12 May 2010)

> As compared to the USA, in Europe we don't have a European public opinion. We have 27 public opinions, and whatever happens in Brussels is interpreted from a national angle. As long as there are not a European people, there will be no solution for the famous democratic deficit. The distance from the citizen, the inability to know how things work . . . The main reason for the democratic deficit is the absence of a European public opinion.
>
> (Galician regional government, DG for European affairs official, 23 December 2009)

The core national condition of the European public spheres can be more easily grasped during the coverage of European Council meetings. The Brussels-based correspondents are sometimes joined by the national political correspondents who cover the prime minister or president's activities in the respective countries. Brussels-based correspondents are trained to put the claims of their national governments in context, but the parachuted national correspondents are there just to reproduce the version of the national government, which is usually the one that is approved by the news media editor at the home capital. This

distorting effect of the national press packs is eloquently explained by *The Economist* correspondent in Brussels:

> You'll often hear from Brussels correspondents their frustration because their political editor will fly in and will say: "Yes, we've just had a briefing *off-the-record* from the government press spokesman, that there's been a tremendous fight, and that Mr. Berlusconi has led the day and has said how things will happen." And the Brussels correspondent, who will say: "That's not true, that's a German idea. Berlusconi is not involved." But the Italian political editor will say to his Italian colleague who is based in Brussels: "Bah! This is a Berlusconi story! It's going on the front-page!" And they [the political editors] have more clout, because they are often more senior. So in the communication of Europe you get this intermittent bursts of nationally-focused reporting every time there's a Summit, led by people whose entire focus is their own leaders, and often very powerful journalists.
>
> (*Economist* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

The literature has found Brussels-based correspondents to be favourable to the idea of an EU, and that was the case in my two samples of interviewees: the British and the Spaniards. Of the two main tenets of the communications gap theory (Eurosceptic media bias and low national commitment to public pedagogy on European affairs), the second finds some support in the evidence that I gathered. However, again, this behaviour of national politicians must be linked to the absence of a European demos (their legitimacy is national, so they must show that uphold the national interest above everything else) and to the *sui generis* features of the European political system, whose mixture of confederalism, technocracy and subsidiarity allows national leaders to show themselves as gladiators fighting for a prize to get back home, instead of codeciders in European-binding resolutions.

Conclusion

The solution for what scholars and policy-makers define as the "EU's communication gap" will not come from pro-European media or savvy public relations techniques from the European Commission. It may not come either from pro-EU national leaders. In Spain, the national government has put the European flag alongside the Spanish one in almost every act of public communication, from official websites to media

appearances. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the Spanish prime minister at the time of this book's fieldwork, won the 2004 national elections with the motto "We're coming back to Europe", after Aznar's alliance with Bush in the Iraq War the year before. During the campaign leading to the referendum over the European Constitution in 2005, the two mainstream Spanish parties asked for a "yes" vote. Both the national and the regional media are pro-European, following Ortega y Gasset's maxim that "Spain is the problem, Europe the solution." In my content analysis of EU regional news in *La Voz de Galicia* (see Methodological Appendix I), EU institutions are most of the time seen in a positive light, meaning that their interests are regarded as similar or equal to those of the region. But however positively regarded in Galicia, the EU is as a remote institutional setting as elsewhere on the Continent.

This distance (the EU is not a home reality for any of its citizens; it is only a home reality for its elites) has little to do with the media or with national politicians, and much to do with the absence (or the incompleteness) of a European demos. To put it bluntly, EU member states do not need as sympathetic media and politicians as in Spain. That would lead to an elite consensus that is still divorced from citizens' popular allegiances. What the EU would need is a Bismarck, a national unifier. This is indeed a strident suggestion, considering that, to a large extent, the EU is the product of post-Second World War antinationalism. But there is no other way to a democracy. The pathway to a fully democratic EU is not related to procedural reforms, such as sunshine laws to increase administrative transparency. Popular legitimacy rests as much, if not more, on identity than on institutional checks and balances.

The linguistic variety in the continent has made many pro-Europeans bet on a civic demos, a unity of moral values. Such a proposal is built upon the belief that the ethnic and the civic can be detached. This universalism, as Carl Schmitt advanced, is typical of liberalism but is less amicable towards democracy. In a democracy, as sad as it may sound to cosmopolitan ears, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the cultural from the civic.

The EU is, I contend, a hypertrophy of liberalism. At the EU level, the identitarian component common in most Western liberal democracies is very weak. This leaves the EU with the cold grandeur of the civic: the borderless and mostly private life dreamed by the bourgeois class. This is why the discourse of cosmopolitanism sees the EU as the great experiment of a world government. The telos of liberalism is depoliticised universalism. The telos of democracy is politicised particularism. Most Western liberal democracies are built on a compromise between

these contradictory tendencies, as Mouffe has rightly explained (2000). But in the case of the EU, absent the identitarian component, the liberal impulse runs free, creating a vast commercial and civic space that is nevertheless devoid of an identity of its own. The EU is, in a way, the essay of that universal, cosmopolitan land. It is attractive for the peaceful constant traveller, as the empire of European law makes mobility easier. But when it comes to deciding a common future – that is, when the world of commerce and humanitarian ethics give way to politics – is when the European identity appears to be found wanting. Until such a demos exists, it might well be that the condition for the EU's survival is its depoliticisation. If EU member countries need an institutional setting to manage their interdependence but do not build a common demos, infusing democracy into the system might be counterproductive or ineffectual. If the demos is not built, the sources of institutional legitimacy cannot be democratic, but instead technocratic – hence the insistence on output legitimacy (the legitimacy of results) by most European national leaders when defending the existence of the EU. Traditional democratic legitimacy (input legitimacy) cannot be waived, as the existence of a European popular will is as questionable as that of the European demos. It is indeed difficult to find an institutional channel for the former in the absence of the latter.

Communication implies the existence of a community. Very tellingly, in a community of faith, the individual who is expelled from the group is "excommunicated". It is only in the hyperliberal, cosmopolitan and universalistic environment of the EU civil servant, the Eurostar businessperson or the Erasmus student that the need for a cultural demos as the ground for a political community looks unnecessary, old-fashioned and perhaps even regressive. But politics and democracy need identity, alterity, borders and territorial definitions. Liberalism does not. Democracy is public, calls for a community; liberalism can be private, appeals to the individual. Democracy is politicising; liberalism is depoliticising.

The intimate connection between democracy and identity was foreseen by pro-European unity authors such as Kuehnelt-Leddihn (1952). Given that Europe was interdependent but did not enjoy anything resembling a national unity, Kuehnelt-Leddihn bluntly proposed a technocratic monarchy as the best system for ruling Europe. There cannot be democracy without a demos, my evidence seems to confirm. Either a European demos is somehow created, or the common governance of Europe cannot be democratic. Whether such a demos can be created through communication, and how this can be done (via pan-European media or Europeanised national media), is a matter of ongoing research

and scholarly debate. But blaming national politicians and journalists, as European Commission representatives and Europhiles usually do, diverts attention from the real challenge: creating a political community commensurate with the breadth and depth of EU institutions.

The European project has successfully eased the antagonism (the most extreme form of the political) among its member states but has not yet built a popular form of agonism. To the extent that a European elite community exists, European agonism is present, albeit only at that elite level. At a popular level, for as long as the European demos is absent, the alternatives would be disintegrative politicisation or integrative depoliticisation. No wonder European leaders have chosen the second.

6
Explaining the Politicisation Deficit

European politics moves along two axes. One is ideological, the other territorial. One refers to the traditional left–right divide, the other to the national interests of the member states. A predominance of the ideological cleavage would be an indication of community cohesiveness. Greater salience of national interests, in contrast, would be revealing of internal divisions within the polity. Although the EU is a grouping of countries with plenty of cultural similarities and common geopolitical interests, European politics is difficult to translate into a left versus right contest. It is, quite often, communicated as a gladiatorial fight among national interests.

The progressive blurring of differences between left and right, between more state intervention and more market freedom, has been predicated from most Western states for decades. However, in the case of the EU, the much-debated "end of ideologies" seems to hold truer than anywhere else. Despite a tendency towards ideological as compared with national division in the EP votes, the main decision-making body, the council, is intergovernmental. The introduction of QMV in more policy areas has removed some national vetoes and increased the sense of "community", but the government of the EU is grounded on compromise. Without a demos, without true political parties, without European mass media, the EU state cannot channel any popular mandate. It must be managerial.

In this chapter, I draw evidence from my interviews and observations to support the claim that the *sui generis* condition of the EU political regime, and not the way it is communicated through the media, is the main cause of the "apolitical" and highly bureaucratised character of European politics. The curious mixture of diplomacy, technocracy and corporatism that the EU is creates plenty of incentives against publicity.

The horse-trading among member states, the separation of economics from politics and the infiltration of private corporate interests into policy-making do not easily fit with public deliberation. These tendencies are not exclusive to the EU (they are actually present in most of its constituent member states), but the absence of a watching public (of a European public opinion or a demos) exacerbates all of their negative consequences.

At its core, the European government is not dependent on public opinion. The EU is the most democratic of all international organisations, but the popular control of the representatives is weak and indirect. Commissioners are appointed by member states, the ministers in the council have not been voted in via a European mandate, and the EP, the only directly elected body, only affects one-third of the lawmaking process (codecides with the council on those proposals issued by the commission). Furthermore, one of the governing principles of the EU, subsidiarity, makes the federal layer of power invisible, letting member states monopolise public attention and popular allegiance. The result is a curious regime of "policy without politics" at the EU level, and "politics without policy" in the member states (Schmidt, 2006).

Although the main original goal of European unification (the avoidance of a new war on the Continent) has been achieved, the EU has not become a single nation, which means that the different national interests (and therefore some minor degree of antagonism) coexist with the ideological divide between the right and the left (agonistic politicisation). Perhaps because it is caught between the immaturity of its demos (which prevents a coherent agonism between left and right) and the need to diffuse national rivalries (antagonism), the EU has opted for depoliticisation. It is the hypertrophy of liberalism advanced by Carl Schmitt: political dilemmas are not resolved by the victory of one side over the other. The political is decomposed into economic and ethical matters, hoping to resolve the first through compromise and the second through rational discussion (Müller, 2003, p. 26).

Evidence

Diplomacy among friends: A merchants' Europe

The EU, as Mouffe argues, has been one of the finest examples of how to go from the antagonism of war to the agonism of economic interdependence. Although European countries no longer see each other as enemies, I would like to reserve the concept of agonism to the left versus right divide that is only possible when communities are cohesive

enough to see themselves as one. I would like to define the current stage of Europe as one of soft antagonism, where the national interest may trump the European interest. The theatre of war has been transformed into a marketplace in which concessions due to mutual interdependence are disguised as solidarity. This is what some of my interviewees defined as a "merchants' Europe", a space of friendly competition where member states compete to get the best out of Europe, not the best for Europe. Absent a strong European identity, the politicisation of European politics is often antagonistic, a "gladiatorial fight", in the words of a Yorkshire socialist MEP (Hull, 6 March 2009). Europe ends up looking like a confederal arrangement that is a matter of member-state elites, not of their citizens, that passively expect a national victory. The following three interview excerpts show an industrial lobbyist, an MEP and a high-ranking Spanish civil servant all acknowledging the precedence of the national over the European interest:

> This Europe is a Europe of merchants. The interests of individual countries take priority over the common interest. Irrespectively of the money they put in [into the EU budget], those who pull it off are the countries with better lobbies, like Britain. The Treaty of Lisbon, which grants a bit more power to the EP, could change this somehow, but I don't believe it. Brussels is essentially a city of lobbyists. You just go to Brussels to do lobbying. What affects us is no longer decided in Madrid, but in Brussels. What our representatives vote in Madrid is a mere transposition of what is voted in Brussels.
>
> (Canned Fished Industries Association director, Vigo, 10 December 2009)

> There's no free lunch in Brussels. The EU is a marvellous, utopian project . . . but it's a market. And in a market, things are bought and sold. It all depends on your bargaining abilities. If you haven't got any, you're doomed. You really need to send there people who have the skills, who know languages, because you cannot rely on having your amendment translated at the parliament. You have to go to the bar and speak with Peter in English, and then with Françoise in French. It's like playing cards.
>
> (Galician Conservative MEP, Santiago de Compostela, 9 July 2009)

> Alas, there is not a global idea of Europe. We conform very different realities, and we have gone too fast with the process of enlargement. I have seen it in the three negotiations in which I have

> been present: Each government, be it left or right-wing, tries to grab as much as possible for Spain when the financial perspectives are being debated. But I don't know for how long this *Europe à la carte* can last.
>
> (Ministry of Economy civil servant, Madrid, 24 November 2009)

The literature on European integration situates the member states at the centre of the EU's power, leaving the commission and the parliament as peripheral actors (Moravcsik, 1998). At the council, the European interest (usually defined by the commission) meets the national interest of each of the constituent countries, whose governments belong to different ideological blocs, and whose internal situation (e.g. forthcoming national or substate regional elections) may force them to take decisions (or to try to get concessions) that do not lead to a coherent output but to the satisfaction of as many interests as possible:

> Member states have recovered the legislative initiative at the European level, and that makes the EU very difficult to explain. Because at the Council the interests of the EU and the member states get mixed. States' interests do not respond to a defined ideological option, but to the most diverse interests: partisan, national, electoral interests . . . Each government representative reacts much out of self-interest. Look at Zapatero's proposal for the regulation of financial markets. Brown is on campaign in the UK, so the proposal had to be frozen for the moment. In the end, you are not very sure who decides what.
>
> (Spanish trade union representative, Brussels, 7 April 2010)

> The power of the Commission has been undermined by the member states, who are guilty of lack of European loyalty. When in Brussels they talk about a system to share energy all across the EU, but then France or Germany reach energy agreements with third countries on their own. There's a huge lack of coherence, so no wonder the European citizen has no idea about Europe. In the end, what the EU does is the maximum that can be done without bothering anyone.
>
> (Spanish Vocento Group correspondent, Brussels, 9 April 2010)

> The European Commission is like the administrator of the building, it does not own any of the flats. It cannot go beyond being a mere

> property administrator, it has to obey the flat owners in the building. Those who have a bigger property share (France and Germany) are the ones who set the pace of the neighbourhood community's general behaviour.
>
> (*ABC* newspaper correspondent, Brussels, 7 May 2010)

The progressive erosion of the commission as an international actor, and its submission to member states' priorities, reinforces the pattern of antagonistic politicisation (country versus country) and deideologises European policies, which cannot be identified as coming from an explicit political blueprint. The triumph of executives at the European level is marginalising the two federal bodies of the EU: the commission and the EP.

My informants gave me examples of the member states' almost arrogant dominance in Brussels. According to a Spanish radio correspondent (11 May 2010), when a commission spokesperson said at a press conference, in response to a journalist's question, that the expulsion of immigrants from Italy without asking them for their place of origin was a violation of the right to asylum acknowledged in the European Charter of Human Rights, Berlusconi (Italy's prime minister) attacked the commission. Also according to the version of this Spanish journalist, the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU has scolded their country's correspondents for asking the commission questions that are too compromising. Having member states checking on the job of their fellow country journalists prevents their reporting from showing the common divisions of opinion that exist among the different levels of the multilevel polity. The result is, once again, a nationalisation of the European political discourse, leading to an antagonistic politicisation of the EU (us against them).

At a conference in the EP in Brussels celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Schuman declaration (4 May 2010), former MEP Doris Pack, much to the amazement of her co-speakers at the table, who celebrated the Lisbon Treaty's empowering of the EP, said that the EP had lost power with the new treaty. "The Commission sends its recommendations directly to the Council, as if the EP had nothing to say." The pressure from national governments could be sensed, in her view, in the increased relevance of the Open Method of Coordination, through which the Bologna Process of higher-education reform in Europe was conducted, excluding the EP. "If it had gone through parliamentary discussion", Pack said, "we would have seen the problems in advance, and the reform would have been less traumatic." "It was purely

intergovernmental," she claimed. In this case the effect was one of depoliticisation. The higher-education reform was a matter of technocratic management, not of public discussion.

The frequency of meetings among commission, council and national permanent representation civil servants in different COREPER formations is surely a diluter of animosity. The groundwork of European legislation is, according to most of my informants, performed at these meetings behind closed doors, where national representatives are free to "betray" their nationals, at least momentarily, in order to gain a future concession within the same dossier or in some other realm of policy. The consequence of this underground bargaining is neither antagonism nor agonism, but mere depoliticisation. These constant negotiations are termed in the literature "intense intergovernmentalism", with a soft diplomatic tension usually leading to some sort of compromise, or a minor loss that will be compensated for in a future round of policy negotiations:

> This place, it must be remarked, is built on compromise. It's the art of achieving compromise. The EU only works if everybody agrees to go with it. The nation states are very important. After all, they pay the bills for these buildings and our salaries.
>
> (UKRep spokesperson, Brussels, 29 April 2010)

The consensual style of intergovernmental relations is also present in the EP, where no single political group has an absolute majority, which forces like-minded parties to form coalitions. As noted in Chapter 5, although the parliament is divided by political groups and not by nationalities, the institution suffers from a problem of divided loyalty, surely the consequence of the still weak European demos. This makes the parliament shift between antagonism (national interests) and agonism (ideological divisions) depending on the vote at stake. Furthermore, the inexistence of a government versus an opposition deprives the EP from the traditional clash between left and right. The EP has been compared to the chambers of "consociational democracies", where constant transparty and cross-ideological bargaining are the main operating modes of the parliament.

> In Britain we elect a parliament, and you see the next day, if there is a change in majority, the furniture vans moving to Downing Street and people say: "Oh, my vote produces this…" That's why people think they elect the government! You don't see that in European

> elections, so when you go out and vote you may be changing the balance between political groups in the European Parliament, but that doesn't have a visible effect in that way on the executive. That could change if political parties start nominating their candidate for the president [of the commission] before the elections, which would be facilitated under the terms of the Lisbon treaty, because it refers to electing the president of the Commission and that it has to take account of the elections before they make that nomination.
>
> (Yorkshire socialist MEP, Leeds, 26 February 2009)

> If you want to get a second reading, the rule is that you have to have a majority of all members of the European Parliament, not just members in the chamber, so you have to have more than 50 per cent of the total number. Mathematically, that tends to mean that you have to have a group agreement between the PPE and the PES [Party of European Socialists] most of the time. So that doesn't produce a huge clash of ideological debates, because most legislation produced in this place tends to be a political compromise, which is a consensus across a very broad centre ground of centre-left and centre-right. Then in the Council of Ministers you have to reach consensus between countries which have very different views of how to regulate markets, how to regulate global trade, how much to open borders, the role of state aid . . . So everything is a kind of compromise fudge.
>
> (*Economist* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2010)

> Here in the UK we are used to a culture of conflict. We like to have Labour in the 70s and Thatcher in the 80s. We like to have the chance to sack a government. With the Continental system (with proportional representation, PR) the change is never clear (for example, with this grand coalition in Germany). What you have in Continental Europe is just a change in the name of the ministers' plates, not a change of government from left to right or vice versa. Our political culture is conflict. We don't reach any compromise here.
>
> (Conservative MEP assistant, Cheltenham, 25 April 2009)

MEPs, however, even when acknowledging the depoliticising effect of an absent government-opposition scheme, like to point to the true ideological differences that are present in the European hemicycle. Christian democrats (the EPP), social democrats (the S&D), liberals, greens and nationalist or regional parties would represent the political sensibilities of Europeans. Interestingly, one of the Conservative MEPs interviewed admitted the paralysing effect of consensus-seeking, which

would prevent clear political options from achieving the temporary hegemony that can exert a clear shift in policy direction:

> We operate on the centre-right, and we are arguing very strongly for the sort of things we believe in. The one difference between the European Parliament and, say, a national parliament, like the House of Commons, where I used to be, is that there [in Westminster] we have a confrontational system. It is written in . . . it is this basic thing. A confrontational system, which are ideas that are challenged, literally, right across the extremes, whereas in the European Parliament, the whole basis of its constitutional approach, is consensus. I, by nature, am not a particularly consensual politician. A lot of my colleagues are not either. This is frustrating at times, when you are dealing purely with consensus. I don't wanna have to seek a compromise every time, there are some times when principles are more important, and therefore a compromise will actually diminish your opportunities to get your way, or to get something done which you believe is right.
>
> (Yorkshire Conservative MEP, Cheltenham, 25 April 2009)

> We are divided politically! And if you think about the issues, that's actually much more sensible. Do you want higher environmental standards, but at a greater cost to the taxpayer or the industry? There will be people on both sides of that argument in every country. It's policy, political choice. That's reflected in the Parliament, it's hidden in the Council. But you see it as well in lobbying. The environmental groups will have a view whichever country they've come from, and the chemical industry may well have another view. Or, to take another example, the revision of the Working Time Directive. You have trade unions from every country coming to see you and saying "This needs to be tied up, it's full of loopholes", and representatives from organisations that say they represent the Small and Medium Size Enterprises saying: "No, no, no, we need a much more flexible labour market." It's political choice. It's not one country and everyone else another view . . .
>
> (Yorkshire socialist MEP, Leeds, 26 February 2009)

This last quote signals a dividing line between the council (intergovernmentalism, soft antagonism) and the parliament (agonism, ideological options). However, the member-state interests cross it with far more frequency than MEPs would like to acknowledge. The balance

of power has traditionally been tipped for the council, which makes the politicisation of the EU closer to the soft antagonism or diplomatic depoliticisation of intergovernmental relations rather than agonism or the ideological politicisation of parliaments.

> The worst thing is that, sometimes, decisions are taken for interests alien to the topic under discussion. That happened, for example, with the "Return directive" for immigrants, also known as the "directive of shame". State interests primed over ideological interests. How would you explain then that half of the Socialist group voted against this proposal while the Spanish Socialist government voted for it in the Council? Because Spain supported this proposal in exchange for other countries' support on another different topic. This is hardly understandable for the average citizen.
>
> (Spanish trade union spokesperson, Brussels, 7 April 2010)

> It is interesting to see the contrast between MEPs and the Government [their national government], although in the end it seems the MEPs, who are supposed to be independent free-thinkers, follow instructions from Downing Street. I know the Labour MEP who acts as a whip in Brussels. She is the one in permanent contact with Gordon Brown and his people. I know MEPs get phone calls from the UK Government, who asks them to follow the Government line when voting on important legislation.
>
> (British trade union spokesperson, Brussels, 8 April 2010)

The Lisbon Treaty introduces codecision between council and parliament in almost all policy areas, and the parliament can claim a few victories of its own, such as the blocking of the Working Time Directive just months before the 2009 European elections. In any case, the current and immediate future institutional settings are not amicable to agonistic politicisation (left versus right). Interstate diplomacy and horse-trading among member states encourage secrecy and soft antagonism. The consensualism of the European chamber, although closer to agonism, rarely allows for the temporary hegemony of a right-wing or a left-wing worldview.

The difficult politicisation of the managerial state

The "communications gap" thesis assumes that the EU is a continental-size federal-like democracy that needs to be better explained to its own

citizens in order to gain popular legitimacy and enjoy a broader participation from the electorate. My contention, and I trust my data provide enough evidence for my argument, is that the EU is a *sui generis* political regime that would not be more politically engaging if it were better explained or communicated. Rather, the features of this particular political system have strong incentives against publicity. Diplomacy, technocracy and corporatism combine in an unprecedented way to create an original regime that has so far proved effective in managing Europe's economic interdependence and in bringing about stability, but has failed to become a democratic community where a (European) people could change a (European) government.

It might be that Europe has found a transitory solution for the aporia of democracy without a demos: a managerial state at the transnational level, where administration replaces politics. Identity, passion and conflict, keywords in the language of politics, are subdued at the EU level. The EU would be, or at least it would pretend to be, "beyond left and right", to paraphrase the title of a famous book by sociologist Anthony Giddens (1994). For authors such as Chantal Mouffe, this idea of seeking a rational consensus in the middle is "a denaturalization of democracy". In her view, politics consists of "the channeling of passions, on the passing from antagonism to agonism, on the legitimation (rather than the eradication) of conflict" (Santiago de Compostela, 18 December 2009). In both my Spanish and British samples, I found journalists complaining about the removal of public policy from the realm of public politics in Brussels.

> I think the way the EU level works, at its most important level, which is the Council, is a public-free site. Those kind of actors don't like public scrutiny, because it disrupts the procedures that they are used to. So they will use the argument that if you're having negotiations, and the negotiations take place before a piece of legislation is passed, which happens 90 per cent of the time, if you go public, you will disrupt those negotiations [...] But that's precisely the problem, that's precisely why it should be public, so that those conflicts can have their social and public expression, rather than just being the management of conflicts behind closed doors. When you have something out in public, it means a wider world, a wider criteria than management can be applied to it: principles, political principles, which are completely independent of bureaucratic procedures.
>
> (Bruno Waterfield, *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2010)

> The EU lacks the dynamic of politics. It does not need a charismatic leader, but to accept that public policies are underpinned by ideological values and need to be channeled through political parties.
>
> (Spanish radio correspondent, 11 May 2010)

These two journalists provided examples to support their points. The *Telegraph* correspondent said that the European Arrest Warrant allowed for trials in absentia (i.e. in the physical absence of the person on trial), which is an exception in national legal systems such as that of the UK. For this journalist, this legislation was convenient and expedient for police forces but not right in terms of justice. It was a consequence of putting administrative efficiency above value choices. The Spanish radio correspondent cited the "Return" directive (on the return of illegal immigrants), which allows for retention for up to 12 months without trial, and decried the lack of clarity of the commission and the member states when the proposal was being debated. It is as if governments went to the EU to pass the legislation that they feared would find much opposition at home, as two Brussels correspondents suggested:

> Europe is making many decisions that affect our everyday lives at a great distance from citizens. And this is happening like this because governments are using Europe to do the dirt laundry here, hiding that reality from their citizens and the national debate. The model of representative democracy that is alive in the member states has its own dynamic. National politicians arrive to Brussels and give themselves some leeway to do and undo things with more freedom.
>
> (Vocento Group correspondent, Brussels, 9 April 2010)

> You also have government Ministers who often realise the only way they can get legislation through national parliaments is to initiate it at the European level. So there is a sort of conspiracy, and I don't meant to say that in a nasty way, but there is a conspiracy between central government ministers who go to Brussels to try and get their legislation through.
>
> (former *Financial Times* correspondent in Brussels, London, 12 May 2009)

The EU portrayed by Brussels correspondents is very much a bureaucratic machine ruled by executives that, somehow, share a similar mindset. Again, in the words of Bruno Waterfield,

> Europe is a way of government that all of Europe's leaders share [...] The EU is like an institutional practice which is shared by all the different member states [...] I always argue the EU is a way of doing politics in a very bureaucratic, very secretive way [...] National referendums on the EU express a general European uneasiness, perhaps, with the direction that politics has taken to this technocratic and managerial kind of form [...] Those kind of officials, those kind of civil servants, particularly the ones who have been in diplomacy, they are used to doing things, essentially, not in public. They are not elected, they're not public people. Quite often they will exercise their political influence and role without ever been known, generally, by the public. And Brussels is the place that they run. It's their place.
>
> (Bruno Waterfield, *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2010)

When the views of journalists are contrasted with those of diplomats, a new light emerges over the issue of transparency: journalists are demanding the openness that they are used to seeing in nation-state democracies, but they underestimate the extent to which the EU, besides making policy, is an organisation that has stability (economic, political, social) among its main aims. Given that member states are the ones implementing any potential EU-level legislation, they are the ones that, before the first reading in parliament is completed, have scrutinised the commission proposal through the so-called working parties, which deal with technical issues. It is at the COREPER level, the gathering of 27 EU ambassadors and the president of the council, where most political decisions are taken. Both the working-party meetings and the COREPER gatherings happen behind closed doors. When the proposal reaches the council and parliament levels in the codecision procedure, the maximum level of consensus has already been sought in private. As Naurin (2007) discovered, publicity politicises discourses. Bargaining parties must be loyal publicly to their constituencies. As noted in the previous section, it is only in private where they can concede on a point that, if publicised, would be difficult to justify. Paradoxically, the secrecy of interstate bargains might be the only way of pursuing the European interest, as it is only behind closed doors that national concessions can be made without public outcry in the national capitals.

> Some argue for more transparency, but we all know that COREPER meetings have to be held in closed doors. There are many issues

> that you cannot talk about if they are reported. Closed talks are an effective mean of dealing with difficulties among us.
>
> (UKRep spokesperson, Brussels, 29 April 2010)

> To pretend to get into every EU meeting is like wanting to get into the kitchen of a star chef like El Bulli. If you know how they do it, the business is over. This happens in Europe and in the member states. If journalists are allowed into the discussion process, the parts cannot negotiate. If you know your rival's cards, there's no game to play. But when you know that both parts have something to offer and something to give up, then there's a game to be played.
>
> (Spanish trade union spokesperson, Brussels, 7 April 2010)

Secrecy in the first stages of lawmaking is for diplomats the guarantee of stability, as proposals are adjusted to a minimum of feasibility for a diverse union of 27 member states. This legislation, however, ends up becoming domestic legislation, so the EU is caught between the requirements of stability (which call for secrecy in order to facilitate compromise and mutual national concessions) and the requirements of democracy (which call for the publicity of legislative processes to facilitate the control by the popular sovereign).

If the requirements of stability are ignored, and the exclusive logic of democracy is applied, as most journalists do, the EU appears, quite understandably, as a managerial state. The EU, Bruno Waterfield insists, is about "managing politics without the public":

> You just tell the public what you've done for them. Delivery. That's one of the dreadful European managerial words. You know, the political institutions are supposed to be about delivery. But they are not! The political institutions, as such, are supposed to be representative, and delivery is a managerial concept. Mussolini delivered. [...] Delivery is not necessarily a democratic concept. Delivery is when you decide everything, and then you deliver it to the public. [...] It's really good for them. We know best.
>
> (Bruno Waterfield, *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

For *The Economist* correspondent, making all council and COREPER meetings open would not improve the communication of European affairs to the public. First, because as in every national cabinet, key

discussions would keep on happening behind closed doors. Second, because in such a large grouping of countries, information leaks are frequent. According to a Spanish radio correspondent, the problem is not so much the unrealistic expectation of having every ministerial meeting open to public scrutiny but the lack of clarity on the part of European leaders:

> Much has been written on the publicity of the Council of Minister meetings. But I think that, honestly, nobody would be upset for having ministers meeting behind closed doors. It happens on every government. The problem is they do not want to translate into normal language whatever they are doing. After a Council of Ministers meeting, if I ask if that decision they have just reached is going to require a change in Spanish national law, they avoid giving me a straight answer, and come up with weird names provided that they don't clarify which countries will have to adapt their national legislations. There's no willingness to be clear about what they do.
>
> (Spanish radio correspondent, Brussels, 11 May 2010)

In some cases that seeming willingness of not being clear about what they do might come from the necessity of not revealing weak points that might compromise a state's bargaining power in the council. Intergovernmental diplomacy, no matter how amicable, demands, if not secrecy, careful discretion. Intergovernmentalism is full of incentives for non-public communication. This aspect is conveniently explained by an EU official who has attended several COREPER and council meetings:

> Even on the technical level, member states are negotiating tactically. I remember there was a proposal on cross-border healthcare. Right now you can be assisted if you fall ill on any member state. But if you are in England and you want to have surgery for a new hip, and it is horribly expensive there but you have a sister in Frankfurt and want to go there to have that surgery, that's tricky. You don't have what jurists call "securité juridique". I remember some member states would suggest an amendment, the inclusion of a reference to a given article in one of the treaties, but without justifying that suggestion, that is, without motivating their position. Later on I realised that, without that amendment, some member states would have to completely revamp the regulation of their emergency health services. But these member states didn't want the others to know because

> that would show a weak point, and that would give a bargaining opportunity for other states, who would agree to include that amendment provided that they were given a similar help to pass some other regulation of their interest. Member states don't want to show that a point is important for them. This tells you that the member states don't always know the position of other member states.
>
> (EU official, Brussels, 5 May 2010)

Since the accession of Scandinavian countries to the EU in the mid-1990s, an effort has been made to make EU legislation easily traceable on the Internet. EU officials like to point out that the EU is nowadays a more transparent administration than many of its constituent member states. Parliamentary committees are open to the public, like the council formations when discussing legislation:

> European institutions are far more transparent than the national ones. For a journalist who lives in León or Teruel it is far easier to know what's going on in the European Parliament than what's happening in the [Spanish] Congress of Deputies.
>
> (EP spokesperson, Brussels, 12 May 2010)

Nevertheless, the EU's claim of transparency finds some heavy qualifications in my informants, who demand to know not just the results of decisions but how those decisions were reached. It is as if whatever is shown or published lacked any true significance.

> The problem is not so much on publishing things on the Internet. Yes, the European Union publishes all kinds of stuff, but that is not openness. Openness is having a public record for the decision-making procedures and processes that go on, and particularly those that are political. Particularly the area of Justice and Internal Security, Foreign Policy – which is sensitive, obviously – . . . but they are the key ones. And that principle just doesn't exist in the European Union. There is no principle of openness. There are bureaucratic procedures of transparency, which determine what can be released, and what it is released.
>
> (Bruno Waterfield, *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

> Look, I'm not suggesting that law isn't easy to track. We don't want the law to be easy to track . . . It's a democracy! We want to have input into making the law! When everybody has made the decision for me,

> it's very easy to find on the website the decision that's been made for me. That isn't democracy! It might be to you, but I'm an Englishman! It's not to me!
>
> (UKIP Yorkshire MEP, York, 20 April 2009)

> It's certainly the case that once legislation is posted, you can track it. [. . .] I think the popular talk about the lack of transparency comes from the way legislation is proposed by the Commission, which is unelected. A lot of deliberations are behind closed doors, are not public, so you have Commission members talking about an issue, consulting on an issue, and a lot of these discussions don't take place in a chamber with elected officials. So I think that's where that animosity about that lack of transparency comes from.
>
> (*The Yorkshire Post* journalist, Leeds, 8 June 2009)

> Transparency is more than just publishing something. It is about making it easy to understand, and actually making people know it is there, and understanding it, and having access to it.
>
> (electoral reform pressure group spokesperson, London, 27 March 2009)

In the end, what lies beneath these concerns about transparency is the much-debated democratic deficit, which could be understood as horizontal (lack of parliamentary control of executive decisions) and vertical (insufficient or ineffective popular input in the direction and control of government and representatives). By extending codecision to almost every policy area, the Lisbon Treaty hopes to end with the democratic deficit of passing European legislation without the control of an elected parliament. However, lacking legislative initiative, directly elected representatives can only work on legislation drafted by the commission, with a strong *de facto* influence of national executives. This depoliticises European legislation in the sense that EU laws are not the consequence of a clear popular mandate. This is acknowledged by MEPs themselves: "European elections are boring, that's their very nature. You don't take out an executive; you vote to change the balance of representation of the Parliament. But you know you are only affecting one-third of decision making in the EU" (Liberal Democrat MEP, Harrogate, 7 March 2009).

Ironically, rather than law being the reflection of a particular politics, in the EU the politics must be inferred from the law that it produces. In the words of a commission official,

> The European Union is based on law. So we do a mix of politics and law, but we can only be as political as far as the law allows.
>
> (European Commission official, Brussels, 27 April 2010)

It is difficult to find a better empirical confirmation for Carl Schmitt's fears. Every liberal democracy is a contradictory combination of rule of law and popular will, with the latter inspiring the former as long as constitutional rights are not violated. But in the EU context, the popular sovereign (the European demos) is, up to a point, the rhetorical creation of the legal system. With the demos still in the making, the liberal component of a demo-liberal political system is hypertrophied. Politics is channelled through law, instead of law being channelled through politics. Which politics? It is difficult to ascertain, as the EU favours as many interpretations as a Rorschach test: it can be neoliberal and welfare-seeking at once. The common denominator is the term "social-market economy", itself a compromise between the enabling market competition and providing a safety net. European leaders call for an economic government of the Continent, without ever making explicit which politics should inspire such a government. As if economics could be detached from politics; or as if economy could rule over politics, as Carl Schmitt predicted liberalism would always lead to.

References to the *sui generis* nature of the EU as a political system abound in my interviews. Journalists themselves see the EU's popular legitimacy as a far bigger challenge than making European policies understandable to their audiences:

> The EU system is difficult to translate to any national system: it is not clear who is the Executive, and the Parliament does not control the executive. The Parliament controls the Commission, but the Council has life on its own, when it actually has real legislative power. And what is really missing is a territorial chamber to fit in the member states. There's a huge problem of legitimacy, anyway.
>
> (Spanish radio correspondent, Brussels, 11 May 2010)

The EU would still be suffering the consequences of its painful adaptation from an elite regime aimed at enabling peace through commercial interdependence and macroeconomic stability to a political system progressively grounded on popular legitimacy. This is not a small challenge,

given the immaturity of its demos. The "original sin" of integration by stealth, perhaps the only viable way of uniting Europe but inherently biased against popular participation, is still behind the EU's difficult domesticisation and politicisation. One Galician MEP said that, simply, European elections would not work until representatives were elected on European, as compared with national, lists:

> Well, having elections to a European Parliament without European candidates . . . it's a flaw, clearly. And the President of the Commission should be an elected member of the Parliament [. . .] But we should be aware that, more than institutional reforms, we need political parties themselves to get involved in the betterment of the EU's democratic life.
>
> (Galician socialist MEP, London, 16 June 2009)

> The institutions themselves by their very nature were set up in a way which is not sufficiently democratic. The arrival on the scene of the European Parliament initially was by way of appointment, not by election. So even then, when they set up the European Parliament, it was not democratic, but they claimed that was one way in which the people could be represented in the decisions that were taken in Europe. Lately, of course, it has become elected, but not under an ideal system, a system where the parties of Europe set their lists up, internally decide who will represent the people . . . again, not fully democratic. So, again, my view is that there's more democracy but is not sufficient. The best way to improve it would be to make the Commission far more of a civil service, answerable to the politicians, rather than an organisation which actually has no real responsibility to answer politicians when they demand things.
>
> (Yorkshire Conservative MEP, Cheltenham, 25 April 2009)

> We all know what's lacking in the EU: The input mechanisms of political representation, which won't be solved until the EP really works as a Parliament.
>
> (former Galician vice-president, Santiago de Compostela, 20 October 2009)

The managerial state and the weak parliament are not an exclusive of Brussels. In the regions, EU regional policy initiatives are displayed without regional-level public debate. Thousands of millions of euros are

invested in infrastructure, urban regeneration, rural development and technological innovation without any encompassing debate in the news media. This is particularly striking in the case of Galicia, with a regional government and parliament of its own that could track the implementation of ERDF funds. The regional Operative Programme, where the budget of regional funding is published, is not subject to parliamentary debate and approval. Other minor regional investments are the object of intense political fighting in the regional chamber, but EU funds are strictly an administrative affair:

> To pretend to know how the former Operative Programme (1993–1999) was designed is just pure science fiction. You only know about it when it's published. Although community regulations state that civil society must be involved in the drafting of operative programmes, the participation, if existent, was very limited. The Operative Programme for Galicia is not approved at the Galician Parliament, when parliamentary approval is required for minor things. Of the three phases (planning, execution, and control) civil society (e.g. business associations) only participates at the control phase. The planning and execution phases are out of reach. The only thing we can do is to sit at the monitoring committee of EU funds.
>
> (expert in regional funding A, Santiago de Compostela, 20 November 2009)

> The process of regional funding is like this: each country or region is given an amount of money. Then they present a proposal to the European Commission, and they negotiate which aspects are more likely to be funded. This is approved at the level of technical elites, not even the political elites. But you don't know how citizen participation could be brought into this process, because no Parliament (European, national or regional) participates in this process. It's a discussion at the level of executive administrations. Therefore, it's impossible for you, average citizen, to say: "No, I don't want this money to be spent on this environmental project or on building this seaside promenade." You don't have a chance to intervene.
>
> (*La Voz de Galicia* correspondent, Brussels, 18 May 2009)

> Opacity is absolute. The case of the technological fund is scandalous. Galicia was one of the four Spanish regions, along with Extremadura, Andalucía and Castilla-La Mancha for which Brussels

> approved millions of euros as Objective 1 regions. But Madrid kept those funds that were aimed at Galicia, and we don't know yet what happened to them.
>
> (consultant on EU projects, Santiago de Compostela, 14 January 2010)

From what I could tell during my interviews, the purely technical and administrative nature of EU funds and their consequent subtraction from political debate are due to two factors.

First, EU regional funds, once assigned to the member state, are a matter of bargaining between the central and regional governments, which decide who spends what. This process, according to another expert in regional funding from Galicia (interviewed in Santiago de Compostela on 20 November 2009), is "obscure and hardly transparent". The horse-trading so common among national governments in Brussels is replicated at the Spanish level between central and regional administrations. Although funds are allocated according to regional criteria, the member state has some margin to distribute the funds. A former Galician Nationalist MEP (interviewed in Santiago de Compostela on 4 December 2009) said that part of the EU funds addressed to Galicia were diverted to fund infrastructure in Madrid.

Second, the design and administration of these funds is intentionally technocratic, isolated from public debate, as it is understood that long-term top-down planning favours high-impact investments over piecemeal rewards to local political barons. This strategic planning, however, has not prevented the existence of dubious investments that, from time to time, reach public opinion. Yet the idea that more public debate over the destiny of EU funds would encourage a wiser investment and more public control is denied by the civil servants dealing with the funds:

> Parliamentary debate? I don't think it would improve anything. People don't care about this things, and it would just generate more heat than light.
>
> (Ministry of Economy civil servant, Madrid, 24 November 2009)

> I am not for the politicisation of EU funds, because that would encourage a share of the cake based on selfishness and not on real objective necessities. The Galician political class has a low profile, and the politicisation of EU funds would just result in a poorer allocation.

> There would be an assignment with political aims, whereas now the allocation is done based on real necessities.
>
> (expert in regional funding B, Santiago de Compostela, 20 November 2009)

A similar view is shared in Yorkshire. A representative from the RDA said that having a regional government would not benefit the administration of ERDF funds as it would encourage their politicisation and, in turn, a more deficient allocation:

> If you have had a situation in which we already had a regional government, the programme would have become a regional government programme, and it would have been dominated by political interests.
>
> (Yorkshire Forward spokesperson, 5 May 2009)

In sum, there is a technocratic drive against public debate among national and regional civil servants and administrators. They believe that politics would get in the way of efficient investment. This neofunctionalist attitude would generate not only a lack of domesticisation, as reported in the previous chapter, but also an intentional depoliticisation of EU regional policy.

Up to a point, the situation in the regions is reflective of the panorama in Brussels. If in the regions a lack of publicity and politicisation is aimed at a more efficient allocation of strategic investments, at the EU level the secrecy of COREPER meetings is necessary to enable national concessions or horse-trading that would be much contested or unforgivable if publicised.

Perhaps the lack of debate over EU regional funds is less justifiable from a normative point of view, as there is no interstate stability to uphold. But then subsidiarity might have something to say here. By not exposing clearly the origin of EU funds, regional administrations can claim investments as their own, beefing up most of their policy portfolios. This comes at the expense of sacrificing the strategic character of the funds. Removing the administration of funds from public debate does not lead, then, to a more rational allocation:

> It is time to question the need of having European funds pervading all the policies of the Galician regional government. Why on Earth do you have guitar courses funded with EU money? Do we really need European solidarity to fund guitar lessons? What happens is that, depending on how you frame the proposal, almost any activity

> can be funded by community funds, and that's a temptation hard to resist for any regional ministry or town council. Who dares to tell the regional ministry of Culture they cannot get European funding? In the end, all government departments look for all possible funding opportunities. That's how a guitar course is related to the ESF activities, and that's how we end up financing with European money a course for which, the truth be said, European funds are not justified.
>
> (expert in regional funding A, Santiago de Compostela, 20 November 2009)

The outcry about arguable EU investments is not exclusive to the UK Eurosceptic think tanks such as Open Europe. In Galicia, *La Voz* occasionally reports on abandoned EU-funded projects. In the edition of 16 November 2008, the main regional newspaper in Galicia qualified the EU as "a sponsor with no control over its own money" (p. 6). In April 2010, the publication of a paper by two economists who claimed that 40 per cent of European funds in Galicia had been invested in infrastructure, as compared with 4 per cent invested in research and development, was widely reported in the Galician press (Armesto Pina and Lago Peñas, 2010).

It is very likely that the average European citizen ignores the existence of COREPER meetings, or that EU regional funds are budgeted in an Operative Programme that can be downloaded from the Internet. However, the popular sensation of lack of publicity (at least among the most critical segments of the electorate) is largely warranted. Lack of publicity and consensus-seeking lead to a state of depoliticisation that provides stability (the original goal of the EU) but breeds public suspicion. More than a problem of communication, the disconnection between the EU and the public could be traced back to the incompatibility between stability and popular participation in a polity that may not be unitary enough (in terms of identity, but also in terms of socioeconomic conditions) to allow for full popular involvement.

Imperfect accountability: Financial, but no political control

Civil servants, academics and businesspeople involved in European projects generally assert the extreme rigour of financial controls by the EU-funding agencies. One of the participants in an Interreg project in which Leeds City Council was involved said she had been asked to provide all sorts of evidence for the expenses claimed (Leeds, 1 June 2009). As an example, she cited the need to keep the boarding passes

of aeroplane tickets, as purchase invoices would not be considered valid for audit purposes. An expert in regional funding in Galicia (Santiago de Compostela, 20 November 2009) said that corruption regarding the administration of EU funds in the regions is "minimal". There is tight control on the part of the commission, especially after the scandal over the alleged fraud of EU subsidies to flax growers in Spain. "What's more, there are so many controls by the Commission, expenses have to be justified with such precision, that many applicants decline receiving grants because of the time consuming task of managing and justifying the subsidies," claimed the same expert. At a public debate in Sheffield with MEPs, Yorkshire parliamentarian Linda McAvan tried to assure a Eurosceptic member of the audience that EU funds are spent correctly, and that 80 per cent of them are managed by member states, so any potential mismanagement is more likely to be found at the national rather than at the European level.

This impression of tight control of EU funds held by those who have close contact with EU projects is in stark contrast with the popular perception (among citizens and journalists) of generalised lack of control of European expenditures. At the European Citizens' Forum held in London on 21 and 22 March 2009, a group of 100 citizens, roughly representative of the UK population, were asked to issue a series of "national recommendations". The second most voted suggestion, supported by 88.1 per cent of participants, read like this:

> For increased public awareness, the EU should be made more transparent, accountable and accessible. Co-ordinate existing agencies to scrutinize and publish legislative and financial activities in the conduct of anyone on the EU payroll. The EU should publish independent fully signed-off audited accounts as a pre-requisite to receiving continued national funding.

This perception is not exclusive to the UK. That very same weekend, a parallel forum held in Hungary issued a recommendation for "stricter monitoring of EU funding". In Galicia, the mainstream newspaper *La Voz* called for a careful examination of the productivity of investments supported by EU funds (Agulló, 12 November 2010). Despite the intended strategic view of long-term planning induced by the commission's multiannual schemes, at the ground level the member states and their administrations are caught between the requirements of bureaucracy (clearly justifiable expenditures of the funds allocated, regardless

of their productivity) and the temptation of "spreading the jam" as far as possible so as to satisfy every local demand. Furthermore, regional administrators must spend all of the funds in the proper fiscal period, as leaving allocations unspent would mean less funding for the next year. The result is an overinvestment in all sorts of infrastructure, which satisfies the demands on all sides: roads and buildings are visible to local voters and Brussels inspectors.

> The Commission audit reports are made public and the worst thing that can happen to any administration is to get a reputation of being a bad administrator. Part of the investment bias towards infrastructure comes from the ease with which expenditures can be justified. When you do a project under ERDF, you have to go through an extra European audit, but you can fund public works with lots of money and, if the inspector comes, you can show him/her, physically, where the money has been spent. On the contrary, it's much more difficult to justify investments on the improvement of business performance. Because if you said you would increase the regional GDP by using European funds, how do you demonstrate the cause-effect relationship? There's much talk about the Irish investment on intangibles, but most of their expenditures were quite tangible: plants to develop electronic equipments in order to sell American products in Europe.
>
> (former regional minister of economics, Bueu, 7 January 2010)

The technocratic strategy of EU fund management (avoiding public debate so as to encourage the most efficient resource allocation) is not preventing short-sighted investments and is biasing EU funds towards an overexpenditure on infra-utilised infrastructures. Paradoxically, as one of my interviewees suggests, this could be partially avoided if EU regional funds were the object of political debate:

> There is a problem of political control. Financial control is quite rigorous (for every euro spent, you have to provide a certification) but the items where money is spent are not put into question. Is it a priority to build a motorway at the Costa da Morte that is only used by the young lads who go to disco parties? Is it a priority to build a motorway from Santiago to Lugo? Aren't sewage treatment plants a higher priority?
>
> (political science university professor, Santiago de Compostela, 18 January 2010)

On the part of European, national and regional administrations, there is a clear concern in "communicating" to the public the impact of the ERDF, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund. The Directorate General for Regional Policy has established an Information & Communication Platform (Inform Network) for that purpose. Regions are even encouraged to participate in an internal award competition for the most creative advertisement on EU regional funds. The Inform Network has in Spain an equivalent known as Grupo Español de Responsables de Información y Publicidad, which gathers the project managers of the central and regional administrations (the autonomous communities). Asked about what sort of "communication" this network dealt with, the Spanish civil servant responsible for this service said it was

> communication in the sense of guaranteeing good information, internal and external transparency. We want the public to see EU investments as something close to them, as something that improves its quality of life. We don't deal with the press, it's our press teams the ones who do it. But we set some communication patterns.
>
> (Madrid, 24 November 2009)

In Yorkshire, the official who was dealing with communications established a distinction between the general and specialised public. The general public, who would read newspapers, would only be interested

> in the fact that Europe has invested to do something. It doesn't really matter what it is [...] There's only one or two core messages for the general public, and that is: we are a region and, like with many other regions, Europe supports us. And they support us by providing money.

The specialised public (potential partners in EU bids) is kept informed through an e-mail list of about 800 addresses. In terms of public information, this official said that the EU should be understood more like a library than a newspaper:

> What people are interested in is in having the services delivered. They don't want to understand all the theoretical reasons for that, or who's made the decisions. They want good public transport, they want good public health services, whether it is done through a combination of European and other administrations... they don't care

> [...] I think the analogy with EU stuff is that you're like a library. You don't have to be like a newspaper. You have to be like a library [...] So if people are interested, they can go and seek it.
>
> (Yorkshire Inform Network official, 5 May 2009)

From these testimonies one could interpret that, from the technocrat's point of view, output delivery is the goal. "Who decided what" is not important when the results of the investment are clearly visible. However, the already mentioned citizen concerns about the control of EU expenditure (even if member states might be the ones responsible) reveal that, from a democratic point of view, knowing who can be blamed or rewarded for an EU-funded investment is important. For the average citizen, putting up figures on the Internet is not enough. One of the participants at the Citizens' Forum in London said: "there is a big difference between being given figures and seeing reality". In her view, the information on EU websites was not filtered down, and "only the people who know how to access it on the Internet know about it" (21 March 2009). This citizen impression might not be totally wrongsighted. An EU funds consultant in Yorkshire showed some empathy towards this position:

> I think people in general feel there is a lack of transparency through complexity: "Fine, you've published everything you've done on the internet. But I still don't know where to look." And also the sense that "Ok, the results of what you've decided are published on the Internet, but how you reach those decisions..." that kind of thing isn't particularly transparent.
>
> (EU funds consultant, Leeds, 8 May 2009)

In sum, the logic of administration, of delivery, lives side by side with the logic of democracy, of accountability. Both sides (technocrats and citizens) might be right. EU-related procedures and funding are subject to more scrutiny and control than any of their national or regional equivalents. But at the national and regional scale, there is a political connection between the administrator and the administered. The possibility of electoral punishment (political control) is perhaps more valuable for the average citizen than the rigid and rigorous control of expenditures (financial and bureaucratic control). It is important to be reassured that public funds are spent on what they are said to have been spent on. Financial control guarantees that. But it is also relevant to

know (and debate) if an accurately processed expenditure is, from the citizen's point of view, a good investment. Such control is what politics and politicisation can bring.

Neocorporatism: Co-opting civil society, not reaching society

Neocorporatism embodies two of the main principles of European integration: elite co-optation (the "engrenage" of national and regional decision-makers and leaders) and codetermination (the search for economic and social stability through the coordination between capital and labour). In a way, it could be said that the EU invented "governance" before it became fashionable. The principle of subsidiarity, in requiring local authorities to implement laws designed at an upper level, is a precedent of more modern forms of "governance networks" involving public and private partners.

Although the existence of neocorporatism at the European level has been questioned in the literature (Scholten, 1987a), the organisation of business and employee interests in Brussels is fairly similar to that in the older member states. The existence of a major business organisation (Business Europe, formerly the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe) and a major confederation of trade unions (the European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]), which are themselves in constant negotiations, reminds one of the German model of social concertation. Very much as in the Adenauer era denounced by Habermas in his classic book on the public sphere (1994 [1962]), neocorporatism is more conducive to the staging of agreements than to the voicing of conflict, precisely because government and civil society are so interdependent that they become indistinguishable.

Perhaps the most significant finding was that the representatives of Business Europe and ETUC did not consider themselves as part of "civil society". Both pointed to their condition as "privileged partners" in the treaties. They are the first layer of consultation for the European Commission, as it happens in the member states with their respective top business associations and trade unions. If the end-point of corporatism is a government in partnership with high-end corporate organisations, the EU might not be far from becoming a corporatist regime:

> We are not a lobby, we are a social partner. We exert political pressure, we meet with commissioners and MEPs face to face. Our secretary general, John Monks, is meeting commissioners, and Barroso himself, from time to time. We need to be out there in the field [...] We do

> reach agreements with employers, some of them very important and of great everyday life influence, such as the extension of maternity leave to men, who have one month more extra time for their parenting. Some unions may want to achieve things by a revolution, but we want to go step by step.
>
> (ETUC spokesperson, Brussels, 16 April 2010)

> At Business Europe there is a culture of social dialogue, that's obvious. What's more, we are proud of being social agents. The directors insist in indicating on our press releases that we are social interlocutors acknowledged in the Treaties, which confers us a special position as regards to other actors in Brussels. At the same time, this recognition comes with a great responsibility. We have to bargain and to seek solutions.
>
> (Business Europe spokesperson, Brussels, 23 April 2010)

Unions do not like to be portrayed as part of the government, and they (as ETUC did in my interview) stress their opposition to neoliberal initiatives, such as the Bolkestein directive, on the liberalisation of services in Europe. This said, the attempt to find compromises to reach socioeconomic stability can be seen from practices such as the meetings between Business Europe and the prime minister of the country taking the (former) rotating presidency of the council. In our interview, the Business Europe representative reminded me that at the beginning of the Spanish presidency of the council (first half of 2010) there had been a meeting attended by Spain's prime minister, the president of the Spanish Confederation of Employers, the president of Business Europe and the Spanish labour minister.

Agreement between capital and labour at the EU level is obviously not always possible, but the relationship between business and trade unions is ongoing and fluid.

> It's a daily work relationship. If you could see through this wall, you would realize that, every other day, there's a trade union representative meeting with us. The secretary general of ETUC has a daily work relationship with us. Every three years we celebrate a meeting with trade unions to plan a working schedule with common topics. There are issues we do not agree on, but the Commission usually asks us to reach an agreement on a voluntary basis.
>
> (Business Europe spokesperson, 23 April 2010)

When agreement between labour and capital is not possible, each side lobbies the commission to advance their respective interests, as happened with a recent proposal to regulate work councils.

In any case, the peace of old Rhineland capitalism is sensed by Brussels observers, among them the press correspondents:

> When I was in Brussels I found that civil society organisations were very much part of the system, I think. They became Brussels insiders, if you like. Business Europe, for example, this lobby group, essentially represents a sort of Germanic view of industry: the idea of workers' councils, and the idea of sitting down with trade union representatives and the European Commission . . . it was a very cozy, and in fact, sterile, environment. There was a consumer organisation called BEUC, who never, or at least it seemed to me, was particularly vocal in defending consumer interests, or promoting them. So it sounds good for civil society representatives to have an input, but I'm not sure how effective they were, and how willing they were to rock the boat.
>
> (former *Financial Times* Brussels correspondent, London, 12 May 2009)

The sensation of elite co-optation voiced in this quote is frequent among my interviewees, and it could be another consequence of the Monnet method of integration. In order to encourage a truly continental organisation of interests, the commission has always prioritised European umbrella organisations over other interest group formations. Some of these European-level organisations receive funding from the European Commission, which raises suspicion about their independence from power. My most critical informants talked about some sort of Astroturf strategy, by which the commission would fund friendly organisations to represent a fictitious civil society that would always give the legislative initiator a façade of social support for its proposals.

> There's an entire parasitic class of people who supposedly represent . . . You know, you meet this people who say: "We represent 500 million consumers", or "We represent 500 million road users", like the European Association of Transport Users says. And you look at where the money comes from, and it comes from the institutions, overwhelmingly. And then their board is usually a couple of ex MEPs, a couple of ex Commission officials . . . and they get to come to nice meetings, and very often, in some spheres . . . they always

tend to conclude that the solution is more Europe, that the solution is definitely to have action at the European level. You will often hear, particularly in the field of environment, for example, that the European Commission gives money to environmental NGOs, and the environmental NGOs, during the consultation process, say that they are dissatisfied with the Commission proposal, because it doesn't go far enough. But I know for a fact. I've talked to senior officials that that is often completely staged up in advance, that they have agreed with the NGO: "Go on, attack us in the consultation process, and say: This doesn't go far enough. Because then we can point to civil society and say: We are under criticism for not going far enough. This isn't going too far, so our proposal must be a happy medium".

(*Economist* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

The EU creates and funds lobby groups, which it then purports to be civic society. You have the European Union of Journalists, the European Women's Lobby, the European Cyclists Federation... Of course, all of these lobby the EU in favour of giving more power to the EU, because they are creatures of the Commission dependent on the EU for their funding, so of course they're gonna say that. And then the Commission turns around and says: "We've listened to civil society!" But actually all they've listened to is the people that they're paying!

(UK Conservative MEP, Cheltenham, 26 April 2009)

As it happens in the member states, the trade unions are not at all representative. They are structures that, as such, stay in relationship with other structures. I am not sure if the same goes for environmental organizations [...] Consumer organizations do get institutional funding, so it is reasonable to be wary about their capacity for criticism.

(Spanish correspondent for Vocento Group, Brussels, 9 April 2010)

When they [European leaders] talk about civil society, they don't mean that. They mean institutions, NGOs, interest or trade associations... That's what they mean by talking to civil society. And they can choose who they talk to, and they fund people to represent civil society as well. But the problem to me is that corporate model of representing society's interests. So it's not a democratic one, where you have... you decide the general interest by having a battle to choose between the interests, and sometimes through the

> alliance of different interests you get new interests, and it's a very static, bureaucratic model, you go and talk to some feminist group, to some environmental group, to a steelmakers association . . . It's a very corporatist model, you talk to representatives, sometimes it's people you've created to talk to.
>
> (Bruno Waterfield, *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent, Brussels, 20 May 2009)

The concern over the independence of umbrella organisations that receive part of their funding from the commission was shared even among the most pro-European interviewees. However, for them, institutional funding is necessary for those "diffuse interest organisations" (environment, women, elderly, youth groups) that could not fund their presence by their own means, and therefore provide a counter-argument to the "concrete interest groups" (business and agricultural associations):

> The more traditional allegation that is made is of course that of the Commission funds NGOs and then asks them for their opinion. So that seems rather circuitous a process. But you also know that without that sort of funding, those NGOs wouldn't be able to get together, wouldn't be able to do the job that they do, and therefore give us that side of the argument, as it were. So I'm not one of those that would be too purist about that because I think it's very, very necessary. But does that land up with just talking with those who have our view? No, I don't think so. Not necessarily. I think you have to dig a bit deeper sometimes to try to find out what's going on.
>
> (Yorkshire Liberal Democrat MEP, Leeds, 13 March 2009)

> From the Commission point of view, they want umbrella groups to be vibrant in Brussels because that gives them a more balanced viewpoint. The enormity of lobbying groups from industry is huge in Brussels. For every lobbyist from an environmental group, there's three or four lobbyists from industry in Brussels. That's huge. So it's good for the Commission to get that balance. And it's good for the umbrella groups to get that funding [to rival industry]. But there's a caveat: that funding doesn't compromise the independence of those groups. The funding isn't contingent on them campaigning on a particular issue. It just provides them the basis to have a base in Brussels.
>
> (Friends of the Earth spokesperson, Leeds, 8 June 2009)

Some organisations, such as the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, have decided to limit their European institutional financing to 20 or 25 per cent of their total budget in order to keep more independence from the commission, according to an expert on regional funding (A Coruña, 17 October 2009).

At the substate regional level, the commission has created a network of information points known as the Enterprise Europe Network, in which many local and regional business associations participate. Besides the promotion of innovation in business, this network is concerned with the proper functioning of the internal market. The local relays of the network get in contact with the companies in their area to invite them to take part in commission consultations on legislative proposals affecting their trade. This is how the process of "engrenage" reaches all corners of Europe. Among those groups whose trade is entirely regulated by Europe, such as the fisheries industries, the meetings between the commission and trade organisations are frequent. The spokesperson for the Vigo's Shipbuilders Cooperative told me that they had 120 annual meetings with the commission in Brussels. That amounts to a meeting every three days (Vigo, 10 December 2009).

In fairness, the cozy relationship between corporate interests and the European Commission is not exclusive to the European level, as one of the interviewees noted above. Both the farmers and the fishermen of Yorkshire and Galicia keep in constant contact with their respective national ministers. Although fishermen and farmers go to the press to voice their concerns, such as the rise in the price of fuel, they said that publicising a disagreement with their own minister would be the last resort, or even a sign of weakness. The most normal situation is one not of conflict but of cooperation, especially in the UK, where farmers and fishermen's unions are not divided by political leanings as in Spain:

> I have to be honest, we lobby our Minister almost on a weekly basis. I was just talking this morning to have an audience with our Minister. We're lucky. Our organisation has a fair enough relationship with our government. We can be very frank, and we can usually have access to the Minister reasonably quickly, within a week, a fortnight, perhaps. And we can have a fine, very straight-forward discussion with him. [. . .] But I'd be very disappointed if the NFU felt that they had to [. . .] to put an advert or write a letter to, say, The Times [to criticize government]. As far as engagement of governments is concern, I think we would have lost the argument if we had to do that.
>
> (NFU representative, Ravenglass, Cumbria, 2 June 2009)

> Whether it works [demonstrating publicly, going to the press] or not, I don't know. It's like workers' strike. I think that's a sign of weakness. People who are really powerful in society don't demonstrate. They go to the club and have a chat to somebody.
>
> (National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations spokesperson, York, 5 June 2009)

Corporatism reaches its maximum level at the December council meetings where fishing total allowable catches are decided for the next year. National representatives are just envoys of their respective national corporate organisations, who keep a close watch on the negotiations, to the point of invading the press rooms so as to check if ministers are delivering to journalists the same version that they will hear later:

> When those affected by decisions have all the information, reaching an agreement is more difficult. That's what happens with farmers and fishermen. They are very aware of what's at stake. They want their ministers to defend them until the end, and at one of the Councils on Christmas eve, where the TACs are decided, we had to quick out the fishermen from the press room, because they wanted to know if what the minister was saying to journalists was the same he/she was telling them. Ministers are under a great pressure during those days, because the affected know that a given decision, one point up or down, translates into thousands of euros of earnings or losses for them.
>
> (Spanish radio correspondent, Brussels, 11 May 2010)

This close relationship between EU actors and corporate interests contrasts with the weak connection between European institutions and the citizenry at large. This gap was acknowledged by most of my interviewees. Particularly interesting is the testimony of MEPs from Galicia and Yorkshire, who openly admitted that they easily reached (or were easily reached by) organised civil society, whereas society at large, for them, remained largely out of reach. Interestingly enough, the Galician MEP says that he deals with "publics" (a public relations term) but not with "the public" (a democratic notion).[1] The Yorkshire MEP even expresses some frustration at not being able to meet with "real people", only with umbrella groups:

> The EU has very segmented publics. Local administrations, trade unions, professional organizations, interest groups . . . all these people

> follows EU activities closely. Therefore there are lots of publics who are concerned about the most strategic, the most symbolic, the most transcendent issues on a medium to long term. Those groups are involved in European politics and are very sensitive to any development, they react quickly. We the MEPs notice it immediately when one of us is named rapporteur or shadow on any topic. Immediately we begin to receive lots of messages, phone calls, appointment requests . . . But what we have to reach the public at large. We are doing policies, but we also have to do politics. We already have an associative base around the parliament. What we lack is a popular base.
>
> (Galician Socialist MEP, London, 16 June 2009)

> I get very cross sometimes, in the sense that in the Parliament we tend to get the national or the European umbrella groups that come to see us. And frankly, I'm often tempted to say: "Go away, but find me a farmer or a businessperson, or whatever it is, in Yorkshire, near my home, that I can talk to, sort of touch-feel-see, and understand the reality of the problem as it affects those that elect me". Because what I don't want is that sort of watered-down, composite message, that comes from nothing grounded in reality.
>
> (Yorkshire Liberal Democrat MEP, Leeds, 13 March 2009)

The limits of corporate and interest-group representation in a democracy are sometimes felt by corporate groups themselves. At a meeting organised by the UK European Movement in London under the title "Is the European Union Responsive to British Civil Society?" (29 April 2009), several NGOs and the European Commission were invited to share their views on the topic. Among the attendees, I noticed a division into three tiers. First were those small groups whose influence is minimal, and who are precisely the ones who called for more society and less civil society. "Perhaps this isn't about civil society, but about citizens, about encouraging them to participate. We can lobby for 10 years and get nothing. But if we have the citizens behind, that's different," said a representative from the association European Alternatives. Second are those associations, such as Age Concern, that are part of the friendly establishment of NGOs surrounding the commission, in part because their remit agrees with the European spirit of public-supported welfare for the elderly. Third are the more outsider organisations, whose positions might be too radical for the commission to take into account. A representative from War on Want, an NGO "fighting global poverty",

admitted his frustration at not being able to influence EU policy, and said that commission consultations were a means to test policy and "co-opt" (he literally used this term) NGOs:

> The EU puts a lot of money on civil society dialogue. So how does the Commission see this dialogue? They [the commission] want to educate the NGOs to show how European policy works. They don't really want consultation on policy, they will just admit the dialogue that comes from replying to our questions. But they won't let us influence the policy. The reason they like the civil society dialogue is because it is a way of "testing" the policy, of knowing before its implementation how it's gonna work. The EU divides NGOs between moderates and radicals, and co-opts those who will talk to the Commission and isolates the others. The point of the dialogue is to co-opt NGOs in order to break down resistance in other NGOs. What prevents us from having influence on the EU's trade policy? Because I know the Animal Rights Movement has done quite well, but we haven't. The problem is that we are working on (and have been questioning) the very same foundations of the EU, internally (the customs union) and externally (promoting the agenda of business lobbies in the word).
>
> (War on Want activist, London, 29 April 2009)

Interestingly enough, the EU's preference for civil society over society at large is felt at both the transnational and the substate regional level. At the upper level of the polity, the relationship with aggregate interest groups is unavoidable, as interests have to be aggregated on the European scale, both for feasibility and because of the attempt, since the early days of the commission, to favour the access of European-level groupings to encourage the development of an organised European civil society. At the regional, level the EU has the regional movers and shakers as its main and, usually, only public. This approach is deliberate, and perhaps also unavoidable, because the regional government and civil society elites (not the public at large) are the ones that are going to codecide, or at least discuss, the destination of regional funds:

> In municipal life, a major can know all of his/her neighbours. But when one becomes Agriculture Minister it is impossible to know all the farmers. When you go up in the scale, you have no other chance than to meet with corporate groups. The key question is to know whether these groups represent a widely shared opinion. But that assessment is precisely the role of the politician. MEPs are

> overwhelmed with work. Parliamentary sessions are very long and, at least in the Spanish case, they [the Spanish MEPs] never go down to the ground.
>
> (Galician former fisheries regional minister, Vigo, 7 January 2010)

> The idea of communicating with the public is distinct to communicating with organisations. At the time when I was head of the EU Commission in London, I used to hold dinners with 20 to 24 individuals at each of the UK regions. I often asked: "Is there anyone who has a relevant role in running the region who is not here?" And nobody would miss anyone. So those who mattered were there. There you could find the media, the CBI, the trade unions, the RDA [...] At the regional dinners, the regional barons didn't felt I was selling them EU propaganda. The EU was something that mattered to them in practical terms ("These are the funds we have for agriculture" I would say), so they wanted to discuss that.
>
> (former head of the European Commission in the UK, Leeds, 17 November 2008)

Corporatism, then, can be found at all levels of the EU polity. Although modern "governance" has been praised for making public policy more participatory, the involvement of non-government actors in policy-making and delivery is usually limited to well-resourced or well-organised groups. In traditional liberal democracies, governance lives side by side with government. Both civil society and society at large (the individuals) have means, however imperfect, of influencing policy direction. But in the case of the EU, the world of individuals is highly peripheral. Corporatism is in essence depoliticising: it has the boardroom, and not the public forum, as its debate arena. Its main actors are the interest groups, not the citizens.

Conclusion

The politicisation deficit could be described as the inability of the EU political regime to facilitate agonistic political choices between left and right. Despite the fact that EP representatives sit in political groups and not by nationality, and even though the post-Lisbon EP is theoretically on an equal footing with the council in terms of lawmaking power, European legislation is not the result of a popular mandate. Instead, EU directives and regulations are designed by a combination of European

and national administrative elites whose main goal is continental stability (in a social, economic and political sense) and economic growth. The EU political regime creates domestic legislation, but it does it in a way that largely avoids ideological politics. At the EU level, interstate bargaining is characterised by a soft antagonism that is diffused through compromise. The EP, where left versus right agonism should reign, is affected by two limitations: on the one hand, MEPs' divided loyalty when parliamentary votes pose a challenge to a particular country or set of countries; on the other, the absence of a majority party in the parliament, along the absolute majority requirements to amend legislative proposals on second reading (which most of the times demands a "grand coalition" between the PES and the EPP), have encouraged consensus between left and right. At the regional level, the administration of EU funds is beyond the reach of political debate, with strong technocratic and neofunctionalist overtones, as shown in my interviews.

Consensus diplomacy, technocracy and neocorporatism, three key features of the EU political regime, are depoliticising and, therefore, difficult to translate into the language that journalists and citizens are used to. Although the constant contact among commission officials and national civil servants has developed into an *esprit de corps* that makes war or enduring conflicts among European countries unthinkable, a soft diplomacy, identified by my informants as "a merchants' Europe", is still alive among member states. Interstate bargaining needs discretion and, given that many times the national interest is sacrificed in exchange for an immediate or a future reward, national governments are not interested in being completely open about their dealings. This finding would seemingly support one of the tenets of the "communications gap" theory (the lack of involvement of national governments in explaining Europe). However, I would say that this is more an effect than a cause of the EU *sui generis* regime. The current confederal setting works for national governments because it allows them to push through the European legislative machine laws that would be far more contentious and difficult to pass if discussed at their national parliaments alone. It is better to keep on portraying Europe as that remote affair than a domestic ground because this sets governments free to praise it or despise it at their convenience.

The intergovernmentalist school has put the role of neofunctionalist technocracy into question. My research does not prove or disprove any of these theories of European integration (that was not the goal of this book) but rather finds evidence of the plausibility of both approaches. The EU looks very intergovernmental in Brussels, but also

very neofunctionalist in the regions. The isolation of EU regional fund administration from public debate (in both Yorkshire and Galicia, with the first not having a regional tier of government, and the second having an autonomous government and parliament since the early 1980s) reveals a clear technocratic spirit: civil servants in Spain and the UK told me that politics would get in the way of efficient fund allocation. The result is a thorough financial control of investments but a poor political control of their necessity and suitability.

Finally, the EU regime also shows some signs of neocorporatism, with a peak business association (Business Europe) and a peak trade union confederation (ETUC) as key social partners in continental cogovernance. Both in Brussels and in the regions, EU activities attract a highly selective group of organised civil society groups. On occasions their independence is compromised by their financial reliance on commission contributions. The modern discourse of governance (involvement of public and private actors in policy-making and policy delivery) fits nicely with the principle of subsidiarity (making lower-level administrations the executors of upper-level regulations). Corporate groups are consulted on European legislation, and regional elites (be they academics, business associations, or local or regional administrations) participate in European projects. But in the world of this "associative democracy", the individual citizen is left aside.

The politicisation and domesticisation deficits should be seen as mutually interdependent. The immature state of the European demos corresponds with the immature state of the European polity. Both are likely to develop in tandem, with European party federations becoming more credible the greater the intra-European mobility of citizens. However, it could also be argued that the established administrative structures have settled down in a *status quo* of confederal diplomacy, technocratic management and corporatist dealings that place the EU as something out there (distant), beyond the left–right divide (apolitical).

7
Conclusions

The so-called "EU communications gap" theory holds that the lack of popular political engagement with European-level politics (understanding engagement as information and participation in elections) can be attributed to the senders and the mediators of EU politics – that is, on the one hand, to the EU and national leaders and institutions and, on the other, to the journalists and the (national or regional) news media. If the EU communications operations were organised more professionally and were sufficiently resourced in terms of staff and expertise; if national leaders explained to their respective public that their governments are coresponsible for EU decisions; if journalists were better trained and paid enough attention to European politics, connecting local issues with European-level debates; if national news media devoted more coverage to EU institutions and Eurosceptic bias were removed from their lenses . . . if all of these mediation gaps were fixed, the communications deficit theory holds, Europeans would have a more balanced view of EU politics and would be more aware of the interconnection between all of the levels of the multilayered European polity. As a consequence, their level of political information and electoral participation would be greater. There might be some truth in all of these theoretical tenets, but in this book I have attempted to show that the main problem with popular engagement regarding EU politics has less to do with communications than with systemic and cultural features. The particular shape of the EU political regime and the immaturity or inexistence of a European identity, not the way in which EU politics is communicated, are the main reason why a vibrant European public sphere has not emerged.

The EU political system, which is both superimposed on, and has transformed, its constituent member states, has strong in-built

incentives against the publicity that is common among liberal-democratic states. Consensus diplomacy, technocracy and associative corporatism are key features of the EU polity, precisely because one of the key pillars of a democratic regime (a political identity, a demos) is not yet mature enough to enliven a set of institutions that are felt to be cold, distant and not easily influenced by a collective (European) popular will. This explanation is not radically new, nor is it ignored by European political elites, be they at the EU or the national level. But the institutional preference (by EU-level and national elites) for a communications explanation for the European civic malaise might not be totally innocent. Indeed, facing what I call the "domesticisation" and "politicisation" debates calls for a deep engagement with the DNA of liberal democracies, and their contradictory marriage of universalistic (liberal, individualistic) and particularistic (national, demo-cratic) principles. The "communications gap" thesis does not challenge the legitimacy of the EU political regime. The system would work well; what goes wrong is its communication to the public. The evidence provided in this book puts that assertion into question. It might well be that, on the contrary, it is the particular features of the EU political system, along with the identity problem, that makes the EU difficult to communicate – and to popularise. The way in which the EU has been and is being integrated, and the way in which the EU is governed, are both intentionally designed to go forward with little more than passive popular consent. The electrical grid of the EU, so to speak, is not designed for democracy. Whenever democracy is plugged in to the socket, the fuses blow. The liberal tradition, more concerned about legal positivism than about ethnic identities, is based upon the belief that law alone can make a state. The EU is, to a large extent, a validation of this thought. But law alone cannot make a democratic state. A collective identity able to channel a collective political will (a demos) is also needed. The EU is both an achievement of liberalism and a sore reminder of its limitations. Identity and conflict, or politics, cannot be easily ignored. As Carl Schmitt would say, if the political is suppressed it may somehow come back in unforeseeable (and undesired) ways. The European Constitution referenda backlash could be regarded as an example of this "return of the political", to use the title of one of Chantal Mouffe's books (2005 [1993]).

Building freely on Schmittian principles (i.e. borrowing inspiration without blindly following the author to his own conclusions), I have tried to move forward the debate about the European communications gap by shifting the focus from a responsibility attribution to particular

agents (politicians, bureaucrats, journalists) to the setting of two variables that, I suggest, define the vitality of a public sphere: the degree of domesticisation (of identification between the government structures and the governed), and the degree of politicisation (of conflict, which can be agonistic [ideological – that is, left versus right] or antagonistic, existential [Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction]). I sought to explore these variables in two European substate regions, as regional is the scale at which one of the EU's landmark policies (regional or cohesion policy) is implemented. Regional is also the scale that some experts deem as recommendable for European electoral representation (Farrell and Scully, 2007). My contrasting case studies were Yorkshire in the UK and Galicia in Spain. In neither of these regions is the EU as a home a reality (it is in the nature and the history of the EU to be distant and elitist), but the EU is certainly more domestic in Galicia than in Yorkshire. Since the 19th century, Galician nationalism has pursued the singularity of its identity by defining its cultural nation as "a European nation". Yorkshire is, in contrast, a typical Eurosceptic region, where anti-EU sentiment is strong (see Methodological Appendix III for public opinion figures). However, Galicia's positive domesticisation of the EU (to the extent that the EU can be domesticised) does not lead to an agonistic politicisation of Europe. The EU is mostly about technocracy and bureaucracy, two forces that, as Schmitt warned, are thoroughly depoliticising. Strangely enough, the EU is far more political in Yorkshire – not in an agonistic but in a extreme, antagonistic way. For the English, the EU has become "the other", an existential challenge to the English way of doing democracy. If Yorkshire is a clear example of domesticisation failure, Galicia could be deemed as the token that proves, if the case of Galicia is to be considered extensible to other pro-EU regions, that EU politics is not normal. For even when there is a relatively strong identification with Europe, bureaucracy and administration win over ideology. After much concentration on the issue of communication, it might be high time to explain the institutional incentives against publicity of diplomacy, technocracy and corporatism.

I will summarise the findings of my research by resorting, again, to the twin deficit of domesticisation and politicisation. The first concept, domesticisation, leads to a cultural explanation of the seemingly distant character of EU politics. The second concept, politicisation, leads to a systemic or structural explanation of the overly bureaucratic and technocratic nature of EU politics, which are inevitably depoliticising. Domesticisation and politicisation are, I must insist, two faces of the same coin. The depoliticised political regime that the EU is owes much

to the immaturity of its demos, and this identity problem is itself a roadblock to further politicisation along a left–right ("agonistic") axis, as ideological opposition requires an agreed understanding of "who we are".

Summary of findings

Why is the EU so distant? A cultural explanation

The EU could be deemed to be founded on two seemingly artificial separations: that between nation and democracy, and that between the cultural and the civic. From a liberal and cosmopolitan point of view, this is a desirable outcome. From a Schmittian point of view, this would be tantamount to an outright neglect of the political: identity and conflict are played down, as if they could be subdued to their minimal expression. Yet democracy calls for a demos, and liberal values cannot be grounded in a cultural and legal vacuum. Human rights can be deemed to apply anywhere, but they are not enforced elsewhere. The rejection of conflict and identity as constitutive parts of the political is what endows the EU with its cold, passionless mildness. In hindsight, it might well be that its founding fathers knew very well the correlates of the political (identity and conflict), hence their quest for a detached, technocratic and elite-driven regime of economic and political integration.

The separation between democracy and nation or, in other words, the possibility of a multinational democracy, is an oxymoron in Schmittian terms. For majoritarian decisions to be acceptable, the deciding sovereign must have some degree of homogeneity, or at least there must be a feeling of collective self-being. Throughout history, national homogeneity has been forced by conquest, war and genocide. Democracy became massive (possible beyond the small city-state) thanks to its marriage with nationalism. Following the syllogism, mass democracy was possible, in most cases, thanks to genocide and forced homogeneity. The Second World War represents the last attempt of one of Europe's constitutive nations (Germany) to dominate the Continent through force and violence. The end of this war also marked the beginning of the European Communities and the creation of supranational institutions that sought to sustain peace through economic interdependence and the eventual creation of de facto solidarities that would result in some sort of communal feeling. It is to the credit of the EU that this stage of peaceful bargaining has been achieved. But democracy, to paraphrase Ernest Renan, is more than a Zollverein (Renan, 2010 [1882]).

The EU is, indeed, more than an economic union. But it is still far from being a substantive democratic political union, despite the existence of

EP elections and European citizenship. Both achievements (the EP and EU citizenship) are fraught with the burden of Europe's weak collective identity. Although the studies on roll-call votes have time and again supported the idea of an increasing ideologisation of the EP, where a left–right division would trump national divides, the perception among the journalists and civil society agents interviewed in my Spanish and the UK samples is one of "divided loyalty" between the MEPs' member states and their parliamentary political groups. European elections are still a national affair, making the EP more a sum of national demoi than a representation of a truly European demos.

The particular character of European citizenship is also worth noting. It has a confederal shape (one becomes a European citizen if and only if one is a national of any of the EU's constitutive states) and is empty of political meaning. Rather than an invitation to involvement in public affairs (despite the right that EU citizenship confers to participate in European and local elections of any member state), European citizenship is seen by my interviewees as a sort of premium passport to enjoy a private life of travel, study and entertainment. European citizenship is the realisation of the old dream of the bourgeois individual: the right to enjoy a private life, free of public commitments.

The students of the European public sphere often minimise the issue of language, and its double nature: instrumental and sentimental. English has become the lingua franca of Europe, but its use is mostly instrumental. Europeans get their points across, and make themselves understood, in English, but they are not moved, nor do they find love, in English. As one of my interviewees recalled, the videos produced by the European Commission are spoken in an English that no British person can feel their own. A directly elected president of the EU would be a politician persuading through translation.

As the journalists in my sample acknowledged, they might be based in Brussels but they work for – at least – 27 national public opinions. Even if the topics and the frames employed by journalists are basically the same, the national interest residual makes a common European public opinion difficult to emerge. Even in pro-EU countries like Spain, the EU is usually placed out there, as if European affairs were not Spanish affairs too. The case of the UK is obviously more extreme, as Europe has become, for a sizeable segment of the English population, the Schmittian other, the outside negative definer.

EU scholars are often surprised by the unrealistic standards that the EU is asked to achieve in terms of transparency and accountability by critics and Eurosceptics. What scholars usually ignore (or refuse

to debate) is that these demands are built on a suspicion that comes from lack of identification. As I have tried to demonstrate in both the theoretical and the empirical chapters of this book, the legitimacy of political institutions is not primarily based on the rightfulness of their proceedings but on the identity between the representatives and the represented.

The double-talk of the national leaders that gather at the European Council (blaming "Europe" for collective decisions for which they are coresponsible) is highly favoured by subsidiarity and the EU's brand of indirect federalism. The principle that supranational authorities should not deal with matters that other closer authorities could assume, and the fact that EU legislation mostly becomes effective through its transposition into national legal frameworks, makes the supranational layer of authority invisible to the average citizen. Paradoxically, one of the EU's key reasons for success (subsidiarity) has a dark reverse that works against the visibility (and, possibly, the legitimacy) of the supranational or federal level.

Except for federalism, which openly pursues a clear division of competences among administrative layers, the other two main theories explaining European integration (neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism) offer a good explanation for the detachment of EU actors (be they supranational or national) from the average citizen. On the substate regional scale, the EU looks very neofunctionalist: technocrats in regional governments or RDAs try to engage local business and civic associations in "making Europe". The civil servant, the high-end SME director, the university professor, the trade-union representative . . . among the regional elites, a selected group constitute what I call "the Eurominati network", replicated all over the Continent with a high degree of similarity, and usually distant from the societies that they belong to. Participating in Europe is not within the reach of every citizen; it is the result of a process of elite co-optation that involves only the regional and local "movers and shakers", often without they themselves being aware. One learns the ropes of EU funding by necessity, not by commitment to the European dream. At the end of the learning process, the outsider becomes an insider, another node in the large network of the Eurominati, defined as those who know how to deal with Europe – at least within their professional trade. They become the qualified mediators, the "interface" that connects the EU with its member states. Access to Europe usually requires the mediating role of an authorised agent (a consultancy business, an official national contact, a specialised legal firm). No wonder, then, that the EU is elusive for those

who ignore the contact or entry points (the qualified mediating agents) to get in touch with Europe.

In Brussels, lofty federalists aside, the EU looks crudely intergovernmental. With the European Commission at one of its lowest points of influence in history (hence the frequent nostalgic call for "good Europeans" such as Jaques Delors), the EU reveals itself as a pseudo-confederation. It is in the nature of all confederations to suffer from a "democratic deficit", as their constituents are not individuals (the people) but corporate bodies (the member states). This feature has obvious consequences for the shape of the would-be European demos and its public sphere. When the European Council meetings are adjourned, national correspondents run to hear their respective national leaders. They do consult with other European journalists, and may also attend, if possible, the press conferences of other prime ministers, but the "we" of Europeans is still, to a large extent, a national "we". It should be recalled that journalistic mediation is not only a communication of facts but a communication of facts to a particular community. More than a problem of mediation, the mostly national shape of public spheres in Europe is a cultural determinant.

Perhaps because it was born as an alternative to nationalism, the EU is confronted with the problem of closure and alterity that all identities demand to become such. The EU is reluctant to define an enemy, an "other", hence the difficulties it has to define itself. The cosmopolitan Europe is more an essay of world unity than a call for a European federation. The European citizenship actually existent (one favouring movement, cultural exchange and education, with no civic commitments) is a hypertrophy of liberalism, a vantage card for the enjoyment of individual freedoms, with little concern for collective responsibilities or sacrifices. It is a private citizenship with no public attachments.

Through diplomatic bargaining and supranational technocracy, the EU has prevented and ended war in Europe. But, along the way, it has thrown away the baby with the bath water. It has thrown away politics (identity and conflict). Nevertheless, as Schmitt would say, not identifying an enemy does not mean one has no enemies. The political remains there even when artificially suppressed.

Why is the EU so apolitical? A structural explanation

When discussing the democratic deficit of the EU, the academic debate often revolves around the differences between the institutional configuration of the EU and that of a liberal-democratic nation state. This is a useful heuristic strategy, and my concern about the degree

of "politicisation" or ideological conflict in EU politics has also been inspired by this approach. However, in the extant literature the speculation about what the EU could become or has failed to become evades the description of the kind of political regime that the EU actually is, and the consequences that its structural or systemic features have for the conduct of politics and journalistic mediation at the supranational, national and substate regional levels.

When interviewing EU political actors in the regions, the national capitals and Brussels, the EU shows itself as a *sui generis* polity based upon the original combination of diplomacy, technocracy and corporatism. These three tendencies are prone to encouraging compromise, bureaucratisation and a silencing of political conflict. European unity has brought antagonism among European nations to an end, but a sort of "diplomacy among friends" remains one of the core features of continental politics. My interviewees usually employed metaphors from commerce to illustrate this "Europe of merchants", where the power of each country is equal to its share in the total property (or power share) of the EU, as one Brussels correspondent graphically explained. The resilience of member states and their arm's-length control of the European Commission is clearly visible in the inexistence of a European political career (MEPs depend on national party structures for their inclusion in voting lists), which weakens the position of an EP that, on paper, has gained almost equal footing with the council. The EU legislative process was found to benefit from a lack of transparency, as it is behind closed doors where member states can bargain and reach compromises that would be difficult to defend before their national public opinions. This is why, paradoxically, the defence of the European interest is better pursued out of the limelight, as the publicity of discussions would not likely politicise debates in an ideological (left versus right) way but in a national (antagonistic) fashion.

A further contribution to depoliticisation is the EP's permanent "grand coalition" between the two biggest parliamentary groups, the EPP and the PES, and the translation to the European level of the neocorporatist tradition, whereby peak interest associations of labour and capital (ETUC and Business Europe), along with the proliferating umbrella organisations from diffuse and concrete interests (from environmentalist to road-transport lobbies), form a "partnership" with European representatives and civil servants to manage public policy. Brussels correspondents from my Spanish and the UK samples deem publicity as "disruptive" for the "management of conflicts behind closed doors", and claim that the EU lacks the "dynamics of politics", by which

ideological values are channelled through political parties. MEPs admit their easy access to organised civil society and their detachment from society at large. The academic discourse of governance (the involvement of organised society in policy-making and policy delivery), which is already part of the daily political discourse of the EU, is nothing but a gentler denomination of old neocorporatism. In the world of "associative democracy", there is little room for the individual citizen. Rather than critical counterforces to government, civil society associations are proud "partners" in the task of government and lawmaking.

This *sui generis* political regime is not the result of a conspiracy, as UK Eurosceptics like to claim. It is largely the outcome of the pursuit of economic stability. As a matter of fact, the word "stability" entered the vocabulary of politics during the first years of the post-war Federal Republic of Germany (Müller, 2003). It came originally from the language of technology, and it was applied to a state looking for peace, reconstruction and, in a faraway future, its full completeness with the recovery of its Eastern side. As I have tried to defend throughout this book, the EU is full of Germanisms: the core concern about stability, the depoliticising effect of corporatism, and the philosophy of "social market economy". These are the same bureaucratising trends that Habermas denounced in his classic study on the fall of critical publicity (1994 [1962]).

The preordinance of positive law over a substantive citizen mandate is, along with the private condition of European citizenship, a major source of the "hypertrophy of liberalism" that the EU represents. In other words, it is the law, not the people, that makes the European "state". Politics does not produce law. Instead, politics has to be inferred from the law produced by the EU.

In the mind of most Europeans, EU technocrats are usually placed in Brussels, but in my fieldwork I chose to focus on the members of the EU's "substitute bureaucracy" (Haller, 2008) in the regions. The regional Operating Programmes, which outline the expenditures of the ERDF for each region, were found to never have been a matter of public debate – not even in Galicia, which enjoys a regional parliament of its own that, according to my interviewees, submits to parliamentary approval investment plans of much lesser importance. Interestingly, the regional civil servants who administer EU funds are sceptical about the goodness of publicity and debate. As it happens at the transnational level, public discussion is thought to get in the way of efficient public policy delivery. The main problem with EU regional expenditures is not financial (as every euro cent is thoroughly tracked) but political: it is the debate

about the destination of public money, not its actual disbursement, that is problematic. In the end, technocracy fails to fulfil its mission (the careful selection of high-impact, economy-changing investments) and European funds fall prey to the piecemeal "political" concessions to regional local power-holders that technocracy was set to avoid. There is a lack of political control, not by politicians but by the public.

At all times, the EU attempts to separate economics from politics. The clearest example is the open pursuit of a "European economic government" without any reference to the sort of politics such an "economic government" should be inspired by. It is the famously decried submission of politics to economics by authors like Carl Schmitt or Jürgen Habermas himself.

Coda: The parsimony of the domesticisation and politicisation categories

This book has argued that the institution–citizen divide regarding EU affairs is not mainly attributable to communication (understood as the way in which politicians' messages are crafted, or the competence with which journalists report on European politics) but to cultural and structural deficits, those deriving, on the one hand, from the immaturity or inexistence of a European demos or political people, and, on the other, from the *sui generis* condition of the EU political regime, a unique combination of diplomacy, technocracy and corporatism.

Theoretically, my research has been guided by two categories inspired by Carl Schmitt's view of politics as a matter of identity and conflict: domesticisation (the degree of identification between government and citizens) and politicisation (understood as either ideological or existential conflict – the first agonistic, deemed ideal in internal politics, and the second antagonistic, considered the "realist" norm in international politics). I therefore set two conditions for a healthy or vital public sphere: identification between representatives and represented, and ideological conflict over conceptions of the public good along a left–right axis. I chose to ground my empirical methods of data collection (content analysis of newspapers and semistructured in-depth interviews) on a regional scale, because regional (substate) is the level at which the EU's star policy (cohesion) is implemented, and regional is the scale at which EP representation should be based according to some political scientists (Farrell and Scully, 2007). My two comparative case studies (Galicia in Spain and Yorkshire in the UK) were at face value divergent in their popular acceptance of the EU (Galicia being pro-European,

Yorkshire being Eurosceptic). Indeed, although the EU proved to be a distant reality for the average citizen in both regions, in Galicia the EU has been as positively domesticised as an elite-based structure can be: Europe works for the benefit of regional interests. In contrast, in Yorkshire, as in much of the UK, the legitimacy of the EU to correct the national regional inequalities is constantly challenged by Conservatives and Eurosceptics on all sides. Although this negative domesticisation leads to a predictable antagonistic politicisation of the EU (Europe is an external negative definer of the UK and in the most extreme versions of Euroscepticism, "the other" and "the enemy"), in Galicia, positive domesticisation does not bring about a "normal" internal politicisation along an ideological left–right continuum, but mere bureaucratic and technocratic depoliticisation. Europe in Galicia is beyond the mundane clash of traditional politics. Regional funds are managed but never, or rarely, debated in public. This was confirmed both in my interviews and in the content analysis of the benchmark newspapers in each of the regions.

The Schmitt-inspired theoretical categories (domesticisation and politicisation) have proved to be parsimonious in describing and explaining the shortcomings of the European public sphere. By asking to what extent EU politics conforms to an understanding of politics as mainly an issue of identity and conflict, the so-called communications gap theory (which puts much of the blame for the EU's civic malaise on the work of politicians and journalists) is put into question. My ethnographic fieldwork has revealed that the problem with Europe is deep (cultural and structural) and not easily correctable through wiser public relations strategies on the part of the European Commission, or through a more comprehensive coverage of EU news by journalists. Actually, what my interviews and observations have shown is that the *sui generis* polity that the EU is has strong incentives against publicity, partly because of the absence of a European demos that would make supranational decisions popularly legitimate, and partly because diplomacy, technocracy, corporatism and the indirectness of subsidiarity have settled as an evolving but firm mechanism of managing Europe's growing interdependence in all realms: economic, cultural and political.

It has been my aim to explain that the EU's *sui generis* political system operates not only in parallel but also in symbiotic relationship with the more traditional liberal-democratic regimes in its member states. The result of this infiltration of the EU way of managing public policy is not entirely positive from a normative point of view: regional policy is brought outside public scrutiny. Formal (financial) control is impeccable, but

the political control (the popular accountability) of public expenditure is weak or completely absent. Technocracy, deemed by Carl Schmitt as the end-point of liberalism, is ever more present in a polity where the continental reach of institutions is not paired with a commensurate continental popular consciousness. The difficult democratisation of the EU is in part the consequence of the old décalage underscored by Spinelli and other federalists: the inevitable economic interdependence of Europe as a continent, but the mostly national condition of its collective identities.

This book offers enough evidence, I hope, of the benefit of taking European integration theory seriously when studying the reasons for the dysfunctionality of a European public sphere. Much of what academics, EU leaders and commentators define as mediation or political communication problems are, on a closer look, cultural and structural shortcomings. The EU presents the researcher with a dislocation of elements that are often commensurate and woven together in a more or less coherent form: a collective identity, a set of political institutions and a public sphere.

My work suffers from some limitations that must be openly acknowledged. The substate regional scale of my research made my fieldwork more manageable, but it would have benefited from more interviews with national-level civil servants and politicians, given the proven resilience of national governments in the European context. The two cases selected, although fruitful in terms of proving the point that EU politics is difficult to ideologise even in pro-European regions like Galicia, will have to be contrasted with other regions across Europe so as to assess the generalisability of my findings.

Network interviewing – in-depth interviews informed by social network analysis performed over publicly available documents, such as newspapers, inspired by Howard's "network ethnography" (Howard, 2006) – has proved fruitful for the study of communities whose members are geographically spread out. Such is the case of the regional spheres of EU political actors.

It might indeed seem contradictory to use the antiliberal political theorist par excellence, Carl Schmitt, to establish the ideal standards of a liberal-democratic public sphere (identity and ideological contention). However, this is less risky or visionary than it might seem at first sight. Jürgen Habermas' famous treatise on the rise and fall of a critical public sphere was inspired by Schmitt. Like Habermas, I deem Schmitt to be a good critic of liberalism whose solution to the ills of parliamentary democracy (a plebiscitary dictatorship) is worse than the maladies

that it tries to eradicate. But unlike Habermas and like Mouffe, I find politics a matter of identity and conflict rather than rational debate and compromise. The depoliticised and distant character of EU politics might be further proof of the plausibility of the Schmittian theoretical framework: lacking identification between people and government, internal European politics could become as inimical as international politics. Ironically, until the European demos is somehow consolidated, depoliticisation might be the condition for the EU's survival, just as a lack of publicity and behind-closed-doors bargaining is the condition for the pursuit of a true European interest.

Methodological Appendices

Methodological Appendix I (Content Analysis)

Comparative content analysis of EU news in regional newspapers

The literature on the European public sphere has set the token of the existence of a European space of communication in the commonality of topics and frames in the news dealing with EU affairs. If different national newspapers deal with the same European topics from a similar perspective, it can be argued that there is an elite discourse in the main national media that is distinctively European, as compared to merely national (Van de Steeg, 2006). Although largely valid, this way of testing the existence of the European public sphere has its limitations. First, the commonality of themes could be induced by the political economy of international news. Reliance on press agencies might account for that similarity in topics. Second, the common interpretive schemes that journalists apply to those issues might also be reflective of the journalistic culture of the Brussels-based correspondents, who may come to share a similar way of interpreting political affairs.

In order to move the discussion about the European public sphere forward, I suggest a different approach. On the one hand, I focus on the substate regional media. National benchmark newspapers do set the agenda for the rest of the media and are read by large audiences, but their social penetration tends to be poorer the further one gets out of the capitals where they are published. In the two regions that I use as case studies, the regional newspapers enjoy a broader readership than any of their national rivals. On the other hand, I apply a Schmittian test to the vitality of the European public sphere, and I do it in two exceptionally different cases, each of them representing the opposite pole on the scale of the local popularity of the EU as a political regime (see Methodological Appendix III for public opinion figures). This focus on the exceptional is also typically Schmittian: it is at the extremes where the true nature of the subject under study is revealed (Schmitt, 2009 [1932]). The EU offers a special opportunity for the study of the DNA of democracy and the public sphere. The pieces that are usually joined together (the nation, the state apparatus and the public sphere) are dislodged in the case of the EU. This offers a golden opportunity to study their core features. The health check of the European public sphere is based on two indicators: domesticisation and politicisation.

Domesticisation is defined as the degree of identification of regional actors with EU institutions. When this domesticisation is positive, the EU is seen as a legitimate layer of power: European Commission proposals, European Court of Justice rulings or EP laws are, as a general rule, debated without putting into question the legitimacy of the institutions as such. When domesticisation is negative, the EU's legitimacy is challenged by the political actors affected by its decisions. This category is inspired by Schmitt's definition of democracy as a regime where

there is a strong identification between the rulers and the ruled. The absence of such an identity has been deemed as the reason why the legitimacy of the EU as a whole (and not any of its constituent actors) is disputed whenever any of its institutions reach a decision that is detrimental to local interests. Lack of identity between a (European) government and a (European) demos is also posed as one of the impediments to the supranationalisation of redistributive policies (Jolly, 2007).

Politicisation is defined as the degree and quality of contentiousness regarding EU public affairs in the region. An extreme degree of politicisation would be exemplified by the friend–enemy distinction that for Schmitt is the basic quality of politics (Schmitt, 2009 [1932]). In Mouffe's view, this extreme degree of politicisation could be deemed as antagonistic (Mouffe, 2000). The other is seen as a foreigner, as a member of a different political community. A milder degree of politicisation would be the one between rivals. This level of contentiousness is known as "agonistic": the other belongs to the same community but has a different worldview that falls somewhere along the continuum between the poles of left and right. Winning over an adversary is qualitatively different from winning over an enemy. The adversary wants to make hegemonic, at least for the time period of a legislature, their worldview. The enemy is the foreign, and the political tension is kept by the ultimate chance of waging war. In the meantime, the foreign can be a commercial ally, as long it is distinguished as different from the home community.

Following this Schmittian framework, through the content analysis of EU news in the regions of Yorkshire and Galicia, I attempted to test these two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: A negative domesticisation of the EU in Yorkshire (framing the EU as an illegitimate layer of power) may lead to an antagonistic politicisation of the EU (the country versus the EU is the main way by which the EU is made political).

Hypothesis 2: A positive domesticisation of the EU in Galicia (framing the EU as a legitimate layer of power) may lead to an agonistic politicisation of the EU (the left versus right contest is the main way of making the EU political).

Confirming both hypotheses would indeed support the theory of a "communications gap". The absence of elite support and the Eurosceptic framing of political debates would obscure the "normality" of politics in the EU, whereas elite support and neutral or positive media framing would make EU politics flow smoothly. If any of these hypotheses is not confirmed, it would mean that the relationship between domesticisation and politicisation is not straightforward, at least in the case of the EU. Assuming that the Galician case is illustrative of other pro-European regions, if a positive domesticisation does not reveal an ideological contest in EU politics, it should be concluded that getting elite support in the regions and having non-Eurosceptic media would not be enough to have a "normal" European public sphere (where the political debate would be carried out along ideological divisions). The causes of the anormality of the European public sphere should not then be sought among national leaders or the media but in the particular conditions of the European political regime.

Research design: Sampling and coding procedures

One of the outcomes of the communication policy review that sprang out of Commissioner Wällstrom's Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate was the convenience of "communicating Europe in partnership" with national, regional and local leaders. The EU should be more visible in the regional and local news media in order to make European institutions closer to average EU citizens, the report suggested. Our content analysis, performed on two substate regional newspapers, addresses this institutional concern.

In the two regions being compared, the regional newspapers studied (*La Voz de Galicia* and *The Yorkshire Post*) are the leading voices in their respective media landscapes. *The Yorkshire Post* is the most widely read non-tabloid paid newspaper in Yorkshire, with a daily circulation of 47,760 copies (Joint Industry Committee for Regional Media Research, 2008) and 119,000 readers a day (National Readership Survey, 2008). It has a wider readership in the region than any of its national competitors (*The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Independent*, whose daily readership is in all cases less than 100,000). *La Voz de Galicia* is even more dominant in its region, as half of the readers of a newspaper in Galicia follow *La Voz*. It has a daily circulation of 101,764 copies (Oficina para la Justificación de la Difusión, 2008) and its daily readership is estimated to be around 606,000 (Estudio General de Medios, 2008).

The unit of analysis was articles (stories and comments) published in the *The Yorkshire Post* and *La Voz de Galicia* newspapers from 10 June 2004 (the date of the 2004 European elections) to 9 June 2009 (the date of the 2009 European elections) that linked the term "EU" with the name of the respective regions ("Galicia" and "Yorkshire").

In the case of *The Yorkshire Post*, the sample of news stories was selected through a keyword search for the combined appearance of the terms "EU" and "Yorkshire" in the headlines and the leading paragraph of the stories filed by the Nexis database in that five-year period. The search resulted in 127 stories. An equivalent search in the online archive of *La Voz de Galicia* for the same period using the terms "UE" and "Galicia" yielded 245,364 documents. The search engine of this newspaper has among its searching methods one called "concordance", which ranks news stories by the degree of co-occurrence of the searched terms. In order to select a similar number of stories to those found in *The Yorkshire Post*, I took the first 150 results. *The Yorkshire Post* sample had two duplicate stories, so the final number of stories computed for the analysis was 125. In the case of *La Voz de Galicia*, some of the news stories selected linked to other information subpackages, which were also included in the analysis, yielding a total of 158 stories. Therefore the final sample was as follows: *The Yorkshire Post* = 125 articles; *La Voz de Galicia* = 158 articles.

As the principal investigator, I coded the full sample but was aided by a second coder to perform a reliability check on more than 50 per cent of the sample – that is, 63 news stories from *The Yorkshire Post* and 79 stories from *La Voz de Galicia*, all randomly selected.[1]

The concepts of "domesticisation" and "politicisation" were operationalised as lists of news frames (Tankard, 2001). Following Snow and Benford (1992), frames are understood as interpretive schemes aimed at making sense and simplifying the meaning of news. They are, to quote Tankard (2001), "the organizing ideas on which stories are built" (p. 99). The list of domesticisation frames (see details in the next section) refers to those news stories that imply some degree

of identification (either in a positive or in a negative sense) between the regional interests and the EU institutions or actors. The list of politicisation frames refers to the means by which the intersection of regional and EU affairs is made an issue of public debate or contention.

My frame analysis followed Tankard's "list of frames approach" (2001), which consists of listing all of the possible frames, deriving them from the relevant literature, defining them with catchphrases or keywords and then using them as a list of categories in a content analysis. In composing the two families of frames (domesticisation and politicisation), I drew from two strands of literature. First was the literature on political theory, with Schmitt, Habermas and Mouffe as my main guides, who provided me with the two elements that make a political system "engaging": the identification between government and constituents (domesticisation) and the voicing of conflict, either on an agonistic or on an antagonistic fashion (politicisation). A second strand of literature came from European political communication studies, and in particular from the work of the Europolcom research group (Koopmans and Statham, 2010), which performed much of their content analyses by resorting to a two-dimensional scheme of vertical integration (relationships between the home member state and the European institutions) and horizontal integration (relationships between and among the members states of the EU). A third source of inspiration came from a careful initial reading of the news stories compiled, which showed two relatively frequent patterns of vertical identification: resource mobilisation (of regional governments or interest groups to keep European funding) and institutional interpenetration (referring to the presence of EU agents in the regions, or regional agents in Brussels). Given that these patterns could also happen horizontally (by member states or different regions joining up forces to defend their interests at the European level, or by having institutional representatives in each others' territories), I also devised the frames of "horizontal resource mobilisation" and "horizontal institutional interpenetration".

The coding scheme (see next section) was developed both deductively and inductively. I knew from the start that I wanted to code for the degree of identification with and legitimacy of EU institutions (domesticisation) and for the sort of politicisation that sparked the connection between the regions and the EU (agonistic or antagonistic). For this goal the literature was helpful, but the families of domesticisation and politicisation frames were only completely developed after reading about one-quarter of the news stories in the sample of each of the two newspapers under study. It was after this reading that I decided to add two more frames to the politicisation family: regional or national mobilisation to defend the regional or national interest against others (be they the European institutions or other member states) and scandal or controversy regarding public management.

Besides looking for the presence of domesticisation and politicisation frames, I also coded for the topic of the news stories (to find out which are the issues that are brought to the public sphere whenever the regions and the EU are linked). Adapting a coding scheme from Cox and Morgan (1973), I aimed to study the relative weight of government and civil society as voices in the news stories. This scheme, also detailed on Appendix A in the coding protocol, showed high levels of reliability: 92 per cent agreement in the *La Voz de Galicia* subsample and 93 per cent in *The Yorkshire Post* subsample.

Finally, I decided to treat the first six sources quoted in each of the news stories as nodes of a non-directed network. In this way, I planned to see, from the sources that show up whenever the regions and the EU are related, which are the ones that appear to be the most frequently related. That is, whenever the region and the EU are discussed, I wanted to know who were the political actors that journalists put in relation with each other when writing their stories.

For the coding of news sources, I used two sorts of criteria: their geographic location within the multilevel European polity (local, regional, national, European, etc.), and their role in the public sphere (executive, legislative, judicial powers, specific and diffuse interest groups, etc.). For the geographic classification, I adapted the coding scheme used by Koopmans (2002) in the Europub.com project. For the public sphere role classification, I used the list of political actors that, according to Habermas (2006), constitute the public political sphere. The classification of topics in the news is taken from the Europa website (www.europa.eu), which lists the areas where the EU has formal competences.

The coding was recorded on an Excel spreadsheet. To compute the frame analysis, I exported the data to SPSS. To compute the social network analysis of news sources, I exported the data to NodeXL, an application that works as a macro for Excel. I coded for a maximum of six sources in each news story, which yielded a maximum of 15 non-directed dyads per news story.

Coding protocol for the content analysis of *La Voz de Galicia* and *The Yorkshire Post*

Unit of analysis: News stories published in these two newspapers from 10 June 2004 (the date of the 2004 European elections) to 9 June 2009 (the date of the 2009 European elections) including the terms "EU" and the name of their respective regions ("Galicia" or "Yorkshire").

Selection procedures: A keyword search for the combined appearance of the terms "EU" and "Yorkshire" in the headlines and the leading paragraph of the stories published by *The Yorkshire Post* as filed by the Nexis database in that five-year period yielded 127 stories. An equivalent search in the online archive of *La Voz de Galicia* for the same period using the terms "UE" and "Galicia" yielded 245,364 documents. The search engine of this newspaper has among its methods one called "concordance", which ranks news stories by the degree of co-occurrence of the searched terms. I took the first 150 results.

Please note: Whenever "Not applicable", type "99".

NAMECOD
(Enter name of coder)

Article variables

STORYNUM
(Assign a unique number to each story, using the number generated by the Nexis search, located at the top of each story)

NEWSPAPER
1 = *La Voz de Galicia*
2 = *The Yorkshire Post*

DATE
(Enter publication date: DD/MM/YYYY)

HEADLINE
(Enter headline of article)

REPORTER/SIGNATURE
(Copy and paste)

PLACE (Dateline)
(The place where the news story is said to have been written. Copy and paste)

PLACELOC
(Describe geographical location of the site)
1 = Region (Galicia/Yorkshire)
2 = Country's capital (Madrid/London)
3 = Other location within the country, excluding the country's capital and the Galicia/Yorkshire region (e.g. Oxford)
4 = EU capital (Brussels, Strasbourg)
5 = Other EU (e.g. Austria)
6 = Outside EU (e.g. Africa)
7 = No place named

SECTION
(Section where the article is published, if known)
1 = Frontpage
2 = Editorial, opinions, and commentaries
3 = International news
4 = National news
5 = Regional news
6 = Local news
7 = Business and economy
8 = Culture, sports, and society
9 = Other

GENRE
(Journalistic genre of the article)
1 = Regular news article (information)
2 = Background article (analysis and interpretation)
3 = Interview
4 = Unsigned editorial
5 = Letter to the editor
6 = Regular column
7 = Guest editorial/op-ed
8 = Other

MAIN TOPIC
(Topic of the article. This list of topics, all areas where the EU has (formal) competences, comes from the Europa website)

1 = Agriculture
2 = Audiovisual and media
3 = Budget
4 = Competition
5 = Consumers
6 = Culture
7 = Customs
8 = Development
9 = Economic and monetary affairs
10 = Education, training, youth
11 = Employment and social affairs
12 = Energy
13 = Enlargement
14 = Enterprise
15 = Environment
16 = External relations
17 = External trade
18 = Fight against fraud
19 = Fisheries and maritime affairs
20 = Food safety
21 = Foreign and security policy
22 = Human rights
23 = Humanitarian aid
24 = Information society
25 = Institutional affairs
26 = Internal market
27 = Justice, freedom and security
28 = Public health
29 = Regional policy
30 = Research and innovation
31 = Taxation
32 = Transport
33 = EU's raison d'être
34 = Elections

DOMESTICISATION FRAMES

1 = Vertical identification. The story suggests that the regional or national interests are in line with those of European institutions (e.g. the EU recognising the right of Galician MEPs to speak Galician in Brussels; the EU granting regional funding to aid in the development of infrastructure in the Yorkshire). There are two types of vertical identification that are of particular interest: resource mobilisation and institutional interpenetration:

a. Vertical resource mobilisation. The EU is domesticised when political actors accept the rules of the game, when they feel the system provides enough opportunities to advance their regional or national interests. When a regional or national agent (be it institutional or belonging to civil society)

demands more European funding or campaigns for the recognition of the denomination or origin of a regional product (e.g. Yorkshire cheese), this would be indicative of vertical resource mobilisation. When the region joins forces with other regions to campaign for more funds, we should code for "horizontal resource mobilisation" instead. The vertical resource mobilisation category is only for those instances when lobbying is done by the region/member state agent vis-à-vis the European institutions, with no further alliances.

b. Vertical institutional interpenetration. This is the category of choice for those newspaper stories that show "our man in Brussels" (e.g. interview with a Galician who works for the European Commission), or the "EU man in the region/country" (e.g. interview with the head of the European Commission in the UK). This category also comprises those news stories that talk about the direct regional representation at the EU level (e.g. Galicia representing the Spanish interest at the Council of Ministers of Agriculture and Fisheries).

2 = Vertical differentiation. The story suggests that regional or national interests are divergent from those of the EU – for example, unwanted regulation on a given issue, EU legitimacy is challenged, EU is not included in "we". Our interests are different, we're not part of them – for example, conservatives claim that regional funds would be spent on different things if they were given from London instead of Brussels.

3 = Horizontal identification. The story suggests that the regional or national interests are in line with other regions or nations in Europe in pursuing some common interest at the EU level without challenging the EU as such (e.g. there are other regions or nations like us in Europe that want the EU, such as an alliance of poor regions between Galicia and the new Eastern countries such as Poland).

4 = Horizontal differentiation. The story suggests that the regional or national interests of several regions or member states are against the EU supranational interests (there are other regions or nations like us in Europe that don't want the EU, such as an alliance of British conservatives with Czech and Polish Eurosceptics). The story may also suggest an alliance of several regions or member states in Europe against the interests of the home region/nation (e.g. France hindering the recognition of Spanish regional languages as official languages in the EU).

POLITICISATION FRAMES

1 = Left/right. The story suggests a left–right divide on the issue at stake.
2 = Pro and anti-EU, Euroscepticism versus Europhilia.
3 = Regional or national interest under threat, need to mobilise in order to be taken into consideration by the EU.
4 = Scandal, corruption, controversy.

INPUTS/OUTPUTS (Cox and Morgan, 1973)

(The following are mutually exclusive categories)

Inputs

1 = Demands (from social and political actors) reported ("We farmers demand EU reform")
2 = Demands expressed by paper ("We as a newspaper demand EU reform")
3 = Supports (from social and political actors) reported ("We farmers support EU reform")
4 = Supports expressed by paper ("We support EU reform")

Outputs

5 = News, events reported (e.g. Galicia will get x million euros of EU funding)
6 = Interpretation, background information (e.g. what extra funds mean for the region)

Actor variables

ACTOR 1

1. Name
2. Affiliation
   (Organisation to which actor belongs, if known or applicable)
3. Scope of its activities (Koopmans, 2002 classification, adapted)
   1 = Local
   2 = Regional
   3 = Countrywide or national
   4 = European-supranational (European institutions)
   5 = European-foreign (belonging to other EU country)
   6 = International (non-EU country)
   99 = Unclassifiable
4. Public sphere role (Habermas, 2006 classification, adapted)
   1 = Executive
   2 = Legislative
   3 = Judiciary
   4 = Journalist/media
   5 = Lobbyist representing specific interest groups (employers' associations, agricultural associations)
   6 = Advocate representing general interest group (NGO: environment, consumer, development, human rights)
   7 = Expert (scientist, professional with expertise in a specialised area invited to give advice)
   8 = Moral entrepreneur (someone who generates public attention for a neglected issue – e.g. domestic violence)
   9 = Intellectual (someone who engages spontaneously in the public discourse without advocating for corporate interests)
   10 = Individual (regular folk on the street, not representing any organised group)
   99 = Other

ACTORS 2, 3, 4 AND 5

(Same as ACTOR 1)

Content analysis results: The EU is apolitical irrespective of its degree of domesticisation

The results of the content analysis show that the EU is almost never a matter of a left versus right contest, even in those regions like Galicia where European institutions are positively domesticised. In Galicia, the main means of politicising the EU is the pursuit of the regional interest (the funds for the region). In Yorkshire, the EU is political in an antagonistic way. The raison d'être of the organisation is permanently in question. The EU is seen to be working for Galicia, but in Yorkshire the EU is seen as some sort of foreign parasite, specially in the claims of some political actors, be them MPs, MEPs, or Eurosceptic writers of letters to the editor.

Hypothesis 1 (negative domesticisation leads to antagonistic politicisation in Yorkshire) is modestly supported. Although the frequencies of frames that question the legitimacy of EU institutions ("vertical differentiation", $n = 51$) are roughly similar to the number of frames that imply an acceptance of the EU ("vertical identification", $n = 47$), a careful reading of the news stories reveals that such acceptance is closer to an instrumental acquiescence than to a positive embrace of European institutions (Figure 1). Within the "vertical identification" frame, we find several news stories on a campaign to get European recognition of a local cheese (which was coded "resource mobilisation" in the first list of frames). We also find up to eight letters to the editor written by Europhiles who write in response to other letters sent by Eurosceptics (the number of anti-EU letters in the sample was 12). As for politicisation, the clash between EU supporters and EU enemies (antagonistic politicisation) was present in 54 stories (Figure 3). This was the most frequent politicisation frame, closely followed by the regional/national interest frame (43 stories) and scandal (five stories). I found not a single case where a story could be read in ideological terms (left versus right).

Paradoxically, although the EU is continuously challenged as a legitimate layer of power by the sources quoted in *The Yorkshire Post*, there are some relevant indications of a positive domesticisation. Other EU countries were seen as allies in the fight against human trafficking ("horizontal identification"), and the EU was seen as a valid framework for promoting the quality of regional food products ("resource mobilisation"). Therefore, despite all the criticisms and challenges voiced by the majority of political actors cited by *The Yorkshire Post*, the EU is seen as a legitimate institution for international police cooperation and as a market with commercial opportunities for local producers.

Hypothesis 2 (positive domesticisation would lead to agonistic politicisation in Galicia) is not supported. Although the EU is indeed positively domesticised in Galicia (of the 158 stories coded, 101 included a "vertical identification" frame), the "left versus right" perspective was completely absent (Figures 2 and 4). The most recurrent politicisation frame was the "regional/national interest", which was present in 123 stories. Clearly, in Galicia, the EU is not a place for traditional politics, but for the pursuit of regional development funds. The constant threat of losing its "Objective 1" status due to the Eastern Enlargement was one of the main issues of public discussion about the EU in the region.

As noted, in *The Yorkshire Post*, the letters to the editor have a relevant presence. Although plain information news articles were found to be the dominant genre both in *The Yorkshire Post* (65.60 per cent of all articles) and in *La Voz de Galicia*

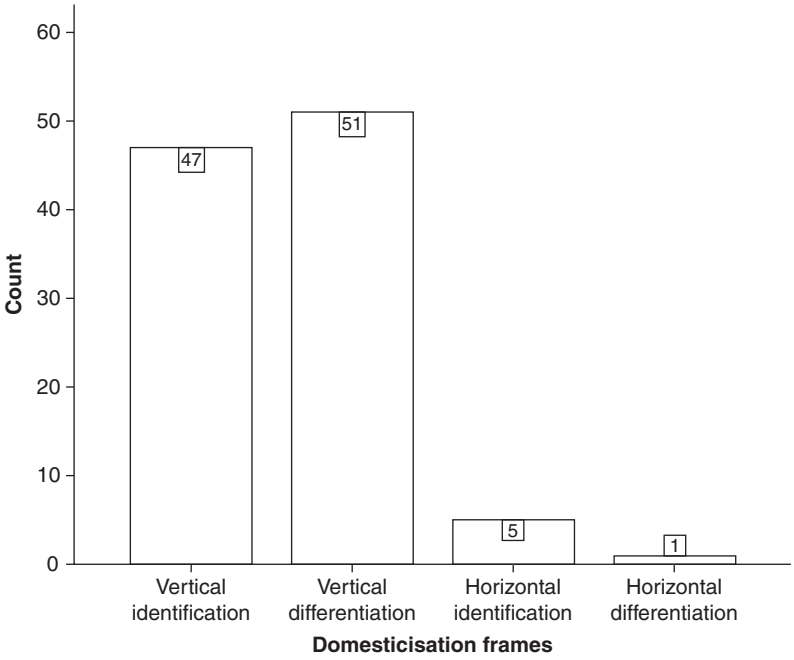

Figure 1 *The Yorkshire Post*: Frequency of domesticisation frames
The number of articles that imply a difference of interest between the EU and Yorkshire ($n = 51$) is slightly greater than the number of articles that imply that the EU works in line with regional interests ($n = 47$). A closer look at the data allows for some explanation of this apparently surprising finding: most "identification" is instrumental and sees European institutions as a lesser evil to deal with (e.g. lobbying for the recognition of a denomination of origin). The vertical identification frame is also pumped up by letters to the editor written by Europhiles in contestation to those sent by Eurosceptics.

(60.78 per cent of all stories), in the Yorkshire newspaper nearly one-quarter of the articles in the sample (23.20 per cent) were letters to the editor (Figure 5). This section usually works as an outlet for Eurosceptic sentiments, with some rebuttals from EU supporters. It is credited as the most widely read section according to the journalists and regional MEPs whom I interviewed as part of my ethnographic fieldwork. *La Voz de Galicia* publishes more background articles (15.03 per cent of all stories) than *The Yorkshire Post* (4.80 per cent of all stories), which might be indicative of the larger human resources enjoyed by the Galician newspaper, which at the time of my fieldwork kept a permanent correspondent in Brussels (Figure 6). Interviews are absent as a genre in *The Yorkshire Post*, whereas in *La Voz de Galicia* they represent 13.73 per cent of all stories. Galicians are famously known among Spaniards for not clearly revealing their opinions, and the benchmark newspaper in the region seems to follow suit, as in general, and with few occasional exceptions, it does not publish editorials.

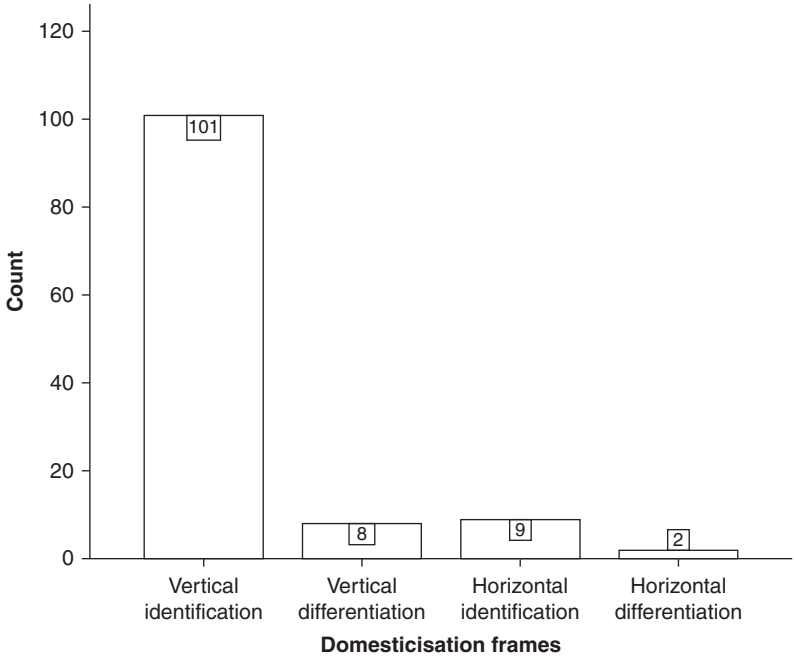

Figure 2 *La Voz de Galicia*: Frequency of domesticisation frames
In Galicia, the EU is perceived as an entity pursuing the same goals of the region (vertical identification, $n = 101$). The vertical identification frame includes several instances of lobbying (resource mobilisation), which implies that the rules of the European game are broadly accepted by Galician political actors.

Interestingly, despite giving ample space to Eurosceptic claims in the news stories and in the letters section, *The Yorkshire Post* rarely editorialises about the EU (only 2.40 per cent of all articles). There is one potential explanation for this practice: the RDA. Yorkshire Forward, which at the time of my fieldwork was the administrator of the ERDF in the region, was a frequent advertiser in the newspaper. The RDA sponsored special supplements related to business issues, and was a regular sponsor of the weekly supplement on rural affairs. In sum, one of the main agents of Europeanisation in the region, Yorkshire Forward, was one of the most frequent advertisers in a newspaper that addresses a very Eurosceptic audience. This might explain why the newspaper refrains from editorialising against the EU, while at the same time provides ample space for Eurosceptic claims in its news stories and letters to the editor. *The Yorkshire Post* was, so to speak, torn between two lovers: a pro-EU advertiser and an anti-EU audience.

The topic of the articles is also revealing about the antagonistic politicisation and negative domesticisation of the EU in *The Yorkshire Post* (see Figure 7). The EU's raison d'être (its legitimacy) is the topic of one in every three articles (34.40 per cent), followed by agriculture (20 per cent of all articles), and justice,

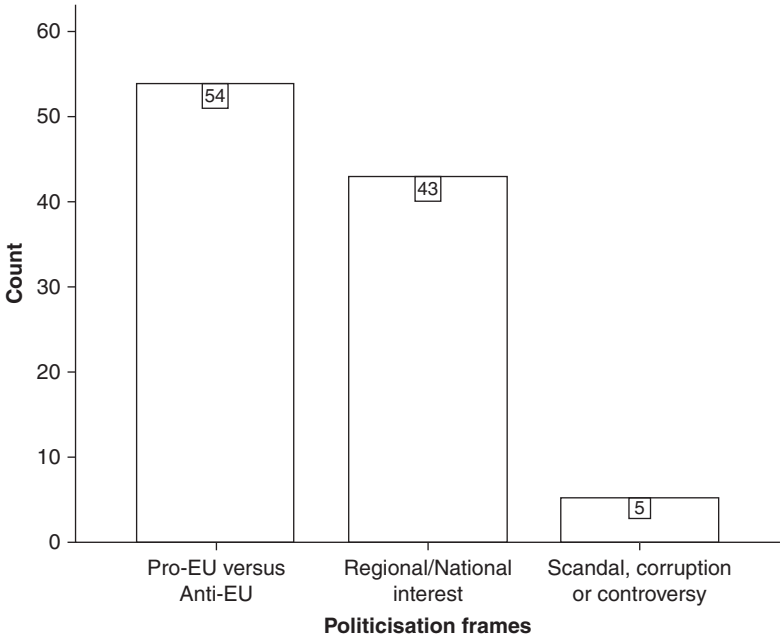

Figure 3 *The Yorkshire Post*: Frequency of politicisation frames
The politicisation of the EU in *The Yorkshire Post* is carried out mainly through the legitimacy debate, through the permanent questioning of the very existence of the EU ($n = 54$) but it is closely followed by the regional and national interest frame ($n = 43$). The left–right politicisation is virtually absent, with the scandal, corruption or controversy frame showing up on five occasions.

freedom and security (7.20 per cent of all stories), a category that includes news about immigration. Agriculture only employs less than 2 per cent of Yorkshire inhabitants, yet it is one of the most recurrent topics under discussion whenever the EU and the region are linked in the same news story (20 per cent of stories). This could be an indication of the presumably rural character of *The Yorkshire Post* audience (according to JICREG data from 2008, the newspaper sales are bigger, the smaller the population size). It could also be indicative of the poor identification with EU institutions: the EU is allowed to enter the regional space of politics only when reporting on those policy areas that are clearly Europeanised.

In *La Voz de Galicia*, the main topic is regional policy (see Figure 8), which accounts for nearly half of the articles that relate Galicia with the EU (42.86 per cent). This finding dovetails with the main means of politicisation in this newspaper: the pursuit of the regional/national interest. Most of the articles that make the EU present in Galicia relate to the quest to keep the generous European structural funds (€8.5 billion between 2000 and 2013) that have transformed its transportation infrastructure. Interestingly, the next most important topic is employment and social affairs (6.49 per cent), a "redistributive"

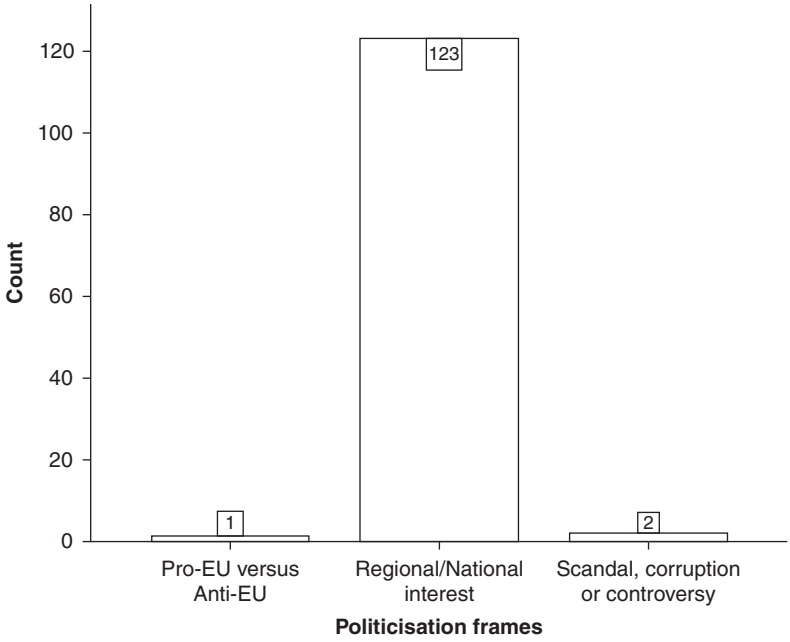

Figure 4 *La Voz de Galicia*: Frequency of politicisation frames
The regional interest (the struggle against others for the limited resource of European funding) is the main means of politicising the EU in Galicia ($n = 123$). EU politics in Galicia is not about a left–right division. It could be hypothesised that, even in those regions where the EU is something perfectly domesticised, as in Galicia, the EU is not politicised along the left–right divide. In Galicia, the EU is not about politics but about money.

policy area. This could be evidence of a more positive domesticisation of the EU in the region. The time range of the sample (2004–2009) covers the period of debate that preceded and followed the referendum on the European Constitution, which may explain the relatively strong presence of topics such as institutional affairs (5.84 per cent) and the EU's raison d'être (5.84 per cent). The presence of agricultural news is remarkably weak (2.60 per cent), but the news about fisheries and maritime affairs is far more relevant (5.84 per cent), given the importance of the fisheries industries in the region. Environmental news represents a similar percentage of articles in *La Voz de Galicia* (5.84 per cent) and *The Yorkshire Post* (5.60 per cent), although for different reasons. In Galicia, the EU is seen as the main force driving the installation of sewage-treatment plants, as some of its coastal cities still dump sewage directly into the sea, without any treatment. Galician environmental groups have in EU regulations their main ally. In the case of Yorkshire, the presence of environment-related news is attributable to the plans for carbon-storage plants and for a carbon-trading scheme, both channelled through the RDA Yorkshire Forward at that time.

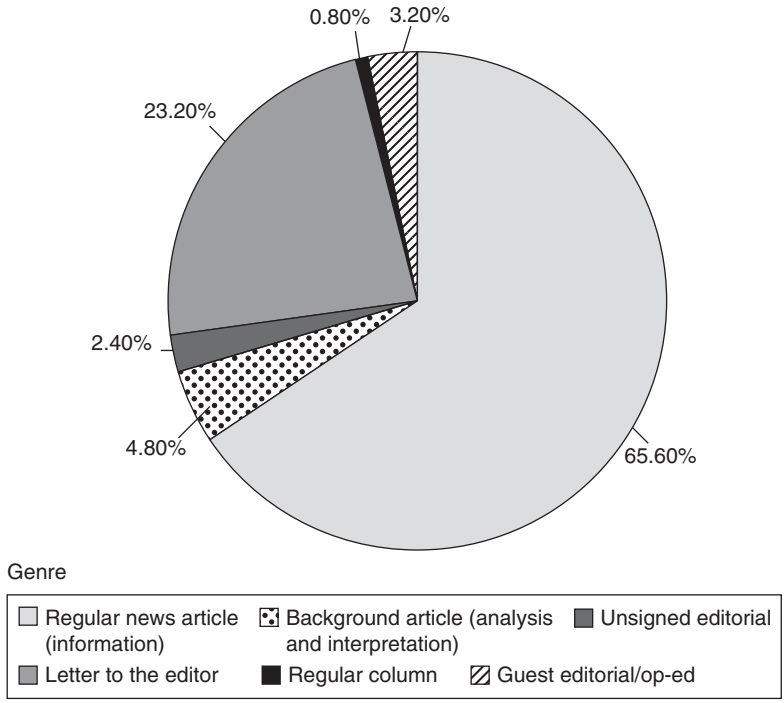

Figure 5 *The Yorkshire Post*: Percentage of articles by genre
Regular news stories are the most frequent genre (65.6 per cent), followed by letters to the editor, which comprise nearly one-quarter of the articles that relate Yorkshire to the EU (23.2 per cent). Most of these letters are concerned with the EU's raison d'être, and the majority of them are Eurosceptic and advocate withdrawal from the EU. Some pro-EU letters are published too, sometimes advocating for a European federation. When these two positions are featured on the same letters page, the debate over the EU looks very polarised, with no place for middle-ground arguments (withdrawal versus federation).

The input/output claims analysis inspired by Cox and Morgan's classic study of the Liverpudlian press (1973) reveals that *The Yorkshire Post* gives far more room for the claims by social actors (inputs into the political system) than from those of government or representatives (outputs from the political system). What in theory would be positive (given the common criticism of newspapers following the routines of the administration) is nothing more than a reflection of the newspaper's choice to give ample space to Eurosceptic claims. In *La Voz de Galicia* the sourcing pattern is more balanced, slightly favouring the government claims (60 per cent output, 40 per cent input). However, of that 60 per cent, 10 per cent are interpretations by the newspaper on what government action means for the region, so the state and society are roughly equally represented in terms of their claims (see figures 9 and 10).

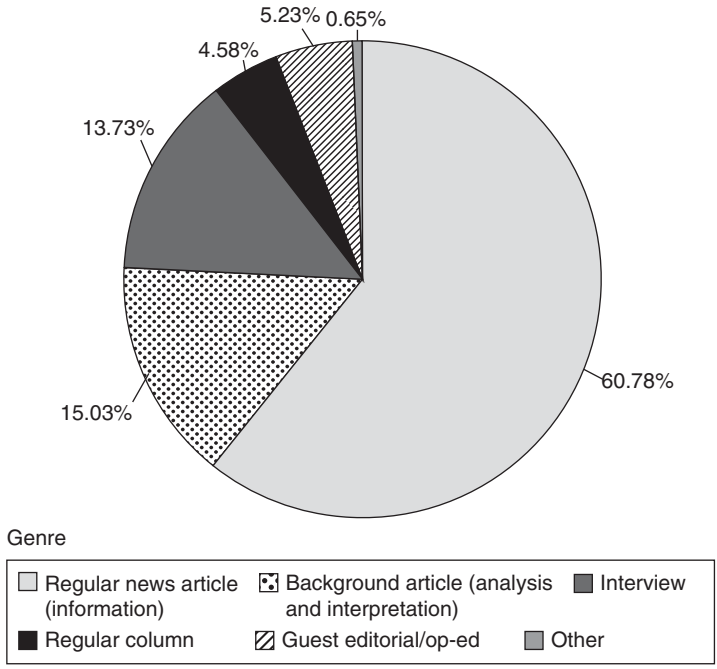

Figure 6 *La Voz de Galicia*: Percentage of articles by genre
Most articles published by *La Voz* are regular news stories (nearly two-third of all pieces: 60.78 per cent). Although the search engine I used to get the sample might have avoided the letters to the editor section, any regular reader of *La Voz* will surely agree that the presence of EU-related topics in that section is minimal, largely because the existence of the EU is not deemed to be threatening in any sense. *La Voz* publishes more background articles than *The Yorkshire Post* (15.03 per cent of all articles are of an analytical nature). Interviews also have a relevant presence in the newspaper (13.73 per cent of all stories), which may contribute to putting a human face to EU, or at least to its relationship with the region.

The network analysis of news sources was instrumental in identifying and guiding the selection of ethnographic informants in the two regions, but it also shows the political actors that journalists invite to the stage of EU-regional politics. I recorded up to six of the news sources cited in each of the articles analysed, coding for their geographic position in the multilevel European polity (local, regional, national, the EU) and their role in the public sphere (executive, legislative power, specific or diffuse interest group, etc.). Given that news stories were my unit of analysis, I considered the sources cited in each article as undirected dyads. All of the political actors cited in the news stories were considered, irrespective of whether they were quoted directly or not. I was primarily interested in the actors assembled by the newspaper whenever the regions were related to the EU. I was not concerned about the directionality of the ties (claimants and

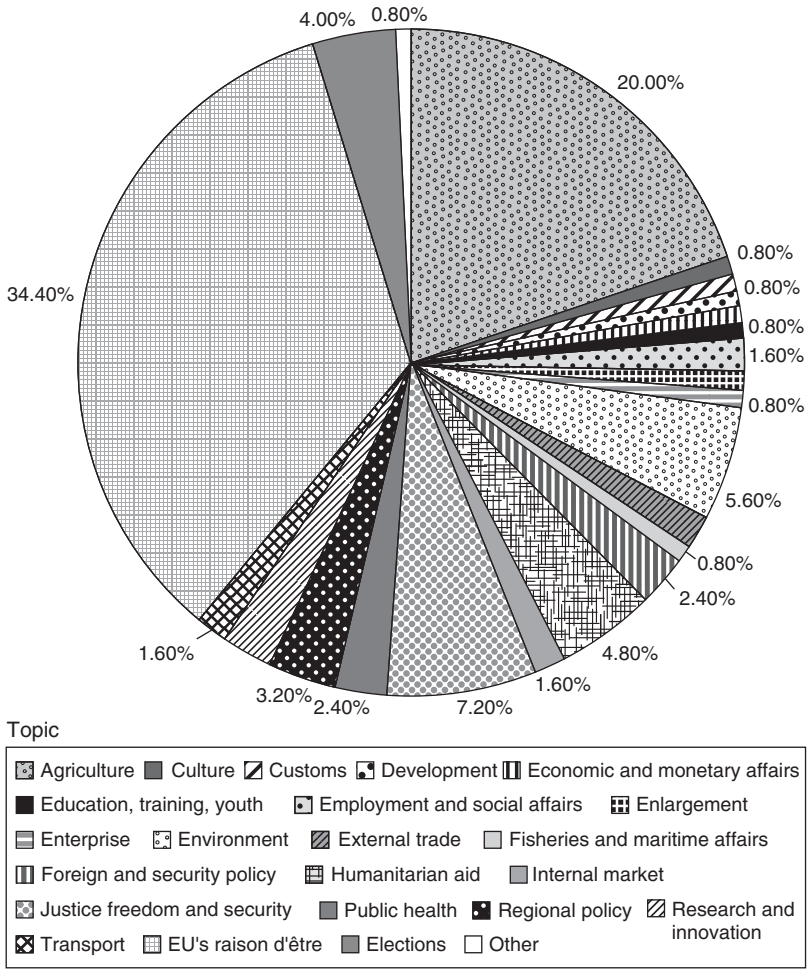

Figure 7 *The Yorkshire Post*: Percentage of articles by topic

The EU's raison d'être is the topic of one-third of the articles published by *The Yorkshire Post* (34.4 per cent). The legitimacy of the EU is in permanent question. Agriculture is the second most important topic (with 20 per cent of all stories), with news stories about the delays in the payment of farm subsidies (admittedly attributed to the national government) or the quest to get a (European) denomination of origin for a Yorkshire-made cheese. Other relevant topics are justice, freedom and security (which includes immigration-related issues, 7.2 per cent) the environment (5.6 per cent) and humanitarian aid (which includes stories about the recovery funds for the Yorkshire floods in 2007, 4.8 per cent). The low relevance of regional policy as a topic (3.2 per cent) is surprising.

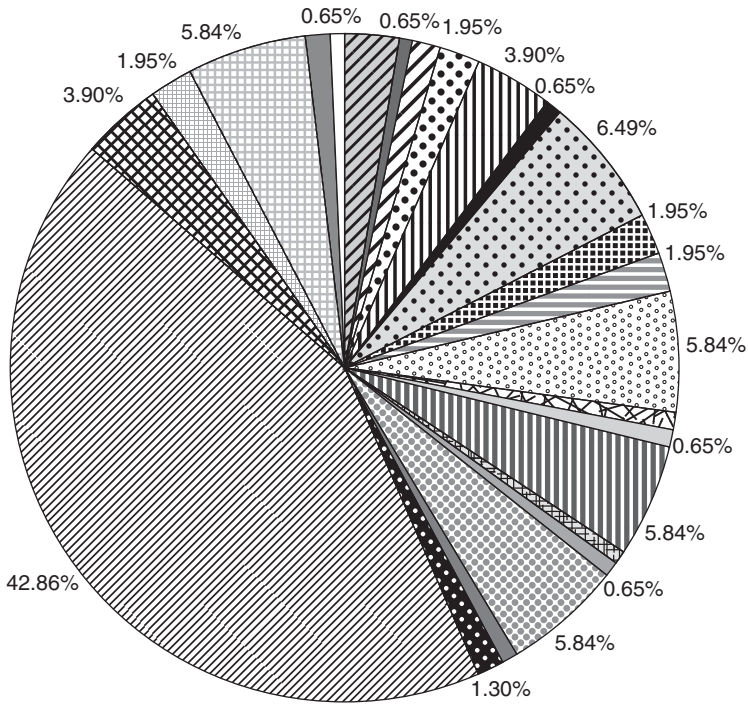

Figure 8 *La Voz de Galicia*: Percentage of articles by topic

The regional development funds that Galicia receives, which are said to represent 10 per cent of its gross domestic product as a region (and, in particular, the struggle to keep most of the European funding for regional development after the EU enlargement to the East), were the topic of nearly half of the newspaper articles in the sample. Other relevant topics were employment and social affairs (6.49 per cent), environment (5.84 per cent) and fisheries and maritime affairs (5.48 per cent). The debate surrounding the European Constitution is responsible for the relevance of such categories to institutional affairs (5.84 per cent) and the EU's raison d'être (5.84 per cent). Surprisingly, despite agriculture occupying far more workers in Galicia than in Yorkshire, this topic was of relatively minor importance (2.60 per cent).

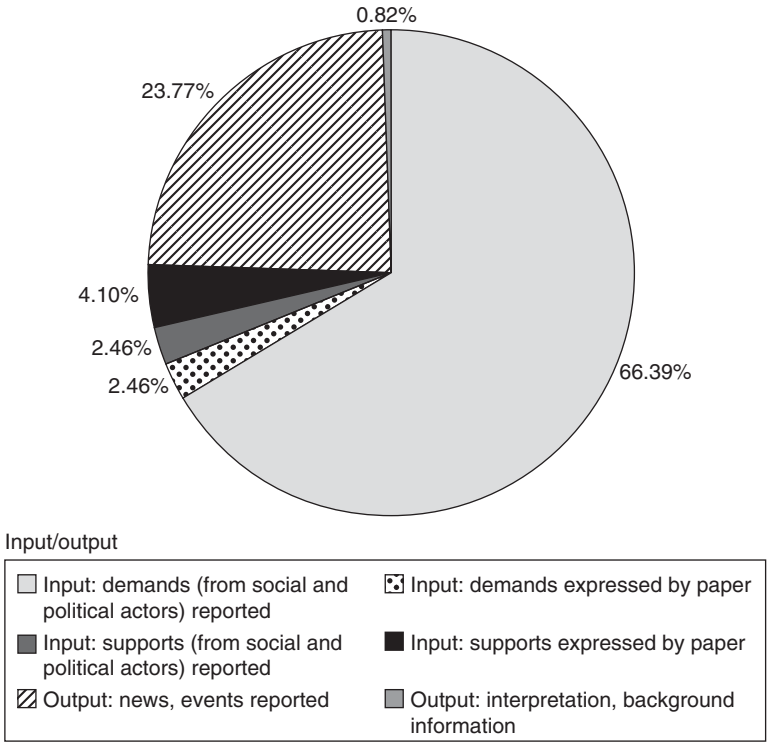

Figure 9 *The Yorkshire Post*: Input/output claims in articles
This pie chart shows the extent to which articles deal with inputs into the political system (e.g. demands from social actors targeting the administration or representatives) or with outputs from the system (e.g. news about how much funding the government will give to the region). The sourcing pattern of *The Yorkshire Post* is bottom-up. That is, the claims from actors demanding something from decision-makers are far more numerous (two-third of all claims: 66.39 per cent) than the claims of decision-makers delivering to society (output news: 23.77 per cent). This reflects the newspaper policy of being an outlet for Eurosceptic sentiments, which comprise the majority of input claims.

addressees) but about the actors that were grouped together in the same story by the newspaper, even if they did not directly address each other. By doing this, I attempted to get a comprehensive map of the widest range of actors that are placed into the public sphere whenever the EU and the regions meet.

Figures 11 and 12 show the frequency of actor citations in *La Voz de Galicia* and *The Yorkshire Post*. In Galicia, the most cited actors are the regional government (mentioned 73 times), the European Commission (68 mentions), the Spanish national government (43 mentions) and other EU member-state executives (28 mentions). In Yorkshire, the pattern of citations is more national and less multilevel. The UK national executive and the Westminster parliament get, respectively, 57 and 50 mentions. MEPs (most of them of British origin) are

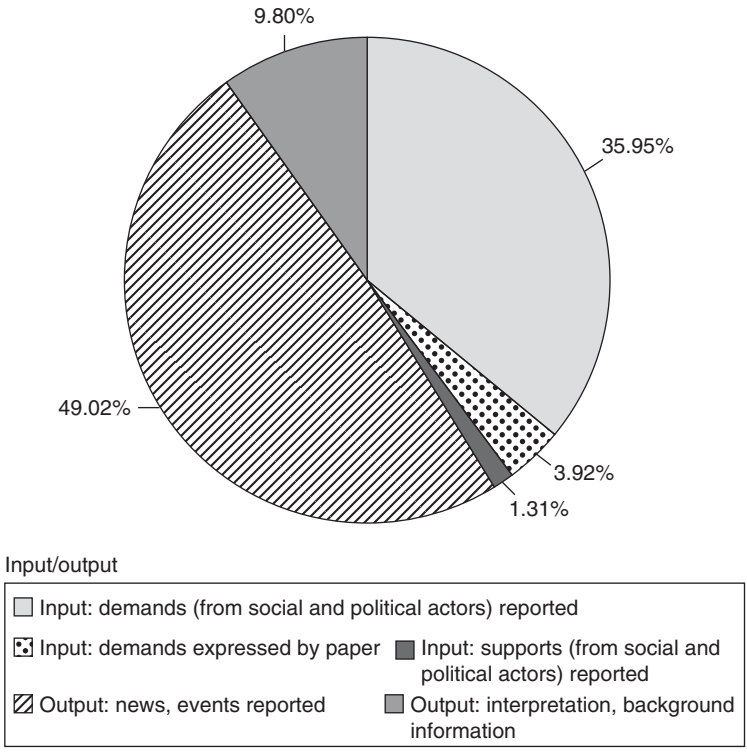

Figure 10 *La Voz de Galicia*: Input/output claims in articles
La Voz presents a more balanced sourcing pattern, slightly favourable to the claims of government and system authorities. Output claims from the administration or representatives to society (up-down) comprise half of the claims reported (49.02 per cent). Nearly 10 per cent of claims are an interpretation of what the EU action means for Galicia, whereas the rest are input demands from either social actors (36 per cent) or the newspaper (4 per cent).

tied with regional individuals (mostly the authors of letters to the editor), with 38 mentions. Following in frequency of citations are the regional specific interest groups (trade unions and business associations) with 26 mentions. Despite the European Commission being the second most-cited actor in Galicia (68 mentions), in Yorkshire it only captures 12 mentions.

The frequency of co-occurrence among news sources can be seen by looking at the times a given dyad is repeated in the newspaper articles. Figure 13 shows the network of newspaper sources for *The Yorkshire Post*, with the edges (the links between nodes or sources) weighted. The thicker the line between a given pair of nodes, the more frequent the co-citation of the two sources in the articles. The most recurrent dyad (46 occurrences) is between the UK government ("national executive") and the Westminster parliament ("national legislative"), followed by the self-referential dyads between national legislative actors (meaning that two

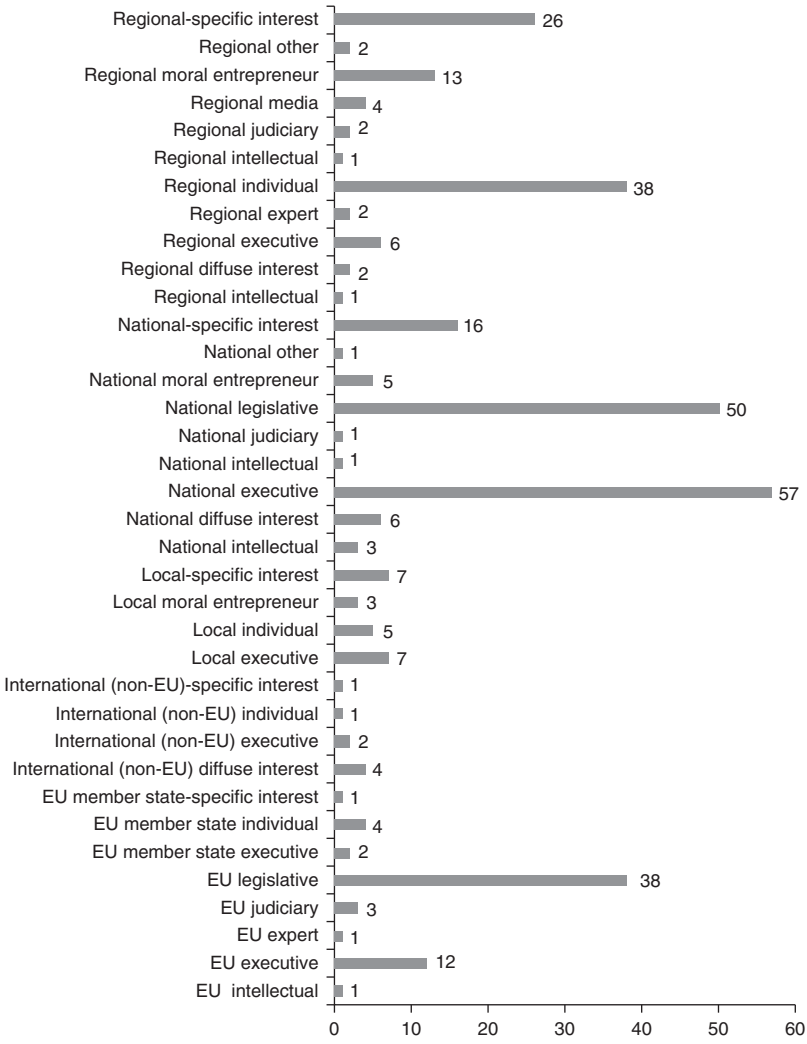

Figure 11 Frequency of sources cited by *The Yorkshire Post*
In *The Yorkshire Post*, the UK national executive and the Westminster parliament get, respectively, 57 and 50 mentions. MEPs (most of them of British origin) are tied to regional individuals (mostly the authors of letters to the editor), with 38 mentions. Following in frequency of citations are the regional-specific interest groups (trade unions and business associations) with 26 mentions. Despite the European Commission being the second most-cited actor in Galicia (68 mentions), in Yorkshire it captures only 12 mentions.

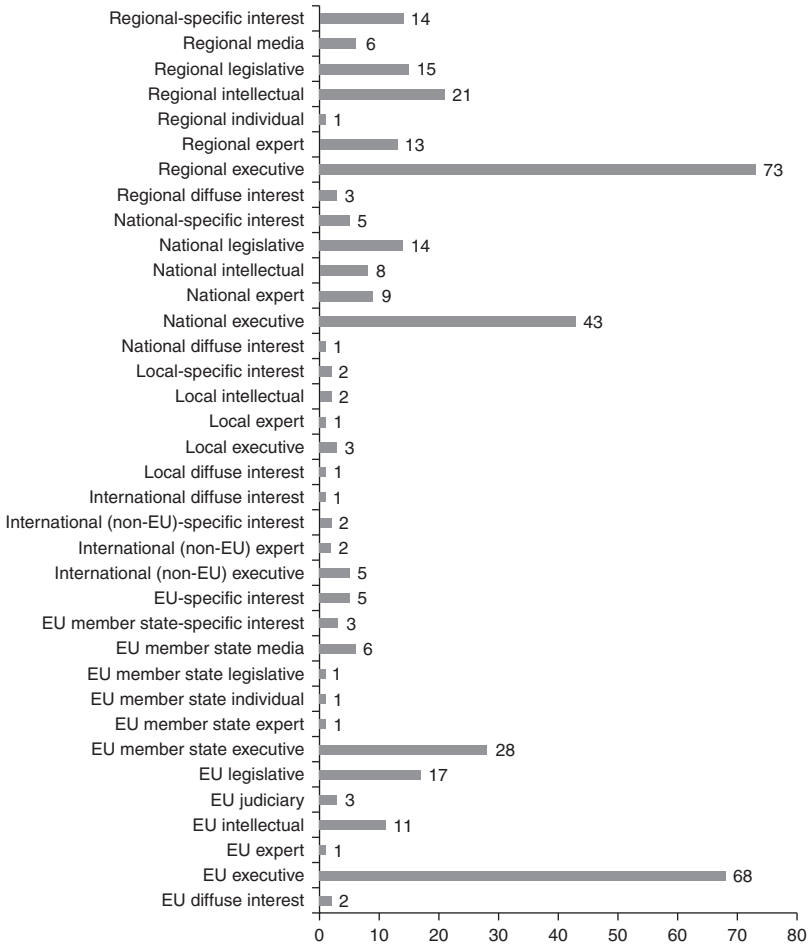

Figure 12 Frequency of sources cited by *La Voz de Galicia*
In *La Voz de Galicia*, the most cited actors are the regional government (mentioned 73 times), the European Commission (68 mentions), the Spanish national government (43 mentions) and other EU member-state executives (28 mentions).

different MPs are co-cited, 30 occurrences) and EP actors (two different MEPs co-cited, 29 occurrences). This pattern is indicative of the national domination of public discourse, even in the stories that link the EU with the regions in a regional newspaper. It must be noted that the MEPs quoted in the *Yorkshire Post* stories are mostly British MEPs, and that representatives from UKIP have a greater presence in the newspaper than the one they earn at the election polls. A search on the Nexis database for the citations of Yorkshire MEPs in the time period analysed

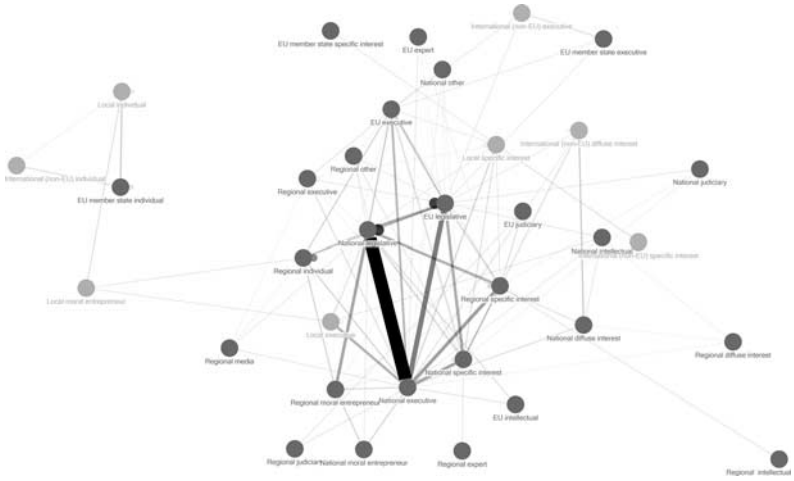

Figure 13 Network graph of sources cited by *The Yorkshire Post* (weighted edges)
This graph shows the network of the political actors cited as sources in *The Yorkshire Post*. The sources were coded by location (local, regional . . .) and role (executive, legislative . . .). The edges are weighted so that the thicker the line linking two given actors, the more frequent their co-citation in news stories. The national executive (the UK government) claims are frequently co-occurring with those of Westminster MPs and MEPs. The UK government also attracts the claims of regional- and national-specific interest organisations (e.g. farmers). The EU executive (the European Commission) is connected to the UK government, but surprisingly weakly connected to the legislative power, whether national or European.

shows the UKIP regional MEP as the most-cited European representative in the region. The EP actor–UK government actor dyad is the next in importance, occurring 17 times. Again, this is indicative of a very national discourse: (British) MEPs appear either linked to each other or to the national government. If the discourse were more European, the dyad formed by the EP and the European Commission would be frequent (implying a control of the executive by the legislative power), but it only appears five times in the sample collected. A proof of the ample space given to readers' voices in the letters page is the relatively high recurrence of the dyad regional individual–regional individual (15 times), which shows the clash between pro-EU and anti-EU readers in the letters page, who frequently cite a previous letter they are responding to. Next in frequency is the dyad UK government–UK government, which is indicative of the co-citation of members of the same cabinet, or of national government departments or executives. It is, again, evidence of the highly national pattern of the EU discourse in the Yorkshire region. It is not surprising, then, to find that the UK Executive has a degree of 24 (that is, it is involved in 24 types of dyads). According to Wasserman and Faust (1997), "an actor with a large degree is in direct contact or is adjacent to many other actors. This actor should then begin to be recognised by others as a major channel of relational information, indeed a crucial cog in the network, occupying a central location" (p. 179).

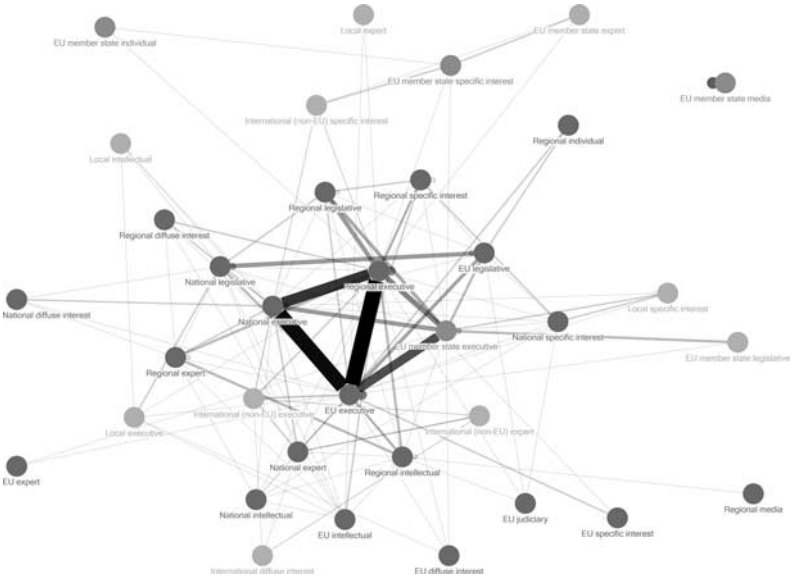

Figure 14 Network graph of sources cited by *La Voz de Galicia* (weighted edges)
This graph shows the network of the political actors cited as sources in *La Voz de Galicia*, coded by location (local, regional . . .) and role (executive, legislative . . .). Edges are weighted so that the thicker the line linking two given actors, the more frequent their co-citation in news stories. There is a clear "triangle of executives" formed by the regional executive (Galicia's autonomous government, the Xunta de Galicia), the EU executive (the European Commission) and the Spanish national government. The "multilevel" character of the EU is reflected in *La Voz*'s journalistic discourse. Interestingly, the three parliaments (regional, national and European) are conspicuously peripheral in the EU–Galicia network, at least from what is reflected by the region's benchmark newspaper.

Figure 15 shows the network graph of *The Yorkshire Post* sources, with node size reflecting eigenvector centrality and node opacity reflecting betweenness centrality. Eigenvector centrality (a number between 0 and 1) is a refined measure of degree centrality: it looks at the actors who have more ties to other actors who themselves are involved in a large number of dyads. An actor with a large eigenvector centrality is an actor who is well connected to other well-connected actors. Betweenness centrality (also a number between 0 and 1) measures the "bridging" role of nodes. That is, an actor with a high betweenness centrality connects other actors who otherwise would not be connected by themselves, or would be connected through more distant paths of dyads. In *The Yorkshire Post*, the UK government actors have the biggest betweenness centrality (1), and also the highest eigenvector centrality (0.39). The next actors with the highest betweenness centrality are the MEPs (0.5), who also enjoy a high eigenvector centrality (0.32), which is similar to the eigenvector centrality of national MPs (0.33). National- and regional-specific interests also show high figures in terms of eigenvector (0.31 national; 0.26 regional) and betweenness centrality (0.31 national; 0.29 regional).

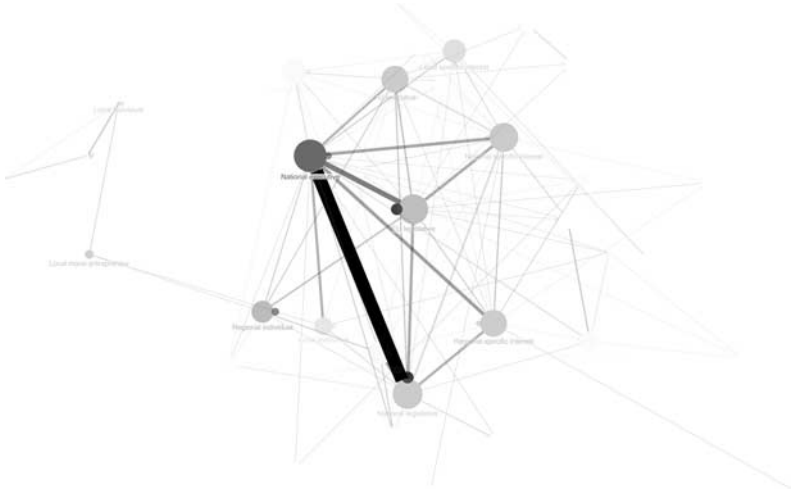

Figure 15 Network graph of sources cited by *The Yorkshire Post* (eigenvector and betweenness centrality)
In this graph, node size reflects eigenvector centrality (the bigger the node, the more links it has to other well-connected actors), while node opacity reflects betweenness centrality (the more opaque the node, the bigger its mediating or bridging role between or among actors that would not otherwise be connected). In Yorkshire, the most central actors are the national government and the EP MEPs. They are also the actors with more betweenness centrality.

These figures reveal a key central role for the British executive, which is linked to the better-connected actors in the network (it is the most popular among the most popular). It is also the actor that shows up in the middle of almost every narration in the news, as it is likely to be cited with actors that, on their own, are less likely to be co-cited.

The relevant role of national and European parliamentarians, however, should not be neglected. , especially when *The Yorkshire Post* network is compared with the *La Voz de Galicia* network, in which the legislative power is more peripheral (see Figures 13 and 14). This is indicative, I suggest, of the more political nature (in the antagonistic sense) of the EU in the UK. The EU is more successful (less contentious) in Galicia at the expense of being a mostly administrative (executive-dominated) reality. In the UK, parliamentary representatives have, along with the national government, the biggest say in the public discourse about the EU in the Yorkshire region. This discourse is often Eurosceptic (revealing again the antagonistic feature of the political in the UK–EU relationship), but the very fact that it is carried out by parliamentarians shows that the EU is more popular (as an enemy) than in Galicia (where the public sphere on regional–EU issues is heavily dominated by the executive powers). Interestingly – and this could be an indication of positive domesticisation – in Galicia there is a more balanced presence of all of the levels of the EU polity, at least among the executive powers. The European Commission, the Spanish government and the Galician regional government (the Xunta) form a strong triad of executives, with also a

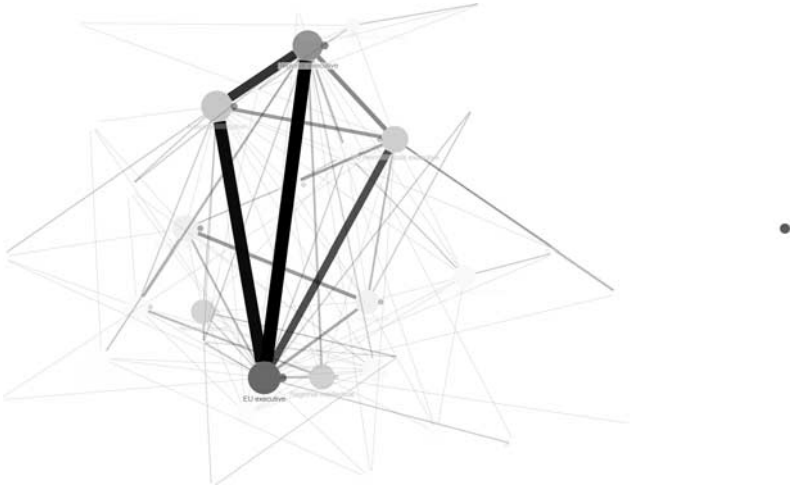

Figure 16 Network graph of sources cited by *La Voz de Galicia* (eigenvector and betweenness centrality)
In this graph, node size reflects eigenvector centrality (the bigger the node, the more links it has to other well-connected actors), while node opacity reflects betweenness centrality (the more opaque the node, the bigger its mediating or bridging role between or among actors that would not otherwise be connected). In Galicia, the most central actors are the European Commission and the regional government, the Xunta. They are also the actors with more betweenness centrality.

relevant presence of other EU executives, who show up in the news stories as important decision-makers for the region's central concern: the maintenance of regional development aid. The strongest connections in the Galician network are between the Xunta and the European Commission (the dyad is present 17 times), and between the Spanish government and the European Commission (they are co-cited 16 times), followed by the dyad between the Xunta and the Spanish government (12 times) and that between the Spanish government and other EU national executives (10 times). A further proof of the importance given to ERDF funding in Galicia is the co-citation of the Xunta and other EU executives (six times), as *La Voz de Galicia* understands that national leaders such as the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, or the French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, are key actors when it comes to the decision about who should keep on receiving regional funds.

The centrality of executives in the *La Voz de Galicia* network can be easily observed in the fact that they have the largest number of degrees – that is, they are involved in more dyads than any other actors. The European Commission has a degree of 28, followed by the Xunta de Galicia (degree of 24), the Spanish national government (22) and other EU member state executives (17). Figure 16 shows the Galician network, with the bigger nodes indicating a larger eigenvector centrality and the more opaque nodes reflecting a greater betweenness centrality. The European Commission occupies in the case of Galicia

the central and bridging role that the UK government occupies in the Yorkshire network. The commission has the largest eigenvector centrality (0.38) and the largest betweenness centrality (1). The regional and national executives have a similar eigenvector centrality (0.32 for the Xunta and 0.34 for the Spanish government), but the Galician regional government has a considerably larger betweenness centrality (0.84) than the national executive (0.36), whose figure on this measure is identical to that of other EU national executives (0.36), who nevertheless have a relevant but lower eigenvector centrality (0.24). In sum, the relative equilibrium between polity levels in the Galician case (with European, national and regional layers having a relevant presence in the network) is indicative of a successful positive domesticisation of the EU, which is firmly established as a central actor of equal or even greater relevance than regional or national actors in the news that relate Galicia to the EU. Though important, the presence of the national executive is far from being as dominant as in the UK case. However, the centrality of executives and the more peripheral role of the legislative at any level (European, national or regional) is also revealing about the instrumental politicisation of the EU in Galicia. Although more positively regarded, the EU in Galicia is less political. It does not excite the national proud against the supranational power, nor does it move to any debate along the ideological continuum between left and right. The EU is about administration (executives as main actors) and money (regional policy as the main topic in the news). In her comparative study of Spain and Germany's regions with regard to European integration, Börzel (2002) concludes that "Europeanization promotes deparliamentarization" (p. 233). If Galicia is considered to be, arguably, more Europeanised than Yorkshire, my study provides further evidence of this "executive dominance" (Börzel, 2002, p. 233).

Conclusions and limitations

Policy-makers usually understand the EU's communication problem as a matter of Eurosceptic media bias or lack of involvement of national, regional and local elites in "communicating Europe". The results of my content analysis show that their aims might be wrong-sighted. If the case of Galicia is generalisable to other pro-EU regions, a broad identification with EU institutions and a neutral or positive mediation of European public affairs does not lead to a "normal" or "agonistic" politicisation of the EU along the left and right ideological axis. Even in those regions such as Galicia where the EU is positively regarded, EU affairs are a matter of administration, not of politics. In Galicia, the EU is broadly seen as a positive influence that has improved the well-being of the region. Being Galician means being Spaniard and European, with little conflict of identity. However, EU politics in Galicia is about getting money from the EU. There is little, if any, discussion about policies channelled through the traditional ideological frames of conservatives, liberals, socialists or greens.

This finding suggests that the problem with the EU might be one not of communication but of politicisation. Whether that politicisation is possible in the absence of a European demos (domesticisation) is a matter of debate. But my evidence suggests moving the debate about the lack of popular engagement and knowledge of EU affairs beyond the role of senders and mediators (politicians and journalists) to more cultural and systemic concerns. The problem with the

EU may not lie in how it is communicated but in the absence of a political community, or in the features of its institutional system, which I claim have in-built incentives for non-publicity: the diplomatic, often secretive consensualism of confederal pacts between and among states; the depoliticising nature of neocorporatist arrangements between capital and labour; the double-edgedness of subsidiarity (which makes supranational authority palatable to nation states at the price of making the federal layer of power invisible); and the antipopular bias of neofunctionalist integration, which is based on the co-optation of national and regional elites, be they governmental, social or economic.

EU politics, even in those regions such as Galicia where the EU is an uncontested and settled institutional framework, is not normal. There is little that journalistic mediation can do, it seems, when the EU political regime itself offers so little opportunity for the visualisation of ideological political conflict. As compared with Yorkshire, in Galicia the EU is a legitimate political power. Galician environmentalist groups report their own regional government to the European Commission for non-compliance with environmental law. The triangle of multilevel political arguments resembles, in this sense, something close to a federal polity. Nevertheless, the ideological contest is absent. The journalistic coverage of the EU–Galicia relationship is concerned with the fines that the European Commission may inflict on the national government for not building a sewage-treatment plant in the city of Vigo, or with the diplomatic quest to keep as much regional development aid as possible after Eastern enlargement. It is yet to be seen the extent to which the regions will regard EU policy as acceptable when they lose funding to less prosperous regions in the newer member states.

Yorkshire is almost at the other extreme of Galicia in the scale of popular (and perhaps also elite) support for the EU. Yorkshire is a hotbed of Euroscepticism, with two anti-EU-elected MEPs (from UKIP and the British National Party), anti-EU millionaires such as Paul Sykes and a benchmark regional newspaper, *The Yorkshire Post*, that inevitably serves as an outlet for the popular animosity towards the EU. From a Schmittian point of view, the EU is in Yorkshire – a highly political matter. Whereas in Galicia the EU is rarely discussed at the bar, in Yorkshire the dangers of a superstate are discussed at the five o'clock tea of a family or group of friends of any social status. The EU is the "other", is the "enemy", and that makes the UK–EU relation very political, in an antagonistic sense. Other EU countries might be seen as good partners in the fight against human trafficking, or EU food labels might be viewed as a means of protecting the image of local food products. EU regional development aid is as well received in Yorkshire as elsewhere in Europe, but with a constant challenge by conservatives and Eurosceptics, who question why regional policy should be an EU and not a national competence. As for regulation, although interest groups often recognise in my interviews that many of their problems with EU regulations come from the "gold-plating" of EU directives by the national parliament (which transposes EU laws into national law), it is the EU that is blamed or challenged. This might be a consequence of lack of identification with the EU, which is seen as a space of free movement and commerce but not as a space for regulating other aspects of the economy. Again, one can observe a separation of the civic from the political, which is a means of promoting integration on a functionally specific basis which governments endorse because it allows them space to operate and agree to measures that they want but that Eurosceptics might oppose. As compared with

Galicia, regional groups in Yorkshire are more likely to lobby the EU for commercial advantage, but rarely is the European Commission seen as a legitimate power to which the national government may be reported for lack of compliance with EU regulations.

In sum, the content analysis reported here shows that poor identification leads to high levels of antagonistic politicisation in the case of Yorkshire, but in Galicia, strong identification, though certainly not conducive to antagonism, is not leading to agonistic politicisation. Instead of blaming journalists and the media, both policy-makers and communications scholars may want to direct their efforts at discovering why EU politics are so "apolitical", so difficult to translate into left versus right politics. The problem might not be the communication of the EU but the sort of political regime the EU is.

This content analysis is, it should be noted, affected by some limitations. The sample-selection procedure (searching for news stories that relate the name of the region with the EU) might have biased the sample towards those that inflate the presence of instrumental politicisation frames (pursuit of the regional interest). If the sample was composed of general EU news (whether it relates to the region or not), ideological politicisation (left versus right) could have a bigger presence. The reason why this content analysis was focused on the regional–EU relationship was because it was used as an instrument for the selection of ethnographic informants in the two regions under study. What might have helped me on the ethnographic front (as the EU actors in the regions could be more easily identified) might have limited the generalisability of the findings in the content analysis. I suggest, nevertheless, that similar content analysis in other established federations, such as the USA (with, say, Georgia and Illinois replacing Yorkshire and Galicia) would reveal a more ideological politicisation (left versus right) than that found in Europe.

Another limitation of this analysis might come from its Schmittian and Mouffian inspiration. The existence of a clear left–right divide in contemporary politics has been questioned for decades, and as a polity the EU might resemble more a consociational Scandinavian democracy than a more polarised political system, such as the ones in the UK or Spain. It might well be that the depoliticisation so decried by Schmitt and Mouffe is not an exclusive feature of the EU but a general pattern present in its constitutive democracies.

In any case, the parsimony of the domesticisation and politicisation concepts is revealed by their usefulness when interpreting the data from the content analysis. The passion of politics (which implies identification and conflict) and the cold administrative rationality of bureaucratic management (which is less dependent on identity and is often conflict-avoidant) can be sharply seen through the lenses of those Schmittian-inspired categories.

Methodological Appendix II (In-Depth Interviews)

Ethnographic interviews with cases selected through social network analysis

The guiding hypothesis of this study has been grounded in the assumption that there is not a European communications gap but a systemic and cultural

incompatibility between the EU administration (understood as the EU institutions and the member states) and a traditional liberal democracy. The chosen methodology has allowed me to penetrate the public sphere of EU affairs (politicians, journalists, trade unions, business associations) as well as the network of anonymous elite actors (the civil servants in Brussels and the member states, or the owners of consultancy firms who prepare EU grant bids) to ascertain, through interviews and observations, whether the source of the twin deficit of domesticisation and politicisation was to be found in the mediation of European affairs, or in the particular features of the European political and administrative system. If the evidence from my interviews and observations pointed towards the first cause, the communications gap theory would be confirmed. If my evidence supported the second, the reasons explaining the remoteness and depoliticised nature of European affairs would not be communicational, but systemic and cultural.

Borrowing from Muhlmann's (2008) definition of the two roles of journalism in democracy (centring and decentring – i.e. creating community and at the same time encouraging the circulation of ideas and dissent), I derived the concepts of "domesticisation" and "politicisation", which had been anticipated by Carl Schmitt, as the two basic conditions of a healthy public sphere – that is, a public sphere that would create a sense of community by reporting on the daily challenges of a given territory, and that would also include the contrasting voices that suggest different directions to face those challenges. These notions were used to respond to the following research questions:

- Why is the EU always felt as distant and remote (domesticisation deficit)?
- Why are the EU policies administered but rarely debated along a left–right axis (politicisation deficit)?

Ethnographic research usually consists of a relatively long engagement with a particular community in order to describe and interpret the reasons for a given behaviour, or to record and analyse the indigenous explanations that community members give to the phenomenon of interest. In this case, the thesis asks the members of the EU network of political actors about their perceived reasons for the distant and seemingly depoliticised nature of EU affairs. Their own accounts are then classified as communication-related or as structural/cultural.

The first challenge was to define that network of EU actors, knowing in advance that the EU is a multilevel political system, with transnational, national and substate regional subjects. For a single researcher, trying to sample the entire network of EU actors in the 27 member states would be impossible, so the first task was to limit the scope of the pool of research subjects while respecting the multilevel feature of the EU polity.

For a researcher concerned with the remoteness of EU affairs, a study limited to the EU network of Brussels actors, or to the EU-related actors in the national capitals, would miss an important but often overlooked level: the regions. It is at this administrative level where almost half of the EU budget is spent, as noted above. It is also at the regional level where the EU makes itself present through tangible developments, like road schemes, R&D projects and urban regeneration interventions. In countries such as Spain, but also up to a point in the UK, the

administration of EU policies and funding is decentralised, so the study of the lower-level bureaucracies in the UK and Spain should be performed not only at their respective national capitals but also at the regional level.

My main entry point, and the first criterion for generating the network of EU informants, would be the regional. As explained above, I opted for a comparative study between the regions of Yorkshire and Galicia, which enjoyed some formal similarities (regional identity, regional media and salient impact of regional EU funding) but differed fundamentally in their popular appreciation of the EU. Yorkshire was paradigmatically Eurosceptic and Galicia paradigmatically pro-European.

As a consequence of this regional focus, most of my informants would come from Yorkshire and Galicia, but I also chose to access the upper levels of the EU polity: the respective national capitals (as member states are still the key power-brokers in the EU) and the supranational level of European institutions, such as the European Commission and the EP in Brussels. My community of study would then be the network of EU actors related to Yorkshire and Galicia, irrespective of their geographic position in the multilevel polity: the regions, the national capitals and Brussels. Later, in order to explore other issues of relevance, such as neocorporatism, the fieldwork in Brussels made it possible to go beyond the regional actors and interview non-region-related trade unions and business associations.

Studying such a dispersed community through in-depth interviews and observations presents an obvious logistical challenge that cannot be overcome: the researcher has to travel to and within the two regions of study, the respective national capitals of the member states that the regions belong to, and the supranational capital, Brussels. There is a second challenge: the sample selection of informants. Where and how does one find the members of the respective regional networks of EU actors in Yorkshire and Galicia?

My research strategy, inspired by University of Washington communications researcher Philip Howard's "network ethnography" (2002, 2006), consisted of the selection of informants through social network analysis. In his study of the "e-politics community" in the USA (the community of foundations, activists and commercial companies involved in the development and use of new media-based political campaigns), Howard looked at the linkage patterns of those individuals invited to conferences on the topic of online campaigning, along with short questionnaires with those research subjects, who would then indicate further relationships with other actors.

Although the use of social network analysis for the selection of ethnographic informants has a long tradition in anthropology (Johnson, 1990), Howard's study was a key inspiration. My heuristical move was to change conference programmes for regional newspapers, as it was in regional-level benchmark dailies where I hoped to find references to the community of political actors whose activities link the regions under study and the EU. For Howard, the schedules of conferences on online politics were the main source to locate the actors of his physically dispersed (but topically related) community. My informants were also physically scattered in the three relevant levels of the EU polity (the region, the national capital and Brussels), but they were united by a common theme: their belonging to the community of EU actors related either to Galicia or to Yorkshire. *La Voz de Galicia* and *The Yorkshire Post* are, among the serious newspapers read

in the region, the ones with a wider audience. I accessed their respective digital archives and did a keyword search of those stories and comments that linked the name of the region (Galicia/Yorkshire) with the EU, using the latest EP legislative period (June 2004–June 2009) as my time range. This resulted in a sample of more than 100 stories for each newspaper. The content analysis technique was used in two ways: autonomously, to test hypotheses related to the concepts of domesticisation and politicisation (more information about these procedures can be found in Methodological Appendix I and instrumentally, as a sampling method for the identification and selection of research participants.

The social network analysis of news stories revealed that the member states were, in both cases, central actors in the networks. In most cases, the centrality of the national governments was due to references to national ministers and the prime minister. Accessing these subjects for interviews proved to be, as expected, a very difficult task (even when I requested short interviews via their press assistants after the ministers' public appearances, interviews were kindly declined). I used high-ranking civil servants as proxies of the national governments' view, which admittedly gave an imperfect substitute. Of the three tiers sampled in my interviews, the national one was the one with fewest interviewees. This is less problematic in Spain than in the UK, as in Spain the lower-level bureaucracies dealing with EU affairs are placed in the regions rather than in Madrid. In any case, this must be taken as a limitation that should be solved in further studies. When it comes to civil society actors, the oversampling of the regional level is less troublesome than might initially appear, as in some key industrial sectors the national offices of interest groups were based in the regions that I studied (e.g. the UK's National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations has its national office in York, and Spain's National Association of Canned Fish and Shellfish has its main office in Vigo).

According to the literature, one of the main features of the neofunctionalist network of EU actors is its public invisibility. That is, as Haas famously wrote, the architects of European integration are not the intellectuals or the public figures but the anonymous civil servants, the environmentalist activists, the business groups and the trade unionists. These actors do not always show up on the news, so I used a secondary sampling technique – snow-ball sampling – asking my interviewees identified through the newspaper reports to indicate to me the names of other relevant informants.

The fieldwork in Yorkshire and the UK was performed during the 2008/2009 academic year, whereas the interviews and observations in Galicia and Spain were performed during the 2009/2010 academic year. Three field trips were done in Brussels in 2008 (to participate in a gathering of young journalists known as the European Youth Media Days), in 2009 (to do interviews seizing the opportunity of attending a conference on European affairs) and in 2010 (when I observed for three months the activities of an MEP with the financial support of the Fundación Galicia-Europa). All in all, I conducted 93 interviews (most of them in depth) and around 30 observation sessions (political rallies, academic conferences, MEP constituency visits, etc.).

The use of social network analysis for the selection of informants belonging to a community that is spread across space was indeed useful. However, I must point out some limitations. Mine was not a pure "network ethnography" project, as I began doing interviews before the content and the social network analysis

was completed. My fieldwork in the UK began several months before the date of the June 2009 EP elections, which marked the end of the temporal frame of the content analysis. Still, I used the sources cited in *The Yorkshire Post* from 2004 to 2008, whose network configuration did not vary significantly when the year 2009 was added. Also, I call my research strategy "network interviewing" rather than "network ethnography" because the periods of long engagement with communities that are the staple ethnographic research were fairly brief in my case, as the study relied mostly on in-depth interviews.[2]

In the end, as noted, the two networks appeared to be heavily influenced by the national actors. This is due, in great part, to the larger journalistic visibility of national ministers and prime ministers. Although, as suggested, the substitute bureaucracies of the nation states are also found at the regional and not only at the national capital level, my oversampling of the regional layer (for both convenience and accessibility of informants) might have biased the results somehow, and this gap should be addressed in further investigations. Indeed, the EU looks very neofunctionalist at the regional level (especially in Yorkshire, where the administration of EU funds is carried out by a technical agency), but very intergovernmental and confederal when in Brussels, where the commission is found to be the victim of the interests of member states. In any case, neither neofunctionalism nor confederalism is amenable to a healthy publicity, as elite networks are by nature not popular, and confederations are by nature not entirely democratic (as their constituents are the states, not the individuals).

Most interviews were transcribed and analysed with TAMS Analyzer, a software program for qualitative textual analysis. In some cases, interviews could not be recorded, so I took notes and re-created the conversation later on the same day, so as to miss as few details as possible. In my analysis of interviews, I used two strategies to come up with categories of interest. On the one hand, I purposefully sought to find quotes or situations that could be labelled as evidence of domesticisation or politicisation deficits. I made room for what constituted my null hypothesis – that is, the actual existence of a communications gap. Interestingly, those arguing for the existence of a communications deficit in European politics were those closer (or actually involved) in European institutions. The second strategy was purely inductive, and consisted of the identification of recurring patterns, which would later be identified with a tag. Examples of these inductively discovered categories were "imperfect accountability" (referring to the financial, but not political, control of European investments) and "managerial state" (alluding to the separation of economics and politics, a tag that has a strong theoretical connection with neocorporatism). Eventually these two categories guided me in the writing of chapter sections in the explanation of the politicisation deficit, as can be discovered below.

Ethical considerations

Political anthropology, like all ethnographic research, involves numerous ethical dilemmas. In the internal university review for the conduct of research with human subjects, I was encouraged to pay special attention to the confidentiality of my sources. During the course of my fieldwork, my own interviewees, especially those with responsibilities within European institutions, asked me not to reveal their identities, as some of their assertions could compromise their

status. Most MEPs and journalists said they had no objections to being cited with their real names, but as a general rule I decided to err on the cautious side. Even in those cases where I do cite the newspapers or media organisations they work for, it must be understood that the journalists' declarations are in no way representative of any official view in their organisations.

One of the main ethical concerns for me was that, even if I did not mention their names, some of my subjects could be identifiable. This was less problematic with public figures like MEPs, who had no problem with being identified, but members of bureaucracies, be they regional (Yorkshire Forward, Xunta de Galicia) or European (European Commission), demanded a more careful approach. This is the reason why in most cases I do not specify the concrete directorates for which these informants work. The reader may miss some relevant information to assess how my interviewees' positions might influence their opinions or worldviews, but again I opted to protect their anonymity as far as I could so as to relieve them of any potential problems.

At all times, I identified myself as a researcher from the University of Leeds, interested in comparing the regions of Galicia and Yorkshire with regard to their engagement with EU politics and policies, with special attention to the so-called communications gap. Except in those interviews conducted "on the run" (some politicians were not available for long interviews, so I had to chase them between speeches at party conferences), I used a consent form in which I briefly summarised my research, stated how I would protect my subjects' confidentiality, and provided a contact with me and my supervisor.

I have found a shadow of betrayal in most of the ethnographic research I have conducted. Even when I identify myself as a researcher, and even when the tape recorder is on, there is a moment when a confession by the interviewee might be the key of the entire conversation, and it is difficult to assess whether that revelation was consciously phrased or was unintentionally dropped in the context of the amicable and relaxed environment pursued by the researcher. There is an old journalistic adage that says that reporters live off their own discretion and off the indiscretion of others, and I see it applying as well to ethnographic research. Indeed, when interviewees end the conversation with a regret of the type "I think I talked too much", both journalists and ethnographers can be confident that they have done a good job. I do not think I have crossed any reprehensive ethical threshold but, from my experience in the realm of journalism, this is only known for certain when interviewees see their own words on print. In some cases, their protests or challenges might come from their own regret of having said too much. In some others, however, their complaints might be entirely warranted.

In any case, I hope that my choice to provide all of my interviewees with a cloak of confidentiality, even when this was not asked for, might prove optimal.

Fieldwork engagements (interviews and observations, 2007–2010) in chronological order

Summary: 93 interviews (most of them in depth) and 31 observation sessions. Disclaimer: Most of the journalists I interviewed declared to speak on a personal condition, so their statements cannot and should not be understood to be endorsed by the media companies that they work for.

25 January 2007. Leeds.
Interview with Yorkshire Socialist MEP press officer.
27 February 2007. Leeds and surroundings.
Shadowing Yorkshire Socialist MEP around his constituency.
27 May 2008. A Coruña.
Book presentation by former MEP from the Galician Nationalist Bloc (EFA/Greens Group).
13 September 2008. Sheffield.
Observation: European Festival at Sheffield Cathedral.
15–17 October 2008. Brussels.
Participant observation: European Youth Media Days.
24 October 2008. Leeds.
Observation: Conference by Carolyn Flint, European Minister, at the University of Leeds.
17 November 2008. Leeds.
Observation: Communicating Europe seminar with former head of the European Commission Representation in the UK.
17 December 2008. Madrid.
Interviews at the European Commission's Representation in Spain.
29 December 2008. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with correspondent for Galicia's Public Television (TVG) in Brussels.
7 January 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with the director of the Office for International Research Projects, Government of Galicia.
26 February 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Yorkshire Socialist MEP.
27 January 2009. Leeds.
Observation: Climate change event at the University of Leeds.
16 February 2009. Morley, West Yorkshire.
Shadowing Yorkshire Socialist MEP at the Scamnesty event, Consumer Direct Office, Morley.
5 March 2009. Doncaster.
Observation: Neil Kinnock euro-fundraiser event.
6 March 2009. Hull.
Interview with former MEP for the Humberside.
6 March 2009. Hull.
Observation: Yorkshire women entrepreneurs event.
6–8 March 2009. Harrogate.
Observation: Liberal Democrats Spring Conference.
13 March 2009. Leeds.
Observation: JMECE Conference: "You and the future of democracy in the EU".
13 March 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Liberal Democrat MEP for Yorkshire.
21 and 22 March 2009. London.
Observation: European Citizens Consultation in London.
21 March 2009. London.
Interview with officer from the UK Representation of the European Commission A.
25 March 2009. Leeds.

Interview with Yorkshire environmentalist activist.
27 March 2009. London.
Interview with director of pressure group on British electoral reform.
27 March 2009. London.
Observation: "Vote Match Europe 2009", organised by pressure group on British electoral reform.
31 March 2009. Leeds.
Brief encounter with a sociologist who wrote a report for Yorkshire Futures.
25–26 April 2009. Cheltenham.
Observation: Conservatives Spring Conference.
16 April 2009. Leeds.
Interview with former Yorkshire Forward officer.
20 April 2009. York.
Interview with UKIP MEP for Yorkshire, and observation of his address to a classroom at Askham Bryan College (near York).
23 April 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Yorkshire Forward officer A.
25 April 2009. Cheltenham.
Interview with Conservative MEP for Yorkshire A.
25 April 2009. Cheltenham.
Interview with Leeds City Region officer.
26 April 2009. Cheltenham.
Interview with Conservative MEP for Yorkshire B.
26 April 2009. Cheltenham.
Interview with Conservative MEP for the South East.
29 April 2009. London.
Interview with an officer from European Parliament Representation in the UK.
29 April 2009. London, Foreign Office.
Meeting: "Is the European Union responsive to British civil society?"
29 April 2009. London.
Interview with officer from European Commission Representation in the UK B.
5 May 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Yorkshire Forward officer B.
8 May 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Yorkshire consulting firm.
12 May 2009. London.
Interview with Centre for European Reform representative.
12 May 2009. London.
Interview with former Brussels correspondent for *The Financial Times*.
12 May 2009. London.
Interview with Open Europe think tank.
12 May 2009. London.
Observation: Conference by Andrew Moravcsik at the London School of Economics.
13 May 2009. Leeds.
Observation: Debate between Etienne Balibar and Zygmunt Bauman on "Europe and the rest".
18 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with Brussels correspondent for *La Voz de Galicia*.

18 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with European Commission civil servant A.
19 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with European Commission Auditor.
19 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with Spanish press office representative, European Parliament.
20 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with Bruno Waterfield, *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent in Brussels.
20 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with Brussels correspondent for *The Economist*.
20 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with Brussels correspondent for the Press Association.
20 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with European Commission civil servant B.
20 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with European Commission civil servant C.
21 May 2009. Brussels.
Interview with EFA/Greens MEP.
28 May 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Europe Direct Leeds representatives.
29 May 2009. Leeds.
Interview with *The Yorkshire Post* journalist A.
1 June 2009. Leeds.
Interview with officer from the International Relations Office, Leeds City Council.
2 June 2009. Ravenglass, Cumbria.
Interview with National Farmers Union representative A.
4 June 2009. Leeds.
Observation: "How to succeed in EU funding" seminar at the University of Leeds.
5 June 2009. York.
Interview with National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations representative.
8 June 2009. Leeds.
Interview with *The Yorkshire Post* journalist B.
8 June 2009. Leeds.
Interview with Friends of the Earth environmental activist.
9 June 2009. Grimsby.
Interview with Grimsby Fish Merchants Association representative.
11 June 2009. Driffield, East Yorkshire.
Interview with National Farmers Union representative B.
16 June 2009. London.
Interview with *The Yorkshire Post* journalist C.
16 June 2009. London.
Interview with Defra (Department of Food and Rural Affairs) officer.
16 June 2009. London.
Interview with Spanish Socialist MEP.
19 June 2009. York.
Interview with National Farmers Union representative C.

9 July 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with Conservative Spanish MEP.
20 July 2009. Vigo.
Interview with EU Fisheries Control Agency representative.
7 October 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with Galician business association officer.
16 October 2009. A Coruña.
Observation of the seminar: "Territorial cooperation in the new Atlantic space: Future challenges".
17 October 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with expert on European funding A.
20 October 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with political science professor at the University of Santiago de Compostela A.
28 October 2009. A Coruña.
Observation: Conference by Francisco Fonseca, head of the European Commission in Spain.
29 October 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with EU funds manager.
2 November 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with Chamber of Commerce of A Coruña representative.
2–5 November 2009. A Coruña.
Observation: Seminar on European Funding, Chamber of Commerce, A Coruña.
12 December 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with expert on European funding B.
18 December 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with ARPESCO (Shipbuilders Association of A Coruña) representative.
20 November 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with expert on European funding C.
20 November 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with expert on European funding D.
23 November 2009. Madrid.
Interview with press officer for the European Parliament representation in Spain.
24 November 2009. Madrid.
Interview with civil servant from the General Directorate of European Funding, Ministry of Economy, Government of Spain.
4 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with Agrarian Unions (Unións Agrarias) representative.
4 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with former MEP for the Galician Nationalist Bloc.
10 December 2009. Vigo.
Interview ARVI (Shipbuilders Cooperative of Vigo) representative.
10 December 2009. Vigo.
Interview with ANFACO (National Association of Tinned Fish) representative.
11 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.

Interview with Galician Agrarian Union (Sindicato Labrego Galego) representative.
14 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with Young Farmers-Galicia (Xóvenes Agricultores) representative.
14 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with ADEGA (Association for the Ecological Defence of Galicia) representative.
15 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with law professor, University of Santiago de Compostela.
18 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Observation: Conference by Chantal Mouffe, "Democratic politics and agonistic pluralism."
22 December 2009. A Coruña.
Interview with former deputy director for relations with the EU, Government of Galicia.
23 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with director-general for relations with the EU, Government of Galicia.
23 December 2009. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with deputy director for relations with the EU, Government of Galicia.
5 January 2010. Vigo.
Interview with the Atlantic Arc association (Galicia-North of Portugal) representative.
7 January 2010. Vigo.
Interview with former regional Fisheries Minister, Government of Galicia.
7 January 2010. Bueu, Pontevedra.
Interview with former regional Minister for Economy and Industry, Government of Galicia.
11 January 2010. Fene, A Coruña.
Interview with spokesperson for the Emergency Citizen Committee to save the Ferrol Harbour.
14 January 2010. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with expert on European funding E.
18 January 2010. Santiago de Compostela.
Interview with Political Science Professor, University of Santiago de Compostela B.
5 April 2010. On a train from A Coruña to Vigo.
Interview with former Spanish MP for the Galician Nationalist Bloc.
7 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with spokesperson for Spanish trade union in Brussels.
8 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with British trade union representative.
9 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with correspondent for El Correo/Grupo Vocento.
13 April 2010. Brussels.
Observation: Civil society "Queremos Galego" platform (campaigning for Galician language in schooling) meets with the European Commission.
14 April 2010. Brussels.

Observation: Press conference by Queremos Galego platform with Oriol Junqueras, Catalan MEP and meeting of the EP interest group for Minorities, National Communities and Languages on the situation of Galician language.
16 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) representative.
19 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with journalism university professor.
22 April 2010. Brussels.
Observation: European Commission Daily Press Conference at the Berlaymont
23 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with Business Europe representative.
26 April 2010. Brussels.
Observation: Modern Language students visit the EP. First afternoon of parliamentary committees.
27 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with European Commission, DG Communication representative.
28 April 2010. Brussels.
Observation: European Commission daily press conference: Greek crisis.
29 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with UK Representation to the EU (UKRep) spokesperson
30 April 2010. Brussels.
Interview with Brussels correspondent for *El Mundo*.
3 May 2010. Brussels.
Observation: European Commission Mid-Day Press Conference.
4 May 2010. Brussels.
Observation: 60th Anniversary of the Schuman Declaration panel debate at the EP library.
5 May 2010. Brussels.
Observation: European Parliament mini-plenary in Brussels and roundtable on Galician literature.
5 May 2010. Brussels.
Interview with EU Council official.
7 May 2010. Brussels.
Interview with civil servant from the Spanish Permanent Representation to the EU.
7 May 2010. Brussels.
Observation: Meeting of the Euro-zone Heads of Government. Includes interview with Spanish diplomat, and other interviews with Spanish correspondents based in Brussels who were covering the event that night.
11 May 2010. Brussels.
Interview with Brussels correspondent for Spanish radio network.
12 May 2010. Brussels.
Interview with European Parliament's spokesperson.

Sample interview protocol

Note: This is a sample interview protocol with the general questions I included in most of my interviews, covering the two key variables studied in this research (domesticisation and politicisation). Given that I interviewed a wide range of

actors in the public (and semipublic) sphere – from farmers to European Commission civil servants, by way of Brussels and region-based journalists and business organisations – I tailored each questionnaire to every interviewee, including sector-specific questions that are not reflected here.

1. Background questions

- When did you become involved in European affairs?
- Could you please tell me about an average day in your life?

2. Domesticisation

- It seems almost every policy issue is touched in one way or another by the EU. Why is it then that the EU appears so distant?
- Why do we talk about the EU or Europe as something happening "out there"?
- How would you qualify the relationship between local/regional/national representatives and the EU-level politicians and administration?
- Do you think there is a good debate about Europe in the region/nation?
- Please comment on this sentence by Spanish diplomat Salvador de Madariaga: "Europe is not and will never be a nation, but a cluster of nations. There will never be a European electoral body."
- In relation to the previous sentence, how would you justify the need for a European Parliament?
- We see the EU flag on almost every public works banner, but we rarely see an EU actor cutting the red ribbon of the completed public work, even if that action has been funded mostly entirely by the EU. Why is it? Do EU actors benefit in any way from public invisibility?

3. Region–EU relationship

- How would you describe Galicia/Yorkshire to a foreigner?
- Do you think there is a Galicia/Yorkshire lobby in Brussels?
- Is the regional press receptive to your demands?
- Are you happy with the electoral system used for European elections? Why?

4. Politicisation

- Why is it that participation in European elections seems to be declining over the years, in every European country?
- What difference does it make to vote right or left in European elections?
- A Eurobarometer survey revealed that half of the Europeans did not know the European Parliament was an elected institution. Why do you think there is such a popular ignorance about the shape and workings of European institutions?
- The debate about Europe seems to evolve about how much money we get from it, instead of other, more political issues. Is this perception correct in your opinion? Why is this happening?

- MEPs often complain about their low media coverage. However, their op-ed contributions to the press are usually very technical, with little willingness to get into the fray of politics, at least in Spain. Why is it?
- Please, comment on this sentence from a Brussels-based political actor: "The European Parliament is the gentle face of European bureaucracy. The EP limits itself to amend the laws done by others, and their members are concerned about meeting the aims charted by their respective national governments, instead of defending the interests of their constituents."
- The EU seems to be built on two axioms: 1) Democracy cannot exist without the common identity of a nation, and Europe is not a nation, so in order for it to be governed we need instead a technocracy, an enlightened despotism, a government by the wise. 2) It is possible to separate economics from politics: that's why we would have a corporatist government, based on consensus, revealing the end of politics. Do you agree with these assertions? Why?
- Most actors decline to comment on the sort of building they would like to erect when they talk about "the construction of Europe": clear references to a federation or a confederation are only common among academics, not among politicians . . . Why is the language about the political form of Europe so vague, especially among their core supporters?
- Can we have a European democracy without a European federation?

5. Transparency and accountability

- The EU says it is one of the most transparent administrations. However, in the citizen forums I have observed the first complain from voters is precisely the lack of transparency. Who is right in your opinion? What is it that is not transparent about the EU?
- In my interviews and observations, I have discovered that there is a sort of specialised network in the regions through which one must get in touch in order to deal with the EU. It is almost impossible to deal with the EU directly. Why is it?
- In our regions, those who know what the EU is about seem to form a separate network that covers everybody, but very few can see or touch this overarching web. Do you agree with this perception? Why is that?

6. Co-optation of civil society, corporatism

- Brussels is full of umbrella organisations that represent the most diverse interests. However, perhaps because of their closeness to European institutions, they are often accused of being too cozy and complicit with the EU's own aims. Do you think there is such a "co-optation" of organised civil society?
- Please, comment on this sentence: "The EU works well with civil society, but not with society. The EU is only for the initiated, and it is not in the interest of these initiated to make it more popular. The EU is like an electrical installation designed for the elites, and every time you try to plug in democracy, the fuses blow."

7. Communications gap

- After the 2005 referenda crisis, European leaders complained about a communications gap between the EU and its citizens. Do you think the EU has, indeed, a communications problem? Do you think the problem with the EU is mainly about communication?
- Please, comment on this sentence by a British Conservative MEP: "If the EU had a communications problem, it should have been solved already. Every year millions of euros are spent on bringing journalists to Brussels, and the EU information offices reach every corner in the continent."
- If you think there is a communications gap in EU politics, who is to blame? The senders (EU and national politicians)? The mediators (journalists and media companies)?

8. Diagnosis and prognosis

- What's wrong with the EU? How would you fix it?
- In ten years, how do you see the EU and its relationship with the region?

9. Reputational references

- Do you know of someone who you think would know about the topics covered in this interview?

Methodological Appendix III (Public opinion figures)

Public opinion regarding the EU in Galicia and Yorkshire

Public opinion on the EU in Spain and the UK (Eurobarometer 71.3, June–July 2009).[3]

QA6a. Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)'s membership of the European Union is…?

	Spain (*n* = 986)	**UK (*n* = 1,341)**
A good thing	**69.3%**	28.3%
A bad thing	9.9%	**33.0%**
Neither good nor bad	16.8%	30.1%
Don't know	4.0%	8.6%

QA7a. Taking everything into account, would you say that (OUR COUNTRY) has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?

	Spain (*n* = 986)	**UK (*n* = 1,341)**
Benefited	**69.0%**	35.3%
Not benefited	20.2%	**49.7%**
Don't know	10.9%	15.1%

A9. I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it.

	Spain ($n = 986$)	**UK ($n = 1{,}341$)**
The (NATIONALITY) Government		
Tend to trust	34.5%	20.7%
Tend not to trust	**61.2%**	**78.8%**
Don't know	4.4%	3.5%
The European Union		
Tend to trust	**50.4%**	21.6%
Tend not to trust	39.4%	**60.0%**
Don't know	10.2%	18.5%

QA10. In general, does the European Union conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?

	Spain ($n = 986$)	**UK ($n = 1{,}341$)**
Very positive	4.8%	3.3%
Fairly positive	**46.5%**	19.5%
Neutral	34.8%	**36.7%**
Fairly negative	9.9%	20.1%
Very negative	0.9%	14.1%
Don't know	3.1%	6.3%

QA11. What does the European Union mean to you personally? (multiple answers possible)

	Spain ($n = 986$)	**UK ($n = 1{,}341$)**
Peace	15.4%	11.0%
Economic prosperity	24.4%	7.6%
Democracy	28.2%	8.6%
Social protection	13.5%	6.2%
Freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU	36.7%	24.5%
Cultural diversity	21.7%	12.4%
Stronger say in the world	20.7%	13.3%
Euro	**38.4%**	12.2%
Unemployment	8.2%	11.3%
Bureaucracy	10.8%	23.1%
Waste of money	8.3%	**28.6%**
Loss of cultural identity	4.3%	21.4%

(Continued)

	Spain ($n = 986$)	**UK ($n = 1{,}341$)**
More crime	1.9%	7.6%
Not enough control at external borders	5.4%	18.3%
Other	0.8%	1.6%
Don't know	3.2%	14.0%

Public opinion in Galicia regarding EU affairs (Observatorio Político Autonómico, 2002–2006,[4] and Instituto Sondaxe, 2002–2004).[5]

Q. Do you consider European integration to be beneficial or prejudicial for your autonomous community (Galicia)? (Observatorio Político Autonómico, $n = 2,000$)

	2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**
Beneficial	59.6%	65.1%	53.7%	57.1%	52.7%
Neither beneficial nor prejudicial	20.3%	22.0%	25.3%	22.9%	24.4%
Prejudicial	12.4%	9.3%	15.9%	14.1%	15.6%
Don't know/no answer	7.6%	3.7%	5.2%	6.0%	7.4%

Q. How do you evaluate Spain's membership of the EU? (Observatorio Político Autonómico, $n = 2,000$)

	2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**
Something good	75.5%	81.2%	71.2%	74.1%	70.1%
Neither good nor bad	14.0%	13.8%	17.0%	14.7%	17.1%
Something bad	4.9%	3.5%	6.6%	6.5%	7.1%
Don't know/no answer	5.6%	1.5%	5.2%	4.7%	5.7%

Q. Recently it has been said that Galicia could miss some European funding due to the enlargement of the European Union to Eastern Europe. Do you think Galicia can manage without such aid? (Question from the 2002 Winter Opinion Barometer for *La Voz de Galicia*, $n = 1,200$, statistically representative of the population of Galicia)

No, we cannot manage without that funding	**78.9%**
Yes, we can manage without that funding	12.4%
Does not know/no answer	8.7%

Q. Do you think the reduction of regional funding suggested by some countries in the European Union threatens the development of Galician economy? (Question from the 2004 Winter Opinion Barometer for *La Voz de Galicia*, $n = 1,200$, statistically representative of the population of Galicia)

Yes, it is threat	**59.1%**
For some economic sectors it is a threat, for others it is not	6.6%
No, it is not a threat	11.9%
Does not know what the question is about	20.2%
Does not answer	2.2%

Q. In the past few weeks the euro has been stronger than the dollar. Having a strong currency is beneficial or detrimental for your personal economy? (Question from the 2004 Winter Opinion Barometer for *La Voz de Galicia*, $n = 1,200$, statistically representative of the population of Galicia)

It is beneficial	**30.5%**
It is neither beneficial nor detrimental	27.6%
It is detrimental	30.0%
Does not know what the question is about	9.9%
Does not answer	2.0%

Q. In February next year there will be a referendum on the European Constitution. If such a referendum were held today, what would you vote? (Question from the 2004 Winter Opinion Barometer for *La Voz de Galicia*, $n = 1,200$, statistically representative of the population of Galicia)

In favour of the European Constitution	**43.9%**
Against the European Constitution	4.8%
Has not made his/her mind yet	16.5%
Does not intend to vote	4.6%
Does not know what it is about	27.3%
Does not answer	2.9%

Public opinion in Yorkshire and the Humber regarding EU affairs (The Regional Referendum Study 2004)[6]

Q28. Which of the statements on this card best describes your own view of British participation in the European single currency, the euro? ($n = 386$).
Q29. And which best describes your own view of British membership of the European Union? ($n = 386$).
Q30. And which best describes your own view of Britain adopting the new European constitution? ($n = 386$).

[Yorkshire and the Humber, $n = 386$]	**Q28**	**Q29**	**Q30**
I strongly support it	7.77%	13.73%	5.69%
I am generally in favour of it, but could be persuaded against if I thought it would be bad for Britain	**32.64%**	**37.56%**	**25.90%**
I am generally opposed to it, but could be persuaded in favour if thought it would be good for Britain	27.72%	27.20%	24.61%
I strongly oppose it	27.97%	16.32%	22.27%
Don't know/not stated	3.88%	5.18%	21.24%

Q35–Q41. I would like you to think about how close you personally feel to different parts of the world, that is, how much you feel a sense of attachment and belonging to them ($n = 386$).

	Very closely	**Fairly closely**	**Not very closely**	**Not at all closely**	**Don't know/not stated**
First of all, how closely attached do you feel to your local area?	**44.04%**	38.08%	14.76%	2.33%	0.77%
And how closely attached do you feel to the county of Yorkshire?	32.64%	**38.60%**	21.50%	3.88%	3.36%
And how closely attached do you feel to the Yorkshire and the Humber region as a whole?	22.27%	**40.67%**	26.16%	8.29%	2.84%
And how closely attached do you feel to England as a whole?	**49.74%**	40.67%	7.25%	2.07%	0.51%
And how closely attached do you feel to Britain as a whole?	**47.40%**	40.67%	7.77%	2.84%	1.29%
And how closely attached do you feel to Europe as a whole?	5.95%	35.49%	**43.52%**	13.98%	1.03%

Q42. Some people think of themselves first as British, others may think of themselves first as English. Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself? ($n = 386$).

English not British	**11.91%**
More English than British	17.09%
Equally English and British	**46.89%**
More British than English	6.47%
British not English	9.32%
Other	5.69%
None of these	0.00%
Don't know/not stated	0.25%

Q63. How much do you trust the UK government to work in the best long-term interests of the Yorkshire and Humber region? ($n = 386$).
Q64. And how much would you trust an elected regional assembly for Yorkshire and the Humber to work in the best long-term interests of the Yorkshire and Humber region? ($n = 386$).

	Q63	**Q64**
Just about always	2.33%	10.88%
Most of the time	25.64%	**42.48%**
Only some of the time	**52.33%**	28.23%
Almost never	17.09%	9.84%
Don't know/not stated	2.84%	8.29%

Q65. Would you say the government looks after the interests of all parts of England more or less equally, or would you say that it looks after some parts of England more than others? ($n = 386$).

Looks after all parts more or less equally	**19.43%**
Looks after some parts more than others	**74.61%**
Neither	1.55%
Don't know/not stated	4.14%

Q87–Q91. Taking your answer from this card, please say how much you agree or disagree with these statements ($n = 386$).

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
If regions vote to set up their own regional assemblies, they should pay for their services out of taxes collected in their own region, and not be subsidised by taxes collected in the rest of the country.	6.47%	**39.89%**	18.65%	20.46%	6.47%	8.03%
A regional assembly for the Yorkshire and Humber would be a waste of money.	24.35%	**28.49%**	17.87%	17.87%	5.44%	5.95%
A regional assembly for the Yorkshire and Humber region should be elected using a voting system that would give parties seats in proportion to their share of votes.	13.47%	**45.33%**	18.13%	6.99%	4.66%	11.39%
There would be no point in voting in regional assembly elections in Yorkshire and the Humber because the Labour party would always win.	6.47%	22.27%	13.73%	**34.45%**	14.24%	8.54%

Q92. If a referendum is held on whether an elected regional assembly should be set up in Yorkshire and Humber, how likely you think you would be to vote in that referendum, on a scale of 1–10, where 10 means you would be absolutely certain to vote and 1 means that you would absolutely be certain not to vote? ($n = 386$).

10 – Absolutely certain to vote	**39.11%**
9	5.95%
8	9.06%
7	6.99%
6	4.40%
5	10.36%
4	3.10%
3	4.14%
2	4.14%
1 – Absolutely certain not to vote	11.65%
Not stated	1.03%

Q93. And if you did vote in the referendum [on whether an elected regional assembly should be set up in the Yorkshire and Humber region], would you vote in favour of setting up an elected regional assembly or would you vote against it? ($n = 386$).

In favour	**34.97%**
Against	**35.49%**
Would not vote	8.29%
Refused	0.25%
Don't know/not stated	21.24%

Notes

1 The True Deficits of the European Public Sphere: Domesticisation and Politicisation

1. The "fear of the masses" is a common trend in the thought of the first quarter of the 20th century, with authors on both sides of the Atlantic fearing the loss of liberal achievements. Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (2003 [1922]) and Ortega y Gasset's *Revolt of the Masses* (2009 [1931]) are two of the most popular references. In the afterwar period, a lengthy book by German Catholic conservative author Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, tellingly entitled *Liberty or Equality: The Challenge of Our Time* (1952), must be highlighted here. He deemed European integration necessary but impossible with democracy (due to democracy's ties with nationalism), so he postulated an elite government for the Continent.
2. Salvador de Madariaga, Spain's most noted pro-European figure, argued for an "organic democracy" structured around the representation of labour and employers' organisations, with popular suffrage limited to local elections. His organic democracy (2005 [1935]) has strong links to corporatism, as I shall discuss in the following section. Governance at the EU level could be thought of as a continental translation of Germany's postwar co-determination, a form of neocorporatism.
3. "This is a Parliament not controlled by a majority that can turn it into a rubber stamp [. . .] It's a Parliament in the 19th-century sense, where you have to take things through, and have things negotiated." Richard Corbett, former MEP, to the *New York Times* (Castle, 2010).
4. The "de-ideologisation" of mass political parties dates back to at least the 1960s. Otto Kirchheimer made famous the term "catch-all parties" to imply a transition from class- and ideology-based political formations to wide middle-class persuaders guided by voter preferences (Kirchheimer, 1966; Smith, 2009). As a consequence, the "end of opposition" theory inspired the debates of political scientists in the 1960s and 1970s (Maier, 2004).
5. This was Mouffe's response to my query during a conference talk she gave in Santiago de Compostela on 18 December 2009 at the Council for Galician Culture (Consello da Cultura Galega).
6. The UK circulation data comes from the Joint Industry Committee for Regional Media Research. The UK readership data was obtained from the National Readership Survey. It should be noted that the "yellow" press remains king in Yorkshire, with *The Sun* being the most widely read newspaper in the region (700,000 daily readers). In the Spanish case, circulation figures (all corresponding to 2008, as in the British case) come from the Oficina para la Justificación de la Difusión, whereas readership data was obtained from the Estudio General de Medios. I would like to thank José Francisco Sánchez, Journalism Professor

at the University of A Coruña, for clarification on the newspaper readership data for Galicia.

2 The Antipopular Bias of Integration by Stealth

1. As stated by the conservative opposition leader, Mariano Rajoy Brey, at the plenary session of the Spanish Congress of Deputies on 12 May 2010 (see *Diario de Sesiones*, No. 162, IX Legislature, 2010, p. 8).
2. MEPs have, nevertheless, an independent mandate: they are free to vote in line with their conscience in ways that national MPs seldom are. Rather than a matter of independence, the problem with the EP seems to be about identity: the issue of double-loyalty (to party ideology and to nationality) is conspicuous during EP campaigns: MEPs are introduced to their constituents as both the defenders of the national interest in Europe and the upholders of a social-democratic, liberal or conservative Europe.
3. Spinelli's Draft Treaty establishing the EU (European Parliament, February 1983) is reprinted and extensively discussed in Lodge (1986). The Maastricht Treaty may be considered as a partial realisation of Spinelli's aims, as observed by Corbett (2001).
4. According to the comparative study by Bruell, Mokre and Pausch (2009), in France the media debate reflected the seeming pan-European concern about the citizen-EU elite divide, and intensively focused on the "social issue" – that is, the defence of the welfare state against the putative neoliberalism of the Constitutional Treaty. This French concern about the "social Europe", the authors contend, "spilled over" to other European countries.

3 Governing the EU: Consensus Diplomacy and Associative Corporatism

1. The two formations of the COREPER are defined in the glossary of the Europa website as follows: "Coreper I, consisting of the deputy permanent representatives, deals with technical matters; Coreper II, consisting of the ambassadors, deals with political, commercial, economic or institutional matters". Retrieved 7 December 2012 from http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/coreper_en.htm.
2. An explanation of the transformation of state-based neocorporatism into trans-European concerted action, and the consequent revival of corporatism through policy networks, is offered by Keating (2010 [2005], see especially pp. 1–15).
3. On the interplay of political discourse and policy changes in Europe, see a special issue of the journal *West European Politics* (Vol. 27, No. 2) coordinated by Vivien A. Schmidt and Claudio Radaelli (2004).
4. The success of liberalism, social democracy or fascism in the Europe of the interwar period was a consequence of the differing alliances among social classes, as Gregory Luebbert describes in his 1991 acclaimed book *Liberalism, Fascism, or Social Democracy* (Luebbert, 1991). His comparative case studies are the UK, France and Switzerland (liberal democracies); Norway,

Sweden, Denmark and Czechoslovakia (social democracies); and Italy, Spain and Germany (fascist countries). In each of these three regime types, there is a continuum from minimal to maximum corporatism. See also Berman (2006) for a discussion of social democracy and its rivals (fascism, national socialism) as developments aimed at protecting society from unbound markets.

4 The "No Demos" Conundrum

1. Only 38 per cent of the EU citizens profess enough knowledge of English to hold a conversation, according to Special Eurobarometer 243, "Europeans and their languages" (European Commission, 2006b).
2. I owe this expression to one of my interviewees, a Conservative MEP (Cheltenham, 26 April 2009).
3. Protestantism and the alienation from Rome is, according to Beloff (1957), part of the national myth and "martyrology" of Northern European countries.
4. In Berlin on 24 July 2008, the then presidential candidate gave his campaign speech that attracted the most attendees outside the USA.

5 Explaining the Domesticisation Deficit

1. The European Commission website in Ireland states that the EU has "no competences whatsoever" on "the syllabuses of schools, national citizenship, housing and the funding of public television (RTE, TG4 only), the welfare state, hospitals and the health service, corporate tax rates and any policy that requires large commitments of public money" (European Commission, 2011).
2. This seemingly popular fear has some historical grounding. Apart from the well-known Catholic background of the European Communities' founding fathers, explained at length by Haller (2008), the papacy sought to unite the European continent in the Middle Ages through Christian ideals, according to historian D.J.A. Matthew, who wrote a book tellingly entitled *The Medieval European Community* (Matthew, 1977).
3. National party bodies, nevertheless, can drop "nationally favoured" candidates into constituencies, which makes the arguments against the list system less convincing. I owe this insight to Professor Juliet Lodge of the University of Leeds.
4. According to Eurostat data cited by Seidlhofer, Breiteneder and Pitzl (2006, p. 4), more than 90 per cent of pupils in EU member states' secondary schools study English, and most of them do it as their first foreign language.

6 Explaining the Politicisation Deficit

1. I owe this insight to Dr Robin Brown of the University of Leeds. When commenting on the possibility of a European public sphere, Eriksen (2009) noted that "even though there are few traits of a *general public sphere* in which all the citizens of the EU can take part, more salient are *segmented publics* evolving around policy networks as well as legally institutionalized discourses – *strong publics* – specialized in collective will formation" (p. 151).

Methodological Appendices

1. The reliability test was performed over half of the full sample, following the standard practice suggested by Neuendorf (2002). The stories were randomly selected using the RAND command in Excel, which generates a series of random numbers within a range determined by the researcher (in this case, the range was determined by the number of stories comprising each subsample, 125 articles for *The Yorkshire Post*, 158 articles for *La Voz de Galicia*).
2. I conducted, nevertheless, more than 30 observation sessions in political rallies and party conferences (see Methodological Appendix II for a complete list of fieldwork engagements). I also enjoyed the insights of a three-month stage at the European Parliament in Brussels funded by the Fundación Galicia-Europa. One of the most provocative assumptions of "network ethnography" is that communities may not be located on a fixed place, and observation sessions might be conducted during ephemeral encounters of network members (brown-bag colloquiums, conferences, meetings, etc.).
3. European Commission (2009). Eurobarometer 71.3. Globalization, Personal Values and Priorities, European Identity, Future of the European Union, Social Problems and Welfare, and European Elections, June–July, 2009. Retrieved 16 July 2011 from http://www.esds.ac.uk/
4. The Observatorio Político Autonómico is a periodical survey conducted by a consortium of Spanish universities (http://www.opa151.com). These figures can also be found in Elias (2009, pp. 105–106).
5. Courtesy of Instituto Sondaxe, S.L.
6. This study was conducted by polling firm MORI on behalf of the University of Plymouth and the Electoral Commission. Retrieved 17 July 2011 from http://www.esds.ac.uk/

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