BETWEEN NATION, PARTY AND IDENTITY: A STUDY OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS

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Paper presented to the European Community Studies Association, Pittsburgh June 2-5th 1999

ABSTRACT

In this paper I examine theoretical arguments and empirical evidence pertaining to the issue of whether Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) 'go native' during their time in the chamber: iè. become socialized into attitudes more supportive of closer European integration and greater powers for the parliament. Despite considerable speculation on the matter, and some literature supportive of the idea, the 'going native' thesis is argued to be under-explored in the context of the EP. The empirical analysis presented suggests that while there is little evidence of socialization effects shaping MEPs' behaviour on issues relating to integration and the powers of the parliament, there is support for the notion of 'selection' effects and links to parties producing members disposed to adopt such attitudes, even from more sceptical countries like the UK. Nonetheless, notions of MEPs developing a coherent, shared 'European identity' are over-drawn - European parliamentarians retain deeply-embedded national and partisan ties.

INTRODUCTION*

Few today could doubt that the European Parliament (EP) is 'on the move' towards becoming a player of major significance in European politics; or indeed that it has been moving steadily in that direction for at least the last decade. With the passage of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU) into effect in 1993, followed very recently by the ratification of the follow-up Treaty of Amsterdam, the EP seems set fair to consolidate its position as the increasingly-influential third pillar of the EU's 'institutional triangle' - Council, Commission, and Parliament.

The growing influence of the EP naturally has raised demands that it be studied more intensively and seriously than was, for the most part, the case until the 1990s.[1] A growing role within the politics of the EU requires that the powers of the parliament in relation to other European institutions be explored, and a considerable literature has emerged in response to this challenge (egs. Crombez 1997; Steunenberg 1994; Tsebelis 1994, 1996; Moser 1996). But the EP can also be studied in a comparative perspective, as a particularly interesting instance of a legislative institution. Operating as it does with a multi-national membership and within a rapidly evolving political system, it clearly has numerous characteristics which distinguish it from many other parliamentary assemblies. But it would be naive in the extreme to argue that studies of the European Parliament should proceed without seeking to draw upon the concepts, theories and methods which have informed the study of other parliaments and other institutional settings.

In this paper I follow such an investigatory strategy, drawing upon a variety of concepts, theories and methods deployed in the wider literature in order to examine a notion that has been widely discussed, but rarely subjected to any systematic analysis. This is what might be termed the 'going native' thesis: the idea that EP members (MEPs) come, over the time they serve in the chamber, to adopt the core values of the institution, principal among these being a more 'European' outlook than is possessed by their national counterparts. As a result of the socialization experiences they undergo, the thesis continues, European parliamentarians become staunch advocates both for closer European integration in general, and a greater role for the EP in particular.

At first sight, the 'going native' thesis appears to be obviously correct. The European Parliament has consistently, and with the support of a clear majority of its members, campaigned in the direction implied by the thesis,[2] and is generally regarded as occupying a position that is more integrationist than that of most national governments or national parliaments.[3] Upon closer inspection, however, the thesis can be seen to be replete with barely-explored assumptions and hypotheses that are of considerable significance for our understanding of the EP and of its members. The task for the rest of this paper is, both theoretically and empirically, to examine the

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'going native' thesis more deeply. The next section, therefore, addresses the origins of the thesis and scrutinizes what appear to be its theoretical foundations. This draws upon previous work on the EP, and also that on socialization processes in legislatures and other institutions. This is followed by an analysis of the degree of empirical support which can be deduced for the thesis from some of the current evidence available. Specifically, I look both at the voting behaviour of all MEPs on a series of votes surrounding the two most recent Inter-Governmental Conferences (IGCs), and at survey evidence which compares a sample of UK MEPs with their national counterparts and with candidates at the 1994 EP elections. The conclusion reviews the previous discussion and then addresses its implications - both for the EP considered as a parliament in comparison to others, and for the future of the chamber and its members within the European Union.

THE 'GOING NATIVE' THESIS

The notion that those who work with or in European institutions come to develop a more 'European' outlook is one of the most widespread conjectures made about the EU.[4] Yet it is also one that has rarely been explored in any great depth. "Relatively little research has been done on the way in which actors in Brussels become socialized to 'Europeanism'" (Peterson 1997), a statement which applies at least as much to European parliamentarians as to others. Given this paucity of previous work, a useful place to begin is with some basic questions. First, why should anyone believe that MEPs are likely to 'go native'? And second, why should anyone care?

Leaving the latter question until later, putative answers to the former can be seen emanating from several sources. Most immediately, there is a broad tradition of literature which seeks to explain European integration, at least in part, through processes of socialization and attitude conversion. This line of thinking is most obviously associated with the work of Ernst Haas and other neo-functionalist scholars. Haas' complex neo-functionalist synthesis includes at least some elements of a theory of socialization, the idea that interactions occurring within new contexts can lead to changed attitudes. In the European context, those changes would be in a 'European' direction. More generally,

> [p]olitical integration is the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their *loyalties*, expectations and political activities towards a new center... (Haas 1968:16. Emphasis added).

Some scholars have interpreted neo-functionalism as predicting such shifts in beliefs to occur most strongly of all within the established European institutions. For example, Brigid Laffan comments that "for Haas, institution-building came first, leading to a shift of elite loyalties over time" (1996:xxx). If one becomes more European over time by experiencing 'Europe' in action, and by interacting with others from within Europe, then the European institutions should surely be where those processes operate most intensely?[5]

Interestingly, however, while believing that such processes occurred elsewhere, such as

among members of political parties and (even more so) among members of organized interests, Haas did not regard the Assembly - as it then was - as being a very suitable arena for the conversion of the previously opposed or agnostic towards a more pro-integration outlook. His explanation for this initially puzzling argument was quite simple:

> What has been the contribution of the Assembly to western Europe's political integration?... Very few, if any, individual members were persuaded to the federalist creed as a result of their work in Strasbourg. With the exception of perhaps fifteen members, *the bulk was more or less in favour of integration before they ever took up their supranational mandate* (Haas 1968:437. Emphasis added).

In other words, the voluntaristic nature of service in the Common Assembly tended in practice to preclude members being attracted to it who would be open towards 'going native'. Rather, the Assembly tended to act as a magnet for those who were already so inclined; there was a powerful 'self-selection' effect among national legislators as to who would choose to undertake the duty of part-time service in the virtually powerless European chamber. For the most part, only confirmed Euro-enthusiasts would bother to expend their time and energies on such an activity. Those who did choose to do so might plausibly, through their interactions with fellow delegates to the Assembly, reinforce their pro-European attitudes. But service in Strasbourg was unlikely to promote any fundamental attitude shifts.

Early work on the EP (as it was to become) appeared to support Haas' argument. Kerr's (1973) study of a sample of French and German MEPs suggested that longer-serving members developed a more sophisticated understanding of European politics, but he could detect little evidence of any substantial changes in attitudes towards either integration or the specific status of the EP. When compared with samples of their fellow national legislators,[6] MEPs attitudes were more 'European', but they were no less so amongst newcomers to the Parliament than with veterans of several years experience. This led Kerr to speak of "the self-recruitment of many legislators who were avowed Europeans *before* their nomination" (1973:45. Emphasis added).

This analysis, however, was based on a small number of interviews, among MEPs from only two countries (albeit two of the largest and most important EU member states), and was conducted at a time when the EP's membership was unelected and the chamber virtually powerless. Thus, Kerr's conclusions could hardly be treated as definitive. The question of significant socialization effects within the parliament began to be raised once more when the direct election of its members finally became a reality at the end of the 1970s, and the prospect loomed of a larger, mostly full-time and power hungry, democratic EP. Marquand argued that those elected to the chamber with more sceptical views would find it difficult to resist the pro-federalist ethos that would dominate, observing that "[p]arliaments are even better at indoctrinating their members with their own norms than are public schools or miners' lodges, as a whole list of angry

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firebrands who later mellowed into sage and gradualist parliamentary statesmen bears witness" (1979:75). Meanwhile, Cotta argued that, along with a general inclination to seek closer European unity, a more specific aspiration would develop among MEPs - towards making the parliament itself a powerful law-making body within that union:

> We now have for the first time a political elite that is not based in national political
> institutions but in a supranational institution. A political class that has therefore
> a vested interest in the strengthening of the European parliament and more broadly
> in the promotion of European integration (Cotta 1984:126).

Subsequent developments showed Cotta to appear broadly correct. The EP consistently championed both closer European unity and as an enhanced role for itself - as seen most notably in its ambitious 1984 Draft Treaty on European Union. Other evidence also pointed in the direction of a distinct 'Euro-elite' developing within the parliament. Westlake (1994a) analysed the development of a more European outlook amongst Britain's elected MEPs. He found that while a significant proportion of the first UK contingent, and particularly those from the Labour party, were distinctly hostile to European unity, this soon began to change. The British Labour Group transmuted into the European Parliamentary Labour Party, its development of a more positive attitude towards the EU pre-figuring a similar change in the attitude of its domestic party. Conservative MEPs, meanwhile, generally maintained a positive approach even as their domestic party was becoming ever more 'Euro-sceptic'. Thus, it seemed that service in the chamber had contributed in some way to altered attitudes among the British contingent.[7] But with a marked absence from the literature of further, detailed tests of the 'going native' thesis, it has only been a small step from this suggestive evidence towards the thesis being accepted by many as true (egs Hrbek 1990; Jackson 1993:169; Dunphy 1996; Marsh and Wessels 1997:238).

Examining the issue from a wider perspective provides some support for the assumptions behind the 'going native' thesis. However, reasons for exercising a degree of caution can also be deduced. The comparative literature on legislative and parliamentary politics has produced numerous studies that appear to demonstrate the ability of parliamentary chambers to, as Marquand insists, inculcate Members into core values, beliefs and practices. Fenno's classic study of the Appropriations Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives demonstrated how a cohesive body of experienced members within a functioning organization could exert considerable pressure upon neophyte legislators to at least comply with established practices, if not come to support them as well (1962, 1973). Other scholars of Congress have examined the issue both from the point of view of the chamber (how the legislature must "transmit its norms to legislative newcomers in order to insure the continued, unaltered operation of the institution" (Asher 1973:xx)), and also from that of the new Member of Congress ("They must learn to make sense of this new world and understand their place in it - in short, become socialized in a new institution and role" (Fiellen 1962:xx; see also Matthews 1960, and Gomez 1996).[8] In his study of the British House of Commons, Searing (1986) has made the convincing argument that membership

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of the chamber tends, over time, to moderate opinion, both on matters of socio-economic policy and also on questions on radical institutional and political reform. More specifically, Mughan et al (1997) have mapped the decline in institutional radicalism on new Labour members in the 1980s, even finding such a process applicable to the relatively moderate reform measure of introducing television coverage of the chamber's proceedings.

These findings of the legislative literature find echoes in other contexts with obvious potential parallels to the EP. Alger's (1963) study of officials working in the United Nations General Assembly found considerable evidence of learning and attitude change as a result of working in a multi-national setting, including improving the favourability of delegates towards many of the practices of the UN. Moreover, the notion of encounters with new organizational surroundings provoking attitude changes is widely regarded as one of the most strongly supported findings within the field of Organizational Psychology (egs. Falcione and Wilson 1988; Feldman 1981; Louis 1980; Ostroff and Kozlowski 1992). As van Maanen and Schein observe, "research has yet to discover a work setting which leaves people unmarked by their participation" (1979:210).

On the more cautionary side of the ledger, however, there are at least two reasons for believing that, while MEPs clearly are socialized in some ways via their experiences in the parliament, the effects of this process might not necessarily work in the direction implied by the 'going native' thesis. First, while much of the extant literature does emphasise the powerful socializing role of legislatures, this process is generally seen as having a conservatising effect. Most parliaments are, for the greater part, seen as predominately 'status quo' institutions. It is much less well-established whether they are readily able to inculcate parliamentarians into adopting a more radical agenda - such as the drive towards some form of federal Europe.

Second, none of the literature reviewed above has suggested anything to rule out the possibility of powerful 'selection' effects being behind much, if not all, of the pro-integrationist stance of the EP. It may well be that, whether via the self-selection of those choosing to go forward as candidates, or the choices made by candidate-selectors and/or voters, that the majority of MEPs have already 'gone native' before they are even elected. It is plausible that some socialization effects on this dimension may still be detectable: service in the chamber may broaden and deepen a pre-existing commitment. But an equally plausible counter-hypothesis is that selection effects may leave little or no scope for the observable impact of post-entry socialization processes.

Before turning to the empirical investigation of these hypotheses, I will briefly address the second of the two questions posed earlier. Why should anyone care, or, as it is sometimes put, 'so what'? From a comparative perspective, exploration of the 'going native' thesis is valuable in terms of extending the scope of the literature on socialization in legislatures into a new setting, one where the impact of such processes may be of a more radicalizing nature than elsewhere. As far as the students of the EP and of European integration are concerned, it is of obvious interest to know more about exactly *why* the parliament is generally such a pro-integration institution.

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Moreover, an answer to this question may also hold out lessons for the future of the parliament. If the 'going native' thesis is correct, it is difficult to see the EP ever being anything other than a staunch bastion for Euro-federalism. If it is not, and if the stance of MEPs on such matters is conditioned more by other factors - such as their views prior to entry, or by their ties to national political parties - then the possibility at least is opened up of the election of substantial numbers of more anti-integration members who could change the overall stance of the parliament. Finally, and with many questions related to the European Parliament, there is the basic but fascinating question: what happens when you put politicians from 15 countries together in the same institution? With these considerations in mind, let us begin our investigation.

GOING NATIVE? AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

One problem with analysing the impact of socialization processes on individuals is that it is generally difficult to gather clear and unambiguous evidence of their effects. As Mughan et al comment, in their study of deradicalization among British Labour MPs,

> the socialization of professional politicians is all but impossible to chart by conventional observational or survey methods...it is not readily visible at any single point in time. Second, legislators may not themselves be aware of their attitudinal conservatisation. Behavioural anomalies can always be rationalized away by 'the circumstances', and need not be admitted to reflect more profound changes in ways of thinking. Third, even if legislators admit to themselves that their radical instincts have waned, they will commonly deny it, for any number of good reasons - loss of self-respect for 'selling out', concern about not being renominated by more radical constituency parties, fear of electoral reprisal and so on (1997:94-95).

Given these difficulties, it would be unreasonable to expect an examination of the available evidence on the 'going native' thesis to produce an absolutely definitive conclusive answer. But by analysing different sources and types of evidence, it should be possible to draw conclusions with at least some degree of confidence.

In the analysis to follow, two different sources of evidence will be deployed. Later on, surveys of British MEPs in comparison to members of the House of Commons and candidates in the 1994 EP elections will be explored. Before that, however, I will examine the behaviour of European parliamentarians from all of the members states on a series of major votes held in the EP. When MEPs are asked to decide whether to endorse calls for closer European integration and for more parliamentary powers, which way do they vote, and why?

When 'Push Comes to Shove': The basis for the analysis to follow is a series of 7 major votes held in the EP between July 1990 and March 1996. It is important to understand that these divisions were not selected randomly, since the concern here is not to ascertain 'typical' influences on voting behaviour across all issues within the chamber.[9] Rather, they constituted key moments

where MEPs were asked to give clear endorsement of calls for closer integration and the granting or usage of significant parliamentary powers. In other words, whilst vaguely pro- or anti-federalist ideals might be held with no real consequences by members at any stage of their career, examining these votes addresses what MEPs do when 'push comes to shove': when they are asked to take a clear, public position.

The first three votes examined (11-07-90, 22-11-90, and 07-04-92) all concerned the institutional debates surrounding the Maastricht treaty negotiations, and attempts by the European Parliament to place its demands for an enhanced role very firmly on the agenda for those negotiations (Corbett 1993).[10] The first vote concerned a resolution in support of the second of the three 'Martin Reports' issued by the Parliament's own Institutional Affairs committee, through which the EP sought to bring institutional reforms more clearly onto the agenda of the forthcoming Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) on Political Union that had recently been approved by the national governments.[11] The second vote, taken later that year, then sought MEP's support for the follow-up 'Martin III' report, which suggested a considerable enhancement in the powers of the EP among a series of specific draft treaty proposals for the consideration of the IGC.[12] The third vote occurred post-Maastricht, on a resolution giving the Parliament's approval of the treaty, but nonetheless also criticising the final agreement for a perceived inadequacy in the degree of institutional reforms agreed.[13]

The fourth vote (19-07-94) examines a somewhat different issue from the others, in that it involves the EP actually using existing powers rather than calling for additional ones. This vote, on the issue of European regulations on the voice-telephony industry, was highly significant in that it represented the first opportunity which MEPs had been presented with to use the 3rd reading veto power over European legislation they had been granted by the Maastricht treaty's 'co-decision' procedure (Scully-1997a; Crombez, 1997). While under the powers granted it by the cooperation procedure, created in the 1986 Single European Act, the parliament had been able to reject the position taken by national governments in the Council of Ministers, this rejection could never be final. The legislation always returned to national governments, who could, by unanimity, re-assert their stance as the final outcome (Nugent 1994:312-320). Under co-decision, parliamentary rejection of a law in 3rd reading was final. Yet this placed great responsibility on the EP: it faced a 'take-it-or-leave-it' choice if national governments laid down the gauntlet by refusing an earlier compromise. Several observers doubted that the parliament would ever choose to confront the national governments by using its veto (eg. Tsebelis 1995). This vote is included in the analysis in order to tap into a rather different aspect of what might be more general support for greater parliamentary powers.

The last three votes, (17-05-95, 14-12-95, and 13-03-96) were all on resolutions relating to the forthcoming IGC, which culminated in the June 1997 Amsterdam treaty. All three resolutions examined here involved demands for greater powers for the EP, including a strengthening and extension of its co-decision prerogative, as well as other institutional reforms of the EU. (A brief description of the outcomes of each vote is given in the Appendix).

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For each of the votes, the dependent variable in the analysis was coded '2' if an MEP supported the pro-integration position, '0' if they voted against, and '1' if the member was present in the chamber and registered an abstention - something allowed by EP rules.[14] A separate OLS regression analysis was conducted for each vote.[15] Several independent variables were coded, in line with both prior theoretical expectations raised by the alternative hypotheses presented above.

First, in order to test the 'going native' thesis directly, a variable is included to measure the length of service for each member in the EP. The assumptions underlying this test are not entirely unproblematic. As Shepherd (1996) suggests, it may often be difficult empirically to disentangle loyalty that derives from a long-term 'careerist' commitment to service in an institution (which may, however, be present from the beginning of a legislative career) from that which has been acquired over time via a socialization process. For the purposes of this study, however, such a distinction is essentially unnecessary. What is important is whether large numbers of MEPs endorse a pro-integrationist position, and when in their career as a member they do so. If significant socialization processes are present, then one should expect to see a positive relationship between length of service and members' institutional loyalty. If, on the other hand, purely careerist considerations are at work, one would still expect to see essentially the same statistical relationship. This is because while both careerists and non-careerists should be present in the less experienced cohorts, only careerists (following Scarrow's definition of a 'European career' MEP as being a member who "served for at least eight years...without winning a new national legislative seat or holding a dual mandate for more than two years" (1997:262)) will be present in significant numbers among more experienced members. Moreover, while a fine distinction between careerism and socialization may not be possible from this test, one can at least largely rule out the possibility of either process being present if no significant statistical relationship exists. The length of service variable measures the number of years an MEP has spent in the chamber as an elected member; following the practice of previous studies, this variable is logged to account for likely diminishing returns the longer the time spent in the institution.[16]

A number of variables are also included to measure the impact of various national and partisan influences. Most directly, a set of dummy variables for the nationality and party group of each member were included.[17] It would certainly be plausible to think that MEPs from countries more cautious about closer integration in Europe - like the UK and Denmark - might be less likely to offer support for a pro-European and pro-parliament position, as might also members representing political factions less enthusiastic about European unity - such as the 'Europe of Nations' group in the current Parliament.

But simply accounting for party membership and national status does not exhaust the potential influences on the attitudes and behaviour of MEPs that might come from this direction. In addition, and following the lead of Hix and Lord (1996; see also Gabel and Hix n.d.), I include a variable for whether an MEP's domestic party was in government at the time of each vote. Hix and Lord's analysis of voting on the issue of whether or not the EP should endorse the nomination of Jacques Santer as President of the European Commission in July 1994 found that MEPs

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seemed reluctant to go against the expressed wishes of national governments when their own domestic party formed, either alone or in coalition with other parties, one of those governments. The variable is included here, therefore, partly for consistency, and partly for the possibility that the degree of power exercised by one's party at home might have a more general influence on MEPs' attitudes: in particular, their willingness to support greater powers for European institutions. It is certainly plausible that lesser success domestically might generate support for more powers to be taken at level where one's viewpoint is perhaps more strongly represented.[18]

In addition, biographical information on MEPs was deployed to examine the impact of their prior political experience.[19] Two variables were coded: whether MEPs had ever been members of their national legislature, and whether they had ever held ministerial office at the national level. Either or both of these experiences might be posited to have two possible effects: first, making an MEP less likely to be socialized by their experiences in the EP if they were already a hardened political veteran with more fully formed attitudes; and second, instilling a greater attachment to national political institutions and national sovereignty. These variables were therefore entered into the equation both independently and via interaction terms where they were combined with time spent in the EP. Finally, control variables for the age and gender of each MEP were included, previous work having indicated that these factors can often be important predictors of legislators' attitudes and behaviour.[20]

Tables 1 and 2 about here

How do the alternative hypotheses presented above stand up to this initial test? Several things stand out in the results reported in Tables 1 and 2. Results for the age, gender and previous political experience variables are notable only for their lack of a general impact on voting patterns. It would appear, for instance, that neither having been involved in the workings of national government nor having been a national parliamentarian influences MEPs' behaviour when issues relating to closer European integration are put to the vote. Certainly, there is no evidence here that such experience engenders an attachment to national political institutions in a manner which prevents an individual supporting a greater role for the EP. It is also interesting that age cohorts do not differ, given that much work on the mass public in Europe argues that younger people are more receptive to measure of European unity (eg. Abramson and Ingelhart 1995).

The results for other variables, however, indicate the presence of distinct national and partisan influences. Confirming Hix and Lord's identification of the status of one's domestic political party as an important influence on MEPs' behaviour, this variable is a significant predictor of opposition to the pro-integrationist position on several occasions. The party and nationality dummies also turn up positive and highly interesting results. While their impact is not entirely consistent, two things are conspicuous. First, there is a strong tendency for the mainstream, more moderate party groups - the Socialists, Christian Democrats and Liberals - to be particularly supportive of closer European unity. This fits in well with much previous work

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on European ideological families which has suggested that these groupings are generally favourable to such notions (Dunphy 1996). What is possibly a little more surprising is to see less mainstream groups like the left-wing Radical Alliance and other leftist fractions, including the Greens, also taking these positions strongly and frequently. Any interpretation of this finding must be cautious. But it may reflect a sense that, notwithstanding the large weight of the mainstream parties (the Socialists and Christian Democrats between them have over 62% of MEPs in the current parliament), the EU in general, and the EP in particular, offers a forum which allows such groups a greater voice in policy than they would typically receive in their home countries.

Second, it is noticeable that Danish and British members, as expected, are the nationalities most commonly inclined to oppose closer integration. The image of politicians from these countries being the least willing to countenance transferring powers to European institutions does, it would seem, have some basis in reality. Moreover, this statement applies not only to national figures in London and Copenhagen, but even to representatives in Strasbourg and Brussels. MEPs from these countries may often be more Euro-phile than others in their national parties (an argument to be examined later). But when compared with their fellows from other nationalities, they remain among the more 'sceptical' of European parliamentarians.[21] Taken together, the results here reinforce arguments based on more impressionistic evidence which suggest that while many MEPs may have established and long-standing European careers, a large number of them are far from immune to domestic ties (Bates 1996; Scully 1999).

But as far as the 'going native' thesis is concerned, the most salient finding is that length of service in the EP is never a significant predictor of support for an enhanced role for the chamber on *any* of the 7 votes. Indeed, on 4 out of 7 occasions the coefficient is even of the 'incorrect' (ie. negative) sign. New MEPs, even though largely unsocialized, and many presumably without long-term career ambitions in the chamber, would seem to be little different from more experienced and more career-oriented members in their willingness to support closer European unity. This finding is bolstered by the absence of a significant relationship when length of service is allowed to interact with national political experience.

To summarize, the findings from the analysis of these seven key votes yields strong support for a view of MEPs' that sees their endorsement of a closer integration and greater EP powers as being primarily shaped by national and partisan factors. There is no support evident for the 'going native' thesis - that large numbers of MEPs develop, perhaps through a socialization process, an institutional loyalty. This conclusion must not, however, be drawn with undue haste. While the absence of a relationship between length of service and support for integration across all 7 votes is an impressively uniform finding, it is nonetheless true that examining any single vote, or even a series of such votes, allows no measure of the *consistency* and *depth* of MEPs' support. Many members may enter the chamber already disposed to support some provisions for closer integration but not others. Over time, such sympathies can broaden and deepen. This can be tested by constructing an additive scale from several of the votes. As

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with interest groups in the United States who construct liberalism-conservatism scores for members of Congress (Fowler 1982), the assumption is that the more broadly and deeply a legislator supports a position, the more likely he or she is to consistently vote for it.

Figure 1 about here

Figure 1 displays the distribution for an additive scale for all MEPs who participated in the 4 votes previously analysed taken from the current (1994-99) parliament.[22] The votes of each MEP in these four divisions were added into one aggregate 'support score', whereby a member who endorsed the 'pro-integration' position each time would have an aggregate score of 8, while one who took the opposite position each time would score 0, a 'habitual abstainer' would score 4 etc. While the distribution is heavily skewed towards high levels of support, there is nonetheless sufficient variation to make a multivariate analysis viable.

Table 3 about here

Table 3 therefore reports OLS estimates for those members for whom a support scale could be constructed. The results must be interpreted with some caution: the absence of those members who either were not, or (such as in the case of those from Austria, Finland and Sweden, which joined the EU after 1994), *could* not be present for all 4 votes might potentially bias the results. However, what is clear is that the results here closely follow the pattern found in the analyses of the votes measured separately. Partisan and national differences account for the vast majority of explained variance in support for a closer integration; length of service as an MEP does not have any substantive impact on such behaviour.

Probing Further: Even were the conclusion to be drawn that socialization processes in relation to views in closer integration do not exert powerful effects operating across the membership of the EP as a whole, it may still be the case, however, that such effects are detectable among specific populations within the parliament. This is perhaps most plausible for members coming to service in Strasbourg and Brussels from an environment where attitudes to European integration and to the parliament are substantially, if not predominantly, hostile. Such has certainly been the case within the UK during the 1990s - indeed, arguably for much longer than that. The greater degree of Euro-scepticism in British political life than in many other EU members might make it more likely that there is more scope among UK MEPs for greater initial hostility and later attitude, conversion. What evidence is there for this?

Survey evidence has been gathered in recent years on MEPs from both the British Conservative and Labour parties, in parallel with their partisan counterparts from the Westminster parliament.[23] In the case of the Conservative sample, the survey was conducted in 1994, which also allowed for the questioning of Tory candidates in that year's EP elections who were not

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already sitting MEPs. (The Labour sample was gathered in 1996 among sitting national and European parliamentarians alone).

What should one expect to see the data revealing? The voting analysis above indicated little support for the 'going native' thesis. One obvious reason for the EP remaining a pro-integration institution, therefore, might be the persistence of 'selection' effects among its membership. If this were the case, one would expect to see - probably even for the British case - national parliamentarians being generally less favourable to closer integration and greater powers for the EP than either MEPs of EP candidates (EPCs). On the other hand, if one saw EPCs adopting positions that were substantially less positive towards European unity than existing MEPs, one might conclude either: a- that there had been over time a change in those seeking candidature or those being chosen from among the candidates, such that new potential MEPs possessed a different attitude profile from existing members; or b- that some post-entry socialization effects among sitting MEPs were being detected here which were not identified in the previous analysis of voting behaviour.

Table 4 about here

Table 4 presents results for a simple difference-of-means test between national MPs, MEPs and EPCs on a cumulative index of responses to four questions tapping into attitudes towards closer integration and greater parliamentary. The picture revealed by these figures is somewhat inconclusive. Among Labour respondents, there was no significant difference between national and European parliamentarians in their responses, indicating little in the way of selection or socialization effects operating on Labour MEPs. For the Conservatives the picture is radically different, with MEPs having the most pro-integration attitudes, EPCs the next, and Westminster representatives being the most antagonistic towards closer European unity. The differences between the categories are highly statistically significant. It is impossible to be sure whether these differences reflect selection effects or socialization ones. One can venture, however, that it would be an odd form of socialization effect that worked so much more strongly on Conservative MEPs than Labour ones. The more plausible conclusion, one endorsed by the original collectors of this data (Baker et al 1996), is that the differences between MEPs and the 1994 EPCs reflect far more the changing politics of the Conservative party, and in particular its radical transformation from the 'Party of Europe' under Edward Heath in the 1970s, to the increasingly anti-European grouping it had become in this present decade. In other words, the differing attitudes between these two groups primarily reflect differences at the stage of pre-entry selection procedures, with somewhat more sceptical candidates now coming forward and being chosen. They are not, in all likelihood, the result of post-entry socialization processes.

To summarize then, the evidence does not rule out the possibility of socialization effects along the pro-/anti-integration dimension among British MEPs, but the indications of this are neither definite nor strong. There is also some slightly stronger evidence of selection effects: that

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rather different types of people, or at least people with rather different types of attitudes, come to be candidates for the European compared with a national parliament. Overall, the evidence both here and in the previous section suggests that support for closer European unity among European parliamentarians, including for an enhanced role for the EP within that evolving union, has rather more to do with the attitudes of one's domestic political party, and the selection process for candidates, than it has to do with socialization processes leading European parliamentarians to 'go native' subsequent to their election.

CONCLUSION

The European Parliament has long been seen as a bastion of pro-integrationist opinion. A central argument made in this paper, however, is that it does not necessarily follow from this that the members of the parliament 'go native' subsequent to being elected to the chamber. That is an empirical question; and the empirical evidence examined here indicates, at best, weak support for this thesis. Rather, the evidence points to the importance of ties to the national party among MEPs, and the significance of who is nominated and elected to the parliament, as the major factors in explaining the high-levels of 'Europeanist' attitudes in the parliament. In large part MEPs do not have to 'go native', because their own beliefs, and the values of the national parties from which they come, already point firmly in this direction. They are doubtless socialized in some directions, but the evidence examined here indicates that their socialization experiences do not include substantial change in the form which the 'going native' thesis proposes.

One obvious question for further research, therefore, is 'in what ways *are* MEPs socialized'? One direction that is certainly worth exploring is that indicated by Kerr's original analysis: the complexity of MEPs' understanding of major issues. Most MEPs agree that they do become clearly better informed over time, but in which areas, and in what ways?[24] It would also be of considerable value, building on research mentioned earlier that has highlighted the importance of MEPs' ties to their national parties, to enquire as to whether such links change in their significance across the life-time of an individual career in the EP? Do members, as has been suggested in the U.S., alter the cues that they follow over time - for instance by gradually according less significance to the views of fellow national legislators, and more to others because of their ideological stance or their technical expertise?

These points also reinforce certain practical consequences of the findings presented here. If MEPs do not, by and large, have their attitudes on European integration changed as a result of their service in the parliament, what might occur if - as there are some, tentative signs of happening - changed domestic political circumstances lead to considerably greater numbers of MEPs being elected who adopt a more fundamentally sceptical viewpoint. One possibility is that it is only under such circumstances that one will see large-scale socialization processes manifesting themselves, as there would now be the scope for these to operate. But an alternative and even more interesting possibility is that one could then see the nature of the EP transformed. The strongly pro-integration position of the EP could, in time, come to be seen not as something that

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is inevitable and unchanging, but as the rather conditional consequence of essentially domestic political factors.

TABLE 1: REGRESSION ESTIMATES (STANDARD ERRORS) FOR 3 VOTES IN 1989-94 PARLIAMENT

Variable	11-07-1990	22-11-1990	07-04-1992
Years as MEP (log)	-.00 (.04)	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.02)
Age	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Gender	.06 (.08)	.03 (.05)	.17 (.09)*
Ex-National Legislator	.17 (.12)	-.14 (.07)*	-.25 (.21)
Ex-National Minister	-.27 (.18)	.10 (.09)	.07 (.13)
Domestic Party in Govt.	-.00 (.09)	.08 (.05)	-.18 (.09)**
Socialists	.88 (.35)**	1.93 (.26)***	2.11 (.43)***
Christian Democrats	.92 (.35)**	1.88 (.26)***	1.78 (.43)***
Liberals	1.07 (.37)***	1.83 (.26)***	2.07 (.44)***
Conservatives	1.57 (.40)***	1.65 (.28)***	1.24 (.51)**
Greens	.55 (.38)	.98 (.27)***	.74 (.46)*
United Left	.60 (.36)*	2.00 (.27)***	1.71 (.46)***
Gaullist/Fianna Fail	-.02 (.39)	-.09 (.29)	1.37 (.46)***
Rainbow Group	-.04 (.39)	-.09 (.29)	.53 (.49)
Left Unity	-.64 (.41)	.92 (.30)***	.44 (.48)
Right	-.88 (.38)**	.05 (.27)	.32 (.46)
Dutch	-.25 (.16)	-.10 (.09)	.02 (.19)
Luxembourg	(dropped)	-.69 (.17)***	-.05 (.37)
French	-.12 (.15)	-.16 (.08)*	-.27 (.16)*
German	-.16 (.14)	-.03 (.08)	-.40 (.16)**
Italian	.08 (.15)	-.06 (.10)	.18 (.18)
British	-.72 (.17)***	.01 (.09)	-.10 (.22)
Irish	-.01 (.24)	.01 (.12)	.30 (.22)
Danish	-1.38 (.23)***	-.03 (.15)	-.48 (.22)**
Greek	-.25 (.21)	-.04 (.12)	.06 (.20)
Spanish	.05 (.15)	-.06 (.08)	.08 (.17)
Portuguese	-.13 (.23)	.01 (.11)	-.13 (.21)
Nat.Leg.*Years as MEP	-.07 (.08)	.08 (.05)	.14 (.11)
Nat.Min.*Years as MEP	.11 (.11)	-.08 (.07)	.02 (.05)
Adjusted R²	.56	.87	.46
Number of Cases	276	204	326

* p< .10   ** p< .05   *** p< .01

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TABLE 2: REGRESSION ESTIMATES (STANDARD ERRORS) FOR 4 VOTES IN 1994-99 PARLIAMENT

Variable	19-07-1994	17-05-1995	14-12-1995	13-03-1996
Years as MEP (log)	-.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Age	.00 (.00)*	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.01 (.00)**
Gender	.04 (.04)	.04 (.05)	.01 (.04)	-.03 (.05)
Ex-National Legislator	-.00 (.05)	.01 (.05)	.04 (.05)	-.01 (.07)
Ex-National Minister	.04 (.07)	.11 (.08)	-.01 (.07)	.07 (.15)
Domestic Party in Govt.	-.06 (.04)	-.35 (.05)***	-.19 (.04)***	-.22 (.06)***
Socialists	.24 (.13)*	1.87 (.15)***	1.70 (.14)***	1.64 (.13)***
Christian Democrats	.23 (.13)*	2.05 (.15)***	1.60 (.14)***	1.68 (.14)***
Liberals	.17 (.14)	1.71 (.15)***	1.56 (.15)***	.40 (.15)***
Forza Italia/Union for Europe[a]	-.73 (.15)***	.85 (.23)***	.62 (.15)***	.47 (.16)***
Greens	.17 (.14)	.69 (.17)***	1.05 (.16)***	-.05 (.16)
United Left	.25 (.14)*	.00 (.16)	.51 (.16)***	.17 (.16)
Gaullist/Fianna Fail	-1.50 (.15)***	.12 (.17)	--	--
Radical Alliance	.36 (.16)**	1.98 (.22)***	1.73 (.19)***	2.15 (.23)***
Europe of Nations	-1.20 (.15)***	.08 (.18)	-.30 (.18)	-.06 (.19)
Dutch	.21 (.10)**	.17 (.13)	.03 (.10)	.32 (.13)**
Luxembourg	-.11 (.18)	.35 (.20)	-.18 (.18)	.06 (.23)
French	-.09 (.09)	-.07 (.13)	-.27 (.10)***	-.06 (.13)
German	.13 (.08)	-.01 (.11)	-.02 (.09)	.21 (.11)*
Italian	.13 (.09)	-.15 (.13)	.31 (.10)***	.60 (.14)***
British	.13 (.09)	-.92 (.12)***	-.33 (.09)	-.92 (.12)***
Irish	.04 (.12)	-.33 (.17)*	-.04 (.13)	-.06 (.18)
Danish	-.61 (.12)***	-.35 (.17)**	-.13 (.15)	-.55 (.17)***
Greek	.14 (.10)	-.73 (.14)***	-.03 (.12)	.32 (.15)**
Spanish	.12 (.09)	-.02 (.13)	-.03 (.09)	.35 (.12)***
Portuguese	.05 (.11)	-.03 (.15)	-.07 (.13)	.41 (.15)***
Austrian	--	.26 (.24)	-.10 (.14)	.35 (.15)**
Finnish	--	-.03 (.25)	-.31 (.13)**	.04 (.16)
Swedish	--	-.27 (.23)	-.43 (.13)***	-.29 (.16)
Nat.Leg*Years as MEP	.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)	-.05 (.03)
Nat.Min*Years as MEP	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.02)	-.01 (.03)	.00 (.09)
Adjusted R²	.75	.71	.65	.71
Number of Cases	437	470	424	457

* p<.10   ** p<.05   *** p<.01

[a] In July 1995, Forza Italia, French Gaullists and Irish Fianna Fail MEPs joined together in the Union for Europe group.

TABLE 3: REGRESSION ESTIMATES (STANDARD ERRORS) FOR AGGREGATE 'PRO-INTEGRATION' SCORES OVER 4 VOTES IN THE 1994-99 PARLIAMENT

Variable	
Years as MEP (log)[a]	.06 (.06)
Age	.00 (.01)
Gender	-.23 (.13)*
Ex-National Legislator	.16 (.20)
Ex-National Minister	.40 (.37)
Domestic Party in Govt.	-.86 (.15)***
Socialists	7.51 (.66)***
Christian Democrats	7.42 (.66)***
Liberals	5.67 (.72)***
Forza Italia	6.65 (1.09)***
Greens	3.79 (.69)***
United Left	2.78 (.71)***
Gaullist/Fianna Fail	-.41 (.81)
Radical Alliance	(dropped)
Europe of Nations	.43 (.76)
Dutch	.37 (.37)
Luxembourg	-.18 (.57)
French	-.14 (.44)
German	-.01 (.34)
Italian	-.65 (.41)*
British	-2.43 (.35)***
Irish	-.69 (.45)*
Danish	-2.37 (.49)***
Greek	-.76 (.44)*
Spanish	-.14 (.37)
Portuguese	.42 (.55)
Nat.Leg*Years as MEP	-.07 (.13)
Nat.Min*Years as MEP	-.29 (.21)
Adjusted R^2	.85
Number of Cases	220

* p< .10   ** p< .05   *** p<.01

[a] The Age and Years as MEP variables for this equation were set at their 1995 values.

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TABLE 4: ONE-WAY ANOVA ON CUMULATIVE INDEX OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS CLOSER INTEGRATION, BY PARTY (UK LEGISLATORS)

Conservatives	Mean[a]	Std.Deviation	N. of Cases
MPs	10.06	3.74	104
EPCs	12.10	2.81	39
MEPs	15.55	3.44	20
F= 22.19	p<0.0000		

| Labour	Mean	Std.Deviation	N. of Cases
MPs	13.68	3.23	75
MEPs	14.81	4.52	26
F= 1.89	p<0.1724		

[a]This index was computed by summing the responses of survey participants to four statements contained within both the Labour and Conservative surveys. The statements were:

'The disadvantages of EC membership have been outweighed by the benefits'
'The 1996 IGC should not increase the supranational power of EU institutions'
'EMU is not desirable'
'The European parliament should be given the right to initiate EU legislation'

Respondents were allowed 5 options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. The items used in the index I have constructed were selected not only for being common across the two surveys, but also in order to tap into some of the main aspects of the pro-integration and pro-parliament attitudes which this paper has been investigating.

Scores in the original survey were scaled from '1' for 'Strongly Agree' to '5' for 'Strongly Disagree'. For the construction of the index here they have been re-scaled so that the most pro-integration response in each instance scores '5', with the most strong counter-viewpoint scoring '1'. The index therefore allows for a range of scores between 4 and 20.

FIGURE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF AGGREGATE 'INSTITUTIONAL LOYALTY' SCORES AMONG MEPS FOR 4 VOTES IN 94-99 PARLIAMENT

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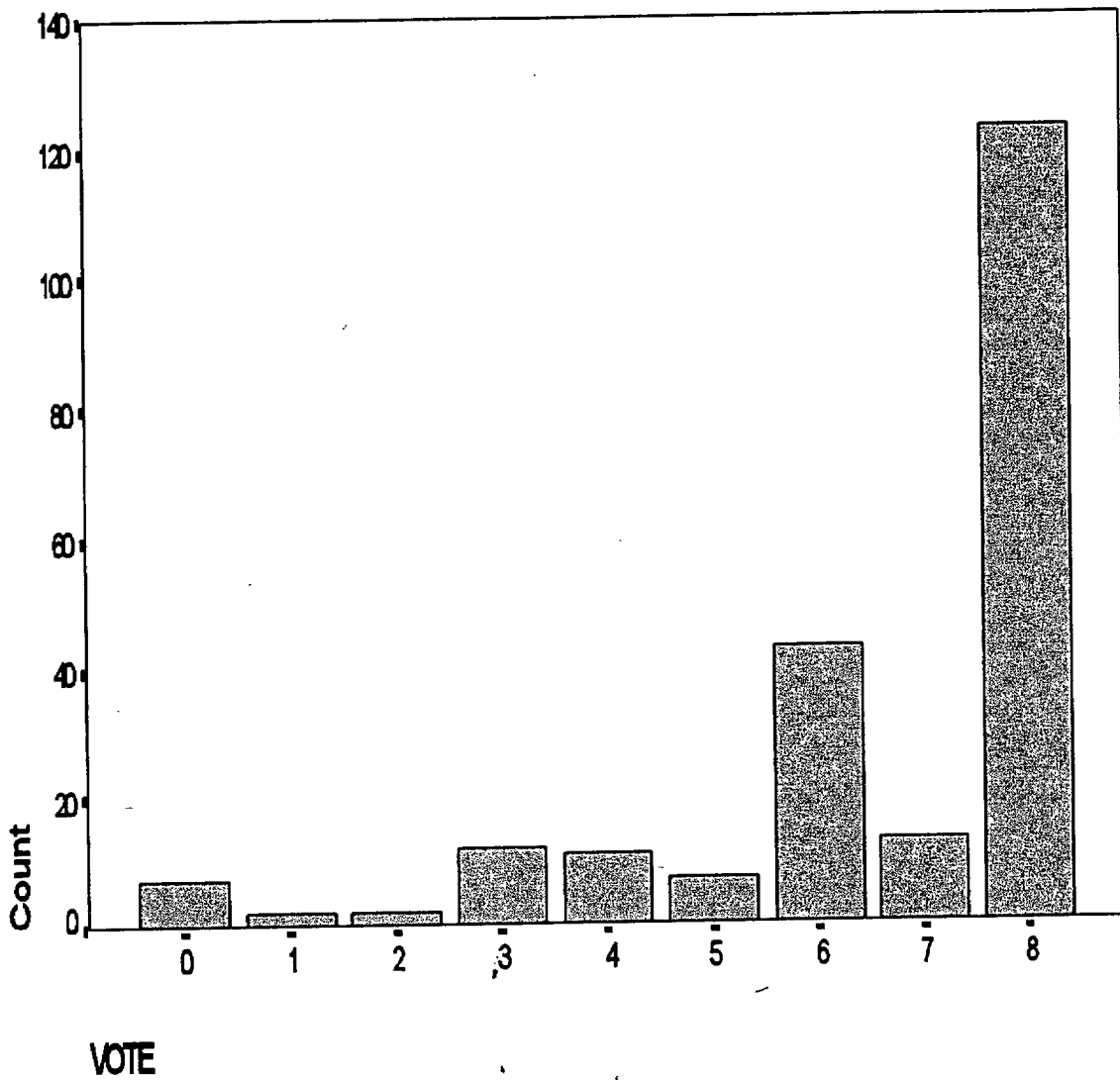
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11 July 1990: Resolution on the European Parliament's Guidelines for a Draft Constitution for the European Union. Vote: 'Pro-integration' position - 218, Against - 38, Abstentions - 20.

22 November 1990: Resolution on the Intergovernmental Conferences in the Context of the European Parliament's Strategy for European Union. Vote: Pro - 163, Against - 22, Abst - 19.

7 April 1992: Resolution on the Results of the Intergovernmental Conferences. Vote: Pro - 231, Against - 63, Abst - 32.

19 July 1994: Read Report on passage of draft directive on Voice-Telephony Deregulation. Vote: Pro - 379, Against - 45, Abst - 13.

17 May 1995: Bourlanges/Martin report on forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference. Vote: Pro - 292, Against - 103, Abst - 75.

14 December 1995: Resolution on preparation of the meeting of the European Council. Vote: Pro - 346, Against - 33, Abst - 45.

13 March 1996: Resolution on the convening of the Intergovernmental Conference. Vote: Pro - 267, Against - 120, Abst - 71.

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1. There are, nonetheless, clear exceptions to this generalization, such as Kerr (1973 - see below), Kirchner (1984), Holland (1986), and Herman and Lodge (1978), merely to cite examples from the English-language literature.

2. See Scully (1998) from which some of the later empirical analysis is drawn; also Marsh and Wessels (1997:238; and Westlake 1994b:28-29).

3. The assumption that the EP is generally at the extreme 'pro-integration' end of the spectrum is used, for instance, to underpin the modelling work of Tsebelis (1994) and Garrett and Tsebelis (1996).

4. To take but one example, pulled from recent press coverage after the Cardiff June 1998 European Council summit: "The idea of a super-council of deputy prime-ministers raises more questions than it answers. There is a clear tendency for those personally engaged in Europe to go native", Martin Walker, 'Analysis: balancing act in the rise and rise of neo-nation states', *The Guardian*, June 17 1998.

5. A similar argument is made by Spinelli: "An objective observer must conclude that a corporate spirit born of working together and the awareness of participating in an ambitious historic enterprise have created and maintained among the Communities functionaries a prevailing European loyalty. The administration of the EEC has, in fact, infected the national administrations with the European spirit considerably more than it has been infected with the national spirit" (1966:xx).

6. Kerr's study was conducted, of course, on the pre-1979 unelected Parliament, whose membership was made up of national legislators delegated to serve in Strasbourg.

7. It is unclear, however, what interpretation can be placed upon such trends. Further behavioural evidence is examined by Westlake, but the results are inconclusive. He examines the voting patterns of the British contingent across 14 votes, between 1981 and 1992, where issues concerning greater powers for the Parliament and closer European unity were placed before MEPs (Westlake 1994a:245-257). The major method of analysis, however, is to chart *aggregate* patterns of support, opposition or abstention/absence across these fourteen votes. Not only is there no identifiable trend in support among UK members across the votes (charting aggregate levels of support over time reveals a statistically insignificant coefficient); even if there were, it would be difficult to draw any clear inferences from such a pattern. Increasing British support could have come from the changing attitudes of UK members in the chamber (although in fact, charting simply the behaviour of surviving members of the 1979 intake across all 14 votes yields little evidence of a trend either), or from less supportive members in this original cohort gradually being replaced by more supportive figures.

8. In a similar manner, Hagle (1993), writing about the experiences of new members of the U.S. Supreme Court, supports the idea that new members of political institutions undergo periods of learning and socialization: rather like much of the organizational psychology work mentioned below, Hagle sees new entrants undergoing an initial period of 'bewilderment and disorientation'.

9. Efforts to calculate more 'typical' influences across all votes held in the EP can be found in Brzinski (1995), Raunio (1997) and Hix and Lord (1997).

10. These votes are among those identified by Westlake (1994a) as significant divisions in relation to support for integration and greater EP powers.

11. The 'Martin' reports were named after David Martin MEP, then *rapporteur* on these matters for the EP's Committee on Institutional Affairs, now a Vice-President of the Parliament.

12. In particular, this report presented a clear proposal for the form and extent of co-decision powers that the EP was requesting.

13. While this vote by the EP had no legal force over treaty ratification, it arguably had greater significance than this might suggest given that the Italian parliament had earlier promised not to ratify any treaty rejected by the EP.

14. Voting 'abstained' on a division in the EP is thus distinct from simply being absent from a vote. Because of the diversity of reasons that might explain a member's absence from the chamber, absent members have been excluded from the following analysis.

15. The use of regression could be questioned, given that the categories of the dependent variable essentially form an ordinal rather than an interval-level scale. Ordered Logit and Ordered Probit analysis was therefore also conducted on the same votes, producing substantially similar results. Given this similarity of results, I have chosen to report the more familiar regression findings.

16. See, for example, Mughan et al (1997), and Arnold (1998). Linear specifications of the regression model, as well as those including the logged function, were run as a check. There were virtually no significant differences resulting from the different model specifications, except for a mild tendency for the logged specification to obtain a better fit.

17 The 'base' categories - that for which no dummy variable was entered, were Belgium, for the nationality variables, and 'Non-aligned' members for the party variables. Dummy variables were, of course, necessary, there being no obvious ordering within these categories.

18. This is similar to the argument that the British Labour Party, and the trade union movement, came to be much more sympathetic to European integration in the late-1980s because Europe was as arena where their policy priorities were accorded greater respect than in a UK dominated by Mrs Thatcher and the Conservative Party.

19. Data on MEPs was collected from the following: *The Times Guide to the European Parliament*, (London: Times Books) 1989 and 1994 editions; *Who's Who in European Politics (second edition)*, (New York: Bowker-Saur, 1992); *Guide to the European Parliament*, (Brussels: EU Committee of the American Chamber of Commerce, 1995); *List of Members*, (European Parliament, various dates); and the *Europarl* web server.

20. See, for example, Mughan et al (1997), which finds that women MPs in the House of Commons were significantly more likely than men to favour the institutional change of introducing television coverage of proceedings.

21. Thomassen and Schmitt (1997) suggest that, at least as far as British Conservatives are concerned, they also differ ideologically from their fellow EPP members in being more right-wing across socio-economic issues.

22 Only these 4 votes, rather than all 7, are used in the construction of the scale because a scale constructed from all 7 would have excluded all but a very small number of MEPs from the analysis. The single biggest reason for this is the high turnover of MEPs in the 1994 elections. After the polls, less than half of the new membership (241 out of 567), had been outgoing members of the previous Parliament.

23. For an extended description of the study, as well as analysis of various aspects of the data, see Baker and Seawright (1998).

24. For instance, Bowler and Farrell (1995) have suggested that MEPs tend to specialize in the direction of their committee assignments. It would be useful to find out the degree to which members display a more complex appreciation of issues in these areas compared to others over time.