NATIONAL POLITICAL CULTURES AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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Introduction: Leadership and Institutions

In the history of the social sciences, and especially over the last hundred and fifty years with the rise of sociology, controversy has surrounded the respective roles and influence of individuals and institutions in both society and politics. At one end of the spectrum are the 'great man' theories of history; their heyday was the late nineteenth century, but they persisted - certainly in the educational system - well into the twentieth century in countries such as the UK, the Soviet Union, France and the United States. These theories of history, describing the life and times of men such as Clemenceau, Abraham Lincoln, the Duke of Wellington, Napoleon, Lenin, or George Washington, are like fables or lives of the saints: exemplary models depicting the individual as influencing affairs, while at the same time reflecting a mythic, moral order. They are doubtless ultimately related to a religious, perhaps exclusively Christian, world view and to the concept of the exemplary life. Today, such voluntarist, individualist interpretations of history and politics have by and large been replaced by theories of institutions; nevertheless, they continue to thrive in political biographies, memoirs, and a myriad of 'inside stories' of political organisations and institutions.

At the other end of the spectrum, and from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, the study of, first, history, and then sociology became associated with objectivity, scientific procedures and sophistication; hence the developing emphasis in the emerging social sciences upon social forces and institutions themselves, where structure, trends in history, and even the notion of the inevitability of historical and social developments (such as capitalism) reduced, marginalised, sometimes even removed altogether the individual from depictions of how the political and historical process works.

The most extreme form of this view is certain forms of economic determinism which withdraw from the individual any role as political actor (political extra is perhaps the highest role such individuals can aspire to, the leading role going to such characters - often personalised just the same - as class, mode of production, even history itself). With the rise and rise (before the decline and fall) of such philosophies as Althusserian Marxism in the 1970s, the limitations placed upon the individual's ability to affect institutions went to the heart of being itself; here the individual was but 'interpolated' by the structures which framed not only his social but his psychic existence[2], the subsequent scope for individual action being non-existent, akin to a kind of limbo in which the 'overdetermined' individual could only wait for the winds of history to change direction.

One of the striking features of these mutually exclusive views of the role of the individual is that these greatly varying accounts of the political and historical process should have developed more or less

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[2] I hesitate to write 'his or her' here given the fact that the individual in this context is stripped of the characteristics normally associated with being; perhaps 'its' would be appropriate.

simultaneously in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, until, that is, the European experience of Fascism in the 1930s, with its idolisation of the individual leader and treatment of him as the prime mover in social and political change. In the post-war period, with such a curriculum vitae, the notion of the powerful individual in political change got itself a bad name. One of the consequences was the taboo placed on the subject of personal leadership or anything remotely resembling it, in the political world of course, but also in the academic,[3] and in subsequent developments in democratic theory. In democratic theory, *no-one*, by definition, is indispensible, and much of the political analysis related to the study of democratic institutions, for example, is strictly impersonal. An irony here is that modern day politics are characterised increasingly by the portrayal of the individual leader - or certainly of his or her image. A somewhat vacuous conflation of the leader and the image of the leader has developed in the post-war years (perhaps, we might add, as a substitute for more substantial study), especially in the USA. Hence the phenomenon and the study of 'personality politics', and the rise of the whole industry of 'selling' politicians with the same methods used for selling soap powders. Media studies have devoted a great deal of attention to analysing this area. Such analyses however, although they bear down upon the distinction between image and reality, are less concerned with the *relationship* of leaders to their public. Such a relationship is highly problematic and raises politico-cultural questions of the first importance. What, for example, are the origins of the perceived *need* to sell what might or might not be a nonentity as a great and charismatic figure? And why the trauma and consternation when

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[3] An interesting post-war illustration of the conflation of personalised leadership with Fascism was the 26 April 1947 edition of London's *Picture Post* in which a series of pictures of Hitler were shown alongside pictures of de Gaulle in similar poses or settings. The headline was 'What is de Gaulle up to ?'

such figures fail, Watergate-style, to measure up to an expected image?

The former UK Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, is a good illustration here. It is without doubt the case that she was a politician of the strongest of convictions. Nevertheless, there is a lot of evidence to show that much of her political personality was 'manufactured' in her early years in power (for example, the trained lowering of her speaking register to a less harsh, less strident and more deliberate one). There is also evidence that much of her singular conviction and so on were private attitudes which were publicly struck only after discussion and organisation in back-room negotiations and strategic planning sessions. The striking of poses which 'reveal' aspects of personality is a national industry, for example, in the case of modern-day American presidential campaigns. However, to see that these phenomena might not be 'real' still does not explain the necessity of the illusion.

What is lacking in many theorisations of political processes, then, is a discussion of the role of the individual or of certain individuals, the role of their projected image, and the relationship of leaders to their constituencies and audiences; a relationship that is seen in political and not simply social psychological terms[3] Whatever the evidence, individuals *seem* to play a role in, and have effects upon, political activity. Moreover, it is worth pointing out that the *notion* of such is attractive both to those involved and to observers. If we look at the lives of politicians and other public figures, whether at the level of national, European or global politics, many of them end their careers with personal memoirs. Here we can make two related observations.

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[3] On leadership roles see L.J. Edinger 'Approaches to the Comparative Analysis of Political Leadership', *Review of Politics*, 1990, 54, 4, pp. 509-523.

First, it is clear from memoirs that political actors are seen, and see themselves, as driven by individual passions such as personal ambition, hatred, the love of intrigue, and the vanity of fame and self-importance (even though this is often well disguised by the sole declared ambition to 'serve'). Second, and of greater importance, is a contradiction: however 'embedded' these individuals' lives are in institutions and structures, or in the struggle to build institutions in order that these regulate and orientate national and international politics, they nearly all - and often irrespective of political ideology - implicitly or explicitly subscribe to the view that it is the individuals themselves (especially, of course, the authors of the memoirs) who make history. Indeed, one often has the impression that it is the individuals and the dynamic of their lives and interaction with others that are by far the most important factors involved. Political memoirs are, in fact, rather like modern versions of the 'great man' theories themselves. Most theoretical explanations of political reality, on the other hand, are written - by definition - on the basis that people are not really the issue (although they might act as agents for functions), and are, for all important purposes, irrelevant. We have, therefore, two worlds both of which are both descriptive and prescriptive, and which, if not attempts to negate one another, nevertheless operate as explanations of political reality which have no real reference to one another.

Leadership and European Integration
The short, and probably accurate, explanation of, on the one hand, the failure of theory to incorporate the individual, and, on the other, a somewhat narcissistic emphasis upon the privileged role of individuals, is that the truth lies somewhere in between. Memoirs themselves,

vanity apart, are strong evidence of the role of individual activity, initiative, and influence upon political processes. And if we take, for example, the various Presidents of the European Commission, especially the President from 1985 to 1993, Jacques Delors, it is clear that the movement towards European integration was greatly enhanced by the personal commitment and drive of these individuals; not because this was the function of office (an office which has in fact very limited powers) but because, as Durkheim put it, all that is in the contract is not purely contractual; or to put it another way; the functions of an office do not account for the effectiveness of the office holder.

In fact, as regards European integration, it is here that we find, if not a reconciliation of the individual/institution dichotomy, then something very close to it. For Lindberg and Scheingold, writing in the 1960s on the development of the EC, leadership, within an elaborate political system, plays a major role: it identifies problems, evaluates and stores information, articulates and symbolises goals, builds up support, engineers consent, and organises bargaining and the exchange of concessions. The authors offer many examples of individuals affecting (directly and from within), the structures and practices of the European Community. Sicco Mansholt's persistence in prioritising agriculture within the Community is the best example. His involvement went beyond standard consultation mechanisms, to stimulating the creation of EC-level farmers' organisations which he consulted exhaustively.[4] The negative example of transport policy is also given: no personally-driven initiatives were taken and; as a result, transport never became (until the 1990s) a priority issue within the EC.

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[4] L.N.Lindberg and S.Scheingold, *Europe's Would-Be Polity* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp.172-3.

The literature on European integration, especially the vast body of literature that has grown up since the mid-1980s shows again and again that reference to the crucial role of leadership and leaders is a constant, but that it does not easily 'fit' into theoretical frameworks. [5] Much of the recent research suggests that there is a significant degree of 'play' between the office-holder and the function of the office which allows for the individual to impinge significantly upon the process; the explanation being that the EC institutions are in a continuous state of flux. Individuals, therefore, have a scope they would otherwise not have (or not seem to have).[6] Ironically, it is worthy of note that in the European context the leadership demonstrated by such figures as Delors has a scope vis-à-vis its prescribed functions rarely afforded in institutional arrangements at national level. As in all other areas of political and social life; people operate within structures, and unless those structures are overdetermining in the Althusserian sense (i.e. have within them qualities which preclude alteration to the overall framework), then individuals can have effects upon them. To paraphrase Sartre on the poet Valéry: Jean Monnet may have been an entrepreneurial civil servant, from the French elite but not all such civil servants were Jean Monnet.[7] To paraphrase again; this time Marx: men and women make their history on the basis of given social conditions and within the political structures they find themselves in.

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[5] A good recent example of the role of leadership is Emil Kirchner, "The EC Council Presidency at Work" European Community Studies Association Conference, Washington, 1991. See also Peter Ludlow, "Beyond 1992: Europe and its Western Partners", Centre for European Policy Studies, Paper 38, July 1991. For a discussion of the literature (although only up until the early 1980s), see Juliet Lodge (ed), *The European Community: Bibliographical Excursions* (London, Pinter, 1983).

[6] For a discussion of constraints upon initiative, see Kirchner, *op. cit.*, pp.5-13.

[7] See also Kevin Featherstone "Jean Monnet: Saint or Sinner ?" Political Studies Association Conference, Leicester, April 1993.

Leadership, Language, and Style

If it is the case that leadership in institutions, and leadership's relationship to institutions, are factors in political processes and political change which must be taken more into account, what is far less accepted is whether, in the construction of Europe, the *style* of leadership is also a factor. We can imagine a more European leadership emerging (e.g. for the coordination of a more common foreign policy). Comparing and contrasting leadership styles, therefore, would be an interesting avenue of enquiry for the light it might shed on a) the various national polities involved, b) their compatibility in the EC setting, c) the 'acceptability' of each to the other countries involved, d) the role of styles of leadership in an EC crisis, and e) the more likely 'style' to emerge over the longer term in the European context. Let us examine some questions of style.[8]

On this question of the scope for leadership in the European arena, it is nevertheless the case that although Commissioners and Presidents of the Commission in particular can have a great deal of influence, even though they may not enjoy a great deal of formal power, it is, nevertheless, national leadership that has been the formative influence on EC development, national leadership that has exploited and used the scope afforded by the institutions. In the construction of Europe since the 1940s and 1950s, what we have in fact witnessed is the exercise of national leadership in the context of essentially intergovernmental structures.[9]

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[8] An extremely interesting case study here would be an analysis of the political effects and or failures of President Mitterrand's dramatic visit to Sarajevo in May 1992.

[9] E.B. Haas has argued in *The Uniting of Europe* Ch. 13, p. 132,that between 1954-7 (with the development of the ECSC) national leaders were much more important in the integrative process than were the international structures, (Standford University Press, 1968). See also, Andrew Moravcsik, "Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community", *International Organisation*, 45, 1, Winter 1991, pp. 19-56.

Having said this, in the inter-national European context, just as in the national or sub-national, there seem to be two fundamental styles of leadership (or projected images of leadership): one involving *demonstrably* strong national leadership, such as de Gaulle's; and one drawing upon a low yet international profile, such as Jean Monnet's. These two approaches seem to a certain degree to correspond to a division in political thought between ideologically and pragmatically driven activity. It is not a question of strong individual activity versus non-activity but of two essential kinds of individual activity. The point we need to consider here, and which we shall come back to in more detail, is the appropriateness of demonstrably strong leadership in the wider European context. Is there a continent-wide model that a de Gaulle-style approach fits into ? Does it bear any relation to those leaders in Italy, Germany and so on in the twentieth century whose behaviour wrought such havoc? If so, what is the nature of that relation ? Just as we need to ask how appropriate is 'ideological' leadership at the pan-European level, we also need to ask how *effective* the second form, the pragmatic, would be in such a context, especially if it involved, which in Monnet's case it did not, election to office, and all its related symbolic developments at the level, here, of a *transnational* constituency. Can European politics evolve towards executive leadership with a European constituency ? Is further political integration dependent in some way upon a more focal leadership ?

We have argued that, by and large, it is the national leaders and leaderships that are defining of the European Community - Europe is being built upon the activity and preferences of decision-makers and leaders who have come to prominence in their national contexts.

Nevertheless, 'European' leadership also has a certain profile within the various national communities, none more so than that of Jacques Delors whose leadership and style, which seem to combine the longer-term strong ideological 'vision' with the pragmatic task-oriented approach, are relatively well known throughout the Community.[10] Moreover, although Europe's leaders are quintessentially *national* actors, they do have an international audience (although they are not 'responsible' to them); figures such as Charles de Gaulle in the 1960s, or Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, had audiences well beyond their national ones. We shall return to this point below. Moreover, these national actors normally form bilateral arrangements, particularly between the 'big' countries, especially France and Germany. In such a relationship each country is playing to an audience which extends significantly beyond national boundaries, as well as using the international context provided by the process of European integration as a political resource at the national level. The classic case, perhaps ironically given de Gaulle's often hostile attitude to the EC, is the de Gaulle-Adenauer relationship.[11] This has been followed by quite strong personalised relationships between President Giscard and Chancellor Schmidt (whose relationship crossed both the ideological divide and the linguistic one - they spoke in English to one another), and latterly between President Mitterrand and Chancellor Kohl (neither of whom speak English). We shall come back to this question of France's predominant role, for so often when we are talking about political leadership in the EC, and for a variety of reasons we shall come on to, we are, in fact, talking above all about France.

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[10] For an illustrative example of his conversational style and ideas, see the interview with Delors in *Le Nouvel Economiste*, No. 783, 15 February 1991.

[11] J. Binoche, *L'Allemagne et le Général de Gaulle* (Paris, Plon, 1975).

Ex-EC commissioner Christopher Tugendhat identified marked differences between the styles of Europeans at the *linguistic* level. One of the principal distinctions is between the UK and the majority of the member-states, the latter often using an elevated rhetoric virtually unknown in the UK.[12] For Tugendhat, this has become the dominant 'Euro-rhetoric'.[13] The problem here is that, as with a lot of declamatory rhetoric, it masks (often, of course, deliberately) more than it demonstrates. The French possess an 'assertive declamatory form'; the Germans 'broad concepts, moral uplift' which in English translation sound 'windy and empty'[14]. The more pragmatic British discourse, when translated into German, sounds opportunistic and short-sighted. To give a specific example: Roy Jenkins, as President of the European Commission between 1977 and 1981, had, it has been argued, a more favourable impact upon those Community actors who knew English than upon those who did not, because his own discourse translated somewhat insipidly into an abstract French or German.

A great deal of national leadership 'style', moreover, is in a relation to the wider *international standing* of countries. To a certain extent, it is only the larger countries: France, Germany, the UK, Italy or Spain who can accommodate a particular leadership style and discourse relating to the EC without exposing themselves to ridicule. Smaller countries, for example the Netherlands, usually assert themselves as peacemakers, honest brokers, and so on.

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[12]And this is even true of speakers whose style is as pedestrian as that of Chancellor Kohl's; see Christopher Tugendhat, *Making Sense of Europe* (London, Viking, 1986), p.21.

[13] *Ibid.*, p.22.

[14] *Ibid.*, p.23

Part of style, furthermore, is *institutional* (for example, the scope for an elected national President will be greater than that of a coalition Prime Minister); therefore, leadership style (like the institutions themselves, in fact) is clearly borne of specific national political cultures, with language as one of the most important elements of this.[15] The choice of vision - and style - seems to contain elements specific to the national political culture: Thatcher's obstructiveness was effective partly because it was an echo of de Gaulle's earlier style; it also reflected a specific trait in British political culture which, clearly, still has political effects. Leadership style raises questions concerning the variety of forms it takes, and its provenance (e.g. national influences; precedent). No case is better illustrative of the issues involved in an analysis of leadership in Europe than that of France.

France

Politically, partly because of Germany's historical notoriety and the UK's desire to maintain distance from things European, it has been France which has dominated Europe since the 1950s. This is true in terms of Monnet and his associates and their elaboration of essentially French 'models' within the European framework. However, French leadership of Europe was also partly the result of France's domestic situation. In 1958, de Gaulle, a charismatic nationalist leader, was swept to power in the teeth of a major crisis. Such a style of leadership in the EC's most influential member state was bound to have strong repercussions for European integration. Paradoxically, de Gaulle's highly personalised leadership initially had a calming and integrative effect on Europe, in that what we might call his leadership of

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[15] See *inter alia* J. Gaffney and E. Kolinsky (eds) *Political Culture in France and Germany* (London, Routledge, 1991).

recognition, namely, his responsiveness to Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, strongly influenced Franco-German reconciliation. The generally accepted view is that such mutual sympathy brought the two countries closer together, and began the long process of undoing France's historical fear of its neighbour, thus facilitating European construction. This has been often stressed.

What has been less stressed, however, but which is equally important from the point of view of our analysis, is that the relationship between the countries was, as the 1962 incident particularly demonstrated - de Gaulle inviting Adenauer to his private house; the two men attending mass together, for example - highly personalised. Henceforward, other leaders would be able to use such a style, for better or worse, in the making of Europe. Similarly, what we might call leadership of *opposition* was also made possible by de Gaulle's new, highly personalised way of treating Europe. The 'empty chair' crisis of 1965[16] is the classic example of the adoption of such a personal approach: de Gaulle ordered his ministers to boycott the Community's decision-making bodies, ostensibly over disagreement concerning the financing of the Common Agricultural Policy; more fundamentally as a protest against the momentum gathered, at that time, for more integrative decision-making procedures.

It is arguable that *only* France at this time could have behaved in such a way without bringing national humiliation upon the country. It is worth noting in this context, however, that de Gaulle's haughty capriciousness in international affairs was having a negative effect on public opinion in

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[16] See, *inter alia,* Serge Bernstein, *La France de l'Expansion* (Paris, Seuil, 1989), pp.250-251; Paul Taylor, *The Limits of European Cooperation* (London, Croom Helm, 1983), p.40.

France, and would be one of the factors leading to his downfall in 1969. This is because, in general, such behaviour means that the individuals involved (de Gaulle and, later, Thatcher) also act as scapegoats for other difficulties. For example, during the 1980s, the impression was often given that only the UK was out of step in Europe, and this particularly because of the comportment of the UK Prime Minister. After Thatcher's resignation, it became clear that the UK had in reality acted as a lightning conductor for many contentious issues. Let us return to the case of France.

France's historical importance in the EC and de Gaulle's particular style mean that while it is quite easy to imagine a French President speaking for Europe (in spite of? because of? de Gaulle), it is almost inconceivable to imagine the same of the Spanish, the Italian, or the UK Prime Ministers. This is compounded by the internal organisation of France's institutions which confers a particular status upon any Fifth Republican leader. François Mitterrand, for example, was, throughout the 1980s the main political actor in France; he had also, however, the same national and international status as the Queen of England, the King of Spain, or the President of Italy. This means that at meetings of European leaders, France's representative is the only head of state present, the other eleven being heads of government only. This in turn means that as regards protocol, France is treated with greater deference (in official photographs, for example, the French President is always in the centre of the picture). Other factors contributing to France's dominance are of course its geographical location in the centre of Europe; and, as we have mentioned, the traditional non-European approach of the UK, and the unacceptability of German leadership (can one imagine a post-war German leader behaving towards the EC like

de Gaulle, or Thatcher?) A further advantage to the French in the 1980s was that the French President, François Mitterrand, had been national leader longer than virtually every other leader involved in the building of Europe. And at the crucial stage of the signing and preparation for the application of the Single European Act, the President of the Commission was also French (Jacques Delors).[17]

All these factors add up to the fact that to date France has no rival to its pretention to European leadership, and raise issues concerning the effect of such leadership and style of leadership at the EC level. What has France made of its prominent role in the EC? It has, first and above all, been a major force in the shaping of European institutions and in policy orientation. In particular, from the Fouchet Plans of 1961-2,[18] through Pompidou's high-profile Europeanism, to Mitterrand's calls for European union, the direction has been the same (and one the Euro-inexperienced British find very hard decoding); namely, the ever-increasing co-operation of national states. For France, it has always been, for example, a question of strengthening the Council of Ministers and the European Council, while holding the European Parliament in relative weakness (the parallels with the strong executive and weak legislature of the French Fifth Republic are striking). Second, France's heightened role has had advantages for the EC as a whole: internationally, the French President is seen as a major figure on the international stage, so providing 'Europe' with a ready-made international representative. Of interest here is the fact that the domestic popularity of the German leader increases partly in relation to his high profile association with the prestigious French leader, proof to

[17] Delors, J. and Clisthène, *La France par l'Europe* (Paris, Grasset and Fasquelle, 1988).
[18] See Christian Philip, *Textes institutifs des communautés européennes* (Paris, PUF, 1984).

the German population of its acceptance by the other populations of the European continent (the German presidency of the Council has a similar effect).[19]

Thirdly, we can see from what has gone before how national leadership - here French - can be effective in a negative sense. De Gaulle - and Thatcher[20] - are the two obvious examples of this; simply by being uncooperative they caused the system either to function less efficiently than it might, or else to function in a way other than that intended by greater integrationists. But does national leadership always have an effect? Or do the EC's institutions (the presence, for example, of eleven other national leaders) and the infinite number of daily exchanges and transactions within it sustain and enhance a complex structure upon which leadership confers only a legitimacy or symbolic status, with movement and momentum being generated from within in a structural or institutional manner?

Leadership and Decision-making

Regarding EC decision-making, it is true that most decisions are taken at a lower level than the national leaders, a whole series of lower levels in fact, and that, often, national leaders seem to be simply rubber-stamping decisions made elsewhere. In the 1970s, the 'lower level' was often the foreign ministries or finance ministries rather than the heads of government. The permanent representatives, moreover, who have a

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[19] Tugendhat op.cit., p.103. One of the negative results of such an association was the French and German leaders' rather flippant (sexist?) attitude to the newly appointed Margaret Thatcher. Tugendhat (p.120) has argued that it was their condescension which partly triggered Thatcher's resentment in the early 1980s.

[20] For an account of Margaret Thatcher's obstructive role in EC politics in the 1980s, see, inter alia, Paul Taylor, "The New Dynamics of EC Integration in the 1980s" in Lodge, J. (ed), The European Community and the Challenge of the Future (London, Pinter, 1989).

highly specialised knowledge far surpassing that of their national leaders, must rank among the most influential political actors on the EC stage throughout its history, both in terms of their day-to-day influence (upon both Community policy and national European policy) and their 'titanic rivalries' between one another (particularly between the British and the French).[21]

It is true, nevertheless, that over the last decade the image of the national leaders has developed, especially at European Council meetings (encouraged by the general development of 'summitry' in such meetings as GATT, OECD, G7, and so on), and therefore the pertinence of their styles and discourse has been accentuated. There is also evidence that such leadership has not just a cosmetic, but a functional role, in the European Council for example, setting particular directions, giving impetus to procedures, and getting decisions underway. And such a view is backed up by the manifest interest of certain national leaders, such as François Mitterrand, in the European process, particularly as concerns the European Council.[22] It is arguable that Mitterrand has used 'Europe' as a shield against becoming embroiled in daily domestic politics. Nevertheless, his involvement in the European process during the 1980s has been extensive and crucial to a host of developments in the EC.[23] Moreover, the symbolism of Europe as embodied in national leaders is itself an integral part of the overall process of European

[21] Tugendhat, *op.cit.* p.157. See also, Alan But-Philips & Christiana Baron: "The United Kingdom" in H. Siedentopf and J. Ziller (eds), *Making European Policies Work* ,Vol 2 (London, Sage, 1988), p.663. See also Elizabeth Bomberg and John Peterson, "Decision Making in the European Union", Politcal Studies Association Conference, Leicester University, 1993.

[22] J. Lodge 'EC Institutions', *Contemporary Record*, February1990 has argued that instutional change follows 'will' e.g. those of Spinelli, Delors, or Mitterrand. Commissioners can also have a great deal of influence. On the influence of Leon Brittan (former Competition Policy Commissioner) see "L'homme le plus puissant d'Europe", *Le nouvel observateur*, 27 July 1991. Another illustrative example is Roy Jenkins' role in the introduction of the European Monetary System in the late 1970s.

[23] See H. Drake, 'France & Europe' in Raymond G. (ed), *France; The Socialist Decade*, (Berg, 1993).

construction. If it were only a question of the infinite number of lower level transactions, it is highly likely that the whole process would stall. 'Europe' as an ideal which can be appealed to by and personified in certain leaders is essential to the overall coordination of European integration. So, leadership - hitherto from national sources - clearly does play a role in European integration. But to recognise that 'Europe' needs to have around it a whole mythology, brings us back to the question of the political culture of Europe and of its member states, because 'Europe' does not mean the same thing to all Europeans. What are the possibilities for a European culture - and leadership?

If we take the UK as an illustrative example, it is clear that a national leadership such as Margaret Thatcher's reflects certain national attitudes. It is also true that opinion polls showed throughout the 1980s a gradual warming of UK attitudes towards Europe, especially among the younger sections of the population. Nevertheless, the UK remains far less committed to Europe, less identifying, less enthusiastic, and more prey than other member states to sudden surges of anti-European feeling (immortalised by such *Sun* newspaper headlines as 'Up Yours, Delors'). Throughout her premiership, Margaret Thatcher's style and attitudes drew heavily upon an underlying nationalism in British political culture, best illustrated by the atmosphere surrounding the Falklands War in 1982. Her approach to Europe drew upon a deep-seated British suspicion of continental Europeans (we shall come back later to whether such a view has any justification in reality), and indifference to its institutions.[24] In June 1990 the then Industry Minister, Nicholas Ridley, exploited anti-German feeling in an attempt to

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[24] Turnout in general elections in the UK is usually around 75%. In the European elections it hovers around the 35% mark, by far the lowest turnout in Europe.

mobilise support for the anti-EC camp in the UK. Ridley's remarks caused his resignation; but what is more interesting is the fact that the opposition parties did not exploit the situation for fear of *increasing* the popularity of such views. Other countries, this time pro-integration ones, have exploited deep-seated worries about German domination in, as it were, a positive way by calling for further integration in order to lock - and therefore tame - the new united Germany in the EC and render docile its potential will to power. This was one of the main arguments of the 'yes' campaign in the French referendum on Maastricht in 1992. In the case of the UK, the 'anti-' is not the only or even the dominant attitude towards Europe; but it is there; a strategic resource, as it were, which national leaders can exploit. The UK, then, shuns leadership of Europe, where, as we have seen, the French crave it, and the Germans dare not contemplate it. Do these various national attitudes preclude a European culture?

A European Leadership Culture

Although it seems to be the case that the EC functions largely as an intergovernmental organisation, that is to say, as one whose dynamic comes from the institutionalisation of interaction (conflictual or cooperative) between the national states, there is a potential for transnational appeals to, say, cooperation or solidarity. But, although such appeals sometimes facilitate European integration, they also sometimes impede it, as in the case of the Dutch draft treaty for political union of September 1991 calling for a 'federal vocation' for Europe which led to serious diplomatic strains and the removal, perhaps forever, of the F-word from EC treaty texts. More often than not, moreover, especially in the larger EC member states, it is arguable that chauvinism increases as integration increases. Ironically, much of this

conflictual interaction stems from one shared characteristic: mutual ignorance. Let us give some examples.

It is probably true to say that the kind of political tradition that Jacques Delors represents: Catholic, corporatist, socially-minded in an oecumenical way, has no real equivalent in the UK.[25] Even as a *type* of politician he has no Anglo-Saxon equivalent. It is perhaps anecdotal but illustrative of the differences between the UK and the continent to note that journalists in the UK press succinctly described Margaret Thatcher's reasons for disliking Delors so intensely: he was a socialist, he was an intellectual, he was French. And for the British there is a certain relish in this semi-deliberate introverted nationalism.[26] It is also probably true to say that few Europeans actually know (or seem to want to know) how the EC works, how power is distributed within it, and what its objectives actually are. For example, in the hostile exchanges in June 1991 between two former UK Prime Ministers, Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher, the first pro-integration, the second anti-, few UK citizens had enough knowledge of the EC to develop an opinion on the relative merits of the two attitudes. It is also true to say that the argument between the two was itself very generalised, neither being particularly specific, and both projecting their views via *attitudes* rather than arguments. Such *unspecific* hostility to the EC on the part of Margaret Thatcher and her supporters, moreover, endows her with the qualities of a Cassandra, and appeals to the atavistic characteristics in a nation.

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[25] Russell Lewis (Margaret Thatcher's biographer) identifies Jacques Delors' "puritanical distaste for consumer capitalism" and his preference for Catholic co-operation, *Guardian* 26/4/91.

[26] The UK's experience of Europe is, it must be remembered, very different from that of continental Europe's.

A highly personalised style of leadership such as Charles de Gaulle's or Margaret Thatcher's projects itself as the beneficiary of a mystical bond between the leader and the people s/he represents in opposition to 'outsiders'. This allows such leaders to 'speak for' their nation in a highly personalised manner. Here is a good example on the EC from Margaret Thatcher of this assumed knowledge of the people, and of the notion of the leader as a warrior defending the cherished heritage of the British people:

They don't want to see Parliament's powers steadily and relentlessly diminished. They don't want to see sterling disappear. They believe in Britain. And they know there are times when you have to stand up and be counted in order to uphold that belief.[27]

This imagined relation between leader and people to the point where the people may even be personified in the leader - and the leader's apparent character traits *themselves* represent the character of the people - is both compelling and highly problematical for European integration, in that it militates against appeals to a European-wide culture. Not all the polities of the EC go in for strong nationally-orientated leadership; although certain (cf. France as opposed to, say, Italy) have political structures which positively enhance it. There *is* a pan-Europeanism which can be subscribed to (we see this in the federalist movement, in calls for greater powers for the European Parliament, or for European citizenship). But mythologically it is weak (especially in certain of the twelve). Moreover, since the dominant pan-Europeanism is essentially rational, peaceful, and utopian, it lends itself poorly to exposition in

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[27] Debate on the Queen's Speech, *Guardian* 8/11/90.

political discourse, and is particularly vulnerable to the rhetorical discourse of political crises; and discourse is crucial to the creation and maintenance of any political culture. We have seen that there is a high-flown discourse (much of it borrowed from national contexts) that is used for European consumption, but much of it translates badly, even comically, into English, and often increases only in proportion to the *lack* of concord on the issues involved.

Conclusions

1) Given all that we have said about national cultures, and the way they are reflected in the European arena, a European culture would seem politically virtually impossible, either in discourse or in the very real terms of political action. One point to note here is that the European Commissioners, however anti-European they might be when they begin, quite quickly develop an allegiance to the EC. This is perhaps an indication of a potential within the EC for generating loyalty - to itself or to some notion of Europe - on a much wider level. It is probable, however, that any kind of European identity would involve a degree of imposition (of policies, leadership, and probably styles) by the larger countries on the smaller. It is inevitable that such a development should be the case when we remember that there are, for example, 80,000,000 Germans to 365,000 Luxemburgers. Nevertheless, one of the EC's great attractions, especially to the smaller countries, is that in terms of the European Council and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, for example, there is at least a formal equality between the member states.

2) Then there is the question of the languages themselves. Not only do the nine different official EC languages strengthen cultural differences,

they also effectively put a brake upon the development of a pan-European discourse with its own styles, rhetoric and so on. Such a brake upon the development of a common rhetoric (and if a common language were to be used, it would probably be the most uncontinental of them all, English) means that, effectively, appeals to allegiance in a rally-style form will remain the domain of national rhetoric; appeals to a wider source of allegiance will only develop on a cooperative, quietist, rational level of political rhetoric. At the level of non-national political practice, this style accords well with the Commission's 'initiative' and 'normative' functions, and gives it greater legitimacy.[28] This contrasts with the fact that most major change - even that which can be traced to non-national impetus (e.g. Schuman and the ECSC, Benelux leaders and the 'New Start' in 1955 involving the creation of the EEC and Euratom, and Delors' action between 1985 and 1991) has, in fact, been relatively dramatic and voluntarist, and was seen as being necessarily so.

3) On the question of national leadership's potential representativeness of a Community entity, it is true that the political longevity of certain leaders has had the effect of facilitating some kind of identification with Europe by Europeans via their and other national leaders. The relative political stability in most of the EC countries in the 1980s meant that Mitterrand, Thatcher, Kohl, and Gonzalez were leaders through more than a ten-year period; others were either Prime Minister or held senior government posts for equally long periods: Andreotti, Martens, Lubbers, Genscher, and Schlüter are the best examples. This longevity also had the practical effect of creating a far greater familiarity with

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[28] See David Coombes, *Politics and Bureaucracy in the European Community* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1970), p.296.

and understanding of the issues and dossiers involved, thus facilitating various levels of the integration process. By the early 1990s, this familiar line-up of national leaders was changing considerably.

4) Finally, a discussion of the European Parliament lies outside the scope of this paper. But, at the pan-European level, it is increased powers for the directly-elected European Parliament which would, conceivably, create the conditions for the emergence of more leaders with a far greater European identity, and who might blend the national, the partisan, and the European; although here too both the national and the cultural play their part, with the EP demonstrating the affinities - and dissimilarities - between various political families.[29] The strengthening of the European Parliament will either screen out extremes or let them into the system;[30] whatever the outcome, such a Parliament, for better or worse, would be more representative of a European political culture than any head of state or government, or Commission President. The style of leadership, were it to emerge from such a Parliament, is, today, scarcely possible to imagine; yet it is from here - if anywhere - that a European political leadership may emerge.

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[29] Among the most interesting in the early 1990s were the difficulties surrounding the British Conservatives' application for membership of the European Parliament's essentially Christian Democratic parliamentary group. See Helen Drake "The Parliamentary Groups in the European Parliament" in J. Gaffney (ed), *Political Parties and the European Community* (London, Routledge,forthcoming).

[30] Lindberg and Scheingold, *op. cit.*, p.131.