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Europeanization and the Reshaping of Representation in Southern Europe

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This paper is a preliminary report on a research project concerning the reshaping of territorial representation in Southern Europe that has been brought about by the ongoing process of Europeanization. The first two sections provide a definition of the two key phenomena that are connected here, representation and Europeanization, and suggest a few possible mechanisms that may account for that connection. The third section present the main hypotheses to control empirically in order to reply to the key questions of the research. The fourth and fifth ones clarify time and space of the research, indicate the Structural Funds as the policy at the core of research, review the main results of previous research on either a similar topic or the same one. The sixth section presents the preliminary results of the research mainly with reference to Italy. The concluding remarks point to the path still to be covered.

The Two Notions

A simple definition of representation is “the ‘making present’ of A by B”. This can at the same time be an ‘acting for’ and a ‘standing for’, that is, the acting of someone for the interests of other individuals or associations and the standing of someone for the identities of other individuals or associations (see Pitkin 1967). Pizzorno (1983, 33-34) emphasizes the same point when distinguishing between “representation as an identifying activity” and “representation as an efficient activity”.

In the ‘efficient activity’ political leaders and interest association leaders ‘represent’ in the sense of making or supporting decisions that are aimed at improving and/or preserving the positions of specific collective groups within the system. This can be made through the public political institutions or through alliances, bargaining, and confrontation. The politicians should be able to make a good use of state organizations and procedures by showing administrative professionalism, bargaining skillfulness, legal knowledge. The goals are already set up, but - let it be added - the political leaders may reshape and rethink them.

The identifying activity of political actors is achieved by building, maintaining and, in some occasion, strengthening the collective identities through parties, interest

groups, movements, associations, and so on. This is a symbolic activity and the political elites have to be able to create trust, loyalty, and solidarity, that is, a set of positive attitudes not immediately related to the governmental decision-making (see on this Morisi and Morlino 1999, 11).

Following the traditional literature on the topic, another aspect to recall is the distinction among the most recurrent channels of representation, that is, the functional channel and the territorial ones. Through the *functional representation* the interests and identities of differentiated groups are articulated and forwarded directly or indirectly to the relevant decision making centers. Through the *territorial representation*, two other channels are developed: 1. the representation of the territory-as-a-whole, that is meant to articulate and convey the positions of territorial groups and institutions in its unitary and cohesive aspects; 2. the representation of the active divides and conflicts through territorially based, specialized political organizations, that also transmit ideological differentiation. This specific distinction is useful to overcome the analytical constraint of the notion or representation that is usually conceived with reference to the traditional nation-state.

Fig. 1 summarizes the resulting general picture by emphasizing also the related role of actors. In this research I'm interested to the central cells of the figure concerning the territorial representation in its unitary aspects.

Fig. 1: Channels, Dimensions, Actors of Representation

	Function	Territory-as-a-whole	Territorial divides
efficient activity	Interest groups	Institutional actors	Parties, interest groups
identifying activity	Interest groups	Institutional actors, territory-based parties	Parties, interest groups, movements

With regard to Europeanization, it can be appropriately considered a complex, multifaceted phenomenon. As Olsen (2002, 1) points out, "the term is used in a number

of ways to describe a variety of phenomena and processes of change" and presently it "has no single precise or stable meaning". Such an increasingly important and widespread phenomenon concerns both a supra-national dimension and the entire set of connections among such a dimension and the national and sub-national levels, characterized by the change or resistance to change in the domestic politics of European states, that over the last decades have been transformed by the weakening or lifting of several of its traditional barriers.

Consequently, first, the phenomenon has to be conceived and researched as a process because of its gradual emergence and the salience of the time in it. Second, its key characterizing element is the blurring and shifting of such a traditional multifaceted divide as the international-domestic one. The point is not to fully appreciate the international-national connection, as recalled by Almond (1990), but rather to recognize the gradual fading away of borders, barriers and other kinds of obstacles that were once so common and strong in the European nations and at the same time the building of higher barriers and borders between Europe and all other areas of the world (see Bartolini 1999). Third, the "engine" of the phenomenon has been and is formed not exclusively, but mainly by the different European institutions and policies (see also Andersen and Eliassen 1993). Fourth, the impact of European Union structures and policies on member states is another key aspect.

Thus, in an effort of integrating different perspectives on institutional dynamics (Olsen 2002, 44) *Europeanization* can be properly defined as the multifaceted process of : a) the emergence and development at the European level of a set of political institutions that formalizes interactions among actors (see J. Caporaso, M.G. Cowles, T. Risse 2001, 3); b) the development of networks of interactions among domestic and supranational actors to initiate and unfold the decision making process during the input phase of that system; and c) the gradual and differentiated diffusion-penetration of values, general norms, and specific decisions from those European institutions into the domestic politics, that is, into the working domestic institutions, decision-making processes and domestic policies at different levels.

Thus, a thorough analysis of the phenomenon would include a deeper look at several aspects concerning the distinct European polity, but also how the input side

emerges and what are the pressures for adaptation and change of politics and policies of all members of the Union with a related challenge to the national states (Olsen 1995). These different features of Europeanization may appear in the long or short run. The prospective members may even anticipate some of them, concerning the domestic aspects.

Fig.2 displays the main patterns of Europeanization and allows us to make the first, subsequent step in focusing on the research topic by adding another distinction. In fact, the recurrent distinction among *policy*, as a set of specific decisions and the implementation of them in a definite sector, *politics*, as all institutions, rules and actors that define a specific political regime (e.g. a democratic one), and *polity*, as the society and the state institutions within a given territory, helps in distinguishing among the different patterns of Europeanization. This simple classification also allows to stress my interest in understanding the Europeanization that concerns the change of several structural aspects of a polity and politics of a member state. I am not concerned either in the important development of a distinctive European level or in the policies that are decided and carried out at both the Union and the national level, though I may take for granted that the continuous impact of the same policy may also bring about politico-structural changes.

Fig. 2: Main Patterns of Europeanization

	European Union	Member State
Polity	Distinctive set of institutions	<u>Domestic institutional impact</u>
Politics	Additional system of representation	<u>Domestic intermediation structure impact</u>
Policy	Policy feedback	Policy impact

The domestic institutional impact and the intermediation structure one are very rich and variegated in content. Here, the focus can be additionally narrowed by referring to the *structural impact on domestic territorial representation*, and even more precisely to how European Union actions and reactions are changing the way the territorial representation has been carried out in a few European democracies that are also EU members.

Domestic Structural Impact: the Basic Mechanisms

To understand better the impact on domestic politics of member countries, three characteristic mechanisms have to be singled out. The main actual reason we need to analyze those mechanisms are methodological ones. That is, first, this seems the best way to ‘reconstruct’ the hypothesized impact by disentangling it from other important factors that contributed to the domestic political changes (see also below). Second, as will be seen, through those mechanisms a softer, partial impact is better found out.

Those mechanisms can be labeled as: i) the policy/polity consistency, ii) the spillover effect, and iii) the complexity impact. In each mechanism the analysis of actions by institutional and political elites must be emphasized and complemented by the attitudes of the people and their reactions are extremely relevant.

By the first mechanism, **policy/polity consistency**, I refer to the problems and consequences that occur because of the distance and extent of consistency or inconsistency between different European norms and the domestic institutions in their actual workings. That is, when domestic institutions actually work in connection with European regulations and directives, then the extent of mutual consistency/inconsistency becomes a salient aspect that can provoke consequences. If the consistency is high, Caporaso, Green Cowles and Risse (2001, 6) label it “goodness of fit”. In this case there is no pressure for change and no need for institutional adaptation. The European pattern and the domestic one tend to overlap. There is already a convergence. Shortly, there is no visible noteworthy impact. If there is inconsistency, then there is “misfit” and consequently, a pressure for change and adaptation is imposed on the domestic institutions.

According to Caporaso, Green Cowles and Risse (2001, 6-8) the actual working of this mechanism may be better understood by examining three possibilities. First, if the adaptation pressure is low and a great deal of structural adaptation is not required, “an

institution is unlikely to resist changes in its environment which are consistent with its own constituting principles”. Second, if the adaptation pressure is very high, there is little institutional change “because of the enormous discrepancy between EU institutions and well-entrenched domestic institutions...National institutions will defend their identity and integrity...”. As suggested by Olsen (1995), radical and rapid transformations may result only over time and after a serious performance crisis of the institutions. Third, “the adaptation pressures are significant, but low enough in order to be surmountable by domestic actors. In such cases both structure and agency should matter”. This third hypothesis is likely to be the most recurring one, and consequently the important related direction to explore concerns what structures exist and what change will be possible, but above all, what strategies the actors will pursue.

The consistency/inconsistency mechanism can be described in a more detailed way when the different moments of actions and reactions are disentangled. That is, once a decision has been made and it is seen to be consistent, partially consistent, or inconsistent with the domestic rules, then different reactions can be envisaged during both the incorporation into the domestic legal system and the implementation. Such an entire repertoire of reactions may include the simple incorporation of the rule, the attempt to transform it in the phase of absorption, the postponement of the implementation, the attempt to change it while implementing it and then the attempt to influence domestic representatives, public and private, in the new decision-making process to change the new output, which may be incompatible with the domestic attitudes, preferences, and positions of domestic actors.

On the whole, Caporaso and his colleagues point out a very key mechanism, but they seem to make two important assumptions that, in a few cases and domains, do not hold. First, they assume that the domestic institutions are well established and entrenched. Consequently, the involved actors are well defined and conscious of their strategies. On the contrary, in a democracy that is going through a long, difficult crisis or a permanent transition this is not so. All main institutions are discussed and debated and maintain a poor legitimacy (Morlino 1998). If a high inconsistency and consequently a high adaptation pressure compound this hypothesis, what happens? Is there a defense of integrity and identity of national institutions that do not actually exist?

In addition, if a government would like to bring about changes in politics or policies and if the European policies happen to be congruent with those prospected changes, then the present inconsistency is largely irrelevant and despite its extent there will be change. This, however, cannot be considered the result of some impact or of an adaptation, but in the best case a shrewd way to 'profit' from the European Union. Moreover, if the institutions are in the process of consolidation and accordingly on the way of defining themselves and their stability (Morlino 1998), again, what happens? In the perspective of the involved actors and unstable uncertain domestic institutions, the specific most appropriate action in each situation has to be singled out (March and Olsen 1989, 23-26). In other words, the key question that party leaders and other actors have to face is to determine the most appropriate action and strategy to achieve their goals, provided that well entrenched European rules exist and must be implemented in order to benefit from them (see also Morlino 1999). When Italian democracy is at the core of the research or when Spanish, Portuguese and Greek democracies are scrutinized to analyze the effects of Europeanization, appropriateness and its connected aspects seems to be the right path.

Secondly, the three above-mentioned authors assume a strictly institutional perspective so that there are rules at the European level, which can be implemented at the domestic level. But let's rather take into consideration the decisional process in its making and the decisions agreed upon as the end results of the interweaving of different domestic and supranational arenas. In this different perspective, there are objective changes, no resistance can be envisaged, and there is nothing else to do but either to react and adapt in some way or to violate and go through an infringement procedure. Consequently, in this hypothesis and within well-established domestic institutions, singling out the most appropriate actions can again be the best strategy from the point of view of the actors involved.

Third, let's add that if there are different kind of policies, a different impact can also be conceived. A useful distinction on this matter is proposed by Knill & Lehmkuhl (1999), who propose three possible kinds of European policies that bring to:

1. **positive integration**, characterized by European regulatory policies that prescribe an institutional model (ex.: environmental protection, health and safety at work, consumer protection, sections of social policy);

2. **negative integration**, with European policies that prescribe no model or old regulatory policies that were 'market making'(ex.: policies defining conditions for market access and market operation, directed at liberalization and deregulation to secure the functioning of Common Market);
3. **framing integration**, that is an intermediate situation where policies give some minimal indications, that prepare the ground for other activities of negative or positive integration, designed to change the domestic climate and to stimulate the support for broader European reform objectives (ex.: railways policy).

Fig. 3: Mechanisms of Europeanization: Consistency/inconsistency

A. if positive integration (or framing integration) and stable democracy, then **policy/polity consistency** between the different European norms and the domestic institutions in their actual working as follows:

- i. if high consistency, no pressure for change and no need for institutional adaptation.
- ii. if inconsistency, pressure for change and adaptation is imposed on the domestic institutions.

If ii, consequent repertoire of reactions:

1. simple incorporation of the rule;
2. attempt to transform it in the phase of absorption;
3. inertia and/or postponement of the implementation;
4. attempt to change it while implementing it;
5. attempt to influence domestic representatives, public and private, in the new decision-making process to change the new output;
6. negative reactions and retrenchment.

B. if positive integration (or framing integration) and critical phase, then consistency/inconsistency not salient and leaders and other actors look for **appropriateness**.

C. if positive integration (or framing integration) and

- i. drives toward change and consistent direction of change, then quick incorporation and compliance, no impact;
 - ii. inconsistent direction of change, then retrenchment.
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The working of the ‘consistency/inconsistency’ mechanism and the different related hypotheses are displayed in fig. 3. But a final consideration on this mechanism is to be added. In some case, the problem of consistency/inconsistency simply does not exist as some policy has been created at a European level since the beginning. That is, for example the environmental policy could not create a problem of inconsistency as it was ‘invented’ at European level and imported in the member country. Here, the possible inconsistency might refer to the opposition of some interest to the absorption and implementation of that policy or to different priority of the government that however had approved the decision concerning the policy at the level of European Council.

There is a second important mechanism to take into full consideration. If there is an adaptation pressure, and even some extent of consistency between European regulations and directives and domestic institutions, then the impact may bring about a **spillover effect** that can be analytically in three different mechanisms, often strengthening one another and empirically very difficult to separate. They are:

1. the **transference** of new rules, routines, and behavioral patterns from the sectors which are more directly affected by the European policies to other ones which are less, much less or remotely affected;
2. such a transference may imply a different, stronger relative role of the affected institution, and through this mechanism a basic **empowerment** of that institution is gained vis-à-vis other domestic institutions;
3. in a context of domestic crisis or change, uncertainty and conflict, the transference and institutional empowerment may bring about a **catalyst effect** with a new or different settlement of institutional arrangements and of other decision-making processes.

The second and third effects may concern the central government, the regions, other local institutions, or even the bureaucracy, because of the key salience of the implementation phase. On the whole, if there is such a spillover effect a few decision-making processes and the actual working of the involved domestic institutions are molded and transformed. Although to a different extent, the existence of such a mechanism is the strongest and most visible test of a profound impact of the European Union on domestic institutions. This notion of spillover differs from that developed by Stone and Sandholtz

(1998, 15), that is related to the progressive removal of hindrances to cross-national exchanges when there are the reactions of government and EU institutions.

In addition to these important mechanisms, there is a third more obvious impact, the **complexity impact**. The simple existence on a supranational level that can influence the key domestic political activities, functions, role and behavior of actors is, in itself, a source of additional complexity that cannot be avoided, and can profoundly change how the basic domestic functions and activities are performed. In this vein if elections, representation, decision-making process and implementation are the key political elements in every working democracy, the simple fact that there is an additional level of politics can deeply affect each element; and can change how those functions and activities are actually performed.

Two additional analytic problems are closely related to those mechanisms: “time lag” and the “space horizon”. Both of these can be presented as two questions. First, how much time will elapse before the European rules have an impact at the domestic level, if in fact they do? Which is the horizon the actors take into account in their strategies in terms of space: the individual country, the European Union, or even a larger geographic area? In my perspective Bartolini (1999) deals with this problem when he develops his analysis of boundary building and political structuring. The space horizon is a key aspect in the strategies of the actors and gives them the guidelines for their action and, when needed, their research for appropriateness.

Fig. 4: Mechanisms of Europeanization: the analytic phases

The EU side	The Member State side	The link	The domestic steps	Additional Problems
1. positive integration	1. stable democracy	consistency/ inconsistency (repertoire of reactions) complexity impact	1. transference	1. Time lag
2. negative integration	2. critical democracy		2. empowerment	2. space horizon
3. framing integration	3. drives toward change		3. catalyst effect	

Fig. 4 summarizes the basic analytic phases to take into account when dealing with this theoretical problem and shows the analytic tools that are necessary to detect, describe and understand the impact.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Within the perspective sketched above, the territorial representation has to be explored in the intertwining of the supra-national level, the national and sub-national levels at the same time, that is, within the multilevel and multidimensional networks already emphasized by other research on a similar topic (see e.g. Kohler Koch 1997 and 1998). Thus, the core research question is: *how and to what extent the European Union institutions and policies bring about changes in the territorial representation?*

First of all, however, there is the necessity of being more precise about 'institutions and policies'. Here the obvious reference is at the regional policy and specifically at its core component, that is, the various structural funds (ERDF, ESF, EAGGF), that have been revised several times since the mid-1980s with the Integrated Mediterranean Program and later with the 1989-93 funds, the 1994-99 funds and the more recent 2000-2006 funds. Let it be recalled that on the whole, the funds account for almost 40% of the entire European Union budget and consequently it is one of the more relevant directions of policy. The complex procedures of drafting the National Development Plans, the Community Development Frameworks, the National Operational Programs, the Regional Operational Program and also the so called Docup (document of programming) and the Community Initiatives, the priority objectives (help for backward regions, industrial decline, unemployment, rural regions and sparsely populated areas), the criteria for implementing the funds (programming, concentration, additionality, partnership, control and efficiency) unfold important policies. Maybe they do not hit the target, as in the intention and wishes of the EU, but are, however, characterized by several decisional moments, by the involvement of a number of actors at different levels (European, national level, sub-national levels), and by several, different bargaining processes.

Thus, the research question becomes: *how and to what extent did and do these funds bring about changes in the territorial representation?* Such a general question can be collapsed in a few other more specific questions. With regard to the *changes* in the territorial representation, they include questions on:

- the strengthening of territorial representation vis-à-vis the functional and the electoral-political ones;
- a growth of efficient representation and a decline of the identifying one;
- the emergence a territorial *arena* with its own rules and identities;
- the emergence of regional *actors* able to develop their own relationships with the European institutions and other regional actors;
- the emergence of new party leaders able to profit from the opportunities given by those policies by changing their way of doing politics with a stronger accent on policy co-ordination, bargaining and concertation;
- the main mechanisms at work (consistency/inconsistency, complexity impact, transference, empowerment, catalyst impact) and how and to what extent they worked in the cases to scrutinize.

Moreover,

- are there conditions that either freeze or hold off the impact, such as an inefficient, old bureaucracy that misses the opportunities given to the territory;
- can the impact on territorial representation be deviated by the constraints of a unitary state with a centralized bureaucracy that is able to manage the policy tasks deriving from the EU policies;
- can the impact be reshaped by striking new and different relationships between regional and sub-regional actors, on the one hand, and central actors, on the other hand?

Finally,

- how large and pervasive has been the impact with reference to a major modernization of bureaucracy, to a change of the regional and local legal system, to the other policies not explicitly related to European Union?

A summary of the hypotheses sketched above is presented in fig. 5. However, to understand better those hypotheses and the connections among them one additional theoretical point deserves to be discussed, although synthetically. One of the key aspects that helped very much in the empirical research was the distinction between the *region-as-arena* and the *region-as-actor*. Very simply, by the emergence of arena I mean the emergence and structuration of a set of recurrent patterns of relations among actors, private and public ones, within the each region. If an arena already exists, then the attention should be focused on either the reshaping of that arena, that is, the reorganization of interests and rules within the region, or its strengthening. To be relevant, and detectable, such a reshaping or strengthening has to gain its own distinctiveness, and the key aspect is to see more in details those distinctive patterns and what role party leaders play within them. By actor I mean the activation of region in its relations with other agencies and institutions, public and private ones as well as domestic and non-domestic ones. Again if the region is already an actor a reshaping has to be seen. In this paper, I'm not going to describe into details the empirical indicators that are useful for the empirical analysis of the arenas and actors.

All hypotheses sketched in fig. 5 should take this distinction as pivotal feature to consider. The actual impact with the several changes, envisaged in fig. 5, is related to the emergence and strengthening of regional arenas and regional actors. Lat but not the least, the hypotheses and the explanations of the detected changes (Europeanization and impact) has to be assessed by confronting alternative explanations that in this field are not lacking at all, and they basically refer to the recent profound changes in the structures of representation inside the European democracies.

Fig. 5 : A Few Selected Hypotheses on the Domestic Territorial Impact

1. There is the strengthening of territorial representation vis-à-vis the functional and the electoral-political ones.
 2. There is a growth of efficient representation and a decline of the identifying one.
 3. A territorial *arena* emerges or becomes stronger with its own interest, identities and rules.
 4. The regional *actors* develop their own relationships with the European institutions and other regional actors.
 5. New party leaders are able to profit of the opportunities given by those policies by changing their way of doing politics with a stronger accent on policy coordination.
 6. The main mechanisms at work include: consistency/inconsistency, complexity impact, transference, empowerment, catalyst impact.
 7. An inefficient bureaucracy is one of the conditions that either freezes or holds off the impact.
 8. The impact on territorial representation can be constrained and modified by a unitary state with a centralized bureaucracy able to manage the policy tasks resulting from the EU policies.
 9. The impact reshapes the relationships between regional and sub-regional actors, on the one hand, and central actors, on the other hand.
 10. The impact brought about a major modernization of bureaucracy.
 11. The impact caused a basic change of the regional and local legal system.
 12. The impact brought about changes in aspects of policies not explicitly related to European Union.
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Why Southern Europe, and when?

The four Southern European countries are the main recipients of the Structural Funds. During the period 1993-99 that area got 57.44% of the entire sum allocated for the Funds. Accordingly, there can be no surprise that the research focuses on the developments of the last fifteen years in Southern Europe. Since the Single European Act in the mid-1980's, this is the period during which some of the most crucial changes have occurred in the relationships between the European Union and its member states, but above all with reference to the structural funds that have been allocated in Southern Europe to a very great extent. If there has been an actual structural impact, it should more easily be detected during these years.

Southern Europe, however, is not a consistent area. During these same years, on the one hand, Italy has been experiencing a long period of crisis of parties and modes of representation and, on the other hand, Portugal, Spain and Greece entered the European Union and at the same time went through a process of democratic consolidation (Morlino 1998) and basic reshaping of representative modes vis-à-vis the previous authoritarian period and the first years of transition.

Moreover, these countries experienced some kind of economic crisis during the 1980s. Therefore, on the one hand, they almost desperately needed the help of European resources and, on the other hand, were considering the European Union as the 'great opportunity' not to miss for the modernization of the country from both an economic and administrative point of view. Additional problems of uncertain identities and domestic problems caught those countries, and particularly Portugal and Greece, and pushed them even more strongly toward the European Union.

It is particularly important to recall that because of domestic reasons with consequences on foreign politics (Italy), because of being recently admitted (Spain, Portugal and Greece) and of being small countries (Portugal and Greece) those four countries are traditionally very weak in the input side of the European decision making process. They also had a different length of membership, a different size in term of population and territory.

Finally, in these countries there is also a wide differentiation of institutional arrangements with stronger and weaker executives, different political parties and

different political party systems, a variety of interest and interest organizations, major or minor decentralization and regionalization, and a more or less modern and efficient bureaucracy.

Therefore, on the whole, external and domestic similarities and differences within Southern Europe should allow a thorough comparative analysis of the impact mentioned above. The comparison should reveal a number of situations on inconsistency and misfit than in larger, stronger countries such as Germany, as well as adaptive reactions. In fact, in such a context of unstable or stabilizing, but partially uncertain domestic institutions, the basic perspective of the Southern European actors inside the European Union was actually to look for the specific most appropriate actions in each situation (see March and Olsen 1989, 23-26). In other words, the key question that party leaders and other actors had and have to face is to determine the most appropriate action and strategy to achieve their goals, provided that given, well entrenched, even if inconsistent, European rules exist and must be implemented in order to benefit from them. Appropriateness and its connected aspects seem to be the right path. If so, there is a large possibility of detecting an impact of the European Union on the domestic politics of those four countries, also taking into account the existing differences between the domestic situation and the European Union influence.

An empirical control of the hypotheses proposed in the previous section bring to gather a large quantity of documents and above all to conduct several in depth interviews with central, regional and sub-regional politicians and civil servants. The amount of work and interviews to cover all those country imply the work of a research team per country, who cannot help of selecting the areas and regions to conduct the research on. Consequently, this paper is only a partial report of such a research that mainly takes into account the results drawn by the data, documents and interviews for all twenty Italian regions and by some few interviews in the other three countries where the research still is at its very beginning.

Before presenting the preliminary results of the research a short review of the existing knowledge on those hypotheses with reference to Southern Europe is useful and to this task will be devoted the next section.

What do we know on Southern Europe?

On the whole, it can be immediately stated that in spite of few important partial exceptions the hypotheses of fig. 5 only received a limited and partial attention in the literature on the Southern European countries. The work by Ioakimidis (2001) on Greece deserves to be included among those exceptions. This author sees the impact of European Union as a sort ideological programme for modernization and change largely supported by Southern European political elites, not only by Greek conservatives and later on by Socialists. The reshaping of the size of the state and of its very functions in a previously statist culture, a decentralization impact, and the strengthening of civil society are the main features that Ioakimidis points out. Some attention to the co-operation at party elite level can be indirectly inferred by the analysis of Magone (1998) on neo-corporatism when he compares the developments of this phenomenon in Spain and Portugal and points out how the European policies compel social and political actors to look for concertation and agreements. But whether this is a feature of the actual impact of Europeanization or is, rather, a simpler policy convergence between the two countries remains still unclear.

There also a few researches more specifically focused on the impact of the European Union on regions and regionalism, although its declared high general salience (Keating 1998, 17) is falsified or at least not recognized by some research and confirmed by other works. Thus, Morata and Muñoz (1996, 217) state that “the structural funds reform did not succeed in.....a closer involvement of regional governments in the formulation and implementation of programmes....” And until 1993 such reform “only superficially affected the domestic pattern of central-regional relations”. The analysis by Dudek (1998) on Galicia and Valencia, conducted some years later, concur with that of these authors to stress the limits of regions in their actual influence within the relationships with the EU. On the contrary, Börzel (1999 and 2001) develops a careful and well designed comparison between Germany and Spain that shows the impact of European Union in transforming the previous conflictive relationships between the center in Madrid and the regions into positive cooperative linkages. The most obvious explanation of the different conclusions of Börzel vis-à-vis of those of Morata and

Muñoz lies in the time lag between the emergence of the phenomenon that Borzel doing the research some years later was able to detect and the previous moment when Morata and Muñoz conducted their own research. This said, however, the two authors did not deny an impact of the Union on the domestic bureaucratic structures. The more reasonable reason of the difference between Dudek and Börzel is that the first author analyzes two regions that are much weaker in their traditions and autonomy than Catalonia and País Vasco, and above all he focuses on a different feature of the complex phenomenon, that is, the decentralizing effect of the European Union when the Structural Funds, the agriculture policy and the fishing policy are implemented.

Ladrech (1994) and Balme and Jouve (1996) on France, Verney (1992) and Ioakimidis (1996c and 2001) on Greece, Magone (1997, ch. 9 and 2001) on Portugal, Grote (1996) and Giuliani (2001) on Italy also analyze the regional issue with contrasting final results. Ladrech and Balme and Jouve stress the developments of regional initiatives aimed at influencing the decisions in Brussels and the cooperative relations between center and periphery brought about by the European regional policies. However, Balme and Jouve suggest how, on the one hand, other sub-regional units, such as *départments* and cities, are also relevant and, on the other hand, the central state is still dominant in all networks. Verney and Ioakimidis on Greece and Magone on Portugal emphasize some decentralizing impact of the structural funds within a previously strong unitary state, the modernizing effects on the civil service, the push for an improvement of industrial sectors and transport infrastructures, some extent of mobilization of civil society. Grote and Giuliani on Italy express different opinions. Grote stresses the changes in administrative structures at regional level, the stronger role of regional governments, the undermining of the control of the central government, the role of other private actors, and also the pushing for more effective regional governments. In a shorter analysis of the topic Giuliani also considers the trend toward a stronger role of regions in Italy, but accounts for it by making reference to domestic and non European factors.

The work by Tondl (1998) on European regional policy and its major impediments to an effective growth (incompetence of national administration and unstable macroeconomic policies) and the important contribution by Leonardi (1998) on regional cohesion and convergence, especially in Southern Italy, pay a prominent

attention to the policies, rather than to the structural impact which is the focus of this paper.

This cursory review of the most relevant literature suggests a few temporary conclusions. First of all, the complexity impact can be taken for granted and it is not worthwhile to be separately analyzed. It can be taken for granted that the European Union has multiplied governmental levels and arenas, and created new opportunities for interaction between territorially different public and private interests. Second, the modernization of the bureaucracy, the change of the legal system, some reshaping of the relationship between center and periphery can also be taken for granted. The more interesting feature to control empirically is what reshaping takes place and the connection between the modernization and a stronger impact of Structural Funds with regard to the reshaping of representative channels and modes.

A few preliminary results

In this section a selective analysis of the first preliminary results of the empirical research is presented. The Italian case is privileged and much less attention is paid to the other cases where the research is still at the very beginning.

First of all, on several relevant decisions where the European Funds can be obtained, the decisional process has different moments and such a resulting complexity has at least a relevant consequence, the *fragmentation of the representative process*. This was not anticipated in our hypotheses, but it is worthwhile to stress. In fact, the decisional process to allocate the Funds goes through several steps, even in the simplified procedure. In each step, to begin with the bottom-up preparatory moment and ending with the implementation phase, several actors are involved in the relationships among the national level, the regional and the sub-regional level, the different interest groups through formal and informal channels, and the European level. In each step there is the possibility of the intervention of a number of actors and the same actor can intervene in different moments to achieve what he was not able to have in the previous phases or to defend what he was able to achieve.

One of the main consequences of such a process is that, on the one hand, the national parties, be they incumbent or not, cannot play any gate-keeping role, that is, they do not have the control of the agenda, of the access to the decisional arena and of decisional results (see Morlino 1991). This is confirmed by the Italian case, where several changes inside the party system additionally strengthen this result. This is basically supported by the Spanish case where territorial, that is, regional actors are already strong for domestic reasons and consequently the national incumbent politicians have to bargain with them. On the basis of the first interviews and data I have, this point is not confirmed by Portugal and Greece where the national authorities are able to maintain the control of the entire process because of the weakness of all other actors (see also below).

Within such a decisional process, the opportunities for institutional *territorial actors* to represent the interest of the territory as a unity are multiplied, informally even in Brussels and formally in the drafting of the Structural Funds programmes and later in its implementation. Here the *catalyst effect* comes out. In fact, in Italy characterized by the growing salience of territorial actors and in Spain with strong regions, the structural funds and the related process give an additional role to those actors. In Greece and in Portugal the sub-hypothesis is confirmed *ex adverso* as weak regions remain weak. In Greece particularly where it can be stated that such an administrative level was actually created to profit from those funds (see also Verney 1994), the role of territorial actors remain weak. This is even truer in Portugal where territorial institutional actors do not exist and territorial interests are actually mediated through the governing parties.

In this perspective it can be recalled that the two main indicators of the activation of territorial actors are present in Italy and Spain and much less in the other two countries. Particularly, for the regions of the first two countries the establishment of autonomous representative agencies in Bruxelles and the development of thick networks of relations with other European regions are present and give to them actual opportunities of promoting their community interest, as they actually do. With regard to the representative agencies in Bruxelles, the contrast between Italy and Spain, where during the period 1990-2002 the jump is from 4 to 19 (Spain) and from nil to 20 (Italy), and Greece (2 in last years) and Portugal (nil) is very striking. In the networks, where also

sub-regional authorities and private agencies or associations are present, however, Portuguese and Greek units are much more common.

Moreover, in Spain and Italy a partisan homogeneity among local party actors and central government make the necessary coordination among them easier and smoother. There is a higher mutual confidence that helps in the bargaining process with Bruxelles.

The third empirical result to mention is related to the previous one. When the incumbent leaders of territorial institutions perform their representative tasks, they are the effective territorial actors. But during the different phases, such as the drafting of the regional and sub-regional documents or their implementation, those leaders have to coordinate and select from the local demands. Consequently, they become part of an *arena* where institutional interests and substantive public and private interests find their own way of accommodation.

If those arenas are distinctively structured and, consequently, there are inside them strong, active, distinctive and sometimes organized interests, then the incumbent political leaders become the true leaders within the regional and sub-regional arenas, and these arenas coexist with the national one. When those arenas are very weak and unstructured - if they actually exist - the national arena only is relevant. Italy and Spain correspond to the first hypothesis. Greece and Portugal to the second one. Thus, in Italy concertation and bargaining within those sub-national arenas become the most recurrent patterns. At least for Italy, this is one of the few features that all interviewed elites confirm. Bargaining and concertation work within the national arena and the regional ones and even in the sub-regional arenas. The simple empirical point, confirmed by several interviews is that the Structural Funds provide one of the main reasons why concertation was necessary and consequently become one of the factors of the emergence, reshaping or strengthening of arenas. But if there is no previous even weak pattern of this kind then there nothing to develop.

Thus, from the point of view of the impact, there is also an obvious *transference* of a very characteristic policy pattern from the domestic sectors affected by the European Structural Funds to other sectors. This can be expressed as a pattern to accommodate conflicts. This is even more worthwhile to stress if the previous conflictive situation in the relationships between the Spanish central government and the regions and the present

cooperative relationships are compared (see also Borzel 2001), in a situation where policy coordination among the different tiers, consultation and negotiation among the European and the national levels, the interdependence among the policies have been gradually becoming the prevailing rule (Borràs, Font and Gomez 1998, 36).

Again a *catalyst effect* is evident in the strengthening of more structured regional arenas. If they existed earlier, they were much more loose and ambiguous. This is particularly evident in Italy on the ground of interviews. A similar situation is expected to be present in Spain as well, but until now I don't have consistent empirical support to state this.

Third, the *empowerment* of institutional actors and of associations is evident in both countries inside the arenas they are active in. This is especially so during the phase of implementation when the not precisely earmarked funds have to be allocated (see also below).

On the reshaping of the regional arenas in Italy, particularly in some regions as Tuscany, where an arena already existed, the reshaping is more immediate and brings out the strengthening of concertation patterns. Moreover, in a different perspective from the one that has been recalled above (the region as actor), when there is a strong partisan homogeneity within the region that strengthening is even easier and quicker to take place.

Furthermore, one of the most interesting aspects that especially comes out of Italian data is a new role a number of party leaders have been able to create. In fact, as also said above, the European policy making gives better opportunities for the development of the efficient component of representation in the regional and local levels of government and in the relations between local and Community policies. The role of the national party leadership in the incorporation of Community directives is a poor one: the decisive links develop in the communication and exchange networks connecting the EU bureaucracy, the domestic and European interest groups, the country specific bureaucratic branches, and the experts in the field. But within the regional arenas a number of incumbent party leaders have been able to cut a new role for themselves in the relationships with the interest and interest associations by:

- a) providing them information;
- b) coordinating the “concertation tables” and the bargaining process.

In performing these new tasks they have been able to renovate their policy-seeking function (see Strom 1990) and again perform a necessary, key role. Consequently, they are able to maintain a relevance they were losing in different sphere with the decline of partisan identities. The Structural Funds gave them the opportunity to play that role.

Therefore, in addition to the development of territorial representation, the end result of the process is to give new, unexpected room to those party leaders who acquired a know-how on the European Union policies, which make them key interlocutors of the entire political process. In other words, if local party personnel have some entrepreneurial and leadership skills, they have the day-to-day possibility of performing a key role in the policy networks related to EU policies. And this is even more relevant when attention is paid to the fact that several European policies may affect almost all sectors of formal competence provided by the laws to the *Comuni*, provinces, and regions.

An aspect, however, where a closer analysis is necessary concerns how such a role is actually performed with attention to gains in terms of electoral campaign or internal career within a party. In regions such as Tuscany, Liguria, Lombardy and others a party leader can build his links with social groups and make of the acquisition of the Funds an issue of the electoral campaign in the regional elections. At the same time the fact of becoming well known and often quoted in the local media also because of his role vis-à-vis the European institutions and resources become a way of strengthening that leader in his political career vis-à-vis his electors and specific economic groups, such as private entrepreneurs. Also in Spain such a phenomenon is present. The enormously long incumbency for more than twenty years, and the power and the prestige of Jordi Pujol and his party, *Convergència i Unió*, in Catalonia is also explained by such an impact.

Thus, there is an opposite, paradoxical result vis-à-vis what was expected within a context of weakening parties and partisan representation when European policies are involved. But this major possible role of party leaders in such a new context seems that actually turned into an opportunity of renovated *patterns of party clientelism* in Greece, but also in Portugal as suggested by some preliminary scrutiny. In a sense the policies of privatization and radical shrinking of the public sectors of economy carried out by Cavaco Silva at the end of the 1980 in Portugal and almost a decade later by Simitis in Greece eliminated a source of clientelist patterns. The new European policies seem to

revitalize the old habits by giving to party leaders new possibilities of controlling and allocating the European Funds.

Fifth, when the European policies of economic and social cohesion have to be implemented at regional and local levels, an additional role of local and regional actors has to be emphasized. In fact, in the implementation process, local institutional actors are able to preserve a large space for policy definition and innovation and a more specific moment of coordination and bargaining. As mentioned above, the fact is that a few funds allocated by the European Union are not precisely earmarked and this leaves new rooms for incumbent party leaders.

Thus, the resources and the decisional process triggered by the Structural Funds bring about two opposite phenomena with reference to representation and actors of representation. There are leaders who are able to innovate their role and build a political career around it, and in a different country or even inside the same country, there is also the possibility of rejuvenating patterns of clientelism that were partially disappearing because of the shrinking of the public sector of the economy or of the political control of it.

With regards to the relationships with the social groups and their representation, there are no doubts that those Funds bring a much stronger attention and care for industrial entrepreneurs, and in the countries we are analyzing this is especially so for the small entrepreneur who are so obviously sensitive to that help and attention. The actual form of such an attention includes: a) the activity of information and networking of those political leaders mentioned above; b) the activity of high and middle level regional staff; and c) the role performed by the Chambers of Commerce so relevant in our countries. So in this domain and with these constraints some reshaping of representation takes place, although no strong evident empirical results came out of the interviews. Additional empirical research is clearly requested to develop and clarify better such a reshaping also with the help of other more detailed data on the financed projects that we only have for the Italian regions.

Moreover, out of our interviews a new interest intermediation actor came out with an important role in cross-region and cross-country networking to develop proposals on the Structural Funds. They are basically private, public or mix associations or agencies

that contact and inform an enormous number of people who could be interested in developing and participating to projects. In addition to the interest groups working in Bruxelles they form a parallel set of actors also with connections in Bruxelles who build a new role around those projects. They basically profit of the expertise necessary to prepare the applications and at the same time of the inefficiencies or the overload of local bureaucracies in all Southern European countries, although it is not difficult to think that those agencies are widespread in all EU member-states as the networks they built encompass units of other countries. They provide information, stimulus, networking and expertise – sometimes very recently acquired - in drafting the proposals. Of course, the result is a growth of interactions, but also a development of networks of sub-regional units, provinces or prefectures, comuni or municipalities, but also private actors and interest associations are present. They may also develop a lobbying activity in Bruxelles with regard to the Commission and the other European Union institutions, as well. Of course, parties and party leaders are largely out of these networks. Actually they outbid these more traditional structures of intermediation. But this only takes place within the sectors affected by the Structural Funds. There is no spillover or other effects at work.

A summary of these very first findings is presented in fig. 6. Two other elements such as the modernization of bureaucracy and the adaptation of the legal system through the absorption of European laws can be taken for granted as mentioned above. These aspects can be seen in all four countries (see also the Taiex Book 1999). However, there are no doubts that changes and adaptations in the structures of bureaucracy with the creation of additional branches at national and sub-national levels and the development of a bureaucratic know-how in the planning and drafting of programmes are very relevant. In fact, this is also the best way to achieve a more effective development and working of the sub-national territorial representation that is becoming so important in Italy and in Spain.

Fig. 6: Summary of a Few Preliminary Findings

1. Fragmentation of representative process: complexity impact;

2. Territorial institutions as arena: transference of concertation & bargaining; empowerment; catalyst effect;
 3. Territorial institutions as actors: catalyst effect;
 4. new role 'invented' by party leaders: information & coordination of arena actors and policies;
 5. Opportunities of neo-clientelism
 6. New attention to small entrepreneurs
 7. A new actor of interest intermediation: networking initiatives and association
 8. Growth of the salience of implementation as the last phase of representation.
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When Figure 5 and Figure 6 are compared, a number of differences becomes evident, and I would like to emphasize some of them. First of all, the previous research done in Southern Europe clarified very well the impact on bureaucracy and legal system (hypotheses 10-12, figure 5). Further research can be done, but there no new important point to research on. The hypothesis 7 on the connection between inefficient bureaucracy and the extent of the impact is one of the key aspects of Kohler Koch's research and here is largely confirmed. The other two hypotheses (8 and 9) on what happens if there is a unitary state and on the reshaping of relationships among the levels of government has received an indirect attention and both ones are confirmed for different empirical cases. That is, the previous analysis has suggested that there was a reaction of the central bureaucracy in Greece and Portugal and a catalyst effect for Spain and Italy in terms of reshaping of territorial representation. The first two hypotheses are not confirmed because there is no enough data to make the large empirical analysis it would be necessary to support or falsify them. However, the considerations developed for the small entrepreneurs gives some support to the strengthening of the efficient representation of a social groups territorially based and to the reshaping of that representation. The other four

hypotheses (3-6) receive a major attention in the empirical analysis here developed and Figure 6 basically makes reference to them.

Questions to reply and future research

Most of the European domestic impact on territorial representation may or may not crystallize in the near future developments of the EU. The enlargement of the EU and the consequent changes of the structural funds may change the situation.

In the paper the key aspect was to assess whether a new territorial representations has been developing, how a representative role for the territorial institutions may emerge, and how what happens inside the territorial representation in Southern Europe.

In addition to the necessity for carrying out the additional empirical research in Spain, Greece and Portugal, but also for Italy, and to the opportunity of reconsidering some methodological problems that in this paper were ignored, there are other still open problems of the research.

First of all, as the really salient sub-national levels of analysis are different in the four countries, can a meaningful comparison be developed by changing the levels of analysis, that is, the prefectures in Greece, the municipalities in Portugal in addition to the regions in Italy and the Comunidades Autonomas in Spain?

Moreover,

- may the birth or revitalization of territorial patterns of representation bring about a sort of anticipated federalization of Southern Europe?
- if so, how and to what extent will the new European Constitution, that the European Convention is drafting, affect such a process, that is, however, different in the examined cases?

And finally,

- in the context of the other specific policies (single market and competition, agriculture, and so on) are different actors and patterns of representation privileged?
- does this lead to a differentiation of the patterns of representation which prevail in given policy areas and not in others; and at the end does this parallel what has been suggested

by Benz and Eberlein (1999) on the different patterns of representation coexisting at the same time?

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