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The Antiglobalisation and the European Union: Critics of Europe

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Executive Summary

- Are social movement organisations euro-sceptical, rejecting the construction of European-level institutions? Or do they accept the EU as a new level of governance upon which to put pressure, developing critical Europeanism? This paper addresses these issues, locating contemporary social movements in a broader scenario of political conflicts around European integration,. Movements' attitudes towards Europe are discussed on the basis of empirical information collected on the organizations and activists that belong to the transnational networks of protest that have been known under the labels of *alterglobalists*, *Globalizierungskritikers*, or global justice movement. These data challenge the inclusion of those social movement organisations and activists among the eurosceptics, suggesting instead that they be defined as "critical Europeanists", who are not against more competences for Europe in principle, but are dissatisfied with its present policies. In this frame, the existing "market Europe" is criticized as supporting neo-liberal policies, but an alternative, "social Europe" is called for. With internal differences, movement organizations and activists do not favour in fact a return to the nation state, but rather develop a process of "Europeanisation from below", which includes the formation of European identities and European organizational networks. The intensification of the debate about Europe has brought about the symbolic linkage of the "conflict over Europe", layering various other cleavages over the original territorial ones Support and opposition thus tend to refer not only to (or not very much to) the integration process itself, but more and more address its form and content.

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Introduction: Eurosceptics or critical Europeanists?

Are social movement organisations euro-sceptical, rejecting the construction of European-level institutions? Or do they accept the EU as a new level of governance upon which to put pressure? Do they disrupt the process of EU integration, or do they provide a critical capital, necessary for what has been defined as the political structuring of Europe (Bartolini 2005)?

This paper addresses these issues, locating social movements in a larger scenario of political conflicts around European integration. Many studies on the subject reveal increasing levels of scepticism, underlining the end of the *permissive consensus* based on the assumption of a legitimacy based upon efficiency. European integration is no longer operating under "technocratic cover" – or by tacit consensus (Hooghe and Marks 1995). The design of the European institutions, as well as the EU's policy choices, are more and more often the target of severe criticism from a plethora of local, national, and supranational actors. Along with increasing numbers of protests against European targets (Imig 2004), opinion polls repeatedly confirm a growing impatience with the European institutions, with about half of Europe's citizens unsatisfied (Pache 2001; Mechet and Pache 2000).

In many countries, accompanying this mistrust in European institutions is a fall in turnout at European elections (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999). Even before the rejection of the constitutional treaty in the French and Dutch referenda, the 2004 European Parliament elections saw the lowest turnout (45.5 percent) since voting began in 1979. Qualitative research on conceptions of Europe finds frequent references to the benefits of European integration in terms of affluence and economic growth, but also misgivings towards a level of decision-making seen as opaque, distant, irresponsive, and inefficient (Diez Medrano 2003, ch. 2). In fact, the European institutions are usually criticised for being bureaucratic, inefficient, and insufficiently transparent (Le Torrec et al. 2001, 8).

The term *euro-scepticism* emerged during the debate on the end of the permissive consensus in the EU, indicating attitudes critical of the process of European integration. Not that Europe's construction had been consensual in the past: within these same institutions, different (intergovernmental versus federalist) visions of Europe have long been pitted against each other. The governments of the various member states have also put forward contrasting positions on the characteristics, speed, and intensity of the integration process. Yet until the end of the 1990s, the

debate on Europe rarely involved public opinion or, at least, non-institutional actors. In fact, a consensual approach based on weak preferences prevailed, although to differing degrees. Euroscepticism has been used to define especially those who oppose (with different degrees of radicalism) the building of supranational institutions at the European level, presenting nationalistic resistance to supranational power.

Comparative research on support for European integration has singled out some of the correlates of euroscepticism. Trust in European institutions has also been presented as compensating for mistrust in national institutions,[1] and identification as European as jeopardised by a strong and exclusive national identification (Carey 2002; for a review see Hooghe and Marks 2004). Euro-enthusiasm has been said to increase with the length of participation in EU institutions (Niedermayer 1995; Eichenberg and Dalton 1993), due to learning processes as well as the acknowledgment of the material advantages of adhesion (Carey 2002). Positions towards Europe have also been linked to the material and symbolic resources available to the different actors, and social gains or losses stemming from the European integration process have been mentioned with reference to winning and losing social groups (Hooghe and Marks 2004). Those who are socially and culturally less competitive on European markets are expected to be less supportive of Europeanisation. Euro-scepticism has been considered by various studies as a characteristic of opposition parties, and above all of extremist parties, but at the same time difficult to situate on the traditional left-right continuum.

In this paper, we shall suggest that contemporary social movements are better described as "critical Europeanist" than as Euroskeptic. Social movement organisations tend to share a form of Europeanism that resonates with their general orientation towards rooted cosmopolitanism (Tarrow 2005). This position is illustrated in the words of a representative of the Italian pacifist organisation Beati i Costruttori di Pace (535), who expressed "our wish for the European level to become always more important. The European Social Forums, for example, are opportunities for this. One of the fundamental points of the first European Social Forum in Florence was to bring civil society from European countries". Nevertheless, social movement organisations are, in the words of another of their speakers, not "unconditional Europeanists, but Europeanists conditioned to the fulfillment of the social part in which there is presently a deficit. If this is fulfilled we will be with Europe" (Red con Voz, 313). As we shall see, as with the construction of the nation-state, the presence

[1] Cfr. Sanches-Cuenca [2000]; but different results in Anderson [1995] that states that economic crises reduce institutional support.

of a critical social capital works as a challenge and a resource for European institution building (della Porta 2005).

The development of these critical voices is related to the politicisation of the debate on Europe in response to the (perceived and real) growth in EU competences. A more visible amount of European intervention, not only on regulatory but also on distributive matters, has contributed to this politicisation, while attention to the effects of globalisation has sensitised national publics to supranational themes. The fact that national actors have held the integration process responsible for economic policies or rigorous environmental policies has contributed to increased worries about the consequences of European construction process. In this situation, contrasting demands are addressed to the European Union, which is (pragmatically and realistically) perceived as a relevant level of governance. Recent research based on analyses of the positions of European parties has in fact identified a tension between a model of regulated capitalism, foreseeing further integration through more interventionist European policies, and a neo-liberal model, which would limit integration to free exchange and push for deregulation and the reduction of public spending (Hooghe and Marks 1999). As we will see, the positions of social movement organisations on the territorial level (of the polity) are also increasingly intertwined with views on policy choices (especially on what Stein Rokkan used to call "class cleavage") and the political assets of Europe.

I shall discuss these questions on the basis of a systematic analysis of various databases, at both the individual and organizational levels. As for social movement organisations, I shall refer to interviews collected within the framework of a project on "The Transformation of Political Mobilization and Communication in European Public Spheres" (EUROPUB.COM) in seven European countries (France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland).[2] Semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of the most important collective actors (state actors, parties, interest groups, and social movements) involved in claim-making in the fields of European integration, agriculture, and immigration. In each country, 48 organisations were interviewed, 16 in each of the three policy fields. In each policy field, interview partners were selected from four categories of

[2] The project was sponsored by the European Commission in the context of its 5th Framework program (project number HPSE-CT2000-00046). For an outline, see Koopmans and Statham (2002), available on the project website at http://europub.wz-berlin.de. The project included eight teams, directed by Ruud Koopmans, Paul Statham, Joos de Beus, Donatella della Porta, Juan Diez-Medrano, Virginie Guiraudon, and Barbara Pfetch.

collective actors: government/administration, political parties, economic interest groups, and social movement groups and associations.[3]

At the individual level, I shall refer to the results of a survey conducted at the First European Social Forum (ESF), a transnational meeting of the movement for global justice held in Florence in November 2002. During the ESF, the Gruppo di Ricerca sull'Azione Collettiva in Europa (GRACE) interviewed 2384 activists.4 The semi-structured questionnaires were distributed face-to-face, with a random sampling of participants in various events at the Fortezza da Basso, where the forum took place. A second survey was done at the Italian national demonstration against the Bolkenstein directive in October 2005 in Rome.5 In both surveys, several questions addressed subjects' individual positions towards European institutions and their trust in them, as well as territorial levels of identification with Europe.

[3] For each actor category, the selection of the four most influential organizations in the field in recent years was made according to two criteria. First, we selected actors on the basis of their frequency of appearance in the media, according to a dataset of political claims made on the issues of European integration, immigration, and agriculture for the most recent years. Second, we integrated this information with our knowledge of the actors active on the policy domain under study and by consulting academic experts in each field for additional suggestions. I shall refer here to the responses by organizations that have taken part in the mobilization of the global justice movement.

[4] The survey was coordinated by Massimiliano Andretta and Lorenzo Mosca; Maria Fabbri was responsible for data inputting. For his help with the analysis of the data, I am grateful to Claudius Wagemann. We interviewed 1668 Italians, 126 French, 83 Germans, 106 Spanish, 143 British, the rest from other countries. The different sizes of country samples reflect the different share of national presence at the supranational meeting in Florence. However, I have weighted the responses to control for oversampling of the Italian population. For the cross-national comparison, we have balanced the presence of Italians by extracting a casual subsample.

[5] In this case, we surveyed activists who went to Rome by train from various European regions as well as activists who marched in Rome. The interviews were conducted by Massimiliano Andretta, Lorenzo Mosca, Linda Parenti, Maria Fabbri, and Gianni Piazza.

1 – Another Europe? The emergence of European protest actors

As mentioned, we will focus on a contemporary social movement – the *global justice movement* – that became visible especially with the protest against the World Trade Organization (WTO) Millennium Round in Seattle at the end of 1999. The movement developed from a series of transnational protest campaigns that had addressed particularly economic intergovernmental organisations as well as free-trade treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement or the Multilateral Agreement on Investments. A common theme of these campaigns was their criticism of the developments that the market economy had undergone since the eighties, when neo-liberal economic doctrines had become hegemonic. In particular, these critics accused governments of strengthening market freedom at the expense of the social rights that, at least in the North of the world, had become part and parcel of the very definition of citizenship rights. In addition, while many economists were still pointing to the advantages for the world's South in abolishing protectionist barriers, "counter-experts" mobilised in the protest stressed the overall negative effects of these measures in developing countries as well. Common to all the campaigns is the idea that market deregulation is not as a "natural" effect of technological development, but a strategy adopted and defended by international financial institutions (the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund [IMF] and WTO) and by the governments of the most powerful nations (in particular through the G7 and the G8), to the advantage of multinational corporations.

The organisations belonging to these mobilised networks have often spurned the title of "no-global" – preferring instead terms like movement for global justice, new-global, *altermondialiste*, or *Globalisierungskritiker* – maintaining that they do not oppose globalisation either as the intensification of cultural exchanges or in the development of supranational governmental structures. They claim, however, to challenge the specifically neo-liberalist policies of free trade and privatisation followed by international institutions and by national governments, and call, instead, for a *different* form of globalisation involving global citizenship rights.

From Seattle onwards, attention to a supranational level of governance remained high. International summits were accompanied by counter-summits and protest demonstrations that often received wider press coverage than the official agenda (Pianta and Silva 2003). The movement organised not only transnational protests and counter-summits, but also its own global events. "Another possible globalization"

was discussed in the hundreds of seminars at the World Social Forums in Porto Alegre (Schoenleitner 2003), growing from 16,400 participants at the first meeting in January 2001 to 52,000 in 2002 and 100,000 in 2003.

Transnational mobilisations also targeted European institutions. One of the first European protests was the European Marches against unemployment, insecurity and exclusion in 1997; two years later, 30,000 mobilised on the same issues at the EU summit in Cologne (Chabanet 2002; Balme and Chabanet 2002). The resources for these protests came from a heterogeneous, cross-country coalition that included Trotskyites and Catholic groups, new social movements and trade unions. Notwithstanding the high costs of transnational mobilisation, the emerging debate on the social dimension of the EU was perceived as a window of opportunity. The various European Marches against Unemployment, Precariousness and Exclusions played an important role in the emergence of the European wave of protest that became visible in the anti-G8 demonstrations in Genoa in July 2001 (della Porta and Mosca 2005). In fact, counter-summits have contested all the main EU summits since Amsterdam (1997). In Nice, Gothenburg, Barcelona, and Copenhagen, tens of thousands marched to protest EU decisions. Since 2002, protestors also met yearly in European Social Forums to debate Europeanisation. Attention to the European construction process has developed since the first European Social Forum in Florence in November 2002, followed by a second one in Paris in 2003 and a third in London in 2004.

With few exceptions, the organisations that took part in the protests were not rejecting European integration, but asking for an EU with different social and political policies. The large success of the first forum – with 60,000 activists from all over Europe participating in three days of debate, and between 500,000 and a million activists in the closing march – was in fact the result of networking among groups and individuals with at least partly different identities. The activists interviewed in Florence were indeed well grounded in a web of associations ranging from Catholic to Green, from voluntary social workers to labour unions, from human rights interests to women's organisations.[6] In contrast to in the Eurosceptical profile, these were highly educated cosmopolitans (ibid.).

[6] As many as 41.5 percent were or had been members of NGOs, 31.8 percent of unions, 34.6 percent of parties, 52.7 percent of other movements, 57.5 percent of student groups, 32.1 percent of squatted social centers, 19.3 percent of religious groups, 43.1 percent of environmental associations, 51.3 percent of charities, 50.9 percent of sport and recreational associations (Andretta, della Porta, Mosca, and Reiter 2003).

2 – Transnational protest and the construction of Europe

Generationally and ideologically heterogeneous, the global justice activists converged on their demands for social justice and "democracy from below". The platform of the first European Social Forum presented it as the first moment in the construction of a critical public sphere for the discussion of the European Convention and its limits. Together with the democratisation of the European institutions, they demand a charter of social rights that goes beyond the commitments made in the Treaty of Nice. The policies of the EU are criticised because they are believed to be essentially neo-liberal, advocating the privatisation of public services and the flexibility of the work market, with resulting increases in work insecurity. Under the banner "another Europe is possible", various policies were demanded, including "taxation of capital" and of "financial transactions." There were also claims for the reduction of indirect taxes and public intervention to help the weakest social groups, as well as the strengthening of public services like schools and health services. On these issues, European social democracy was criticised for promoting economic policies of privatisations and deregulation of a neoliberal type (*Le Monde* 10-11/11/02).

Similar claims were presented by the social movement organisations interviewed within the Europub project. Research based upon claims analysis (that is, the analysis of the demands published in newspapers or other mass media) has indicated that social movements tend to be simultaneously marginally present in the debate on European integration, and more critical than more institutional actors of the decisions taken by European institutions (della Porta and Caiani 2006 and forthcoming).

If our interviews confirm that the attention towards the development of a European identity and European values among our social movement organizations, they also show an emerging critique – not of "too much" Europe, but of not enough social Europe. The support for European citizenship is combined with the criticism of the prevalence of policy choices allegedly designed to protect the market rather than the citizens. The interviewee from the German Attac (213) states: "I perceive European integration process as an economic process, where the role of the EU is to improve competitiveness of member states versus other competitors. And this is the direction where it'll go in the future. … We want alternative European integration, which is not dominated by economic interests." According to a representative of the Spanish Amnistia internacional (329), the EU "has focused on market elements and the economy, and very little on political and citizenship elements. … this leads to

resources not being spent on essential issues: health, education, social action for diversity, human rights." The speaker for Swiss Pro Natura (138) does not agree with the actual development of EU integration, since socio-ecological and democratic questions are receiving inadequate attention Hope is expressed that such issues will be addressed in a second step, once economic integration has taken place. Within this image of a "Europe of the market", the increase in the competence of the EU is perceived as producing "a minimum standard that is very low" (Euromärsche, 216). European integration "has a modernising impact, but with social deficits. There is more wealth, but its distribution is worse" (Espacio Alternativo, 315). The monetary union and stability pact are seen as undermining the welfare state (Swiss Solidarité sans frontières, 132).

The (stigmatised) "Europe of the market" is contrasted with the (desired) Europe of the citizens. Especially those movement organisations active on issues of immigration specifically criticise the lack of recognition of migrants' political and social rights. According to the representative of the Italian (Catholic) Comunità di Sant'Egidio (563), "the present direction that the European integration process is taking places great emphasis on security to the detriment of solidarity." Also according to moderate associations, the EU policy "has the defect of paying too much attention to the regulation of illegal immigration and immigration flows, and not enough to solidarity" (Foundation 'Migrants' of the Italian Episcopal Conference, 509; see also Swiss Aid for Refugees, 131). In these circumstances, the consequences of Europeanisation are described as dangerous for solidarity policy – with refugee camp build-up in regions where asylum seekers originate (Solidarité sans frontières, 132), stronger border controls will increasingly close off Europe (Aid for Refugees, 131), "smallest denominator" in terms of migrants' protection (Pro Asyl, 266) and "instead of one repressive minister, … 15 repressive ministers" (French Amnesty international, 30). The impact of EU policies is seen as "bad. First it has meant an increase of immigration control policies. Second, asylum harmonisation has meant a loss of guarantees for people, it has tended to eliminate asylum seekers' rights" (Spanish Amnistía Internacional, 329). The EU is in fact accused of building a fortress: "The EU has consolidated and normalised apartheid. There's a contradiction: EU knocks down borders and raises them. Open to free circulation and installing citizenship on a EU level. But there are 13-15 millions non-EU citizens who don't have social rights. … the EU isn't helping social integration nor civic attitudes and commitments, access to citizenship and rights" (Spanish SOS Racismo, 332). Similarly, the German Unterstützergruppen für abgewiesene Asylbewerber (268) believes that police control will be more efficient, but "the standards of social security will be lowered." And British Asylum Aid (734) assesses a negative impact of European integration "in

terms of giving real meaning to the phrase 'fortress Europe' so making it much more difficult for immigrants in general and asylum seekers in particular to get into Europe in the first place".

In addition to those concerning specific policies, an open discussion – partly interlinked with the above – develops on the issue of what the European *polity* should look like, on its competences and decision-making procedures. If social movement organisations express a general criticism of the perceived democratic deficit, they also perceive at the European level an opportunity to move towards a politics "from below". Social movement organisations tend, in general, to trust the European parliament more than other EU institutions: "The European parliament (if it represents a European interest at all) has not enough influence" (Bund für Umwelt- und Naturschutz - BUND, 252), and it "should be more important; the Commission is not transparent enough and has too much influence" (Euronatur 255). Similarly, the representative of the Italian ATTAC (534) mentions the "democratic deficit" in connection with the limited powers of parliaments (both national and European), criticising in particular the fact that the European constitution gives more power to the executive than to the parliament. In this view, a strengthening of the European parliament is perceived as a main step towards participation and electoral accountability, facilitating responsiveness to demands "from below": the representative of Beati i Costruttori di Pace (535) underlines in fact that "we believe much more in our capacity to influence elected bodies, like parliaments and administrations, than on governing bodies", but in the EU "the only institution that expresses democracy, the Parliament, has ever smaller powers and we would like to see a reorganisation that moves democratically elected and much more powerful structures to centre stage". The "democratic deficit" is in fact perceived and stigmatised. The EU is considered as "not transparent for the citizens" (Euronatur, 255), and in "need for more political scrutiny on the decision making process by the EU parliament" (Friends of the Earth Europe, 584). In fact, according to the spokesperson of the Italian Tavolo della Pace (547), "the EU, from an institutional point of view, still remains distant from the civil society. We can make proposals, and use funds, but there is no listening". The emerging demand is indeed of more participation – in the words of the representative of the Spanish SOS racismo (332), "There should be a bottom-up debate, not just of the experts, but with referendums and more participation, as there is little participation".

Summarising, it is not Europe that is rejected, but specific EU policies: the criticism does not target the construction of a European level, but the specific direction of the process. Representatives of social movement organisations often portray themselves as "strongly in favour of Europeanisation" (Attac Italy 508), and even "profoundly

Europeanist" (Disobbedienti 542), but vehemently critical of its actual contents. In this vein, the representative of the Italian network of associations active on global justice issues explains that "Rete Lilliput is in favour of the integration process, but does not share the political direction that is being taken" (564), hoping for an "expansion of global integration and a higher level of protection of rights". In a similar direction, the representative of the Spanish Espacio Alternativo (315) declares: "We feel European. … But a different Europe to the one that is being designed by conservatives and neoliberals. … It will be negative if the process ends constitutionalising neoliberal processes which delay social and public issues."

3 – Mobilising at the European level

Although critical of the European institutions, social movement organisations do address those institutions and even promote a European identity. Our interviews confirm that social movement organisations share a tendency to coordinate their action at the cross national level and to address European institutions , especially via lobbying the. Social movements reveal a larger tendency to direct claims to the European level than previous analyses of the presence of civil society organizations in mass-mediatic public debates had shown (della Porta and Caiani 2005b). Overall, they very often address European targets (around two thirds of them addressed at least one EU target in the past year) as often as the other powerful actors do.: Summing up, the type of actor does not affect the probability of addressing a European target (della Porta and Caiani forthcoming). They are also particularly well-connected transnationally, even slightly more than the general trend of all actors considered.

A multilevel structure is present in several social movement organisations. Some of them have European offices, but those who do not often act at the European level through European partners. For instance, the Italian Altragricoltura-Foro contadino, as well as the Swiss dissident farmers' associations Uniterre (Kriesi 2004, 35), work with "the *Confédération Paysanne Européenne* – the coordination of the agricultural unions that belongs to Via Campesina. Most of the action at the European level are carried out by this network, and we belong to this network" (552). Similarly, "the European activity for Altroconsumo are carried out through EUC – the organisation representing European consumers – that has its office in Brussels" (519; cfr. also Adiconsum 551), and "all the actions that AIAB (Associazione italiana agricoltura biologica) performs at the European level pass through IFOAM (the International Federation of the Movements for a Biologic Agriculture) which has offices in Brussels, and also mediate our contacts at the European level" (531).

European institutions, beyond being the target of an increasingly Europeanised public discourse, provide opportunities for the creation of supranational networks and identities through continuous and contentious interactions of various political and social actors around EU institutions (Imig and Tarrow 2001a, 23; della Porta and Caiani 2005, on the Italian case). On this subject, the representative of the Italian Rete Lilliput (564) declares, "All our actions at the EU level are organised as a net… We believe in transnational networks and there are continuous relations with international activists that occasionally translate in campaigns pressuring the

members of the European Parliament". The debate around the convention is defined as an opportunity to express criticism, with the by-product of "approaching our potential partners in other European states" (Rete Lilliput 564); participation in European marches has "the positive effects that the Cobas—Comitati di Base trade union are now forced to interact with those who think like them at a European and international level" (Cobas 505).

The building of European networks and identity is also related to the belief that the process of European integration has had and continues to have a strong impact on civil society organisations. According to the German Unterstützergruppen für abgewiesene Asylbewerber (268), the Europeanisation of politics requires a Europeanisation of the movements". And ProAsyl "has changed since the mid 1990s. We adopted a stronger orientation towards Europe and the standards there. … Europe is a chance to shape - it is an important pillar of our work" (266). In fact, "The neoliberal turn that the EU took since the Maastricht Treaty was actually a major condition for the creation of Euromarches. Thanks to institutional setting, there has been a democratisation" (Attac Germany, 216). Similarly, for environmental groups, "We began with the topic protection of nature and endangered species, then we again and again found that the structural guidelines of the EU are the problem behind" (Euronatur 255). And "consumers' associations exist thanks to the EU that was the first to introduce norms in protection of consumers. Norms that overtake those of the national governments… This is why Europe is a necessary point of reference for us" (Altroconsumo 519).

Despite criticisms – even the most radical, levelled at the "Europe of markets" –most of the social movement organisations we interviewed expressed support for the construction of "a different Europe" – a Europe built from below. These organisations present themselves as belonging to "a European movement" (Attac Germany, 213). The concept of a "Europeanisation from below" emerges during the protests that address the EU – as the German speaker for the Euromarches (216) recalls, European integration had a large impact on his organisation, "but not in an institutionalised way. Euromarches were the first to have the concept of Europe from below, we want others to take over this concept. We have a pioneering role because for the first time, criticism is brought forward not only nationally." In the language of the Italian Disobbedienti, the constitutional debate "has the merit of posing the constituent problem of Europe and the European political space as a space unavoidable for new democracy".

A form of Europeanisation from below emerges through what neo-functionalists would call the spill-over effect (Schmitter 1971): acquiring competences the EU

institutions attracted protest, and during the organization of protest, social movement organizations from different countries developed Europe-wide organizational networks and common visions about Europe. In a certain sense, the representatives of social movement organisations present themselves as "Europeanisation entrepreneurs", declaring that against "a profoundly anti-European Berlusconi", "the movements have worked hard to get these [European] themes into the common parlance, even if, to be honest, they do not rouse much interest in themselves alone" (Disobbedienti, 542); "the public is not very interested in the theme of the European Convention and we seek to make them more interested" (Beati i Costruttori di Pace, 535). Implicitly acknowledging this process, the representative of the Italian Movimento federalista europeo (501) explains that he often took part in supranational protest forums (such as the European Social Forum) and marches (such as the peace march Perugia-Assisi) by organising information stands on European issues – following his belief that interest in Europe depends upon the ways in which Europe is presented: "For instance, at the European Social Forum in Florence the MFE presented a document that discussed some topics of Europe and federalism. We should do that in all protest on the streets."

Protest campaigns are indeed perceived as occasions to build a European identity. The EU worked as a sort of coral reef (Tarrow 2005), favouring the construction of supranational organisations and offering in some cases material and symbolic (legitimacy) resources, in others offering a target for common mobilisations. In turn, the EU is indirectly legitimised by social movement organisations that recognise its competencies by addressing at the European level claims of various types.

4 – Global activists and the construction of Europe

A similar image of "critical Europeanists" emerges if we look at the attitudes of the activists of the global justice movement. According to our survey of the European Social Forum in Florence, activists from different countries express strong criticisms of the actual politics and policies of the European Union. As indicated in Table 1, there is consensus among activists from different countries that the European Union strengthens neoliberal globalisation and a shared mistrust in the capacity of the EU to mitigate the negative effects of globalisation and safeguard a different social model of welfare. If the Italians (in particular those coming from Tuscany and therefore also including less "committed" militants) have a higher trust in the EU, and the British activists confirm their euro-scepticism (followed by French and Spanish activists), the differences are altogether small. The data from the 2005 demonstration in Rome confirm this image with even stronger disagreement on the capacity of the EU to mitigate the negative consequences of economic globalisation. The ESF data about trust in institutions (see Table 2) also indicate strong criticism of the European institutions, with about half of the sample declaring a total mistrust in the EU, and a tiny minority expressing high trust. Mistrust remains high in 2005.

Table 1. How much do you agree with the following statements? (equilibrated sample)

	Italy	France	Germany	Spain	UK	ESF Total (%)	Rome 2005
*a) The European Union attempts to safeguard **a social model** that is different from the neo-liberal one*							
not at all	46.7	50.7	47.4	51.4	68.3	53.7	42.4
a little	43.7	35.8	43.6	38.5	26.1	36.8	37.7
some	8.9	8.2	7.7	6.4	4.2	7.0	11.7
very much	0.7	5.2	1.3	3.7	1.4	2.5	4.0
Total	135	134	78	109	142	598	410
*b) The European Union **mitigates** the most negative effects of neo-liberal globalisation*							
not at all	31.7	50.0	29.7	44.0	59.4	44.4	41.8

a little	51.1	27.9	48.6	40.4	21.7	36.6	40.5
some	15.1	13.2	14.9	10.1	5.6	11.5	11.7
very much	2.2	8.8	6.8	5.5	13.3	7.5	1.5
Total	139	136	74	109	143	601	410
*c) The European Union **strengthens** neo-liberal globalisation*							
not at all	3.6	3.0	2.4	1.5	6.1	3.6	4.6
a little	18.7	6.0	4.9	6.3	5.4	8.6	11.8
some	43.2	32.8	35.4	38.7	15.0	32.3	31.7
very much	34.5	58.2	57.3	53.2	73.5	55.5	48.2
Total	139	134	82	111	147	613	410

Table 2. How much do you trust the European Union

	Italy	France	Germany	Spain	Great Britain	Total ESF	Rome 2005l
not at all	21.8	41.2	41.3	35.2	67.6	41.9	45.1
a little	56.3	46.3	48.8	54.6	29.0	46.3	44.0
a fair amount	19.0	10.3	10.0	9.3	2.8	10.3	10.2
much	2.8	2.2	-	0.9	0.7	1.5	0.7
Total	142	136	80	108	145	611	425

We have to add, however, that the activists of the European Social Forum express both a high affective identification with Europe and a certain level of support for the building of a European level of governance. First, about half of the activists feel enough or strong attachment to Europe, with also in this case less support from British and Spanish activists and more from French, Germans, and Italians. As for multilevel governance institutions (see Table 4), the activists express little support for a strengthening of national governments and instead a strong interest in the construction of macro-regional institutions. The data from the 2005 demonstration in

Rome indicate a decrease in the percentage of respondents indicating disagreement with the strengthening of national governments, but also an increase in those who support a strengthening of EU institutions, while confidence in the building of new institutions of world governance decline. The mix of dissatisfaction with the existing EU and support for the building of "another Europe" is evident in the results of the 2005 survey: although only 11 percent of the activists we interviewed disagreed with the statement that the EU constitutional treaty would endanger the national welfare state and social policies, as many as 80 percent agreed (64 percent of them strongly) that "an alternative model of European integration is necessary in order to resist neoliberal globalisation." In this sense, they represent a "social capital" of committed citizens that, although critical, might represent an important source for the building of a European citizenship.

Table 3. To what extent do you feel attached to Europe?

	Italy	France	Germany	Spain	Great Britain	Total ESF %
not at all	17.9	9.1	12.8	20.7	27.8	18.2
a little	29.3	31.8	29.5	49.5	31.9	34.2
enough	45.7	43.9	37.2	28.8	26.4	36.5
very much	7.1	15.2	20.5	0.9	13.9	11.1
Total	140	132	78	111	144	605

Table 4. In your opinion, to achieve the goals of the movement it would be necessary:

	Country (in %)						
Degree of Agreement	Italy	France	Germany	Spain	UK	Total ESF (%)	Rome 2005
a) to strengthen national governments?							
Not at all	57.3	49.6	56.3	48.5	87.9	61.4	36.3
A little	26.6	18.7	27.5	25.2	4.3	19.5	26.3
Much	14.0	20.3	11.3	15.5	5.7	13.2	22.2
Very much	2.1	11.4	5.0	10.7	2.1	5.9	6.0

b) to strengthen the European Union and /or other regional institutions (Mercosur, Arab League, etc.)?							
Not at all	33.8	32.8	44.4	34.6	85.2	47.5	27.1
A little	28.1	18.0	22.2	28.0	5.6	19.8	25.5
Much	27.3	25.4	14.8	25.2	4.9	19.5	38.3
Very much	10.8	23.8	18.5	12.1	4.2	13.2	13.1
c) to strengthen the United Nations (giving them power to make binding decisions)?							
Not at all	27.7	29.4	27.4	27.4	76.9	39.1	25.5
A little	18.4	12.7	14.2	14.2	7.0	13.9	21.3
Enough	29.8	26.2	31.1	31.1	6.3	23.2	29.0
Very much	24.1	31.7	27.4	27.4	9.8	23.9	19.6
d) to build new institutions of world governance?							
Not at all	24.1	15.3	31.3	11.4	21.3	20.3	17.6
A little	15.6	4.4	13.4	10.5	6.4	9.7	14.9
Enough	24.8	27.7	21.7	23.8	7.1	20.8	24.0
Very much	35.5	52.6	33.7	54.3	65.2	49.3	36.4
(N)	(140-3)	(123-37)	(80-3)	(103-7)	(141-3)	(590-607)	446

Note: *** = significant at the 0.001 level.

Eurosceptic or critical Europeanists? Some conclusions

> "One can be against a Europe that supports financial markets, and at the same time being in favour of a Europe that, thought concerted policies, blocks the way to the violence of those markets… Only a social European state would be able to contrast the disaggregative effects of the monetary economy. So, one can be hostile to a European integration based only upon the Euro, without opposing the political integration of Europe (Bourdieu 1998, 62)."

> "Contestation is a crucial pre-condition for the emergence of a European public sphere rather than an indicator for its absence. … If political issues are not contested, if European politics remains the business of elites, the attention level for Europe and the EU will remain low. European issues must become salient and significant in the various public debates so that a European public sphere can emerge." (Risse 2003, 6).

In this paper, I have presented data that challenge the inclusion of those contemporary social movement organisations involved in the global justice movement among the eurosceptics, suggesting instead that they be defined as "critical Europeanists". We may distinguish types of Europeanisation by considering actors' positions on the construction of the European institutions and their support for the EU's current policies, differentiating between *Euro-sceptics,* who want to limit European competences and are critical of the EU's specific policies; *critical* Europeanists, who want more competences for Europe, but are dissatisfied with its present policies; and *identity* Europeanists, who are in favour of the extension of the EU's competences and satisfied with the Union's current policies. Social movements appear in this frame as critical Europeanists, in favour of deeper integration but with policies very different from those that have so far characterised the so called "negative integration" dominant in the EU. The stability pact in particular is criticised as one of the main examples of the neo-liberal policies privileged by already privileged groups, which reduce welfare for the poor and disadvantaged. They do not call, however, for a return to the nation state, but for a process of Europeanisation from below.

If European integration has long been an top-down, elitist project, its evolution involves pressures "from below" – among others, from social movement organisations. The ideology of a regulatory Europe, legitimised by good performances, appears as less and less convincing: producing policies, the EU became the target of claims and protest. In this process, national actors of different types started to address the EU. If those richer in resources were the first to open headquarters in Brussels, resource-poor actors also started networking supranationally and framing European issues. Vertical integration created horizontal

processes that, at the same time, legitimate European institutions by recognising them, but also politicise the European public sphere by contesting public decisions.

Support or opposition to Europe are positions usually considered as pertaining to territorial identity, pitting nationalists against Europeanists – or intergovernmentalists against federalists. It should be added, however, that at various points in time and on various policies, national actors have symbolically intertwined their positions on Europe with those held on other issues, some using their veto powers, other fashioning themselves as Europe's "entrepreneurs". The intensification of the debate about Europe has brought about the symbolic linkage of the "conflict over Europe", layering various other cleavages over the original territorial ones (concerned with the boundaries of the *polity*). As in the formation of the nation state, the territorial issue is articulated alongside others: support for Europe is linked to different images of Europe as built by different actors. Support and opposition thus tend to refer not only to (or not very much to) the integration process itself. They address, rather, its form and content. In this area, too, our data help us to detangle these hazy, overlapping – sometimes clashing – images of Europe within the public discourse of social movement organisations.

As with the construction of the nation state, the focusing of protest at the national level followed the centralisation of decisional power (Tilly 1978). Then, as now, social and political actors moved on more territorial levels: alliances with the *state-builders* targeted local governors, but there were also alliances with the periphery against the centre (Tarrow 2005). The construction of the nation state, however, has been a conflictual process: citizens' rights are the results of social struggles (Bendix 1964; Marshall 1950). Democracy emerged with the contestation of public decisions: criticism of national governments contributed to legitimising the state as the main decisional level. Even as we avoid exaggerating the parallel with the building of the nation and that of peculiar and anomalous supranational institutions such as the European Union, our research seems to confirm the development of a Europeanisation by contestation.

As observed in the two quotes in this section's *incipit*, support for the process of European integration cannot be measured in terms of (more or less permissive) consensus on the decisions of European institutions. Even supporters of the construction of supranational institutions might stigmatise, even radically, a community treaty they consider too intergovernmentalist or too neoliberal. Those who criticise free market Europe could support – as Bourdieu did – a social Europe. A contested public sphere is indeed – as Thomas Risse recalled – the only path towards the creation of a supranational democracy. It is indeed not a silent consensus with

the governors that signals a democratic process, but instead the submission of their decisions to the “proof of the discussion” (Manin 1995). It is not the agreement upon borders, ideologies and values, but the public debate about them that indicates the existence of a European public sphere (Risse 2003, 6-7; also Risse 2000; Habermas 1981).

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APPENDIX: QUOTED INTERVIEWS

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132. Solidarité sans frontières (SSF); Secretary for Political Affairs ; 27 August 2003

138. Pro Natura; Head of Section "Politics and International Affairs"; 9 May 2003

146. Uniterre; Speaker; 18 June 2003

213. Attac Deutschland; Member of Ko-Kreis, Expert in EU affairs; 3 Jun 2003

216. Euromärsche (Euromarches); Activist; 8 May 2003

252. Bund für Umwelt- und Naturschutz (BUND); Abteilungsleiter Pressearbeit; 22 Aug 2003

255. Euronatur; Präsident; 2 Jun 2003

266. Pro Asyl; Europareferent; 3 Jul 2003

268. Unterstützergruppen für abgewiesene Asylbewerber: "Kein Mensch ist illegal"; Mitarbeiter; 30 Jun 2003

29. French GISTI

30. French Amnesty international

313. Red Voz

315. Espacio alternativo

329. Amnistia internacional

331. Andalucia Acoge

332. SOS racismo

501. Movimento federalista europeo, segretario generale, Pavia, 03.12.03

509. Migrantes - Conferenza episcopale italiana, direttore dell'ufficio nazionale pastorale per gli immigrati in Italia, Roma, 10.12.03

534. Attac (Italy), membro del consiglio nazionale, Roma, 13.05.04

535. Beati i costruttori di pace, portavoce nazionale, Roma, 02.06.04

542. Disobbedienti, portavoce nazionale, Roma, 21.05.04

547. Tavolo della pace, portavoce nazionale, Perugia, 23.06.04

557. Environmental association Legambiente, responsabile temi agricoli, Roma, 25.09.03

563. Comunità di Sant'Egidio, portavoce nazionale, Roma, 21.10.03

564. Rete Lilliput, portavoce nazionale, Firenze, 24.10.03

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