

Democratic Governance Beyond the State:

*An exploration of democracy and
governance in the European
Parliament*

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Abstract

The growing internationalisation of governance in the modern era means that states are increasingly interconnected. In this process, democratic governance has often taken second place to the demands of a neoliberal system that emphasises market-based solutions to social organisation and deregulation of structures based in the democratic realm of states. This dissertation is an exploration of the role democracy plays in regional governance bodies, focusing specifically on the European Parliament and its role in the European Union as an example of this.

The dissertation argues that there is a role for democracy in global governance, and that the European Parliament represents a positive step towards introducing the wishes of citizens into political structures above the level of the state. It uses a three-stage immanent criticism developed from the early work of Max Horkheimer to explore the parliament in its historical, present, and potential functions. Built on a critical philosophy that understands the social world as a product of historically materialist action, this dissertation seeks not just to describe the functions of the Parliament, but also to suggest ways in which they might develop past their current limitations.

Following a methodological discussion on the application of immanent criticism, the dissertation engages in a theoretical analysis of the complex concepts of democracy and governance as a prelude to the exploration of the Parliament. The dissertation then utilises a range of interviews and documentary evidence to present a thesis that has two main claims. Firstly, it argues that the European Parliament represents a new form of democratic regional structure that represents both states and citizens, and introduces an element of democratic accountability to governance above the level of nation states. Secondly, the thesis contends that the Parliament, as part of the wider Union, possesses the potential for greater democratic function. In making this argument, the dissertation suggests a range of practical ways to improve democracy and governance in the Parliament, and by extension in other similar regional political bodies. These include the introduction of greater democratic influence on decision making, increased transparency, dedicated European political parties, and a stronger role for civil society bodies.

The dissertation concludes that democratic governance has the potential to present an alternative to the dominant neoliberal structures that currently shape much of the international political, economic, and social environment.

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas. Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed

Date

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Acronyms

AU	-	African Union
CAP	-	Common Agricultural Policy (of the EEC / EU)
CRA	-	Credit Rating Agency
EBRD	-	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECB	-	European Central Bank
ECSC	-	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	-	European Defence Community
EEC	-	European Economic Community
EMU	-	European Monetary Union
EP	-	European Parliament
EU	-	European Union
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
UEF	-	Union Européenne de Fédéralistes (Union of European Federalists)
Euratom	-	European Atomic community
NAFTA	-	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	-	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OECD	-	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	-	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
OPEC	-	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAP	-	Pan-African Parliament
PES	-	Party of European Socialists
S&P	-	Standard and Poor's
USSR	-	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WB	-	World Bank
WTC	-	World Trade Centre

Chapter 1:

Introduction: Democratic governance and the European Parliament

1.1 Introduction: democracy, governance and the European Parliament

1.2 Key arguments of the thesis

1.3 Researching Democratic global-regional governance and the European Parliament

1.1 Introduction: Democracy, Governance and the European Parliament

Democratic governance is one of the cornerstones of modern politics, and the right for citizens to participate in the management of their state is a central aspect of many contemporary political systems. Despite this, Held (2003: 353) argues that we are living today ‘at a fundamental point of transition’ in which globalising pressures are changing the nature of democratic governance. As the boundaries between national and international action become blurred, states find it harder to function in isolation. At the same time, an increasing number of unaccountable, undemocratic governance structures, influence state policies at the international level.

In a world of changing political and social structures, democracy is under threat. However, a growing globalisation of political authority need not be at the expense of democratic governance. There are ways in which participatory politics may be internationalised and citizens involved in the decisions that structure their lives. Rather than being subsumed by globalisation, democracy can play a vital role in shaping future forms of governance, as Shaw (2002: 169) argues democracy is not ‘just about the form of government within individual states, but about the shape of world order’.

Many theorists have discussed the role of democracy in world political structures. Dahl (2000), Held (2003), and Keane (2009) amongst others, argued that a reinvigorated democracy has the potential to bridge the emerging gap of accountability in international governance. For these theorists, as well as for this dissertation, democracy may provide a

means through which citizens might retain (or regain) control of the forces that influence their lives.

One body that attempts to extend the rights of the citizen beyond the traditionally demarcated state is the European Parliament. Functioning as part of the wider European Union, the Parliament brings a level of democratic politics to governance at a global-regional level. At the turn of the 21st Century, Philippe Schmitter (2000:1) spoke of the EU as ‘an emerging polity’, growing from its beginnings as a regulatory institution responsible for collective management to become a Union of political and social jurisdiction. Along with growth of the EU, the European Parliament took on increasing responsibility for democratic involvement in decision making, and today represents 27 member states and over 500 million citizens. What started as a loose collection of states with regulatory interests has emerged as the world’s foremost multi-state democratic regional governance body.

The presence of the European Parliament in the EU means it is the only democratic governance structure operating above the level of the state, allowing a legally mandated citizenry to exert democratic influence over the decision-making process. The EU’s place as the foremost democratic regional governance body makes it substantial to the future of global governance. As McNamara (2003: 357) claims, ‘the EU experience underlies the importance of political institutions in shaping the progress of globalisation and its outcomes’.

This dissertation uses the European Parliament as an example of how democratic politics functions beyond the state, at a regional level. Through an adapted form of Horkheimian immanent criticism (1946; 1992), which has its roots in critical theory, the dissertation provides several ways to evaluate democracy and governance, and then applies these to the European Parliament. In doing so, it proffers a range of practical suggestions for improving both democracy and governance in the Parliament.

1.2 Key arguments of the thesis.

This dissertation presents a thesis of two parts. The first part argues that the European Parliament is a new form of democratic governance structure that represents citizens at a supranational level. It maintains that there is no other body, regionally or globally, that does this in the same way. Consequently, the first part of the thesis claims that the Parliament's presence in the EU shows democracy to be a genuine system for regional and international governance.

The second part of the thesis proceeds to claim that there is greater potential for democratic governance in the European Parliament than is currently evident. In doing so, it produces a set of practical methods to strengthen the nature of the Parliament's democracy. This second part also suggests that the democratic element the Parliament brings to governance includes the potential to challenge the dominance of neoliberalism, not just in Europe but globally.

In presenting the two arguments of the thesis the dissertation utilises an original adaptation of Max Horkheimer's immanent criticism (1946; 1992: 200) which argues that the structures of a modern capitalist society are a product of historical inequalities and inherently unfair because of this. Implicit with Horkheimer's philosophy is the idea that research should not just explore the social world, but seek to orientate action for its improvement. This focus on praxis underpins the second element of the thesis, which moves beyond a description of democratic governance in the European Parliament to provide a set of practical suggestions through which it may better fulfil its role.

1.3 Researching democratic global-regional governance and the European Parliament

The form of Horkheimian immanent criticism applied in this dissertation delineates its explanation of the European Parliament into three stages. Initially, it explores the

Parliament's historical development, setting out the forces that were influential on its growth within the EU and the ways in which these shaped its current functions. It then makes use of a range of first-hand interviews, treaties and Parliamentary reports to examine the actual functions of the Parliament, and in so doing begin a discussion on the ways in which Parliament's democratic and governance functions could be developed. The final stage of immanent criticism continues this discussion by suggesting a number of practical ways to nurture both democracy and governance in the Parliament's structures.

The focus on democracy and governance in the European Parliament requires some theoretical background. However, the problem with constructing this background is that, for both democracy and governance there is little agreement on which structures and ideologies serve each concept. For example, Dahl (2000: 2) states that, despite being 'discussed on and off for about twenty-five hundred years' democracy still remains without universal definition. Similarly, Keane (2009: 842) argues that democracy is 'nothing but a time-bound, geographically limited' way of life.

As with democracy, defining the parameters in which governance occurs is difficult. Diverse interpretations of the role that ideologies, technologies, and political decisions play in global structures sometimes create very distinct models of global functions. Conceptions of the manner in which a body such the European Parliament works depend heavily on the ways in which an individual interprets the many factors that influence its operations.

In order to overcome the difficulties in defining democracy and governance in the European Parliament, this dissertation constructs a theoretical basis for each concept. This basis provides a background to the subsequent immanent criticism and a guide to the types of strategies than may develop democracy and governance further. Chapter 2 outlines this in more detail with a methodological discussion and an account of Horkheimian immanent criticism. Following on from this, Chapters 3 and 4 discuss ways to evaluate democracy and global governance respectively. Chapter 3 conducts an

historical analysis of democratic systems that culminates in three key principles of democracy that guide the exploration of democracy's functions and potential later in the dissertation. Chapter 4 constructs three interpretations of global governance, which are presented as discrete ontological models. These models outline particular perceptions of global structure and the role that regional governance bodies such as the European Parliament would play in each case. As with the principles of democracy, they compliment the immanent criticism later in the dissertation with a set of analytical tools for exploring the Parliament's present and potential role.

The second part of the dissertation develops the immanent criticism of the European Parliament. Divided into three chapters, each examines democracy and governance in the Parliament from one specific aspect. Chapter 5 provides a critical history of the Parliament's inception spanning the end of the Second World War to the present day. This first part of the immanent criticism sets out the Parliament's role in the context of the forces instrumental in its construction. Chapter 6 builds on this by dealing specifically with the Parliament's current functions and the ways in which its democracy and governance work. It does this by reference to a wide range of Parliamentary publications and documents, as well as set of nine interviews with MEPs, leading academics, and those with experience of working with or for the European Parliament. Chapter 7 initially applies this analysis of the Parliament to further a critique of its democracy, and then moves on to consider a range of practical methods through which democracy may better function and governance ma more readily be understood.

The dissertation concludes with a summary of the arguments in the immanent criticism, paying special attention to the proposals as to how the European Parliament might enhance its democratic functions. It then identifies the practical constraints these proposals face in a complex and evolving global political environment. Finally, the concluding chapter reflects on the dissertation as a whole, discussing the wider role of global democratic governance, and some ways to extend the studies findings beyond the European Parliament.

Chapter 2:

Methodology, the philosophy and practise of researching the European Parliament

2.1 Epistemology and the importance of methodology

2.2 Developing a sociology of knowledge

2.3 The application of critical theory to the European Parliament

2.4 Immanent criticism of the European Parliament

2.4.1 Chapters 3 and 4: The theory of democracy and global governance

2.4.2 Chapter 5: Immanent criticism Stage 1, a critical history

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2.4.5 Chapter 8: A summary of the thesis and its approach

2.5 conducting the research for immanent criticism

2.5.1 Maintaining reflexivity in the interviews

2.6 Methodology: a summary

2.1 Epistemology and the importance of methodology.

This chapter sets out the methodological framework of the dissertation. It describes how a form of Horkheimian immanent criticism is adapted for this work and the ways in which this approach informs both the structure of the dissertation and the research methods it applies.

Although there are already a number of very good examinations of the European Parliament, many of these originate from the political sciences and therefore focus on structural and functional analysis. For example, influential accounts by Lipgens (1982), McAllister (1997), Hix (1999 & 2007), Schmitter (2000), and Dedman (2010) all provide valuable insights into the workings of the EU and its Parliament but are predominantly historical and structural in their frames of reference. This dissertation is distinct from many of these accounts as it bases its interpretations in the discipline of sociology. This foundation in sociology means that rather than an emphasis on the political, structural, and functional roles of governance, it explores the European Parliament in terms of its

impacts on the lives of individuals and groups. The focus on democracy and governance in this work therefore has wider implications than their application in the European Parliament, conceptualising these aspects as part of a wider set of social functions and structures.

The essential starting point for research based in the discipline of sociology is to establish an understanding of the nature of social relationships and the types of structures that these relationships engender. C Wright Mills (1970: 143) argues that ‘the line-up of a man’s problems – how he states them and what priority he assigns to each – rests upon methods, theories and values’. Only by constituting a basic set of relationships may deeper interpretations of social action take place. For sociology, the concept of methodology represents this process. Methodology in its proper context refers to a set of epistemological and theoretical interpretations that translate the social world. As such, it provides a structure for making sense of everyday action, and a context for social research. For Habermas (1990: 44), it provides a ‘system of reference within which reality is systematically explored’.

As the starting point of methodology, epistemological understandings enable us to conceive the basis of social reality and the types of relationships this generates. For Hamlyn (1995: 242), epistemology is the ‘possibility, scope and general basis’ of the world around us. Therefore, different epistemological positions lead to different ways of interpreting the social world. For example, the empirical sciences, and those that may wish to appear as such, often base their interpretations on an epistemology that understands an objective world of facts that is ‘always there’. Consequently, the physical collection of information is often a largely functional process, designed to ‘discover’ a particular facet of our social or physical environment. In the case of this research however, knowledge represents more than an arbitrary process of cause/effect deduction. Rather, as Natanson (1963: 15) puts it, research into our social lives ‘considers the intersubjective world as constituted in the activity of consciousness’.

An example of the epistemological position this dissertation takes is evident in the ways that interpretations of democracy vary dramatically between states. Democracy in the People's Republic of China involves very different structures to democracy in the United States of America. Not only do contemporary interpretations vary, but democratic systems do not exist in isolation; they are the product of ongoing social processes and the manifestation of particular social forces. Consequently, interpretations rely upon underlying understandings and assumptions, as Natanson (1963: 15) puts it, our 'intersubjective world'.

In an intersubjective world, social reality, i.e. that which we perceive as the actual in our lives, is not objective fact but social construction. For this epistemological interpretation, 'truths' do not exist externally from their moments of realisation, but are complex sets of interactions between aspect, subject and culture. Adorno (1973: 11) argues that truth and meaning are therefore 'moments of the reality that requires their formation'. There is no intrinsic quality of an object, but the object is an artefact brought into meaning by social action.

An epistemology which views reality as 'the product of man's own activity' (Remmling, 1975: 22) places emphasis on subjective meaning rather than objective fact. There is philosophical and sociological support for this approach in the works of Berger and Luckmann (1966: 13), who famously argued that 'reality is socially constructed'. As with Berger and Luckman (1966), Bachelard (1967 [1934]: 14) argues that knowledge as a set of social facts, does not exist as an objective reality but 'all knowledge is in response to a question... Nothing proceeds from itself. Nothing is given. All is constructed'. For Weber (1963), this idea of reality as a function of social interaction extends beyond the social world to incorporate the natural sciences. He argues that 'even the knowledge of the most certain proposition of our theoretical sciences – e.g., the exact natural sciences or mathematics, is, like the cultivation and refinement of the conscience, a product of culture' (1963: 361-2).

Horkheimer (1992) claims that an epistemology based in subjective and constructed meanings contain a dual process for interpreting the social world. On the one hand, the structures and meanings of society are manifest in ‘the historical character of the object perceived’, whilst on the other, these historical characteristics are also subject to interpretation ‘through the historical character of the perceiving organ’ (1992: 200). In other words, knowledge is a product of the ongoing social processes that shape our world, as well as subjective interpretations of those social processes made as we seek to take meaning from the world around us. This dual process, Horkheimer (1992: 200) argues, means that our understandings are ‘not simply natural; they are shaped by human activity’; all knowledge is therefore a product of historical and social interaction.

In a world shaped by social interaction, Marx conceives of the individual not as single unit, but as a social being constructed through the lens of historical relationships. For Marx (1961: 67) ‘it is not the consciousness of men that determine their being, but, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness’. As a result, we can understand human action as a product of the environment in which it occurs, where the meanings and structures that shape social life are the result of historical patterns of influence. Horkheimer (1992: 200) supports this philosophy of Marx, arguing that ‘the world which is given to the individual and which he must accept and take into account is ... a product of the activity of society as a whole’.

Both Marx and Horkheimer’s emphasis on social processes are based in a socially constructionist epistemology. Berger and Luckmann (1966: 211) describe this epistemology as one conceiving ‘a human world, made by men [sic], inhabited by men, and, in turn, making men, in an ongoing historical process’. Although this places a great deal of emphasis on recognising the constructed nature of social reality, it does not mean that arguments built on this position must succumb to the extreme relativism of postmodernism or the empiricism of objective and supposedly scientific approaches. On the contrary, social constructionism stands between the extremes of outright postmodern subjectivity and of empirical objectivity by seeking to ‘salvage relative truths from the wreckage of false ultimates’ (Horkheimer, 1946: 183). While it acknowledges a

constructed world of interpretations as many postmodern philosophies do, it moves beyond this by arguing that these interpretations are collective products of the dominant forces that shape the whole of society. Similarly, it does not suffer the paralysis of empirical objectivism in which ‘every thought has to be held in abeyance until it has been completely corroborated’ (Horkheimer, 1950: 297). Rather, social constructionism embraces a world constructed through historical meanings and actions, therefore seeking to confront ‘the existent in its historical context’ (Horkheimer, 1946: 182).

Implicit within an epistemology based on social constructionism is an understanding that social inequalities and imbalances are the product of historical action: in a world that is the product of human action it can only be human action that creates unfairness. This key part of the epistemology underpins this dissertation’s exploration of democracy and governance in the European Parliament. As a body purporting to structure the lives of over 500 million individuals, the European Parliament enjoys a key role in shaping the future of democratic governance. Critically examining the functions of the Parliament is therefore important for understanding the ways in which democratic governance above the level of the state may develop, both in the European Union and in other global political structures.

The role that methodology plays in exploring democracy and governance in the European Parliament is vital. By transcending simple ‘statements of method and arguments about them’ (Mills 1970: 136), a robust methodology ensures that this research is both coherent within its own confines as well as transparent in its conclusions. The rest of this chapter sets out the ways this socially constructionist epistemology informs this research, applying Scheler’s (1925) concept of ‘sociology of knowledge’ to illustrate how these decisions came to inform both the methods adopted and the structure of the analysis.

2.2 Developing a sociology of knowledge

Whilst epistemology informs us about the foundations of social knowledge, it does not hold an implicit way of understanding the nature of those relationships or their outcomes in terms of social structures. Translating epistemology into functioning understandings of real-world structures, such as the European Parliament, requires that we employ what Max Scheler (1925) called a *Wissenssoziologie*: a sociology of knowledge. For Goff (1980: 112), a comprehensive sociology of knowledge allows us to determine ‘what it can possibly make sense to say about specifically human reality’. It is both a philosophical tool for formulating basic understandings of the nature of social reality, and a functional guide which allows us to construct ‘a methodology appropriate to this reality’ (Goff, 1980: 112). As such, a sociology of knowledge provides a bridge between epistemology and interpretation by allowing us to apply conceptual tools to the exploration of social objects. For Berger and Luckmann (1966: 15), it provides us with ‘the relationship between human thought and the social context within which it arises’.

Applying a socially constructionist epistemology to research, particularly research that seeks to explore the potential of a body such as the European Parliament to structure social action, involves an approach that is both consistent with the ideas of a constructed social world as well as inherently geared towards critical analysis of the structure that social world contains. There are two main positions that could accomplish this: the scientific or critical realism of Bhaskar (2008); and the critical theory of Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School for Social Research. Although similar in many ways, the important distinctions between these two positions have significant impacts on the ways to examine democracy and governance in the European Parliament.

In its modern incarnation, scientific or critical realism owes much of its reinvigoration as a philosophical approach to Bhaskar’s (2008) work and the idea that we can distinguish the *actual* from the *empirical*. Bhaskar (2008: 46) argues that ‘there is a distinction between the *real* structures and mechanisms of the world and the *actual* patterns of events’. For Bhaskar (2008: 185), there is a greater truth of a scientific reality, which is

not a ‘product of man’ but the ‘intransitive and structured character of the objects of knowledge [that] exist and act independently of the operations of men and the patterns of events alike’.

Bhaskar’s (2008: 262) philosophy imagines a ‘transcendental ontology of enduring and transfactually active structures’ in which the process of critique is one of attainment. Knowledge of the scientific world represents a progression towards the transcendental; a *world which is always there*. Yet despite this, on a social level knowledge is still subject to interpretation through human consciousness, and Bhaskar (2008: 185) argues that ‘knowledge is produced by knowledge’ insofar as ‘the objects from, and by, which knowledge is generated are ... always themselves social products’

Bhaskar’s ontology draws a distinction between a scientific ‘real’ world and the world of human thought and action used to interpret it. Bhaskar is dismissive of society as an antecedent to knowledge of our ‘real’ scientific world. Knowledge generated through human action is ‘true’ in a social context; it is true because we believe it to be so, and because we base our actions upon those beliefs (2008: 185). It is not true as an ‘intransitive’ reality however; as Bhaskar (2008: 189) argues, it ‘has no foundation – only a structure in time’.

Bhaskar (2008: 196) explains the division between a physical reality and a social world, constructed by human action:

‘It is not necessary to explain society as such; but only the various structures responsible for differing societies and their changes ... As so conceived, society may be regarded as an ensemble of powers which exist, unlike other powers, only as long as they are exercised ... [through]...the intentional action of men’

Bhaskar argues that two worlds of intransitive reality and human interpretation coexist. To explain this, he uses a metaphor that describes reading a piece of text that is ‘independent of any language’ (2008: 196). Such a text would contain a meaning that was both a ‘correct’ and ‘communicatively successful’ (2008: 197); there would be its actual

message as well as the message the reader took from it using their own socially constructed terms of reference.

The difference between truth and meaning for Bhaskar (2008: 185) intimates that ‘it is not necessary that society should continue’ for the ‘enduring mechanisms’ of the world to exist. The impact of this on researching aspects of our human world is less evident in Bhaskar’s work. Certainly, he argues that the social world is one of interpretations, and it is the job of the ‘skilled scientist’ to ‘attempt to understand the mechanisms of phenomena’ (2008: 197), and it does create an understanding in which humans ‘are not passive spectators of a given world, but active agents in a complex one’ (2008: 117).

As an interpretive approach, Bhaskar (1986) adopts the basic premise of Marx’s ideas on the applications of critical reason as a tool to discuss human potential, particularly in respect of the ability to achieve social action that is more enlightened. In his most recent work, Bhaskar (2011: 192) maintains his critique of capitalism, and argues for a ‘socialist emancipation’ using critical realism to challenge the rhetoric and structures that are part of contemporary political ideologies.

Bhaskar (2011: 190) seeks to apply critical realism as ‘a critical tool at the political level’, yet offers little in the way of functional methods through which to do this. His separation of physical and social reality do create the human world as an inherently malleable object, and one that is subject to the unequal forces of historical influence, but there is little guide for ways this may occur. Therefore, although Bhaskar makes an important contribution to critiquing positivist approaches to interpreting social action as well as stressing the importance of critique in understanding human action, much of his work remains in a philosophical mode. He gives little suggestion for direct action or associated method outside of suggesting possibilities for rethinking how emancipation might translate into political action. He does however generate a valuable insight into the role critique plays, suggesting that it ‘must be *internal to* (and conditioned by) *its objects*; or it will lack both epistemic groundings and causal power’ (Bhaskar, 2011: 114).

An alternative applications of Bhaskar's (2008) critical realism and the *world which is always there*, is that of Merleau-Ponty (1963) for whom the existence of a 'real' world outside of human experience does not necessarily mean that truth is inexorably tied to this external reality. As with Bhaskar (2008), Merleau-Ponty (1963: 501) envisages meaningful truths as relative to their moments of conception, arguing that, 'if history envelops us all, it is up to us to understand that whatever we can have of the truth is not to be obtained in spite of our historical situation, but because of it'. Differing from Bhaskar however, Merleau-Ponty argues that once we recognize that truth is socially constructed, we cannot ignore the intrinsic reality of that truth:

... having once recognized that through this situation I have become part of all action and all knowledge that can be meaningful for me, and that it contains ... all that can be for me, then my contact with the social in the finitude of my situation reveals itself as the origin of all truth. ... Since we are in truth and cannot escape it, the only thing left for us to do is to define a truth within the situation.

(Merleau-Ponty, 1963: 501)

Distinct from Bhaskar's (2008: 185) *world which is always there*, Merleau-Ponty (1963) argues that although it is possible to understand a world which 'exists' aside from human action, without human action this world contains no meaning. It is a world conceptualised in the enlightenment philosophy of Hegel (1966:590, cited in Held, 1980:152) in which 'matter has no intrinsic experience' and 'material things' are given to us as 'pure' objects with 'no further determination of any sort'. Even though Bhaskar (2008) acknowledges the social truth in objects, he simultaneously restricts that truth to the realm of human conception, apart from a world of real physical truths.

As with Bhaskar and Merleau-Ponty, Horkheimer (1992: 196) is critical of an empirical approach in which the social sciences is an exercise to 'integrate facts into conceptual frameworks'. For Horkheimer (1992: 196), this traditionalist approach is part of a positivism that focuses on 'independent, "suprasocial", detached knowledge' rather than on actual understandings of social action. Horkheimer (1992: 188) terms this 'traditional

theory’, a supposedly scientific reproduction of knowledge which he argues both ‘belong[s] to the existing order and help[s] make it possible’.

In answer to the failings of traditional theory, Horkheimer (1946: 167) uses critical reason to embrace the constructed nature of a social reality in which ‘each concept must be seen as a fragment of an inclusive truth in which it finds its meaning’. Horkheimer (1946: 210-11) argues for a form of ‘critical thinking’ that rejects the detached knowledge of empiricism:

Critical thinking is the function neither of the isolated individual nor of a sum-total of individuals. Its subject is rather a definite individual in his real relation to other individuals and groups.

In order to make sense of a world formed through historical and material relationships, Horkheimer (1946: 168) argues that we must embrace ‘the logic of the object as well as of the subject’. This creates a form of social knowledge that is inseparable from the social processes that generate it, and represents the collective reality of social constructivism. It is through knowledge of our social world that we may come to reason what we believe to be true and right. Reason therefore allows us to imagine the structures and functions of our social world as part of an ongoing process of possibility. Marcuse’s (1973: 145) reading of critical theory emphasises this idea of knowledge as a transforming tool, arguing that ‘the real field of knowledge is not the given facts about things as they are, but the critical evaluation of them as a prelude to passing beyond their given form’.

Critical theory and its application to the structures of social life is not the ‘rationalization of the world’ (Held, 1980: 66) embraced by empirical sciences, nor is it the same as Bhaskar’s separation of the human world from one of ‘intransitive and structured character of the objects’ (2008: 185). Rather, critical theory understands the world as a wholly constructed environment in which praxis, the culmination of thought and action, provides the key to *overcoming* the inequalities that come about as part of this process.

The roots of critical theory derive from the work of Marx (1961: 67) and his central argument that ‘the mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life’. In applying the principles of knowledge and reason to human action, Marx famously envisages other forms of social structure that would provide better vehicles for human thought and action. Adopted in large part by Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School for Social Theory, this Marxian reading of the social world creates a requirement of knowledge that ‘cannot be separated from political commitment and the struggle for emancipation’ (Delanty, 1997: 60).

Critical theory differs from the highly philosophical work of Bhaskar (2008; 2011) as it provides a functional approach to researching and understanding the social environment. Developing Marx’s idea of praxis in philosophy and function, Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School sought to create a ‘link between philosophy and social science’ (Delanty, 1997: 71). Building upon Hegelian principles of potentiality with a broadly Marxian understanding of the functions of capitalist society, the aim was to produce a method of enquiry that embraced enlightenment ideals of potentiality, freedom, and equality.

As a form of Hegelian-Marxism, this historically materialist consideration of social history focuses on the relationship between agency and structure and the overall ability of the mechanisms of social order to provide a vehicle for enlightened human action. More than just a way to explore our social world, critical theory aims to be a transformative mode of thinking which gives the agent ‘a kind of knowledge inherently productive of enlightenment and emancipation’ (Geuss, 1999: 2).

Despite the requirement for critical theory to produce work that is both explanatory and transformative, it does not provide the same definitive guide for action that other more empirical ontologies do in their ‘quest for certainty’ (Horkheimer, 1946: 167). Indeed, the Horkheimian

form of critical theory applied in this dissertation believes that the ‘weakness of positivism’ is in the ‘implicit assumption that the general empirical procedures used by

science correspond naturally to reason and truth' (Horkheimer, 1946: 79). Rather, this thesis embraces what Geuss (1999: 88), working on the philosophy of Horkheimer, identifies as *Wissenschaft*: 'a body of systematically interconnected propositions which gives reliable guidance for successful action'. So even though critical theory does not offer functionally defined methods, it does provide a structure for exploring the social world: a *way of researching* rather than a *mode of researching*.

For this dissertation, critical theory bridges the gap between a socially constructionist epistemology and a practical route to exploring the nature of democracy and governance in the European Parliament. The following section of this chapter outlines the specific application of critical theory in this dissertation.

2.3 The application of critical theory to the European Parliament

Critical theory represents a way of researching rather than a specific set of methods. Horkheimer (1992: 242) argues that 'there are no general criteria for critical theory as a whole, for such criteria always depend on a repetition of events and thus on self reproducing totality'. As a response to this problem, Horkheimer (1946) describes a form of immanent criticism as a practical application of critical theory. Immanent criticism is central to applying the concepts of critical theory to this exploration of democracy and governance in the European Parliament. This section of the chapter sets out the application of immanent criticism in this dissertation and its influence on the research structure.

Raymond Geuss (1999: 1-2) outlines three criteria that an approach based on critical theory should fulfil. In the first instance, he argues that 'critical theories have special guides for human action' insofar as they are 'aimed at producing enlightenment in the agents who hold them' and are 'inherently emancipatory' (1999: 1-2). For Horkheimer (1946: 186), the use of theory as a guide to action is an essential aspect of research, and a key distinction from traditional theories that have a tendency to 'confuse thinking with

planning'. Unlike many traditional theories, Horkheimer (1946: 186) thought of critical theory as a 'corrective of history ... mankind's memory and conscience', elevating critique above the level of deconstruction and using it as a tool of social and human justice.

The focus on praxis and knowledge as a transformative tool is a central aspect of critical theory's application. In this dissertation, this means the exploration of democracy and governance in the European Parliament is part of a wider comprehension of social structures and their potential. This resonates with Horkheimer's (1946: 183) argument that critical theory 'takes existing values seriously but insists that they become parts of the theoretical whole that reveals their relativity'. The process and purpose of this dissertation is therefore more than performing a structural-functional assessment of the Parliament, it is a wider consideration of potential for enlightened human action.

Secondly, Geuss (1999: 2) argues that a critical theory must contain some 'cognitive content' inasmuch as theory represents 'forms of knowledge'. This is the essential legacy of social constructionism in critical theory's approach to interpreting the social world. A critical theory understands that society, at its most basic level, is an expression of its own evolution. As Held (1980: 182) explains, 'every thought, idea and particular is interwoven with the whole societal life process'. This manifests in this dissertation as a continued emphasis on self-reflection and an acknowledgement of the researcher as an active agent in the generation of knowledge. In particular, a technique of organising and conducting interviews was devised which maintained a reflexive approach to gathering information from interviews with actors possessing high levels of knowledge and involvement in the European Parliament. More detail on these methods is given towards the end of this chapter.

Thirdly, Geuss (1999: 2) argues that critical theories should 'differ epistemologically in essential ways from theories in the natural sciences'. Unlike theories which claim objectivity as a method and inalienable 'truths' as outcomes, critical theories 'reject the veneration of the finite ... as far as they pretend to be independent ultimates'

(Horkheimer, 1946: 182). As such, Geuss (1999: 2) affirms that ‘critical theories are reflective’, designed to embrace the constructed nature of social reality and adjust their positions accordingly. This does not mean that critical theory succumbs to the ‘contradiction between relativism and dogmatism’ in refuting objective truth, but that any truth is acknowledged as historically relative, yet no less true for being so (1999: 2).

Immanent criticism understands knowledge as a social construction, and research as the process of exploring the meanings that derive from this. As this chapter has argued, the role of researchers is one of active involvement. Researchers engage in translating social meanings and processes in order to create a particular image of the world. For this reason, it is important to examine the manner in which information in research is gathered and the purposes for which this information is then used.

The research in this dissertation uses a wide range of different material in order to make the arguments of the thesis. The first two chapters on democracy and governance largely comprise a theoretical exploration that uses a range of historical and academic accounts to construct an image of each concept. This type of theoretical analysis is useful insofar as it allows different perspectives to contribute to an analysis. However, this does mean that the chapters are subject to the range of interpretations contained within these different materials, and because of this neither chapter is a simple recounting of those arguments. In both cases, the chapters synthesise a wider argument from the material they use; in the case of democracy three principles for analyzing its application, and in the case of governance, three distinct ontological models.

The three-stage immanent criticism in the latter part of the dissertation incorporates a wide range of material in its arguments. Here, it was important to employ more first-hand material in order to construct a set of interpretations on the Parliament’s functions that concentrate on the arguments of the thesis. This clear focus on the European Parliament means that this analysis is free to deal specifically with democracy and governance in a real-world context, contributing a unique insight into the workings of the Parliament. As

such, this approach forms what Stake (2000: 437) defines as an ‘instrumental case study’, that is, ‘a particular case chosen both for particular and general interest’.

The information for the immanent criticism came from several sources. As well as an extensive array of academic accounts, it employed two primary sources of data. The first of these comprises a range of documentary evidence that come directly from European governance bodies, including the Parliament and Commission. These bodies routinely make available a range of treaties and accompanying documents, along with press releases, and other historical accounts. These documents are an important source of information, representing an account of the roles and functions of European bodies from their own perspective. In arguing a position of social constructionism, Horkheimer (1935, cited in Held, 1980: 182) asserts that truth retains its historical value, and any ‘later correction does not mean that an earlier truth was an earlier untruth’. He goes on state that, while a critical theory:

...does not presume that the process of critique and determination will end with its own standpoint, it in no way gives up the conviction that its knowledge – in the total context to which its concepts and judgments refer – is valid not only for individuals or groups, but simply valid, i.e. that opposed theories are false.

(Horkheimer, 1935, cited Held, 1980: 182)

For Held (1980: 183), this conceptualisation of truth as relative relies on a relationship between concept and object in which they are ‘interdependent but irreducible aspects of the societal process’. Horkheimer (1946: 171) supports this, arguing that concepts ‘become inadequate, empty, false, when they are abstracted from the process through which they have been obtained’. Consequently, in order to understand the nature of democracy and governance in the European Parliament it is essential to conceptualise it as part of a social whole, in which its functions are inseparable from wider social processes.

Geuss’ (1999: 2) three criteria for using critical theory provide a foundation for social research based in critical theory, and an important basis for this research. They apply a

socially constructionist epistemology to the structures of social life in order to orientate action whilst at the same time, emphasis the role of the researcher as part of the same structures and processes which construct the world in which they live. As such, Guess's three criteria (1999: 1-2) are a useful guide for employing critical theory, describing the important aspects contained in an approach based on this philosophy. Despite this, they do not constitute a specific method for exploration. For this it is necessary to look more directly at the work of individual members of the Frankfurt School.

Although many of those in the Frankfurt School who worked on critical theory were sceptical about the structures of the modern world, the early work of Max Horkheimer stands out as an approach for critically exploring the physical structures of the social world. Horkheimer (1941: 122) sought a real-world application of critical theory that could relate 'social institutions and activities to the values they themselves set forth as their standards and ideals'. The resulting method came to be known as immanent criticism (Held, 1980: 183), insofar as it deals with the object in question in reference to the ability of its own structures to provide an enlightened structure for human action. Applied in this work to a study of democracy and governance in the European Parliament, this means contrasting the ways in which it fulfils its aims and objectives against the potential of these functions.

Horkheimer was not the only member of the Frankfurt school to describe an immanent method, and Adorno (1973: 323) in particular applied the concept to philosophy in an attempt to establish a 'critical social consciousness'. This approach arose from what Adorno perceived to be the failures of a bourgeois philosophy 'to provide an adequate account of the relation between subject and object' (Held, 1980: 2001). Consequently, it was predominately concerned with deconstructing the philosophical problems that Adorno felt blighted a modern, capitalist society.

In contrast to Adorno, Horkheimer exercises immanent criticism as a structural tool by applying it to 'the social functions of systems of thought' (Held, 1980: 201). For Horkheimer (1992: 200), as with Adorno, there are serious conflicts in bourgeois

ideology, and Horkheimer views these conflicts extending to the structures of bourgeois society which may claim to be functioning in the interests of all but are, in fact, either ‘founded directly on oppression, or been the blind outcome of conflicting forces’. Horkheimer argues that an immanent method must apply to the social world in a tangible way. A method such as immanent criticism does not take place ‘in a purely intellectual world, but coincides with the struggle for certain real ways of life’ (Horkheimer, 1992: 245). Immanent criticism therefore seeks to explore the contradictions of modern society, particularly the ways in which social institutions reflect the historical inequalities of a capitalist system.

Immanent criticism challenges the functions of social objects to ascertain if they do in fact provide a means of more enlightened action. In the words of Horkheimer (1946: 182), it ‘confronts the existent, in its historical context, with the claim of its conceptual principles in order to criticize the relation between the two and thus transcend it’. This approach bears some similarity to Bhaskar’s (2011: 114) argument that critique must be ‘*internal to* (and conditioned by) *its objects*’ in order for it to have a functional, epistemic meaning. Horkheimer however, extends this approach, using it as a functional method to critically examine the structures that arise with and help to define societies. Immanent criticism contrasts the actuality of a social structure against a wider conception of its place in human history. It allows the researcher to embrace the dialectic of the object as ‘a unity of opposites that contains within itself contradictions’ (Held, 1980: 185), and through examination of these contradictions work towards transcending them.

Immanent criticism’s focus on the functional nature of social objects makes it uniquely suitable to applying a critical method to the European Parliament. It offers a practical way to assess the functions of an important and influential social structure. By contrasting the Parliament’s actual role with its own claims for its purpose, immanent criticism emphasises the contradictions and inequalities that exist within its functions. An examination of these contradictions also generatess insights into a wider understanding of the structures engendered by a modern, capitalist system. This process of critique is not to be confused with simple scepticism, although scepticism should play a large part. Rather,

immanent criticism seeks to assess a system as part of its wider ability to provide enlightened human action. As Horkheimer (1992: 229) puts it, ‘every part of the theory presupposes the critique of the existing order and the struggle against it’.

The adoption of immanent criticism has shaped this dissertation’s exploration into the nature of democracy and governance in the European Parliament. Basing itself in Geuss’ (1999: 2) three criteria for a critical theory, the dissertation explores the European Parliament as a body derived from historical meanings and relationships, and embraces its role as an important agent of contemporary social and political structure. Through a focus on the Parliament’s ability to function as a democratic governance structure, immanent criticism allows this research to move beyond simple observation and comment to orientate action.

2.4 Immanent criticism of the European Parliament

As application of critical theory, immanent criticism is particularly suited to this exploration of democracy and governance in the European parliament. Its focus on the contradictions in the physical structures of the social world means that it is a practical way to assess the Parliament and integrates wider ideas of potentiality that run through critical theory. Writing on the nature of immanent criticism, Held (1980: 184) describes it as an application to researching social objects and structures which:

...starts with the conceptual principles and standards of an object, and unfolds their implications and consequences. Then it re-examines and reassesses the object (the objects function, for instance) in light of these implications and consequences.

In some ways the process of critique involved in immanent criticism is conceptually similar to Weber’s (1963: 416) approach of ‘ideal-typical concept-construction’. Both concepts emerged to some degree from a Hegelian-Kantian philosophical tradition that seeks enlightened forms of social structure, and both involve contrasting existing systems against their potential. There are however, some significant differences between the two

approaches, the largest of which rests in what the *ideal* constitutes as an evaluative concept.

For Weber (1963), the *ideal* was a concept constructed from a rational functional assessment of any given structure's objectives. Thus, an ideal type is a reproduction of the most rational parts of a given system, compiled as a model and used as an exemplar. These models could then provide a template against which one could contrast actual systems, Lachman (1971: 26) describing them as 'essentially a measuring rod'. Ideal types do not necessarily need to be achievable, positive, or correct, but are internally logical constructs for evaluating a system. As with immanent criticism, Weberian ideal type is therefore particularly useful for examining the bodies and structures that regulate our social lives.

Unlike Weberian ideal type, immanent criticism understands the *ideal* not as a rational-functional or purely logical construct, but as a potentiality more in line with the Hegelian aspects of Kant's philosophy and Marx's later adaptations of this. The evaluation of a social object is not as Weber considered it, based on its adherence to a rationalised model, but is as Horkheimer (1992: 245) argues, the *ideal* is 'concerned with men and all their potentialities', having only 'the happiness of all individuals as its goal (1992: 248). Therefore, a critique of the European Parliament in the immanent mode would possess as its ultimate aim the Parliament's role as a potential vehicle for human action.

There is another, more specific criticism of the rationalisation that is instrumental in Weber's ideal type. Although many of the early members of the Frankfurt School shared a broad agreement with Weber on the emergence of instrumental reason as the increasing means by which human articulated actions, Weber's idea that this was inevitable was highly criticised. Marcuse (1964: 215, cited in Held, 1980: 66) was particularly critical of what he felt was the teleological nature of Weber's rationalisation, describing it as a 'concept of fate' which 'generalizes the blindness of a society which reproduces itself behind the back of individuals, of a society in which the law of domination appears as objective technological law'. For Marcuse, Weberian rationalisation that was typified in

ideal type was symptomatic of a decline in critical reason and the erosion of thought by the ‘bracketing of human beings within commodity production [and] the fall of the technological veil’ (Marcuse, 1941, cited Held, 1980: 67).

Marcuse termed the decline in critical reason technological rationalism, Horkheimer called it instrumental reason, and in both cases, it was symptomatic of a manifestation of capitalist modes of economic and cultural production in the everyday lives of individuals. They argued that capitalism’s dominance taints rationality, reducing it to ‘a set of truth values which hold good for the functioning of the apparatus – and for that alone’ (Marcuse, 1968: 422, cited Held, 1980: 67). As Horkheimer and Adorno (2002: 121) put it, the rationale of capitalism was ‘the rationale of domination itself’.

In order to challenge the dominance capitalist modes of production exert on the structures of our social world, critical theory and immanent criticism emphasize the historical dimension of critique as a tool for understanding and then overcoming the inequalities which are built into social systems. For Horkheimer (1941: 122), immanent criticism is bound up in a critique of the historical and ideological structures in which society is built, these structures all too often being a reflection of the ‘ambivalent relation between prevailing values and the social context forces’. Immanent criticism of the European Parliament is therefore part of a process that actively questions ‘the absolute claims of prevailing ideology and of the brash claims of reality’ (Horkheimer, 1946: 183). In other words, the Parliament needs to be conceived of as a product of a particular ideological system rather than a body arriving to function unconstrained and uninfluenced by external forces.

The focus of immanent criticism is not just on the object in question, in this case the European Parliament, but its historical emphasis places that object in matrix of social meaning and formation in order to envisage the object moving beyond its present conditions. Immanent criticism is an exploration of past influence, present function, and future potential. These elements, the historical, functional, and potential, are essential in

the immanent process as they remove research from the purely subjective and introspective and give it both context and real world function.

The three elements of immanent criticism translate in this exploration of democracy and governance in the European Parliament as three-stage process of critique. Firstly, the dissertation contains an historical critique that explores the history of the Parliament's role within the European Union. Secondly, it explores the actuality of the Parliament, examining the ways in which it fulfils its mandate. Finally, it embraces the aspect of transformative knowledge by exploring the potential of the Parliament to provide a vehicle for social organisation and offering a range of suggests for ways to work towards this potential.

As well as the three-stage process implemented in this dissertation, immanent criticism requires that social objects are explored as part of 'the web of relationships within the social totality' (Horkheimer, 1946: 211). Consequently, prior to the immanent criticism proper the dissertation provides a detailed analysis of the concepts behind both democracy and global governance in order to place them in a context through which the subsequent analysis is able to take place. As well as forming a basis for immanent criticism, this analysis also allows an application of this thesis' claims beyond the European Parliament, making it relevant to other institutions that seek to function in a democratic way on the global stage. This process is set out in more detail in the following sections.

2.4.1 Chapters 3 and 4: The theory of democracy and global governance

Horkheimer (1992: 225) argues that a 'critical theory of society also begins with abstract determinations'. In this instance, he is referring to an understanding of the material nature of a capitalist economy, but more generally this argument encompasses the idea that in order to be critical, there must first be an 'outline of the mechanism' you are critiquing (1992: 225). Chapters 3 and 4 provide part of this outline with an analysis of democracy and global governance respectively, assembling a theoretical basis for the three-stage immanent criticism of the European Parliament.

Chapter 3 deals specifically with the theory of democracy. Using an historical analysis of democratic systems and a range of academic and theoretical arguments, the chapter argues that democracy is temporally and culturally bound, both conceptually and in terms of its applications as a system of governance. Therefore, in order to analyse democracy's different applications the chapter constructs a set of three principles as a way of evaluating the nature of democracy exhibited in a system. These principles form an important tool for the subsequent analysis of the European Parliament in the dissertation.

As with chapter 3, chapter 4 provides a basis for the subsequent three-stage immanent criticism of the European Parliament by constructing a set of three different theoretical models of global governance. These models each cover a particular ontological perspective on the nature of global political structure and the relationships this entails. Using a range of different theorists, each model presents a general position that argues for a particular type of global order. Along with the analysis of democracy in Chapter 3, these models of global governance contribute a range of concepts and tools which are used in the subsequent analysis of the European Parliament. They also develop a wider background to the arguments of in this work, placing the Parliament in a global context.

2.4.2 Chapter 5: Immanent criticism, Stage 1, A critical history

For immanent criticism, it is only through an appreciation of 'the importance of historical circumstances' that we can fully understand a social object in its contemporary position (Horkheimer, 1992: 195). Consequently, understanding the functions of the Parliament is a process inseparable from its historical development. Chapter 5 conducts this historical exploration of the Parliament's growth within the European Union, evaluating how the forces acting on it has shaped its development and its changing role in the European Union.

The chapter makes use of a wide range of official documents from the European Union and Parliament as well as a number of accounts from academics and historians in order to set out the development of Parliament since the Second World War. The aim of the chapter is to place the Parliament in an historical perspective through which the later

stages of immanent criticism then interpret its present and future functions. This first stage of immanent criticism is more than an historical appraisal; it does not just plot the course of events, but is a developmental history of the Parliament that provides a guide for understanding its cotemporary role.

2.4.3 Chapter 6: Immanent criticism, Stage 2, A critical examination

Chapter 6 is the second part of the three-stage immanent criticism, examining what Horkheimer (1941: 122) refers to as ‘the actual rift between the social reality and the values it posits’. This chapter is primarily concerned with a critical analysis of the European Parliament in terms of its present democratic and governance functions. To do this, the chapter construct a model of the European Parliament that focuses on its functions at a local, regional, and global level.

As well as using the material from chapters 3 and 4 on the nature of democracy and global governance, much of the information for this stage of immanent criticism comes from a range of interviews conducted for this dissertation. These interviews involved individuals with strong connections to the Parliament, and provide an important source of first-hand information on the ways in which the Parliament functions. The first of these interview groups comprises MEPs who are, or were at the time of interview, members of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, the body of the Parliament that deals specifically with issues of democracy and governance. The second set of interviews comprise three leading academics who are each involved in theorising areas around national and European policy, democracy, and global governance. The third body of interviews involves what are termed here ‘involved practitioners’, those with practical experience of working for the Parliament in specific functions, or that have played primary roles in large European centrally funded projects. Together, these interviews provide a broad spectrum of opinion on the Parliament and contribute toward a unique insight into its democratic and governance functions. There is more detail on the interview process later in this chapter.

This second stage of immanent criticism also deals with contains the first claim of the thesis, arguing that by combining accountability for both states and for citizens, the European Parliament represents a new type of democratic governance structure that functions above the level of the state. The argument in this chapter informs the subsequent chapter's analysis on ways to improve democracy and accountability in the Parliament.

2.4.4 Chapter 7: Immanent criticism stage 3, an exploration of potential

Chapter 7 is the final part of the three-stage immanent criticism, and it emphasizes the importance that critical theory and immanent criticism place on the transformative element to research. This chapter initially critiques the Parliament as a social structure 'not geared to the life of the whole community ... [but] ... geared to the power-backed claims of individuals' (1992: 213). It then moves beyond this critique to explore the potential of the Parliament to provide democratic governance for the European Union.

The arguments of this chapter build on the analysis from the stages of immanent criticism, as well as drawing on material from the interviews conducted for this work and the earlier chapters on the theory of democracy and global governance. It also takes material from two important reports commissioned by the Parliament, which supply a range of suggestions for ways to improve democracy in Europe. The chapter culminates a range of practical suggestions for ways to improve democracy and governance in the functions of the Parliament. These practical suggestions for ways in which the Parliament could better achieve its potential are presented as a set of suggestions, some dealing with practical elements of the Parliament's day to day workings and others focused on wider questions over the Parliament's role within the European Union and a global political economy as a whole. In making these claims, the chapter presents the case that that there is greater potential in the European Parliament than is currently evident.

2.4.5 Chapter 8: a summary of the thesis and its approach.

The dissertation concludes with a chapter that summarises the two claims of the thesis, presenting evidence that the Parliament represents a new form of democratic structure

and that it contains greater potential in its functions than is presently evident. It argues that the discussion on democracy and global governance affords this thesis context beyond its immediate focus on the European Parliament, and that much of the evidence here is relevant to other global institutions, particularly bodies such as the African Union. The chapter also discusses elements of the dissertation with continued relevance outside of this study outside of its central claims. It concludes with an evaluation of study as a whole, suggesting ways to continue the study's exploration of democracy and governance at a global level.

2.5 Conducting the research for immanent criticism

Extensive use was made of these sources, particularly in the first stage of immanent criticism that provides a critical history of the Parliament's formation.

Using documentary evidence from a critical perspective requires an understanding of them as part of a wider social and political context. Hodder (2000: 703) talks of documentary evidence as 'mute evidence', and argues that it is essential to understand it as a 'form of artefact produced under certain material conditions ... embedded within social and ideological systems' (2000: 704). Consequently, it is important to regard any information contained within the document in this analysis as a subjective account, translated twice: one at its inception, and again in its reading. As Hodder states (2000: 704), 'meaning does not reside in text but in the writing and reading of it'. This does not discount these texts as inherently flawed and therefore meaningless, but requires careful evaluation of their content that considers their subjective perspective. One way of managing the subjectivity of documentary accounts is to use a variety of different sources to construct an argument. Accordingly, where this dissertation makes use of documentary evidence from the Parliament or other similar bodies, accounts from other sources are included to provide a contrasting perspective, particularly those from academic accounts which approach the area with a different focus.

The second source of primary information in this immanent criticism comes from a range of interviews conducted specifically for this research. As this chapter outlined, the interviews are in three sets of three, each with a specific focus on the European Parliament and its functions. The interview sets each comprised individuals with extensive experience of working in or for the Parliament or those that are involved in examining areas of governance and democracy relating to structure such as the EU.

The first set of interviews was with three MEPs, at the time all members of the highly influential Committee on Constitutional Affairs that deals with issues of democracy and accountability in the Parliament. This committee was instrumental in producing the opposed European Constitution as well as its replacement, the Lisbon Treaty. The interviewees with MEPs provide a unique insight into the functions and future direction of the Parliament, and their important role in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs meant they are ideally placed to discuss issues relating to this study. There was consideration taken to achieving a fair balance across political parties, and although all three were UK based MEPs, each represents one of the three main UK political parties.

The second set of interviews comprises a group of three leading academics who are involved in researching issues of democracy and governance in bodies such as the European Parliament and Union. Chosen to provide an external perspective to the operations and nature of the European Parliament, these interviews covered a wide range issues related to the Parliament's functions. They were also an important contribution to the wider discussion on considerations of democracy and governance above the level of the state.

The third set of interviews is with the 'involved practitioner' group. Individuals here possess extensive practical knowledge of working within or for the Parliament at a level other than an elected member. Two of those in this set previously ran several European funded projects, and the interviews provide an important insight into the application of European policy at a local level that discusses the role the Parliament and MEPs play in member states. The third member of this interview set is the Head of the Secretariat for

the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, effectively the most senior civil servant in that department and a person of great influence in the working of the committee. This interview gave a valuable perspective of the Parliament from a non-partisan perspective. Figure 1, following, provides more detail on the interviewees, as well as the signifiers applied when quoting from their interviews later in the dissertation.

Figure 1: Interviewee breakdown	
Interview set M: Members of the European Parliament	
Signifier	Brief Details
MEP1	Labour MEP - Member and one time vice Chair Committee on Constitutional Affairs
MEP2	Conservative MEP Member Committee on Constitutional Affairs at time of interview
MEP3	Liberal Democrat MEP Member Committee on Constitutional Affairs
Interview set Ac: Specialist Academics	
Ac1	Professor of Social Policy at a UK University Worked / published extensively on the applications of social policy across Europe.
Ac2	Professor of Sociology at large UK university Published extensively on globalisation and civil society
Ac3	Professor of Politics at Universities in the UK and Germany Founder member, <i>Centre for the Study of Democracy</i> , Served as a Fellow of the <i>Institute for Public Policy Research</i>
Interview set C: Involved Practitioners	
IP1	Head of Secretariat of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs Member, group of professors <i>Institute for European, knowledge acquisition</i>
IP2	Former Head of the (UK) <i>Centre for Local Policy Studies</i> Worked on a large number of EU funded projects and has extensive knowledge of the funding and knowledge transfer process within EU bodies.
IP3	Director of <i>Countryside and Community Research Institute</i> Professor Faculty of the Built Environment, based in a large UK University. Former member of Prime Minister's Development group review of rural planning, housing, and economy.

In all cases, interviewees signed a consent form agreeing to the interview and use of the transcripts for academic purposes (a template of this is available in Appendix 1). Each interviewee had an information sheet outlining the research and contact details should they wish to discuss or withdraw from the study at any time. Examples of both forms are in Appendices 1 and 2, respectively. In total, the nine interviews provided just over 450 minutes of material, 390 recorded minutes, and a 60 minute interview that was written and then countersigned by the interviewee due to problems with the recording equipment.

2.5.1 Maintaining reflexivity in the interviews

A large part of critical theory and immanent criticism's approach involves an understanding of social knowledge as a product of historical flows of power and meaning. Social knowledge is part of a process of interpretation, as Habermas (1990: 152) argues, it is one in which 'the interpreter is a moment in the same context of tradition as his [sic] object'. For this reason, it is important to understand the role that 'self' plays in any piece of research, translating meanings and presenting evidence to create a particular representation.

Achieving an appreciation of self in research required that reflexivity became a central aspect of this immanent criticism. A need to retain awareness of myself as both social-construct as well as social-interpreter meant that it was important to accept that my own interpretations would change as my knowledge developed. This was particularly true of the interviews, where I was talking to individuals with high levels of knowledge and experience. Gillingham (2005: 55) terms these 'elite interviews', where interviewees are individuals especially knowledgeable or in positions of power. Consequently, the interviewer is likely to enter the interviews with less knowledge on the specific area of the interview. Although from a critical perspective there are concerns with using a term such as 'elite' that arguably reinforces unequal power relationships, the label is nevertheless an accurate reflection of the highly specific and targeted interviews conducted for this dissertation.

There were a variety of methods adopted in order to minimise some of issues of control and knowledge within the elite interviews undertaken for this dissertation. Having three sets of interviews means that no one group dominated the knowledge, and staggering the time between these interviews meant that there was a chance for my own knowledge to grow in a balanced way rather than be dominated by one set of perspectives. The interviews took place in a variety of locations that meant that any environmental issues on either my part or that of the interviewees were minimised. For example, the interviews with MEPs took place at the European Parliament building in Brussels, the London Office of the Conservative European Parliament and a regional constituency office. Other interviews were held at the offices of interviewees or, in several cases, more informal public locations albeit away from other members of the public.

The most important measure taken to help control the interviews was the adoption of a form of interviewing similar to Douglas's (1985) idea of 'creative interviewing'. This approach is situational, being reflexive in style and technique, allowing changes in understandings and approaches to reflect in the questions asked. The need for a form of reflexive interview was born largely out of the problems that arose in the initial construction of interview questions. A preliminary set of interview questions along with brief justifications of the questions (a copy of which is in Appendix 2) were sent for review to a number of academics chosen for their experience in issues of interviewing or the European Parliament. Unfortunately, this method proved to be unsuccessful due to a limited set of responses from those who received the initial interview questions. This method also did not sufficiently address the problems of conducting elite interviews, where there is a high possibility of new issues or knowledge emerging in the interview process that could usefully inform the questions put to other interviewees.

As a response to the problems of conducting elite interviews, the research devised a new form of reflexive interview structure. This includes fixed topic areas, within which specific questions are adapted to reflect changes in the interviewer's knowledge. The method embraces the fact that in elite interviews there is a high chance that the interviewer may encounter 'new' knowledge and that each interview is likely to change

the interviewer's understanding or perception of the subject. By allowing this changing knowledge to reflexively impact on the questions that are being asked, the method of interviewing maintains a high level of focus across the interviews.

The structure of a reflexive interviewing process is in two parts: initially, it uses a fixed set of interview topics that provide continuity throughout the interviews and enable them to target specific issues or areas that are important to the overall focus of the research. Within these fixed topics, groups of questions are adapted reflexively depending on the ways in which the interview's knowledge develops. As well as allowing the questions to maintain a high level of focus within the set topics, it also means that each topic can contain a variety of questions that may be more or less suitable for different interviewee's areas of experience. The two-tiered process encompasses two of the key aspects of a critical theory: it provides a structure that allows the interviews to maintain focus and hence enable critique, whilst at the same time embracing the reflexivity that is part of social constructionism where knowledge is a social product and subject to continual change.

Figure 2 on the following page gives a guide to the process of reflexive intervening in this dissertation. It illustrates how fixed topic areas offer an overall structure to the interviews, and how within this structure questions are reflexively adapted on the basis of a changing personal knowledge and to help focus on the specific experiences of individual interviewees. This figure describes two interviews conducted for this dissertation, one with an academic and one with an involved practitioner. Although this figure does not show all questions from each interview, those chosen give a good indication of how the reflexive process works between different interview groups.

Figure 2: Reflexive interviewing model for Interviews MEP1 and IP2

Static topics	Reflexive Questions (simplified for this table)	
	Interview Ac2 (Academic)	Interview IP2 (Involved Practitioner)
<p>Topic 1: The EP's functions at a national level</p>	<p>What role do you see the EP playing in domestic social and economic policy making?</p> <p>What do you feel is the strategy of the European Parliament in terms of national politics – what function do you feel it is trying to fulfil?</p>	<p>How influential do you feel the EP is in domestic social and policy?</p> <p>What function do you feel the EP is trying to fill in for its composite national states?</p> <p>What role do you see the EP playing in its composite states?</p>
<p>Topic 2: The EP's functions at a regional level</p>	<p>What role do you see the European parliament playing on a regional level? Is it a genuine attempt at regionalisation or is it an exercise in standardisation?</p> <p>What do you think the Agenda is for the EU and EP?</p> <p>Do you feel there are any ways in which the internal procedures/functions of the EP and EU governance structure could be made more democratic or more open?</p>	<p>You were involved in a project that dealt with other EU nations – what was the influence and input of the EU/EP in this project?</p> <p>Do you think the EU/EP Is it an attempt at a democratic government for Europe, is it collectivism, is it a strengthening of neoliberalism?</p> <p>Do you feel there are any ways in which the internal procedures/functions of the EP and EU governance structure could be made more democratic or more open?</p>
<p>Topic 3: The EP's functions at a global level</p>	<p>How do you see the EP interacting in a global environment dominated by big non-democratic financial and economic bodies?</p> <p>Are there tensions between the EU's economic neoliberalism and the EP's social agenda?</p> <p>What role can the EP play in a world dominated by financial and corporate entities?</p> <p>How do you see the EP interacting with other large global states?</p> <p>Globally, what role do you see the EP playing now and in the future?</p>	<p>How have you seen the role of the EP develop since you have been involved with it?</p> <p>Are there tensions between the EU's economic neoliberalism and the EP's social agenda?</p> <p>What role can the EP play in a world dominated by financial and corporate entities?</p> <p>Globally, what role do you see the EP playing now and in the future?</p>

In the case of the reflexive interviewing method here, the static topic areas reflect a focus on three specific levels of interaction within the functions of the European Parliament. By guiding questions to a local, regional, and global level of interaction, the topic areas

allowed the interviews to focus specifically on each interviewee's areas of expertise without losing the overall focus on the European Parliament.

Figure 2 describes the questions for two interviews, one with an academic and one with an 'involved practitioner'. The interviews with MEPs, were based on a slightly different set of question topics that reflected the particular type of specialised knowledge they had. These topics were also a product of the analysis of democracy and governance in chapters 3 and 4. A copy of the reflexive process for the MEP interviews, including the questions asked and the changes made between interviews, are available at the end of this work in Appendix 3.

Reflexive interviewing is a method devised here in order to relate specifically to the requirements of an immanent criticism built on social constructionism. Based in social constructionism, the value of reflexive interviewing extends beyond this specific study to cover other situations in which interviewers find themselves in a position where it is likely they may encounter significant 'new' information. It embraces the idea of a constantly evolving knowledge of the social world; and in doing so maintains particular relevance to Gillingham's (2005: 55) concept of 'elite interviews'.

As part of the overall research process employed in this dissertation, reflexive interviewing helped the interviews to produce a range of highly specific responses in key areas of the research, whilst contributing to a more general focus on the functions of the European Parliament. Its inclusion helped to describe the ongoing importance that a socially constructionist epistemology plays in interpreting the world around us.

5.6 Methodology: a summary

This chapter has set out the methodological process through which this exploration of democracy and governance in the European Parliament takes place. This process is important, as it emphasises the underlying assumptions and interpretations that inform the

conclusions of this dissertation. The three-stage immanent criticism also informs the structure of the analysis, constructing the European Parliament as an historical social object, as a functioning body, and as a potentiality for providing democratic governance. It also defines the presentation of the two central claims of the thesis: that the Parliament is a new form of democratic governance structure; and that the Parliament is capable of greater democratic governance than presently evident.

The next two chapters represent the initial stage of criticism, providing an examination of democracy that culminates in a set of three principles, and then three ontological models of global governance that describes how different interpretations of global structure suppose different roles for bodies such as the European Parliament. Together, these two chapters form a basis for the immanent criticism in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Chapter 3:

The theory of democracy

3.1 Introduction: democracy and the European Parliament

3.2 Democracy: Zeitgeist and material

3.3 Democracy: development and applications

3.3.1 Democracy: an historical foundation

3.3.2 From Greece to Rome and beyond

3.3.3 A Protective state Vs the individual.

3.3.4 From Republicanism to Liberalism and the modern state

3.3.5 Democracy: Key applications in the 21st century

3.3.6 Democracy: going global

3.4 Democracy: the key principles

3.4.1 The principle of legitimacy

3.4.2 The principle of representation

3.4.3 The principle of accountability

3.5 Democracy and the European Parliament: a summary

3.1 Introduction: democracy and the European Parliament

This chapter examines the ways in which it is possible to evaluate the democratic functions of a system of governance such as the European Parliament. Along with the following chapter that focuses on the nature of global governance, it forms a basis for the immanent criticism of the European Parliament in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Many prominent social and political theorists have discussed at length the nature of democracy. Schumpeter's (1976) classic work on capitalism, socialism, and democracy examined the ways in which democracy could contribute to a rejection of capitalism in favour of more socialist political and economic world structures. Here, Schumpeter adopts an approach that treats democracy as a material and finite system, setting out an 'economic definition of democracy, conceived as an institutional arrangement like the market' (1976: xi). In a similar vein, Lijphart (1999ix) conducted a comparative study of twenty-one democracies between 1949 and 1980, concluding that the 'institutional

characteristics [of democracies] form two distinct clusters'. Habermas (1996: 21) also sought to construct three normative models in order to 'sketch a proceduralist view of democracy'. These approaches each attempted to provide structural assessments of democracy applicable as templates through which to examine other systems.

Others such as Held (2003) sought to move beyond structural assessments of democracy in order to take a more inclusive view of a system that was continually changing. Held (2003: xi) produced a range of democratic models which sought common themes from a 'history of democracy marked by conflicting interpretations...and inconsistent accounts of the key terms of democracy'. As with Held, authors such as Dahl (2000), Shaw (2002), Arblaster (2002), Smith (2007) and Keane (2009) sought to conceive democracy as a changing system of governance in an increasingly global world.

The problem with defining democracy, as Dahl (2000: 3) argues, is that it has 'meant different things to different people at different times'. Democracy is a subjective concept, applied in a variety of ways through a variety of systems for at least 2500 years. For Dahl (2000:32), this means we are constrained to interpret democracy and democratic systems based on 'our beliefs about causal conceptions, limits and possibilities in the actual world around us'.

As with Dahl, Keane (2009: xv) argues that democracy's lack of universal definition is an integral part of an evolving history in which 'values and institutions are never set in stone; even the meaning of democracy changes through time'. For Keane (2009: xiii) 'often hotly disputed meanings' construct democracy as a 'time-bound' (2009: 842) and difficult concept to evaluate. This does not mean that it is impossible to assess the applications of democracy in a governance structure, but that democracy's important place in modern societies means simple definitions and procedural accounts are inadequate. Consequently, the following section of this chapter explores democracy as both a structural system of governance as well as an ideological aspect of many societies. This dual role democracy plays in many modern states provides an important way to understand its central role in shaping modern political and social culture.

3.2 Democracy: Zeitgeist and Material.

Democracy is an important characteristic of Western state governance. The democratic state is often a focal point for an expression of Western social and political ideals; as Held (2003: 1) argues, ‘democracy appears to legitimate modern political life’. Yet, democracy as a functioning system of representative governance does not contain a definitive form or a universally established basis. Its application varies between states, and its role in the instruments of government is often subject to radical differences.

On a basic level, democracy entails the will of the people transposed to some degree onto the laws and structures that govern social life. For Keane (2009: xv), democracy can be seen as a system in which ‘the people or their representatives lawfully govern themselves’. Yet beyond this basic position, there is little in common between democracy’s applications in different systems. For example, the process of representation in direct participatory democracies where all citizens are involved in the decision-making process is very different from democracy in indirect systems where representative rule means decisions are made via proxy.

Describing the origins and futures of democracy, Keane (2009: xiv) argues that ‘every turn of phrase, every custom and every institution of democracy as we know it is time-bound’. This lack of common application extends not just to democracy as a structural system, but also to its role as a cultural artefact. Democracy plays an important role in defining ideological aspects of cultures and civilisations, and this is particularly evident in the forms of democracy often referred to as ‘Western’, ‘capitalist’ or ‘liberal’ democracy. These forms of democracy have increasingly been a uniting force for states that have in the past, differed politically and culturally. For those states which claim to ‘be democratic’, the ideology of democracy provides collective meaning through political and cultural ethnocentrism. Democracy identifies a common thread between states and individuals, and constructs the non-democratic *other* as ideologically and culturally different.

For the ‘democratic West’, this *other* has taken different forms in recent decades. For example, the Second World War was partially a war of Democracy against Fascism; each side portrayed the other as immoral and inferior. According to Held (2002: 57-8), the victory of the democratic Allies led to a strengthening of democracy in the victorious states, which were ‘stimulated by processes of mass mobilisation’, while in contrast the Axis states became ‘democracies by defeat or imposition’.

Following on from the Second World War, the Cold War witnessed a new ideological conflict in which democracy became a political and social rallying point. Western, capitalist states presented their versions of liberal democracy as ‘choice’ and ‘freedom’ in stark contrast to Communism’s absence of choice. In Western Europe, liberal democracy found support through the Marshall Plan, which pumped billions of US dollars into rebuilding European industry as a counter to rising communism. Keane (2009: 711) argues that in many cases this attempt to weaken communism ‘put the democratisation of industry on the political agenda’. At the same time in the UK, the establishing of a welfare state democratised healthcare and benefits for citizens who had sacrificed much in the fight against Fascism.

On the other side of the iron curtain, the Soviet states portrayed themselves as a replacement to old style European empires, as Smith (2007: 8) argues, claiming to be ‘egalitarian, Libertarian and democratic’ whilst at the same time exercising power through ‘absolutism or top-down assertiveness’. Although in reality the Cold War was as much about the division of global power and resources as it was about ideology, democracy provided a useful vehicle for both sides to justify why they were ideologically superior. Democracy, particularly in the West, was the collective characteristic that unified states and citizens.

The revolutions across Europe that signified the end of the Cold War meant many states rejected various applications of soviet communism, and embraced the liberal democracy of the ‘Western’ world. For some such as Fukuyama (1992) this end to ideological contest was tantamount to an ‘end of history’: liberal, capitalist democracy emerged from

the Cold War as a system of governance supported by the remaining major global powers. Institutions of such as the IMF, World Bank, and World Trade Organisation became powerful fronts for the economic and social structures of neoliberalism, and an ideology of global, liberal capitalist democracy. This corresponding increase in Liberal Democracies post-Cold War is illustrated in Figure 3, following.

Figure 3: Number of liberal democracies compared to World Bank membership		
	Number of Liberal Democracies	World Bank Group Membership
1975	35 (of 147) (23.8%)	448
1995	78 (of 164) (47.6%)	631
% increase	50%	41%
Sources: Held, 2001: 47, World Bank 2011a and 2011b		

Although the table makes it clear that there was a dramatic post-Cold War increase in liberal democracies, the nature of ongoing conflict in the modern world shows Fukuyama's (1992) claims to be overstated. The 'triumph of the west over all political and economic alternatives' (Smith, 2007: 256) has in recent times become a complex ideological clash between Western liberal democracies and other systems that do not embrace this mix of neoliberal capitalism and democratic ideology.

Huntington (1996) made a case for ongoing ideological conflict not long after Fukuyama had made his claims. The 'clash of civilisations' predicted by Huntington (1996) draws heavily on the language and ideology of a world established in distinct parts. This reductive approach seems at odds with a global world that boasts increasingly large flows

of cultural and ideological information and in which ‘civilisations’, such as they are, no longer conform solely to territorial boundaries. Although the world is still divided in economic and structural means, Castells (1998: 74) argues that individuals are increasingly free to participate in what he terms a ‘network society’. In an information age, it is ‘networks of production, power, and experience, which construct a culture of virtuality in the global flows that transcend time and space’ (1998: 350).

The rise of a network society does not mean that conflicts with ideological elements cease to occur. Indeed, at the turn of the 21st century, Shaw (2002: 169-70) argued that new global conflicts were likely to be ‘about the shape of civil society and the state...about the future shape of states’, a position certainly born out by recent global events. The US led invasions of Afghanistan, Iraq and, more latterly, Libya all incorporated the rhetoric of democracy as part of their justification. Revolutions of varying success across North Africa and the Middle East were in part about a desire for more democratic forms of governance. Similarly, a growing number of states oppose the dominance of liberal democracy’s focus on capitalist social and economic structures, objecting to its pervasiveness in national and historic cultures.

In all of these cases, conflict that uses democracy as an ideological or structural element does not represent Huntington’s (1996) ‘clash of civilisations’, but a continual search by people for a better way to structure their social and political lives. A more descriptive concept for this process might be *Weltanschauungen War*, which derives from the German term for world-view and the philosophy of Mannheim (1993). This concept refers to a process in which individuals and collectives participate in an ongoing clash of worldviews, facilitated by the flows of knowledge in an information age. As both an ideological concept and as a structural system, democracy functions as a powerful force for mobilising opinion and action as well as a guide for reform.

As an important characteristic of *Weltanschauungen* and as a structural system of governance, democracy plays two important roles. On the one hand, it helps to define defining particular modes of social and cultural production dominant in many liberal-

democratic societies. On the other hand, democracy provides a guide for types of political and bureaucratic structures that enfranchise a section of the population. This division between zeitgeist and material function means that it is impossible to understand democracy outside of its social and cultural contexts.

The complex cultural influences on democracy mean that there is no single, dominant definition of what it constitutes ideologically or structurally. Its long and varied history means that any definition has little validity beyond its own systems of reference. Indeed, Horkheimer (1946: 167) argues that an attempt to define any concept is to construct an ‘essentiality for the object ... designed merely to be distinguishing tokens for an external reflection’.

In seeking to avoid the essentialism of definitions, this chapter understands democracy as a series of principles, applied in different ways across different systems. Held (2003) took a similar approach when constructing a number of historical models of democracy in order to explore the nature of that system and its applications. These models, he argues, are ‘complex networks of concepts and generalisations about aspects of the political realm and its key conditions of entrenchment, including economic and social conditions’ (2003: 7). Although this approach is congruent with this dissertation’s understanding of the complex and interconnected nature of democracy, the application of models is not suited to exploring a system of governance such as that in the European Parliament, which this work argues differs in some radical ways from previous systems. Applying predefined models runs the risk of prejudicing the research by defining the Parliament in traditional terms, and this is in contrast to critical theory’s emphasis on moving beyond the presumptions of traditional interpretations to explore the nature of social objects.

As an alternative to traditional models of democracy, this dissertation devised a set of three key principles that focus on specific ways in which democracy is applied. The three key principles stem from the analysis in this dissertation, and embrace the idea of democracy as a historically fluid concept, with a variety of culturally and temporally bound meanings. They are not a set of definitive tenets, as constructing such is simply be

establishing ‘one norm among the others’ (Keane, 2009: 843). In this approach, there is no value placed on each principle and they do not represent predefined applications. Rather, the principles are a guide for focusing on specific areas of democracy and the ways in which a democratic system functions.

The first principle of democracy is legitimacy, which Caporaso (2003: 365) describes as ‘a highly general characteristic of democratic governance that cuts across various other indicators of democracy’. Legitimacy is a general concept that sums up a range of different ideas on the way in which a system maintains its right to rule. To be legitimate, a governance structure must enjoy both support and recognition as this is how ‘those subject to a governance process accept it as properly authoritative’ (Keohane and Nye, 2003:386).

The second principle of democracy is representation, and it refers to the remit of the state and the role it plays in managing the lives of its citizens. Describing the concepts of modern democracies, Birch (1993: 78) talks of the important role representation plays ‘in maintaining the system as well as ... in securing a degree of popular control over government’. Consequently, understanding the ways in which a system represents those it governs offers an important avenue into the wider democratic functions of that system.

The final key principle is accountability. Accountability examines the ways in which a system interacts with those for which it holds responsibility. Held (2002: 27) uses the term ‘relevant community’ to describe whom a state encompasses. The concept has a wider basis than the idea of citizenship, and it refers to all those with a stake in a governance body. This is particularly relevant to institutions such as the European Union that are accountable not just to their citizens, but also to other organisations. The EU, for example, represents the will of both states and of citizens, a role that creates a significant impact on its governance structure.

By examining the ways in which a structure such as the European Parliament applies democracy in these key areas, it is possible to understand the wider nature of its

democratic structures as well as then being able to go on and suggest specific ways in which their democracy may develop. The following section sets out the rationale behind each of the three principles of democracy. It uses an historical analysis of different democratic systems and applications of democracy to examine how elements of these principles are evident. It then goes on to discuss the indicators the key principles might display in a democratic system, as well as how to apply these to an exploration of the European Parliament.

3.3 Democracy: Development and Applications

Held (2002: 7) states that the ‘development of democracy encompasses a long and much-contested history’. A good example of this is evident in contrasts between the United Kingdom and the United States of America, states with historical ties and ones where democracy plays an important ideological and structural role in defining the nature of political life. The USA is a constitutional republic, with a bicameral system in which each chamber comprises fully elected representatives. It is also a federal state, with discrete jurisdictional areas exercising legislative power. Contrast this with the United Kingdom, where individuals are at once subjects of the crown as well as both citizens of the UK and the European Union. There is a sovereign monarch, albeit in a largely ceremonial role, a partially elected upper House of Lords partially able to veto legislation, and an elected House of Commons with the majority of power. There is also a legislative body in the European Union, where an elected Parliament and a Council of Ministers comprising representatives of member states jointly draft legislation that a Commission enacts. Both systems argue they are democratic, and both often assign democracy as a defining aspect of their legitimate right to rule.

This short example of two systems illustrates the variety in modern-day democratic structures. This variety also extends to historical applications, and as Dahl (2000: 9) argues, ‘it would be a mistake to assume that democracy was just invented once and for all, as, for example, the steam engine was invented’. The following historical analysis of

democracy centres on some of the key different applications throughout its history. At each important historical juncture, there is a brief evaluation of aspects of the three key principles, and the chapter concludes with a more in-depth discussion of their place in democracy's history and the role they play in this immanent criticism of the European Parliament.

3.3.1 Democracy: an historical foundation

All forms of governance are systems of rule that entail control by a group, and evidence exists of collective or consensus rule far back into human history. Some of the oldest documented evidence of collective rule in the democratic tradition is from the self-governing 'sabhas' villages of India and Pakistan around 1200BC (Nehru, 1964: 288). From these grew the 'Panchayat' system (1964: 288) in which villages exercise executive and judicial powers individually and collectively, a system still in use in some areas today.

As a specific form of rule, democracy commonly attributes to the early Greek city-states, with the Greek word *demokratia* translating literally into "rule by the people". There is however, a certain amount of evidence to suggest that these systems derived, or at least were heavily influenced by, other earlier structures. Plutarch (1989) in *Life of Lycurgus* talks about a Spartan Probouleutic council existing around 600 BC, which met at regular intervals some hundred years before such meetings were a common part of the Greek tradition. More latterly, Bernal (1987) argues that Phoenician influence in the Greek alphabet and military could well extend to political structures, influencing early self-regulating city-states.

Despite some disagreement on the exact beginnings of the democratic tradition, the Greek city-states of the 5th century BC provide a well-documented place to begin exploring the development of Western democracy. These city-states emerged from a feudal system of 'residential nodes of concentration for farmers and landowners' (Anderson, 1974: 29) to become economic and cultural centres, which shouldered responsibility for local defence and economics. Gradually, these nodes of economic and

cultural concentration began to form the basis of the autonomous city-states that followed, the most notable of which were Athens and Chios (Held, 2003: 13-14).

Central to these emerging city-states were new ways of demarcating populations, and issues of identity and solidarity paved the way for the concept of the citizen as an individual with rights and responsibilities towards the common good of their state. This construct of the individual as an agent of the collective was captured in a funeral speech attributed to Pericles, Athenian citizen, politician and military leader (although more likely composed some time after his death by Thucydides). In this speech, there is a veneration of the integral relationship between the act of governance and the citizen:

Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people.

...

We give our obedience to those whom we put in position of authority, and we obey the laws themselves, especially those which are for the protection of the oppressed, and the unwritten laws which it is an acknowledged shame to break.

...

Here each individual is interested not only in his own affairs but in their affairs of the state as well: even those who are mostly occupied with their own business are extremely well-informed on general politics – this is a peculiarity of ours: we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all.

(Thucydides, 1972: 145-147)

The speech clarifies a citizen's duty to commit to a principle of civic virtue, in which the private sphere of the individual was secondary to the public sphere of the state. This was the case to such a degree that the individual's role within the state ultimately became his *causa causans*, the most immediate influence on his life.

Aristotle, although not wholly in agreement with the democratic system, stresses the reciprocal relationship between state and individual that permeated political philosophy at the time:

For though admittedly the good is the same for city as for an individual, still the good of the city is apparently a greater and more complete good to acquire and preserve. For while it is satisfactory to acquire and preserve the good even for an individual, it is finer and more divine to acquire and preserve it for a people and for cities.

(Aristotle, 1990: 217)

Involvement in political life was not just the duty of the citizen, but also a central feature of a system in which participation was the irrevocable association of political ‘public’ and individual ‘private’ spheres. The state and citizen defined each other in their mutual reference, and legitimated the authority exercised by one on behalf of the other.

The idea of an intrinsically linked *demos* and *polis* meant the governed themselves as governors. Citizens comprising uniformly free men and predominantly those from within the confines of the city-state could ‘express and transform their understanding of the good through political action’ (Farrar, 1992: 38). Representation through direct participation was enshrined in city-states by the principle of *isegoria*, an equal right to speak, which allowed the citizen to realize his own material powers and work toward the *telos*, the common good of the state.

Aristotle (1981: 362), writing in the first half of the 3rd Century BC, outlines some of the ‘features of democracy’ in these early Greek systems:

(a) Elections to office by all from among all. (b) Rule of all over each and of each by turns over all. (c) Offices filled by lot, either all or at any rate those not calling for experience or skill. (d) No tenure of office dependent on the possession of a property qualification, or only on the lowest possible. (e) The same man not to hold the same office twice, or only rarely, or only a few apart from those connected with warfare. (f) Short terms for all offices or for as many as possible. (g) all to sit on juries, chosen from all and adjudicating on all or most matters, i.e. the most important and supreme, such as those affecting constitution, scrutinies, and contracts between individuals. (h) The assembly as the sovereign authority in everything, or at least the most important matters, officials having no sovereign power over any, or over as few as possible [...] (j) as birth, wealth, and education are the defining marks of oligarchy, so their opposites, low birth, low incomes and mechanical occupations, are regarded as typical of democracy. (k) No official has perpetual tenure, and if any such office remains in being after an

early change, it is shorn of its power and its holders selected by lot from among picked candidates.

(Aristotle, 1981: 362-4)

Aristotle presents a range of criteria that define this early application of democracy, setting out a variety of ways to maintain the perceived equality of the system. The legacy of these ideas is evident in many modern systems, for example: the choice of officials by election; limits to periods in positions of power; trial by jury; and full franchise for citizens, albeit within a very limited set of criteria in Aristotle's case.

In these early systems, there was an expectation that those who qualified for citizenry would be available to participate in the process of government. For Cicero (1929: 124), the citizenry of the time comprised 'not every group of men, associated in any manner, but is the coming together of a considerable number of men who are united by a common agreement about law and rights and by the desire to participate in mutual advantages'. Those few who qualified as citizens ruled over the rest of society as, in the words of Held (2003: 24), a 'tyranny of citizens'.

For early Greek democracies, the state took on the normative functions of collective governance, at once both the immediate collective will and the prospective continuation of its citizenry. Whilst the state could, and did, exist outside of an individual citizen's immediate participation, a citizen could not exist outside of the state's ability to define them as such. Citizenship was essentially membership of the privileged class who were able to exercise control over their own political destiny.

These Greek systems provide a template for many subsequent democratic systems, generating accountability, representation, and legitimacy in governance through participation in the life of the state. The state gained legitimacy through the direct participation of citizens. Although those who were not citizens had little recourse to accountability, those that were represented had accountability assured through the option of direct representation in personal involvement.

3.3.2 From Greece to Rome and beyond

From the 5th century BC onwards, the advent of Roman rule over much of Europe and North Africa meant the Greek tradition was adapted for the new Republic. Civic responsibility and the role of the state were enshrined in the pseudo-democratic systems of early Rome in which representation of citizens and subjects came through a variety of bodies. A senate of aristocrats made the majority of decisions on behalf of the empire, informed by citizens through *concilia* of collective groups and *comitia* of individuals. This was complemented by the Plebeian Council representing those who were not part of the exclusive citizenry of Rome. This system of multilayered representation effectively governed the republic until around the first century AD, when autocratic control through the senate and the role of Emperor brought about the imperial phase of Roman history where citizen representation in the decision-making process was largely removed.

This imperial state remained for some 500 years until the division of the empire resulted in power relocated to the Byzantine Empire based in Constantinople, which became increasingly theocratic. The idea of an active citizenry participating in the functions of the state and political destiny gave way to a culture based on religious rule, with the rationale of political action in the polis replaced by a theological scripture. The view of the good of the polis as the ‘greater and more complete good to acquire and preserve’ (Aristotle, 1990: 217) was supplanted by the idea that it was to God’s will that one should submit, the exact nature of which was subject to the interpretations and translations of various religious bodies. Nevertheless, the idea of individual rights remained evident in some teachings of early Christianity. For example, St Augustine’s (2003) *The City of God* emphasised equality, even if it focused more on the spiritual rather than the temporal aspects of an individual’s life.

In Europe, the theocratic focus remained dominant until the Middle Ages when early Medieval Europe experienced the emergence of social and political structures that sought to deal with various papal and imperial claims to control. Typified in the northern Italian city-states of Florence, Siena and Venice, these first post-classic challenges to the established rule reintroduced the idea of self-government and self-determination. Keane

(2009: xviii) argues that this was the beginning of a second, new phase in democratic thinking which culminated in the emergence of modern, representative democracy.

In the 13th century, the political philosophy of Plato, Cicero and most notably Aristotle was rediscovered and translated for European audiences. As the Renaissance gathered pace, post-plague Europe experienced a philosophical reinvention in which thinkers such as Brunetto Latini (d.1294), Ptolemy of Lucca (d.1327) and Marsilius of Padua (d.1342) began to give accounts of the importance of elective governments that incorporated concepts such as self-determination and political freedom. In *Defensor Pacis*, Marsilius (1324 [1996]) challenges the supreme right of the church by dividing the realm of governance into two distinct branches. The ecumenical ‘Christian legislator’ would deal with religious aspects pertaining to the governance of the soul, whilst a human legislator was left to govern ‘the people as a community and as individuals’. Marsilius sought to reintroduce an Aristotelian idea of a civic community capable of self-governance:

The legislator or the effective cause of the law is the people, the whole body of the citizens, or the majority of that body, expressing its will and choice in a general meeting of the citizens, and commanding or deciding that certain things shall be done or left undone, under threat of temporal penalty or punishment.

(Marsilius, 1324 [1996])

For Marsilius, participation in representative governance was the key to liberty, and constitutional frameworks in which leading social forces took charge of their own political destinies became more popular. The freedom of the citizen ‘from the arbitrary power of tyrants’ was adjudged to rely upon his (and it was predominantly male) own and collective abilities to ‘run their common affairs by participating in government’ (Canovan, 1987: 434).

Despite a long absence of democratic ideals in the Western world, the rediscovery of many classical works served to place concepts of legitimacy, representation, and accountability back onto the governance agenda. Although still dominant in many places, there were increasing challenges to autocratic and theocratic forms of governance

that involved ideas of democratic legitimacy extending from accountability and representation. These important principles went on to inform the ways in which democracy continued to develop in Europe.

3.3.3 A Protective state Vs the individual.

At the turn of the 16th century, Niccolò Machiavelli made a connection between participatory politics in elective government and civic welfare and success. Writing at a time in which competition and war divided Europe, and particularly his native Italy, Machiavelli (1983: 275) argued it was only when a state was able to enjoy liberty that it could increase in ‘domination or wealth’.

For Machiavelli political participation was essential for liberty, and it was civic involvement that could achieve conditions of self-rule and independence. However, this could only happen if the ‘generality of men as self seeking, lazy, suspicious and incapable of doing anything good unless constrained by necessity’ could be overcome (Held, 2003: 51). Machiavelli built upon the historical example of the Roman Republic’s combination of representative bodies and strong authoritarian rule to argue for civic involvement enforced through a strong state and law. It was a form of protective republicanism that combined the principles of self-rule and authoritarianism in order to maintain an idea of a good state as ‘first and foremost the secure and stable state’ (Held, 2003: 54).

For Machiavelli, unlike Plato and Marsilius, politics was not the implementation of an ideological principle, but a mechanism to create order and the ‘chief constitutive element of society’ (Held, 2003: 51). Although his form of protective republicanism still limited the polis to males of ‘unambiguous local descent’ (2003: 54) and excluded “dependants” such as women and slaves. It did however include non-aristocrats within the local area and in doing so widened representation and laid the foundation for the modern participatory system of governance that were to follow.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau rearticulated Machiavelli's vision of participatory politics in the mid 18th century. Described by Pocock (1975: 504) as the 'Machiavelli of the eighteenth century', Rousseau stressed the importance of the individual's civic obligations and duties as central to individual and collective freedoms. For Rousseau, liberty was closely associated with civic involvement and the collective regulation of state functions; it was not just the duty of the citizen to become involved in the collective process of government, but an important way of maintaining personal and collective freedoms. Unlike Machiavelli, Rousseau believed that the right to sovereignty originated with the people, and the state was the ultimate expression of the people. In cases where the representative elements of governance fell short of this standard, he was highly critical, in one instance saying of the English:

The English people believes itself to be free; it is gravely mistaken; it is free only during the election of its members of parliament; as soon as the members are elected, the people is enslaved; it is nothing.

(Rousseau, 1968: 141)

Rousseau (1968: 60-1) felt that liberty could only be achieved through the free and constant exercise of the citizen's involvement, binding the state by 'the supreme direction of the general will'. Structurally, this meant the creation of a political system that clearly demarcated the legislative and executive functions. The legislative would be the sole proviso of the citizens whereas the executive functions remained in the realm of a government or a prince operating as a bureaucratic body, providing logistical support and enforcing laws. However, this advisory body should never exceed 'the instructions of the general will' (Rousseau, 1968: 148).

Rousseau provided a viable alternative to the despotic regimes of the time and contributed to the political landscape at the beginning of the French Revolution. His ideas were a forerunner of many modern systems in which majority rule within collective decision-making forms the basis for democratic governance.

Despite these republican systems moving towards a wider base for enfranchised citizens, there were continued restrictions on who constituted the polis, and women in particular still excluded from their own representation in political life. Writing in the latter half of the 18th century, Mary Wollstonecraft challenged many of the ideals and values that were placing women outside of the political community. In her seminal work *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), Wollstonecraft built upon the premise of an integral relationship between liberty and equality, as discussed by those such as Rousseau. Supported in part through the works of John Locke (1690), Wollstonecraft highlighted the association between social and political processes and individual freedoms, arguing that the restricted role of women in civic life curtailed their ability to participate in the political process. It was an argument for enfranchisement that emphasized the role of the citizen whilst at the same time extending that definition to encompass a much wider demographic.

In the five or six hundred years of major developments in republican thinking, the notion of civic life as the base for a free political community served to provide a new balance in the relationship between the individual and their governing body. Central to these developments in democracy was a changing idea of what constituted political liberty. The legitimacy of a state was a function of its representation, and those to whom it was accountable. Those represented by the state could directly influence the structures that governed their lives, and growing notions of equality between the sexes, and to some extent between socio-economic classes, widened ideas of to whom it was that a state had responsibility.

3.3.4 From Republicanism to Liberalism and the modern state

Despite the focus from many social commentators on the nature of political structures, the ideology of participatory, representative democracy remained largely conceptual. In contrast, the social and economic changes that took place around the time of the Enlightenment in Europe served to redefine the role of the state as an economic protectorate. Where republicanism provided the philosophy behind modern democratic states, liberalism defined the shape of the modern state.

Growing out of the social, geographical and political upheaval of the early industrial revolution, liberalism sought to restrict ecumenical and despotic monarchies and assert individual choice by ‘freeing the polity from religious control and freeing civil society [...] from political interference’ (Held, 2003: 74). Among liberalism’s early proponents in the 17th and 18th centuries, Thomas Hobbes (1968 [1651]) and John Locke (2005 [1689]) applied the concepts of reason, freedom and tolerance to potential structures for a more representative state. They argued for individuals as free and equal agents with inalienable rights that the state had a duty to protect, whilst at the same time refrain from becoming overly interfering. They argued that such a constitutional state would allow for the pursuit of individual religious belief, the ownership of private property, and a competitive market system. From these basic principles emerged the two different concepts of protective and developmental democracy, debates on the nature of which continue to characterise much of modern democratic theory.

The early proponents of liberalism sought to establish the form that a representational system of governance should take, as well as the ways to sustain such a system. Unlike republicanism’s focus on the citizen as a bearer of inalienable rights, liberalism emphasises the state as the mechanism through which a citizen’s rights come into existence. Building upon the ideas set out by Hobbes in *Leviathan* (1968 [1651]), proponents of a protective form of liberal democracy maintained that it was only through a strong state apparatus that freedom and human potential could be realised. The state for Hobbes, as with Machiavelli, should focus human activity towards the best ends and protect individuals from their inherently self-serving and destructive nature.

For Locke (2005 [1689]) and other theorists of the time such as Madison (1966 [1788]), it was not credible to expect individuals to place their trust in a sovereign state that was present in all spheres of life. Rather, they argued that the state should exercise sanctioned power only in certain spheres of life. Advancing this position, Bentham (1998 [1776]) argued that political power could reside within the government only to the extent that there was accountability of those that governed. This concept was argued by Madison (1966 [1788]: 21) in support of the US constitution, who claimed this form of political

representation would only work through the transfer of government to ‘a small number of citizens, elected by the rest’.

Rather than an all-encompassing direct representation, liberal democracy applies the idea of accountability through proxy, where the few governors represented the many governed. The individual is then free to make his or her own decisions based upon the rationale of economic competition. Under this laissez-faire form of minimal government, the state should only intervene in the life of the person where behaviour of an individual or group threatened the security of the market system, the method by which the rules of civil society were to be ‘governed’.

Whilst developmental democracy holds many of the ideals of a protective state, its main proponents argued that the democratic process was more than just a necessity of a state’s maintenance. J.S. Mill (1982: 72) in particular claimed that the democratic tradition was not only a mechanism to safeguard society but, along with a laissez-faire economic structure, allowed the individual the freedom to pursue their ‘our own good in our own ways’. The role of the state was to be minimal, and ‘the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others’ (Mill, 1982: 68).

Representation in a developmental democracy was exercised ‘through deputies, periodically elected by themselves the ultimate controlling power’ (Mill, 1951: 228), and increased legitimacy derives from extended franchise. J. S. Mill (1951) extolled the ideas of suffrage to encompass women, and to a certain extent, the working classes. For J. S. Mill (1997:1), inequalities were acting as fundamental ‘hindrances to human improvement’, and it was in liberty of thought and action that independence may be fostered and autonomous judgement reached.

Both the protective and developmental models contain the idea of a free society, albeit one with some limitations on enfranchisement, in which individuals are able to pursue

their own ends. Legitimacy and accountability expand through increased representation and a neutral state functions as a safeguard.

In the 19th century, Marx and Engels (2004) disputed the idea of a neutral liberal state, arguing that such was contradictory to the nature of the market system that underpinned it and stratified individuals along economic and social lines. Such a society could not provide equality, as those who had greater access to the laissez-faire market structures had greater influence on the political and social systems of the state. Effectively such a system allowed those with power and wealth to ‘rule without directly governing’ (Held, 2003: 136). For Marx and Engels, the liberal democratic state intended to protect the individual had failed the masses, as it could not represent the individual or even the collective aims against the power of a market system.

During the 20th century, Europe was engulfed in a series of conflicts. The First and Second World Wars and the Cold War, found at different times imperialism, fascism, communism, and liberal democracy vying for military, economic, and cultural domination. At the end of this period of conflict liberal democracy emerged as the dominant ideological and structural governance system, and Fukuyama’s (1992) consequent claims that we had reached the ‘end of history’ appeared to be true, if only for a decade or so. Liberal democracy and its global institutions formed a philosophical and structural template for most modern Western systems, and principles of capitalist democracy that emphasised limited state involvement and market economics became the dominant mechanism for global political structures.

Horkheimer (1992) argues that that the classic liberal model has broken down. The inevitable dominance of power interests in liberal capitalism mean that individuals are no longer the driving force behind liberal economics, but states and the power-back claims of individuals have come to dominate the system. ‘Supply and demand’ Horkheimer (1992: 290) claims, ‘are no longer regulated by social need but by reasons of state’.

The post-Cold War period of relative stability and laissez-faire economics in the West, cemented liberal, capitalist democracy as the dominant political ideology. The state, operating as a regulatory organism, played the role of intermediary between the market and the citizen, ensuring that capitalism and democracy coexisted, at least on paper. Championed by the Reagan and Thatcher administrations, liberal democracy stood relatively unopposed in a form broadly similar to the ideas of Hobbes and Locke, in which a protective state provides a structure to which the citizen subscribes through electoral participation. Capitalism, which was largely although not wholly unopposed, became integrated into the modern democratic state to such a degree that it was difficult to separate the two concepts; thus, we now talk about neo-liberal or capitalist democracy and intrinsically connect the two ideologies.

3.3.5 Democracy: Key applications in the 21st century

The dominance of liberal democracy means that its particular form of state/market regulation has been highly influential in shaping the nature of national and international structures. According to Hindess (2000), part of the effect of this has been an emphasis on the functional nature of democracy rather than the ideological aspects brought to the fore during the conflicts of the 20th Century. Referring back to Schumpeter's (1976) classic analysis of democracy and capitalism, Hindess (2000: 38) argues that a 'realist' interpretation of democracy reverts to an understanding of democracy as 'the systems of government ... in place in the major Western societies rather than to an abstract ideal against which those systems could be measured'. Despite the emphasis on democracy's structural functions, Hindess (2000: 38) states that it is still possible to take a more 'radical democratic' position that provides an interpretation based on wider social considerations.

For Crouch (2004), democracy exhibits a dual nature, being both a structural system as well as an ideological concept. This dual means that 'the early twenty-first century sees democracy at a highly paradoxical moment', and liberal democracy in particular is facing a series of challenges to its dominant global position (2004: 1). New forms of governance, such as the mix of statism, communism, capitalism, and democracy in

China, constitute one example of alternative sources of power in the global political environment. The power that China increasingly exercises in the international market is illustrated in its role as the largest holder of US government debt, 'more than \$1 trillion in Treasury debt as of March [2011]' (Reuters, 2011).

Other challenges to the pervasive role market economics plays in regulating political and social life is evident in the recent recession in the US and Europe. Debates on the ways in which to restructure unbalanced budgets and fiscal plans have shaped European and US politics since 2009. In Europe, the Eurozone is experiencing problems managing 17 different economies, with Ireland, Portugal, and Greece requiring large loans of the European Central Bank (ECB) and IMF. In these countries as well as other European states there were angry clashes in response to cuts in public spending. In the US, political deadlock on the nature of fiscal policy continues to threaten spending on many social projects.

The re-intensification of religious ideology in political and social thought also presents a challenge to liberal democracy in the modern world. The perceived rise of Islamic ideology is also a focal point for clashes between perceived Western and Islamic ways of life. For example, the War on Terror waged by the USA and its allies was at the time referred to as a war for democracy, with President George Bush Jr. talking of America's 'efforts to help the Iraqi people build a lasting democracy in the heart of the Middle East' (Bush, 2005). In the same speech to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, President Bush described in detail the ideological and structural roles that democracy could play in Iraq:

By helping Iraqis to build a democracy, we will win over those who doubted they had a place in a new Iraq, and undermine the terrorists and Saddamists. By helping Iraqis to build a democracy, we will gain an ally in the war on terror. By helping Iraqis build a democracy, we will inspire reformers across the Middle East. And by helping Iraqis build a democracy, we will bring hope to a troubled region, and this will make the American people more secure.

(Bush, 2005)

Western, democratic ideology was at the forefront of justifications for military action. In 2003, Tony Blair used a Commons speech to open the debate on the Iraq crisis, arguing that the threats Britain faced were from those who ‘detest the freedom, democracy and tolerance that are the hallmarks of our way of life’ (Blair, 2003). The subsequent invasion and occupation of Iraq resulted in between 100,000-110,000 documented civilian deaths (Iraq body count, 2011) and led Arab League Secretary General Amre Moussa (2003) to accuse the invading nations of bringing ‘democracy ... to Iraq on a B52 or on the back of a tank’.

At the same time as democracy was being pushed as part of a western ideology of freedom, there is occurring a crisis of confidence within many of the established and influential democratic states. In the USA a number of highly questionable election results found George Bush Jr. elected to office twice. In Italy, despite his attempts to enact laws protecting him from litigation, Silvio Berlusconi faces trial on a number of charges including tax fraud, false accounting and soliciting prostitution with a minor (Guardian, 2011). Similarly, in ‘newly democratised’ states such as Afghanistan and Iraq, allegations of voting irregularities marred elections and the democratic process, despite the practising of democratic ideals being a central argument for the invasion and occupation of those countries.

Keohane and Nye (2003: 390) agree that in many states, democracy is ‘traded off against other values’. This leads to a situation of a diminishing of the structural and functional elements of democracy whilst its ideological structures are emphasised. In public, democracy is extolled as a defining virtue of civilised life, whereas in private, governments reduce democratic controls that hinder particular programmes. For example, in the USA the 2001 Patriot Act, and in the UK the 2005 Prevention of Terrorism Act, both included clauses that allowed supra-judicial detention of individuals. In the case of the UK, this meant ‘any obligations that the Secretary of State or (as the case may be) the court considers necessary’ (OPSI, 2005: 1, c.3).

There are other examples of downgrading democratic functions in order to suit a state's requirements. Amongst recent cases was the dropping of corruption charges relating to a £43bn arms deal between BAE and Saudi Arabia by the former British Attorney General Lord Goldsmith (BBC, 2008). Eventually BAE were found guilty of lesser charges relating to deals in Saudi Arabia, as well as Tanzania, the Czech Republic, South Africa and Hungary (BBC, 2010). Following Keohane and Nye's (2003) argument, these examples show how structural elements of democracy are sometimes secondary to its ideological role. States advance democracy as a justification for actions, whilst at the same time reducing some of the structural elements of their democratic system.

Crouch (2004), argues that the result of democracy's dual and conflicted nature in many modern systems is a crisis in confidence for democracy. The modern liberal democratic tradition stresses electoral, rather than direct participation as the main aspect of achieving accountability and legitimacy. After the election of a government, citizens experience very little recourse until the next round of elections, and even then, they face a carefully constructed media portrayal of politics and politicians, much as in Rousseau's (1968: 141) criticism of the English system.

Crouch (2004: 4) argues that in modern liberal-democracies, the diminishing role of public electoral and political debate means elections are tightly controlled, media driven spectacles. In these spectacles of democracy, the active citizen plays little part in the overall process. This process was also identified by McLuhan and Fiore (2001: 22) who claimed that the media provide 'packages of passive entertainment', which reduces traditional politics to offering 'yesterday's answers to today's questions'.

In this view of democracy as a managed spectacle, public interest is created or sustained by a combination of media and what is sometimes called political 'spin'. A buffer zone of media agencies separates the public from politics, and the reality of political action is translated through a series of filters that produce carefully constructed information. Lippmann (1921) referred to this process almost a century ago as the 'manufacture of consent', an idea that was developed by Herman and Chomsky (1994: xii) who describe a

media orientated 'guided market system', controlled by political and corporate actors who ultimately 'serve the ends of a dominant elite' (1994: 1)

Hindess (2000: 34) views the modern democratic system as comprising 'at least three levels of political activity: the political activity of the people themselves, that of elected representatives and professional politicians, and the work of the administrative machinery of the state'. What Crouch (2004), McLuhan (2001) and Chomsky (1999) identify is an overemphasis on the second and third levels of this system, and a de-emphasis on the role of the individual in democratic processes. The result, according to Crouch (2004, 3), is a 'satisfaction with the un-ambitious democratic expectations of liberal democracy [which] produces complacency'. The citizen is marginalised and disenfranchised by a system that is unrepresentative of their wishes and ultimately, contains little democratic legitimacy.

Horkheimer and Adorno (2002: 128) argue that modern society is suffering from the 'universal imposition of [a] stylized mode', influenced by a false logic of capitalist production. Although in this instance referring to a culture industry that reified all aspects of social life for consumption, it is an argument that extends to a global political environment, in which liberal capitalist democracy becomes a stylised ideological construct rather than a functional system of governance. The dominance of capitalism in shaping global economic and social systems results in it becoming a defining factor in the lives of a large portion of the world's population.

Crouch (2004: 6) argues that the crisis in modern democracy means that there is disenfranchisement in many modern democratic systems, and that consequently 'politics and government are increasingly slipping back into the control of elites'. In public, there is an overemphasis on personality and superficiality; politicians engage in crowd-pleasing and engineering public opinion rather than engaging in serious political debate. The result is a voter who has 'been reduced to the role of manipulated, passive, rare participant' (2004: 20-21). At the same time, a political class of often privately educated politicians makes a great attempt to appeal as 'normal citizens' to court votes against a growing

apathy born out of declining confidence and participation in both state and civil organisations.

For Horkheimer and Adorno (2002: 133-4), the decline of an individual's ability to affect their political and social lives is a process in which the citizen becomes immersed in a manufactured world, where 'the deceived masses are today captivated by the myth...they insist on the very ideology which enslaves them'. Supporting this position, Caporaso (2003:367) argues that 'in an age of mass politics, nearly all policy is made by elites. Democracy may be "for" the people but it is not generally "by" the people'.

The idea of a transforming democracy is taken up by Keane (2009: 689) who argues that 'democracy is no longer a way of simply handling the power of elected governments by electoral, parliamentary and constitutional means, and no longer a matter confined to territorial states'. For Keane (2009), democracy in a modern, global world functions in ways unlike any classical and contemporary state-based systems. Increasingly, accountability and legitimacy occur in public spheres and through non-state mechanisms, and the resulting system of 'monitory democracy', as he terms it (2008; 2009), produces an expansion of democracy's functions into new forms.

Examples of monitory democracy are evident in a variety of modern mechanisms, many of which also relate to the increasing role that communications and network technologies play in modern life. The role that modern media such as Twitter plays in helping to disseminate information and organise action was evident in the recent revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East (Guardian, 2011). Whilst it may be wrong to call these technologies instrumental in those processes, the ability to communicate without state intervention undeniably helps coordinate action outside of official spheres of influence. The rise in epistemic groups means that people increasingly place allegiance outside of the traditional state. Pressure groups such as Greenpeace and Amnesty International voice the concerns of their members across national and international issues, and may influence the policies of states and corporations.

Keane's (2009) monitory democracy is also evident in the rise of organisations or services designed specifically to monitor the ways in which states work. Launched in 2009, the BBC's 'Democracy live' service allows users to view and comment on 'live and on demand video coverage of the UK's national political institutions and the European Parliament' (BBC, 2009). Other television services show live coverage of national and regional parliamentary sessions, and whilst many of these are run by state services such as the BBC (2011) or the European Parliament (EuroparlTV, 2011), they still provide high levels of access to the functions of governance.

For Keane (2009: 690), monitory democracy represents a shift in the locations of power, which increasingly lie 'beneath and beyond the institutions of territorial states'. Consequently, Keane (2009: 690) argues that the 'rules for representation, democratic accountability and public participation are applied to a much wider range of settings than ever before'.

Despite differences between the arguments of Horkheimer and Adorno (2002), and those of Keane (2009), both positions agree that democracy is subject to change in a globalising world. Whether the role of democracy in public life is diminishing as elites control more of its functions, or if the systems of democracy are shifting to new forms typified in monitory democracy, there is a move away from traditional state-based systems. In both cases, the key to understanding what is happening is in the ways that legitimacy, accountability, and representation occur. However, traditional representations of these ideas need to expand to encompass the mechanisms of a changing and interconnected global world.

Crouch (2004: 6) argues that changes to the nature of governance represent a bridge between 'democracy and non-democracy'. He calls the resulting system 'post-democracy', a symbolic move beyond traditional understandings of democratic structures towards more flexible political representation and 'creative citizenship' (2004: 15). Whether or not the European Parliament represents such a post-democratic system of

governance depends on interpretations of legitimacy, accountability, and representation, in its structures.

3.3.6 Democracy: going global

Hall and Biersteker (2002: 3) argue that traditional notions of legitimate political authority derived from ‘conceptions of the state and of the domain of international politics [in which] states are both the source of, and the exclusive location of legitimate, public authority’. However as this chapter has argued, ideas of the state as the fundamental unit of international governance were brought into question in the latter part of the Twentieth-Century.

The changing nature of democracy and governance projects a multitude of driving forces, but amongst the most important is the increasingly influential role played by global economic multi- and trans-national organisations. Although there is nothing new in economic institutions operating on international levels, organisations such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank have become the locus of discourse and policy for the internationalisation of economies. Largely unchallenged in the international arena, organisations such as the IMF and WB are, according to Hall and Biersteker (2002: 6), ‘implicitly legitimated as authoritative’ as they function in the capitalist rationale that dominates the global financial and political environment.

These institutions function under a mandate of economic stabilisation, and in particular the role of the IMF is evident in the recent global economic turmoil in which the organisation ‘committed more than \$280 billion to countries hit by the crisis—including Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, and Ukraine’ (IMF, 2011a). Zürn (2005: 149) however, argues that bodies such as the IMF fulfil a role that now transcends economics, to involve itself in the discourses and actualities of governance and political authority in a way ‘far more intrusive than conventional international institutions’.

In part, the process by which the institutions of global capitalism increased their influence can be dated the end of the ideological conflict of the Cold War. Although Fukuyama’s

(1992) claim for the ‘end of history’ with the victory of capitalist ideology was overly reductionist (as this chapter has already argued), within its oversimplification there lies a truth on the rise of a global liberal-democratic system. Although the fall of communism did not mean the west would embrace neo-liberalism *en masse*, it did mean that neo-liberalism was essentially free to become the modus operandi of a dominant, Western form of geopolitical action. History was not ‘over’ but had temporarily reduced options as neoliberalism became a monopoly ideology.

The international institutions of Western liberal democracy as set out in the Bretton Woods agreement were able to emerge from the Cold War as both well established and relatively unopposed in the international arena. asserting themselves as the dominant sites of global regulation in the 1980’s and 1990’s, organisations such as the IMF and World Bank influenced states through the mechanism of free markets and structural adjustment programmes in which aid was given in return for fiscal restructuring. The IMF defines this process of conditionality as such:

When a country borrows from the IMF, its government agrees to adjust its economic policies to overcome the problems that led it to seek financial aid from the international community. These loan conditions also serve to ensure that the country will be able to repay the Fund so that the resources can be made available to other members in need.

(IMF, 2011b)

Loan conditionality continues today and is evident in the initial restructuring required of Greece by the IMF in order to receive the initial €30 billion three-year loan as part of the joint EU-IMF rescue package, although the IMF argues that the load won’t be ‘a return to the more traditional IMF “austerity” measures of the past’ (IMF, 2001c). Although the membership of many global financial regulatory bodies is taken from their member states, there is no direct representation for citizens, and Zürn (2005: 136) argues this makes these organisations ‘at best, only accountable to a fraction of the people affected by their activities’. Because of this, Robert Dahl in particular states that such ‘international organizations are not likely to be democratic’ (1999:32).

The *lassiez-faire* ideology and the beginnings or wide spread deregulation by the Reagan and Thatcher administrations of the 1980s further advanced the cause of liberal democracy. Crouch (2004: 29) argues the resulting marginalisation of the state as an effective regulatory body meant ‘large corporations have frequently outgrown the governance capacity of individual nation states’, as was evident in the role of banking and financial trading institutions in the global financial crash in 2008/9.

Despite the problems brought about by the migration of economics into the global sphere, Kahler and Lake (2003) argue that it has hastened the speed of political internationalisation. They talk about a process in which a ‘mobilization of new political actors’ created new forms of governance and regulation bodies and changing patterns of political authority (2003: 424). Increasingly, governance falls outside of the remit of the state, and into the hands of a range of bodies that are now influential in lives of individuals.

Writing at the start of the 21st Century, Shaw (2002: 265) predicted three developments, each of which has occurred to some degree:

‘first, in the early twenty first century people will be struggling for democratic liberties across the non-Western world...Second, the old international thinking in which democratic movements are seen as purely internal to states no longer carries conviction...Third, global state formation is a fact’

In the first instance, the political and social upheavals in North Africa and the Middle East are part of a popular demand for greater democratic accountability. Secondly, it is right to say that the nation state is now less influential in a global financial market. The recent economic crash has shown the limits of states in controlling global markets, and deregulation begun in the 1980s has served to shift some power away from citizens and state politics toward economic elites. In the third case, whilst a global state has not yet emerged, the role that bodies such as the European Union and its Parliament play in international politics is increasing. Although the European constitution did not happen, a series of treaties in the EU and EP made great strides towards increasing power and

influence politically and economically. Recent and ongoing troubles with the Euro might affect this process, likely by either increasing centralised control of monetary union or by threatening the European Project through collapse of the 17-member Eurozone.

The concept of a developing global state is important for understanding what is happening to democracy as a system of governance, and many of the debates on these consequences relate to the role bodies such as the European Union and its Parliament exercise in transposing the democracy of member states onto a regional or global structure. For Strange (1996: 197), political authority in the European Union and Parliament has not replaced the authority of the national states that comprise it, although they do represent a 'diffusion of authority'. She argues that by producing another layer of bureaucratic dependency, organisations such as the EU and EP reduce the effectiveness of organised political action, particularly in its role as a counterpoint to the pervasive influence of neoliberal market economics (1996: 5). The result for democracy, according to Strange (1996: 197), is that 'the casting of a vote from time to time becomes a merely symbolic act'.

For others such as Kahler and Lake (2003), the transference of power to the EU and EP is a transmission onto a supranational body of the same kinds of authority which states traditionally exercise. The European Parliament as a regional governance body is effectively fulfilling some of the same roles of a traditional state. They argue that 'if one considers the EU as a parliamentary state, it appears that the traditional institutions of democracy are simply being rebuilt at the supranational level. If so, applying the standards and practises of democratic accountability to the EU may be appropriate' (2003: 432).

In contrast to Kahler and Lake, Caporaso (2003: 361) claims that 'democratic politics is not transposed to international organisations. Instead, states bargain in these organisations through agents who are carefully instructed by principles in the constituent states'. In essence, this position claims that democratic politics is confined to the national level, and

global or regional bodies are just bargaining platforms for states and established governments.

In each of the positions portrayed here, the nature of democratic governance relies on the ways in which that system is implemented. Again, the role of legitimacy, accountability, and representation show what kind of governance structure results from the transference of power away from the state. However, judging the role of democracy in governance institutions such as the European Parliament is a complicated task, and depends upon individual interpretations of how legitimacy, accountability, and representation are applied. For Keohane and Nye (2003: 411), the way in which ‘we evaluate international-governance processes depends both on their accomplishments and on the extent to which their procedures approximate ideas of democratic accountability.’

The following section of this chapter attends more specifically to issues of legitimacy, accountability, and representation, describing how they might help to evaluate the nature of democracy in the European Parliament.

3.4 Democracy: three Key Principles

Democracy’s 2500-year history means there is no single structural or ideological description to act as a template against which to compare the European Parliament. Rather as Keane (2009: xiv) argues, it is a ‘time-bound’ concept defined through human action. The solution in this dissertation is to use a set of three principles of democracy that target an exploration of its application in key areas. These principles are not a definitive set of criteria, but a guide to specific areas in which an examination of democracy’s functions can inform on the overall nature of a democratic governance structure. As the principles are not bound in the traditional expressions of state governance, they provide a particularly useful way to assess a new form of democratic structure such as the European Parliament. The following sections explore in more detail

each of the three principles, showing ways to apply them for a structure such as the European Parliament.

3.4.1 The principle of legitimacy

The first of the three principles this dissertation is legitimacy. Legitimacy is a complex concept that covers ideas on the rights of a state or governance body to make decisions for its populations. Held (2003: 291) argues that democracy and politics are closely associated, as ‘democracy bestows an aura of legitimacy on modern political life’. However, he goes on to say that ‘under what conditions political regimes may reasonably be considered legitimate and when one can claim the mantle of democracy remain unclear.’ Whilst legitimacy is an essential part of democracy, achieving that legitimacy is a process that involves a range of different acts.

Held (2002: 162) makes a distinction between two types of legitimacy: ‘legitimacy as a belief in existing law and political institutions, and legitimacy as ‘rightness’ or ‘correctness’ – the worthiness of a political order to be recognised because it is the order people would accept under ideal deliberative conditions.’ Held’s (2002: 162) description of both a functional and a ‘correct’ democracy corresponds to this chapter’s argument of democracy’s dual nature as both structural and ideological. Although democracy exists physically in the institutions of governance, how those institutions apply their particular type of democracy largely dictates the extent to which citizens accept this as a rightful system of rule.

Habermas (1996: 23) also offered three models of democracy, and through these emphasised what he regarded as the ‘original meaning of democracy’ which was the ‘institutionalisation of a public use of reason jointly exercised by autonomous citizens’. Whilst the idea of applying an original meaning of democracy to systems outside of its constraining cultural and temporal applications is questionable, an approach to democracy that emphasises legitimacy through participation is useful. Although there are a great many applications of democracy across its long history, it does contain as a running theme a particular version of the state-citizen relationship that involves

interaction between citizens and decision-making processes. Through examining these physical or structural relationships, we can understand how a particular application of democracy legitimates its authority.

One of the ways to evaluate structural legitimacy is by examining how a right to rule is manifest in a system. Held (2002: 231) argues that ‘if the initial inauguration of a democratic international order is to be legitimate, it must be based on consent’, although as this chapter describes, the nature of that consent varies. For example, in the Greek city-states, the state and citizen defined each other through a mutual relationship that legitimated each part. On the other hand, indirect democracies such as the republican and liberal traditions use proxy representation to legitimate governance. In each case, the democratic systems legitimated their authority with a relationship between the state and the individual.

Outlining his models of democracy, Habermas (1996) identifies different types of structural legitimation in representative democracies. In a liberal system, he argues that authority and the exercising of political will are legitimated in the process of election, as well as in a continual process in which ‘the government must justify the use of power to the public’ (1996: 28). In contrast to this, a republican views authority as an intrinsic element of the state and one part of legitimation. Legitimacy and the right to pursue certain aspects of power are ‘bound to a self-governing political community’ in which tradition means they are ‘programmatically committed to carry out certain policies (1996: 28).

In both of Habermas’s (1996) cases, the citizen gives over some portion of control to a state, which retains the right to exercise legitimate authority. In both cases there is also some guidance on the ways to achieve ongoing legitimacy, either through continued justification of power or through an assumed role that governors take on as part of a traditional role for state. The concept of legitimacy therefore covers a right to rule, both in the initial selection of those that rule and in the ongoing ways that those rulers justify their authority.

There is not just an influence on democratic legitimacy from political structures, but democracies ideological role also helps to define its applications in different societies. Shaw's (2002) strikingly accurate predictions on the role democracy may play in a changing global environment emphasise how democracy is finding a re-emphasis as an ideological tool. The increasing pace of global interactions and the transmission of authority into the international area serve to reignite debates on the important role of democracy in modern society. This is emphasised in the recent economic troubles in much of the world, which highlight the limited power of states, democratic or otherwise, to influence global financial markets. In Europe, there is an association between democracy's ideological importance and the role of the European Parliament in the EU; and in North Africa and the Middle East, there is a renewed focus on democratic governance as an ideological aspect of the state. Consequently, any assessment of democratic legitimacy needs to incorporate an ideological element that appreciates the role this plays in maintaining democratic governance.

In assessing the nature of legitimacy, particularly in the European Parliament, the role that democracy plays in both the structures and the ideologies of governance bodies is an important indicator for its present and potential role. As well as evaluating the physical elements of a democratic system, exploring the ways in which democracy is important to the overall purpose of a governance body is important for showing how far democracy extends, and the areas in which it may be improved.

3.4.2 The principle of representation

The second key principle of democracy is representation. The nature of representation in democratic bodies is crucial for understanding the relationship between citizens and state. Held (2003: 108) believes that representation, along with freedoms of speech and assembly, forms a central aspect of democratic systems, arguing that 'a representative system ... provides the mechanisms whereby central powers can be watched and controlled'.

The nature of representation defines a large part of a democratic system, for example in ancient Greece, representation for citizens was immediate through the inseparable bond that justified mutual existence. In more recent systems such as the European Union, the Parliament acts as a representative body of a pan-European citizenship which it directly represents in the decision-making process. In both cases, the nature of citizens' representation can tell us for whom a system functions, as well as how well the system performs those functions.

Representation is in two parts, each of which contains an important aspect of democratic function. The first part involves the scope of the state, and it who actually represents. The second part involves the remit of democracy, and the ways representation occurs with a governance structure. Representation is therefore both the extent of the state as well as the ways in which democratic representation contributes to the decision-making processes.

In the first instance, the scope of a state is an important part of understanding the extent of a governance structure's influence. Held's (2002: 27) concept of a 'relevant community' helps to define who or what it is that a state or governance structure is involved with representing. This is a useful term in the context of this dissertation, as the idea of a relevant community conveys two important elements of representation. On the one hand, it involves those that enjoy a say in influencing the state, a group most commonly known as citizens; on the other hand, concepts of relevant community may encompass those over which a governance structure can legally exercise authority, including citizens and non-citizens alike.

On a basic level, a relevant community comprises those with a right to enjoy input into a governance structure. This group, commonly referred to as 'citizens', often excludes certain people, women for example historically lacked the right to vote or participate directly in the mechanisms of state. In the same way, those who are economically less successful often exert less influence over the structures of state power, particularly outside of elections. In many cases however, groups other than citizens form part of a

‘relevant community’ and can influence states. For example, this dissertation argues that organisations such as the IMF and WB exercise influence over states, placing them in a wider definition of ‘relevant community’.

The other element of a ‘relevant community’ refers to those over which a governance structure is free to exercise legitimate authority. This group is always much greater than those that comprise the citizenry, and includes those deemed unsuitable to participate directly in government or in electing a proxy. Commonly this includes those within the boundaries of a governance structure but deemed to be too young or old, guilty of committing certain crime, or those deemed not to be full citizens by dint of birth, location, or, historically, gender. Despite exclusion from certain levels of participation, these groups still form part of the relevant community as they are subject to the authority of the governance structure.

The concept of a relevant community is a useful way to examine the first part of representation as it refers to the reciprocal relationships between governed and governors within a democratic system. It directs us to who is able to exercise democratic authority in a state or governance body, as well as whom a state can then proceed to exercise its authority over.

As well as the scope of the state, the nature of representation also involves the remit of democracy within a governance structure. The extent to which democratic representation influences decision making is an important part of understanding the role of democracy. One way to evaluate the remit of democratic representation is by examining how it occurs. For some states, the participation of citizens is limited to periodic elections; a system which Rousseau (1968: 141) was highly critical of in the case of British democracy. The frequency of elections in a participatory system, the methods for electing representatives, and the length of time people may stay in power are all useful indicators of the role of representation in a democratic system. For example, where there are periodic elections but little further role for citizens, there is only a limited window for

representation. On the other hand, there are greater levels of representative governance in a system where elections are more regular or one that involves citizens more frequently in the processes of the state in other ways, for example by encouraging in civil society organisations.

The effectiveness of representation is also evident in the ways in which governance bodies incorporate it into the decision-making process. For example, systems with two elected bodies, such as the USA, tender a greater chance for representation than those with bodies comprising hereditary peers, such as the UK. In reality however, there is a wide range of other factors that may influence the outcomes of representation, although the greater the avenues for representation, the more likely it is that citizens may enjoy an opportunity to influence the decision-making process.

Issues on the nature of representation have come to the fore with the burgeoning internationalisation of authority. Although all democratic states show some form of representative structure in place, these structures have increasingly been vying for control with other, non-elected bodies. This chapter applies the arguments of Crouch (2004), and Keohane and Nye (2003) to show how the growing power of international markets and the globalisation of some aspects of state authority mean that decisions are increasingly removed from the democratic sphere of influence. Held (2003: 333) supports this position, claiming that ‘distrust and scepticism ... are expressed about existing institutional arrangements, including the effectiveness of liberal representative democracy’

The problem of incorporating democratic methods of representation into governance structures that operate above the level of the state was also identified by Nanz and Steffek (2005: 192), who claim that ‘international governance is remote from citizens, its procedures are opaque, and it is dominated by diplomats, bureaucratic and functional specialists’ (Nanz and Steffek, 2005: 192). However, this dissertation argues that the growth of bodies such as the European Parliament is an attempt to incorporate democratic

representation in international decision-making structures, although it also suggests there are significant ways to improve this process.

Representation in this dissertation describes both the scope of a governance structure as well as their remit. Through the concept of a 'relevant community', the nature of these features along with their impact on the democratic structures of governance may become clear. As with legitimacy and accountability, representation is a key element for exploring the nature of democracy and governance in the European Parliament.

3.4.3 The principle of accountability

The third key principle of democracy is accountability. Connected to both representation and legitimacy, the levels of accountability in a democratic system may show how a population and its governance body interact. For Held and Koenig-Archibugi (2005: 3), 'accountability refers to the fact that decision makers do not enjoy unlimited autonomy but have to justify their actions vis-à-vis affected parties, that is, stakeholders'. Participation and legitimacy in a democratic system require the governed to possess a genuine mechanism to hold decision makers accountable. This mechanism reinforces the association between the population and the decision-making processes, and helps stall a democratic system from becoming autocratic.

This dissertation applies two main approaches to assessing the nature of accountability. Firstly, it uses accountability to refer to the specific ways in which systems provide citizens with a method of maintaining influence over elected members and therefore the decision-making process. Secondly, it uses accountability to show the level of integration of citizen-involvement into decision-making.

One way of understanding the sources of accountability in a democratic system is to examine the structures in place to maintain it. Held and Koenig-Archibugi, (2005: 3) argue that 'effective accountability requires mechanisms for steady and reliable information and communication between decision-makers and stakeholders as well as mechanisms for imposing penalties'. Mechanisms for accountability are as diverse as the

different systems that employ them, but in modern democratic systems, it is common for accountability to revolve around the relationship between elected officials and those they represent. The most obvious way this occurs is through the election process, although outside of elections governance structures also incorporate a variety of different tools to help maintain accountability. For example, transparency in the decision-making process allows citizens to appreciate the role their elected officials are performing; similarly, clear communication might help to maintain the connection between citizens and state.

For Kahler (2005), an increasingly global political environment means that there are problems with traditional methods of accountability. He argues that in a modern world, ‘electoral institutions are only one part of the institutional panoply of modern democracy’ (Kahler, 2005: 9). Although citizens retain a route to accountability in the traditional methods provided by states, the role of economic multilaterals such as the IMF and World Bank means that elements of governance increasingly take place outside of accountable structures. The blending of different forms of authority in a global world means that there are some severe challenges to the role citizens play in governing their own lives. Although the rise of bodies such as the European Parliament help to internationalise accountability, the shift of authority to structures outside of the state represents a serious threat to democratic governance. Assessing the part that accountability plays in governance above the level of the state is essential for understanding both the role of the European Parliament and for addressing wider questions on the shape of global governance.

The second element of accountability builds on the idea of mechanisms for maintaining accountability by exploring the ways in which these mechanisms integrate into the overall decision-making processes. In historic democratic systems, this was a less complicated aspect, as there were fewer conflicting sources of authority acting upon the state. However, in a global world, the number of different sources of power and authority imply that accountable systems of democratic governance vie with other forces for influence on the decision-making process. For Kahler (2005: 11), global pressures on governance mean there is a ‘barrier to accountability as systems of multilayered

governance in which specialised organisations at different levels circumvent national governments'. This is not to say that democratic accountability no longer plays a role in governance, but it is only one part of a complex process of power.

Held and Koenig-Archibugi (2005: 3) argue 'there is no reason to assume that democratic forms of accountability will necessarily prevail over non-democratic ones', and that other forms of accountability may provide a vehicle for public opinion. This position supports Keane's (2009: 583) idea of 'monitory democracy' in which increasing new forms of collective organisation provide structures for democratic action outside of traditional avenues. In a world in which democratic accountability is declining as other forces influence decision-making, Keane's (2009) idea is that similarly non-democratic forms of accountability function alongside traditional forms. This creates the benefit of allowing accountability to extend beyond the reach of democratic structures to affect all parts of an increasingly diffuse decision-making process.

Held (2000: 303) argues that accountability operate through a wide range of mechanisms, and that 'lobbyists, activists, independent writers and professional journalists...all contribute to maintaining the accountability of government'. This being the case, part of the process of accountability in democratic structures relies on the degree of transparency and communication at the point of governance. Despite increasingly diverse forms of authority, accountability still relies to a large extent on how much information a governance body willingly gives to its citizens. Other sources such as civil society bodies and pressure groups might complement this process, adding to the overall ability for citizens to understand and then act when needed, to the decisions made on their behalf. Accountability then ultimately relies on the willingness of political bodies to reflect the will of citizens, and the mechanisms in place to ensure that this happens.

Through an appreciation of the ways accountability occurs and the role that accountable structures play in the decision-making process, it is possible to understand the ongoing role of citizens in the governance structures that shape their lives. When applied to the European Parliament later in this dissertation, accountability assess the role democracy

plays alongside other forms of authority, in particular how it is mixed with the will of member states in decision making.

3.5 Democracy and the European Parliament: a summary

Democracy's long and varied history means that any single definition or model is unsuitable as a method for analysing a contemporary structure. Consequently, using a set of three key principles to explore how democracy functions in a system of governance is an approach that provides this dissertation with a very useful tool for exploring the European Parliament. The flexibility of these principles means that they are not tied to any one interpretation of what democracy is, and can therefore be applied to any structure that claims democracy as a structural or ideological tool. This is particularly important when considering that the European Parliament is unlike many other democratic structures, insofar as it functions at a regional-global level rather than as a single state or body. Figure 4 (following) discusses these principles along with some specific aspects of each and their possible identifiers within a governance structure.

Figure 4: Three principles of democracy

Principle	Aspects	Possible identifiers
Legitimacy	Physical and structural legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is legitimacy initially achieved? • How is legitimacy an ongoing process in the structures and functions of a system.
	Ideological legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the ideological and cultural importance of democratic beliefs in the governance structure.
Representation	The scope of the 'relevant community'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who contributes to a governance structure. • Who the governance structure can exercise authority over.
	The remit of democracy for the 'relevant community'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How representation occurs • How far representation influences the decision making process.
Accountability	How systems are accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources of accountability • Structures of accountability
	How democratic accountability is integrated in the decision- making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How accountable the decision making process is. • Levels of transparency and communication.

The three key principles are by no means a definitive list of the relationships and functions that may occur in a democratic system. Rather, as this chapter argued, they offer a guide to the areas in which democratic functions may be seen to work in any given system. The principles therefore also direct any suggestions for improving democracy in a system to these specific areas.

The following chapter examines the nature of global governance, which is the second aspect of the European Parliament under investigation in this dissertation. The chapter

sets out three different ontological models of global political structure, which are used later to support the three-stage immanent criticism of the Parliament. These three models also help to place the Parliament in wider global context, examine the role that regional-political bodies may play in different conceptions of world order.

Chapter 4

The theory of Global Governance: Conceptions of the World Order

4.1 Introduction: Global Governance and the European Parliament

4.2 The emergence of modern global governance

4.3 Three ontological models of global governance

4.3.1 Neorealism: International Relations and the extended state in the 21st century.

4.2.2 Model 2. Capitalist hegemony: neoliberal global economics as the new imperialism

4.2.3 Model 3: Concentric Governance: The Globalisation of Statehood

4.4. Summary: using different models of global governance with immanent criticism

4.1 Introduction: global governance and the European Parliament

This dissertation applies a three-stage immanent criticism to explore how democracy and governance function at a regional level, in the structures of the European Parliament. Derived from the work of Max Horkheimer, the immanent criticism considers the Parliament in its historic, functional, and potential modes. As part of the process, this chapter and the one preceding it construct a theoretical foundation of the concepts of democracy and global governance that provides a basis for the subsequent critique of the Parliament. Chapter 3 argued that democracy's long and varied history means there is no definitive structure, and consequently traditional methods of evaluating democratic systems are unlikely to provide a full account of its functions. As a response, the chapter set out the key principles of legitimacy, accountability, and representation, as a way to guide an exploration of a democracy in a governance structure.

This chapter is the second part of the theoretical background to the immanent criticism. It examines the nature of global governance and the role that regional bodies such as the Parliament play in global structures. Initially, it builds upon some of the arguments on the globalisation of political authority that the previous chapter began to explore. In this case however, it focuses specifically on the ways in which sources of power and influence affect different perceptions of global political structure. The chapter presents three

different ontological models of global and regional governance, each of which represents a particular perspective on the relationships in an internationalised political environment. In each case, the models look specifically at the role a regional body such as the European Parliament might play. This provides an important set of conceptual relationships and processes for the subsequent immanent criticism in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

4.2 The emergence of modern global governance

As a concept, global governance is inherently subjective. Different interpretations of global processes such as the role that ideologies and states play in regulating international exchange, lead to different outcomes in terms of the nature and functions of global agencies. Cox (2002: 26) in his analysis on the political economy of an increasingly plural world, argues that there is always a subjective element in the relationship ‘between the analyst and the object of analysis’. Consequently, individual and collective worldviews provide different conceptions of social and political structures and the functions they perform.

Cox (2002: 26) argues that ‘history shapes the consciousness and perceptions of the analyst; and the analyst’s mind shapes its mode of apprehending the movement of history’. In other words, different historical interpretations form varying ontological positions on the shape and function of global governance. Because of this, it is impossible to produce a single model of global governance accepted by all. The solution this chapter takes to the problem of conceptualising global governance is to construct a set of three different models, each of which integrates a range of arguments to illustrate different ontological perspectives on global political structures. These models ultimately show how global forces act on governance bodies, providing a theoretical basis to the analysis of the nature and scope of governance structures, typified in this dissertation by the European Parliament.

The initial sections of the chapter provide a basis for the three models by setting out arguments on the ways power transfers into the global sphere. The subsequent models

then contribute a range of different ontological views on how this globalised power is manifest and managed, paying specific attention to the role that regional bodies such as the Parliament do play or could play in the future for each case.

Interconnections between different communities are nothing new. Historical narratives show patterns of civilizational development that invariably involve trade, conflict, and expansion. Military and economic empires have for thousands of years, spread goods, ideas, and authority across the world. For many social and political scientists however, the modern world offers something different in terms of these flows of culture and power. The nature, pace, and scope of global interconnections in contemporary society represent a process of global interconnection that distinctly differs from previous historical forms.

Smith (2007: 3) argues that although the processes of interconnection may have a long history, globalisation as a concept did not really emerge until the early 1980's, and it was not until the mid 1990's that it became part of a 'core vocabulary'. Matthews (1997) presents contemporary globalisation as a 'power shift' that is redefining the modern age, and Friedman (1999: 7-8) describes modern globalisation as 'a new international system [with] its own unique logic, rules, pressures and incentives'.

In attempting to synthesise the different arguments on global change, Shaw (2002) conceptualised transformation in the modern world based in three camps. Firstly, a position of post-modern perception that describes a fragmentation and 'dissolution of previously fixed relations, institutions and traditions' (2002: 7). Secondly, a post-Cold War argument in which change occurs as part of a transition from a state-based system to forms of 'newly legitimate international institutions' (2002: 7). Finally, a theory of globalisation understands contemporary change as 'the relentless aspect of a single process – or a closely related set of processes – through which the market system colonises new social space' (2002: 7). In all three cases, the processes of change represent a phase of human social development whereby social structures are organised differently from the systems and structures that preceded them.

For Held and McGrew *et al* (2001), there are several ways to distinguish contemporary systems of global structures from historical forms. In the first instance, global transformation is evident along spatio-temporal dimensions including the extensity, intensity, velocity, and impact of global interconnections (2001: 17). Understanding the ways in which different parts of the world connect with others, they argue, can illustrate the processes occurring.

In the second instance, Held and McGrew *et al* (2001: 21) argue that global transformation may be evaluated through ‘modes of interaction’, which include ‘the infrastructure present ... the levels of institutionalisation of global networks and the exercise of power ... the pattern of global stratification [and] the dominant modes of global interaction’. It is not just the speed and amount of interconnections that illustrate the nature of a global system, but the relationships that occur and the structures that facilitate these relationships help us to understand the processes that are occurring.

These two criteria, Held and McGrew *et al* (2001: 17) argue, can help to evaluate the nature of globalisation and avoid what they say is a ‘tendency to presume either that globalisation is fundamentally new, or that there is nothing novel about contemporary levels of global economic and social interconnectedness’. Although there is contestation between different interpretations of globalisations processes, Held and McGrew *et al* (2001) are right to argue that global change is not a fundamentally new process, but as the latest point in a continuum of human development. In other words, the process of change is not new, but ways in which that change occurs and its outcomes may be.

Modern global interconnections are therefore part of the long history of human interaction as well as representing a significant shift in the ways those patterns of interaction occur. Held and McGrew *et al* (2001: 21) support this by arguing that the driving force for increased interconnection are divided between two distinct explanations: ‘those which identify a single or primary imperative, such as capitalism or technological change; and those which explain globalisation as the product of a combination of factors, including technological change, market forces, ideology and political decisions’. In both

instances, increased interconnections and interdependencies are part of a process that influences contemporary institutions and the lives of individuals.

Although there are a variety of positions on when modern globalisation began, the exploration of the European Parliament in this dissertation focuses on the ways in which authority is transferred from primarily state-based organisations to the international sphere. As the previous chapter argued, in recent years the role of democratic states became diminished as increasing amounts of this authority moves to international organisations. Consequently, much of the focus on global development here concentrates on transformations since the Second World War as this period incorporates the beginnings of those bodies that eventually became the European Union and Parliament.

In 1944, the Allies predicting victory in the Second World War established the Bretton Woods System (BWS) as part of a process designed to regulate monetary relationships between states. As its main institutions, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank aimed to ‘ensure that domestic economic objectives were not subordinate to global financial disciplines’ (Held and McGrew *et al*, 2001: 200). Replacing the Gold Standard as the primary method of regulating international economic exchange, the Bretton Woods System used the US dollar as an international currency. The aim was to provide capital controls and regulate exchange rates in order to establish control over global markets. For rich states, this meant the ability to control macroeconomic policy, and for poorer states, this meant operating in a market almost entirely run and regulated by and for the interests of the rich, s states.

Held and McGrew *et al* (2001: 201) argue that the modern market system was largely facilitated by a series of events in the 1960’s and 1970’s that led to an increasing role for private equity and finance in the global market. Firstly, the Bretton Woods System became increasingly unsustainable as greater amounts of capital flows occurred outside of government and state control. States were increasingly unable to maintain economic autonomy in a globalising market where the growth of multinational corporations meant that big business could operate outside of many state’s influence.

Secondly, the rise of a Eurocurrency market in the 1960s included the internationalisation of currency exchange. The US dollar was significantly weakened as multinational corporations, many originally based in the USA, increasingly sought to place their funds outside of capital controls. This had a dramatic effect on the BWS, which used a dollar pinned to gold as its economic standard, and when in 1971 President Nixon stopped the dollar being freely convertible to gold in order to bolster the flagging US currency, the underpinning stability that the BWS offered exchange rates was removed (Held and McGrew *et al*, 2001: 202). Consequently, as there was no longer a fixed standard on exchange rates, the global economy became largely unregulated, with only the processes of supply and demand influencing transnational exchange.

The final phase in this initial transmission of power from states to international markets came with the quadrupling of oil prices by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). This had the effect of shifting a great deal of wealth from Western manufacturing countries to oil-exporting countries, who subsequently invested much of this in the international money markets. This provided international banks, who were becoming increasingly influential in national economies and global structures alike, with 'almost \$50 billion to recycle through the world economy during 1974-6, and large sums thereafter into the early 1980's' (Held and McGrew *et al*, 2001: 202).

The emphasis on further deregulation and on liberalised methods of social and economic structure was integral to the administrations of Thatcher and Reagan in the 1980s. On both sides of the Atlantic, there was a reduction in the state's role in controlling markets, which was matched by an increased emphasis on private investment and business in managing services and resources. During this period, the UK sold a number of nationalised services and industries, and the US experienced large reductions in government spending and a subsequent increased reliance on the private sector. At the same time as the deregulation of business and industry, global technological developments made it increasingly easy to transfer information and services. The speed of new information technologies led McLuhan (2002: 4) to claim in the mid 1960s that 'as electronically contracted, the globe is no more than a village', an argument that

helped to shape a generation of thinking on the nature and role of technology in modern life.

Castells (1998: 336) argues that in the period between the late 1960's and mid 1970's a new world took shape in three interdependent processes: 'the information technology revolution; the economic crisis of both capitalism and statism, and their subsequent restructuring; and the blooming of cultural social movements'. For Castells (1998: 336), the result was the rise of a 'network society' in which the world was heavily influenced by global interdependencies and the transfer of increasing amounts of information. The continued rise of internet based forms of communications technology reinforces the important role that such technologies play in structuring social life.

Despite the focus on cultural aspects of globalisation, economic and political processes continued to influence the world at a macro level. The end of the Cold War at the start of the 1990s removed the main ideological challenge to capitalist global market economics. Although other challenges would arise, the period immediately after the Cold War meant the dominance of a market system supported by the IMF and World Bank, now freed from the constraints of the BWS. As the previous chapter argued, these institutions became closely associated with forwarding an agenda based on an ideology of neoliberalism and advanced global capitalism, in which the market is the dominant form of exchange.

As this dissertation has already argued, Fukuyama (1992) rightly came under a great deal of criticism for the reductionist nature of his assessment of global political landscapes and assertions of the 'end of history'. Nevertheless, the concept that Western liberal or neo-liberal democracy had become the dominant global ideology was essentially correct. Although the fall of communism did not mean that politically the world would embrace neo-liberalism *en masse*, it had the consequence of effectively freeing that ideological approach to become the *modus operandi* of Western geopolitical action.

The onset of the twenty-first century found the global dominance of a neoliberal ideology based on capitalist methods of economic and social structure. This ideology provides a system that largely defines global financial and political institutions, and in order to function on a global stage states must incorporate this ideology wholly or in part. Despite this dominance, neo-liberalism was not, as Fukuyama (1992) claimed, the only system of state regulation. The People's Republic of China, growing in influence especially since the recession in 2008/9, applies a combination of statist centralisation and capitalist wealth generation. Similarly, alternative ideologies based on a range of perceived religious or cultural fundamentals inform political and legislative structures in other states around the world.

The 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre (WTC) in New York brought into stark contrast the dominance of neoliberal regulation and liberalised states. These attacks demonstrated, live on television, that there were those who fundamentally disagreed with the nature of a neoliberal world order, and felt they were in direct conflict with the states that were instrumental in supporting the agenda of this nascent world order. The subsequent bombings of public transport in London and Madrid re-emphasised the arguments on the shape of national and global order that had been largely ignored since the Cold War. This is not Huntington's (1996) oversimplified 'clash of civilisations', but what this dissertation terms *Weltanschauungen War*, conflicts based on wider concepts of worldview, not on ideas of nationality or political ideology.

The recent global recession, which is still affecting many Western states, is another challenge to the dominance of global neoliberalism. The bailout of banks and financial institutions, particularly in Europe and the USA, led many to question the influence which unregulated economics plays in maintaining states. Part of the pattern of this recession is the transference of some economic power away from Western countries to economies that are continuing to grow, most notably China and India. Figure 5 (following) shows the effect the recession had in 2008/9 on the GDP of two 'developing' economies compared to three more 'developed' nations.

Figure 5: Comparative GDP growth

(Annual % at market prices based on constant local currency)

country	Growth by Year			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
China	12.7	14.2	9.6	9.1
India	9.3	9.8	4.9	9.1
UK	2.9	2.6	0.5	-4.9
US	2.7	1.9	0.0	-2.6
Germany	3.4	2.7	1.0	-4.7

Source: World Bank Group (2011c)

Although the USA is still the world's largest economy by GDP, China's economy nearly doubled to around 5tnUS\$ in the period between 2006-2009, making it larger than either the UK's or Germany's (World Bank Group, 2001d). As the previous chapter pointed out, China is also the largest single holder of US treasury debt (Reuters, 2011) which currently stands at 14.3tn US\$ (US Treasury, 2011), giving it a significant level of influence over the US economy.

Although it is difficult to predict future global patterns, it is possible that we are at the beginning of a transition in economic power similar to the one that occurred with the OPEC revaluation in the 1970s, which resulted in the demise of the BWS and a radical shift in the nature of a global economy. The changing emphasis is evident in the recent trade delegations to and from China to the USA and many European countries, which sought a range of financial and trade agreements (BBC, 2011a). Similarly, the Eurozone's problems with debt in member countries such as Greece, Ireland and Portugal led to mass protest at so-called 'austerity measures', leading to questions over the future of the single currency.

Although it is far too soon to predict the end of US and European dominance, it is clear that processes of global transformation are ongoing. Globalisation is not a finished process but part of a continuum in which ideological, economic, political, and

technological development structure the nature of interaction. As Held and McGrew (2001) argue, integration of world economies and structures is part of a long process in which there is a disagreement on the nature of the forces shaping action and the likely outcome of global structures.

Interpreting global governance is a complicated task, both because of the multiple factors influencing it, as well as the disputed nature of the processes and meanings that occur. For Cox (2002: 132), all understandings of global governance presuppose ‘a certain basic structure consisting of the significant kinds of entities involved and the form of significant relationships among them’. In other words, different ontological perceptions of global processes construct different understandings of the global political environment. Because of this, it is impossible to describe a single model of global functions that covers the range of diverse processes and interpretations. Instead, this chapter constructs three different models, each of which demonstrates a particular perspective on the processes and functions of a global political economy. Each model also deals specifically with the role that the European Union and its Parliament may have in that particular conception of global functions.

4.3 Three ontological models of global governance.

The models constructed for this work each comprise a collection of related theories and perspectives that focus on the functions and structures of global governance and specifically on how the European Parliament and Union function according to that particular worldview. These unique models build upon the basic analysis of global transformation provided in this chapter, although they do differ on the degree to which they believe this history influences the global political environment.

The following models explore several specific areas of global processes. Firstly, they cover different interpretations on the role of the market, and in particular neoliberalism, in order to illustrate how political and social action is shaped. Secondly, they examine the

role states play in a global world and how this can be an indicator of changing sources and sites of authority. Thirdly, they consider a range of other forces that act on a global political environment, particularly ideological influence and technological development, in order to show how these aspects influence the structures and functions of global governance.

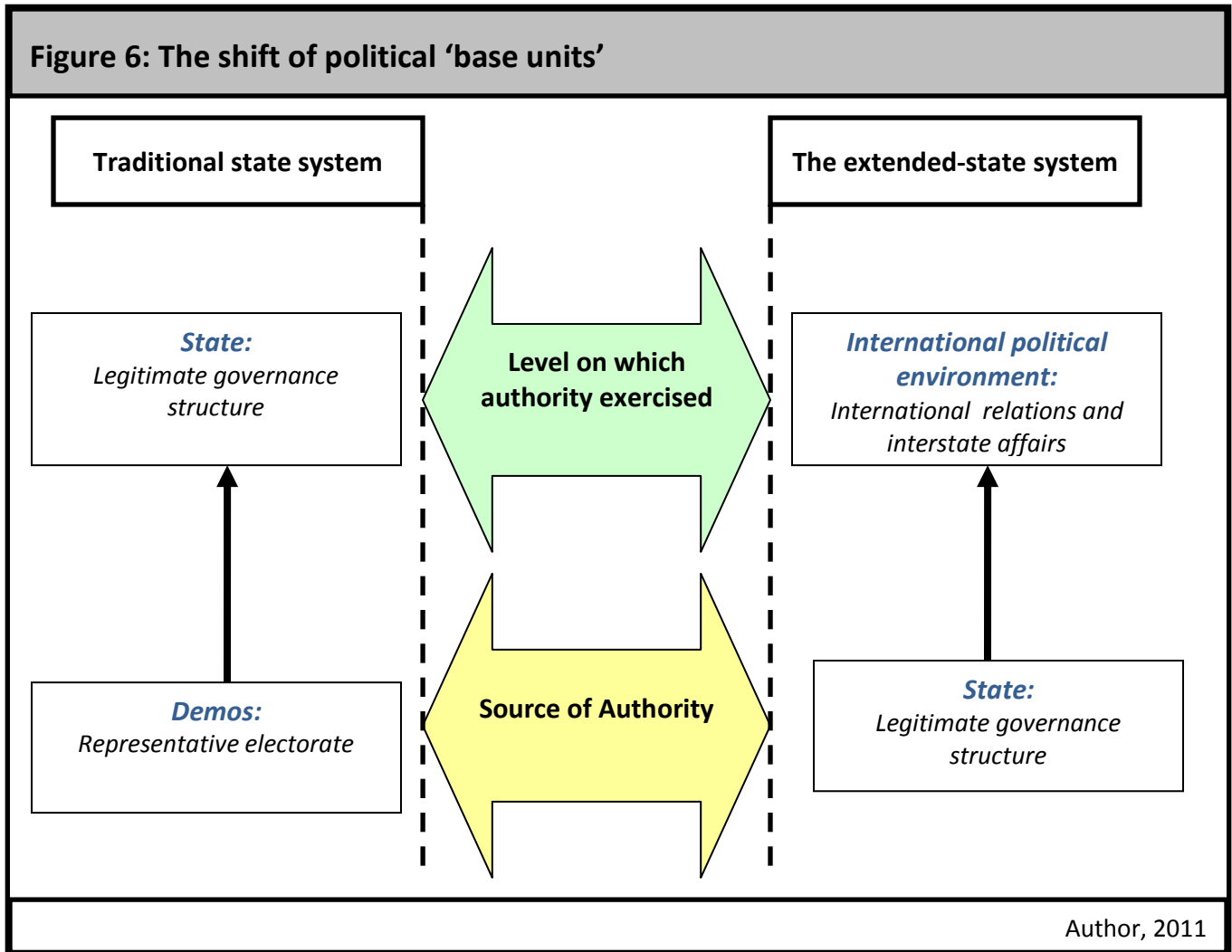
4.3.1 Model 1. Neorealism: International Relations and the extended state in the 21st century.

The first of the three models considers global governance primarily in terms of the changing functions of states. Deriving from the disciplines of International Relations (IR) and International Political Economy (IPE), the neorealist assumptions that comprise this position take a functional view of global processes as ‘anchored firmly in modernity’s grasp’ (Payne and Samhat, 2004: 13). Although this position does not deny that there is a large degree of economic, political, and cultural globalisation, it contends that global processes are part of organised systems of state interaction in which authority on a global scale is the same as that on a national scale, only writ large.

In the neorealist understanding, a ‘fluid and volatile’ international economy means there are ‘growing limits to purely state-centric politics’ (Held: 2000: 396). This does not mean however, that the state is losing control but that macroeconomic policies increasingly need to take into account the role of other states and of a global economy with unpredictable and far-reaching effects. For Payne and Samhat (2004: 34), this position is one that views the global environment as inherently unstable, in which ‘states seeking to survive in an anarchic international system are not engaged in a fundamental reordering of global relations. Rather, they merely engage in the instrumental use of an institutional form’. There is not a fundamental decline of the state, but a reshaping of the ways in which states operate to incorporate a global level of interaction.

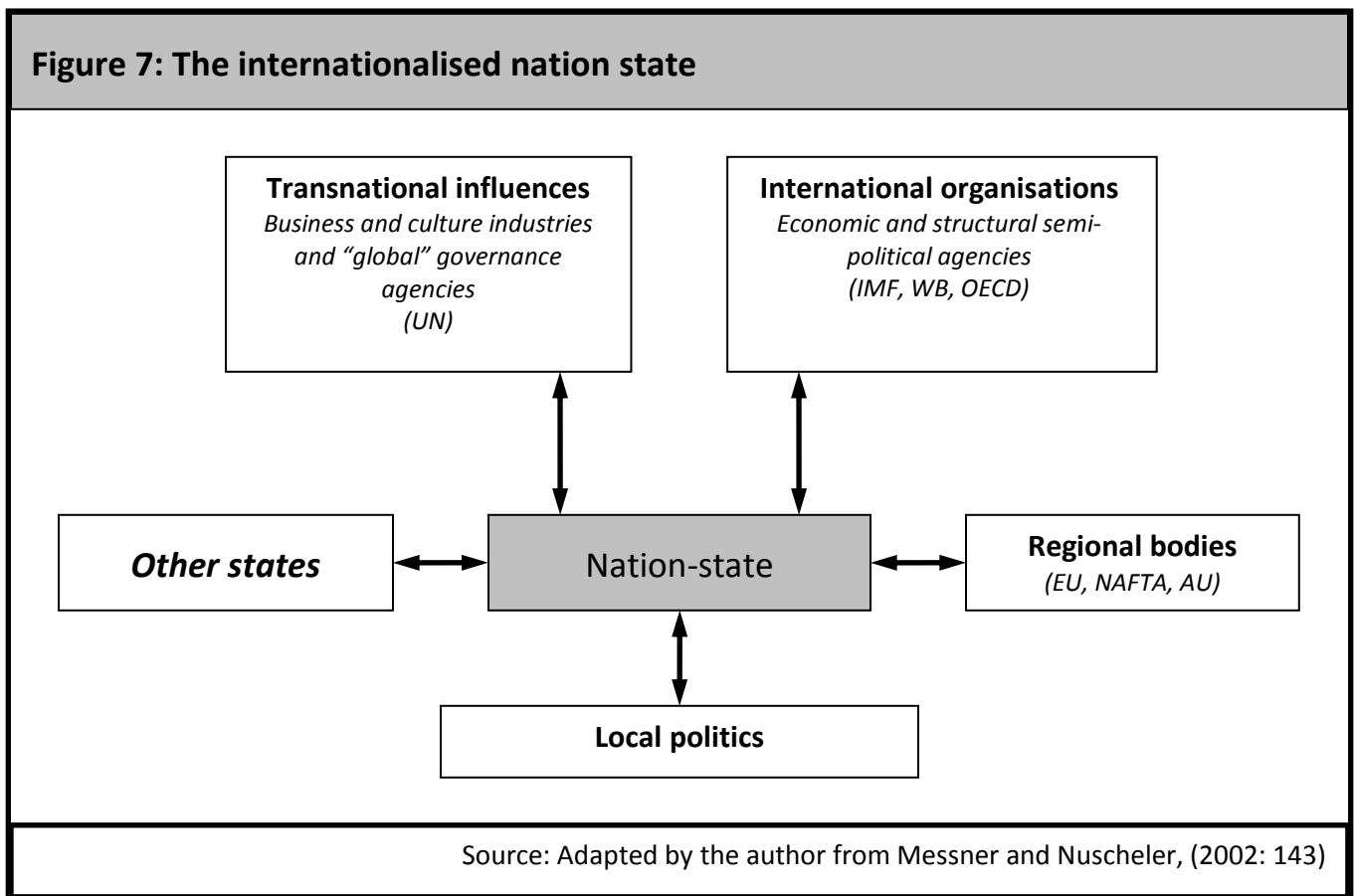
In a global world, an internationalised state becomes part of a political system characterised by increasingly dense and overlapping spheres of interaction. For Payne and Samhat (2004: 139), ‘the states-system is experiencing a reconfiguration’ and

although the exact nature of that reconfiguration remains contested, on a basic level it entails a process in which the base-unit of representative systems shifts from the citizen to the state. Figure 6 (following) explores how the internationalisation of statehood forces states to function on a global level.



Messner and Nuscheler (2002: 143) argue that this extended state will 'remain the main actor in international politics', although according to Held (2000: 199), the power it exercises is 'frequently embedded in, and articulated with, other domains of political authority – regional, international and transnational'.

Other sources of authority that the state needs to manage come from a variety of areas. For example: transnational interests in the form of business and capital markets; global organisations including the IMF and World Bank; regional bodies that deal with collective political or trade issues, such as the EU or the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA); and traditional sources such as other states and internal political influences. Despite this, the state articulates the wishes and desires of these bodies. Figure 7 (following) shows these influences on the state, which remains the focal point of political communities despite no longer being the sole location of political authority.



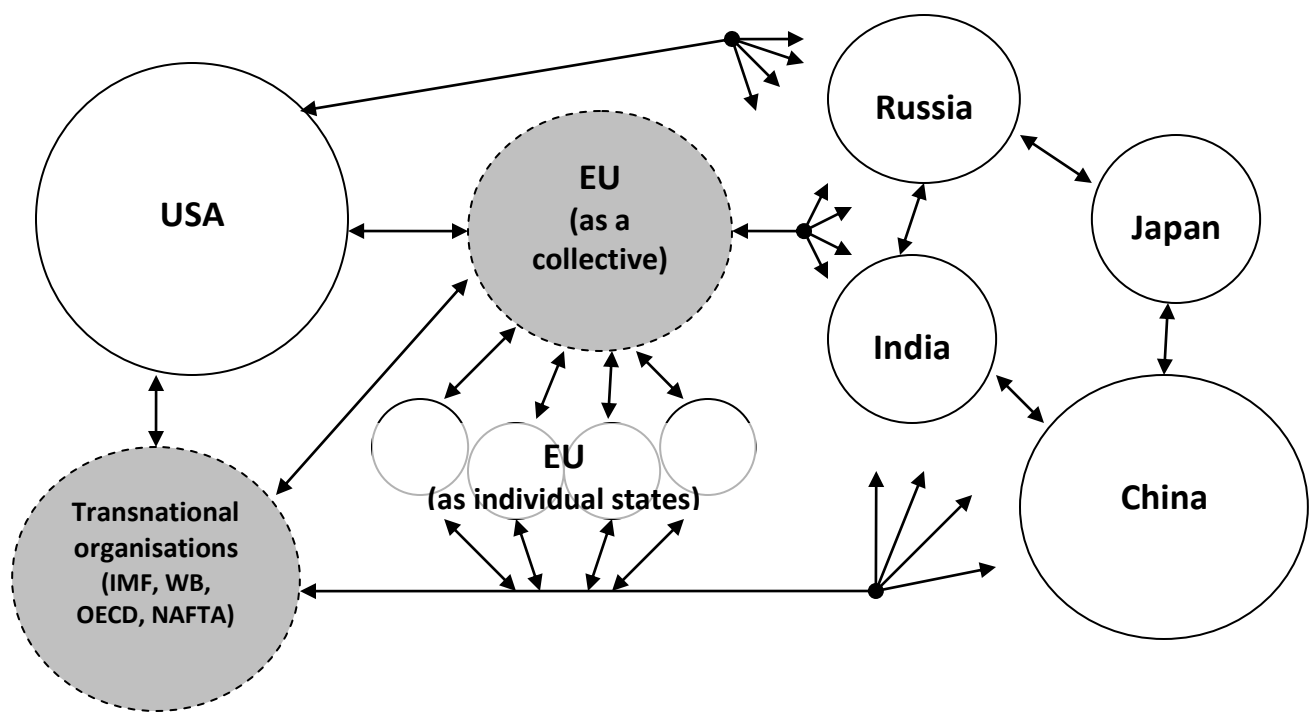
Although other sources of authority exert some influence on nation states, it is at the national level where this influence is ultimately articulated. At times however, the inter-reliant nature of a global world means that states occasionally divest some legislative powers to other bodies, such as the European Parliament. In this instance states may

temporarily lose ‘that measure of their external sovereignty that is needed collectively to process problems resulting from interdependence’, although they ultimately retain overall ‘domestic monopoly on power’ (Messner and Nuscheler, 2002: 142).

Kahler and Lake (2003: 412) argue that, although the globalisation of politics serves to internationalise many issues, this has ‘not yet produced a fundamental change in the political structure of authority’. In this position, while some issues may require collective bargaining or action, there is ‘no obvious trend towards decentralisation of national authority’ (2003: 413). Others, such as Mattli (2003: 201) agree that, despite growing market-driven standardisation stemming from the international political and economic community, this standardisation and the ‘standards-development organizations’ that orchestrate it only attain legitimacy through acquiescence of states.

The resulting governance structures amount to a system of international cooperation that takes the form of what Messner and Nuscheler (2002: 136) call ‘horizontal self-control’. This is a system of interaction in which states participate as actors in a global political arena with no overall controlling body or regulatory authority. Regional bodies such as the European Union, African Union and the North American Free Trade Arrangement, as well as international organisations such as the OECD, WB and IMF may form regional “blocks”, but these are extensions of states and functionally restricted. Figure 8 (following) describes this idea of horizontal self-control, emphasising how coordination between states and “blocs” becomes the base of a global political structure.

Figure 8: Horizontal self-control



The light circles represent individual states with different sizes denoting different concentrations of power and influence. The dark circles represent collective bodies such as the EU. Although some states / conglomerates are more involved and exert more influence than others, none retains an overriding influence over the others.

Source: Author 2011, based on Messner and Nuscheler (2002: 136)

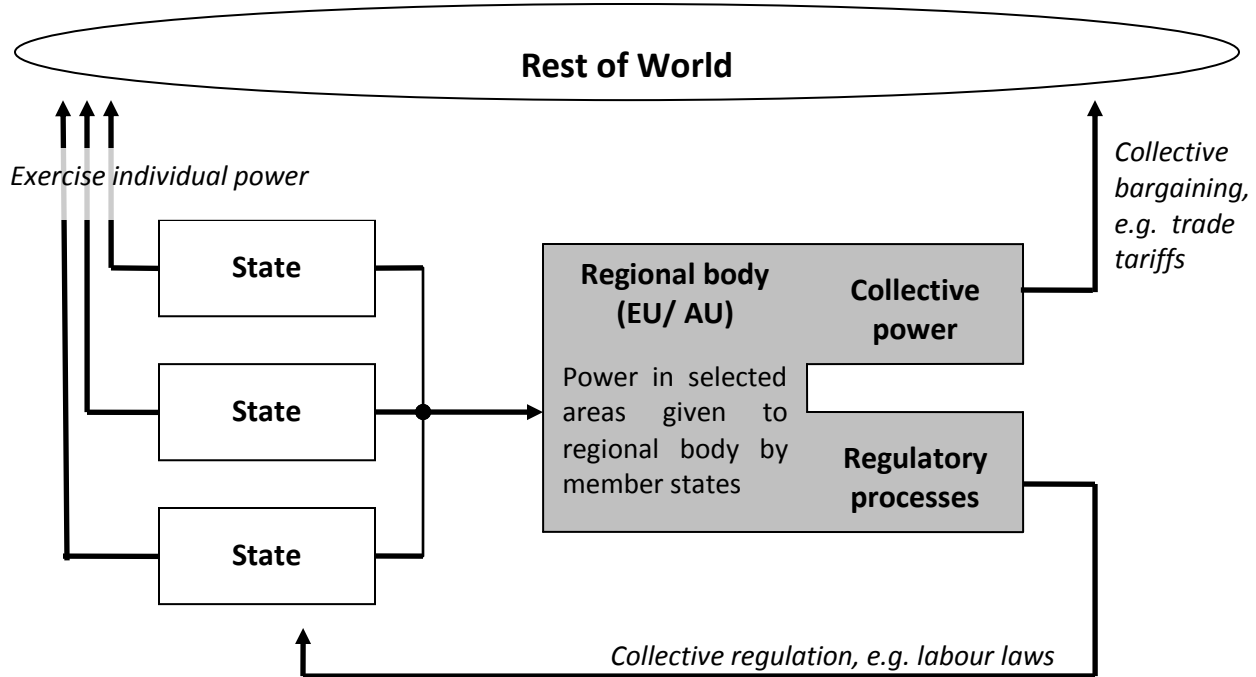
Horizontal self-control is a more globalised interpretation of the basic neorealist interpretation. In this interpretation the extended state is at the centre of a new regionalised ‘multipolar world’ (Messner and Nuscheler, 2002: 134) in which there is no single dominant source of authority but interconnecting sources of influence and control. Individual states more or less retain control over their own sovereignty, and regional bodies such as the EU or IMF complement this by helping to manage a complex global environment. These collective bodies do this by performing regulatory roles in regional economics and politics, or by giving member states the chance to exercise collective power in areas such as trade bargaining. Although states divest some portion of influence

or control to regional bodies, these bodies augment the role of the state without supplanting it.

The structure of regional bodies reflects their purpose, with power only divested from the state in specific areas. For example, in the European Union states have allowed it to function in a range of economic and legislative areas, designed to integrate the region economically. On the other hand, the African Union chooses a greater focus on collective stability through military intervention and less focus on collective economic policy. In both cases, as the needs of states change this may bring about corresponding changes in the nature of the collective structure; however the collective organisation responds to the needs of states rather than driving the agenda itself.

In horizontal self-control, a regional body such as the European Union provides a collective voice in certain areas where member states feel that joint action may be of benefit, for example in the setting of trade tariffs. These bodies may also regulate some aspects of the relationships between member states, for example, the EU sets labour laws for member countries. Where bodies such as the European Parliament allow some form of democratic interaction, this does not entail a discrete political community but an extension of the states involved. Figure 9 (following) uses the example of the EU to show the ways in which regional bodies function as a source of internal regulation as well as collective bargaining on the international stage.

Figure 9: Regional bodies as collective authorities



Source: Author, 2011

Keohane (2003: 339) argues that this model of internalised statehood envisages a ‘partially globalised world’ in which power is yet to be fully divested from traditional sources. Regional bodies play a migratory role, offering a collective decision-making process for states with similar needs in a changing geopolitical environment. However, these states remain ‘the most powerful actors in world politics’ and remain in political ideology as the most desirable unit of political structure (Keohane, 2003: 120). Because of this, the nature of democracy and sites of democratic accountability are broadly unchanged. Politically, the state remains predominantly territorially bound and national governments are the primary methods through which the decision-making processes operate. There is some degree of internationalisation, particularly in terms of regional bodies; however where democratic forms are transposed onto these bodies, such as within the European Parliament, this is simply another way in which a state represents itself at a regional or international level.

An example of rationalised international action exercised through a collective body is the recent military action in Libya. As a collective response to a perceived danger, member states petitioned the UN to allow the exercising of military force in order to help resolve the situation in the country. With the passing of resolution 1973 (2011), several countries committed to military action, organised as part of a UN mandate that allowed ‘all necessary measure to protect civilians’ (UN, 2011). Those states involved, but mainly France and the UK, undertook military action as part of the UN, whilst retaining control of their aircraft and bearing the cost of the action themselves. In this instance, member states authorized the UN to broker a decision on military action, essentially allowing that organisation to produce collective foreign policy in one select area. Individual states still voiced agreement or concerns over the decision, but acquiesced to military action within the confines of the resolution.

Messner and Nuscheler’s (2002: 136) approach to the idea of an extended state is an updated and adapted version of the neorealist stance that owes much of its interpretation to the disciplines of International Relations and International Political Economy. This approach takes the state as a base for describing global politics, and does not imagine much role for other bodies such as the EU or EP. For Payne and Samhat (2004), this neorealist stance has its uses as it sustains detailed examination into the functions of traditional institutions and the ways in which they deal with international issues. Nevertheless, they are critical of the approach which they argue ‘denote[s] exceptionally limited bounds of imagination’ (Payne and Samhat, 2004: 13). The reliance on interpretations founded primarily on traditional forms of governance such as the state, mean that its ‘theoretical apparatus ... is constrained from accommodating fundamental change’ (2004: 13).

As one of three models for explore different conceptions of global governance, the idea of an extended state reinforces the important and continued role of states in regulating international politics. Although with limited acknowledgement of other forces, particularly the role of corporate power and financial markets, the approach affords a

major assessment of traditional interpretations of authority. The next two models are more radical in their interpretation of global governance, with accounts that underline factors other than the state and structures that differ from traditional models.

4.3.2 Model 2. Capitalist hegemony: neoliberal global economics as the new imperialism

In contrast to the model of an internationalised state, a hegemonic approach focuses on the role of capitalist neoliberal ideology in forming global structures. The different approaches that make up this model rely heavily on a neoliberal institutionalist reading of globalisation that understands a capitalist ideology that is increasingly integrated into an increasingly wide range of political, economic, and social structures.

Despite a wide range of different theories falling into this ontological position, all agree that the role nation-states play in governance is in decline, partly because of a global capitalist ideology becoming more dominant. Authors such as Strange (1996), Scholte (2000), Hardt and Negri (2001), and Callinicos (2003), argue that neoliberal ideologies are progressively shaping the structures and functions of states and international actors.

The original liberal roots of the modern market system are set out in the works of Thomas Hobbes (1968 [1651]) and John Locke (2005 [1689]), who extol the virtues of a minimalist state and individual responsibility. Milton Friedman (1963) in the USA and Friedrich Hayek (2001) in the UK developed these ideas of a minimalist state to incorporate a laissez-faire approach to governance in which freedom through market-led choice increasingly became a guiding political ideology for successive regimes on both sides of the Atlantic. The result, according to Scholte (2000: 34) was a intensified support for a neoliberal ideology that believed ‘market forces will bring prosperity, liberty, democracy and peace to the whole of humankind’.

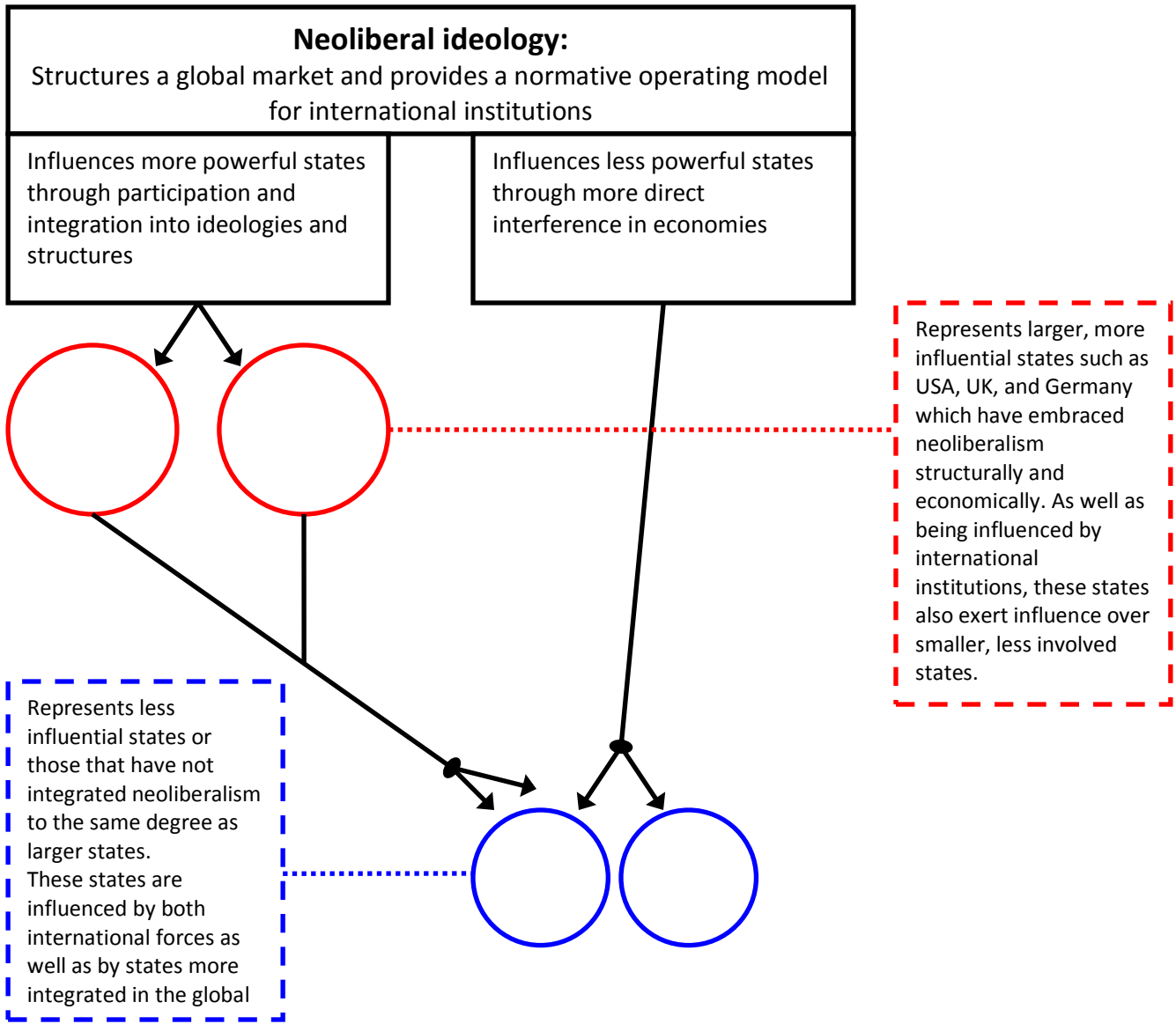
In the hegemonic model of global governance, a dominant and pervasive neoliberal ideology erects a framework for global capitalism and a controlling mechanism in global politics. Callinicos (2003: 5) argues that normative institutions such as the IMF and

World Bank support this system, which now ‘embraces geopolitics as well as economics’ (Callinicos, 2003: 50). As a result, the structures of global governance prioritise laissez-faire market economics over the individual rights of citizens or states.

The neoliberalisation of centralised governance institutions means that participation in the international market is a central feature of many states and governance bodies. For example, in the European Union, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) requires member states to consider privatisation of state services. In other nations, organisations such as the IMF and World Bank apply structural adjustment and conditionality clauses as part of aid packages in order to force countries to open up internal markets to international business. For Chomsky (1999: 92-3) this process effectively creates neoliberalism as a global norm, and in the case of poorer countries it is forcing ‘social policy that is globalizing the structural model of the third world’ (Chomsky, 1999: 92-3).

In the hegemonic model of global governance, neoliberalism is the dominant factor shaping global processes. Unlike the previous model in which the internationalised functions of states provided the main structure for a global environment, this model views a neoliberal ideology as the driving force for global integration. States are influenced by this ideology in a variety of ways. Larger states internalise neoliberalism to a greater degree than smaller states, its processes shaping institutions and functions. On the other hand, smaller less influential states or those that have not integrated a neoliberal ideology to the same extent, experience pressure to adopt neoliberalism from the international market, global institutions, and from larger states. The ways in which a dominant neoliberal ideology filters down to states is shown in Figure 10 (following), which supports the argument that states with different levels of influence experience the global market in different ways.

Figure 10: Hegemonic global order.



Source: Author (2011)

The election of former French Minister of Economic Affairs, Finances and Industry Christine Lagarde (IMF, 2011d) as head of the IMF indicates how larger states maintain control and influence over global bodies. The overall effect of this process is to reinforce a global economy divided along economic and ideological lines.

Strange (1996) argues that as well as a structural element, a global neoliberal ideology contains normative functions that include the exercising of legitimate force. Organisations with a primarily military function, such as NATO, as well as those with some military elements such as the UN, possess the power to sanction the use of coercive force at an international level. Weighted voting systems in many of these organisations mean the economically most powerful and influential states hold effective control, and these bodies consequently reflect a neoliberal position. This also means that these neoliberal bodies reduce the support of large powerful states such as the USA, who have the ability to exercise coercive and political force on their behalf. For Callinicos (2003), the exercising of political and military might by the USA is instrumental in neoliberal dominance. He argues that ‘the worldwide triumph of neoliberalism in the 1980s and 1990s was a consequence, not of the impersonal workings of market forces, but of a successful political intervention by the American state’ (2003: 58).

Economist Thomas Friedman (2000) also believes that neoliberal dominance requires mechanisms for exercising coercive force. As a proponent of neo-liberal style globalisation, Friedman (2000: 464) argues that ‘the hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist...and the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies to flourish is called the US Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps’. For Strange (1996: 162), the use of force on behalf of a neoliberal agenda has too often meant that ‘within the soft velvet glove of the worldly bureaucrats...can be felt the iron fist of American power – power exercised on behalf of the ruling elites of transnational capital’.

Hardt and Negri (2001) agree that normative institutions of global governance sustain a pervasive neoliberal ideology; however, they also argue that the idea that only a few powerful states support this does not go far enough in assessing the extensive nature of global neoliberal dominance. A modern imperialism represented in US economic and military domination is a simplistic explanation of global capitalism’s power structure. Rather, they suggest that global capitalism is an empire that ‘establishes no territorial centre of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries and barriers’ (2001: xii). Control

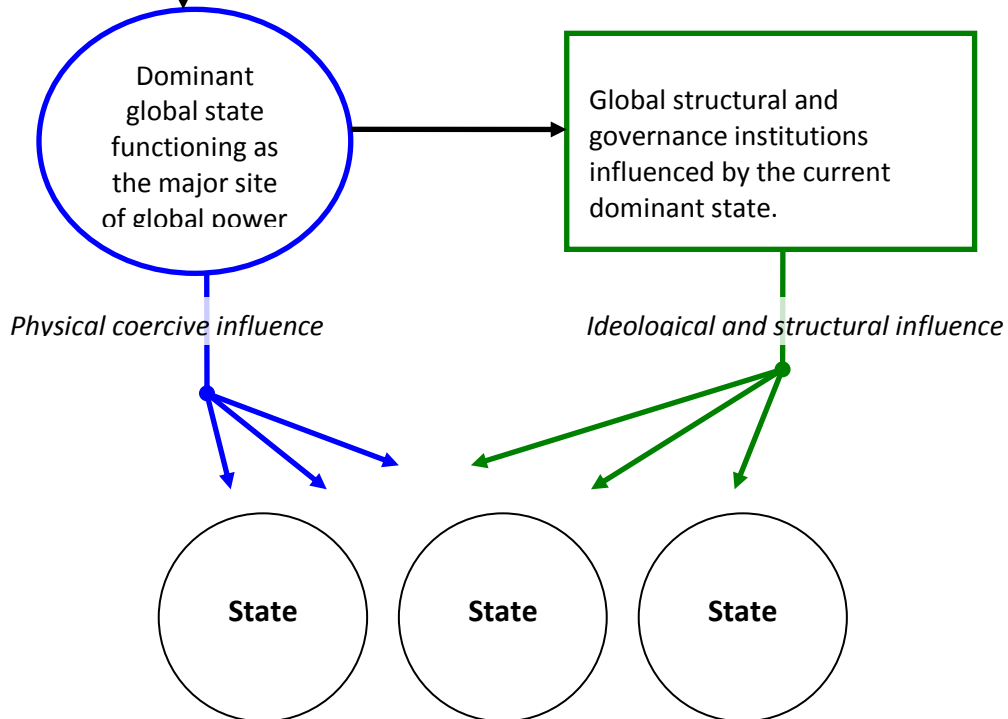
on the global level lies in the hands of groups of elites, which shift as power and influence migrate between economies and regimes. Presently, the economic and military dominance of the USA means that it exerts the greatest influence on the global economy, however if the USA no longer held this dominant position, Hardt and Negri (2001) argue the controlling influences would shift to the new sites.

For Hardt and Negri (2001), the supporting force behind global structures is fluid insofar as it does not originate from a single or static point but from whichever state is best suited to serve the needs of the global ideology. As a result, the structural configurations of global governance are not centralised, but expressed through ‘a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule’ (2001: xii). Figure 11 (following) describes the role a dominant state plays in exercising control on behalf of a global neoliberal ideology. It demonstrates how this control extends to individual states as well as to structural bodies such as the IMF.

Figure 11: Hardt and Negri's hegemonic ideology

Ideology of neoliberal global capitalism:

Informs the political and economic structures of global governance and of individual states.

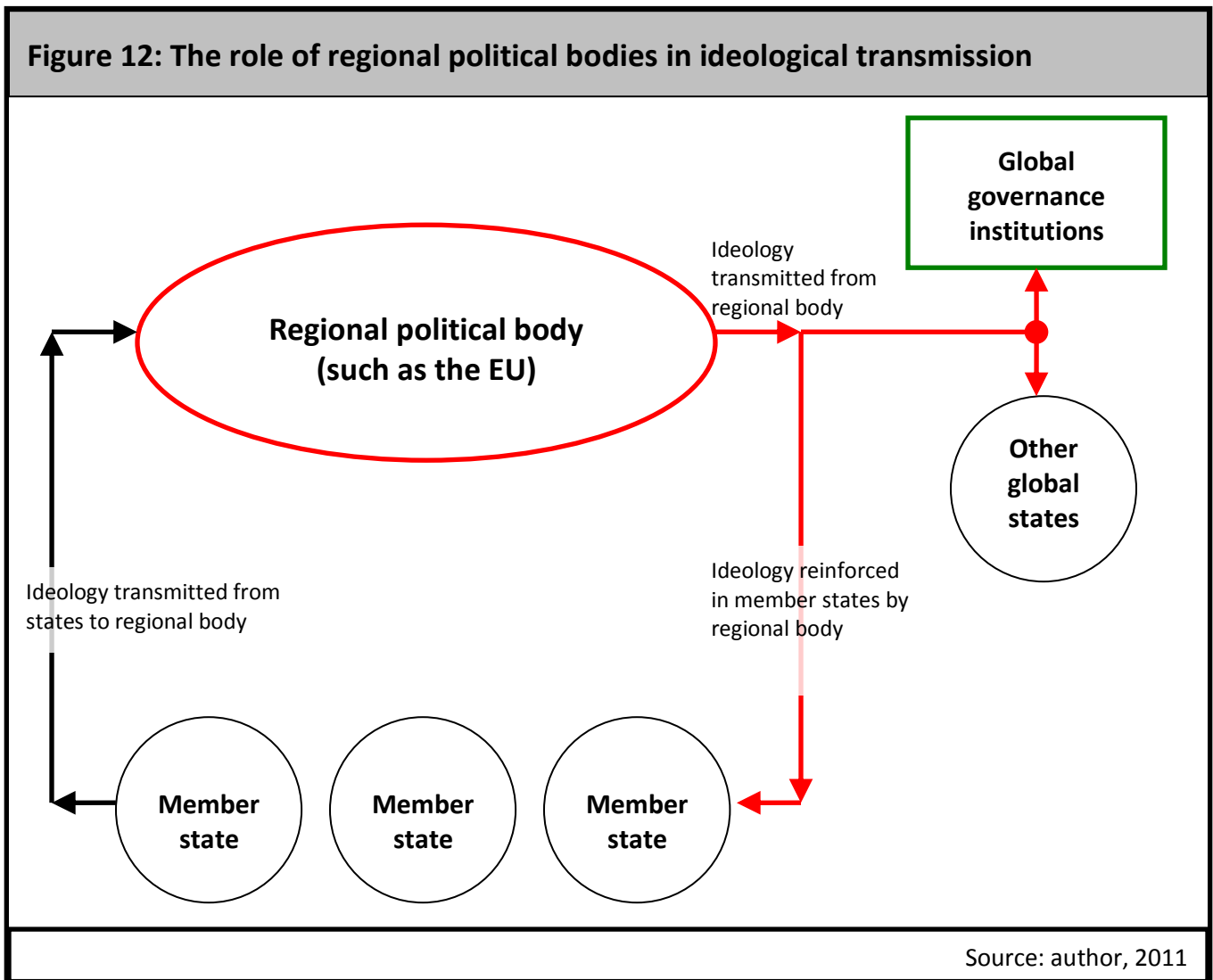


Source: Author (2011), based on Hardt and Negri (2001)

In Hardt and Negri's (2001) approach, a pervasive neoliberal ideology reinforces its influence through global structural institutions, and in doing so gains another source of political authority. Regulatory global institutions such as the IMF or World Bank perform a role complementary to the large neoliberal states such as the USA. These bodies ensure that there is a continued integration of neoliberal ideology in the structures of a global market, functioning as standardising bodies for national and global economies.

Regional governance bodies such as the European Union play a similar role to global structural institutions in this model, acting as 'ideological hubs' with influence beyond that of many nation states. Unlike structural institutions however, regional governance

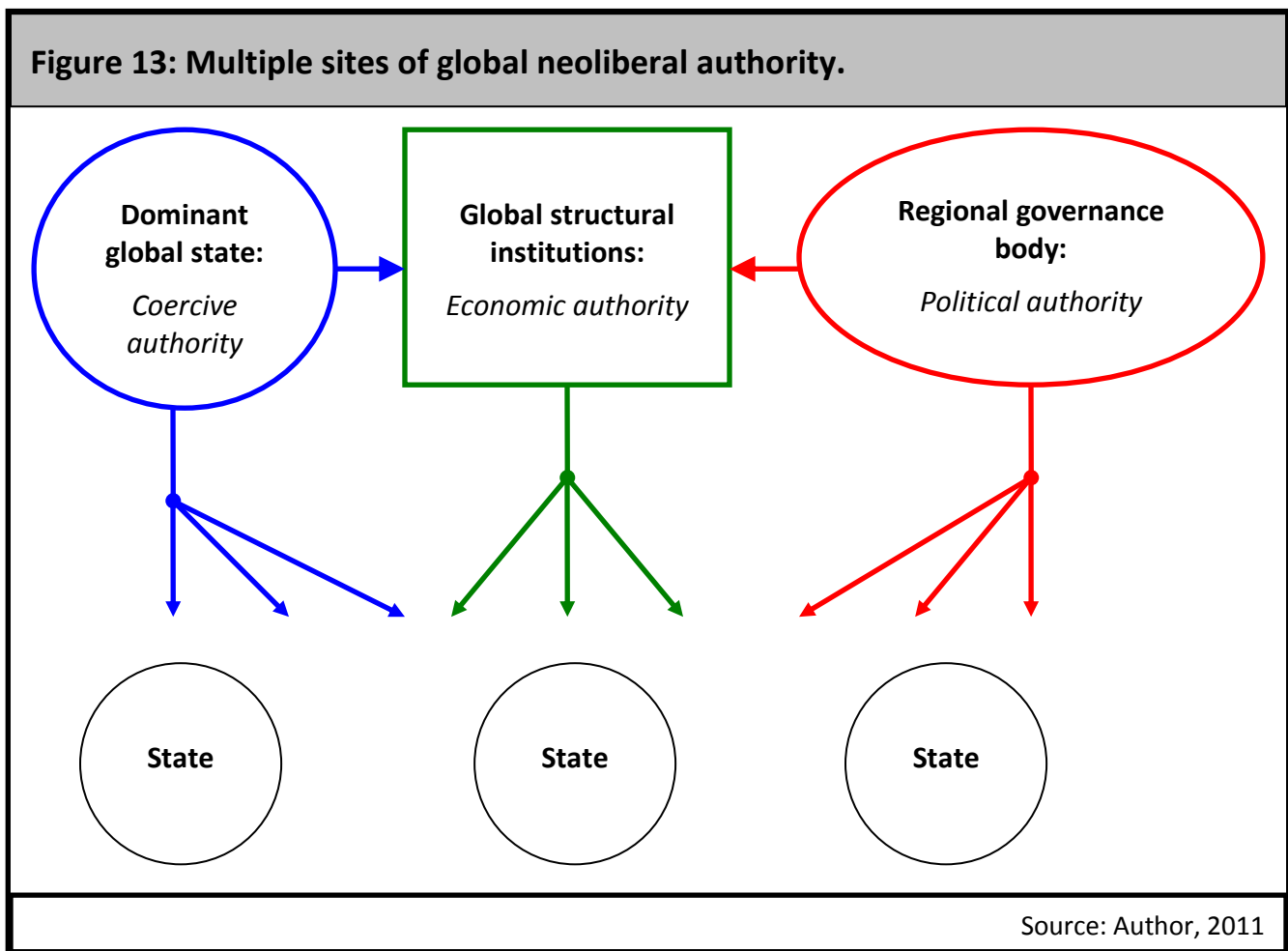
bodies may also wield normative political authority that extends from their own legitimacy. Moravcsik (2005: 233) argues that these bodies adopt a ‘neo-liberal bias in the constitutional structure ... and the rhetoric that surrounds it, which favours market liberalization’. Consequently, regional governance in institutions such as the EU provides political authority to neoliberalism, which bolsters the economic authority it achieves through institutional structures such as the IMF. In the case of the EU, the democratic input of the Parliament heightens this political legitimacy. Figure 12 (following) illustrates the role that regional bodies such as the European Union play in a hegemonic conception of global structure and underlines how these organisations reinforce neoliberalism to both member states and the wider global community.



Source: author, 2011

In the hegemonic model, a neoliberal ideology serves multiple sites of political, economic, and structural authority. Powerful states engage in the use of coercive force to maintain global ideological order, whilst at the same time global structural bodies such as the IMF and World Bank maintain a global environment in which neoliberal structures of economic exchange are dominant. Finally, neoliberalism achieves global authority through regional governance bodies that function on behalf of member states, thereby adding another layer of political legitimacy to that ideology.

Figure 13 (following) combines the three elements of coercive, economic, and political authority to show how neoliberalism maintains its global dominance.



The hegemonic approach focuses heavily on the ideological impetus for globalisation and the role of this ideology in the functions of powerful states and global institutions. Unlike the previous model in which states simply extend authority into the global area, a hegemonic neoliberal order suggests dramatic changes to the role of the nation state and the locations of political authority. Streeten (2001: 115-116) argues this point, claiming that 'while global forces reduce the power of the people to influence policy democratically at the national level, at the global level, where the need is now greater, there are no democratic institutions at all that would enable people to control or even influence their destiny'.

For Crouch (2004), the integration of a neoliberal ideology into almost all aspects of a global world means that the market acts as the primary mechanism of organising social action. The primacy of economics led to a reduction in the sovereignty of states, and political discourse is less about democracy and more about maintaining a state's position in a global market. Crouch (2004: 104) argues that this disparity means that the 'fundamental cause of democratic decline in contemporary politics is the major imbalance now developing between the role of corporate interests and those of virtually all other groups'.

The diminishing power of states and the reduction in forms of democratic opportunity at the state level is a symptom of a post-Keynesian politics characterised by growing physical and political distance between citizens and decision-making structures. Crouch (2004: 4) argues that normative issues of governance occur 'in private by interaction between elected government officials and elites that overwhelmingly represent business interests'. The result, according to Kaldor (2000: 560), is a situation in which 'substantive democracy [is] eroded by the loss of autonomy of nation-states'.

The hegemonic model conveys a more radical interpretation of global structures. Its overwhelmingly negative view of a global environment dominated by a neoliberal ideology emphasises market forces over all other forms of social and political structure. This economic impetus reaches states through physical, structural, and political forces,

resulting in a reduced role for democratic governance in the organisation of political and social life.

4.3.3 Model 3. Concentric Governance: The Globalisation of Statehood

The third model in this chapter to explore the nature of global governance utilises the concept of concentric governance. This approach takes aspects of the first two models to explain global processes as a ‘complex interdependence’ (Payne and Samhat, 2004: 34) between states, regional conglomerates, and international organisations. As with the capitalist hegemonic model, concentric governance views globalisation as an expression of a dominant neoliberal ideology, although it combines this with the neorealist model’s emphasis on state structures as important sources of authority.

In this model, a group of global institutions operating in a common neoliberal ideology dominate an intricate matrix of global relationships. For Shaw (2002: 192) this structure represents ‘a unified centre of state power which generates a worldwide web of authoritative relations, backed up by a more or less common, world organization of political force’. While a neoliberal ideology is still the overriding element influencing global structures, states and state functions remain important mechanisms for organising social and political life.

Shaw (2002) argues that the supranationalisation of politics results in contradictory effects on the nation state. On the one hand, a continued focus on the importance of political infrastructure in contemporary global political discourse reinforces the idea of the state as a universally accepted structure of governance. On the other hand, state functions are repeatedly brought into question by ‘the continuous emergence of new centres of would-be authoritative force’ (Shaw, 2002: 192). The result of this is a ‘dual globalization of statehood’ (2002: 193) in which states are continually both *reinforced* and *redefined*.

For Shaw (2002: 193), the dual process which states undergo results in a ‘complex globalisation of authority [which] involves the extension of globally legitimate

international institutions [and] the transformations of national forms of state'. In this process, Shaw (2002: 199) locates the emergence of what he terms a 'global-Western state-conglomerate'. This conglomerate comprises those economic and militarily powerful Western states that have internalised a neoliberal ideology that fosters much global interaction.

Collectively, the states and organisations that form the core of a global governance structure provide some of the normative functions of rule. Through their integration into the regulatory and structural bodies of global governance, states and bodies in the core re-assert their influence through economic, political, and physical means. For example, Shaw (2002: 200) argues that these states exercise an 'authoritative deployment of violence [which is] structurally reinforced by its increasing, if problematic integration with the legitimate and world authority-structure of the United Nations'.

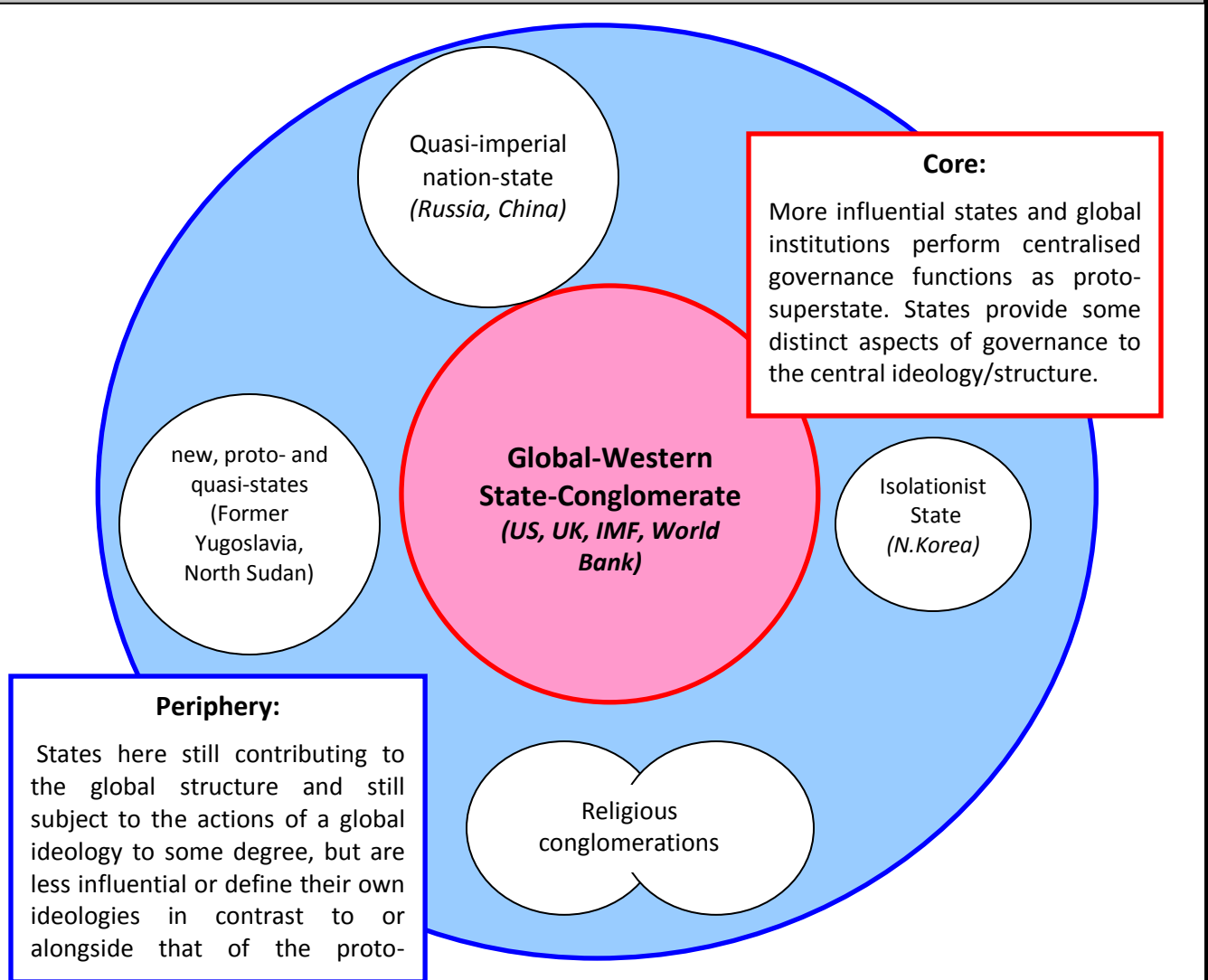
The model that results from Shaw's (2002) arguments is effectively one of a core and periphery, in which a global-Western state-conglomerate dominates international structures and exercises wide-ranging influence over the ways in which global processes function. Surrounding the core of most influential states is a periphery of other states not as integrated or influential within the global neoliberal structure. As part of these periphery states Shaw (2002: 208) describes several different bodies, amongst them a type of 'Quasi-imperial nation-state' typified in Russia or China that closely corresponds to a 'classic nineteenth- and early twentieth-century model'. These quasi-imperial states may wield large amounts of power and influence over other states, as is evident in both examples of China and Russia's regional relationships, however they do not exercise the same levels of influence over the core functions as the global-Western state conglomerate.

Shaw (2002: 211) adds another group to his periphery, 'new, proto- and quasi-states' which are not defined in terms of traditional manifestations of statehood, but wield authority in more dispersed structures or in ideological beliefs not specifically linked to statehood. Shaw (2002: 212) uses the break-up of the former Yugoslavia as an example

where concepts of nationality and authority cross national boundaries. Here, the composition of a unifying belief or a collective did not clearly map onto geographical boundaries. A more modern example is the role that religious ideology plays in forming collective identities and political will. For example, the rise of a traditionalist Islamic ideology in some parts of the world serves to unite different groups politically and culturally across territorial boundaries. Another example is the isolationist stance of states such as North Korea. Here the state is in a slightly different position insofar as an ideological stance by the military leadership means that the global core states often exclude this country from functioning on a global stage. In both cases, Shaw (2002: 193) argues, these states define themselves in contrast to or ‘through conflict with this global state’.

Shaw’s (2002) core-periphery approach helps to explain how ideological domination influences global political structures. Figure 14 (following) represent this process by demonstrating how these different sources of power in a global world exist together but exercise diverse levels of influence.

Figure 14: Core-periphery model of global governance



Adapted by Author from Shaw (2002)

The core-periphery approach means that different states experience global governance to different degrees. Those involved in the core form what is essentially a proto-global superstate and, according to Shaw (2002: 193), become ‘sufficiently internationalised within the dominant global state as to no longer constitute distinct states in any meaningful sense’. States on the periphery operate within the neoliberal economic

structure, but without the same influence over the system as those heavily involved in its normative structures.

Although the core-periphery model constitutes a valuable tool for examining some of the relationships of states on a global level, it may underestimate some of the more complex relationships. Countries such as Brazil, India, and China are increasingly influential on the world stage and whilst they do not exert as much influence as established powers, they are certainly more influential than many others are. Rather than being quasi-imperial, these states comprise a semi-periphery to the primary grouping of influential states, operating within its ideological remit but outside of its structural core. They have internalised a neoliberal ideology but their immediate influence on its structures is limited; or, as Payne and Samhat (2004: 35-6) put it, ‘merely joining institutions is not the same as sharing the burdens of institutional goals’.

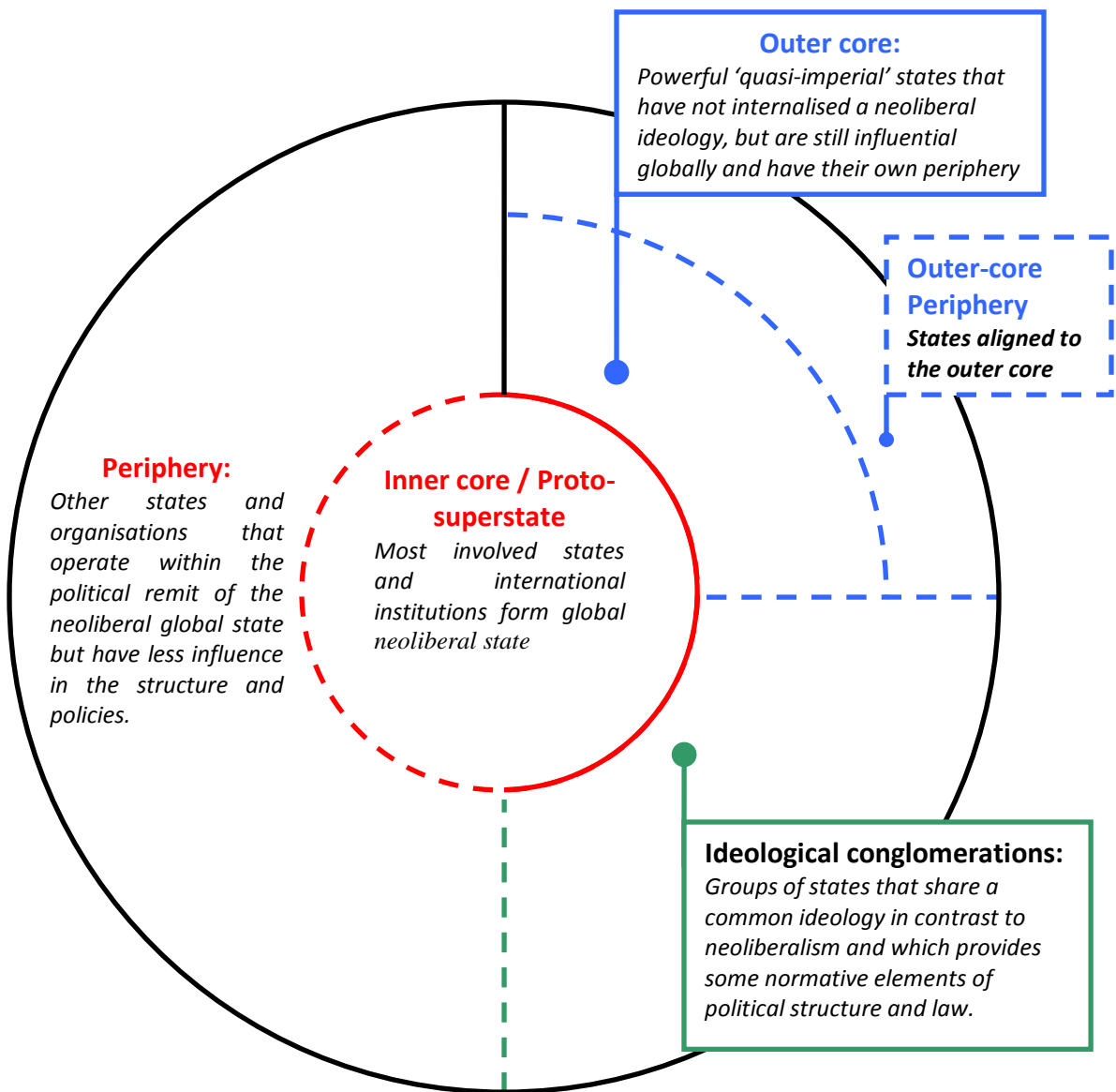
Other groups of states reject some of the cultural elements associated with neoliberal capitalism. Factors such as a growing international division of labour, increasing global inequality and religious-cultural differences mean that some choose to distance themselves from neoliberalism’s invasive nature. Such states form international bonds based on social or cultural systems, outside of the neoliberal core of states and institutions. Such bonds are seminal in shaping the nature of global relationships, particularly in the ideological portrayal of democracy as a key feature of modern governance.

Robert Cox (2002) argues that the standing of the nation state varies in the modern order when it comes to creating and maintaining a political identity. Adopting a position similar to Crouch’s (2004) idea of post-democracy in which political interaction is reduced, Cox (2002) believes that there is no uniform decline in political identity, but that the importance of the nation-state varies depending on how it is integrated into the global neoliberal order. An example this is the case of a powerful state such as China, where it is insufficient to understand its global role simply within a core-periphery model of interaction. Brown and Chun (2009: 18) argue that ‘the past decade has witnessed a

major and very significant increase in China's engagement in Africa'. Growing investment in infrastructure, natural resources, and trade in Africa, as well as its influence over states such as North Korea, mean that China' is the core of its own sphere of influence. Where it may once have been suitable to regard this as a function of quasi imperialism (Shaw, 2002: 208), China' integrated role in the modern global economy means that it offers an alternative route to globalised trade and economics. As such, it forms an alternate core to the more established Global-Western state-conglomeration, with its own periphery's economic and ideological commonalities.

For Cox (2002: 88), as well as providing an ideological structure for the international order, neoliberalism creates fundamental social cleavages as it 'accentuates polarisation between rich and poor in all parts of the world'. Rather than unite all states under a common ideology, the processes of political and economic globalisation serve to create alternative locations of power on a global scale where states' 'domestic structure [mean they] act differently in the international arena' (Czempiel, 2000: 256). The more complicated relationships of this interpretation mean that multiple sites of authority overlap with one another, as states participate in distinct spheres at the same time. Figure 14 (following) describes how a global economy that is still overwhelmingly dominated by a neoliberal ideology creates a complex periphery of allied states and competing ideological and economic structures.

Figure 15: Advanced core-periphery model



Source: Author (2011)

Both the initial and the updated core-periphery models represent conceptions of global governance in which neoliberalism is the primary influence in global economic, political, and social structures. States however, maintain an important role, either for articulating

this influence in an individual capacity as part of global structural institutions such as the IMF, or through regional political bodies including as the EU.

Keohane and Nye (2003: 409) posit that ‘a potentially debilitating problem for international governance is lack of legitimacy’. The internationalisation of governance demotes traditional forms of accountability based in states, as they are no longer sufficient for managing the wide range of influence on national political action. Although a neoliberal ideology frames most political action in this model, it still requires a perception of legitimacy in order to function, and the recent revolutions in North Africa show what might happen when a system loses legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens.

The structures of global governance achieve legitimacy in the core-periphery model through the states that participate in them. These states effectively ‘lend’ a portion of their legitimacy to global structures by their outright support or tacit approval of their actions. For example, the IMF is a supranational body with wide-ranging influence; however, as Figure 16 below shows, its leading members are all prominent politicians in European states.

Figure 16: Heads of the IMF	
Name and length of directorship	Role prior to IMF Directorship
Christine Lagarde <i>2011-present</i>	Minister for Economics, Finance and Industry, France
Dominique Strauss-Kahn <i>2007 to 2011</i>	Minister for Economics, Finance and Industry, France
Rodrigo de Rato y Figaredo <i>2004 to 2007</i>	Vice President for Economic Affairs and Minister of Economy for the Government, Spain
Horst Köhler <i>2000- 2004</i>	Deputy Minister of Finance, Germany Former President of the EBRD
Michel Camdessus <i>1987-2000</i>	Director of the Treasury, France
Source: IMF (2011f)	

As well as achieving legitimacy using established political structures, the legitimisation of neoliberalism as the dominant ideology also occurs through the international market. When states acquiesce to the demands of banks and credit rating agencies for changes to national fiscal policy, they effectively establish these bodies as a suitable source of authority.

The role of regional governance bodies in the core-periphery approach conforms to a similar pattern as world structures. A periphery of less involved countries surrounds a central core of influential states that dictate the majority of global policy emanating from institutions under their control, such as the IMF or World Bank. These bodies may also achieve legitimisation through the role states take within them.

As well as institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, legitimate authority in the advanced core-periphery model may emanate from regional bodies such as the European Parliament. There are two ways to interpret this authority. On the one hand, the Parliament may be functioning as little more than a legitimisation exercise, providing an impression of democratic governance whilst allowing the other parts of the EU to pursue a neoliberal agenda. On the other hand, the Parliament may represent a genuine source of democratic legitimacy, thereby providing a counter-weight to the neoliberal elements in the Union by emphasising democratic and social accountability rather than market-driven policy.

An understanding of the role the European Parliament plays as a governance body depends on the interpretations adopted. Regional bodies are either strong agents of a centralised global governance structure that give limited 'opportunities for people to manage their own collective and individual affairs' (Chomsky, 1999: 92), or they represent a genuine internationalisation of citizenship and an expansion of collective decision making and democracy into the international arena. The immanent criticism of the Parliament later in this dissertation deals with these possibilities in more detail.

Of the three models in this chapter, the core-periphery approach is a more balanced interpretation of global political structures. Although a neoliberal ideology still defines the global economy, this ideology is not the only source of organising at a global level. There are challenges to its domain from other methods of globalising authority, notably from what Shaw (2002: 208) describes as ‘Quasi-imperial nation-state’ and from other ideological sources that extend beyond territorial boundaries. As well, there is the potential from regional bodies such as the European Union and its Parliament to function as alternative sources of ideological focus, which stress democracy rather than market economics. This flexibility means that the core-periphery model is a much better vehicle for interpreting the nature of the European Parliament’s role in the EU and its influence on wider global governance structures.

4.4 Summary: using different models of global governance with immanent criticism

The ontological models of global governance constructed by this chapter represent provide a set of conceptual frameworks for the analysis of the European Parliament. Whilst they do not cover all eventualities, they do show a range of interpretations that suggest the types of relationships that occur. Of the three models, the final core-periphery group is the most flexible approach for describing global and regional governance. It utilises elements of the neorealist model that set out how states function in a global economy, besides adopting the second model’s critique of a hegemonic neoliberal order. It arrives at a position that comprehends a world shaped by complex combinations of ideological and political forces in which often competing relationships create more space for different structures to emerge.

The next chapter begins the detailed process of immanent criticism. The first stage in Chapter 5 sets out the Parliament’s historical foundations, proving a critical analysis of the forces that were influential in its formation and subsequent development. It critically examines the ways in which these forces restrict its present functions, allowing the subsequent stages of immanent criticism to explore these more closely and then to suggest strategies of development in democratic governance body.

Chapter 5:

Immanent criticism Stage 1: A critical history of the EP

5.1 Introduction: The first stage of immanent criticism

5.2 Theories on European political development

5.3 The development of the European Parliament

5.4 The present structures of democracy and governance in the Union and Parliament

5.5 Critical analysis: the development of governance and democracy in the European Parliament

5.5.1 Legitimacy

5.5.2 Representation

5.5.3 Accountability

5.6 Summary: the first stage of immanent criticism

5.1. Introduction: The first stage of immanent criticism:

This chapter is the first part of the three-stage immanent criticism of the European Parliament. This immanent criticism sets out in turn the Parliament's functions as an historical, actual, and potential set of relationships and in doing so examines how democracy and governance are manifest in the Parliament's structures.

Horkheimer (1992: 211) argues that in order to understand a social object we must view it as 'not only a logical process but a concrete historical one as well'. Consequently, the three-stage immanent criticism in this chapter critically explores the forces that shaped the Parliament's growth within the EU. Constructing a critical history of the European Parliament is not a process of simply recounting historical "facts", but an evaluation of the Parliament that takes into account the historical flows of power that were influential in its development. It is a search for what Horkheimer (1992: 200) terms 'the historical character of the object perceived'.

The chapter comprises three main parts. Firstly, it provides a basis for the critical discussion on the Parliament's history by setting out several competing theories on European integration, each of which provides a particular account of the driving forces

behind the Parliament's changing role. The chapter then gives an historical account of the Parliament's development within the European Union. Using a wide range of contemporary documents, it describes the Parliament's shift from an oversight body with little influence, to an important part of the EU's decision-making structures. The final part of the analysis focuses on the development of democracy and governance in the Parliament. It critically reflects on how the forces influential throughout its history shape the Parliament's present role within the European Union. The chapter concludes with an overall assessment of the Parliament's functions, which also begins to provide evidence for the first of the thesis's claims, arguing that the European Parliament represents a new form of multi-state governance structure that combines the wishes of individual citizens with that of states. This summary also sets the scene for the second stage of immanent criticism in the following chapter.

Although there are a great many political and historical accounts that examine the history of European politics, a critical history differs insofar as it seeks to provide an evaluation of the process involved in the Parliament's development rather than just a descriptive retelling. The basis of a critical history lies in Horkheimer's (1999: 207) argument that we should not accept as natural the world prescribed to us. Accepting these definitions as limits he argues, leads towards a conceptual separation of 'individual and society' that precludes an understanding of the structures and functions of the social world as a 'product of human work'. Rather, we must view our world in a critical light with which we seek 'a conspicuous opposition' to accepted accounts (1992: 207). For Horkheimer (1992: 207), and for the history of the European Parliament in this chapter, this means adopting a 'critical attitude' that is 'wholly distrustful of the rules of conduct with which society as presently constituted provides each of its members'.

The information in this chapter comes from a variety of sources. One of the most important of these is a range of archived material from the central European governance bodies, including the Parliament. Copies of treaties, meetings, and working groups provide direct evidence of the discussions that were taking place at the time, and give an

insight into the legislation produced. Going directly to these sources rather than relying on the account of others allows a process of critical evaluation that is unique to this work.

As well as a range of first-hand documents available from the EU and EP, this chapter benefits from a number of texts on the EU and its Parliament which come from several of academic fields, including economics and political history. Accounts from McAllister (1997) and Dedman (2010) offer historical descriptions, and Dedman in particular uses a range of whistleblower exposé accounts, contemporary academic assessments, and a wide variety of newspaper and press reports from across the European political spectrum (see Dedman, 2010: ix-x). The chapter also makes use of Lipgens' (1982) history of the European Union, as well as the work of Hix (1999) and Hix *et al* (2007), who write extensively on the political development of democracy and governance in the European Union. These texts offer a varied set of interpretations, and the chapter uses these as part of an overall focus that remains directed towards the process of immanent criticism and sociological interpretations that ultimately associate social objects with the functions of individuals and societies.

5.2 Theories on European political development

The history of European political development in this chapter charts the Parliament's rise from a collection of oversight bodies to its present role as a key constituent of the European Union's decision-making process. The section prefaces this history with a series of accounts that supply a useful range of concepts and principles for explaining the driving forces of European development.

Dedman (2010: 8) describes three distinct schools of thought on the forces driving European integration. The first of these he terms an 'orthodox explanation' (2010: 8) which arises primarily from disciplines surrounding political science. This orthodox account views integration as an inevitable consequence of a post-war Europe in which the 'increased complexity of the post-1945 international order and the range and functions of

the modern nation state mean that countries are inexorably entwined in a network of functioning international bodies' (Dedman, 2010: 8-9).

In recent years, many globalisation theories have applied the concept of an increasingly complex and interrelated world to descriptions of political change. This position believes there is an erosion of the role for demarcated states in the face of global political and economic integration. Writers such as O'Hare (1994: 19) talk of a 'borderless world' in which states face a range of challenges that are 'eating them away'. Similarly, Strange (1996) describes the 'retreat of the state' in the face of globalising pressures. Hobsbawm (1994) as an historian describes this decline in state control in terms of increasingly dispersed sources of legitimate violence; or as sociologists Cohen and Kennedy (2007: 135) call it, a 'privatisation and democratization of the means of destruction'. In each case, changes in the ways states and societies interact reshape the nature of the social world.

Dedman (2010: 9) argues that the orthodox discourses view integration driven by the pressures of global development as a 'self sustaining process', in which there is an 'inevitable tendency for further integration to occur'. From this position, European integration is unavoidable as states increasingly find that they must operate on an international level in order to maintain competitive influence on a global scale. The basis of these discourses is similar to the orthodox form of political science in the first model of governance in Chapter 4. This approach is a neorealist interpretation of a world comprising extended states, which views integration as a largely neutral process that is driven by economic, technological, and political development, as well as the necessity of states to occasionally aggregate power. Although there are other driving forces in this process, for example the threat of the Soviet Union as an accelerator of European integration, this model is a more traditional interpretation of market economics and state functions, which is a somewhat simplistic interpretation of complex global pressures.

Dedman's (2010: 8) second interpretation of European development applies the work of Lipgens (1996), who argues that a federalised Europe was an outcome of 'inevitable and

logical post-war policy' (cited in Dedman, 2010: 9). Lippens (1982: 85) conducted a number of studies that focused on the nature of groups and organisations advocating a federalised Europe from the Second World War onwards. He concluded that 'a combination of the inherent logic of a federal solution for Europe ... [and] ... the public support and promotion of federalism from politicians and intelligentsia' led a strong drive towards the initiation of the European project with the treaties of Paris and Rome.

Lippens (1982: 85) argues that there were two main reasons why this groundswell of political and public opinion did not succeed in achieving its goal of a federalised European state. The first of these was an antipathy from the US and USSR, who were both averse towards the ideas of an integrated, stronger Europe. By the time the Cold War had swung American opinion in favour of a stronger more unified Europe, there was a new obstacle in many Western European governments' reluctance to surrender national influence. Lippens (1982: 120) argues that countries such as France, Britain, and Scandinavia, proved to be 'bastions of stubborn nationalistic traditions and illusions which refused to face realistically such facts as the decline of Europe'.

Despite the objections to federalisation from many states, Lippens (1980: 12) argues that 'increasingly successful lobbying made a big contribution to the integration effort between 1950-54'. Pressure groups such as the Union Européenne de Fédéralistes (UEF) played a vital part in the processes of European integration and Lippens (1980: 12) states that 'one cannot understand or describe the pre-history of the European movement or its beginnings without studying the activity of these groups'. As evidence of this, the 1952 European Defence Community Treaty had a clause written into it that required the shaping of a European constitution as an:

... organisation which will take the place of the present transitional organisation should be conceived so as to be capable of constituting one of the elements of an ultimate federal or confederation structure based upon the principle of separation of powers and including, particularly, a bicameral representative system.

(US Senate, 1952)

Dedman (2010: 10) is critical of Lipgen's (1982) assessment of the role that lobbying groups such as the UEF played in the integration process, pointing to the fact that the French national assembly ultimately rejected the constitution clause in the 1952 European Defence Community Treaty. Indeed Lippens (1982) himself goes on to state that the federalist movement and its associated organisation had little influence over the principal initial integration treaties of Rome in 1957. Dedman (2010: 11) concludes that whilst Lipgen's (1982) theory of integration driven by the pressure of a European Federalist movement may be interesting, it 'inevitably ignore[s] all the evidence from national governments' archives that reveal the internal debates over policy options and objectives [many of which] did not (rhetoric aside) include 'federation'.

In place of both the traditional, political science approach to inevitable integration, and to Lipgen's (1982) theory of Federalist movements, Dedman (2010: 11) describes what he calls the 'Milward thesis' which views the process of European integration through the lens of contemporary historical accounts. In large part, the Milward thesis grew from material released under the 30-year disclosure of information rule in the UK, which provided a range of government documents on the initial processes of post-war European integration. These documents, along with accounts from other European states, produce an account based almost solely on what Milward (1984) and Dedman (2010: 11), both economic historians, describe as empirical evidence.

Milward (1984) and Dedman (2010) disagree with positions that base their assumptions around inevitability of 'the demise of the nation state and creation of a new supranational ... or federal United states of Europe' (Dedman, 2010:11). Rather, they argue that 'European integration only occurs when and only works when it is actually needed by the nation states' (Dedman, 2010: 11). Supranational organisations support the apparatus and requirements of the state at a regional or international level, and states then use these organisations 'for their own specific purposes' rather than as 'a step towards the submission and eclipse of the nation state within federal Europe' (Dedman, 2010: 12).

The example of national interest as the driver for integration is also described by Lynch (1984: 242, cited in Dedman, 2010: 54), who argues that the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was created under a 'smoke screen of idealist European Rhetoric' which was designed to disguise the fact that it was actually a highly politically motivated act. The establishing of a single market gave France access to the vast reserves of German coal, coke and steel that it had been paying vastly inflated prices for, some 46% higher than paid in Germany (Dedman, 2010: 54-55).

As well as playing to the advantage of French post-war economic and physical reconstruction, the ECSC was also welcomed by the USA who were seeking assurances that the money paid to Europe through the Marshall Plan would go towards 'creating a European Framework to contain Germany' (Dedman, 2010: 54). Together, these factors lead Dedman (2010: 44) to argue that the process of establishing the ECSC was actually a 'French attempt to reshape Europe's economic and political environment to suit the needs of the French domestic economy'.

This approach bears similarity with the neorealist model of global governance, in particular with Messner and Nuscheler's (2002: 136) form of 'horizontal self control' in which collective organisations such as the EU operated as extensions of states. These bodies legitimately increase states' power on the international stage without removing any significant element of authority or, in Europe's case moving towards federalism. Indeed, Milward (1984) and Dedman (2010: 12) argue that 'far from advancing the cause of federation' the process of integration actually 'rescued the nation state'.

Dedman (2010) gives the example of the Federal Republic of Germany to show how European integration did not lead to federalism but allowed the development of a new politically distinct entity. A process that began with the West German state regaining control of its steel and coal production under the ECSC eventually led to the Bonn Agreements of 1955 and the restoring of 'full sovereignty ... in foreign affairs and national defence' (Dedman, 2010: 13). Dedman (2010: 13) claims that it was only the

European framework that allowed West Germany to emerge from its post-war political confinement and become a distinct state within the context of a new integrated Europe.

For Dedman (2010: 12), ‘whether in the EEC [European Economic Community] of the 1960s or European Union of the 1990’s, power remains with the nation states’. Despite this emphasis on the powerful role played by nation states, both Milward (1984) and Dedman (2010) also identify the state as having undergone some change through the various stages of European integration. The restructuring of Western Europe economically and structurally after the Second World War, they argue, ‘often required international solutions’ (Dedman, 2010: 12). The mutual dependence of Western European states meant that they were reliant upon an economic revival to drive national development at a sufficient pace. The development of the ECSC in 1951, the first real treaty to signify the modern phase of European integration, is an example of how a common market in coal and steel provided international structures for national development.

Despite Dedman’s (2010) focus on the continued dominance of the state, the role of economic development and an increasingly global political arena must not be underestimated in European development. Dedman’s (2010) own analysis points to an economic imperative in early European integration spearheaded by a small number of states, particularly France. Consequently, a form of core-periphery model similar to Shaw’s (2002) approach believes strong states aggregate on issues of national interest, then either force or entice other states to join them.

Kahler and Lake (2003: 435) claim that ‘most authors have taken Europe as an example of advanced Globalisation’ insofar as it represents an integrated political, economic and cultural exchange. For Held and McGrew *et al* (2001: 49), the processes of integration that are typified in Europe are part of a ‘fundamentally interconnected global order, marked by intense patterns of exchange as well as by clear patterns of power, hierarchy and unevenness’. As the advanced core-periphery model in Figure 16, Chapter 4 points out, ideological and physical control often functions as complex set of relationships

between different states and Kahler and Lake (2003: 435) argue that while states clearly maintain a significant element of control they 'have clearly grown more porous over the last decades'.

For McNamara (2003: 355), the driving force for European integration, particularly in terms of monetary union, is a complex process that is the result of both 'the institutionalist logic of market integration' as well as a 'choice to build institutional capacity at an EU level' (2003: 357). States, she argues, are compelled to act in order to maintain market position in the face of growing global competition.

There is a contrary position to the statist model of Milward (1984) and Dedman (2010), or the globalising models of Held and McGrew *et al* (2001) and McNamara (2003), that views Europe and particularly the European Parliament as a genuine attempt to introduce democratic politics above the level of the nation state. Keane (2009: 825-6) talks of the European Parliament as 'the world first ever example' of a regional parliament, and cites it as an instance of what he calls a 'monitory' democratic system with the ability to offer a check to the wider neoliberal global market. Similarly, Smith (2007: 204) cites Todorov's (2005: 51) hailing of a 'tranquil power' in the EU, which stands in defence of democracy and justice. He goes on to argue himself that 'the European union has gone much further than the united states in envisaging and partly implementing decent democracy' (Smith, 2007: 204).

For Milward (1989) and Dedman (2010), the European Union is an extension of states, and for Held and McGrew *et al* (2001) it is a response to globalising pressures. However, in a broader reading, the EU and its Parliament also contain the potential to represent a significant move towards internationalising democracy. If the role of the Parliament is effective enough in the structures of the EU, then it should provide a route for citizens to influence decision making above the level of nation states. It is the debate on the Parliament's role that makes an historical analysis such an important part of immanent criticism. The development of the Parliament and the ways in which its role is integrated into decision making indicate how far its processes allow genuine democracy at a

regional level. More than this, the ways in which authority is shared in the EU may shed light on the wider future of democracy in a global world, as Kahler and Lake (2003: 437) claim, it ‘will remain a bellwether in assessing the response of democratic electorates to expanded governance that does not immediately acquire the form of national parliamentary democracy’.

5.3. The historical development of the European Parliament

On the 1st November 1993, the Treaty on European Union came into force, representing a significant step towards a European governance structure that began in 1951 with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Dedman (2010: 7) argues that the development of a unified Europe was a markedly different process from that which formed organisations such as the OECD and NATO. For Dedman (2010: 7) the difference is between *interdependence* and *integration*. The former is a process associated with mutual need, in which states act together to find solutions to common problems, whilst the latter more accurately describes a process in which aspects of states governance are centrally controlled.

In contrast to bodies such as the OECD and NATO that are characterised by collective action and integration of state needs, Dedman (2010) claims that the growth of the European Union and its Parliament represents a process of integration that deals with wider issues of governance. This process is distinct from the forms of interdependence that had previously characterised the relationships between states as it involved the ‘creation of a supranational organisation ... [where] ... the member states transfer some policy decisions to a body of all member states’ (Dedman, 2010: 7).

McAllister (1997) describes how it is possible to trace back the process of successful post-war European integration to the 1950s. He describes how Robert Schuman, the former French Prime Minister and then Foreign Minister, pushed for a collective European body to deal with the redevelopment of post-war Europe, announcing that ‘it is

no longer the time for vain words, but for a bold act – a constructive act’ (McAllister, 1997: 11). The Schuman Declaration as it came to be known, was inaugurated in the 1951 Treaty of Paris and created the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) as a ‘common market for coal, steel, coke, iron ore and scrap between France, German, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Italy’ (Dedman, 2010:51). Importantly for many members of the ECSC, it allowed access at a reduced price to the large deposits of coke and iron ore in Germany that were needed for reconstruction.

The ECSC was not however the first attempt at federalising Europe. In 1949, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) sought a move towards greater economic integration, its failure partially attributed to the 30% devaluation of the British Pound in the same year (McAllister, 1997, 11-12; Guardian, 1949). A year after the failure of the OEEC, the French rejected a Franco-German union suggested by the then German chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. As well as these, there were also failures by a preliminary Council of Europe to act as a genuine collective body, or as McAllister (1997: 12) describes it, ‘the political germ of a European federation, with limited but real powers’.

Although the process of economic and trade integration in Europe had a stuttering start, the progress of military cooperation had a more successful beginning. Many Western European nations were motivated into action by the advances of the Soviet Union, typified by the blockade of Berlin and the ‘Prague Coup’ which established communist control over then Czechoslovakia. These military and political advances from the Soviet Union effectively increased the pace of military cooperation and led to the establishing of several military pacts, most notably an agreement for ‘collective self defence’ in the Brussels pact of 1948, which led to the subsequent establishing of NATO the year after (McAllister, 1997: 12).

For a time, these cooperative military organisations were the most successful methods of collectivising action in Europe, but despite this, they fall firmly into Dedman’s (2010: 7) category of interdependence insofar as they represent intentions of support and assistance

rather than an integration of purpose. Although this military cooperation was a relatively successful example of joint decision making, it did not prejudice continued movement towards establishing governance bodies that stressed integration over interdependence.

Another senior French politician, Jean Monnet the head of the French National Planning Commission, matched the emphasis on integration that Schuman took into developing the ECSC. Monnet fought for and eventually established a High Authority of the ECSC, an oversight body that made the ECSC the first successful 'regulated market-sharing arrangement under supranational control' (Dedman, 2010: 55). Along with the High Authority, the Treaty of Paris (1951) that established the European Coal and Steel Community also set up a Common Assembly, a collective body to help oversee the wider integration process and management of resources. This collective authority was a consultative body of 78 members drawn from the national parliaments of the six member-states. Although it had an oversight role, there was little functional power; nevertheless, its inaugural meeting on 10th September 1952 was effectively the beginnings of what became the European Parliament.

The progress of integration in Europe that began with the Treaty of Paris and the ECSC in 1951 continued with the Treaties of Rome (1957a and 1957b), which established 'a new legal system and framework to regulate both the institutions and members powers, rights and obligations' (Dedman, 2010: 8). These two treaties created the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Community (Euratom), and were signed by the six countries of 'little Europe' that had been part of the original ECSC.

The more important of the two treaties of Rome established the EEC as a 'common market in manufactured goods with a common agricultural policy' (Dedman, 2010: 82), whilst the Euratom Treaty set up a common market and equal access to stocks of fissile materials. Despite the importance of these treaties, Dedman (2010: 82-3) argues that they were 'mainly a statement of intent' rather than a 'detailed comprehensive blueprint'. They did however, set out plans for establishing a more comprehensive union based on economic and commercial expansion in Europe.

After the initial statement of members at the start of the Treaty Establishing the EEC (Treaty of Rome 1957a: 11) the first line of the treaty proper states its intention to ‘lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe’. Article 2 sets out in more detail the economic nature of this union, emphasising its focus on establishing a common market in the European Economic Community:

The community shall have as its task, by establishing a common market and progressively approximating the economic principles of Member states, to promote throughout the community a harmonious development of economic activities, a continuous and balanced expansion, an increase in stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living and closer relations between the states belonging to it.

(Treaty of Rome 1957a: 15)

Although economics was the primary focus for integration in the Treaty of Rome, establishing the EEC was a significant development in the overall process of European integration. It formed a common set of rules for members, typified in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), as well as reiterating an intention to establish a governing body to help oversee integration and functions, and a court of justice to settle disputes. The Treaty of Rome provided a legal mandate for these bodies, affording them political presence and the ability to ‘act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it’ (Treaty of Rome 1957a: 16).

The decision-making processes of the newly established EEC relied upon a Commission that was ‘the central concept behind the integrated organisation’ (Dedman: 2010: 83). The Commission acted as both civil service and primary governance structure for the EEC, pursuing its interests and initiating policy. Policy debate took place through a Council of Ministers made up from members chosen by individual states, and who remained closely associated with those national parties. Despite the continued influence from member states in the Council of Ministers and the Commission, these bodies ‘constituted [a] supranational integrated element in the Rome Treaties’ and were regarded by many as the engine of the EEC and an ever closer union’ (Dedman, 2010: 84). The introduction of the Treaties of Rome in the 1950s also established an assembly that

incorporated the 78 members of the already functioning Common Assembly of the ECSC along with delegates responsible for the EEC and Euratom. The resulting body had 142 participants from member states, and although it only functioned as what Hix *et al* (2007: 13) call a ‘purely consultative institution’, it had some power to act as a check and balance to the overall authority of the Commission. In its first meeting this body voted to change its name to the ‘European Parliament’ (Hix *et al*, 2007: 13).

The period between the Treaties of Rome in 1957 and the first enlargement of the EEC in 1973 caused a great deal of negotiation and disagreement on the direction that the new supranational organisation should take. In a series of summits, the most important of which was in Hague in December of 1969, the six member states set out their commitment to the common market. They established a 10-year plan that emphasised an ongoing commitment to European integration, thereby ‘paving the way for a United Europe capable of assuming its responsibilities in the world of tomorrow’ (The Hague Summit, 1969: 12).

As well as a commitment to strengthening the future of Europe, the Hague Summit also introduced plans for the introduction of a European Monetary Union (EMU) and the beginning of successful negotiations on membership for United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, and Norway. French President Charles de Gaulle had twice previously used his absolute veto to end these negotiations, but the eventual successful admission of more members in the EEC started a phase of expansion (McAllister, 1997: 51).

Although the Hague Summit made some great strides towards European integration, it contained little reference to the European Parliament other than strengthening some of its budgetary powers and a commitment to study ‘the problem of direct elections’ (The Hague Summit, 1969: 15). The summit did however include statements made by the Heads of State or senior representatives from each of the EEC members, which were supportive of strengthening the Parliament. In the opening address to that portion of the Hague conference, P.J. S. de Jong, Prime Minister of the Netherlands and the representative of the Dutch government, stated that:

...‘substantial further integration is virtually out of the question unless it is brought under parliamentary control... [so that] ... peoples, in their turn, to be able to influence integrated policy at European level through normal democratic procedures.

(The Hague Summit, 1969:32-3)

Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was less specific on the democratic nature of the Parliament but supported a strengthening of its role as a budgetary check against the working of the Council and Commission, arguing that:

...the powers of the European Parliament be broadened, particularly by giving it budgetary control.

(The Hague Summit, 1969: 40).

Mariano Rumor, the Italian Prime Minister in his statement reflected what he felt were the growing voices in support of the Parliament and the growing movement for a strengthening of democracy within the new structures of European governance:

...we cannot indeed remain unaware that in each of our countries increasingly authoritative and numerous voices call for the control of the Community, with all the resources which are or will be at its disposal by a Parliament elected by the people.

(The Hague Summit, 1969: 45-6)

More vociferously than many other ministers at the conference, Pierre Werner, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, made the case for establishing the Parliament as a fully active and representative member of the European system:

...Economic, monetary and financial strengthening is to be matched by a reinforcement of the institutional provisions of the Treaties to increase the powers and competence of the European Parliament and make provision for a first step towards the election of its members by direct universal suffrage

(The Hague Summit, 1969: 51)

The strengthening of the Parliament's powers in the Hague Summit was reinforced a year later in the Luxembourg Treaty (1970) which established a common budget for the ECSC, Euratom and EEC. The Treaty of Luxembourg established a level of direct involvement of the Parliament in the overall budget of these European Communities by giving it the right to:

...amend the draft administrative budget, acting by a majority of its members, and to propose to the Council, acting by an absolute majority of the votes cast, modifications to the draft budget relating to expenditure necessarily resulting from this Treaty or from acts adopted in accordance therewith.

(Treaty of Luxembourg, 1970)

The first enlargement of the EEC for which The Hague Summit paved the way occurred on 1st January 1973 when the UK, Denmark, and Ireland joined the EU (McAllister, 1997: xxii). This succession also meant the Parliament grew from 142 members to 198 representatives, part of a steady increase in its power and representative influence.

The period between the first enlargement in 1973 and the subsequent treaty establishing the European Union proper at Maastricht was characterised by a global economic recession, various crisis in energy prices, the Yom Kippur war, and high levels of unemployment across Europe. Nevertheless, the European project continued and the 1979 Paris summit culminated in agreement for eventual accession of Greece to the Community and, importantly for this account, the first direct elections to the Parliament (Hix *et al*, 2007: 13; McAllister, 1997: xxiii-xxiv). The introduction of direct elections in June 1979 meant the Parliament's numbers more than doubled, rising from 198 to 410. This increased to 434 with the eventual accession of Greece in 1981. These first elections were an important stage in the Parliament's democratic and legislative evolution, as it meant that for the first time the Parliament had, as Hix *et al* (2007: 14) call it, a 'source of legitimacy that is independent from national governments and national parliaments'.

The inclusion of Portugal and Spain meant successive enlargements of the Parliament, bringing membership up to 518. The reunification of Germany in 1994 then increased

this to 567 (Hix *et al*, 2007: 13). Within this period of rapid expansion for the Parliament, there were two important pieces of European legislation that strengthened the Community as a whole and increased the Parliament's hereto absent influence over the legislative procedure. The first of these was the introduction of the Single European Act that came into force in 1987 and gave the Parliament a chance to read bills before the Council passed them as law. The Single European Act significantly strengthened the Parliament's powers, and Article 7 clearly includes it in the legislative process, stating that:

The council, acting by a qualified majority ... on a proposal from the commission and after obtaining the opinion of the European Parliament, shall adopt a common position.

(Single European Act, 2005: 5)

This agreement represented a strong move towards European integration that moved beyond economic, fiscal, and military cooperation (Hix *et al*, 2007: 14). Although by no means it brought the Parliament on par with either Council or the Commission, it did for the first time give the Parliament the ability to return legislation to the Council where, in order for it then to be passed it required a unanimous vote (Single European Act, 1987: 6).

The second important piece of legislation at this time was the Treaty on European Union devised at Maastricht. Signed in 1992 and eventually enforced in 1993, Maastricht signalled the transition from the European Economic Community (EEC) to the European Union (EU). As well as establishing the European Union proper, the Treaty on European Union (1992) signed at Maastricht established the European Union proper, and further strengthened the Parliament's role in the decision-making process.

The Maastricht treaty redesigned the shape of the European project, creating a new Union with a greater degree of political as well as economic integration. As part of the political restructuring, Maastricht empowered the European Parliament to engage more fully in the political and decision-making structures of the EU, requiring the Council of Ministers to

inform or consult the Parliament on the decisions it took, including the appointment of a Commission President (Treaty on European Union, 1992: 16). Importantly, Maastricht developed the process of cooperation between the Council and the Parliament. In an update to the Single European Act, a process of codecision was introduced which gave the Parliament greater influence in decision making (Hix *et al*, 2007: 11). Codecision went on to form the basis of the Parliament's legislative relationship within the EU.

As well as codecision, the Treaty on European Union (1992) established the concept of 'Citizenship of the Union'. For the first time citizens of member states were also European citizens, thereby establishing a concept of legitimacy in democratic governance and affording citizens direct representation and accountability in the EU's decision-making processes:

... every citizen of the Union residing in a Member State of which he is not a national shall have the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament in the Member State in which he resides, under the same conditions as nationals of that State.

(Treaty on European Union, 1992: 7)

The Maastricht Treaty was one of the most significant developments in European Union integration, particularly in terms of the Parliament and its role in democratic governance. The increased involvement of the Parliament in the politics of the Union as a whole was evident in 1995 when the enlarged 567 members rejected a piece of legislation for the first time. Directive 95/62/EC on voice telephony had proposed 'universal service for telecommunications in the perspective of a fully liberalized environment [as] an essential element of the information society' (European Parliament, 1999). However, the Parliament in its deliberation over the referred bill had expressed a number of concerns, including the potential for unequal access that a deregulated telecommunications market could create. The official report on the communications between the Commission and the Parliament made clear that the Parliament 'pointed repeatedly to the danger of exacerbating social divisions should liberalization lead to unequal access to the telecommunications infrastructures and services' (European Parliament, 1999).

The Parliament's concern that the voice telephony bill took only 'minimal account ... of social needs' meant that the directive was returned to the commission with a number of amendments that reassert its commitment to 'a universal service worthy of the name' (European Parliament, 1999). Hix (2007: 14) argues that this first rejection of a bill was a landmark occasion for the Parliament and set a 'precedent that the council cannot act unilaterally under codecision's procedure' (Hix *et al* 2007: 14).

The activity that followed the Maastricht treaty in 1993 represented an important stage in the development of the Parliament as a functioning body, and cemented the change from its role as a group of oversight bodies for the ECSC and Euratom to an integrated part of the EU's governance structure. As well as the rejection of the voice telephony bill, the mid 1990's also included the first meaningful participation of the Parliament in the investiture and subsequent removal of a Commission and its President.

Under the new investiture procedure of the Maastricht treaty, the Parliament gained the right to be consulted on the appointment of a President to the European commission as well as the ability to veto on the appointment of the President of the European Commission as well as members of the Commission as whole (Hix *et al*, 2007: 186). In the discussions to replace the outgoing Jacques Delors following the 1994 elections to the European Parliament, Jacques Santer, a Christian Democrat and Prime Minister of Luxembourg, found himself in a commanding position, enjoying support from the heads of the European States and the backing of the Parliament's centre right parties. Despite disquiet from the socialist and more radical left of the European Parliament on the openness of the deal to present him as a candidate, Santer eventually received a majority vote in the Parliament and became President of the Commission (Hix *et al*, 2007: 186-7).

It was not long, however, before, a number of crises in the Commission ensued, including criticism over its handling of the BSE crisis and banning of beef exports from Britain in 1996. A much more serious set of allegations on financial irregularities followed, in particular on the way the Commission had implemented the 1996 budget and allegations of 'fraud, mismanagement and nepotism' (Committee of Independent Experts, 1999a:

27). The European Parliament refused to discharge the 1996 budget and a Committee of Independent Experts investigated the irregularities on behalf of the Parliament. Although the findings put no blame on any individual commissioner, it did uncover:

... instances where Commissioners or the Commission as a whole bear responsibility for instances of fraud, irregularities or mismanagement in their services or areas of special responsibility
(Committee of Independent Experts, 1999a:137)

The report was leaked a day before its official publication, and on hearing that the Parliament would vote to censure it, the Commission resigned *en masse*. A second investigation into the Santer Commission reasserted the role of the Parliament, stating that ‘the Commission is accountable to the European Parliament ... [and] ... is under a constitutional duty to be fully open with Parliament’ (Committee of Independent Experts, 1999b: 38).

The Parliament’s actions over the issues with the Santer Commission and the subsequent reports reaffirming its position in the structures of the European Union helped to assert its transition into a legitimate part of the governance structure. Hix *et al* (2007: 15-16) argue that the investiture and then dismissal of Santer and his commission amounted to a ‘de-facto’ right of the European Parliament to veto the choice of Commission President’. This right was formalised in the Treaty of Amsterdam that came into legislative force in 1999, amending and consolidating the initial Treaty of the European Union.

The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) formalised the codecision procedure that had begun with Maastricht. The new procedures meant legislation needed to achieve a qualified majority in the Council and a simple majority in the Parliament in order to pass (Hix *et al*, 2007: 20). Hix *et al* (2007: 21) argue that this formalisation of the right to reject legislation meant the European Parliament ‘developed significant independent legislative amendment and agenda-setting powers’, even though the Commission retained the exclusive right to initiate legislation.

The official inclusion of the Parliament in the decision-making processes afforded it and the overall Union democratic legitimacy. For the first time, European citizens had official representation in the governance structures of the EU, and there was a route to political accountability for politicians. In recent years, the Parliament has continued its transition from ‘simply a rubber stamp’ to a body ‘independent of the executive’ (Hix *et al*, 2007: 20). In 2004, the proposed Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe set out a constitutional basis for the formalisation of the Union. Its opening statement claimed that it was:

Reflecting the will of the citizens and States of Europe to build a common future, this Constitution establishes the European Union, on which the Member States confer competences to attain objectives they have in common.

(European Union, 2004: 11)

Despite claims that it was representing the collective will of citizens, French and Dutch voters rejected the Constitutional Treaty in referendum in 2005. In its place, the Lisbon Treaty (2007) sought to solve many of the same issues as the constitution, but in a different framework that was more acceptable to those countries that had rejected the original Treaty. Foremost amongst Lisbon’s roles was to manage the accession of new member states, although Dedman (2010: 178) argues that ‘the Lisbon treaty is not required for the EU to operate ... the Nice Treaty has perfectly adequate provision in place to allow the EU to grow to 30 states’. Nevertheless, Lisbon represented a rewriting of the EU’s major treaties, replacing both the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community.

The Lisbon Treaty passed into law on 1st December 2009, its main aims reflected in its four stated goals: a desire to create ‘a more democratic and transparent Europe; A more efficient Europe; A Europe of rights and values, freedom, solidarity and security; Europe as an actor on the global stage’ (Europa, 2010a). A formalising of power sharing in decision-making structures helped to formalise a commitment to democracy and social rights, as did the further commitments on ‘human rights and fundamental freedoms’ (Lisbon Treaty, 2007: 232).

As the goals of the Lisbon Treaty show, many of its aims attempted to strengthen the image of the European Union as a legitimate governance structure. This was emphasised in one of the many official companion documents to the Treaty, which stated that Lisbon:

...makes the EU more democratic, efficient and transparent. It gives citizens and parliaments a bigger input into what goes on at a European level, and gives Europe a clearer, stronger voice in the world, all the while protecting national interests.

(European Commission, 2009: 18)

One of the ways in which Lisbon worked towards greater integration of democracy in the EU was by further strengthening the European Parliament's role in decision-making. Lisbon reinforced the important principle of codecision between the Parliament and the Council, making it an 'ordinary legislative procedure [which] will extend to new policy areas such as freedom, security and justice' (European Commission, 2009: 12). This prominence is evident in the final act of the Treaty, which reaffirms a commitment by the Council to 'devote every effort to strengthening the democratic legitimacy of decisions taken by a qualified majority' (Lisbon Treaty, 2007: 250).

Although there is a strong emphasis on democracy and codecision in the Lisbon Treaty, a critical reading also reveals importance placed on changing a number of protocols involving member states. At the same time as reinforcing the role of democracy, Lisbon gave more power to individual member states as part of a desire to:

...encourage greater involvement of national parliaments in the activities of the European Union and to enhance their ability to express their views on draft legislative acts of the European Union as well as on other matters which may be of particular interest to them.

(Lisbon Treaty, 2007: 148).

This seeming return to a system where states exercise a more direct hand in the processes of legislation appears to run counter to the expressed commitment for increasing democratic accountability and a wider remit for the Parliament. Nevertheless, there is

support for the position of states as the ultimate sources of authority in official companion documents to the Lisbon Treaty:

A basic rule is that the EU will only be able to exercise those powers that have been conferred on it by the Member States. It must respect the fact that all other powers rest with the Member States.

(European Commission, 2009: 14)

Although there are some mixed messages on the role that the Parliament, the Council and member states play in EU decision making, the Lisbon treaty does attempt to separate the legislative influences of centralised EU structures and member states into clear but overlapping spheres of influence. This is an important move towards having a clearly structured decision-making process, in which the role that European democracy plays is both well defined and transparent. Where ‘member states have primary responsibility in fields such as health, education and industry’, it is the EU that holds ‘exclusive charge over areas such as competition rules, monetary policy of the Euro area and the common commercial policy’ (European Commission, 2009: 14). In areas with no clear distinction such as agriculture, transport, and the internal market, then the ‘EU and the Member States share competence’ (European Commission, 2009: 14).

Lisbon effectively established the EU and EP as a legitimate governance structure. It outlined a clear sphere in which the EU maintains primary authority, and although this is less than envisaged in the initial EU constitution, it nevertheless created the Union as a democratic governance structure with normative, albeit limited, authority. Within this, the Parliament performs a specific function in the decision-making process, thereby formalising the role of democracy in the EU. The amendments to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010) which followed on from Lisbon help to reinforce this role for democracy. The amendments clearly emphasise the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the European Union, which are:

... based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. It places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Union and by creating an area of freedom, security and justice.

(Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2010: 391)

Together, the Lisbon Treaty (2007) and the reworking of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010) form the basis for the principle of a European citizenry, represented through the European Parliament. After successive stages of enlargement, the Parliament now contains 736 members and represents over 500 million citizens from 27 Member States (European Parliament, 2010a). The legislative remit of the Parliament now covers 83 areas, including areas of social policy; data protection; free movement; consumer protection; trans European networks; structural and cohesion funds; regulation of political funding; European administration; and the adoption of financial rule (Appendix 4 provides a full list of areas subject to codecision).

5.4 The present structures of democracy and governance in the Union and Parliament

The role that the European Parliament plays in the governance structure of the overall Union has changed dramatically since its original role as oversight body to the ECSC. The Lisbon Treaty gave the Parliament a significant role in the decision-making process, and whilst it is still only one part of that process, it has the ability to approve, alter, and reject legislation passed to it. Lisbon represents the latest stage in a long progression of European integration that began in 1951 with the Treaty of Paris and eventually the establishing of an integrated system of governance with responsibility for a number of areas of social, economic, and political life.

The current system of governance in the European Union revolves around the process of codecision between the Parliament and the Council. Introduced in the Treaty on European Union (1993) at Maastricht, the principle of codecision created a bicameral system that meant the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament jointly made

decisions on legislation. Prior to this the Parliament was able to read bills before the council passed them to law and had the ability to reject the budget of the Union by majority vote, although in practise this meant little real influence (Hix *et al*, 2007: 14).

Under the process of codecision in the Lisbon Treaty the European Commission, advised by the European Council, is the only body that can instigate draft legislation. The Parliament receives draft legislation first, and will then either agree it or make amendments. The draft passes over to the Council of Ministers who may agree with the Parliament, in which case it passes back to the Commission to be turned to law, or they may draw up a 'common position' of amendments that are then returned to the Parliament for consideration (European Parliament, 2010c). If Parliament agrees or chooses to take no stance on the common position, it again passes back to the Commission, but if there is still disagreement and further amendments are insufficient, legislation then goes to a conciliation committee comprising 27 members of both the Parliament and Council. This conciliation committee, advised by the Commission, will produce an agreed text which then returns to the Parliament who can either accept it, or can reject it by absolute majority, in which case it will be dismissed (European Parliament, 2010c).

As well as strengthening codecision, the Lisbon Treaty defined a clear process through which member states also received draft legislative texts. Whilst states may not be able to vote on this legislation, it gives them the opportunity to liaise with their Council members on the direction they may wish them to take (Lisbon Treaty, 2007: 148). In its own literature, the European Union outlines the process of sending draft legislation to national parliaments:

National parliaments will act as "watchdogs" ... at an early stage of the decision-making procedure. All proposals from the Commission, initiatives from a group of Member States, initiatives from the European Parliament, requests from the Court of Justice, recommendations from the European Central Bank and requests from the European Investment Bank for adoption of a legislative act are to be sent to the national parliaments at

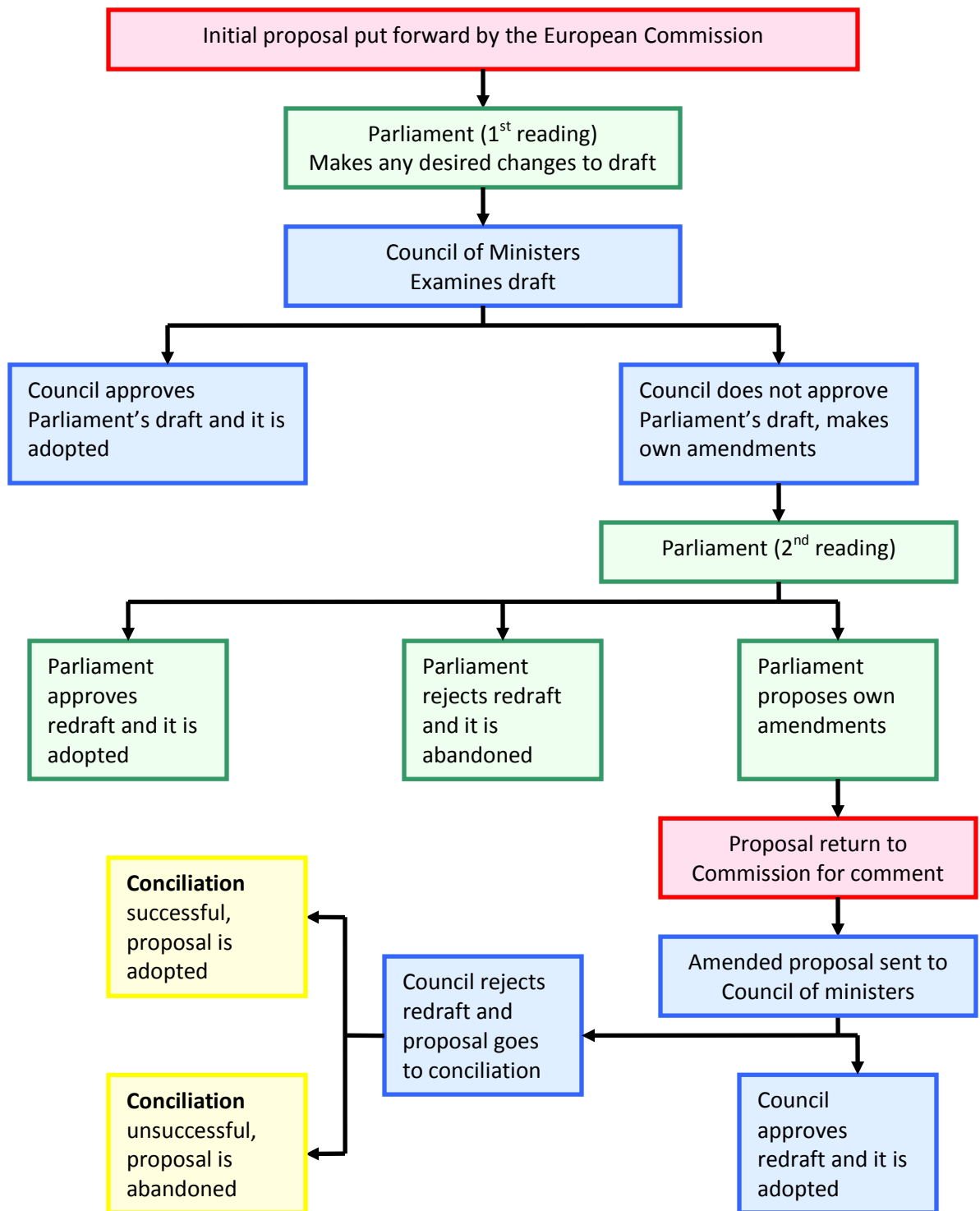
the same time as they are sent to the co-legislator (Council and Parliament)

(European Commission, 2011)

The formalisation of a role for both states and citizens effectively defines the remit of the EU. It comprises a relevant community unlike any other body, with separate institutions representing the wishes of member states and legally mandated European citizens. Together, these bodies share a large part of the legislative structure and give both parts of the EU's relevant community the chance to participate in the governance process.

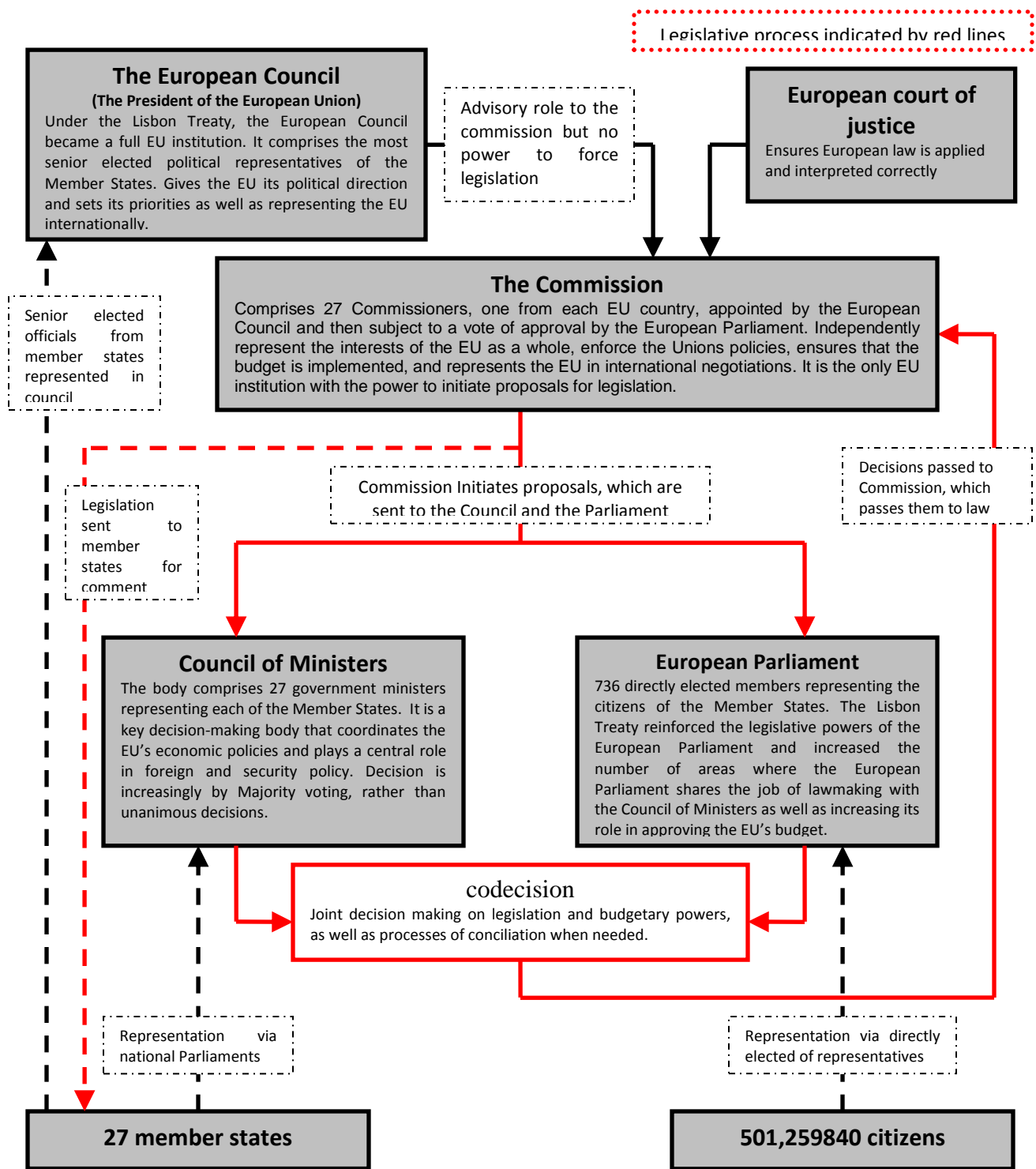
Figures 17 and 18 (following) outline aspects of the EU's legislative procedure, specifying the role that states and citizens play. Figure 17 depicts a simplified diagram of the codecision process, with the roles of each legislative body clearly identified. Figure 18 puts this process into the wider context of the EU's governance structures, displaying the relationships between different bodies in the EU. Figure 18 (following) also shows the different levels at which states and citizens may input into the legislative process.

Figure 17: The process of codecision



Source: Adapted by author (2011) from Europa (2009)

Figure 18: The governance structure of the European Union after Lisbon



Source: Author (2011), using material from: Eurostat (2010); Europa (2010a); Nugent (2006: 399); Hix (1999: 6)

For Hix *et al* (2007: 20), the reforms of codecision in Maastricht and Lisbon mean the ‘EU legislative procedure is now a genuine bicameral procedure, under which the council and European Parliament have equal power’. As Figure 18 s however, there is far greater input for states into the governance structure than there is for citizens. State influence on the European Council, Commission, and Council of Ministers means that there is influence at every level of the EU structure. The Parliament, on the other hand, is the only body through which citizens may employ a direct voice, and even though it exercises significant powers to influence and even reject legislation; its lack of ability to initiate legislation effectively hampers the role of democratic governance.

The European Parliament may adopt its own ‘resolutions’ or ‘initiative reports’ which, whilst not legally binding do indicate a desire for the Commission to initiate legislation in that area (Hix *et al*, 2007: 112). The Lisbon Treaty also created ‘citizens initiative’ in which a petition of one million signatures ‘allows for citizens of the EU to call on the Commission to bring forward new policy proposals’ (Europa 2010a). Despite this, states remain the dominant political entities in the Union’s structures.

The model of one wholly elected chamber and one comprising selected representatives is not unique, for example, the Westminster model operates in the same way. What is unique about the governance structure of the European Union are the bodies it comprises. For the first time, a democratic institution in the Parliament stands along-side bodies representing the collective will of states. This governance structure serves to elevate the role of citizen in the international decision-making process. Whilst the Parliament is not as influential in the EU as states continue to be, its increasing role radically shapes the ways in which the governance of the European Union functions.

5.5 Critical analysis of the development of governance and democracy in the European Parliament

The development of the European Parliament as the primary democratic element of the European Union has been a slow process, and the history so far in this chapter shows how

the Parliament's development from a set of oversight bodies to become a mandated part of the EU's decision-making process. However, Horkheimer argues that we must not view the process of historical development as fact, but as a part of a managed history, which is a reflection of dominant ideological and cultural processes. In answer to this, Horkheimer (1992: 207) uses the concept of 'conspicuous opposition' as a method to question historical accounts. In the case of this analysis of the European Parliament, this means examining the Parliament's development in terms of its actual abilities to function as a democratic structure. The following parts of this chapter do this by using the three key principles of democracy developed in Chapter 3. These principles of legitimacy, representation, and accountability are a guide for areas to examine when assessing how a democratic system works and are discussed here in relation to the European Parliament.

5.5.1 Legitimacy

Democratic legitimacy in the European Union is an involved process, much of which relates to the changing role that the European Parliament plays in decision-making. As Chapter 3 argued, legitimacy refers to the ways in which a body gains the right to represent its citizens. Legitimacy is evident in both the physical and ideological structures of a governance body, informing the ways in which it works as well as the philosophy under which it presents itself to citizens and to the wider world. These two aspects of legitimacy play different roles in the Parliament's deployment, at different times shaping the ways in which democracy functions as part of the EU as a whole.

The process of legitimating the European Union as a democratic governance body began with the ECSC and Euratom in the late 1940s. The emphasis at this first stage of European development was undoubtedly economic, as the need for reconstruction meant that states required access to materials and resources. Many elements of the initial treaties that became the EU did not include a tangible role for democracy, but concentrated on maintaining a collective agreement geared towards the regulation of specific materials.

Democratic legitimacy was not a primary functional aspect in the early phases of European integration; however ideologically, democracy played an important part in

justifying the new bodies. Although the impetus for cooperation at the time was primarily economic, pressure groups such as the Union Européenne de Fédéralistes (UEF) and influential individuals such as Monnet advocated a more social agenda. The influence these bodies and individuals brought to bear was instrumental in the development of the oversight bodies that were part of the ECSC and Euratom. Despite the introduction of these oversight bodies however, governance relied almost solely on the signatory states. It was only through agreement by these states to allow some aspects of regulation to occur outside of their direct control that the collective bodies achieved any political legitimacy.

Although the oversight bodies of the ECSC and Euratom had little influence procedurally, they did comprise parliamentary representatives of the six states that had signed the agreements. Because of this, they did constitute a new level of democratic European cooperation, the existence of which helped to maintain a discourse on the role that democracy could play in legitimating a genuine European-wide governance structure.

The advent of the EEC in 1959 meant the combining of the various oversight bodies into a European Parliament, although Dedman (2010: 83) argues that this new Parliament had little more influence than the original bodies. However, by naming itself a parliament and by extending its membership, the ideological aspects of democracy championed by the UEF and those such as Monnet remained an important part of the integration process. Although the new Parliament lacked influence over the structures of the EEC, it maintained a strong ideological emphasis on the role democracy could play in legitimating European integration.

The Single European act (1986/7) meant the EEC became the EU, and within this new body there was a newly defined role for the European Parliament. Central to this role was the introduction of codecision, which allowed the Parliament to participate in the legislative process along with the Council of Ministers. Codecision extended what legitimacy that Parliament gained through its democratic elections to the overall European

Union, introducing a limited but meaningful structural element of democracy to the ideological emphasis.

There was further development in the structures of democratic legitimacy when the Treaty on European Union (1992) legally mandated a European citizenry to exist ‘under the same conditions as nationals of [a member] State’ (Treaty on European Union, 1992: 7). The concept of a European citizen helped to legitimate the European Union as a governance body in its own right, with a democratic arm through which the new citizens could influence decision making. This Lisbon Treaty strengthened many of the structures within the EU, and created a governance body with clearly demarcated powers and responsibilities. The Lisbon Treaty overhauled the process of codecision through which the Parliament and Council of Ministers take joint responsibility for shaping legislation. Under these reworked principles, an extended system of qualified majority voting that comes into force from 2014 involves what the EU calls a ‘double legitimacy’ as it requires ‘the support of 55 % of the Member States, representing at least 65 % of the European population’ (European Commission, 2009: 5).

The concept of a double-legitimacy, which Figures 17 and 18 also display, is an important aspect in the EU’s own justifications of democratic legitimacy. Codecision represents the culmination of an ideological claim to legitimacy in which the role of the Parliament has slowly increased; however, at the same time these claims also show that the role of member states remains central to the functions of the EU. The EU is not a body that wholly represents citizens, indeed it was deliberately structured in order to limit the influence of citizens over decision making. Instead, the EU is a body that represents a relevant community of two distinct but highly interrelated groups: member states and European citizens.

The divide between states and citizens is evident in the two most recent pieces of legislation that shape the EU’s structure. In the first instance, the reworked Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010: 391) emphasises the ‘principles of democracy and the rule of law’ as well as an established ‘citizenship of the Union’. This

document offers a clear ideological focus on democracy to match the structural development in Lisbon. At the same time however, Lisbon also emphasises the need to recognise the limits to its own influence and the ongoing role member states play in divesting power (European Commission, 2009: 14).

There are two ways to view the division of influence in the EU in relation to aspects of democratic legitimacy. On the one hand, the EU represents an ongoing struggle between states and citizens, which have clearly demarcated ideas and roles. This approach presupposes a fundamental difference between states, pitting the legitimacy of citizens against the legitimacy of states in a struggle for legislative authority in the EU. This interpretation is not necessarily representative of real-life relationships. While it is likely that there will be some difference between these two groups in what constitutes the best course of action, for example in how to reshape an economy to deal with a fiscal deficit, in practise there may often be many areas in which these two groups agree.

An alternative reading of the divide in political authority in the EU is to view that body as representing a globalisation of authority that seeks to include democratic legitimacy as part of its process. As Figure 6 in Chapter 4 shows, states need to function on an international level in order to participate in the structures of a neoliberal global economy. By introducing a level of democracy into internationalised politics, the EU challenges the dominance of purely neoliberal structures, giving citizens a chance to participate in the decisions that shape their lives. As such, this is a structure not born from a market rationalisation, but from a wider ideal of what is right for both states *and* citizens.

To a certain extent, the evidence in this chapter points towards the latter of these two explanations. There was no overwhelming push to increase the role of the Parliament, and it was not essential to the continued function of EU economic ties. However, the efficacy of democracy and democratic legitimacy depends on how far the Parliament integrates into the democratic process of the EU. If the Parliament has little functional input and is present in the EU simply because of its democratic credentials, then the legitimacy of governance is limited. If however, the Parliament plays a meaningful role

in decision making in which both elements of the relevant community participate in governance, the EU constitutes a unique type democratic global governance structure.

It is possible to explore the Parliament's integration by examining the role of representation and accountability. These principles of democracy identified in Chapter 3 help to define the role democracy takes in decision making, and thereby show how far citizens are able to influence the political structures shaping their lives.

5.5.2 Representation

As the second key principle of democracy, representation deals with the ways in which a 'relevant community' (Held 2002: 27) is able to participate in the structures of governance. Figure 4 in Chapter 3 shows how representation in a democratic governance structure is evident in two ways. Firstly, it is possible to tell how well representation occurs by examining the scope of a democratic and the composition of its relevant community. Secondly, representation is evident in the remit of a democratic system; how far representative systems account for citizens.

As the arguments already made on legitimacy show, what constitutes a relevant community in the EU has changed as the scope of the body developed. Initially, the relevant community constituted only those signatory states to the early treaties dealing with select trade regulation. The EU's relevant community expand with the introduction of European citizenship, and a legally mandated role for citizens to whom the Parliament was directly responsible. This new expanded relevant community is evident in the EU's decision-making structures, and Figures 17 and 18 describe how both states and citizens are now jointly involved in these processes.

The combination of representation for both states and citizens in EU decision making shows the body to comprise a relevant community unlike that of any other governance structure. The EU adapts the bicermal model of many democratic states to construct a system with both macro and micro level representation. As Figure 18 shows, although

states have greater policy influence in EU structures, through the Parliament EU citizens enjoy a functional, if limited, representation in the decision-making process.

The relevant community of the EU is fundamentally different from that of national democratic systems. It is not a traditional model writ large, but a combination of national and individual representation that gives states collective bargaining and a unified voice on the complex international stage, as well as providing citizens with a direct route for democratic representation above their national governments.

It is not just the scope of representation that may show how well a democratic system performs, but also the remit of democracy within the structures of decision making. The ‘double legitimacy’ (European Commission, 2009: 5) that the EU claims is part of its structures operates through both states and the Parliament, although the Parliament remains the primary body representing citizens. One of the most significant ways in which democratic representation occurs in the Parliament is through elections, which occur at five-year intervals. The most recent elections in 2009 had an average turnout of 43% across the 27 member states (European Union, 2009). A system of degressive proportionality allocates seats proportionately to the population of each member state, which means that ‘bigger Member States accept fewer seats than they would receive if the total were divided exactly in proportion to population, in order to allow for better representation of less-densely populated states’ (European Parliament, 2007). The intention of degressive proportionality is to ensure that the allocation system is flexible enough to allow fair national representation and ‘enough seats to represent all major strands in the national political fabric’ (European Parliament, 2007). Figure 19 gives the resulting proportion of seats that each member state receives:

Figure 19: Number of European Parliament seats per country (2009 – 2014 parliamentary term)			
Germany	99	Austria	17
France	72	Bulgaria	17
Italy	72	Denmark	13
United Kingdom	72	Finland	13
Poland	50	Slovakia	13
Spain	50	Ireland	12
Romania	33	Lithuania	12
Netherlands	25	Latvia	8
Belgium	22	Slovenia	7
Greece	22	Cyprus	6
Hungary	22	Estonia	6
Portugal	22	Luxembourg	6
Czech Republic	22	Malta	5
Sweden	18		
TOTAL	736		
Source: Europa, 2010b			

Although degressive proportionality assures some level of equality between states in the EU, it also means that European politics filters through a national framework. Citizens vote for political parties on a state level, and these votes then translate into a proportion of seats on a European level. This association between national and European politics has the potential to be highly detrimental for the Parliament’s attempts to function as a democratic body representing a clearly defined European citizenry.

A further issue is the under-representation of citizens in the decision-making process. Although Figure 17 shows the significant role of the Parliament in codecision, when contrasting this with the overall structures in Figure 18, it is clear that citizens experience a lesser involvement than member states. The influence of states over codecision and over other bodies in the EU, such as the European Commission, allows them a greater say in the way that policy evolves.

There are some clear problems with representation in the EU, not least of which are the ongoing associations between national and European politics, and the less involved role the Parliament takes in decision making. Despite an unequal relationship, the Parliament's role in codecision does mean a significant role for citizens in the governance structures of the EU. Extending a relevant community to encompass European citizens clearly shows the EU to have moved beyond its role as a regulatory body to encompass other aspects of democratic representation above the level of the nation state. Because of the Parliament's role, the EU is different from any other governance structure, allowing states the ability to collectively bargain in a global market, whilst at the same time enabling citizens to exercise some democratic representation in those processes. However, the actual democratic success of this system relies on the functional relationships between democratic structures and citizens, and how well these allow citizens to participate in the governance process.

5.5.3 Accountability:

The third principle of democracy that Chapter 3 identifies is accountability. Accountability deals specifically with the functional and reciprocal relationship between the relevant community and those that are involved in the decision-making process. The ways in which systems and processes are accountable show how democracy integrates into decision making.

As the previous section on representation argued, despite working on behalf of a pan-European citizenry the European Parliament still often functions through the structures of member states. As with representation, there is a divide in accountability for elected MEPs between national and European structures. At a state level, the election of MEPs occurs through national political organisations, with members selected as part of these parties. Once in the European Parliament, MEPs join one of seven European political groupings that operate independently of the national political system. Figure 20 (following) displays the size of these European Parties as well as showing an indicative membership of national political parties.

Figure 20: Political groups in the European Parliament		
European political groupings	No. of seats	National political party members
Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)	265	France: New Centre Party Germany: Christian Democratic Union
Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats	184	UK: Labour France : Socialist Party
Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	84	UK: Liberal Democrats Germany: The Free Democratic Party
Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	55	UK: SNP / The Green Party France: The Greens
European Conservatives and Reformists Group	55	UK: Conservative / Ulster Unionists Poland: Law and Justice Party
Confederal Group of the European United Left	35	UK: Sinn Fein France: The Left Front
Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group	32	UK – UKIP Italy – Northern League
Non-attached	26	
TOTAL	736	
Source: Europa, 2010b		

The association between national and European political parties remains a major barrier to creating an independent authority in the Parliament, as MEPs are subject to a duality of political identity in which there is the risk of conflict between national and European allegiance. Hix *et al* (2007: 133) describe a ‘principle-agent’ framework that explains how conflicting pressures influence decision making. On the one hand, MEPs have allegiance to a European political grouping through which they operate for the majority of the time in Europe, an allegiance which allows them to ‘secure policy and office goals inside the European Parliament’ (Hix *et al*, 2007: 134). On the other hand, the national political parties that elected MEPs retain significant influence over their political careers, as well as control over their future access to political office.

Hix *et al* (2007: 137) conducted an analysis of voting patterns in the European Parliament and concluded that where there is a conflict in position, MEPs are more likely to vote

with their national party rather than their European political grouping. They argued that despite an ‘increasingly cohesive’ system in the European parties, the national parties remain the ‘main aggregate actors in the European Parliament’ (2007: 145) as they can exert the most pressure on the future career of the MEP.

Accountability in the European Parliament has developed through a gradual process of aggregation of influence from successive treaties. As with legitimacy and representation, there are however, some serious questions on the nature of the structures in place to manage the relationships between citizens and their elected representatives. Continued dominance of state-based systems means that a European citizenry might exist in principle, but there are barriers to its functions in practise. Although the Parliament does exert influence, there are questions over the levels of citizen’s democratic input, particularly in light of ongoing conflicts between national and European interests.

5.6 Summary: the first stage of immanent criticism

This chapter is the first phase of a three-stage immanent criticism, and it provides an historical basis for the Parliament’s functions and a starting point for their critique. As an historical analysis, the chapter applies Horkheimer’s (1992: 200) assessment of social objects located not only in time, but in particular sets of relationships which are ‘not the result of conscious spontaneity or the part of free individuals’ but ‘founded directly on oppression or been the blind outcome of conflicting forces’. Consequently, it imparts both an historical breakdown of the Parliament’s development as well as some critique of the claims of democracy made by its legislative structure.

The Parliament’s growth was purposeful, shaped within the developing European Union in order to perform a particular role. After the initial treaties establishing the ECSC and Euratom, there was a slow process of developing the bodies that were to become the European Parliament. A more critical reading argues that this development was firmly under the guidance of dominant member states, and that these bodies sought the

legitimacy which a democratic institution such as the Parliament brought. As greater power was concentrated in the centralised EU structures, the democratic European Parliament afforded the project an air of accountability and legitimacy.

The EU argues that the bicameral governance structure of the Parliament and Council accords its citizens a 'double legitimacy of the people (as represented by their MEPs in the European Parliament) and the Member States (as represented by the Ministers in the Council)' (European Commission, 2009: 16). As this chapter has argued however, this claim of double legitimacy for European citizens is questionable, and the study carried out by Hix *et al.*, (2007: 134) certainly suggests that where there is a difference of opinion between national and European parties, the national party prevails.

Despite the continued dominance of states, Lisbon did strengthen the Parliament's role in decision making. Codecision gives the Parliament and the Council of Ministers the ability to adapt and reject proposals. Although the influence of citizens through the Parliament is less than that of states, there is a real route for participation in governance. This representation gives the EU a degree of both accountability and legitimacy, but crucially it also introduces the idea of democratic governance above the level of the state. The Parliament's role imports democracy into an international political area, which is dominated by the non-democratic structures of a neoliberal ideology.

The EU is the only body with a relevant community comprising states as well as a legally defined citizenry, and both of these groups enjoy representation in its governance structure. The EU calls this a double legitimacy, and although this term belies the complex nature of its representative system, it is a useful concept for explaining the dual role of the EU. As part of this governance structure, there is a mandated role for democracy in decision making that is unique amongst other non-state and multi-state global governance bodies. However, the extent to which this democracy is effective relies on its application in the legislative structures in the EU.

On paper, the Parliament offers democratic legitimacy, accountability, and representation; however, in its actual functions these processes are less well defined. Through a range of first-hand accounts, the following chapter explores how the structures of democracy and governance in the Parliamentary function. As the second stage of immanent criticism, it reviews the actual workings of the Parliament, and in doing so expands on the idea that the Parliament's presence in the EU makes it a new form of governance structure that functions above the level of the state and incorporates democratic elements into its decision making.

Chapter 6

Immanent Criticism Stage 2: A critical examination of democracy and governance in the EP

6.1 Introduction: the second stage of immanent criticism

6.2 The local level of the Parliament's functions

6.2.1 Communication

6.2.1 Effectiveness

6.2.1 Critical summary of the local level

6.3 The regional level of the Parliament's functions

6.3.1 Economic model versus. social approach

6.3.2 States versus Parliament

6.3.3 Democracy and the European Parliament

6.3.4 Critical summary of the regional level

6.4 The global level of the Parliament's functions

6.4.1 EU/EP as a global actor

6.4.2 Global governance and democracy

6.4.3 Critical summary of the global level

6.5 Summary: democracy and governance in the European Parliament

6.5.1 Moving towards the third stage of immanent criticism:

6.1. Introduction: the second stage of immanent criticism

As a democratic governance body, the European Parliament fills a significant role in the decision-making processes of the European Union. Through codecision, the Parliament provides citizens of the EU with a chance to influence governance above the level of their individual states. As the last chapter began to argue however, although EU legislation provides a strong role for the Parliament, in practice there are limits to its democratic and governance roles.

As the second stage of immanent criticism, this chapter explores the nature of democratic governance in the Parliament's procedures. The chapter builds on the previous analysis of the Parliament's developmental history by critically examining the applications of democracy and governance in its structures. This part of immanent criticism embraces

Horkheimer's (1946) idea that the construction of social objects is part of a interlinked set of process in which different forces influence the eventual outcome. Consequently, this chapter views the Parliament as part of a 'theoretical whole' (Horkheimer, 1946: 183), in other words a manifestation of wider global political, social, and economic forces rather than a self-contained set of processes.

As this chapter is an account of the actual working of the Parliament, the majority of the information in it comes from a series of first-hand accounts from those with a working knowledge on a wide range of its functions. Foremost amongst these is a range of interviews conducted specifically for this study, which asked three MEPs, three Academics and three involved practitioners for their perspectives on various aspects of the Parliament's capabilities. The methodological discussion in Chapter 2 outlines the reflexive process used for conducting these interviews, and Figure 1 in that chapter gives a more detailed description of each interviewee and their relevance to this chapter's analysis. In the analysis of the interviews, quotes from members of the different interview groups are signified by the following abbreviations: MEP for Members of the European Parliament; Ac for academics; and IP for involved practitioners. Quotes from the interviews are in italics to differentiate them from other sources, and the page number given with each quotation refers to the corresponding page from each interview transcript, a complete set of which is in Appendix 5, attached in digital format at the end of this dissertation.

As well as the interviews, this chapter also utilises some other documentary evidence from bodies in the European Union and other similar organisations, particularly the African Union. As with the interviews, there is recognition that these official documents are subjective accounts, although their use adds another dimension to the overall analysis.

Since the Parliament is a large and complicated body, the chapter looks at its functions in at three distinct levels: the national, the regional, and the global. Each of these represents a particular aspect of the Parliament's functions that focuses on the different relationships

and roles of the Parliament within the EU. Figure 21 outlines these levels and the important areas for analysis under each.

Figure 21: Three levels of the Parliament's functions for analysis

Global level of interaction

- The ways the European Parliament functions as a governance structure in a globalising world and its relationships with other global bodies
- The integration of democracy into global governance

Regional level of interaction

- The conflicts between economic and social models in the Parliament's functional relationship with the decision-making processes of the EU
- The ongoing competition between states and citizens
- The democratic experience in the Parliaments internal structures

Local level of interaction

- The efficacy of the Parliaments relationships within member states
- The ways democratic governance is manifest for European citizens, and how this is communicated.

The chapter divides each of the levels into specific aspects that emerged from the interviews and analysis of the dissertation. Each level concludes with a critical summary that discusses how democracy and governance is manifest in those relationships. As well as offering a critique of the Parliament's functions for the particular levels of interaction, the chapter concludes with a more in-depth discussion on the ways in which the Parliament's presence in the EU represents a new form of internationalised democratic governance.

6.2 The local level of the European Parliament

The local level of the Parliament's functions focuses on the relationships between the European Parliament and its citizens. These relationships are an important indicator of how effective the Parliament's democratic structures are, as well as how European citizens experience that democracy. While the concept of 'local' fits well with the idea of interaction at a level below the state, it is worth remembering that this covers 27 countries and over half a billion citizens.

The treaty on European Union at Maastricht (1992: 7) introduced the concept of 'Citizenship of the Union', and subsequent treaties refined this with 'a series of fundamental and political rights' (Europe, 2010c). Legislatively, Maastricht (1992), Lisbon (2007), and the updated Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010) helped to strengthen the EU as governance structure with de facto powers across member states. However, the efficacy of these treaties is in the ways that they provide an opportunity for democratic governance.

The local level of interaction focuses on two key areas, both of which emerged as important in the interviews conducted for this dissertation. The first deals with the nature of the Parliament's communication, both with individuals and with some of the many projects it commissions, oversees, or implements in member states. The second area focuses on the effectiveness of the Parliament in implementing or influencing policy enacted at a national level. Although these two examples by no means constitute the full range of the Parliament's activities, they do provide real examples that emerged from the interviews and illustrate the ways in which the Parliament functions.

6.2.1 Communication:

The involvement of citizens in the processes of governance has the potential to be a great legitimating force for a democratic structure. Often, this involvement revolves around the communication between citizens and their governance structure, as well as the transparency of its decision-making processes. If communication is poor, then the

democratic element of governance runs the risk of being limited to specific events, such as periodic elections. However, if there is a free flow of communication, it is more likely citizens will experience an interactive democratic process with the Parliament.

There are a number of different mechanisms to facilitate feedback and interaction between the European Parliament and its citizens. The most obvious of these is the relationship between the MEP and their constituency members, essentially the basic element of a representative system. The nature of the relationship between a representative and those they represent is an important way to maintain the connection between the governed and the governors. Good communication creates strong relationships and engenders participation and confidence in the system, whereas poor communication may often leave citizens feeling they are able to bring little influence to bear over the structures and functions of power.

In the case of the European Parliament, one of the main issues to arise from the interviews was a concern in the academic and practitioner groups over MEP's perceived remoteness from their constituents and constituencies. The constraint of representing what are in some cases very large constituencies, both geographically and in terms of population, is compounded by the need for MEPs to spend a certain amount of their time in mainland Europe. Certainly, both Ac1 and IP2 felt there were problems in the remoteness of MEPs:

...They are completely remote. I mean they are accountable ... I know that the one or two Labour MEPs that I've come across certainly try to put themselves about in their constituencies and particularly within their parties to whoever will listen to them, so they do work quite hard, I think, to report back.

(Ac1: 8)

.....

...How the hell does someone in Brussels know what the hell is going on in the Forest of Dean? It's very hard.

(IP2: 4)

As well as geographical constraints, the nature of European party politics means that MEPs find themselves as representatives of both national and European political parties, as well as individual causes they may champion. The effect of this is to present MEPs with several different sources to whom they are accountable. When asked a question on this directly, the MEPs indicated the range of different locations to which they feel they are accountable. For MEP3, accountability primarily lay with:

The party in the east of England, my party, the constituency. Those are the people that put me here.

(MEP3)

For MEP1, accountability was a more complex issue that depended on the nature of the issue at hand. He stated that:

In terms of accountability, of course, we're accountable at election time, we are accountable in between though ...

But in the European Parliament you also have to work out what's the best compromise not just for your region and your country but for Europe as a whole. So you're trying to get the right balance between all these things.

(MEP1: 2&3)

Both MEP3 and MEP1 identify different sites of accountability they feel they are subject to, and MEP1 in particular talks about the role played by different sources of accountability in the Parliament. The 'principle-agent' framework described by Hix *et al* (2007: 133) illustrates how different sites of authority mean MEPs may often find themselves conflicted, an issue particularly relevant in a body the size of the European Parliament that deals with the wishes of citizens as well as national and European political parties. MEP2 identifies this conflict:

[The] easy answer, r and the correct answer is I'm accountable to the six million, or the six and a half million people in the South East of England. But the six and half million people in the South East of England cannot vote for me as an individual, they can only put their cross by a party list. So you could then say am I really accountable to the hundred and eighty odd thousand Conservative party members who selected me? Well, even there, how many came to the meeting? I mean two thousand or something?

I mean it is a real problem and the problem I would argue ... has to do with the whole level on which people connect with their democratic institution.

(MEP2: 1)

The problems of communicating accountability are evident in the different responses that MEPs gave to questions on that topic. Multiple sites of authority mean that communication differs between individuals MEPs, and aside from some contact with constituency members, it appears that the Parliament as a body makes very little direct effort to communicate with European citizens. Practitioner IP1 who has extensive working knowledge of the structures of the European Parliament, argues that the Parliament's direct communication with its citizens is limited:

There is no direct interaction between the citizens and the Parliament, there are however indirect interfaces which are about to be developed. For example, public hearings, for example consultations of the civil society organisation. Also the possibility for associations of interest to present their points so it is not that the Parliament is closed with regard to the concerns which are uttered by citizens...

...I wouldn't say this is accountability, but it is a level of dialogue.

(IP1: 6)

Another aspect of communication that was discussed in the interviews with the involved practitioners was problems in connecting major European-funded projects with the functions of the Parliament and local MEPs. Interviewee IP2 has worked on several large centrally funded European projects, and he questions the involvement of MEPs in these processes:

There is very little contact, face-to-face contact. In our limited experience, you know here is a faceless bureaucracy ... we never knew the name of anybody until problem[s] with finding ... It was anonymous...

...do MEPs know what European funded projects are operating within their area? They have got a large area but...no contact at all...

(IP2: 6)

Practitioner IP3 echoed these concerns, and questioned the role of centrally funded projects. He felt that the projects he worked on were often not genuine communicative exercises, but were:

... primarily for the validation of existing policies and policy directions, [and] used by departments and agencies as a means to justify their decisions and seemingly legitimate their actions, rather than as a genuine attempt to gather information on policies and provide suggestions for future directions.

(IP3: 2)

Both IP2 and IP3 felt there was little communicative process or ongoing impact associated with the European-funded projects in which they had been involved. Communication of findings was limited, and IP3 argued that there was not much evidence of the projects he had been involved in extending beyond their conclusion:

... [That] there was relatively little impact of the research on EU policy overall...

... to some degree, this was to do with levels of bureaucracy that separated the research/research from the decision-making mechanisms.

(IP3: 2)

Although the European Parliament did not initiate all of these projects, they are part of the overall governance process in the EU. These projects are an important element of the interface between central European agencies and European citizens, and as such, they afford MEPs a chance to participate and communicate with European citizens.

IP1 presents a damning case of communication in his interview and from his vantage point within the Secretariat offers an opinion of interaction between citizens and the Parliament:

Let me put this very quickly as I think we should make it clear. There is no direct interaction between the citizens and the Parliament, there are however indirect interfaces which are about to be developed. For examples public hearings, for example consultations of the civil society organisation. Also the possibility for associations of interest to present their points.

(IP1: 6)

Lisbon made a clear attempt to involve citizens in the mechanisms of state. For example, schemes such as the ‘citizen’s initiative’ allow groups of citizens to petition for legislation on specific areas (Europe, 2010a). Nevertheless, even through many of the initiatives in Lisbon are yet to be implemented, there seems to be a problem with communication that runs deeper than a lack of structures and involves a problem with MEP’s multiple roles, and an ongoing lack of participation in activities in local or national communities.

6.2.2 Effectiveness

The second aspect to emerge from the interviews in relation to the local level was the effectiveness of the Parliament’s actions in member states. The role of the European Parliament in policy making, and the visibility of this to individuals is an important indicator of how the democracy is judged.

For academic Ac3, one of the important ways in which the Parliament is successful is through the mandated existence of a European citizenry. He argues that this concept did much to extend the idea of a European Parliament that existed outside of national frameworks:

[The] invention of the category of European citizen which is stamped on everybody’s passport ... burst the boundaries of the old doctrine of citizenship which supposed you only can be a citizen so long as you are a part of a territorial state.

(Ac3: 3)

In contrast to Ac3, the other two academics expressed concerns over the degree of influence the Parliament wields in shaping policy at a local or national level. Academic Ac1, who has extensive experience of researching the application of social policy across Europe, felt that the Parliament exerts little influence:

I rather wish I could think of an example of social policy, whether it’s about disability, sexuality, sexual harassment, race or whatever where you

could say 'well the Parliament has really dug its foot, stuck it's foot in here and changed something, but I can't.

(Ac1: 3)

Similarly, academic Ac2 questioned the role of the European Parliament in domestic politics, arguing that there may be a manufactured lack of visibility when it comes to European Legislation:

... I don't see much impact. Of course, the impact of the legislation is very large as everyone knows. Over 50% of our legislation derives from the EP even though it is often initiated from outside the Parliament.... But the awareness of the impact is not huge, and that's partly deliberate. I mean it could be made to be much larger if politicians in the nations thought it was useful to.

(Ac2: 7)

Although there are differences in how each participating academic discusses the Parliament's legislative role, they generally agree that the Parliament's visibility is low in member states. Practitioner IP1 who is head of the Secretariat for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs argues that there is a problem in citizens' perception of the Parliament:

The problem is that citizens often do not perceive exactly the possibilities, which the European Union has because the powers and the forms of action the European Union has are much more limited than ordinary citizens often imagine.

(IP1: 6)

For IP1, the issue is not just that citizen's poor sense of the Parliament's role, but that the Parliament itself plays a secondary role in the Union's overall governance structure. Any policy the EU does produce is not necessarily a product of the Parliament, but of the overall governance structure in which the Parliament is only one part. Academic Ac1 picks up this point:

[It] doesn't seem to me that [policy is] coming from the Parliament, that's coming from the social partners and it's coming from the Council of Ministers. I mean... it seems to me that the power and policy making is done by the Commission and is approved by the Council of Ministers and the European Council above that.

(Ac1: 2)

These views emphasise the complex nature of decision making in Europe, divided between the Council of Ministers and the Parliament. The Lisbon Treaty attempted to remedy the perceived democratic deficit created by this division, however the interviews here show that at the local level there is still a perception that the Parliament is less influential than other EU bodies.

Academic Ac1 claims that the lack of involvement of the European Parliament is an intentional outcome of Member States' continued dominance. Ac1 uses the so-called Milward thesis (1984) to argue that development is only fully realised at the sufferance and requirement of states:

The Milward thesis ... is that the EU, the EC the ECC was actually constructed in the 1940's and 50's to strengthen the nation state. Not that that's a paradox. Because it gives this sense of the Council of Ministers fighting for the nation ... so yes we don't have wars within Western Europe any more, we have this place where national battles can be fought. And this is a strengthened national sovereignty, particularly in areas like social policy.

(Ac1: 6)

Ac1 makes the point that the EU functions as an extension of the member states because bodies such as the Parliament maintain little actual say in policies. He argues that this is made worse when you consider that the EU's remit still does not encompass the same range of areas as national politics:

In terms of the nuts and bolts of social policy, housing, rents, education, the EUs role is really minimalist and that's because national governments don't want to let that go because it legitimates them. If you don't control things like immigration, health care, whatever, then you know, that's where you get your legitimacy from.

(Ac1: 8)

This extension of the Milward thesis (1984) describes a process in which member states maintain legitimacy by holding onto the primary functions of statehood, including the ability to set the majority of policy. MEP2, who identifies himself as a Conservative

sceptic on the European project, argues that the failings of the Parliament lie in the lack of common agreement in member states and a dearth of European solidarity:

[T]here's no pan-European public opinion, there no sense of affinity, of allegiance of inherited loyalty. And for that reason, the European Parliament is like a wheel whirling in place without connecting to the ground.

(MEP2: 1)

Although many of those interviewed here question the efficacy of the European Parliament as a decision-making body, its presence in the EU does offer the potential for a democratic route for citizens into the functions of governance, however limited. For academic Ac1, although the Parliament may not be particularly effective, its presence is nevertheless vital to the EU maintaining democratic legitimacy as a governance body:

[The Parliament] has a very very important role in legitimating the whole apparatus... it's about approval, it's about scrutiny, it's about what the Commission is doing. It's about scrutinising policy making, but it's not driving it and it's not really shifting it or changing it very much, but it has to be there.

(Ac1: 2-3)

6.2.3 Critical summary of the local level

At the local level of interaction, those interviewed identified two areas of concern with the Parliament's interaction with citizens. The first of these involved the nature of communication between citizens, funded projects, and MEPs. Several of the interviewees expressed a degree of scepticism regarding the levels of contact between the Parliament and citizens. This was particularly the case for members of the involved practitioner group who had engaged in centrally funded projects within member states and experienced limited engagement from MEPs.

The principles of democracy outlined in Chapter 3, strongly connect issues of accountability with communication and Held and Koenig-Archibugi's (2005: 3) argument that in order for effective accountability to take place, there needs to be 'steady

and reliable information and communication between decision-makers and stakeholders'. Effective democratic accountability requires the presence of communicative structures within a governance body to ensure it takes place. For several of those interviewed, this was not always their experience.

The interviews identified were several reasons for problems with the Parliament's communication. The nature of representation in the European Parliament means MEPs are responsible not just for local communities, but maintain associations with national parties as well as European political parties. Consequently, the conflict that MEPs might experience between sources of accountability mean that there is some confusion over what constitutes that relevant community.

The problems of managing a European-wide Parliament whilst still functioning as a representative of a defined area in a member state meant several interviewees felt that MEPs were distant or removed from local politics. Distances are political as well as physical. The lack of Europe-wide political parties means that MEPs retain strong ties to national political systems, adding a layer in between MEPs and constituents, and distancing citizens from the Parliament's politics.

The principles of democracy in this dissertation suggest that the nature of communication is an important way of maintaining transparency and therefore legitimacy in democratic governance. This is also identified here by practitioner IP3, who argues that the Parliament is involved with some European Projects 'primarily for the validation of existing policies and policy directions' (IP3: 2). Democratic legitimacy is a two-way process that needs to be ongoing in order to be sustained. Genuine participation and communication may strengthen democracy, whilst a lack of it, or a superficial attempt at it, might weaken the relationship between citizens and governance. The Lisbon Treaty (2007) worked towards strengthening the process of communication by strengthening codecision and allowing citizens to petition the Parliament directly; however, as the interviews demonstrate there is still a lack of direct communication between the Parliament and citizens.

The second area identified at the local level of the model is the effectiveness of the Parliament as a governance structure. Several interviewees described a struggle between states and citizens, and although the democratically elected European Parliament does provide legitimacy for EU policy, some felt that the Parliament's overall role in the decision-making process was limited. The EU certainly exhibits an interest in using the Parliament as a legitimising force; however, the criticisms of its relationship with citizens must bring this into question.

The Milward Thesis (1984) seems to fit the model of the Parliament described here. Certainly, some of those interviewed talked of a Parliament that was either 'limited' (Ip1: 6), with little impact (Ac2: 7), or lacking any form of European solidarity (MEP2: 1). There was however, some feeling that the Parliament did represent a genuine part of the decision-making process in the EU. Academic AC3, argued that a European citizenry, represented through the Parliament, helps to define the EU as a new form supranational state. In addition, academic Ac1 felt that even though the Parliament played a secondary role in decision making, it had an important part to play in scrutinising the process.

Although there was some feeling that the Parliament plays an important role in the overall structures of the EU, there was little evidence of this at a local level. Because of this, the benefits of democratic governance are predominately manifest at an institutional level where the Parliament helps to legitimate the governance of the European Union. At a local level, citizens appear to experience little interaction with the Parliament. The emphasis on the ideological rather than the structural elements of democracy means that whilst it is an important part of legitimating the European Parliament and Union, democracy fulfils only a limited functional role.

6.3 The regional level of the Parliament's function:

The development of the European Parliament as a democratically elected body has been a long process. Whilst there is clear evidence of strengthening the Parliament's role in the

treaties of Maastricht and Lisbon, the evidence from the local level questions how effective the Parliament actually is. This second level of interaction explores the Parliament's relationships on a regional level, specifically the ways in which it functions as democratic aspect of the EU's governance. There are three main areas emerging from the interviews: firstly, a clash between economic and social approaches to governance; secondly, the ongoing division of powers between states and citizens; and finally the actual role the democracy plays in decision-making.

6.3.1 Economic model versus social approach

One of the key areas to emerge from the interviews was the clash in the European Union between economic and social models of integration. This division is the product of a conflict between the more social role of the European Parliament and the economic emphasis more commonly adopted by the Council and Commission.

Academic Ac1 emphasises a conflict between the need for social integration and the clear drive for economic cooperation that characterises the history of much of European integration. Speaking from a social policy perspective in which he has a wide range of experience, Ac1 questions the nature of European integration:

[We] do seem to have got economic integration to some extent, without the other forms, the social integration if you like, the social policy integration... The function is and always has been economic integration. The coal and steel community and now the Euro and the situation we see ourselves in ... It's about economic integration and making business efficient and effective.

(Ac1: 5)

As with Ac1, academic Ac2 identifies ongoing tensions in the EU between social and economic forces:

[It] seems to me there is a battle going within the European Union about the extent to which it will be an organisation which is making a friendly environment for what you describe as neoliberal economics. We used to call it laissez-faire.

(Ac2: 2-3)

For Ac2, there are ongoing pressures on the EU to function as an environment suitable for neoliberal, laissez-faire political and social structures. As both Ac1 and Ac2 identify, the social element represented in the Parliament continues to be less emphasised than the management of resources:

[In] Europe you haven't got the task of building societies, the societies are there. The EU is about management and coordination of those existing resources.

(Ac2: 5)

Although there is a strong emphasis on neoliberal structures, Ac2 also identifies a significant role for a social emphasis in European development. Driven initially by the ideologies of many early proponents, this social focus continues in some of the larger member states today:

[This] social rights tradition is very strong in Europe and is being protected so that I think that it has many defenders who would not wish to see it disappear. Yes, I mean if it's going to violence it'll be in defence of social rights, not against social rights.

(Ac2: 6)

There is some recent support for this in Greece, where there is widespread opposition to austerity measures imposed by the European Central Bank and IMF including the most recent reports of the ECB requiring a reduction of 100,000 in the civil service and a cut in pensions and salaries for those that remain employed (BBC, 2011b; 2011c). In Greece, as well as other countries around Europe in a similar position, the social agenda is being dictated by the needs of the Eurozone to reduce fiscal and structural deficits of member's economies.

The EU, and particularly the Eurozone, is not alone in having to introduce measures to address economic concerns, many other countries worldwide are in the same process. For example, the Credit Rating Agency (CRA) Moody's (2011) threatened to downgrade US's Aaa rating if it did not change its economic policy, a threat which Standard and Poor's (S&P) followed up on in early August, 2011. The EU is therefore not alone in suffering under the pressures of a global economy, and agencies of that economy play an

important role in managing how states and governance structures function. That the EU is no different from many other states should be no surprise; however, the fact that these external market forces actively shape democracies is worrying. In particular, the Parliament's role as only one part of an EU that also represents economic and statist interests means that it is particularly vulnerable to these influences. The future of democracy exercised through the Parliament therefore depends to large extent on how far a social model may impinge on the continued dominance of economic pressures.

6.3.2 States versus Parliament

The struggle between a social model and the dominance of a market-based system is evident in the relationship between member states and citizens of the European Union. One way to observe this is through the pressure MEPs face when working on Parliamentary business.

Hix *et al*'s (2007: 133) 'principle-agent' framework is a useful way to describe the different sources of authority MEPs face. MEP1 described how these different sources of authority impact on the decisions they make in the Parliament:

Well, in first instances as with most national parliaments, members of the European Parliament act individually under their own conscience. They cannot take instructions from outside; there is no imperative mandate from any outside body. You have been elected to exercise your judgement.

...

[O]f course we do take account of national interests just as ministers in the Council it does matter which party they are... So just as the party ideological side can creep into the Council, the national interest side can affect debates in the Parliament.

(MEP1: 2&3)

MEP3 indicates in his interview how the lack of specific European-wide political parties is an issue when dealing with the multiple sources of authority. For MEP3, the association with national parties means that the system in the European Parliament does not function properly:

I think that the principal sinew of democracy that we haven't got is political parties at the European level. And we've got to develop federal political parties which can compete with the nationalistic, narrow focus of the domestic political parties. They can be affiliated as they are in the US, but they are essentially competing for power with the national political parties. That's what we haven't done very well.

(MEP3: 4)

MEP3 goes on to explain how the nature of this system leads to multiple sites of accountability and a disconnection between citizens, who vote at a national level for candidates of national parties, which then represent them on a European basis as members of different political groupings. For MEP3 this disconnection is symptomatic of a lack of clear political choice:

Essentially, you've got to offer people political choice and political choice can only be offered by political parties in a democracy. They have to feel that by supporting a political party or some other political party that decision will affect the quality of policy that flows out of Brussels. It's that lack of an obvious connection, which is a real difficulty.

(MEP3: 4)

Despite the problems identified with multiple sites of authority, MEP1 talks about an overall positive influence from a European Parliamentary system that emerges from a range of different ideologies:

We sit by political affinity. So in the Parliament you have members from parties that are in government in each member state and that are in opposition in each member state. So we bring pluralism to the system, right from the far left to the far right ... coming not just from the cities but from the regions. So we bring a lot more diversity.

(MEP1: 1-2)

MEP1 may overstate the impact of this diversity, and MEP3 argues that the actual decision-making processes in the Parliament may reduce the ways in which these positions influence policy:

Well the policy is formulated here in the groups, but it's articulated in the Committees. That's where the nitty gritty work is done either on

legislation, clause by clause, or the tighter enquiry interrogation ... The powers of the committees combine the powers of a Westminster select committee and a standing committee. We can do whatever we like.

(MEP3: 1-2)

This position is interesting, as it suggests that power in the Parliament rests with committees, rather than individuals. MEP3 indicates that this reduces the effect of having multiple sites of accountability to some degree, although it may not eliminate all of the issues in a principle-agent framework.

As well as the role multiple sites of accountability play in MEPs decisions, issues regarding the ongoing division between states and citizens also arose when discussing the decision-making process with interviewees. The principle of codecision means the EU represents both states and citizens, as MEP 1 outlines in his interview:

[We] have a sort of a virtual two-chamber system in Council and Parliament. Council's job is to look at things from a national interest point of view – the ministers are there representing their country with their civil servants behind them, focused on how they see things in terms of the national interests, at least as seen by the government of the day.

(MEP1: 2)

The problem with this system, as MEP 3 identifies, is that it effectively allows member states to pursue agendas of self-interest rather than the benefit of the entire Union:

The Commission and the Parliament here are directed towards trying to seek consensus about what's in the common interests of the European Union. In the Council too often it's the spurious self interest of a state that either blocks progress or skews the quality of the decision in a certain direction or some other. Of course, nationality is still important, it still matters, it will always matter, but it ought not to be the prevalent factor in determining the direction of policy or the outcome of policy or the speed with which decisions are made.

(MEP3: 5)

The nature of codecision is a product of the EU's joint representation of states and citizens. The consequence of this dual system is that citizens often hold less influence than states, largely because states remain a large part of the basic administrative structure

of the EU and consequently retain a monopoly on legitimate authority. For interviewee IP1, Head of the Secretariat for the Committee for Constitution Affairs and heavily involved in the workings of the Parliament, members of both the Council and the Parliament have to compromise under codecision, a fact particularly evident when there is disagreement on a legislative issue:

[None] of the actors is fully free when they come together to compromise because with members of Parliament, if they want to enter the compromise they have to consider and examine whether they will have a majority in the house for such a decision. And on the other side, the representatives for the Council before entering the compromise will have to consider whether in the 27 member states governments comprising will have a qualified majority.

(IP1: 5)

For IP1, codecision is a legitimate way to represent the will of both citizens and states, as he puts it:

[The] European Parliament accepts the Council as the necessary place where the interests of the member states are legitimately voiced ...

(IP1: 8)

Although not the sole legislative body, the Parliament plays an important part in codecision. Furthermore, Parliament represents a legitimate democratic element in the decision-making structures of the European Union. However, there appears to be some conflict between the role of states and of citizens represented in their different bodies, and these differences mean important ramifications for the perception and function of democracy within that system.

6.3.3 Democracy and the European Parliament

The third element of the Parliament's regional functions deals with the integration of democracy into the EU's governance structures. As the primary source of democratic legitimation, the involvement of the Parliament in decision-making impacts directly on citizens' ability to express their democratic will.

For practitioner IP2, one of the major issues on the exercising of democracy is the sheer size of the European Parliament. The success of democratic structures is jeopardised by the problems of managing such a large structure:

...I think the size of that Parliament is enormous in terms of numbers and how you make that work? I'm not sure you can make a parliament like that work ...

...How do you make such a large disparate organisation democratic? How do you make them accountable? ... It's hard to see how you can have face-to-face locality representation.

(IP2, 14)

Similarly, Academic Ac2 expresses some concern over the shape a European-wide democracy might take. For him, it was not a problem specific to Europe, but a general issue:

[The] difficulty of creating something that resembles the old Athenian democracy in large-scale polity is a problem that's almost as old as the hills. It was something that Schumpeter was writing about in the 1940's and I don't think that the creation of the European Union makes this a qualitatively different problem, it just is an issue which is more complex and will take time, not to resolve but to evolve.

(Ac2: 2)

Those interviewed expressed different ideas of the problems in creating and sustaining a democratic European state of some form. MEP2 was particularly sceptical about the possible nature of a European-wide democracy, arguing that the role of the European Union was not to create a pan-European demos, but to manage the collective issues that Europe faces:

The EU is, at least in these questions of European integration, is an undemocratic body that overrides the deliberately stated wishes of its own populations at the ballot box.

... It is after all a Union of 25 liberal democracies so why is it collectively, then, behaving in an undemocratic fashion?. The answer is, I think, that the EU is in a sense, doing what it was designed to do. The very early founders of the EU, the patriarchs of the project, Jean Monnet, Robert

Schuman, the founding fathers, they understood from the first that this scheme that they had, this project of merging these ancient kingdoms into a single unified polity was so big, and so contentious and so bold and so ambitious, that it would never survive if you had to keep going back to the national voters for permission.

... So people talk about this democratic deficit as though it's some kind of accidental side effect, but it isn't, it was actually built into the thing...They deliberately created a system where supreme power is in the hands of unelected people, unaccountable people, 25 commissioners who are deliberately invulnerable to public opinion.

(MEP2: 3)

For MEP2, the relocation of authority to a central governance structure in Europe does not enjoy the backing of many citizens. Furthermore, he argues that this was never really the intention of the Union, which established itself through a succession of treaties that did not stress democracy as a key element of the structure. The rejection of a European constitution in referenda by the French and Dutch appears to support this position, although in reality local referenda are often subject to a range of other domestic issues.

The MEPs interviewed were all members of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, which was heavily involved in the drafting of the constitution, and whilst MEP2 regards the development of further democratic systems as counter to the intended functions of the EU, interviewee MEP3 clearly disagrees, arguing that:

We should renegotiate the whole package, or at least parts of it. The weaker part of the Constitution should be improved and then we try again. In other words, try to keep the integrity of the package deal.

(MEP3: 6)

This renegotiation is largely present in the Lisbon Treaty, which incorporates much of the original constitution, although for MEP3, the failure of the constitution to pass was a blow to increasing the role of a democratic Parliament. MEP3 outlines the importance the constitution might have had in terms of increasing the role of the Parliament:

Parliament profited from their constitution. It was the prizewinner, if you like; in the power struggle between the Commission the Council,

Parliament and the Member States. And it's essential that we rescue it in order to help parliamentary democracy grow at the European level.

(MEP3: 5)

For those in support of the constitution and the subsequent Lisbon Treaty, these treaties represented the latest stage in a process working towards democratic governance in the EU that began with the ECSC and Euratom. Ac2 touches on the legacy of this history, saying the outcome means:

...the European Union is not a single political will. It's a coalition ... It's one whose external relations have shifted quite dramatically over the last 30 years.

(Ac2: 2)

The purported outcome of this coalition varies, depending on the perspective taken by the interviewees. For IP1, head of the Secretariat for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, the ongoing process created a system in which:

[W]e have in principle a regime of equal footing.

(IP1: 4).

For others interviewed, such as MEP2, the role of the Parliament in this coalition is highly suspect. Whilst he rejects the idea that the Union should be a democratic body, he does note that for a body that regards itself as democratic, the Parliament wields a lack of influence particularly when it comes to initiating legislation:

We can amend and we can delay and we can sometimes block but we cannot initiate legislation and that is an extraordinary thing.

(MEP2: 4)

This lack of direct control over the direction of policy reinforces the division of authority between the main legislative bodies of the EU. It also helps to feed ongoing debates over the influence the Parliament exerts over the legislation produced. In his interview, academic Ac2 illustrates this by questioning the actual role of the Parliament in the decision-making structure of the EU:

Is the Parliament an arena or an agent? ... Things happen because of what is said in Parliament, but is Parliament an actor? It's a place; it's an area where a lot of these forces play against each other.

(Ac2: 8)

The lack of influence over the direction of policy means that there are serious questions on the extent of democracy. However, MEP1 again reiterates in his interview the important role the Parliament plays as an oversight body, scrutinising legislation and the workings of the Commission:

The other role of the Parliament, as with the national parliaments is scrutiny of the Commission.

We'll haul in commissioners, or their civil servants because the Commissioners all have civil servants of course, to the Parliamentary committees to be cross examined and the ultimate sanction is that the Commission can only hold office with the confidence with Parliament because to take office it needs a vote of confidence and we can dismiss it in a vote of no confidence.

(MEP1: 11)

Although the Parliament's influence over policy may not be as great as that of member states, its present role in the European Union keeps it active in the decision-making process and helps to legitimate the EU as a pan-European governance structure. For MEP 1, the democracy of the Parliament helps to validate the Union by providing a clear and accountable route to authority:

Well the European Parliament is there to provide democratic accountability for the decisions and the legislation that we adopt at European level. You have the national parliaments dealing with national legislation, you have local councils dealing with local matters, and the European Parliament deals with those matters that we have chosen to regulate jointly with our neighbouring countries at European level because there is a need or an advantage of acting at that level.

(MEP1: 1)

MEP 1 claims that the European Parliament plays a role beyond the provision of a democratic voice in the legislative process or providing oversight and scrutiny to other

bodies. He argues that the Parliament represents a distinct stage in the development of a new form of governance structure, different from other organisations engaged in international regulation:

[I]t's the first attempt to create an elected parliament at a level beyond the nation state, and to have this extra degree of accountability that no other normal international structure has: the World Bank, the WTO, the IMF the OECD, you name it, don't have an elected parliament. They are just a bureaucracy with ministers meeting periodically to try and give guidance, and countries that agree; some of them go away and maybe do it and maybe don't. Here we have a legal system, because when you adopt legislation it's binding among member states.

(MEP1: 5)

Academic Ac2 supports the idea that the EU represents a new form of governance structure, particularly in the ways in which the polity is constructed and represented:

It's a new polity; it's a new kind of polity in the same way that the United States was a new kind of polity when viewed from Europe.

(Ac2: 2)

He is however, highly sceptical of how far this new democracy might be free to act especially in light of the ongoing influence of other EU bodies and of member states:

They will let the Parliament have this greater formal power once they have discovered a way of controlling it.

(Ac2: 9)

Although there is some disagreement over the effectiveness of the Parliament, its presence in the EU is significant insofar as it adds an element of democracy to international governance and regulation that has hereto been absent. How far this democracy gives citizens a genuine chance to influence decision making is debatable.

6.3.4 Critical summary of the regional level:

Discussion on the regional level of the Parliament's functions set out some of the ways in which the Parliament operates within the governance structures of the EU. Many of the

criticisms of these functions revolve around the ongoing conflict between a social and democratic emphasis in the Parliament, and an economic focus from states that derives from the pressures of a global market.

Academics Ac1 and Ac2 both identify a conflict between economic and social forces, which is evident in some of the recent problems in EU states such as Greece, Ireland, and Portugal. Serious problems in the Eurozone renewed a preoccupation with economics and meant that an emphasis on social policy is less evident. More so, the requirements of the ECB for loans to member states are often fiscally restrictive, and result in serious impacts on citizens in those states. This process is evident in the recent statement from the ECB on the joint European Commission / ECB / IMF rescue package for the Greek economy. In this statement, it is clear that fiscal policy takes primacy over most social concerns:

The government has committed to an ambitious medium-term fiscal strategy that will enable it to maintain its 2011 and medium-term fiscal targets. This strategy includes a significant downsizing of public sector employment, restructuring or closure of public entities, and rationalization in entitlements, while protecting vulnerable groups. On the revenue side, the government will reduce tax exemptions, raise property taxation, and step up efforts to fight tax evasion.

(European Central Bank, 2011)

This excerpt from the ECB statement reiterates the emphasis on economic models in the EU. As this dissertation argues, this emphasis is partly a consequence of the role that a neoliberal ideology plays in structuring a global political economy; the models of governance in Chapter 4 each offer a picture of global structure in which neoliberalism plays a significant part in the shape of governance structures. Figure 9 in particular, describes how states only divest power in certain areas whilst retaining what Messner and Nuscheler (2002: 142) describe as a 'domestic monopoly on power'. This argument matches Milward's (1984) position on the primacy of states in the growth of the European Union, and reflects many of the responses in the interviews.

Both Milward's (1984) assessment on the role of states and the claims in this dissertation on the pressures exerted by global and neoliberal ideology describe how difficult it is for

democracy to exist at a level above the nation state. However, whilst there is a clear economic pressure within the Union's structure, there is evidence that the Parliament exerts a level of democratic influence over policy outcomes. Several of the MEPs interviewed for this work felt that the Parliament exercises some control; in particular through the process of codecision which means there is a clear opportunity to shape legislation.

Although the bicameral system in the EU favours states over citizens, the Parliament represents a mandated democratic role for citizens, reinforced by both the Lisbon Treaty (2007) and the reworked Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010). The integration of the European Parliament into the decision-making structures of the European Union as a whole has helped to create a new form of governance structure. Although it is not a dominant element, the Parliament provides a level of democratic legitimacy above national politics into the EU, which involves a relevant community comprising both states and citizens. This structure is far from perfect, and the role of the states and wider considerations of a neoliberal global structure limit the exercising of democracy at a regional level. The following section of this chapter explores these wider considerations of exercising democracy and governance at a global level.

6.4 The global level of the Parliament's functions:

The Parliament's relationships at a global level involve the ways in which it operates as a governance structure in a globalising world. In this case, focus falls on two main issues: the Parliament's role in the EU as it works globally, and the ways in which the Parliament's democracy make the EU a unique type of governance structure on the global stage. As well as the interviews, this section also refers to some additional documentary evidence from the African Union, a regional body with similar aims to the EU but without a parliament providing the same type of democratic function.

6.4.1 EU/EP as a global actor

On a global stage, there is no other body offering the same level of democratic function as the Parliament. Its presence within the European Union means that body represents a new form of democratic politics with normative functions of rule at a level beyond the individual state. MEP1 is forthright on this in his interview:

It is a government: a structure of governance, it adopts policies and legislation.

(MEP1: 7)

Although there are many large democratic states that exert international influence, as a collective body the European Union is the only one to fulfil such a clearly defined role for a mandated supranational citizenry. MEP3 believes the Parliament and Union represent a democratisation of global governance that other regions of the world can aspire to:

I can see us as being an example to other regions of the world, like the Africans especially. That certainly, and the Latin Americans.

(MEP3: 3)

Academic Ac2, who has worked extensively on theorising the nature of global governance, agrees with this assessment of the Parliament and Union as an example of ways to manage democratic governance in a global era:

Well, it can be a European equivalent of what the Americans like to call their 'city on the hill' ... an example to the rest of the world about how political society might be managed.

(Ac2: 1)

Here, Ac2 implies that Europe provides a different path to the established structures of global power, which are largely dominated by the USA. MEP3 echoes this, arguing part of his role in the Parliament is:

...to develop a mature, strong post-national Parliamentary democracy.

(MEP3: 2)

As the regional level previously suggested, the continued influence of a social model of governance and an emphasis on democracy in the EU lends some counterbalance to the dominance of an economically driven, laissez-faire ideology. For Ac2, the resulting model of regional governance provides an alternative to state based, capitalist models of globalisation:

It seems to me that the European Union, including the Parliament are probably the best developed example of what one might call the social market approach to combining capitalism and democracy. In other words, an approach which gives a strong significant role to social rights as well as to the legal and political rights that are stressed in the United States and also as an alternative to the kind of developing state capitalist model that we get in China.

(Ac2: 1)

The influence of a social ethos on governance in the European Union is evident in the increasing role of the Parliament in the decision-making process. The Parliament's role legitimates the European Union as a governance structure, although for Ac2, the Parliament also partly represents a desire to create a governance structure with clear ties to its polity:

[I]t seems to me that the European union is an example of a polity which has a strong vested interest in providing benefits to ordinary citizens because these ordinary citizens are also members of national political communities in which they have a vote and a vote which affects the willingness of member states to provide the funds for the Commission.

In other words, there is a ... practical interest as opposed to an ideological interest on the part of the European Union as an institution, as a set of bureaucrats and officials in securing their own income by making sure that they're providing for ordinary citizens.

(Ac2: 1)

For Ac2, the European Union represents a different type of regional or governance structure to any other collective body currently functioning at the same level. The history

of social rights that have developed with the Parliament means that the EU retains a much stronger focus on the social rather than the economic or ideological nature of integration. MEP 1 echoes this position, claiming that it is the collective and social structure of the EU that allows it to function effectively on the global stage, negotiating with organisations such as the WTO:

[It's] inevitable in that with a common market we have a common external tariff which has to be negotiated as single thing. But that also, conversely gives us a lot more leverage in shoulder matters. There isn't just one super power. The European Union's share of world trade is actually larger than the United States so that gives a better balance to world affairs and gives us a stronger voice than we would have if we were all going in there defending completely different positions.

(MEP1: 8)

MEP1 feels that the EU's role as the world's largest economy (see also IMF, 2011e) gives it the ability to integrate social elements into its structure. Rather than being dominated by neoliberalism, its influence means that it is able to modify some of the excesses of that system within its own governance procedures. However, as this chapter argues, there remains a strong emphasis on economic structures in the EU.

Despite a continued economic focus in the EU, academic Ac1 argued that the internationalisation of democracy that Parliament represents might potentially come to be an alternative model of global power to the economic and military influence of states like China and the USA. For Ac1, the EU's social emphasis stands against the economic neoliberalism of US domestic and foreign policy:

I think the US is really scared of the EU. I mean, not scared in terms of threatened militarily but economically, and they are right to be. There is an insecurity in America about... you know, its either the Trojan horse of social democracy, an alternative model to the liberal model or what's left of the left which is fine. It's kind of a beacon of civilisation to the brutality of some aspects of American social policy.

(Ac1, 10-11)

For most of those interviewed, the European Parliament makes the Union a unique structure in global politics. The only other governance body similar in terms of its stated

aims is the African Union. The AU grew out of the Organisation of African Unity, its draft Constitutive Act of the African Union came into force in 2002. At the launch of the African Union, its chairperson Thabo Mbeki set out two tasks:

The first task is to achieve unity, solidarity, cohesion, cooperation among peoples of Africa and African states. We must build all the institutions necessary to deepen political, economic and social integration of the African continent. Our second task is that of developing new forms of partnerships at all levels and segments of our societies, between segments of our societies and our governments and between our governments.

(African Union, 2009)

The similarity between these commitments and those of the European Union is striking, particularly with the inclusion of a social as well as an economic component to integration. The AU now consists of 52 member states (African Union, 2010a) and is structured in a similar way to the EU, with a primary Assembly of the African Union representing heads of state, and a secondary legislative body in the Council of Ministers, composed of Foreign Affairs ministers from member states (African Union, 2010b). The AU does contain a Parliamentary body, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), although its role in the decision-making process is largely perfunctory, similar in many ways to that of the European Parliament in its first incarnations with the ECSC and Euratom. The AU states that its Parliament presently fulfils a role that contains:

...consultative and advisory powers only, with the aim of ultimately evolving into an institution with full legislative powers.

(African Union, 2004)

As with the European Parliament prior to the introduction of universal European suffrage in 1979, Article 4 of the protocol establishing the African Economic Community and PAP states that Member States:

‘...shall be represented in the Pan-African Parliament by five (5) members, at least one of whom must be a woman’

(PAP, 2007)

The initial phase of the PAP as an oversight and advisory body was intended to only last for its first five-year mandate, and by the time its second mandate arrived in 2009 it was hoped that the PAP would take a more direct role in the legislative procedures of the African Union. As part of this, there was also a plan to initiate direct elections for members. This did not happen for various reasons, including intransigence of member states; however in his speech at the inauguration of the second PAP, President of South Africa Jacob Zuma appealed for the AU to transform the PAP from an advisory body to a legislative one:

We look forward to the day when the peoples of Africa can send their representative to the seat of this parliament to fashion laws that will bring about a tangible improvement in all their lives

(Zuma, 2009)

Although the PAP still has no directly elected members and it is not a legislative part of the AU, it does represent a move towards democratic representation at a regional level. At the Pan-African Parliament's meeting in October 2010, Ibrahim Mayaki, head of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) an economic development programme of the African Union, called for greater recognition of the PAP:

[as] a key organ of the African Union, particularly in promoting popular participation and representation of African peoples in decision-making and good governance.

(PAP, 2010: 4)

He went on to affirm the commitment of the African Union to support 'the Pan-African Parliament's transition from a consultative parliamentary forum into a fully-fledged legislative body (PAP, 2010: 4). Nevertheless, the PAP is not a Parliament in the same sense as its European counterpart; it does not yet have a mandated concept of African citizen, and exercises a minimal role in the legislative process. Consequently, only the European Union offers democratic governance above the level of the nation state, and although there remain some serious questions over the effectiveness of its democracy, it is a mandated aspect of the EU's political structure.

6.4.2 Global governance and democracy

With respect to the global level of interaction, a number of the interviewees regarded the integration of the Parliament into the structures of the EU as an important step towards introducing democracy to wider ideas of global governance. Academic Ac2 pointed out that the EU is only the latest attempt to collectivise governance in Europe:

Well at the very least the EU is one of a number of experiments that have been going on for the past century to replace the form of global governance which was prevalent for three or four centuries before, in other words the European empires.

(Ac2: 3)

Although there have been a number of different projects in Europe, this chapter argues that the role of the Parliament sets apart the EU as different from previous European projects, as well as from many of the other global attempts at creating a governance structure. For the European Union, the Parliament represents something achieved by no other collective governance or regulatory body: a functioning democratically representative body with influence over legislation. In his interviews, MEP1 puts forward a supporting case for this idea:

... not saying the EU is perfect, but there is a level of democratic accountability there that we've built into the system that we should actually be proud of, which is missing in all of these other international structures. The fact that you have a directly elected parliament, the fact that national parliaments have been brought into the system.

All that is something we've achieve at a European level which is not existing in these other bodies.

(MEP1: 8)

Despite the lauded role of the Parliament in the EU, the overall democratic element is by no means the dominant aspect of decision making. For Academic Ac3, this combination of state and citizen does not mean that the Parliament and Union are undemocratic, but that they represent the latest manifestation of an ever-transforming democracy:

[We] should think what we mean by 'democracy' in order to make different sense of these processes. This flies in the face of, its cuts against

the grain, of those who say no no no no, democracy can only be thought of as ultimately a territorial state phenomenon. And so it follows that from that position ... that the precious institutions of Westminster democracy can only be preserved by basically keeping at arm's length all these other external cross-boarder processes.

(Ac3: 7)

Ac3 feels there is a need to reassess how we understand democracy, and argues that it would be wrong to conceive of democratic systems only functioning as state-based mechanisms. For him, as with others interviewed, the European Parliament is a new form of democratic structure, for which we must adjust our perceptions accordingly:

...we have to change our notion of democracy because, if you think about it, if in some sense democracy is the will of the people, or self government of the people, what the European Parliament has done as work in practise has been to introduce the notion of multiple mechanisms [of achieving this].

(Ac3: 11)

It is clear that the European Union is not a simple transposing of traditional state-based democracy system onto a regional or global level. Its structures are different from other bodies, partly because of its unique relevant community. The presence of a functioning Parliament means that citizens enjoy direct representation at a global level to a degree not present in any other global body.

6.4.3 Critical summary of the global level:

At the global level, both of examples show a clear image of the Parliament as the only body offering democratic accountability above the level of the state. Although (and as the other levels of interactions here illustrated) the Parliament's role in EU decision-making and its presence in local and national communities is limited. Nevertheless, for European citizens, the Parliament represents an additional layer of democratic representation, providing them with a direct voice to an international political body, which they exercise alongside their national democratic systems.

The European Parliament is unique in its role in international politics. Both MEP1 and academic Ac1 argue that because of the Parliament, the EU represents a real alternative to present models of global governance. The role of the Parliament in decision making elevates democratic governance in the EU above the level of states, and as such, it stands against Milward's (1984) argument of state superiority and the basic interpretations of the neorealist model of extended states. Similarly, the Parliament's presence in the EU does not fit with a hegemonic model of global governance. Although its role is limited, it does present a counterweight to neoliberal structures that dominate the global political and economic environment, offering a social model alongside the more established economic focus.

The perceptions in the global level of interaction outlined bear some similarity with the model of concentric governance outlined in Chapter 4. This model imagines a more complicated set of global networks, interlinked by ideological and political structures. Here, the EU forms an influential ideological 'core' that offers an alternative to more neoliberal structures of global governance. As a result, the Parliament is not just a new form of democratic governance above the level of the state, but offers a potential for challenging the dominance of established international systems that do not emphasise democracy.

Despite continued questions over the effectiveness of the Parliament's democratic role in the Union, the arguments presented here make a case for the EU as a new type of governance structure, which employs democracy above the level of national political systems. Academic Ac3 in particular argued that we should not judge the transference of democracy to the Parliament in terms of traditional systems. Rather, democracy is an ever-evolving concept and its role in the European Parliament is different from any other system. The final section of this chapter explores this argument in context of the claims of this thesis.

6.5 Summary: democracy and governance in the European Parliament

As the second stage of immanent criticism, this chapter constructs a functional interpretation of the European Parliament that is built from a range of first-hand accounts and supplemented by official documents. Examining the Parliament's relationships at a local, regional, and global level allows the chapter to construct an image of the wide variety of different relationships and roles the Parliament performs. Although the material in this chapter by no means represents the entirety of the Parliament's functions, it does provide an indicative range of perspectives on the different ways in which the Parliament operates.

Throughout the analysis here, two images of the Parliament are dominant. The first of these is a perception that the Parliament does contain a degree of democratic function, but that often this is not well exercised. At a local level, there is an image of the Parliament having little interaction with citizens. While there were benefits to the well-defined role of the Parliament's democracy in decision making, these benefits are primarily in the legitimization of the European Union as a governance body. Democracy therefore plays an ideological rather than a functional role in the EU, so whilst there is a genuine route for citizens into decision making through the Parliament, the role of the Parliament remains secondary to that of member states.

The conflict between states and citizens was also evident at the regional level of the model. Here, it was felt that there was a struggle between the economic desires of states and the more social influences of the Parliament. Despite limitations of the role of the Parliament compared to that of states in the structures of the EU, the principle of codecision cemented in the Lisbon Treaty (2007) meant that those interviewed felt democracy and democratic accountability played a functional role in decision making.

Although it is not always effective, the role of the Parliament in the structures of the EU is well defined. Codecision means that, along with the Council of Ministers, the Parliament plays a direct input into decision-making. Furthermore, the Parliament has

clear structures in place to provide accountability. Periodic elections ensure that citizens are able to choose who represents them and although there is some conflict over sources of authority for MEPs, the Parliament does provide a source of legitimacy for the governance structures of the EU.

The role that Parliamentary democracy plays in the EU is a form of democratic governance structure unique amongst others presently functioning in the global environment. A relevant community that encompasses both states and citizens elevates democracy as a supra-national presence in the global political environment. In Chapter 3, Kahler's (2005: 9) assertion that 'electoral institutions are only one part of the institutional panoply of modern democracy' supports the idea that we should not view democratic governance in purely state-centric terms. Similarly, Keane's (2008; 2009: 583) ideas of 'monitory democracy' mean that aspects such as accountability, representation, and legitimacy also occur through non-state mechanisms, although arguably it requires an acceptance of these mechanisms for them to be effective. The European Parliament does just this, showing democracy to be a legitimate route to governance at a level above the nation state. This is not to say that structural support for democracy is unimportant, but that democracy's ideological presence helps to cement its ongoing importance in self-determinate governance.

6.5.1 Moving towards the third stage of immanent criticism.

The introduction of the Parliament's democracy into EU decision making represents a step towards increasing collective democratic governance on a global stage. The social influence that the Parliament brings act as a counterweight to a strong neoliberal ideology that pervades international structures, creating what interviewee Ip1 (7) calls 'a new kind of balance' to global governance. This new balance is a result of both citizens and states participating in global governance.

Despite the positive role the Parliament plays in bringing democracy into global governance, there are some serious failings in the ways it expresses democracy, both for its citizens and in the EU's decision making. Democracy is a constantly evolving system,

and this dissertation argues that there is potential in the Parliament's democracy to function as a vehicle for forwarding a social agenda. This agenda could focus on the rights of individuals in contrast to the market emphasis of a dominant neoliberal ideology.

The final stage of immanent criticism in the following chapter proposes a range of ways to develop democracy and governance in the Parliament. In doing so, it addresses the commitment to praxis in Horkheimer's (1956: 182) philosophy, which requires work not just to be critical, but also to actively seek to 'transcend' the inequalities in the structures of our social world.

Chapter 7

Immanent Criticism Stage 3: An exploration of the potential of the European Parliament:

7.1 Introduction: The third stage of immanent criticism.

7.2 A critique of the European Parliament's functions.

7.2.1 Issues of democracy

7.2.2 Issues of governance

7.3 The potential of democracy through the European Parliament

7.3.1 Reform of the Parliament's role

7.3.2 Dedicated European Political Parties

7.3.3 Increased transparency

7.3.4 Stronger and more involved civil society

7.3.5 Summary: potential of democracy in the EP

7.4 The potential of governance through the European Parliament

7.4.1 Citizens over states

7.4.2 Democracy over neoliberalism

7.4.3 Summary: potential of global governance and the EP

7.5 Beyond structural critique

7.6 Summary: The potential of the European Parliament as a democratic regional-global governance structure

7.1 Introduction: the third stage of immanent criticism.

As a democratic governance body, the European Parliament occupies a unique position in world political structures. It gives its citizens the opportunity to influence some of the decisions at an international level that affects their lives. As this dissertation has argued however, there are some serious flaws in the ways in which these democratic and governance functions operate. This chapter is the final stage of immanent criticism, which sets out some of the most important criticisms of the Parliament a range of practical suggestions for overcoming them.

The chapter initially provides a summary and critique of the main areas identified in the other two stages of immanent criticism in which the Parliament's functions fall short of

their potential. This summary is a basis for the chapter to examine some practical ways in which improvements could be made. It does this by dealing with the two concepts of democracy and governance in turn. In the case of democracy, it sets out measures that could improve the ways democracy works in the Parliament. For the section on governance, the chapter discusses suggestions for ways in which the Parliament may better integrate into the EU's functions in present global structures.

The suggestions for practical measures in this chapter are the culmination of the first two stages of critique in Chapters 5 and 6, as well as the theoretical work on democracy and governance in Chapters 3 and 4. The suggestions made here also refer to an important Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe (Council of Europe, 2004). A number of academics and members of EU bodies wrote this paper in order to bring forward for discussion issues to do with democracy and governance across European states. Although not specifically dealing with the EU, the analysis in the Green Paper contributes some useful insights into areas that affect democracy, including issues of European enlargement and globalisation. The paper also deals with what it calls 'possibilism' that is, the regard for 'potential reforms of formal institutions and informal practices' (Council of Europe, 2004: 11). This is a concept very similar to the idea of potentiality that this third stage of immanent criticism addresses, and as such, the Green Paper is a useful source of material for the chapter.

As well as the Green Paper, the analysis also takes material from a range of surveys conducted by various bodies that focus specifically on issues of democracy and governance related to this study. Foremost amongst these is a set of 'Parlemetre' reports which details citizens' perceptions of the European Parliament. Conducted by the European Commission through their agent Eurobarometer every three years, these surveys explore questions that involve the nature of EU citizens' perceptions of the Parliament's functions, especially in relation to its democratic role (Eurobarometer, 2011). As well as Parlemetre reports, Eurobarometer conduct surveys three to five times a year that focus more generally on citizens' perceptions on the way the EU and its

bodies are working. Together, these surveys offer a valuable source of primary data that contributes to the analysis of the Parliament.

The final element of critique goes beyond some of the structural concerns that immanent criticism focuses on to embrace wider ideas of potentiality within Horkheimer's critical philosophy. It is a more radical criticism of the Parliament's role in a global political environment shaped by neoliberalism, and its suggestions therefore focus less on structural reform and more on wide-ranging challenges to the established global order.

7.2 A Critique of the Parliament's functions

This initial section of the chapter complements the criticism of the Parliament laid out in the first two stages of the immanent process. It explores in detail some of the main issues that arose around the Parliament's democratic and governance functions, identifying important areas in which democracy and governance need to be developed. In making these criticisms, it utilizes a range of arguments from the theoretical chapters at the start of this dissertation, and supports these with further insights from the Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe (Council of Europe, 2004).

The first stage of immanent criticism in Chapter 5 set out the Parliament's growth from an oversight body in the ECSC to a mandated part of EU decision making. Although this part of the process was mainly establishing the historical basis from which the Parliament grew, it also argued that the process of democratic development lay firmly within the control of member states. Because of this, the Parliament fills only a secondary role in the decision-making structures of the EU, and although the most recent treaties went some way to strengthening the Parliament's role, citizens still benefit from less input in the decision-making process than member states.

The second stage of immanent criticism in Chapter 6 argued that the nature of democracy and governance in the Parliament raises some serious problems. In the first instance, it

claimed that the Parliament had very poor visibility in terms of its functions in member states. Secondly, there were concerns over the nature of governance structures in the EU, and the role that the Parliament played within them. Finally, there were issues around the overall role democracy plays in decision-making.

The concerns from these two stages of immanent criticism are set out here under the headings of democracy and governance. This aids the subsequent discussion on their potential later in the chapter.

7.2.1 Issues of democracy

One of the issues identified with the democratic nature of the European Parliament reflects problems with its functional visibility for citizens. Both of the first two stages of immanent criticism identify problems with the Parliament's role in member states. Chapter 6 in particular, argued that there was not enough engagement either with citizens or with centrally funded projects situated in local or regional communities.

The Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe suggests that 'EU institutions lack the legitimacy of their national counterparts and the gap between EU citizens and European institutions seems to be growing' (Council of Europe, 2004: 47). Support for this comes from a Eurobarometer survey in 2008, which found that of 27,000 EU citizens asked for their perceptions of the EU's regional policy, 48% were unaware of EU support to their city or region (Eurobarometer, 2008). Although these figures reinforce the argument that the Parliament experiences low visibility in member states, this problem is common to many governance structures. For example, a similar survey conducted in 2008 by Ipsos MORI on behalf of London Councils found that 55% knew nothing at all or not very much about their local council (Ipsos MORI, 2008).

The Parlemetre report in February 2010 found that in the UK 74% of those asked felt they were 'badly informed' about the European Parliament's activities, compared to an average of 68% across all 27 Member states (Eurobarometer, 2010: 1). Despite this seemingly negative outcome, the European Parliament (2010e: 2) in its response and

analysis of the survey described the result as a ‘significant trend reversal’ when compared to the previous survey in 2007.

Another concern around democracy was a picture that emerged of the Parliament’s role in the EU providing little opportunity for democracy to influence decision making. Chapter 5 establishes an argument in which the structures of the Parliament remain dominated by the influence of member states, a process that Figure 17 demonstrates by describing how codecision involves citizens in the legislative process. Chapter 6 takes this argument further, and the interviews show how the Parliament concentrates more on ideological aspects of democracy rather than on providing functional ways for citizens to participate.

A recent Eurobarometer (2010) survey shows that there is wide national variance across the EU in citizen’s perceptions of the nature of democracy in the European Parliament. Averages across the whole EU show that 64% perceive the European Parliament as democratic. This is much higher than the 42% who felt the same in the UK (Eurobarometer 2010: 2). Similarly, an average of 38% across the EU felt that the European Parliament listened to citizens, contrasting with 27% in the UK (Eurobarometer 2010: 2). Although the overall results are better than those in 2007, the specifics of these Eurobarometer surveys display a different sentiment between states. It is clear that there are problems with the nature of democratic legitimacy in the Parliament in regards to the perceptions of EU citizens, and the resulting image is one of a Parliament struggling to make its presence felt in local communities.

Crouch’s (2004: 6) concept of ‘post democracy’ discussed in Chapter 3 describes how poor visibility or lack of engagement leads to problems in the ways democracy and governance function. When the governance process does not involve citizens or where citizens evidence little evidence of those statutes working, there is a risk of disenfranchisement. Consequent difficulties in accountability, representation and legitimacy in the European Parliament that stem from this poor visibility run the risk of de-legitimizing the whole Union as a body that speaks for citizens. It will be interesting

to discover if the upward trends in visibility continue in the next set of Eurobarometer surveys, in light of the stringent financial aid programmes run by the ECB in Greece, Ireland, and Portugal, or if these interventions direct public awareness onto other EU bodies, such as the ECB.

7.2.2 Issues of governance

As well as issues on the nature of democracy, there were concerns in the earlier stages of immanent criticism over the European Parliament's role in democratic governance above the level of the state. The Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe (Council of Europe, 2004) identified a number of challenges in this area, querying how well Europe's 'well-established formal institutions and formal practises "fit" with the much more rapidly changing social, economic, cultural and technological arrangements that surround it' (Council of Europe, 2004: 14). The Green Paper regards the EU as subject to evolving social and political forces that challenge democracy's foundations 'both materially and normatively' (Council of Europe, 2004: 14).

The Green Paper goes on to state that the 'shift of economic and political competencies from the national to the European level has (so far) not been matched by a corresponding shift in democratic legitimacy' (Council of Europe, 2004: 47). Although there is evidence in this dissertation to suggest this is the case, particularly in light of the Parliament's lesser role in decision making, it is also true that the Parliament and the Union are not simply state-based models of democratic governance writ large for the international stage. Their joint role as a composite of 27 different states and over 500 million citizens means they represent a unique relevant community, and a source of legitimacy unique among similar bodies.

The principle of codecision affords the Parliament a unique position in the decision-making structures of the EU. The social and democratic attention it imports to governance tempers the economic models that states feel they must adopt in order to function in a global neoliberal political environment. Nonetheless, there remain serious concerns over the role the Parliament plays in decision making, as Figure 18 in Chapter 5

demonstrates. This secondary position of Parliament in decision making impacts on the role that democracy plays in the governance of the EU. As Chapter 6 expounds, there is a conflict between economic and social models in the European Union. The regulatory and economic requirements of states are influential in both the Commission and Council of Ministers, whilst on the other hand, the Parliament seeks to manage and represent the issues of European citizens.

The Green Paper also expresses concern about the division between states and citizens, suggesting that there is a 'trade-off between institutions that promote democratic legitimacy and institutions that promote output and functional legitimacy' (Council of Europe, 2004: 68). This argument echoes the findings of Keohane and Nye (2003: 390), who suggest that in systems of governance, democracy is often 'traded off against other values'. Where bodies such as the Parliament concentrate on democratic forms of participation, other institutions are more concerned with ensuring that the Union delivers results, with less regard for how the process occurs.

For the Green Paper, the distinction between democratic legitimacy and functional legitimacy is material to understanding the ways that democracy works in the EU. The Green Paper identifies democratic legitimacy as a product of 'participation, access and accountability' (Council of Europe, 2004: 68). Using categories similar to those devised in this dissertation, the Green Paper forwards the idea that the ongoing involvement of citizens is vital to the democratic legitimation of governance.

Unlike democratic legitimacy, functional legitimacy 'require[s] institutions to operate in place of citizens' (Council of Europe, 2004: 68). This approach views governance as the product of institutions that are more concerned with the maintenance of social and political life than that processes of democratic rule. As a result of this difference, the Green Paper contends that institutions that adhere to functional types of legitimacy are 'eroding citizens' sense that they can influence collective decision making' (Council of Europe, 2004: 68).

The contention of this dissertation, reflected in the Green Paper, is that the EU is slipping towards a functional legitimacy in which citizens lack influence over the nature and direction of the structures and decisions made. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, it is a result of continued dominance of states in EU governance structures. As Chapter 4 establishes, this is partly due to a dominant neoliberal ideology that shapes the global political environment and is therefore a strong force in defining the capacity of states. The desire for states to operate effectively in this environment means democracy must be ‘traded off’, as both Keohane and Nye (2003: 390) and the Green Paper suggest (Council of Europe, 2004: 68).

The second reason for a slip towards functional legitimacy is a ‘tendency towards bureaucratisation’ and a ‘shift from politics to administration’ (Council of Europe, 2004: 70). This is congruent with Milward’s position (1984), where control always ultimately resides with states. There is evidence for this in the immanent criticism. For example, the historical analysis of the Parliament’s development suggests that it is only through the acquiescence of states that the Parliament has realised any real influence. It is also evident in Chapter 6, particularly at the local and regional levels of interaction, where several of those interviewed felt the Parliament had little tangible authority or influence. In both cases, the consequences of a shift towards functional rather than democratic legitimacy are that the Parliament and the EU risk becoming a body in which democracy is a secondary element to governance.

7.3 The potential of Democracy through the European Parliament

As the main democratic component of the European Union, the European Parliament gives democratic legitimacy to its rule, providing an avenue for EU citizens to influence policy. The formalised role in decision-making which codecision gave the Parliament signifies a new system of internationalised democracy with a relevant community that represents both states and citizens. Because of the new nature of EU democracy, traditional definitions of are unsuitable for describing the functions of the Parliament. In

their place, the dissertation applies three principles to provide a guide for analysing how democracy is manifest in the Parliament's structures. These principles also direct analysis to areas where democracy might be improved, and this provides some specific discussion on ways to enhance the Parliament's democracy that culminates in four suggestions for enhancing democracy.

The first principle of democracy is legitimacy. As Chapter 3 describes, legitimacy refers to the ways in which a democratic structure achieves and maintains a right to govern. This is evident in the physical as well as the ideological structures of an organisation, and both of these elements are an important gauge for the role that democracy plays in the governance process.

The Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe (Council of Europe, 2004) also identifies legitimacy as a key concern for democratic systems. Although these suggestions are relatively unspecific, they do suggest some general solutions to addressing problems in legitimacy. The Paper also takes a useful approach in describing these strategies, as Figure 22 (following) indicates, dividing its focus into several categories. Direct and indirect strategies refer to the requirements of strategies in terms of legislative or structural change, and it applies these either to the structures of a polity or directly to citizens.

Figure 22: Suggestions from the 2004 Green Paper on improving democratic legitimacy		
	Direct Strategies	Indirect Strategies
Polity-based	Subjecting guardian institutions to the direct control of democratically elected bodies	Promote a system of <i>horizontal</i> checks based on reciprocal vigilance between guardian and democratic institutions
Citizen-Based	Devise mechanisms, other than electoral control, which guarantee popular participation and control	Promote institutions that operate a <i>vertical</i> check over political institutions by allowing for citizens' voice.
Taken from: Council of Europe (2004: 71)		

The target of these suggestions is not directly the EU, but its aim is to promote a general discussion on democracy in Europe. Furthermore, the Green Paper published these suggestions around the same time as the initial constitution for the EU was under consideration, and consequently before the Lisbon Treaty (2007) that replaced the constitution came into force. Although Lisbon developed the role of the Parliament in the EU, particularly in relation to codecision, there is little improvement for many of the areas which the Green Paper suggests are important.

Although the suggestions made by the Green Paper are in many cases too general to apply specifically to the European Parliament, the structure with which it presents its suggestions is useful (Council of Europe, 2004: 71). In particular, the divide between polity-based and citizen-based initiatives is a robust way of approaching some of the issues this dissertation contends are problematic in the Parliament's democracy.

The following four sections present some discrete ways to improve democracy in the European Parliament. These suggestions derive from the analysis in this dissertation, using the immanent criticism of Chapters 5 and 6 as well as the more general theoretical discussions from earlier in this work. They also utilise useful terms applied in the Green Paper to help articulate these issues (Council of Europe, 2004: 71).

7.3.1 Reform of the Parliament's role

One area of democracy identified as problematic was the more limited role that the Parliament plays in the EU's decision-making structures. This is particularly prescient for democratic legitimacy, as the Parliament is central to the ways that the EU justifies its democratic role both ideologically and structurally. If democracy in the Parliament is seen or felt to be flawed, then this brings into question the right of the EU to function on behalf of its relevant community.

The most obvious way of directly addressing reform at a polity level is an overhaul of the current structure of EU governance bodies. The nature of the European Union is such that both states and citizens presently require representation in its structures, and although it

may increase democratic legitimacy to move to a structure that did not incorporate states, this would not reflect the Parliament's unique relevant community. However, there is clearly an imbalance towards states in the current system, and redressing this would go some way to increasing overall democratic legitimacy.

One solution to developing the role of the Parliament could be to redefine the current structure of the EU to allow both the Parliament and the Council of Ministers to initiate legislation. This would provide the two bodies that represent the relevant community of the EU with a much more involved role in the legislative process. The ability to initiate legislation may also help to increase the connections between the Parliament and citizens by creating a more direct route to transformative action. Through their representatives, citizens could be given the chance to shape the EU's functions more immediately.

As a complex structure with a relevant community that encompasses both citizens and states, the nature of multi-level governance in the European Union means that accountability is sometimes hard to locate. Although giving the Parliament a clearly defined role in the EU, the process of codecision, exacerbates the overall complexity of decision-making. Legislation passes through several bodies, each of which influence it in different ways and exhibit varying levels of transparency in their deliberations. To some extent this is an inevitable outcome of a multi-house system, although in the EU this is amplified as only one of the bodies in the process is directly elected and therefore accountable through democratic structures. The Green Paper raises this problem more generally, arguing that 'multi-level governance and decentralisation challenge democratic norms of accountability' (Council of Europe, 2004: 72). However, just because a structure is complex does not mean that it should be unaccountable, and the Green Paper suggests this is achievable through a process of 'inter-level accountability' (Council of Europe, 2004: 71).

Inter-level accountability within a multi-level system of governance involves a well-mandated and established process of checks and balances between different sections of the governance structure. To a certain extent, this already exists in the EU with the

Parliament's role in scrutinising legislation, the EU budget, and choices for Commission President. In practise, however, a real improvement in accountability means widening this form of monitory and inter-level accountability that would involve the Parliament playing a more engaged role. This could create greater transparency through a process that subjects all levels of governance to some democratic authority. It would also go some way to reducing the domination of states in the governance system, as well as placing greater status upon the social aspects of EU policy.

The greatest mechanism for achieving accountability is to extend the role of the Parliament in decision making. The moving of all decision making into the hands of elected members would increase accountability in decision making as well as the overall legitimacy of the Union. However, as this process of immanent criticism suggests, the EU at present comprises a relevant community that is a composite of state and citizens, and its decision-making structures necessarily reflect this.

One possible solution to increasing democracy whilst ensuring representation for both parts of the EU's relevant community is to elect representatives for the Council of Ministers. Transforming the Council of Ministers into an elected body may also serve to create a democratic bicameral system, where the elected Council could comprise representatives from member states, put forward for election at the same time as Parliamentary candidates. This would leave open an avenue for state representation in the EU, whilst subjecting the Council to the same democratic procedures as the Parliament.

Reform of the legislative system in the European Union would enrich the nature of democracy exercised. A more involved role for the Parliament in decision making might help to resituate the body away from state centric policies yet still allow states to participate in this unique governance structure. Ultimately, a greater role for the Parliament in decision making would increase democratic legitimacy of the EU as a whole.

7.3.2 *Dedicated European Political Parties*

One of the main problems with the exercising of democracy in the Parliament is the lack of a functioning, unified pan-European political system. In particular, this work identified the current system that elects MEPs through the domestic parties of member states as damaging for the nature of democratic representation in the Parliament. The problem of dual party affiliation creates an area of tension for MEPs who are faced with a national party that controls the source of re-election and a European Party which represents their everyday working environment. It also hinders the development of European wide political parties, as the national associations continue to have influence over MEPs and their voting patterns.

There has been extensive debate on the ways in which a set of Europe-wide political structures has, and continues to, develop. Ladrech (2010) describes two processes that strengthen European-wide democratic politics. In the first instance, he highlights the ways in which European political influence is increasingly acting on national party politics. He argues that because the EU is ‘undeniably interwoven in the policy and decision-making process of domestic governance’, it is therefore ‘reasonable to assume that national political parties may have also exhibited internal organisational change as elements of their domestic environment have altered’. The second element to Europeanisation has been the development of transnational political groups and party federations ‘the extra-parliamentary wings of the party groups within the parliament’. These groups, although not as influential as the main party groupings, have become ‘a permanent feature of the European union party universe’ (2010: 129). In both these cases, Ladrech sees a steady progression towards Europeanization that is beginning to change the nature of both domestic and EU politics.

Despite a movement towards a more centralised European political system, Ladrech (2010: 210) is sceptical on the level of overall change, arguing that there are only ‘very modest outward or formal exchanges ... which are traceable to EU influence’. Ladrech does, however, identify a role for emerging ‘interest groups’ and ‘Euro-associations’,

which are increasingly supplementing the domestic political arena (2010: 211). Although far from political parties in a traditional sense, and still playing a supplementary role to the established political groupings, these associations offer an alternative route to pan-European collective action that gives European citizens a voice in centralised European politics.

As with Ladrech, Hix (2008) believes there is the potential for a genuine party system in the European Parliament to emerge. He argues that voting in the Parliament is already ‘much more along transnational party lines than national lines’ (2008: 114). However, the political organisations that currently exist in the EU are ‘rather loose umbrella organisations with few incentives to coordinate genuine political action across EU institution. Consequently, Hix (2008: 136) argues that there is ‘very little coordination of positions and alliances across the three EU institutions’, rather informal agreements and coalitions deal with issues on an individual basis.

The problems Hix (2008: 119) identifies with democratic politics in the European Parliament are exacerbated by what he sees as a disconnection between citizens and the ‘emerging democratic politics in the European parliament’. Hix (2008) argues that the continued association of European politics to domestic politics and political parties means that European citizens have little information on which to base voting decisions, other than the traditional connections to the domestic parties from which MEPs are drawn. Accordingly, it is difficult for citizens, during elections or at other times, to ‘identify the protagonists and the positions they represent’ (2008: 136). As a consequence, Hix (2008: 119) claims that European citizens ‘do not vote in European parliament elections to influence which parties form the majority in the European Parliament’.

The conflict between national and European politics may make it hard for citizens to envisage a route from political ideologies at the national level where elections take place, to the European level where MEPs sit in different ideological blocks. This disconnect is noted in the 2010 Parlemetre survey where 39% of European citizens questioned felt that

MEPs sat in Parliament according to national rather than political affiliation (Ipsos MORI, 2008: 2). The Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe also refers to a problem with political groups, which it believes arise as part of the gradual transfer of power from states to the EU unmatched by a corresponding boost in representation (Council of Europe, 2004: 46).

For Hix (2008: 85), the missing element in European Political organisation is ‘the substantive content of democracy: a battle for control of political power between rival groups of leaders with rival policy platforms’. The lack of what he terms ‘open political contestation’ (2008: 101) means it becomes very difficult to know ‘whether the policies of the EU really are the choices of European citizens’ (2001: 85). For Hix (2008:101), the solution to this impasse is greater open competition that would ‘significantly strengthen these nascent transnational party organisations’ and, ultimately, ‘force the realignment of these organisations and the establishment of European-wide political forces’.

The development of transnational party groups, such as the Party of European Socialists (PES), is often cited as an example that highlights the ways in which European Politics is becoming more democratic. Both Ladrech (2010) and Hix (2008) present a case in which these bodies, although imperfect, have the potential to offer centralised democratic European politics. Lightfoot (2005: 144) however, claims that this case has been overstated, and that both Hix and Ladrech have ‘underestimated the strength of the factors that limit its effectiveness’. In particular, Lightfoot (2005: 145) points to the realpolitik dynamics of managing policy at a transnational level, in which policy is a result of ‘tensions between domestic constraints and ideological preferences’ and where ‘party elites/government actors wrestle with the task of constructing sustainable, sub-optimal policy bargains’. The consequence of this is a European Political system that is ‘elite dominated, pragmatic, and limited in ambition’ (2005: 145).

Despite Lightfoot’s (2005: 147) critical reading of European politics, he does concede that the EU has the potential to become a ‘complete polity’, in which ‘Europarties could offer the voters choices for the future development of this polity’. For Lightfoot (2005:

147), it is ‘future European integration [that] may hold the key to the development of true Europarties’. As the EU increasingly takes on the functions that were once the remit of domestic politics in member states, Lightfoot (2005: 147) sees it as possible that these ‘Europarties may take on more of the functions of national political parties’.

For Lightfoot (2005), Ladrech (2009), and Hix (2008), European-wide political parties remain some way off. This does not mean, however, that greater democratic politics cannot develop in other forms. The Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe reflects this idea of democracy as multifaceted process and rejects ‘the notion that there is one ideal type of democracy’ (Council of Europe, 2004: 89). Supported strongly in this dissertation, this idea extends to the nature of representation in the Parliament insofar as there is no set way in which representation should occur. It is however clear that there could be a great improvement in representative functions in the European Parliament, particularly in the case of political parties. Clear roles for such parties would ideally allow citizens to receive a much sharper indication of their connection to European-wide political ideologies. The Green Paper suggests that ‘the development of a genuine party system among EU member states would constitute an important step towards creating a European *demos*’ (Council of Europe, 2004: 46). Although the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (1992) introduced the concept of European citizen, there needs to be an extension of this process needs in order to better connect European citizens with European politics.

The introduction of dedicated European political parties and the strengthening of ‘open political contestation’ (Hix: 2008: 101) would help to develop democracy in Parliament plays and strengthen its role as a European-wide political institution. Disassociating European from national political parties could ostensibly reduce the distance between voters and the structures of power. It may also help to solve the complications in multiple sites of authority for MEPs, who would no longer be subject to national party politics. The creation of dedicated European political parties may also assist in cementing the idea of a European *demos*, for both citizens and EU policy makers. Along with this, there is the potential to supplement these European wide political parties with other mechanisms

that allow citizens to voice their democratic rights, such as Ladrech's (2010: 210) 'interest groups' and 'Euro-associations'. Lightfoot's (2005: 147) argues that the presence of the bodies in a growing EU would help to create the EU and its Parliament as a 'complete polity'.

7.3.3 Increased transparency

Common across many of the issues raised on the Parliament's democratic governance in this dissertation is a lack of transparency. By their nature, many of the other suggestions here also help to increase transparency in the structures of the Parliament and EU. Although it is clear that certain complicated aspects of running a multi-state governance body require specialised bodies, this does not mean that these bodies must function outside of the remit of democratic accountability. Bringing all aspects of European governance within the remit of the European Parliament would mean that citizens could have some kind of input in all aspects of decision making. This may be as simple as ensuring that all such bodies include MEPs sitting on them and reporting to the Parliament or Council of Ministers, and who could then exercise the power to bring decisions from these bodies to their respective chambers for debate. The resulting increase in transparency would also help to heighten accountability and perceptions of legitimate government in the EU as a whole.

As well as these direct approaches to improving transparency, certain indirect ways exist to develop this in the Parliament. One solution would be to subject a wider range of bodies within the EU to scrutiny from democratically elected Parliamentary members. Members of the Parliament sitting with non-elected parts of the governance structure, such as the Commission and European Council, could assist in countering the lack of democratic involvement in some areas of the Parliament's functions. This would also formalise the legitimacy of the EU, giving citizens a route through the Parliament into all aspects of the EU's functions, and thereby increasing transparency in decision making and governance.

A further way to increase transparency would be to encourage MEPs to take a more active role in their national states and local constituencies. As the interviews in Chapter 6 pointed out, there is a feeling that MEPs do not directly engage much with issues in their local areas. This was particularly the case with those who are involved with running European projects and experienced little interaction with their respective MEPs. This is a difficult issue to resolve given the complications of distance in the role of MEPs who have large geographical constituency areas, and owe a commitment to be in Brussels or Strasbourg at Parliamentary sessions. Nevertheless, fostering greater interaction between citizens, European projects, and MEPs should go a long way to improving the relationships between the governed and the processes that govern them.

Some of the ways to help increase MEP involvement could include the use of information technology that would enable them to participate in European debate and discussion whilst remaining in their local constituency. An alternative to this might be MEPs teamed up more actively in regions, so that one can be present in Europe while the other is in the constituency. Both of these options would help to forge better relationships with citizens, and in doing so, involve them more in the workings of the Parliament.

7.3.4 Stronger more involved civil society

According to the Green Paper, the challenges facing the nature of the state and governance in Europe mean that ‘civil society has probably been affected more than any other aspect of democracy’ (Council of Europe, 2004: 56). One way they suggest to redress this decline is fostering movement toward ‘an embryonic European civil society’ (Council of Europe, 2004: 57). Although the idea of European citizen already exists, reinforcing a European civil society could open further channels another method whereby this collective citizenry might express its wishes and hopefully political consciousness of Europe as a political entity distinct from statutes.

In Chapter 3, the idea of a strong civil society was central to debates on the shape of modern democracy. Shaw (2002: 169-70), for example argued that the nature of civil society and the state would likely constitute the focus for conflict, a position with some

merit particularly in light of recent clashes in Europe as a result of the ongoing recession. Chapter 3 supports Keane's (2009: 690) argument that representation in modern democratic systems is applicable 'to a much wider range of settings than ever before'. Rather than rely on traditional forms of democratic structures, individuals are finding other ways to represent their views, particularly through civil society organisations.

Enlivened civil society bodies create a parallel structure to traditional governance and one that can represent citizens' views outside of the formalised bodies of governance. Currently, there is a loose commitment in the EU to facilitate this kind of input and monitoring from civil society bodies. Protocol No 7 in the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) made it compulsory that "the Commission should ... consult widely before proposing legislation, and, wherever appropriate, publish consultation documents". The Lisbon Treaty (2007: 150) reiterated this with a similar commitment that 'before proposing legislative acts, the Commission shall consult widely'. However, these commitments are at best vague; there is scarce definition of what constitutes a consultation. In fact, the only process written into Lisbon for this purpose was the process of sending new legislation to national parliaments in order to 'consult, where appropriate, regional parliaments with legislative powers' (Lisbon Treaty, 2007: 151).

Increasing practical democratic representation through civil society would involve locating responsibility of consultation more firmly with citizens. Reinforcing the relationship between the citizen and the EU would help to engender a European ethos and expand the concept of a European demos. A European civil society would also act as a monitory body for both the Parliament and the EU as a whole, imbued with its own sources of legitimate authority deriving from its freely subscribing membership of EU citizens, and operating as external checks and balances to the functions of governance bodies within the European Union.

As an informal check and balance, civil society organisations add another layer to the processes of accountability in a state or governance body. Regenerating the role of civil society bodies should greatly inflate the accountable element of democracy in the

European Parliament. In Chapter 4, Keane's (2009: 689) idea of monitory democracy made a case for pursuing accountability through less formal democracy structures, existent in the public sphere and outside of traditional institutions. Keane is attempting to find in monitory democracy 'new ways of democratic living for little people in big and complex societies' (2009: 690) where there is a lack of faith in traditional methods of political accountability. Instead of state-based methods of representation and accountability, civil society bodies allow individuals a different avenue in which to express opinions or beliefs. Keane argues that these bodies may operate as 'power-scrutinising inventions' (2009: 690) which protect or project the interests of groups who choose to support them. The success of these organisations or pressure groups is then partly down to the democratic choice of individuals to lend their support. As an example of this, Keane (2009: 961) cites the Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe as a case in which a group of leading European academics were commissioned to write a report that went on to become an effective influence on the EU.

Keane's (2009: 689) concept of monitory democracy has the benefit of facilitating participation for a much wider group of people. Since most civil society bodies possess less stringent membership rules than states, monitory democracy encompasses a much wider relevant community than traditional systems of citizenship. This is particularly true in an information age when individuals enjoy the opportunity to participate in campaigns and activities dispersed across Europe without having to be physically present.

A stronger European civil society, even if not within an improved mandate for consultation, should enable a greater voice for citizens. Operating as a check and balance on the functions of the European Union and Parliament, a stronger civil society would increase the ways in which it was possible for citizens to influence the nature of policy and would represent citizens' opinions outside of formal channels. As part of this, a clearly mandated role for consultation with civil society bodies would also facilitate a chance for making opinions known outside of formal elections, not just to citizens but for all those living in the European Union,.

A stronger civil society may also assist in strengthening the Parliament’s image as a representative body as it would serve to reinforce the concept of European citizen, with rights responsibilities and representation in an accountable and legitimate governance structure. It could also enhance accountability by allowing non-citizens with a stake in the EU to contribute to processes of governance.

7.3.5 Summary: potential of democracy in the EU

The strategies suggested here for improving the Parliament’s democracy are organised along similar concepts to the Green Paper on The Future of Democracy in Europe (Council of Europe, 2004: 71) Figure 23 (following) divides the strategies into four categories depending on their focus. Strategies are targeted either at polity structures or on the role of citizens and these are also divided into direct and indirect approaches, referring to those that require legislative change and those that involve little or no new legislation. The intention of these four strategies is to advance practical ways for improving the nature of democratic accountability. Whilst many focus specifically on the Parliament and its functions, aspects of them may be implemented outside of the Parliament’s direct control but still remain closely associated with its role.

Figure 23: Author’s suggestions on improving democracy		
	Direct Strategies	Indirect Strategies
Polity-based	<p>1. Reform of the Parliament’s role</p> <p>Increase influence of Parliament as elected body.</p> <p>Extend process of democratic elections to Council of Ministers</p> <p>Commission chosen and populated by members from Parliament and Council</p>	<p>3. Increased transparency</p> <p>Strengthen horizontal checks with more transparent monitoring of all bodies.</p> <p>Push MEPs to be more active in local constituencies. Encourage more involvement with local projects</p>

Citizen-based	<p>2. Dedicated European political parties</p> <p>Introduction of European-wide political parties,</p> <p>Dissociate European political parties from national parties</p>	<p>4. Stronger, more involved civil society</p> <p>Stronger role for civil society organisations</p> <p>Actively seek to strengthen the idea of a European citizen with rights and responsibilities outside of their nation state</p>
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Although these strategies are presented in four categories, there is a great deal of crossover between them. For example, the introduction of dedicated European political parties would also require some central, structural readjustment in the Parliament, although in principle political parties are an extension of citizens’ requirements. Similarly, increased transparency applies to a whole range of different aspects in governance, although its inclusion in the polity-based category is because these are essentially mechanisms of the Parliament that require action. The division of the strategies into the categories also means that their implementation can occur independently. They do not rely on each other in order to function; however, collectively they offer a more comprehensive package of practical changes for addressing democracy in the Parliament and EU.

Working towards better democracy is not the only way to improve the functions of the European Parliament. There are governance issues that relate to the ways in which it operates that, although closely associated with its democratic role, embrace wider considerations of global political structures. The next section considers these issues, exploring the role of Parliament in a wider context of global governance.

7.4 The Potential of governance through the European Parliament.

The four strategies for improving democracy concentrate on establishing some practical methods for developing the democratic functions in the European Parliament. Although

these strategies go some way to addressing the failings of the Parliament identified in this immanent criticism, there remain wider considerations of the Parliament's governance role in the EU and its significance for democratic governance above the level of the state.

This part of the chapter examines two of the most pressing aspects of governance in the European Parliament that the immanent criticism revealed. Firstly, it suggests ways to address the ongoing struggle between state and citizens in the EU's governance structures, paying specific attention to the ways in which the Parliament may be able to strengthen its role. Secondly, it sets out some of the more serious problems of a democratic body operating in an overwhelmingly neoliberal global environment, advancing suggestions for the Parliament to function in such a situation.

7.4.1 Citizens over states

The ongoing dynamic between states and citizens continues to shape the nature of the Parliament and the Union as a whole. This is evident throughout the immanent criticism, which emphasises on several occasions how the power-sharing arrangements in the EU mean that citizens exert less influence than states in decision making.

The arguments of economic historians Milward (1984) and Dedman (2010: 11) tie the Parliament's growth to the will of member states, and the history of Parliamentary development described in Chapter 5 certainly supports them. Although a social emphasis emerged alongside the economic and structural desires of states, manifest initially as the oversight bodies for the ECSC and Euratom, states continued to retain the largest share of influence in decision making.

More recently, the Lisbon Treaty (2007) formalised a process of codecision that allowed both the Parliament and Council of Ministers to participate in decision making. Despite this seeming movement away from the state as the sole or primary locus of control, this immanent criticism raises some real questions as to the effectiveness of the European Parliament as a part of the Union's overall governance structure. The interviews in Chapter 6 detailed a range of views on the Parliament, many of which although

supportive of its principles and some of its functions, viewed it as little more than a ‘talking shop’, as academic Ac1 (3) termed it.

Part of the Parliament’s success within the EU lies in its ability to function effectively alongside states. Despite several negative opinions in the interviews, and an historical analysis that shows a continuing emphasis on states, a certain amount of evidence suggests the Parliament contains a tangible potential for incorporating a genuinely democratic aspect to governance. Although the democracy exercised so far leaves significant room for improvement, as the previous section illustrated, ongoing legislative developments meant that democracy plays a meaningful, if not dominant role in decision making.

If the Parliament is able to maintain its influence in the EU by implementing some of the changes discussed in this chapter and outlined in Figure 21, it could ultimately strengthen its position in the EU and in wider political roles. Not least, promoting a more involved role for MEPs should foster a better democratic relationship between citizens and Parliament, improving the Parliament’s legitimacy. Similarly, encouraging the growth of a European-wide civil society could allow the Parliament to develop its democracy without having to rely on changes at the structural level. This may involve a function for monitory systems of democracy in which an enlarged relevant community would participate in governance.

The process of strengthening the Parliament’s governance requires developing the transition from what Dedman (2010: 7) terms ‘interdependence’ to ‘integration’. Outlined in Chapter 5, this idea posits that for democratic governance to be truly effective at a supranational level there needs to be more than cooperation over common needs. In its place, a process of integration in the European Parliament and wider Union must involve a coming together of states and / or citizens not as individual bodies, but as a functional whole. The creation of a European citizenry was part of this process of integration as it allows citizens to transcend individual states and function at a collective level. If the European Parliament can continue to work towards integrating the wishes of a European

citizenry then it has the potential to strengthen its role in the EU, and in doing so increase the influence it may bring to bear on decision-making.

As well as using democratic methods to develop democracy internally, the European Parliament can also help to improve its representation of citizens by improving its role in a global political environment. The neorealist model described in Chapter 4 portrays an image of the European Union as a vehicle for extended statehood. In this so-called 'neorealist interpretation' of global politics (Payne and Samhat, 2004: 34), states are geostrategic units in a multi-polar world that regulates itself through treaties, agreements and, occasionally, force. Whilst this position is generally dismissive of any other source of authority other than states, its interpretations of global relationships mean that any regional influence from democratic bodies such as the European Parliament has the potential to diffuse across regional networks of states. This 'diffusion effect', as it is being termed here, contains the potential to initiate a wider movement for the inclusion of democracy at a supranational level of governance.

The diffusion effect of European regional democracy is evident in the African Union, which adopted a template similar to that of the EU. Whilst the AU does not yet contain a Parliament that functions in the same way as the EU, it does place a significant importance on the ideological aspects of democracy, and uses these as a way to help legitimate its actions. There is an ongoing commitment in the AU to matching these ideological aspects of democracy with tangible structures, including the strengthening of the Pan-African Parliament towards a role very similar to its European counterpart.

For the emphasis on integration to continue, the Parliament needs to maintain its present role in the structures of the Union and develop this where possible. It also needs to be more active in helping to initiate similar projects in other areas, offering the benefit of its experience to nascent regional democratic bodies. By doing this, the European Parliament might contribute a structure to global governance that does not rely solely on nation states and that contains the potential to challenge the dominance of economic modes of globalised authority.

7.4.2 Democracy over neoliberalism

Although the Parliament plays an important role in maintaining and developing its own democratic functions, it does not do this in a global environment devoid of other ideological forces. The influence that a neoliberal ideology exerts in structuring global political, economic, and social exchange must not be underestimated, and as this dissertation has argued, these neoliberal processes represent a serious and ongoing threat to democratic development.

The hegemonic model in Chapter 3 described the dominance of a neoliberal ideology, building upon the critical perspectives of, amongst others Strange (1996), Hardt and Negri (2001), and Callinicos (2003). It conceptualises a social and political world dominated by the ideological tenets of neoliberalism in which market economics is the primary force structuring human action, and which is more concerned with maintaining the structures of international markets than providing individuals with the opportunity to influence the political decisions that shape their lives. Furthermore, these authors argue that the defence of this ideology is often aggressive, supported by a network of powerful states and international organisations.

Streeten (2001), Hardt and Negri (2001), Callinicos (2003), and Crouch (2004) all argue that an aggressive neoliberal ideology places the needs of the market as first and foremost with social considerations of democracy secondary. In this hegemonic approach, structures such as the European Parliament allow citizens influence within accepted limits that do not impinge upon the ultimate neoliberal goal of the institution. The dominance of an economic over a social model in the hegemonic model means that it is difficult to comprehend how developing a democratic element to governance could be possible in the European Union and Parliament.

For Crouch (2004), the inevitable outcome of a system that depends solely on a market-driven ideology is a fundamental decline in democracy. In its place, elites and those with the ability to influence a market system geared towards economic regulation and

management drive policy. There are recent examples of market influence over state functions, one of the most evident of which is the ongoing role of influential Credit Rating Agencies, such as Standard and Poor's and Moody's, in directing national economic policy. In an interview in 1996, Friedman discussed the way that Credit Rating Agencies influence world markets and the economic policies of states. He stated that:

There are two superpowers in the world today in my opinion. There's the United States and there's Moody's Bond Rating Service. The United States can destroy you by dropping bombs, and Moody's can destroy you by downgrading your bonds. And believe me, it's not clear sometimes who's more powerful

(Friedman, 1996, cited in Guardian, 2011b)

The influence that CRAs such as Moody's bring to bear is evident in the recent downgrading of the US credit rating. An initial threat by Moody's (2011) and other rating agencies to reduce the US credit rating from AAA helped to define fraught debates on economic policy in that country. On 5th August, 2011, Standard and Poor's (S&P) downgraded the US credit rating from AAA to AA+, meaning that the US must now pay a higher price for lending on the international bond markets (see Appendix 6 for full version of Standard and Poor's, 2011: 3). Justifying their decision, S&P state that they take 'no position on the mix of spending and revenue measures that Congress and the Administration might conclude is appropriate for putting the U.S.'s finances on a sustainable footing'. However, in their wider rationale for the decision S&P discuss the issues that led them to make their decision:

The political brinkmanship of recent months highlights what we see as America's governance and policymaking becoming less stable, less effective, and less predictable than what we previously believed...the resulting [statutory debt ceiling] agreement fell well short of the comprehensive fiscal consolidation program that some proponents had envisaged until quite recently. It appears that for now, new revenues have dropped down on the menu of policy options. In addition, the plan envisions only minor policy changes on Medicare and little change in other entitlements, the containment of which we and most other independent observers regard as key to long-term fiscal sustainability

(See Appendix 6 for Standard and Poor's, 2011: 3)

Despite S&P being careful to state that they take no position on the US proposed fiscal policy, they openly discuss two distinct aspects of the recent debt–ceiling agreement in the US that they feel did not go far enough. In response to this criticism, President Obama was critical of S&P, saying that ‘markets will rise and fall. But this is the United States of America. No matter what some agency may say, we've always been and always will be a triple-A country’ (BBC, 2011d)

There are similar concerns in the Eurozone, where aggressive pricing from bond markets has promoted rapid fluctuation on Spanish and Italian government bonds (BBC, 2011e). Unlike the US however, the reaction of the Eurozone was to suggest regulation for CRAs in 2008 (Europa 2011), and in July 2011 Michel Barnier, the EU's internal market commissioner, delivered a speech to an EU conference aimed at improving how financial markets work in the EU. He argued that:

We need to be more demanding when it comes to how CRAs rate sovereign debt. These ratings play a crucial role not only for the rated countries but for all our countries: a downgrading has the immediate effect of making a country's borrowing more expensive, it makes states weaker, and there are possible effects of contagion on neighbouring economies.

(Barnier, 2011)

The problems that states face with CRAs gives one example of how an internationalised economic environment makes it difficult for even the most powerful states to function in isolation. The influence of a neoliberalised market economy up on states threatens the credibility of democracy to function in such a market system. However, the proposal from Europe is interesting, as it suggests that there is some movement away from outright reliance on market mechanisms, and that neoliberalism and market economics may be managed more tightly at a local level.

The argument that neoliberalism is transformed rather than transforming at a local level is evident in the concentric-governance model discussed in Chapter 4 and throughout parts of the immanent criticism in this dissertation. This position is one of ‘global statehood’,

in which the international political world is structured around a core of states with the most power and influence. Czempiel (2000: 256) argues that a core of powerful states on similar lines to the hegemonic model maintains a strong focus on a neoliberal ideology and institutions either directly sponsored by or affiliated with this core. Here, bodies such as the IMF and World Bank help in maintaining the dominance of the market-led global structure. However, this model of concentric governance also conceives world structure as more fluid, with states and collective bodies such as the EU less tied into the structures of neoliberalism. Although the global system remains dominated by a neoliberal ideology, this is modified at a national or regional level to form distinct structures or interpretations of that system. Shaw's (2002: 192) premise underpinned this model is of a continued 'resilience of some national centres and the continuous emergence of new centres of would-be authoritative force'.

The revised version of a core-periphery model in Chapter 4 incorporates more space for an institution such as the European Union, allowing the Parliament to function more freely than possible in the hegemonic model. Neoliberalism is still a powerful influence, but it is tempered by the social and democratic influence of Parliament, creating a new form of governance structure, creating what academic Ac2 (1) described in his interview as a 'social market approach to combining capitalism and democracy'.

The interpretations in concentric governance render a more accurate representation of the European Union and Parliament's role. Although the power of international markets and regulatory bodies is dominant in shaping institutions, the idea that local forces may influence governance suggests there is room for bodies such as the Parliament to grow. The structures of democracy might function more freely within this approach than in the hegemonic model and consequently there is a much greater chance for organisations such as the Parliament to influence the direction taken by the European Union. Although citizens are still inevitably tied into the liberalised structures of modern capitalism, within these confines they experience a much greater opportunity to affect the ways in which their governance structure operates.

Despite the continuing role of neoliberalism in global structures, the European Parliament has the opportunity to present an alternative route to internationalisation less reliant upon an economic model. This more optimistic approach builds on the idea of a 'diffusion effect' in democracy, which ultimately entails a reduction of global neoliberal influence beginning at regional and local levels. Although institutions such as the EU function in a global environment predominantly structured by a market-driven neoliberal ideology, their ability to adapt this ideology at a local or regional level means that they may exercise more control the ways they organise governance.

A great deal of evidence is collated by this dissertation in favour of the above approach, not least of which is the continually evolving nature of the EU and the Parliament's place within it. There is an undeniable concentration within the EU upon market issues, typified in the recent concerns over the future of the Eurozone; however, this is not surprising as monetary union is a large part of the integration project. Nevertheless, a social outlook from the Parliament provides what Shaw terms (2002: 192) a 'continued resistance' to neoliberal dominance, and a temper to its economic focus.

Although the European Parliament is not a dominant element in the EU's structures, its democratic influence does occupy a genuine place in decision making. The benefit of this is to create the Parliament as an alternative method of globalising authority that does not function along neoliberal lines. There is already some evidence of this occurring in the route that the African Union is increasingly taking. The ongoing progress towards a democratic Pan-African Parliament implies that democracy will play a larger part in future modes of global governance.

For democracy to prosper in a global environment, bodies like the Parliament need to sustain their goal of introducing democracy at the supranational level. This requires a concerted effort from the Parliament to maintain its orientation, particularly in times of economic crisis when there is a tendency to emphasis purely economic approaches to problems. Only by continuing to solidify its position in the structures of the EU can the

Parliament champion democracy as a genuine challenge to the dominance of neoliberal approaches to governance.

7.4.3 Summary: Potential of global governance and the EP

As with the strategies for democracy, the suggestions for improving governance in this chapter yield practical ways to address some of the issues identified in this immanent criticism. The proposals for governance incorporate some of the previous ideas on democracy as part of a wider drive to reinforce democratic governance and project that onto the decision-making processes of the European Union.

Figure 24 (following) breaks down the approaches to developing governance into three approaches, in each case describing the actions required as well as the intended outcomes of these approaches.

Figure 24: Author’s suggestions for improving governance

Approach	Action	Intended outcome
Foster greater democratic integration through the Parliament	Implement suggestions on improving Parliament-focused democracy, such as better interaction of Parliament / MEPs with citizens and increased connections with civil society bodies	Strengthened democracy in the Parliament without having to radically alter structures of the Union. Increase in forms of monitory democracy.
Encourage diffusion effect of democracy	Where possible, use the Parliament as an example of how democracy can function at a supranational level	Increase in the number of supranational democratic bodies worldwide. Offer of solidarity in more networks of democratic structures.
Offer ‘continuing resistance’ to neoliberalism	Strengthening the Parliament’s democratic structures and encourage other forms of democracy.	Evidence that democracy can function at a supranational level, and therefore offer a genuine alternative to neoliberal globalisation.

Each of the three approaches targets a specific area of governance, and incorporates some elements of the suggestions for improving democracy. However, in this case these three

approaches also consider wider aspects of democratic governance in the face of continued neoliberal pressure. The first approach deals specifically with the Parliament and its own democracy, suggesting that strengthening its internal democratic structures and functions would allow it to represent citizens without having to alter radically the way in which the EU works. The second approach considers the role that the Parliament might play in a global world by encouraging other bodies such as the AU to adopt or develop greater democratic aspects of governance. In doing so, it hopes that the diffusion effect of democracy will amplify its presence in states and global political institutions. The final approach for improving governance combines the first two in a hope that a Parliament that functions more democratically, and that tenders other global bodies solidarity and a template for internationalising democracy, may present a substantial challenge to neoliberal dominance in global governance.

Along with the detailed suggestions on democracy, the three approaches to developing governance made here represent a structural critique of the European Parliament. This critique follows immanent criticism's stress on developing bodies to function better as a vehicle for human organisation. This means that whilst they may hint at major changes in organisational structures, they are not as radical as some other aspects of Horkheimer's work. The following section proffers a more radical critique of democracy and governance as part of a wider approach to the criticisms contained in this dissertation.

7.5 Beyond structural critique:

As a method of analysis, immanent criticism searches for practical ways in which to develop the social structures that govern the world, however its genus in the work of Horkheimer and critical theory mean that it is part of a more radical tradition. Part of this radicalism is implicit in the ongoing critique of neoliberalism that underpins immanent criticism and the interpretations in this dissertation; however, immanent criticism as a practical method does not always go as far beyond structural critique as other aspects of Horkheimer's work or critical theory generally.

The dominance of a capitalist mode of production in global neoliberalism undermines any other system that emerges as a challenge to its economic and social dominance. Writing in the late 1960s, Horkheimer (1992: 250) was critical of the modern era and ‘the real nature of the new relations of production’, which he argues is inseparable ‘from the economic’. For Horkheimer (1992: 252) the economic rationalism of capitalism fundamentally distorts society and the individual within it, so profoundly changing the nature of human activity that ‘under the totalitarian lordship of evil, men may retain not simply their lives but their very selves only by accident’.

The arguments of Horkheimer are not diminished with time; indeed the systems of production and control of which he was so critical have only increased in magnitude and reach. The global inequality that a neoliberal system creates diminishes the opportunities for real democracy, as Crouch (2004: 6) argued through his concept of ‘post-democracy’. Writing on democracy’s future in a system of market-capitalism, Dahl (2000: 179) states that ‘the relation between a country’s democratic political system and its non-democratic economic system has presented a formidable and persistent challenge to democratic goals and practises throughout the twentieth century. That challenge will surely continue in the twenty-first century’. Dahl (2000) paints a pessimistic picture of the clash between democracy and neoliberal capitalism in which there is little chance of the two coexisting in governance. The future for democracy is further degraded, he argues, by the continued internationalisation of political power, which he regards as ‘likely to expand the domain of decisions made by political and bureaucratic elites at the expense of democratic controls’ (2000: 183)

Although Horkheimer uses an immanent method as a way to explore and then suggest practical solutions to the failings of social structure, ultimately this is part of a wider tradition that ‘is not concerned only with goals already imposed by the existent ways of life, but with men [sic] and all their potentialities’ (1992: 245). For Horkheimer, this potential may be unreachable as long as capitalist economics remains the dominant method through which social organisation is articulated. He argues that:

[it] would be mechanistic ... to judge the future forms of society solely according to their economy...if in the present state of society economy is the master of man and therefore the lever by which he is to be moved to change, in the future men must themselves determine all their relationships in the face of natural necessities. Economics in isolation will therefore not provide the norm by which the community of men is to be measured.

(Horkheimer, 1992: 249)

Horkheimer's (1992: 247) struggle is 'against the illusory harmonies of liberalism and the broadcasting of the contradictions immanent in it'. In order to pass beyond the inequalities and injustices of present systems, he argues that we must fundamentally change the ways in which we imagine our social existence. The outcome of this assessment is a system in which 'the economy must serve man, not man the economy' (Horkheimer, 1992: 247)

Although radical change is highlighted as the ultimate solution to inequality, Horkheimer's approach remains inherently practical, and he suggests that 'the abolition of this state of affairs aims at a higher principle of economic organisation and not at all at some philosophical utopia' (Horkheimer, 1992: 249). As part of this practical approach, the realistic assessment of democracy and governance in this dissertation could play an important role in helping to move beyond present systems. Improving the ways in which bodies such as the European Parliament function is the first stage in working towards supplanting the dominant and destructive economics of neoliberalism and replacing it with a system that is more just, and entails greater freedoms. The approaches to governance and suggestions for democracy should therefore be realised as a beginning to transformation, rather than as an end in themselves.

7.6 Summary: the potential of the European Parliament as a democratic regional-global governance structure

As the final stage of immanent criticism, this chapter provides some specific strategies and suggestions for improving the ways in which democracy and governance function in the European Parliament and, by extension, in a wider global political environment. This is the second element of the thesis in this work, which affirms that there is a greater potential in the Parliament's democratic and governance functions than is presently manifest. It is also part of the dedication of immanent criticism to achieve practical ways of moving beyond the inequalities of present social structures.

Potentiality in democratic regional and global governance relies largely on bodies such as the European Parliament. These collective institutions possess the ability to voice the will of citizens above the level of national politics, and denote a challenge to the dominance of an established market system guided by a neoliberal ideology. The Parliament's slow but continued progress towards a more integrated role in the EU lends a means for introducing greater levels of democracy into supranational systems of authority. For this progression to continue necessitates constant reevaluation of democracy's application by and through bodies such as the European Parliament. Ultimately, democracy in global governance should function freely when neoliberalism ceases to be the defining force of global political, social and, above all, economic structures.

The final chapter summarises the arguments made in the three-stage immanent criticism conducted in this dissertation. It highlights the most important parts of the two elements of the thesis, as well as other important aspects to derive from this work. It also describes several ways to extend this study to encompass a wider view of democracy's role in global governance.

Chapter 8

Conclusions: a summary of democratic regional governance in the European Parliament

8.1 Conclusions of the thesis

8.1.1 The EP as a new form of democratic regional governance structure.

8.1.2 The democratic and governance potential of European Parliament

8.2 Other applications from the dissertation

8.2.1 Immanent criticism

8.2.2 Principles of democracy

8.2.3 Reflexive interviewing

8.3 Furthering the study on democracy and governance in the European Parliament

8.4 Final reflections on the project

8.1 Conclusions of the thesis

As an exploration of democracy and governance in regional-political bodies, this dissertation has concentrated on the European Parliament which is the most developed of such bodies. It presents a thesis arguing the Parliament is a new form of democratic regional governance structure with a relevant community that combines the wishes of state and citizens. In operating at an international level, the Parliament elevates democracy as a genuine alternative to governance beyond the state. The thesis proceeds to suggest a number of practical ways to improve the Parliament's democratic and governance functions.

The nature of democratic governance in the European Parliament continues to be a contentious issue. For those that view the European project as a retrenchment of state dominance and neoliberal power, the Parliament represents a system of governance where democracy is subordinate to the demands of a market system. On the other hand, for those that view the EU and its Parliament as a functioning democratic governance body, there is at least the possibility to envisage a greater potential for democratic politics above the level of the state.

A particular problem in discussing the changing nature of democratic governance is the varying interpretations that exist for both democracy and governance. In the modern world, democracy is a central concept in discussions on the nature of governance and the functions of a state, often defining aspects of social and cultural systems. The lack of any universally agreed parameters for what constitutes a democratic system means that there is always the potential for disagreement. Similarly, considerations of governance depend largely on ontological interpretations of how an interconnected world functions. Different conceptions of institutions such as the European Parliament are inexorably tied into varying interpretations that determine its possibilities.

Chapters 3 and 4 dealt with the problems of defining democracy and governance, in each case constructing a conceptual framework to assess the nature of these aspects when manifest in a governance system. Chapter 3 devised a set of three key principles for evaluating a democratic system, and Chapter 4 offered several ontological perspectives interpreting global structures in a different way. These theoretical discussions are a robust basis for this dissertation, providing the subsequent immanent criticism of the European Parliament with a wider context in current debates on democratic governance.

The immanent criticism of the European Parliament applied a process adapted from the work of Max Horkheimer (1946; 1992). Founded on a socially constructionist epistemology which understands knowledge as a social process, it traced the ways in which dominant forces in history shape the functions of present-day social institutions. As part of this process, the immanent criticism examined the European Parliament through three aspects: its historical development; its present functions; and its potential role. This three-stage process gives a unique insight into how Parliament has grown into its role, as well as its potential to develop further. The thesis of this work that is supported in this three-stage process makes two arguments on the Parliament: firstly, that it represents a new form supranational democratic governance structure with a unique relevant community; and secondly, that there is greater potential in its present structures than is currently evident. The main arguments are summarised in the following sections.

8.1.1 The EP as a new form of democratic regional governance structure.

The argument that the European Parliament represents a new form of democratic governance structure is made primarily in the first two stages of immanent criticism. These chapters assemble a range of evidence to support the idea that the European Parliament brings a democratic element to regional governance unlike that of any other similar body and that in doing so, it is representing a new relevant community of states and citizens.

The EU and its Parliament are not alone in offering some form of democracy at a level beyond the state. For example, Greenpeace and Amnesty International allow their members to voice concerns on certain pressure issues, however these are pressure groups rather than governance institutions and therefore do not exert the same levels of influence. Other international institutions such as the UN give states the chance to participate on collective issues, although in the case of the UN there is no attempt to regulate the everyday functions of states, or to provide individual citizens with the chance for democratic engagement.

Dedman's (2010: 7) distinction between *interdependence* and *integration* is useful in understanding the difference between pressure groups and international bodies such as the UN and the European Union. Where the former produce some form of interdependence, the EU represents a form of political integration that is typified in the functions of the Parliament. The European Parliament is the only collective governance body to represent directly a citizenry comprising members from multiple states, allowing these citizens the chance to shape policy and direct governance at a supranational level.

As this dissertation points out however, the Parliament is far from an ideal expression of the democratic function, and there are a number of areas which attract serious concerns on how the Parliament integrates the will of citizens into the EU. Foremost amongst these is the continued inability of the Parliament to initiate legislation, a fact that greatly reduces the role of democracy in decision making. Similarly, EU member states retain a

greater chance to influence the policy process than does the Parliament, an imbalance that was addressed in recent treaties but which still exists.

Although there are problems with its role, the Parliament's role in the EU introduces the voice of citizens into decision making at a supranational level. The addition of a democratic element to the EU is such that it creates a unique relevant community, where alongside member states the individual citizen experiences a genuine chance to influence the political decisions that shape their lives. Although the Parliament's role is limited, this dissertation argues that its presence is significant enough in EU decision making to represent a genuine democratic influence in governance.

The presence of the Parliament in the structures of the EU means that both states and citizens enjoy representation in its regional governance. In this way, the Parliament acts as a genuine balance to the influence of a pervasive global neoliberal ideology over governance. Its presence also means that the EU as a whole represents an alternative route to international governance which is not solely reliant on a neoliberal ideology, but also incorporates the wishes of over 500 million legally mandated European citizens.

8.1.2 The democratic and governance potential of the EP

The second aspect of the thesis addressed the emancipatory requirements of Horkheimer's (1946, 1992) philosophy upon which this exploration of the European Parliament was structured. The nature of this research as both exploratory and emancipatory meant that it was not sufficient to simply critique the Parliament, but it was also required to provide a range of suggestions for ways in which it could move beyond its present state. Consequently, the final stage of immanent criticism in Chapter 7 presented alternatives to develop democracy in the Parliament and EU as a whole, as well as an assessment of global governance and how the Parliament might develop.

The chapter presents four specific actions which, if adopted could improve the ways that democracy functions in the European Parliament. The design of these suggestions allows them to be implemented individually or collectively, although together they cover a wide

range of the issues raised in this immanent criticism. Figure 25 (following) summarises these suggestions, dividing them between direct strategies that involve fundamental shifts in structure and function and indirect strategies, which do not need new legislation. There is also a divide between those that concentrate on changes at a polity level (meaning they require fundamental changes to the way the EU works) and those that focus on developing the role of citizens and other non-governmental bodies.

Figure 25: Summary of author's suggestions on improving democracy		
	Direct Strategies	Indirect Strategies
Polity-based	1. Reform of the Parliament's role	3. Increased transparency
Citizen-based	2. Dedicated European political parties	4. Stronger, more involved civil society

As well as the suggestions for ways to improve democracy in the Parliament, the final stage of immanent criticism also discusses the potential that a democratic Parliament brings to governance beyond the level of the state. Chapter 7 argues that the introduction of democracy into global governance faces some severe difficulties in challenging the dominance of neoliberal market economics. However, it does appear that the democratic element the Parliament integrates into the EU shows a degree of challenge to neoliberal dominance. For this to continue, the Parliament needs to maintain its position in EU decision making, strengthening this where possible through the suggestions on democracy already made. By doing this, the Parliament may function as an example for other similar bodies who are seeking to introduce democracy into their supranational structures. For instance, the African Union is moving more towards an EU-style model of regional governance, although as yet it has not adopted many of the same concepts and processes.

In order for the European Parliament to function as a genuine democratic institution in governance above the level of the state, it must be allowed to participate more fully in decision making. If this occurs, then there is a chance for citizens to genuinely influence their own social and political lives in an increasingly globalising world. In this sense, the place of Parliament and the Union represents part of the wider debate on the future of governance structures: if democracy works in the EU, there is the potential for it to work across other global governance structures.

If the Parliament is able to maintain its position in EU governance structures and if it is able to help to develop democracy in supranational governance worldwide then there is a real chance for it to be an alternative route to internationalised power. The European Parliament has the potential to be a beacon for globalising democracy, and the unique role it plays in the EU is an alternative to neoliberal globalisation with the potential to generate a wider change in how global governance occurs.

8.2 Other applications from the dissertation

As well as the two main arguments of this thesis, this dissertation contains other elements with a wider application outside of this work. Of these, three have the most significance: the adapted process of immanent criticism; the key principles of democracy used to evaluate the Parliament; and the method of reflexive interviewing used in the fieldwork.

8.2.1 Immanent criticism

The process of immanent criticism that is adapted for this dissertation derives from several of Horkheimer's analyses on how to explore and then move beyond the problems faced in modern society. It is an inherently practical application of critical theory that does not lose any of that philosophy's wider concern for the reasons behind social problems, or the considerations of how to move beyond them.

As a methodological application, immanent criticism has been largely ignored by mainstream sociological and political theorists. This is partly due the fact that

Horkheimer himself only really talks about it as part of his wider discussion on an immanent method that criticises the dialectic within modern capitalism. This dialectic is presented by Horkheimer and much of the Frankfurt School as a contrast between the classic liberalism with which capitalism justifies its logic of the market, and a reality where a false logic of the market ultimately subjects all aspects of social life to a rationale that is ‘the rationale of domination itself’ (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002: 121).

Unlike other members of the Frankfurt School at the time, Horkheimer sought to challenge this dialectic in the structures of modern society as well as in its philosophy, and immanent criticism is a way to apply these ideas to contemporary social bodies. Because of its wider remit on the potential of such bodies in organising social action, Horkheimer’s approach is particularly suited to big institutions such as governments. The subsequent work on Horkheimer’s immanent method completed by Held (1980) and Geuss (1999) add to this body of thought and help contextualise it in terms of its potential as a method of research.

Despite its applicability, there are few if any pieces of research that conspicuously apply Horkheimer’s immanent method, although arguably any approach that contrasts an organisation’s claims against its actual functions is a step towards this. What sets immanent criticism apart, however, is its requirement for praxis. Knowledge should not be an end in itself, and immanent criticism requires research to produce outcomes with practical applications in the potential of organisations.

Through applying a form of immanent criticism in this dissertation, I hope that I have gone some way to reintroducing it as a method of investigation. In the current global political environment, it provides a creative way to explore the failings of large social institutions, particularly those that regulate our everyday lives. More than this, immanent criticism may contribute a way to transcending the inequalities of present times, given its commitment to praxis assists in directing research into practical solutions for daily problems.

8.2.2 Principles of democracy

The principles of democracy that Chapter 3 constructs were part of a solution in this dissertation to the problems faced in analysing the nature of democracy in the European Parliament. They do however possess a much wider application than in this study. They concentrate the exploration of democracy into three key areas that together tender insights into how that system works, and as such are applicable to any democratic system, whether a state or any other body.

These three key principles are particularly relevant to new forms of democratic structure, as they do not rely on traditional models for their analysis. As Chapter 3 showed, democracy is a shifting concept that has undergone a wide variety of applications over its 2500-year history. Using traditional approaches to modelling democracy can mean couching new systems in terminology and approaches that do not fully encompass the ways in which they operate. This is evident in this dissertation vis-à-vis the new form of relevant community that exists in the EU. This term, borrowed from Held (2002: 27), is crucial in communicating how it is that the European Parliament functions as part of a whole body incorporating the wishes not just of states or citizens, but combining both.

Using key principles to describe a democratic system is not an inherently new process; many descriptions of democratic governance base themselves around key ideas. However, those formulated for this dissertation differ insofar as they are not associated with definitive structures, or indeed ideologies. They are a guide rather than a template for understanding how a system applies democracy, and as such are as open to interpretation as the democratic system itself.

8.2.3 Reflexive interviewing

Devised as part of this dissertation's desire to adhere to a socially constructionist epistemology, reflexive interviewing is a technique for social researchers to explore situations in which they have little initial knowledge or where there is a chance that their own knowledge may develop to a significant level that requires an adoption of the interview schedule. In the case of this dissertation, reflexive interviewing lent a way to

deal with what Gillingham (2005: 55) terms ‘elite interviews’: interviews with those who are in positions of power, knowledge or influence that facilitate a substantial degree of knowledge in a specific area.

Reflexive interviewing is a way of setting up fixed interview topic areas that remain constant throughout the whole interview process, but facilitating a wider degree of variation on the questions within each of these topic areas. This has the benefit of producing a defined interview structure for the researcher, whilst allowing them to reflexively incorporate changes to their knowledge and understanding into discrete questions, and therefore to extract the most out of each interview. Although not suitable in every situation, reflexive interviewing is a method that combines structure and consistency with a reflexive adaptation that social constructionism asserts is an inevitable outcome of research.

8.3 Furthering the study on democracy and governance in the European Parliament

There are number of ways to develop the findings of this study. One approach would be to extend the analysis of the Parliament to cover the Council of Ministers. This adds an important extra level of analysis to areas such as codecision and power sharing, which can broaden the focus to encompass aspects of democracy and governance within other parts of the EU. On the same note, including a wider range of MEPs, academics and other involved actors in a set of interviews may help to extend the perspectives on how the Parliament currently functions.

Another way to develop the findings of this study could be to apply the principles of democracy devised for this research in another study. Examining a body such as the African Union and the Pan-African Parliament would provide a valuable compliment to this exploration of regional governance, expanding its global reach as well as its portrayal of the ways in which democracy and neoliberalism coexist. Similarly, extending the study to another regional body that clearly does not incorporate democracy in its makeup, such

as the North American Free Trade Agreement, would help to demonstrate how the EU, and to some extent the AU, resemble new forms of democratic governance at an international level.

8.4 Final reflections on the project

The future of democratic global governance relies heavily on the role of the European Union and its Parliament. These bodies, however, face some serious challenges, and how democracy develops in the European Union will, I suspect, depend on two contingencies. Firstly, it is likely to rely heavily on the consequences of the so-called debt crisis in Europe and the outcomes of this for the Eurozone. Although the Eurozone is by no means the entirety of the European Union, its importance to the process of integration is vast.

The Euro represents the latest phase of integration and if it were to fail, then it is almost certain that the entire European project would need to be re-examined. The ongoing troubles with Greek debt repayments present a significant challenge to the mechanisms of the Euro, and how the ECB and other Eurozone states manage these issues is likely to have important ramifications for the wider Union. If the financial problems affecting Greece spread to Italy, Spain and even France, then a more extensive redefinition of European monetary union may well be required.

If the debt crisis in Europe and America escalates, as seems likely, then there might be a more fundamental reorganisation of global structures. In such a situation, there is arguably an opportunity for democratic structures to reassert themselves in a global system with its ideology in crisis. For example, it is possible that the crisis in the Eurozone will result in tighter fiscal union, which may also exert a positive impact on social union. In the same way, a renewed global recession could offer states and democratic institutions a chance to reclaim some portions of control that they ceded to the international market.

Although none of the options for developing the function of the European Parliament in this dissertation represents the revolution that Marxist theory predicts, it may be that a crisis in neoliberal, market-based dominance opens the door to other ideological structures. In such a situation, meaningful democracy, already an established part of the European Union, may have the chance to assert itself on a global stage. The resulting global structures, however, are far from certain.

The second element that has the potential to define the future of regional democracy, at least in Europe, is the will of member states to surrender portions of their sovereignty to centralised governance. As this dissertation has argued, member states are still the primary stakeholders in the EU, and despite an increasingly influential Parliament, they still determine much of its political direction. Domestic pressures in some European states mean an increasing rejection of further integration, with some states questioning if deeper connections are a good idea at all, especially in light of the current problems in the Eurozone. The ongoing conflict between social and economic models aids this division, and makes it difficult for citizens to envisage how a European Parliament can effectively influence their lives.

The issues of recession and a will to integrate, although not exhaustive, represent some of the upcoming challenges to regional democratic governance in the EU. However, the EU and its Parliament are used to negotiating difficult transitions. This is evident in the changes that took place during the process of researching and writing this dissertation, which included the failed European Constitution and its replacement in the Lisbon Treaty, as well as a global recession that hit Europe particularly hard. Continuing this research to monitor the ongoing and changing forces acting upon the EU and Parliament is important, not just from a political standpoint but from a sociological one, as ultimately, these processes are about the control that individuals command over their own lives.

Further integration in Europe is reliant on many factors, particularly given such an unstable global economic and political environment. Democratic regional governance

however, remains a viable alternative to the economic neoliberalism that characterises much of the present global structure. The presence of the European Parliament in the wider EU represents the most advanced resistance to neoliberal ideology on an international level, and its further expansion through some of the methods proposed in this dissertation would ultimately help to allow individuals and citizens to retain control of their political and social destiny.

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