

EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND OTHER MYSTERIES — SEEKING OUT THE HIDDEN SOURCE OF UNITY FOR A TROUBLED POLITY

IDENTIDAD EUROPEA Y OTROS MISTERIOS — EN BUSCA DE LA FUENTE OCULTA DE
UNIDAD PARA UNA ENTIDAD POLÍTICA EN PROBLEMAS

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Abstract: The economic crisis in Europe exposes the European Union's political fragility. How a polity made of very different states can live up to the motto "Europe united in diversity" is difficult to envisage in practice. In this paper I attempt an "exegesis"—a critical explanation or interpretation of a series of published pieces ("the Series") which explores, first, if European unity is desirable at all. Second, it presents a new methodology—*analogical hermeneutics*—used throughout the Series to approach the problem of unity. Third, it conceptualises the source of unity as political identity. Fourth, it advances that the vehicle to share such identity is an analogical language: the political culture of human rights. Fifth, it submits the conditions under which such political culture could ground political identity through an open public sphere. Finally, it presents a way in which solidarity can grow as the increasingly diverse citizens of the European Union interact with each other. Even though the economic crisis can be solved by means of sound economic strategy (which is not the main object of my work), any successful economic strategy requires—as a precondition—a certain degree of political unity (the central concern of my research).

Keywords: analogical hermeneutics, analogical language, European Union, human rights, political culture, political identity, political unity, public sphere, relational interculturalism, religion, secularism, solidarity, statism, suprastatism.

The economic crisis has exposed the fragility of Europe's political building—the European Union (EU). In this political building, every “brick” (or member state) is different and claims respect for its singularity. In the EU motto: “Europe united in diversity,” the “diversity” part is most evident.¹ Tallinn and Dubrovnik attest to very different cultural, political, artistic and historical traits. But what can Tallinn and Dubrovnik—Estonia and Croatia—stay together as part of the same polity?

This article follows a series of papers (“the Series”) on European political identity.² Eight of them have been published.³ In order to make it easier for the reader to follow the referencing in the text, a shorthand name has been given to each of the pieces: *European Identity*,⁴ *Cosmopolitan Communitarian*,⁵ *Political Identity*,⁶ *Normative Conceptions*,⁷ *Analogical Identity*,⁸ *Liberal Democracy*,⁹ *Cultural Riddles*,¹⁰ *Rethinking Neutrality*,¹¹ *Worth Fighting*,¹² and *Europe United*.¹³ All of them are available online.¹⁴

The Series, I put forward here, represents a body of research about one problem—the wobbly political unity of the EU, using a specific methodology—analogical hermeneutics, with a coherent conceptual framework which hopes to contribute to the study of the topic, presenting a plausible avenue to address the problem—building political identity around the common political culture of human rights, and pointing to areas of research in need of further development.

A glance at the foundational ideals is contrasted with the current situation of the European Union, and some thoughts are advanced about the significance of political culture, participation, and

¹ See Pablo Cristóbal Jiménez Lobeira, "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading," *Open Insight: Revista de Filosofía* 2, no. 2 (2011): 57. "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific," (2012): 6-7. "Is Europe still worth fighting for? Allegiance, identity and integration paradigms revisited", in Fiona Jenkins, Mark Nolan & Kim Rubenstein (eds) *Allegiance and Identity in a Globalised World*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 2 November (2014) pp. 105–108.

² An earlier version of this paper was presented as a Public Lecture at the Australian National University Centre for European Studies, Canberra, on the 3rd of July 2012. I am indebted to HE Mr Andrzej Jaroszyński, former Ambassador of Poland to Australia, for his very insightful comments, to Dr Matthew Zagor for questions that helped a further elaboration of these ideas, to the Director of the Centre, Professor Jacqueline Lo, and to all of the attendants for their insights and participation. Thanks to Professor Tom Campbell, Professor Simon Bronitt, Professor Kim Rubenstein, Dr Ben Wellings, Dr Lina Eriksson, Dr John Besemeres, Dr Michael Casey, Dr Antonio Missiroli, Dr José Manuel Sobrino Heredia, Dr Héctor Velázquez and Professor Peter Hill for very useful feedback during the writing of the Series and/or subsequent versions of this piece.

³ Complete bibliographical reference for each of them will be given throughout the paper.

⁴ This current article.

⁵ "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading."

⁶ "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems," *European Law Journal* 18, no. 4 (2012).

⁷ "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach," *Australian Journal of Professional and Applied Ethics* 12, no. 1 & 2 (2010).

⁸ "EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding)," *Australia National University Centre for European Studies Briefing Paper Series* 1, no. 2 (2010).

⁹ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," *Australian & New Zealand Journal of European Studies* Volume 2, No 2 / Volume 3, No 1., no. May/June 2011 (2011).

¹⁰ "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific."

¹¹ "Veils, Crucifixes and the Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-secular Europe." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* Vol. 35, Issue 4, June (2014).

¹² "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited."

¹³ "Conclusion: Europe United in Diversity — an Analogical Hermeneutics Contribution to the Social and Political Philosophy of the European Union " *SSRN (WPS)* (2013).

¹⁴ *European Identity* at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2087938>;

Cosmopolitan Communitarian at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1620882>;

Political Identity at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1682422>;

Normative Conceptions at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1672479>;

Analogical Identity at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1652067>;

Liberal Democracy at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1658784>;

Cultural Riddles at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2083421>;

Rethinking Neutrality at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1648711>;

Worth Fighting at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1990817>;

and *Europe United* at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2292770>.

solidarity among European citizens.¹⁵

These days, however, the cause for European unity has become less popular—to put it mildly. In some instances, it faces not only scepticism but even blunt hostility. The case for European unity is not as obvious and clear as it might have been at the time of the Schuman declaration in 1950. This will be discussed in the following section.

Is unity desirable at all, and if so, of what kind?

The point of departure of my research is the undemonstrated assumption that the peoples of Europe, symbolised and expressed, among other elements by their languages, have an intrinsic, self-evident value that should be acknowledged, fostered and preserved. If Lithuanians—who form a state—or the Welsh—who do not but are a nation—or Neapolitans—who possess a language regardless of their being considered today a nation or not—were to disappear, something of intrinsic and immense value would be lost.

The day, in other words, when the Swedish people, their way of life, their love of coffee and nature, their history and music, their openness and sense of egalitarianism—conveyed by and synthesised in the Swedish language—ceased to exist, that day would signify a terrible and irreparable loss for Europe and for the world, comparable to a certain extent to the disappearance of an animal species or a large section of rainforest.¹⁶

I should like to warn the reader about three possible misunderstandings surrounding this idea.¹⁷ The first one is the naïve suggestion that all Swedish people are morally good from the simple fact that they are Swedish. That is certainly not the case of the Swedish people or any other people. In any human group, certain individuals behave in ways that are considered good (think of the honours, medals, distinctions and other forms of reward certain outstanding individuals receive due to their service to society); others may behave in ways that are considered bad, not exemplary, reprobate (receiving for it different forms of disapproval or punishment).

The second possible misunderstanding is the obtuse thought that appreciating Swedish people and culture, is somewhat equivalent to affirming their *superiority* over other human groups and cultures, for instance Russians or Norwegians. This is absurd because every people and their culture—symbolised and expressed in their language—are unique. Of course, the Swedish culture being human, is related to other human cultures in the way of complementariness. Certain elements of it can enrich others—as much as the Swedish culture itself can be similarly enriched by particular features of other cultures.

Third and last, that arguing for the value of Swedish people and culture equates to arguing in favour of the Swedish state. Because among other things, that would ignore those Swedes who do not live in the Swedish Kingdom (for instance, those who reside in Finland). And in the event that a state may become totalitarian, aggressive or destructive, that does not make the peoples and cultures living in them necessarily part of the state's atrocities. Think of many innocent Russians (or Georgians) in the Soviet Union under Stalin, or Germans (and Jewish Germans) living in the Third Reich under Hitler.

The assumption above does not ignore that peoples (as their cultures and languages) mix and change. In complicated and intricate ways which would be impossible to summarise in a few

¹⁵ Jiménez Lobeira, "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited; "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific; "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe."

¹⁶ To me, the hypothetical extinction of the Swedish people and their culture would be far worse. But I do not intend to elaborate an argument about it here.

¹⁷ Note that these possible misunderstandings could very well be just descriptions of at least some forms of nationalism along history—eminently in Europe. My position, however, is closely tied with peoples and their culture, rather than to abstract "nations" (unless the term is used to designate concrete peoples and their language and culture), or even less to "nation-states" (i.e. states).

paragraphs, languages evolve. In Europe, Uralic, Slavic, Germanic and Romance languages (among others) developed over centuries into the languages that are spoken today. They mutate, there is a sort of relativity to them. Hence, their value, though intrinsic and self-evident, is not absolute.¹⁸

For all their wrong-doings and mistakes, for all their history of wars and imperialism, the peoples and cultures of the continent that Mazower has called “dark”—and not for flattering reasons¹⁹—have nonetheless enriched the world in many positive ways. Abstract terms such as “Western” (ideas, culture, mentality, and so on) and “the West” would mean nothing without a strong reference to Europe.

From the middle of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th one, Europe faced the prospect of self-destruction due to the immense power of its increasingly assertive nation-states. From the aftermath of World War II to the end of what Hobsbawm calls the 20th “short century” (1914 - 1991),²⁰ the threat became external, with the Old Continent as main stage of a conflict—the Cold War—between two world superpowers ever at the brink of a disastrous conflagration. Contrastingly, in the 21st century, with emerging powers represented in the G20, seven of the ten fastest growing economies located in Africa and a general shift of interest in the planet towards Asia (as China gains economic, military and political prominence),²¹ Europe’s major threat is the ghost of irrelevance.

And if this is true for Europe as a whole, it is even more so for smaller European countries such as Luxembourg or Cyprus, and for minorities who live within one or several states: Scots in the UK, Ukrainians in Latvia, or Romani in France, Italy and other countries. If these and other peoples of Europe, their languages and cultures, are to survive and continue flourishing, peace is a first prerequisite. But it is not enough. A pooling of resources, skills and labour is also needed.

This realisation was obvious in countries of the Baltic region, with Latvia poised to join the euro in 2014, while Lithuania and Poland in line prepared to adopt the European currency in the coming years. It is also why Croatia worked for several years through a hard agenda that included solving border issues with neighbouring Slovenia to become a member of the EU in 2013, as other Balkan countries continue striving to obtain membership, often undergoing painful economic reforms and on occasion swallowing their pride in order to solve historical conflicts and thus qualify (think of Serbia’s arrangements with Kosovo, under EU’s auspices).

¹⁸ Language groups obviously change with time. The Romance languages in the Iberian Peninsula, for instance, developed from vulgar Latin, and progressively differentiated and formed what today we know as Portuguese, Galician, Castilian, Catalan and other languages. In the 13th century Alfonso X (the Wise) set the Toledo School of Translators who conveyed texts from Arabic, Greek and Hebrew into Castilian, which was promoted to state language. At the same time, nonetheless, Alfonso was writing poetry (e.g. the *Cantigas de Santa María*) in Galician-Portuguese and hosting in his court varied artists whose mother tongues were Occitan, Galician-Portuguese, Catalan, Hebrew, Araba and of course Latin. The evolution of languages in the former Yugoslavia a more recent example. Tomorrow the cultural and linguistic landscape of Europe may change, with Arabic and Turkish as important languages again. People, concrete human beings, have an absolute value. But as long as certain languages represent groups of concrete peoples and their cultures, those languages possess an intrinsic value too—even if subordinated, conditional and in evolution.

¹⁹ M. Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century* (Vintage Books, 2000).

²⁰ E.J. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (Michael Joseph, 1994).

²¹ See to this respect two recent speeches that highlight and spell out these ideas: Hilary Rodham Clinton, “Remarks on American Leadership at the Council on Foreign Relations,” *Diplomacy in Action*(2013), <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2013/01/203608.htm>. And especially: Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament” (2011), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>.

The intrinsic value of each European nation is showcased in the language it uses to express its culture.²² Unity is desirable in order to preserve those cultures and the viability of the states which host them.²³ Unity is, in this sense, a means to preserving diversity and enabling its flourishing.²⁴

These ideas motivated the creation of the European communities (the first of which was dedicated to the production of coal and steel). With the years, those communities became what today is the EU. However, the preservation of peace required constant attention. The pooling of resources was critically reliant on a certain unity of the peoples of Europe. The need became evident for a common authority which could mediate between different countries in the face of potential conflicts of interest, and which was able to set certain rules and goals for the common work. Some sort of legal and political unity was therefore desirable.

Today economic and legal unity has been attained—to a certain degree. True, the euro crisis revealed that a lot still remains to be done. And the political aspect has been more difficult to develop. What the EU is in political terms continues to be debated. Famously, Jacques Delors, a former president of the European Commission described it as “an unidentified political object.”²⁵ Also debated is the nature and quality of the EU in terms of the political culture which prevails in its member states and which includes the rule of law, democracy and human rights as its most important elements and symbols.

As many as the EU’s achievements have been in terms of continental peace and prosperity more than sixty years after its beginnings, it becomes ever clearer that the project cannot continue to grow unless economic and legal unity are matched by unity in the political realm. The rise of Eurosceptic parties all over Europe at a time of economic crisis is no coincidence. But even if the effect of those parties were ignored, most European citizens today—regardless of their political persuasion—perceive that this political underdevelopment—or in the jargon of European studies this “democratic deficit”—requires attention for the EU to survive and grow— and for “European citizenship” to mean anything at all.

Therefore, the main question I have attempted to address in the Series is how political unity can be envisaged and made more stable. This is closely related to cultural diversity in general and political culture in particular. Because political unity is not a question of form only, but *also* a question of substance. Hence, the importance of culture and its implications for politics—or political culture.

There are two sides to political unity, whether the polity is considered as a community of citizens or as a legal entity. Unity from the first point of view can be promoted through relational interculturalism²⁶ in an inclusive public sphere. The second side can be fostered through supranationalism, exemplified by the principle of constitutional tolerance.²⁷

²² Jiménez Lobeira, "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems," 14-15.

²³ *Ibid.*, 515.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Jacques Delors, "Speech at the First Intergovernmental Conference (of the EU)," *Bulletin of the European Communities* (1985), http://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2001/10/19/423d6913-b4e2-4395-9157-fe70b3ca8521/publishable_en.pdf.

²⁶ I take the term relationality from Pierpaolo Donati, see: Jiménez Lobeira, "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 105-108. See also de last section of this paper (below).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 109-111.

Political unity is, in the face of an increasingly globalised world—one that has Europe less and less at its centre—a necessity in order to preserve and enhance peace, prosperity and the flourishing of the peoples of Europe. United, the European peoples can more effectively mitigate internal conflict, face external threat, and continue to matter in the changing world of the 21st century.

Yet, unity has many forms. The United Nations, the United Arab Emirates, the African Union, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Union of South American Nations all possess some unity, but of different kinds.

In Europe, the debate regarding political form or regime has revolved around three main possibilities. First, the EU as an international organisation with economic purposes and no political coordination. Second, the EU evolving into a federal state similar to the USA (or to Germany or other federal states)—position proposed by philosophers such as Jürgen Habermas. Finally, the EU as a mixed commonwealth, an arrangement which envisages some sort of political unity short of that of a state.

Under this third possibility, the EU is a polity formed by states but itself not a state. Among others, proponents of this position (each with different nuances) include Neil McCormick, Joseph Weiler and Richard Bellamy.²⁸ In the Series I have argued in favour of this third possibility, which is in my opinion the regime that is best suited to the unity the peoples of Europe need.

Unity for the peoples of Europe is a means rather than an end (the end is their preservation, prosperity and flourishing). And the sort of unity more convenient for that end to happen—not only the flourishing of “Europe” in abstract but of its peoples (Romanians, Estonians, Danes, and so on)—should be one that allows the greatest space possible for each of those particular peoples to prosper and flourish.

Desirable outcomes of European political unity are, therefore, the preservation of the distinct peoples and cultures, and their flourishing. Subordinated to that goal and as part of its attainment, would be (social) peace and (economic) prosperity, with civic friendship (or solidarity) as part of both. Much attention from the media has gone to economic prosperity (the dire situation of the finances, high unemployment, the risk of a break in the euro zone, and so on). My perspective seeks to address aspects which—if attended—can ground a prosperous economy: social peace, civic friendship and cultural flourishing.

Derived outcomes from a socially, economically and politically healthy Europe can be a significant contribution to world prosperity and peace through the EU’s economic clout and a commitment to promote peace in different regions of the planet and enrich international relations by sharing its political culture of human rights.

Outcomes such as these can come—I submit—from a Europe united in diversity as a stateless, analogical polity with a relational, intercultural society, a flexible integrated economy and an inclusive and open public sphere.

Before engaging in the discussion of those topics, however I would like to present some notes on the methodology that I have used throughout the Series to approach the problem of political unity and surrounding issues.

²⁸ See: *ibid*; "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems; "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading."

Approaching the question: analogical hermeneutics

The approach I undertook was a theoretical one, while always trying to keep in mind the latest empirical research. As a theoretical work, the research dealt both with descriptive (conceptual, analytical) matters—how things are—as well as with normative ones—how things should be, and why.

In its development, my analysis used an underlying methodological approach along virtually the whole Series. A tool that allows for the weighting of difficult and contrasting choices in the investigation of the EU's political unity.

The methodology to engage with the problem is called *analogical hermeneutics*. Through the Series I have used Analogical hermeneutics²⁹ both to understand the research question and as a tool to evaluate possible solutions.³⁰ Analogical hermeneutics provides a path to conceptualise the European polity, citizenship and identity. It helps to approach the conceptual tension between the EU as a whole, and the individual parts (member states), unity and diversity.³¹ Analogical hermeneutics not only helps to understand (or interpret) what the European polity, citizenship and identity are, but also what they should be.

The reason for this is that analogical hermeneutics, of itself, privileges diversity over unity (without breaking it). It can aid the approach to normative issues when the desirable outcome is precisely that, prioritising diversity while maintaining unity.³² Such is the case of the EU's political unity.³³ Hence, analogical hermeneutics suits that problem, following the initial premise (explained above) that the goal of unity is subordinated to the flourishing of the peoples of Europe, to its diversity—the whole is less important than the parts. In order to understand why this method is suitable, a little more must be said about its nature.

Intuitively, analogical hermeneutics could be summarised as a methodology of interpretation. Initially “hermeneutics,” a name related to the god Hermes of Greek mythology,³⁴ was a way of interpreting texts, of finding or discovering their meaning, a meaning that the texts certainly had and could be discovered. Hermeneutics can go beyond the texts and reach out to the reality they refer to—meaning and reference.

Analogical hermeneutics is an attempt to navigate between the “one meaning” interpretation of scientific positivists, and the “infinite meanings” (which often leads to meaninglessness) of at least some “postmodernists”.³⁵ For the latter, there are in fact so many interpretations that it is practically impossible to know which one is true.

From Aristotle, Beuchot takes the terms “univocal,” “equivocal” and “analogical”. A univocal word or term has only one possible meaning: it is unambiguous. For instance, the word “platypus.” There

²⁹ For instance in: “Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading,” 159-60. “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems,” 515. “EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding),” 14. “Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach,” 168. “Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited,” 109-111. “Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific,” 7.

³⁰ “Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach,” 168.

³¹ Cf. “EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding).”

³² See for instance: *ibid.*, 13-14.

³³ “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems,” 514.

³⁴ Part god and part man, who was in charge of conveying messages—serving as link of understanding—between the gods and men. Mauricio Beuchot, *En el camino de la hermenéutica analógica* [On the Path of Analogical Hermeneutics], Aletheia (Salamanca: San Esteban, 2005), 14-15.

³⁵ Think for instance of Derrida’s “deconstruction,” which, admittedly, does not necessarily imply that concepts are meaningless altogether, but at least that they have multiple—and sometimes conflicting—meanings. See, among many other possible examples: J. Derrida, *Limited Inc* (Northwestern University Press, 1977), 61-62. See also Vattimo’s “weak thinking” proposal which tends to lead to equivocal positions, e.g. in: G. Vattimo and P.A. Rovatti, *Il Pensiero Debole* (Feltrinelli, 2010); G. Vattimo, *A Farewell to Truth* (Columbia University Press, 2013), 7-13.

is no meaning other than the animal with that name. An equivocal term is one with more than one possible interpretation: it is ambiguous. For instance, “case,” which may mean “example,” “circumstance,” “set of arguments,” “difficulty,” “eccentric person,” “container,” “legal action,” “set of grammatical categories,” etc. Note that the meanings do not always have a logical link, even remote, between them.

I will explain analogical terms below. But before I do, I would like to mention what Beuchot’s purpose is in undertaking these distinctions. His idea is to break the impasse between the rigid ontology of modernity (univocality of interpretation) and the wobbly relativity of postmodernity (equivocality of interpretation). Clearly, his intent goes beyond texts and embraces reality and different fields of knowledge.³⁶ From the beginning of my research, it occurred to me that his method could be of great value for dealing with the problem of unity and diversity in Europe. But I did not realise its full potential until the end of it. I would advance that the use of analogical hermeneutics is one of the original contributions of my work to the field of EU studies.

Analogical hermeneutics has partial roots in Paul Ricoeur’s interpretative model based on the metaphor. Beuchot points out, however, that metaphor is only one of the many forms of analogy. Metonymy is another.³⁷ Analogical hermeneutics, through proportionality, navigates between two extremes: on the one hand univocal hermeneutics—typical of scientific positivism—and on the other hand equivocal hermeneutics—common in postmodernity (or, as Beuchot calls it sometimes, “late modernity”). Analogy is a form of meaning that is neither univocal (as is the meaning of “tennis”) nor equivocal (as is the meaning of “light,” which can be “medium of illumination that makes sight possible” or “not heavy,” or “not fattening”). An analogous term has a main referent with which analogous terms keeps some similarity, even if the similarity is very weak.³⁸

Beuchot mentions several kinds of analogy: of *simple inequality*, as in “life,” which can be vegetative, sensitive or rational; of *attribution*, as in “healthy,” predicated properly of an organism, and less properly of “healthy food”—in reality food that makes an organism healthy—or a “healthy habit”—same reasoning; of *proper proportionality*, as in “instinct is to animals what reason is to human beings”; of *improper proportionality* (or metaphoric) as in “flowers are to meadows what smiling is to human beings”.³⁹ Note how the first kind of analogy just reviewed is closer to univocality and the last one is closer to equivocality.

Beuchot’s method has as another of its sources Charles Sanders Peirce’s pragmatism, in particular Peirce’s concept of “abduction” which Beuchot uses to enhance his analogical hermeneutics.⁴⁰ He sides with Peirce in asserting that there is a reality independent from a conceptual frame—even if only knowable through such a frame—in disagreement with Kant.⁴¹ He positions himself as a “relative relativist,” since analogical hermeneutics pulls away from univocality, hence relativising truth (especially our possibility of knowing it fully), but only to a certain degree, therefore, not assuming completely the “absolute relativity” of equivocal positions.

³⁶ Beuchot, *En el camino de la hermenéutica analógica*, pp. 16-17.

³⁷ “La naturaleza de la hermenéutica analógica,” in: *La hermenéutica analógica, hacia un nuevo orden de racionalidad: círculo de hermenéutica, diálogos con Mauricio Beuchot*, Alejandro Gutiérrez Robles (Ed.), Plaza y Valdes, 2000, pp. 11-12.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12. Note that some of the examples necessarily change as words that are equivocal or univocal in the original Spanish may not be so in English. For example, in Spanish the word, “vela,” may mean “candle,” “sail,” “wake.” The explanation of the concept however does not change even if the examples are different.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 - 13.

⁴⁰ See, among other sources: M. Beuchot, *Estudios sobre Peirce y la Escolástica* (Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Navarra, 2002). Mauricio Beuchot, “Abducción y analogía,” *Analogía filosófica* XII, no. 1 (1998), <http://www.unav.es/gep/AN/ANIndice.html>.

⁴¹ “La naturaleza de la hermenéutica analógica,” in: *La hermenéutica analógica, hacia un nuevo orden de racionalidad: círculo de hermenéutica, diálogos con Mauricio Beuchot*, Alejandro Gutiérrez Robles (Ed.), Plaza y Valdes, 2000, p. 15.

Beyond Apel's transcendental pragmatics and Putnam's conceptual frame, there is a reality that exists and can be known—even if only under ideal conditions. However, just as Putnam and Apel claim to have been inspired by Peirce in the development of their theories of truth as consensus (Putnam) and of pragmatic realism (Apel), so Beuchot says to have taken inspiration from Peirce to present a way of analogical universalisation. This happens within what Peirce calls abduction, abductive abstraction or hypostatic universalisation: a hypothesis presented to others in order to be tested; an iconic hypothesis, nevertheless, since its truth does not depend on mere convention, but on its representation (however imperfect) of reality.⁴²

From its departing point in philology and epistemology, analogical hermeneutics has been developed and applied to a number of fields in the humanities, social sciences and culture,⁴³ such as philosophical anthropology,⁴⁴ legal philosophy,⁴⁵ political philosophy,⁴⁶ human rights,⁴⁷ philosophy of history,⁴⁸ and psychoanalysis,⁴⁹ among others. Nevertheless, it has not been applied to the problem of political unity and identity, and even less to the EU case. The Series suggests that analogical hermeneutics can bring fresh insights and approaches to the problem of the EU's political unity on its varied facets.

Before showing how I use analogical hermeneutics along the Series, I would first like to illustrate briefly how Beuchot himself applies his concept to three well known areas of study in social and political philosophy. The first one is the discussion between formal and material ethics. This second one regards the debate between liberalism and communitarianism. The third one is an interesting analysis that he undertakes on the notions of *prudence* in Aristotle, *reflective judgement* in Kant, and *reflective equilibrium* in Rawls.⁵⁰

First example. In the context of a renewed interest in the connection between ethics and politics (which is relatively obvious in Classical and Medieval philosophy, but less prominent to Modern philosophy from the Renaissance onwards), Beuchot speaks about a contest between “justice” and “the good” similar to that between formal v material ethics.

Formal ethics, contrary to its initial promise, eventually ends up adopting at least some material, axiological contents. Contemporary formal ethics, for instance the discursive ethics of Habermas or Apel, is full of logical, methodological, ontological and anthropological assumptions—of a substantive or “material nature”.⁵¹ In agreement with Dussel, Beuchot mentions as some of those material elements the value of life, and respect for others.⁵² And drawing from Lévinas, Beuchot

⁴² Ibid., 15 - 16.

⁴³ *Puentes Hermenéuticos hacia las Humanidades y la Cultura* [Hermeneutical Bridges towards the Humanities and Culture] (México, D. F.: Eón-Universidad Iberoamericana, 2006).

⁴⁴ M. Beuchot, *Antropología filosófica: hacia un personalismo analógico-icónico* (Fundación Emmanuel Mounier, 2004).

⁴⁵ Mauricio Beuchot Puente, *Filosofía del derecho, hermenéutica y analogía* (Universidad Santo Tomás).

⁴⁶ M. Beuchot, *Filosofía Política* (Torres, 2006).

⁴⁷ Mauricio Beuchot, *interculturalidad y derechos Humanos* [Interculturality and Human Rights], *Filosofía* (México, D. F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México; Siglo XXI, 2005); M. Beuchot, *Filosofía Y Derechos Humanos: (Los derechos Humanos Y su fundamentación filosófica)* (Siglo XXI, 2004).

⁴⁸ M. Beuchot and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, *Hermenéutica analógica y filosofía de la historia: del fragmento como símbolo del todo* (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2011).

⁴⁹ J. Tubert-Oklander and M. Beuchot, *Hermenéutica Analógica Y Psicoanálisis* (Torres Asociados, 2008).

⁵⁰ All of them taken from his book on political philosophy: Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*.

⁵¹ Ibid. Chapter 5: “Hermenéutica y política”.

⁵² Enrique Dussel, *Ética de la liberación en la Edad de la Globalización y de la Exclusión*, Second ed., Trotta (1998), 129-30.

points out how a person can only enter in dialogue with someone else if the other one is prepared to respect her life, if he is not going to kill her. Other presuppositions have to follow. For instance, that the other one is not lying and that in the discussion he will follow some rules of logic or argumentation.⁵³

But the link between formal and material ethics does not go in one direction only. Consider the most basic material element: that of respecting each other's life. "Life" has to be defined: there is biological life, but also other concepts such as "good life," or "quality of life". These notions have to be discussed through deliberation and argumentative dialogue, in other words making use of formal ethics.

Neither is formal ethics exempt of material or axiological contents, nor can material ethics claim complete independence from formal ethics as it needs to clarify its axiological contents. From an analogical hermeneutics perspective, the confluence of those two partial positions ends up in a more comprehensive point of view that includes both.⁵⁴ I could develop a little further that in this case, univocality would be given by material ethics and equivocality, by formal ethics. Analogical hermeneutics would see both as part of ethics, considering that some elements are material and cannot be ignored, while other elements are formal and built discursively. In the end, both positions have learned from, and enriched each other.

A second example on how Beuchot applies his concept of analogical hermeneutics concerns the debate between liberalism and communitarianism. Analogical hermeneutics will attempt a balance, taking each position to their limit—to their "proportional limit"—in order to attain harmony, so that liberals recognise some community rights and communitarians give full importance to individual (human) rights. The way to achieve such a harmonious new situation is through the analogical exercise of prudence or *phronesis*, in order to discover where conflicting positions can be compatible and how to attain the lesser pain or loss to each of them when some loss is unavoidable. Such "proportional balance" attained through *phronesis* (Beuchot calls it "analogy in action") brings about justice.⁵⁵

Analogical hermeneutics should then bear both proportional freedom and proportional equality. Proportional freedom would mean that, within the framework of the rule of law, individuals should always be allowed to enhance their potential, their skills, their effort, and to be in that way different from others to a certain extent (for instance in the amount of wealth they accumulate). At the same time, proportional equality would translate into minimum life standards for all people (a minimum wage, perhaps), welfare for the less fortunate in society (those suffering from sickness, accidents, a troublesome family situation, or an unfortunate upbringing). Funding for those needs could come from (reasonable) taxation of the most fortunate in society, with incentives or offsets in case they undertake solidarity initiatives to help others.

Beuchot brings to mind that the third postulate of the French Revolution—fraternity—is often overlooked: unlike freedom and equality, fraternity could be, in Beuchot's mind, the key to mediating between and harmonising liberalism and communitarianism.⁵⁶ At any rate, the process of harmonising is again a task for analogical hermeneutics, with univocality being an unchecked communitarian position, and equivocality an unchecked liberal (individualistic) stand. Following Gadamer,⁵⁷ Beuchot emphasises again that the way to interpret a reality in order to achieve its improvement is *phronesis* or political prudence.⁵⁸

⁵³ Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*, Chapter 5.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., Chapter 5: Hermenéutica y política.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ H.G. Gadamer, *Verdad Y Método: 1.* / [Trad. Ana Agud Aparicio Y Rafael De Agapito] (Ed. Sígueme, 2005), 49ff.

⁵⁸ Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*, Chapter 5: "Hermenéutica y política."

A third example of analogical hermeneutics at work is the following. Closely connected with the debate between liberalism and communitarianism are the ideas of one of the most prominent political philosophers of the 20th century, John Rawls. In the discussion regarding the power of the state vis-à-vis that of the individuals or civil society, Beuchot compares Aristotle's concept of *phronesis* (practical or moral wisdom),⁵⁹ with Kant's *reflective judgement* and Rawls's *reflective equilibrium*, finding some parallels. *Phronesis* in Aristotle ponders what is good in different possible actions. Through reflection (deliberation with oneself) and deliberation (with others), a prudential judgement is reached, which illuminates the best course of action. *Phronesis* is, therefore, essential for moral and political life: it is, in Aristotle's system of ideas, practical wisdom, the wisdom that is concrete and contingent (changing). It changes therefore according to circumstances, and it always depends on the context.⁶⁰

Kant's reflective judgement is a regulative ideal which balances different courses of action in tension with each other.⁶¹ For Beuchot, Kant's reflective judgement—along with his conceptions on teleology and aesthetics—deals with the dimension of the concrete. This dimension could remain on the merely subjective realm (as in the case of judgements of taste). Yet, the reflective judgement also has the capacity to acquire universality through the atmosphere that the conditions of possibility of action provide. And through the categorical imperative, this possibility extends not only to individual but also moral action. For individual action, once it fulfils that maxim, comes to acquire objective and universal validity. Kant's reflective judgement presents a systematic regulative ideal, which can pass from partial actions to a systematic practicality.⁶²

Beuchot sees a close relation between the former two kinds of judgement (Aristotle's judgement of practical wisdom and Kant's reflective judgement), with Rawls's *reflective equilibrium*.⁶³ As seen above, the validity of the aesthetic judgment is subjective, yet it becomes objective through the fulfilment of the maxim or categorical imperative of objectivity or universality in the individual action. In other words, individual action should be able to be universalised through what Kant called "enlarged mentality".⁶⁴ In Beuchot's view, Rawls builds on Kant's enlarged mentality and understands his reflective equilibrium as a mediator, combining teleology and autonomy for the achievement of justice and of a good life (since Rawls seeks to integrate duty and happiness). As Arendt had done in her own way, Rawls combines Aristotle and Kant and sees their theories not as opposing but complementary.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Rosalind Hursthouse, "Virtue Ethics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2012).

⁶⁰ Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*, Chapter 6: Estado de derecho y sociedad. His analysis of Aristotle is based mainly on: Aristotle and A. Kenny, *The Eudemian Ethics* (OUP Oxford, 2011); Aristotle and R. Crisp, *Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2000). And *Magna moralia: Aristotle, Metaphysics: Oeconomica, Magna Moralia*, trans. H. Tredennick and G.C. Armstrong (Harvard University Press, 1935).

⁶¹ Beuchot draws here from: Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Practical Reason* (Wilder Publications, 2008), and especially from: *The Critique of Judgement* (Wilder Publications, 2008).

⁶² Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*, Chapter 6: Estado de derecho y sociedad.

⁶³ Not unrelated to Hannah Arendt's grounding of her theory of political judgment on Kant's aesthetics rather than on his moral philosophy, and her insight on the likeness between political judgment and aesthetic judgement. See: H. Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (Penguin Group USA, 1993). And also: Maurizio Passerin d'Entreves, "Hannah Arendt," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2008).

⁶⁴ Which for Arendt opened the way "to a reevaluation of judgment as a specific political ability, namely, as the ability to think" representatively, "that is, as the ability to think in the place of everyone else". "Hannah Arendt." Kant presents this idea in the section corresponding to sense of community in *The Critique of Judgement*. See an introduction to the idea on: Garrath Williams, "Kant's Account of Reason," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2013).

⁶⁵ Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*, "Chapter 6: Estado de derecho y sociedad." One place where Rawls defines the concept of reflective equilibrium is: J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice, Revised Edition* (Harvard University Press, 1999), 42-25. Beuchot notes two more examples: Martha Nussbaum (*The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy*

Beuchot concludes that *phronesis* is the sense of balance and measurement we give our actions. *Phronesis* provides an idea of proportion, of the amount of strength that must be given to actions conducive to the good. Reflective judgment, in turn, seeks for a balance or mediation in actions, so that they do not remain in a particular, individual good or taste, but rather enlarge its scope in order to achieve the common good. And reflective equilibrium combines, again, concreteness and universality, principles and contingency.⁶⁶ Aristotelian *phronesis*—Beuchot concludes—is proportional; it is analogy put into practice. Kantian reflective judgment is, similarly, an exercise in weighing or proportionality, in “living analogy”. And Rawlsian reflective equilibrium seeks to moderate, nuance and bring proportion to the discussion on distributive justice. Even Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons” is a resource to universalise, through the use of analogy or similarity, in order to connect to the position of the others with whom one is in dialogue.⁶⁷

Though the use of analogical hermeneutics will become clearer in the following sections, here I would like to sketch out how the method is used on the main parts of the Series, namely: (i) the problem of unity, (ii) the content of unity, (iii) the building of unity, (iv) the stage for unity and (v) the language for unity.

(i) Regarding the problem of unity in the EU, one possible extreme view could be that of regarding Europe as one country or even one nation (univocality). Political control becomes central. A common language is chosen either by a majority of native speakers inside the EU (with German as a possible winner) or by a majority of non-native speakers (with perhaps English as the *lingua franca*). A single banking, finance, fiscal and monetary system is adopted.

In the other extreme (equivocality), Europe is regarded as an agglomeration of disconnected countries which, at most, carry out some trade with each other and cooperate occasionally on issues such as educational exchange or military alliances. Each of them keeps its own language and manages its own internal and external affairs. The euro is dismantled, and each country assumes responsibility for its own fiscal, financial, and social problems.

Those positions do not exist as such, but other positions come very close to either extreme, with the EU becoming an international organisation for trade (on the equivocal side) or a federal state (on the univocal one). In the Series, I use analogical hermeneutics to propose a kind of unity for the polity that is more than a loose international organisation but less than a state.

The initial assumption (introduced above) about the intrinsic value of the peoples, cultures and languages of Europe provides a framework in which unity is promoted to facilitate their protection, but enough freedom is maintained so that they may continue to flourish in their diversity. The main analogical referent of unity is a state, with the EU interpreted only as a quasi-state—short of becoming one—and yet maintaining links that hold the peoples of Europe (at least those in the EU) together.

I try a similar approach to the related matter of political belonging symbolised by “Citizenship of the Union,” a concept that seems even more difficult to grasp than the already abstract question about the political form, the regime or kind of polity the EU should be. As I try to show in *Cosmopolitan Communitarian* and above all in *Political Identity*,⁶⁸ analogical hermeneutics proves especially adept to deal with this particular problem. Indeed, EU citizenship is *like* state citizenship but not

and *Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2001); and Eugenio Trías, *Ética y condición humana*, Ediciones Península 62, 2003).

⁶⁶ *A Theory of Justice, Revised Edition*, 18-19.

⁶⁷ Beuchot, *Filosofía Política*, “Chapter 6: Estado de derecho y sociedad”. Gadamer explains his concept in: H.G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (Continuum International Publishing Group, Limited, 2004).

⁶⁸ Jiménez Lobeira, “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems; “Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading.”

quite. On the univocal side, citizenship is directly related to a concrete state (hence, the EU *should* become a state). On the equivocal side EU citizens are already citizens of their respective states (since EU citizenship can, in fact be granted only to nationals of member states). EU citizenship becomes, therefore, superfluous.

Yet, from the point of view of analogical hermeneutics, EU citizenship is an analogical way of interpreting (or understanding) citizenship. The main or original referent is the belonging to a “city” (*polis*), i.e. ordinary state citizenship, for instance citizenship of the sovereign state of Portugal (officially the “Portuguese Republic”). With this in mind, the univocal conception would be one of citizenship of, say, the “United States of Europe”.⁶⁹ The equivocal understanding would have no space for EU citizenship at all. The analogical perspective places EU citizenship somewhere along the spectrum between univocality and equivocality.

Political belonging to the EU can be viewed, then, as a weaker form of citizenship—in part similar to “proper” (state) citizenship but in part different—though nevertheless not devoid of meaning. It is a subordinated belonging in comparison to “national” (member state) affiliation, but still existing and real. It is possible to be a citizen of the Czech state *and* of the European polity. And “citizenship” in either case may mean something different—if not completely unrelated. I developed this explanation in *Political Identity*.⁷⁰

(ii) As for the “content” of unity, its substance and binding force, in the Series I have called it “European identity”. Its specific nature has been and continues to be debated. In any case, its result from the institutional point of view is political unity and from the social perspective, one of its clear fruits is solidarity or civic friendship. At the beginning of my research I found several definitions of what European identity was—and positions about what it should be. Often, they were in conflict with each other. Analogical hermeneutics was useful here to analyse each of the different claims, assess their validity and attempt a harmonisation of those positions. In the end I proposed a conception which took elements from each of the standpoints on European identity, ordered them and built with them a new, comprehensive and nuanced concept—one which could benefit from the merits of each position without having to renounce to those of the others.

Analogical hermeneutics also appears in the treatment of a difficult problem closely connected with the building of identity and, therefore, with the attainment of political unity: political culture. In *Worth Fighting*⁷¹ I pointed out that culture in general and political culture in particular was not an issue in the foundational years of the European communities, not because culture was not important in the formation of identity and the consolidation of unity in any successful polity. As I tried to show in *Liberal Democracy*,⁷² even the apparently value-aseptic political regime of liberal democracy possesses some implicit values that make its existence possible and without which it would collapse.

Rather, political culture did not cause problems during the foundational period of the EU because such culture was very similar for all six foundational member states. As the European project evolved into a Community and then a Union, the cultural diversity of the peoples inhabiting the member states grew. Immigration has only accelerated this process. Social and political cohesion have become more challenging, to put it mildly.⁷³ Culture—that set of elements expressed by language and which convey a worldview, a lifestyle and at least a tentative answer to the search

⁶⁹ A name that has been used, among others, by Habermas in his proposal for the future of Europe. See for instance: Jürgen Habermas, “Why Europe Needs a Constitution,” *New Left Review* 11, no. Sept-Oct (2001).

⁷⁰ Jiménez Lobeira, “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems.”

⁷¹ “Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited.”

⁷² “Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe.”

⁷³ One recent example is the riots that occurred in one of the most open, tolerant, and welcoming countries in the EU, Sweden. See: Richard Orange, “Swedish Riots Spark Surprise and Anger,” *The Guardian/The Observer* (2013), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/25/sweden-europe-news>.

for meaning that each human being experiences—influences not only the social realm but also the political one. It is obvious why: the *politeia* (polity) is comprised of *politai* (citizens). And citizens are human beings, therefore inevitably susceptible to having a culture, to being “cultural” in this sense.

(iii) To this situation, I bring analogical hermeneutics again, this time in the form of relational interculturalism and secularity in the social and public sphere, respectively. Relational interculturalism will be explained in more detail in the last section of this paper. But here, I would like to briefly show the role of analogical hermeneutics in finding a balance between two possible extremes.

On the univocal side, monoculturalism is the idea that new, culturally different citizens should conform to the culture of the host polity. In order to belong, they must leave their own culture including their worldview and their language and assimilate to the culture of their new country. Different forms of ostracism, or outright expulsion from society follow if the newly arrived do not assimilate.

On the equivocal side is multiculturalism, understood as the push towards diversity with a peculiar view of tolerance as meaning respect to minority groups so that each of them can develop their own culture. Groups compete for recognition, minorities grow vocal. Society becomes more fractured, as tolerance of groups with particular cultural backgrounds grants respect to them but little interaction between them and the mainstream culture. In an extreme scenario, parallel societies inhabit a more fractured polity.

The referent for an analogical interpretation of this situation is culture. Analogical hermeneutics tends more towards the equivocal side, but without renouncing to the referent, i.e. a common culture for the polity. This culture of the polity cannot be a strong one—as monoculturalism would have it. But it is not a fragmented landscape of parallel cultures either. Relational interculturalism⁷⁴ creates a way for different cultures not only to tolerate each other, but also to mix with each other up to a certain degree; something that Beuchot has called *mestizaje* (blending).⁷⁵

The terms should be no surprise as the particular context of his analysis concerns the coexistence, dialogue and blending of different strands of Mexican culture and society that once were different but which over half a millennium have become a more or less stable feature of the country's character. “Western” (European) culture was conveyed to Mexico mainly by Spain during its “Golden Age” in the 16th century, though it is true that in its political configuration Mexico has received influences from other countries too.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ The term inspired in Donati's *relational sociology*, has been exposed in a copious literature. Prominent titles in English are: Pierpaolo Donati, "Beyond the Dilemmas of Multiculturalism: Recognition through 'Relational Reason'," *International Review of Sociology* 19, no. 1 (2009). And also: *Relational Sociology: A New Paradigm for the Social Sciences* (Taylor & Francis, 2010).

⁷⁵ Beuchot calls the inhabitant of this mixed societies, “an analogically blended person” (*un mestizo análogo*). Beuchot, *Interculturalidad Y Derechos Humanos*, 92.

⁷⁶ For instance Mexico's federal system, established by the 1824 Constitution, drew to a certain extent from the US Constitution, presented only a few years earlier, in 1787. Federalism, however, had never been the “natural” organisation Mexico had during colonial times, when it was the New Spain or in the pre-Columbian periods. The system was devised by the liberal elites in the 19th century. Many Mexicans feel uneasy when they learn that the official name of the republic is “United States of Mexico”. Another example is the French influence regarding the public sphere. Like in France, two different features of the public sphere in Mexico—what here I have called “secularity” and “secularism”—tend to be confused. In a country with an overwhelmingly religious citizenry, up to the 1992, the Mexican Constitution, on its Article 130 stated that: “[Mexican] law does not recognise any personality whatsoever to religious organisations so-called churches.” See: Congreso Constituyente, “Constitución Política De Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos” (5 February 1917). As with many other historically rooted issues, a balanced perspective about both Mexico's federal system and the setting of its public sphere cannot be acquired without knowledge of the historical reasons—and excesses—that gave way to certain laws and to the political regime. Such weighting escapes the goals and field of this paper. Excellent literature to this respect is, however, not difficult to find. See, among many other sources:

European culture entered in contact sometimes violent, sometimes respectful and productive, with pre-European cultures, some of which survive to this day—the language of the Aztecs, Nahuatl, still counts around two million speakers in Mexico, Central America and Southern United States. This subject is highly relevant in most of Latin America, as a region of the world which seeks to adopt and develop Western democracy and economic progress, while keeping its cultural diversity and its cultural mix alive and flourishing.⁷⁷

Though I take from Beuchot the idea of analogical hermeneutics to attempt tackling the cultural problem, my study differs from his in at least two counts. Firstly, his analysis is focused on the conflict between the Western culture that largely informs Latin American culture today and pre-European cultures which have perdured in need a place in that culture too. My application of Beuchot's idea, though concerned with peoples that have been in Europe for a long time (for instance the Roma people), is trying to address mainly of the pressing difficulties that have arisen from immigration. Note how the riots that broke out in France in 2005, the UK in 2011 and Sweden in 2013 have all been associated, at least partially, with the situation of immigrants in the respective countries (lack of opportunities, social exclusion and others).⁷⁸

The second difference in my application of analogical hermeneutics to the intercultural problem is an additional charge of tension in the problem of immigration caused by the newly arrived European residents (some having attained citizenship, some remaining in a civic limbo even for two or three generations, like large groups of Turks in Germany): they possess a cultural background with unmistakable religious tints. The level that this feature reaches in Europe has no match in the Latin American situation. Why religion causes so much scandal in a subcontinent which throughout history has been deeply religious is an interesting matter that I try to address in *Rethinking Neutrality* and in *Worth Fighting*.⁷⁹ It is also expounded in the corresponding section below.

E. Krauze, *Mexico: Biography of Power* (HarperCollins, 2013). A.F. Aguirre, *La otra historia de México: Hidalgo e Iturbide - la gloria y el olvido* (Diana, 2008); A.S.F. Aguirre, *La otra historia de México. Antonio López de Santa Anna: ese espléndido bribón* (Grupo Planeta - México, 2012); *La otra historia de México. Juárez Y Maximiliano: la roca y el ensueño* (Grupo Planeta - México, 2012); *La Otra Historia De México. Díaz y Madero: la espada y el espíritu* (Grupo Planeta - México, 2012); W. Beezley and M. Meyer, *The Oxford History of Mexico* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2010). G.M.D. de Cantú and R.G.P. Rangel, *Historia de México* (Pearson, Prentice Hall, 2003); Gloria M. Delgado de Cantú, *Historia De México, legado histórico y pasado reciente* (México: Pearson, Prentice Hall, 2004); J.H.L. Schlarman, *Mexico - a Land of Volcanoes from Cortes to Aleman* (Lightning Source Inc., 2007); G. von Wobeser, *Historia de México* (Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010).

⁷⁷ In a different but not unrelated line, one of my initial motivations to study the European integration project was the extremely modest development of similar initiatives in America, a continent in which a large number of its 36 countries share very similar historical, cultural, political and economic features. However, despite repeated efforts over many years, there is no regional integration project that comes close to being able to be compared, to a much more culturally diverse Europe. Among others, think of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Central American Integration System (SICA), or the recently founded Pacific Alliance (*Alianza del Pacífico*). I come back to these ideas in Jiménez Lobeira, "Conclusion: Europe United in Diversity — an Analogical Hermeneutics Contribution to the Social and Political Philosophy of the European Union".

⁷⁸ I should warn against a possible interpretation of my comment as casting aspersions on immigration. Europe throughout history has seen incessant waves of immigration and emigration. In fact, for an ageing continent with below replacement birth rates, Europe, a region of emigrants, needs immigrants in order to survive. It's economic, political, social and cultural health strongly relies on immigrants. Precisely, my point is not that immigration should be stopped, but rather, that it should be approached in a constructive and intelligent way because, given the below-replacement birth rates, that is Europe's new reality.

⁷⁹ Jiménez Lobeira, "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited; "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe."

(iv) Let's move now to illustrate how analogical hermeneutics helps understand the "stage for unity" or public sphere. For the moment, let the idea suffice that cultural stands or worldviews concerned with the meaning of life, the afterlife, suffering, the material and immaterial realms, the good life and other such metaphysical questions, can be either religious or secular. For as long as people holding religious or secular views acknowledge that theirs is a belief system—the best in their view, but not necessarily so for others—and that respect, dialogue, and mutual learning is the way ahead, a constructive atmosphere will prevail. When, however, people possessing a particular religious or secular worldview believe themselves to have the only valid answer to making sense of reality and exclude those who think differently from the public sphere or mainstream society, then a big problem arises.

Undeniably, different brands of religion (and in particular of the Christian religion) have been guilty in the past of intolerance and even persecution in Europe and elsewhere. Think of the importance that the founders of the United States of America confer to religious freedom. After all, part of their reasons to emigrate west was religious persecution in their original homeland, Britain and other European countries.

Notwithstanding, today there might be a different danger: that some might confuse secularity—the secular state and civic space that has been achieved after many centuries of conflict and today forms part of Europe's political culture—with secularism—a belief system which, when dominant, ostracises those with different beliefs (including religious beliefs) from mainstream society, or exclude them from the public sphere because they are not secularist or because they use religious symbols as part of their identity. This is the case in the debate about banning people who wear Islamic veils from universities or other public spaces.⁸⁰

Analogical hermeneutics applied to the situation in Europe translates into a cultural landscape that is, on the one hand, happy with the traditions, history and language of the peoples that have been there for hundreds of years. Two powerful sources of today's European political culture are Social Democracy and Christian Democracy, with corresponding parties that have shaped the continent's contemporary history, resulting in what I call the political culture of human rights (see corresponding section below).

On the other hand, analogical hermeneutics means openness to the "new" cultural traditions including Islam.⁸¹ The process is not easy. But it needs more than just "respect" or "tolerance". It requires nuanced engagement in both directions. This is what relational interculturalism brings about. And it necessarily entails facing a connected issue which must be dealt with as a task for analogical hermeneutics too: inclusiveness in the public sphere.

Though to some extent I treat the issue of the public sphere in *Worth Fighting*,⁸² *Cultural Riddles*⁸³ and *Liberal Democracy*,⁸⁴ it is in *Rethinking Neutrality*⁸⁵ where I analyse this issue in greater depth as I shall explain further on. But here I would like to spell out how analogical hermeneutics applies. The public sphere would be univocal when only one voice could be heard. Any belief system—be it religious or secularist—with pretention of exclusivity will foster a univocal public sphere. In contrast, an equivocal situation would be one in which many voices speak, each in their own

⁸⁰ This matter is discussed at length in "Veils, Crucifixes and the Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe."

⁸¹ Islam, of course, is not new in Europe. Among the many pieces of evidence to remember it, consider what Muslim conquerors called "al-Andalus," which included portions of today's Portugal, Spain and France, and consisted of various kingdoms, emirates and caliphates between 711 AD and the very year in which Columbus landed in the American continent (1492).

⁸² Jiménez Lobeira, "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe."

⁸³ "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific."

⁸⁴ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe."

⁸⁵ "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe."

metaphysical language expressing a different worldview without connection to others; a situation very likely to make a “Babel” of the public sphere. And a very dangerous one, for real dialogue can be hardly attained.

The analogical situation will come if no voice is allowed to dominate excluding others (univocality), and no voice is left isolated from the rest (equivocality). The different voices can express themselves as much as needed, while the public sphere still maintains a common link that harmonises and serves as means of communication. This element is secularity, which I distinguish from secularism to bring clarity to the debate on “the problem of religion”.⁸⁷ Though I do not completely agree with Habermas’s outline,⁸⁸ I use it as a grounding point, and complement it with contributions from Casanova, Taylor and Weiler, among others. Secularity is defined as an open atmosphere, a more or less neutral and inclusive medium where views from different belief systems or worldviews can be expressed about the polity. A medium, finally, that is not a belief system itself—therefore it is different from secularism.

Secularity allows a plurality of voices, maintaining certain common elements through very basic rules and attitudes that must be followed by all. At the same time, secularity is not one of the voices—a worldview—itsself. It is, in that sense, a more or less neutral platform, an open framework for different views to be expressed, that nevertheless remains a *platform*, not an agglomeration of parallel discourses.⁸⁹

(v) A polity where every voice were respected and seriously listened to, where cultural diversity were valued, and where everybody were enthusiastic about unity, would still need a common language, even if one of sorts. In *Cosmopolitan Communitarian*, I acknowledged that problem and explored a few options at the level of speculation. Concretely, I pondered the possible value of Pera’s proposal about a “civic religion” for Europe, hypothetically fulfilling the needed role of common language.⁹⁰ The idea, however, has several shortcomings that come more clearly to light under the analogical hermeneutics lens and enhance the discussion on the common language, an essential element for the main concern of the Series, the question about European political unity. The analysis becomes easier now that we have touched on the issue of the public sphere.

As I explained above, analogical hermeneutics aids in understanding the intricacies of the religion and secularism debate, and takes us to a situation where poles can be harmonised to a certain

⁸⁷ Similarly to what happens with the “Muslim problem,” the term “problem of religion” can be misleading too. The “Muslim” problem is in reality the problem that some in Europe have recognising the relevance that Islam has for a significant number of European residents. Likewise, the “problem of religion” is the problem that some have with religious views or practices, or even appearances, as in the discussion on the Islamic veil, that for some European residents or citizens is meaningful or even deeply relevant.

⁸⁸ For instance, regarding his view about the language that should be used in public debate. All religious categories for him, while having access to the political stage, must translate their claims into “a language that everybody can understand”. That common language is assumed to be secular. Admittedly, Habermas assigns to secular citizens the task of helping religious citizens “translate” their discourse into secular categories. Yet I do not see why, in a public sphere that is secular but not secularist, translations could not occur in both directions. Under a relational interculturalist paradigm (see below in this paper), secular citizens could be influenced by religious ones as much as religious citizens could be influenced by secular ones. The relationship goes both ways. There might be concepts in the secular language that enrich religious language, but there might be religious concepts too with no equivalent (no translation) in the secular language, that could, however, enrich it. But this is a task for further research, as I outline in: Jiménez Lobeira, “Conclusion: Europe United in Diversity — an Analogical Hermeneutics Contribution to the Social and Political Philosophy of the European Union”.

⁸⁹ Since the analogical tool in this case is related to “secular,” it becomes acutely important that the terms “secularity” and “secularism” are properly defined and distinguished from each other. For a more detailed development these concepts, see *Rethinking Neutrality*.

⁹⁰ Jiménez Lobeira, “Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading,” 162-65.

degree. I have called that situation “secularity,” defined as an open-frame atmosphere. Throughout my research I have come to think that any religion—even a civil one like Pera’s—is not a wise option if we visualise the belief-system spectrum with analogical hermeneutics.

The “civic religion” analysis differs from the one above in that we are not considering the spectrum of, on the one hand, a belief-system or worldview—religious or secularist—in (exclusive) charge of the public sphere, and on the other hand, a complete absence of order, with voices sounding in parallel and basically no dialogue in the public sphere. Before assessing the civic religion option, though, Charles Taylor’s analysis comes handy.

Taylor describes what we could call it the immanence-transcendent spectrum.⁹¹ On the one hand, we have the univocality of an immanentist position—a position that states there is no other option apart from immanence (holding what Taylor calls a “closed frame”). On the other hand, we have the equivocality of transcendent positions, offering each in its own way a connection with a divinity or a transcendent state, something that escapes the immanence of the here and now in which Western societies largely live (Taylor’s “immanent frame”). Positions, at the same time, that point towards something difficult or impossible to define in “simple” (secular) words, and in the extreme, incapable of dialogue and compromise, Otto’s *ganz Andere* (the “wholly Other”).⁹²

There is a large number of people who are neither immanentists nor transcendentalists. As Davie has shown, most people in today’s Europe rather live somewhere along that spectrum.⁹³ That is Taylor’s view too. Analogical hermeneutics will pull gently away from univocality, along the spectrum towards equivocality, but mindful of still keeping some unity of meaning. With analogical hermeneutics, a situation can be conceived which keeps weak resemblance with a clearly univocal position of immanence, yet with openness to the possibility of transcendence in different degrees. Note that along the spectrum there is also space for those—perhaps a majority—who do not have strong views in favour of immanence or transcendence and prefer to regard the topic with a drop of scepticism—or indifference.

Under this scenario, it becomes easier to see why a civic religion of any kind could not be an element of unity, a common language under an analogical hermeneutics’ perspective. It would mean a position in one of the extremes of the immanence-transcendence spectrum, trying to impose (or sell) itself to all. Beuchot notes the irony that in the extreme, univocality and equivocality sometimes coincide. This would be true of an extreme immanentist position or an extreme transcendentalist position. Both would contain the less attractive features of “religious” when that word is used to designate fanatic attitudes.⁹⁴

⁹¹ For his conception of “the immanent frame,” see Chapter 15 of: C. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, Harvard University Press, 2007), 539ff.

⁹² R. Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (OUP USA, 1958), 25ff.

⁹³ Grace Davie, “Religion in Europe in the 21st Century: The Factors to Take into Account,” *European Journal of Sociology* 47, no. 02 (2006). See her interesting categorisation of the empirical results in today’s Europe: “Historic churches,” “believing without belonging,” “vicarious religion,” and others.

⁹⁴ Thus, for all their mutual animosity, religious and secularist fanatics risk holding equivalent views about “the other”. Not even a “religion without God” would be advisable. Besides, from a common-sense point of view, a religion could not in practice be inclusive of all. If it were “civic” as Pera wants it, why bother calling it “religion” and put off so many citizens that are sceptical or even have an aversion—justified or not—towards religion? Besides, the concept would put off even that camp supposed to feel sympathy for it, the religious one. For religious people could feel that such arrangement is but a caricature of religion, that is a religion different to the one they already have, that religion should not be used as an instrument to deal with temporary affairs, or that religion and politics must be separated to keep each other in check, rather than mixed. As I have shown in (Jiménez Lobeira, “Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe.”), a similar set of contradictions faces Beck’s “god of one’s own” proposal. Finally, Pera has in mind not just a generic civic religion but a Christian one, which brings one more degree of complexity to the issue, as religious citizens who are not Christian could feel excluded to a certain extent—think of Jewish and Muslim citizens, for instance. See more in: Pope Benedict, *Without Roots: The West*,

If, however, a civil religion appears problematic as a possible common language for the European polity to build its identity and unity, I argue that the political culture of human rights (PCHR) is a much more adept candidate. In this section it remains to show how analogical hermeneutics contributes to the understanding of this political culture as a common language for Europe.

Language is a vehicle of expression. It reveals ways of life, history, experiences and worldviews. It communicates artistic creativity, technology, and opinions. Language could be seen as pure convention or as map of reality. Probably it is both. When we consider the Polish language, it is not only a system of symbols but also a window into the minds and hearts of Slavic people who write, sing, discuss, trade, debate, teach and play using it. There are expressions, sayings, jokes, poems, that strictly speaking cannot be translated into another language without losing nuances that will only fully shine in Polish.

I do not pretend that the PCHR can be a language in the same sense that Polish is a language. But I suggest that PCHR could connect Europeans and express what the peoples of Europe are and think, to an extent sufficient enough to foster a shared identity (even if weaker than the one experienced among those who speak the same national language) and European political unity. An analogical hermeneutics analysis can show how.

PCHR inspired and motivated a growing body of positive law which today is part of the EU's and Council of Europe's *acquis communautaire*.⁹⁵ The reason why I do not speak simply of human rights, but of a PCHR, is precisely to distinguish between the positive body of laws already in place with an institution in charge of interpreting and applying them (the European Court of Justice or the European Court of Human Rights) and the original inspiration that made them be accepted by all state members of the EU or the Council of Europe, respectively. There is a shared awareness in Europe about PCHR that does not exist in other parts of the world.⁹⁶ An awareness shaped by common historical and sometimes dramatic experiences that are unique.

PCHR resembles a language, a vehicle of expression that reveals the culture of the people who "speak" it. But PCHR is not a language in the stronger sense of the word, the one given by the main or univocal referent such as, say, Danish. It is rather analogical: less strong in its capacity for expression, yet more ductile, flexible and porous to accommodate different peoples and cultures, both those who have been in Europe since the beginnings of the European communities, and those who have arrived recently through immigration. PCHR can harmonise and receive contributions from every EU country, as well as from the historically strong political culture streams of Social Democracy (with draws its main inspiration from the Enlightenment) and Christian Democracy (rooted more in Judeo-Christianity). But it can also stretch and potentially accommodate new cultural influences.

Again, PCHR is not the body of positive laws that today serve as reference to the European Court of Justice or the European Court of Human Rights in the exercise of their specific work. PCHR is rather the inspiration behind them, an inspiration not very different from that which originated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations.

Relativism, Christianity, Islam / Joseph Ratzinger Now Pope Benedict XVI, Marcello Pera; Foreword by George Weigel; Translated by Michael F. Moore, ed. Marcello Pera, George Weigel, and Michael F. Moore (New York, N.Y., Basic Books, 2006), 94-97.

⁹⁵ With the European Convention of Human Rights as main text of reference ("European Convention on Human Rights," International Convention, *European Court of Human Rights*, no. 3 May 2002 (2010), http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/CONVENTION_ENG_WEB.pdf.) and the European Court of Human Rights located in Strasbourg as institutional symbol and practical organ. Plus the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union / European Union*, ed. Parliament European and Commission European ([Luxembourg]: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2001).

⁹⁶ This is not to say that it cannot exist somewhere else (other "Western" democracies for instance).

Therefore, using analogical hermeneutics, we are talking of PCHR as an analogical language. A language consisting of the original values that motivated the *acquis communautaire*, which is not as strong as the main referent for a language (e.g., Slovak), but which still does not renounce to enable communication between Europeans. Because it is analogical, PCHR does not directly compete with any national language, in the same way that the EU as a polity does not compete with European states and European citizenship does not compete with citizenship of individual countries in Europe.

As I have tried to show, analogical hermeneutics runs through the whole Series and is applied in each of the important topics. It provides insights on how to conciliate between very different facets in a variety of problems. Unity, identity, political culture, and the public sphere can all be understood in a different way and acquire new light with the help of this method.

Having reviewed in the first section the normative question about European political unity and in this second section the general approach to the matter, attention must now be paid to how and where to ground that unity—the question about political identity.

The key to political unity: political identity

There is extensive literature about “European identity”. European identity is associated with “source of unity” for the polity.⁹⁷ When I first tried to form for myself a general idea about it, I realised the complexity of the task. Even before getting to the second part of the term, the first one presented incredible problems. “European” is an adjective whose noun is “Europe”. But what is Europe? Not even geographically can it be defined neatly, as America (the continent running from Cape Morris Jesup to Cape Horn) or Antarctica. Besides “identity” (from the Latin “the same”) can have a host of meanings which vary depending on the field of study, from mathematics to metaphysics, from sociology to politics, from psychology to cultural studies, and of course in political science and political philosophy.

Months after I started a literature review on the topic, I was able to find certain patterns under which the many articles on the subject could be classified. Building on the work of researchers who had undertaken previous classifications I singled out a few streams which would be pertinent for my own research. They must concern my field of interest—the social and political philosophy of the EU—and provide answers to the main problem of my research, namely the political unity of Europe. In *Normative Conceptions*⁹⁸ I carried out a conceptual analysis of the problem of European political identity and of some of its more important aspects (political form, political culture, and political community). Along three articles on the subject, I reviewed the terminology to designate each of the positions on European identity.⁹⁹ Following some reflection, I came to think that perhaps the most accurate names for the five “normative conceptions” could be: “cultural,” “legal,” “social,” “international” and “cosmopolitan.”

⁹⁷ See: Jiménez Lobeira, "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems; "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading."

⁹⁸ "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach; "EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding); "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems; "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe."

⁹⁹ "EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding); "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach." The other article (not part of the Series) is: "Towards a notion of European Political Identity," Proceedings of the 17th Annual Australian Association of Professional and Applied Ethics Conference, June 15-17, University of Sydney.

They first one refers to the cultural heritage that is common to Europeans from different regions, and that includes elements like history, geography, religion, and art. The second one is related to the law, which arguably all Europeans contribute to form. The third conception regards economic and social benefits, summarised as “the European way of life” by its purporters. The fourth looks at how Europe can influence the international arena as a “normative power”. Finally, the fifth conception attempts to present cosmopolitanism as the feature that can unite Europeans.¹⁰⁰

As much as they all contain arguments in favour of their case, each of them faces significant objections: Europe’s cultural heritage cannot determine—and it may be radically different from—cultural trends today, especially if immigration is taken into consideration; there is no “European Constitution,” and the process through which EU laws are formed could hardly be called democratic; the budgets necessary to maintain a “European way of life,” a generous welfare system of short working weeks, long paid holiday periods and early retirement schemes are being revisited and shrink by the day; Europe’s international image can be at times laudable,¹⁰¹ but at others less dignified;¹⁰² and cosmopolitanism, if truthful, embraces the whole world and does not especially distinguish Europe from other cosmopolitally- oriented regions of the world.¹⁰³

I submitted the idea that European identity—if there is one—might be conceived rather as a synthesis, a combination of the definitions above. There is no need, I think, to choose the legal aspect of identity and discard the cosmopolitan one, or choose the international one and discard the cultural one. When it comes to political identity, those positions can actually become features of a single European identity, perhaps less defined and strong, but still real and flexible enough to cater for diversity.

I arrived at this conclusion at the end of *Normative Conceptions*¹⁰⁴ and undertook the task of outlining what European identity could look like in *Analogical Identity*.¹⁰⁵ I showed how the different facets of identity not only did not conflict with each other, but on closer analysis, complemented each other and became richer once combined. With the aid of analogical hermeneutics, each aspect was taken neither under a univocal interpretation which would exclude others, nor under an equivocal one which gave place to incommensurable, parallel positions. An analogical interpretation enriched them with some plasticity so that each of them could be combined and harmonised with the others.

But European identity, in the realm of political unity, calls for at least two questions: Who are the putative bearers of such an identity? and What is the institutional result of their unity? I pursued the answer to these questions in *Political Identity*.¹⁰⁶ To the first question, the answer was the citizens of the polity, the EU citizens. Their citizenship derives from being citizens of an EU member state. The political community of EU citizens is, on closer examination, a sort of conglomerate of member states’ citizens. They are not “a people,” but rather peoples. Not, using the Greek term, a *demos*, but rather a group of *demoi*.

¹⁰⁰ "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach," 160-66.

¹⁰¹ As in the case of developments in the solution to the problem of Kosovo and Serbia: see: Piotr Smolar, "Serbia and Kosovo Sign Historic Agreement," *The Guardian*(2013), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/apr/30/serbia-kosovo-historic-agreement-brussels>.

¹⁰² See the contradicting messages sent by EU diplomacy in Bahrain: JUDY DEMPSEY, "Turning up the Volume on Human Rights in Europe," *The New York Times*(2013), http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/09/world/europe/09iht-letter09.html?_r=0.

¹⁰³ In fact, often in the same region some people are more cosmopolitan than others. It may even be that cosmopolitans are part of an elite that has received more education and has had the opportunity to travel more than ordinary people. To be sure, it makes for a nice ideal, but of scarce credentials when it comes to finding a source of unity for the majority of Europeans.

¹⁰⁴ Jiménez Lobeira, "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach."

¹⁰⁵ "EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding)."

¹⁰⁶ "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems."

This first aspect of political identity presents a number of very serious conceptual and practical difficulties, which I introduced earlier in this paper,¹⁰⁷ but in sum having to do with the apparent contradiction of being a citizen of two polities. In *Political Identity*¹⁰⁸ the answer was a nuanced approach to citizenship, considering the possibility of subordinate affiliations, allowing for differentiated allegiances—one to the member state, stronger than the one to the EU, but with the latter still existing. Therefore, a subordinate identity which entails a weaker unity than that of a state (the main referent) makes sense from the perspective of analogical hermeneutics, and rather than being a problem, it becomes a feature of a polity of polities like the EU.

The answer to the second question—that regarding the EU polity not from the point of view of the peoples integrating it, but of the entity as a whole—reveals a puzzle that along the years has captured the attention of many researchers: *what exactly is the EU?* It is a question about the *telos* or end, the goal of the EU as a whole and its regime.

In *Cosmopolitan Communitarian*¹⁰⁹ I surveyed three different positions on this question. The EU for some should lean towards an international, free trade organisation. It needs to loosen the already excessive ties between the member states. A second position (sustained, among others, by Jürgen Habermas) advocates a postnational federation—the United States of Europe—a fully-fledged federal state. The third position suggests a hybrid: a mixed-commonwealth—a term coined by Neil McCormick and explained and expanded by Joseph Weiler, Richard Bellamy and Rainer Bauböck among others.

If this third position is not new, its relevance has in my opinion grown as the other two have proven insufficient or inadequate for “the nature of the beast”. Due to its composition by *demoi* and to the importance that diversity has in Europe, the EU can better fulfil its purposes and its functions serving the peoples of Europe by continuing to be a stateless polity. What the Series brings to the study of this position is an original conceptual framework to visualise a regime that could otherwise appear chaotic or at least dysfunctional, and as a way to help a decision between the three models based on analogical hermeneutics.

Analogical hermeneutics provides a tool to see the importance of each member state (and national groups inside them) and seek a type of unity that maintains national diversity as much as possible, while still fostering links between the different national groups. This understanding helps to envisage a mixed commonwealth not necessarily as a transitional structure towards a federal state, but as a possible regime in itself.

The stateless polity also makes sense if one attends to the historical reasons that motivated the founders and designers of the European project. The two world wars in the first half of the last century contained a very incendiary ingredient often called “nationalism,” but which I purposely denominate “statism”. Throughout the Series, I tried to signal how slippery the concept of “nation” is, in contrast with the much more precise, related notion of “state”, which can be more easily definable in legal terms too.¹¹⁰

The “nationalism” that created confrontations and the near destruction of Europe—and other regions of the world—in the 20th century, is more a use of the idea of nation by states, than a real confrontation between nations. This is, in part, because nations do not necessarily coincide with states—there can be several nations (Scotland, Wales, England, ...) in a state (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) or a nation may be scattered along several states (Romanians in Moldova, Italy, or Germany). When a state appropriates the idea of a certain nation

¹⁰⁷ In the section explaining analogical hermeneutics.

¹⁰⁸ Jiménez Lobeira, "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems."

¹⁰⁹ "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading."

¹¹⁰ Perhaps a similar case is seen in the concepts of political identity and citizenship. See: "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems," 511.

and uses it to depict others as enemies or as inferior, then “nationalism” becomes dangerous. But the phenomenon is rather the promotion of a state masquerading as a nation.

To be sure, national groups can also clash with each other from time to time. But it is only when nationalism is taken as the official ideology, an instrument of propaganda for a state, that it becomes damaging and destructive. It was this exasperation of the state that took Europe to fight internally and to bleed nearly to death in the 20th century. Weiler recognises this nuance, as he points out how ironic it would be that a project created precisely to keep the power of states in check through the “community method” (supranational—suprastatal—authorities, consensus and negotiation), should end up producing a massive state.

Thus, an idea that emerged as the Series unfolded, was that the important distinction in the study of the EU’s regime is not between “federation” and “commonwealth,” but between “state” and stateless polity. The opposition between “mixed-commonwealth” and “federation,”¹¹¹ was therefore better rephrased as one between a stateless polity and a (presumably federal) *state*, because both regimes contain varying degrees of federation.¹¹²

Suprastatism is an alternative to “nationalism” (statism) or postnationalism.¹¹³ As mentioned above, statism is the reality hidden in the catchier term “nationalism.” It is no secret that at the height of “nationalism” in the first half of the 20th century, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and many other European countries were hosts to different national groups—an eminent one being the Jewish people. The war waged in the name of nation was carried out by states. Perhaps it was not “the German nation” but rather the state of the Third Reich the one that promoted and exalted Nazi propaganda.

Today this reality becomes apparent when from time to time discussions about “minorities” are sparked in countries like Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Ukraine, Germany, Finland, France, the United Kingdom or even Sweden. Those minorities are at times formed by linguistic groups of migrants to Europe, but often they are just national groups associated with neighbouring countries. State borders (take for instance those of Austria or Hungary) change with wars and other historical events. They do not always coincide with national groups. A state may host several national groups (say Welsh, Scots, Irish and English in the United Kingdom) and a national group can be spread along three or four countries (e.g., Catalans in France, Andorra and Spain).

Few people feel inspired by a state. Many can be enthusiastic about a nation. In the 19th and 20th century the hard sell (state) was dressed up with the much more appealing idea of nation. Yet, as mentioned above, wars were not fought between nations but between states. Robert Schumann, born in a region that historically belonged to the states of Germany and France at different moments, perfectly understood this and from the beginning of the European project advocated for “supranationalism,”¹¹⁴ a concept that, as hinted above, Weiler finds very useful¹¹⁵ in understanding the notions of “mixed commonwealth,”¹¹⁶ and “community of states”. As advanced above, along the Series I have reflected on the concept of supranationalism and come to deem it clearer if denominated *suprastatism*, as its goal is to keep states, not necessarily nations, in check.

¹¹¹ Mentioned, for instance, in: “Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading,” 160-62. “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems,” 510-12.

¹¹² That is still not clear in, for instance, “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems,” 512.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 516.

¹¹⁴ “Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited,” 95-96.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹¹⁶ “EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems,” 517.

The EU as it is today, provides a way to harmonise different member states and their own state interests within an overarching political structure, which though suprastatal remains at the same time a non-state. The EU could be regarded as an “ugly duckling” case, characterised by an analogical telos (the mixed commonwealth) and an analogical *demos* (a gathering of *demoi* sharing a weak common identity).¹¹⁷

Thus, political unity has its source in a common political identity, which is given, on the one hand, by the people that make up the political community—in the case of the EU the analogical *demos* integrated by several *demoi* from different member states—and on the other, by a common regime, a political architecture that allows the different states and nations in the EU to form a stateless polity. Yet, the question remains about what can give sufficient cohesion to that polity in order to keep it together. This question takes us to the next section.

The content of political identity: political culture

Important normative premises outlined in this section are the value of national cultures (showcased by the corresponding languages) and the relevance of spiritual and moral values in the grounding of European identity.¹¹⁸

According to Ratzinger, laws—even those created democratically—can be unjust. Therefore, neither democracy nor (positive) law by themselves can provide the standard for justice. A different point of reference, antecedent to positive law, may be needed to provide such a standard. This antecedent has been called in different traditions “natural,” “people’s,” “moral” or “rational” law.¹¹⁹

Such antecedent reveals the possibility that there is a more or less objective set of norms or juridical principles, manifest to all—even if in constant need of deepening, clarification and expression—that ground our everyday (positive) laws.¹²⁰ Human rights seem to be situated in this category of norms or principles. Even when not always enshrined in positive or quasi-positive law (charters), they are present in the original intuitions that inspired documents such as the *Magna Carta Libertatum* in England (1215), the Declaration of Rights of Man and of the Citizen in France (1789), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the European Convention of Human Rights (1950), among others.

For Habermas, legitimacy is generated by legality: if all citizens have participated in the elaboration of laws, or at least the core of all laws, the Constitution, the ensuing political system and derived body of laws governing the state will be legitimate—accepted by all. Hence, no source of authority or legitimacy is antecedent to the law.¹²¹ Notwithstanding, the source of the law—the political community integrated by people—is never really absent from cultural backgrounds and specific systems of belief. Each deliberator possesses a worldview that is normative and, in this sense, “moral”. Indeed, laws don’t come into existence by themselves, but emanate from a body of people, the constituents or citizens, who in addition to being political agents are also human beings, and as such, “cultural” (i.e., influenced by a specific culture—evident in their use of a particular language and their inclination towards a certain worldview). Therefore, the law possesses a moral antecedent or foundation.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 513-14.

¹¹⁹ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 45.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid., 49.

When Ratzinger speaks of human rights he places them in the context of a law that is rational.¹²² Both secular and religious rationalities can and should participate in the rationality of human rights which is universal, in the sense that it comprehends, perhaps, every human being individually and collectively.

Because of this, human rights potentially appeal to all and become a language of communication for every human being regardless of their particular cultural background, worldview or system of belief—whether religious or secular. Human rights would be, from this perspective, intrinsic human values, inherent to being human. These values (rights and duties) can be discovered, understood, and clarified, but not exactly invented. They are objective values, therefore, notwithstanding their being imperfect and always subject to better understanding and explanation.¹²³

Yet human rights are received with varying degrees of acceptance in different parts of the world. For all the universality in the name, human rights are widely accepted without reserve only in the West. In other words, a worldwide agreement on human rights is a long way away.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, human rights can be common currency in certain regions of the world, and it is advanced in the Series that the EU is one of such regions.

Now if “moral” (i.e., pre-positive) foundations are essential to successful democracies where human rights are upheld and the rule of law is the order of the day, then they could be considered as a plausible source of cohesion for the European Polity.¹²⁵ In other words, the normative foundations for human rights, the rule of law (their guarantor), and democracy (their natural environment) are values held in all European countries (even if not fulfilled to the same extent in all of them) and are thus a source of mutual understanding. These values were present from the outset of European integration.¹²⁶

For this reason, I explored human rights as the possible common language of political culture and source of European political identity. Human rights (with the rule of law and democracy as necessary companions) provide the content for a shared political culture in the EU. They constitute a common language, as has been alluded to throughout the Series.¹²⁷

This common language with the potential to unify a very diverse polity, is in a way part of the content of European identity.¹²⁸ Human rights are, indeed, a language capable of containing and expressing a common identity where the realms of culture, the law, the economy, international affairs and cosmopolitanism, the five elements of a normative conception of European identity mentioned in the previous section, intersect.

The idea of human rights and the related notions of democracy and the rule of law, when studied in their historical context, reveal themselves as more than purely formal concepts. The political culture of human rights (PCHR) was born in a very specific normative ground rooted in Judaism, Christianity, and the Enlightenment.¹²⁹ Today, human rights have been incorporated into the positive laws of all EU countries. But it should not be forgotten where they came from, in order to avoid the illusion of thinking that these Western concepts are “value” free or devoid of any cultural background.¹³⁰

Indeed, human rights and its associated notions have sprung from (and at the same time constantly inform the content of) a political culture that pervades all of the EU member states. Awareness of an existing political culture in Europe (partly traceable back to religion) can help to deal with the

¹²² Ibid., 51.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 46.

¹²⁶ "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 96.

¹²⁷ See, for instance, "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading," 163.

¹²⁸ "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach," 167.

¹²⁹ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 47.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 53-57.

cultural diversity (sometimes strongly informed by religion) increased by immigration and which has created tensions in the public sphere, opening a debate about the possibility of maintaining social cohesion in a more diverse Europe.¹³¹ New avenues for social understanding based on a relational paradigm¹³² and interculturalism¹³³ are needed to meet the challenges that Europe faces today (see corresponding section below). But PCHR can serve as the common platform and starting point.

Since both the secular tradition of the Enlightenment and the religious tradition of Judeo-Christianity have been normative sources of the PCHR, both traditions deserve a voice in the debate about the common language for Europe. Both traditions must be present in the public sphere and enter into an enriching dialog with other increasingly important sources of political culture in Europe, such as Islam. Secularist worldviews, while rightly deserving their place in the public sphere, should not be allowed to monopolise the field of discussion, and even less should citizens holding religious views be banned from the public sphere.¹³⁴

Beuchot sees human rights as a key for the transcultural grammar, and his idea set me to think about human rights as a strong candidate for the common language of Europe.¹³⁵ Human rights could perhaps be a good "exchange currency."¹³⁶ Not because human rights are exclusively European: they can be successfully used in other parts of the world. Rather, and in a very unpretentious manner, because human rights could perhaps function as a medium for communication, a *lingua franca*: an analogical language for Europe.¹³⁷

The stage of political culture: the public sphere

If political unity is the problem the Series is focused on, the key concept to address it is political identity; the core of that concept is political culture;¹³⁸ the stage in which it could be analysed is the political (or "public") sphere; and the way to building identity through the creation of a common political culture in the public sphere, and consequently solidarity, is relational interculturalism. In this section I would like to explain the importance of the public sphere for unity, and why the secularism-religion debate matters in this respect.

Given that culture entails perspectives about meaning (of self, of the world, of the unknown), in the Series I touched on two kinds of worldview offering their alternative interpretations: secularism and religion. It matters for secular and religious worldviews influence and inform culture.

¹³¹ Cf. "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe."

¹³² "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific," 6-7.

¹³³ "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 105-108.

¹³⁴ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 48. Of course, the same holds true for a hypothetical vice-versa: no religion should be allowed to monopolise the public sphere, nor secularist citizens banned from the public sphere on account of their immanent perspectives. But though this case scenario may have happened in the past (e.g., for Locke, neither Atheists nor Catholics were to be tolerated in the public sphere) it is nearly unthinkable today, at least in the West. See: John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2010), <http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/2375>.)

¹³⁵ Jiménez Lobeira, "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 7.

¹³⁶ "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific," 106-107.

¹³⁷ Admittedly, in other parts of the world, with different historical and cultural backgrounds, it would be nearly impossible to give human rights in their present form a similar use.

¹³⁸ For instance in: Jiménez Lobeira, "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 49. But also: "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific." "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe." "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 99-100, 9. "EU Citizenship and Political Identity: The Demos and Telos Problems," 514-15. "Exploring Cosmopolitan Communitarianist EU Citizenship – an Analogical Reading," 162-65. "EU Analogical Identity - or the Ties That Link (without Binding)," 2, 7, 10-13. "Normative Conceptions of European Identity - a Synthetic Approach," 160-61, 66-67.

Rather than pretending to be a purely formal polity (neutral in normative terms), the EU should recognise its normative sources and be aware of them when new Europeans with different cultural—and therefore normative—perspectives come to the public sphere. This suggestion runs through the Series and is one of its key proposals to generate a cohesive society and a workable European identity that contributes to its political unity.

If moral foundations are essential to successful democracies, where human rights are upheld and the rule of law is the order of the day, then they should be taken into consideration as source of cohesion for the European polity.¹³⁹

Ratzinger's binary "reason-religion" (or secular v religious reason) is in my view shorthand for two different (but not mutually exclusive) kinds of *rationality*. The former is based on what Taylor calls "the immanent frame;" the latter on a transcendent frame.¹⁴⁰ The human capacity to reason, to argue in an intelligent way, to support rationally what one believes in, is present as much in individuals with an immanent frame of mind (say, Sam Harris), as much as in someone with a transcendent one (e.g., the Dalai Lama). Both can give a reasoned defence of their positions about life, human beings, the world, the polity and so on. Labelling either of them as unfit for public discussion, only because they have an immanent or a transcendent worldview, would be unfair.

A term that became clearer as the Series progressed was "secularism". As I have mentioned before in this paper, secularism is sometimes taken as a way of arranging public affairs and other times as an immanentist worldview.¹⁴¹ The distinction between secularity and secularism,¹⁴² and the place of the second alongside other systems of belief (including religious ones), is a contribution from the Series, important for the idea of political identity based on a comprehensive (inclusive) political culture and contributing to the goal of political unity.

Secularity is rooted both in the Biblical and the Enlightenment traditions of Europe.¹⁴³ The analytical contrast between "secular" and "secularist" is used through the Series to clarify an often confusing discussion when "the problem of religion" is dealt with.¹⁴⁴ Neutrality means inclusion and plurality of worldviews, and is equivalent to secularity but not to secularism.¹⁴⁵ Intolerance, fundamentalism and exclusion are latent tendencies in any human being who holds nearly a belief system, religious or secular. It is not limited to religion or to religious people only.

Therefore, complete emptiness or absence of worldviews in the public sphere is nearly impossible and a delusion when "neutrality" is taken to be a synonym of secularism—itself one among many possible worldviews. Inclusiveness is a more realistic normative goal. It translates into a fair opportunity for every worldview to express its voice in the public sphere. A secular public sphere, open to all worldviews, is the desirable climate for the building of solidarity and civic friendship (see section on relational interculturalism below).¹⁴⁶

There is a distinction or clarification in place when it comes to the term "secularism". In the case of religion, one thing is to have an extreme position that might entail the endorsement of, say, terrorism. We would label such a position as "fundamentalist". Another, very different thing is to speak of religion as a respectable worldview, deign of been listened to. Judaism, for instance, has provided us with the ideas of history and law we take for granted today. When it comes to secular

¹³⁹ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 46.

¹⁴⁰ "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe," 392.

¹⁴¹ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 47-48, 53. "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 104-105. "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe," 389-393.

¹⁴² "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe," 391.

¹⁴³ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 54.

¹⁴⁴ "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe," 1.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 393-394.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 389-390.

worldviews the same distinction applies. They are respectable secular belief systems or philosophies of life, whereas other such systems could (and sometimes do) entail extreme attitudes of hatred or violence that fall into the category of fundamentalism. Think how the same secular worldview, Marxism, can inspire a respectable and useful development of ideas as it did for the Frankfurt School, or lead to awful extremes in Communist dictatorships. Fanaticism is not a latent danger for religious people only, but for *any* human being with firm religious or secular convictions.

Accordingly, in both realms—the immanent or secular, and the religious or transcendent—there are rational (and easier to reason with) positions and irrational ones (or positions with a violent rationality attached to them). The Series refers to the possibility of extremes both in secular and religious worldviews. It lacks a distinction between secularism as a sensible worldview, and secularism as a fundamentalist worldview.¹⁴⁷ In part, this is because there is not an equivalent distinction for sensible and fundamentalist religious positions either. As long as secularity and secularism are distinguished, then “secularism” is a generic term to denote immanent (secular) belief systems, with an open connotation (reasonable or fundamentalist) as happens with the generic term “religion,” which denotes transcendent belief systems with an open connotation too.

Another term for inclusiveness in the public sphere is pluralism.¹⁴⁸ Even if, as explained above, I do not completely agree with his approach to the public sphere, I have taken Habermas as referent in the dialogue between religion and secularism because, in my opinion, he eloquently exemplifies what it is to hold an open immanent frame. He invites conversation not only *about* but also *with* each other.¹⁴⁹ And he has been the first one to practice it. He has sat down to speak with prominent figures from both secular and religious circles (among others, with John Rawls, Charles Taylor and Joseph Ratzinger), has seriously pondered their arguments, and has come up with proposals to carry that dialogue ahead.

Furthermore, Habermas’s intuition of speaking not only about each other but also with each other sits well with a relational interculturalist paradigm and with an analogical hermeneutics approach, both of which seek to harmonise, to find solutions, and to think creatively about complex and often polarised issues such as the debate of secularism vs. religion in the public sphere.¹⁵⁰

Europe living in a secular and yet “post-secularist” age is a good description of the cultural situation of the continent (following the distinction between “secularity” and “secularism” above). Europe seems to be entering an age in which—using Taylor’s terms—the frame is still immanent (in other words secular) but more open to the possibility of transcendence (i.e., not secularist).¹⁵¹

Habermas’s position and approach to the problem contrasts with Beck’s. The former clearly defines and acknowledges his perspective, and seems to have given a great deal of thought to perspectives different from his.¹⁵² Habermas carries out a deep analysis and provides thoughtful guidelines on how to address the problem of equal citizenship and diversity of worldviews, or a united political identity in the face of multiple cultural identities.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵⁰ “Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited,” 113.

¹⁵¹ “Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe,” 385-386.

¹⁵² Beck’s position to this respect is expressed in his recent book: U. Beck and R. Livingstone, *A God of One’s Own: Religion’s Capacity for Peace and Potential for Violence* (John Wiley & Sons, 2010). See my comments on that book in: Jiménez Lobeira, “Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe,” 394-397. Habermas’s position is outlined, among other publications, in: Jürgen Habermas, *An Awareness of What Is Missing – Faith and Reason in a Post-Secular Age*, Hardback ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010); Eduardo Mendieta, “Rethinking Secularism: A Postsecular World Society?: An Interview with Jürgen Habermas,” in *The Immanent Frame - Secularism, religion and the public sphere*, ed. Jonathan van Antwerpen, SSRC (2010); Jürgen Habermas, “Notes on Post-Secular Society,” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2008); J. Habermas, “Religion in the Public Sphere,” *European Journal of Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2006).

¹⁵³ Jiménez Lobeira, “Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe,” 393-394.

Singapore's case, in many ways so far apart from the EU (and so difficult to compare with Europe), sheds some light, however, when it comes to the treatment of diverse cultural positions with their corresponding worldviews, the pursuit of social coherence and the goal of political unity.¹⁵⁴

At any rate, Europe should not be afraid of its own cultural self-understanding from the past and present, including cultural traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, the Enlightenment—strong referents of Europe's political culture from the beginnings¹⁵⁵ of its integration process—and Islam, among others, in order to build its future.¹⁵⁶

The only way to build and maintain a liberal democracy is by being "truly liberal and truly democratic".¹⁵⁷ The Series advocates respect for all worldviews, secular and religious, in particular for Muslims, but also for New Atheists, Jews, Christians and any other belief system wishing to participate constructively in the public sphere. The recognition of and respect for different cultural positions is essential for social harmony and political unity.¹⁵⁸

Clearly, not everything is up for negotiation culturally, even in liberal democracies. Because democracy, the rule of law, and other elements of what I have called the political culture of human rights are substantive, not only formal.¹⁵⁹ It is schizophrenic and dangerous to pretend that the political culture of Europe is exclusively formal.¹⁶⁰ It does not convince those newcomers who possess a different culture, especially if that culture contains a strong religious background, and the very fundamentals of Western democracy and its limits are difficult to explain without this acknowledgement.¹⁶¹

Along this paper, an answer to the problem of how Europe can be united in diversity has been proposed under four aspects so far, using analogical hermeneutics as a methodological tool: political unity, political identity, political culture and the public sphere. The research is situated in the context of history and with awareness of the EU's present challenges.¹⁶² Tangentially, I have touched on the economic realm, submitting the possibility of flexible integration.

I have suggested that desirable and feasible outcomes of my approach are, from a suprastatal political regime, analogical unity, and from an inclusive public sphere, a common political culture. The question remains, however, about how a sufficiently cohesive community of citizens¹⁶³ where solidarity or civic friendship flourish, can be created. As an answer to this question I would like to propose relational interculturalism, to which we can now turn.

Building identity and solidarity: relational interculturalism

Interculturalism is the fifth and last key idea in the Series. It constitutes a way to deal with diversity and build political identity based on a common political culture, in order to maintain and increase political unity to an acceptable level.¹⁶⁴ Donati's relational sociology helps interculturalism and links with the topic of the common language already referred to above.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁴ "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific," 9.

¹⁵⁵ "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 95-96.

¹⁵⁶ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 52.

¹⁵⁷ "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe," 398.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 397-398.

¹⁵⁹ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe," 56-57.

¹⁶⁰ That's what Beck would appear to suggest. See: "Veils, Crucifixes and Public Sphere: What Kind of Secularism? Rethinking Neutrality in a Post-Secular Europe," 396-397.

¹⁶¹ Intolerance, for instance, to the violation of human rights, disturbances to the rule of law, or the existence of democracy.

¹⁶² Jiménez Lobeira, "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited."

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

¹⁶⁴ "Liberal Democracy: Culture Free? The Habermas-Ratzinger Debate and Its Implications for Europe."

¹⁶⁵ "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific," 6.

Formally, political unity is built in an inclusive public sphere through relational interculturalism. The initial substantive element of the political culture is that of human rights, as has been explained in previous sections.

I have connected Donati's concept of relationality with Beuchot's idea of human rights as a common language and with the latter's cultural analogical pluralism. That connection could be developed further than it has been so far,¹⁶⁶ as I have hinted at in *Europe United*.¹⁶⁷

The term *relational interculturalism* did not appear as such in the Series. Rather, the concept developed gradually through reflection and it is only at the end of it that I have given it an initial definition. Designating an invitation to blend, the idea itself is a blend that draws from Canadian (Bouchard, Taylor), Indian (Panikkar), Italian (Zamagni, Donati), and Latin American (Fornet-Betancourt, Beuchot) developments.¹⁶⁸ Yet, the intercultural trend is of course not limited to those regions. In 2008, the forty seven member state Council of Europe (antecedent to the EU but today different from it) published a *White Paper* on the subject.¹⁶⁹ A common thread in the intercultural analyses seems to be the need to find alternatives to multiculturalism which are not regressive (that is, alternatives to the view that sees monoculturalism or blind assimilation as the only possible form of social integration). Relational interculturalism, as I have come to see it, is not so much a challenge to multiculturalism as it is a constructive effort to improve it.

Interculturalism needs to be qualified, lest it become just another word for multiculturalism, at least a moderate multiculturalism. To this effect, relationality provides an adequate nuance which indicates how the social blending that interculturalism promises might come about.

The two papers in which I dedicate several sections to speaking about Interculturalism are *Worth Fighting* and *Cultural Riddles*.¹⁷⁰ Relational Interculturalism links with political culture, the public sphere, political identity and in the end with political unity, though it is none of them and requires a separate treatment.

Relational Interculturalism is the way in which political culture is formed in the public sphere to generate identity and eventually civic friendship or solidarity, which strengthens unity. It sets a path through which very diverse societies (and political communities) can work towards a common identity, rather than to the cultural annihilation of the newcomers (monoculturalism) or the creation of cultural ghettos or parallel societies (present in at least some forms of multiculturalism).¹⁷¹

In order to understand what *relational* means for interculturalism, I would like to bring to mind the way in which Donati defines his semantics of difference. This is important because it clarifies how he proposes to deal with diversity. And as mentioned above, the key to the problem of cultural plurality is how to harmonise cultural diversity without, on the one hand cancelling it (monoculturalism) or on the other hand fostering the creation of cultural archipelagos with little interconnection between them, eventually leading to a fragmented society (multiculturalism).

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ "Conclusion: Europe United in Diversity — an Analogical Hermeneutics Contribution to the Social and Political Philosophy of the European Union".

¹⁶⁸ "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited."

¹⁶⁹ Ministers of Foreign Affairs Council of Europe, "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living Together as Equals in Dignity", White Paper, (2008), http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf.

¹⁷⁰ Jiménez Lobeira, "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited; "Cultural Riddles of Regional Integration - a Reflection on Europe from the Asia Pacific."

¹⁷¹ "Is Europe Still Worth Fighting For? Allegiance, Identity, and Integration Paradigms Revisited," 101-102.

Donati distinguishes between three types of difference in the interaction between human beings. In the first one, *dialectic semantics*, difference is “a gap (border) between *Ego* and *Alter*. Between them, there is no sharing of specific identities but rather an assertion of two identities comparing with each other.”¹⁷² In this semantics, “reciprocity does not require recognition of a common identity.”¹⁷³ Habermas’s discursive ethics is for Donati an example of this semantics of difference in which “Ego and Alter have divergent and clashing identities.”¹⁷⁴

In the second type, *binary semantics*, difference is “conceived as discrimination and incommunicability.” Accordingly, “Alter is a denial of Ego and cannot ‘be included’ by Ego (and vice versa).”¹⁷⁵ Donati points as examples of this type of semantics the self-referential systems of functional and mechanist nature such as that of Luhman.¹⁷⁶

Finally, in *relational semantics*, the difference itself—dividing Ego and Alter—is conceived as a *relation*. “The relation,” claims Donati “is constitutive of *both* Ego and Alter.”¹⁷⁷ This is because each one’s identity is *shaped through the relation* to the other. Donati points out that relation implies on the one hand distance (non-identity between Alter and Ego) but on the other hand it brings about sharing of two uniquenesses. Relation envisages the other neither as Alter Ego, nor as a totally Alter.

Here is where these thoughts from two different thinkers, in two different continents, and studying two different disciplines, can coincide. Indeed, Donati’s relationality operates in a similar way to Beuchot’s analogical hermeneutics. And this position is at the core of the kind of interculturalism that I have sought to advance through the Series. Hence, I have called it *relational interculturalism*.

As already mentioned before, relational interculturalism will navigate between monoculturalism (where, extrapolating Donati’s terms, the other is accepted as long as it is an Alter Ego) and multiculturalism (where the other becomes an incommensurable, totally Alter). Relational interculturalism can be used to address the challenge of socially integrating peoples from very diverse cultural backgrounds who reside now in Europe.

Europe’s motto, “United in diversity,” it has been argued here, is a desirable goal. Though extremely challenging, certain conditions can help achieving it. The first one is an understanding of political unity in analogical terms, where the polity is not a state and its citizenship is compatible with and not in competition against that of the member states. The second one is the conception of an analogical language—the political culture of human rights—as the vehicle of intercommunication for the polity. The third one is an open and inclusive public sphere that fosters and facilitates the expression of diverse citizens, their worldviews, concerns and contributions. Finally, unity at the level of citizens is not a given and relational interculturalism presents a way to foster it. If at the institutional level unity is expressed in an analogical polity which is not a state, at the ground level unity translates into solidarity and civic friendship among citizens.

The European project has been one of the most innovative political experiments in history. Its success, even if limited, warrants creative approaches to enable its continuation. The ideas contained in this paper have been presented as a small contribution to that end.

¹⁷² Donati, “Beyond the Dilemmas of Multiculturalism: Recognition through ‘Relational Reason’,” 69.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 70.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ “Beyond Multiculturalism: Recognition through the Relational Reason,” *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 166 (2009): 70. (My italics).

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