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The Fall of Communism:
Changing Regimes in Central Europe in 1989-1990

Iván Bába

Introduction

It was not by accident that the collapse of communism in Eastern Central Europe happened at the same historical moment. The change of regimes, in other words, the fall of communism, should be treated as one comprehensive process, because the internal political processes of the five countries that are to be to be analysed – Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland and Romania – mutually influenced, reinforced or debilitated one another.

Throughout the forty years of "real socialism," these societies considered the Russian-style Stalinist socialism forced upon them to be alien, unrelated to their own social traditions, with its aggressive totalitarianism dominating the whole society, its primitive and lying rhetoric. This also includes its economic policy that contradicted every principle of economics, at the same time, creating an economy of deficiency. Since, however, it is not economic but rather intellectual and psychological oppression that humans perceive as the most unbearable, smaller and larger groups of rebelled against the mismanagement, lies, and aggressive manipulations, even when the reason for their protests clearly lay in the unbearable social circumstances. Revolts in these societies were continuous during the four decades of communist dictatorship. Different social groups voiced their discontent in different ways – according to their own subcultures, their socialization and their social positions.

The first mass revolts openly aimed against communist dictatorship occurred in 1953 in Berlin and other East German cities, where workers went on strike, and demonstrated. Their action was immediately supressed with considerable force of the Soviet army. This was followed in June 1956 by a rebellion in Poznan, Poland, that ended with a peculiar success. The hated Stalinist dictator Bierut was toppled, and in his place stepped the "national communist"

Gomulka. The “success” in Poland notoriously had a great impact on events in Hungary. On October 23, 1956 demonstrating university students chanted “Poland is showing us the way, and on their trail we’re gonna stay”. Though the revolution in Hungary was overpowered by the Russian military, it remained an indelible dramatic memento in Europe’s subsequent history. After years of bloody reprisal, in response to steady international pressure, in 1963 the ruling power granted an amnesty in Hungary. Most of the imprisoned were set free. The situation of those left in jail worsened, because international public opinion considered the “Hungarian issue” closed. These people were freed only after many years, some only in the 1970s. In the meantime, following the Polish example, the Hungarian communists offered a compromise to society. This became the Janos Kadar-led “consolidation”, involving in easing of repression, a gradual decrease in private life harassments, and the introduction of a “soft dictatorship”, giving birth to a kind of “goulash-communism”.

Not independently from the developments in Hungary, from 1965 throughout Czechoslovakia an intellectual ferment was in the making, mainly among writers, artists, philosophers and university professors. By 1968 this led to the Prague Spring. The political program of Czech intellectuals was based on a special tactic of self-restraint. Namely, from the cruel crushing of the Hungarian revolution they drew the conclusion that it was not worth entering into frontal combat with Soviet communists. It was better to convince them that introducing reforms to existing socialism, transforming the socialist model into something more attractive, creating “socialism with a human face” was also in their interest, and that the Czechoslovak shift towards reforms were only aimed at that goal, but this did not succeed. Russian tanks crushed the Prague Spring just as they had twelve years earlier with the Hungarian revolution. Retaliation followed, and Czechoslovakian society suffered terrible human and intellectual losses.

In the days of the Prague Spring, in Paris and other cities of Western Europe, famous student rebellions took place that influenced students in Poland as well. The agitation of students caused only minor nervousness among the Polish party leadership, but two years later, in 1970 they did not hesitate to use arms to supress the industrial workers' revolt. They did not count on what happened next, however: the radical crushing of the rebellion caused the fall of the party leadership. Gomulka, the "national communist" leader of 1956, had to step down, handing leadership over to Edward Gierek, a "Western communist". Gierek grew up in Belgium which influenced his political background and program for national pacification. Nevertheless, since he was unable to improve the economic situation, social peace soon gave way to new tensions. In 1976, a new workers' rebellion broke out, but this time Polish intellectuals also went into action, granting legal and financial assistance to vilified workers through their newly created organization, the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR). This was the first step towards the real massive social revolt in Poland, and the formation of *Solidarność* [Solidarity].

In 1977, the Czech intelligentsia, protesting against the restored Stalinist-type dictatorship, issued a pamphlet – the Charta 77 Manifesto. This proclamation was endorsed by intellectuals in Poland. The Hungarian reaction was a declaration of support signed by dozens of leading Hungarian intellectuals and can be considered the starting point for the radical opposition movement in Hungary.

In 1980, the workers' strikes in Poland ended successfully. This was the first mass movement against communist rule, and the system was forced not only to accept the existence of, but also the legalization of *Solidarność*, the independent trade union. This "tolerance" did not, however, last long. On December 13, 1981 there was a military coup in Poland, and the army, led by General Jaruzelski, introduced Marshall Law, and restored communist order.

Through arrests, imprisonments and assassinations *Solidarność* (by then with almost 10 million members) was forced to go underground, and thus lost a good part of its influence.

By the beginning of the 1980s, significant numbers of groups, organizations and movements had sprung to life in all the Eastern European countries, which were "independent" or professed programs of direct political opposition. Regardless of their targeted field, e.g. environmental issues, trade union pluralism, freedom of religion, questions of democracy, rule of law, these organizations were knocking against the wall of communist dictatorship. As time passed, methods of repression and retaliation changed in the different countries, but the basic structure of society and power remained the same. The relationship between the groups demanding democratization and the basically Stalinist-type communist authorities could not be changed, while communists in East European countries could rely on the Brezhnev doctrine, that is, the expect help of their "soviet comrades" if socialism was threatened. This situation lasted until 1985.

Gorbachev

After the decline of elderly communist leaders like Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko, a relatively young, vigorous and intelligent party secretary general, in his fifties, shook up world politics. He showed signs of starting a new era in the Soviet Union, searching for a way out of economic bankruptcy (labelled "stagnation" in the communist party language) through social dialogue and the introduction of certain democratic rights. This provoked surprise and hope as well as suspicion and fear among different social and political groups.

Gorbachev was a staunch communist and a staunch "anti-Stalinist", coming from a family that had suffered from the terror under Stalin, even with having relatives who had died in labour camps. As he explains in his memoirs, he was convinced that it was possible to build a non-Stalinist, that is, democratic socialist model. This Gorbachev-type socialist model was not

based on an elaborate or complicated theory. The essence was that under the leadership of a functional, not too aggressive and not too corrupt party apparatus, it would be possible to mobilize the good will, efforts and talent of the people. All this – sensibly organized – would be sufficient to lead the Soviet Union out of stagnation, and set it on the path towards economic progress. These were the considerations behind the programs of Acceleration (*uskorenie*), the following Open Social Dialogue (*glastnost*) and Transformation (*perestroika*).

In the beginning, he did not foresee the avalanche these actions were about to hurl upon the state and party leadership, or how freedom of speech would affect a society suppressed for decades, or the kind of new tensions created by this transformation within society and the party leadership itself. He also failed to anticipate how difficult it would be to tackle the huge existing problems, without having the right political and legal frameworks in place. It quickly became clear that "acceleration" made no sense without the acknowledgement of former errors, and that an investigation into the failures and open discussion would soon lead to the basic problems of the political, social and economic system. Finding a way out of the dilemma, i.e., the lack of democracy and rule of law, including the unsettled character of the basic social institutions of a democracy, and the total absence of a market economy, soon proved to be a "mission impossible".

Gorbachev transformed relations between the Soviet Union and the Central European countries. His decision to announce the end of the Brezhnev doctrine was of global strategic significance. He stressed that the socialist countries could choose the most appropriate measures to solve their own economic and social problems. With that decision, he put an end not only to Moscow's direct right of intervention, but also distanced Moscow from political responsibility. He let go of the hands of the old dictators like Honecker, Ceausescu, Husak, János Kádár and Todor Zhivkov. These old communist politicians suddenly did not know what to fear more: the dangers of facing their own societies, or the consequences of Gorbachev's socialist

reforms in their countries. The Czechoslovakian comrades, for example, chose their usual path of isolation, and banned selling Russian newspapers in Czechoslovakia. Janos Kadar, with good political insight, simply told one of his collaborators, a Gorbachev-enthusiast: "This man will dig the grave of socialism". Kadar knew – from his experience of 1956 – that "existing socialism" cannot be anything else than the dictatorship of the communist party. He expressed this view at several party congresses after 1956. In Hungary we saw the most sophisticated form of communist dictatorship where, for example, formal censorship was abolished (i.e., transferred to the conscience of newspaper chief editors and journalists, writers) or where "goulash communism" and the "happiest barrack" was created. However, Kadar instinctively felt that socialism would survive only by maintaining direct and overall control of the communist party. That is why he considered Gorbachev's pursuits and experiments "life threatening".

Gorbachev himself considered two Central European countries of special significance: Poland and Hungary. Though he renounced the Brezhnev doctrine, he did not plan to break up "the socialist camp", dismembering the Warsaw Pact or the close economic interdependence, rather he wished to modernize them.

To achieve this aim, Poland's present and future was of key importance. After taking over, he consulted several times exclusively with Jaruzelski, trying to find a way to end the lasting Polish internal crisis. He played an important role in starting the dialogue between the big adversaries of the Polish political arena at the turn of 1987-1988. As far as Hungary was concerned, he visualized Hungary as a "small laboratory" where experiments of modernizing socialism were taking place, for example in the field of agriculture, retail trade, and in the relative independence of the managers at big state owned firms. He had already visited Hungary in 1984, while he was the secretary of the Central Committee, responsible for agriculture, to study the "Hungarian model". He did not know what to do with Janos Kadar, but he followed with sympathy the accelerating Hungarian transformations.

Gorbachev – recognizing the threat in the American "star wars plan" – changed world politics fundamentally, initiating and carrying through a substantial cut in the enormous Soviet and American nuclear arsenals. This was prompted, on the one hand, by his recognition of the historical necessity, that is, the recognition of the technological superiority of the USA, and on the other, by his own principles. Gorbachev pursued humane relations not only in domestic policy, but in foreign policy as well. He seriously believed in the possibility of "peaceful coexistence" between countries of different social systems, in the balance between competition and cooperation, and the global historic chances of socialism. He pursued balanced relations with the key influential figures of international politics of the time – with Bush, Kohl, Thatcher, Mitterrand – because he wanted to incorporate the western model into the Soviet Union. He did so wishing to save socialism. He believed in a cooperation among equal partners.

Poland

Nobody contributed more to the toppling of the communist system in Central Europe than Polish society. A vast majority of the Polish nation never accepted "real socialism" as such, never reconciled with the Soviet occupation of the country and communist dictatorship. Poland was the only Central European country, where after WW II there was an armed resistance to Soviet occupation, through actions of remaining Home Army units. These forces were gradually destroyed by the Soviet Army and the Polish security services, but the memory of these legendary heroes lingered for a long time.

During the four decades of communist dictatorship, Polish society fought battle after battle against communist power. While in Hungary after 1956 and in Czechoslovakia after 1968, the opposition to the regime dwelled mainly among intellectuals, in Poland the biggest threat for the Polish United Workers Party lay in the discontent and riots of manual workers.

This fact fundamentally distinguished Polish social opposition from movements in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Although in 1968 only students rebelled against the party dictatorship, by 1970 mass groups of workers organized strikes and demonstrations. These manifestations were ferociously attacked by security forces in 1976 in Warsaw and Radom. The party leadership did not understand that these drastic measures would lead to the "most dangerous" type of social opposition, that is, to a close cooperation of workers and dissenting intellectuals. The events in June 1976 quickly advanced the formation of KOR, the Workers' Defence Committee. Its activists organized aid for workers' families, for family members of sacked, jailed or assassinated victims. KOR activities, besides provision of direct aid, gradually expanded to informing Western public opinion, drafting political declarations, and organizing public debates. Within this framework, a special opposition subculture formed gradually of members and leaders which later became leaders of *Solidarność.*

By 1977-1978, KOR grew into a nation-wide illegal network, with groups working in Warsaw, Wroclaw, Gdansk, Lublin, Poznan, and with a membership of five thousand. These were people interested in politics and rebelled against the "existing situation". They held monthly meetings – political debates in various private flats, where rank-and-file activists could become acquainted with the intellectual leaders of the organization. This constituted the birth of the alternative political culture that became the moral basis and the practical experience supporting any opposition against the regime.

In 1978, a new blow hit the Polish communist leadership, and in general, the whole communist camp. Unexpectedly, the archbishop of Cracow, Karol Wojtyla, was elected head of the Roman Catholic Church. The new Pope became the first Central European and Polish pope. This dealt a blow to the Polish and European communists as great at least as had the size of the "star wars" plans of Ronald Reagan. This "success" had an enormously encouraging effect on

the masses of Catholic believers and on Polish society with its strong Catholic identity. In October 1979, on the first anniversary of the election of the Pope, thousands of Cracow students went out to the main square, the Rynek, with guitars, to tell the world with singing and rhymes "We have a Pope. The Pope is ours!"

John Paul the Second did not help the communists to hang onto power. During the twelve years between being elected and the fall of communism he visited Poland three times, in 1979, 1983 and 1987. Upon landing and leaving the plane he always bent on his knees and kissed the ground of the Polish Motherland. During open-air masses he celebrated, where the attendance was always between 200 thousand and one million, he professed to his listeners: "Do not fear". This biblical quote in the social context of the time was unambiguously political, encouraging people to declare their faith, as well as to refuse and resist communism. Perceiving this new danger for communism, the KGB, involving its Bulgarian allies and a Turkish hired assassin, tried to murder the Pope in 1981. The attempt, however, backfired. The Pope, thanks to his faith and physical training, survived the attack. In September 1981, he issued and *Encyclical Laborem Excerens* devoted to workers, a clear signal of support for the Independent Trade Union *Solidarność* .

Permanent economic crises was the fundamental problem of Polish communism. The insurmountable economic problems and the rebellion against poverty led to the overthrow of Gomulka in 1970 and made way for Edward Gierek. Gierek, however, was not able to ensure a stable economic balance and acceptable living standard and by 1978-1979, control over the economy slipped out of the hands of the political leadership. A "price correction" announced on July 1, 1980 sparked strikes. On August 14th, the Strike Committee of Gdansk was formed, led by Lech Walesa. The wave of strikes first in the North, and later all over Poland forced the frightened political leadership to sign an agreement to create the independent trade union, and later, in November, the authorities were obliged to legally register, after some procrastination,

the Independent Self-governing Trade Union *Solidarność*. The union initially had 2.5 million members, but by the autumn of 1981 membership had increased to 10 million. The symbol of successful opposition to communism and the biggest and the best organized anti-communist movement of Central Europe came to existence.

Communist power, feeling the support and also the pressure of the Soviet party leadership at its back, fought an ongoing battle against *Solidarność*, resorting to political, administrative methods as well as intelligence. But they could not stop *Solidarność* from gaining momentum. It was a Polish general who finally became fed up with the continuous loss of ground by local communists. The political struggle of one and a half years ended on December 13, 1981 with a military takeover. A state of emergency was immediately introduced ("state of war"), 6600 trade union and political activists were interned, and 130 big industrial firms were put under military supervision. Factory workers, where the opposition was found, were shot at. Although mass arrests and persecutions represented a heavy blow for *Solidarność*, not even terror tactics could break the resistance. In January 1982 the first illegal contacts were made, and in April a Temporary Coordinating Committee was founded. *Solidarność* prepared itself for acting underground, making it clear in every communication that it was not giving up the battle against the rulers.

Working underground and the political oppression after the state of emergency had hardened and fatigued some of the leaders and members of *Solidarność*. Its membership fell from 10 million, but still counted in the hundreds of thousands. Though the above-mentioned papal visits gave new strength to the organization, and the Nobel Prize for Lech Walesa also demonstrated unambiguous international support, the Polish military-political power was not embarrassed by these events and, trusting that the Soviets would come to their aid, was not very fastidious about choosing the means for reaching their internal political aims.

Not accepting the behaviour of the otherwise cautious Polish Catholic clergy, some Catholic priests took an open stand for *Solidarność*, and more, numerous parishes offered opportunities for meetings, or even provided conditions for clandestine printing and other activities. Polish security services were more or less informed about these practices, so they executed assassinations against priests as a means of intimidation and warning. International public opinion is most informed about the case of Popieluszko, abducted and killed by security forces (October 19, 1984). It is less known, however, that the round-table negotiations between communist authorities and *Solidarność* were already under preparation in 1988 when Father Nidzielak, who had cooperated with *Solidarność*, was assassinated in his house. Father Suchovec, a secret member of the Intervention Committee of *Solidarność* was set on fire. These priests became part of Polish history as martyrs of *Solidarność*.

During the spring and summer of 1988, as a response to the government's economic measures, mainly a raise in prices, a new wave of strikes began, to which even trade unions, reorganized by the communists in the 1980s, adhered. Jaruzelski and his government were tired of the permanent struggle by then, and gave up. At the same time, *Solidarność* and Polish society themselves had become tired as well. By then the leaders of *Solidarność* clearly saw that society and workers had lost their "revolutionary fire" and "fighting spirit". In May 1988, for example, at the famous Lenin Shipyard of Gdansk, the birth place of *Solidarność*, only 1,500 out of 10,000 workers took part in the strike, with only 600 remaining until the end of the strike. It turned out that the strongest weapon Polish society and of *Solidarność* had, the strike, was not working anymore.

The communist government found itself in a new situation, too. By 1988, it had become clear to them that Gorbachev would not fall, and that he was taking his ideas of social reform seriously. The withdrawal of the Brezhnev doctrine caused uncertainty in the Polish circles of power. The exclusion of the possibility of Soviet political and/or military support created a new

strategic situation in which Polish and Central European communist leaders were compelled to do new calculations. They had to face their own nations and societies without foreign support, and aware of the crimes committed, this was not an easy task. The main motive of the Polish party leadership, however, was not to search for moral purification, but to avoid being held accountable and to preserve its power in the future.

On August 31, 1988, that is, on the 8th anniversary of the famous Gdansk agreement that set the foundation for *Solidarność*, the Minister of the Interior representing Jaruzelski, held informal talks with Lech Walesa, promising him to call for round-table talks. At that time, within *Solidarność*, there were two lines of thought. The first, radical wing was of the opinion that no negotiation should be held with the rulers; *Solidarność* should wait for, or even better, speed up the collapse of the entire system. The other wing suggested/insisted that talks should be initiated with the military-communist leadership to force it to share power. This latter position was not too far from what Jaruzelski wanted, sharing power under the best terms for him, instead of giving it all away.

A special role was played in this process by the Polish Catholic Church, in which "combative" priests and their followers were left out in the cold as happened to the afore--mentioned martyrs. Within the church, those wishing to maintain their positions started to gain strength. This was perceived by both the communist authorities and the leadership of *Solidarność*. *Solidarność* feared that Jaruzelski would form a kind of a pseudo-democracy and share power with the Church in the name of "national Christian Socialism", thus gaining a significant mass base and ousting *Solidarność* to the margins of politics.

Finally, the round table talks ended up as a series of talks between two sides. The talks started on February 6, 1989 and ended on April 6. On one side of the table sat Lech Walesa and his collaborators representing *Solidarność*. On the other side there were representatives of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) and its allies, the Catholic Church and some

"independent" public figures. Negotiations commenced in three commissions and 14 sections ending in a peculiar compromise: the PUWP accepted political pluralism, freedom of speech, the access to mass media by different political and social organizations, as well as the idea of introducing territorial self-governance. From the point of view of constitutional law, the talks led to agreements on significant changes: Poland would be a "republic", directed by a so called semi-strong president, laws would be adopted by a bi-cameral parliament, the Sejm as the lower house and a Senate. The "real compromise" came in the field of the preliminary distribution of parliamentary mandates. Accordingly, 60% of the seats of the Sejm would automatically go to the PUWP and its allies, 5% would be occupied by delegates of the Church. Only 35% of the seats were left to be contested among independent candidates. All Senate seats were to be open.

In the partially free elections of June 4, 1989, 62 % of the potential voters turned out to vote. The result was catastrophic for the communists in power, since the opposition, that is, *Solidarność*, won all the freely contestable mandates. Nevertheless, the system of distribution of power, agreed in advance obliged *Solidarność* politicians. After long bargaining, Tadeusz Mazowiecki was asked to form a government. At the same time, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the head of the military coup, was voted President of the Republic by the Sejm. Thus, a coalition government could be formed, led by *Solidarność*, but the PUWP and its allies also took important positions. (Communists got the interior, defence, foreign trade and transport portfolios.) On September 12, 1989 the maiden speech of the new prime minister reflected the heavy compromise. He stressed: "We are separating the past with a thick line"; and also "I will not be a puppet prime minister". Though this latter sentence seemed to be directed at the communists, insiders knew that it was addressed not to Jaruzelski, but to Walesa and the dissatisfied radicals of *Solidarność*. Thus, Mazowiecki opened a new front towards Walesa, leader of *Solidarność* who found himself a bit marginalized.

At the start, the Mazowiecki government had a huge (90%) social support, but by the middle of 1990 this started to plunge due to the measures that had been taken to tackle the grave economic situation. Hyper-inflation, a huge public debt, the enormous budgetary deficit, the tensions deriving from the transformation of ownership structures put a huge unexpected burden on Polish society.

The first free parliamentary elections in Poland took place on October 27, 1991. Participation reached only 44%. This number indicated well the grade of disillusionment Polish society had developed in two years. This "era of short governments" essentially gave left wing politicians an opportunity to recover and it also tired *Solidarność*-based parties. The early parliamentary elections held on September 19, 1993 brought about a clear victory of the left. The leftist electoral bloc, led by Aleksander Kwasniewski, won 37% of the votes, and in coalition with the Polish Popular Party they had 74% of the parliamentary seats. In 1995, Kwasniewski challenged Walesa and in a tremendous battle won the presidency of the republic. (He was re-elected in 2000.) By the middle of the 1990s, the Polish post-communist left reorganized itself and reappeared on the political scene as a "modern social democratic force", renovated, younger and successful.

Hungary

Hungarian society, as well as the forces and events underpinning regime change in Hungary, were strongly influenced by the political process in Poland, despite the significant differences between the historical, political and social contexts of the two countries and between the Hungarian and Polish opposition groups. The 1956 revolution and war of independence was a decisive experience for the generations that lived it. This applied to the whole Hungarian nation, regardless of individual political convictions. Those who considered

the revolution their own never forgot it, remembering frequently the catharsis experienced by the fall of the hateful dictatorship, the sudden opening up of different ways of living, the appearance of hope for a dignified life. They also never forgot the heavy blow caused by the suppression of the revolution and the subsequent retaliations. Nor was the revolution forgotten by those who fought on the communist side of the barricades, and who regained power with the help of Soviet tanks. In October 1956, they were well aware of their isolation, the hatred of society towards them and also of the power that swept them away in a couple of hours.

After 1956, the Hungarian authorities retaliated strongly. Summary courts declared several hundred death sentences, the majority on workers, and a significant number of those sentenced were executed. The intellectuals who participated in the revolution were sentenced to several decades or even life imprisonment, of which normally 5-6 years were spent behind bars. The majority were set free after the amnesty of 1963, but the situation for those kept inside, for example of several Catholic priests, worsened, not just in terms of their immediate environment, but also because they were practically forgotten by their own people and by the wider world. They were set free after 8-10 years, carrying for the rest of their lives the heavy psychological and physical consequences of their long imprisonment.

A separate problem for the communist rulers was the "management" of the case of Imre Nagy, the prime minister of the revolutionary government. In 1958, Janos Kadar assumed responsibility for the Imre Nagy case, signalling that Imre Nagy and his collaborators should be sentenced and executed. He worried that if he left the man alive and in Budapest, either under house arrest or as a free man, Imre Nagy would constitute a political magnet that could endanger him and his aspirations. He shared the old bolshevik opinion that a counterpoint "within socialism" is the most dangerous of all. (Imre Nagy was a communist himself.) On the other hand, he should have read Imre Nagy's diary that pointed to Kadar as his main enemy. By having Imre Nagy executed, Kadar considered the issue closed. He suppressed every attempt to

reconsider 1956 and the figure of Imre Nagy for three decades. However, contemporaries and eyewitnesses did not let the matter rest and Kadar had to face the consequences of his actions in the last year of his life.

The 1963 amnesty allowed Hungary to be accepted back into the international community and for the "Hungarian question" to be withdrawn from the agenda at the UN. The issue also disappeared from Hungarian political debate and during the Kadar era, that is, between 1956 and 1988, the topic became taboo. This was the "original sin", from which Kadar's regime was conceived. This was the key issue that concerned Kadar in the most direct way, so in the evaluation of this question he never made a political concession until his fall in 1988.

After the 1963 amnesty, Janos Kadar set out to encourage social and economic consolidation. Learning from the experience of the 1950s, he aimed to create a system in which by maintaining total power for the communist party, he would be able to win, even if only partially, the support of the people. The main – conciliatory – slogan for this policy was: "Those who are not against us, are with us". It turned on its head the motto of the 1950s days of wild terror ("Those who are not with us, are against us"), which forced people to express total and vocal support for the regime.

Kadar's "big trick" was to allow people, after the years of retaliation, to create their partial "private sphere", unique at that time in communist countries. He did not force people to continuously express their loyalty and reduced political pressure over society. The most important element of Kadar's policy of consolidation was the New Economic Mechanism introduced in 1968. The idea of the Mechanism was to create a functional, effective economic system that would allow steady economic growth without affecting the political and ideological base of the system and its social structure. From 1968 until the mid1980s, depending on the

skirmishes within the upper circles of the HSWP (the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party) it was the struggle around "the Mechanism" that determined Hungarian political life.

By the mid-1980s, opposition groups (that had already been organising themselves for several years) or organizations critical of the regime followed two different strategies. The circle of "legal" non-governmental organizations was wide and colourful, and appeared in the form of clubs, societies, associations, and youth camps. The most important of these "civilian" organizations turned out to be the Association of Hungarian Writers that became one of the centres of intellectual life. At their congress on November 29-30, 1986, through a democratic electoral process, collaborators of the ruling communist authorities were relieved from the leading posts in the Association, and were replaced by democrats. The party responded to this revolt in its own way. They ordered the press not to report on the issue; writers loyal to the regime withdrew from the association; rebellious writers were threatened; and the budget of the association was frozen. This was the first open rebellion of this intellectual circle against communist rule. Party authorities took the rebellion seriously, and hit back, not realizing that their reaction would not weaken this rebel circle of intellectuals, writers, poets, historians, newspaper redactors, but would instead reinforce, motivate and stimulate them to act. They also hit back when, on September 27, 1987, they held a meeting at the farm of writer and poet Sandor Lezsak at Lakitelek, which resulted in a communiqué. In the first half of 1988, the group held forum-type events, the first one concentrating on the topic of parliamentarianism. (The only reaction of the communist authorities to this was to prohibit the participation of party members.) This is how a movement started that became, in the following two years, the largest opposition organization They won the 1990 parliamentary elections under the name of Hungarian Democratic Forum.

Another group, calling themselves the "democratic opposition", in the second half of the 1970s, at the start of its activities, denounced the unwritten deal existing between the

communist government and representative circles of the Hungarian intelligentsia. According to this deal, the intellectuals gave up their demands for democratic rights, gaining in return the "maximum benevolence" that could be granted in the shadow of the Soviet Union. People belonging to the democratic opposition considered this deal incompatible with their conscience and their self-esteem. They believed that it was unnecessary to make unwritten deals with the authorities and that it was possible to create autonomous organizations, independent newspapers, meanwhile they could be defended against retaliatory actions on behalf of the government. As a consequence, they were convinced that a transition to political pluralism could start, first near the edges of the system, later moving towards its heart. Associations, organizations would start to work, newspapers and magazines would be published, without asking for preliminary permission from the ruling power. They would be open about the oppositional character of their behaviour. The organizers and participants knew to expect reprisals, but also knew that those reprisals would not go beyond workplace harassment, meaning that there was no chance of jail sentences or physical beatings. They based this conviction on the observation that the Hungarian State was hugely indebted, already heavily dependent on the West. The communist rulers could not have everything. Many people of this group were dismissed from their jobs, forbidden to publish in newspapers, had their passports withdrawn and their houses searched. They were harassed, but the retaliation went no further.

The development of Hungary's international relations provided an important source of support for this group. The Hungarian government opened talks with the IMF in 1979. The country had been submerged in debt since 1973, but by the end of the decade there was a turning point, when the Soviet Union announced that it would not be able to distribute reduced rate raw material supplies. The IMF loan became vital. Another important international development was the signing of the Helsinki Agreement. The document implicitly recognized

the division of Europe in two. In exchange, the Soviet Union and the communist countries accepted the so called “third basket” concerning human rights. The idea of using international agreements and treaties of human rights against the regime came from Moscow – the first Helsinki Commission was founded by Yuriy Orlov. Then and there, it was very quickly and cruelly wound up, while in Hungary people gradually became more and more convinced it was possible to call the authorities to account over its compliance with human rights.

The democratic opposition became a loose conglomerate of many currents based on mutual solidarity. It had smaller, well-organized groups but those never formed a unified structure. They had different views on the chances for political success. They shared the memories of the 1956 revolution, and the need to assume those publicly, and they shared the view that no democratic transition could be brought about without that tradition. Some of them were preparing for a new revolution, while others did not see any conditions for a revolution in Hungary and considered it more important to widen the political and intellectual field of action. But they all took the same political stance, placing themselves at a distance from official institutions and stressing their opposition role; and they all pledged themselves to human rights.

This group saw the future of Hungarian society in getting closer to the West. From an ideological point of view, they gradually moved from the ideas of the New Left to those of modern liberalism. The start of the democratic opposition traces back to 1979 when the campaign to collect signatures in solidarity with the imprisoned members of the Czechoslovak Charta 77 received about 250 signatures in Hungary. That was the moment when the network of loosely organised private meetings, friendly reunions and intellectual subculture transformed into a political movement. This was also the time when the group of 1956 participants appeared on the political stage. Members of this group were all ex-convicts who had directly experienced the 1956 Kadar retaliations, in the form of long imprisonment.

FIDESZ was formed on March 30, 1988 as a political organization of young people. It represented a special splash of colour in the local political palette. It grew out of the world of youth clubs, university colleges and summer camps. The ruling power at first did not react to this obviously provocative step, because at that time the party leadership was patiently analysing the level of possible retaliatory measures, its political advantages and disadvantages. Those were times of political ferment even at the highest and medium levels of the HSWP, as the party was preparing for an extraordinary conference.

By the beginning of 1988, Janos Kadar and his team became a burden to the party not only for the reformers, who were getting stronger every day, but also for the more cautious "realists". Both groups feared that the old leader – with visible signs of mental decline – would be more and more dangerous for them during the rearrangement of power that seemed inevitable. Within the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party a growing number of groups/platforms were formed nurturing different ideas on possible reforms.

Janos Kadar could not understand what was happening in Hungary – or in the Soviet Union. He still believed in 1987-1988 that if he said "There is no crisis" that would be accepted by the party members and the wider population; and that his words would be reflected in reality. On the contrary, in 1987 there was a considerable decrease in real incomes and it became clear that the Kadar policy, based on falling into more and more debt, was not sustainable and that Hungary was heading towards economic bankruptcy. By the beginning of 1988, it also became clear that Kadar would be unable to neutralize his potential successor, Karoly Grosz, who was already prime minister since 1987. On May 22, 1988, an extraordinary party conference was held by the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, during which approximately 40 members of the Central Committee were dismissed and replaced (out of 105). The forces of reform won the majority within the Central Committee. The delegates voted

Kadar's supporters out of the Central Committee, meanwhile voting Kadar president of the party – a post without any power.

This was a decisive political breakthrough. The room for manoeuvre available to the reformist forces inside the communist party widened significantly. Everyone could feel that political change affecting the very basis of the existing system was inevitable. Gorbachev acknowledged the events in Hungary without comment. In 1987, Hungary was visited by Vladimir Kryuchkov, head of the KGB with the mission of finding out who could be Kadar's successor. In his report, he pointed to a Grosz-Kadar change as the possible solution. So the new Hungarian party leadership didn't need to fear Moscow's opposition. In May 1988, the Political Committee commissioned work on modifications to the Constitution. The elaborated plans were not very different from the version voted by the parliament later. In January 1989, the Parliament voted for a new law on the right of public assembly that became the basis for a legal multiparty system.

At the start of 1989 – in his capacity as the President of the Commission of Programming of the Central Committee of the HSWP – Imre Pozsgay unexpectedly announced that 1956 was a popular insurrection. Doing this he destroyed the biggest taboo of the communist dictatorship, and made possible the authorization of a funeral tribute to Imre Nagy and his companions, on which Imre Nagy's daughter had been insisting for a long time. On June 16, 1989, the funeral of Imre Nagy and his companions became a huge mass demonstration, and a symbolic historic date for the collapse of communism in Hungary. During the ceremony, politicians representing the opposition parties spoke, a guard of honour was offered, flowers and wreaths were laid by the highest level state and government officials, by the diplomatic corps and distinguished representatives of Hungarian cultural life. Janos Kadar and his accomplices had to watch from beginning to end. Kadar followed the events with a broken mind

and three weeks later, on the same day when the Supreme Court declared its absolving sentence in the case of Imre Nagy and companions, he died.

On June 13, 1989, round table talks opened on the creation of the framework of a democratic state and the rule of law. The participants were the ruling HSWP, the biggest opposition parties that were gaining strength by then, and as the third party, representatives of the biggest social organizations. Upon the final results of the talks, between October 17 and 20, the parliament adopted the laws with the modifications to the socialist constitution, and on October 23, the 33rd anniversary of the 1956 revolution Matyas Szuros, provisional President proclaimed the republic. In a legal sense, this marked the end of socialism and communist dictatorship in Hungary, and the country could start preparing for free parliamentary elections.

Nevertheless, peaceful transition had also significant opponents. These forces – belonging mainly to the secret services under the Ministry of Interior – had opposition politicians under surveillance even at the end of 1989 and beginning of 1990, reporting on them to the inner circles of the communist party. The case exploded at the beginning of the 1990s, and became known as the Duna-gate scandal.

Between October 6 and 10, 1989, the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party held its last congress, dissolving itself and splitting into two successor parties. The larger one, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), approved a declaration adopting the system of values of the European democratic left, while the smaller one, the Workers Party, assumed the task of taking further the communist system of values and ideology. Most of the leaders of the ex-communist party joined the new socialist party, freeing themselves from the political and ideological heritage of communism, and trying to present the image of modern European democrats of the left. The date for the first free parliamentary elections was fixed for March 25, 1990 by the provisional President of the Republic. For the elections, a three-pole political playing field could be observed in Hungary. On the left, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP); the liberal SZDSZ

and FIDESZ; and the rest of the centre right political parties. The elections were won by the MDF, forming a coalition government with the Independent Smallholders Party and the Christian-democratic Party. At the beginning, SZDSZ and FIDESZ, on one side, and the Socialist Party, on the other side, formed two poles of opposition to the government. Two years later the polarity changed, and the liberal SZDSZ joined up with MSZP in an anti-government movement, remaining its coalition partner for 10 more years.

The Hungarian secret services made a last attempt to overthrow the new and inexperienced government in October 1990. "Topping up" the demonstration of taxi drivers against fuel price rise, involving truck drivers too, they blocked all the bridges of Budapest and the busiest traffic hotspots of the country. After some days of high tension, the government resolved the situation, but could not neglect the serious warning. Taking political measures and modifying some laws, it started a significant reorganization of the secret services.

As we can see, the engine of Central European political reforms was working in three countries: in the Soviet Union, Poland and Hungary. The forces that wished to change the rigid communist political system were advancing in different ways but with the same determined dynamism, aiming to lead "real socialism" out of the crisis and transform it into a social and economic system that could function steadily in a sustainable way.

Political leaders of the other three communist dictatorships stood on opposite sides, having contrary interests. By 1988, a Berlin-Prague-Bucharest axis was formed, where the three dictatorships cooperated in a kind of harmonized common defence against the unwanted effects of the Gorbachev-promoted reforms. While, for example, reform-inclined politicians in Hungary were constantly following whether Gorbachev's position was weakening or if there was any anti-reform turn in Moscow, German, Czech and Romanian party leaders were hoping to see such a turn. They were aware of the history of the USSR and therefore knew that an internal coup could change everything. It could lift their conservative comrades to power, thus

reaffirming their own positions, too. These dreams were not totally unfounded since the coup attempt of 1991 was aimed at such a change, but failed. In any case, it came too late for the communists of Central Europe.

The German Democratic Republic

Leaders of the East German communist state, the German Democratic Republic led by Erich Honecker tried to obstruct by all possible means the entry of Soviet reform ideas in their country. Honecker tried so hard that he even forbade the distribution of certain Russian papers – demonstrating clearly the level of desperation and paranoia of the German communists. The GDR as an independent state came to exist in 1949 due to a Soviet political decision (taken most probably by Stalin). In June 1953 in East Berlin and some other cities, uprisings broke out and were supressed by the rulers with the help of Soviet military power. After that, the extent and form of dictatorship did not change – unlike other, evolving dictatorships in other socialist countries. The power of the regime was based on three basic pillars: political support coming from the Soviet Union, inter-German economic relations, and a total isolation of the country, preventing its citizens from travelling to the West. Political support from the Soviet Union finished by 1988. They could not count on the several hundreds of thousands of Russian troops either. The benefits coming from the inter-German economic ties – for example, the exchange of the two German marks 1:1, or the West German technology transfer – were not enough anymore to solve the problems of the economic crises.

The population chose a rather peculiar tactic to break travel limitations. In the summer of 1989, approximately 120,000 people asked for permission and several tens of thousands travelled to Czechoslovakia and Hungary, where they simply occupied the embassy of West Germany. On top of that, between 100,000 and 200,000 East German citizens applied to be accepted into Hungarian refugee camps every day. On August 19, 1991, during the so-called

pan-European picnic in Sopron, border gates were opened between Austria and Hungary as a symbolic gesture, and 661 East German citizens took advantage of the moment and rushed over to Austria. On August 23rd, the Hungarian Government took its first official decision in this matter, allowing 117 refuge seekers that were queuing up at the West German embassy to leave Hungary for Austria with Red Cross documentation. The Hungarian prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs, well aware that the road forward led to Bonn and not to Berlin at that moment, paid a personal visit to Chancellor Kohl and foreign minister Genscher to tell them that the Hungarian Government was ready to open its western border for refugees of the GDR. With this, the Hungarian side made it unmistakeably clear that it considered the Geneva Convention on Refugees, signed in March of the same year, more important than the agreement signed with the East German state in 1969 about deportation of East German citizens detained during attempts at illegal border-crossing. The Soviet leadership did not get involved in the refugee affair, and the Hungarian Government opened its border to East Germans on September 10th. Until the opening of the Berlin Wall, approximately 60,000 people had left the GDR through Hungary and Austria. Leading East German politicians accused Hungary of "betraying socialism", while their minister of foreign affairs asked Gorbachev to convoke the consultative body of the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet leader refused to do that. The Brezhnev doctrine was not active any more, and the East German leaders were not supporters, but rather enemies of Gorbachev.

From then on it was only a matter of time before the GDR collapsed – even if not many people dared to say this out aloud. The different strikes and clashes that occurred more and more often for several months before the 40th anniversary of the existence of the GDR were not exactly pointing towards consolidation. Gorbachev at that moment told Honecker, as if wishing him well on the occasion of the anniversary: "The one who comes late will be punished by life". On October 9th, in Leipzig, 70,000 people demonstrated against the regime, and the

police did not intervene. On October 17th, the top leaders of the party forced Honecker to resign.

With that the history of the German communist state reached its last chapter. The announcement of the end of travel restrictions started a mass movement that within hours demolished the 28-year-old Berlin Wall. Willy Brandt, who as a Mayor witnessed the construction of the wall, said on November 10th: "Now what belongs together - will grow together". What followed was only the execution of the practical tasks related to the unification of the two German states. The GDR ceased to exist on October 3, 1990.

Czechoslovakia

In Czechoslovakia the changing of the regime brought about not only democracy but also the disintegration of the federal state. The question had already lingered – openly or in a latent way – in political thinking and dialogue for decades. The widening of political possibilities opened the way for the separation and so it happened. In Czechoslovakia there were no opposition movements like in Poland or Hungary. In Bohemia, Charter 77 and some human rights and independent initiatives tried to speak up, while in Slovakia environmental and Catholic activists expressed criticism of the system, but the Czechoslovak communist dictatorship successfully neutralized any opposition initiatives for two decades.

Marking a fundamental change, the "Velvet Revolution" broke out on November 17, 1989 when an official legal student march evolved into a demonstration against the regime. Police intervened on the first day, but on the following days the series of demonstrations practically became open forums of discussion. From this came the name of the Czech opposition movement: Civic Forum.

In Bratislava the movement Public Against Violence became the partner organization to the Czech movement, establishing official ties on November 21. On November 27, the

Czechoslovak political authorities already spoke of personal changes and replacements. On November 28, negotiations began between leaders of the opposition and the Prime Minister. The communist leadership, showing good tactical sense, surrendered by December 10, so a government of national compromise was formed, headed by the communist, Marian Calfa, as prime minister. On December 29, Vaclav Havel was elected provisional president of Czechoslovakia. Alexander Dubcek, the hero of 1968, became president of the federal parliament. The first act of the regime change in Czechoslovakia took place in 23 days, without blood and bigger tensions. The strength of any revolution, the masses, were provided by the students as in Prague and Bratislava. But the change itself was executed by the generation that had been active in 1968, learned politics in 1968-1969, and fell victim to the subsequent retaliation. That generation had the feeling that after 21 years they "were obliged to make another revolution".

The second act of the revolution also took place very quickly. Czechoslovakia had been a federal state, having a federal parliament and two national ones – a Czech and a Slovak one. The personal changes, the replacement of the most compromised delegates with opposition representatives in all three parliaments contributed to the approval by the three parliaments of all the laws necessary for a complete political and economic change. On June 8-9, 1990, the first free parliamentary elections took place, closing the second phase of the political change. Nevertheless, the relation between the Czechs and the Slovaks had been a permanent problem in the internal politics of the country, practically since its creation, that is, since 1918. The Czech domination, and the asymmetric structure of the state, served as a topic for Slovak literature, press and political discourse for 50 years. In 1969, Czechoslovakia became a federal state, and what is more, the Slovak Gustav Husak became the president of the party and of the republic.

But even this could not satisfy Slovak political ambitions, so the rearrangement of the Czech and Slovak relationship became one of the key topics of the regime change. As a result of

this discussion, on November 25, 1992, the federal parliament adopted a constitutional law that declared the cessation of the joint federal state as of December 31, 1992. The Republic of Czechoslovakia came into existence in 1918 and ceased to exist in 1992, so it was present in European history for 74 years.

Romania

Romania was the only communist country where regime change became violent. The Ceausesu dictatorship contained all the absurd features of "existing socialism." The dictator succeeded, over the course of several years, in making enemies of the intellectuals, the top managers of the economy, the national minorities, his own political elite, the military (giving control over the army to his own brother) and even his main support – the security services. Romania's foreign policy manoeuvres – the attempts to increase its independence from the Soviet Union, recompensed by spectacular gestures on behalf of Western politicians – eventually proved to be meaningless bluffs after the party chief tried to create an anti-Poland and anti-Hungary coalition. In the meantime, Ceausesu firmly rejected Gorbachev's reform experiments. Romania was continuously criticized at the US Congress for its human rights and minority policies. Within the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Romania continuously obstructed the supervision of compliance with human rights in European countries. Ceausesu kept fighting until the last moment against the "import of reforms", defending Romania's rigid communist system with Gorbachev's thesis, according to which "each socialist country can determine the direction of its development itself". By the end of 1989, there were no interest groups (except his immediate family clan) in Romania that did not wish for the fall of the old dictator.

Meanwhile, by the end of November 1989, communist dictatorships were overthrown in all the other countries of the "socialist camp", while the adversaries of Ceausesu still were not

finding the means to get rid of him. The explosion happened in Timisoara on December 15th and the spark came from László Tőkés, a Hungarian protestant minister. László Tőkés was a young pastor who rebelled against the dictatorship, and was about to be transferred from Timisoara to a little village in order to diminish his intellectual and moral influence. He did not accept this transfer, and his forced removal was impeded by a living chain of his Hungarian followers and a growing number of Romanian sympathizers, who joined them. On the next day, security forces and the army shot at the people keeping guard, killing almost one hundred demonstrators. These were the first martyrs of the Romanian revolution. On December 17th, the minister of defence refused Ceausescu's order to keep on shooting at demonstrators. On December 21, the communist party – as usual – organized a popular march to the party headquarters. But then something happened, something never seen before in the history of Romanian communism: the mass with its singing and shouting, obstructed the speech of the secretary general of the party. And everything was broadcast on live television.

It was followed by the "Romanian revolution" – also broadcast live by TV. After the spectacular helicopter escape of Ceausescu, the Front of National Salvation took power and announced that "the revolution won". Television showed the different street demonstrations and gave live coverage of somebody shooting into the crowd from somewhere. The TV footage aimed to create mass psychosis by suggesting that forces of the old regime wanted to set free the already captured dictator. The new power thus created the pretext to execute the dictator who then was put before a martial court and sentenced to death with his wife. They were executed immediately. The TV footage of the execution was shown several times a day. The governments of the US and of Western Europe recognized the Front of National Salvation as the legitimate government of Romania. Today it is widely known that the TV revolution was all staged and filmed after the pattern of the French Revolution.

The evaluation of the Romanian events of December 1989 are still debated. The main question is whether it was a popular uprising or a coup. The leaders of the Front of National Salvation – the majority of whom came from the communist party hierarchy or from armed institutions – wanted to create a revolutionary myth to prove their legitimity. They wanted to suggest that the new organ of power/authority was created by the revolution. The objectives of the uprising and those of the coup were different. The uprising was directed to overthrow the hateful communist dictatorship, while the coup aimed at the removal of the dictator and the salvation of all the other representatives of the former regime. The uprising was spontaneous and proclaimed the ideals of freedom. The coup was planned and set up and used violence as its means. The further process of regime change followed a similar pattern to the other countries. Communist leaders became "reformers", they saved themselves, later forming a new modern socialist party that did well at the next parliamentary elections.

Conclusions

The fall of communism and the transformation of Central Europe happened in one historic moment, in 1989. No political leaders of any of these countries could resist the current of history. The unpopular or directly hated communists could not maintain power when the Soviet support ceased. They were swept away by their own people, by their own societies, by their own comrades. At the same time, it can be seen from the above mentioned facts that in spite of the similarities, the process of the fall of communism took place differently in each country, depending on the internal conditions of each society. The decades-long wrestling in Poland, the bargaining in Hungary, the sudden collapse in East Germany, the "velvety capitulation" of Czechoslovakia, the bloody play in Romania – all these were consequences of the traditions and situations of each particular society. This paper has followed the events only until the end of

the first part of the regime change, until the political change. The social and economic transformation after the collapse of "existing socialism" would be the subject of another essay.

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Nationalized Citizenship in Central European Countries

Michal Vašečka

Changes in the Concept of Citizenship under Globalization

Modern citizenship in inherently egalitarian and it has been almost universally appealing since the dawn of modernity to a majority of ideological streams of society (Faulks 2000). In its egalitarian mode, citizenship has developed within the liberal tradition and it has become a powerful idea – it recognizes the dignity of the individual but at the same time reaffirms the social context in which the individual acts. In the liberal tradition, citizenship is portrayed as part of an evolutionary process towards a more rational, just and well-governed society (see for instance Marshall 1981). Citizenship therefore can be characterized as a membership status that contains a package of rights, duties and obligations, and which implies equality, justice and autonomy. Citizenship itself could be thin or thick. A rich sense of citizenship can only be achieved when the contextual barriers to its performance are recognized and removed.

One of these contextual barriers began soon after the French revolution. On the one hand, liberalism, as the dominant ideology of citizenship, has stressed the egalitarian and universal nature of the status (Faulks 2000). On the other hand, citizenship has been closely bound from the beginning to the institution of the nation-state. Since the 19th century, citizenship has become meaningful only in strong connection with the nation-state. Citizenship derives its power from the nation-state that often represents an uneasy symbiosis of ethnic and civic elements. Countries significantly differ in their supports levels in terms of strengthening ethnic or civic elements.

Different dimensions of the modern citizenship that show both ethnic and civic elements have been described well by Brubaker (2002). Modern citizenship, according to Brubaker, ought to be egalitarian, democratic, socially consequential, sacred, national, and unique. While the first three of them (egalitarian, democratic, socially consequential) are following strictly civic tradition, others (sacred, national, unique) are from the ethnic dimension. The first three dimensions are present in all concepts of modern citizenships and we can find them in all modern states. Differences between states are therefore in presence of the later ones. In all Central European countries citizenship is being perceived to certain extent sacred, national and unique, although there are naturally differences in between them (more on the topic in 1.3.).

Citizenship in Central Europe

Civil society is always able to generate ethnic communitarism and nationalistic ideas that could destroy it. Civic and ethnic traditions very often influence each other and the politics of civic liberation often goes hand-in-hand with politics of ethnic identity (Taylor 1992). These ties between civic and ethnic politics are traditionally very strong in Central Europe. The Polish Solidarity movement always had traditional and nationalistic fractions; Hungarian nationalists came out of dissident movements; one stream of Slovak nationalistic tradition is derived from the revolutionary structures of the Public Against Violence, etc.

The ethnic perception of a nation has not necessarily been historically anti-liberal and anti-democratic. Kymlicka rightly suggests that "all existing nationalisms are complex mixture of liberal and non-liberal elements, although forms and depth of anti-liberalism is usually very different" (Kymlicka 2001: 54). Nationalisms in Central Europe have differed significantly since the 19th century – from Polish aristocratic nationalism, through loyalist Hungarian nationalism, up to Czech economic nationalism or Slovak plebeian nationalism.

One element has been, however, common for all countries of Central Europe: the influence of the metaphysical and organic German nationalism. Herderian ideas suggesting that the nation ought to overlap with a state were extremely influential in all countries of Central Europe. Habermas´ criticism over tribal and blood-based traditions of post-war Germany should be fully applied to most of the Central European countries (see Habermas, 1998). The difference is, however, rather paradoxical: thanks to long discussions initiated by Habermas, Germany has been moving toward more inclusive and more civic practices of granting full citizenship to aliens. At the same time, policies of preferential treatment of ethnic Germans living in Central and Eastern Europe have been slowly abolished. These patriarchal and strictly *ius sanguinis* policies were not abolished within Central Europe. They are actually in fact further developed, fostered, and institutionalized by countries such as Slovakia and Hungary.

Challenges to modern citizenship that have been brought by processes of globalization provoked three very different theoretical responses. The first is represented by R. Brubaker (1992) who argues in favor of citizenship traditionalism, according to which there is a persistent divergence between states´ national citizenship laws and policies. The second, represented by scholars such as Soysal (1994) argues that national citizenship is in decline all around the world and that there is a convergence across states toward postnational membership schemes. Joppke and Morawska (2003), however, argue that instead of simply reaffirming national citizenship traditions or devaluing citizenship as such, recent experiences with immigration and the appearance of the trans-state nomadic life has launched a trend toward the de-ethnicization of citizenship. Morawska and Joppke (2003) argue that citizenship in countries of the EU is becoming attributed by birth on territory and constituted by political values rather than by ethnicity.

Bearing in mind developments in the EU in general, the position close to reality is undoubtedly the one of Morawska and Joppke. They rightly argue that one element of de-

ethnicized citizenship is the resurgence of territorial *ius soli* citizenship in Europe. Previously exclusively *ius sanguinis* states came to complement their *ius sanguinis* rules with the *ius soli* rules. The second element of de-ethnicized citizenship is the increasing toleration of dual citizenship in Europe. A third element of de-ethnicized citizenship is the most important as far as Central European countries are concerned, i.e., a relaxed attitude toward minority identities and practices of multiculturalism. In spite of all the concern that European multiculturalism is dead (Mason 1995), to be a citizen of a liberal democratic country increasingly does not mean being a member of a cultural community - only culture citizens are asked to share is the political culture of a liberal state.

But are these developments relevant for Central European countries as well? I argue that not to the extent that might be expected bearing in mind legislative changes conducted as a compulsory move toward EU membership. Firstly, practically all countries of the Central European region were combining *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis* principles in the past and this chaos is up to the moment reflected in respective legislations. The process of getting rid of *ius sanguinis* principles will be, therefore, more complicated since they overlap in strange ways. Secondly, a certain level of tolerance of dual citizenship in Central Europe does not exclude trans-territorial, ethnic-based legislative norms, or at least exemptions from the law, that go well-beyond non-ethnicized citizenship. Thirdly, the above-mentioned thinning of naturalization requirements in liberal states somehow did not affect all Central European countries. While Czech Republic follow the third option of de-ethnicized citizenship described by Joppke and Morawska, other countries such as Slovakia, are tightening respective cultural community even more than in the past. In this sense, fissures are opening within Central Europe. Some of countries (Czech Republic, to certain extent Poland) rather slowly follow the path of Germany, Belgium, or Spain, though others (Slovakia, Hungary, to certain extent Slovenia) reaffirm national citizenship traditions.

Citizenship in Central Europe and Constitutional Codification

A choice between civic and ethnic traditions has been viewed for a long time as contradictory from an ideological point of view. Legal analysis shows, however, that selection of either of these traditions is not possible and most national democratic states have been established upon political compromises between ethnic and civic traditions (Beck 1997). From this perspective, Central European countries create from an interesting group. They comprise a "cocktail" of civic and ethnic traditions, although most of them are rather ethnically defined with many national differences in constitutional codification. Citizenship, albeit a mixture of *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis* principles, is understood rather in ethnic terms. A lack of thinking in terms of postnational citizenship characterizes all these countries.

Central European countries differ greatly in the way the nation is constitutionally codified. These codifications influence successful inclusion policies more than history, political representation, or even prevailing value orientation. An example of the Visegrad group countries shows us a continuum from civic up to ethnic codifications:

1. Civic Codification (Czech Republic)

2. Patriotic mixture of ethnic and civic codifications (Poland)

3. Civic codification combined with externally focused ethnic codification (Hungary)

4. Ethnic codification that defines sovereignty of a "Volk"as participation and cooperation between the ethnic majority and minorities (Slovakia).

In all countries on this continuum, however, tension between civic and ethnic traditions is crucially important. The continuum, at the same time, does not negate the importance of ethnic-cultural definitions of the nation in any of these countries. Even the Czech Republic reached its civic codification during the process of negation of Slovak codification, rather than just as a result of a long-term process of overcoming ethnic traditions of 19th century.

Tensions between civic and ethnic traditions within the Czechoslovak federation caused a split of the country into two national states at the end of 1992. Consequently, constitutions of both successor states are excellent examples of a very different understanding of a nation and nationhood. The cnstitution of Slovakia is strictly ethnic; it is an expression of the ethnic dominance of ethnic Slovaks in the country. Any other groups living in the country therefore are only tolerated; their equality within the system can be always questioned. Recently, this symbolic domination of ethnic Slovaks has been presented by Prime-minister Robert Fico who started to distinguish loyal and un-loyal minorities. The constitution of the Czech Republic, consequently, has been written as a reaction to the Slovak ethnic approach toward nation and as the result constitutes by far the most civic defined constitution within Central Europe. It defines "nation" exclusively in civic terms - citizenship, territorial unity, state history, universal values of human dignity, freedom, democracy a human rights.

As far as the Polish constitution is concerned, the preamble constitutes an interesting mixture of civic and ethnic patriotism. The Polish constitution is overwhelmed by notes and messages on history, traditions, religion, and culture, while these rather ethnic elements overlap with universal human values. In other words, Polish ethnic patriotism is worth constitutional protection since it leads towards universal humanity and toward civic culture.

Hungary is another interesting case that shows that Central European countries have difficulties or even structural reasons why they tend to mix civic and ethnic traditions. The preamble of the Hungarian constitution is without any doubt civic-oriented; there are no messages concerning history, culture, traditions, or religion. There is, however, a rather controversial paragraph 6/3 that states that *"Hungary takes responsibility over the destiny of Hungarians living outside of its borders and will strengthen their relations with Hungary"* (Mediansky 1995:108). In 1993, a new law on citizenship was adopted based on this paragraph that fosters the principle of *ius sanguinis*. Following the logic of paragraph 6/3, former Prime-

minister of Hungary, Jozsef Antall, stated at the beginning of the transformation that he considered himself the prime minister of all 15 million Hungarians. This means both of the 10 million living in Hungary, and the 5 million living outside of Hungary. Since the beginning of the 1990s, ideological and political battles in Hungarian politics, as they are displayed in paragraph 6/3, have deepened. The so-called Status Law that was adopted in June 2001 is just a continuation of the battle of two antagonistic principles in Hungarian politics - internal civic codification combined with externally focused ethnic codification.

Ethnization of the Concept of Citizenship in Central Europe - Structural View of Jeffrey Alexander

How can ethnization of the concept of citizenship be explained using sociological terms? Scholars tend to explain the process of ethnization by using historical reasons, traditions, description of legal backgrounds, etc. The structural view of Jeffrey Alexander offers a sociological explanation that rather than asking the question of "How to include?" all members of society, asks the question "Where to include?" Attempts to include the "others" in Central Europe usually show cleavages in majority identitie. The presence of the "other" always point to cohesion and differentiation of the respective communities. According to Alexander (1988), modern national states were established as rational projects and therefore there is little space for irrationality without a reason. What explains ethnization of otherwise egalitarian concepts of citizenship is the persistence of the "core group" an its "core solidarity".

Nations were established by core-groups, whose members share certain characteristics and features, upon which their solidarity was structured. Alexander suggests that each core-group needs an out-group. In Central Europe out groups are defined ethnically and remnants of the 'core' solidarity has lasted until today. Applying Alexander's model to Central European developments shows how the continuum between civility (less emotional, consciously constructed ties) and primordiality (preference of race, territory, family, and religious ties)

switches systematically towards primordial sentiments when setting up principles for modern citizenship.

The author therefore suggests, applying Alexander's model, that the crisis of non-ethnicized citizenship in the case of Central Europe is based precisely on the inability to establish "the core" of the nation based on principles other than ethnicity. Structural reasons for the failure of non-ethnicized policies in Central Europe can be explain by the permanence, depth, and strength of the core solidarity survival. Alexander asked a banal question that became important: where did the "other" come from? Alexander suggests that those who should be included today and granted a "thick" citizenship had been previously excluded during the process of ethnic differentiation. Alexander suggests, therefore, that these people can be included by acquiring solidarity within so-called terminal groups in society, where solidarity can be exercise in terminal situations of society.

The problem of some of Central European countries is therefore connected with the identification of the group that should be included, to whom solidarity should be displayed. Core solidarity is defined in countries such as Slovakia and Hungary according to ethnic lines, no matter where the national state borders lie. The "core" solidarity should be shifted from ex-patriots to citizens of the country or people with a denizenship status.

The Aim of Minority and Migration Policies in Central Europe

It is questionable to what extent countries of the Central European region tend to include those who are not part of the ethnicized "core" group. As the author suggested, in some of the Central European countries autochthonous or so-called new (migrant) minorities are not the objects of integration in all of its dimensions. Policies are aimed at the socio-economic dimension of integration and partially on civic-political one. Cultural integration is very often not required. Out groups are in fact not welcomed to try to penetrate into the core group. One

can hardly find a more inconsistent stand-point. In fact, there are examples in the history of Central European countries that at the moment the process was in full swing, the majority yielded to "the racist paradox". This paradox occurs when the minority fulfills the original demand, but is nevertheless then rejected as a danger to the majority. The majority originally demand that those ethnically different should be fully adapted, but when many failed to do so, the majority is rejected them.

The "racist paradox", first described by political scientist Rainer Bauböck (1994), is not after all a new phenomenon in Central Europe. The same "racist paradox" led to the slaughter of European Jews during the Second World War. Germany and other Central European nations demanded full assimilation from the Jews as a precondition for their possible integration into society. However, when the minority in many ways succeeded, especially in Germany, the majority felt threatened, and produced a new conspiracy theory to explain processes taking place within the Jewish community.

Just as Germany, Central European countries too can overcome historical determinism; everything depends on how and whether it takes advantage of the opportunities provided. Shifting from a cultural definition of one's nation to a voluntary definition does not mean that one has to give up one's identity.

The important thing is that one's nation professes universal values. According to the German sociologist Jürgen Habermas (1998), such values include the rule of law and democracy. Habermas' "constitutional patriotism", as the basis of loyalty to nation and state, for the first time gives countries like Slovakia, or Hungary the chance to bind people's national loyalty not to an ethnic and cultural homeland, but to a legal and political space defined by the universal principles of freedom and equality. These countries too, if they intend to succeed in integrating "others" into society, should choose an "elective" Renanian definition of nation that allows political and legal identity to be separated from ethnic and cultural membership. Otherwise the

whole discussion on integration of "others" who are part of out-groups is useless – minorities would have nowhere to integrate. Following from the thoughts of Habermas, Central European societies need a new partnership agreement. One chance had been a proposed with EU citizenship, but the project that has not been utilized at all yet.

EU Citizenship as a Lost Chance

Nationalized citizenship in modern times that constituted an ontological security for its members is according to Castles and Davidson (2000) definitely gone. Globalization in all of its dimensions challenges the foundations of the nation state construction. Even states locked in their voluntary autarchy are forced to face the effects of globalization. States that are deeply rooted in ethnic definitions increasingly face conflicts that are formulated within an ethnicized discourse. As Castles and Davidson (2000: vii) point out: "Heterogeneity of cultural values and practices rises exponentially - there is hardly a time for processes of acculturation and assimilation".

The example of Central Europe countries shows, however, that public policy makers in these countries are not fully aware of the paradigmatic changes that have occurred over last few decades. Discussion on post-modern and multiple citizenship is missing in the public discourse and legislative plans for the future. A chance that has been raised by the failed project of the EU constitution was not utilized at all in Central European countries. It was not followed by the appearance of de-nationalized discourse on post-modern citizenship, nor by the beginning of a discussion on European citizenship and its aspects.

It would be false, however, to point fingers in this respect only at Central European countries. Unfortunately, as Faulks (2000: 159) rightly points out, the creation of EU citizenship at Maastricht failed to take an excellent opportunity to sever the link between nationality and citizenship. According to EU law, member states can still assert their right to determine

citizenship of their communities and, EU citizenship is limited to those individuals who are citizens of member states. And this is exactly the core of the problem that allows also Central European countries to continue ethnicized policies of citizenship that divide citizens into two categories: the dominant ethnic group and the potentially marginalized groups of other ethnic origin. As O'Leary (1998:100) argues, the EU is actually far from being a post-national organization. An exclusive European identity that sets cultural as well as legal limits on the expansion of citizenship is rather encouraging. On top of that, the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 asserted that EU citizenship was to complement and not supersede national citizenship.

In this respect it is starting to become clear that the EU did not utilize a unique chance to move towards postmodern citizenship, although historically some of the founding members of the EU had better structural chances to undertake these changes than the countries of Central Europe. A weak legal background that does not reflect the characteristics of a postmodern citizenship are displayed also at the European Parliament, in the course of a colloquium "Europe of the Expatriates: the 26th Country of the Union?" that took place on April 28, 2005. Participants represented twenty member associations that equaled in numerical terms the number of foreign ex-patriots from EU countries to the population of Turkey. They complained about their treatment and obsurity, but most importantly they outlined future trends: "In spite of diversity and dispersion all around the world this diaspora begins to unite. It does not have any doubts about its European identity in its everyday life" (Vašečka 2006). Primordialism of the discourse of the above-mentioned colloquium is follows the same lines as trans-territorial attempts to extend citizenship in some of Central European countries.

Redefinition of a nation and re-construction of national identities

The more universal the definition of a society's identity, the more particular the contents and groups it is capable of including. From this viewpoint, when introducing postnational

citizenship, the starting position of countries with prevalence of ethnic and cultural self-identification is more problematic than of those where civic and territorial self-identification prevails. Central European countries could overcome historical determinism, but everything will depend on how and whether they are able to. The shift from a cultural definition of the nation towards a voluntaristic one is not necessarily a sign of giving up one's identity. Perhaps the post-modern Central European countries should redefine democracy, human rights and the rule of law as the focal points for their identities, instead of ethnically defined membership. Central Europeans can reach a new partnership agreement by a systematic attempt to redefine and reconstitute their identities and to structure the identity of the "core group" on territorial and constitutional bases, rather than on ethnic and endogamic basis as is the case today. The role of constitutional patriotism here is crucial, but the countries of Central Europe should be cautious not to remove so-called national identities completely. As Habermas suggests (1998), the role of constitutional patriotism is based upon inclusion and the re-direction of national identities, pride and history. In other words, in order to reconstitute national identity into a post-modern one, enabling appearance of the postnational citizenship, we should not completely reject the role that history has played in shaping the modern identities of respective nations.

I would like to argue that strengthening particular and universalistic identities instead of national ones will be the greatest challenge for Central European countries in the future. As Stuart Hall suggests (1992: 300) there are three scenarios as far as national identity is concerned:

1. Erosion of national identities due to cultural homogenization and global post-modernity;

2. Strengthening of particular or universalistic identities as a result of opposition against globalization;

3. Creation of new, hybrid identities.

In spite of on-going globalization processes, hybrid identities will only slowly replace national identity. Focus should be much more on strengthening universalistic and particular identities (local, regional) at the same time. Coexistence of these two is not in contradiction. Universalistic identity in the form of, for instance, European identity does not clash with any particular identities. But there are also other chances to avoid the prevalence of ethnicized national identities. One of them could be the resurrection of pre-modern identities that were not ethnicized. Slovakia as the most ethnicized country of Central Europe might serve as an example.

Slovakia has been a part of Greater Hungary (Hungarian Kingdom) until 1918. Until the moment when the process of nationalization and so-called national emancipation started in the 19th century, Slovaks, together with ethnic Hungarians, Romanians, Germans, Croats, Serbs, Ruthenians and others, possessed both territorial-based Hungarian identity (Hungarus) and their proto-national identities. Only in the 19th century and the Herderian wave of nationalism forced people to choose – to become Hungarian, this time in the sense of Magyar (ethnic Hungarian) identity. Hungarians started to mean Magyars and all non-Magyar ethnic groups had to choose - to identify themselves with the modern Hungarian nation or exclude themselves and foster their particular national identities.

Therefore, today the Slovak political nation should be built along several lines, but the beginning must be resurrection of the Hungarian identity. This secondary "national awakening" might serve for reconciliation with the Magyars, and for breaking tribal endogamic chains that excludes any successful accommodation of others into Slovak society. I understand the resurrection of Hungarian identity in 21st-century Slovakia as a chance to bind Slovak appurtenance primarily not to an ethnic and cultural homeland, but to a legal and political one defined by the universalistic principles of freedom and equality.

Removal of Preferential Treatment and Policies towards Ex-patriots

The preferential treatment of ex-patriot communities are by far the best example of an ethnicized understanding of a "core group" and broadly of citizenship as well. Since the Hungarian Status Law is a well-known and discussed example of preferential treatment of foreign countries' citizens, the author will attempt to show a similar Slovak law on "Foreign Slovaks" that in the course of years after 1989 became an untouchable group. The fact that their unique status within the Slovak legal system has not been criticized by any relevant political or social group within the Slovak society is not a sign of intellectual failure, but rather a perfect example of the dominance of the primordial and ethnic perception of a nation.

The rights of "foreign Slovaks" are guaranteed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic Act No. 70/1997 on Expatriate Slovaks. An Expatriate Slovak is a person to whom such status can be granted on the basis of his/her Slovak nationality in a foreign country or Slovak ethnic origin and Slovak cultural and language awareness. For the purpose of this law, the direct ancestors up to the third generation with Slovak nationality are eligible. The applicants prove their Slovak nationality or Slovak ethnic origin by presenting supporting documents (such as a birth certificate, baptism certificate, registry office statement, and a proof of nationality or permanent residency permit).

It is perhaps interesting that applicants have to prove their Slovak cultural and language awareness by the results of their current activities, by the testimony of a Slovak organization active in the place of residence of an applicant, or by the testimony of at least two expatriate Slovaks living in the applicant's country of residence. The applicants submit a written application for the recognition of Slovak Expatriate Status to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Slovak Republic or abroad at a mission or a consular office of the Slovak Republic. The Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs decides on the application within 60 days from its submission. If the

application is accepted, the Ministry through the respective mission of the Slovak Republic will issue the applicant a document (Expatriate Card), identifying him/ her as a Slovak Expatriate.

What advantages does the status of foreign Slovak bring to its holders? For instance, foreign Slovaks entering the territory of the Slovak Republic are not required to have a visa, if this is in harmony with bilateral agreements. They also have the right of permanent residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic – a circumstance that is very favorable for them. More importantly, the persons with the status of foreign Slovaks have the right to apply for admission to any educational institution in the territory of Slovakia, apply for employment without a work permit, apply for state citizenship of the Slovak Republic, and request an exception from Social Security payments. The foreign Slovaks also have the right to own and acquire real estate in the territory of the Slovak Republic, which is not the case for any other category of migrant or alien in the country.

In the sense outlined above, the provisions of the Act on Expatriate Slovaks are fairly advantageous for this category of aliens and enable them many exemptions and benefits during their stay in Slovakia. The following graph and table demonstrate some data referring to the granting of the status of foreign Slovak over recent years. The majority of holders, utilizing the status of foreign Slovak to legalize their stay in Slovakia, aim at obtaining an official job in the country. Here, the situation is rather varied. For example, ethnic Slovaks from Romania with a low level of education work primarily in agriculture, the mining and building industries. Only some of them are employed in more developed branches. A high number of Slovaks coming from the former Yugoslavia are represented by students at universities (some 60 to 100 persons a year). Ethnic Slovaks from Ukraine are above all employed in the building industry, engineering and services.

The status of foreign Slovaks stabilized and institutionalized since 2002. According to the Law on Foreign Slovaks (2005) the Office for Slovaks Living Abroad was established. The

Office therefore symbolically but also legally operates in favor of an endogamic, tribally defined group. It is more than obvious that these kinds of legal and institutional provisions are in sharp contradiction with modern citizenship.

Moving towards Post-Modern Citizenship

The countries of Central Europe on their long way toward post-national citizenship might follow the example of Germany with all of its recent constitutional changes. These countries share the same tradition of tribal and blood-based affinities towards the state and therefore the German example is worth following. Today these countries are, unlike Germany, good examples of imposing a *Leitkultur* (see Bassam Tibi) over minorities. Even such practices tend to be described as a proof of a good will and openness.

But Keith Faulks (2000: 166) goes even further in his thinking about chances to impose post-national citizenship. He argues that post-modern theories fail to identify the problem that the existence of the state creates for a universal citizenship. While reforms of the state, to enhance the democratic and inclusive nature of its institutions, are a necessary move, they are not a sufficient step towards fulfilling citizenship's potential. As long as people live in a world divided by territorial states, Faulks argue, citizenship's egalitarian logic will remain unfulfilled. Post-modern citizenship must be, according to Faulks, detached from its modernist associations with the state. It is questionable, in this respect, whether detachment from national states of the EU will be sufficient. The EU has been built up until today on principles similar to those of member national states.

Conclusions

The notion of self-determination in Central and Eastern Europe was primarily founded on the 19th century concept of nationalism. Unlike in Western Europe and the United States that

draw on the ideas of the Enlightenment and individual freedom, in Central and Eastern Europe the concept of self-determination was characterized by the primacy of the group defined by ethnic, cultural, and linguistic aspects.

Castles and Davidson (2000: 153) suggest that the idea of civic inclusion, based upon democratic active citizenship, can be sustained only under conditions that the cultural community be replaced by a political community. First of all, states should be undetached from an idea of nation and replaced by fully democratic states based upon open and flexible coexistence. Secondly, and this is an even greater challenge, such forms of political participation should be invented that go beyond the borders of the state. Living together cannot be based upon group cultural belonging, but at the same time this should not be ignored. New forms of belonging together should be based upon both principles of individual equality and principles of collective difference (Castles - Davidson 2000: ix)

To conclude, the author stresses the following structural needs for Central European countries:

1. The need to re-define national identities, but to leave space for uniting universalistic principles in order to secure social cohesion of post-modern societies.
2. The need to transition from an ethno-cultural to a legal-political definition of the nation.
3. The need to redefine core solidarity based on ethnicity to core solidarity based on post-modern citizenship.
4. The need to “sell” constitutional patriotism to people who are locked in the cage of banal nationalism.

These changes will certainly not happen in Central Europe in the short term. Lack of discussions, active policies, and legislative changes might however turn against the interests of the whole EU. Some Central European countries (such as Slovakia or Hungary) might turn to be real trouble-makers within the EU in its attempts to move closer toward post-national

citizenship. The EU has not yet utilized its chances in the process of constituting a European citizenship based on principles other than those of extending national citizenship, but this does not mean that the process itself is irreversible.

Joppke and Morawska (2003) point out that de-ethnicized citizenship is certainly not happening everywhere. The authors conclude that it is an exclusively Western phenomenon whose "true galvanizer is not so much immigration as the transformation of the North-America region from the Hobbesian zone of war into a Lockean zone of trade" (Joppke - Morawska, 2003: 19). Following this logic, the countries of Central Europe might just be delaying, since they have enjoyed a "Lockean zone of trade" for just less than two decades. Nevertheless, Central Europe showed a rather spectacular ability to speed up the processes of catching up with the older EU members since 1989. The author suggests that this sphere should also be put at the top of the agenda by policy makers of respective countries of the region.

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State Dismemberments and their Implications for Europe: *How Partitions Affect the Nature of Democracy*

Stefano Bianchini

Multilevel Partitions, Globalization and the Metamorphosis of the Nation-State

In the last century, the American writer and Nobel Prize winner William Faulkner, declaring his support for the Supreme Court decision against school segregation in the USA, wrote one of his most famous sentences: "To live anywhere in the world today and be against equality because of race or color, is like living in Alaska and being against snow".

In the last decades, Europe has radically changed in a world undergoing deep transformations. As soon as the Cold War was over, globalization and the development of new communication systems powerfully contributed to the reshaping of society. In this new environment, the EU integration process intensified, the EU expanded eastward, and a growing mobility of capital, labor, services, and peoples was promoted. Interdependence, mixed marriages, métissages, the coexistence of diverse groups, internet communication, surfing, and cross-cultural relations, in few years all became given facts, like "the snow in Alaska". This pluralism creates powerful challenges and increasingly demands recognition, social commitment to equality (in political, social, cultural, and economic terms) of the homogenized and standardized the national form of the State that was promoted and forged for two centuries both within and outside of Europe.

Faulkner's words 60 years ago are, in many respects, still appropriate and can be applied to the current European context, where the reluctance to cope with the reality of integration is rooted in society at many levels. Mentally and culturally this resistance to integration is expanding well beyond far-right circles and parties, ultimately drawing a plethora of contrasting interests, some of which are aimed to design unprecedented geopolitical balances, new state partitions, and new ethno-national mergers. This is not only a European

phenomenon, as similar mechanisms are taking place on other continents. Nevertheless, it is in Europe that the nation-state has been historically forged in all its manifestations, including the most extremist and genocidal ones. Its patterns have generated consequences worldwide. As a result, the polarization between support and rejection of integration, between inclusiveness and the "us-them" dichotomy, is widely visible in a variety of contexts.

Simultaneously, however, Europe puts more effort into the process of integration than other continents. Therefore, Europe is also where the incompatibility between the traditional form of the nation-state and the new needs of transnational governance is escalating, with potentially far-reaching consequences.

Despite the hopes (or illusions) that the end of the Cold War and the process of European integration would encourage harmonization, cooperation, networking, tolerance, and peace, the dynamics of state partition have recently re-emerged at different levels. Claims for the independence of stateless nations and/or to "the restoration of full sovereignty" of national unities (whatever this may mean) increasingly attract wide popular consensus.

It should also be noted that the notion of "partition" is a broader political concept that may occur due to a variety of factors. Historically, power politics, interests, and ideological or religious confrontations beyond ethnic differences have frequently played a key role in this regard (Bianchini, Chaturvedi, Ivekovic and Samaddar 2005/2007). For example, the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth occurred due to the interests of power politics; the partitions of Germany, Korea or Vietnam after World War II came about due to ideological confrontations; and the partition of India and Pakistan was provoked by religious hostilities.

Nevertheless, it seems that nationhood and ethnicity have increasingly acquired relevance in state building processes in Europe since the 19th century. During this period, liberal and republican ideas about the "freedom of peoples" fused with social democratic, and later communist, aspirations to self-determination and equality. At the same time, they

unintentionally inspired extremist and far-right irredentisms in support of ethno-national territorial unity.

A growing *transformative nature* has crucially marked the development of this modern form of state. Within this form of state, a comprehensive set of feelings connected to mass psychologies can be found: frustration, victimhood, religious beliefs and identifications, ancestral fears of "otherness". These interact with selected and favored memories, persistent ethno-national patriarchal hierarchies, economic protectionisms, and an education system biased toward populist political visions, there by heralding a pretended monopoly on effective forms of group preservations from external enemies or other potential risks (Huttenbach and Privitera 1999).

As a matter of fact, when the ideas of the French Revolution originally spread throughout Europe, nation-states were envisioned, and later constructed, with the aim of integrating territories that had been politically divided for long historical periods or incorporated within pre-modern dynastic Empires. This trend of nation-building was nurtured by policies that promoted common standard languages, a basic public education, and political authority increasingly legitimized by "popular will" rather than the "grace of God." 19th century nation-building was also strictly connected to the needs of the industrial revolution, the search for new markets and production opportunities. The unification of Italy and Germany were the first examples in this sense; others followed, including among others Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland (Tamborra 1971, Valiani 1966, Dedijer 1966).

Still, the process of nation-state building has expanded and evolved in many directions since then. On the one hand, it offered a helpful environment for the affirmation of general suffrage, paving the way for a potentially democratic development; on the other hand, the need to control the implications of people's participation in selecting the elites persuaded leaders to identify and support new tools able to reinforce group identity. This occurred through the

homogenization of the population, and the mobilization of people's emotions, often by affiliating with the support of a predominant religion. Additionally, public ceremonies, monuments, urban and rural topographies, and memorial sites were designed to serve these needs and construct the collective memory (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). In the most extreme manifestations, politics infused nationalist ideals with a sense of racist superiority, xenophobic behaviors, and violence against all those who were considered alien.

As a result, the original "nation-state integrative process" began to nurture powerful trends toward mono-ethnic predominance. Diachronically analyzed, the metamorphosis of the nation-state structure gradually had a twofold, paradoxical, effect. On the one hand, nation-states actively promoted power politics strategies, treated minorities with suspicion, or even persecuted them, and perpetuated genocide and ethnic cleansing by inflaming mass military conflicts. Group security was the most powerful motivation behind these behaviors. Minorities were increasingly seen as a sort of "Trojan horse" within the state, where claims to homogeneity were intensified and later imposed. In the end, the collective defense of the majority group was identified with a coercive and uniform group self-identification (Motta 2013, Gurr 2000, Cuthbertson and Leibowitz 1993). On the other hand, nation-states offered a unique framework for democratic developments, the affirmation of human rights, and a higher level of political involvement due to the peoples' new authority in legitimizing power. Appeals to active mass participation stimulated the activities of movements, associations, political parties, the development of civil society, and an active public sphere. Dialogue, mutual trust and cross-national communications became key vectors of individual and transnational knowledge.

Consequently, the claims invoking collective security and democratic development were often incompatible, or were considered compatible only *within* an homogenous group (or Nation), whose borders with the "others" have been previously and clearly established in terms of "in" and "out". By contrast, through its promotion of dialogue, cooperation, networking and

mobility, the European integration process is a dynamic strategy aimed to make security and democracy compatible *throughout* nation-states – whose domestic social structures are, however, becoming increasingly diversified and heterogeneous.

Meanwhile, the assertive policies of nation-states generated new national aspirations in stateless nations inspired by the ideas of freedom and equality (Guibernau 1999). A sort of "matryoshka" process resulted that threatened the existing geopolitical balance, was encouraged. As time passed, nationalism became increasingly tied to ethnicity. The 19th century "integrative processes" were seen as having denied the right of self-determination to a variety of other nations. Accordingly, these "newly oppressed nations" were improperly incorporated within the borders of the existing "nation-states" and suffered from the comprehensive implementation of homogenization policies. From Ireland to Croatia, from Catalonia to Slovakia or Macedonia, similar examples multiplied during the 20th century.

Therefore, new stateless groups emerged: they defined themselves as nationalists, but they opposed – not promoted – integrationalist policies. As a result, they began to advocate independence, separation, or secession, thereby creating the fragmentation of political societies still dealt with today. Aspirations of nation-building have established a potentially endless mechanism. Desires to partition, based on ethno-cultural, religious and/or linguistic arguments, together with the aim of protecting local socio-economic interests and/or specific political perspectives, began to vividly mark the geopolitical arrangements (Hale 2008).

In conclusion, while looking diachronically at the European experience since the end of the 18th century, both the perception and the praxis of the nation-state continuously changed, *either within* political societies, *or under* international influences (Goldmann 2001). In more recent times, after the end of the Cold War, these changes have indeed affected the national form of the state, however construed, despite Western emphasis on the "civic" dimension of the

nation as a "positive prerogative" of Western societies against the "ethnic and negative" perception of Eastern Europe (and, above all, in the Balkans).

A *wave of neonationalisms* (Gingrich and Banks 2006), surfaced after the fall of the Berlin Wall and has since strengthened under the economic and financial crisis that began in 2007. This new wave has aggressively promoted the ethnic aspect of the nation and has made new ideological claims regarding group homogenization, despite the integration of Europe and the increasing globalization of the world. Thus, a crucial question follows: is *this ethnic evolution of the nation-state* an inspiring (and inevitable) source of partition? Or, in other words, what is the impact of globalization on nationhood and statehood under transformation?

This question poses a key dilemma for European societies stressed by the EU and member-state governance, radical demographic and climate changes, a sharp economic decline, regional and local divergence of interests, a still partial harmonization of laws, regulations and standards, and an increasingly tense and threatening international environment. In this context, the year 2014 has been pivotal for Europe in many respects. Two main phenomena have interacted powerfully: multilevel trends to partitions and mutual sanctions have together challenged free market relations and global interdependence. Referenda on partitions have been held from Crimea to Scotland. Catalonia has claimed to proceed similarly, despite the sharp opposition of the government in Madrid and the silent concern of the European Commission. Republika Srpska's leadership has intensified its discourse in support of statehood. Incidentally, it was on the day of the Scottish referendum, September 18, 2014, that a former leader of an Albanian party of Macedonia made a formal declaration in Skopje for the independence of Ilirida (namely, North-West Macedonia where Albanian Macedonians are mainly concentrated), calling for a referendum and a future Macedonian confederation. Pinpricks, one can say, but still, this is a symbolic act that could potentially fuel new tensions.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom aims to hold a referendum in 2017 regarding its own EU membership. If it decides to leave the EU, the implications for Scotland may be unpredictable.

With the deepening of the crisis in Ukraine between 2013 and 2014, and after a contested referendum by the EU and USA, Crimea has been included in the Russian federation. Furthermore, the secession of Eastern Ukraine has provoked a war and the intervention of Russian volunteers, backed by the Russian army which has been deployed near to its borders with Ukraine. These events have fuelled a sharp international confrontation between the EU/US and Russia. The previous mutual cooperation rapidly deteriorated, and sanctions were applied by both parties. Since there is no ideological confrontation, as was the case during the Cold War, politicians have adopted economic measures against the free market, undermining the rationale of neo-liberalism and thus restricting the ability of global corporations to maneuver. At the end of the day, they have at a minimum postponed economic recovery in a period of crisis.

Meanwhile, new military clashes have occurred in the Southern Caucasus between Armenia and Azerbaijan due to the territorial dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh. Other "frozen conflicts", as in Prednestrovija/Moldavia or Georgia, might flare up again. Indeed, local alarm is growing. Moreover, the destabilization in the Middle East in areas close to the Southeastern borders of the EU may lead to an independent Kurdistan against the wishes of Turkey (an EU candidate country), while the Flemish party advocates a Belgian confederation, or even a separation (van Grieken 2014). Others, such as the Basques in Spain (*The Spain Report* 2014) and the Catholic component in Northern Ireland (Halpin 2014), are still considering their course of action.

In the end, the European continent is facing a new wave of potential partitions (together with its economic difficulties). This would be the fourth such wave in a century. The previous three waves have been associated with the collapse of the pre-modern dynastic Empires, the

colonial Empires, and the socialist federations. Nevertheless, the fourth wave is going to be distinguished by specific characteristics, since the appeal of partitions *also* reveals a *multi-level structural dimension*. This affects – with a multi-layering mechanism – the EU, member-states, and sub-national structures (regions, districts, minorities within minorities), in addition to families and individuals in their own everyday life, contacts, working organization, welfare access etc. Indeed, every geopolitical and territorial transformation, however peaceful it might be, has a direct impact on human beings and their habits. We are speaking about a phenomenon that may profoundly and permanently affect peoples' lives.

To sum up, together with (let's call them "traditional") trends that are affecting the integrity of existing states, as in the cases of the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine, Moldavia, Azerbaijan, or Georgia, a newly *multi-level structural dimension of partitions* is concerning the EU as such. Each situation leads to a highly differentiated process in terms of political strategies and adopted policies, depending on the local contexts and the variety of the involved protagonists or activists. This process is *simultaneously* affecting **both** the development of the European integration **and** the stability of its member-states. Working as an intense mechanism similar to a "matryoshka" process (namely, a set of endless partitions as experimented with in other contexts, particularly in the former European colonies), this dynamic is in blatant conflict with the EU integrative mission.

Under difficult social and economic circumstances, which are challenging not only the effectiveness of EU governance, but also – and primarily – the idea of integration, the broader geopolitical configuration of Europe suffers from an escalating trend toward the *renationalization* of member state domestic and foreign policies. More specifically, the EU project is threatened either by *temptations to withdrawal* (as in the British Tories' determination to hold an in-out referendum on the EU), or by the EU far-right parties' attempts to establish formal relationships after the 2014 European Parliamentary elections, with the

adamant aim of scaling down the process of integration by appealing to a "restoration of sovereignty". The success of Marine le Pen in France and UKIP in England may potentially generate far reaching, multilevel consequences and jeopardize the cohesion of the integration project.

Simultaneously, in fact, individual EU member-states are affected by *claims of independence* as well as *claims supporting the (re)establishment of sovereignty*. The former have been recorded in Scotland, Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia, Flemish Belgium, and Northern Ireland; the latter mainly in France and the United Kingdom (actually England), although a neo-nationalist ideology is emerging in a number of far-right movements in EU member states like Austria, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Bulgaria, and most recently in Germany. Similar trends are materializing outside the EU as well, as for instance in Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine and Russia.

Given this framework, what are the main factors that make partitions appealing in Europe today? Actually, there are many factors, some of them refer to crucial issues, some are related to everyday life and needs, others to identities, cultures, and emotions. Among the variety of reactions to the global economic crisis, the idea of protectionism, both in economic and social terms, is finding a great number of supporters, particularly when employment, immigration, high costs of living, cuts to welfare, and the relocation of enterprises are concerned. These concerns eventually generate forms of "economic nationalism". Furthermore, not less relevant is the crucial issue of security, perceived not only in military terms, but primarily in terms of "life security" dependent upon human rights protection and access to services increasingly associated with state sovereignty. As a result, any (cultural, financial, legal) change (or even restriction) in these fields is often considered an effect of a loss of sovereignty. Additional factors that contribute to making partition attractive include the "anti-bureaucratic reaction" against European rules, and the EU Commission officials' (supposed)

behavior, brutally identified with the simple signifier “Brussels”. In the end, the mixing of these beliefs leads some political parties to claim a “re-establishment of lost sovereignty” and group homogeneity (or “purity”) in terms of civilization, language, religion, cultural “traditions”, etc.

As a result, although globalization creates pressures for statehood and nationhood to be redesigned to the benefit of supranational/macroregional integrations, the ethnicized nation-state political culture – nurtured for at least 200 years under different historical conditions – fiercely resists. Its hostility generates a multi-level structural desire for partitions, under the presumption that economic wealth and security will be better guaranteed in this way. Still, these claims may not necessarily lead to independent states. At the moment, analysts are recording an expanding trend, although it remains to be seen if a majority consensus will be reached. To a large extent these developments may produce a variety of implications specific to local contexts. As Dejan Jović (2014), a prominent Croatian scholar, noted in an academically convincing article from September 2014, it is a nationalist myth that all nations are willing to have their own independent state, a narrative which has inflamed irrational and violent reactions in his country. The cases of Scotland and Québec, Jović says, are adamant confirmations that nations can desist from independence for a variety of reasons, both rational and emotional, stemming from concerns about the size of the country, the chance of success in a globalized world, a traditional loyalty to their broader political community, or a rooted sense of identity or patriotism. The fact should not be underestimated that even in the referendum for a reformed Soviet Union, held by Gorbachev on 17 March 1991, all 9 Soviet republics which participated in designing the Union Treaty in Novo Ogarëvo expressed majority preference to preserve the Union under new conditions, rather than see its collapse (Beissinger 2002, Hahn 2002, Cohen S. 2004).

In conclusion, partition does not appear as an unavoidable destiny of a State, despite the growing assertiveness of political movements and parties claiming such an outcome. Indeed,

one can conclude that inclusive decision making and territorial devolution are the best tools for decreasing the appeal of partition, but the Yugoslav case shows that institutional regulations are not enough. Perhaps a rooted democratic environment, (as in the case of the Scottish and Catalan, but not Yugoslav, situations), may represent a crucial difference. Solid evidence in this regard is still lacking, however, as the Soviet referendum experience of March 1991 and the Irish war for independence suggest.

By contrast, historical experience also shows that radical and/or unexpected dramatic changes of local and/or international political conditions can rapidly reverse both the situation and the preferences of public opinion. In particular, prolonged instabilities and uncertainties are potential sources of discontent, able to generate drastic transformations. The case of Yugoslavia, whose implications have been to a large extent overlooked and marginalized in European political awareness – mainly, as we are going to see below, due to ideological reasons, persistent Western bias against Balkan cultures and behaviors, and political disregard for the Region once the Cold War confrontation was over – can offer remarkable insights and useful lessons about the conditions under which violent partitions take place.

The Lessons Not Learned from the Yugoslav Dismemberment

In an interview published by *Le Monde* in 2014, Jacques Rupnik said that "the greatest obstacle to the Europeanization of the Balkans is the Balkanization of Europe". This sentence may seem alarming, particularly in circles that are accustomed to neglecting the impact of the Yugoslav war, or that simply nurture the illusion that some sort of pacification in the region is under way. Actually, there is a set of lessons left unlearned from the Yugoslav dismemberment, whose cultural, mental, and political implications are still producing effects.

As said, the general underestimation of the dynamics that led Yugoslavia to dismemberment traces its origin back to a variety of reasons. Among those, it is worth recalling

a) The role of anti-communist feelings that were addressed not only against the Soviet Union and its camp but also against the non-aligned Yugoslavia, as Brzezinski explicitly stated in Uppsala in 1978 during the World Congress of Sociologists (Dizdarević 2009). In particular, these feelings reinforced the Western predisposition to support secessionist nationalisms when they appeared to serve the weakening and eradication of communism.

b) A widespread Western belief that the violence that erupted in Yugoslavia was an evident manifestation of an uninterrupted, medieval "Balkan" brutality, unrelated to the "European democratic traditions".

(c) The Western conviction that an international non-aligned position in Europe was unsustainable as soon as socialist statehood began to vanish in the late 1980s.

Yugoslav federalism deserves special consideration, because of the way in which its institutions worked – beyond the ideology of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the predominant role of the League of Communists – it offers critical insight into experimented mechanisms of representation and decision-making in multinational societies (Đorđević 1982, Mirić 1984, Bianchini 2003, Mostov 2008).

Briefly, after the 1974 constitution Yugoslavia was closer to a confederation than a federation due to the remarkable empowerment of its units, the republics, and the regions. A deep decentralization in practice shifted the key powers to the republics and the regions, which were expected to negotiate and harmonize their interests within the federal bodies. With a yearly rotating presidency among these units, the representatives of the federal components had the right of veto, each of them expressing one vote regardless of the number of their members in the two parliamentary chambers. The federal government was set up on the basis of a rigid and well-balanced distribution of ministry responsibilities among republics and regions. Moreover, the representative groups of republics and regions mirrored an ethnic ratio according to census outcomes, although both republics and regions were supposed to

represent, within the highest federal bodies, all the six "constituent peoples" of the federation (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Muslims, Montenegrins and Macedonians) and the two main minorities (Albanians and Hungarians) (Bianchini 1984). Given this institutional structure, a better understanding of what happened in the Yugoslav federation during the 1980s will widely improve our interdisciplinary and comparative knowledge on the nexus among partitions processes, geopolitical balances, and the development of democracy.

In addition, the analysis requires a special consideration for another crucial aspect, based in this case on the key role played by the *international interdependence* that European socialist countries increasingly developed as soon as de-Stalinization and economic reforms were implemented, from the second half of the 1950s onwards. Indeed, this is an aspect that has been essentially ignored by the scholarly literature with rare exceptions. Nonetheless, it is a matter of fact that communist parties gradually abandoned Stalinist protectionist policy due to two main factors: intensification of the relations with the newly established postcolonial states (the so-called "Third World"), and access to international loans from the West. Despite the existing differences between socialist states, this approach was basically pursued by the leadership of the socialist camp, even during the Brezhnev era of stagnation (with the exception of Albania). Gorbachev was the first high ranking policy maker, however, who explicitly elaborated both a domestic and foreign policy strategy based on the interdependence of "three worlds" (the capitalist, the socialist and the non-aligned). Meanwhile, Yugoslavia – which had not belonged to the Camp since 1948, but was a socialist country – applied the most radical reforms in this regard, strengthening its own ties worldwide and implementing peculiar forms of pluralism despite domestic social inequalities and political differentiations among republics.

In this way, **interdependence, as an early form of globalization**, deeply penetrated the socialist societies, and particularly the Yugoslav federation, generating far-reaching social and cultural consequences. The previous isolationist policy, characterized by notions of the

"besieged fortress" and "socialism in one country", later applied to an expanded socialist camp and proved to be unsustainable in the long term. Moreover, the desire to compete internationally in a comprehensive way, including the promotion of social patterns worldwide, increased dependency. Dependency, in turn, exposed socialist countries to fluctuating international contingencies, gradually contributing to their mental inclusion within a wider European context, and thereby putting an end to the variety of European communist experiences inspired by the Bolshevik revolution.

These aspects have been rarely analyzed in scholarly literature (Lavigne 1998, Berend 1998, Bianchini 2015), but are crucially important. Interdependence and globalization not only created the conditions for putting an end to the reality of the exhausting communist "otherness", but also provided the broader cultural framework under which – once the socialist system collapsed – the dynamics of EU widening and deepening took place, the Yugoslav federation was brutally dismembered, and the Soviet and Czechoslovak partitions occurred.

Consequently, an analysis of the *unlearned lessons* from the Yugoslav dismemberment requires both coping with such globalization and maintaining mentally a vivid connection with these lessons. To make visible the comparison between unlearned lessons and the dynamics of the incumbent multilevel process of partitions in Europe, the arguments are summarized below according to three main aspects graphically juxtaposed in two corresponding columns. These three aspects concern the impact of a prolonged economic crisis; ineffective governance and decisional uncertainties; and the nature of the appeal to mass mobilization.

The first lesson concerns the impact that a prolonged economic crisis may generate in inter/multi-cultural societies. From the beginning of the 1980s, the Yugoslav economic crisis was characterized by high foreign debt (20 billion dollars) with unproductive domestic investments. The amount of the debt was to a large extent contracted by republics and regions. Therefore, in order to avoid nationalist recriminations on responsibilities and repayments, the

federal government published only the total amount, classifying the amounts per republics and regions. Then, restrictive austerity measures were adopted with a drastic import reduction in order to restore a balanced budget. As a result, public investments rapidly declined, family consumerism (encouraged since 1965) was affected, and unemployment increased. The country was also suddenly excluded from new technology developments, particularly in the field of information technology (IT). The existing gaps in the development of republics and regions escalated severely. The perception that sacrifices were unequally distributed among republics and regions increased as well, fuelling frustrations and resentments. The repayment of foreign debt also proved to be extremely costly: at the end of the decade Yugoslavia had paid interest for an amount equal to the debt, but not the debt itself (Bartlett 1987, Brera 1985, Dizdarević 2009). Furthermore, as the crisis deepened and Yugoslavia was a federation with a high level of devolution, the reaction of the authorities of the eight constituent units was to protect their local economies as much as they could. They also interfered in the business relations between republics and regions, hindering the contract implementation between enterprises. In so doing, they generated economic nationalism, which had a detrimental impact on the unity of the Yugoslav market (Korošić 1989, Horvat 1985, JCTPS 1982).

Broadly speaking, the Yugoslav experience tells us a great deal about the consequences of tackling a long period of economic crisis with austerity measures and without investments for growth, as the EU has tried to do since 2007 when the crisis of sovereign debts exploded and monetary measures were implemented rather than social support investments. In a situation of rapid decline in the standard of living, increased unemployment, and social impoverishment, restrictive measures produce divergent interests between the autonomous components of an integrated society and generate trends in support of economic nationalism (Yavlinsky 201, Duménil and Lévy 2010, Mencinger 2009). These trends become particularly acute when the economic and social differences between regions (or states) are escalating, and may encourage

the adoption of a policy of "everyone for him/herself" in blatant conflict with the needs and advantages of free trade, free circulation of capital, labor, people and services, and the morality of solidarity and equality. The consequences are, on the one hand, a growing limitation on exchanges within narrower geopolitical spaces, which thus triggers further economic effects of recession. On the other hand, a worsening of the relations between regions (or states) arises, based on the perception that sacrifices are unequally distributed and that financial resources are diverted to some territories to the detriment of others. The polarization of the political economy, caused by budget policies prioritizing expansive investments, widens the gap not only in terms of strategies to be applied, but also in terms of social implications (Pogátsa 2011). This situation can encourage local authorities, bankers, and entrepreneurs to call for alternative solutions, derogations, and differentiations, which can ultimately result, for example, in conflicting economic visions between North and South, in divisive currency policy proposals (i.e. the creation of 2 or 3 €uro), or in more radical decisions via referendums for quitting a currency, the EU, or an existing nation-state. In substance, the arguments used to express discomfort within the EU, its member states, or third parties on the continent, following the explosion of the economic and financial crisis in 2007, are to a large extent reminiscent of the arguments that stirred opposition between the leaderships of Slovenia, Serbia, and Croatia between 1981 and 1988.

A second lesson concerns the effectiveness of governance and decision-making. As mentioned, Yugoslavia was a deeply decentralized federation, with an ethnic ratio of representation, regular one-year rotations in the representative bodies, and eight constituent units exercising *de facto* veto power. These mechanisms affected state institutions ranging from the League of Communists and other social organizations, to even the supreme command of the army, which also represented ethnic plurality. Nevertheless, in depressing economic conditions, the decision-making system crucially lacked efficacy. In times of crisis, people need to understand who is responsible for what and how their civic and economic rights are protected (Bunce 1999). Furthermore, they expect from leadership a vision, a strategy and the decisional capacity to solve problems and pass consistent institutional reforms when needed and in a timely fashion. The Yugoslav federal system was unable to make rapid decisions, since the tortuous negotiations among the units of the federation (each unit needed to achieve its own consensus), imposed a timetable that was increasingly inadequate for meeting the fast pace required when dealing with the economy. Particularly problematic was the adoption of budgetary measures able to significantly reduce welfare expenses without changing the political system to one that was ideologically unacceptable to the dictatorship of the proletariat. As a result, the decision-making system was increasingly powerless to reform welfare, and when the system was finally able to do so, it was too late to produce beneficial effects. Meanwhile, *ad hoc* commissions for reforms were established and worked for years without achieving any effective synthesis. Governmental attempts to introduce stimulating measures in economics and politics failed miserably because they were inadequate to meet the rapid worsening of the situation. Accordingly, republics and regions, as well as the population at large, increasingly did not see the advantages of sharing (ineffective) institutions; as a result, they started to search for alternatives

(*separation*) outside Yugoslavia (Cohen 1995, Woodward, 1995, Lampe 1996, Allcock, 2000).

Unlike socialist Yugoslavia, the EU member states are democratic states, but the *decision- making system of the EU has also proved so far to be too slow and inadequate* to face the crisis that started with sovereign debt and expanded to production and consumption. Divergent interests are multiplying as an effect of the economic crisis; different divides crosscut EU membership, from Eurozone policies to constitutional courts invited to scrutinize the legitimacy of decisions (as in the cases of Portugal and Germany). Furthermore, budgetary measures – which the most economically successful countries required of their economically insecure peers – have imposed austerity measures and higher taxation, generating dramatic social costs. As a result, angry social protests are intensifying, particularly in southern Europe. With the deepening of the north/south polarization, Euroskeptic and nationalist parties are trying to maximize their electoral benefits. In search of consensus, they appeal to the "return" of an imaginary nation-state sovereignty, addressing their criticism to the hyper-bureaucracy of "Brussels" or to their own central governments. Since people have been inculcated with nation-state values for almost two centuries, the idea of taking shelter under the limits of a nation-state (regardless of the meaning of this notion) sounds persuading. Nevertheless, *neo-nationalist arguments* are increasingly in conflict with an everyday reality marked by globalization and societal diversifications, *two driving forces of post-nation-state configurations.* In such antithetical circumstances, the existing institutions (of both the EU and its member states), weakened by the crisis and inadequate to face it, are severely affected by multilevel challenges, while dissatisfaction with shared institutions is intensifying all over Europe.

The Yugoslav federation experienced similar dynamics. As time passed, (neo)nationalist arguments threatened its society, where both multiculturalism and interculturalism were operating: multiculturalism functioned in the institutional representation based on ethnic ratios, but without democracy (restricted dialogue and mediation among ethnic groups); interculturalism effectively characterized social and individual realities. The simultaneous double crisis of 1) the economic (self-managed) system and 2) institutional governance, paved the way to a radical collapse of the federation, under the assumption that a democratic transition would have been possible only in its constituent units, rather than in a federal framework (Bianchini 1989, Goati 1989). Despite the differences between Yugoslavia and the EU (i.e., the former was a state under dictatorship, the latter is not a state but an original conglomeration of democracies), evident similarities can be recognized, particularly when considering the tensions between nationalist and integrative arguments. Therefore, it remains an open question whether democracy under a prolonged economic crisis and with inadequate governance can manage diversity in intercultural contexts and stimulate people's support for shared, reformed, institutions (Žagar 2007, Reichenberg 2001, Turton and González 2000). Similarly, the risk that neo-nationalist discourses will overwhelm the prospect of integration cannot be dismissed.

The third lesson refers to the quality of the appeals to people's mobilization in times of crisis. We have mentioned above that the economic and institutional crisis encourages leaders to re-define their sources of legitimacy. In the Yugoslav case, this process was gradually influenced by the decline of the self-management system in the political and economic spheres. The decline affected the convincing role of ideology, which had been the lever of power legitimacy in socialist societies. Political elites consistently began to worry about their future role, and to look for electoral consensus.

Economic nationalism and the institutional role of republics and regions offered them the opportunity to rely increasingly on territory (soil) and people, rather than ideology. With the aim of defending local interests and their own positions of power, communist leaders began to criticize the "hyper-bureaucracy of the federal government" in Belgrade. Milošević in particular encouraged an *anti-bureaucratic revolution* (Jović 2003, Gordy 1999, Obrenović 1992) that actually facilitated the shifting of administrative personnel in republics and regions from communist ideology to visibly supporting nationalist discourses. This development converged with the arguments of those intellectuals, mainly from the humanities, who were suggesting a primordialist vision of the nation. This approach, in fact, appeared to be helpful in many respects: the mental and cultural borders of the nation were supposed to be clearly marked, and the sense of group belonging would be reinforced by a solid call to ethnic recognition and solidarity in times of crisis and loss of political and social orientation. The ethno-identification between rulers and ruled sounded simple and effective, appealing to emotions (rather than to reason), facilitating a mass mobilization, and fuelling resentments against "others" who could be regarded as responsible for the crisis. Additionally, this approach made possible a convergence with part of the anti-communist emigration. In the end, a connection was firmly established between soil and blood (or group homogenization), in full contrast to the existing in-depth intercultural individual relations within the Yugoslav space. Predictably, this step paved the way to war and ethnic cleansing.

Ethno-nationalist claims appear to be less influential in the EU and within member states, but this is not accurate. Indeed, political culture based on the "us/them" polarization, which adamantly rejects the "other" (whatever "other" means, in terms of gender, migrants, EU citizens from another member-state, people with different religious beliefs, sexual orientation, transnational or cosmopolitan cultures, etc.), flourishes and is

shared by a growing number of political protagonists, activists, and ordinary people. Consistently, racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism are feelings well rooted in the populations of Europe and easily spread worldwide by social networks. These attitudes persist despite their sharp rejection by democratic political cultures, civil society projects of inclusion, and EU institutional behaviors. Migration flows, both between EU member states and from third countries, have been manipulated mainly by parties on the far-right as well as the media, particularly when they report news on criminality aiming to inflame mass hysteria against "otherness". The economic crisis and the search for employment also contribute to inflame contentious situations when opportunities for employment are offered to migrants. Cameron's suggestion in October 2014 to reduce the mobility of even EU people towards the United Kingdom is not only a violation of a key value of EU integration, but it is also a cultural failure of the conservative party and a dramatic concession to policies of exclusion promoted by UKIP's far-right. In fact, public opinion is often and increasingly influenced by these attitudes. Even democratic mainstreams have been culturally contaminated by these phenomena, and democratic parties have compromised with these narratives. As a result, the third lesson that stems from the Yugoslav tragedy concerns the *mechanisms that determine how mutual trust evaporates*, how, in other words, the sense of threat is spread within and among ethnic groups or nations and how discriminatory and exclusive policies are justified and claimed. In the end, instead of strengthening democracy, the homogenization of groups on the basis of the "us-them" dichotomy demolishes bridges of communication, even potentially threatens peace.

The Crisis of the European Project and the Limits of Soft Power

In addition to these three main lessons, **a fourth one** can be also considered. Indeed, its character is mainly encoded into the local (Balkan) context. This lesson includes a crucial political morality whose implications concern liberal ideology, the political culture of the nation-state, and Western political behavior. In a sense, the considerations that follow are direct consequences of the three aforementioned lessons, but their content easily recalls Rupnik's words quoted above. In fact, his alarming statement mirrors a broader concern about the mutual flow of negative interdependences that mark the relationship between a lack of reforms in the Western Balkans and the crisis of the European project.

Undeniably, the EU has undertaken a long-term commitment in supporting peace and stabilization in the Balkans since the beginning of the 1990s, but their concrete improvements in the region largely depend on, and are deeply affected by, *how peace has been established* between the Yugoslav successor states. Furthermore, since the EU project is going through a difficult time after the Constitutional Treaty was rejected in 2005, it is also necessary to question whether *potential EU integration will still have a conditional ability* to convince local authorities to reform institutions by making them institutionally compatible with membership. In 1995, in fact, American and EU diplomats negotiated a fragile peace treaty – the Dayton Agreement – with warlords. The treaty successfully put an end to war, but the ethno-national compromise that dominated the agreement made post-war decision making impossible, affecting prospects for the consolidation of peace.

This failure, however, stemmed to a large extent from the nation-state political culture to which the diplomacy of the US and EU perversely adhered during consultations with the warring parties. Consistently acting on the basis of this cultural background, they

negotiated peace with leaders to achieve a crucial war goal: the establishment of ethnic nation-states. Despite the Western diplomats' rejection of violence, there was a strong cultural predisposition from both sides to find a solution that in effect respected a shared rationale: in the end, they were speaking the same national language (even if differently interpreted). Therefore, their mediation remained restricted within the nation-state cultural perimeter, leading them to accept ethnic separation.

When Western diplomats realized the mistake, they negotiated a different accord for Macedonia in 2001, rejecting the partition of entities, confirming the unity of the state, and assuming that municipal devolution was the only acceptable compromise capable of guaranteeing an equal representation of ethnic groups. At the end of the day, a contradictory message was launched, since these agreements (and the others that were signed between 1995 and 2003) could have been interpreted **either** as a temporary achievement *before* the final state partition, **or** as the *first step towards* the preservation of the territorial unity and, potentially, national reintegration (Bianchini, Marko, Nation, and Uvalić 2007). Consistent with this ambivalent rationale, even when social unrest emerged regardless of ethnicity – as occurred for a short while in Bosnia-Herzegovina in February 2014 – political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as in Croatia and Serbia reinterpreted the events in ethnic terms, trying to annihilate any other discourse.

Ultimately, the Dayton Agreement represents a blatant cultural defeat of the Western liberal vision, based on a pretended supremacy of the "civic nation." Indeed, the main characteristics of this liberal vision have been deeply tarnished by the predominantly ethnic solutions incorporated in the agreement. This paradoxical outcome was generated not only by the influential role of the warlords during the negotiations, but also – and more frightening – by the substantial cultural convergence of Western

diplomacy, whose ethno-national inclinations quietly persist, despite their public rejection.

This effect is not surprising when considered in light of the historical experiences of the 20th century. The civic/ethno ambivalence in liberal praxis has emerged repeatedly since the *House Inquiry* presented their conclusions regarding desirable peace arrangements after WW I to President Wilson, even while elaborating Wilson's famous 14 points (Heater 1994, Mamatey 1957). The way in which Great Britain withdrew from its colonies similarly indicates an ambivalence in liberal praxis. London rarely transferred civic values together with independence, as the ethno-national instabilities generated by the British *divide et impera* policy have confirmed in the cases of India, South Africa, Cyprus and the Middle East. Furthermore, the lack of recognition of any minorities in France stems from a rooted liberal belief according to which primacy is assigned to the rights of *citoyens* as individuals, therefore undermining the implementation of assimilation policies, though such policies are – or have been – actually practiced (and sometimes even violently pursued in the past). This approach has been absorbed by other countries in different contexts where, however, the obsession for security and territorial integrity has coincided with the belief that citizenship rights should be granted to an ethno-national homogeneous population without minorities. Greece and Turkey are two significant examples that have been inspired by French political culture. The Yugoslav monarchy and Czechoslovakism between the two World Wars are additional examples in this sense.

Truly, most of these behaviors subsided after WW II, particularly under the process of European integration. Italy, it should be remembered, recognized minority languages in its constitution, and France has provided some devolution rights to Corsica after the launching of the Balladur Initiative for a Pact on Stability in Eastern Europe (with the aim

of isolating the "nationalist virus" ready to expand beyond the Yugoslav borders). This occurred after the approval of the Copenhagen criteria, which required the respect of minority rights prior to the submission of an application for membership (Dunay and Zellner 1996, Bianchini 2013).

This consistency is, however, a key point. EU conditionality – as an expression of its soft power – was successful in the 1990s due to two main factors (Atanasakis 2008, Grabbe 2006). On the one hand, a crucial role was played by the strong will of the political elite of candidate countries in joining the Union, regardless of their political orientations (to such an extent that alternate governmental coalitions never questioned EU membership, but worked to achieve the goal anyway). On the other hand, the influential capacity of the EU to convince candidates to pass reforms was consistently reinforced by the EU's serious commitment to increasing its inner harmonization, and to further integration by reforming and adapting its institutions to new challenges. In other words, the EU provided a convincing and inclusive perspective because its widening and deepening were simultaneously pursued political goals (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005, Vachudova 2005).

As a result, the period of 1995-2004 was the most successful and dynamic for the integration of the Union and the affirmation of its soft power to the external world. These transformations were positively perceived by many scholars and journalists overseas, who began to follow and analyze carefully the new input issued by former warrior states. In 2004, Jeremy Rifkin published his famous book under the title *The European Dream*, in which he captured the momentum by comparatively analyzing the declining "American dream" and the insurgent "European dream" (Rifkin 2004). He was particularly impressed by the fact that after a long history of violent clashes and genocide, Europeans were developing an integrative pattern based on cooperation, soft power, democratic

values, and peaceful coexistence. This pattern was additionally able to attract the former socialist countries of East Central Europe, jointly pass a Charter of Fundamental Rights, and pave the way to a Constitutional Treaty. His seminal book was not the only one that recorded this fervent phase of openness and reform. Previously in 2000, Elisabeth Pond addressed her passionate interpretation of Europe's progressive resurgence to Americans, many of whom were still incredulous, in a book eloquently titled *The Rebirth of Europe* (Pond 2000). Similarly, the New York Times bestsellers series published another book in 2004 by T. R. Reid under the title *The United States of Europe,* with the very clear subtitle of "*The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy".* Focusing on the ability of the EU to "invent peace", the author extensively describes the European social model and the networking policy able to unite a Europe under deep transformation. He concludes by warning American readers that a revolution was taking place with "profound effect on the world" (Reid 2004). Other studies (Kopstein and Steinmo 2008) suggested that the EU and the USA might gradually diverge and grow apart.

To be concise, there was a time when the European integration project shook global consciousness, attracted international admiration, and stood as an evident novelty in a globalizing and uncertain world. Nevertheless, this proactive phase vanished in 2005 when the Constitutional Treaty was rejected in the French and Dutch referenda. Already at that time, the main contentious argument that led to the failure of the treaty proposal was related to the claim for a more social Europe, as a Gallup poll revealed after the vote (Manchin 2005), within a document that was expected to include in a clear and readable way the main legal principles on which the Union should have been based (Holland 2015). Instead, the document was a huge list of decisions approved by the European Councils without providing an inspiring projection for the future. This shortcoming played a key role in strengthening the negative vote, far beyond criticisms of the Bolkestein Directive

on services within the internal EU market. That directive did, however, create the potential for new divisive behaviors within the EU, epitomized by the critiques against the "Polish plumber".

Significantly enough, the campaign against the "Polish plumber" was able to stimulate a critical public attitude against the free mobility of people within the EU a few months after the first great enlargement of 2004 and following on years of excited rhetoric about the "reunification of Europe" upon the collapse of communism. Such a campaign was a divisive sign that revealed a growing reluctance of old member states' populations to welcome the policies of inclusiveness so far pursued. Indeed, this was an indication that a "return" to national and sovereign values was again coming to the surface. Member state governments were able to seize the opportunity and take advantage of it. Consistent with this new "re-nationalization" trend, the new Lisbon Treaty, designed to replace the failed Constitutional Treaty, excluded references to any state-like symbols such as the flag, the anthem, or the coat of arms, which were included in the Constitutional Treaty. In this vein the Lisbon Treaty maintained only the Charter of Fundamental Rights. In contrast, the institutional provisions of the second part of the Constitutional Treaty were encompassed in the new one. As a result, the Union gradually abandoned the communitarian approach for a more assertive intergovernmental approach, imposed the approval of the treaty on a reluctant Ireland, and *in effect* reinvigorated negative public opinion and assessments about the democratic deficit in the EU (Ziller 2007, Michalski 2006).

This reconstruction is crucially important for understanding the political impact of the economic and global crisis that started in 2007. Since then, in fact, enlargement has been increasingly perceived within the Union as a weight, rather than as an opportunity; moreover, EU institutional effectiveness was measured in relation to its managerial capacity to face the implications of the crisis. The outcomes so far achieved have

registered a failure to promote first a general recovery, then a new phase of growth and social security, particularly in the Eurozone.

With the intensification of social and political uncertainties, the prospect of implementing the integrative project was affected, generating evident negative effects in some potential candidate countries in the Balkans. This includes especially Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia, whose commitment to reforms had evaporated (Emerson, Aydin, De Clerck-Sachsse and Noutcheva 2006). Serbia and Kosovo have – under the pressure of the EU – made some efforts to normalize their relations; Belgrade and Tirana did organize the first visit of the Prime Minister of Albania to Serbia in 68 years, and Serbia and Croatia announced their first joint military exercises of NATO in Serbia as well as a stronger cooperation in the healthcare system. Still, even considering these developments, the level of understanding, tolerance, and reconciliation remains poor in the social reality of the Balkans as a whole.

Several polls in different periods have recorded the persistence of animosities. Scholars and anthropologists with their methodological observations and contextual interpretations have easily confirmed the situation and called on authorities to take action on bridging this gap, despite efforts to do so on the part of civil society. In 2005 an International Commission on the Balkans, led by lawyer and former Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, published a document on the future of the Balkans and included an interesting annex with polls on people's feelings regarding borders, potential new conflicts, and inclusion within the EU. From the figures, a sharp polarization emerged between Albanians (both from Albania and Kosovo) and Slavs (either Serbs or Montenegrin, Bosniaks or Macedonians). Albanians voiced opinions concerning potential changes to the borders (approximately 70% approved of border changes under an international community intervention), as opposed to a diversified opinion (between

14% and 29%) of the Slavs. Similarly, the idea to have a joint future within the EU was supported by up to 63% by Slavs and only by 35/42% by Albanians. The importance of the idea of nation was emphasized by 88.5% of the Albanians, but only by an oscillating percentage of between 50 and 65% of the Slavs. New military conflicts were expressed to be expected in Macedonia (76%), Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (28/29%), but in Albania only approximately 13%. Also quite interesting was the belief that the persistence of the status quo had to be considered as a way to avoid worst-case scenarios. The absolute majorities of the Slavs (with more than 60% of Macedonians and Montenegrins) held this belief, while only an average of 45% thought so among the Albanians (Amato 2005).

By contrast, in 2014 the Belgrade magazine "*Nin*" published a new poll conducted in Serbia, Albania and Kosovo, that offers insightful data. First of all, 62% of questioned Serbs admitted they had never visited Kosovo, nor Albania (97%). Furthermore, if 47% of Albanians support the project of Greater Albania, 43% believe they have more in common with the Serbs than they have differences. Nevertheless, 39% of the Serbs (as opposed to 37%) think that a long-term peace with Albania is impossible. The lack of trust is mutually evident when the question concerns dialogue between Belgrade and Priština: the majority of Kosovar Serbs (43% to 2%) believe that the dialogue is beneficial for Kosovo rather than for Serbia, while the general perception in Kosovo (34% to 19%) is that Serbia is taking advantage of the normalization process (Didanović 2014).

Despite the fact that these two polls cannot be compared in a scientific way, due to the evident differences in the posed questions, they nevertheless suggest that suspicions, mistrust, and a low level of mutual knowledge still persist, giving little hope that the trend can be reversed even from a mid-term perspective. Under these conditions, a mere sports match can inflame team supporters in nationalistic terms, as occurred in Belgrade in

October 2014 when a drone with a flag showing the map of Greater Albania landed in the playing field, unleashing violent reactions. On the other side, however, the EU is no longer an affirmative project. On the contrary, to the outside world it reflects its own sharp divisions over the future of its integration, of its economic policy, and its institutional reforms. In light of this, the risk of the EU suffering from what has so far been called a "Balkanization" cannot be dismissed.

As a matter of fact, the renationalization of member states' domestic and foreign policies have dramatic implications when the time comes for making joint decisions in economic policy. This renationalization is already evident in, for example, the energy sector, the reluctance of old member states to comply with the directive of the European commission, and some national policies aimed to preserve bank autonomy. The controversy over the most effective measures aimed at consolidating the common currency is increasingly strengthening the decisional uncertainty of the Union. On the one hand, in fact, both the Bundesbank (more radically) and German Chancellor Merkel (more softly) are ideologically insisting on neoliberal principles, based on the priority of monetarist and budgetary policies (although agreed to by 25 out of 27 member-states when the Stability Treaty was signed in 2012). On the other hand, a wide number of economists writing in the news (from Joseph Stiglitz to Jean Paul Fitoussi and Paul Krugman) fervently discourage this option, supporting instead a neo-Keynesian approach. This attitude is also influencing the most recent behavior of the governments of France and Italy, who would prefer to focus on public investments for growth and welfare protection (Stiglitz 2013, 2009a and 2009b, Krugman 2013, Fitoussi and Le Cacheux 2009).

In addition to the internal implications of such a dichotomy, the divergent strategies in the political economy of the EU generate several external effects, among

those the weakening of the effectiveness of conditionality. In fact, by propelling an image of uncertainty and the inability to make decisions, the persuasive power of the EU project remains deeply affected both among its own citizens as well as the Balkan countries that are interested in membership but still struggling with unimplemented reforms. In this context, the 2014 *multilevel* perspective of partitions within the EU, which is to a large extent the consequence of a multilevel *inadequacy* in facing the challenges of a multifaceted crisis, represents an aggravating blow, dramatically damaging to the comprehensive image of the Union.

How Partitions Affect the Nature of Democracy Today

In summary, the considerations so far developed suggest that a process progressing from *economic crisis to ineffective governance to mass mobilization based on an "us-them" dichotomy* – in a nation-state political-cultural framework – is likely to affect the nature of democracy. That is, if we assume that democracy *is not only about rules*, but also about *the recognition of diversities* and how to respect them within political societies under transformation. In a globalizing context – which is the main dynamic feature of societal development since the end of the Cold War – the relationship between representation, recognition of diversities (far beyond the mere notion of tolerance), and legislation is becoming a pivotal factor for the substance of democracy.

A large number of scholars (Schmitter 2015, 2004, Holland 2015, Follesdal, Andreas and Hix, Simon 2006, Crombez 2003, Moravcsik 2002) have extensively analyzed the roots and main features of the European crisis. This includes the controversial issue of its democratic deficit, the limitations ascribed to its democratic mechanisms and institutions, the legislative process and the party system, together with the opacity of the decision-making process and voters' fatigue. The topic has also been recurrently

discussed by the international press, and contentiously included in some public statements of policy-makers while contesting decisions of the European Commission or the European Parliament. In other words, the matter has been widely scrutinized, particularly with regard to the functioning of the rules, the economic policy decisions, and the outcomes of public opinion polls (*Eurobarometer* at alia). Therefore, we do not need to concentrate again on these issues. However, there is one aspect of these deficiencies that has been neglected in the investigation of the roots of the European crisis: namely, the *increasing inadequacy of the functionalist or neo-functionalist method* in the management of European Affairs, both at the domestic and the international level. Joschka Fischer was one of the rare policy makers who, in a famous speech given at Humboldt University in 2000, publicly elaborated on the need to overcome the David Mitrany/Jean Monnet method (Fischer 2000). Politically, this is a crucial cultural challenge since the EU and its member-states' institutions are still unable to face the ongoing liquefaction of the nation-state.

As Bauman suggested in his seminal studies (Bauman 2006, 2000 and 1997), most of the characteristics of the existing collective and personal links that solidified during the nation-state formation of the 19th and 20th centuries are currently in a process of fusion and amalgamation into new, unexpected forms. Among those, suffice it here to recall the effects of this dynamic on national-cultural homogenization, the primacy of one standardized language, the role of the traditional heterosexual family and the bourgeois ideas of respectability, the predominance of patriarchy and the challenges to hierarchical gender relations, perceptions of time and space (thanks to the new technologies and the faster trans-European communication systems under construction), the growing transnational recognition of legal and fiscal regulations, and the national link between blood and soil (Blagojevic, Kolozova and Slapšak 2006, Iveković 2003, Iveković and

Mostov 2002). These melting and neo-crystallizing processes are increasingly produced by globalization in general terms, but more specifically by the impact of European integration and its enlargement eastward, despite weaknesses and contradictions in the process of widening and deepening.

In particular, these phenomena of *fusion have been accelerated by the implementation of the Schengen Treaty and the Erasmus program.* Their current impact and their further, potential role in the cross-national dynamics deserve greater consideration in the analysis of the current European social transformation. Admittedly, *the Schengen and Erasmus "silent revolutions"* are far from being culturally accepted by EU governments and peoples. The reference to the term "revolution" is not exaggerated. On the one hand, Schengen represents a silent but tremendous, radical change whose rationale has not yet been understood. Indeed, Schengen has threatened, for the first time in a peaceful way, one of the key aspects of the Westphalian notion of sovereignty. Since 1648, the full sovereignty of the "Prince" (in Machiavellian terms) over a fixed territory with a *stable* population has been dogma. In contrast, by abolishing restrictions to mobility, Schengen challenges the sovereign power over the stability of the population; therefore, the fluidity of exchanges among people is encouraged without the exclusive control of the EU member-state governments. Thanks to Schengen, the ability of individuals to search for new jobs or educational opportunities is expanding, and cultural syncretism and the mixing of populations are intensifying, in sharp contrast to claims for "purity" (Bianchini 2013).

On the other hand, the *Erasmus program* is deeply transforming the university system with student and staff mobility; international programs; joint, double, and multiple diplomas. This all paves the way for building up a new European ruling class, expanding multilinguism in teaching and learning experiences, gradually (although

sometimes arduously) harmonizing administrative systems and regulations, and strengthening individual and institutional networks at both senior and junior levels. As a result, national borders are easily crossed by new generations of scholars and students, who are increasingly neo-nomadic in mental and cultural terms, while geographic and political borders are becoming irrelevant. This neo-nomadism, enhanced by the new communication systems (which do not respect any border restrictions) and the international teaching of incoming students, dramatically contributes to the liquefaction of the old national élites and the uniqueness of self-identification with the nation-state. On the contrary, they make cross-cultural communication a social reality while expanding the self-identification of educated people to a broader European context, multiplying the identity-consciousness of individuals.

Furthermore, the link between "blood and soil" is challenged by other social phenomena that politics is visibly unable to control like migration flows and the free movement of people. As one of four liberties of the Union, this marks a radical transformation not only in terms of demographic setting, but also in terms of cultures, religious beliefs, dietary habits, lifestyles, and work organization, generating new social pluralities and diversified market needs. This therefore also contributes to the liquefaction of national homogeneity and the primacy of "one religion in one state" (Donskis and Dabašinskiegė 2010, Benhabib 2002, Coimbra Group 2001, Balibar 2001, Noiriel 2001).

Inevitably, adaptation to such radical and intensive changes is painful and controversial; it galvanizes fierce resistance, if not aggressive rejection, well encoded in populist and far-right political programs throughout Europe. Challenged by these radical social transformations and intimidated by far-right parties, member-state leaders are admittedly powerless in dealing with unexpected phenomena related to the broader

mobility of people (from economic migrants to soccer game attendees). Therefore, they tend to react by suspending Schengen and blaming their neighbors for a lack of control over their borders, as in the case of Italy and France during the Lampedusa crisis in 2011, or in the case of Denmark against Germany and Sweden, also in 2011.

At the same time, people at large – despite the growing new transnational and neo-nomadic élite – are not necessarily prepared to face the effects of inclusiveness in their everyday life. They tend to react negatively to the demographic transformation of their cultural and social environment, particularly when economic conditions decline. These dynamics explain to a large extent when and why ethno-nationalist, racist, xenophobic, and anti-Semitic reactions materialize (Taras 2009). Actually, there is a common mindset in their rejection of otherness. *Mutatis mutandis*, the policies that led to the violent dismemberment and ethnic cleansing in the Yugoslav federation, and rationales supporting violent behavior in other established European ideologies of the far right, are all similar in nature. These ideologies are based on ignorance, prejudice, and exclusiveness; a sense of superiority alone – inherent in racist theories – may not be necessarily, or explicitly, asserted by ethno-nationalism, but this does not significantly change the substance of these ways of thinking.

Furthermore, the boundaries between ethno-nationalism and (civic) national identities are quite tenuous. I am not referring here to academic studies and analytical research: in this case, the peculiarities of these phenomena have been widely discussed and defined. By contrast, I am referring here to the behavior and statements of policy makers, journalists, and analysts when they appeal to emotions in order to mobilize consensus: from Milošević to the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) report, published in the US shortly after 9/11, the idea of the nation-state has been deeply affected by this cultural volatility (Bianchini 2003, Puri 2004).

Admittedly, the *claim to group homogeneity* has played and still plays a crucial role in in/out polarization, stimulating neo-nationalist approaches. On the other hand, we have noticed that the nation-state was, under certain conditions, a functional breeding ground for the development of democracy. Schmitter explicitly says that democracy is a "national and sub-national product" (Schmitter 2015). However, this process occurred in political societies whose democratic development progressed within a nationally homogenizing framework and was historically encouraged by a variety of phenomena, primarily the industrial need for workers sufficiently educated to understand the tasks of their job. As Gellner (1983) has convincingly argued, the convergence of industrial needs with a secularized monolingual compulsory school system was also beneficial for nation-state military organization, power politics implementation, and the establishment of a public educational structure – in antithesis to the longtime traditional role that religion played in this sphere.

Nevertheless, at the time when these reforms were passed and then implemented, the process of fusion and amalgamation underway generated the transition from pre-modern agricultural societies to industrial modernity. New societal relations based on industrial production, innovation, mechanics, and urban rationalization, were established together with policies aimed to guarantee economic protectionism, national custom policies, and a more broadly developed national market that competed fiercely with other national markets. These radical changes generated a new and intensely different context, in comparison with the pre-industrial past, paving the way for imperial and/or ideological confrontations, while domestic national homogenizations appeared to be consistent with the state requisites and the international standards of the time being.

Two centuries later, with the enhancement of cross-national cooperation, interaction, and interdependence in trade, economic development, technologies, new

communications systems, etc., a new phase of human civilization began, paving the way to globalization. A new period of fusion and amalgamation has followed, involving primarily the nation-state configuration. It has been in this context that the following developments should be framed: a) the collapse of the socialist federations, b) the revival of neo-nationalisms, and c) the weakness of liberal ideology in confronting either of these phenomena, as well as the inadequacy of neo-functionalist methodologies alongside post-Cold War challenges stemming from new societal pluralities and cultural identities in Europe.

This is indeed a comprehensive and far-reaching transformation. Nevertheless, the EU and its member states do not seem equipped to tackle the implications, due to the failure of constitutional referenda, the consequent undermining of the project of integration and, a few years later, the dramatic impact of the economic and sovereign debt crisis. As this situation has persisted since 2007, the perverse mechanism encoded into the dynamic of *economic crisis – ineffective governance – mass mobilization based on the "us-them" dichotomy* has started to play its game, galvanizing parties and movements that at local, regional, and national levels raise their voices promising security (in a broader sense, including cultural and linguistic exclusiveness) together with socio-economic protection (or privileges). The restoration of an imagined "purity" in terms of group homogeneity, or the emphasis to the return to a "full sovereignty", are key factors (if not obsessions) of those populist and far-right ideologies that are increasingly influential in a number of countries. They pretend to represent the cultural and political shield of the group against the risk of "contamination" by the "others". Furthermore, they believe they more effectively protect the threatened (or supposedly threatened) standard of living of the local population by directly controlling the currency (i.e., by abandoning the Euro) and the natural resources (particularly if crucially important), while redefining the rules of

group belonging by which access to rights and social services are determined. And, in fact, historical circumstances show that a powerful breeding ground for spreading and reinforcing trends of state partition (or dismemberment) along ethnic lines is characterized by phases of prolonged economic crisis when the ineffectiveness of the governing powers becomes blatant.

The still unfinished process that led Yugoslavia to fragmentation is the most recent case in this regard, but similar processes are in action in other European contexts, even if public opinion and policy makers underestimate them. Rare concerned voices have been raised about situations that appear as the tip of the iceberg, since they mirror a powerful mechanism working under the surface and become visible only when it might be too late to control it. In other words, the fact that the Scottish referendum produced negative results for the supporters of independence from the United Kingdom is not a sufficient reason for undermining the relevance of partition arguments, which might take root in other countries soon.

Three of these arguments sound to me particularly relevant for consideration. The first one concerns the contested legality of partitions; the second one the prospective ethnic unification *within* the EU; the third one the relations between ethnic unification and border changes.

1) Contested legality of partitions

The first argument refers to two opposite cases: the Scottish and the Catalan (Dardanelli and Mitchell 2014, Guibernau 2014). In the United Kingdom, a referendum was summoned after agreement was achieved between the parties involved (as it was in the past in the case of Norway, Québec and Montenegro). In Catalonia, the central government has been adamant in rejecting any agreement about a referendum, which has been declared unconstitutional. The social tensions between partitions and territorial

integrity may lead in the latter case to violence if the Catalans insist on carrying out the referendum, as happened in Yugoslavia in 1991-1992. In both Scotland and Catalonia a decision in support of secession would have affected the integrity of the European Union and, in the case of Catalonia, also the Euro. Surprisingly enough, the European Commission limited its public interventions to a few alarming statements about the consequences and the re-negotiation of membership, without offering any guarantees of success to the seceding part. However, no clear steps towards regulating such a potential event have been made. The issue remains therefore potentially devastating, since a referendum could be claimed in other EU contexts (as, for instance, in the Basque country, Northern Ireland, and Flemish Belgium)(Krugman 2014, McKirdy, Jones and Cullinane 2014, McKittrick 2014).

It is a matter of fact, however, that the mechanism of partitions can also involve the seceding part: when Québec held its referendum in 1995, the Creek and Inuit populations threatened to hold their own referendum for quitting Québec in the case of Québecois independence. A similar threat came from the islands of Shetland on the eve of the Scottish referendum. When the Yugoslav federation was dissolving, similar declarations were made by both the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia, and the Croatians of Herzegovina, but they were obliged to step down from their claims by the USA and EU intervention. On the contrary, no referendum was held for the independence of Kosovo in 2008, nor for the Czechoslovak dissolution in 1992. Nevertheless, even the legitimacy of referenda, when held, has been contentious due to the gaps between political decisions and legal interpretations of norms. The EU and the USA, for instance, have vehemently questioned the validity of the referendum in Crimea in 2014, assuming that it was unfair, not free, and lacking an international agreement – despite the presence of international observers. By contrast, the Badinter Commission, appointed by the EU, recognized in 1992 the validity

of the referenda in Slovenia and Croatia on the basis of their unilaterally modified constitutions, disregarding the lack of any agreement with both the other federal units of Yugoslavia and the federal government (who attempted in vain to achieve a new federal contract). They also disregarded the aggressive political atmosphere at the polls, as well as the fact that the Croatian constituency never voted for independence but only chose between a federal and confederal option. When Dejan Jović raised exactly this point in his previously mentioned article, the nationalist reaction was so powerful as to force Croatian President Ivo Josipović to revoke Jović's cooperation with the Presidential office. The reasons why Western countries treated these events differently remain controversial, unless the explanation is found in the context of power politics. This briefly sketched picture shows how deep the lack of consistency is in the international arena, and in the liberal-democratic world when a claim of partition is concerned.

2) Prospective ethnic unification within the EU

The second argument worth mentioning is connected to the aspiration of ethno-national unity within the EU. As marginal it may appear to Western observers, this question has repeatedly inflamed the interested parties involved when they believe that their ethno-national unification has been so far obstructed by negative international events. This has been the case for the Albanians, when the head of the government, Sali Berisha, made a set of public statements in 2012 and 2013 during the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Albanian state, emphasizing how integration within the EU would effectively achieve the unification of the Albanian people. A similar declaration was made by the Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta on September 17, 2014, when he referred explicitly to the Romanian ethnic unification in coincidence with the inclusion of Moldavia within the EU, and alleged a new enlargement eastward that would incorporate Ukraine as well. He even gave a date for the achievement of this goal: 2018. Both of the

aforementioned statements triggered inflammatory reactions in Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moldavia, and Russia. Indeed, it is undeniable that EU membership and Schengen are making national borders invisible and ethno-national separations imperceptible; however, they do not challenge the administrative competence of the member states over their territories. Nevertheless, it is just this aspect that is perceived to be put in question by political statements referring to ethno-national unification within the EU.

In other words, the territorial and ethno-national questions of Europe, which are still considered unsettled by the parties involved, remain politically highly sensitive, and confirm how the rationale that led to two World Wars still affects the mental geographies of local national mainstreams. On the other hand, the argument linking "ethnic unification" with EU membership is in blatant conflict with the aspirations, mentioned above, of some EU member-states' territories or regions, which seek independence despite their inclusion already within the broader umbrella of European integration. Under these conditions, why should the Basques – who are living between Spain and France – claim readjustments of the borders between these two countries if Schengen has annihilated them? Why is Spain still insisting on claiming Gibraltar back from Great Britain? And why do Flemish nationalists in Belgium want to separate because they feel Belgium is an "artificial state"? These rhetorical questions shed light on the still vivid appeal of a nation-state perspective, however mutable.

3) Ethnic unification and border changes.

Finally, the two aforementioned narratives meet the third one, which is potentially the most unpredictable for the stability of Europe. The argument based on the right of "nations" (ethno-nations) to unify in independent states, most frequently outside the "EU umbrella", was widely discussed during an international conference on the Right of Self-

determination and the role of the United Nations in Geneva in 2000 (Kly and Kly 2001). Most recently, the reasoning has been resumed and broadly articulated by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, in his speech in Crimea on March 18, 2014. Among other arguments, expecting some sort of gratitude or at least understanding from Berlin, Putin has referred to the process that allowed the unification of Germany in 1990 to claim that a similar right should be recognized for Russians as well. Furthermore, he mentioned that Crimea's declaration of independence followed "word for word" what Ukraine did after holding a second referendum for independence from the Soviet Union in late 1991. Then, Putin turned to remind Americans that they also declared independence by violating a national law. America, however, did not violate an international law, as the International Court of Justice noted while addressing the issue of the legitimacy of Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2008. Rhetorically, Putin raised the question as to why a similar recognition should not be applied to Crimea (Putin 2014).

The speech was an adamant collection of arguments emphasizing the lack of international agreement regarding ethno-national partitions/unifications, precedents (like Kosovo) or, again, legally ambivalent arguments that offer room for action in other contexts and by powers other than Western ones. Similar arguments about ethno-unification via border changes were used by both Serb and Croatian leaders in Yugoslavia on the eve of its fragmentation, and even later between 1992 and 1995 when they disputed the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Serb and Croatian leaders failed due to the military intervention of NATO, but it seems rather unlikely that a similar pattern might be used against a nuclear power. During those years, Romania raised the issue of a restoration of unity with Moldavia. As a result, a secessionist war occurred in Prednestrovija (or Transnistria) with the support of the Red Army, and Gagauzia proclaimed its independence while the president of Hungary, József Antall, threatened a

revision of the Trianon Treaty on Transylvania. Bulgaria, in turn, questioned the existence of the Macedonian nation, leaving room for potential territorial inclusiveness. These trends intensified, particularly in 1992, when the war for Nagorno-Karabakh exploded between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The potentially inflammatory content of these statements was, however, gradually contained and then scaled down by the EU and particularly France with the Balladur Initiative and then the Copenhagen criteria.

As a result, the implementation of still-contentious partition/unification desires remains bound to the local impact that the balance of powers is able to make at that given time, and/or when positive circumstances unexpectedly materialize. In any case, equal treatment cannot be guaranteed. It appears evident that the intensification of claims for fragmentation and the rearrangement of territories, identities, and communities are generated by a cultural inability to face the liquefaction of the nation-state after two centuries of metamorphosis. On the contrary, resistance to the process of fusion in favor of preserving the nation-state, even only in ethnic form, only multiplies opportunities for new groups to nurture aspirations for independence, even while interdependence is increasingly becoming essential to the future development of people on a shared planet. As a result, this process leads to a dead end, as a cartoon published in the Yugoslav magazine "NIN" in 1991 effectively symbolized by simply reshuffling the colors of the Yugoslav flag into a road sign.

Undeniably, it is the *ambivalence, encoded in the notion of the nation-state,* which remains the main catalyst for evoking partitions. Even when political movements do not assert ethno-national identity protection as the main reason for separation, preferring (for instance) to focus on *local economic interests*, their priorities appear to be not only in contrast with advantages and obligations incurred with the rest of the country, but also in counter-tendency with the mainstream economic orientations that are challenging the

national forms of production. Transnational corporate powers, transnational environmental policies imposed by climate change, even transnational criminal trafficking, as well as cross-border and cross-cultural dynamics, characterize our societies in an increasingly interdependent and globalized world.

Consequently, and crucially, the future of democracy remains anchored to the capacity of politics to identify effective rules and contexts that go far beyond the constraints of the nation-state, and of neo-functionalist and neo-nationalist approaches. Such politics are needed to courageously face the implications of the post-modern social processes of fusion that lead to new complexities and generate a variety of heterogeneities, métissages, and neo-nomadisms (Braidotti 2011a 2011b, Callari Galli 2005, Wieworka 2001).

At the moment, the European approach to these challenges remains inadequate and culturally backward. Public declarations made in 2010-11 by Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, Prime Minister of Great Britain David Cameron, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy stating that *multiculturalism has failed* in their own countries is fuel for inciting feelings against people's mobility, the common currency, and even EU institutions. Without offering any alternative vision during a time of economic crisis and weak shared governance, the leaders of Germany, the United Kingdom, and France confirmed to what extent policy makers are still unable to look beyond the parameters of the nation-state (Friedman 2010, Kanli 2010, Heathcote 2010).

By contrast, and paradoxically (just to make the picture even more confusing), one can also notice that claims for dissociation from existing nation-states (as in Spain, Belgium, or the UK) sometimes do not contest EU membership, or do envision the adoption of the Euro, even if the state to which they still belong has so far opted against.

Still, according to recent public statements, post-partition controversies cannot be excluded on this matter.

The picture is complicated further since claims of partitions, projects for EU integration, and governmental statements by existing nation-states in support of territorial integrity all refer to democracy, particularly after the fall of communism and despite their evident, mutual incompatibility. Even when appealing to "purity", or to the protection of group homogeneity, arguments in support of a freely expressed decision of separation, for instance via referendum, are presented by their activists – from Crimea to Catalonia – as an evident form of democracy, respect for rules, and the desire to let people freely express their own will. As a result, these contradictory pronouncements in support of democracy (or "national" democracies?) open new questions.

As stressed above, during approximately the last two centuries, the development of political, civil and social rights has taken place *within* the framework of the nation-state, despite all forms of resistance, power control over media and people, dictatorships, and totalitarianisms. Meanwhile, human societies have increased in complexity and interdependence. Pre-existing social links are radically changing: traditional habits, family settings, class relations, urban/rural geography, gender relations, and the neighborhood are all under drastic transformation that affect a nation-state discourse predominantly based on an imagined homogeneity, one standardized language, one predominant religion, one defined territory with stable population, and a well-defined cultural recognition between rulers and ruled.

Under these circumstances, **is the democratic system as we know it doomed to remain restricted within the nation-state discourse,** allowing for (peacefully-accepted) partitions and raising new borders between communities? Or, **does democratic development circumvent nation-state discourse,** which is increasingly

becoming a straitjacket for democratic development? In other words, will democracy exist only within (pretended) "homogeneous" societies, given that "national democracy" is the only viable option, even if the term is uncomfortably reminiscent of "national socialism" in a social reality increasingly characterized by pluralities *across* groups and individuals? Or, by contrast, will the essence of democracy be forced to face the great challenge of recognizing and dealing with diversities *within and across* political societies under transformation, rather than *only between* them as separated communities? Should democracy be "national," or altogether open to multiplicities and synchroneity?

The failure of multiculturalism that prominent national policy makers in Europe have denounced has actually been determined by the fact that ethnic communities may live side by side peacefully without interacting (Triandafyllidou, Modood and Meer, 2012). Remaining foreigners to each other, they therefore lack mutual knowledge and do not build trust or empathy. *Without trust and empathy*, violent confrontations between groups can easily explode, even as a consequence of an apparently minor incident, or as an expression of social distress (Trout 2010, Rifkin 2009). The idea that democracy is compatible with the coexistence of separate, juxtaposed groups is reminiscent of Machiavelli's understanding of diversities, when he interpreted the multi-state system of Europe as an expression of republicanism and freedom against the prevalence of despotic absolute monarchies in Asia. Similarly, if referring to the Balkan peasant tradition, this idea of "*democracy in separateness*" is also reminiscent of the system of TOR, enclosures for cattle grazing within whose rigid borders anyone may feel secure. In both cases, however, history says that the balance of powers and a side-by-side system of closed homogenous societies have repeatedly led to wars, rather than to peaceful coexistence.

By contrast, can a potentially fluid, post-nation-state and comprehensive democracy offer a shared public space for the management and the development of a variety of forms

of interculturalism, nomadism, and métissages that regularly stem from interpersonal relations? Can this variety of forms become a lever for re-designing the form of the state, despite overcoming the current limitations of the traditionally conceived nation-state?

Some recent historical experiences in Europe are likely to show controversial effects when democracy is connected to diversity. Admittedly, today the democratic nature of European societies cannot be denied, despite some rare exception (i.e., Belarus) and even if the level of democratic development is not necessarily the same. Nevertheless, when communism collapsed and post-socialist federations started a painful transition to democratic standards, the *Euro-Atlantic liberal democracies proved to be powerless in offering a convincing pathway* to make possible the evolution *from the dictatorship of the proletariat to democracy without dissolving the federations*. I would say that they did not even try to offer such a pathway. No connection was made with the Swiss liberal experience, which is seen more as an exception rather than an inspiring model. A few theoretical attempts to connect the liberal democracy approach with diversity and partitions was bravely made by Kymlicka (1995) and Buchanan (1991); other authors have focused on power sharing (Sisk 1996, Horowitz 1985) and consociationalism (Lijphart 1984). However, these attempts remained culturally encoded with the constraints of the nation-state form.

Meanwhile, the failure of liberal democracies to face the collapse of socialist federations has had far-reaching consequences whose effects can be felt even today, specifically in how the deep economic and sovereign debt crisis affects stability and governance in the EU. The Yugoslav experience should serve at least as a political warning in this regard. On the other hand, although the EU is still an unfinished project, there is no doubt that its founders – from Jean Monnet to Altiero Spinelli (1991) – were well aware of the limits of the nation-state. The political rationale they elaborated at the end of WW

II envisioned a potential pathway for overcoming this form of state (which they considered an agent of war) through a European integration process able to guarantee peace in the future. This was also the hope of Mazzini and other visionary revolutionaries of the 19th century who were inspired by ideas of national freedom in the framework of an inclusive European brotherhood. Moreover, it was thanks mainly to this cultural background that the EU was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2012.

Nevertheless, it is still to be seen whether the EU is an incomplete project that will be implemented consistently. Political efforts to strengthen integration and the effective governance are still very poor and shy in a time when member states and Europe as a whole are facing the challenges of economic globalization, as well as meeting the needs of a fluid society whose nomadic and hybrid characteristics are already in conflict with the constraints of the nation-state.

At the same time, in this ambivalent and transitional situation where the "landing point" is still unknown, the EU project, however incomplete, represents a unique institutional opportunity to drive the still culturally painful transformation from the nation-state form to a post-nation-state society, whose success, however, is not to be taken for granted (Menon and Wright 2001). Indeed, the future implementation of the project suffers from increasing disagreements within the EU, disagreements that reveal a multilevel dimension. The economic and financial crisis, for instance, is putting northern and southern member states in opposition, not only relating to their own impact on production, employment and growth, but also in terms of reforming measures, budgetary policies, and medium-term strategies to be adopted in order to revitalize the economy. A neoliberal and monetarist vision endorsed tenaciously by Angela Merkel is contested in countries like France and Italy, who are inclined to favor a more social Europe. If anything,

the paradox is that the "market social economy" has been proudly labeled and implemented by Germany since its reconstruction after WW II (Zweig 1980).

Furthermore, the Eurozone and the Schengen area are triggering frictions with the countries that opted out or who do not yet participate in integrative schemes. In particular, the monetary measures that are taken by the European Central Bank (ECB) have an impact on other currencies, raising governmental concerns in the non-Eurozone area of the EU. On the other hand, facing the electoral success of the far-right UKIP party in England, Prime Minister Cameron has threatened to establish limitations on the free circulation of EU citizens in the United Kingdom, raising sharp criticism particularly from German Chancellor Merkel, since the proposal questions a key value of the Union (Castle and Smale 2014). Cameron is again advocating a referendum on renewed EU membership terms.

An even more frightening political trend is the rise of Marine Le Pen in France. Despite her failure to build a far-right group at the European Parliament (including the Italian Northern League), she may seriously affect relationships within the Union if the sharply declined popularity of President Hollande and the opposition in the center-right bloc offer her an unexpected opportunity to achieve excellent results at the next presidential and national parliamentary elections. Meanwhile, Le Pen leads a campaign in support of a "restoration of sovereignty" of EU member states, while the "Five Stars" populist party in Italy campaigns against the common currency. Other centrifugal inputs concern the future of Spanish integrity and the Flemish nationalist N-VA party proposal in support of a Belgian confederation of two states. Moreover, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant feelings, and intolerance against minorities are inflaming social tensions in a number of EU member states.

Against these divisive phenomena, an opposing visionary policy is lacking: as we have already said, the renationalization of domestic and foreign policies is a matter of fact and, sometimes even unintentionally, reinforces centrifugal aspirations, thus deflecting cultural and political attention away from post-nation-state democratic challenges. By contrast, radical changes in terms of space and time are reconfiguring what it means to belong: suffice it here to recall that low cost flights are bringing urban centers across national borders nearer and nearer, while the distance between cities and countryside is growing mentally, geographically, and practically (for instance in terms of travel time). Furthermore, the end of the privileged role of standardized languages, EU multilinguism, the multiplication of religious beliefs, Erasmus mobility, inter-university cooperation, and transnational economic production and management, all create a highly diversified society across Europe causing, potentially, new socio-cultural polarization and an elite class where the level of knowledge is the crucial factor of social divide.

Under these circumstances, partition might be seen as a way to preserve the "solidification of soil and blood" (to again quote Baumann) typical of the nation-state, although within new borders. Nevertheless, even assuming that partitions can be carried out peacefully (which is historically a rare event), policies aimed at building new walls can be extremely costly in economic and political terms. They can lead to socio-cultural decay and dependence and, finally, they do not guarantee security. The post-Yugoslav scenario blatantly confirms this assumption: despite the end of military operations, tensions still sharply divide the region, reconciliation remains a dream, and governance is mainly ineffective. In this context, the resurgence of nationalist intolerance in Croatia against the Serbian minority and those who identify with non-normative sexual orientations, together with aspirations aimed to rehabilitate Ustaša's personalities with the support of the Catholic church, indicate a frightening cultural regression and decline

of democratic values in the youngest EU member-state. Outside the EU other cases present similarities, and in order to survive Ossetia, Abkhazia, Prednestrovija, North Cyprus, and others rely on their powerful protectors, as does Kosovo.

To conclude, the *nature of democracy is affected by these opposing dynamics of integration and disintegration,* and the *content of democracy is changing* due to expanding access to rights and the need to recognize pluralities. Although the rules are often formally respected, the dichotomy of inclusiveness and exclusiveness creates new forms of discrimination against different groups of minorities, as well as migrants, nomadic, surfer, métis or hybrid individuals. Despite the predominant narratives in Western liberal societies about respect for human rights, a functional pattern of democratic management and recognition of diversities is still to be achieved, not only in severely divided communities but also in liberal-democratic societies. The main reason for this difficulty lies in the *persistence of nation-state institutions and political cultures*, *which are hindering future developments in intercultural, post-nation-state society*. The EU might offer a new frame of reference in this regard, but its policy makers do not manifest the courage and vision to carry out a project based on intercultural governance and education beyond the constraints of the nation-state. As a result, Europe as a whole, its communitarian institutions, and its member states are mentally and politically unprepared to face the current challenges posed by societal fusion and amalgamation. Democracy as a tool for accommodating and representing the diversities and pluralities of social reality might fall victim to the process of renationalization of territorial unities, which will then be exposed to the risk of new wars, rather than guaranteed a prospective peace.

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