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Europe of the Regionals and the future of the National-State

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"Europe of the Regions and the future of the National State"

**by
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"Europe of the Regions and the future of the National State"

1. Introduction

The Treaty for the European Union (Maastricht) in article 8 enacts the citizenship of the Union. A Citizen of the Union is every individual who has the citizenship of a member state. The citizenship of the Union completes and does not replace the national citizenship.

This paper, on the one hand, attempts to shed light on the vague relation contributing to the necessary intervention between the perspective of the European Integration and the future of the national-state in the European Union. On the other hand we have to look into the issue of what is implied by the European citizenship in a Union where different citizenship's of the member states coexist.

This approach will take into consideration what is then predicted in article 8A and SB of Maastricht Treaty. That is every citizen of the Union has the right to go about and reside freely in any member state. In addition every citizen of the Union who lives in a member state of which he or she is not a citizen, has the right to elect and be elected in the municipal and communal elections as well as in the elections of the European Parliament in the member state of his or her residence.

The new administrative structure is completed with the enactment of the District Committee (article 198A) which comprises representatives of the organisation of the local government and the Regional Administration.

The described federal model of "Europe of the Regions" claims that it founds the decentralised and self governed society in which those which are influenced by one decision may participate in the procedure of its taking. In this case it shows that it ignores the existence and functions of the member state. There will be an evaluation of the efforts of the Committee which, through, the company principle attempts to upgrade the regional and local government of the member states in the procedure of decision taking. It is evident that it is still a long way to "Europe of the Regions". The national governments are still the first to speak. So theoretically a federal Europe is being structured and it is based on the principle of subsidiary and on the creation of

federal government who will be responsible for the immediate elected and upgraded European Parliament.

The defined federal versions will be looked into under the pressure which is exercised by the national state which, through, it continuously seems to withdraw" from the foreground "suddenly" it returns having our upgraded role. For all these reasons we are obliged to examine the slogan "Europe of the Fatherlands" and "Europe of the Regions" in its contemporary perspective.

2. Nation-State and the European Integration

There have been at times various opinions about the nation which define it with the criterion of the language, the religion, the tradition, the history, the common origin, the political rights, the common will etc. From the beginning of the 19th century in the framework of bourgeoisie ideology transformation of the European societies, were composed the modern nation-states on the basis nationality principle: every nation and state, every state and nation¹.

Necessary and sufficient condition for the formation of the nation-state is the administrative, military, and the cultural homogeneity of population. There, the nation-state progresses in the processes of integration, where the central political authority penetrates every level of the public life. The internal piece, the bureaucratic organisation of the society, and the population homogeneity, are realised from the state-nation through the system of the education.

It is worthy to note, the interesting viewpoint of Gellner², on the same topic, stating that if we assume that the nation is defined on the basis of the language, and the people speaking the same language consist of a nation. According to the same author, we are obliged to accept the power of the following data: at the present, in the globe exist almost 200 state-nations, 800 nationalities demanding to become nation-states, and 8,000 potential nation-states, because there exist 8,000 different languages. In the era of globalization, it is difficult to imagine 8,000 nation-states competing with each other which could

¹ Manesis Ar., The International Nationalism and the Prominence of the Racism, *ŌĬ ĀÇĬĀ*, 20.6.1999.

² Gellner, E., *Nation and Nationalism*, pp. 44-45, Oxford, 1983.

maintain rudimentarily the equilibrium of international system and avoiding the catastrophe of the planet entirely.

The attitude of the national nation-states of the European Union towards the European Integration, should not be judged necessarily as a negative phenomenon, even if creates embroilment at the level of interstate corporations. The advocacy of national interests consists of the driving force of the development and the strengthening of the national states mainly when are expressed from countries with regional incorporation in the international economic system.

The present nationalism in Eastern Europe is a product of decomposition of the large historical supranational identities

TABLE 1
Organisation of Dominion of the State-Members

Austria	Germany
9 federal states	16 federal states
99 administrative regions	444 administrative regions
2,347 municipalities	14,727 municipalities
Belgium	Greece
3 regions	13 regions
3 communities	51 prefectures
10 prefectures	900 municipalities
589 communities	133 communities
Denmark	Ireland
14 administrative regions	4 provinces
277 municipalities	8 regional authorities
	29 county councils
	5 municipal county councils
	83 urban regions
Finland	Italy
19 federal provinces	20 regions
12 prefectures	102 prefectures
455 municipalities	8,097 municipalities
France	Luxembourg
26 regions	3 administrative regions
100 prefectures	118 municipalities
36,547 municipalities	
Netherlands	Sweden
12 prefectures	24 counties
633 communities	23 prefectures
	288 municipalities
Portugal	Spain
2 autonomous regions	17 regions
18 administrative regions	50 provinces
305 communities	6,097 municipalities
UNITED KINGDOM	
England	Wales
14 Councils of general business	22 councils of general interest
35 County Councils	
274 Departmental Councils	Scotland
32 Municipalities of London	32 councils of general interest
36 Metropolitan municipalities councils	
	North Ireland
	26 department councils
	9 provincial councils

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, data elaborated by the author.

of the USSR and Yugoslavia, while the phenomenon appeared in Western Europe in 1968, with different localisms, the «small nationalities» in Great Britain, France, Spain, Belgium and Italy. In other words, it was missing the universalism as an opposing weight to particularism. This particularism is expressed in Western Europe mainly at the level of a nation-state, as have been shown the reactions for the agreement of Maastricht, an agreement hiding the anguish that is caused from the prospect of the European integration being a supnation.

It has been observed by the historians ,since long time ago, that from the moment when the empire declines, the nation moves on. During this century we have observed the fall of two German empires, two Russian empires, one Ottoman's empire, all the colonial empires (British, French, Belgian, Dutch, and Portuguese), as well as of the Yugoslavian frame consisted of a combination between empire and federation³. In the case of the European Union, the progress is reverse and contradictory. There is a question if the Germans will ratify the option of over-passing the nationalism of each state and consequently to restrict the domination of each nation in order to be avoidable its spreading, to be favoured everywhere wherever is possible, the construction of powerful entreties, to be declared that there exist a common philosophy for France and Germany⁴.

From the Table 1, it is observed that in the European Union exist:

- a) Two pure federal states (Germany, Austria)
- b) Four regional states (Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Finland) where the regional organs have at their disposal legislative authorities being protected essentially from the constitution
- c) Three decentralised states (France, Netherlands, Portugal), where the regional organs have at their disposal only administrative and executive authority, and
- d) Six uniting states (Denmark, Greece, great Britain, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Sweden).

It is often expressed the opinion that the development of the democracy⁵ is not better served from the federal or decentralised

³ Daniel Jean, *Voyage au bout de la nation*, ed. POLIS, Athens, 1996, pp. 11.

⁴ Daniel Jean, p. 225

⁵ Kostopoulos T., *European Union and Local Government*, Eds. Papazisis, Athens, 1996, p. 108.

democracies. Moreover, the history is teaching us that at several times the democracy had greater development in regimes of centralised form. Such preclusion have larger effect on the democracy of the bourgeois where «the federal democracy means anyway more freedoms than the centralised one». This is not correct. The facts referred by Engels for the centralised French democracy 1792-1798 and the Swiss democracy prove the opposite. In reality, more freedom had been given the centralised democracy than the federal one. In other words, the centralised and not federal democracy gave the greater local, regional etc. in the history⁶. The Marxist evaluation of democracy has to be seen in its historicity, so that the dilemma federal or centralised democracy to have a special political weight in the era of nationalistic tensions and explosions. In reality, the progress towards the European Union is vanishing in the whirlpool of the national fanaticism, while the frequent appeal from the state members of the national peculiarities refute the effects of the unification progress. The federalism of the old continent comes up against the facts which followed the fall of the East. The Swiss form of the European Union through its federalism viewpoint of the Europe of Regions refutes the slogan of the Europe of Homelands.

The federalism in the European Union operates mainly as ideology in order to secure, through the single internal market, the interests of the powerful states of the Union. Germany declares hypocritically the federalist's structure of Europe with final aim the unequal European integration and its sovereignty on the other European nation-states⁷. Consequently, the idea expressed by the ex chancellor of Germany Helmut Kohl at the University of Zurich that «Europe either will be federal or will never be united» implies the dominion of the German federalist's model on the community.

The restricted fiscal economics of the Union with a community budget near to 1.27% of the community Gross Domestic Product make difficult to bring important changes in the levels of convergence of the economies of the member states. In contrast to the restricted

⁶ Lenin, B., I., Nation and Revolution, Vol. 33, Eds. Sinhroni Epohi, Athens, 1995, p. 438.

⁷ Kostopoulos T., European Union and Local Government, Eds. Papazisis, Athens, 1996, p. 110.

economic means of the Union, the Union appeals to be dominant in the level of decision making, up to the point which the theoretician of the German social democracy Peter Glotz to doubt for the role that the German federal parliament could play, because he estimates that from the middle of the decade of 1990-2000, 80 percent of the decisions are referred to settlements for the economic and social life of the Europeans will be taken at Brussels. Because of this reason, he considers that the only solution of having the federal small states not losing more responsibilities for the community's institutions pass through necessarily from the revision of the constitution not on the basis of centralised authorities but with full orientation to the federal frame of the Europe of Regions⁸.

The argument is upon the probability of retreat , in the 21st century, of the importance of the nations because of the development of another unity i.e. the region. We are referred to the future of the state-nation in one of the most difficult problems which the humanity has to confronted.

There is another important point. The state-nation will not be withdrawn, as long as the capitalistic system of the social reproduction continues to dominate the world. It consists a declaration, a utopia. Whatever is called a self-administration is another national form of organisation, based on the federalism of the nations with universal perspective suppresses the capitalism and the nationalism.

Beyond the declared views on retirement of the state-nation, we easily ascertain that from every other historical period of the Europe after the war the nations are projected in a impressive way. The powerful national states , in the economic and political sense, attempt to pose their wills upon the weak and powerless nations which in turn resisting with whatever means have at their disposal to keep their national identity.

It appears clearly from the political behaviour of the united Germany that from the one side represents itself as extreme advocates of the federalism in Europe, and from the other side tries to attempt to secure the German national interests in the community. Towards this direction moved and the decision of its federal constitutional court of this country in regard to Maastricht's Treaty. On the 12.10.1992

⁸ Kostopoulos T., European Union and the Local Government, eds. Papazisis, Athens, 1996, p. 110.

stating that « the Treaty of the Union gives reason for the union of the states for the realisation of a closer union of the state organised people of Europe and not of one nation that is based on a European state of people»⁹.

The decision of the German federal court with very definite way states that every federalistic utopic wondering of the future withdrawn of the state nation from the spotlight of the history. Klaus Busch states that «superimposition of the national state in the present Europe crashes on the economic and political limits: if a plan looks forward to the promotion of the unification and attempts to overpass it, is condemned to be in failure»¹⁰. The leadership presence of the united Germany in the Community, is attempted to dominate from its own side through a federalist's model of organisation and administration of the European institutions. The federalist's view attracts its origin from the model of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Germany, therefore, does not select as its policy the self-dissolution of the nation-state but the policy of the elevation of the Germany as the first nation of Europe. The old agony of the great German author for the future of Europe comes back to the front with larger intensity, keeping in full its prophetic value. Agony, which can be condensed in the fighting effort of the people of the old Europe to be confronted with the German problem, on the basis of the known instigation of Thomas Mann which is included in his

TABLE 2
THE CHANGING FACE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

	1958	1973	1981	1986	1994	1995
Countries	6	9	10	12	12	15
Languages	4	6	7	9	9	11
Area (klm 2)	1.167	1.524	1.658	2.252	2.368	3.234
Population (hundr.)	185	273	287	338	348	368
Commissioners	9	13	14	17	17	20
European Parliament members	142	198	434	518	567	626
Votes of special majority in the Minister's Council	12/17	41/58	45/63	54/76	54/76	82/87
Necessary number of countries						
Veto minority	4	6	6	8	8	10
			19	23	23	26

Source: *TO BHMA*, 12.2.1995

⁹ Leamean, J., «Maastricht-Karlsruhe und zuruek», *Blaetter fuer Deutsche und International Politic*, 11/1993.

¹⁰ Busch, K., *The Euripe after 1992*, Eds. Critical Scientific Library, Athens, 1995, p. 99.

known saying: «to build not a German Europe but a European Germany»¹¹.

From the elements of Table 2, we observe that the European Union has all these characteristics of a state formation and it looks like a state in progress. The Committee looks like as the government of the European Union. The president and the commissioners of the Committee look like the prime minister and its ministers. The committee is the executive organ of the Union and elaborates all the regulation proposals, directives and decisions of the Council. Every state-member participates in the Committee with one Commissioner, while the more populated countries as France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain and Spain are represented with an additional second representative. As a rule, these countries allocate the corresponding representatives between their larger political parties.

The president of the Committee appointed from the leaders of the state-nations in one of their top level meetings. The term of office of the committee is for five years and is approved by the European Parliament.

Important role in the preparation of the decisions of the Council has the Committee of Permanent Representatives,

TABLE 3
PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

Countries	Population (Jan. 1993)	Minister's Council (votes)	European Commission (members)	European Parliament (members)
Germany	81,800,000	10	2	99
Italy	57,300,000	10	2	87
Great Britain	58,700,000	10	2	87
France	58,300,000	10	2	87
Spain	39,200,000	8	2	64
Holland	15,500,000	5	1	31
Portugal	9,900,000	5	1	25
Greece	10,500,000	5	1	25
Belgium	10,100,000	5	1	25
Denmark	5,300,000	3	1	16
Ireland	3,600,000	3	1	15
Luxembourg	400,000	2	1	1
Sweden	8,800,000	4	1	22
Austria	8,000,000	4	1	21
Finland	5,100,000	3	1	16
Total	372,500,000	87	20	626

Source: H AYGH, 6.6.1999, and the European Committee, The Organs of the European Union, eds Official Editions Service of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 1995.

known as COREPER (Comite des Representants Permanents), operating under the Council and in which participate the fifteen Permanent Representatives of the state-members of the Union. The

¹¹ Kennedy, P., Preparation for the 21st Century, Eds. Nea Sinora, A.A. Livani, Athens, 1995, p 438.

meetings of the COREPER are on weekly basis. The Committee, often called and European Committee, resides in Brussels and employs almost 15,000 employees¹², and with full independence from the countries of their origin¹³. The ideological weight of this small minority is multiple of its numerical power. And this is the reason why these employees are highly compensated. It is the cost of acquisition in order to be in the service of the new great «idea».

Table 3 represents analytically the structure of the three institutional organs of decision making of the European Union within which are realised the necessary mediations for the creation of the required community consensus, which is the necessary condition for the unequal European unification. This trend can be easily found in the numerical superiority of the richer member states in the Council of Ministers, the European Committee, and also in the European Parliament, where it is confirmed and their population and economic superiority on the smaller and economically powerless state members.

If this will be combined with the influence of institutional organs of the Union, the not formal decisions are taken in the margin of the top level meetings, where the pressures to the economically powerless state-members are heavier, we can conclude then that the institutional structure of the Union corresponds to the needs and interests of the hard cell. What is the meaning of the German presence in the European Parliament with 99 eurosenators? The answer that comes from the powerful members of Europe is simple. The representation in the europarlament is based on the population criterion, even if exist deviations here as in Luxembourg with 6 eurosenators.

The difficult questions are why in the Ministers Councils they exist Ministers of first (Germany), of second (Spain), and third (Greece) speed and why the votes are weighted again with population criteria¹⁴,

¹² European Commission, The Organs of the European Union, Eds. Official Editions Service of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 1995.

¹³ Mousis N., From the European Community to the European Union, Eds Papazisis, Athens, 1993, p. 41.

¹⁴ The population criteria is a certainly smart innovation discovered from the richer countries of the Community to impose their dominance, since the criterion of the equal numerical representation corresponds better in the principles of the pluralistic middle class democracy. Up to now there is not a problem. If we observe that the rich countries are superior on the economic indices and population criteria (Germany, France, Italy, G. Britain) then can be drawn the conclusion that this serves their economic interests and certainly not the operation and the development of the democracy.

and consequently there is not one vote for each country? The same is valid for the Community Commissioners. The question is if there exist a Europe of variable geometry and many speeds having in its body from the first phases of the creation and structure of EEC an unequal system of decision making?

3. Conclusion

The direction towards the European integration in the context of globalization is characterised from various conflicts and inconsistencies. The rapid and implacable internationalisation of the production obliges the member states of Europe to join forces in order to face successfully the economic competition from the United States and Japan. The recent war in Yugoslavia has shown the important weaknesses of this effort. Europe has been an economic giant lacking common policy for external affairs and political defence, being patronised from the United States.

Within Europe exist national conflicts and contrasts. One nation attempts to have control over the other, one middle class is competing the other with aim to displace it from the spotlight. It is the physical stage of Thomas Hobbs and the *Homo hominis lupus*.

Finally, for the states of community coherence the perspective of the Europe of Regions is limited and doubtful result, since the dominating slogan in Europe is the Europe of Homelands and the single internal market. The large market makes the restricted European fiscal economics to look small and the intracommunity conflicts larger with a direct consequence the elevation of the social inequalities and the enlargement of the Gap between North and South.

The nations in the interior of the European Union are not dead or sleeping. In contrast, in this real experiment of unification the one nation competes with the others until the historical moment when this structure will be crossed out and will lead itself in a deterministic end.

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