

## **THE 'EUROPE OF THE REGIONS' AND THE IDENTITY POLITICS OF NATIONS WITHOUT STATES**

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Some effects of economic globalisation like 'niche'-production, internal decentralisation of big companies, the growing importance of 'soft factors', and attempts to create 'industrial districts' are said to promote regional or national identities of 'nations without states'. The European Union, it could be argued, has reinforced these economic incentives by allowing and institutionalising regional participation. This article<sup>1</sup> will therefore sketch the 'regionalisation' of the European Union and discuss who might benefit from it, and analyse whether this kind of regionalisation effectively defends cultural identities. Here, the question is whether changes in the European arena enhance the opportunities not only for regional administrative institutions, but also for certain non-state nationalisms. What kind of nationalism might profit from it, what adaptations and sacrifices are needed to make non-state nationalism succeed in the new environment, and what gains can be expected?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on papers presented to the International Conference of the Regional Studies Association on "Regional Potentials in an Integrating Europe" (Bilbao, 18.-21.9.1999) and the ESRC Research Seminar "State and Civil Society in Scotland and Catalunya" in Edinburgh (21.-22.5.1999). See also my article *A unificación europea. Unha nova escena posible para os nacionalismos non estatais?*, *Grial* (Santiago de Compostela) 138, 1998, p. 199-237.

<sup>2</sup> Examples are drawn mainly from the Catalan experience, but also from the Welsh and Occitan cases. For a comparison between the first two, see Loughlin, John et al.: *Regionale Mobilisierung in Wales und Katalonien: Eine vergleichende Analyse*, in: Kohler-Koch, Beate et al.: *Interaktive Politik in Europa. Regionen im Netzwerk der Integration*, Opladen 1998, p. 182-228.

### **THE 'REGIONALISATION' OF EUROPE<sup>3</sup>**

Regions have been conceptualised as a third level of government, and it has been said that the state, caught in the middle, will be stripped of its power from above and from below, as if we were in a zero-sum game. The scheme has been called the sandwich thesis<sup>4</sup>, and seems attractive for minority nationalists. Its realisation would mean co-operation between the regions and Brussels, to the detriment of the State. The Commission might have an interest in strategically weakening the nation states, favouring a 'Europe of the regions'. As the European bureaucracy is very small, it might look for regional bureaucracies to implement its policies, circumventing the States, which might fight thoroughgoing 'Europeanisation' by the European Commission.

A different vision might be what has been called 'Europe with the regions', a less hierarchical and democratically less transparent mode of multi-level governance.<sup>5</sup> 'Europe with the regions' means 'networking' and negotiations

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<sup>3</sup> On the "Europe of the regions", see, among others: Borrás-Alomar, Susana et al.: *Towards a 'Europe of the Regions'? Visions and reality from a critical perspective*, *Regional Politics & Policy* 4, 1994, pp. 1-27; Bullmann, Udo (ed.): *Die Politik der dritten Ebene. Regionen im Europa der Union*, Baden-Baden 1994; Jones, Barry/Keating, Michael (eds.): *The European Union and the regions*, Oxford 1995; Kohler-Koch, Beate: *Regionen als Handlungseinheiten in der europäischen Politik*, *WeltTrends* 11, 1996, pp. 7-35; Petschen, Santiago: *La Europa de las regiones*, Barcelona 1993; Puhle, Hans-Jürgen: *Staaten, Nationen und Regionen in Europa*, Viena 1995; Rhodes, Martin (ed.): *The regions and the new Europe*, Manchester/New York 1995; Sharpe, L. J. (ed.): *The rise of meso government in Europe*, London et al. 1993.

<sup>4</sup> See Eser, Thimo W.: *Europäische Einigung, Föderalismus und Regionalpolitik*, Trier 1991.

<sup>5</sup> See Hooghe, Liesbet: *Subnational mobilisation in the European Union*, *West European Politics* 18, 1995, pp. 175-198; Kohler-Koch, Beate et al.: *Interaktive Politik in Europa*, Opladen 1998; Kohler-Koch, Beate: *The strength of weakness: the transformation of governance in the EU*, in: Gustavsson, Sverker/Lewin, Leif (eds.): *The future of the nation state. Essays on cultural pluralism and political integration*, Stockholm 1996, pp. 169-210; Kohler-Koch, Beate: *Catching up with change: the transformation of governance in the European Union*, *Journal of European Public Policy* 3, 1996, 3, pp. 359-380; König, Thomas/Rieger, Elmar/Schmitt, Hermann (eds.): *Das europäische Mehrebenensystem*, Frankfurt/New York 1996; Marks, Gary et al.: *Governance in the European Union*, London et al. 1996; Négrier, Emmanuel/Jouve, Bernard (eds.): *Que gouvernement les régions d'Europe?*, Paris/Montréal 1998.

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between partners at different levels with different competencies and responding to different notions of legitimacy, even including private interests.<sup>6</sup> The Commission, which has little in the way of own bureaucratic resources, is particularly prone to lobbying and the European political system has many access points. Everyone is aware that the Maastricht Treaty opened the way for a Europe of fast and slow routes, i.e. a 'Europe à la carte', and there has even been some discussion about a return to Medieval times, with unclear or shared competencies and overlapping regimes of governance for single policy fields.<sup>7</sup> In this non-transparent situation, strong regions might act in some policy fields as if they were small states, but both would not be sovereign powers.

Regional politics is perhaps the field where direct contact between regional administrations and the European bureaucracy is most important.<sup>8</sup> In historical perspective, this is a new development, since the Community had ignored the regions till the end of the 80s. The reforms of the structural funds and the doubling of their budget were a way of buying off the poorer states and preventing them exercising their veto in 1988 when the Single European Act opened the way to a really common market. But direct cooperation does not necessarily favour minority nationalism. One of the main reasons is the continuing omnipresence of the state. The director of regional policies in Directory General XVI once said<sup>9</sup> : '... dans le contexte ... des critiques assez

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<sup>6</sup> For the discussion of this interpretation see Kassim, Hussein: *Policy networks, networks and European Union policy making: a sceptical view*, *West European Politics* 17, 1994, 4, pp. 15-27; Peterson, John: *Policy networks and European Union policy making: a reply to Kassim*, *West European Politics* 18, 1995, 2, pp. 389-407, and Rhodes, R.A.W./Bache, Ian/George, Stephen: *Policy networks and policy-making in the European Union: a critical appraisal*, in: Hooghe, Liesbet (ed.): *Cohesion policy and European integration*, Oxford 1996, p. 367-387.

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of various scenarios, see Schmitter, Philipp: *If the Nation-State Were to Wither Away in Europe, What Might Replace It?*, in: Gustavsson/Lewin (eds.) 1996: 211-244. See also Jáuregui, Gurutz: *Los nacionalismos minoritarios y la Unión Europea*, Barcelona 1997, chapter 4.

<sup>8</sup> For regional policies see: Hooghe (ed.) 1996; Leonardi, Robert (ed.): *Regions and the European Community*, London et al. 1993; Marks, Gary: *Structural policy and multilevel governance in the EC*, in: Cafruny, Alan W./Rosenthal, Glenda G. (eds.): *The state of the European Community, 2: the Maastricht debate and beyond*, Boulder/Harlow 1993, p. 391-410.

<sup>9</sup> Cited by Balme, Richard/Brouard, Sylvain/Burbaud, François: *Politique des coopérations atlantiques. Mobilisations inter-régionales et intégration européenne*, Bordeaux 1995.

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fortes de Maastricht, le partenariat de la Commission avec les régions ne peut pas être un partenariat direct et exclusif. La règle du jeu définie dans les règlements fait que le partenariat est tripartite et non Commission-régions contre l'Etat (...) La commission ne se prêtera pas à ce petit jeu.' Another reason is the European system of NUTS regions, which does not coincide with nationalist aspirations or realities. Catalonia for example is not eligible for objective 1 subventions. But smaller NUTS regions which form part of its territory are objective 2 and objective 5b regions.<sup>10</sup>

Partnership in regional policy is less important for well-off stateless nations. But even these regions have found ways to draw on the smaller funds and programs. Catalonia's keen interest in trans-border co-operation may well have something to do with 'Prince INTERREG' whose 'golden kiss' awakened dormant cross-frontier co-operation schemes of regions which were not eligible for bigger programs. However, it has to be said that INTERREG funding is pretty small beer compared with regional fund subsidies. The truth is that some form of State co-operation is essential to lay hands on really sizeable funds.<sup>11</sup>

The Maastricht Treaty introduced cohesion funds for infrastructure and ecology, to buy the votes of poorer countries and stop them hindering the path to the Euro. Despite being one of the State's richer regions, Catalonia received 18 of the 40 thousand million Pesetas of Spain's share of cohesion funds in 1995.<sup>12</sup> The Socialist central government's dependence on Catalan nationalist votes undoubtedly had a great deal to do with this. Between 1993 and 1996, Catalonia received 15.13% of the Spanish share and it was the region (Autonomous Community) which got most.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, Catalonia

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<sup>10</sup> Carles Gasòliba, General Secretary of the Patronat Català Pro-Europa and MEP for *Convergència*, prides himself to have lobbied successfully for those objectives, against the first Felipe González government which was more inclined to concentrate the money on the really poor *Comunidades Autónomas* (see interview in *EL TEMPS* 9.2.98).

<sup>11</sup> See Marks, Gary et al.: *Competencies, cracks and conflicts: regional mobilization in the European Union*, in: Marks, Gary et al.: *Governance in the European Union*, London et al. 1996, p. 40-63.

<sup>12</sup> See Petschen, Santiago: *Kataloniens internationale Politik: Zum auswärtigen Handeln einer spanischen Comunidad Autónoma*, *WeltTrends* 11, 1996, p. 79; Morata, Françesc/Muñoz, Xavier: *Vying for European Funds: territorial restructuring in Spain*, in: Hooghe, Liesbet (ed.) 1996, p. 194-218.

<sup>13</sup> See ABC 20.10.1997. *The money was administered by Madrid and most of it still is.*

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is said to be a net payer both to Spain and Europe. Between 1993 and 1996, Catalonia received 67 pesetas from Brussels for every 100 paid, whereas Spain received 199 for every 100. Catalonia seems to have been a net contributor ever since Spain joined the Community.<sup>14</sup> Not surprisingly, Catalan nationalists are beginning to consider the disadvantages of being a rich nation in a poor state. Their enthusiasm for Europe may well cool if Catalonia continues to pay the piper without calling the tune.

There are two lessons for minority nationalists. First, the best way to lay hands on EU funds is to have one's State as an ally. Second, political influence in one's own State is more effective than lobbying Brussels in making sure one's own region gets the lion's share. Thus, the most effective strategy is not to seek more independence, but to achieve greater participation and influence. In Gary Marks' words<sup>15</sup>, 'When it comes to finances, the EU is a state-centric polity, and a regional government that is oriented to money will operate through national rather than European channels.'

Regional policy is, of course, only one side of the coin, freedom of competition being the other. Indeed, one could say that freedom of competition is a stronger feature of Commission policy. Rich regions (by European standards) may want to act autonomously and compete freely with other regions. But one should remember that the economic performance of European regions measured in terms of growth rates or per capita production usually develops in national clusters.<sup>16</sup>

It might be thought such considerations notwithstanding, 'Maastricht' meant a leap forward in the recognition of a third level in Europe. After all, did it not install a new collective regional actor, the Committee of the Regions (CoR), about which a great deal of ballyhoo was made?<sup>17</sup> However the treaty

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<sup>14</sup> See *EXPANSION* 28.7.1998.

<sup>15</sup> Marks, Gary et al. 1996, pp. 40-63.

<sup>16</sup> See the empirical material presented by Borrás-Alomar et al.

<sup>17</sup> See Dehousse, Renaud/Christiansen, Thomas (eds.): *What model for the Committee of the Regions? Past experiences and future perspectives*, Florence 1995 (EUI Working Paper EUI 95/2); Jeffery, Charlie: *Whither the Committee of the Regions? Reflections on the Committee's 'Opinion on the Revision of the Treaty on European Union'*, *Regional & Federal Studies* 5, 1995, p. 247-257; Knaap, Peter van der: *The Committee of the Regions: the outset of a 'Europe of the Regions'?*, *Regional Politics & Policy* 4, 1994, 2, p. 86-100; *Fundació Carles Pi i Sunyer d'Estudis Autònoms i Locals* (ed.): *Regiones y ciudades ante la Unión Europea. La Declaración de Amsterdam de la Cumbre Europea de Regiones y Ciudades, y otros documentos*,

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provisions for the new body proved flawed and the purely consultative functions of this institution have proved a bitter disappointment to both the governments of Catalonia and the stronger 'Länder' in Germany (which had done so much to promote the 'third level').<sup>18</sup> The first deliberations of the CoR showed that strong regions were losing out against weak ones, the latter often allying themselves with local authorities, which nationalists like Pujol and the Belgian regions and German 'Länder' had not wanted in the CoR.<sup>19</sup> One of the first decisions of the CoR was to forbid delegated votes, a decision which conveniently ignored the fact that political heavyweights like the presidents of Belgian regions or German Länder simply cannot be present at the long sessions of a mere consultative agency like the CoR. One of the main cleavages in the CoR continues to be the origin of the deputies, who normally are seen (and see themselves) as representatives of their states, which name them according to their own internal rules.

CoR may well be an example for symbolic policy; it seems that Europe is intent on legitimising itself by integrating the regions in its institutional structure. At the same time, regional leaders can present themselves to their voters as influential politicians at a European level. It is questionable if the device will work in the long run. In any case, regional and local administrations which co-operate with their existing State and the Commission may profit more than regions seeking more autonomy.

However, the establishment of the CoR was a success for the European regionalist movement organised in the Assembly of the European Regions (AER) founded in 1985. AER now unites some 300 regions of all kinds and competencies<sup>20</sup>, including even ones outside the EU. But this success in

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*Barcelona 1997; Loughlin, John: Representing regions in Europe: The Committee of the Regions, in: Jeffery, Charlie (ed.): The regional dimension of the European Union. Towards a third level in Europe?, London/Portland 1997, p. 147-165; Farrows, Martyn: The Committee of the Regions: regionalising the Union or pacifying the regionalists?, Limerick Papers in European Integration 3, Limerick 1997; Farrows, Martyn/McCarthy, Rosarie: Opinion formulation and impact in the Committee of the Regions, Regional & Federal Studies 7, 1997, 1, p. 23-49.*

<sup>18</sup> See my article on *Problemes i tendències del federalisme alemany desde 1945*, *Afers* 35, 2000, p. 127-156.

<sup>19</sup> The irony is that the local authorities were led by Pasqual Maragall, then mayor of Barcelona, who has been Pujol's antagonist in the Catalan elections in October 1999. Europe is sometimes as symbolic battleground for party contest at home.

<sup>20</sup> According to AER, a region is the territorial entity immediately inferior to the State. See Susana Beltran: *L'Assemblea de Regions d'Europa*, Barcelona 1996.

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mobilisation weakened the coherence of the movement. For presidents of autonomous communities like Pujol in Catalonia or Fraga in Galicia, the AER may be a valuable asset, but radical nationalists fear that if their countries are swallowed up in some kind of regional melting pot, the position of the states as the effective holders of the power in the European Union may be strengthened. Nationalists like Pujol when participating in European regionalism AER-style, accept a denomination ('region') which they despise at home.<sup>21</sup>

Interregional networking is fashionable among European regions.<sup>22</sup> Catalonia is extremely active in this respect, and it makes common cause with Wales as well as with neighbouring Occitania and other territories which include stateless nations. Catalonia participates in the Conference of Maritime Peripheral Regions, in the Association of Frontier Regions<sup>23</sup>, in the Working Community of Regions with Industrial Tradition, in the Working Group of the Pyrenees, and it forms a Euroregion with Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées, for example.

One of Jordi Pujol's most dearly-cherished interregional projects is the Four Motors for Europe initiative, together with the supposedly economically leading regions of Baden-Württemberg, Lombardy, and Rhône-Alpes, with

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<sup>21</sup> Concerning stateless languages, Working Group VI of the AER approved a "Guide pour une politique de l'ARE sur les langues régionales et minoritaires" in 1996, which claims: "Dans le cas où, par suite de pressions idéologiques ou sociales, les attitudes langagières des parents ou de la communauté ne seraient pas favorables à cet enseignement (of the regional language, K.-J.N.), toutes les autorités compétentes de la région devront promouvoir activement le changement de ces attitudes." But nothing was heard from it afterwards. See CONTACT BULLETIN 9/1997.

<sup>22</sup> Literature on single networks is numerous, but comparison is still rare. See Cappellin, R./Batey, P.W.J. (eds.): *Regional networks, border regions and European integration*, London 1993. One of the more curious endeavours is "Conférence des régions européennes de la diagonale continentale" CREDC, with Limousin, Midi-Pyrénées, Aragón and Extremadura as founding members (see LE MONDE 24.5.1997). Those regions saw themselves handicapped by being caught in between the development axis of the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the "blue banana", and they responded claiming a "position stratégique centrale d'interconnexion entre les arcs atlantique et méditerranéen, et de liaison avec l'arc de nord-est de l'Europe."

<sup>23</sup> ARFE is one of the oldest interregional cooperations. It is actually chaired by Joan Vallvé, former Catalan "comissionat" (minister) for external actions, and MEP for *Convergència Democràtica*. It has about 50 members and claims to safeguard INTERREG funding even for the more prosperous frontier regions (see ABC 5.5.1998 and the article of Joan Vallvé in EL PUNT 6.5.1998).

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Wales as a latecomer. Christopher Harvie believes the real interest behind the initiative comes from high-tech multinationals. For him, this regionalism is 'bourgeois'<sup>24</sup>: 'The chief boosters of the "Europe of the regions" didn't figure in the books of the 1970s: neither Lombardy nor Rhône-Alpes, nor Baden-Württemberg.' I think this interpretation exaggerates the importance of such initiatives, which are often used by politicians to polish their image and sometimes depend on casual personal contacts between leaders which warm and cool in an almost unpredictable fashion. The partners' commitment to such initiatives can be very unequal. In the Four Motors group, real co-operation in some periods only took place between two or three of the partners. Preference for one or other co-operation scheme may change according to internal politics or image problems. Catalan governments' long-standing co-operation with Rhône-Alpes President Charles Millon (in the Four Motors group) and Languedoc-Roussillon President Jacques Blanc (in the Euroregion and the Pyrenees Group) was interrupted when they accepted the help of the French extreme right.<sup>25</sup> Be that as it may, one thing is clear: the 'Four Motors' have nothing to do with the defence of national identities, even when two stateless nations (Catalonia and Wales) participate.

In the Catalan case, which is far from being an isolated example, it is obvious that the different Working Groups promote contradictory development patterns and spaces. It is difficult to find any underlying coherence to such a policy. If the various cooperation schemes are to be believed, Catalonia is as Pyrenean as it is Mediterranean. It is an old established industrial region which needs recycling (RETI), and, at the same time, a motor of Europe. It is a region on the maritime periphery, and yet is also a central region in a thriving and prosperous Mediterranean crescent of technology poised to challenge the 'blue banana'.<sup>26</sup>

Catalan nationalists can, of course, try to justify such incoherent policies by stressing the different 'missions' and 'vocations' their people have to fulfil. Pujol, on different occasions, has spoken of a Pyrenean, a European, a Mediterranean, and a Hispanic (Spanish and Latin-American) vocation for the Catalan people.<sup>27</sup> But it is doubtful whether identity can be defended (or

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<sup>24</sup> See Harvie, Christopher: *The rise of regional Europe*, London/New York 1994, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> See *EL PERIODICO* 9.6.1998 and 10.6.1998.

<sup>26</sup> See *INFORMACION* 17.6.1997. *The actual Mediterranean Arch for Technology includes 10 regions between Tuscany and Andalusia. But its budget is only 25 million pesetas.*

<sup>27</sup> See Pujol, Jordi: *Pensar Europa*, Barcelona 1993, p. 41, 46, 139, 175, 273-278.

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built) in that way. The policies of interregional cooperation may well pursue other objectives. As we have already noted, internal politics are always lurking in the background. Furthermore, some of those cooperation schemes are aimed at laying hands on European funding. Trans-border co-operation is a notorious example. As empirical research on the Atlantic Arch suggests, collaboration by State government may be the key to success.<sup>28</sup>

Collective organisation and lobbying in Brussels are one thing, individual representation is another. Today, most regional governments are permitted to have their own office in Brussels, even if the juridical status of these missions and their funding differ widely. Often, as in the Catalan, Valencian or Galician cases, the offices are maintained by foundations and/or public/private partnerships. This may support regional cohesion. Whether a region opens an office depends little on the importance which European funds may have for the region and bears no relation to its income level. There is, however, a correlation with its level of associative culture, and, even more, with its level of autonomy. Another factor is the level of tension between region and State. But the most decisive factor seems to be whether the political complexion of the parties governing in the region and in the State is different or not. To sum up, internal politics are a more important determinant than economic reasons.<sup>29</sup> The Patronat Català Pro Europa has never worked against Spanish government interests in Brussels but sought close co-operation with the Spanish Permanent Delegation to the European Union. The dependence of the Madrid government on Catalan nationalist votes in the Madrid parliament certainly facilitated this. Even so, Spanish conservative media like ABC regularly slate large scale spending by Spanish Autonomous Communities and are swift to criticise Catalonia and the Basque Country for their representation in Brussels.<sup>30</sup>

So what role can a stateless nation play in the new 'regionalised' European Union? If the Union is to be interpreted as a community of states, it can only go for statehood. The SNP officially defended such an interpretation. One may argue that stateless nations have the right to self-determination and that there should be a referendum on the issue. Once a State, it would be entitled to have a seat on the Council of Ministers. In order to achieve this goal,

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<sup>28</sup> See Balme et al. 1995, p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> See Marks et al. 1996.

<sup>30</sup> ABC 16.12.1996. *The figures given by the same paper don't support the conclusion that regions which have a specific identity (hecho diferencial) engage in more heavy spending. For 1997, Catalonia's planned expenditure amounted to 10,41% of the overall expenses of all Spanish regions, and Catalonia was only the fifth in ranking.*

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nationalists might look for allies among other nationalist movements and parties which find themselves in the same boat.

However, the current strategies pursued by nationalist regional governments, particularly in Catalonia, do not follow this scheme. Catalonia has staked a claim to have a vote in the Council of Ministers but only as a Spanish region rather than a nation in its own right. If one region is to represent Spain, Spanish regions have to agree on a collective position to be defended by that region. Although the federalising consequences are obvious, Spanish governments have consistently opposed such an idea. The Partido Popular government accepts regional participation in the Spanish delegation in European Union working groups and committees.<sup>31</sup> It may even be in a State's interest to have the regions engaged in a common project, thus limiting the centrifugal temptations and to control the third level by subordination or bringing local government into the picture. States may even exploit the formula of the 'Europe of the Regions' in order to secure structural funds. In cases of formerly centralist states, decentralisation may actually pull the country together. Charles Millon, the former UDF-member and Secretary of State for Defence and President of Rhône-Alpes, always spoke out for French regionalisation but in the interest of the French state, as a counter to the federalisation and regionalisation trends which had taken place in France's neighbours. He feared that their regional capitals could lure away French money. Devolution, he argued, would help bind the country together.<sup>32</sup> It may be that development of a new regional loyalty hinders the growth of national consciousness, for example in Occitania.

Interregional co-operation does not mean regions forego competing for inward investment and funding. The Basque Country and Catalonia fought

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<sup>31</sup> Since 1996, the "regions" have an "observer" ("agregado", a career diplomat) who is member of the Spanish Representation to the Communities, but who is not chosen by the regions (ABC 24.5.1996 and AVUI 31.7.1996). In 1997, the Spanish government opened 55 of 450 Community working groups to regional participation (EL PAIS 3.8.1997). Three years ago, there was a vivid discussion in Congress about the access of the regions to the Council of Ministers; the Spanish government had positioned itself against this, but in order not to be outvoted by Socialists and Nationalists in parliament, Partido Popular came out in favour of a reform. Afterwards, the government drew back (EL PAIS 4. and 5.3.1998 for the debate and the change of position, and ABC 30.8.1998 for the relapse). The program of Catalan nationalist Convergència for the 1999 elections to the European parliament included the claim (AVUI 19.5.1999).

<sup>32</sup> See Millon, Charles: *Der Europa-Effekt muss Frankreichs Regionen stärken*, Dokumente 48, 1992, p. 211.

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each other for the Daewoo refrigerator plant in 1996. In 1997, the same communities and Navarre vied with one another for a Goldstar investment project. Having the state on one's side in these battles is a considerable asset.

Consequently, Europe's institutional framework opens up new opportunities for regional governments which are prepared to play by certain rules. The first rule is to give up any attempt to undermine the State. Regions have to accept a complementary position. The political system of the European Union, I argue, is open to access, but it reserves privileged positions for the States as central actors, even if they are no longer the only players on the cast list. However, the efficiency of collective action in a European regional tier has to be questioned; the considerable heterogeneity of the regional actors is one of the main reasons for the failure of collective regional action. That is a great impediment for regions governed by nationalists. On the other hand, such regions can act individually. However, their scope of action is widened if they can ally themselves with the State they belong to. Nevertheless, collective regional action has a symbolic value for internal political consumption which should not be underestimated. However, far-reaching nationalist demands will be moderated and extreme positions penalised in such a framework. Of course, nationalists could go for 'independence in Europe', or adopt an outright anti-European stance. So far, very few important nationalist parties in stateless nations have succumbed to the temptation, which would bring them into conflict with defenders of the state and 'pro-Europeans' alike. More often than not, they have presented themselves as better Europeans.

Gary Marks has argued that<sup>33</sup> 'The possibility of regional empowerment in Europe has influenced culturally distinctive regional movements away from the demand for full national independence toward the demand for greater autonomy in the context of the EU. (...) In reducing the stateness of the European polity, the development of the EU has diverted ethnic groups away from a focus on forging a separate state as their ultimate goal.' Let us now consider the defence of cultural and linguistic differences by stateless nations.

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<sup>33</sup> *Marks et al. 1996, p. 110.*

## **THE DEFENCE OF CULTURAL IDENTITY OF STATELESS NATIONS IN PRESENT-DAY EUROPE**

European integration started with the economy. But one of the acknowledged fathers of the integration process, Jean Monnet, later had second thoughts<sup>34</sup>: 'Si c'était à refaire, je commencerais par la culture.' This second section deals with the prospects of defending, and perhaps even deepening, cultural identities in Europe. We have seen that opening up the system to regional participation does not mean that all national movements are equally welcome. After all, nationalist claims may not only run counter to national identities defended by member states, but also hinder promotion of a European identity and attempts to 'rationalise' European administration (particularly regarding the language issue).

There are, of course, different conceptions of what identity is. Some see it as a primordial asset, others stress its functional value in improving communication and willingness to accept majority decisions and social redistribution. Yet others stress the opportunities for the individual to choose his or her identity, the reality of plural identities, and the possibilities of moulding identity. Be that as it may, all States wittingly or not help create, maintain, or destroy identities by exerting selections and pressures. The extent to which this occurs varies, but one cannot shut one's eyes to the fact. Language is a particularly strong feature of cultural identity, not least because of its potential primordial, functional, and instrumental aspects and values. In the three cases cited in this paper (Catalonia, Wales, and Occitania) language is a keystone of their respective claims to a separate identity. Language plays a prominent role in political integration. No administration can work without language and its use conditions identity politics from above and from below whilst its value for communication and symbolic purposes cannot be underestimated.

Of what importance are the European Union, on the one hand, and the political actors of stateless nations, on the other, in relation to decisions on language and culture? As we have said, the European Community initially focused on markets and the economy, not culture. Even if Maastricht gives some theoretical leverage for a European policy favouring the flourishing of all national and regional cultures and of cultural diversity (Art. 128 Treaty of Maastricht), the existence of organised defenders of small languages in a given nation state is still considered the result of bad identity management

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<sup>34</sup> Cited by Bausinger, Hermann: *Europa der Regionen: Kulturelle Perspektiven, Leviathan 1993, 4, p. 487.*

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and an obstacle to economic development. There is some lobbying in favour of cultural identity, selling it as an asset for development<sup>35</sup>, but it can be argued that the realisation of a Common Market, which is the EU's main achievement, will act to the detriment of cultural diversity in Europe.<sup>36</sup> Language matters are to be resolved unanimously by the Council of Ministers (Art. 217 of the Treaty of Rome, 1957), where every state jealously defends its official language(s).<sup>37</sup>

Lack of cultural and education policies has further hindered the development of European identity. Europe may seem inoffensive to defenders of the cultural identity of stateless nations, but as far as non-state languages are concerned, European Union policy is limited to declarations in the European parliament and cheap measures.<sup>38</sup> The fact that the issue is left to such institutions is proof of how little thought is given to the matter. Many Members of the European Parliament do not consider themselves dependent on regional electorates. Spain and France, in particular, are state wide circumscriptions with state wide voting lists, making it extremely difficult for 'regional' parties to obtain any seats. This may explain the often awkward and unnatural alliances forged by Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalists to muster the votes necessary for representation in Strasbourg.<sup>39</sup> There are always very few MEPs from minority nationalist parties.

When the European Parliament has not been busy with other affairs, it has found time to pass a number of resolutions on 'minority' languages. In 1982, the Bureau for Lesser Used Languages was founded following the initiative of some MEPs.<sup>40</sup> The minute budget given to the Bureau has always been in

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<sup>35</sup> See *Foundation Europe of Cultures 2002 (ed.): Regional identity and economic development. Report on the workshop, Leuven, 6 November 1996.*

<sup>36</sup> See Biscoe, Adam: *The European Union and minority nations*, in: Cumper, P./Wheatley, S. (eds.): *Minority rights in the 'new' Europe*, 1999, pp. 89-103.

<sup>37</sup> See Kraus, Peter A.: *Kultureller Pluralismus und politische Integration: Die Sprachenfrage in der Europäischen Union*, *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 27, 1998, 4, p. 443-458.

<sup>38</sup> See Corretja i Torrens, Mercè: *L'acció europea per a la protecció dels drets lingüístics*, Barcelona 1995; Petschen Verdaguer, Santiago: *Las minorías lingüísticas de Europa Occidental*, 2 vols., Gasteiz 1990.

<sup>39</sup> See Castro Ruano, José Luis de: *La circunscripción regional en la hipótesis de una ley electoral uniforme para el Parlamento Europeo*, *Anuario de Derecho Internacional* 10, 1994, p. 83-123.

<sup>40</sup> See the documents in Petschen Verdaguer, Santiago: *Las minorías lingüísticas de Europa Occidental: Documentos (1492-1989)*, vol. 2, Gasteiz 1990, pp. 699-703. See

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danger of succumbing to attack, particularly from France and Greece. The parliamentary resolutions tend to defend individual rights of minority language speakers and to invite the states to promote, subsidise, and protect those languages and their use in the media and the education system. From a minority nationalist point of view, European Parliament resolutions will continue to prove ineffective for so long as they evade the territorial dimension of the language issue. There are few indications anything will be done to redress this shortcoming.

There are EP-resolutions requesting the Commission to include non-state languages in European programmes like Erasmus, Kaleidoscope (cultural co-operation), Tempus (university co-operation), Ariane (translations), Raphael (cultural heritage), Media (audio-visual communication), Babel (dubbing and subtitles). That means that, in some cases, activities using or favouring those languages could receive subsidies. In some cases, particular governments, for example the Spanish one, have done their utmost to exclude minority languages from such schemes. The programmes are administered by different General Directorates of the Commission, and there has been no effort to co-ordinate those policies. For example, DG XVI is responsible for regional policies, but cultural co-operation is the responsibility of DG X, whilst youth and education is the area of DG XXII. Here, we even find a budget title (Heading B3 1006) for the Promotion of Regional and Minority Languages, used to finance a minuscule program, MERCATOR, for non-state language media.

But there is no coherent policy and the funding available is wretchedly low. The scant attention devoted to the problem in the European Union contrasts sharply and unfavourably with the concern shown in programmes like PHARE and TACIS aimed at Central and Eastern European states. These schemes show much greater awareness of minority languages than those aimed at the EU itself. It seems that stateless languages are still seen as an obstacle to achieving a single European market. Some official European Union documents and maps don't even include local place-names in those languages, even when their official status is recognised, as in Catalonia.

However, the EP has considered Catalan a slightly different case from that of other non-state languages.<sup>41</sup> In a 1990 non-binding resolution, the Parliament

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*Corretja i Torrens, Mercè: L'acció europea per a la protecció dels drets lingüístics, Barcelona 1995.*

<sup>41</sup> *Strictly speaking, there is a small state which has declared Catalan as its official language, but Andorra is not a member of the Union.*

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recognised a kind of special status for Catalan which has been included in some publication activities of minor importance.<sup>42</sup> During the last EP election campaign, Catalan Nationalist candidate Pere Esteve promised that CiU MEPs would demand full official status for Catalan ('la plena oficialitat del català') if they were elected in June.<sup>43</sup> In all EP resolutions on language questions, Catalan MEP's of all parties used to be at the forefront, but the Catalan government tiptoed around the issue and even the above mentioned EP-declaration was only secured after pressure from part of the general public in Catalonia and the Balearic islands.

Obviously, the language issue could be pressed in European institutions outside the Union. The Council of Europe for example, since its foundation in 1949, has issued a couple of non-binding resolutions on minority languages, minority rights in general, etc. The Council of Europe offers a real playground for those pressure groups dedicating themselves to defending such languages.<sup>44</sup> Often, they see their propositions discussed by the assembly, but watered down later, especially by the Council of Ministers of the member states. Although the propositions may result in a covenant or charter (e.g. on trans-border co-operation, in 1980; the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages, in 1992; and on the protection of national minorities, in 1995), the fight is still far from won. The document has to be signed by the necessary minimum of member states. They often sign only parts of the documents. Ratification is yet another problem. The current discussion in France on whether the state should ratify the European Charter is a good example; preparations for the Charter started in 1982!<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> See *Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament de la Presidència (ed.): El català reconegut pel Parlament Europeu, Barcelona 1991; Duch i Guillot, Jaume: El Parlament Europeu i la llengua catalana; Montserrat i Moliner, Antoni: La llengua catalana a les institucions europees; Argemí, Aureli: Les llengües en el marc de l'Europa Unida, all articles in: Schönberger, Axel/Stegmann, Tilbert Dídac (eds.): Actes del desè col.loqui internacional de Llengua i Literatura Catalanes. Frankfurt am Main, 18-25 de setembre de 1994, vol. II, Barcelona 1996.*

<sup>43</sup> See AVUI 19.5.1999.

<sup>44</sup> In total, 350 NGOs have advisory status.

<sup>45</sup> See Clotet i Miró, Maria-Angels: *La carta europea de las lenguas regionales o minoritarias, Revista de Instituciones Europeas* 21, 1994, 2, pp. 529-562; Corretja 1995; Jou, Lluís: *Protecció jurídica de les llengües europees, Revista de Catalunya, 1991, february, p. 206-210; Petschen, Santiago: Entre la política y el derecho: la Carta Europea de las Lenguas Regionales o Minoritarias, Revista de Estudios Políticos* 66, 1989, pp. 127-144; Clotet i Miró, Maria-Angels: *Incidència del*

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In addition, these documents refer to individual rights and not group rights. The problems of defining what a 'minority' and what a 'language' are remain unanswered. Nationalists who think that their Nation is entitled to the right to self-determination (even if they are not willing to exercise it) have problems in accepting terms like 'minority'. The abysmal differences in the situation of minority languages make coalitions between their defenders difficult. The Catalan government and governing parties, for example, are not at all keen to see their language (which has more speakers than some state-languages) be put on the same footing as Manx or Sorbian. In the cases of Occitania or French Catalonia, the Charter may offer some symbolical recognition by the French state, and perhaps even some support.

However, Catalan is defended by the autonomous government on a territorial basis. EP declarations and the resolutions and documents of the Council of Europe have little relevance to a widely-spoken non-state language like Catalan which, in the short run, is no longer threatened with extinction. In France, every conscious speaker of a minority language is eager that the government sign the Charter on the rights of regional and minority languages. In Spain, the government signed but then did nothing to ratify the agreement, even when pushed by nationalists in the Senate. But there is hardly any public discussion on the matter, even among Catalanists, who refuse to see themselves as a 'minority' and their language as a 'minority' language and only reluctantly accept Catalonia being labelled as a region.

If, as we have seen, regional governments such as the Catalan one are unwilling to press their languages on European institutions, one might reasonably ask if there is any point in co-operating with other regions on this matter. Not all regional co-operation schemes include national minorities or stateless nations. However, this is the case for the Working Group of the Pyrenees and the Euro-region on both flanks of the Mediterranean Pyrenees, to give just two examples.

The Working Community of the Pyrenees includes Navarre, the Basque Country, Aragon, Aquitaine, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées, the tiny state of Andorra (where Catalan is the official language), and Catalonia. At its inception in 1983<sup>46</sup> the French feared it would become a hotbed for pan-

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*conveni-marc per a la protecció de les minories nacionals en l'estatut de les llengües regionals o minoritàries, Revista de Llengua i Dret 24, 1995, pp. 99-136.*

<sup>46</sup> See Fernández Sola, *Natividad/Peralta Losilla, Esteban: El papel de la Comunidad de Trabajo de los Pirineos y su evolución en el contexto europeo de cooperación transfronteriza territorial, Revista de Instituciones Europeas 21, 1994, 2, p. 499-527; Ndiaye, Patrice: La coopération transfrontalière des collectivités*

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Basque and pan-Catalan activities. The concern was totally unfounded.<sup>47</sup> The group's main interest is to develop trans-Pyrenean communications. It was initially organised into nine thematic committees (now reduced to four). The group's budget was a mere 31.1 million pesetas in 1997. Ten million was spent on the annual assembly.<sup>48</sup> Not surprisingly, the Working Group's output is limited and its discussion of cultural and linguistic issues non-existent. The Group found itself hemmed by doubts concerning its legal status, the activities of competing French institutions (Commissariat à l'Aménagement du Massif Pyrénéen), its clumsy internal organisation, and finally, its minute budget. Other initiatives which were more closely aligned with EU programs and pursued similar goals to those of the Working Group further reduced the body's role.

The so-called Euro-region comprising the French regions of Midi-Pyrénées, Languedoc-Roussillon, and Spanish Catalonia is hardly a springboard for pan-Catalanist sentiment either, even if its capital is Perpignan, the capital of the French département Pyrénées-Orientales. This administrative unit roughly coincides with what the Catalans call Northern Catalonia, which the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659 tore away from the rest and which has formed part of the French state since then. As in the case of the Pyrenees Group, there is a whole range of official objectives but very little money to realise them. The main interest seems to be the High Speed Train.<sup>49</sup> With reference to French

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*décentralisées sur l'arc méditerranéen, Sciences de la Société 37, 1996, p. 151-169; Ndiaye, Patrice: Collectivités locales et frontière pyrénéenne: la coopération transfrontalière décentralisée en Languedoc-Roussillon, Paris 1993; Sanguin, André/Guiraud, Frédérique: Les Pyrénées: mort une frontière, naissance d'une charnière?, in: Goetschy, Henri/Sanguin, André (eds.): Langues régionales et relations transfrontalières en Europe, Paris 1995, p. 243-254.*

<sup>47</sup> "La frontera continua, ningú no demana que es toqui. L'Estat francès és l'Estat francès, l'Estat espanyol és l'Estat espanyol, però aquesta frontera s'ha d'afèblir molt i molt, de manera que allò que t'è d'absurd desaparegui del tot". (Pujol 1993, p. 270). Some years later, the Catalan daily AVUI published a road map where the state frontier was not marked. On initiative of the "prefet" of Pyrénées-Orientales, Bernard Bonnet (who later became notorious for his behaviour in Corsica), this was seen as a provocation and a minor diplomatic incident followed from this. See AVUI 21.3.1996.

<sup>48</sup> See DIARIO DE NOTICIAS 25.4.1997. The Working Group tried to make itself heard when it claimed INTERREG I and II funds, but states turned a deaf ear. See DIARI D'ANDORRA 18.4.1996 and DIARIO DE NOTICIAS 18.4.1996.

<sup>49</sup> See Euroregió-Euroregion. Midi Pyrénées, Languedoc-Roussillon, Catalunya, ed. Generalitat de Catalunya/Région Languedoc-Roussillon/Région MidiPyrénées, Barcelona 1993; Ndiaye: 1996. The Euroregion hails from 1991.

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and (to a lesser extent) Spanish government fears of pan-catalanism which might spread to other Catalan speaking areas in Spain like Valencia and the Balearic Islands, Catalan president Pujol spoke of senseless central government paranoia and emphasised that all participating regions belong to consolidated states.<sup>50</sup> Publications of the Euro-region are in Catalan and French; however the language of Occitania gets no mention.<sup>51</sup> When in 1992 a committee was set up to promote the learning of each partner's language, measures to disseminate Catalan and French were agreed. In some respects, pan-Catalan identity might even have been weakened by this interregional co-operation. Before the new scheme was put into action, the département Pyrénées-Orientales, that is roughly the Catalan part of the region Languedoc-Roussillon, had co-operated with the government of Spanish Catalonia. But after the Euro-region was founded, the département started co-operation with Girona province.<sup>52</sup> In reality, as in the case of the Pyrenees Working Community, the different administrative systems, competencies, and strategies of the partners limit the scope of this co-operation scheme. In 1995, Sanguin wrote: 'L'Eurorégion se cherche encore'<sup>53</sup>, and the same thing could be said today, with activities brought to a stop by rejection of the agreement between Languedoc-Roussillon president Jacques Blanc and the extreme right. It has to be remembered that these co-operation schemes cover only parts of Occitania. There is certainly a presence of Catalan while the use of Occitan is non-existent - a point which does not seem to worry the Generalitat one iota.

If the government does not address such problems in Europe, what can society at large do? In case of stateless nations without a regional government of their own, 'grassroots action' is the only option available.

National movements of non-state nations in the 70s co-operated actively against their states, or at least tried hard to do so. But those movements are no

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<sup>50</sup> *REGIO 7*, 5.7.1993.

<sup>51</sup> When asked by an occitanian interviewer how Catalonia helps Occitan, Pujol's answer made it clear that the only help to be expected by French Occitans was Catalonia's example as a model to realise its claims inside the state. (Interview given to *LA SETMANA*, reprinted in *AUE* 4.1.1998).

<sup>52</sup> It seems that in the 80s, culture and language were higher on the agenda of the co-operation between département and Generalitat than they are in the Euroregion (see Ndiaye 1993, p. 32). Remember that département and província reflect the territorial distribution of the central state, and that the abolition of the "província" has been on the Catalanist agenda.

<sup>53</sup> Sanguin/Guiraud 1995, p. 250.

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longer in a position to do much. Political parties and, in some places, institutions took the lead. It can even be argued that Catalan civil society at large, once strong, has been domesticated by its own government, political parties and public institutions. Catalan interest in supporting forlorn cases with small, idealistic movements is very low. Nevertheless, a lot of work to organise the movements of minorities and stateless nations in Europe is still performed by associations like the 'Centre Internacional Escarré per les Minories Etniques i les Nacions' (CIEMEN)<sup>54</sup>, and the Catalan government and the parties behind it seem to collaborate on some issues with CIEMEN, but one cannot say that the Catalan government backs all CIEMEN's policies and commitments.

If we now focus on international party activities, the ruling nationalist parties of Catalonia and the Basque Country refrain from any attempt to form an independence-minded international front.<sup>55</sup> The nationalist parties do not even fall into line in the European Parliament. The Bureau of Unrepresented European Nations was shortlived, the European Free Alliance (EFA) is weak, and has never been able to form its own parliamentary group. Catalanist MEPs who are elected on the common ticket of *Convergència i Unió* enter the liberal group if they are from *Convergència*, or the Christian-Democratic one, if they are from *Unió Democràtica*. Both prefer relations with state-wide parties, even if the European Liberal Democrats are not known for taking a very favourable stance on stateless nations. As for the Christian-Democrats, *Unió* and (until very recently) the Basque Nationalist Party PNV have always belonged to the European People's Party, even siding with the *Partido Popular*. Last May *Convergència*-Secretary Pere Esteve promised that CiU deputies in the next EP would create a group of MEPs drawn from nationalist parties but he also confirmed they would not leave their existing groups.<sup>56</sup> *Convergència*'s youth organization both participates in the International Federation of Liberal Youth Organisations and in a federation of young

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<sup>54</sup> See Argemí, Aureli: *Sobirania o submissió. Pobles i nacions sense Estat*, Barcelona 1993.

<sup>55</sup> See *L'Italia tra Europa e Padania, Limes-Rivista italiana di geopolitica* 3, 1996. For comparative research on several parties see Müller-Rommel, Ferdinand: *Ethno-regionalist parties in Western Europe: empirical evidence and theoretical considerations*, in: Winter (ed.): 1994, pp. 179-198; Seiler, Daniel-Louis: *Sur les partis autonomistes dans la CEE*, Barcelona 1990 (*Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials Working Paper 19*). The best work is Lynch, Peter: *Minority nationalism and European integration*, Cardiff 1996, but he excludes the Spanish cases.

<sup>56</sup> AVUI 19.5.1999.

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nationalists. Esquerra Republicana, marking the difference, sided much more with their opposite numbers in Scottish, Basque, and Flemish parties.<sup>57</sup>

There have been contacts between the Italian Northern League, Flemish Volksunie, Scottish National Party, Fianna Fail, Plaid Cymru, Unione di u populu Corsu, Partit Occitan, Union Démocratique Bretonne, Eusko Alkartasuna, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, and other smaller parties, so that an Italian author already speaks of an 'internazionale federalista-indipendentista'.<sup>58</sup> In spite of the existence of the EFA, this seems premature. The different parties do not agree on federalism or independence, on their participation in Europe as regions, on social policies, among others, whilst the phenomenon of the Lega Nord produced a great deal of controversy. Nobody now believes in a socialist Europe of the peoples, as in 1974, when the Charte de Brest united left-wing nationalists from Galicia, Ireland, the Basque Country, Wales, Northern and Southern Catalonia, Sardinia, and Occitania to attack 'internal colonialism'.<sup>59</sup>

It seems that the much older concept of 'ethnic federalism' still survives. The FUEV, the federalist union of ethnic communities of Europe, founded in 1949, still exists. It continues the work of the Congress of European Nationalities which existed between the wars.<sup>60</sup> Like its forerunner, there is still a lot of influence from ethnic Germans. The Sudetendeutsche, ethnic Germans expelled by the Czechs after the Second World War, and the pan-European movement of the conservative son of the last Austrian Emperor Otto von Habsburg (a MEP for the Bavarian CSU) and the Bavarian government which co-finances the 'Intereg'-Institute seem to exercise some influence. In spite of financial and personal problems, FUEV still claims to organise 70 associations and parties of ethnic minorities; it has advisory status in the Council of Europe. But it is not the only such organisation, since in 1985, the Catalan CIEMEN organised the Conference of stateless Nations of Western Europe (CONSEO), which still exists.

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<sup>57</sup> *Their youth organisation participated in EFA, today, Parti Démocratique des Peuples d'Europe (democratic party of the European peoples). See LE PEUPLE BRETON september 1998.*

<sup>58</sup> *Luverà, in: L'Italia... 1996, p. 40.*

<sup>59</sup> *See Beramendi, Justo G./Niñez Seixas, Xosé Manoel: O nacionalismo galego, Vigo 1995, p. 220.*

<sup>60</sup> *See Niñez Seixas, Xosé Manoel: Movimientos nacionalistas en Europa. Siglo XX, Madrid 1998.*

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If we leave aside those weak and heterogeneous European alliances of nationalist parties and organisations, there is still the possibility that nationalist claims, especially those which refer to language and culture, may be integrated within Non-Governmental-Organisation (NGO) programmes in these fields. It may even be of interest for identity politics if organisations from stateless nations can manage to be accepted by international organisations as national sections. The international PEN Club is an example of both phenomena. Its declaration in favour of the collective rights of peoples (shunning the word minority) was passed in 1996, and was heavily influenced by CIEMEN. But the final outcome may be just another another Council of Europe resolution.

The present campaign for direct Catalan membership in UNESCO is supported by the Catalan government but is rejected point-blank by the Spanish UNESCO-delegation. The campaign is based on the work of the private 'Centre de la UNESCO de Catalunya'. The Catalan government and its ruling parties might drop their support if this suited their purposes. NGOs tend to be left to fend for themselves when governments think that higher things are at stake. In the run up to the 1992 Olympic Games, the Catalan government seemed to support the popular Catalan Olympic Comitée (COC) which was striving for recognition and acceptance by the IOC of which the Catalan Samaranch was president. Some more or less prominent *Convergència* figures participated in COC but as the Games drew nearer the Catalan government and *Convergència* made a U-turn and Samaranch, opposed to recognition from the outset, put the issue off until after the Games, when it was killed by the IOC. Another example is also illustrative. When the Olympic Games started, a flag war was fought between *Omnium Cultural*, a nationalist NGO dedicated to the dissemination of Catalan culture, which distributed Catalan flags, and the Barcelona city council, which gave flags away with the city coat of arms. President Pujol and Maragall, the City Mayor, stopped 'their' respective troops.<sup>61</sup> In a stateless nation with a regional government like Catalonia, this shows the degree to which some aspects of civil society can be controlled or at least influenced by institutions and leading politicians. These activities may be useful mobilising instruments as long as they serve their purpose, and may be dropped if necessary. But in the long run, such antics may tend to create apathy and resignation among the general public.

Especially in cases where there is no regional administration or this is very feeble, it may be more important for nationalists that organisations like trade

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<sup>61</sup> See *Crexell, Joan: Nacionalisme i Jocs Olímpics del 1992, Barcelona 1994.*

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unions, employers federations or farmers' organisations accept the region as a basis for their organisations. But as empirical evidence shows, every organisation follows its own logic, and institutional conservatism is very strong.<sup>62</sup>

#### **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Non-state nationalisms differ in their capacity to mobilise and organise their people, as variations in party structure, and electoral success indicate. Besides, the degree of acceptance of nationalist claims by the general public and the institutional power and influence in their respective states differ. Depending on those variables, European integration has different effects on these nations and their respective nationalist movements. The success of the politics of identity in Europe depends primarily on the ability to mobilise at home, because only a strong base at home influences state governments and administrations. European activities, although they should not be underestimated, matter far less. The lower echelons of the European arena, which are relatively easy to access, are grist to the mill of political battles at home. Foreign examples have always been used by nationalist propaganda, as the influence of the Irish case on Basque, Catalan and Galician nationalism demonstrates. But Europe is of more than symbolic importance because some administrative power - and also money - is involved. Regional administration, where it exists, may capitalise on this, maybe to the detriment of nationalism. However, even if regional political and even cultural actors have free access to European institutions, that does not mean that European integration will save or promote a high degree of 'regional' cultural identity, even if the corresponding symbols are tolerated.

Stateless nations like Catalonia, with recognised regional administrations, strive (successfully) to give themselves a European, cooperative and pragmatical image, setting great store by technological and economic cooperation. They are not looking for effective co-operation with other stateless nations, in terms of voicing common nationalist grievances. Instead, they are content to complement the role of the states. Although they play the game, they may try to change the rules. It may thus well be that regional empowerment in the EU helps to divert possible separatism to regionalism. On the other hand, the common interest of the hundreds of European regions is limited, and even the Catalan partners in interregional cooperation have

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<sup>62</sup> See Lange, Niels: *Wirtschaft zwischen Regionalismus und europäischer Integration*, *WeltTrends* 11, 1996, p. 106-123.

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different particular objectives. That is one of the (minor) reasons why states have maintained a decisive role in the Union.

Catalonia may be less of a development coalition than 'Quebec Inc.'<sup>63</sup>, but there is a broad consensus between government and opposition for posing as a leading region in Europe. A broad but not deep Catalanism, not totally monopolised by one party, may work wonders in competing with other regions for inward investment and European funds.<sup>64</sup> 'Soft' nationalism has incurred no penalties so far. On the contrary: it is an asset for competition, but if too strong, may endanger collaboration with the state, which is essential for pursuing interest politics in Europe. On the other hand, if too weak, nationalism may lose its influence on state government. If the votes of minority nationalists decide which party governs the state, their claim may be heard, but they always run the risk of stirring up majority nationalism. Those situations require a high degree of control by the respective elites. The fear to provoke majority nationalism even inside the territory of the minority nation contributes to ensure basic co-operation by the minority nationalists. Europeanism may contribute to this.

Much has been said on the demise of nation-states as a result of globalisation. 'Nation' and 'state' may separate, there may be 'nationalism' which gives up claiming territoriality and sovereignty, perhaps to the point of returning to the kind of 'pre-national' situations characteristic for the Middle Ages.<sup>65</sup> Catalan government places considerable importance on its administrative competencies in the country and is trying to enhance them. But it is not seeking fully fledged nation-state status. In April, Pujol at a speech in Freiburg, Germany, defended the Catalan autonomy as a cohesive element not only for the Spanish state, but for Europe. He said that to accept the democratic legitimacy of the regions could be a form of recognition of the

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<sup>63</sup> *In Catalonia, workers and employers mostly organize in Spanish federations. See Keating, Michael: Nations against the state. The new politics of nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland, Basingstoke 1996, p. 155.*

<sup>64</sup> *As empirical research shows, political actors in northern regions associate "Europe of the Regions" and competitiveness, whereas in southern regions it is understood to mean cultural pluralism and nearness to the citizen. As with other issues, the European Union, in the North, is identified more with economy, in the South with politics. See for the empirical research Kohler-Koch et al. 1998.*

<sup>65</sup> *See Keating 1996 and McCrone, David: The sociology of nationalism, London 1998, last chapter.*

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right to self-determination.<sup>66</sup> He also stated that his government assumes the role of an international advocate of autonomy as an alternative to secessionist approaches.<sup>67</sup>

Catalonia provides us with the case of a nationalism which can rely on considerable general acceptance in Catalonia, which has bargaining power in the state capital, and which does not overstress identity markers which may create domestic problems beyond seeking consensus between the main parties. The political frontiers of Catalonia are also accepted by the majority of the nationalists. The most important identity marker of Catalanism, the Catalan language, is not high on the EU agenda. Surprisingly, it does not rank highly among the aims of Catalan foreign policy or even in the context of international cooperation of the governing parties of Catalonia. This identity issue is addressed mainly in the Catalan and the Spanish context, with the Catalan government refraining from putting its case before international forums. Catalan language and even culture are not the main issues for Catalan foreign policy. That leaves scope for party and public initiatives, which are influenced, at least in part, by the present government. These activities can be used to mobilise public opinion and dropped when convenient, but this runs the risk of creating general disenchantment with politics.

In other cases, decentralisation of EU-member states has been carried out without much pressure from below, depending on the interests of state governments and to counter the economic consequences of the economic attractiveness of neighbour regions or as a result of EU-politics and opportunities. In these cases, notably in France, 'soft' regional conscience may arise in the newly formed regions, and clash with minority nationalist projects like Occitania, based on language and culture. The EU offers opportunities to those administrative regions, but none to the linguistic ones. However, there is always the possibility of looking for small outlets for linguistic claims among the contradictions arising from different European policies, but it would be wrong to expect nationalist success without any interior mobilization.

In still other cases, for example in Wales, Europe may help strengthen the national factor, especially if pressure groups decide to act on the Welsh level.

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<sup>66</sup> *"com una forma de reconeixement del dret a l'autodeterminació i assegurar una participació més gran dels ciutadans."* AVUI 29.4.1999.

<sup>67</sup> *"el nostre govern ha assumit voluntàriament, el paper de defensor internacional de les autonomies territorials com a alternativa als plantejaments secessionistes."* AVUI 29.4.1999.

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If national conscience is as widespread as in the Welsh case, it can be a cohesive factor favourable for interregional competition for European money and inward investment. But to enforce an identity symbol like the Welsh language against strong opposition might well prove counterproductive in forging 'development coalitions'. In cases like this, Europe may help to nationalise, but not all symbols and kinds of national identity may profit. In this respect, one can agree with Keating's verdict that 'soft ties' are favourable for modernising a region, whereas 'strong ties' are an impediment.<sup>68</sup>

As an apparently 'unpolitical' project backed by the political and economical elites who always put markets first, European integration has failed to inspire much enthusiasm among the general population, but it has been widely accepted by the public. It may well be that there was no other way. Europe best suits a type of nationalism which uses the end of the monopoly of the nation-state to introduce a regional dimension to European policy but which falls short of creating new states. This nationalism may seek to mobilise regional elites to a limited extent in gaining backing for its policies but there is a danger that it might contribute to undermine parliamentary politics and engage in opaque 'Politikverflechtung' (interlocking politics) or multi-level governance. In this context, a region may well participate in the EU's elitist project but is wary of opening the flood gates of nationalist sentiment which could destabilise the situation.

Maybe we shall see more right-wing ethnic regionalism in the future. In many countries, the populist right is still professing strong state nationalism, and, sometimes, anti-europeanism. But there are politicians like Jörg Haider in Austria who are already talking of their vision of a 'Europe of the Regions', in which ethnic regions hold on against multicultural states. 'Europe of the ethnic groups' has already been used as an anti-immigration formula to defend 'white' Europe. To europeanise non-state nationalism, defend or awaken its democratic traditions as well as non-exclusive cultural identities may well be a way forward in countering such extremist views. However, a European project run by a closed elite and unresponsive to democratic precepts seems unlikely to enjoy much success in pursuing such a strategy.

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<sup>68</sup> Cf. Keating 1996. See for the Welsh case Jones, Ieuan Wyn: *Europe - the challenge for Wales*, Ynys Môn 1996; Keating, Michael: *The nations and regions of the United Kingdom and European integration*, in: Bullmann (ed.): *op. cit.*, p. 225-246; Rhodes, Rodney A. W.: *The europeanisation of sub-central government - the case of the UK*, *Staatswissenschaften und Staatspraxis* 3, 1992, 2, p. 272-286; Loughlin et al. 1998.

## **REVIEW: THE ALMANAC OF SCOTTISH POLITICS**

*Robert McLean*

Gerry Hassan and Peter Lynch, **The Almanac of Scottish Politics**, Politico's, 2001, ISBN 1902301 536. £30.00.

In the introduction to **The Almanac of Scottish Politics**, Gerry Hassan and Peter Lynch recall a recent report that came to the stunning calculation that each Scottish voter is now represented by 18 different people: one Westminster MP, one constituency MSP, seven regional list MSPs, eight MEPs representing Scotland in Europe and one local councillor. Political consultant Hassan and politics lecturer Lynch are perceptive observers of the Scottish political scene, and this fruit of their collaboration is a timely route map guiding its readers through the complex, multi-layered, structure that is now Scottish democracy.

Two thirds of the Almanac's 450 pages constitute a constituency by constituency guide to each of Scotland's 73 Westminster and Scottish Parliament constituencies, and the 8 Scottish Parliament regional seats. In each case Hassan and Lynch describe the constituency, trace its political and electoral history from 1945 to the present (where geographic continuity permits), detail the results of the 1997 general election and 1999 Scottish Parliament elections, and include a biography of the current MP and MSPs.

The remainder of the Almanac is given over to a series of useful tables, including:

- the socio-economic characteristics of Scottish constituencies;

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- Scottish general election and by election results since 1945;
- European election results since the introduction of direct elections in 1979;
- Scottish local government election results from 1974;
- Scottish referendum results from the Euro poll in 1975 and the devolution referendums of 1979 and 1997.

It also includes a history of opinion polling on voting intentions and preferred Scottish constitutional options. This allows for easy comparison between responses to pollsters and real votes that were cast in the privacy of the polling booth. Such comparisons should be compulsory reading for politicians suffering from inflated expectations spread by opinion poll results.

The Almanac includes a useful list of those who have served as Scottish Secretary and Secretary of State for Scotland since the post was first created as Scottish Secretary in 1885 in response to early demands for home rule. It also includes a list of the Scottish Executive as constituted at 29 October 2000, following the McLeish reshuffle caused by the death of Donald Dewar to whose memory Hassan and Lynch dedicate the book.

The concluding chronology of post-war Scottish politics dates from Dr. McIntyre's SNP by election victory in Motherwell in April 1945 to 25 January 2001 and the Executive's 'finessing' of its position on care for the elderly in response to a majority demand in the Scottish Parliament.

The Almamac is essential equipment for political transpotters, and political practitioners are sure to surreptitiously flick through the index to count their mentions. It deserves a wider market. General readers will find it informative, and many of the constituency and politician profiles are not without humour.

By definition, reference works of this nature date with every turn of the electoral cycle. This first edition will either be a one off, a snap shot of Scottish government at the turn of the millennium, or the first in a series regularly updating the evolving Scottish political scene. Will Hassan and Lynch inherit the mantle of Bochel and Denver? On the basis of this first edition of **The Almanac of Scottish Politics**, I think they might.

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