Christophe Solioz

The European integration of the western Balkans (Part II)[1]

Abstract

This final part of the author's keynote on the occasion of our 20th anniversary symposium, held earlier in 2018, draws the recent history of central and eastern Europe up to date. It then goes on to explore the deep-seated changes that the author believes to be required firstly if the EU is tackle the challenges of the 21st century; and secondly if south-east European integration is to have any meaning. The first part of the article discussed the twenty years of transition since the fall of the Berlin Wall, questioning in particular the 'turning point' rhetoric often applied to the fate of countries of the region and the European Union, and concluded that Europe is facing a 'polycrisis'. Now, the author focuses on the challenges presented by convergence and by economic and monetary union, as symbols of a trend towards a de-legitimising of the EU, and the rise of populism which has been bred from that. He then goes on to explore how a 'multiplex Europe' can be reawakened, proposing a new narrative for the Europeanisation process based on regionalism which, as he indicates, has firm roots in Europe's recent past.

Keywords: *western Balkans, EU integration, transition, convergence, populism, regionalism,*

Europe in crisis (2009-2018)

The end of the dream

In 2014, against the background of the simultaneous celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the post-communist transition (from 1989) and the tenth anniversary of EU enlargement to the east (2004), the assessment of Zsolt Darvas was, altogether, actually quite positive:

> While progressing at a slower pace than their capitals, the anniversary members' total economies have also generally converged towards the average of core EU countries since their accession, though there are some notable exceptions: Slovenia and Cyprus are now falling behind (…) and the Czech Republic and Hungary have not converged much in recent

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years. These country-specific differences likely reflect the varying ability of individual anniversary members to exploit the opportunities offered by EU membership.[2]

Assessing the value of economic integration for the 1992-2002 period across the EU-15 (thus not including CEE countries), the Bertelsmann Foundation adapted an index previously developed by König and Ohr. The Bertelsmann 'integration index' shows that, first, every country – except for Greece – has been able to achieve higher per capita income due to European integration; and, second, while some countries took lesser advantage from growing integration (as in Italy, Spain, Portugal and the UK), others have benefited significantly from it (Denmark, Germany, Austria and Finland).[3] In general, northern countries were the 'winners', while those in the south were the 'losers'.

Another study by Darvas also deserves attention. The author interestingly questions whether overall convergence since the mid-1990s has compensated for the dramatic reduction in per capita incomes during the transition years. His analysis delivers a surprising picture: of the 29 post-communist countries he considered:

> Only 14 had a higher GDP per capita (at purchasing power parity) in 2014 relative to the 10 advanced EU countries as compared to before the transition; while 1 had similar and 14 had lower.[4]

Thus, one-half of post-communist countries did not converge during the previous 25 years – among those that did were Poland, Albania, Slovakia and the Baltic countries.

There are four main factors which may explain this deficit in convergence (or deconvergence):

■ first, the introduction of the eurozone (1999) for countries having met the 'euro convergence criteria' (also called the Maastricht criteria)
■ second, the Union did not provide adequate resources for the 'big bang' enlargement after 2004
■ third, the 2007-08 crisis, that started as a financial crisis in the private banking sector and which developed in Europe simultaneously as a financial market, sovereign debt, economic/employment crisis and, last but not least, a major institutional crisis
■ fourth, the insufficient means made available through the EU's Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund.

2 Darvas, Zsolt (2014) *10 Years EU Enlargement Anniversary: Waltzing past Vienna*, 1 May. NB the following countries may be considered a part of 'core Europe': Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom. The less-developed economies of southern, central and eastern Europe and the Baltic belong to the 'periphery'.
3 Bertelsmann Foundation (2014) *20 Years of the European Single Market: Growth Effect of Integration* Policy Brief 2014.12, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation.
4 Darvas, Zsolt (2015) *The Convergence Dream 25 Years On*, 6 January 2015, available at: http://bruegel.org/2015/01/the-convergence-dream-25-years-on [last accessed 12 April 2018].

The Cohesion Fund seems a quite efficient tool to diffuse the EU's multiple regional co-operation programmes,[5] but it proves to be inadequate in tackling the situation of 'deficit countries', i.e. the increasing divide between countries in terms of indebtedness, growth and trade performance. The economic and political divide was acknowledged in the 1989 Delors Report, but fiscal federalism or the development of adequate instruments capable of dealing with economic shocks were not envisioned.[6]

These four factors also intensified the dualist nature of the European economy: thus the core-periphery divide.[7] 'Differentiated integration' (DI) produced a multi-floor Union of which Attila Ágh sees the existence of four:

- Core 1 – 'West-Continental': features the fully-effective membership of Euro-zone members with deep integration and full decision-making capacity
- Core 2 – 'Nordic EU': refers to countries that have followed (almost) all common EU policies except for Eurozone membership
- Periphery 1 – 'South': includes those countries that are Eurozone members at the legal level but have limited weight in actual EU decision-making processes
- Periphery 2 – 'East': corresponds to a group of new member states having fully marginal membership; even though some of them are Eurozone members, none of them – despite the growing influence of Poland – number among the real decision-makers.

Following Ágh, the consequence of the global crisis has resulted in an:

Increasing differentiation between both Core-1 and Core-2 and between Periphery-1 (South) and Periphery-2 (East),

in which:

The decline of Periphery-1 is much more dangerous for Core-1, given that the South has been much more involved in asymmetrical Eurozone integration; thus, for Core-1, much more is at stake in the South than in the East.[8]

The Union also shares some responsibility as it considered DI only as a legal-technical instrument, neglecting the other DI dimensions – i.e. respectively the political (decision-making process) and the polity (values) dimensions. In other words, 'quantitative catching-up' received priority, while 'qualitative catching-up' was neglected.[9]

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5 Solioz, Christophe (2017) *Thinking the Balkans Out of the Box. EU Integration and Regional Co-operation – Challenges, Models, Lessons* Baden-Baden: Nomos.

6 Delors, Jacques (1989) *Report on Economic and Monetary Union in the European Community* 17 April, p. 11 and p. 18.

7 Mangone, Jose M *et al.* (Eds.) (2016) *Core-Periphery Relations in the European Union* Routledge: London; and Attila Ágh (2016a) 'The core-periphery divide in the EU transformation crisis: challenges to the Visegrád Four' *Yearbook of the Institute of East-Central Europe* 14 (2):113-130.

8 Ágh (2016a) *op. cit.* pp. 120-121.

9 On the diversity of economic models in the peripheries, and on the difference between Periphery-1 and Periphery-2, see Béla Galgóczi (2016) 'The southern and eastern peripheries of Europe: Is convergence a lost cause?' in José M. Mangone *et al.* (Eds.) *op. cit.* pp. 130-145.

Nevertheless, in spite of all of these results, the 2007-08 crisis and the core-periphery divide, five countries from central and eastern Europe joined the eurozone: Slovenia (2007), Slovakia (2009), Estonia (2011), Latvia (2014) and Lithuania (2015); while others are committed to following suit. Actually, the Euro crisis prompted, instead of an east/west divide, a new north (core)/south (periphery) one – the westerns Balkans belonging to the latter.

Considering the catching-up of capital and intrastate divergences in the 'east', the trends referred in the previous article in this series can be confirmed. Warsaw, Bratislava and Prague have overtaken Vienna in terms of GDP per capita, while Budapest lags not far behind Vienna. However, regional divergence has widened. Poorer regions showed much weaker convergence in 2000-11.[10] Europe's cohesion policy and regional strategies are thus exhibiting results which are, if not poor then certainly only modest.

The overall positive assessment of the 'smooth' and 'successful' transformation and convergence processes in central and eastern Europe – getting 'remarkable achievements' and providing 'encouraging models'… to be applied elsewhere (particularly since the 2010s in southern Europe) – needs thus to be carefully checked, notably in the field of economics. Violaine Delteil and Vassil Kirov highlight:

> More than twenty five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and ten years after the Central and Eastern Europe Countries (CEECs) acceded to the European Union (EU), they have still not lost their specificities and have not resolved all of the challenges they inherited or faced later in the transition and EU integration processes. This is particularly true in the field of labour markets, work and industrial relations, in which the CEECs still show original patterns which contribute to the socio-economic heterogeneity of the enlarged European Union. […] Key difficulties concern notably: low wages, precarious work, instrumentalised social dialogue and strong and continuous labour emigration (at least for some countries).[11]

By 2018, with a thirty-year perspective on post-Wall history, a fine-tuned analysis would disclose another – more moderate and reasonable – narrative, one that speaks of 'relative success', 'mixed results and failure', 'success, fragility and diversity'. A more pessimistic – or perhaps more realist – one would characterise the same period as a failed try at democratisation, Europeanisation and the 'convergence dream'.[12]

Considering the years between 2001 and 2013, Marek Dąbrowski's convergence analysis distinguishes two sub-periods: the first, up to 2007-08, demonstrating a rapid catching-up (convergence); and the second, after 2008, showing either de-convergence or no further progress in convergence. Notably, in the latter case: the four new EU member states with the highest income per capita level in the early 2000s –
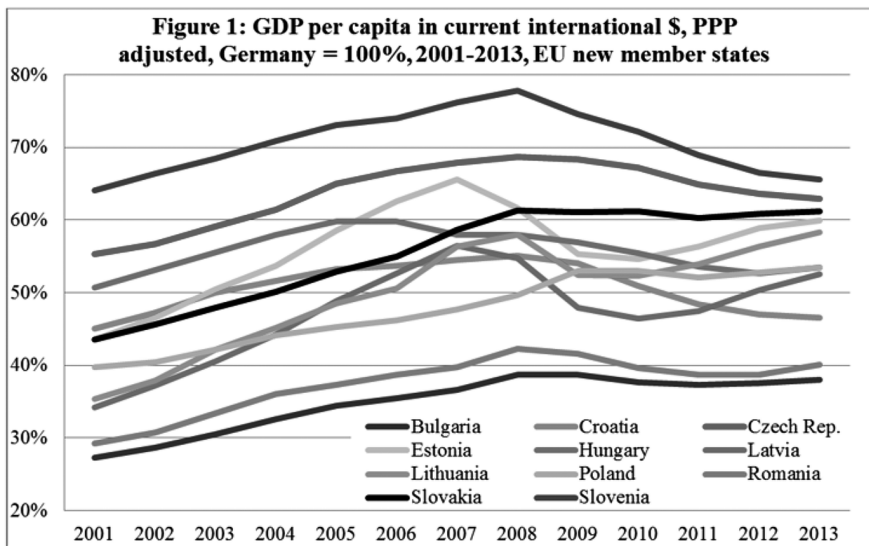
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10 Darvas, Zsolt (2014) *op. cit*.

11 Delteil, Violaine and Vassil Kirov (2017) 'Introduction: revisiting the transition' in Violaine Delteil and Vassil Kirov (Eds.) *Labour and Social Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe* London: Routledge, p. 1.

12 Ágh, Attila (2016b) 'The Deconsolidation of Democracy in East-Central-Europe: The New World Order and the EU's Geopolitical Crisis' *Politics in Central Europe* 12(3), pp. 7-36.

i.e. Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Croatia – recorded a continuous decline in their relative levels of GDP per capita, as compared to Germany, after 2008.[13] Only Poland, Slovakia and Albania managed to continue their convergence, although at a very slow pace.

Dąbrowski's analysis tends to show that, in the new economic and political environment, the EU's transformative power seems very limited. Again, the above-mentioned factors, especially the lack of adequate convergence, means that herein it plays a crucial role. Additionally, the European Central Bank's over-generalising ('one size fits all') policy does not take into account the high heterogeneity of eurozone countries. Accordingly, the Euro is becoming a heterogeneous currency.

Figure 1 – GDP per capita, Germany and EU new member states

Figure 1: GDP per capita in current international $, PPP adjusted, Germany = 100%, 2001-2013, EU new member states

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13 Dąbrowski, Marek (2014) *Central and Eastern Europe: Uncertain Prospects of Economic Convergence* 10 December, available at: http://bruegel.org/2014/12/central-and-eastern-eur ope-uncertain-prospects-of-economic-convergence [last accessed 12 April 2018]. See also Balázs Forgó & Anton Jevčák (2015) *Economic Convergence of Central and Eastern European EU Member States over the Last Decade (2004-2014)* European Economy Discussion Paper 01, Brussels: European Commission.

Figure 2 – GDP per capita, Germany and the Western Balkans

Figure 2: GDP per capita in current international $, PPP adjusted, Germany = 100%, 2001-2013, Western Balkan countries
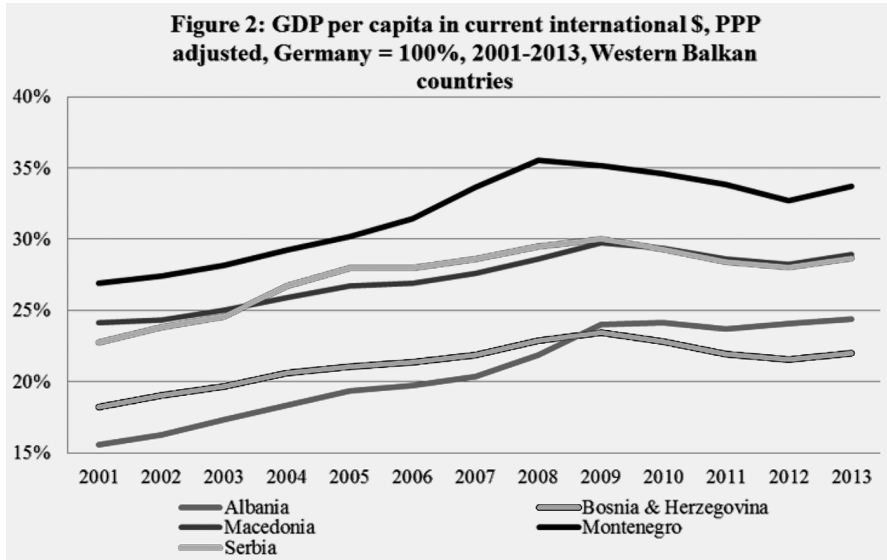
Source for both Figure 1 and Figure 2: Marek Dąbrowski (2014) *Central and Eastern Europe: Uncertain Prospects of Economic Convergence* 10 December.

Data based on IMF *World Economic Outlook* (October 2014).

All in all, instead of uniting the member states using it, the Euro is disuniting them. In Offe's words:

> The Euro has rendered European democratic capitalism more capitalist and less democratic.[14]

Europe's 'order' is at a stage of disorder. With the fate of the Euro, the Union has passed a point of no return. François Heisbourg, like Wolfgang Streeck, suggests taking a few steps back the better to leap forwards – i.e. abolishing the Euro and returning to national currencies. However, it is naive to think that abolishing the eurozone would solve the crisis without dramatically affecting the Union as such.[15] The 'trap' metaphor introduced by Claus Offe indicates that the Euro currency is an irreversible arrangement, as well as a very difficult one to reform.

Greater flexibility, differentiated measures, debt mutualisation, welfare state remedies and a European social model – including, notably, unemployment insurance, social assistance/poverty relief and a 'Youth Guarantee' – should be introduced in order to respond to particular country specifics, to the situation produced by

14 Offe, Claus (2015) *Europe Entrapped* Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 43.
15 See the possible consequences of the dissolution of the eurozone envisioned by Offe *ibid*. pp. 48-55. By the way, it is clear that Article 50 of the Treaty envisions a country leaving the EU, but there are no legal procedures which contemplate the abolition of the Euro.
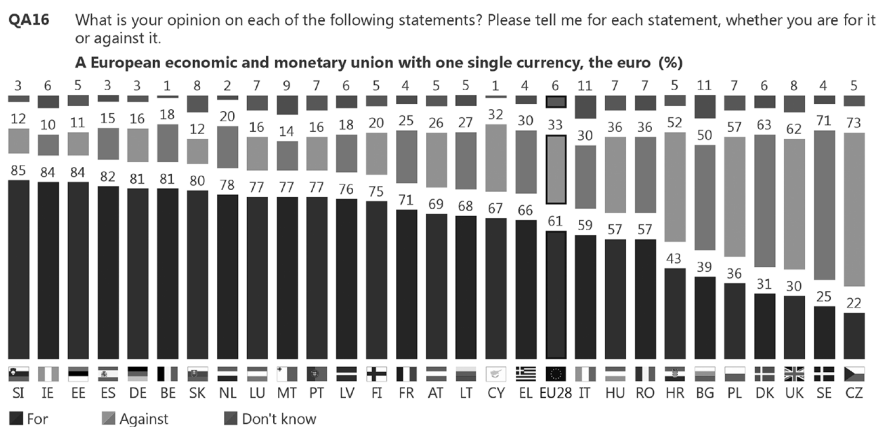
the financial crisis and also to win back citizens who have lost confidence in the European project. These and similar measures are inconceivable within the framework of a return to a national-focused arena for policy-making. They presuppose, instead, a strengthening of the supranational authority such that it:

> Would have to be turned into a supranational *democracy*, complete with mechanisms of territorial and functional representation, elected legislative bodies and accountable supranational governing agencies,

as Offe underlines.[16] Alas, it is precisely the senior level of the Union that is becoming more and more de-legitimised, being viewed as a supranational entity out of the control of citizens and depriving member states of their prerogatives. Notably, Europe as 'foreign rule' is being, quite erroneously, framed as a supranational state – as a matter of fact, the Union is a supranational *non*-state.

Strikingly, in spite of the increased loss in 'net support' in the EU,[17] most citizens are not thinking of abandoning the Euro. More so, the common currency enjoys popular, and consistently rising, support: as of November 2017, 74 per cent of eurozone respondents were for the Euro, the highest score since Spring 2004, while 61 per cent were in favour taken across the EU as a whole. Accordingly, a majority of respondents favour a European economic and monetary union with one single currency.[18]

Figure 3 – Support for European economic and monetary union with one single currency: national results

QA16   What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell me for each statement, whether you are for it or against it.
A European economic and monetary union with one single currency, the euro (%)

■ For   ■ Against   ■ Don't know

Source: *Standard Eurobarometer 88. First Results* European Commission: Brussels, November 2017, p. 37.

16   *ibid*. p. 119.
17   'Net support in the EU' has been calculated by the European Council on Foreign Relations subtracting those who 'tend to trust the EU' from those who 'tend not to trust the EU'. Torreblanca, José Ignazio and Mark Leonard (2013) *The Continent-Wide Rise of Euroscepticism* Policy Memo, Brussels: EFCR.
18   European Commission *Standard Eurobarometer* Nos. 34-88.

National results show, not surprisingly, that in seven countries, all located outside the euro area, a majority of respondents say they are against the Euro: the Czech Republic (73% 'against'), Sweden (71%), Denmark (63%), the United Kingdom (62%), Poland (57%), Croatia (52%) and Bulgaria (50%) – see Figure 3.

Paradoxically, there is actually a lack of democratic support for the political will to introduce effective remedies aimed at saving the currency – i.e. the measures which require additional transfers of sovereignty are, apparently, no longer welcomed. Looking to escape the 'trap', to counter the de-convergence and de-consolidation trends, the strategy of the transfer of sovereignty is, indeed, out-dated:

> Confidence in the quasiautomatic adaptation of a neofunctionalist sort and its basis in the 'permissive consensus' of constituencies is no longer warranted. The stakes involved have grown too high for that, and, instead of the neofunctionalist autopilot, 'real' agency needs to step in and to engage in 'political' (i.e. strategic, resourceful and contested rather than adaptive) action.[19]

Referring to the European Central Bank, the European Court of Justice and the European Commission, Fritz Scharpf highlights that it is precisely those EU institutions which have the greatest impacts on the daily life of people which are the ones farthest removed from democratic accountability.[20]

Thus, the 'trap' closes as the ECB is currently not in a position to acquire new competencies because European Monetary Union (EMU) has already removed crucial instruments of macroeconomic management from the control of democratically-accountable governments – and will thus not be permitted to do so again. Emphasising the relationship between economic crisis and the crisis of democratic legitimacy, Scharpf pinpoints:

> EMU has systemically caused a destabilizing of the macroeconomic imbalances that member states found difficult or impossible to counteract with their remaining policy instruments. And even though the international financial crisis had its origins beyond Europe, EMU has greatly increased the vulnerability of some member states to its repercussions. Its effects have undermined the economic and fiscal viability of some EMU member states and have frustrated political demands and expectations to an extent that may yet transform the economic crisis into a crisis of democratic legitimacy. Moreover, present efforts by EMU governments to 'rescue the euro' will do little to correct the economic imbalances and vulnerabilities, but are likely to deepen economic problems and political alienation in both the rescued and the rescuing polities.[21]

Additionally, various built-in structural imbalances related to the European integration process need to be acknowledged:

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19   Offe (2015) *op. cit.* p. 57.
20   Scharpf, Fritz M (2006) *Problem Solving Effectiveness and Democratic Accountability in the EU* Vienna: Institute for Advanced Studies.
21   Scharpf, Fritz M (2011) *Monetary Union, Fiscal Crisis and the Preemption of Democracy* Max-Planck Institute for the Study of Societies Discussion Paper 11.11, Köln, p. iii.

- first, economic policies have been progressively Europeanised, but social protection policies (social welfare policies) have remained at national level. This explains the increasing 'perverse' asymmetry between policies promoting market efficiencies and those promoting social protection and equality[22]
- second, the current crisis has amplified citizens' perceived 'space inconsistency': political measures are required to apply locally and not 'far away'
- third, classical 'time inconsistency': short-term strategies are welcomed, but citizens resist and obstruct long-term ones.

After the 2004 Constitution debate, the 2007-08 crisis and the current de-convergence, de-consolidation and de-democratisation period, the EU membership perspective of the western Balkans is more distant.[23] Not only for the Balkans, but also for the over 500 million people living in EU member states, 'the European dream' is now over.[24] Indeed, Eurostat data shows a significant decrease in citizens' support for Europe (from 48 to 31 per cent), while negative views almost doubled between 2007 and 2012 (from 15 to 28 per cent).[25]

Ostensibly, the early warnings went unnoticed. Notably, Edgar Morin's cautious and forewarning formulation from 2002 – thus, well before the 2007-08 crisis and the 2015 European migrant crisis and outburst of populism:

> I am afraid Europe will actually stall, even dissolve, because my assumption is that what does not regenerate degenerates. If Europe does not regenerate, she will degenerate. The possibility of virulent neo-nationalisms is one of the existing degeneration factors. To what extent these neo-nationalists' manifestations eventually prevail, in different European countries, remains unknown. […] Reasonable predictions today exclude the return of past fascism to power, but forms of neodictatorships, neo-fascisms, post-fascisms, etc. cannot be excluded. One cannot exclude an intermediary neo-authoritarian system in Russia which, thanks to a pluralistic party government, cannot be totalitarian any more.[26]

Fifteen years later, Ivan Krastev observes that crisis of identity and lack of confidence have instilled an atmosphere of 'end of reign':

> I'm someone who believes that the disintegration train has left Brussels's station — and who fears it will doom the continent to disarray and global irrelevance. […] It may cause the breakdown of liberal democracies on Europe's periphery and usher in the collapse of several

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22 Scharpf, Fritz W (2002) 'The European Social Model. Coping with the Challenge of Diversity' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40(4): 645-670; Fritz W. Scharpf (2010) *Community and Diversity. Institutions, Policies and Legitimacy in Multilevel Europe* Frankfurt/New York: Campus, pp. 242-243.

23 There is increasing public support for further enlargement (42%) but, nevertheless, more citizens are against it: 47%; see European Commission (2017) *Standard Eurobarometer* No. 88, September.

24 Rifkin, Jeremy (2004) *The European Dream* New York: Penguin.

25 Figures from *Eurobarometer*, various, 2004-2012. See Leonard, Mark and José Ignazio Torreblanca (2013) 'Le choc des démocraties' *Le Monde* 25 April, p. III.

26 Morin, Edgar (2002) 'European Civilization. Properties and Challenges' in Mehdi Mozaffari (Ed.) *Globalization and Civilizations* London: Routledge, p. 148.

existing member states. Political, cultural, and economic cooperation won't evaporate, but the dream of a Europe free and united probably will.[27]

Might the European dream be lurching towards nightmare?[28] Certainly, the Union's *finalités* have lost their political appeal while Euroscepticism gains in political strength. A spectacular shift from light to dark has happened, captured by Timothy Garton Ash's exclamation:

Ichabod! Ichabod! The glory has departed from our common European home.[29]

An outcry echoing the, albeit naïve, 1989 narrative full of enthusiasm, visions of future glory and a future of liberty and prosperity.

Paradigm change

The multi-faceted crisis has radicalised criticism of the Union. Increasingly, citizens are turning away from the European project. Beyond the EU and the global economy, what is at stake is the fate of Europe, of democracy and of 'open society'.

Jan Zielonka spotlights the common denominator of 'counter-revolutionary politicians', often called populists:

They are against the order installed after the 1989 revolution. They attack not only those who ruled Europe after 1989, but also their key political projects: European integration, constitutional liberalism and neo-liberal economics.[30]

Accordingly:

The real contest is between the winners of the post-1989 revolution and those who intend to topple them and dismantle the post-1989 system. The latter may well be 'populist', they may form tactical alliances, they may be neo-nationalists or post-Marxists, but they are first of all counter-revolutionaries with a mission.[31]

Not only politicians, but also experts and intellectuals currently rank under that banner. Intellectuals were mostly supportive of the Europe project in the 1920s and after WWII, hostile during the immediate Cold War years and sympathetic in the 1970s, but nowadays they adopt hyper-critical positions targeting the post-national paradigm, viewing the EU as a post-democratic construct ignoring the nation-state,

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27 Krastev, Ivan (2017) *After Europe* Philadelphia: Pen Press.

28 Heisbourg, François (2013) *La fin du rêve européen* Paris: Stock.

29 Ash, Timothy Garten (2017) 'Is Europe Disintegrating?' *New York Review of Books*, 19 January.

30 Zielonka, Jan (2018) *Counter-Revolution. Liberal Europe in Retreat* Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 10.

31 *ibid*. p. 14.

even thinking that the EU has outgrown politics.[32] There is nothing really new in this: the criticisms coined in the 1950s are reloaded: the 'a-democrat Monnet'; the virtuous national *demos*; and the shadows of Empire – often a synonym for *Anschluss* or the 'Fourth *Reich*'.[33]

The reality check is stunning. How can we ignore the alarming pervasive trend towards democratic backsliding in the 'western Balkans'? How can we overlook the establishment of illiberal regimes in Hungary and Poland? How can we disregard, almost everywhere in Europe, the rise of aggressive right-wing populism[34] and far-right nationalist parties advocating an exclusionary and monolithic conception of what it means to belong to a given 'people' (*Volk*)?

Election results show the progress of populists in almost all EU countries. Looking at presidential elections – in 2006 in Bulgaria: 21.5 per cent; in 2010 in Austria: 20.5 per cent; and in 2017 in France: 33.9 per cent. Concerning legislative elections – in 2005 in Poland: 19.4 per cent; in 2007 in Denmark: 13.7 per cent and in Finland: 14.1 per cent; in 2010 in the Netherlands: 10.1 per cent; in 2012 in Romania: 13.8 per cent; in 2017 in Austria: 26 per cent, in Czech Republic: 40.4 per cent and in Germany: 12.6 per cent; in 2018 in Italy: 37 per cent and in Hungary: 49.3 per cent.

Beyond the figures, Europe today is home to intolerance, chauvinism and xenophobia; and, more so, to open, unrestrained hate speech. Considering the case of central and eastern Europe, not foreign immigrants, but national minorities, seen as protected by 'Brussels', are targeted – such as Roma in Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria; Hungarians in Romania; and Turks in Bulgaria.[35] Furthermore, the recent refugee influx represents a population increase of only 0.2 per cent in the EU – compared to more than 10 per cent in Jordan and 25 per cent in Lebanon.[36]

Totem and not taboo. Populism is infallibilist. Impressively, those active in these movements are sure of themselves; they have no doubts.[37] Meanwhile, those standing for democracy, the liberal consensus and a more integrated Europe – core values meanwhile transformed into weaknesses – are plagued by questions and doubts as

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32 The French political philosopher Pierre Manent illustrates this viewpoint: Pierre Manent (2013) *A World Beyond Politics? A Defense of the Nation-State* Princeton: Princeton University Press; and Margaret Canovan (1996) *Nationhood and Political Theory* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. For a critical review of the various arguments, see Bernard Bruneteau (2018) *Combattre l'Europe. De Lénine à Marine Le Pen* Paris: CNRS, pp. 227-278.

33 Hartrich, Erwin (1980) *The Fourth and Richest Reich* New York: McMillan.

34 See Jan-Werner Müller's conceptual analysis of populism as the 'shadow' of democracy: Jan-Werner Müller (2016) *What is Populism?* Philadelphia: Pen Press.

35 Nacu, Alexandra (2009) 'L'émergence de la « question rom » en Roumanie et en Bulgarie', *Tumultes* 32-33, pp. 191-216. We may mention that, while 100 000 Jewish Hungarians are stigmatised, ethnic Hungarians living abroad (among them 1.4 million in Romania and 530 000 in Slovakia) are not perceived as 'foreigners'; they may even easily acquire dual citizenship and benefit, from 28 December 2017, from a budget of €448.7m.

36 Data source from UNCHR. See Lorenza Errighi and Jörn Grisse (2016) *The Syrian Refugee Crisis Labour Market Implications in Jordan and Lebanon* Discussion Paper 029, May, Luxembourg: European Commission.

37 Emcke, Carolin (2016) *Gegen den Hass* Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.

never before. Quibbling about the ups and downs of the EU, facing the current 'EU crisis', some insist on going ahead with an integration strategy that has become, in the meantime, obsolete; while others debate Europe's fragility or even consider a possible EU disintegration process.[38]

Seemingly, right-wing anti-integration populists have succeeded in imposing their viewpoint, consisting of a presentation of the EU as an agency of foreign rule against which the nation-state must defend itself. Or perhaps this might be a left-wing critique of integration: against the background of an analysis of the changing relationship between capitalism and democracy, and the proliferation of post-democracy tendencies, i.e. the Union's 'democratic deficit', Wolfgang Streeck commits to the re-nationalisation of economic and monetary policies as well as for the revival of the nation-state.[39] Albeit successful in different circles that might hardly agree on common strategies, these political narratives – framed only in national terms – are unable to break the locks of the 'trap'.

This kind of 'methodological nationalism' relies on a one-dimensional understanding of the relationships between the nation-state and the supranational ('the neoliberal-supranational Leviathan'),[40] disregarding other levels. More fundamentally, both the above-mentioned, albeit diverse, narratives are framed in terms of a domination paradigm.[41] All other possible discourses, of European integration, of the principles of solidarity and cosmopolitism, are thus marginalised by an epistemology intended to police 'deviations'. What matters instead is, in Donna Haraway's words, to:

> Craft a poetic/political unity without relying on a logic of appropriation, incorporation and taxonomic identification.[42]

Haraway's subtle *Manifesto for Cyborgs*, developed in another context, is correctly placed here as the cyborg simulates politics, paving the way to a much more potent field of operations. Her sound critique reads as follows:

> The theoretical and practical struggle against unity-through-domination or unity-through-incorporation ironically not only undermines the justifications for patriarchy, colonialism, humanism, positivism, essentialism, scientism and other unlamented -isms, but all claims for an organic or natural standpoint. I think that radical and socialist/Marxist feminisms have also

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38   Of course, when discussing the multiple resistances and oppositions to the various federalist approaches to Europe, a detailed analysis should consider the long-term perspective of history. The term 'eurosceptic' was introduced in 1985 and the recent wave of criticism of the EU started in the 1990s, but the first waves of criticism trace back to the 1900-1950s. See Bruneteau (2018) *op. cit.*

39   Streeck, Wolfgang (2014a) *Buying Time: The Delayed Crisis of Democratic Capitalism* London: Verso.

40   Streeck, Wolfgang (2014b) 'Small State Nostalgia?' *Constellations* 21 (2): 213-221.

41   For a thorough critique of the domination paradigm, see Donna Haraway (1985) *A Manifesto for Cyborgs* in Donna Haraway (2004) *The Haraway Reader* New York: Routledge, pp. 7-46.

42   *ibid*. p. 15.

undermined their/our own epistemological strategies and that this is a crucially valuable step in imagining possible unities. It remains to be seen whether all 'epistemologies' as Western political people have known them fail us in the task to build effective affinities.[43]

Our final section attempts to scrutinise how this viewpoint may enable us to un-lock the 'trap'.

Manifold are the visions, prospects and calls discussed in innumerable working papers, op-eds and academic publications. Nevertheless, the question: 'What is to be done?' must not undermine a more crucial one: 'Is there anyone to do it?' This is precisely the starting point of Claus Offe's thoughts on an entrapped Europe:

> The observation is that the crisis has largely paralyzed or silenced the forces and sources of constructive remedial agency, which are capable of *implementing* strategies and changes by which the crisis might eventually be overcome and its repetition precluded. Contrary to what is claimed by Marxian analysts and also self-confident technocrats, the crisis does not *breed* but rather *paralyzes* the very forces that might be capable of overcoming it; it disables agen-cy rather than activating dynamics of learning and the capacity for resilience. The present crisis has deactivated potential crisis managers and agents of change.[44]

Attempting to answer his own question as to 'Who might liberate Europeans from the trap', Offe reviews the potential of various agents: the Union's citizens; EU agencies; social and political forces; or the benevolent leadership of either one coun-try (Germany) or otherwise a small group of them. Their respective capacity for agency looks bleak:

> Taken together, the above brief (yet complete, I believe) list of arguments 'for' the EU and its further (democratic) integration is not sufficiently powerful in its political appeal to allow us to predict a sustained and robust alliance of popular political forces, preferences, and po-litical parties to be inspired by any mix of them. For the EU also has its intensely and widely perceived flaws, which are highlighted and put into sharp relief by the crisis itself.
> […]
> The overall picture indicates that political dispositions for action concerning the Euro zone and the further course of European integration are highly fragmented and deeply divided along the left/right, national/supranational and creditor/debtor country axes. The result is a pervasive paralysis of agency. [45]

The only light at the end of this tunnel is Offe's hope that concrete policies in the field of social policies may mobilise:

> A kind of agency capable of carrying out viable responses to the crisis.[46]

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43 *ibid*. p. 16.
44 Offe (2015) *op. cit*. p. 2.
45 Offe (2015) *op. cit*. p. 76 and p. 89, respectively.
46 Offe (2015) *op. cit*. p. 121.

As pertinent as this might be, it is indeed quite 'thin' when we remind ourselves that it is the Union's integration process that is at stake. The 'trap' metaphor suggests there might be no way out of the labyrinth, other than to follow Zygmunt Bauman's advice to view Europe as *An Unfinished Adventure*.[47]

Awaking and facing a multiplex Europe

> For us, who owe it to a revolution and the resulting foundation of an entirely new body politic that we can walk in dignity and act in freedom, it would be wise to remember what a revolution means in the life of nations. Whether it ends in success, with the constitution of a public space for freedom, or in disaster, for those who have risked it or participated in it against their inclination and expectation, the meaning of revolution is the actualisation of one of the greatest and most elementary human potentialities, the unequalled experience of being free to make a new beginning, from which comes the pride of having opened the world to a *Novus Ordo Saeclorum*.[48]

Pursuing the chosen sequencing approach, the end of the EU dream should be logically followed by an 'awaking' – a key concept of Walter Benjamin's dialectical dream theory. Transposing Freudian dream understanding from the individual subject to the collective, Benjamin views the 'awaking' dialectically as a synthesis of 'dream consciousness' and 'waking consciousness:

> Then the moment of awakening would be identical with the 'now of knowability' in which things put on their true – Surrealist – face.[49]

Benjamin's approach was an analytical attempt to awaken from the nightmare of fascism. Nowadays, the EU finds itself in the middle of the ford: the EU dream is over and the post-crisis future belongs to the 'not yet' (Ernst Bloch),[50] and so the Union is experiencing the very moments of collective awakening.

The previous sections in this work highlighted, on the one hand, the European Union's multi-level heterogeneity and, thus, the growing differentiated integration; and, on the other, the omnipresence of 'methodological nationalism' and the difficulty of thinking beyond that. Admittedly, Michel Vauchez's 'methodological Europeanism' approach attempts to reframe the European project through the *acquis*.[51] Very unfortunately, he does not really depart from the nation-state narrative. This

47   Bauman, Zygmunt (2004) *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure* Cambridge: Polity Press.
48   Arendt, Hannah (2018) 'The Freedom to Be Free. The Conditions and Meaning of Revolution' *Thinking Without a Bannister, Essays in Understanding 1953-1975* New York: Schocken Books, p. 385.
49   Benjamin, Walter (2002) *The Arcades Project* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 463-464. See also Alexander Gelley (2015) *Benjamin's Passages, Dreaming Awakening* New York: Fordham University Press.
50   See Jamie Owen Daniel and Tom Moylan (Eds.) (1997) *Not Yet. Reconsidering Ernst Bloch* London: Verso.
51   See Antoine Vauchez (2015) 'Methodological Europeanism at the cradle' *Journal of European Public Policy* 37(2): 193-210.

section starts with a short introductory note on 'Europe' before providing an overview of some key aspects of regionalism in Europe, focusing on south-east Europe. Accordingly, a new narrative of the Europeanisation process is proposed, while our conclusion attempts to frame a new understanding of a 'multiplex Europe' within a new geopolitical environment.

The de-borderisation of Europe

What most can neither stand nor really apprehend is the very fact that Europe is defined not by its geographic nor by its historical borders – Europe is, indeed, a notion with vague territorial boundaries and changing historical borders. Edgar Morin recalls that 'Europe' as a concept defies precise definition in terms of space and time:

> Europe is an uncertain notion, born of confusion, with vague borders, a shifting geometry, and subject to slippage, breaks and metamorphoses. What is therefore needed is to probe the idea of Europe precisely where it is uncertain, blurred, and contradictory so as to reveal its complex identity.[52]

Morin goes on considering Europe as a never accomplished project characterised by its metamorphoses – a concept that implies both continuity and transformation:

> Modern Europe appeared by metamorphosis, like a winged insect emerging from its chrysalis and taking flight out into the world. […] Modern Europe is the product of a metamorphosis, and it has continued to live by metamorphoses: from a Europe of states to a Europe of nation-states; from a balance-of-powers Europe to a Europe of chaos and violence; from a trading Europe to an industrial Europe; from an apogean Europe to an abyssal Europe; from a Europe mistress of all the world to a province Europe under guardianship. Thus, Europe's identity is to be defined not despite its metamorphoses, but in its metamorphoses. This metamorphic identity subsists in the accelerating change that, in a unique and prodigious way, characterizes European history from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, a time Europe experienced as a devastating cyclone. Modern Europe has never lived except in motion. Its being has never been other than as accelerated change.[53]

Once characterised by limitlessness, the European project was later perceived as a successful model for the global world,[54] but Europe faces nowadays the limits of its identity in a new geopolitical context. In the late 1980s, Morin was among the very few who predicted that the twenty-first century would not belong to Europe – envisioning that Europe was no longer the centre of the world and would, instead, become a sort of periphery. Against the current geopolitical background, Europe

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52 Morin (2002) *op. cit*. p. 126.
53 *ibid*. pp. 128-129.
54 Among many symptomatic cases, we may mention here Mark Leonard (2005) *Why Europe Will Run the 21st Century* London: Fourth Estate.

must think itself both as periphery and as 'meta-nation' – instead of misfortune, this may well represent its lifeline.[55]

Today, we may reframe Morin's narrative, saying the EU is increasingly facing multi-dimensionality and fluidity – multi-actor, multi-level and multi-scalar processes are forming a complex geometry of interlocking networks. Janine Wedel pinpoints that we live in a world of flexibility:

> The new players and networks of power and influence do not restrict themselves to activities in any one arena. Rather, through their activities, they connect state with private, bureaucracy with market, political with economic, macro with micro, and global with national, all the while making public decisions — decisions backed by the power of the state.[56]

Accordingly, the European integration process must take into account the 'flex nets' and 'network power'.

This issue is crucial for the Union if it wants to gain relevance, and even more so for south-east European states as they may play a key role in a pan-European framework given their geo-strategic position – bridging the Danube region, central and eastern Europe, western Asia and the Russian Federation. What should be borne in mind is that south-east Europe is a 'region of overlapping regions'.[57] Indeed, south-east Europe is not a homogeneous region but, rather, a multi-faceted network linked to other networks of regions. This is best exemplified by regional co-operation schemes which are evolving inside but also outside the EU in the direction of an inter-penetration between the interior and exterior of states, virtually producing a 'de-borderisation'[58] as well as, at the same time, a 'nostalgia for roots and walls'[59] – as illustrated by five out of fifteen EU transnational co-operation programmes (Interreg, Strand B) targeting south-east Europe (see Map 1). Of course, regional co-operation initiatives show cultural, contextual and time sensitivities. They evolve, change, adjust, develop and, sometimes, even disappear. Earlier, old, new and comparative regionalisms represent a way to capture the fluidity and history of regions (see also Table 1).[60]

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55   Compare to Tony Judt's '(…) the twenty-first century might yet belong to Europe' in Tony Just (2005) *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* London: William Heinemann, pp. 7-8; 799-800. See also Edgar Morin (1987, 1990) *Penser l'Europe* Paris: Gallimard, p. 231. This idea was reloaded in Edgar Morin and Mauro Ceruti (2014) *Notre Europe. Décomposition ou métamorphose* Paris: Edition Fayard, p. 13-14.
56   Wedel, Janine R (2009) *Shadow Elite* New York: Basic Books, pp. x–xi.
57   Gligorov, Vladimir (1998) 'Trade and Investment in the Balkans' in Vladimir Gligorov and Hermine Vidovic (Eds.) *On the Way to Normality: The States on the Territory of Former Yugoslavia in the Postwar Period* Vienna: wiiw Paper No. 250, p. 2.
58   Beck, Ulrich (1996) *The Reinvention of Politics* Cambridge: Polity.
59   Hassner, Pierre (2002) 'Fixed Borders or Moving Borderlands? A New Type of Border for a New Type of Entity' in Jan Zielonka (Ed.) *Europe Unbound: Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of the European Union* London: Routledge, pp. 38-50.
60   See our review of various regional programmes and initiatives in Solioz (2017) *op. cit.*

Map 1 – Transnational co-operation programmes involving SEE (Strand B – 2014-2020)
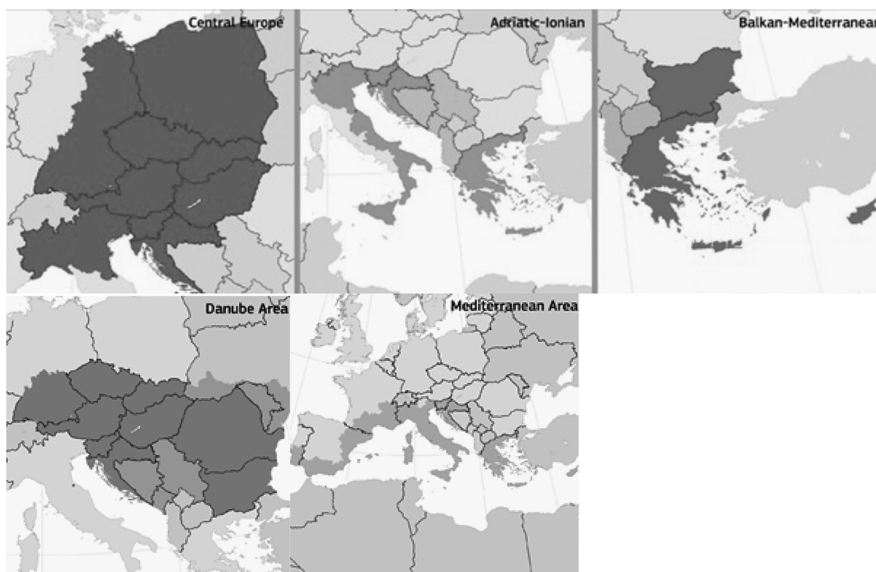
Source: InfoRegio.

Only a flexible architecture and strategy may overcome what could be viewed as the new dividing lines between EU member states encompassing the latest enlargement, the 'would-be' (thus, south-east European) EU members and those countries which are explicitly precluded from EU accession – such as Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the Caucasian states. New strategic thinking is also needed in order to be able to cope with the greater complexity resulting from, firstly, relations among south-east European countries (sub-regional co-operation and multiple bilateral issues) and their respective partnerships with the EU; and, secondly, the co-existence of numerous programmes – such as the pre-accession process, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the strategic partnership with the Russian Federation, numerous bilateral agreements, various action plans and the wide range of EU and Council of Europe cross-border, transitional and inter-regional programmes.

Map 2 – Europe of variety
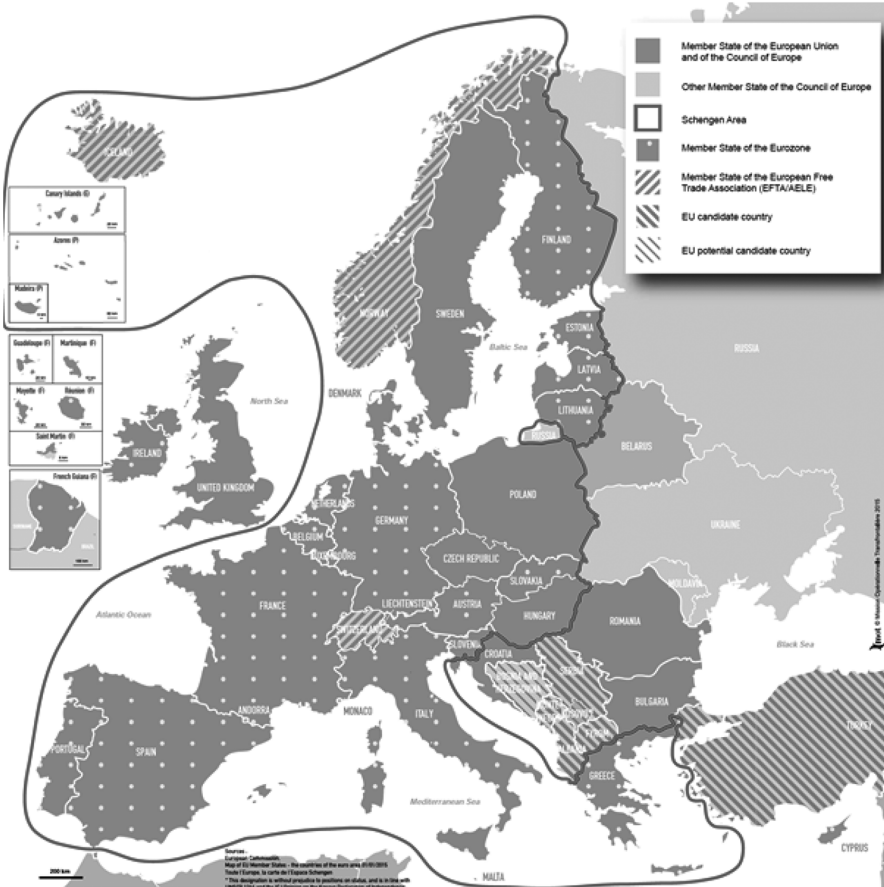
Source: European Commission (2015) *Territorial Cooperation in Europe. A Historical Perspective*
Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 23.

Beyond the mere EU, both the European integration and the regional co-opera-
tion processes thus require flexibility. Given that, in addition, regions are not often
on the radar, we ought to list here the main territorial configurations and institutional
frameworks which are shaping regional co-operation in Europe: the Council of Euro-
pe (CoE); the European Union (EU); the Schengen area; the Eurozone; the European
Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); the European Economic Area (EEA); the Organisa-
tion for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); the European Free Trade As-
sociation (EFTA); the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA); the Energy
Community; and UNECE.

Map 2 captures part of this: it provides an idea of a Europe as a complex multi-layered structure involving different types of partly-overlapping integration and territorial co-operation schemes of varying depths and degrees of institutionalisation. Europe is thus already today a multi-level and multi-floor entity with plurilateral governance and multi-speed arrangements.[61]

Multiple and hybrid membership

Despite the rhetoric and the many conferences with their (self-) reassuring statements and promises, the accession prospects for south-east European countries seem unambiguously bleak. The enthusiasm and political will have evaporated and, most crucially, EU policy and strategies have failed to acknowledge the emerging new world order.

But has nothing really changed in the last two decades? On the one hand, no: Slovenia (May 2004) and Croatia (July 2013) have become fully-fledged EU member states. But, on the other, yes: all the other countries of the region remain in the EU's waiting room.

Resistances to rethinking and renewing European strategies for south-east Europe can be traced back to the first EU-Western Balkans Summit, held in November 2000 in Zagreb. After the second EU-Western Balkans Summit, organised within the framework of the Thessaloniki European Council (June 2003), the Centre for Applied Policy Research (CAP) identified that progress regarding south-east Europe had reached a stumbling block and called therefore for a:

Determined rethinking and a renewal of European strategies for South Eastern Europe.[62]

In the meantime, eighteen years later, almost no significant move forward is on anyone's radar.

Would it be possible further to complete European integration through a pan-European and also regional-based process? If so, we might well say that south-east European integration is a process already at work.

The focus lies here on two intertwined processes: European – and thus not only EU-related – integration; and the multiple regional co-operation networks in their relationship with south-east Europe. Obviously, the nexus between both is as complex as it is manifold. It is thus crucial to envision a framework that encompasses the multi-layered structure of regional co-operation and European integration.

Such a pan-European vision sets the bilateral and multilateral issues, as well as regional integration and co-operation, within a coherent and significant framework for an efficient development of economic, political and cultural co-operation.[63] Additionally, a pan-regional approach such as this represents a bold vision for south-east

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61 See Fritz W. Scharpf (2010) *Community and Diversity. Institutions, Policies and Legitimacy in Multilevel Europe* Frankfurt/New York: Campus.

62 Zentrum für angewandte Politikforschung (2003) *The Next Europe: Southeastern Europe after Thessaloniki* Munich: CAP, p. 1.

63 Solioz (2017) *op. cit.* chapter 2.3.

Europe, as well as for Europe as a whole. Fredrik Söderbaum recalls the main features of pan-regional movements:

> Pan-regional movements were usually motivated by a mixture of geopolitical, socio-economic, cultural (sometimes even racial) and, to some extent, functional beliefs and goals. They were multidimensional and reflected shared ideas and goals of political and intersocietal unity rather than intergovernmental regionalism in a more narrow sense.[64]

It would be a mistake to think that 'early regionalism' is outdated. Today's Organisation of American States (OAS) can be traced back to regional co-operation in the Americas 1889-1890. This is the oldest, still-working organisation of this kind in the world. Thus, albeit rebranded, pan-regional movements may become relevant in the new world order.

Furthermore, in South East Europe the concept of 'integration' is almost exclusively related to the European Union accession process, but the term ought, instead, to be understood in a much broader sense. What is at stake is the framing of a process that establishes, confirms and deepens the sense of belonging to Europe independently of being an EU member state. Here, 'territorial co-operation', intended as partnerships established between the regional or local authorities of one state and the equivalent authorities in one or more other states, plays a key role in the perspective of a qualitative integration strategy.

The current accession process amounts to an 'anticipatory Europeanisation', but such an alternative approach envisions an effective multiplex Europeanisation process – again, in no way limited to the EU. Adding new, already existing layers would nevertheless both deepen and open the Union's organisation – already characterised by 'unity in diversity', positive and progressive divergences and increased heterogeneity. It is notable here that progressive divergences, often a source of problems, may also contribute to a more converged European political space insofar as it could help to 'manage' the diversity within Europe.

The distinction between façade and substantive membership is now blurred, but non-member states or regions may receive an 'upgrade'. Indeed, various 'not yet EU members' are already increasingly applying EU laws and regulation – thus, virtually, they are 'in'. In the opposite way, the global crisis has stirred up a distorted, or even superficial, Europeanisation with some EU member countries exhibiting a low-profile democratisation. These have, virtually, to consider a 're-entry' process. Indeed, some fully-fledged Union member states, such as Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus, experienced between 2010 and 2012 conditionality policies similar to that of the 'may be members' from south-east Europe. In Attila Ágh's words:

> In general, the declining NMS democracies feature weak party systems, fragile governments and increasing oligarchisation and corruption in polity terms. They have not yet achieved high-performing democracies in policy terms or effective EU membership in politics terms – in other words, they have not achieved genuine Europeanisation.[65]

64   Söderbaum, Fredrik (2016) *Rethinking Regionalism* Basingstoke: Palgrave, p. 20.
65   Ágh (2016a) *op. cit*. p. 123.

The blurring of the divide between inside and outside divide means that multiple and flexible memberships/partnerships should be considered. This is a viewpoint developed by Jan Zielonka, who views the Union not as a Westphalian super-state, but as a neo-medieval empire characterised by overlapping authorities, divided sovereignty, diversified institutional arrangements and multiple identities.[66] Inspired by David Mitrany's studies from the 1940s to the 1970s, Zielonka's original and iconoclastic analysis, often perceived as a narrative of European disintegration, may well be understood as a thought-provoking body of work envisioning a 'soft integration' process. Accordingly:

> Nor does new medievalism mean the death of European nation states; rather it implies further transformation of these states and the increased importance of other polities, be they large cities or regions. NGOs will also grow in importance, some of them defending certain values such as environmental or minority rights, while others will represent corporate or consumer interests. The result will be a multiplication of various hybrid institutional arrangements, and increased plurality of political allegiances.[67]

Such a polycentric approach supports the integration of interdependent and transnational polities: effective, and a more functional, integration than the merely territorial is to be carried out by multiple actors and networks – and thus not just by states.

Europe's increased diversity and heterogeneity require a new approach to the international and transnational realities. In turn, this indeed represents a break with the classical modern conception of political territoriality, as Denis Retaillé, the French geographer, highlights:

> Before, the coalescence of societies used to be handled in a simple way by contiguity. […] Now what one has to invent is the coalescence of different levels of society. Something that resembles horizontal federalism, i.e. the process of assembling incomplete or unfinished societies in places that are imperfect, a little elusive, and with variable dimensions.[68]

To sum up, nation, state and territory still exist, but new — sub-national or transnational – political actors are emerging: Jacques Delors's vision of Europe as an 'unidentified object' has become reality. Among these emergent political networks, regions play a decisive role, albeit one that is often neglected.

The New Regionalism Approach – developed from the mid-1980s, notably by the seminal work of Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum – offers an adapted conceptual framework in its advocacy of a multi-layered and comprehensive understanding of regionalism, and one which is not bound to the Westphalian state-centred approach. The New Regionalism Approach, further developed in the framework of 'compara-

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66   See Jan Zielonka (2001) 'How New Enlarged Borders Will Reshape the European Union' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 39: 509-511; and Jan Zielonka (2006, 2007) *Europe as Empire* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

67   Zielonka, Jan (2014) *Is the EU Doomed?* Cambridge: Polity, p. 82.

68   Denis Retaillé (1991) 'L'invention du territoire' *Culture et conflits* p. 138, quoted in Hassner (2002) *op. cit.* p. 45.

tive regionalism', highlights a multi-dimensional and pluralist type of regionalism, as well as new institutional designs and an active role for non-state actors.

Additionally, we have to consider that many regional co-operation initiatives involve at state level some countries (or regions belonging to states) that are not yet EU member states and are also non-EU countries. Accordingly, regional co-operation programmes have been developed from the mid-2000s on in the respective frameworks of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (2006) and the European Neighbourhood Policy (2007). Regional co-operation thus developed specific programmes, treating in a different way both the 'internal borders' (separating the adjoining territories of (forthcoming) member states) and the 'external borders' (delimiting member states from non-EU countries). The former anticipate and accompany the accession process of incoming EU member states while the latter play a substantial role in 'managing' the new 'east-west' divide.

Table 1 – Old, new and comparative regionalism

	Old regionalism	**New regionalism**	**Comparative regionalism**
Context	Post-World War II and Cold War (Europe) Bipolarity; but also post-colonialism provided context (developing world)	Post-Cold War Globalisation and neo-liberalism Unstable multilateralism Transformation of the nation-state	Multi-polar and multiplex world order War on terror Financial crises Rise of BRICS and emerging powers
Linkage	Regional integration beyond the nation-state (Europe) Development and nation-building (developing world)	Regionalism seen as resisting, taming or advancing economic globalisation	Regional governance part of multi-layered global governance
Sectors Actors Forms	Sector-specific Formal and states-led regionalism through regional organisations	Multi-sectoral or specialised State vs. non-state actors Regionalism vs. regionalisation	State and non-state actors grouped in formal and informal forms of organisation in growing number of sectors
Epistemology	Dominance of positivism, rationalism and materialism	Rationalism vs. constructivism Epistemological conflict	Epistemological pluralism Emerging dialogues

	Old regionalism	**New regionalism**	**Comparative regionalism**
Methodology	Europe-focused Rigid comparison	Regional specialisation vs. false universalism Comparison as parallel case studies	Increasing comparison Emergence of non-Eurocentric comparative regionalism

Source: adapted by the author from Fredrik Söderbaum (2015) *Early, Old, New and Comparative Regionalism* KFG Working Paper 64, p. 23.

Nothing is really new here. Since its early stages, regional co-operation and integration had been largely related to reconstruction and reconciliation, as illustrated by the following milestones that belong to the 'old regionalism' era (see Table 1): the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951; the Common Market in 1957; the German-Dutch EUREGIO and the European Economic Community (Treaty of Rome) in 1958; the Regio Basiliensis and the Franco-German reconciliation (Elysée Treaty), both in 1963.

The key element in the next stage – which corresponds to the 'new regionalism' phase initiated by the White Paper on internal markets (1985), the Single European Act (1986) and the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) – was the EU's reform of regional policy in 1998: the European Commission assigned a key role to regional, more specifically to cross-border, co-operation in the task of European integration. Accordingly, the community initiative Interreg was introduced in 1990 and became instrumental both in economic growth and territorial cohesion.[69]

After the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon, territorial cohesion became a strategic goal of EU regional policy and regional co-operation became an integral part of EU integration policy. Thus, integration also became effective in the framework of the comprehensive territorial co-operation policy that encompasses a set of three strands or schemes:

- cross-border co-operation (local co-operation between neighbouring regions separated by a frontier)
- transnational co-operation (co-operation over wide areas)
- inter-regional co-operation (pan-European networked co-operation).

Obviously, the geopolitical upheaval in 1989 intensified and deepened the linkage between integration and regional co-operation. Euroregions, created in the early 1990s, spanned and linked east and west territories, contributing notably to speeding up the path of central and eastern European countries towards accession. Meanwhile, the regional co-operation schemes also play a security role in 'wider Europe'. In the view of Romano Prodi, then-President of the European Commission, they constitute

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69   Solioz (2017) *op. cit.* chapter 2.1.

'a ring of friends surrounding the Union'.[70] They are, therefore, tools for the 'soft power' management of the EU's external borders. Within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), they were supposed to replace the Cold War order, ensuring democratic stability on the EU's periphery. Nowadays, of course, in a very different geopolitical context, the ENP is taking on new dimensions.[71]

The focus on the above-mentioned linkages must, nevertheless, not overshadow the main differences. Interstate and bilateral relations matter in the framework of European integration but, for the most part, it is local and regional stakeholders that are involved in regional co-operation. Of course, their respective goals have a different magnitude: compare the 'ever closer union among the peoples of Europe' (Schuman Declaration, 1950) with the practical solutions proposed for border problems. Accordingly, the tools vary: unique Community law versus different national legal frameworks. Ultimately, both are evolving in a different way: strengthening of the institutions and spatial expansion are the hallmarks of EU integration, whereas singularity and diversity characterise regional co-operation. And, last but not least, they have quite a diverse visibility: respectively high versus low.

Theoretical framework

Methodologically speaking, I refer here to three distinct and heterogeneous, yet nonetheless interconnected, areas in which I have been active over the last thirty years. These draw on:

- a narrative corpus (administrative documents, review reports, non-papers)
- forums for discussion (seminars, conferences, etc.)
- publication networks (thematic reviews, internet forums, informal networks).

By comparing the dynamism, flexibility and interconnectivity between these areas in the fields of, on the one hand, architecture and urbanism and of, on the other, integration and regionalism, we may observe that the latter are less permeable and flexible, specifically in south-east Europe. For the former, meanwhile, plasticity and porosity characterise these areas along with the consented flow of information, projects, practitioners and scholars, with the same persons being subsequently, or simultaneously, active in various areas.[72]

For the French urbanist Ascher, this corresponds to a global trend, a new phase of society that he identifies as the 'hypertext society': after the classical, community-based society and the industrial, Fordist-Keynesian-based society, the hypertext society characterises a third revolution (see Table 2). The hypertext metaphor reflects a layered organisation of society, an *n*-dimension space, where people belong simultaneously to different layers and shift with ever greater ease from one to another. In-

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70 Prodi, Romano (2002) *A Wider Europe – Proximity policy as the key to stability*, Speech given at the Sixth ECSA-World Conference, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-relea se_SPEECH-02-619_en.htm, Brussels, 5-6 December 2002 [last accessed 16 April 2017].

71 See the volume edited by Sieglinde Gstöhl (2016) *The European Neighbourhood Policy in a Comparative Perspective* Abingdon: Routledge.

72 As for urbanism, an excellent insight is provided by Alain Bourdin and Joël Idt (Eds.) (2016) *L'urbanisme des modèles* La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube.

deed, people belong simultaneously to different layers of society and shift more and more readily from one to another. Nowadays, social links might weaken, but they are considerably enhanced: social relations, which are indeed more fragile, are more numerous and more subject to change.[73]

Flexibility is thus a key argument in 'neo-urbanism' as conceptualised by Ascher.[74] Accordingly, the process of standardisation shifts, in the 'neo-urbanist' approach, from being a means of mass-production and spatial expansion (as conceived in the framework of a neoliberal functional, bureaucratic and static approach), to being a means of change and combination. Flexible and highly reactive projects, involving a wide range of 'drivers for change' constantly involved in reflexion and negotiation, increase joint ownership, reinvigorate local democracy, foster 'commutative solidarity' – in that they relate people and organisations that belong to a multiplicity of interconnected networks – and, last but not least, open new ways of thinking politics.

A closer look at Ascher's approach highlights the similarities which structure neo-urbanism and comparative regionalism: both can be defined as open, multi-dimensional and collaborative systems; for both, the context of the changing world order matters. Ascher's emphasised social mutations imply significant changes in the conception, production and administration of territories. The same applies to regionalism. Björn Hettne puts it thus:

> A new world order thus implies a new type of regionalism.[75]

Furthermore, Ascher's distinction between community, industrial and hypertext society (see Table 2) fits, for the most part, with the distinction between four subsequent phases in the development of regionalism: early, old, new and comparative regionalism.

Table 2 – Modernisation process and the three modern revolutions

	Community	**Industrial society**	**Hypertext society**
Social ties	few not diversified stable strong	more diversified scalable becoming specific	many highly diversified direct, fragile specific
Solidarity	mechanic	organic	commutative

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73 See François Ascher (2010) *Les nouveaux principes de l'urbanisme* La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube, pp. 43-51.

74 Ascher, instead of using the concept of 'new urbanism', introduced the concept of 'neo-urbanism'. As for the discussion of the ten new principles of urbanism, see Ascher *ibid*. pp. 95-120.

75 Hettne, Björn (1994) 'The New Regionalism: Implication for Development and Peace' in Björn Hettne and András Inotai *The New Regionalism: Implications for Global Development and International Security* Helsinki: UNU/WIDER, p. 4.

	Community	**Industrial society**	**Hypertext society**
Social territory	autarkic close locally-driven	integrated national-based	open multiple shifting local and global real and virtual
Paradigm	belief tradition destiny authority	universal reason functionality representative democracy	complexity uncertainty flexibility self-governance
Action	Repetitive	rational	reflexive
Regulation	custom chief	state laws	subsidiarity partnership public opinion
Economics	Agriculture	industrial	cognitive
Culture	local	socio-professional	hybrid
Urbanism	town	industrial city	metapolis
Institutions	parish canton nation-state	central administration welfare state alliances treaties	countries regions welfare state international organisations NGOs

Source: François Ascher (2010) *Les nouveaux principes de l'urbanisme* La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube, p. 66-67; as adapted and translated by Christophe Solioz.

Following Fredrik Söderbaum's synthesis, Table 2 traces the intellectual roots and main characteristics of three types of regionalism: on the one hand, outlining the context and polity content (links between national, regional and global governance; and sectors, actors and forms of organisation); and, on the other, focusing on the modes of knowledge production and methodology.[76] This framework, insisting on the influence of the political context and of different theoretical standpoints, should be handled in a smooth way.

First, the various phases are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Thus, whenever possible, they should be interconnected. For example:

> The inclusion of the section on early regionalism serves to draw attention to the deep roots of and diverse trajectories of regionalism preceding the era of old regionalism. Among other things, early regionalism underlines the interaction rather than the competition between regionalist and statist ideas, and at least in some respects this resembles more recent debates about multilayered global governance.[77]

76   See Söderbaum (2016) *op. cit*. pp. 16-35; and Söderbaum (2015) op. cit.
77   Söderbaum (2016) *op. cit*. p. 30.

Second, the same complementary approach should apply to the richness of theorising about regionalism. There are, of course, many ways to consider regions and regionalism. Considering various theories is indispensable as they provide a useful toolbox for a critical analysis of different regional schemes and are instrumental in overcoming binary conceptualisations (state versus non-state actors; formal versus informal regionalisms; etc.). Often, their differences refer to different aspects of regionalism, as Söderbaum himself has highlighted:

> For instance, structural analysis may be more plausible when the research focus is put on the role of regions in world-order transformation, whereas a stronger emphasis on agency is necessary for a better explanation of agencies and micro-processes on the ground.[78]

Considering the emerging regional architecture of world politics, Amitav Acharya provides another interesting illustration of complementarity in the framework of the discussion on how regions respond to powers in the new world order. Acharya calls for:

> Balancing the top-down and powercentric analytical prism […] with an agency-oriented perspective that acknowledges local resistance to, and socialization of, powerful actors and attests to the endogenous construction of regions.[79]

Re-thinking the new world order

We are already living in a new world order, facing a fresh Copernican revolution: we now live in a less USA- and Euro-centred global system and more in a multi-polar world with enhanced mobility, diverse political cultures, higher heterogeneity and porous boundaries.[80] Major economic trends give an idea of the global turn. The OECD report *Looking to 2060*, published in 2012, highlights major changes in the relative size of world economies:

- growth in the non-OECD G20 countries will continue to outpace OECD countries
- fast growth in China and India will make their combined GDP, measured at 2005 Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs), soon surpass that of the G7 economies and exceed that of the entire current OECD membership by 2060
- furthermore, the faster growth rates of China and India imply that their combined GDP will exceed that of the major seven (G7) OECD economies by around 2025 and, by 2060, it will be more than 1.5 times larger; in comparison, in 2010 China and India accounted for less than one-half of G7 GDP.[81]

78 Söderbaum *ibid*. In the same book, Chapter 3 'Learning from Theory' reviews the main theories and competing approaches to regionalism (pp. 36-61).

79 Acharya, Amitav (2007) 'The Emerging Regional Architecture of World Politics' *World Politics* 59(4), p. 630.

80 See Bertrand Badie (2019, *forthcoming*) *New Perspectives on the International Order* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

81 OECD (2012) *Looking to 2060: Long-term Global Growth Prospects* Paris: OECD, p. 8.

Goldman Sachs and World Bank reports predict similar results, notably that, in the coming years, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) economies will surpass the USA and the G6.[82] The long run of the west's material and ideological hegemony appears to be coming to an end. The fading away of the old world order and the emergence of a new one makes these 'single visions' obsolete. We face, as Donna Haraway notes, a:

> Profusion of spaces and identities, and the permeability of boundaries in the personal body and in the body politic.[83]

As for the latter:

> The biggest, most basic questions of world politics are now open for debate.[84]

Even more so, we are additionally confronted with a multiplicity of narratives and new players: China on the rise; Russia recovering; India and Brazil, and others, emerging. Strikingly, this applies also to non-state actors – Viva Rio from Brazil and Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC) based in Bangladesh (to name but two) already compete with Bill Gates, Richard Branson, CARE and *Médecins sans frontières*. This implies a diversity of purpose as well as a different distribution of power – meanwhile, empirical studies in regionalism are confirming the power shift from north to south and from west to east.[85] Peter Katzenstein comments accordingly:

> Global politics will be polycentric, and plural in substance.[86]

Accordingly, it would be out-dated to reload the nineteenth-century multi-polar world version. Multilateralism – often simply a way to legitimate unilateral decisions – is *passé* and might well be reframed as 'regional multilateralism'. As for unipolarity and hegemony, they no longer ring true, but heterogeneity does. According to Charles Kupchan, the consequence is that:

> Liberal democrats will have to share the stage with leaders of quite different stripes. Autocrats, theocrats, strongmen, and populists will all play a role in ensuring that liberal democra-

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82   See Jim O'Neill and Anna Stupnytska (2009) *The Long-Term Outlook for the Brics and the N-11 Post Crisis* Global Economics Paper No 192, New York: Goldman Sachs Global Research Centre.

83   Haraway (1985) *op. cit.* p. 30.

84   Weber, Steven and Bruce W. Jentleson (2010) *The End of Arrogance* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 3.

85   See Agata Antkiewicz and Andrey F. Cooper (2012) 'Beyond Geography: BRIC/SAM and the New Contours of Regionalism' in Timothy Shaw, J. Andrew Grant and Scarlett Cornelissen (Eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Regionalisms* Aldershot: Ashgate, p. 298.

86   Katzenstein, Peter J (1993) 'A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium' *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 1(1): 82.

cy is only one of the multiple variants of political order that will populate the next international system.[87]

In the middle east, Africa and Latin America – regions long dominated by outside (colonial) power – the legacy of top-down rule continues to have the major impact on politics, while religion and ethnicity still, and always, provide the strongest political base. In the middle east and in Africa, a few countries might transition to democracy, some in substance others only in form, but many surely will not. Democratic activists and foreign donors are able to challenge neither autocrats in Russia or China, nor theocrats in the middle east, nor even populists in Latin America and strongarm politics in Africa.

Furthermore, heterogeneity is augmented in that democratic countries do not ally with one other as a matter of course, as illustrated by India and Brazil, not to mention Turkey – all of which are countries that do not follow the west's lead. Each of these countries is thus forging its own version of modernity, in which many different regime types will co-exist. Consequently, this global dissensus elucidates why the leading and emerging powers – with the exception of China – hardly envision, let alone understand, the rules of the new world order. This brings Kupchan to state:

> The next world will not march to the Washington Consensus, the Beijing Consensus, or the Brasilia Consensus. It will march to no consensus. Rather, the world is headed toward a global dissensus.
>
> […]
>
> [W]hat comes next will not be the Chinese century, the Asian century, or anyone else's century. Rather, no one's world will exhibit striking diversity; alternative conceptions of domestic and international order will compete and coexist on the global stage.
>
> The next world will hardly be the first one in which different great powers operate according to different conceptions of order. But, due to the onset of global interdependence, it will be the first time that such a diverse set of order intensively and continuously interacts with each other.[88]

However, it would be misleading to think here only in terms of political power, distribution of power, international power games, etc. The co-existence of multiple centres of power, of manifold conceptions of modernity and of diverse fundamental principles structuring the new world order will be key. Thus, the script behind the emerging global landscape matters a great deal.

Visualising the new world order

Weber and Jentleson suggest repeatedly that 'A global competition of ideas […] within a market place of ideas' characterises the twenty-first-century as a 'new age of

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87   Kupchan, Charles A (2012) *No One's World: The West, The Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn* Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 91.

88   ibid. Quotes respectively at p. 145 and pp. 183-184.

ideology'.[89] But ideology – using Mannheim's definition[90] – is a mode of thought that obscures the real condition of society, stabilising thereby a shared social reality. Accordingly, we may have some doubts about the relevance of Weber and Jentleson's viewpoint that may well deliver merely 'reproductive imagination'. Paul Ricœur's approach might help to avoid the trap. Relying on Mannheim's seminal work, he reconnects ideology and utopia in a single conceptual framework driving toward the development of 'productive imagination'.

We only take possession of the creative power of imagination through a relationship with such figures of false consciousness as ideology and utopia. It is as though we have to call upon the 'healthy' function of ideology to cure the madness of utopia and as though the critique of ideologies can only be carried out by a conscience capable of regarding itself from the point of view of 'nowhere'.[91]

Thus, utopia empowers a critique of ideology: ideology provides common values and images whereas utopia challenges those common values with new, imaginative alternatives. Ricœur's philosophy does not consider images, but rather language as the way to access images. Language, especially metaphors, produces productive imagination, unfolds new dimensions of reality and opens the way to the possible, including the anticipation of action. This was a viewpoint formulated initially by Ernst Bloch who also viewed metaphors as the royal road to capture the 'not yet conscious'.

Symptomatically, in order to envision the new world order, both François Archer and Amitav Acharya have recourse to a metaphor. They first coined the idea of the 'hypertext society', while the latter introduced the notion of a 'multiplex world'. The 'multiplex cinema' metaphor stands for a 'multiplex world' characterised by the following main features:

- in a multiplex world, the making and management of order is more diversified and decentralised, with the involvement of established and emerging powers, states, global and regional bodies, and transnational non-state actors
- a multiplex world would be one of diversity and complexity, with a decentralised architecture of order management, featuring old and new powers and a greater role for regional governance
- a multiplex order is the political order of a culturally diverse world that rests on political and economic interconnectedness, as well as institutional arrangements, relying not on the power or purpose of a single actor or mechanism but on a range of them.[92]

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89 Weber and Jentleson (2010) *op. cit.* respectively at pp. 12, 40, 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 62 and 195; and, for the new age of ideology: pp. 6, 15, 16 and 19.

90 See Karl Mannheim (1936) *Ideology and Utopia* London: Routledge (originally published in 1929).

91 Ricœur, Paul (1976) 'Ideology and Utopia as Cultural Imagination' *Philosophic Exchange* 7(1): 28. See also Paul Ricœur (1988) *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* New York: Columbia University Press.

92 Acharya, Amitav (2014) *The End of American World Order* Cambridge: Polity, respectively pp. 8, 9 and 113.

Acharya's viewpoint, closely related to the 'new regionalism' explored above, bridges international relations studies and regionalism. The multiplex world order he describes is consistent with a regional worlds approach (regionalism):

> Instead of a singular, traditional notion of universality, the idea of regional worlds speaks to a pluralist conception of global order".[93]

Acharya concentrates on:

> The informal, non-hegemonic, comprehensive and multi-dimensional nature of newly emerging regional interactions and processes,[94]

and on the prospects of progress towards sovereignty-freeing regionalism. More specifically, he highlights, first, that region-building is not dominated by a single power; and, second, the extent to which emerging powers – in the past branded as the 'third world', or the 'south' – successfully involve themselves in regional multilateral institutions adapted to their own specific goals and identities.

Accordingly, Acharya suggests rethinking regionalism. Against the background of the new global context, regionalism might potentially deliver a relevant 'world order concept'. Various scholars might confirm this possibly. In his seminal work published in 1994, Björn Hettne reflected on the linkage between regionalism and context, as well as on the script for a post-hegemonic world. Hettne considers three scenarios: the first, interdependence based on multilateralism; the second, a USA-, EU- and Japan-based trilateralism; and, the third, a regionalisation of the world – the region emerging as an actor and spokesperson for constituent states. Even if today we would rule out the two first scenarios, it is worth mentioning that Hettne insisted that: 'no scenario has the monopoly on the future'.[95]

In the meantime, various scholars have confirmed that regions have become central to our understanding of world politics. Eve Hepburn reminds us that the rise of the regions relates to the European integration that:

> Opened up new possibilities to pursue territorial interests that were once 'closed' by the expansion of the nation-state […]. Regions now operate within a post-sovereign or 'post-Westphalian' order in which authority is dispersed.[96]

Regions have thus gained a new political role in federalising and regionalising states. Similar understandings – typically belonging to 'new regionalism' – need to be supplemented with perspectives such as 'regional worlds' ideas, inter-regional-

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93   *ibid*. p. 82.
94   Acharya, Amitav (2002) 'Regionalism and the Emerging World Order' in Shaun Breslin, Christopher W. Hughes, Nicola Phillips and Ben Rosamond (Eds.) *New Regionalisms in the Global Political Economy* Abingdon: Routledge, p. 21.
95   Hettne (1994) *op. cit*. p. 5.
96   Hepburn, Eve (2010) *Using Europe: Territorial Party Strategies in a Multi-Level System* Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 10.

ism[97] and 'comparative regionalism' which consider regionalism in the framework of a comparativist perspective encompassing region-building in other areas. Regionalism beyond EU-centrism is a necessary approach.[98]

Accordingly, Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver suggest that:

> It is now possible to begin more systematically to conceptualise *a global world order of strong regions*.[99]

Based on detailed studies, Peter J. Katzenstein argues that open and porous regions have become central to contemporary world politics and suggests that they may also provide solutions to the contradictions between states and markets, security and insecurity, nationalism and cosmopolitanism.[100] Viewing regionalism as a driving force of world politics and as a dominating trend in today's international relations studies, Rick Fawn finds that:

> Regions are now everywhere across the globe and are increasingly fundamental to the functioning of all aspects of world affairs from trade to conflict management, and can even be said to now constitute world order.[101]

Rethinking regionalism in a constructivist and reflectivist way, Söderbaum, the authoritative writer on regionalism, states:

> Regionalism has become a structural component of global politics, deepening and expanding into an increasing number of policy fields.[102]

Applying the institutional design theory to the analysis of comparative regionalism, Acharya and Johnston consider regional institutions as an increasingly prominent feature of world politics. Notably:

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97   Thus region-to-region relations, for example EU and ASEAN. Inter-regionalism often means institutionalised inter-regional relations. See Heiner Hängi, Ralf Roloff and Jürgen Rüland (Eds.) (2006) *Interregionalism and International Relations* London: Routledge, p. 3.

98   See Amitav Acharya (2016) 'Regionalism Beyond EU-Centrism' in Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 109-130.

99   Buzan, Barry and Ole Wæver (2003) *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 20 — the italics are the authors' own.

100   See Peter J. Katzenstein (2005) *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

101   Fawn, Rick (Ed.) (2009) *Globalising the Regional, Regionalising the Global* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, from the book's synopsis.

102   Söderbaum (2016) *op. cit.* p. 218.

Their characteristics and performance vary widely: some are highly legalistic and bureaucratic, while others are informal and flexible. They also differ in terms of inclusiveness, decision-making rules and commitment to the non-interference principle".[103]

Likewise, intergovernmental organisations and politicians are starting to share this standpoint: viewing regionalism as a dimension of, or even an alternative to, the concert of the Great Powers. For the first, the UN, especially since its 1992 *Agenda for Peace*, involves regional organisations in its high-level meetings – for instance, in the field of security matters. The World Trade Organisation (WTO), for its part, has also acknowledged the necessity of considering the role of regionalism positively – albeit subordinating regionalism to the WTO's multilateralism. For the latter, we may think of Guy Verhofstadt, then President of the European Council and Belgian Prime Minister, who made public in an open letter the idea of replacing the current:

G-8 of rich countries […] by a G-8 of existing regional partnerships.[104]

However, it would be misleading to over-emphasise the argument. Taking regionalism seriously, as a 'building block of world order', Acharya nevertheless introduces a welcome nuanced approach:

Thanks to interregionalism, the rise of alternative non-European forms of regionalism, and the proliferation of transnational issues that regional groups must contend with, regionalism has become more open, inclusive, and multidimensional. While regionalism alone is not a sufficient basis for constructing global order, it cannot be ignored in any meaningful discussion of the future of world politics and deserves serious attention in any discussion of what might take the place of the American World Order.[105]

Acharya illustrates once more the added value of the complementary approach: both/and instead of either/or.

At first glance, we might think that this would be an approach shared by the UN. Indeed, Secretary-General Kofi Annan envisioned that:

The United Nations and regional organizations should […] play complementary roles in facing the challenges to peace and security.[106]

103   Acharya, Amitav and Alastair Iain Johnston (Eds.) (2007) *Crafting Cooperation: Regional International Institutions in Comparative Perspective* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, back-cover text.

104   Verhofstadt, Guy (2001) 'The Paradox of Anti-Globalisation' *The Guardian*, 28 September 2001, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/sep/28/globalisation [last accessed 1 June 2017].

105   Acharya (2014) *op. cit.* p. 6.

106   Annan, Kofi (2005) *In Larger Freedom* New York: United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General, A/59/2005, 21 March 2005, p. 52, § 213, available at: http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/in_larger_freedom.shtml [last accessed 1 June 2017].

Nevertheless, the UN narrative intends to secure the primacy of the UN and its Charter, the rationale being that the UN agenda would be the only foundation for a rules-based world order. Ramesh Thakur questions whether the UN would be able to shape a new world order: he thinks in terms of proximity and views regionalism as an alternative that might possibly complement traditional multilateralism.[107] Nevertheless, such a complementary approach might be difficult to formulate in practical terms, too, since the UN- and other multilateral approaches, as well as regional modes of governance, tend to follow different logics.

Avoiding linear thinking, Söderbaum considers that these approaches are still reliant on an abstract hierarchical order (structuring global, regional and national levels). Significantly, the UN approach fails to understand that the:

> Strengthened regional arrangements get their mandate not only 'from above' (from the UN), but also 'from within'.[108]

Accordingly, Söderbaum attempts to overcome binary thinking (global versus local, global versus regional, multilateralism versus bilateralism) and to formulate a 'regional multilateralism', arguing that:

> States and global organizations are being locked progressively into a larger regional and interregional framework, in which 'regions' become the increasingly relevant scales and even actors in the global security architecture.[109]

Considering that regional formations, actually for the most part inter-regional institutions, are still 'under construction' – which, incidentally, is an argument mentioned by Söderbaum – the time may not yet be ripe for regional multilateralism. However, while we may question whether regionalism would be the next paradigm, we may say that it will certainly play a role in it.

Rethinking regionalism away from 'western values'?

Despite EU-centred and -led integration and regional co-operation processes, both the EU and the Council of Europe should have learned lessons from their respective inter-regional programmes and seen that, in regionalism, 'lead' has to be replaced by 'participate', and, in politics, 'dominance' by 'influence'. When compared with region-building elsewhere, notably in Asia, it is clear that:

> The EU does not hold the monopoly over successful pathways to regionalism and regional order-building.[110]

107   Thakur, Ramesh (2006) *The United Nations, Peace and Security* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
108   Söderbaum (2016) *op. cit*. p. 200.
109   *ibid*.
110   Acharya (2014) *op. cit*. p. 100.

Meanwhile, away from 'western values', many emergent powers have made a different political choice and are delivering an alternative governance message – emphasising, for example, order, sovereignty, non-interference and progress – which is seen as legitimate by their people. They are no longer willing to be 'norm-takers'; they want to become 'norm-makers'.[111] This shift traces back to the experience, as already mentioned, to the era of 'old regionalism', of the Non-Aligned Movement that imposed norms such as non-intervention and equality between states. More recently, these countries, at some distance from traditional-oriented values, have introduced the progressive norm of 'common but differentiated responsibility' as a global climate change strategy. The evolution of *Responsibility to Protect* provides an additional example for an open-minded setting.

Their normative framework often reflects domestic political conditions and tradition, but Acharya calls for a more updated assessment:

> There have been some recent developments indicating that the normative gap between the established and emerging powers over sovereignty and non-intervention may be narrowing. While China and Russia adopt a much more cautious attitude toward such interventions, South Africa and Nigeria have led the way in turning Africa's staunching non-interventionist stance to one that has allowed a number of collective interventions, including humanitarian interventions. While their dilution of non-intervention should not be overstated, the developing countries, including the emerging powers, are showing signs of being more interested and involved in rule-making, as well as contributing to some of the newer and more progressive norms of world order. The evolution of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is a case in point. It is not well known that many African diplomats and political leaders were not only sympathetic to the R2P idea, but played a role in its development.[112]

Additionally, it is worth mentioning the often-discounted fact that countries from Latin America and eastern Europe, as well as China and India, are successfully active in many inter-regional programmes or intergovernmental bodies (like the G20), as well as in the key international financial institutions of the post-war global economic order.

Eric Helleiner's 2014 book on international development and the making of the post-war order reframes how most scholars viewed Bretton Woods.[113] Based on primary sources, such as the transcripts of the Bretton Woods conference, he recalls that thirty-two of the forty-four delegations were from what we would now call emerging markets. In spite of an obvious asymmetry of power and that they did not form a united front, these countries significantly influenced the outcome of the negotiations.[114]

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111   See the inspired book by Bertrand Badie (2018) *Quand le Sud réinvente le monde* Paris: La Découverte.
112   Acharya (2014) *op. cit.* p. 76.
113   The IMF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (nowadays the World Bank) were established at the 1944 Bretton Woods conference.
114   See Eric Helleiner (2014) *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods: International Development and the Making of the Postwar Order* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

China and India – and, before them, Japan – illustrate how many emerging countries may have major stakes in the emerging new world order and how deeply they are involved in regional and global multilateral structures.[115] Of course, this must overshadow neither their differences – which will of course contribute to increasing the diversity of the emerging world order – nor their conflicts (as is the case at the time of writing between China and India).

The question is, on the one hand, whether these countries, as norm-makers, want to export their own – often, but not exclusively, more traditional and hierarchical-driven – values and institutions. This might well limit their influence and ability to shape the new world order. Alternatively, on the other hand, the question is one of whether, as partners, they are receptive to new values and institutions and thus willing to reduce the normative gap and gain influence – as the above-mentioned examples tend to prove.

Learning from Athens

Without doubt, the emerging landscape is as complex as it is fluid, and the time is ripe to introduce a change of civilisation.[116] But how is the ongoing transition to be managed peacefully? Some might be sceptical about the capacity of emerging powers to follow the western path to modernity; others about the west's ability to work out a consensus with emerging powers on foundational principles and rules.

We have seen that the post-hegemonic world order, as well as regionalism, introduce, in place of a singular dominance and a centralised model of co-operation, a variety of actors and cross-cutting drivers as well as diverse political cultures and competing conceptions of international order. Consequently, the new world order's key principles will have to be discussed and negotiated. Multiple versions of modernity and politics will enter into a decisive dialogue that must lead toward greater international co-operation and the forging of a pluralistic order.

Of course, sharing decision-making power is easier to achieve at regional level than at state- or global-level. But this argument does not face up to the fact that these levels are mostly intertwined. Thus, the relationship between sub-national, national, regional, inter-regional and global levels must be reconceptualised. Fredrik Söderbaum argues:

> With the political and institutional landscape in transformation, there is a need to think in terms of a more complex, multiscalar approach to government and governance, in which the state is reorganized and assumes different functions and where non-state actors also contribute. [117]

Furthermore, since the Westphalian order is *passé* and global governance is not working, Söderbaum suggests that discerning the pluralism of governance structures

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115   See Badie (2019, *forthcoming*) *op. cit.*

116   See Edgar Morin (2017) *Le temps est venu de changer de civilisation* La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube.

117   Söderbaum (2016) *op. cit.* p. 195.

– that is, regional and multi-layered governance[118] – may help to avoid the trap between the local and the global.

The emergent world order will increasingly involve multiple stakeholders who are eager to have a greater say. Close to François Ascher's concept of 'commutative solidarity', the common sense notion of 'mutuality', introduced by Weber and Jentleson, helps us rethink the subtle process of negotiation, diplomacy and persuasion; the idea being that politicians use their authority and power for shared, rather than self-interested, concerns.[119] The authors mention some convincing examples, such as carbon capture and sequestration, which might well apply to other sensitive issues, such as intellectual property-intensive sectors (pharmaceutical and agricultural genetics). For Weber and Jentleson, the 'leadership proposition' consists:

> In the contribution to shared interests that one makes by distributing the technology widely and in such a way that the knowledge gained in practice from using it in diverse circumstances gets cycled back into the system for the benefit of all. And, of course, in the meaningful contribution to carbon reduction and climate change mitigation that would also benefit everyone.[120]

This is one element of the much-needed toolbox to build convergence, a middle ground between established and emerging powers.[121] Regionalism additionally offers a set of values and strategies: flexibility, autonomy, openness, inclusiveness and interactivity that fit well into the new landscape.

As diverse as different nations are, dialogue and consensus on fundamental values may be shared. This brings us back to Europe's root, to ancient Athens and its lesson which has still not been learned.[122] Edmund Husserl's famous Vienna lecture from 1935 might deliver a welcome reminder here – and the reader should feel free hereafter to replace 'Europe' with 'new world order':

> We can also see how, starting from this [the transformation of human existence and all its cultural life], a supranationality of a completely new sort could arise. I am referring, of course, to the spiritual shape of Europe. Now it is no longer a conglomeration of different nations influencing one another only through commerce and power struggles. Rather, a new spirit, stemming from philosophy and its particular sciences, a spirit of free critique and

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118   Regional governance is conceived 'As spheres of authority at regional level of human activity, which amounts to systems of rule – formal or informal, public or private – in which goals are pursued through the exercise of control.' *ibid*. p. 197.

119   On installing the process of true understanding via common sense and popular language, see Hannah Arendt (1994) 'Understanding and Politics' *Essays in Understanding 1930-1954* New York: Schocken Books, pp. 312-314.

120   Weber and Jentleson (2010) *op. cit*. p. 143.

121   Rifkin's concepts of lateral power and empathy would certainly strengthen such an approach. See Jeremy Rifkin (2011) *op. cit.*

122   Documenta 14 (2017) had the timely motto "Learning from Athens" for its public exhibition – see https://www.documenta14.de/en/public-exhibition/.

norm-giving aimed at infinite tasks, dominates humanity through and through, creating new, infinite ideals.[123]

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123 Husserl, Edmund (1935) 'Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity (The Vienna Lecture)' contained in: Edmund Husserl (1970) *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* Evanston: Northwestern University Press pp. 269-299.

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