



ORIGINAL PAPER

**Theories of the European Integration before and after
Communism**

Lorena-Valeria Stuparu*

Abstract: This paper aims at interpreting the philosophical meaning of political and civic European integration – from West to East. For this purpose, the paper explores certain historical sequences and theoretical modeling of European integration (from the Middle Ages until the Treaty of Lisbon), confronted with theoretical synthesis of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, regarding the establishment of European unity. The study is based on modern and contemporary authors who have pondered on the problem of a European integration philosophy. The philosophical perspective is based mainly on normativism and centered on the alliance between knowledge, spirituality, equilibrium, good will and legality - and in this respect the research methodology consists in a confrontation of particular perspectives (such as the legislative framework of the European citizenship) with major theories currently performing in a interdisciplinary approach.

Keywords: *European integration philosophy, European unity, particular perspectives, theoretical synthesis, European citizenship*

* Scientific Researcher, PhD, Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations of the Romanian Academy, Phone: +40 21-212 8640, Email: l_stuparu@yahoo.com

Introduction

The European Union political projects have evolved over time from imperial ambitions to the global democratic ideas, either those have invoked, or these have ignored the European cultural model (Noica, 1993). The current project of European integration, initiated by Pan Europe manifesto in the twenties of the last century as an philosophical-political alternative centered on the individual, personality and freedom ideas has a striking table normative component, for both theoretical and ideological initiatives are under the sign of moral imperative, namely the soteriological peaceful shade (Riou, 1929).

In this respect, the first part of this study is entitled “Historical sequences and theoretical modeling of European integration” and it overtakes some historical moments (from the Middle Ages until the Treaty of Lisbon), confronted with theoretical synthesis of the twentieth century and twenty-first century, regarding the establishment of European unity. The second part of the study is entitled “The European citizenship inside of the legislative framework” and outlines the theory and the possibility of a new civic identity. The research methodology in accordance with the major assumption of this study is that European integration theories are based on normativism and centered on the alliance between knowledge, political action, spirituality, equilibrium, good will (Basile, 1970) and legality.

Historical sequences and theoretical modeling of European integration

Europe as a philosophical ideal, theoretical construction and spiritual aspiration, as “historical being that transcends the various parts of the continent” (Julien Benda) was associated with the idea of integration (even though this notion did not exist from the beginning), based on the universal principle of a common substance on behalf of which ethnic groups and very different political communities could form a whole.

The political or philosophical integrative projects conveys the idea of cultural unity and of a common spirit, an idea whose theological, humanistic or pacifist dimensions could be read finally as a hope, as a “global” response in a crisis situation (barbarian invasions, the threat of Christianity, the collapse of civilization, fratricidal wars, world wars, democratic reforms), but also as a way to sublimate the desire for power or geopolitical and strategic interests.

From the effort of Justinian and his predecessors to hold back the “barbarian kingdoms” and to restore the unity of the Roman Empire whose legacy one actually held the eastern part of the continent (Fontana, 2003) from the attempt of Charlemagne to establish an “empire of West” - the idea to rebuild Europe was taken over by Pope Innocent III, by Charles V, by Frederick Barbarossa or Napoleon and those has concerned a unified leadership and administrative system, a common legal status and intellectual direction (Breton, 2006).

But as I have shown, the current project of European integration, initiated by Pan Europe manifesto in the twenties of the last century as an philosophical-political alternative centered on the individual, personality and freedom ideas has a striking table normative component, for both theoretical and ideological initiatives are under the sign of moral imperative, namely the soteriological peaceful shade. For this purpose, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, the initiator of the project (Coudenhove-Kalergi, 1923), proposes

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the cultivation of personality and the respect of difference, the respect of freedom accompanied by awareness of responsibility, characters acquired through practice and reception of European art, religion and politics - the latter represented mainly by the German power. This project was advocated in the interwar period also by the Frenchmen oriented to the left of the political spectrum, and by Frenchmen oriented to the right, but he encountered also severe critics, such as those that came from Julien Benda (Benda, 1933).

The interwar and postwar visions of European integration understood as the normal course (despite some “failures”) of the idea of unity (Jouvenel, 1930), as an organic and unitary assimilation of nations model (Gasset, 2002; Manent, 2007), as a possibility of inclusion of diversity in the name the same harmonizing principle (Assunto, 1983) that makes a larger homeland composed of smaller countries (Riou, 1928), is not yet a paradigm shift. This process, according to Andrei Marga’s analysis occurs from the last decade of the twentieth century, when our life problems and cultural interrogations pass imperceptibly from national paradigm that took a long route in European culture, to the “European paradigm” (Marga, 1995: 5). In other words, the European idea has a long history (Orban, 2004) where, from the twentieth century, states are involved not only by their national interests but also with their citizens. The transnational formulas more or less radical outlines what we might call a soteriological concept of European unification and in this respect Joseph Pironne’s remarks loaded by a sense of urgency are relevant because he has considered the wars between European nations as civil wars (Pironne, 1935: 13).

Since the development of post-communist European Union has a considerable charge both theoretical and practical, concerning theories of European Integration before and during communism in this study I will formulate only what I consider to be the idea of this philosophical-political construction: throughout its history, the political concept of Europe as a kind of open society to the idea of self explanation, as ideal opposed to mass barbarism has been shaped by “illuminated” minds, even if their ideals were speculated by the politicians and business men and at the same time it has self modeled according to the dominant civilization in a certain period (Rougemont, 1961). Up to this point I have presented only some details, philosophical arguments and historical examples aiming to highlight some post-communist transformation in the concept of European integration.

After 1989 have occurred many transformations and “significant changes” in European development, such as the dismantling of the Iron Curtain, the disappearance of communist regimes, German reunification, dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, the emergence of new European institutions (Defarges, 2002). If European integration philosophy broadly remain at the same social-humanist and political-pacifist ideals beyond economic interests, the consequences of these changes affect nation-states and their citizens. How Europe is responding to these changes and developments and their consequences is the focus of a book like *Theory and reform in The European Union* (Chrysochoou, 2003). This book examines how the Union has changed since the events of 1989 and whether available theoretical and “conceptual tools” enable us to explain and predict future European integration.

The authors (Dimitris N. Chrysochoou, Michael J. Tsinisizelis, Stelios Stavridis and Kostas Ifantis) highlight the unequal development both within EU policy areas and between EU policies and institutional settings, emphasising that, in spite of important breakthroughs in the form of the Treaty on European Union and the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties, the political authority of the Union has not significantly increased. Nor, according to the authors, has there been a reliable integration theory as the basis for

assessing the Union's future. For the authors, such an entity would have to strike a balance between being "the main locus of collective, binding decision-making for the constituent governments, and the dominant focus of popular identification" (Chrysochoou, 2003: XI).

According to Dimitris N. Chrysochoou, Michael J. Tsinisizelis, Stelios Stavridis and Kostas Ifantis, theorising about the structural conditions and operational dynamics of European integration has produced a wide-ranging "laboratory" of concepts and ideas about what the European Union is, and towards what it is developing. Central to these analyses has been the search for "conceptually refined paradigms and interpretations either of specific policy actors and processes, or on the dynamic institutional configuration of the larger management system" (Chrysochoou, 2003: XIV).

The above cited authors dismiss the possibility of a regional superstate, first, because the Union is still composed of sovereign nation-states, whose dominant governing elites are still capable of managing the process of large-scale institution-building. Second, because since the 1990s state and regional organisations have found themselves bound in a mutually reinforcing relationship – what has been termed "above symbiotic arrangement" – thus dismissing any zero-sum conception of the interplay between the collectivity and the constituent segments. Third, because the extension of the scope of integration, that is the new policy arenas that gradually form part of the Union's policy acquis, does not necessarily coincide with the less dramatic extension of its level, namely, the actual way in which the new functional areas are managed- i.e., in a supranational or state-centric manner. Finally, the whole question of a "democratic deficit" in EU and national political structures has revealed the growing democratic disjunctions between the wishes of West European political elites and their respective publics, resulting in an acute legitimacy crisis: (Chrysochoou, 2003: XIV).

Quite rightly these authors consider that the multitude works and positions theorising European integration have produced a situation where one might expect that little remains to be said. But this statement does not mean "an attempt to escape the intellectual responsibility of developing a greater understanding of the forces that constantly form and reform the regional system". It is only to state that the theory of such a plusemous concept as integration appears to have reached a high plateau in its Western European context: "Not that theorists of European integration should start looking for new regional experiments of comparable analytical potential. Rather, the idea is that the new challenges facing the study of regional integration in Europe (concerning both its theoretical boundaries and operational dynamics) do not take place in a theoretical vacuum: they are an extension, if not a refinement, of older ones. The task remains to discover a reliable integration theory as the basis for the future of the European Union and offer a convincing response to the challenges of large-scale polity formation" (Chrysochoou, 2003: 1).

According to the book *Theory and Reform in the European Union*, both normative and narrative interpretations of the integrative project, purporting to identify the logic of a distinct form of regionalism and its implications for the participating state and societies, often tend to overemphasise either the importance of the central institutions or, conversely, the role of national governments in setting the integrative agenda and the acting authoritatively upon it. Writing on the inappropriateness of classical statist, purely intergovernmental, and traditional federal forms of political organisation, Keohane and Hoffmann have captured the evolving European reality as "an elaborate set of networks, closely linked in some ways, partially decomposed in others, whose results depend on the

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political style in the ascendant at the moment". But perhaps one of the most "progressive" classifications has been Scharpf's conception of the then European Community (EC) as a "joint-decision system", where the pathology of public policy-making is conditioned by a "systemic tendency towards sub-optimal substantive solutions", exemplifying the notion of a "joint-decision trap" or *politikverflechtungsfalle*. Embracing Wallace's dictum that the Community system is "stuck between sovereignty and integration", while recognising that the effectiveness and implementation of common policies are greatly influenced by what Taylor had earlier called the 'interdependence trap', Scharpf argues that Europe "seems to have become just that middle ground between co-operation among nations and the breaking of a new one" (Chryssochoou, 2003: 14).

Some terms to be found in the academic language as means of conceptualising the larger entity include: "proto-federation", "confederation", "concordance system", "quasi-state", "Staatenverbund", "consortium", "condominium", "regulatory state", "regional regime", "federated republic", "polity market", "managed Gesellschaft", "international state", "confederal consociation", "multilevel governance".

Core theories of integration until 1970 are: Functionalism (represented by David Mitrany with the book "The Functional Theory of Politics"), Federalism, theorized by Preston King (Federation and Representation), Michael Burgess (Federalism as Political Ideology), Reginald J. Harrison (Europe in Question: Theories of Regional International Integration), Confederalism represented between others by Heinrich von Treitschke with the book "State Confederation and Federated States" (Chryssochoou, 2003: 17), *Transactionalism* - Karl W. Deutsch (Political Community of the North Atlantic Area, 1957) (Chryssochoou, 2003: 19), *Neofunctionalism* (Paul Taylor, "The Limits of European Integration"), G. Haas ("Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Organization"). After 1970 have appeared theories such as: *Interdependence theory*, *Concordance system* (Donald J. Puchala, *Of Blind Men*) (Chryssochoou, 2003: 33). New theoretical approaches, after 1990 are *The liberal intergovernmentalism* - Andrew Moravcsik ("Preferences and Power in the European Community. A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach") (Chryssochoou, 2003: 46), *New institutionalism* - Simon Bulmer ("The Governance of the European Union: A New Institutional Approach") (Chryssochoou, 2003: 48-50), *Constructivism* (Thomas Christiansen, Knud E. Jørgensen and Antje Wiener, *The Social Construction of Europe*) (Chryssochoou, 2003: 56-57), *(Neo)republicanism* - Paul P. Craig (Democracy and Rulemaking within the EC: An Empirical and Normative Assessment) (Chryssochoou, 2003: 60). But as the authors cited above argue, conceptual issues raised by the definition of a united Europe is still looking for their solution, along with the practical problems, while this larger entity progress (at least theoretically) towards the formation of a European "demos", of a "political nation" conceived in civic rather than ethnocultural terms. These aspects can be treated as potential effects of the European citizenship.

The European citizenship inside the legislative framework

The evolution of political projects, social and cultural aspects of the European Union from imperial ambitions to the global democratic principles clearly emerges from the conceptual level of European citizenship. The European citizenship status pays attention to citizens' public information and to their feeling of belonging to an ideal and cultural space, but also to a legal area. The European integration as synchronizing economies and institutions of member states of continental organization is equally

addressed to the individuals, i.e. to the citizens of member states that become also European citizens. As we know, this organism which contributes to accelerating the democratic reforms required in the countries of Eastern continent currently operates through its authorized institutions: European Parliament; The European Commission; Council of the European Union; The Court of Justice of the European Communities; The Court of Auditors. The paradoxical mechanism of the European institutions training, understood as “machines”, “frameworks”, “multilateral structures” changing throughout history, is concentrated by Phillipe Moreau Defarges into a formula that includes political, civic, legal, educational and cultural plane: throughout its history, while Europe is in harrowing conflict, actually it dreams the peace, the political unity (Defarges, 2002: 16). The troubled geopolitical universe within which the European construction has progressed from 1950 to 1990 when the overthrow of communist regimes has prompted the treaty’s signatories on European Union of Maastricht (7 February 1992) to appoint that document as the “refounded” act, has imposed a new continental architecture ensuring peace and fostering (at least theoretically) the economic reconstruction and social consensus, the political democratization. If the first point of Article 8 of the Treaty of Maastricht stated that any person holding the nationality of a Member State is a citizen of the Union, in the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997, became effective in 1999) it is added that the citizenship of the Union complements national citizenship and does not replace it. The Amsterdam Treaty strengthened the protection of fundamental rights, condemning all forms of discrimination, and recognized the right to information and consumer protection. This “complementary” citizenship means a political situation of the individual beyond the boundary between “an autonomous and conflictual citizenship” and getting “a cultural, economic or social citizenship” as remarked Catherine Wihtol de Wenden: “Europe which felt the need to constitute itself from the moment when it ceased to be a center of the world, putting an end to the Franco-German conflict and to the “trade of nations”, has tried to replace the world of the countries by a transnational citizenship, “more economic and cultural than political in front of the globalization” (Wihtol de Wenden, 1997: 15). Nevertheless, as the same author remarks, “Europe of citizens” who made a qualitative leap at Maastricht (1992), exceeding the “Europe of workers” of 1957 cannot constitute by a decree or by a treaty and we can add that to achieve this status is required an adequate public space.

Despite this philosophical remark, EU citizenship under the Treaty on European Union, as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon, is subsumed under the principle of “the strengthening of European democracy”. Since the *Introduction* states that “The Treaty of Lisbon puts the citizen back at the heart of the European Union (EU) and its institutions. It aims to revive the citizen’s interest in the EU and its achievements, which sometimes appear too remote. One objective of the Treaty of Lisbon is to promote European democracy which offers citizens the opportunity to take an interest in and participate in the functioning and development of the EU”. As for issues relating directly to the European public space, namely concerning a “European Union more accessible to citizens”, is shown that “the EU has often dismissed the image of a body with a complex structure and procedures. The Treaty of Lisbon clarifies the functioning of the EU in order to improve citizens’ understanding of it”.

The opening of the European Union to the East was accompanied by a wave of Euroscepticism more or less manifest, signaling a crisis of legitimacy. On this basis, EU citizens are found at the crossroads of several roads between individualism and collective identities (regional, religious or ethnic), between the local, national or international stages,

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between universalism and specificity claiming. If European citizenship seems to be “the sociocultural texture of political Europe” which would otherwise remain - according with Jacques Delors’s phrase – “an unidentified political object”, European identity is expressed, most probably, by reference to Europe as a symbol and as the space able to unify the cultural, economic, legal and communitarian of citizens from member states. And this despite the lack of symmetry between East and West, despite a “dual” European society which is manifested by the formation of a “Europe for the elite citizens” and a “Europe of the workers” (Wihtol de Wenden, 1997: 18); despite a Europe organized around urbanity and civility, limited to individuals who share a common language (democracy, rule of law, aspirations to political consensus, reconciliation, valuing individualism and privacy) on the one hand, and on the other a Europe of “the excluded from the edge” (Wihtol de Wenden, 1997: 19). But also for these latter, at least in principle, European citizenship provides “a framework of extensive life”, as shown in practice and on social networks, in online forums and media by the rights of citizens of the member states: freedom of movement, the right to stay, the right of establishment, the right to work and study in other EU Member States, the right to vote and to stand for election to the European Parliament and in municipal elections in the State of residence, under the same conditions with the citizens of this state; the right to benefit on the territory of a third country (not a member state of the European Union) from consular protection from the diplomatic authorities of another Member State, if the State of origin has no diplomatic or consular representation in the relevant third country; right to petition the European Parliament and the right to appeal to the European Ombudsman to address cases of maladministration by the Community institutions.

Currently more in the virtual European public space there are questions related to European citizenship, such as: Are the European citizenship rights really complied? Do we know the European citizens’ rights? Does such a status involve any obligations? Because the European citizenship requires a certain involvement, such as participation in European elections and the participation issue goes beyond elections: it reflects the manner in which the European citizen can communicate with its representatives. Is there such a communication? Do we make our voice heard in Brussels? If yes, which is the manner? Do we have a civic spirit in the “European” meaning?

Dominique Schnapper shows that there is a natural and essential difference between ethnicity, immediately lived as a feature, and participation in the nation, the latter being the result of the detachment of data characteristics. In other words, the nation, i.e. the Community of citizens “in Hegelian terms”, is the product of a culture, or *Bildung*, which aims to alienate us from ourselves, to raise us through this “dispossession”, beyond the limitations of our belonging to a particular people, realizing the universal essence of humans (Schnapper, 2004: 101). At this level, the concept of European citizenship which in principle “alienates” all the members of integrated states, while ensuring an end to otherness, achieves – interpreting Pierre Manent’s vision – the postmodern ideal of European construction: “Europe is a political promise because it promises the exit from the policy”, which would announce “a meta or post-political world, an unmediated human world” (Manent, 2003: 322-323).

Foreseeing such a post-historical possibility, Dominique Schnapper draws attention to the potential risks it entails. According to Schnapper, in fact, the “post-national” citizenship desired by philosophers and lawyers anxious of any nationalist derives, if adopted, would also act for the purposes of depoliticization. Within the nation the legitimacy and democratic practices were built, the weakening of the national state,

which is a consequence of European construction risks to involve that of democracy. Also, in Western European societies that do not recognize neither the legitimacy of religious principle nor the dynastic principle, the national link's dissolution risks to weaken even more the social relation (Schnapper, 2004: 201).

We can find a philosophical answer by pursuing the history of European democracy from the beginnings until today, as does Salvo Mastellone: European unification called into question the national state, the political representativeness, the power of governments, giving a particular value to the topic of democracy. Concerning the kind of democracy which should be adopted by the European Union, the answer given by Norberto Bobbio was "the democracy of rules". According to Bobbio, European civil society must comply with constitutional norms, adopt the principle of mutual tolerance, to act in the name of peace (Mastellone, 2006: 248). In short, the ideal system of stable peace can be expressed by the synthetic formula: "a democratic universal order of democratic states" (Mastellone, 2006: 25).

Serge Latouche states that the "cultural" flows in one way start from the countries of the Centre and arrive anywhere on the planet by "classics" broadcast media such as newspapers, radio, television, movies, books, records, video, to which are now added the virtual media. Therefore, these flows of information and cultural products "inform" the desires and necessities, forms of behavior, attitudes, education systems, lifestyles of the receptors (Latouche, 2012: 55-56). In addition to the disadvantage of the "imaginary's standardization", this phenomenon has the advantage that the West – the place of projection and achievement of European citizenship – designates – more than a geographical entity or a precise space – "a direction" (Latouche, 2012: 62).

And this direction towards the West as "more ideological than geographical concept" (Latouche, 2012: 63) is the one where the citizen of a political entity which is still being built (European Union) can manifest itself in a space more or less real, more or less virtual. This aspect reiterates the philosophical premises of European citizenship and public space. According to Habermas, in the description of a political public sphere at least two processes intersect: on the one hand, the communicational production of legitimate power and, on the other hand, the monopolization of media force to create the loyalty, of requirements and of a "compliance" to the imperatives of the system. From this perspective, a public sphere able to political functioning needs not only guarantees received from state institutions, it is also linked to the support of cultural heritage and socializing patterns, to political culture of a "population *accustomed* to freedom" (Habermas, 2005: 41). Also available for both public space owned by the national citizenship as well as those concerning European citizenship is that "assumptions regarding a political functioning public sphere (...) can no longer be simply characterized as utopian" (Habermas, 2005: 283). The theoretical understanding of the integrative process and its implications in the lives of states and of citizens have the quality of an open answer to the questions about the very meaning of the European Union and its extension from West towards the East.

Conclusion

The European citizenship is one of the most appropriate concepts to express the European Union's enlargement from West towards the East after communism, because it contains the entire theoretical load of the idea of European integration developed over history. Beyond the unequal treatment of EU citizens in the political and social realities,

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European integration had a very important role in the post-Communist democratization (Vachudova, 2005).

European citizens' status is one of those concepts that illustrates the importance of the concept of harmony in European culture and civilization. Harmony can be transposed to the relation between unity and diversity, which enables the construction of the concept of European integration starting from the philosophical attitude of Baroque, whose theoretician is Leibniz. If Leibniz's idea was realized in the eighteenth century only in the urban plan (Assunto, 1983: 30; 32; 33; 57), nowadays the fulfillment of this ideal in practice emerges clearly: the technological revolution, the development of communications and international trade contributed to the development of interdependence between nation-states (Dehousse, 1996: 3) and international cooperation embraces the henceforth so diverse fields such as culture, technological development, improving working conditions, the fight against drugs or environmental protection. Because the interaction between internal and international affairs is so striking that one cannot operate a distinction between the two levels, the EC, conceived initially as a classic international system has evolved towards a system where decisions of the Community are one step ahead the rules of national law, even if it is a constitutional one. However, the integration does not lead to a retreat of the state, as otherwise it can be seen from a horizontal approach to intergovernmental cooperation. This highlights the common interests and values of the main actors (the European citizens) in a given network and the attitude more or less favorable regarding community innovations, particularly those political-institutional arising from the Treaty of Maastricht (Dehousse, 1996: 2;12).

Returning to the the conceptual problems mentioned above the Union still remains a difficult theoretical problem (Dehousse, 1996) and a reality in search of a definition encompassing the nation states and the federal union of states or a federation of nation states (Barroso, 2012). In this respect one can say that the Union is neither an international organisation as conventionally understood, nor is it becoming an ordinary state possessing a monopoly of law-making and law-enforcing powers and also, on the other hand, that "an equally puzzling remains the nature of its legal structure" that the Union rests upon a series of international treaty-based rules, while others prefer to speak of an incipient constitutional system driven by aspirations akin to those involved in traditional state-building (Chrysochoou, 2003: 3). From an integration theory perspective, considers the authors of *Theory and Reform in the European Union*, it has failed to meet either the sociopsychological conditions of the older functionalist school or those related to the formation of a neofunctionalist-inspired European "political community". Therefore, "the Union remains an integrative venture whose final destination is yet to become discernible", between state-centric theory and federalist-driven approaches which involve a more profound understanding of what the Union actually is. According to these authors analyzing perspectives of different theories considering also the conditions of their synthesis as possible in a work which is still actual, "we do not know exactly what the end situation of the integration process might look like, but at least we can conclude with a degree of certainty what its final product will not come to resemble: a regional superstate subsuming the participating units-in the form of states, subnational political authorities and citizens - in its governance structures" (Chrysochoou, 2003: 4). These statements reflect the theoretical optimism beyond Euroscepticism that accompanies the process of European integration from the West to the East.

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