

PARADIPLOMACY REVISITED: THE STRUCTURE OF OPPORTUNITIES OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND REGIONAL ACTORS

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PART 1: **Paradiplomacy and the New Medievalism**

In the past three decades a major transformation of world politics took place which led to a growing interconnectedness between different countries and the merging of space and time. What has been referred as globalization has created major challenges to nation-states, but simultaneously allowed the liberation of subnational authorities from centralized national state structures. The restructuring of spatial relationships between national centres and peripheries created new opportunities for subnational authorities. At the centre of this transformation is the end of the rigid structures imposed by the centralizing nation-state. Indeed, until the 1970s one of the main characteristic was the expansion of the intrusive state. The level of public spending was increasing considerably, creating major problems for economic efficiency and economic growth. According to Bob Jessop there was a major transformation of the welfare state from the Keynesian Welfare National State (KWNS) to the Schumpeterian workfare post-national regime (SWPR). The privatisation and contracting out of welfare services were important aspects of this transformation. Underlying these changes towards a lighter workfare state which was based on the principles of employability and the reorganization of labour were a fisco-financial squeeze of the KWNS, the re-emergence of neo-liberalism against neocorporatism and statism and the rise

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of new social and economic problems that challenged the old modes of regulation (Jessop 2002: 140, 147-177; see also Scharpf 2000). The state had to become more competitive in relation to other states. Philippe Cerny speaks of a changing architecture of politics, having at its centre the way state restructures itself and relates to the world economy and subnational units (Cerny 1990). The emergence of the competition state of the 1980s was an important factor in creating a favourable structure of opportunities for subnational governments.

The decentralization efforts since the 1970s allowed for the regional actors to play an important role in the world economy. The region and its location factors became a more flexible unit to deal with the emerging thrusts of globalization. There is always a danger to conflate the political and cultural revival of the regions with changing economic strategies of the nation-state to push forward regionalization, but the reality is that starting in the second half of the 1970s regionalism and regionalization became intrinsically linked. The late studies of Stein Rokkan on regional cleavages document this emergence of regionalism across different countries of Europe (Rokkan, Urwin, 1983). Similarly, Quebec's quest for independence and the Scottish referendum were important signs of a growing consciousness of regionalisms. In the Canadian case, there were major problems to achieve a constitutional settlement in 1982 and afterwards. What happened is that the centralizing nation-state had reached the end of the road. New more flexible ways of delivering services, which included the need for regionalization began to be looked at. Such a process of restructuring the state and its subnational units is still not finished and is part of this transformation of the late twentieth century. There has been so far a huge difficulty to label this new age. According to Manuel Castells we are in the informational age and regions can be regarded as flexible enough structures to build efficient networks for economic growth. This economic understanding of the region as a flexible unit has been used successfully by many regions in northern Italy and in Spain. Slovenia's

independence and upgrading from a region to a state follows this logic of economic self-consciousness. Similarly, in Italy the emergence of *Lega Nord* and the creation of the myth of the 'Padanian state' fall into this category of using economic dominance to achieve independence from a state which is distributing the wealth to other regions (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2005: 954-958). This restructuring of the state in relation to the periphery is related to the coming together of regionalism and regionalization. It pushed the boundaries of the rights of the regions in a period, when the state as we have known until now was and probably still is in a crisis.

The transformation was not only at national level, it was global. Throughout the 1980s we saw already the rise of new technologies which created a less divided global space. Niklas Luhmann brought to the fore the idea that we are in an interconnected 'world society' in which national societies have become irrelevant, because they belong to the same world wide society (Luhmann 1998: 145-171). In this sense, an integration of the global and local became one of the main features of the late twentieth century transformation. The so-called 'glocalization' made the regional and local an expression of the emerging global culture. Regional identities define themselves in the context of a global capitalist market. Although some distinctive elements could be found in different regions, they all are expressions of the same tendency towards a shared global culture (Münch 1991). World society means also that through the global immigration waves, the increase in speed, the merging of space and time and convergence towards a global culture, there has been a de-nationalization of societal processes going on. According to Michael Zürn, this denationalization of societal processes is accompanied by a governance beyond the nation-state which strengthens democracy and social welfare through the dominance of international organizations. What we are experiencing is a double movement of fragmentation and integration (Zürn 2002: 235-254, especially p.245). In this sense, Zürn is very close to what James Rosenau calls *fragnegration*, which wants to show the interconnectness of the

two processes in different dimensions of the global governance system (Rosenau 2004: 31-48, especially 34-35). The exponential growth of non-statal actors such as non-governmental organisations, transnational corporations and naturally subnational actors led to a de-hierarchization of world politics. Instead a multilayered network society emerged which clearly changed considerably the structure of opportunities once monopolized by states (Rosenau 2004: 36; see also Castells 2000).

Already in the 1970s, in his classic study, Hedley Bull identified the main aspects of this transition of world politics. He characterized it as 'neo-medievalism' in reference to the middle ages, which preceded the modern nation-state. Nevertheless, this neo-medievalism is not a regression to the middle ages, but a qualitative new age in which the nation-state is challenged from above and below. The centralized, rigid organized nation-state is replaced by a more multi-layered flexible governance system which allows subnational authorities to become engaged in international relations: He defines this as follows:

All authority in medieval Christendom was thought to derive ultimately from God and the political system was basically Theocratic. It might therefore seem fanciful to contemplate a return to the medieval model, but it is not fanciful to imagine that there might develop a modern and secular counterpart of it that embodies its central characteristic: a system of overlapping authority and multiple loyalty.

It is familiar that sovereign states today share the stage of the world politics with 'other actors' just as in medieval times the state had to share the stage with 'other associations' (to use the medievalists' phrase). If modern states were to come to share their authority over their citizens, and their ability to command their loyalties, on the one hand with regional and world authorities, and on the other hand *with sub-state or sub-national authorities*, to such an extent that the concept of sovereignty ceased to be applicable, then a neo-medieval form of universal political order might be said to have emerged (Bull 2002: 245-246).

Bull's observations are very important because the central aspects of the state, internal and external sovereignty, can no longer be taken for granted. In relation to the European Union, William Wallace characterized it as being a partial polity which is part of a wider development towards 'post-sovereign' politics through the use of collective governance. It means that sovereignty itself became increasingly reinterpreted in terms of a shared good, due to the fact that problems are becoming global and no longer national (Wallace 2006: 483-503, especially 491-494).

This 'post-sovereign' politics changes the nature of international relations. International relations has been replaced by global politics and the paradigm of global governance. Fulvio Attinà speaks already about an emerging global political system which is in transition. In this emerging global politics, regional actors gained significance alongside states, global civil society actors such as non-governmental actors and international regulatory organizations, international organizations and transnational actors. It means that states have no longer the monopoly over world issues as it was common during the Concert of Europe in the nineteenth century (Attinà 2003: 154-165)², but they have to share it with other non-statal actors. Although this has created a complex multi-level and multilayered system of global governance, the restructuring is still ongoing and creating tensions and misunderstandings from time to time. It is always quite difficult to map out the transformations that happened in the past three decades, nevertheless one can summarize as in table 1.

² for the role of regions in the global political system see Hocking (1999); for the Concert of Europe see Holsti (2000).

TABLE 1. THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

PERIOD	1945-1989	Post-1989
STATE	Sovereign State	Post-Sovereign State(Wallace)
WELFARE PROVISION	Keynesian Welfare National State(Jessop)	Schumpeterian Workfare Post-National Regime(Jessop)
SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENT	Dominance of national structures and centralization	De-nationalisation of subnational government
SOCIETY	National Societies	World Society (Denationalisation of societies) (Zürn,Luhmann)
ECONOMY	National economies	Global Economy
WORLD POLITICS	System of International Relations	Global Governance

In short, in this informational age, flexible forms of governance are replacing the rigid governmental structures of nation-states. The rise of stateless nationalism in Spain, Belgium and Canada cannot ignore this reality. In a globalized world nationalisms have to be regarded as important identity instruments to resist the melting pot of cosmopolitanism. If they are successful is another question.

PART 2:
Towards a typology of paradiplomacy

One of the main problems of paradiplomacy, is that its combination of formal and informal elements makes it quite difficult to grasp.³ A typology is quite difficult to develop because there are so many and diverse actors involved that any analysis leads to a simplification of the process. Robert Kaiser made a brave attempt to establish such a typology. He developed the typology

³ for a thorough discussion see Keating (1999).

based on the forms that paradiplomacy adopt in the global governance system. He differentiated between three types:

1. *Transborder regional paradiplomacy* which includes formal and informal contacts between neighbouring regions across national borders(what we refer here as cross-border cooperation);
2. *Transregional paradiplomacy* which he defines as cooperation with regions in foreign countries; and
3. *Global paradiplomacy* which comprises political-functional contacts with foreign central governments, international organizations, private sector industry, interest groups (Kaiser 2003: 17-19, especially 18).

Such typology is quite comprehensive, because it includes all the other non-statal actors that have emerged as global civil society, which is also multilayered and multilevel. Indeed, International Organizations are very keen to adjust to the growing demands of this global civil society (Kaldor 2003; Anheir and Glasius and Kaldor 2001; Lipschutz 1992; see also Shaw 1994). Former secretary-general of World trade Organization (WTO) Mike Moore described in his book *World Without Walls*, the attempts of the organization to create channels of dialogue with the growing number of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) which are following the WTO negotiations (Moore 2003).

It means that the two first types are probably the ones where the regions have a stronger input, while the latter maybe be reserved to other groups other than territorial organizations. The typology shows also the limits of regional paradiplomacy and what has to be left to the political functional contacts. Another important aspect of his article, is that the structure of opportunities within a country and regional integration project matters. He compares the USA and Germany and finds major differences in their approaches to paradiplomacy. The structure of opportunities for regional actors and other organized civil society actors has increased considerably in the European Union due to the multilevel governance system which emerged since the mid

1980s. In contrast, the North Atlantic Free Trade Area is much more limited in its scope. According to Kaiser, paradiplomacy is framed by the nature of multilevel governance. There are substantial differences between the paradiplomacy of the states in NAFTA and Germany within the European Union.⁴

Kaiser's typology misses probably one level of paradiplomacy which is between the global and the regional. This is *transnational paradiplomacy*, which is framed by cooperation between national governments, but within this context different interest groups, universities, local and regional authorities take part in common projects. The best example is the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which attempts to create a long term Mediterranean Free Trade Area. The gatekeeper for such paradiplomacy are the national governments, but the real actors come either from civil society or subnational governments.⁵ In this regard, the European experience through supranational steering seems to be a valuable experience to look at.

⁴ Robert Kaiser, Subnational Governments in International Arenas-Paradiplomacy and Multilevel Governance in Europe and North America. Fifth Symposium of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) on "Globalization, Nations and Multi-level Governance: strategies and challenges", Montréal, Québec, October 24-26, 2000. Powerpoint Presentation.

⁵ For an assessment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership see Youngs (2001).

PARADIPLOMACY IN THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

UN ORGANIZATIONS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

TRANSNATIONAL INTERCONTINENTAL PARADIPLOMACY

REGIONAL INTEGRATION PROJECTS

EU, NAFTA, etc.

National

Regional

Local

National

Regional

Local

TRANSREGIONAL PARADIPLOMACY

CROSS-BORDER TRANSREGIONAL PARADIPLOMACY

GLOBAL PARADIPLOMACY

PRIVATE GLOBAL PLAYERS

- Transnational Corporations
- Media
- International Banks
- Intern. Regul. Agencies

CIVIL SOCIETY

- NGOs
- Interest organizations
- Science

PART 3:

Governance, Paradiplomacy and the European Domestic Space

3.1. The EU Interreg Programme As A Strategic Tool For European Integration

Two days before the visit of Portuguese President Anibal Cavaco Silva between 25 and 27 September 2006 to Spain, the Portuguese newspaper *O Sol* presented the results of a survey which asked if Portugal should unite with Spain. The big surprise was that 28 percent of the respondents would be happy to do so, and 70 percent would be against it. Moreover, 97 percent agreed that an eventual formation of one country would benefit Portuguese economy considerably. Most of the respondents would prefer a Republican form of government (64 percent), and only 24 percent would support a monarchy. Nevertheless, the supporters of the monarchy would overwhelmingly support King Juan Carlos. Furthermore, 42 percent advocated that Madrid should be the capital of the hypothetical country while 41 percent named Lisbon.⁶ This is quite astonishing, because conservative elites in Portugal were very keen to keep the separation of the two countries through a mythology of dislike for the neighbour. In the past three decades, the borders between the countries have become more blurred. Indeed, the border regions are spearheading a silent movement of cross-border cooperation which is having now cultural effects. According to figures of the Junta de Extremadura the number of people learning Portuguese in Spain and Spanish in Portugal have increased considerably.

There is a growing recognition that the border regions of Minho, Trás-Os-Montes, Beira Alta e Baixa, Baixo and Alto Alentejo and Algarve on the Portuguese side have a lot in common with Galicia, Castilla-León, Extremadura and Andalusia. Longstanding cooperation have helped to make these border regions more accessible. The long history of living back to

⁶ *El País*, 23.09.06.

back has led to a neglect of these regions. Still today it is extremely difficult to travel from one side of the border to the other. The centralizing policies of the Portuguese and Spanish problem led to few transport linkages between the two countries. The main problem is the transport linkage between the border regions.

Many people work on the other side of the border, commuting is quite dense between Norte Portugal and Galicia. This led to the establishment of a EURES, a European Employment Service, which is design to help these cross-border migrants. Quite instrumental in this quest were the Inter-regional Trade Union Councils (ITUC) which consist of representatives from the Portuguese Socialist General Union of Labour (*União Geral do Trabalho-UGT*), the Communist General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (*Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses-CGTP-In*) and its Spanish counterparts the General Union of Labour (*Unión General de Trabajo-UGT*) and the Workers Commissions (*Comisiones Obreras-CC OO*). In spite of many problems, ITUCs were established also between the Beiras and Castilla-León, between Alentejo and Extremadura and Algarve and Andalucia (Magone 2001: Chapter 9). It shows that paradiplomacy does not only comprise regional governments, but also interest groups and new supranational agencies such as the EURES. The role of the ITUCs which was dormant for many decades gained new vitality only in the 1990s. This was a conscious decision of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), because of the growing cross-border cooperation. In spite of the fact that the INTERREG programme is being phased out and less funding is available, the number of cross-border initiatives has increased considerably. Although strategically, the INTERREG programme plays a major role in sustaining such cooperation, dynamic regional actors have achieved to soften, and in many cases eliminate, the hard borders between the European countries. It means that cross-border cooperation and their focused para-diplomacy is creating new dynamic spaces (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 134-136), which can be characterized as islands of European integration. One

is experiencing a de-nationalisation of spaces and a restructuring towards Europeanized flexible spaces. Similarly, to the Portuguese-Spanish case, cross-border cooperation has been an important instrument to transform mentalities and integrate many subnational authorities within the multilevel global governance system.

Although cross-border cooperation between rich regions such as Catalonia and French Regions may not be so dependent on EU structural funds, the INTERREG programme fosters also a mentality of functional and professional cooperation through different projects. Although the funding is insufficient, one has to recognize that it is strategically placed and may in the end contribute to the building up of the single European market. Such spill-over effect can be recognised the longer cooperation takes place between regions, in spite of their economic level.

The INTERREG Programme consists of three strands:

- INTERREG A: Cross-border cooperation;
- INTERREG B: Transnational cooperation;
- INTERREG C: interregional cooperation.

This growing cooperation at different levels shows that paradiplomacy may be controlled by the model of multi-level governance. Cooperation between regions and non-statal actors of different regions and countries has become a normal process which is funded by the European Union. Paradiplomacy within the EU multilevel governance system just neutralizes the ambitions of the regions towards creating their own foreign policy. The number of cross-border working communities has increased considerably since the 1980s. The integration of the regions neighbouring member-states of the European Union is today a normal process. Through the INTERREG and other cross-border policies, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, are framing and probably structuring the overall

mobilization of non-statal and subnational actors. This structuring and framing has the intention to flexibilize the overall rigidity of previous structures embedded in national political systems. In many ways, the global network society identified by Manuel Castells (2000) is changing the political culture of nationally embedded structures towards the European integration process and ultimately towards the creation of the single European market which its own cultural framework. One of the characteristics of this framing and structuring is that is an open-ended project. In many ways it is inclusive, because it wants the neighbouring regions such as the Community of Independent States, the Maghreb, the Mashreq and the Middle East to be extensions of the culture of the single European market. This is regarded as a strategy to create security and stability around the European Union. Probably, one would agree with Cris Shore that the European Commission has become an important elite, similar to those of national formation process, to push forward an imagined community around the project of European integration (Shore 2000: 32-37). These elites structure and frame the boundaries of such identity. The open-ended and open-minded approach towards diversity, which includes the protection of regional languages, allows for the integration of regional identities in the world society, of which European societies are part of.

The development of the European Neighbourhood Policy which will replace the former distinctive geographic programmes in the Mediterranean and in relation to the Community of Independent States (CIS), is a good example of a structuring and framing of inner and outer space. The INTERREG programme itself will have linkages to these external policies, meaning that the partnership principle will become more shared between the two sides of the transnational border. It means also that there is a growing convergence of the instruments used for the internal and external space (Cugusi and Stocchiero 2006). The 'Partnership principle', 'Twinning', became an important instrument to blur the borders between insiders and outsiders and

allow for the borders to be softened up in order to disseminate the European model of society.

According to Ingeborg Tömmel, the European Commission allied itself with the regions to challenge the gatekeeper monopoly of the member-states, contributing so to the ongoing restructuring of the European political space. She clearly recognised that the integration of the regions and local authorities through the Committee of the Regions was not so much a rise of third level in the EU, but actually 'a diversification of the actual system of decision-making and consensus-building and, thus, in the long run towards the emergence of new modes of governance' (Tömmel 1998: 71; see also Morata 2004: 19-50). The calls of different member-states before the most recent budget negotiations shows that the expansionary structural policies of the EU were undermining a nationally defined regional policy. In the end, the cohesion countries and the central and eastern European countries were able to keep these policies, in spite of the substantial cuts (Palvolgyi 2004: 126-130).

After almost two decades of stronger regional involvement at European Union level, one has to acknowledge that the strategy of the European Commission has been quite successful. There are now over 50 different INTERREG cooperation agreements which comprise over 120 regions. Several neighbouring countries are involved in projects of the European Union. This dense network of regions is being also complemented by larger networks such as the *Arco Latino*, which wants to create a sustainable Mediterranean and re-equilibrate the relationship of Europe towards the Mediterranean. The *Arco Latino* consists of 66 members from Spain, Italy and France. It is engaged in the creation of a polycentric Europe, comprising 8,004 municipalities and 45,316 million people. The INTERREG programme was certainly a major factor leading to the creation of the *Arco Latino* in Montpellier.⁷ What it achieves is to integrate several paths of the INTERREG

⁷ *Arco Latino, Informe de Mandato, 2002-2004*, Barcelona:Diputacio de Barcelona 2004, pp.11-13.

programme and create synergies which benefit the whole region. There is also the strategic long term vision that, if the Mediterranean Free Trade Area takes off in the next decades, there is the possibility that this may contribute towards in the involvement of the regions i.⁸ They built a very light network structure to coordinate the different projects. Moreover, the *Arco Latino* is also linking up with other associations such as the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions(CRPM), Euromed Committee of Eurocities. An Intermediterranean Commission was set up to facilitate the exchange of experiences and lessons. Moreover, the *Arco Latino* has contacts and meetings with the Union of Baltic Cities and the Baltic Bridge.⁹

In an excellent book, Stefano Bartolini expanded the theoretical thinking of Stein Rokkan to the present transformations in the European continent. He clearly identified a huge process of change taking place, which is softening up the internal borders through EU policies and growth in complexity in such 'internal paradplomacy' and the rising of external borders. He characterises this process as follows:

In studying European integration, we retrace the ruins of previous attempts to integrate this part of the world. The half-a-century long process of new large-scale territorial integration is characterised by a progressive lowering of internal boundaries and the slow rise of new external boundaries. The process liberates conflicting and contradictory energies and requests for exit and, at the same time, new demands for closure. Which specific systemic boundaries are lowered internally and which are raised externally is, and will be, of paramount importance for the internal forms of voice structuring and institutional differentiation. As usual, the specificity of the process that is unfolding before our eyes seems so complex and momentous as to defeat any comparison with previous historical phenomena of the same genus (Bartolini 2005: xviii).

The unbound enlargement is a major factor preventing a closure in the definition of the external borders of the European Union. One can argue that

⁸ Ibid., pp.37-39.

⁹ Ibid., pp.41-42. On Baltic cooperation, see Wesley Scott (2002).

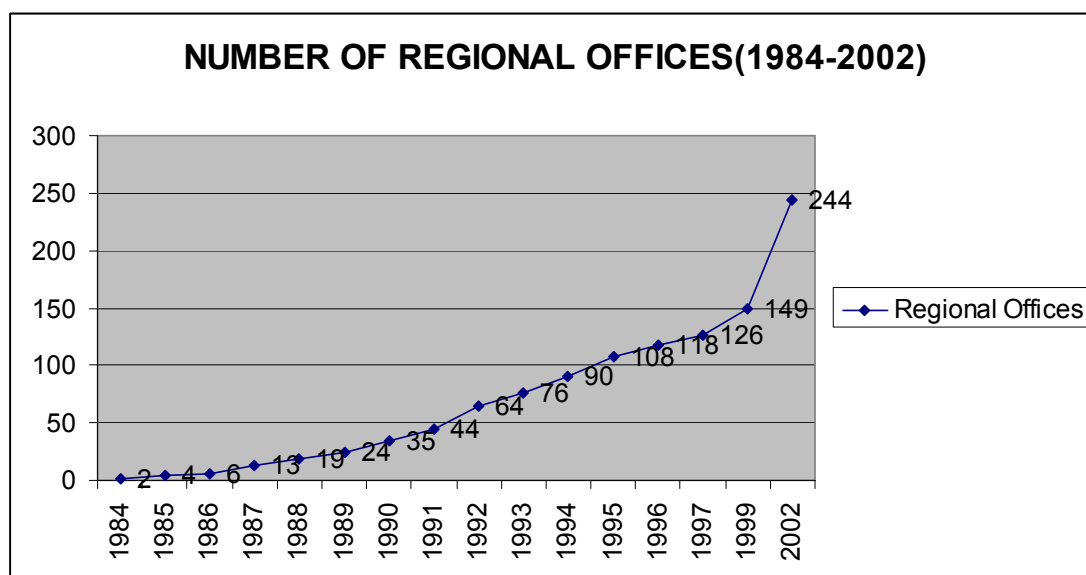
internal and external paradiplomacy is flourishing in this ongoing process of European transformation.

In sum, what we are witnessing is a softening up of the borders between countries in order to facilitate the network-building between them. Within two decades the density of regional and city networks has changed the nature of cross-border and transregional cooperation. What once was regarded as paradiplomacy is now part of European domestic politics.

3.2. Subnational Presence At Supranational Level

Plenty of optimism was linked to the establishment of regional representation offices since the mid-1980s. Gary Marks and his team brought forward the thesis that regions were able to use the multilevel governance system to have different access points. This multiple crack strategy was certainly very important in the beginning. Originally, the restructuring process was in its beginning and the structure of opportunities was more open, than it is today (Marks and Nielsen and Ray and Salk 1996: 40-63, especially 43-45). The number of regional offices has been growing steadily since the mid-1980s. Spanish and German regions were the first to establish such offices, but today a great majority of countries has subnational representatives in Brussels.

FIGURE 2: REGIONAL OFFICES IN BRUSSELS



Sources: Badiello (2004: 328); Magone (2003: 12); Smets (1998: 322).

One of the major aspects of this regional representation in Brussels is that each country has a different approach towards such representation. While Portugal has no representation in Brussels, Spain, France, Germany and the UK have very extensive networks of such offices. In an excellent study Lorenza Badiello showed how the structure of opportunities is different for each country. The EU Multilevel governance system is certainly characterised by a diversity of linkages which are coming together through fusion mechanisms. Her study also tells us about the complex system of networking between subnational, national and supranational institutions. Such networking is quite developed among German, Austrian, Spanish and UK regions, while some other countries such as Portugal and Greece do not need to take into account the regional input (Badiello 2004: 327-368). It seems that a major shift in attitudes has happened since 1986. When in 1986 the first offices were established by Spain, the offices of Catalonia and Galicia, relations with the EU were regarded as being part of foreign policy (Badiello 2004: 334-355), but today as part of European politics, due to the

Europeanization processes and the fusion between the different levels of the EU political system became domestic politics (Hix 1999).

The establishment of the Committee of the Regions and Local Authorities (CoR) was an important mechanism to control this paradiplomatic activity in the early days. After almost a decade, the CoR has become a quieter institution, but very useful for the European Commission because of its diverse composition and its consensual political culture. According to Ricard Ramón, the CoR has lost some of its initial attractiveness because the regions in federal and quasi-federal states were able to gain more importance within their own states (Ramón 2004: 322). The Spanish case shows that the autonomous communities have been gaining more and more importance since the 1980s. Most recently, the 2004 reforms have taken place: they allow for a stronger participation of the regions at Council of the European Union level. Regions have their representatives in the national permanent representation, and in certain instances they have more expertise in certain policy areas, than the national government. A good example is Scotland, which accounts for two thirds of fish in the UK catch, and therefore has a strong input in the Fisheries policy of the British government (Kassim 2000: 33).

In a study by Gary Marks, Richard Haesly and Heather Mbaye it becomes clear that the overall pattern of representation of subnational authorities in Brussels is quite asymmetrical and extremely dependent on the ambition of the region and local authority concerned. The budgetary situation of a particular region is an important factor leading to a stronger engagement and influence in the supranational governance system. The study found out also that weaker regions tend to have joint offices, while stronger regions have more autonomy in defining their aims, backed up by their own financial and human resources. The study also found out that there are three main activities for the regions at the supranational level. By far the most important

is influencing EU decision-making through all possible mechanisms. This is followed by what the authors call 'liaising' local actors with counterparts of the same country or other countries, national institutions EU institutions and other actors present at the supranational level. The third main activity is networking and information gathering (Marks and Haesly and Mbaye 2002: 7). The growth in complexity at the supranational level means that only regions and local authorities with strong human and financial resources can be efficient in these three roles. The more powerful regions, such as Catalonia, the Basque country, North-Rhine Westphalia, have a stronger experience and also more ambition in pushing forward the agenda of their own governments and business community (Marks and Haesly and Mbaye 2002: 12). According to the authors, local authorities, which tend to work together in joint offices are also very efficient in pursuing their interests (Marks and Haesly and Mbaye 2002: 13). Particularly, the English local authority offices and the Scandinavian ones have established strong linkages to the European level.

The strength of a region is determined by its constitutional and real position in the respective country (Marks and Haesly and Mbaye 2002: 15). The diversity of national political systems which range from federal (Germany, Belgium, Austria) to unitary (Portugal, Greece) shows that the structure of opportunities is very asymmetrical across the European Union (Loughlin 2000). Nevertheless, as already mentioned, constitutional change has enhanced the position of the regions in as different countries as the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium and most central and eastern European countries. In spite of a negative referendum on introducing federalism in Italy in July 2006, Italian regions have gained more powers and autonomy through small constitutional changes affecting title V. The inclusion of a State-regions Council recognizes the input of subnational actors in the European integration process (Olivetti 2004). The position of the autonomous communities in Spain has been increasing since the

constitutional process was completed in 1978. The latest developments were introduced by the Zapatero government allowing for the establishment of a conference of regional presidents similarly to the Austrian, Swiss and German cases. Moreover, the regions have now also some input in the decision-making process in the Council of Ministers. The Committee for European Affairs (*Comisión de Asuntos Relacionados con la Comunidad Europea-CARCE*) has been upgraded and allowed to coordinate the positions of regions. Moreover, the different sectoral conferences (*conferencias sectoriales*) link national and regional governments according to policy areas (Magone 2004: 122-125). According to a study by Tanja Börzel (2002), the performance of the sectorial conferences is very asymmetrical. Europeanization plays a major role in enhancing the importance of some sectorial conferences against other.

Probably, the most dramatic transformation happened in Belgium. After decades of devolution and restructuring, the introduction of a federal structure in 1993 led to the emergence of three foreign policies: the national, the Flemish and the Walloon ones. Peter Bursens brings to the fore, the complexity of the Belgian process. Although the coordination of Belgian foreign policy is undertaken by the federal government, there is no hierarchy between the different units of the country.

Let me now turn to the more particular setting of foreign relations within the Belgian federation. The new 1993 Constitution introduced the '*in foro interno in foro externo*' principle. This means that - completely in line with the absence of hierarchy - all government levels have the right to conduct foreign policy with respect to the competencies they possess within the Belgian federation. However, to prevent Belgian foreign policy from becoming totally scattered and chaotic, the Constitution has put the overall coordination responsibility with the federal level This implies that the overall foreign policy orientations are formulated by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Bursens 2002: 188).

According to the studies of Bart Kerremans and Jan Beyers, Belgium foreign policy now involves six actors which are more less at the same level: two

regions, two cultural communities and the Flemish region-cultural community, additionally there is the central national government. The process only works, because all parts have the same maximalist and positive attitude towards European integration. Moreover, the small size of the country allows for fast informal gatherings to smooth tensions or problems before final common decisions (Kerremans 2000a; 2000b; Kerremans and Beyers 2001). Nevertheless, the process of devolution may not be finished just yet. There is a strong possibility that Belgium may become in the mid to long term a confederation which two separated Flemish and Walloon foreign policies (Delwit and Pilet 2004).

The growing cooperation of the national parliaments of the European Union through COSAC has led also to major demands for similar structures for regional parliaments. A similar structure with the acronym CALRE (*Conference des Assemblées Législatives Régionales Européennes*) was established to integrate regional parliaments and give them a better possibility to influence European policy.¹⁰ The German *Landtage* are adjusting their structures to have a stronger say in European affairs (Lenz and John 2000: 20-29), similar restructuring processes of parliaments are happening in other countries, especially in Spain, Belgium, Austria and the United Kingdom. In the latter, European affairs have been an important battleground for the assertiveness of Wales and Scotland. There is a genuine increase in engagement in both parliaments after devolution in 1997. In Scotland, both the executive and the Scottish parliament were very keen to assert themselves and play a role in the European Union decision-making process. Scotland House in Brussels is an extremely active regional office, which has wide support among the Scottish political elites.¹¹

¹⁰ on the growing importance of regional and national parliaments in European decision-making see Vos (2004), particularly p.228.

¹¹ the best study so far is Sloat (2002); see also a comparative study with Catalonia by Roller and Sloat (2003).

The Welsh Committee of European Affairs had to learn to deal with the new situation. The first legislature of the Welsh Assembly was very much a learning process on how to best use the resources to influence EU decision making (Jones 2003). There is a stronger support for the European Union in Scotland and Wales than in England.

According to Stelios Stavridis, the Catalan Parliament has been engaged in many international issues related to the Mediterranean. Moreover, the Catalan Parliament has established many contacts with *cogeneris* across the European Union, particularly Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg in Germany, Scotland in the UK, the Flemish region in Belgium, as well as links to Quebec which include a parliamentary dimension. Both Quebec and Catalonia refer to each other as models to learn from (Stavridis 2003: 5-6).¹² In the Flemish Parliament, a consultative committee on foreign and European affairs was established which monitors the process of European integration and liaises with the Flemish executive and the national institutions¹³. The institutionalization process has been slower in the Walloon region: due to its separation from the French community, its parliament is weaker and less self-confident.¹⁴ Indeed, the Flemish Parliament regards itself as representing a new political culture against the pre-1993 Belgian state. The building of the Flemish parliament is made out of glass to demonstrate its transparency and accountability (Celis and Woodward 2003: 177).

¹² for a more extensive study on the importance of the Mediterranean for Catalonia, see Brunet and Grau and Stavridis (2004).

¹³ Flemish Parliament, *30 Years Flemish Parliament*, Brussels, 2002, pp.16-17.

¹⁴ Parlement Wallon, Reglement, 22 Juillet 2004. Its Committee of European Affairs is defined by Article 26; see André Lecours, When Regions Go Abroad: Globalization, Nationalism and Federalism. Paper presented at the Conference 'Globalization, Multi-Level Governance and Democracy: Continental, Comparative and Global Perspectives', Queen's University, 3-4 May, 2002, pp. 9-13.

3.3. The External Projection Of European Regions

Although still under researched European regions have also global ambitions. So far most engagement has been dominated by EU 'internal diplomacy', nevertheless globalization has transformed regions into dynamic and proactive economic units which need to look for new markets. Regional trade and industrial interest groups are interested in expanding to new markets. One good example is the 1988-founded Four Motor Europe consisting of Lombardy, Catalonia, Rhone-Alps and Baden-Württemberg. Many other regions became associated to this dynamic group such as Wales and even Quebec. The Four Motor Europe decided in 2002 to form a Club pushing forward the interest of these more conscious regions. Moreover, it has an interest in revitalising the Committee of the Regions and Local Authorities. Most of the agenda has to do with economic issues. The Four Motor Europe planned to establish an office in China in order to expand their markets (Caggiano 2004: 192-194). This collective attempt to become more proactive and have a global projection is actually supported by some governments which see their own possibilities as being quite limited. As Peter Bursens shows, in Belgium there is national governmental support for transregional alliances which may help individual regions to enhance their global projection (Bursens 2002: 192-194).

The Catalan *Generalitat* is a good example of policies of internal projection. The Directorate of External Relations played an important role in pushing over the years the boundaries of paradiplomacy. It has representations across the world which are primarily devised to promote economic interests and expand Catalan products to new markets. In the global governance system, the Catalan political elite regards the European Union and the wider Europe as their main arena, but it recognises the importance to be part of the global

economy.¹⁵ Most of the work towards external projection of Catalonia was done by former president Jordi Pujol, but Pascual Maragall was also extremely committed to such a strategy.

According to Alex Wright, in the past, Scotland has a representative in the UK embassy in the USA (for at least a decade) but even this fact has led to some media speculation that this would start an independent Scottish foreign policy. What unleashed these speculations was the fact that in spring 2001 First Minister Henry Mcleish had a brief meeting with President George W. Bush during his visit to 'tartan day' in the United States (Wright 2003: 114). In sum, the European multi-level governance was able to domesticate most of the activities of European regions. One of the main reasons is that the proactive actions of the European Commission have transformed this European space into an 'internal' paradiplomacy space. Such hyperactivity of European regions differs considerably from the rest of the world. Paradiplomacy is also exploding, but it is less integrated into a particular project.

PART 4:

Beyond Europe: Some comparative notes paradiplomacy in the world

The European Union multilevel governance takes an important pro-active role in the shaping of global governance. The main transformation is from hierarchical Westphalian governmental structures to horizontal flat network governance. Such processes can be found across the world, nevertheless the EU has pushed the boundaries of transformation. The project is very ambitious and still in transition. In this context, similar processes in the North American Free Trade Area are less far-reaching. In a comparative study, Joachim Blatter compares the impact of cross-border cooperation in

¹⁵ Alexander Barniol, 'Globalisation Pan-identity and constitutional powers. The international projection of the *Generalitat de Catalunya*', Unpublished MA dissertation, Hull University, 2001; see also Caminal Badia (1998: 405-427, especially 413-419).

North America and Europe. It seems that the most important difference between what is happening, on the one hand, in the North Pacific (along the Canadian and US coast) and along the US-Mexican border (in the two Californias), and, on the other, with the cross-border cooperation in the Upper Rhine Valley (along the German, Swiss and French Borders) and with the cross-border cooperation in Lake Constance (between Germany, Austria and Switzerland) has to do with the symbolic-inductive nature of European projects (Blatter 2003: 514-515; see also Blatter, [2001b](#)). In his research, he clearly shows that the European cross-border projects are more institutionalized (Upper Rhine Valley) and in more harmony and having a common identity (Lake Constance) than the North American counterparts which are either characterized by antagonism due to the contestation of bioregionalist groups (Cascadia) or relying merely on instrumental institutions designed to transform the still existing economic development gap between the two sides (Blatter 2001a: 193-194). The problem with this typology is that, possibly, the two European case studies are not representative of the European Union. Probably, the inclusion of cross-border cooperation from the Portuguese-Spanish or Polish-German experience would create some similarities in this respect. Nevertheless, one has to acknowledge that overarching power of European integration plays a motivating factor for such cooperation in Europe and is a major difference to what is happening in North America (Blatter 2003: 515). In spite of concerns in relation to the typology, Blatter identified an important aspect of transformation, that we have already mentioned, and this is the transition from the rigid hierarchical structures to more elastic network structures. He clearly is against characterising the present emerging structures of cross-border cooperation as loose coupling, as some German political scientists have theorized it recently (see Eder and Trenz 2003; Heinelt and Kopp-Malek and Lang and Reissert 2003). He regards the emergence of the new network processes as part of the interactions between political and other

actors. He refers it as 'elastic coupling' to characterise the flexible nature of the way networking and cooperation is undertaken (Blatter 2003: 513).

Blatter comes to the conclusion that Europe and North America are developing in different directions in the restructuring of the Westphalian model:

Territory is no longer the only imaginable basis for creating and defining primary political communities and institutions. Nevertheless, it would be too easy to 'write off' the nation-state or the territorial basis of politics in general. In Europe, the process of regional cross-border institution-building shows the quite typical modern features of institutions with a rather clear-cut geographic basis and multi-sectoral goals and tasks. The European system of 'multi-level governance' is being complemented by another – rather weak but comprehensive – layer of institutions of governance and identity formation.

In contrast to this, in North America regional cross-border cooperation follows much more the logic of *spaces of flows* – but the new, quite 'fluid' institutions in respect of geographic space and time are not strong enough to play a significant role in policy conflicts with distributive consequences across the national border. In these cases the 'old' territorial identities and loyalties prevail. Therefore, we can conclude that here 'de-bordering the world of states' means complementing the single territorial polity (nation state) with non-territorial polities (transnational socio-economic exchange networks or transnational ideological coalitions) which are relevant only in specific policy dimensions but have a significant mobilizing capacity. Such a system of 'multi-polity governance' does not question the Westphalian system of sovereign states directly, since the states are not challenged by similar territorial units (same kind of polities), but presents a much more radical path of system change (Blatter 2001: 201-202).

This explains the limited possibilities for the province of Quebec within the Canadian Federation. André Lecours clearly shows that Quebec is involved in many activities in order to push its global reach, but the structure of opportunities is less favourable than those in Europe, in particular Wallonia in Belgium. According to Lecours, Quebec has no international relations competences in contrast to regions in Belgium. The strong activity of Quebec is due to its nationalist identity which is strengthened by the distinctiveness within the Canadian federation. There is a strategic vision of Quebec, which

defines this province as a 'small nation'. Quebec's main arena of paradiplomacy is the close relationship to France and the *Francophonie*.¹⁶ The Quebec government uses very often the structure of opportunities offered by globalization. Prime Ministers of Quebec tend to go the World Economic Forum in Davos in order to promote the region, but also Quebec as a distinctive entity in the Canadian Federation. Moreover, crossborder cooperation within the NAFTA framework plays a major role in enhancing the international role of Quebec. Lachapelle and Paquin speak of the rise of a new regionalism which draws its strength from the strong economy of Quebec. This identity-economy is naturally informing the overall identity of this stateless nation. NAFTA and Globalization have been major new structures of opportunities to extend the international and global reach.¹⁷

Quite interesting are developments in Russia where the centralist legacy is trying to assert itself after a decade of disorganisation during the 1990s. The government of Vladimir Putin pushed forward legislation to control better regional attempts to develop an independent foreign policy. As an example one can mention the Muslim-dominated Republic of Tatarstan, which clearly expanded considerably its global reach. Most of the agreements are of economic nature, but the political dimension is always quite important in this respect. Tatarstan declared itself a sovereign state in 1990, backed by a referendum in 1992, although Moscow clearly regards it as a breach of the constitution. The control of Putin over the regional governors and the change of the Federation Council were steps to curtail the autonomy of regions. Tatarstan challenged the position of the Russian government in relation to Kosovo, which was one of support for Milosevic and Serbia. In contrast, Tatarstan supported the plight of the Kosovo Albanians (Sharafutdinova 2003: 621-622). Similar tensions exist in relation to other regions, such as the

¹⁶ Lecours, op.cit., pp. 12-13.

¹⁷ Guy Lachapelle and Stéphane Paquin, Quebec's international strategies: mastering globalization and new possibilities of governance. Paper presented at the Conference Québec and Canada in the New Century: New Dynamics, New Opportunities. Queen's University, School of Policy Studies, 31 October-1 November 2003.

Pskov region on the border to Estonia and Latvia. These two new member-states of the European Union were former Republics of the Soviet Union and diplomatic tensions occur regularly, jeopardizing the cooperation with the Pskov region (Roll and Maximova and Mikenberg 2001). In spite of these problems, it shows that there is a will within the different subnational units of Russia to explore this growing phenomenon of paradiplomacy.

In terms of paradiplomacy is also important to consider the transregional/transcontinental projects that are leading to a strengthening of diplomacy in which regions may be also involved. The Euromediterranean partnership and the EU-Mercosur Free Trade Area are contributing to a change of the borders between continents. These projects are still too new to make an assessment, but time may show ways for regions from different continents to work together. Spanish regions will be at the forefront in both these projects. The cultural proximity will allow to create networks, synergies and expand to all forms of cooperation. Civil society of these different regions are already engaged in a dialogue of cooperation (Pérez Antón 2001 Volpi 2004; Stavridis 2002. see also Magone 2006: Chapters 9-10).

In sum, since the 1980s paradiplomacy has been rising across the world. Regional actors have been very important in changing the attitude towards it. The rise of complexity in restructuring processes across the world is creating a new world architecture which will lead inevitably to global governance. States will not disappear and will still be *primi inter pares*, but their sovereignty will be perforated, if not shared with subnational actors.

PART 5:

Conclusions: Global Governance and Paradiplomacy of Regions

In the past three decades, the world architecture has changed considerably. The 'debordering of states' and the 'denationalization of societies' led for the

emergence of a new structure of opportunities which allowed regional actors, interest groups and other civil society actors to become part of the global governance system. Such transformations of regional-continental, transcontinental and global governance will continue to progress until a balance is reached. One of the consequences is that sovereignty is now perforated (Tierny 2005) and being replaced by new forms of organisation that William Wallace calls post-sovereign (see above). European regional actors are in the enviable position that the European Commission is interested in pushing forward a strategy of softening up the internal borders of the European Union. Moreover, there is a genuine will to push the boundaries of the European model to the neighbouring countries without integrating them as new members.

Regions may have escaped the confines of the nation-state, but multi-level governance structures at regional-continental and global level have created more elastic structures in order to keep them undertaking mainly domestic politics.

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