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The Nationalism of stateless nations and Europe. The Catalan case

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Abstract

This paper analyzes how the ideas and concepts of Europe have developed in Catalonia, under the conditions of a decentralizing “nation-state” (Spain) on one hand, and the European integration process on the other. It analyzes the programmes, manifestations of political leaders, and political actions of the Catalan political parties, specially the nationalists, from the setting up of the Spanish state of autonomies (1977-1982) until today. The paper tries to show how, in multilevel governance, holistic and enthusiastic visions of an economically and political integrating Europe as a “natural ally” of a Catalan nationalism were partially replaced by more pragmatic and even more critical assessments.

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European opportunities for stateless nations?

European integration may be seen as a process that substitutes, by and by, the nation-state; but it may also be that it complements its functions. Some authors even consider that, after the Second World War, and particularly under globalization, the EU may be the “rescue” of the nation-state. Be that as it may, nationalists of non-state nation had to take issue with the process, they had to take a standpoint. The EU afforded a new opportunity structure that nationalists could accept or reject. All the new opportunities, however, favoured regional administrations. How do they influence “nationalism”? To answer this question, we should first know what nationalism is, and that would certainly go beyond the limits of this contribution. Perhaps we can use the operational definition, that it is 1) a political principle that political and national units should be identical, and 2) a movement to secure this goal. But it may be subject to discussion what a “nation” is, and whether it is the source or the result of nationalism. And it is far from clear how sovereign the „political unit” nationalisms are after has to be, or, in other words: what separates, in an interdependent world, a region from a nation? Under EU integration, different nationalisms had to answer that question, and they did; but their answers differ. Nationalist movements and programs are quite different. Identity markers, history, former successes of the movement, the existence of nationalist parties and their strength and electoral performance, their participation in regional and/or state-wide government, the existence of administrative units which coincide more or less with nationalist claims, the stance on the European Union historically adopted by its elites and members... all these factors differentiate nationalisms in respect to the effect the EU may have on them. Nationalist movements may govern territories with important competences as in the Catalan case; there may be strong, but (until recently) non-governing parties in a part of the territory, like in Wales; the nationalism may present itself mainly in a cultural form or as a defence of the language movement, like in Occitany. In cases where the territory claimed by nationalists does not coincide with the regions accepted by the states and the EU, successful regional participation in the EU of such territories may run counter to the nationalist goals and movements, because it helps to establish alternative political units.

¹ Research on the programmes of the Catalan political parties was conducted as part of the project *Espacios de competición en gobiernos multinivel. Ciudadanos, partidos y elecciones en el estado de las autonomías* (MEC project SEC2003-00418), directed by Francesc Pallarés. The very first draft of this paper has been presented at the Conference *Beyond the Nation? Critical Reflections on Nations and Nationalism in Uncertain Times*, Queen’s University, Belfast, 12.-14.9.2007. My thanks for all comments I have received on this occasion and afterwards. All errors are mine.

Spain, Catalonia and Europe

Catalan nationalism has historically claimed to be a modernizing element, a progressive force against a „backward“ Spain that was led by pre-modern, repressive elites totally out of tune with Europe. From the transition (1977-1982) until today, Spain has democratized, decentralized, and europeanized itself. In Spain's transition process, the necessities to decentralize, democratize, and accommodate the minority nations have overlapped. As we have argued elsewhere², the first two of these challenges were quite successfully answered, while the last problem has not been dealt with successfully. Today, Spain is no longer „different“, but a western style liberal democracy. The admission to the European Union (1986) was a part of this process and may be seen as a factor of the recovery of a new Spanish national pride.³ On the other hand, Catalan nationalists are no longer facing a centralist dictatorship with low international prestige, but a recognized member state of the community of European liberal democracies.

Spanish membership in the European Communities has changed the opportunity structure for Catalan nationalists in other ways, too. The Spanish state lost powers, but transferred them mostly to Brussels. On the other hand, a new, European level of decisions emerged, with possibilities of new centralization, but now in Brussels. Furthermore, European Integration was (and still is) centred pretty much on economy. For these two reasons, in 1974, nationalist organisations from Galicia, Ireland, the Basque Country, Wales, Sardinia, Occitany, and North and South Catalonia had met in Brest in Brittany to pass a document condemning "interior colonialism". In those times it was usual among them to criticise the "capitalist" European Community as well as the nation-states. But afterwards, many nationalist critics of the UE made their peace with the way European integration was proceeding. In the eighties, regional initiatives like the "4-Motors" were criticized as "bourgeois regionalism" (Christopher Harvie). New regionalist movements like the Leagues in Italy effectively used nationalist elements of discourse and mobilization.

In Catalonia, mainstream nationalism, stemming from the opposition to a centralist dictatorship, saw European integration as a modernization process and an ally. This is one of the differences between Catalonia with a nationalist movement in opposition to a dictatorship and, say, Scotland. While Scottish nationalists had to change their stance on Europe, Catalanists had not. With the exception of some leftist Catalanists that argued in the line of the Brest document, Catalan nationalists saw, according to Keating⁴ „...Europe ... as a source of economic opportunities; as a source of support for their cultural and linguistic promotion policies in the context of a hostile Spanish state; and as a source of support for their self-government aspirations, with its commitment to subsidiarity and the Europe of the Regions concept, and through the possibilities of alliances with other minority nations and regions. Europe is thus used as a resource for nation-building, but not necessarily for state-building in the classical sense.“ However, Europe was more

² Nagel, Klaus-Jürgen/Requejo, Ferran: El debate sobre la relación entre centro y Autonomías en España, in: Bernecker, Walther L./Maihold, Günther (eds.): España: del consenso a la polarización. Cambios en la democracia española (=Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana, 13), Madrid/Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/Vervuert 2007, p. 265-295.

³ See, from a somewhat different standpoint, Jáuregui, Pablo: Spain: 'Europe' as a symbol of modernity, democracy, and renewed international prestige, Euronat Project, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, April 2002.

⁴ See Keating, Michael: Les nationalités minoritaires d'Espagne face à l'Europe, *Revue Études Internationales* 30, 1999, 4, p. 729-743; Keating, Michael: The minority nations of Spain and European integration: a new framework for autonomy? *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 1, 2000, 1, p. 29-42 (here: p. 32).

often seen as a new, less hostile political space than positively as a new (additional or alternative) identity.

It should be noticed that at least until the nineties, the opportunities for regional administrations to participate in Europe have increased. This process had begun more or less at the time of Spain's negotiations for accession. It culminated in Maastricht (1992). Funds were created and increased, the Committee of the Regions was established, access to the Council of Ministers was made possible for regional ministers when their member states agreed to. Before, some minority nationalists had claimed a "Europe of a hundred flags" (Yann Fouéré), opposing it to the "capitalist" European Economic Community. Now, a new catchword appeared, the "Europe of the Regions". European programs and initiatives like *Interreg* created new policy opportunities and seemed to indicate a change in politics, too. Under multilevel governance and public-private partnerships, the importance of the nation-state seemed to diminish. For some authors, this form of political organisation seemed doomed. In consequence, "statelessness" could be less of a handicap for a nation. In addition, European elections seemed to be a promising new field for Nationalist parties.⁵ It is true that from the start, some contradictory developments happened, too. In order to receive European money, state cooperation always was essential, even for the Regional Funds.⁶ And while regional administrations seemed to be appreciated partners of the European Commission, at the same time, the role of the regions as collective actor was weakened by the competence between them. This limited the importance of their interregional partnerships.

However, the conclusion that the Catalan leaders draw from the trends was not to pursue more independence, but to improve lobbying strategies, not separation, but more participation and influence. In short, voice, not exit.

Catalan parties

When Catalan nationalism had been formulated first, that is, during the last two decades of the 19th century, Catalan society was more different from Spanish society than it is today. People clothed different, ate different, and Catalan was the dominating language in oral communication. Many Catalans talked only poor Spanish and some even none. Today, differences in clothing or eating are marginal, and the dominating language of the streets of Barcelona and its neighbour cities is Spanish, above all, among the young people. But while „objective“ differences have diminished, „subjective“ nationalism has increased. The Catalan nationalist parties together would have a majority in the Catalan parliament. National consciousness and, particularly, the existence of a Catalan party system of its own is one of the distinguishing elements of the Catalan Nation.

In opposition to the Franco regime, Catalan parties of different colours had worked together, and in some issues of general importance, possibilities of collaboration continued to exist afterwards, as the votes on the Statutes or on the Laws of Linguistic Normalisation show. From the start, the union of democratic forces, left and right, nationalist or not, contrasted with other parts of Spain, where opposition to the regime was often weaker, and parties with some or much personal and programmatic continuity from the dictatorial regime were stronger. After 1975, a new Catalan party system had emerged, where parties

⁵ See De Winter, Lieven: The impact of European integration on ethnoregionalist parties, Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials Working Paper 195, Barcelona 2001; Lynch, Peter: Minority Nationalism and European Integration, Cardiff 1996.

⁶ See Gary Marks: "When it comes to finances, the EU is a state-centric polity, and a regional government that is oriented to money will operate through national rather than European channels." Marks, Gary et al.: Governance in the European Union, London et al. 1996.

can be located on two axis: the usual left-right axis, and the national dimension: While the Partido Popular of Catalonia is a branch of the Spanish PP, the Catalan PSC is federated to (or with, according to interpretation) the Spanish socialist PSOE⁷; left and green Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds (ICV) is totally independent from Spanish Izquierda Unida (IU), but forms a common parliamentary group with IU in Madrid. Convergència i Unió, a federation of two parties (Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya and Unió Democràtica de Catalunya), and leftist Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya are purely Catalan parties, presenting themselves only to the Catalan electorate (ERC also in other Catalan speaking parts of Spain, that is in Valencia and the Balearic Islands). Catalan voters often choose different parties for different levels of government, demonstrating a certain double identity.

Convergència i Unió (CiU) is a federation of two parties. CiU dominated Catalan autonomous politics from the granting of autonomy and the first Catalan elections in 1980 up to 2003, when Jordi Pujol, the first president of the Catalan Generalitat government of modern times, finally retired. Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya (CDC) is the bigger of the two parties. It was founded by catholic Catalanists in 1974. Initially presenting a social democratic program, under the charismatic leadership of Pujol, it was capable to rally liberals, centrists and catholics of different sorts. Under the Catalan banner, smaller parties were integrated, even some of doubtful catalanist pedigree. But Unió Democràtica de Catalunya, a historic christian democratic party that had sided with the Republic and against catholic crusader Franco, did not give up its autonomy. Finally, UDC pacted a federation with the far bigger Convergència. In CiU, sovereigntist or regionalist currents survive side by side; the party never formulates its ultimate goal for Catalonia. In Spain, this lack of definition is sometimes seen as disguising separatism, while in Catalonia, some sovereigntists criticise it as regionalism. While in government, CiU tried to increase autonomy in a piecemeal way. At the same time, the party secured, when necessary, Spanish governability by parliamentary pacts, though refraining from entering Conservative or Socialist Spanish governments. These patterns have not changed since transition. CiU always stood for modernizing Spain, thinking (and saying) that an economical and politically strong Spanish state would serve Catalonia's interest best. According to Giordano and Roller (2005), CiU "has sought to mobilize electoral support on the basis of language, culture, and national identity rather than independence as a means of expressing self-determination..." and "has sought the modernization of the Spanish state as well as the emergence of a 'Europe of the Regions' rather than fully-fledged independence from Spain."

In comparison to CiU, Esquerra Republicana, situated on the left of CiU and sharing its nationalism, has had a longer and a more eventful history. Founded in 1932, the party had governed autonomous Catalonia during the second Spanish Republic (1932-1939). During the transition, it tried to capitalize on its history and the figures of Republican presidents Macià and Companys, shot in 1940. It even fought elections with the same federal program it had already formulated at the time of its foundation. Losing votes from election to election, the party seemed to become redundant. Its nationalism and its leftist orientation faded away, and Pujol even maintained coalition governments with ERC when he did not need the votes in parliament. But finally, NGO activists from the language movement like Angel Colom and leftist members of independentist and formerly marxist non-parliamentarian parties like Carod Rovira and

⁷ Some authors present the PSC as a mere regional PSOE branch. See for example Giordano, Benito/Roller, Elisa: Catalonia and the "idea of Europe". Competing strategies and discourses within Catalan party politics, *European Urban and Regional Studies* 9, 2002, 2, p. 99-113.

Puigcercós took over the party leadership. The party then took an independentist stand, employed media-orientated and even populist mobilization methods, and addressed itself to the younger age groups. After some of the separatists had split off in 1996, the remaining party, led by Carod, by and by stressed its leftist elements, and finally formed the coalition with socialists and greens that has governed Catalonia since 2003. After the disappointment with the 2006 statute of autonomy, this coalition strategy is under debate, the leadership is questioned, and some split offs have happened.

Catalan socialism has also changed since transition. During Catalan history, among the workers, socialism had for as long time been second to anarchism, and its political traditions defer quite a lot from the jacobin ideology so often professed by Spanish socialists, integrating heterodox and non centralist traditions of self management, the cooperative movement, and a federalist Catalanism. The different strands of Catalan socialism only united in 1978. The new party, that included the Catalan section of the Spanish Socialist Party, federated with the Spanish PSOE. By and by, its founding differences vanished away, and it gave up its own parliamentary group in Madrid in favour of socialist unity. This tendency has only recently been questioned. While the PSC (and even the PSOE) had defended the Catalan right to national self-determination under Franco, both parties had abandoned this position afterwards (1978). Since then, the PSC stands for a federal reform of the Spanish state, often defending asymmetrical elements, while the PSOE has embraced symmetrical federalism officially, but is not too keen to stress the point when in government.

The leading party of anti-Franco resistance in Catalonia had been the historic PSUC, founded in 1936 as a unified socialist-communist party. It seemed to have good chances when the transition to democracy started. However, several bitter struggles between orthodox and euro-communists, and with the Spanish Communist Party PCE weakened the PSUC. Current *Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds* party combines traditional socialist elements with claims for a ecological, feminist and basis democracy. The party defends the right of national self-determination for Catalonia, but its main concerns are with other political issues.

One of the most striking particularities of the Catalan party system is the weakness of the second of the two big Spanish parties, the Partido Popular, in Catalonia. During the transition, the forerunners of the current PP came from the files of the Francoists and rallied people that saw the necessity for a limited political reform. They were unable to take roots in Catalonia. Only when the Spanish right, initially quite critical with the 1978 constitution, reinvented the party, and became a staunch defender of the constitution in the name of Spanish patriotism, than the newly founded PP managed to win significant shares of the Catalan vote, sometimes with an antinationalist (referring to the Catalan nation) discourse. Some Catalan party leaders tried to move cautiously to more regionalist positions, but these attempts have often been obstructed by the central leadership in Madrid. At the same time, the party is criticized in Catalonia as serving more its Madrid masters than its Catalan base.

This quick overview of the Catalan party system and its development since transition shows clearly that the parties adapted to the new political system of the Spanish state of autonomies. With the partial and temporary exception of ERC, all parties brought their programs and practices into line with the new multilevel setting. This process of adaptation stabilized the Spanish state.

Catalan governments and Europe

Under these circumstances, what is the role of the European integration process and how does it fit into this general pattern? The first part of my answer will deal with the

politics of the Catalan government; European opportunities are mostly thought for governmental actors. As Catalonia was governed from 1980 to 2003 by CiU led cabinets under the presidency of Jordi Pujol, government politics were clearly interwoven with the development of *Convergència i Unió*. The second part will deal with the different parties, also shading some light on the non-nationalist ones, and their concepts of Europe, analysing the corresponding programs.

Catalonia celebrated its first free elections for its own parliament in 1980. The winner was Jordi Pujol. His leadership has been a very personalised one. In the field of foreign and European policies, ultimate decisions were his.⁸ His foreign policy was consistent in some aspects, while in others, it lacked coherence. When analyzing Pujol's vision of Catalonia and Europe, a thick volume of more than 600 pages published by the Generalitat, the Catalan government, is useful. Under the title *Pensar Europa* (Thinking Europe), it collects Pujol's speeches delivered on the issue between 1985 and 1993⁹, that is, in the formative years of Catalan European policy. Pujol, in the usual way of romantic nationalism, speaks about the "vocation" of the Catalan nation. What is more unusual is that the Catalan Nation has more than one vocation, at least four or five of them:

1. *la vocació pirinenca*. Catalonia is seen as a people of the Pyrenees mountains, where it had its roots and origin. As we will see, Catalonia has embarked on transpyrenean cooperation in several transborder cooperation schemes with overlapping objectives.

2. *la vocació europea*. Catalonia, a part of the Carolingian empire, is seen as European, right from the start, whereas Spain is a latecomer to Europeaness. In fact this belief has been shared by the Catalan left.¹⁰ We will come to that later.

3. *la vocació mediterrània*. Pujol often referred to Catalunya as a Mediterranean country. In the first sense of the term, that embraces cooperation with the French, but also with the Northern Italian and the Southern Spanish regions along the coast. In a second sense, Pujol included Morocco. He was conscious of the fact that Moroccan immigration to Catalonia is growing rapidly and that integration of this new type of immigrant in Catalan society, culture and language is generating problems. Broadly spoken, his successors, socialists Pasqual Maragall and José Montilla, followed the same line of thought.

4. *la vocació hispànica*. The vocation of Catalonia to be "Spanish" is a constant factor in mainstream Catalanism. Catalan bourgeoisie tried on occasions to take the lead in Madrid. And Pujol himself acted as *de facto* co-leader in Madrid between 1993, when the Socialists lost their absolute majority, and 2000, when the Partido Popular won an absolute majority of its own. For Pujol as well as for historic Catalan nationalists, Catalonia is the economic motor of Spain; the material base of this vocation may be more doubtful now, but the notion survives. Part of this hispanic vocation of Catalonia is the "bridge"-function between Latin America and Europe that Spain so often claims, too.

So we understand that a Catalan foreign policy based on these vocations is rich, multi-perspective, even tends to be contradictory as to the geographic spaces involved or created. We should stress that Pujol never spoke of "foreign policy", but of "international presence" of Catalonia. As a Catalan nationalist, but not a separatist, he wanted Catalonia to intervene in Spanish affairs. He stressed to be a citizen of a non-state nation and not of a

⁸ See García Segura, Caterina: *L'activitat exterior de les regions: una dècada de projecció exterior de Catalunya*, Barcelona 1995, p. 153.

⁹ See Pujol, Jordi: *Pensar Europa*, Barcelona 1993.

¹⁰ See Deulofeu, Alexandre: *Catalunya i l'Europa futura*, Barcelona 1934.

region, but he favoured regionalisation as an asset for all regions, toying conveniently with cultural, economic and administrative concepts of the "region". In order to understand this better, we will now focus on his European policy.¹¹

There is no doubt that the European vocation was of special importance for Pujol. Most Catalans pride themselves on possessing a high grade of Europeanness. Spanish elites feel positive for European integration and Catalan elites may even beat them. Spanish integration in the European Communities and Spanish participation in the Euro produced euphoria, and Catalans were initially among the most positively minded, before a certain disillusion took place.

But which role can a stateless nation like Catalonia play in the European Union? An interpretation of the EU as a mere community of states might suppose that a nationalist of a stateless nation may have to go for stateness. After independence, a seat in the Council of Ministers should be secured. This strategy might imply to look for alliances with nationalists in other places who find themselves in the same situation. But "Independence in Europe" has never been on the agenda of the Catalan government. Instead, the official Catalan European policy has always claimed to enhance the role of the European regions. Hereby, it accepted for Catalonia a denomination ("region") that Catalan nationalists don't accept for Catalonia's position in Spain. Some Catalan politicians think that globalization is gnawing at the strength of the nation-state and that it is, at the same time, increasing the significance of the regions. However, a "Europe of the Regions" means different things to different people. Defenders of the "sandwich thesis" argued that the state, caught in the middle between an expanding Commission and the burgeoning regions, who act in a strategical alliance, will be stripped of its power. For others, a less hierarchical and democratically less transparent mode of "multi-level governance" is developing in what might be more properly called a Europe "with" and not "of" the regions.

Pujol as leader of European regionalism made always clear that his movement was not attacking the states.¹² Under his government, Catalonia was opting for the following alternative: Trying to influence the Commission and other European organs by way of interregional cooperation, by a Brussels office run in partnership between the Catalan administrations and civil society partners, and, above all, cooperating with the Spanish government, making use, if possible, of the votes the governing parties of Catalonia had in the Madrid parliament.

It is well known that "Maastricht" introduced a new collective regional actor, the Committee of the Regions (CoR), which includes local administrations. As leader of the Assembly of the European Regions (AER) founded in 1985, Pujol had struggled for the inclusion of the regions in the political structure of Europe. But afterwards, the inclusion of the local administrations and the insufficient powers of this consultative organ disappointed him.¹³ His hope for the Amsterdam Treaty (1996) proved false. The first deliberations of the CoR showed that the strong regions that had fought for it were losing out against the weak, which allied themselves occasionally with the local authorities. The

¹¹ For the central thesis of this paragraph, see my articles on "The 'Europe of the Regions' and the Identity Politics of Nations Without States" (Scottish Affairs 36, 2001, p. 48-72) and "A unificación europea. Unha nova escena posible para os nacionalismos non estatais?" (Grial 138, 1998, p. 199-237).

¹² "Desearía precisar que la Europa unida que se está construyendo va a ser una Europa de estados. No va a ser una Europa de 200 regiones. (...) Los estados son el esqueleto del cuerpo de Europa, y no hay cuerpo sin esqueleto." (Pujol 1993: 110s.).

¹³ See Pujol, Jordi: Vers une Europe des régions?, in Portelli, Hugues (ed.) La décentralisation française et l'Europe, Boulogne, 1993, p. 283: "Malgré une évolution globalement positive, on ne peut pas négliger les carences de ce comité, en premier lieu, sa composition mixte d'entités locales et régionales."

irony is that the local authorities were led by Pasqual Maragall, then mayor of Barcelona, who became Pujol's antagonist in the Catalan elections of 1999 and finally, his successor. In sum, the movement of the European regions had its symbolic victory when CoR was introduced in the European structure, but till now, the CoR has not become a relevant political actor, due to the heterogeneity of the European regions and local administrations.

Pujol has been one of the most prominent presidents of the AER, but more radical catalanists argue that the "magma" of the regions only strengthens the position of the states as the effective power in the European Union. However, disappointment with the CoR is a feature not limited to Catalonia, nor to stateless nations; it affects strong regions of other states, too. In consequence, Catalonia embarked upon two initiatives aimed at enhancing the role of stronger regions in Europe. Since 2000, Conferences of Regions with Legislative Powers were celebrated. In Barcelona in 2000, the presidents of Austrian, Belgian, German, Portuguese, British, Spanish, and Italian regions established a network of cooperation. A group of seven "constitutional" regions signed a declaration claiming more participation in the European institutions and more consideration of the constitutional regions. Catalonia, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westfalia, Salzburg, Scotland, Valonia and Flanders signed this declaration.

The same year that the AER was founded as a collective organization of the European regions, the first German *Länder* installed offices in Brussels for individual representation of their regions. It is symbolic (and it was meant to be) that Catalonia opened an office there even before Spain became a member of the Community. It is equally significant that the Catalan *Patronat Pro Europa* took the form of a foundation, in order to avoid problems with the monopoly on foreign policy the Spanish state claimed, whereas the Basques deliberately risked constitutional conflict. Among the members of the Catalan *Patronat* there were local administrations, universities, commercial establishments, savings banks, trade unions and Chambers of Commerce. The *Patronat* never worked against Spanish government interests in Brussels but looked for close cooperation with the Spanish Permanent Residency to the European Union. During some periods, the dependence of the Madrid government on Catalanist votes in the Madrid parliament facilitated this. Even though, Spanish conservative media like ABC used to censure the considerable expenses of Spanish *Comunidades Autónomas* and especially of Catalonia and the Basque Country.¹⁴

Interregional networking became fashionable among European regions, and Catalonia is one of the most active European regions in that respect. For some years, Catalonia participated among others, in the Working Community of Regions with Industrial Tradition (RETI, 1984). It became a member of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR, 1986), the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR, 1987), not to forget the Assembly of European Wine Growing Regions (AREV). Some of these associations, which evidently pursue different and even contradictory objectives, are strictly orientated to attract European funds. Transborder cooperation is notorious for that, but, on the other hand, there is not much money spent for that purpose.

Let me spotlight the more important schemes Catalonia ventured into.¹⁵ The Working Community of the Pyrenees, founded in 1983, rallies Navarre, the Basque Country, Aragon, Aquitaine, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées, the tiny state of

¹⁴ See ABC 16.12.1996. The same article gave Catalonia's share as only 10,41%.

¹⁵ See Nagel, Klaus-Jürgen: Interregional Cooperation. The Catalan Case, in: Hrbek, Rudolf (ed.): Außenbeziehungen von Regionen in Europa und der Welt/External Relations of Regions in Europe and the World, Schriftenreihe des Europäischen Zentrums für Föderalismus-Forschung, 27, Baden-Baden 2003, p. 129-142.

Andorra where Catalan is the official language, and Catalonia. It tried to follow the model of a Council of Europe Convention, but both states made this practically impossible, so the Community was initially organized as an association of French private law. The main interest of the group is to develop transpyrenean communications. Transport, agriculture, water resources and cultural heritage are the most important issues. But big programs contrast with small budgets. It is no surprise that the output is limited. There is nearly no real initiative on linguistic and cultural matters. In 1998, the Working Community was temporarily blocked by the socialist presidents of Midi-Pyrénées and Aquitaine, when French liberal Jacques Blanc, a long year partner of Pujol, had himself elected with extreme right votes in Languedoc-Roussillon. In 1999, the Andorra presidency had to make major diplomatic efforts to ensure the participation of all member regions, and to avoid direct meetings of the delegates for Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées because of this political conflict.

The Working Group served the interest of the regional politicians to get media coverage, especially those who presided the Group. There is no sign that Catalonia or the Basque Country mean to use the scheme in order to propagate transborder nationalism.

The so-called Euroregion made of the French regions of Midi-Pyrénées, Languedoc-Roussillon, and Catalonia was no pan-catalanist activity either. It is true that its capital, Perpignan, at the same time, was capital of the French department Pyrenées-Orientales, which roughly coincides with what some Catalans call Northern Catalonia, the part of Catalonia which the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659 had torn away from the rest and which since then belongs to the French state. Once upon a time, the Euroregion was declared the second pillar of Catalan exterior policy, together with the "Four Motors" initiative.¹⁶ French and (to a lesser extend) Spanish government feared pan-catalanism which might spread to other Catalan speaking areas in Spain like Valencia and the Balearic Islands, but Pujol spoke of senseless state administration whims, and underlined that all participant regions belong to consolidated states.¹⁷ It should be noted that, like the Pyrenean Working Group, the Euroregion suffered from an overburdened program (and corresponding underfinancing); that the use of the scheme can be atoned to current necessities (case of the high speed train, the necessities of the presidents to get re-elected, etc.).

There always has been the idea of combining the Euroregion with models of a Mediterranean arch. Sometimes the "arch" is conceived to reach out as far as Tuscany and Andalusia, a string of prosperous and well connected regions which counterweight the famous "blue banana" of the prosperous regions between London and Milan. But the space between Andalusia and Tuscany is not very homogeneous and the scheme not very operative.

I think it is already obvious that the different associations of regions where Catalonia is organized promote contradictory development axes. One of the most cherished interregional projects of Jordi Pujol has been the Four Motors for Europe initiative, together with the supposedly economically leading regions of Baden-Württemberg, Lombardy, and Rhône-Alpes, with Wales as latecomer. This initiative obviously has no nationalist bias. Its partners don't even have a common frontier. Such kind of interregional cooperation schemes depend as well on sometimes casual personal contacts between the political leaders who try to use them in order to favour their image

¹⁶ See Llimona, Joaquim: La Euroregión, factor de desarrollo e integración europea, *Conceptos - Revista de Gestión y Dirección* 14, 1992, p. 4-9.

¹⁷ REGIO 7, 5.7.1993.

and the profile of their country. According to these factors, the schemes experience their ups and downs. Engagement of the partners is very unequal.

Preference for one or the other cooperation scheme may change according to interior politics or image problems. Catalan government's long year cooperation with Rhône-Alpes president Charles Millon (in the Four Motors) and Languedoc-Roussillon president Jacques Blanc (in the Euroregion and the Pyrenees Group) was cancelled to further notice when those political friends of Pujol collaborated (to a different degree) with the French extreme right.

So it is not easy to find an overarching coherence in the range of cooperation schemes and agreements on which Catalonia embarked. If we believe all schemes to the letter, Catalonia is as Pyrenean as it is Mediterranean. It was an old established industrial region facing recycling when it belonged to RETI, and, at the same time, it was (and still is) a "motor" of Europe. It is a region of the maritime periphery, and a centre region of a thriving and prosperous Mediterranean arch of technology ready to challenge the "blue banana". But referring to our topic, I think it is interesting that Catalonia used the schemes striving (successfully) to give itself a European, cooperative and pragmatist image, privileging technological and economic cooperation, and that these cooperation schemes were preferred to pursuing purely nationalist alliances.¹⁸

Language is a central marker of Catalan nationality. What importance does Catalan foreign policy give to the language factor? Catalan foreign policy has always centred on the European Union. Historically, the EC is about markets and economy, not about culture. Even if Maastricht gave some theoretical leverage for a European policy favouring the flourishing of all national and regional cultures and of cultural diversity (Art. 128 Treaty of Maastricht), the existence of "small" languages in a given territory is often still believed to be a consequence of bad identity management, and an impediment to economic development. Some lobbying in favour of cultural identity as an asset of development is done, but it can be argued that the realization of the Common Market, the main success of the Union, has been to the detriment of cultural diversity in Europe.¹⁹

However, we have already seen that the defence of regional or minority languages is not the main issue for the Catalan foreign policy. In all EP resolutions on language questions, Catalan MEP's of all parties use to be in the forefront, but they have always acted very cautiously and the Catalan government as such has been very prudent. It did not like this issue to disturb its partnership schemes. And it did not want that its language, which has more speakers than Danish or some other state-languages, is compared with non-state languages of very limited use like Manx or Sorbian; therefore it could not embark upon the existing protection schemes of the Council of Europe. The issue was left to "softer" forms of exterior activities, for example financing Catalan "lectorats" in foreign universities, maintaining cultural representation offices, financing organizations of Catalan emigrants in Europe and South America and so on.²⁰ The Catalan presidents and specially

¹⁸ See Nagel, Klaus-Jürgen: Transcending the National/Asserting the National: How Stateless Nations like Scotland, Wales and Catalonia React to European Integration, in: Australian Journal of Politics and History 50, 2004, 1, p. 58-75.

¹⁹ See Biscoe, Adam: The European Union and minority nations, in: Cumper, P./Wheatley, S. (eds.): Minority rights in the 'new' Europe, 1999, pp. 89-103.

²⁰ A full account of Catalan foreign activities under Pujol has been published by Jaume Urgell (ed.): Donar protagonisme a Catalunya. Acció internacional i política exterior catalana, Barcelona 2003. This book includes the economic promotion of Catalan interests abroad, the cooperation in research and development, linguistic and cultural activities, and the collaboration with developing countries, as well as other forms of foreign policy. It features chapters on the exterior activities of the civil society as well.

Jordi Pujol, on his countless voyages, have seen half the world. They nearly always respect the Spanish diplomacy meticulously, always preparing his trips with the ministry of foreign affairs and the respective embassies. Conflicts with Madrid have widely been avoided. The *Generalitat*, under Pujol, opened dozens of COPCA (*Consorci de Promoció Comercial de Catalunya*) commercial promotion offices and some COPEC (*Consorci de Promoció Exterior de la Cultura*) cultural promotion offices as well. These offices functioned as partnerships with other institutions and private business, not as institutional representation offices of Catalonia.

This international presence was (and is) costly. We have seen that some of the activities can be criticized as being strategically inconsistent, particularly those in interregional cooperation. Catalan foreign policy has always been very cautious and sensitive to circumstances; this may explain some inconsistency. The Catalan government is not giving preference to the regions with national identity, but to strong regions. The common interests of the hundreds of European regions are very limited. But even the partners of the interregional cooperation schemes Catalonia ventured into have very different particular objectives. The heterogeneity of the regional level can be said to be one of the reasons why states have maintained their decisive role in the Union.

Interregional cooperation and foreign policy in general are also image policies for interior use, while opposition parties censure the governments' intents to monopolize the representation of the territory. Pujol's European regionalism, which did not erode, but complement the role of the states in the European Union, had to face the same critics. Catalonia played region, accepting the game, trying to improve its rules, but not to change the game.

In a post-Maastricht EU, the Catalan government accepted the continuing power of the member states as evidence. But it certainly welcomed the loss of the states' monopoly. This standpoint was then sold successfully as useful pragmatism. Some observers hope that "new regionalism" would expand to the detriment of state influence. Europe, in a way, provided an explanation for the contradiction that in spite of the non-acceptance of Catalonia as a nation in the Spanish Constitution, *Convergència* nationalists did not to go for independence. But in reality, Europe added ambivalences, and the Catalan status in European politics is far from being solved definitely.

Catalonia may be less of a "development coalition" than "Quebec Inc."²¹, but in fact there was always a broad consensus between the respective government and main opposition parties on Europeanism and the role of a leading region in Europe. Catalanism, which is much broader than *Convergència i Unió*, may be functional for the competition with other regions for inward investment and European funds money, as it personalizes the region. Catalan nationalism, soft in its claims, has not been a severe handicap till today. The most important identity marker of Catalanism, language, was and still is not high on the agenda of Catalan foreign policy. The Catalan government usually refrained from putting it before international forums seriously, trying instead to find solutions in the Spanish framework. Catalan language and even culture have not been made the main issues for Catalan official foreign policy. That leaves space for external activities of parties and civil society, although these activities may of course be at least partially influenced by the government.

Under Pujol, Catalan government valued its administrative powers very high, and was trying to enhance them. But it was not looking for fully-fledged nation-state status. Pujol defended Catalan autonomy as a cohesive element not only for the Spanish state, but

²¹ See Keating, Michael: Nations against the state. The new politics of nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland, Houndmills 1996.

for Europe. For him, the acceptance of the democratic legitimacy of the regions can be seen as a form of recognition of the right to self-determination. And he affirmed that his government assumed the role of an international advocate of autonomy as an alternative to secessionist approaches.²²

Perhaps, Gary Marks was right when he wrote: "The possibility of regional empowerment in Europe has influenced culturally distinctive regional movements away from the demand for full national independence toward the demand for greater autonomy in the context of the EU. (...) In reducing the stateness of the European polity, the development of the EU has diverted ethnic groups away from a focus on forging a separate state as their ultimate goal." Catalans do not usually feel to be an "ethnic" group, but saving this difference, Catalonia provides a good example for this development.

Did the taking over of the socialist led governments in Barcelona (2003) and Madrid (2004) change Catalonia's European policy? The answer is no, at least not categorically. It is true that the European background seemed to change with the possibility of a Constitutional Treaty. Spain had done nothing to fight for the inclusion of the interests of its regions and minority nations like Catalonia. But when Rodríguez Zapatero planned to submit the Treaty to a Referendum,²³ some claims of Catalan and Basque governments were considered. In September 2004, for the first time, a minister of a Spanish Autonomous Community assisted a meeting of a European Council of Ministers.²⁴ The Spanish Representation in Brussels included two civil servants of Autonomous Communities. Asymmetrical elements (that one of the servants should be from a minority nation) were promised initially, too, but were dropped later. In a further bid for complicity, the socialist majority of the Spanish parliament claimed to give an official status to the Catalan language in Europe, a curious fact if we remember that the same Chamber does not allow the Catalan deputies to use their own language, or if we consider that the former president of the EP, Josep Borrell, a Jacobin-style socialist, did not allow to use the language in Brussels either. Finally, in June 2005, the Council of Ministers decided that those languages that enjoy official status in a part of a member state may be used in communications with European institutions if the member state pays the translation costs and if these institutions agree one by one. Some have, the European parliament has not.

In spite of these policies the Spanish socialist government pursued, the Catalan public grew more critical with the European integration process. Catalonia tried to participate in the Constitutional process with a Catalan Convention for the Debate on the future of the EU. The convention agreed on 80 proposals mostly orientated to strengthen the European institutions and deepen integration. In fact, the final document of the European convention showed many similar propositions. But the clear defeat of the initiatives to strengthen the regions with legislative powers, the fact that minority

²² "el nostre govern ha assumit voluntàriament, el paper de defensor internacional de les autonomies territorials com a alternativa als plantejaments secessionistes." AVUI 29.4.1999.

²³ See Institut d'Estudis Autònoms/Fundació Carles Pi i Sunyer (ed.): La posición del Gobierno español y de los partidos políticos sobre el futuro de la Constitución europea, EuropaFutura.org 10, Barcelona 2004; Albertí Rovira, Enoch/Roig Molés (eds.): El proyecto de nueva constitución europea. Balance de los trabajos de la Convención sobre el futuro de Europa, Barcelona 2004; a general overview of the problems of the process of European integration for stateless nations is provided by Nagel, Klaus-Jürgen: Dilemmas of stateless nations in the European Union, in: Máiz, Ramón/Requejo, Ferran (eds.): Democracy, Nationalism and Multiculturalism, London/New York 2005, p. 127-143.

²⁴ A comparison with Germany in Börzel, Tanja A.: States and Regions in the European Union. Institutional Adaption in Germany and Spain, Cambridge 2002; see also Institut d'Estudis Autònoms/Fundació Carles Pi i Sunyer (eds.): La participación de las regiones en Europa, Barcelona 2003.

languages were not to be considered, and a growing consciousness that Catalonia was a net payer of Europe²⁵ contributed to the growth of eurocriticism in Catalonia we have already mentioned. A considerable number of Catalans (and Basques) felt that „when Europe does not love us, we, too, stop to love it“²⁶. Only 42,3% of the Spanish electorate participated in the referendum. 76,7% voted „sí“, 17,2% „no“, 6% voted „abstention“.²⁷ But only in the Basque and Catalan provinces did the „no“ votes sum up more than 25%.

Up to now these chances in the electorate have not had consequences for the European policy of the Catalan government. When the socialist Maragall took over from Pujol in 2003, Catalan European policy was continued; all partnerships were maintained,²⁸ even schemes like the Four Motors that the socialists had criticised when in opposition.²⁹ The change of the old Euroregió for a new one that includes the Balearic Islands and Aragon and, theoretically, conservative ruled Valencia, that is, the countries of the old crown of Aragon, was presented as a major news, but widely failed. The only really new factor was the establishment of an official representation office in Brussels in addition to the public-private *Patronat*³⁰.

A broad but not deep Catalanism, not totally monopolized by one party, may be an asset in competing with other regions for inward investment and European funds. "Soft" nationalism has incurred no penalties so far. On the contrary: As Keating affirms, it is an asset for competition. But if too strong, may endanger collaboration with the state, which is essential for pursuing interest politics in Europe. On the other hand, if too weak, nationalism may loose its influence on central government. If the votes of minority nationalists decide which party governs the state, for example, their claim may be heard, but they always run the risk of stirring up majority nationalism. Those situations require a high degree of control by the respective elites. The fear to provoke "majority" nationalism even inside the territory of the "minority" nation contributes to ensure basic co-operation by the minority nationalists. Europeanism may contribute to this further.

The parties and Europe

It has become evident that the Catalan government has not used foreign policy to question or even discuss its relations with the Spanish state in the European arena. But there is a wide range of political cooperation for parties, pressure groups, and other actors, who might or might not receive financial backing, encouragement or disapproval of the Catalan government. That includes the Catalanist parties of the government coalition themselves, which might give a special "nationalist" touch to their international activities.³¹ A "soft" way of strengthening the international presence is to use NGOs. Some Catalan NGOs have

²⁵ See Avui 12.2.05, echoing informations given by ERC Minister Josep Huguet. The CiU governments had tended to close such figures away.

²⁶ „Si Europa no nos quiere, nosotros tampoco“, Francesc Morata: La oposició a la Constitució Europea, La Vanguardia 23.10.04.

²⁷ Avui 21.2.2005.

²⁸ See Nagel, Klaus-Jürgen: Interregional Cooperation. The Catalan Case, in: Hrbek, Rudolf (ed.): Außenbeziehungen von Regionen in Europa und der Welt/External Relations of Regions in Europe and the World, Schriftenreihe des Europäischen Zentrums für Föderalismus-Forschung, 27, Baden-Baden 2003, p. 129-142. zu den Eurostrategien einiger staatenloser Nationen vgl. Nagel, Klaus-Jürgen: Transcending the National/Asserting the National: How Stateless Nations like Scotland, Wales and Catalonia React to European Integration, in: Australian Journal of Politics and History 50, 2004, 1, S. 58-75.

²⁹ Avui 18.11.2004. In January 2005, took over the presidency of the group with the declared intention to attract Scotland and Flanders as members. See Avui 3.1.05.

³⁰ See interview with director Anna Terón i Cusí in Avui 19.1.05.

³¹ In addition, the Catalan parliament intends to strengthen relations with other regional legislative assemblies.

been recognized as "national" section of international NGOs, for example the Catalan PEN-Club. The same applies to international sport federations. Such activities can be of some use for Catalan national recognition, and, of course, many "non"-governmental organizations are supported by Catalan government funds.

National movements of non-state nations, in the seventies, had cooperated actively, or at least tried hard to do so, against the states. But those movements are no longer the protagonists. In Catalonia (and not only in Catalonia), political parties and institutions took the lead. It can even be argued that Catalan civil society, once strong, has been domesticated by politics and politicians. Catalan official interest to support "forlorn" cases of small and chanceless movements is very low. Nevertheless, some work to organize movements of minorities and stateless nations in Europe is still done by associations like the *Centre Internacional Escarré per les Minories Ètniques i les Nacions* (CIEMEN), and the former Catalan government and some parties seemed to collaborate on some issues with it, but not to the extent that Catalan government could be related with all CIEMEN engagements. The Conference of European Stateless Nations (CONSEU), largely inspired and maintained by CIEMEN, claims self-determination and a direct participation of the stateless nations in the future European constitution.³²

If we now focus on international party activities, it should be clear from the start that the ruling parties of Catalonia refrain from any intent to form an "independentist international".³³ Not even in the European Parliament, the nationalist parties of Catalonia fall into line with other stateless nationalists. While MEPs for *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*, when there were any, form part of the Rainbow or (today) of the Greens/European Free Alliance-group,³⁴ the MEPs voted on the common ticket of *Convergència i Unió* enter the liberal group, if they are from *Convergència*, or the christian-democratic one, if they are from *Unió Democràtica*. This way they prove that both prefer relations with statewide parties. It is true that under the auspices of *Convergència* and other nationalist parties, an intergroup of MEPs of nationalist parties was formed, but those parliamentarians do not leave their existing groups. The Intergroup demands the sharing of sovereignty, the presence of the regions in the Council of Ministers and the COREPER, the demarcation of the EP constituencies which respect the nations, and recognition of the languages of the stateless nations on the same level as Portuguese, Danish and Swedish.³⁵

Following Aguilera de Prat, we may say that self-determination is no real strategic goal of *Convergència i Unió*, but a rhetoric referent, that may serve to press for more powers.³⁶ But we should not neglect that „sovereigntism“ is present among the militants of the party. Sovereigntists may feel encouraged by European integration, because it seems to lower the costs for secession (it is not longer necessary to establish a new currency or a new army, when founding a new state). But on the other hand, they feel that the emergence of a new, European centre may be a problem. In spite of more radical and (lastly) more

³² See AVUI 17.3.2002 and 13.3.2002.

³³ See L'Italia tra Europa e Padania, Limes-Rivista italiana di geopolitica 3, 1996; Winter, Lieven de/Türsan, Huri (eds.): Regionalist parties in Western Europe, London/New York 1998; Lynch, Peter: Minority nationalism and European integration, Cardiff 1996.

³⁴ The alliance rallies Basque, Galician, Scottish, Welsh and Flemish nationalists, among others.

³⁵ AVUI 19.5.2000.

³⁶ See Aguilera de Prat, Césareo: Partidos y estrategias nacionalistas en Cataluña, Escocia y Flandes, València 2002, p. 190.

sceptical positions, *Convergència* backed the policies of Pujol in Europe, to defend the EU's policies of economic convergence, to look for funds where available, and to establish, in the early nineties, the Committee of the Regions, and afterwards try to strengthen its role. The party also claimed that the Catalan governments could represent Spain in Councils where Catalan competences were at stake. All these piecemeal and integrative objectives can be traced through the party platforms and congress resolutions.

A typical party publication on Europe would always start with a statement of Catalan Europeanism. In the words of Pujol, „Catalunya és l'únic poble d'Espanya que neix lligat a Europa... Nosaltres, país de marca carolíngia ficat en el cor mateix del mediterrani occidental i, per tant, profundament romanitzat, hem estat sempre fidels a aquesta doble vocació europea.“ In this vision, after a long absence from Europe, Spain had returned to it – while Catalonia had never parted from it. If Spain desired to be considered fully European, it should use Catalonia as its most important connection with Europe („Catalunya ...una punta de llança d'Espanya dins d'Europa, el lligam més permanent d'Espanya amb Europa.“³⁷).

CiU party platforms, over the years, dedicated increasing space to Europe, and with the time, claims and plans became more detailed. This shows the acceptance of the European level and its growing importance, but also a clear compromise to play by the rules of the game and propagate changes, if ever, from inside. In the first program for a Catalan Parliament election in 1980³⁸, there was still a very limited space dedicated to Europe, hoping that the EC to overcome its deplorable moral state. The first platforms for European elections are full of references to a „Europe of the Peoples“ and argue for a stronger Union, with Constitution, European symbols, and a strengthened European Parliament. From the first election until today, CiU has deplored that Catalonia is no constituency in European elections – Catalanist votes dissolve in the big Spanish constituency. From the start, for CiU, Catalan should be an official language of the EU, but the wording is sometimes ambiguous, considering the language as an integral part of the linguistic and cultural plurality of Europe (p. ex. 1987).³⁹ From 1987 onwards, the institutionalisation of the participation of the regions becomes a salient issue. As in the use of the “Europe of the Peoples” terminology, during these years, claims are far-reaching. We even hear that the Assembly of European Regions should be the embryo of the future senate of Europe.⁴⁰

After Maastricht (1994), the Treaty is considered a success, particularly the Committee of the Regions (1994: 7), setting great hopes on its further development. The mentioning of cultural diversity in the Treaty is also celebrated (in spite of its ambiguous wording). A (weak) declaration of the Parliament in favour of Catalan is presented as if it were an official recognition of the language. After Maastricht, the claim appears that Spain should allow autonomous ministers to participate at Council sessions; but platforms are less specific in how far this participation should include voting rights, too. The party platforms never seriously consider that Catalan ministers, as members of a Spanish delegation, have to agree with other Communities and/or the Spanish government, and that these processes of negotiation and integration might strengthen the integration of the Catalan administration into a common Spanish

³⁷ Pujol, *Pensar Europa* 1993, p. 8-10.

³⁸ CiU: *Un programa de govern per a la ciutadania dels 80*, Eleccions Parlament de Catalunya 1980.

³⁹ CiU: *Programa eleccions Parlament Europeu 1987*; *Convergència i Unió: La via directa a Europa* (1989); CiU: *Programa eleccions Parlament Europeu 1989*.

⁴⁰ 1989: 11.

framework. All these clearly integrative “let me in” claims (into the Spanish and into the European polity) are only counterbalanced by some passing mentioning of the new, independent Baltic states.⁴¹

The 10th Congress of *Convergència* celebrated in 1996 is often considered a turning point towards more sovereigntist positions. Terminology demonstrates that there is some sense in this interpretation. But there are contradictions, too. The document is full of references to the „crisis of the modern nation-state“ in Europe, granting particular importance to its loss of control on economy and the international security system, global media, and cultural universalism. While the impression is that some *Convergents* seemed to think that the nation-state is over anyway, so why struggle to have one, other parts of the document stress the continuing of the functions of the states in international relations, highlighting that states are not vanishing, but transforming (23) and considering states as chameleons, adapting to the colours of different environments (23). However, while considering that European integration may only a device to maintain the position of the states in the context of globalisation, in the end, the transformation process is considered too deep to be a mere adaptation to circumstances. For the authors of the congress resolutions, this transformation process may have the advantage for Catalonia to receive a statelike treatment by European institutions at least in issues of Catalan competence.⁴² *CiU* fought the 1999 European elections together with more radical Basque and Galician nationalist parties, in order to make good for the disadvantages that the electoral system of Spain offers for the *NSWPs*.⁴³ In this common platform, formulas like a „Europe of peoples and nations“, that some already had started to downplay, are often to be found. But, as always, the tone is on the strengthening of European institutions and their democratization. The *CoR* should be strengthened, but its composition modified. The claim to participate in the Council is now more elaborated. In the 2000 Platform for the Spanish election, participation of the *ACs* already appears as asymmetric and progressive. Other rights for the regions are specified: access to the Court of Justice, Catalonia’s involvement in the Intergovernmental Conferences, but inside the Spanish delegation.....⁴⁴ The 2000 platform, already details that, where possible, regions with „political sovereignty and own legislative power“ should be differentiated from other regions. European policy questions of security and foreign policy are discussed at some length. The argument in favour of the official character of Catalan is strengthened by the reference to its number of speakers. This democratic argument has often been used since then.⁴⁵

The last platforms of *CiU* and particularly its congress resolutions demonstrate a growing disillusion with Europe. Catalonia, „under normal circumstances a founding member of the EU (2000: 77), feels, according to the party, frustrated by the actions of the state (77). This has also to do with the amplification of the Union to the East, a process that should not „dissolve“ the *acquis communautaire*. Amplification is not only seen as a possible reason for a loss of subventions (for Spain, not for Catalonia anyway), but also as a danger for the (small) achievements in regards to recognition of the language and the participation of the regions; the party seems to remember that the new members do not have strong regions. The real argument here is a multilevel one: when the poor Spanish regions get less European money, they will refinance, taking

⁴¹ *Convergència i Unió*: Eleccions al Parlament Europeu 1994. Programa electoral, Juny 1994.

⁴² *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya*: La força decisiva per a Catalunya. X Congrés L’Hospitalet, 8,9 i 10 de novembre de 1996.

⁴³ *CiU*: Programa Eleccions Parlament Europeu 1999.

⁴⁴ *CiU*: Programa Eleccions Parlament Europeu 1999.

⁴⁵ *Convergència i Unió*: Programa electoral per a les eleccions a Corts Generals 2000.

more money from Catalonia in turn. The party still expects the decline of state power, but saves itself by considering this process to be very slow and gradual. It is still hoping for the participation of stateless nations – but in about 50 years.⁴⁶

Unió Democràtica, in its manifestations and the speeches of its leader Duran i Lleida, defends similar positions, but with a clearer dedication to federalism and the subsidiarity principle.⁴⁷

Both Convergència and Unió have manifested their disappointment with the process of drafting the European Constitution; according to them, this frustration is due to the states' actions (Duran: Escolta, Europa, 20.1.2003). The constitutional process enhanced CiU's claims for more powers for European institutions, and for taking into account sub-state entities like Catalonia. Claims are made on behalf of Catalonia's status as a "region with legislative competences". Participation in the Council sessions is now claimed also for matters of shared competence, not only for exclusive powers of such regions. The 13th congress of Convergència passed a long list of issues to be included in the constitution. Some incoherencies can be found, i. e. it is not clear how the CoR should be structured in future: as a bicameral organ with a chamber for regions and another for local administrations, or with an organ for the regions with legislative powers, or both? But the whole discussion of the draft constitutional treaty demonstrated that scepticism was growing among the militants: In the end, a party as "Europeanist" as Convergència had to celebrate an extraordinary congress to discuss whether to vote "aye" or "nay" in the referendum of the treaty.⁴⁸ This Congress insisted on a condition *sine qua non*: the recognition of Catalan at least to the same degree as languages with the same numbers of speakers.

The program for the European elections of 2004 brought no new issues but confirmed the tendency to more specific and detailed claims.⁴⁹ In a retrospective speech held in Aberystwyth in 2005 Jordi Pujol still defended the essentials of CiU European stance, in particular, that "CiU sees Catalonia and Spain as having mutual interests in the process of European integration." (103). He remembered that for all opposition parties (meaning opposition against Franco), nationalist and non-nationalist alike, 'Europe' provided a unifying objective (104). Thereby "pro-Europeanism became an integral part of CiU's strategy of modernizing the Spanish state." Until the end of the 90s, European regionalism was seen as good and productive, but afterwards, in Pujol's record, the states "fight back", and he considered the evolution of Europe during these past few years no longer as positive.⁵⁰ In one of the very few publications on Catalan European strategies, Giordano and Roller conclude that CiU's strategy "allows the Catalan government to bypass the national state in its dealings with supranational institutions". This did not happen. But the authors are right to stress that Catalonia's position within the EU is always assessed within the context of its position within the Spanish state and its relationship with the Spanish government." (105). In these regards (106) "the consistency of CiU's position on European matters has been considerable over the last two decades."⁵¹

Since transition to democracy, all Catalan parties, nationalist or not, believed that European integration was "a good thing". Critics of the European Economic

⁴⁶ Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya: Avancem amb tú. 11è Congrés 2000.

⁴⁷ Duran 1993 (cited by Pérez): p. 103.

⁴⁸ Convergència: 13è Congrés.

⁴⁹ CiU: Una nova Europa ampliada oberta a les persones i al món. Programa per a les Eleccions Europees 2004-2009.

⁵⁰ Pujol, Jordi: European Regionalism: The View from Catalonia, Annual Lecture 2005 "Wales in a Regional Europe" (WiRE), Aberystwyth 2005.

⁵¹ Giordano/Roller 105.

Community, that came from marxist and separatist parties like the PSAN found no forum, and had difficulties to explain why they were pro-European, but critical with the EEC. Sergio Salvi tried to do so in terms of the “internal colonialism” paradigm.⁵² “Veiem com la dominació capitalista, que s’expressa en imperialisme a nivell planetari, avui es mostra clarament, sigui sota la forma de monopolis europeus que desborden els límits esdevinguts estrets dels vells estats europeus a mesura que avança la integració econòmica del Mercat Comú, sigui sota la forma de les grans societats multinacionals.” But it was difficult to see Catalonia as an internal colony.

The second nationalist party of Catalonia, ERC, at first did not profess too much interest in the subject. Its founding declaration of 1931, still hold as a banner, had proclaimed the right to confederate of all “nacions ètniques i regions naturals d’Europa, regides democràticament, pels supremes interessos de fraternitat universal”.⁵³ Those principles were not updated until 1993.⁵⁴ Then, independence in Europe was proclaimed as the final objective (p. 15: “l’obtenció de la independència de la Nació catalana dins l’Europa Unida constitueix un objectiu irrenunciable”). But the idea of Europe is still the romantic “Europe of the Nations, from the Atlantic to the Ural”, seen as the only alternative to the centralistic states. A part of the extreme left and nationalist thinking on the EEC now found a way into the ERC principles. The following comment on the EU integration may serve as example: “Cal avançar cap al procés d’unificació sempre que es preservi la sobirania de les nacions, i Europa no ha de ser una coartada pels grans grups industrials i financers sinó una unió política, social i econòmica que preservi la sobirania de les nacions.” (15). The fact probably can be related to the growth of the party: some of the new militants that joined ERC, like Carod Rovira, had been members of radical left nationalist groups like PSAN or Nacionalistes d’Esquerra before.

Angel Colom, the independentist new leader of ERC, always insisted on comparing Catalonia to the new and small states emerging in the centre and east of Europe, and on the viability of even radical claims.⁵⁵ In its clearly independentist platform for the Spanish elections in 1996⁵⁶, ERC opposes itself to those that put too much confidence on Europe: „Un cop constituïda la Unió Europea, els catalans nacionalistes hem vist sovint la possibilitat que dins el marc europeu se’ns respectessin uns drets que Espanya ens nega sistemàticament, i que dins d’un macroestat com l’europeu la nació catalana hi tindria un paper important. Era allò de com més europeus, menys espanyols. De fet, aquesta posició encara es defensada per certs sectors de l’autonomisme majoritari. Des del partit de la independència, però, la posició és diferent. Malgrat ser partidari de la Unió Europea, ERC és conscient que només els catalans podem canviar les coses a la nació catalana. L’Europa actual és un club d’estats i si la nació catalana vol tenir-hi veu pròpia i defensar-hi els seus interessos cal, en primer lloc, que obtingui la sobirania, és a dir, una majoria suficient per proclamar-la. (82)“ But while struggling for independence, the party platform offered pragmatic solutions for the time being. It defended the UE, and included a special reference for the protections of minority languages provided by Council of Europe conventions. This has to do with the fact that, in theory, the reference territory for the Catalan Nation, in ERC’s eyes, are the Països Catalans, that include French Catalonia, where the situation

⁵² Sergio Salvi, in: *Quaderns d’Alliberament 1: Qüestió nacional i lluita de classes*, Barcelona 1977, p. 139.

⁵³ Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya. *Declaració de principis bàsics*, 1978.

⁵⁴ Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya *Declaració ideològica*. 19è Congrés Nacional, Barcelona 1993.

⁵⁵ Colom, Angel: *Esquerra, República, Catalunya*, Barcelona 1995.

⁵⁶ Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya: *La teva veu. Cap a la independència*. Eleccions a Corts espanyoles, 1996.

of the language is worst. The claimed Catalan constituency in European elections, therefore, had frontiers that differed from CiU's. Claiming independence should not exclude the eventually elected Esquerra MEPs from defending Catalan economic interests and transborder cooperation and for controlling the „temptations“ of the EU to become a „jacobin and bureaucratized state“ itself. ERC always remembered that the „European Union“ is not „Europe“, and that its ultimate goal was (83): „la superació dels actuals estats i la construcció d'una Europa confederal basada en les nacions reals“.

During the second half of the nineties, ERC confronted CiU “autonomism” with its own “sovereignty” claim, preferring to talk “sovereignty” and not plain “independence”. Inside ERC, we find differences between those that still think in federal or confederal terms (thinking in terms of the –limited- sovereignty a federal arrangement may provide), and the more radical and straightforward independentists. The confrontation between the two nationalist parties had its influence on their standpoints on Europe. ERC denounced CiU to defend a “Europe of the Regions”, and claimed a “Europe of the Peoples” instead, particularly in the European elections of 1999, when the party formed a common list with Basque and Galician parties. The 1999 program included far reaching, but imprecise proposals (a modified European senate with presence of the European “peoples”, with state or without), the incorporation of the right to self-determination in the European catalogue of rights. It confirmed the growing disillusion with a Europe that did NOT allow the Catalans to bypass Madrid.

The new century, which featured a growing interest of ERC to be considered a coalition partner by both major forces, brought a considerable moderation of its programmes. The party congress of 2001 passed a list of detailed improvements a new statute of Catalonia could include in regards to participation in Europe. The 2003 platform for the Catalan elections spoke in general terms of “guarantees for Catalan presence” and took over the Lamassoure proposal for a special status for “associated regions” in Europe (a concept that ERC related to stateless nations). These forms of accommodation took more space than the claim that the European constitution had to include the right of national self-determination. Many points of the platform were comparable to those of the major parties (an official delegation in Brussels, Catalan an official language, strengthening and reform of the CoR and its organisation in two chambers, the defence of the Catalan offices abroad installed by the CiU led governments...). Although still somewhat critical with the CiU policies (administrative structures considered insufficient, too many public-private partnerships), the document was now quite adapted to the reality of the European institutions, looking toward their improvement, while postponing radical change.⁵⁷ In 2004⁵⁸, after having secured the coalition government in Catalonia with the socialists and greens (ICV), the party congress used a very moderate language, previewing the transformation of Spain into a federal, plurinational republic as the first step, and although the Constitutional Treaty is clearly criticized and in the last instance, rejected, the inclusion of self-determination rights is no longer the main issue. Instead, during the Spanish election of 2004, the integration of Catalan representatives into Spanish delegations appears as a main issue!⁵⁹ The platform for the European elections that were held the same year, advocates for a European Constitution, celebrates the advances in regards to europeanization and democratization that can be found in the draft text, but regrets that the Treaty is no

⁵⁷ See ERC: 23e Congrés Nacional, Ponència Política, Tarragona 2001, and ERC: Una nació europea, democràtica i solidària. Eleccions catalanes 2003. The title of the last document (an electoral platform for a Catalan election!) is significant.

⁵⁸ ERC: 24e Congrés Nacional, Ponència d'estrategia política, 2004.

⁵⁹ ERC: Programa electoral. Eleccions generals 2004.

proper constitution, that the sovereignty is not based in the peoples of Europe, that the strengthening of European institutions has not gone far enough. The old critical arguments against an integrated capitalist Europe seem forgotten. The party regrets that Europe leaves the sub-state units in the hand of the member states, and it claims, now in a very elaborate way, to include the right of self-determination in the constitution and to give the Catalan language official status. The general line of the document now recognizes the successes of CiU “regionalism” in Europe, but believes that the time has come for going farther.⁶⁰ In fact, when ERC in 2005 mobilized its electors to vote against the Treaty in the referendum, the propaganda insisted not only on nationalist arguments of deficits of recognition and accommodation, but also on democracy and welfare state arguments.

In fact, the debate on the European constitution may have interrupted or ended a process of moderation in ERC’s positioning on the EU, because it confirmed those that had no real hope that the EU might ever accommodate its stateless nations.⁶¹

The ideas about Catalonia’s relation to Europe professed by the second major party of Catalonia, the PSC, the party of current president Montilla, have striking similarities to those professed by CiU. And where differences exist – and they do exist – they are often more doctrinal than political. In practical policies, as we already have observed, the PSC led governments did not pursue categorically different goals in regards to Europe than those led by Jordi Pujol. Often, the differences are due to different political positions in the Catalan party system, or reflect, as Giordano/Roller have affirmed, orientations to different social target groups in the electorate. In Europe, both presidents Pujol and Maragall preferred gradual, pragmatic ways to act, and perhaps the only main difference in doctrine was about the role of the local authorities, always strongly defended by Maragall. Both Pujol and Maragall were staunch europeanists.

Party platforms of PSC and CiU may agree on many topics: from enhancing the power of European institutions, to general interpretations of the EU as (still) a community of states, but open for a pragmatic regionalism. The CoR had been celebrated by both parties, though the Socialists defended always the municipalities, where their electoral success is stronger. At least for European politics, the German *Länder* serve as a model for both. But Europe is still far away of being constructed upon a regional pillar.

Both parties defend the subsidiarity principle, and hold it should apply to relations between the three levels of Europe, including the regions, and for the socialists, also the municipalities. Both try to use the possibilities to confirm Catalonia as a European actor. In regards to instruments, they agree that the CoR should be strengthened. Both defend a Catalan constituency in European elections. A difference may be seen in the importance given by the socialists to the „federal“ collaboration between the Autonomous communities.⁶² When the PSC stressed its federalism (sometimes annoying the PSOE), Europe was included. Spain is seen as a magnificent „door“ to Europe: „No oblidem en cap moment que Espanya és, pel seu pes específic, una magnífica porta d’entrada a Europe”. Catalonia should profit from this door.⁶³ But for the Socialists, sectoral conferences, and a – hopefully reformed – senate with an

⁶⁰ ERC: Programa eleccions europees 2004.

⁶¹ Avui 27.11.2004 (declarations of Carod Rovira).

⁶² For example PSC: Més Europa, més política, més transparència. Manifest del PSC per a les eleccions al Parlament Europeu 1999; about subsidiarity: Maragall, Pasqual: Europa próxima. Europa, regiones y ciudades, Barcelona 1999.

⁶³ PSC: Per Catalunya. Ara, un nou federalisme. La proposta dels Socialistes de Catalunya, p. 36.

institutional role in European policy should be established or enhanced, following the German model. Sometimes, a second, territorial chamber for Europe is envisaged, but the role of the regions in this chamber still remains obscure.

Given the many coincidences between the platforms of the major parties, the PSC, during its long opposition years, had concentrated its critiques on the ways and means used by Pujol's government. For the Socialists, the CoR should be empowered and enhance its influence. The Pujol governments were sometimes accused of lack of support for it. The socialists denounced the Patronat, the offices and their subventions as clientele structures, they accused the Pujol administrations to miss opportunities, lack of transparency, and lack of seeking consensus with the opposition.⁶⁴ Their main purpose was to establish a link between the "nationalism" of the government, and the missing of opportunities for the country: according to this interpretation, concentrating on identity, interest policies were neglected. Already during the nineties, the PSC platforms included the establishment of an official bureau of representation in Brussels. Now that the Socialists govern, they sometimes find the channels with the central government to be insufficient, or too much controlled by Madrid. These experiences find their way into the electoral manifestos. In fact, the following sentences of the 2004 manifesto could have been fotocopied from CiU:⁶⁵ „El fil de la història ha unit sempre catalanisme i europeisme: les aspiracions del catalanisme polític han trobat a Europa una oportunitat que l'Estat espanyol no els podia oferir i que, en alguns casos, els hi negava. Fins avui, Espanya no ha aconseguit vehicular plenament els interessos de Catalunya a Europa ni tampoc ha afavorit la seva participació directa en les instàncies decisòries comunitàries.” Now, the PSC defends a two chamber solution for the CoR (one for the municipalities, one for the regions)⁶⁶ plus a special status for regions with legislative powers (p. 19), and when claiming official status for the Catalan language in Europe, the argument is backed by mentioning official languages (state languages) with fewer speakers than Catalan. But the constitutionalization of a truly federal Europe is thought to be more important for Catalonia than to strengthen the CoR or establishing a representation of the constitutional regions.⁶⁷

ICV, a successor party of the PSUC, but also integrating smaller left nationalist and ecological parties and groups, still conserves the defence of national self-determination that had characterized the communist parties during resistance to Franco. The party presents a common list with the Spanish IU in European elections – Spain is the only constituency, and a candidature only of Catalan ICV would have no chance. The party is in favour of European integration and also of the EU, defending subsidiarity, but also the strengthening and democratization of the European institutions with the goal of a federal Europe. According to the party, Europe has to leave the period of a merely economic community behind, embracing social and ecological policies instead, and democratizing its institutions. The platforms of the party, though defending the right of self-determination, claim to enhance regional and above all municipal participation in Europe. They defend sovereignty, but in a federal way, that is, limited.

⁶⁴ PSC-Ciutadans pel Canvi: Noves oportunitats per a Catalunya. Programa eleccions catalanes 1999; PSC Més Europa, més política, més transparència. Manifest del PSC per a les eleccions al parlament Europeu 1999; Grup del Partit Socialista Europeu: Europa pròxima. El Nou Federalisme europeu, Madrid 2002.

⁶⁵ PSC: Per una Europa unida i forta. Manifest electoral del PSC per les Eleccions Europees del 13 de juny de 2004.

⁶⁶ Against the position of PSOE. See PSOE: Nuestra idea de la Europa de los ciudadanos, Propuestas. Cuadernos socialistas 9.

⁶⁷ Castells, Antoni: La Constitució europea des de la perspectiva catalana, 2004, p. 182.

But ICV insists, above all, on civil rights and ecological and social issues. The distribution of the money of the European funds is of particular concern for them. It should be noted, however, that ICV, a party that allies with the Greens in Europe, opposed Maastricht, against the standpoint of its allies. The “Europe of the citizens”, not of regions, peoples or nations, is their catchword.⁶⁸ The platform they presented for the campaign for the European elections of 2004, a very extensive document, featured chapters on ecology (21 pages), social issues (27 pages), democracy and rights (6 pages), peace, solidarity and cooperation (4 pages), and the draft constitutional treaty (10 pages). This may give an impression of their favourite issues.⁶⁹

Concerning the PP, we only have to remember that the Catalan section of the party has not enough autonomy to pursue political goals of their own.

Conclusions

My conclusions will be short. At least in the Catalan case, Europe helped to moderate non-state nationalism. The European policies that governments of both political orientations (CiU and PSC) have pursued, have not differed too much. The governments of both colours tried to exploit and eventually enhance the possibilities of a “Europe of the Regions”. It is true that party platforms remained different, at least up to a degree, but in general, we could find a tendency towards more similarity, and the European institutions contributed to guide the nationalist parties towards accepting the (limited) possibilities regions have in Europe, and to prevent them to follow sovereigntist schemes of self-determination.

However, this trend may have come to an end. The amplification of the EU and the ongoing debate on the Lisbon Treaty enhanced the role of the member states. In addition, party standpoints on Europe cannot really be separated from their respective discourses at home, at least in a multilevel setting. The pro-European discourses of Catalan parties so far, have to do with the imperatives of their situation in the party system at home. The European issues and questions form only part of their struggle over the national question, and sometimes not the most important one, although the significance of the matter is growing. For Catalan parties of different colour, Europeanism served as a symbolic element to distinguish Catalonia from Spain. But as Spain europeanized quickly, this distinctive element that united nearly all Catalan parties during resistance to dictatorship has lost this unifying significance now. As party positions on Catalonia’s national rights and its preferred national future tend to diverge more, so will the positions on Europe.

⁶⁸ See Iniciativa per Catalunya. (Coalició Izquierda Unida-Iniciativa per Catalunya): Europees 94. Programa electoral; Gutiérrez Díaz, Antoni: El futur és Europa, Barcelona 1995; Els Verds-Esquerra Verda: Quina Euriopa volem? Per una Europa federal, democràtica, social i ecològica. Document aprovat per la Comissió Coordinadora Federal, gener 2002, in: *Nous Horitzons* 41, 2002, 165, p. 2-12.

⁶⁹ ICV-EUiA: Eleccions europees juny 2004. D’esquerres, ecologistes, i europeistes de debò.