Part I

Historical and theoretical background
The legacy of Stein Rokkan for European polities

A short tribute

Daniel-Louis Seiler

Stein Rokkan died in 1979, leaving a corpus of works he considered unfinished and was constantly revising. Today, with hindsight, it can be said that these texts remain essential for any political scientist undertaking a study of the European cultural zone. His scientific legacy is rich and complex, both from the methodological and the theoretical standpoint, covering a wide range of fields.

As far as European politics are concerned, the heritage he left us is twofold. On the one hand, there is the paradigm of fundamental cleavages, which has provided political scientists with an interpretative model for the European multi-party system; on the other, there is his conceptual map of Western Europe, which affords a comprehensive synthesis of the nation-building processes on the continent. These two models will therefore be the focus of this chapter, underlining the extent to which they remain pertinent in the understanding of even very recent political phenomena.

The four cleavages paradigm

The publication in 1967 of Party Systems and Voter Alignments (under the direction of Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan) can be considered a Copernican revolution in the study of the European multi-party system, a change in perspective equivalent to that of the distinction between mass and cadre parties introduced by Duverger 15 years earlier (Duverger 1954). Before that point, specialists had wavered between perinde ac cadaver recourse to the left–right axis and simple inventory logic.

Taken from the discourse of the players in the political game, the concepts of ‘left’ and ‘right’ had been briefly defined by Duverger, but most researchers used these terms without defining them, as if they were blindingly obvious. Even today, Duverger’s theory is still misunderstood. In his view, left–right opposition represents not a continuum but rather a dichotomy: parties express conflicts, which are always dualistic in nature. Consequently, the centre does not exist except as a grouping together of the moderates from both camps. In order to combat the multi-party system, it is necessary to adopt an appropriate voting regime – that is to say, a regime based on a plurality that preserves the natural bipartisanship. Duverger’s perspective in this regard
becomes evident when he makes a norm, even a categorical requirement, of the Westminster Model: any party system that deviates from this model is viewed as abnormal (Duverger 1954).

Some countries do have party systems corresponding to this model: Portugal, England (but not Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), Spain (except Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia) and France (if we agree to consider the Front National as an extremum of the classic right). Italy, where Duverger’s influence remains strong, demonstrates the limits of electoral engineering: certainly, there are fewer parties than there once were, but the 2013 parliamentary elections, marked by Beppe Grillo’s 5 Stelle movement, revealed the powerlessness of the system. Moreover, the centre has far from disappeared, even though the EU’s hopes for Mario Monti were dashed; once the Berlusconi scandal is over, it is likely that centrist will regain strength (see special issue by Giugni and Lazar 2013).

However, the other European countries feature party systems that are impossible to reduce to a left–right dualism, either because they have too many parties or because one or more of their parties is neither left-wing nor right-wing – or because they possess both of these characteristics. Even with the left–right axis extended by the addition of two centres and two extremities, the model’s explanatory capacity does not exceed more than six cases. Beyond six political parties – the far left, left, centre left, centre right, right and far right – unless we assume that voters are insane, the party system becomes incomprehensible. Yet Belgium, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Switzerland each have more than six political parties represented in parliament. A second objection is that some parties (for example the Christian Democrats in the Benelux countries, Switzerland and, formerly, Italy) combine positions ranging from the left of the socialist party through the centre to the far right. In fact, the issue of religion or attachment to the Catholic Church has often led voters who in Great Britain would have been Labour supporters to join far-right groups or to vote in a bloc with their fellow believers, even those whose other views would identify them as conservatives. We have suggested the concept of ‘horizontal parties’ – groups covering the political spectrum from left to right – to designate this type of party (Seiler 1986: 93; 2011: 181–2).

Conversely, Rokkan’s model is based on four fundamental cleavages. If we assume that on each side of each cleavage a family of parties can develop, eight explanatory possibilities are available to us; this can be extended to 16 if each family of parties is divided into moderates and radicals, and even to 24 if each camp possesses extremists! There is thus no possible comparison between the explanatory potential of Rokkan’s paradigm and that offered by left–right opposition, even in expanded form (Rokkan 1999).

It is obvious that this expansive quality of the four cleavages paradigm can be explained by the fact that Rokkan understood the complexity of European multi-party systems: In particular, he understood their history. In his view, the parties are both the agents of the conflict and the instruments of its integration; they persist, even in the long term. They are thus witnesses of the past; the richer and more complex this history is, the stronger the tendency towards a multi-party system (Rokkan 1999). It may be remarked in passing that the desire of the large European groups, as stated in their statutes to limit the proliferation of parliamentary groups (‘little’ groups), is unnatural. For, as the EU has continued to expand, the European Parliament has opened up to party systems that often express new sociological and historical realities. Westminster should not be compared to the parliament in Strasbourg, but rather to that of Vienna in imperial times.

Not only does the four cleavages paradigm reveal the mysteries and richness of European multi-party systems, it has also withstood the test of time. What is more, it has an undeniable predictive aspect. The Rokkan model dates from 1967, a time when (in illo tempore non suspecto) the system of cleavages and parties appeared extremely stable, seemingly frozen since the 1920s. However, in 1968 the party systems of European countries entered a period of turbulence from
The legacy of Stein Rokkan

which they have yet to emerge. This phenomenon has given rise to many debates in political science concerning the defreezing of the cleavages. Contrary to an argument often put forward, defreezing – if it exists – fails to prove Rokkan’s model outdated; in fact, it even validates and confirms it (for supporters of Rokkan’s thesis see Bartolini and Mair 1990). Two examples are proposed in support of our thesis: the centre v. periphery cleavage and the emergence of the Green parties.

The cleavage dividing the ‘centre’ (the nation-builder) and the ‘periphery’ (the outer provinces that resist national integration on the basis of language, religion or simply a specific way of life) represents the Rokkan paradigm’s main innovation. Today, the concepts of centre and periphery are part of the everyday vocabulary of party specialists, but the situation was quite different in 1967. Although Rokkan was not alone in constructing a model based on the thesis of cross-cutting cleavages, he was the only scholar to allow a place to ‘parties for territorial defence’ (Rokkan 1999: 320–6). He was criticized by some political scientists for this novel innovation, which aroused ironic derision among his English colleagues. With the exception of Belgium, where the phenomenon only went back a few years, no countries had parties resulting from such a cleavage. The Union Valdotaine in Italy was as marginal as it was peripheral, and as for the Scottish National Party (SNP), which represented the British analysts’ implicit reference, researchers had no doubts about its irrelevance.

However, today this same SNP forms the regional government in a Scotland in which it is the Tories who seem marginal. The Scottish case is not an exception; Catalonia is in a similar situation with its Convergence and Union (Convergencia i Unio, CiU) government, and the Basque nationalists of the Nationalist Basque Party (Partido Nacionalista Vasco, PNV) – a party over one hundred years old – are the main political force in Euskadi. Similarly, in Flanders, the separatist New Flemish Alliance (Nieuw Vlaamse Alliantie, NV-A) is establishing itself as the strongest party in the region, boasting the largest parliamentary group in the Belgian parliament (for more see Urwin and Rokkan 1983).

In addition, recourse to the centre v. periphery cleavage enables us to better understand the emergence or, more precisely, the resurgence of nation-state parties driven first by xenophobia, then by Euroscepticism and finally by Islamophobia. The ultra-nationalist groups, although they borrow certain themes attributed to the ‘right’, take their economic and social concepts from the far left, while giving a new lease on life to the protectionist theories of the nineteenth century (for example those of Friedrich List). To categorize such parties, specialists employ a ‘cat-dog’ in Sartori’s sense, the word ‘populism’ having lost all meaning from having been attributed too much meaning (a good example of conceptual stretching) (Sartori 1991: 247–9). Centralism and ultra-centralism are representatives of a family of parties almost as old as the social-democrat parties: They appeared in the nineteenth century and peaked in popularity in the 1930s with the wave of Fascism and Nazism that swept across Europe. Whereas the defence parties of the periphery were often a ‘post-1968’ phenomenon with an electorate sensitive to post-materialist values, the new nation-state groups emerging at the end of the last century and proliferating in the twenty-first century correspond to a backlash phenomenon predicted by Lipset in his latest edition of Political Man. With an electorate steeped in materialist values, such parties express fear in the face of the threats that European integration and, above all, globalization pose to their material security (unemployment) as well as to national identity (Lipset 1981).

Whereas classic state nationalism is an old phenomenon that can only be termed new with a lack of historical hindsight, the same cannot be said of the ecologists. Should we conclude that they represent the appearance of a new cleavage that Rokkan did not foresee, one that cannot be reduced to the paradigm of the four basic cleavages? This has been the contention of many authors. A number of scholars have suggested a cleavage – resulting from some revolution
or another – opposing new politics and old politics. In party terms, this has amounted to opposing the ecologists to the far-right parties; that is to say, to establishing an absurd dichotomy between an authentically new political force and the resurgence of parties whose roots go far back in time.

By this reasoning, the Green parties would appear to be inexplicable using Rokkan’s paradigm. According to Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair, this is certainly not the case. In an essential work backed up by electoral data, the researchers prove that the ecologist electorate comes mostly from socialist renegades or social democrats – that is, from the socio-economic ‘left’. The sum total of their respective votes creates a stable electoral bloc. Thus, the Greens would seem to originate from the possessors, owners and employers v. workers cleavage (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Seiler 2011: 244–6). From the point of view of electoral sociology, this argument is convincing. However, when examined from the perspective of their discourse and socio-economic vision, the ecologists do not primarily appear to be defenders of the working class, workers or the proletariat. Thus, to include them in the possessors v. workers cleavage seems somewhat artificial. Must we therefore accept the new politics hypothesis?

This would be unnecessary: because Rokkan’s paradigm defines not just one cleavage but four, it offers other classificatory possibilities. To answer the question in Rokkanian terms, we must identify two loci – on the one hand, the revolution from which the Greens originate and, on the other, the axis of conflict along which this revolution developed. It is obvious that the ecologists sprang up from a reaction, a counter-mobilization in Rokkan’s terms, against the damage done to the environment by the Industrial Revolution. This is expressed in their radical criticism of capitalism and growth and their desire to replace this with ‘green’ growth (for some, even with ‘degrowth’). Resolute in their determination to conserve ecosystems (i.e. the countryside), the Greens are obviously territorial parties, representatives of a territory they intend to develop harmoniously. They are therefore an integral part of the man/nature relationship that Marx identified as the key to the social division of labour. Their opposition to Mancunian liberalism means that their positions are similar to the more moderate stances defended by social democracy; they are ‘economic’ parties. However, their propositions also resemble those of the parties focused on territorial defence (in Rokkan’s sense), thus bringing them closer to the defence parties of the periphery. On this point, it is interesting to note that in the European Parliament the ecologists form a common group with the regionalists, the so-called Greens/European Free Alliance (EFA) parliamentary group (see Chapters 14, 33).

All in all, it would seem that the Greens are economic territorial parties stemming from the impulse to defend nature against the ravages of industrialization and uncontrolled urbanization. In Rokkan’s paradigm, the ‘economy-territory’ slot is occupied by the ‘secondary and tertiary sector v. primary rural sector’ cleavage; this latter sector gave rise to agrarian parties, which the eminent sociologist viewed as primarily concerned with the prices of agricultural products on specific markets. However, the analysis of agrarian positions since the 1920s has revealed that beyond the problems the liberal economy poses for agriculture, there is also a definite desire to defend not only the mode of production but also a specific way of life. The farmers were the guardians of the environment, and for a long time their economic activity maintained a more balanced relationship with nature. ‘The end of small farmers’ and ‘the end of terroirs’ following the integration of agriculture into the vast food-processing sector have therefore contributed greatly towards the upsetting of natural balances that led to the counter-mobilization of the ecologists. At first an urban reaction, the Green parties now also mobilize the supporters of regional agriculture – farmers who seek to defend their small-farmer status, rejecting the role of industrial farmer. The reactions against Monsanto in general and transgenic corn in particular illustrate this mobilization, embodied by the European deputy José Bové, a member of Europe
Ecologie Les Verts. The agrarian parties, where they exist, demonstrate a deep sensitivity to environmental problems. As early as 1970, the Swedish Centerpartiet, under the leadership of Thorbjörn Fälldin, expressed its opposition to Sweden becoming a concrete sprawl and to nuclear energy. As for its Norwegian counterpart, its positions are virtually those of a koalitionfähig Green party such as the German Grüne, Europe Ecologie Les Verts (EELV) in France or the Belgian ecologist parties (Seiler 2011: 246–50).

The identifiable connection between the Greens and the agrarians leads us to examine the economic-territorial cleavage of Rokkan’s paradigm a little more closely; in Karl Polanyi’s perspective, this division can be clarified as a ‘market v. nature’ cleavage. This explanation enables us to understand the emergence of both the agrarian parties and the Greens (Polanyi 1957 [1944]).

Stein Rokkan was interested above all in his main discovery, the centre v. periphery cleavage. This was the point of departure for the ‘Conceptual Map of Western Europe’, which he considered his greatest work. In fact, Stein Rokkan completely abandoned his cleavage paradigm in later years; in 1978, when I sent him the first opuscule in which I developed a typology of political parties in Europe based on his model (Seiler 1978), he replied with a few words of thanks, saying that he was pleased that I ‘had found some use in an old scheme of mine’. He enclosed a collective work, written in German under the direction of René König, that concerned the conceptual map of Europe (Rokkan et al. 1978; Rokkan and Svåsand 1978).

The conceptual map of Western Europe

Stein Rokkan’s conceptual map of Europe is too well known to require a lengthy explanation. We shall endeavour to describe its general characteristics in order to concentrate on its topicality.

As we know, Rokkan’s map is a conceptual model based on the integration of four variables: two independent variables (culture and economy), an intermediary variable (territory) and a dependent variable (the nation-building process) (see Table 2.1). A variety of different economic factors are combined into one variable that reflects the intensity and structure of the urban network; the cultural variable corresponds to the effects of the Reformation on a Europe long dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, while the territorial variable is identified with geopolitical position (Rokkan 1999: 141–7).

In the European case, the model’s interest lies in the way it reveals a clear political structure: the intensity and density of urban networks. The economic variable is expressed along an east–west axis that produces a ‘state–economy’ dimension subdivided into five parts. The second dimension, expressing the impact of the Reformation, has four sub-divisions that form a north–south territorial axis: the Protestant state church, mixed territories, national Catholicism and the Catholicism of the Counter-Reformation. Europe, as revealed by the conceptual map, forms a system with a centre – the city belt – and two peripheries – one seaward, the other landward. It is significant to note that this economic centre (or core) has never stopped developing; even today, the towns that share EU capital status – Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg, but also The Hague (for Eurojust) and Lyon (for Europol) – all belong to the city belt. To these, we can add the Meccas of knowledge represented by the College of Europe in Bruges and the European University Institute in Florence. However, this structure has been obvious since the 1970s, and Rokkan was well aware of it (Rokkan 1999: 142).

The model’s scientific interest obviously lies in its capacity to account for the events that have taken place in the decades following Stein Rokkan’s death. Of the many major events, we shall present two examples, a specific event from the late twentieth century and another that began in the same era but whose effects are still being felt. Respectively, these are the war in Yugoslavia and the expansion of the European Union (see Table 2.2).
Table 2.1 A conceptual map of Western Europe, 1500–1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre formation</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Weak</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City network</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Seaward</td>
<td>City-state</td>
<td>Europe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seaward</td>
<td>Empire-nations</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>into larger</td>
<td>Consociational</td>
<td>Fragmented</td>
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<td></td>
<td>peripheries</td>
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<td>formation</td>
<td>until</td>
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<td>nineteenth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>century</td>
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<tr>
<td>The state–economy dimensions: east–west axis</td>
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<tr>
<td>The state– Protestant</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>DENMARK</td>
<td>Hansa</td>
<td>PRUSSIA</td>
<td>SWEDEN</td>
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<td>culture church dimension:</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>(Scotland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>north–south axis</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Wales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>National territories</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>FRANCE</td>
<td>‘Lotheringia’</td>
<td>Burgundy</td>
<td>Arelatum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Brittany</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter-Reformation</td>
<td>SPAIN</td>
<td>Catalonia</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>AUSTRIA</td>
<td>(HUNGARY)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Territories recognized as sovereign during the period from 1648 to 1789 are shown in capital letters.
Table 2.2 A typology of the political systems of twentieth-century Western Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System characteristics</th>
<th>Seaward peripheries: sovereign after 1814</th>
<th>Seaward nation-states: retrenched empires</th>
<th>City-state Europe: early consociations or late unification</th>
<th>Landward Nation-states: retrenched empires</th>
<th>Landward Buffers: sovereign after 1918</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>City structure</td>
<td>Linguistic structure</td>
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<td>Larger</td>
<td>Monocephalic</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>(German Democratic Republic)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Endoglossic peripheries</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Polycephalic</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>German Federal Republic Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Endoglossic peripheries</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smaller</td>
<td>Monocephalic</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>(Yugoslavia)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polycephalic</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Belgium Switzerland</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: author's own compilation based on interpretation of Stein Rokkan.
The war in Yugoslavia that broke out at the end of the twentieth century demonstrated the non-viability of the democratic states straddling the Tallin–Dubrovnik axis corresponding to the boundary established by the Roman emperor Theodosus between the Western Roman Empire and its Eastern counterpart.

Interpreting the war in Yugoslavia with Rokkan’s conceptual map

The Illyrian and later Yugoslav concept was invented by Croatian and Serbian intellectuals living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Jelavich 1983; Jelavich and Jelavich 1977). After World War I, the Serbian Crown was put in charge of Yugoslavia as a reward for victory in the Serbian Campaign. Nevertheless, Serbian nationalists (such as the great statesman Pasic) were ambivalent about the development, as they favoured a different concept: Great Serbia. The Yugoslavia idea – the political unity of all southern Slav countries (from Slovenia to Bulgaria) in one state – was the literal application of the Herderian–Fichteian concept of Kultur nation (Herder 1959 [1772]; Fichte 1978 [1806–7]; Meinecke 1911: 9, 13, Chapter 6). The implementation of this idea was not limited to L. Gaj’s Illyrian areas; it also helped Masaryk and Beneš to create Czechoslovakia and gave Transylvania to Romania. This Kultur nation concept, which is still regularly applied in the former Eastern Bloc, is based on the following three equations:

1. Nation is equal to culture.
2. Culture is equal to language.
3. Nation is equal to language.

The first step in the creation of a unified state was to establish a common language between the Serbs and Croats; to accomplish that, linguists stressed the similarities between Croatian and Serbian vernaculars. Although they failed to include Slovenian and Bulgarian, the similarity of these languages was emphasized. The second step was to unify Yugoslavia as an autonomous state, but within the general framework of a renewed Habsburgian Empire. Archduke Franz-Ferdinand, the heir to the throne, was strongly committed to this idea, and this was one of the main reasons behind his assassination by Serbian ultra-nationalists in Sarajevo in June 1914. The third step, a consequence of the second, contributed to the second and contributed to the Austrian defeat in 1918: the founding of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The final step was, of course, the creation of a unified Yugoslavia, the natural result of this logical process.

From the perspective of the classical analysis of nation and nationalism based either on language or religion, the collapse of Yugoslavia is inexplicable. The map of dialects between the Serbo-Croat set does not correspond to the map of the Serb, Croatian and Muslim populations. When Croats and Serbs fought each other in Vukovar, it was neither over the alphabet nor over the question of filioque which opposes Catholics to Orthodoxes! In fact, the map of the hostilities separating the Croats and Bosnian Muslims follows the Theodosius line.

On the other hand, the presence of the Serbian population in Krajina correlates with the Austrian Militärgrenze. Serbs, who were considered good soldiers, settled in this area in order to protect the Empire against Turkish attacks. The old kingdom of Bosnia (which, like the Albano-Illyrians, was Roman Catholic) was already in trouble when the Ottomans invaded the country. The Catholics were struggling against members of the Bosnian church who had been influenced by the Bogomil heresy; the latter group had turned partly to Islam and partly to Orthodoxy (Dzaja 1984). The Ottoman governments definitely favoured the Orthodox Church, which was obedient to the Phanar organized by the Turkish rulers and exercised control over the Rum Millet. Most of the conversions affecting Christianity in the Balkans concerned Roman
Catholics and Albanians and Bosnians (Castellan 1991). Serbians and Bosnians were opposed to each other in two respects: historically, as Easterners versus Westerners, and also as former privileged pro-Turks versus former victims of the Turkish domination.

The division that appeared within post-communist Yugoslavia was precisely this east–west division in Europe. It was not a question of faith or of language; rather, it was a question of historical structures. It concerned neither modes of production nor feudal structures, nor even recent serfdom. Switzerland and most of Scandinavia have never known the feudal system, yet nobody questions the fact that both belong to the West.

The distinctive feature of Western Europe is the existence of a *civilis societas*, separating earth from heaven but also society from state (Colas 1992). This means that in the West pluralism developed and was perceived as natural. The East, however, operated on a monist pattern: State, society and religion were viewed as inseparable. In the West, strong states were opposed to civil society, whereas in the East patrimonialism was able to serve as a counterweight to despotism. The West invented a democracy based on parliaments and the mediation of political parties, and Eastern Europe invented a populist democracy based on charisma and patronage. In the West, democracy has always been under threat from totalitarianism, representing the attempt to deny the existence of a difference between state and civil society, between private and public, etc. In the East, democracy has always been challenged by classical Oriental despotism.

Nobody questions the fact that the landward buffers are an interface between East and West. However, their basic structures, which are quite visible nowadays, reveal that they are part of Western Europe. Whereas the Baltic States, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia are located along this interface, this is obviously not the case for Slovenia and Bohemia, which belong to the bulk of Western Europe. Slovenia was a part of the *Occidens* from the very beginning, for the same reasons that Austria was. Bohemia came along later but was soon incorporated into the Holy Roman Empire.

**Interpreting European integration with Rokkan’s conceptual map**

Our first example could be entitled ‘War in Yugoslavia’; and the second could be called ‘What’s Wrong with the EU’. If we refer to Rokkan’s conceptual map, the history of European integration shows several significant stages. To begin with, six-country Europe included four countries (Benelux and West Germany) that were entirely part of the city belt, whilst the other two were only half-dependent on it: that is, France (the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Champagne-Ardenness, Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur and Languedoc-Roussillon regions) and Italy (northern Italy as far south as Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna). In 1958, the Italy of the city-states represented the wealthiest part and the most dynamic economy on the peninsula; in France, this corresponded to a periphery – often an industrialized one, the centre being in the Europe of imperial maritime nations. If the expansion process had not gone beyond six-country Europe, the union would have become federalized long ago. The entry of Great Britain, Denmark and Ireland decreed otherwise.

The expansion that has taken place since 1973 has concerned countries that can be analysed using Rokkan’s map and thus categorized as imperial or peripheral nations. Greece, which was admitted upon the country’s return to democracy and which was able to secure Cyprus’s entry into the Union, played the part of the stowaway: the European Council had confused Caramanlis and Papandreou with Pericles. In 2000, on the initiative of France, which feared German hegemony over the new democracies of Central Europe, the entry of Bulgaria and Romania was granted, even though they were less economically developed and politically unstable. The latter country is compatible with Europe (in the sense of Rokkan’s map) and...
possesses a successful automobile industry, but it remains politically unsettled (not to mention the Roma issue). The former, a less dynamic country, suffers from the same problems and, in particular, from high volatility in its party system.

It was only when Greece set off the Euro crisis that it was discovered that the country had massaged its accounts, that its state was politically non-existent and that Cyprus was being used as a kind of Trojan horse by oligarchs and the Russian mafia seeking to launder ill-gotten gains. The Greek crisis and its impact on the Eurozone destabilized Europe’s most fragile countries, Spain and Portugal, whose budgetary policies were initially among the most exemplary from the standpoint of the standards imposed by the European Commission.

Conclusion

Europe is diverse and complex; if it nevertheless wants to have a more efficient integrated political system (or even if its ambition is limited to managing the system that already exists), a minimum degree of common political culture is essential. When we examine Rokkan’s conceptual map, the reasonable limits of EU expansion become clear. Croatia, which has just been admitted, is a good recruit; to admit Turkey would be catastrophic. Too many mistakes have been made, and the influence of successive British governments (which see Europe only as a vast market) and French governments (which do not take into consideration the formal aspects of democracy and are indifferent to political cultures) will eventually compromise the EU’s political future. More than 30 years ago, the Swiss philosopher Denis de Rougemont, an untiring activist for the European cause, wrote that ‘either Europe is a culture or it is very little’ (De Rougemont 1966).

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