

GLOBALIZATION AND INTERREGIONALISM

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ABSTRACT:

GLOBALIZATION REPRESENTS A PROCESS THAT HAS EXTENDED AT A PLANETARY LEVEL IN A VERY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. EACH STATE'S ECONOMY HAS BECOME MORE AND MORE OPEN TO RECIEVE THE NEW PRODUCT SERIES AND THE GIANT GROUPS ARE HAVING THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON THE MARKET. THUS, GLOBALIZATION IS A SET OF PHENOMENA THAT OCCUR AND IT CAN BE SAID THAT THIS PHENOMENA HAS MANY FACES. THE AIM OF THE STUDY IS TO PRESENT THE EFFECTS THAT GLOBALIZATION HAS HAD OVER THE STATES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION. INTERREGIONALISM, SEEN AS A PROCESS OF INTERACTION OR COLLABORATION BETWEEN TWO REGIONS , IS SUPPOSED TO DETERMINE THE EUROPEAN UNION'S FOREIGN POLICY TO ACT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTIONS , BUT INTERREGIONALISM IS OFTEN HAVING A BAD INFLUENCE OVER THE EXTERNAL POLICY.

KEYWORDS : GLOBALIZATION, INTERREGIONALISM, FOREIGN POLICY, HOMOGENIZATION

INTRODUCTION

“Globalization is associated with a nearly perfect capital mobility, but also with a variety of economic imperatives expected from actors. Involves and assumes a world in which there are strict duties, exacerbated by capital flows and by an intense fight for competitiveness at the local level.”² as Ben Rosamond sustained.

Globalisation is a phenomena that takes over everything. It is impossible to live in the XXIst century and ignore the effects of globalisation. Also, when the discussion about globalisation appears, there is also a discussion about the regions and the way these entities react to changes produced within their structure and within their way of approaching a certain polical or economic matter. From regionalism we can make a step forward towards interregionalism, which is also important when we reffer to the way EU is being governed. Sovereignty is cetrainly being shattered into pieces thrown as little or bigger balls between states. There is a multitude of studies which reveal the meaning of

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² Ben Rosamond and Colin Hay, *Globalisation, European Integration and the Discursive Construction of Economic Imperative*, Department of Political Science and International Studies, University of (Birmingham, , Department of Political Science and International Studies, 2000, 2

globalization for our Planet and for its continuous transformation. Ben Rosamond (Senior Research Fellow in International Politics in the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick) and Colin Hay (Reader in Political Analysis in the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham) are the authors of a study called *Globalisation, european integration and the discursive construction of economic imperatives*. "This paper seeks to contribute to and develop an 'ideational institutionalist' understanding of the appeal to external economic constraints (such as globalisation and European integration) within contemporary European public policy and political economy."³

The book of Bernard Guillochon, *Globalizarea. O singura Planeta, proiecte divergente*, was written in 2003. It aims to provide an overview, which includes the effects of long term or short term of globalization over the planet. Globalization is "The term called whole life phenomena through which each inhabitant of the planet is linked to, at least partially, to the resolutions taken within their own countries."⁴ said Bernard Guillochon.

Fredrik Soderbaum and Luk Van Langenhove have written an article called *Introduction: The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalism*. Most of the article is focused on interregionalism, on explaining its mechanism and especially its role for the European Union, for the foreign policy of the Union.

The study "Globalization and Interregionalism" has a double purpose: one is to expose the effects of globalization within the Union and to reveal both homogenous and heterogeneous sides and the other purpose is to reveal the negative effects that interregionalism may have for EU foreign policy and, especially, why these effects are negative. A few questions arise to complete the picture: „Can globalisation reduce disparities between regions or it has only negative effects over their development? Which are the effects of globalisation over the sovereign state? What are the benefits from interregional cooperation? "There is still no consensus on the main concepts in the study of regionalism, and there is even greater disagreement in the conceptualisation of interregionalism. This is because the research field is in the early stages of development and the research object is still unclear and shifting.[...] In the most general sense, interregionalism signifies *the condition or process whereby two regions interact as regions*"⁵ "Until now, I had a tendency to assume that there is only one, large and hegemonic vision or conception of globalization, which is present in contemporary Western European society. While the concept of essential market-liberal globalization as an economic factor as well as external compulsion, is consistently the dominant one, in any case it is not the only one."⁶ said Soderbaum. "Globalization does not produce diversity, heterogeneity [...] but, certainly, the tyranny of a broad cultural imperialism"⁷. And not just American. There is also China as a great power. And other powers that are placed on a stage ready to receive them in order to blend with them. Such a conception of globalization as imperialism colonizing influence, is becoming more pronounced in France, where it

³ Rosamond and Hay, *Globalisation*, 2

⁴ Bernard Guillochon, *Globalizarea. O singura Planeta, proiecte divergente*, (Bucuresti: Enciclopedia RAO, 2003), 1

⁵ Soderbaum Frederik and Luk Van Langenhove, *Introduction: The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalis* (University of Göteborg, Sweden and United Nations University —Comparative Regional Integration Studies **United Nations University — Comparative Regional Integration Studies, Belgium, 2005), 5

⁶ Soderbaum and Langenhove, *The EU*, 5

⁷ Soderbaum and Langenhove, *The EU*, 7

came to be considered an anti-globalisation movement. How is this possible? Hard to imagine.

HOMOGENIZATION SEEN AS A THREAT

If globalization is presented as an opportunity for those prepared to adapt to its logic, by economic imperatives, then there is another perspective which presents a totally different image: globalization is seen as a process in full progress, indeed the inexorable process of economic change, uncontrollable. The fact that this process is uncontrollable reminds us of another fact, that many people may be opposing globalisation there, in the village or city where they live, that they want a peaceful life and traditional values to remain unchanged. Economy, progress and change are not the only aspects that matter in a human being's life. There are also culture and tradition. Without culture, a man can no longer be called a man because it loses its identity and because he can no longer express the feelings and ideas most precious to him. We are unique. However, if the first speech presents the economical aspects, which, in short, embraces and welcomes enthusiastically the association between globalization and economic imperatives, between desire and pay, the second requires major changes not only in economic, but also in social, cultural and financial views. It has been said that individuals who oppose change are being rejected. The reality is another one: no individual can be forced to accept globalisation and to embrace it if he/she does not find himself/herself among the "values" it promotes or if he does not agree to homogenisation.

THE TWO FACES OF GLOBALIZATION

A third and yet very different discourse on globalization has emerged in the years 2004-2005, in the framework of certain sectors of the Media, business and finance. As in the first speech, globalization is presented as a desirable process. However, in stark contrast to the invocation of globalization as well as non-negotiable external logic, recognizes what it looked like a shoddy process.

It is obvious, however, that the process of globalization is not beneficial to the planet. It is the one that brings in a mostly smooth and heterogeneous process, not one that is desirable and healthy for a long existence of life on Earth. It can be regarded as if it had two faces: the first face seems to bring people together and make them know what other cultures are about, what other people are like, visit various countries and mix them with strangers. It is about a cognitive process. The other face looks like a Salvador Dali painting. It has various shapes, it models the reality, which becomes unrecognisable: there are no borders between countries, ONG's and OING's mix in the local governance, The EU emerges as a "second USA" on another continent, wanting to be a federal state but it ends by realising that it shall never become one. Globalization exists.

INTERREGIONALISM AND FOREIGN POLICY

"External Relations of the EU and foreign policy have expanded dramatically at the end of the cold war and the establishment of the EU by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993. Today, the EU maintains relations with almost every State and most regions of the world."⁸ "The European Union has become a force on the international scene, especially in the field of commerce, cooperation for development, promoting regional integration, democracy

⁸ Soderbaum and Van Langenhove, *The EU*, 249-250

and good governance, defense of human rights and, to a very large extent, in security policy”⁹

It felt agreed that the Union is not a State or an international organization. Its hybrid nature is that which assures the originality in relation to known types. The specific practices combine classical institutions with institutions of democracy inspired by federalism. One such Monster proves difficult to be conceptualized, still in an age dominated by classical concepts. Conceptual “governance at multiple levels” was developed to overcome this impasse analytically. The European Union is governed on three levels: national, sub national, supra-national. The Union cannot be defined in terms of national State since her association with certain features would mean a centralized pyramidal structure, and while it is, in fact, an overlapping of the different levels of power. Power does not focus in Government. Numerous actors, public and private, are components of it. An analysis of the Union in terms of its complexity means the destruction of the State.

The Union cannot be reduced to the rank of mere organization but raised to the rank of federal State. This new dimension, the governance at multiple levels, has the merit of broad perceptions over Union.¹⁰

“The Common Foreign and Security Policy is based on unanimous consensus among the memberstates. CFSP is a mechanism for adopting common principles and guidelines on political and security issues, committing to common diplomatic approaches, and undertaking joint actions. Many analysts argue that Europe’s relevance in world affairs increasingly depends on its ability to speak and act as one.”¹¹ If that thing would not happen, *a chaotic policy would appear, in which every region would express its desire and all states would follow only that region’s desire.*

“It was alleged that the EU has a diffuse and ineffective foreign policy, based on common values; in essence, it has been argued that the EU is an incomplet actor or perhaps ineffective on the international scene. There are different interpretations given to the nature and the EU’s foreign policy. As a result, the EU is perceived as ambiguous political actor and appears as a moving target. This data conglomerate aims to create a place that can look inside the EU, the role it has to play in the world, as a global actor. The starting point is the fact that, over the last decade, has been put special emphasis on EU interregionalism (region-to-region relations) as the foundation for its external polities.”¹²

“To promote and develop regional integration is a key feature of the relations between the EU and other regions in many parts of the globe. The developed relationship in Latin America is with Mercosur Interregional Cooperation Agreement EU-Mercosur is regarded as a step towards an agreement of association and partnership, interregional between EU and Mercosur”¹³

“In Asia, the EU has engaged in interregional relationships very accented with ASEAN and has provided support for ASSARC, and this support is focused on trade integration in the countries of South Asia. EU-ASEAN trade have created a new

⁹ Soderbaum and Van Langenhove, *The EU*, 250

¹⁰ Paul Magnette, *Europa politica. Cetatenia, statul, democtaria*, (Iasi: Institutul European, 2003), review by Scutaru Magda Simona, PhD student in Political Science at Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza of Iasi, Romania

¹¹ E. Derek Mix, *The European Union. Foreign and Security Policy.* (Congressional Research Service, 2013), 2.

¹² Soderbaum and Van Langenhove, *The EU*, 250.

¹³ Soderbaum and Van Langenhove, *The EU*, 250.

interregional relations and multidimensional framework with creation of the "Asia-Europe Meeting in 1996. The historic ASEM Summit was held in Hanoi in October 2004 and marked the enlargement of the ASEM from 26 to 39 partners.¹⁴

To understand interregionalism you need to look beyond the European Union itself. I believe that interregionalism is a factor that produces chaos, randomness. Of course, interregionalism is not a crucial element to the internal politics of the EU, nor for the foreign market. I consider that each EU region is obviously a part of the European Union regarded as a whole; we should not carry a separate EU policy, a policy of interaction with the other parts of the world, which does not fit into the general flow of EU foreign policy. It is true that interregionalism may mean the EU's interest in certain regions, according to the commercial relationships it has with them, depending on the State in which coordinates the foreign policy of the EU at the time of interaction and negotiation. Interests may vary, there may be economic or political.

An absolute fact is clear and well established: no region of the EU can lead a foreign policy of its own, is not a beneficial fact for the Union. The EU has clearly understood the link between regional integration and development in its policy towards Africa, Carraibe, and Pacific (ACP) by including regional integration between the three focal priorities for poverty reduction mentioned in the Cotonou Agreement: "Cooperation will provide effective assistance to achieve the objectives and priorities which the ACP States have set in the context of regional cooperation and regional integration and interregional cooperation."

Interregionalism does not occur as a result of power politics as it was seen during the wars, but the vision of power has changed since the Cold War, and we can say that it took another form, a more subtle, less recognized under multiple facets of economic or financial aspects. Interregionalism could be a result of power politics to the extent that regions are getting economic benefits from some actors owning important financial resources, natural or social, if we make reference to the work force. In any case, never interregionalism may be the "getting a better world, more fair", in which traditional values prevail, because very few of these values survived. Within the EU, the speech about values, it's just a speech, meant to hide the reality of power and greed of States, which, although no longer carry the wars, in their heart of stone, the seed of progress always makes them want more.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of numerous studies, it was found that the effect of foreign direct investment in developing countries is the rise of economic inequalities. « Major industrial groups in developed countries which are units implanted in countries under development, are often accused of exploiting them, their only goal being to get maximum profit, without taking into account the real interests of the country"¹⁵. The loss of the sovereignty of States in the developing world is obvious. It damages the national interests of States. « [...] Developing countries are not in the shelter of the shocks that can cause certain capital movements, and the most deprived regions remain far off the benefits derived from free trade»¹⁶

In a fairly large extent, globalization should exist to reduce the inequalities between the economies of the world, or, at least, to help the weaker developed States to progress. « Trade and capital flow should reduce inequalities between countries, increase

¹⁴ Soderbaum and Van Langenhove, *The EU*, 251.

¹⁵ Guillochon, *Globalizarea*, 41

¹⁶ Guillochon, *Globalizarea*, 49

the productivity of export funds, so the level of life ; while imports [...] contribute to the stimulation of productive efficiency and increase buyer`s satisfaction »¹⁷. Theoretically, this is the script. Basically, however, the influence of globalization is different and appear other factors that determine the evolution of each State, so that it can be affirmed that, in the end, inequalities between developing regions may be exacerbated rather than reduced. Political and economic structures of each country are those who dominate decisively on the evolution of the economic and social level and on the evolution of interstate relations in the system. The nature of these relationships is forming a network of diverse interests that intersect or stand in opposition one to another, so a lot depends on the situation of economic, social and policy of each State. One can thus say that everything pertaining to globalization cannot be separated in fact of the will of States, proving them that they do not get out of control than when national sovereignty is being eroded ; and that happens when States are grappling with unexpected results of their own actions.

"At the international level, globalization produces or creates the conditions necessary for the manifestation of entities that erode the traditional role of the State as a unique international actor. This means that globalization is associated with a new regime of sovereignty [...] "¹⁸ Whether we are talking about international organizations, governmental or non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, military-like organizations or large groups , sovereignty has changed. The classical concept of sovereignty is thus reinvented, gained new meanings and new light has been thrown on it. Thus we can say that a new type of sovereignty arose, as a direct consequence of the existence of the European Union with the European States possessing this kind of sovereignty, the European Union is an unique structure in the world. It's not about sovereignty as it appears in a federal State, as there is no sovereignty in a confederation. According to the Republican vision, the EU is a Federation of States. If we look at sovereignty as a multi-storey structure with multiple layers and sublayers, we can affirm that every EU Member State has lost some of the top layers of sovereignty (the right to have a currency of its own, to develop their own laws in various fields, to establish their own policies alone), remaining only with layers of sovereignty just having the right to draw up laws and provide application policies at a lower level, because the essence of sovereignty remained unchanged. The sovereignty of European States is a weak kind of sovereignty, but also different from the other types. I consider it to be sovereignty « in esentiam » (in essence). Is a poor type of sovereignty in the sense that we are talking about fragile, water-eroded sovereignty. It can be said that it is situated at the opposite pole of the westphalien sovereignty, which equals independence. New sovereignty appeared through the erosion of classical sovereignty, but also by adding certain aspects pertaining to a whole new spin on the concept, a vision that appeared as a result of the establishment of the European Union.

In terms of sovereignty, looming as one of the most important positive effect of erosion sovereignty of the Member States: loss of control over some policies means actually developing new policies, new directions in terms of developing and bringing new visions over how we should reach prosperity, so that progress in States in economic difficulty to become a real one.

¹⁷ Guillochon, *Globalizarea*, 60

¹⁸ Stefanachi, Bogdan, "Statul si provocarile globalizarii. Descentralizarea guvernarii si decentralizarea cunoasterii." *Sfera Politicii*, (2010), 151, Accessed : 27 may 2014 (<http://www.sferapoliticii.ro/sfera/151/art05-stefanachi.html>).

Interregionalism is a non-desirable process. “In the authors’ view we are now in the early stages of the development of third-generation regionalism, characterised by a much stronger external orientation of regions, in which regions begin to play a more important role world-wide and in extra-regional affairs on a series of fronts: (i) towards global international regimes and organisations; (ii) towards other regions; and (iii) towards individual countries in the rest of the world”¹⁹

If a state’s sovereignty is being weakened by globalisation, the state can no longer lead an efficient external politics. Why? Because the state’s interests are being redefined or they are not interests that can define a clear line of action. The line that had represented the external politics, the foreign politics for each European state no longer exists. There are only many lines, in many directions, there is a confusing picture of an Union which seeks cooperation and welfare, which is ambitious and strong but has chosen wrong directions in order to achieve its goal. Concluding, interregionalism is a wrong method to reach economic growth because it brings unwanted complications within the Union.

¹⁹ Soderbaum and Van Langenhove, *The EU*, 257

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