

Hans-Jürgen Puhle

**Regions, Regionalism, and Regionalization in 20th-Century
Europe**

This paper will focus on the relationship between regions and states, i.e. the relevant nation states and 'nations' (no matter how the latter are conceived), between regionalisms and the respective nationalisms or other movements in favor of competing objectives (religious, class, etc.), and on processes of regionalization in Europe, basically in Western and Southern Europe, with regard to their different motives, actors, aims, modes of operation, coalitions and outcomes. Of particular interest are the relations between regionalisms and regionalizations: Regionalist movements, if they do not aspire to separatism or a full fledged federalization of the state, usually are asking for moves towards decentralizing and regionalizing the state, for regional autonomies or at least more liberties, processes which will be called regionalization. And it can be shown that strong regionalist movements can help in (eventually even trigger) regionalization, particularly if the respective objectives of the regionalists and of the political elites of the state somehow coincide, at least in parts. There have also been, however, regionalizations which had not much to do with regionalist movements.

The region, hence, here is understood as a subnational entity. What a region is depends on how it is defined. Everything can be defined as a region provided that it is smaller than a state and larger than a locality, a département or a small province. It can be a 'classical' historic region like the traditional French provinces which were institutionally demolished by the Revolution and Napoleon, or earlier territories of their own like Lombardy, Catalonia, Wales or Franconia, but it could also be an artificial construct invented by technocrats like a recent French planning region or one of the NUT levels of EU regulations. If there is a political move for it, every part of a centralist state could be regionalized (even if it was never before considered to be a 'region'), but feelings of a regional identity and cohesion, and regionalist movements usually will only be generated if there is a longer regional tradition, a common history and experience, a distinct language. Here we can find striking similarities between today's regionalisms in Western and Southern Europe or on the Balkans and the 'small' nationalisms of the periphery or of minorities or conquered peoples which

tried to break away, since the early and mid 19th century, from the multinational empires of the Habsburgs, the Ottomans and the Russian Czars (or from the U.K., in the case of the Irish). We can find structural and functional similarities between 'regional' and 'national' constructs and mechanisms with regard to self-definition, ideology, region building, movements, coalitions and politics in general. Many regionalist movements can also be conceived of (and some consider themselves) as movements of 'minority' nationalisms ('minority' with regard to the state as a whole, not to the region where the 'nationals' usually constitute the majority).

It is not always so that 'nationalisms' are per se stronger than 'regionalisms'. There can be comparatively 'weak' nations and nationalisms (like those of the Bosnians or the Makedonians, or in earlier times the Rumanians), and 'strong' regionalisms (like the one of the Catalans). Beyond the traditional preferences for a particular wording (e.g.: 'national' in Spain and Great Britain, 'regional' in France) it is the constellation of the different factors that counts. Minority nationalism and regionalism both seem to figure on the same sliding scale and can be functional equivalents, so that many of the questions, categories and approaches which have been designed for the analysis of nations and nationalisms can also be applied, in a modified way, to regions and regionalisms. This paper will show how profitably this can be done in a number of areas. The basic focus here will be on two purposes: (1) to try to explain the differences among West and South European regionalisms (or: minority nationalisms), and to account for the characteristic fact that some have made it to a full-fledged political mass movement, and most have not, and (2) to try to locate the West and South European regionalisms within their broader context and their interactions with the established states and 'nation state' nationalisms. There will be five points:

1. Questions and Problems of Comparison
2. Typological Stages
3. Some West and South European Cases
4. Modifications: The Catalan and the Basque Case
5. Regionalization in Western and Southern Europe and the EU

1. Questions and Problems of Comparison

In contrast to most of the Central, East and North European minority nationalisms of the 19th century, the 20th-century regionalisms in Western and Southern Europe have in general been centered around a region, not a state. They have usually opposed the centralist states and their traditional

nationalisms, which in many ways have reflected the different paths of European societies into the modern world. And, to a certain extent, they have destroyed or modified old assumptions like those of Great Britain, Spain or France being 'nation states'. Some of them have, completely or in parts, even gone separatist, like the Irish and the Basques, and have asked for a new 'nation state' of their own, which should bring together the nation in terms of regional culture and history in a state. They meant it territorially, not in the sense of an association of individuals, no matter where they lived, as conceived of by Otto Bauer. Their protagonists thought about dividing lines and boundaries, and some of them have not been far from seeing their region as kind of an 'opportunity structure' along the lines of Rokkan, Urwin and others, even if the movements went more fundamentalist or primordialist afterwards. So in some cases the 'opportunity structure' theories have a high explanatory potential.

Like the 'nation', the 'region' is a construct, an invention, a fiction. If the idea of a region 'of one's own' is to inspire people, it is important that the alleged common characteristics be sufficiently plausible to a sufficient number of people. As in the case of the nation, they can be found in language and culture, religion, traditions, institutions, shared beliefs, mechanisms of communication and 'understanding' (Tönnies), of inclusion and exclusion. And it does make a categorial difference whether or not a region has some institutional degree of autonomy or self government, as in the case of the nation it makes a difference whether or not the 'nation', in the moment it comes to conceive of itself as a nation (or is being 'invented'), has a state of its own. 'Regionalism' here is conceived as a political concept and ideology and the respective movement behind it. What all regionalisms seem to have in common is that they represent aspirations, movements, organizations with a certain mass support, which, by means of political mobilization, organisation, pressure and even unrest and violence, try to emphasize and strengthen the influence and the power of a region against the central state and its authorities. As a rule, regionalists ask for self determination, self government, institutional decentralization, including the decentralization of the bureaucracy, and for certain privileges, and they demand a respect for their traditional culture and their peculiar institutions. They may want to keep them if they are still in possession of them, or they may want them back if these institutions have been abolished or taken away. They react against the aspirations and demands of a centralist state, they want autonomy, at times separation and independence whether they can afford it or not. In federal states where there is already a certain degree of self

government, limited autonomy and a decentralized set of institutions, political regionalism generally tends to be weaker. Québec certainly was an exceptional case, given a cultural 'minority situation' within a region.

What my colleagues and I have been trying to do in our research is to look comparatively into some West and South European cases of regionalism or peripheral nationalism in order to find the adequate categories for their analysis and a tentative working typology, and to ask some simple questions like the following:

1. What makes some regions go regionalist (or nationalist) and others not? Why have some regionalisms become political movements with mass support, whereas others have stopped at the level of some cultural mobilization?

2. Who are the regionalists? Which are the issues and interests involved? What is the relationship between 'regional' (or: 'national') and 'social' cleavages, between socio-economic and other (linguistic, cultural, religious) factors?

3. How can we explain the different degrees of heterogeneity of the regionalist movements? What is the relative weight of the divergencies within a region, of the economic background, of class, of 'ethnicity'?

4. Does 'bigness' matter? Do time constellations matter?

5. What is the weight of industrialization and urbanization, of migrations, of the proximity of the languages or dialects involved, or of 'irredenta' situations and of social and political institutions?

6. Why have some movements been more successful than others? Is there anything the latecomers in regionalism (or minority nationalism) could learn from the pioneers, e.g. Occitania from Catalonia?

7. Which are the solutions that have been accomplished? And particularly, have the different patterns of regionalization in Western and Southern Europe been adequate answers to the demands of the regionalist movements?

2. Typological Stages

In order to find adequate descriptive and analytic categories and patterns for a comparison between different regionalisms

we can productively make use of the terminology and the hypotheses Czech historian Miroslav Hroch has developed in his book "Die Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegungen bei den kleinen Völkern Europas" (1968), the first comparative and systematic study of the nationalist movements of the smaller nations of Northern, East Central, and South Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century. (Engl.: "Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe", Cambridge 1986). As it has been shown by subsequent studies by P. Alter, G. Brunn, O. Dann, L. Mees, K.J. Nagel, A. Helle and others, Hroch's categories and criteria for periodization to a great extent, can also be applied to the West and South European cases of regionalism, no matter whether or not we share Hroch's basic assumptions, or the concept of 'national awakening' with all its dangers of reification. In both cases, Hroch's Eastern nationalisms and our Western regionalisms, we have territorially concentrated movements within larger established states, be it the multinational empires of earlier times, or the centralist West European states like Great Britain, France or Spain which have (though erroneously) conceived of themselves as being 'nation states' and the administrators of which, for a long time, have tried to ignore the existence of minority ethnic groups within the boundaries of their countries. In both cases we find the phenomenon of a belated nation or region building opposing a traditional state structure. The earlier East European nationalist movements, and a few in Northern and Western Europe, like the Irish, have generally asked for self government, ideally expressed in a new 'nation state'. The West and South European regionalists and peripheral nationalists in their overwhelming majority have preferred federalist solutions or statutes of autonomy and limited regional self government.

Within the East European context Miroslav Hroch has proposed a typology of three different stages within the development of the movements of the 'small nations':

1. The first stage (phase A) is characterized by the early beginnings of a national consciousness in linguistic and cultural terms which remains limited to a relatively small group of some intellectuals (mostly teachers, professors, librarians, doctors and the like) who try to preserve or even codify the elements or institutions of the hitherto not yet established national culture.

2. The most important second stage (phase B) is the phase of what has often been called the 'national awaking': It begins with the massive breakthrough of national consciousness and cultural nationalism (AB), and it might end - if it comes to this - with the breakthrough of political nationalism as a

mass movement (BC).

3. The third stage (phase C) is the period of full-fledged political nationalism from its start to its further achievements which might eventually end in the establishment of the 'nation state' (NS).

Hroch is primarily interested in Phase B, and in what happens in the transitions from A to B and from B to C. He is particularly concerned about relating the transitions in nationalism: AB and BC to the basic transitions in the economic, social and political history of the statewide society involved as a whole. The latter transformations, in a somewhat simplistic way, may be labelled as: bourgeois revolution (BR), industrial revolution or breakthrough of industrialization (IR), and organization of (a) working class movement(s) (OW).

If we now try to bring these six variables, three referring to nationalism and three to statewide development, for different movements, nations or regions, into their respective time sequences, we find different patterns of relationship between 'national' (or in our case: 'regional') and statewide developmental processes which have essentially framed the character of the particular nationalist movements. Some of these patterns or time sequences can be found, not without simplifications, in the following list ('tentative typology', fig. 1), which, in some cases, might require slight modifications in the course of further empirical research. The criteria AB, BC, NS have been more or less designed according to Hroch. The periodizations of the types 3 to 5 follow Hroch; n. 1 and 2 have been added to show the contrast. The types n. 6 and 7 for the West and South European regionalists have been put together on the basis of evidence I have collected. The terminology is mine.

(Fig. 1)

Some of these cases (particularly those under 6 and 7) evidently need some comments: The relative over- or underdevelopment of a region (in terms, basically, of the distribution of sectoral employment and the sectoral shares in the GNP and other indicators), which constitutes the basic difference between n. 6 and 7, refers to the time of the breakthrough of cultural regionalism or nationalism (IR v. AB) in a particular region (cf. Flemings/Walloons; Wales divided). 'NS' means, of course, in most cases not the 'nation state' but its functional substitutes like autonomy statutes, federalization or regionalization. I shall not go into the earlier East European cases which have been studied in extenso

by Hroch and others and of which I am not an expert. Some of the results of Hroch's research, however, should be mentioned here briefly, because they seem to have a certain relevance within the West European regionalist context:

- For Hroch the fundamental prerequisite of the existence of a nation and of full fledged nationalism is the dominant role of the regional or national bourgeoisie. This has been more or less corroborated for the regionalisms (or minority nationalisms) of our West and South European cases; only in the case of the Basques it has to be modified, but even here, to a certain extent, it might be upheld if we include into the definition of the 'bourgeoisie' the more traditional, pre-industrial and professional urban strata, in the wider German sense of 'Bürgertum'.

- Hroch has generally recognized the fact that, during the phase of the 'national awakening' (phase B), it is not yet the bourgeoisie which plays the leading role and directs the nationalist movement. The bourgeoisie comes later, usually at the end of phase B. In its beginnings, the promoters of the national consciousness and of an incipient cultural nationalism are mostly petty-bourgeois opinion leaders like teachers, clerics, journalists or professional urban notables, doctors, pharmacists, lawyers etc. We can find the same pattern in Western Europe.

- Another characteristic is that the later phase B sets in, the more peasants may be found in the nationalist movement.

- Furthermore, the strength and the tempo of a 'nationalist awakening' (if we are to use this term) seem to depend on the size of the small nation and on a certain degree of education and urbanization, of (distant) market orientation, communication and social mobility. Here Hroch's results are matched by the evidence presented by Karl Deutsch, Stein Rokkan and others. High rates of mobility and communication may, however, have disintegrating and retarding effects within the process of building the small nation (or the region), if they exist at a statewide range prior to the breakthrough of nationalism or regionalism. Similarly, nationalism or regionalism can also be weakened by a constellation in which we find the conflicts and antagonisms between entrepreneurs and workers already institutionalized at a statewide level before the interests of the smaller nation or region opposing the centralist state come to be articulated. So, in the formulae of our list, it makes a big difference whether AB follows OW or vice versa (cf. the Czechs or the Catalans vs. the Basques).

3. Some West and South European Cases

It seems, however, to be a characteristic of the West and South European cases that only a few of the regionalist (or minority nationalist) movements have reached phase C, i.e. the breakthrough of a political movement with mass support. The exceptions are Catalonia, the Basque provinces, the Irish, and probably, to an extent, the Corsicans. This is not only due to the fact that after 1918 a number of East, Central and South East European nations could take advantage of the breakdown of three multinational empires, a situation which never had an equivalent in Western Europe. If we want to find out why these few have made their way to full-fledged political regionalism or nationalism, and others not, like the Gallegos or the Occitans, although the explicit regional and national identity of the latter in cultural terms cannot be questioned, we have to look more in detail into the peculiar combinations of socio-economic, linguistic, cultural and institutional factors. I shall only mention four categories.

1. It is obvious that the divergence between socio-economic underdevelopment and overdevelopment of the region in relation to the state to which it belongs (cf. position of: IR), makes a significant difference, but cannot explain everything. The particular strength and power of Catalan regionalism since the midst, and Basque regionalism or nationalism since the end of the 19th century, to a great extent, could be derived from the disproportion between political dispossession on one hand, and relative economic overdevelopment on the other. In the case of the Flemings and the Welsh, however, relative overdevelopment at a time has not pushed the respective regionalism or nationalism into phase C, apart from the fact that economic development does not always automatically coincide with social and political development. The Flemings and the Walloons reacted differently at different times, according to their economic situation. And Wales has always been divided into the developed South and the underdeveloped North. Ireland, in contrast, has experienced a successful fight for its liberation promoted by a strong nationalist, though factionalized movement with mass support, in spite of the fact that it was - with the exception of the Northeast - so obviously underdeveloped that it might figure in our list among the backward South East European nations constituting the type of 'insurgent dissociation'.

2. To have a regional language and culture of one's own seems to be a minimum requirement for the formation of cultural and hence political nationalism or regionalism, but it certainly is not a sufficient guarantee for the success of a political movement, the basic indicator of which would be that at least one of the two strongest parties of the region were

regionalist or nationalist. Two cases, Andalucía and the Canary Islands, during the last 20 years, have shown how difficult, if not impossible it is to try to create an 'artificial' political regionalism or nationalism lacking a basis in language and culture. The support the respective movements of these two regions have received in the polls for a moment, after 1980 has turned out to be a short-lived coalition of protest voters. On the other hand, the existence of a regional language may not suffice to bring about a massive political movement, as it can be seen in Spanish Galicia, in Wales, in Occitania, or in Brittany. Scotland may be an example to the opposite, having achieved a certain level of nationalism without having a unifying language of some size of its own.

3. A third factor which seems to make a great difference and which has a much greater importance than it has been granted by most of the literature, is the existence or non-existence of well defined (past or present) administrative and political institutions which are peculiar to the region. Most of the studies centered around ethnicity, memory, cultural constructions or deconstructions, have tended to underestimate the weight of institutions, which often have been the hard core of the historical process which is, I think, more than myths, symbols, cultural interaction, language, policies or a diffuse 'ethnic past'.

Catalonia, which practically has been a state of its own in the middle ages and has kept many of its institutions much longer, and the Basque provinces with their historical micro-autonomies guaranteed over centuries, have had such institutions which have been invoked by the contemporary regional nationalisms of both regions. Galicia, which has always been part of the Kingdom of León, had nothing comparable. Here, the lack of such institutions, or at least of the memory of their previous existence, has undoubtedly contributed to the political limitations of Gallego regionalism or nationalism which, in spite of its extended and rich culture, has never come to surpass phase B before the 1980s. The different 'nationalist' groups of Galicia only began to fare better in the polls in the 90s, after some years of institutionalized and experienced regional autonomy. Before this, the 'ethnic past' was definitely not enough. Other containing factors of political regionalism in Galicia have been the relative underdevelopment, the lack of industrialization, apart from some shoreline enclaves, a low rate of communication, the poverty, isolation and dependency of the small 'minifundista peasants', by far the majority of the Gallego population, and the clientelistic structures of traditional 'caciquismo' which, by their integration into the

statewide (not regional) notable party system, for a long time have prevented rural Galicia from any kind of mobilization or autonomous organization, regionalist or not.

A similar absence of distinctive regional institutions can also be noted for Brittany and Occitania, apart from the latter's traditional territorial subdivisions. In the case of Corsica its character as an island, its peculiar history and clientelistic rivalries may, to a certain degree, have strengthened its regionalism. Even the relative weakness of Welsh regionalism or nationalism compared to the Scottish may have one of its roots in the quantitative and qualitative differences of regional institutions, particularly the absence of distinctive administrative institutions in Wales.

4. In order to account for the special situation of Northern Ireland and of the Basque provinces, characterized by violence and terrorism, a fourth category should be introduced, in addition to relative development, language and characteristic institutions, which is the existence of high rates of repression, frustration and violence.

Some of the cases mentioned here have also been analyzed by some authors (M. Hechter, T. Nairn et al.), within the framework of the theory of 'internal colonialism', a (rather descriptive) derivative of the nationalistic and anti-imperialist Third World dependency theories which has particularly emphasized the process of exploitation of the peripheral regions by the centralist administration and its agencies. The explanatory potential of this theory, within the context of the problems dealt with here, has, however, remained limited. It applies to underdeveloped regions only, and it cannot explain why some of the internally colonized regions have made it to massive political regionalism or nationalism, and some others have not.

4. Modifications: The Catalan and Basque Case

A typology constructed on the basis of the four criteria I have mentioned would be a productive first starting point, but still needs further modification. Catalan and Basque regionalism or nationalism, e.g., would have been in the same analytical category, at least until 1940, but they nevertheless have developed quite differently: In Catalonia the transitions to cultural (AB) and to political regional nationalism (BC) have taken place about three decades earlier than in the Basque provinces (AB 1850/1880, BC 1900/1930). The breakthrough of industrialization in the Basque region was, however, only about a decade late (late 1870s vs. late 1860s). The bourgeois leadership of Catalan regionalism, however, left

the workers basically to the anarcho-syndicalists. The Basque regional nationalists, in contrast, who were not in the first place led by bourgeois groups, tried to integrate at least the skilled workers of Basque origin who felt threatened by the majority of unskilled immigrant workers. Catalonia was dominated by the textile industry, the Basque region by heavy industry, shipbuilding and metal industry. Given the size of Catalonia and the traditions of its economy, Catalan bankers, merchants and entrepreneurs were used to thinking in regional categories and dimensions, and their attention focussed around Mediterranean and worldwide, not Spanish markets. Thus the regional bourgeoisie could become the promoter and first leader of Catalan regionalism since the 1890s. When, at a later stage, after 1917, the Catalan peasants and the middle classes turned regionalist or nationalist, they had to create new and different parties corresponding to their divergent interests. Catalanism, to the end of the Civil War, remained divided along the lines of social stratification into two or at times even three different currents. Until the 1920s the bourgeois *Lliga* was the hegemonic political factor; after 1930 the politics of Catalanism were dominated by the groups and parties of middle class leftist liberalism and republicanism which had eventually formed the alliance of the *Esquerra*.

The bourgeoisie of the *Basque* region, in its vast majority was not nationalist or regionalist. The size of the Basque market was relatively small. Banking and industry, therefore, had always been integrated into the statewide Spanish market, of which they dominated sizeable sections, and Basque business interests had for long been closely connected with the interests of the state bureaucracy in Madrid. Heavy industry and shipbuilding, in addition, were much more in need of state mediation, state initiative and protection than textile industry. With the bourgeoisie being absent, the social milieu which, from around 1900 on, organized politically in the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), was and remained comparatively homogeneous: It was catholic and basically conservative, at times tendentially (but not too much) republican. The nationalists were essentially petty-bourgeois notables, craftsmen, shopkeepers, peasants and fisherman. The catholic clergy fulfilled an important elite function within the movement. Compared to Catalonia, another fundamental difference is that the PNV and its labour union (founded in 1911) succeeded in mobilizing a sizeable number of workers of Basque origin, a process which was undoubtedly facilitated by the fact that the Basque bourgeoisie did not belong to the Basque movement. Basque regional nationalism, in spite of some occasional splits and secessions, down to the years of the Republic and the Civil War, was and remained, on the whole, a much more homogeneous and united movement than Catalan

regional nationalism. The problems of the Basque movement did not so much result from its social heterogeneity, but more from the smaller size and the institutional diversity of the region, the somewhat artificial character of Basque 'unity' and identity in linguistic and cultural terms, the special problem of Navarra and the ribera in the South, where only half of the population is Basque, the difficulties of the language and of a valid definition of what 'Basque' means, and the comparatively lesser degree of cultural saturation and self-confidence. It is only a minority of the Basques who speak and understand 'Euskera', the Basque language.

These factors have also contributed to the different reactions in Catalonia and in the Basque provinces to Francoist repression and to the consequences of the second Spanish industrialization, since the 1960s, for the earlier industrialized regions: Francoist repression has produced more devastating effects among the Basques. Basque opposition against the regime has been more widespread, more radical, better organized, more violent and more efficient than in Catalonia, and thus has triggered more repression, etc. During the 1960s Basque regional nationalism has definitely split into two factions, the moderate majority faction in the tradition of the PNV, the new Basque Left which first organized in the numerous marxist-leninist groups of ETA, some of which have propagated and - in their view quite successfully - used terrorism and violence as political means. During the transition from Francoism to democracy these groups formed two new political alliances of the 'patriotic Basque left' (HB and EE), which, in the elections down to 1992, received between 22 and 30 % of the Basque vote. Whereas the more moderate EE later merged with the socialists, the major and more extremist group, Herri Batasuna (HB), since the late 90s Euskal Herritarrok (EH), continued to attract a sizable (though through the 90s slowly declining) share of the regionalist or separatist vote (12.3% in 1996). This party which has openly fought any compromise between the regional government and Madrid and steered an antiparliamentary and separatist course, can, however, not any longer be considered to be marxist or even leftist in its entirety. Some of its groups seem to be rather close to the die-hard radicals and separatists (now a minority) within the traditional PNV, which has eventually split into two parties (PNV and EA). Until the end of the 20th century, despite some progress which has been made, it has not been possible to unite the divergent forces of Basque regional nationalism behind a common platform for the regional peace process.

In contrast to this, Catalan regional nationalism, to a great extent due to the virtually moderate and reduced, but

persistent and continuous oppositional activities within the region, at the end of the Franco regime has presented itself much more unified than ever before. Since then, during more than two decades, the populist catch-all strategies of the dominant Catalanist party (CiU) which, under the leadership of Jordi Pujol, has governed the region, have, however, contributed to a process of moderation, if not dilution of traditional Catalanism.

5. Regionalization in Western and Southern Europe and the EU

Regionalism and Regionalization are related to each other. In Western and Southern Europe, during the last decades, regionalization has become a fashion in politics (and a major growth industry in the social sciences). This is, of course, not to say that there has not been a need for it. There is a need for it, within the traditional state structures as well as within the emerging European Union. Regionalization has, however, not in all cases been meant to be a response to the challenges of regionalism or peripheral nationalism, although the pressures of the latter have been felt. Its motivations have been much more general:

The socio-economic development of advanced industrial societies has produced two convergent trends which have fundamentally modified the 18th and 19th-century traditions of federal and centralist states. Traditionally federal states like Germany, the United States or Switzerland have experienced a certain degree of, as it seems, unavoidable centralization, for reasons of planning, bureaucratic administration including the welfare and defense bureaucracies, of corporate coordination and integration into international markets and systems. 'Cooperative federalism' has just been one variant of it. - In the traditionally centralist states of Western and Southern Europe, particularly, we find that, despite all the tendencies towards 'bigness' and corporate intermediation at the macro-level, there seems to be a structural need of advanced industrial societies, at a certain stage of their development, to create institutions of participation, administration and planning, of representation and control at an intermediate level between the grass roots and the state. Planning, corporate coordination and the administration of the welfare state need a certain degree of centralization, but it seems as if they could not optimally function along centralist lines only. The people and the interests want a medium level 'in between' for purposes of initiative, modification and control.

These structural trends towards a regionalization of the state exist independently from whether or not there have been

traditions of regionalism in the regions. They may, however, be reinforced or even changed in quality by the intervention of regionalist (or minority nationalist) factors. So regionalization in a regionalist area is usually different from, and more complex than, regionalization in a non-regionalist area. In contemporary Western and Southern Europe, and even within some states like Spain, we can find both cases. A common characteristic of all the cases we know has, in fact, been the rapid emergence of regional bureaucracies and the costly growth of the number of bureaucrats which at times has matched the number of municipal and provincial or departmental administrators who had already existed before regionalization began. This process of an advanced parallel bureaucratization has been the more criticized, the less obvious and the less politically legitimized the performances and achievements of the new regional authorities have been, e.g. in Italy more than in Spain. - In the details, the forms and modes of regionalization in Europe have widely varied:

1. In *France* regionalization (22 regions, out of 95 départements) for more than a decade (1969-1981) has not been a response to major regionalist demands, all of which - with the possible exception of the Corsicans - generally did not go beyond the stage of a cultural movement. Its motives, like those of the 'planification' after 1945, have clearly been fiscal and technocratic, in order to promote 'l'amélioration et la rentabilisation du fonctionnement de l'Etat'. What became regionalized, basically was the state budget. The regions were primarily meant to be planning regions. The status quo of their economic disequilibrium was not substantially altered, nor were the traditional power structures. Frequently the aspirations of technocratic planning and the traditions of departmental notable politics have entered into a stalemate. And at times the central bureaucrats of Paris even sided with the prefects of the departments against the weaker and less established regional authorities. Out of the regions which have displayed regionalist energies, only Corsica, Brittany and the Alsace have been designed to become regions of their own. The space of Occitania was divided between several regions.

The regional reforms of the socialist governments after 1981 have essentially modified this situation, although it may still be an open question up to which point the changes might have affected the structure of the distribution of power. The reforms which have not been reversed by Conservative governments, have undoubtedly shifted power from the prefects to the assemblies, both in the departments and in the regions; the Parisian bureaucrats have been instructed to pay more respect to regional interests and institutions, and in the two

cases of a more explicit and visible regionalism, Corsica and the Alsace, for evident political reasons, special arrangements have been made in order to satisfy at least some of the demands from the regions. In the case of Corsica this has eventually led to a (moderate) autonomy statute in 1991, which, for more traditional than functional reasons, nobody seems to like.

2. In *Italy* (20 regions, out of 95 provinces) we find a mixed experience: With the exception of the German speaking South Tyrolians, regionalist movements have been generally weak and politically uninfluential. The basic motivation for a limited regionalization, at least in the 'classical' cases of Sardegna, Valle d'Aosta, Trentino-Alto Adige (1948) and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia (1963) has been the protection of linguistic minorities, an objective that has been more or less achieved. The only ones to take resort to stronger and at times even violent resistance, because their demands were not met, were the South Tyrolians. For them a solution has been found which, besides bilingualism, a tripartite educational sector and the 'proporzionale etnica' within the regional civil service implied a de facto deregionalization (or at least a more realistic regional re-districting): The statute of 1972 shifted powers back to the provinces of Bolzano (German majority) and Trento (Italian majority). In Sicily where regional autonomy was granted first in Italy (1946), basically under the pressure of American mafia interests, regionalization has turned out not to work at all, because there were no autochthonous political energies behind it.

When in the years after 1970 Italy turned to what might be called comprehensive regionalization, by which 15 new regions were created, the protection of linguistic and cultural minorities basically worked in the North and in the Center (cf. Piemonte, Veneto, Molise), but not in the South (cf. Basilicata, Puglia, Calabria). To a certain extent, this can be considered to be a general pattern. As far as financial redistribution or promotional or developmental budgets are concerned, the comprehensive regionalization has, on the whole, not changed much, except for an increase in patronage for the Christian Democrats and the Communists, in 'their' respective regions, until the early 90s. The poor regions have remained poor; in some cases even the subsidies from Rome, which they had received in earlier years, have been cut. The expectations of an increase in political participation and more efficient control of the administration have also not come true. What was, indeed, achieved, was a drastic increase in the number of civil servants and the emergence of new types of regional bureaucrats and politicians, on one hand, and an additional institutionalization of party hegemonies at the

regional level, on the other.

This and the more general state of inefficiency, stalemate, corruption and clientelism in Italian politics, has triggered, during the last decade, a new and regionally powerful movement: the Leghe, from the Lega Lombarda to the Lega Nord, which, for its localist roots, its lack of coordination and its erratic moves, may not exactly be a typical regionalist movement (and certainly not one from the periphery), but rather an ill-coordinated protest coalition from the grass roots, inspired by some semi-charismatic populists, but with leadership problems. In addition, the lega has already lost some of its influence and votes in the course of the slow reconsolidation of the Italian party system during the late 90s.

3. Given the long and persistent rivalries between the Flemings and the Walloons, the case of *Belgium* (3 regions out of 9 provinces), unlike France and Italy and more like Great Britain and Spain, has been presenting a set of severe problems which could only be solved by establishing a full-fledged federal system (through a temporary intermediate stage of a 'consociational democracy' à la Lijphart et al.). This process began when the Belgians regionalized their state in 1980, a move that still suffered from a number of deficiencies: so the tripartition of the country did not (and could not) everywhere correspond to the linguistic boundaries, and the fundamental problems of dealing with the ethnically mixed and disputed Brussels region were, for the time, postponed. In the end a complete federalization of the state helped more than everything else to contain the severe conflicts and cleavages between the regions, even if this secular reform of the structures of the state was overshadowed by the repercussions of the overall crisis of the institutions and of the political elites of Belgium in the late 1990s.

4. In the *United Kingdom* we find three different problems overlapping, all of which have been focussing around different degrees of administrative decentralization or regionalization: separatism and the violent social and religious conflicts in Northern Ireland, the politics of devolution for Scotland and Wales since 1974, and the statewide administrative reforms which have been initiated in the 1960s. - Northern Ireland has always been a special case for which a 'solution' is not in sight, as it has regularly been shown after continuous sequences of agreements between the two governments on a 'guided' autonomy, from 1990 down to early 2000. This is basically due to the impact of the 'irredenta' situation and to the fact that there is no consensus and no majority for one single solution of the problem. The catholic separatists have,

however, remained a clear minority casting no more than about one third of the vote (1974, 1983), with about two thirds (basically protestant) preferring to stay within the UK, although a majority of them might have wished a higher degree of regional self government, which Whitehall was, on the whole, rather reluctant to grant in the war-like situation of the last decades. The devolution of limited legislation to the Ulster assembly has eventually been revoked twice in favour of the emergency powers of the Secretary for Northern Ireland. The second time it happened in early 2000, only shortly after some executive powers had been transferred to the fragmented Northern Irish Assembly (10 parties!) in a long delayed implementation of the peace agreement of Good Friday of 1998. The problems of Northern Ireland will certainly not be solved by devolution and administrative regionalization only.

The regionalist and nationalist movements of Scotland and Wales have usually received much less popular support than the Irish. In 1983 88% of the Scots and 92% of the Welsh voted for British parties, and not for the nationalists. Even at the height of nationalist influence in British politics, in 1974 when a Labour minority government needed the votes of the nationalist MPs and therefore started the policies of devolution, the Welsh nationalists won only around 10%, the Scottish around 30% of the vote of the region. Scottish nationalism has always been stronger than its Welsh equivalent, due to size, historical and institutional traditions, a relatively greater homogeneity, and temporarily also the issue of the North Sea oil. This had repercussions for the performance of devolution policies which came in two waves, the first in the 70s, and the second in the late 90s: (1) After the design of the first White Paper (1975) which had provided for the creation of a legislative assembly and a weak executive with no substantial economic functions for Scotland and Wales, had been watered down and the respective bills had been buried in committee, two new and more restricted bills, one for Scotland and one for Wales, were introduced and put to a referendum in March 1979. Both failed: The Scotland Act reached a slight but insufficient majority; the legislation for Wales was only approved by 12% of the vote.

(2) The second move towards devolution, under the aegis of Tony Blair's Labour government, was more successful, but also made the differences clear: The jurisdiction of the Welsh Assembly was designed to be much more limited than the powers of the Scottish Assembly; and in the regional referenda of September 1997 the Welsh bill was carried only by a slight majority of 50.3% (by 6722 votes, to be exact), whereas 74.3% of the Scots were in favour of a Scottish Assembly (and 63.5% favoured regional tax legislation). The particular model of a semi-autonomous regional government which has evolved in

Scotland and Wales, with regard to the weight of the regional powers somehow figures between the Spanish and the French case, and it was facilitated by the fact that the Labour Party won a clear plurality (though not a majority) of seats in the elections to both assemblies of May 1999: Its basic idea was that the secretary of state for the region in the Westminster government became the first secretary of the regional assembly. The new spirit of regionalization and decentralization has also contributed to the proliferation of an institution which had belonged into the context of the abortive first devolution attempts of the 70s: since spring 1999, the Scottish and Welsh Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have been copied in eight regions of England (the North East is even aspiring to an 'assembly').

Decentralization in the UK, in a protracted way, has also been promoted by processes of general administrative reforms since the 1960s. These reforms, by designing bigger and more adequate units of self government with different and flexible sectorial subdistricts have, at least until Mrs. Thatcher cut them back, fundamentally reinvigorated the participatory energies of local government which had been contained by the expansion of the welfare state bureaucracy. Thus for the first time in British history, government and administration at an intermediate level between Parliament (and the central agencies of the Civil Service) and the town councils (or the JPs) has been institutionalized. Here, in a way, the British case, like some German traditions, has shown that regionalization, to an extent, can be substituted for by mechanisms of efficient and 'cooperative' local government, if there is a tradition of strong local self government.

5. The case of *Spain* (17 regions, out of 50 provinces) seems to be the most elaborate and most complicated case of regionalization within contemporary Western and Southern Europe. Here regionalization and the creation of the 'Estado de las Autonomías' throughout Spain has played a decisive role of fundamental importance in the process of the transition from Francoism to democracy during the years after 1975. The constellations were unique and, on the whole, promising: A new democratic constitution had to be made in a decade in which regionalism was very much en vogue all over Europe. The traditions of peripheral regional nationalism were very much alive in Spain, not only in Catalonia and in the Basque region, and the existent minority nationalist movements had been strengthened during the last decade of the dictatorship by their active part in anti-Francoist opposition. Centralism had been one of the basic features of the regime and of its ideology; so resistance, opposition and democracy had become more and more identified with anti-centralism and decentralization, even in regions which lacked substantial

regionalist or nationalist traditions. In the first electoral campaign of 1977 even the parties of the Spanish Left which had always been as centralist as the conservatives or even more, spoke out for regionalization or even for federalism, hitherto the traditional panacea of the Catalan republicans and the anarcho-syndicalists.

On the other hand, there was the century-old tradition of Bourbon centralism, of a centralist bureaucracy and of its usually successful fights against regionalist aspirations; there was the ideological legacy of Francoism and the menace of a military coup usually referred to by its proponents as a necessary action in order to "preserve the unity of the State". So the Spanish politicians of the transition had to be careful and to compromise. And this is, basically, why they decided in favour of comprehensive regionalization instead of a small number of autonomy statutes for the 'historical' regions with strong regionalist movements only, as it had been the strategy of the governments of the Second Republic in the 1930s (Catalonia 1932, Basque provinces 1936).

Comprehensive regionalization means regionalization as a rule, throughout the whole territory of the State, instead of institutional privileges for some who happened to be stronger and more influential than others. The legalistic fiction, to a certain extent, has served its purpose in not too openly violating the alleged "unity of the State". There are, however, differences to be made and they have been made: Even the Spanish constitution of 1978 has provided for different procedures in order to obtain regional autonomy for the 'historical regions' and for others. (So if there was not a sufficient initiative from the grass roots in favour of regionalization, the Madrid government and parliament could help.) And the powers transferred from the state government to the new regional governments which are elected and controlled by regional parliaments, have been defined differently, along a sliding scale, in the different autonomy statutes for the 17 regions passed between 1979 and 1983. The same applies to financial and tax legislation. In both cases, the autonomy and the jurisdiction of the regional governments lie more or less within the frame of the autonomy statutes of the 1930s for Catalonia and for the Basques.

After the end of the transition in Spain, we can clearly distinguish between three different classes of regional autonomous communities: *First* Catalonia and the Basque provinces, both (in the Basque case occasionally with the help of socialist votes) governed by their respective nationalist majority parties, both unproportionately privileged by the agreements on tax and revenue sharing (the Basques, for

evident political reasons, more than the Catalans), both equipped with old and peculiar institutions of their own, and both building new bureaucracies with explicit regionalist loyalties.

Secondly, we have not so privileged and poorer regions displaying a certain amount of cultural regionalism which try to use their autonomous jurisdiction in order to promote their specific educational and cultural objectives and to develop the regional infrastructure. Here we find Galicia, Asturias, Aragón, the Canary Islands and the Balears and even Andalucía, where temporary regionalism or regional nationalism, despite its artificial, transitory and voluntaristic character, has created a certain regional solidarity against Madrid.

In the *third* category, we find the regions of the Center where regionalist ambitions have always been low or nonexistent. They had to be created for reasons of uniformity, and their expanding bureaucracies seem to be duplications of the provincial bureaucracies at a higher level. These regions have not been against regionalization, and they have not really fought for it either. They have been indifferent. But even here the situation has changed after more than a decade and a half of autonomous institution building. Today even these regions would not want to miss their new institutions with which they have come to identify more and more: a clear case for the importance of institutions in the process of framing memories and identities. By these processes the regions have also gained more weight against the central state with regard to many issues: traditional clientelism has become even more regionalized, and within the leadership structures of the statewide political parties the former leaders of programmatic or ideological currents and factions (usually based in Madrid) have been substituted for by the regional 'barones'.

In the years to come, the Spanish experiment in regionalization will face a number of severe problems. Among the most important ones are the continuation and extension of the transfers of powers from Madrid to the regions, the creation of more flexible and efficient mechanisms and channels of interregional redistribution and of tax and revenue sharing between the state and the regions, and instruments and funds to cope with interregional disparities in development which have been (and will continue to be) accentuated by Spain's accession to the EC. Not to speak of the difficulties of creating a minimum consensus of interregional solidarity and of the fact that Spain is still waiting for the long promised and indispensable structural reforms of its administration and tax system which should

complement regionalization to make it work. On the whole, the *Estado de las Autonomías*, originally invented as a pragmatic and completely unsystematic compromise in order to appease the resistance of the 'poderes fácticos' (particularly the military) during Spain's transition to democracy, in the two decades of its existence has unexpectedly shown a constructive potential to establish itself as a new type in its own right which might eventually develop into a more federal order (as the Catalans and some others insist it should).

To sum it up: the Spanish *Estado de las Autonomías*, devolution and institutional reforms in Britain, a more comprehensive regionalization in France and Italy, the federalization of Belgium and decentralizing moves in a number of other states (even Portugal and Greece have started considering more decentralization) have made Europe more regional during the last decades, much beyond the classical core of the federal orders of Germany, Austria and Switzerland. In addition, cross-border cooperation between the regions has been intensified, encouraged by EC/EU funds and not much hindered by regulations and interventions of the states (e.g. Saar-Lor-Lux; along the Haut Rhin; between North Rhine-Westphalia and Friesland, etc.), and the mechanisms of the slowly advancing European integration have contributed to emphasize and invigorate the common interests, identities and strategies of the regions: The European regional development programs and 'cohesion funds' had a special appeal for the less developed areas of the 'Celtic fringe' or the 'arc atlantique'. The more advanced and stronger regions (e.g. the 'quatre moteurs', or the 'arc méditerranéen') intensified their cooperation 'from below' in order to compensate for the fact that the institutional innovations of the treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam did not live up to their expectations of giving more influence to the regions: The new 'Committee of the Regions' has turned out to be rather powerless, the weight of the regions in it has been further reduced by the inclusion of the communes, and the best way to make the regional interests voiced and heard in Brussels has remained the traditional method to channel them through the respective state governments in the council of ministers which still is the seat of power in Europe. Here the regions which are part of a federal state usually have a clear institutional advantage. The unrealistic 'sandwich theory' shared by many regionalists since the 1970s, according to which, in the course of an advancing European integration, the nation states would somehow inevitably be crushed between the European agencies, one the one side, and the regions, on the other, has not worked. The dream of a 'Europe of the regions' in this sense has not come true.

On the other hand we can find that the processes of regionalization and the protracted progress in European integration have both triggered more competition for the nation states and have contributed to open up, enrich and make more flexible people's conceptions of their feelings of belonging and their identities, in the sense of a dual or triple '*patria chica - patria grande*' model which might be helpful in a world characterized by the dialectics between globalization, on the one hand, and new (and often fundamentalist) localisms on the other: People in Europe, particularly younger people, have increasingly come to feel, at the same time, as being rooted in their regions, as citizens of their states, and as Europeans. In this sense, Europe, at the beginning of the 21st century, is very much alive in its regions, even if the dream of a 'Europe of the regions' did not come true.

Note:

For more details and evidence, see, e.g.: Hans-Jürgen Puhle, *Staaten, Nationen und Regionen in Europa*, Wien 1995; ed., *Nationalismen und Regionalismen in Westeuropa*, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 20/3, 1994; *Regionale Identitäten, Nationalstaat und Nationalismus in Spanien*, in: G. Bossong et al., eds., *Westeuropäische Regionen und ihre Identität*, Mannheim 1994, 187-207; *Das Baskenland zwischen Separatismus und Integration*, in: F.-J. Hutter et al., eds., *Das gemeinsame Haus Europa*, Baden-Baden 1998, 87-101.

Fig. 1

Hans-Jürgen Puhle: Regions, Regionalism, and Regionalisation
in 20th-Century Europe

A tentative typology of several cases:

1. Integration: AB - BC - BR/NS - IR - OW
England, France
2. Belated integration: AB - IR/BC - (BR) - OW/NS
Germany
3. Integrated dissociation:
Czechs AB - IR - BR/BC - OW - NS
Norwegians, Finns AB - BR/BC - IR - NS - OW
4. Belated dissociation: AB - BC - (BR) - IR - (NS) - OW
Estonians, Croats,
Slovaks
5. Insurgent dissociation:
Serbs, Bulgarians AB - BC - (BR) - NS - IR - OW
Irish AB - (BR) - BC - NS - IR - OW
6. Disintegrated dissociation I
(developed):
Flemings BR - IR - AB - OW
Welsh BR/IR - AB - OW
Catalans BR - IR - AB - OW - BC - (NS)
Basques BR - IR - OW - AB - BC - (NS)
Walloons, Alsatians BR - IR - OW - AB - (BC - NS)
7. Disintegrated dissociation II
(underdeveloped):
Gallegos, Occitans, BR - AB - IR - OW - (BC)
Britons
Corsicans BR - AB - IR - OW - BC

BR	bourgeois revolution	AB	transition to cultural nationalism
IR	industrial revolution	BC	transition to political nationalism
OW	organisation of working	NS	'nation state' (or equivalent)

class movement

(acc. to M. Hroch)