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HOMOGENEITY OF THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL LAYOUT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

“What we have is the first non-imperial empire... We have twenty-seven countries that fully decided to work together and to pool their sovereignty. I believe it is a great construction and we should be proud of it.”

José Manuel Barroso

***Abstract:** The boundary is a dynamic value in terms of time. The EU enlargement process is now for its citizens the substitute of the history, which Europeans always understood as progress, linear progression from one to the other tees.*

During the feudal period state borders often united heterogeneous territories, the convergence of which had been ensured by “dei gratia” legitimacy of monarchs. When the “Spring of Nations” in the mid-19th Century occurred, other aspects of the territorial organization came to the fore: ethnic, linguistic or religious. Today, the Union is riddled with many geographic, economic, cultural, mental boundaries yet. Where is the final frontier expansion? Will Europe respects similar entities as herself - Islamic world and Russian Eurasia, or try to build a bridgehead in them?

So far, valid response can be found in Article 49 of the Maastricht Treaty from 1992 in conjunction with the European Council Declaration, containing so called Copenhagen criteria (1993). The criteria define the principles of enlargement as follows: the right of access belongs to any country that shares concrete (political, legal, economic) values, and is in the same time geographically European country. But already today Europe is a geographical term subject to a political assessment. Europe’s territory is yet and will be henceforward most likely defined by its mental, and not by strictly speaking geographical, boundaries.

Where is Eastern Partnership in this regard today? – Will it be a “frontier”, border seen as a broad transition zone, or Europe one day will cross the line of convergence (which is just too clear in Ukraine between the western and eastern regions) and instead of “cordon sanitaire” will see space for further expansion in this territory, far beyond its final mental boundaries?

Homogenous realm - it is from historical point of view a contradiction in adjective, on the other hand, the image created by a composition of dissimilar parts is suggesting future state of territorial layout after a termination or weakening of unifying authority – the picture made by seismic lines of disintegration.

Expanding boundary defined American mentality in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Manifest destiny has granted to Americans easily understandable perspective of national territory enlargement to the borders of the continent, from “ocean to ocean”. Another realm that perceived expansion as its existential principle, the Roman Empire, at some point had to proceed to deliberate implosion. During the reign of Emperor Hadrian and Antoninus Pius they left the province in Mesopotamia and in Britannia the Romans withdrew back to the Hadrian Wall. During the great crisis of the third century and Romans evacuated province of Dacia also. Transition to the defensive and shortening lines of defence was the first, still unclear “writing on the wall” on the road to the extinction of the Western Empire.¹ Heir of Roman expansionist mentality, Ottoman Empire, underwent a continuous implosion, once it reached the limit of maximum distance from its logistic and organizational centre in the south of the Balkans and continuing offensive happened technically impossible to the armed forces. In 1867 there was the Alaska purchase. Russia ceased to be the realm of three continents in exchange for a relatively small amount of dollars but considerably greater amount of spared rubles.²

¹ Curry, A.: The boundaries of the Roman Empire. National Geographic magazine, Issue September 2012, pp. 46 - 87.

² Tindall, G. B., Shi, D. E.: Dějiny Spojených států Amerických. Lidové noviny. Praha 1996, p. 453.

Nowadays, the enlargement process of the European Union represents to the Europeans a history, the content of which since the Enlightenment optimism era is understood as an all-round development, an advance in a linear fashion for improvement - and enlargement, which should be equivalent for progress in respect of any territory. Lev Nikolayevich Gumilev has described the current state of Europe as achievement of a stage of inertia in the process of ethnogenesis, meaning that the local ethnos passed through climax phase characteristic by external flourishing of culture. Now is in the state of inertia, in which although “the big states are shaped, and there is a building and accumulation of material wealth”³ but energy is being depleted increasingly, and life is on the flywheel. The thought of “sustainability” and “absorption capacity” are creeping more and more. But Europe still fills the old debts and the enlargement process continues, intends to exceed the traditionally and geographically defined Europe.

Croesus, king of Lydia, was once asking Delphic oracle what happens when his army crosses the border river. Oracle is answer was: “Then a great empire will be destroyed.” King rejoiced and boldly ventured into the adventure. He did not realize, however, that the oracle did not speak of a hostile empire, but of his own kingdom. In connection with its expansion Europe must postulate two basic questions: how far could stretch its limits in order to avoid subsequent centrifugal tendencies in the periphery? And Europe should also ask whether the competing geopolitical entity - Russian Eurasia and the Islamic world would respect any European bridgehead in the sphere of interest of theirs own.

The EU membership is established by the Treaty of Accession to the European Union.⁴ The treaty concludes on the one hand EU Member States and on the other acceding State or States. For the acquisition force needs to be ratified by all States Parties.

Terms of membership are governed by Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). This article provides not only the material

³ Gumiljov, L. N.: *Od Rusi k Rusku*. Praha 2012, p. 18.

⁴ Zmluva o Európskej únii. Ú. v. EÚ C 326, 26.10.2012, s. 13 – 390, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012M/TXT:SK:PDF>

conditions of membership, i.e. what conditions the state must meet in order to become a member of the EU, but as well as process conditions, i.e. the procedure to apply for membership of the EU.

The Article reads as follows: „Any European State which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union. The European Parliament and national Parliaments shall be notified of this application. The Applicant State shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the consent of the European Parliament, which shall act by a majority of its component members. The conditions of eligibility agreed upon by the European Council shall be taken into account. The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded, which such admission entails, shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the Applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.”

The requirements for membership in the EU under Article 49 TEU are therefore as follows:

1. The member country may become only European state
2. The State must respect the values referred in Article 2 TEU

The article 2 TEU: „The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail. “

The examination of whether the State respects these values does not take place only at the time of accession negotiations, but also during the membership of the State in the European Union. Article 7 TEU provides a procedure for the case that there is a clear risk of breaches or even mentioned values are violated.

3. It is necessary in accordance with Article 49 TEU to take into account the conditions of eligibility agreed upon by the European Council.

The European Council defined the conditions to be met from the side of the acceding State on the meeting in Copenhagen in 1993 and completed them during the meeting in Madrid in 1995. They are known as the Copenhagen criteria.

Membership criteria approved by the European Council can be divided into three categories:

- Political criteria: the existence of a stable institutional base assures the democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect and protection for minorities
- Economic criteria: the existence of a functioning market economy, capacity to cope with competitive pressures within the Union
- Other criteria: ability to ensure fulfillment of the obligations arising from membership in the EU and the involvement in the implementation of the objectives of economic, monetary and political union in particular.

Copenhagen criteria which the country has to meet in order to gain membership in the EU implicitly refer to the concept of absorption capacity. „In Euro jargon this concept is understood as the need of the Union to define, or rather redefine itself and its potential in the light of further expansion.”⁵ Since 2005, after the failed referendums in France and the Netherlands on the European Constitution, is basically used as an argument against future enlargement of the EU.

The President of the European Council Wolfgang Schäuble in an interview given to the French newspaper *Le Monde* in January 2006 said that it is necessary to keep the promises which the EU gave to Bulgaria, Romania and to the Balkan countries and that after the accession of Turkey the enlargement should be stopped. “We should not continue, an important criterion is the absorption capacity.” If the EU wants to expand further, according Schäuble “Union must significantly improve its neighborhood policy.” He added that the definition of European borders is not just a matter of maps, but “also depends on the political decision. “ The former President of the European Council believed that it was necessary

⁵ http://www.europskaunia.sk/absorpcna_kapacita

to thoroughly discuss the dissatisfaction of Europeans and clarify what unites them.⁶

The criterion “European” is subject to political evaluation as all other criteria. Parts of Europe are today, of course, geographically non-European countries.⁷ Not only African Ceuta and Melilla, Asian island of Cyprus, or the overseas departments of France, the autonomous regions of Spain and Portugal, but one day probably Turkey, almost completely (97%) located in Asia. Greenland, the largest island in the world physiographically belongs to North America, but its 60,000 residents have citizenship of the European Union.

If Europe is a continent of shared values, it should be also a continent of the common mentality, which recognizes and prefers such a values. The Europe itself is extremely varied in every way (languages, customs, material culture, religion etc.). European fellowship of nations, from the ethnological point of view we could call it „superethnos“, is or will be (if the unification of Western and Eastern Europe respectively old and new member states, will terminate once from a psychological point of view) the result of the process in which more than origin, language, culture or ideology prevails the stereotypical behavior of everyday life. According to the above-mentioned Russian historian Gumiljov the bond of collectivity is a sense of „complementarity“ - a subconscious perception of the mutual sympathy and the community of people, the perception of the opposite between „us and them“ and of the distinction between „ours“ and “alien“.⁸ The true European boundaries are only mental ones.

The redefinition of internal European borders has already been in the past. Instead the territories of heterogeneous nature, converging together through “divine grace” granted to the legitimate monarch, we have since the “Spring of Nations” in the middle of the 19th century

⁶ <http://www.euractiv.sk/rozsirovanie/clanok/schussel-hranice-europy-su-politic-kym-rozhodnutim>, 25. 1. 2006

⁷ The European Union has on other continents either regions one of its member countries (Outermost Regions) or local authorities with a special relationship to one Member State of EU (Overseas Countries and Territories)

⁸ Gumiljov, L. N.: *Od Rusi k Rusku*. Praha 2012, p. 12.

the boundaries defined by new criteria. As a constitutive criteria of the territorial organization established themselves: nationality, language or religious affiliation.

However, where the process of revision of the territorial organization principles has not concluded yet for some reason, there is a time bomb often ticking and still getting louder. (Scotland, Catalonia, Basque Country, Flanders etc.). Even “invisible boundaries” remain within national units, which were united long ago, sometimes more than once. German West and Ost still not hold together entirely and for members of the “Northern League” Italy ends in Rome and their dream is to have a prosperous state, why not of the size of Slovenia. Canada as we know it will end when Quebec separates. Nevertheless, if the independent Scotland would emerge, from a European perspective few have happened. Just on the flag of the Union will be added next star (if it could be possible). But it will apply always and everywhere in the future? In Paris “à l’autre côté du Periph”⁹ is not so different world in terms of class nor the “zone of social deprivation”, but more likely an area where the adoption of the “French identity gift” was significantly problematized.

New “non-imperial” European empire (Eurosphere) is the area of influence interfering 20% of the world population in 109 countries on all continents. Within its context it is necessary to include primarily countries participating in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). It is the Eastern Partnership (2009) and its predecessor in efforts to avoid dividing lines between the EU and its neighbors, the Euro - Mediterranean Partnership (started 1995 like a Barcelona Process). Nature of the goals is common in both cases: gradual establishment of Free Trade Area, deepen of the respect for the European values (human rights, rule of law, democracy, the good government principle etc.), the political and security dialogue reinforcement and permeable border regime last but not least.

The outermost orbit of the satellites is represented by the Treaty of Cotonou (June 2000) between the EU and so called ACP countries.¹⁰

⁹ On the other side of the ring road t. j. on the Parisian suburbs, where mass riots broke out recently in 2007

¹⁰ Created by Georgetown agreement in 1975 it is The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

British diplomat Sir Robert Cooper, member of the European Council on Foreign Relations, promotes “new liberal imperialism”. According to him the best response to now spreading global threats is “the cooperative empire.” He refers to Catherine the Great, who said that “there is no other ways of borders defend except to extend them” Critics, however, argue that it is not so much the spread of cooperation rather than a transition to coercion. ACP countries in exchange for a pot of money must to cope with the core principles and rules of the World Trade Organization, rather than with a principle of good governance. The new approach taken by the EU can be understood within the context of the hegemonic dominance of neoliberalism within political elites.¹¹

The concurrents of European Union represent two different groups: first one that believes himself to be cultural alternative to Europe (Commonwealth of Independent States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), or also the communities that rose from a common past. For Europe, the Commonwealth of Nations and Francophonie should not be competitors in the true sense. Special ties connect world’s countries only to one of the European Union member. On the other hand, they are vital, expanding organizations and not the memorial associations to re-experiencing the memories of grand imperial past. For their future it is important that they are not looking for clients but built partner relationships within the community on strict egalitarian principles.

Using the metaphor of Nicholas Berdyaev - in Moscow they aren’t somehow yearning for a European groom for the Russian bride. Formerly, Russia in a German bureaucrat “adopted the false one as its chosen one, mistaken groom”. For Russian people imperialism in the Western sense is extraneous, but they gave humbly their power to build an imperialism, on which their heart was not interested”.¹² They do not want to repeat old mistakes. In any case Russia wants to go its own way in the 21st century. Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia formed their own Customs Union in 2011 and some member states of the

¹¹ Hurt, S. R.: Co - operation and coercion? The Cotonou Agreement between the European Union and acp states and the end of the Lome Convention. *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 24, Issue 1, 2003, pp. 161 - 176.

¹² Berd’ajev, N. A.: *Duše Ruska*. Brno 1992, p. 18.

Commonwealth of Independent States , which is practically otherwise a symbolic organization, have signed a free trade agreement later in this year.

The Muslim world noted from the 70ies of the last century the advent of neo-fundamentalism and can hardly be surprising that the recent “Arab Spring” has brought to the power islamically oriented political parties in a number of countries. “It’s premature to assume that any of them, let alone all of them, will bring their respective countries out of the long Arab winter of authoritarian rule.”¹³ Impact radicals barely reached its apogee. Article 22 of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam reads: “Everyone shall have the right to express his opinion freely in dry manner as would not be contrary to the principles of the Shari’ah.”¹⁴ In the future, Europe will be forced to admit more willingly than before, that the values on which is built have not universalistic claims. Not in the Muslim world at least.

Commonwealth of Nations is spread to all inhabited continents and in its countries one third of the world’s population lives. Core values of this community are compatible with those of EU (democracy, human rights, international peace, security, tolerance, respect, freedom of expression, rule of law, good governance, sustainable development, gender equality, protecting the environment, importance of civil society etc.).¹⁵ Newest, they are defined in the Charter of the Commonwealth, signed by Queen Elizabeth II. on 11th march 2013. If the community is defined by such values and goals, it is clear that the constitutional link to the previous British Empire is no longer a prerequisite for membership (Mozambique and Rwanda entered into the Commonwealth of Nations, although they had nothing to do with it previously) as well as the change of governmental form to a republican ceased essentially to mean termination of membership in the Commonwealth.

¹³ Totten, M. J.: Arab spring or Islamist winter? World Affairs; January – February 2012

¹⁴ Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, 5. 8. 1990; <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/cairodeclaration.html>

¹⁵ Charter of the Commonwealth, 14. 12. 2012; <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/252053/FileName/CharteroftheCommonwealth>,

The organization “Francophonie” was founded in 1970 and heads of state began to meet up on the summits since 1986. However, summits held in Cotonou and Hanoi (1995, 1997 respectively), already started the tendency to give the cooperation a political dimension. Francophonie revised its charter, for first time occupied the post of its Secretary General and established new institutions with the aim to generate political influence in the future and thus become an active and dynamic player on the international scene. „Now the summits discuss major international political and economic matters, and organize cooperative programmes in a range of fields, such as agriculture, energy, culture, as well as the dissemination of scientific and technical information. When talking about community and what it actually takes to form and sustain one, is it likely that a common language would be enough?”¹⁶

Let’s go back to the Eastern Partnership and let us pose the question of what it should be. Optimistic voices argue that the European Union may not to define as “narrow west-centric intellectual construct.” The relativization of eastern border is a step in the right direction. “The provincial narrowing of the human world on the trade, GDP growth in numbers and statistics should be replaced by the broader „cultural” and cosmopolitan thinking. The good new vision of (Central European) West in this direction is therefore the further opening towards the East, but not with superiority of the type - “help build democracy to backward neighbors”, as so-called missionaries of the civil society are attempting henceforward. It is completely sufficient yet if the “new Europe” will be not closed for its immediate neighbors.”¹⁷ It is not about the admission of new members immediately. For the begin with the extending of the model of Polish - Ukrainian visa policy would be sufficient.

Eastern Partnership can of course remain what it has been so far: a wide transition zone, whose members share the benefits of the

¹⁶ Mason, M. K.: La Francophonie: History, Structure, Organization, and Philosophical Underpinnings; <http://www.moyak.com/papers/history-francophonie.html>

¹⁷ Buzalka, J.: Má Európa východnú hranicu, alebo aká bude Curzonova línia novej Európskej únie? <http://www.euractiv.sk/rozsirovanie/analiza/ma-europa-vychodnu-hranicu-alebo-aka-bude-curzonova-linia-no>

European Union enlargement in 2004, but under the conditions set out in the Action Plan, of course.

Or may even be something else - the way EU will break own farthest line of convergence, if will try to fully integrate any of the major countries of this part of the world. With acquisition of Ukraine, Europe could absorb Ukrainian “west - east” problem. Thus, instead of Ukraine like a part of a “cordon sanitaire” between Russia and Europe, Ukraine could become a place where Europe repeats the mistake of the king of Lydia. Just as in the case of the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, there could be crossed its mental boundary. The European Union would gain territory, which will be feeling “at home” outside the European Union.

Could Ukraine really be a “Trojan horse gift” to the European Union? According some Ukrainians scholars the different civilizational preferences in Ukrainian society, distinct on the regional division of the country, are the differences in the worldview essentially. “East” is a Soviet, of “Orthodox-Slavic” consciousness and what might be called “Russia” in the broadest sense. “West” represents Ukrainian national consciousness and Ukrainian national values. As the reasons for such a dichotomy are mentioned historical factors (Ukrainian society has evolved in the different countries), ethno-linguistical factors (linguistic diversity inside of the Ukrainian society), the religious factor (Greek Catholic Church, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and Russian Orthodox Church) as well as significant socio-economic differences between eastern and western regions. For Ukraine and its political scene, however, it is also true that “in the modern world is an important source of governance the use of power to create myths and artificial conflicts and disagreements, images and ideas, forming them with the help of their enemies and friends, hiding the real problems and their solutions in this way.”¹⁸

If we examined the views on the further foreign policy gravitation of the country, taking into account the double consciousness of

¹⁸ Романюк А.С., Сокирка Ю.М. та ін.: Від соборності до незалежності: стан та динаміка інтеграції українського суспільства у контексті європейських процесів. СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПОЛІТИЧНИЙ ПОДІЛ В УКРАЇНІ НА ТЕРИТОРІАЛЬНИЙ (РЕГІОНАЛЬНИЙ) ОСНОВІ – Львів: ЦПД, 2009. – 140 с.

Ukraine, we would find that only a few years ago the focus on common economic space with Russia had a clear predominance over the European orientation with 10% difference. Currently, according to the survey of the “Democratic Initiative“ and the “Center Razumkova” 48.4% of Ukrainian citizens support integration to the EU, while 40.3% want Ukraine’s accession to the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. Significant differences are in the western and the eastern regions of Ukraine, while the central and southern regions give their preference to both directions equally. Experts attribute this development primarily to the generational exchange and the growing number of supporters of European integration in Eastern Ukraine.¹⁹ Despite of this trend, starting apparently favoring the orientation on the European Union, it is clear that the division of the country regarding the solution of the issue where it Ukraine wants to belong, is still fundamental and even more accentuated due to the fact that supporters of one or another orientation have the most significant superiority at opposite ends of the country in geographically clearly definable (and separable) regions of the country. The European Union must still remain “ante portas” of Ukraine.²⁰ It’s in the interest of both parties still, regardless of the specific problems that were discussed during the 16th Summit of the European Union - Ukraine in Brussels in February 2013.

¹⁹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/ukrainian/politics/2013/01/130110_ukraine_eu_cu_az.shtml, 10.01.2013

²⁰ Poland’s ambassador to Ukraine Jacek Klyuchkovsky estimated that Ukraine will become a member of the European Union, by 10 to 15 years after the entry into force of the FTA and Association Agreement. <http://ua.for-ua.com/politics/2010/03/22/113908.htm>