

Abstracts

Does european union set up a new mode of organisation for public authorities and the International Society ?

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*Can European integration converge to a totally new stable institutional form that would be neither a unitary State nor a federation or a confederation and that would respect the sovereignty of member-states ? The evolution of the Union after the signature of the Maastricht treaty justifies that such a question should be asked. As Europe was integrating competencies held to be close to sovereignty, its institutions were subject to tensions that progressively detached them from the national state model as well as the *sui generis* model of integration initially adopted in Europe. Not only the principle of sovereignty of the national state but also its omnicompetence was questioned, i.e. the absence of a durable differentiation in the mode of integration of public competencies. The historical analysis based on the theory of Westphalism, which holds the State itself as a form of organisation of public authority which is not unalterable, a regime of public order ; shows that such a question makes sense, that it appears as a contradiction in terms only in the regime of legitimacy of public authority that is specific to the Nation-State. To characterise this hypothetical new regime of public authority towards which European integration could converge and stabilise, one has to start from elementary categories of analysis of public authority and confront approaches usually held to be independent from one another : This leads to analyse it as an institutional configuration liable to make compatible institutions concerning the horizontal régulation of different integrated competencies (Monetary union, defence, internal security), vertical political institutions (council, commission, parliament) and transversal geopolitical interests of member States according to the relative position within and outside of the Union. This method allows to emphasise a few possible contrasted models of the Union and to characterise their properties.*

The historical meanings of europeanisation

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From the long 16th century to the last turn of the century, Europeanization implied the extension of the European state system outside its core area. This essay argues that in the 20th century, Europeanization must be understood as an integration process within Europe as a region. The first section presents a criticism of recent American international relations theory, arguing that there are indeed more fruitful European and non-neoclassical approaches that fit better into the institutionalist programme of the regulation school. We then compare the phases of the inward-oriented process of Europeanization through this century : in the interwar period, there were visions only. In the late 1940s, the new hegemon, the U.S., pushed for a Western European federation in order to conduct the Cold War without a too heavy burden on the U.S. tax panel : This programme failed because of great tensions between the old and the new hegemon, that is, between Britain and the U.S. In the 1950s, countering British resistance to European integration, a separate Western European trajectory of integration evolved. The tensions between this trajectory and a parallel Atlantic process of integration is analysed with reference to a distinction between security, trade, money and political cooperation as fields of international integration. This enables us to define the limits to Europeanization during the Cold War ; and to sketch different visions of Europeanisation and Euro-atlantic relations after the Cold War.

Europe : Sinking into quicksand or transition towards a new growth regime ?

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With the signature of the Single Act, the appeal to the market has appeared as the magic solution for overcoming the contradictions of the European construction and for facing the economic crisis. The financial liberalisation has destabilised the EMS and has led to the project of Single Currency. These mutations have formed the beginning of a new mode of " régulation ", partly supranational, at the European level. Far from helping the foundation of a new growth regime, they have contributed to shut up Europe into stagnation during the 90s. The mode of transition towards the Single Currency written down in the Maastricht Treaty has been specially disastrous. More gravely, the project of Monetary Union is marked by deep contradictions which are linked to the lack of the balancing mechanisms and to the difficulty of economic policy co-ordination. In a broader outlook, the main issues in terms of growth regime can be described concerning the monetary regime, the forms of competition, the pressure put on the wage relations and the renewal of the public interventions at the national and European level. If the liberal scenario is the more likely, it may lead to sinking into low growth and to an increase of the social pressure which may be difficult to contain in the medium term. This project theoretically can be improved owing to important institutional changes, specially with progress towards federalism, but this project receives only a weak support from our European partners.

The societal and regulation approaches, and the methodology of international comparative analysis : a structuralist reading of the diversity of national systems of social protection

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The French socio-economic « regulation » and « societal » approaches pay a large attention to international comparisons. So doing, they experience the same kind of problems as the historico-comparative institutionalist approaches developed elsewhere : in spite of trying to build theoretically their research objects, they used a strictly inductive method of generalisation. The purpose of the article is to show that the regulation approach, enriched by the societal approach, nevertheless owns internal resources to fill up this theoretical deficit. We sustain that, in order to do this, it only has to activate explicitly the genetical structuralism which is still only implicit in the approach, because structural analysis allows to build intermediary concepts which, as Weber's ideal-types, inject a theoretical deductive dimension into the core of comparative -historical enterprise. Following that view, the first section of the article addresses the present state of methodological thinking in comparative political economy, sociology and political science. The second

section reviews the specific contributions in the domain of regulation and societal approaches, then focuses on their present limits. Finally, the third section tries to overcome these limits in the specific domain of the welfare state analysis, using a theoretical deductive approach mobilising the structural method to produce international comparisons of national systems of social protection.

The 1992 italian crisis interpreted as the outcome of an endogenous evolution

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The reconstruction of the economic and political evolution in Italy between 1979 and 1992 proposed in this article stresses that the political crisis of 1992 is the result of a specific combination of the characteristics of the political and economic systems : the role of budget transfers in the building of the political support of the government ; the development of a class of renters related to the increase in public debt ; the growing political importance of this class ; the exclusion of wage-earners from the political support of the government and the very low mobility of voters between the coalition of government parties and the left-wing opposition parties ; the proportional ballot system and the high degree of conflict within the parties backing the government, which justify the hypothesis of a short political horizon for economic policy. Following this reconstruction, the Italian political crisis can be defined as the break-up of the compromise that linked social groups with diverging interests. In the proposed interpretation, the crisis comes from the endogenous narrowing of margins for political mediation between these interests. It is the consequence of the impossibility to keep an economic policy that was unable to ensure the cohesion of the social block that formed the political support of the government ; an impossibility which itself is the final outcome of the implementation of a policy of mediation between different, and even contradictory, demands put forward by the groups that supported the government.

A regulation approach to regional studies

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In order to contribute to the development of regional studies, this article emphasises the influence of the socio-economic forms of regulation, of industrial organisation and production concepts, and of socio-cultural shaping of the regional economy. Primary importance is given to the region's socio-economic institutional fabric and to the regional differentiation of social systems of regulation. Every region develops amid the tension resulting from the restructuring of patterns of spatial division of labour on the supra-national as well as the national level and the regional specific patterns of economic organisation and its institutional resources. Are decisive for the development chances of a region, the system of production, the system of regulation, i.e. the socio-economic patterns of

interaction, inter-firm linkages and industrial labour relations, and political institutional forms of co-ordination in which a region are understood to make up its regulation system. The region's system of production and regulation can form a more or less coherent model of development, i.e. a particular (but not necessarily "unique") configuration which is determined by the way in which regional and supra-regional (global) development determinants come together and by the specific socio-economic institutional fabric of a region. The diversity of regional development models and their uneven geographical distribution within the Pan-European economic space underline the regulationist's thesis that the geography of the post-fordist era forms an uneven mosaic ("leopard skin") rather than a spatial fabric of dominant axes with uniformly structured development configurations.

The « hierarchical market-firm nexus » and the post-war Japanese economy : focusing on incentive and flexibility

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According to this study, the high productivity and the dynamic efficiency come from the structural compatibility between the organisation of the firm, the labour market and the inter-firm relation that are constructed hierarchically. This understanding is central to our hypothesis. Then, the strength of the Japanese economy is its very ability to produce this compatibility.

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