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Between integration and regional particularism – the global context to the European Union

Since the 1950s, global politics has witnessed the emergence of a new political phenomenon: the cooperation and integration of states on the regional scale. The excellent example among the regional groupings is the European Union (EU). The EU is a special instance in this respect not much because it came first, but because it has gone furthest in terms of the powers transferred from its member states to its central institutions. The attempt to comprehend the EU has always been challenging, largely because of the immense expansion and transformation of its membership, scope, goals, institutional architecture and policy concerns, and especially more recently, because of its growing role as a global actor¹.

Whatever we might think about the contemporary strengths and failures of the EU as a political community, it should be stressed that the project on European unity has come a long way since the leaders of six European co-

untries put their signatures to the founding Treaty of Rome in 1957. Today, a reasonable judgement on the process of European integration would conclude that it has gone far from the original plan. The EU gradually appears to behave as one single actor in world politics.

One of the difficulties faced by international relations scholars is how to define the EU that is neither a state nor an international organization – the two entities identified as a subject and an actor in international relations. Realism, one of dominant schools, agrees that the EU is a perfectly sensible response by the European states to the challenge of the post-war reconstruction. More recently, the single market and monetary union are similarly explained as a response to international competition and the drive for economic strength in an increasingly globalized world².

The liberal tradition in international relations starts from different assumptions about how the world operates. It

¹ Zob. J. Baylis, S. Smith: *The Globalization of World Politics*. Oxford 2005, s. 580.

² Zob. M. Farrell: *EU External Relations: Exporting the EU Model of Governance*. „European Foreign Affairs Review” 2005, vol. 10, s. 453–454.

regards other actors in world politics besides states, including international and multinational organizations, and transnational interest groups. The EU is deemed as an institution that personifies certain principles, including democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and free market which offers a set of standard to follow for the members in the globalized world³.

This article explores the ambivalent relationship between globalization and European Union. It also tries to characterize some reflections on knowledge about globalization and regionalization within the EU.

This article argues that the relationship between European integration (sometimes called Europeanization or EU governance⁴) and globalization is puzzling, mutually implicated, and ambivalent. It is a matter of consensus that a strong relationship exists between these two phenomena. Globalization is considered to be responsible for creating the environment in which a greater degree of integration is seemed necessary. At the same time the EU has contributed to the spread of globalization.

The aim of the article is to contribute to understanding the relationship

between the EU and globalization, and between the EU and the process of regionalization. The purpose is to gain a better grasp of the nature of both of them.

European integration: from international treaty to constitutional polity

In the course of the process of regional integration, the European Union has gradually become an important factor in the domestic affairs of states as well as in relations between them. It arose through a series of international treaties among the "original Six" member states, but has since expanded to include most of Europe. There were numerous factors leading to the creation of this supranational governance: the post-war economic, physical, and social devastation of Europe, the ambitions of creating a federal Europe developed during the second world war, the division of Europe during the Cold War, the desire among Western powers, especially the USA, to strengthen Western Europe politically and economically⁵. The most visible driving force

³ Ibidem, s. 454–455.

⁴ Zob. B. R o s a m o n d: *Globalization, the Ambivalence of European Integration and the Possibilities for a Post-Disciplinary EU Studies*. „Innovation” 2005, vol. 18, nr 1, s. 23.

⁵ Zob. M. S a r: *Polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych wobec procesów integracyjnych Europy Zachodniej w latach 1947–1963*. Warszawa 1981, s. 10–20; W. S z y m b o r s k i: *Unia Europejska. Struktury. Instytucje. Prawo*. Bydgoszcz 2005, s. 25–27.

at the time has been the reconciliation between France and Germany, of which European integration has been both a consequence and a guarantee⁶.

Initially the European Communities were responsible for the regulation of specific sectors of the economy (coal, steel, and agriculture), but over time the European institutions have been entrusted with responsibility over an ever-increasing range of goals. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, these tasks included monetary policy, the protection of human rights, and coordination in foreign policy and military security, therefore encroaching on what scholars regard as an essence of state sovereignty. The EU's power to negotiate external trade agreements went simultaneously with the establishment of a customs union in the 1960s. In the 1970s came the first attempts to cooperate in foreign policy matters. The Maastricht Treaty in 1992 also contained ambitious plans for a single European currency – the euro – that was launched at the beginning of 1999⁷. Since the end of the Cold War the perspectives for European integration have changed fundamentally. With the Iron Curtain gone, an origi-

nally Western European project received a pan-European dimension. Central and East European states, as well as Malta and Cyprus, joined the EU in 2004⁸.

From its start and during the 1960s and 1970s the European Communities (EC) was a small player in world politics. Its external relations (where it had some impact) were mainly with former colonies, but most importantly, the EC achieved a common position above all on international trade. By contrast, today the EU has emerged as a global actor and a force in world politics, especially in trade, development cooperation, the promotion of regional integration, democracy and good governance, human rights, and also in security policies. In fact, the EU's "presence" is realized more or less everywhere in the world⁹.

The gradual course of the integration process allows us to distinguish its two different processes: the first one is the reform of the treaties which established the European Communities ("Paris Treaty", "Rome Treaties"), the second one subsequently reformed it ("Single European Act", "Maastricht Treaty", "Amsterdam Treaty", and "Nice Tre-

⁶ Zob. J. K u k u ł k a: *Historia współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych 1945–1996*. Warszawa 1997, s. 43–45.

⁷ Zob. B. G l e e s o n: *Learning About Regionalism: "Economic Normalisation" and Beyond*. „Australian Geographical Studies” 2003, vol. 41, s. 223–224.

⁸ Zob. J. B a y l i s, S. S m i t h: *The Globalization of World Politics...*, s. 581–582.

⁹ Zob. B. H e t t n e, F. S o d e r b a u m: *Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism: The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalism*. „European Foreign Affairs Review” 2005, vol. 10, s. 535.

aty"). Within the framework of these treaties, which are referred to as the UE's "primarily legislation", a number of institutions on different levels operate that have more specific tasks and possess a degree of autonomy from the member states. They are responsible for running the day-to-day affairs of the EU, developing public policies, deciding on the annual budget, and passing "secondary" legislation such as EU directives and regulations¹⁰.

The global context to European integration

The early phase of European integration developed in the context of the Cold War. Encouragement from the United States, the needs to strengthen Western Europe economically against a Soviet threat, and the desire among European countries to give some weight to European views in the emerging bipolar world – these all contributed to the faster development of the European Communities¹¹.

The more recent phase of integration has occurred against the backdrop of globalization. Three dynamics of globalization, in particular, are mirrored by developments in the EU. First, in terms of economic governance, Euro-

pean integration has fed on, and contributed to, the global trends of marketization towards neo-liberal economic policy, with liberal trade, low inflation, deregulation, and tight fiscal budgets. Second, the trends towards greater social and cultural exchange across national borders have also intensified in the European Union. Common policies and institutions in Europe are specifically designed to strengthen possibilities of greater mobility across national borders on the global scale. As a matter of fact, political parties, local and regional authorities, interest groups, social movements, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are now very active, within national governments and supranational institutions, on a European scale. Here the EU has fed into rather than causing these existing transnational trends. Third, despite the creation of an integrated market and the growth of trans-border economic, social, and cultural exchange, the development of a transnational civil society has been limited by factors such as, for example, the diversity of languages..

In the academic literature, attention has been drawn to the dual nature of the relationship between integration and globalization – with the EU¹² acting both as a shelter from, and as

¹⁰ Zob. J. Baylis, S. Smith: *The Globalization of World Politics...*, s. 583.

¹¹ Ibidem, s. 587.

¹² Ibidem, s. 587.

an accelerator of, global processes. In the wider political and public debate, however, one or the other side of these aspects is being emphasized. In this respect, two very different interpretations of this interaction are on offer: European integration is regarded either as an expression of turbo-charged globalization or as a protective shield against the negative outcomes from globalization.

In the perspective of integration as a turbo-charged globalization, the EU is little more than the local variant of the kind of the global trends mentioned above¹³. Thus globalization is being accelerated by the policies of the EU. Multinational corporations benefit from the improved access to markets, and there is a general trend towards greater concentrations of economic power in certain regions and large firms¹⁴. States abdicate their traditional welfare responsibilities in order to satisfy the demands of efficiency and price stability imposed by the single market and single currency. Within the EU, capital mobility and market access are hardly different from those within the nation-state, and as result there are even greater competitive pressures for firms as well as for public authorities.

Yet, the advocates of European integration generally, and of the single currency, perceive it as precisely the opposite. In their view, integration provides nation-states and electorates in Europe with a mechanism to confront the challenge of globalization. In relation to European integration, globalization is commonly understood to constitute an external (particularly economic) threat creating the environment in which a much greater degree of integration is necessary and impelling Europe countries towards closer union. The nation-state needs the security offered by membership in an economic bloc such as the EU because it is no longer possible for relatively small national economies to go alone in the global market. Put simply, European integration is the logical response to a world dominated by global financial flows and transnational corporations. Globalization has acted upon the EU by encouraging the replacement of an economic space of independent trading regions and nations by a single Europe-wide corporate economy¹⁵.

Henry Wallace accounts that the EU adopted the necessity of integration in order to domesticate the effects of globalization: "European integration can

¹³ Ibidem, s. 587–588.

¹⁴ Zob. *Europe's Hot Growth Companies*. „Business Week Online” 2005, s. 9.

¹⁵ Zob. Ch. R u m f o r d, P. M u r r a y: *Globalization and the Limitations of European Integration Studies: Interdisciplinary Considerations*. „Journal of Contemporary European Studies” 2003, vol. 11, nr 1, s. 87–88.

also be seen as a distinct west European effort to contain the consequences of globalization. Rather than be forced to choose between the national polity for developing policies and the relative anarchy of the globe, west Europeans invented a form of regional governance with polity-like features to extend the state and harden the boundary between themselves and the rest of the world"¹⁶.

There may be a dynamic process of economic integration, but the EU provides institutional response to regulate it. Ultimately, the transnational market is regulated and political control is exercised, through the collaboration of supranational institutions and national governments. There is the growth of such a supranational polity. At the beginning its development was led by the market, but eventually by an effective legal order, a system of political rights, and duties, and a political community at the end was established. Both states and firms are now subject to rules and regulations that go much further than anything available at the global scale. Indeed, global environmental and social regulation receives much impetus from the political consensus among the EU member states.

European integration has also provided a counterweight to the economic

interests of the USA, the remaining superpower. It is difficult to see how individual states in Europe would respond to the demands for unregulated market access from the US firms and the US Administration. The EU, on the other hand, has regularly resisted such demand, often couched in complaints about protectionism, whether in response to preferential market access for developing countries, concerns over health or environmental safety, or simple because of the economic interests of the member states. In multilateral negotiations, the EU has permitted member states substantially to increase their voice and thus extend their influence in the international trade regime¹⁷.

The nature and intensity of the relationship is summarized by Manuel Castells in the following words: "European integration is, at the same time, a reaction to the process of globalization, and its most advanced expression"¹⁸. The European Union may be understood in two ways. First, it can be seen as a collective response among European states to preserve a distinctive model of European political economy. Second, it can be deemed as an instance of globalization.

Such a close relationship between globalization and the EU derives from a narrative dominated by market inte-

¹⁶ H. Wallace: *Politics and policy in the EU: the challenge of governance*. W: H. Wallace, W. Wallace: *Policy-making in the European Union*. Oxford 1996.

¹⁷ Zob. J. Baylis, S. Smith: *The Globalization of World Politics...*, s. 583–585.

¹⁸ M. Castells: *End of Millennium*. Oxford 2000, s. 384.

gration and transnational cooperation. The processes that form European integration are necessary and its appropriate policy reacts against the challenges issued by the logic of the global economy. In this sense, we can say that the existence of globalization legitimizes European integration because of the need for greater EU competitiveness, and global trade trends can justify the need for regional blocs. In fact, this is the dominant theme in the EU's own estimation of the impact of globalization. For example, a Commission White Paper states that: "The globalization of economies and markets, which involves the intensification of international competition through the emergence of a potentially unique worldwide market for an expanding range of goods, services and factors, brings out the full importance of the responsibility on the part of national and Community authorities as regards competitiveness"¹⁹. Globalization is presented here as a challenge and an impulse to pursue ever-greater steps towards economic integration, trade liberalization and competitiveness. In other words, globalization presents the EU and its member states with both the motive and the opportunity to enhance competitiveness. The logic of greater

competitiveness has also led the EU to device ways of ensuring that economic growth and increased competition do not undermine the single market by concentrating growth too narrowly in favoured areas and core locations²⁰.

This 'close-fit' between globalization and the EU is in no small part due to the definition that is being employed. Globalization is taken to refer to an internationalization of economic production and the development of markets on a world scale. The nation-state has become increasingly inefficient in the world dominated by global markets and transnational corporations. Increased European integration is the response to such changes. In this sense "globalization represents the long-term replacement of an economic space of independent trading regions and nations by a single Europe-wide corporate economy"²¹. One consequence of these processes and of the greater transnational uniformity in culture, communication, information, financial regulations and national economic policies engendered by globalization is that a nation-state needs security offered by membership in an economic bloc such as the EU. On this model of integration nation-states surrender a degree of their sovereignty in

¹⁹ *Growth, Competitiveness, and Employment*. Commission of European Communities (CEC), Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Luxembourg 1993.

²⁰ Zob. Ch. R u m f o r d: *European Cohesion? Globalization, Autonomization, and the Dynamics of EU Integration*. „Innovation” 2000, vol. 13, nr 2, s. 184.

²¹ *Ibidem*, s. 184.

order to survive under the conditions of globalization. Globalization destabilizes the hierarchies upon which the national economy is ordered. It promotes the local over the national and the transnational, it fosters a new set of relationships between regions and nation-states, between sectors and the state, between centres and peripheries. Globalization empowers the region not simply as an actor autonomous from central government control, but as a self-responsible and self-regulating governor of its own economic activity²². "In short, globalization is the condition which has replaced the need for peace in the justification of European integration today"²³.

Such a definition does not capture the full complexity of globalization, which is better thought as a transnationalization of economic and cultural life in which the relationship between the local, national, and transnational passes through and acts on each other in unfamiliar ways. Globalization is about the dissolution of old structures and boundaries of national states and communities and the increasing transnationalisation of economic and cultural life.

On the other hand, the UE realises the idea of globalization. Globalization in the first part of Castells' expression,

mentioned above, is concerned to be exogenous to European integration and the growth of EU institutional forms and processes. In the second part of his opinion it is fundamentally endogenous. Thus, for example, at the beginning, European states comprehend that globalization represents some sort of threat or challenge. As a result, they choose collectively to invest in some forms of supranationalism by creating, consolidating or delegating some authority to a set of common institutions. However, by this time, it becomes apparent that the choice to Europeanize in response to globalization has in fact resulted in accelerated globalization, which in turn takes the form of an enlarged liberal market order or a polity that represents a functional fit for increased transnationalism. We might also ask the question of where globalization came from. At this point it is often noted that states themselves are the primarily authors of globalization – for example by liberalizing capital control regimes. Therefore what occurs is a rational appreciation of the consequence of decisions taken earlier²⁴.

European integration can also be seen as a distinct West European effort to contain the consequences of globalization. Rather than be forced to choose between the national polity

²² Ibidem, s. 184–185.

²³ Ibidem, s. 185.

²⁴ Zob. B. R o s a m o n d: *Globalization...*, s. 24–25.

for developing policies and the relative anarchy of the globe, west Europeans invented a form of regional governance with polity-like features to extend the state and harden the boundary between themselves and the rest of the world. European integration is the way in which states have chosen to react when confronted with the imperative of globalization.

The complexity of Castells' account is revealed by analyzing the pronouncements of policy actors that offer rhetorical announcements about the relationship between globalization and the EU. There are a number of important claims recently registered among European-level policy actors about the relationship between the EU and globalization²⁵. One of them states that Europe is challenged by globalization. The appropriate response is to Europeanize policy capabilities to ensure the delivery of neo-liberal policy solutions both internally via devices such as competition policy and the European Monetary Union (EMU) and externally through pro-active support for and investment in the global multilateral free trade order. The EMU is the only way in which Europe is being globalized, and the way in which Europeans have sought to reclaim con-

trol over monetary policy in the face of globalization²⁶.

On the other hand the "European social model" is threatened by globalization, which is forcing societies to converge around an American-style model of capitalism characterized by radical deregulation, labour market flexibility and welfare retrenchment. The only way for member states to preserve the cherished "European social model" is to invest further in the EU. The UE should be active in promoting the social dimension of globalization by becoming an active global campaigner for core labour standards and corporate social responsibility. The EU has also a responsibility to help set globalization within a moral framework²⁷.

The European model of integration represents a successful and exportable attempt to engage in the governance of globalization. The European Commission should be empowered to negotiate on the EU's behalf with regard to all matters relating to globalization. The new globalized order should be advanced through the leadership of a "G8" – style collection of regional organizations, of which the EU would be one²⁸.

²⁵ Ibidem, s. 26.

²⁶ Zob. L. Brittan: *Globalization versus Sovereignty: the European Response*. Cambridge 1998.

²⁷ Internet: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/speeches/250402ad.pdf (20.04.2006).

²⁸ Zob. B. Rosamond: *Globalization....*, s. 26.

In sum, perhaps the fact that there is no clear picture of the relationship between globalization and European integration should not surprise us because the EU should be understood as a natural arena for competing conceptions of globalization. Therefore the EU is either an agent of globalization or it is a response to globalization. We might, of course, discover elements of truth in both propositions. Perhaps some elements of the EU's activity induce globalization, while others resist it.

Specific nature of the EU as a global actor

What is not in dispute is the desire for collective action by societies, through forms of regional cooperation to counter the adverse, often crisis-driven, effects of globalization on the one hand, and to maximize the benefits to be gained from the processes of the globalization on the other. The question is how the EU shapes the complex global governance system towards a system that is both efficient and just, as the global governance system is considered as fragmented, ineffective and undemocratic in its decision-making²⁹.

Therefore there is a priority for the European Union to identify its role

and its responsibility in the regional and global world. The integrative dynamics of globalization are also deemed to have another dimension: presenting a number of new opportunities for the EU to preserve a leading role in global governance. The EU with its high degree of economic cooperation and a commitment to neo-liberal trade policy benefits from the expansion of global markets. But the EU perceives itself as much more than a market. It also embodies a 'social model'. The EU can assist its interests by deploying its specific power as a global actor to demand for the regulation of global players. This is what the EU defines as a moral framework for globalization, anchored in solidarity and sustainable development. Europe's general collective preferences are arguably to pursuit of global governance in order to defend non-market social model³⁰.

The EU has an integrated governance system, linking institutional structures, policies and legal instruments that bring together the national and supranational level of decision-making and policy implementation. In particular policy areas, Europe has a sophisticated regulatory framework unequalled at the global level. Only the EU has managed to develop a competition framework based upon the adoption of com-

²⁹ Zob. R. Higgott: *The Theory and Practice of Global and Regional Governance: Accommodating American Exceptionalism and European Pluralism*. „European Foreign Affairs” 2005, vol. 10, s. 586.

³⁰ Internet: <http://www.laidi.comm/papiers/governance.pdf> (25.05.2006).

mon standards, procedures and laws by each member states. Globalization is often associated with a diminution in the role of the nation-state and the concomitant empowerment of the sub-national regions. Governance has become the preferred for the way the EU organizes the complex of mechanisms of regulation, working on regional, national, and supra-national levels with the EU, and involving a variety of state and non-state agencies. Transnational European space has been impelled by globalization and takes the form of amalgamated levels of governance, deriving from, displacing but not eliminating the nation-state³¹. The need for greater competitiveness in the global marketplace has forced EU member states to bind more closely together in order to regain at the European level some of the autonomy lost at the nation-state level. At the same time, the nation-state has been subject to pressures from new, mainly supranational levels of authority, and globalization is responsible for creating: "multiple power centres and overlapping spheres of authority"³². Thus it appears that a European level of polity is emerging. The transnational level reorders the na-

tion-state within the overarching integrative framework provided by the EU. The European model is specific in the complexity of the institutional system, in the blend of national autonomy and community principles allowing it to impact on national politics, policy-making and politics, negotiations between different interests, and in the use of law as an instrument of integration. The specific European governance model is precisely what the EU brings to the world, and it is what defines the EU as an international actor.

One of the most important things is that the UE governance model relies heavily on the rule of law³³. The role of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) is crucial in ensuring a system that is both effective and fair at the same time. The ECJ plays a key role in ensuring the legal provision of the Treaty of Rome (and subsequent amending treaties). An access to the ECJ for private individuals, as well as member states and the supranational institutions, makes it distinctive from other international governance models. Contrast it with the World Trade Organization (WTO), where only states can make a complaint to the Dispute Settlement Body³⁴.

³¹ Zob. Ch. Rumford, P. Murray: *Globalization and the Limitations of European Integration Studies...*, s. 89–90.

³² D. Held, A. McGrew, D. Goldblatt, J. Perraton: *Global transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Cambridge 1999.

³³ Zob. A. S. Sweet: *The Judicial Construction of Europe. Introduction*. Oxford 2004.

³⁴ Zob. S. Leibfried, D. Wolf: *Europeanization and the Unravelling European Nation State: Dynamics and Feedback Effects*. „European Foreign Affairs Review” 2005, vol. 10, s. 496–498.

Europe exhibits both common and distinctive features in its national social models. European models of the welfare state face common internal and external challenges arising from accelerated globalization. The EU has a long experience of gender politics. This provides a rare example of a primarily economic organization developing a strong transnational social policy backed by law. More recently, the policy of "gender mainstreaming" has been adopted, with the stated aim of incorporating gender awareness in all aspects of EU policy-making and increasing the representation of women in key forums³⁵.

The EU has emerged as a major actor in the world economy, with a reasonably developed and coherent set of trade policies³⁶. The EU emerges as a key regional actor in certain global affairs, particularly in such areas as finance, trade, environment and development, and current policy is directed towards enhancing the role of the EU in the global governance system. To this end, the European Commission is actively engaged in such issues as the global governance of trade, the protection of human rights, the promotion of democracy, strengthening of regio-

nal and global security communities, and encouraging regional integration in other parts of the world³⁷. Amidst these endeavours, the EU is seen, and indeed projects itself, as a qualitatively, normative power in world politics, and on this basis stakes its claim to being a legitimate and thus a more effective international actor. During the last decade it has become evident in the European Commission and in leading policy circles that the EU's increasing economic weight and geographical size are linked to an imperative to become a global actor and to play a more important political and security role in the world³⁸. One of many examples of this trend was the Cologne European Council meeting in June 1999, where it was decided that: "[...] the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action which is only possible if it is backed up, by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO"³⁹. This European ambition, which became more articulated during the 1990s, has also to be understood in the context of the post-11 September 2001 global trans-

³⁵ Zob. R. Higgott: *The Theory and Practice of Global and Regional Governance...*, s. 587–588.

³⁶ Zob. N. Fligstein, F. Merand: *Globalization or Europeanization? Evidence on the European Economy Since 1980*. Hamburg 2001, s. 7–21.

³⁷ Zob. M. Farrell: *EU External Relations...*, s. 453.

³⁸ Zob. B. Hettne, F. Soderbaum: *Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism...*, s. 536.

³⁹ *Policies: Securing and Defence Policies*. European Council. Internet: <http://www.ue.eu.int> (26.05.2006).

formation as well as the redefinition process of the international community through the reform agenda of the United Nations. As much as American unilateralism renews the legitimacy of power politics on the world stage, the normative approach in the European management of international relations sustains the relevance of the very notion of global governance. Paul Kennedy agrees that Europe cannot act as counterbalance to the USA⁴⁰. There is an "aquis transatlantique"⁴¹ between Europe and the United States, which must be strengthened⁴². But the EU must strengthen its foreign relations and security policies because this is necessity for Europe to help shape the globalization process. The question is whether in the nearest future the EU will be at the centre or at the periphery of world events. European foreign policy should be an example for world politics of the future, based upon democracy, social justice, and multilateral cooperation. Using this as a foundation, the EU will be viewed as cooperative world power, an attractive partner for fair, democratic and human globalization, providing a model of an international, social and ecological market society. A strong Eu-

rope is a main point for an equal partnership with the United States and developing strategies to include countries like China, India, Brazil, Thailand, and South Africa in international cooperation, as their support is critical for the solution of any world problem, including the fight against international terrorism, reduction of poverty, efforts to create social justice, and the reform of the United Nations⁴³.

As a global actor the EU leads to shape its own specific foreign policy relations, which take four main forms: enlargement (towards the core area of Europe); stabilization (in the "neighbourhood" – the European Neighbourhood Policy is primarily driven by the EU's aim to stabilize the region of its neighbourhood⁴⁴); bilateralism (toward great and strong powers), and interregionalism (towards regions and regional organizations).

The regional context to the European Union

Although there is no single model of regionalization, the European Union is still the most institutionalized regional grouping displaying a set of governance

⁴⁰ Zob. E. Deutscher, D. Messner: *Europe's Response to World Politics*. „Society" 2005, vol. 42, s. 59–63.

⁴¹ The history of common achievements.

⁴² Zob. B. Hettne, F. Soderbaum: *Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism...*, s. 543–544.

⁴³ Zob. E. Deutscher, D. Messner: *Europe's Response to World Politics...*, s. 62–63.

⁴⁴ Zob. F. Charillon: *Sovereignty and Intervention: EU's Interventionism in its «Near Abroad»*. W: W. Carlsson: *Contemporary European Foreign Policy*. London 2004, s. 256–263.

behind the nation-state. The importance of regional well-being is reflected in the governance of the EU. In the EU, "regional" is generally taken to mean geographic areas within member states. The unique feature of regional actorship is that this has to be created by voluntary processes and therefore depends more on dialogue and consensus-building than on coercion. This way of operating is the model Europe holds out as the preferred world order⁴⁵.

One of the outcomes of the relationship between globalization and regionalization is the tendency of globalization, in conjunction with neo-liberal growth, to lead to autonomization as well as integration⁴⁶. The autonomized EU animates economic and social actors – citizens, economic enterprises, NGOs, or regions – in a new way. It empowers them at the same time as exposing them to a degree of risk. Autonomization encompasses the idea that neo-liberalism promotes autonomy amongst its participants, in terms of government, the provision of services, economic actors, and citizens. The idea of autonomization causes us to think about EU cohesion policy and the role of the region in new and different ways, or at least to supplement

the standard account of the role of the region. This standard account sees the region as the focus for a whole raft of EU policies, ostensibly designed to address the problem of cohesion: the wide disparities in wealth and opportunities that exist between member states and particularly between regions. This has led to the idea that the EU is promoting the interests of sub-national regions over those of the nation-state as a prelude to a federal Europe or a 'Europe of the regions'. What needs to be emphasized is that the region has assumed a greater and more important role but its prominence is not simply the product of EU policies. Of central importance is the tension that exists between the role in which globalization has cast the region, and the region as a central player in the EU's cohesion strategy⁴⁷.

Cohesion is generally understood to be a priority goal of the EU. It is a somewhat loosely defined term which embodies the EU's broad aim to be more than a giant marketplace⁴⁸. The Article 130a of the Treaty on European Union (1992) states that cohesion stands for: "reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backward-

⁴⁵ Zob. B. Hettne, F. Soderbaum: *Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism...*, s. 538–539.

⁴⁶ Zob. Ch. Rumford: *European Cohesion...*, s. 186.

⁴⁷ Zob. W. M. Downs: *Regionalism in the European Union: Key Concepts and Project Overview*. „European Integration” 2002, vol. 24, nr 3, s. 171–177.

⁴⁸ Ch. Rumford: *European Cohesion...*, s. 187.

ness of the least favoured regions". The term cohesion is used to refer to both the problems of regional inequality and the policy solutions offered by the EU. Cohesion policy is most commonly associated with the Structural Funds and the reduction of regional disparities. Placing the region within a matrix of neo-liberalism and globalization provides the basis for a consideration of the region as an economic actor autonomous from national and EU government. No account of EU regional policy and cohesion can avoid the issue of regionalism. Regionalism can be defined as the prioritization of the sub-national region over other units of socio-political organization, such as the nation-state. Regionalism is often thought as a threat to the nation-state, seeking to fragment it and replace it with a multiplicity of smaller nation-states, for example. Alternatively, regionalism may attempt to weaken the central authority of the nation-state and replace it with a federal arrangement that allows greater regional autonomy. This is the sense in which the association of regionalism and the idea of 'a Europe of the regions' within the EU is generally understood⁴⁹.

Globalization and the development of regionalism are key drivers in the

contemporary global order. They should be seen not as discrete activities but intimately linked processes. While regionalization processes can be observed throughout the world, with an increasing diversity and complexity in these processes, moves towards regionally integrated problem solving have been more active in Europe than in other parts of the world. In Asia, Africa and Latin America, societies are trying to make their own choices of the regionalization process that best reflect their own political, social, and economic needs⁵⁰.

Today, not only Europe, but the whole world experiences a new wave of regional integration, in which Europe, like in the previous one, is considered to play a key role. So far the EU represents the most advanced supranational regional arrangement, and consequently can serve as a paradigm for "the new regionalism". This term, used by Bjorn Hettne, differs from the "old" regionalism in many ways⁵¹. While the old one was formed in a bipolar Cold War context, the new regionalism is shaped in a multi-polar globalized world order. The previous way of regionalization was often created through superpower engagement, the new one is a more voluntary regional process,

⁴⁹ Ibidem, s. 187–189.

⁵⁰ Zob. R. H i g g o t t: *The Theory and Practice of Global and Regional Governance...*, s. 585.

⁵¹ Zob. B. H e t t n e: *The Europeanisation of Europe: Endogenous and Exogenous Dimensions*. „European Integration" 2002, vol. 24, nr 4, s. 325–326.

where the states and other actors are aware of the imperative of cooperation in order to cope with new global challenges. While the old one was described as protectionist in economic terms, the new regionalism is often seen as "open", and therefore compatible with an interdependent world economy. The old process of regionalization was shaped by the relations between nation-states, the new one forms part of a global structural transformation, in which a variety of non-state actors also operates at several levels of the global system.

Interegionalism, in the opinion of Bjorn Hettne and Fredrik Soderbaum, is the most typical European way of relating with the outside world⁵². During the last decade interregional cooperation has become an increasingly important component of the EU's foreign policy relations, which is realized through a large number of interregional arrangements⁵³ especially with more distant counterparts in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Europe has already built up a dense web of cooperative relationship with countries and other regional groupings of the world, based upon either formal institutional dialo-

gue or more informal agreements. Interregional cooperation has increased in both the scope and density of the agreements. Although often misunderstood, the Asia-Europe (ASEM) process, EU-Mexico, EU-Mercosur, and the Cotonou Agreements are examples of the increased aspirations of regional group to build a density of relations and foster trust and understanding fundamental to a global governance framework. These agreements create a set of bilateral and multilateral relations linked to trade, aid, investment, and other forms of development cooperation⁵⁴.

The fact that the EU constitutes the core of these arrangements is in full accordance with its regionalist ideology, encompassing not only trade and foreign investment but also political dialogue and cultural relations between the regions. The EU's ambition is also to formalize and institutionalize the relations between regional bodies and regions rather than the more diffuse and often informal transregional or bilateral contacts, but for pragmatic reasons the forms of interregional relations show some variety⁵⁵.

The EU's relations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of

⁵² Ibidem, s. 540.

⁵³ Zob. R. Higgot: *The international political economy of regionalism: the Asia-Pacific and Europe compared*. W: W. D. Coleman, R. D. Underhill: *Regionalism and Global Economic Integration*. London 1998, s. 42-67.

⁵⁴ Zob. E. D. Mansfield, H. V. Milner: *The Political Economy of Regionalism: an Overview*. W: E. D. Mansfield, H. V. Milner: *The Political Economy of Regionalism*. New York 1997, s. 5-16.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, s. 545.

countries are testimony to a long history of interregionalism. Historically, the EU-ACP partnership has emphasized humanitarian issues and a particular trading relationship. Now EU-ACP relations are being described by EU policy-makers in more symmetric terms as "partnership", as seen in the Cotonou Agreement, there is a stronger emphasis on such issues as reciprocal trade, supporting regional-base economic cooperation and integration, human rights, democracy and good governance⁵⁶.

By contrast, the EU relations with Latin America were intensified in the 1990s after a long period of neglect. Today the EU has interregional partnership with most relevant regions in Latin America, such as Andean region, Central America, and above all Mercosur. The origins of the partnership between the EU and Mercosur are in trade relations, and this aspect continues to be particularly strong through an interregional free trade agreement with only quotas in agriculture and some other sensitive goods. But gradually interregional cooperation has spread to emphasize other sectors such as economic cooperation, development coo-

peration, as well as political dialogue and common norms and values. This is a broader landscape of cooperation that can be considered as a civilian option that could make the EU and the regional partners abroad able to provide a contribution to a global change and better regional governance⁵⁷.

As far as EU relations with the Asia region are concerned, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) represents a new type of interregionalism that can be understood as a post-cold war phenomenon. EU-Asia interregionalism is comprehensive and multi-sectoral, joining trade and investments, politics, security and antiterrorism, culture, technology and science, drug trafficking, environmental protection and so on. ASEM is frequently stated to be interregionalism among "equals"⁵⁸.

The policy towards interregionalism allows the EU to play the role of a global actor. As the most sophisticated regional grouping in the world, the EU is particularly well-suited to act in a world of regions. James W. Scott argues that the EU – as the only true organized regional space in the world – plays a fundamental role in the building up of the new political architecture

⁵⁶ Zob. *A World Player: The European Union's External Relations*. European Commission. July 2004, s. 1–3, 10.

⁵⁷ Zob. B. Hettne, F. Soderbaum: *Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism...*, s. 546–547.

⁵⁸ Zob. *Europe and Asia: A Strategic Framework for Enhanced Partnerships*. European Commission COM (2001) 469, 4 September 2001, s. 13–19.

and needs to be strengthened further⁵⁹. Europe through its integration process is able to act not only as an element of balancing in the international relations, but also as an inducing factor leading to the strengthening of other regional blocks.

Conclusion

Globalization consists of a number of processes that destabilize economic and social structures, particularly those relating to the nation-state. In this regard, globalization is responsible for the autonomy of localities from their dependence upon a centre. In the EU, globalization is responsible for the re-ordering of the relationship between the region and the nation-state, between the region and the EU and between the EU and other regions all over the world.

Generally speaking, the key processes today in the EU do not, for the most part, originate within the EU, and the EU has only a limited degree of control over them. The nature of globalization is such that it cannot be reduced to a series of transnational processes: movements of capital, goods and services,

and so on, which have stimulated the need for greater EU integration. Globalization has a close relationship with EU integration but has also set in motion a number of other dynamics that act on the EU in contradictory ways, and at many different levels.

It has also been argued that the regionalism has become the locus of many of the contradictory effects attributable to globalization. The region has emerged as both the site upon which the global acts upon the UE, and the level at which the EU has determined that the processes of globalization can best be accommodated⁶⁰.

In sum, there is a casual relationship between globalization and integration but there is also something inevitable about it: the EU as a necessary to the inexorable global integration of capital, and globalization as the midwife of multi-level governance⁶¹. However, this is not the only way that globalization can be understood in relation to the EU. Rather than an economic juggernaut, globalization can be seen more credible as a multi-dimensional process that reduces the separation of Europe from the rest of the world, broadens the horizon of possibility for European actors, and transforms the EU into

⁵⁹ Zob. J. W. Scott: *A Networked Space of Meaning? Spatial Politics as Geostrategies of European Integration*. „Space and Polity” 2002, vol. 6, nr 2, s. 147.

⁶⁰ Zob. Ch. Rumford: *European Cohesion...*, s. 193.

⁶¹ Zob. Ch. Rumford, P. Murray: *Globalization and the Limitations of European Integration Studies...*, s. 90.

the global space. Similarly, attention is drawn to cultural, social and political, and economic dimensions of globalization. Diverse cultural phenomena, technological innovation, mass communications, and supra-state regulation have all caused globalization to happen.

With an increased level of actor-ness in different fields and parts of the world, the EU will be able to influence

the world order towards its own model of civil power, dialogue, respect for different interests within an inter-regional, pluralist framework built on democracy, social justice and equality, multilateralism and international law⁶². These value and norms are seen as universal and deemed to be part of a civilian policy as opposed to a militaristic and hard one⁶³.

⁶² Zob. A. Hurrell: *Regionalism in theoretical perspective*. W: L. Fawcett, A. Hurrell: *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organization and International Order*. Oxford 1995, s. 40–65.

⁶³ According to Robert Kagan, Europeans (from Venus) prefer to live in the ideal world of “permanent peace” of Immanuel Kant, which is the natural choice of the weak, whereas the Americans (from Mars) live in the real world of Thomas Hobbes, which shows the responsibility and mission of the strong in dealing with evil forces. Zob. R. Kagan: *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. New York 2003, s. 5–8.

Maria Ewa Szatlach:

Między integracją a regionalnym partykularyzmem – Unia Europejska w kontekście globalnym

W latach 50. XX w. pojawiło się nowe zjawisko polityczne: współpraca i integracja państw w skali regionalnej. Unia Europejska jest wyjątkowym przykładem tego fenomenu i to nie dlatego, że powstała jako pierwsza, lecz dlatego, że posunęła się najdalej w aspekcie przekazania części swojej władzy przez państwa członkowskie centralnym instytucjom unijnym. Próby zrozumienia Unii są dużym wyzwaniem, głównie z powodu olbrzymiej ekspansji i transformacji jej członków, zakresu funkcjonowania głównych polityk, realizowanych celów, architektury instytucjonalnej i, zwłaszcza ostatnio, z powodu jej wzrastającej roli jako globalnego podmiotu w stosunkach międzynarodowych. We współczesnej literaturze naukowej główna uwaga skierowana jest na dwoistą naturę relacji pomiędzy integracją europejską i globalizacją. Integracja europejska stanowi jednocześnie reakcję na procesy globalizacji, jak również jest jej najbardziej zaawansowaną formą. Integracyjna dynamika globalizacji wydaje się w opinii uczonych mieć jeszcze jeden wymiar – przedstawia sobą szereg nowych możliwości przejścia przez Unię Europejską wiodącej roli w globalnym zarządzaniu, gdyż jej specyficzny model systemu władzy jest tym, co UE ma do zaoferowania światu i co definiuje Unię jako międzynarodowego aktora w stosunkach globalnych.

Unia Europejska wyrasta na kluczowego regionalnego aktora, zwłaszcza w kontekście takich globalnych dziedzin, jak finanse, handel czy ochrona środowiska. Globalizacja i rozwój regionalizmu są siłami napędowymi we współczesnym świecie, doświadczającym w tej właśnie fazie nowej fali integracyjnej, w której Europa, jak i w poprzedniej, po II wojnie światowej, odgrywa główną rolę. Również w procesie interregionalizacji UE zbudowała mocną sieć powiązań z państwami i ugrupowaniami integracyjnymi na całym świecie, bazując zarówno na formalnie zinstytucjonalizowanym dialogu, jak i na mniej formalnych porozumieniach. Ta interregionalna polityka wzmacnia miejsce i rolę Europy w globalnej sieci połączeń międzynarodowych.

Artykuł jest próbą dokonania analizy ambiwalentnych i skomplikowanych wzajemnych relacji pomiędzy procesem globalizacji a Unią Europejską, jak również związków pomiędzy globalizacją a regionalizacją w kontekście roli UE jako głównego regionalnego aktora w stosunkach globalnych. Celem artykułu jest przybliżenie charakteru relacji UE–globalizacja, jak również UE–regionalizacja, a także globalizacja–regionalizacja.