

**From the Congress of Local
and Regional Authorities to the
Committee of the Regions.
A History of European Integration**

Fabio Zucca



**Jean Monnet Interregional Centre of Excellence
University of Pavia**



Polo Interregionale di Eccellenza Jean Monnet - Pavia
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Università degli Studi di Pavia
Via San Felice, 5 – 27100 PAVIA - ITALY

Internet Site: www.jeanmonnet-pv.it
Contact: info@jeanmonnet-pv.it

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Bernardino Lanzani (1522), *Veduta di Pavia*. Edited detail.
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Index

Summary	p.	5
Foreword <i>by Giulio Guderzo</i>	p.	7
1. Introduction	p.	11
2. The first representative of Local Authorities at European Institutions: the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe	p.	13
3. From the election of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage to the Committee of the Regions	p.	29
References	p.	43

Summary

The issue of subnational and supranational federalism is today highly relevant. The interest comes from the evolutionary process of European integration and its ability to attract countries that haven't yet taken part in it. The debate on the future EU structure is on going: the alternatives are a Europe of Nations or the European federation. Indeed, the issue of the future role of local Administrations, the ones standing below the State institutional level, needs to be discussed too, especially in relation with the on going deep crisis that grips financial and economic institutions. On the one hand we could foresee a loss of autonomy in favour of a strong central supranational authority; on the other hand we could actually hope for a reassessment of their role in relation to the State level.

In this framework, the research focuses on an extremely rich and first-hand archive, reporting the contribution and action of local governments in the process of European unification since the 1950s. Conceived as a study on the contribution of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions to the European integration process, the research has carefully reconstructed the battle of the movement of local governments in favour of the integration process itself and for the enforcement of the representation of local authorities in the European institutions, conceived as the first attempt to empower a multi-level governance approach inside a continental federal system.

Note on the Author

Fabio Zucca, Ph.D, is Professor in History of European integration (Jean Monnet chair) at the University of Insubria Varese. He is Director of the Historical Archives of the University of Pavia and Director of the Interdepartmental *Centre for the research and documentation of 20th Century history* of the University of Pavia.
email: fabio.zucca@unipv.it

Foreword

Giulio Guderzo

Professor Emeritus of History of Risorgimento at the University of Pavia

Researchers that study the European integration process focusing on non-State actors know that their work - despite having since long time acquired citizenship among scholars of contemporary history - continues to raise doubts and concerns among those who believe that only States are the real drivers of the European integration process. Following this point of view, we should take in consideration only researchers that study inter-State relations and, more specifically, the ones that study the progressive construction of the European Community after World War II. And we should consider them as the only ones that deal seriously with the history of European Integration.

For the same reason, alternative research paths should be classified as pertaining to the history of the administration, to local history, or something similar. They should be therefore considered as complementary, as they would have little to do with history and its fundamental aspects and elements.

This could be true if we focalised only on small steps forward or backward, happened in a short time - or a very short time. Steps like these occur during meetings (and clashes), on occasion of summits between Heads of State and / or Heads of Government, or during diplomatic negotiations that preceded and followed these events, and so on. But, if we use different time coordinates, this opinion might appear as unfounded.

If we look beyond the simple "hic et nunc" we can understand how the events we are referring derive from the full-blown crisis of the main actors - the so called national States - even if they still stand at centre

stage of the European scene. Their crisis has already appeared in its full extent after the First World War and then it finally revealed after the World War II. Widening a little bit further this perspective, we can easily understand – thanks to the contribution of Cattaneo, Tocqueville and many other Authors – that the real roots of the concept of Europe as "common home" must be placed in other, deeper grounds. These grounds do not coincide with more or less artificial state and national constructions, as produced during the nineteenth-century. This is true even in case of Germany, often indicated as a "natural construction": we should always remember that the faithfulness of Germany to a federal tradition survived the unitary construction of Bismarck and the exasperated nationalism of Hitler.

We have to take in consideration the crisis of States, after World War II, and the way it has generated "independence movements" in many parts of Europe: something that could lead to repeat errors made during the eighteenth and nineteenth-century transition from an "ancient regime" federalism to the absolute sovereignty of national States. These mistakes could be repeated now, on a smaller scale. All this should not blind us to the true nature of evil and its cure; and should lead us to always remember the lesson learned from the American founding fathers, which is always valid.

Metropolitan areas and regions of ancient tradition, historic towns and areas involved in the possible reorganization of the political-administrative scale at supra state level: all these stand as old and new actors in a long-time on going process.

Their contribution to the construction of the European house, in a federal perspective, deserves attention. But it is necessary to remove forces that drive towards independence, which have been condemned by common sense even before history.

The same way, it deserves attention that kind of bottom-up federalism that has since long time ostracised by historic research, and has finally been recognised in its importance. The study of functions and roles

held by various cities, regions and territories along an undoubtedly difficult path - even if full of good reasons and positive proposals - stands as enticing though complex field of inquiry.

The author of this essay - Fabio Zucca - has for years devoted his work to explore this field: with the inevitable fatigue of pioneers, researching unknown or almost unused archives, rewarded by the priceless joy reserved by discoveries in fields where other scholars are rare, or absent.

By moving at ease in the study of European and federalists movements, both in the reconstruction of initiatives and activities of the institutional actors mentioned above, Professor Zucca has not only produced innovative essays but also organized or helped organize conferences, seminars and meetings and then publishing – following the best academic traditions - their results.

Also on occasion of this new initiative, I sincerely wish him good luck.

1. Introduction

The European Union is unquestionably a relatively new institution, but, like national states created in the past, it is subject to a number of rules. It is not in fact possible to understand any national or international political-administrative system without placing it within the historical context through which it came into being. It is necessary to consider historically the nature and dynamics of the political, economic and social forces that continuously, but progressively, changed the balance in play and also interact dynamically. In other words, the European Union must be observed within the context of the forces that created it, which interact with its current organization or those still shaping it. As mentioned in the introduction, we can include among these players local European authorities that over time have increasingly become players in the integration process and that today are one of the Union's institutional bodies.

Cultural diversity, which is Europe's great asset, has produced specific adaptations in relations between state and regional authorities¹ and has led to the creation of a broad range of regions², which can be summarized in five categories, of which some at the federal level, at times overlap within one same State:

- 1) Administrative districts (Portugal and the United Kingdom have both administrative districts and administrative regions, and, in the case of the United Kingdom, also autonomous or political regions).

¹ On the state and territorial organization of the various European states and current processes see Fiorenzo Ferlaino and Paolo Molinari, *Neofederalismo, neoregionalismo e intercomunalità. Geografia amministrativa dell'Italia e dell'Europa*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2009 pp. 33-256. For a comparison between the various autonomist models see Pierangelo Schiera, *Le autonomie e l'Europa. Profili storici comparati*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993.

² Silvia Bolgherini, *Come le regioni diventano europee. Stile di governo e sfide comunitarie nell'Europa mediterranea*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006.

- 2) Regions as second level territorial bodies as groups of local institutions (Germany and Holland).
- 3) Administrative regions (France, Portugal and the United Kingdom).
- 4) Autonomous or political regions (Belgium, Italy, Holland, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Spain).
- 5) Federate regions (Austria, Belgium, Germany).

These differences reflect the variety of players and national or supranational processes, and, in general the profound reorganization of the state and administrative framework currently still taking place in European countries. These are, however, phenomena that have marked a strong discontinuity with the past and ones that must encourage the abandonment of traditional comparative modes for new conceptual models, in particular in order to understand the European Union's current institutional organization in relation to local bodies and, in particular, the role played by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) regarding Parliament, the Commission and the Council. One must also emphasize how these complex interrelations are in line with that of those who support multi-level governance (MLG)³ as an alternative policy at a European level for the integrated governance model (IGM) that initially characterized relations with the Community and later with the Union. In the IGM the main decision-making players are the states of the Union, while in MLG it is necessary to shift responsibility to both a higher level, that of European institutions, and to a lower one, that of territorial authorities⁴.

³ European Commission, *European Governance. A White Paper*, Brussels, European Commission, 2001. Committee of the Regions [the two authors are Luc Van Den Brande – President of the Committee of the Regions - and Michel Delebarre – first Vice President of the Committee of the Regions], *The Committee of Regions White Paper on Multilevel Governance*, Brussels, European Union - Committee of the Regions, 2009.

⁴ For a quick overview of the work done by the Italian regions in favour of their integration in European policies see Consiglio regionale della Lombardia, *Comunità europee e ruolo delle Regioni*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1981; Paolo Caraffini,

2. The first representative of Local Authorities at European Institutions: the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe

The local authorities' 'Long March' in relations with European institutions began the day after the creation of the Council of European Municipalities [CEM]⁵ in January 1951, which, as a federalist and Europeanist movement, immediately addressed the problem of its own representation to the European bodies founded at the time, unlike the *International Union of Local Authorities* (IULA), originally better known by its French name, the *Union Internationale des Villes* [UIV]⁶.

Il Piemonte per l'Europa: venticinque anni di attività della Consulta regionale europea, Turin, Celid, 2002. At a European level see *Le fait régional et la construction européenne*, by Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Brussels, Bruylant, 2003.

⁵ On the CEMR see Umberto Serafini's opinion in AICEMR [Umberto Serafini], *Breve storia del Consiglio dei Comuni e delle Regioni d'Europa nel quadro di due secoli di lotta federalista*, Rome, Salemi, 1995 as well as Monika Pelz, *Artur Ladebeck und der Rat der gemeinden Europas*, Bielefeld, Stadt Bielefeld, 1984; Edmondo Paolini, "Il Consiglio dei comuni d'Europa", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea dal 1945 al 1954*, by Sergio Pistone, Milan, Jaca Book, 1992, pp. 205-25; Id., *Il Consiglio dei comuni d'Europa [CEM]*, in *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1954-1969*, by Sergio Pistone, Pavia, Pime, 1996, pp. 261-87; Fabio Zucca, "Il Consiglio dei comuni e delle regioni d'Europa", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea [1970-1986]*, by Ariane Landuyt and Daniela Preda, vol. II, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2000, pp. 857-94 and the more recent Fabio Zucca, *Autonomie locali e federazione sovranazionale. La battaglia del Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe per l'unità europea*, preface by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2001.

⁶ For events that led to the creation of the IUV within the framework of the reformist movement see Oscar Gaspari, "Alle origini del movimento comunale europeo: dall'Union Internationale des Villes al Consiglio dei comuni d'Europa [1913-1953]", in *Memoria e Ricerca. Rivista di storia contemporanea*, no.10, 1997, pp. 147-63; Renaud Payre and Pierre-Yves Saunier, "L'Union internationale des villes o l'Internazionale municipale [1913-1940]", in *Amministrare*, no.1-2, 2000, pp. 217-39; Patrizia Dogliani and Oscar Gaspari, "Origini e sviluppo del movimento comunale europeo nel Novecento", in *L'Europa dei comuni dalla fine dell'Ottocento al secondo dopoguerra*, by Patrizia Dogliani and Oscar Gaspari, Rome, Donzelli, 2003,

This issue was particularly felt within the French federalist movement, *La Fédération. Centre d'études institutionnelles pour l'organisation de la société française*, which, founded in July 1944 by a group of federalists linked to Catholic personalist movements, had as one of its main objectives that of providing political-theoretical means for the reorganization not only of the state but also of French society⁷. *La Fédération*, together with the Italian and Luxembourg sections of the CEM, played a driving role as far as the representation of local authorities was concerned. Ever since the CEM's constituent assembly, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, at the time mayor of Bordeaux, had provided precise indications concerning the need for local institutions to be in some way represented within the "*différents Conseils qui dès à présent travaillent*" and later insisting on the creation of an assembly representing all municipalities, "a sort of European senate" as a democratic element within future European

pp. 12-21. For an overall perspective of this subject see Fabio Rugge, *Il regime delle città. Il governo municipale in Europa tra '800 e '900*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 1992. After World War II the UIV extended its network of members to the whole world. The organization is divided into seven regional sections with headquarters in Quito, Djakarta, Washington, Guatemala City, Harare, Istanbul and Paris. After two years of at times very bitter debates, at the end of the Eighties the CEMR became the UIV's European section ceding the global representation of local autonomies to the UIV. Complex relations between the UIV and the CEMR have yet to be resolved. For the years preceding the integration of the two associations, one essential source is the documentation entitled *CEMR-International Union of Local Authorities (1982-1997)* preserved at the European Union's historical archives in Florence.

⁷ To set the history of the *Fédération* within the overall framework of the history of movements for European unity, see Alain Greilsammer, *Les mouvements fédéralistes en France de 1945 à 1974*, Nice, Presses d'Europe, 1975; Bernard Voyenne, *Histoire de l'idée fédéraliste*, 3 v., Nice, Presses d'Europe, 1981; Jean-Pierre Gouzy, "I movimenti per l'unità europea in Francia", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1945-1954* cit., pp. 61-89; Idem, "I movimenti per l'unità europea in Francia", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1954-1969* cit., pp. 55-69. On the creation and early development of the *Fédération* see F. Zucca, *Autonomie locali e federazione sovranazionale* cit., pp. 68-75 and pp. 114-28.

institutions. After a lengthy debate, the CEM's assembly passed two documents approving the observations presented by Chaban-Delmas. The CEM's objective, as stated in Paragraph IV of its Charter, was to "*assurer la participation et la représentation des communes et collectivités locales dans les organismes européens et internationaux*" and, in Paragraph V, to "*intégrer aux futures institutions européennes l'Assemblée représentative des communes et collectivités locales*". The organization thereby committed to participate in the debate opened by the Schuman and Pleven proposals and, in that perspective, to pose the problem of the representation of local communities⁸.

It was however the secretary of the *Fédération*, André Voisin⁹, who obtained for the CEM the first political acknowledgement from European institutions. In April 1951, during a meeting of the Executive Committee of the European Movement (ME)¹⁰, Voisin contacted Paul

⁸ *The Edgard Milhaud Archives - Geneva (from here on the AERCG-Milhaud)*, c. DOC. EM. *Procès-verbaux des six séances de la conférence constitutive du Conseil des communes d'Europe. Genève 28-30 janvier 1951.*

⁹ A biography of André Voisin, pseudonym used by André Bourgeois (1912-1990), has yet to be written. It would be extremely useful to have an in-depth analysis of his role, if indeed a role was played, as the "eminence grise" consulted by a number of the French Republic's governments as well as the role he played within the federalist and Europeanist movements. For this paper historians will not, however, be able to consult his personal archives that allegedly do not exist, nor those of the *Fédération* that have been lost, but will have to rely on documentation preserved by other people or movements that were in close contact with him, such as Jacques Chaban-Delmas or Antoine Pinay. For biographical mentions see *1912-1990, in XX siècle fédéraliste. Pouvoir européen*, no. 1, 1991, pp. 2-3; Max Richard, "Soixante années de connivance", *ivi*, pp. 5-7; *La Fédération, mouvement fédéraliste français*, Paris, La Fédération, 1994, pp. 1-3.

¹⁰ The ME has always been characterized by the heterogeneity of its members, who, although they shared generic Europeanist sentiments, diverged and are still divided regards to the means, the ways and the timeframe for achieving European unity. On the European Movement see the essay by Paolo Caraffini, *Costruire l'Europa dal basso. Il ruolo del Consiglio italiano del Movimento Europeo (1948-1985)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008, which not only reconstructs the work of the Italian council, but also sets it within the context of the international movement, see Alan Hick, "Il

Henri Spaak, at the time President of the Council of Europe's¹¹ Consultative Assembly and of the ME, informing him that the CEM had

Movimento Europeo", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1945-1954* cit. pp. 171-81; Jean-Marie Palayret, "Il Movimento Europeo", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1954-1969* cit., pp. 337-347; Idem, "Il Movimento Europeo 1970-1986", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea (1970-1986)* cit.; Daniela Preda, "La commissione istituzionale del Movimento Europeo e le proposte per la riforma istituzionale dell'Unione Europea", in *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1970-1986* cit. v. I pp. 569-602.

¹¹ The Council of Europe, founded in 1949, was initially adhered to by "the governments of the Kingdom of Belgium, the Kingdom of Denmark, the French Republic, the Irish Republic, the Italian Republic, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Kingdom of Holland, the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". Later Iceland, the FRG, Greece, Austria and Turkey also joined. The Council of Europe consisted of a Consultative Assembly and a Committee of Ministers and was the broadest and most advanced expression possible of intergovernmental cooperation on the subject of the European Union. The British and Scandinavian presence significantly conditioned the assembly's role denying it effective power, while the Committee of Ministers, obliged to deliberate unanimously, basically turned out to be the custodian of the absolute sovereignty of national states. The assembly did however play an important role in clarifying the different positions assumed by governments, parties and movements in favour or not, of real European Union, as well as, to a certain extent, acting as a stimulus for reflecting on institutions that the real union needed. On the Council of Europe see in particular the not always univocal opinions expressed by Fernand Dehousse, *L'Europe et le Monde. Recueil d'études, de rapports et de discours 1945-1960*, Paris, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1960; Altiero Spinelli, "La nascita del Consiglio d'Europa (febbraio 1949)", in *L'Europa non cade dal cielo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1960; Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1945-1953*, Monaco Vienna, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1966, translation by Enrico Cicogna *Memorie 1945-1953*, Milan, A. Mondadori, 1966; Jean Monnet, *Mémoires*, Paris, Fayard, 1976, Italian translation by Elena Tessadri, *Cittadino d'Europa. 75 anni di storia mondiale*, Milan, Rusconi, 1978; see also Pierre Duclos, *La réforme du Conseil de l'Europe*, Paris, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1958; Idem, *Le Conseil de l'Europe*, Paris, Presses univ. de France, 1964; Arthur Henry Robertson, *Le Conseil de l'Europe*, Leyde, Sijthoff, 1962; Ugo Leone, *Le origini diplomatiche del Consiglio d'Europa*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1966; *Il Consiglio d'Europa*, Rome, Secretariat General of the Council of Europe, 1971; Marie Thérèse Bitsch, "Le rôle de la France dans la naissance du Conseil de l'Europe", in *Histoire des débuts de la construction européenne* cit., pp. 165-198; Jean-Louis Burban, *Le Conseil de l'Europe*, Paris, Presses univ. de France, 1993; Edoardo Greppi, "Il Consiglio d'Europa:

been founded. Spaak was favourably impressed and promised “*tout son appui*” for the development of the municipal organization¹². To promote this new association, he agreed to receive a delegation from CEM during the Council of Europe session scheduled for May. The official meeting held, in Strasbourg on May 7th 1951, and the crowded press conference that followed, were undoubtedly a political and public relations success for the CEM to which Spaak publicly acknowledged the role of representing local European authorities and the potential for providing a “*apport [...] au mouvement pour l'Europe [...] surtout au moment où se fait particulièrement sentir le besoin d'un grand effort de propagande pour l'unité du continent*”¹³. The Speaker of the Assembly committed to encouraging “*la reconnaissance du Conseil des Communes d'Europe comme organisme qualifié pour apporter au Conseil de l'Europe ses avis et suggestions sur les incidences des problèmes européens dans les collectivités locales*”¹⁴.

The organization of local European authorities hoped, however, to achieve further results that were outlined by Voisin, while cultural

l'istituzionalizzazione della cooperazione politica tra Stati sovrani”, in Romain H. Rainero (ed.), *Storia dell'integrazione europea*, 2 v., Roma, Marzorati, 1997, v. I, pp. 87-116; *Jalons pour une histoire du Conseil de l'Europe*, by Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Berna, Peter Lang 1997.; *Institutions européennes et identités européennes*, by Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Wilfried Loth, Raymond Poidevin, Brussels, Bruylant, 1998.

¹² *Archives of the Council of European Municipalities – Paris (from now on ACEMR-Paris)*, c. *Archives 1955-56*, F. Cottier, letter from Jean Bareth to Fernand Cottier, dated April 24th 1951, in which the CEM's Secretary informs the President about action taken by Voisin.

¹³ *Archives of the Association villes et communes luxembourgeoises - Luxembourg (from now on AAVCL-Luxembourg)*, c. *Conseil des communes d'Europe 1951. Réception, le lundi 7 mai 1951, de la délégation du Conseil d'Europe par M. P.H. Spaak, Président de l'Assemblée Consultative du Conseil de l'Europe et Président du Mouvement européen*; ibidem, *Déclaration de M. Paul-Henri Spaak*.

¹⁴ *AAVCL-Luxembourg*, c. *Conseil des communes d'Europe 1951*, letter from Jean Bareth to Hubert Clément dated May 18th 1951.

aspects were entrusted to Alexandre Marc¹⁵ who, under the aegis of the *Université Internationale* and in cooperation with the CEM's

¹⁵ Alexandre Marc (whose real name was Aleksandre Markovitch Lipiansky 1904-2000). His family, which was of Jewish origin, was obliged to leave Russia in 1918. He completed his education between Paris, Jena and Freiburg to then graduate in Paris in 1927 from the *Ecole libre des sciences politiques*. His role in the infra-national and supranational federalist battle has yet to be defined, but he was certainly a leading player during the season of the federalist and Europeanist congresses, which between 1946 and 1949 resulted in the creation of the *Union européenne des fédéralistes*, of which he became the secretary general in 1946, and the founding of the first European Institutions such as the Council of Europe. From the mid-Fifties onwards, Alexandre Marc worked for a federal European state, cooperating with Altiero Spinelli in promoting the Congress of the European People, the only really revolutionary attempt to create a supranational Europe by mobilizing the European people. Simultaneously he cooperated in the founding of the *Centre international de formation européen* (CIFE) and the *Institut européen des hautes études internationales* in Nice, directing both. Between 1960 and 1970 Marc became committed to drafting the federalist school of thought as the global answer to contemporary society's needs. In 1960 he founded the magazine *L'Europe en formation* the real educational workshop for extreme federalist ideals. During the Seventies and Eighties Marc continued his work on the consolidation of the federalist idea and on promoting a federal society in Europe. After the fall of the Berlin Wall the work of the patriarch of extreme federalism and of the many study centres inspired by its ideas also spread to Eastern European countries, providing possible solutions for the troubled and not yet completed events linked to post-communism (*Le fédéralisme et Alexandre Marc*, Losanna, Centre de recherches européennes, 1974; Jean-Pierre Gouzy, "Alexandre Marc, soixante-quinze ans de combat fédéraliste", in *L'Europe en formation*, no. 291, hiver, 1993-1994, pp.7-14; Idem, "Alexandre Marc", in *Dictionnaire international du fédéralisme*, by Denis de Rougemont and François Saint-Ouen, Brussels, Bruylant, 1994, pp. 219-27; Achille Lega, "I novanta di Marc", in *Cuore e Critica*, second series no. 17, May 1994, pp. 46-7, Alexandre Marc, *Europa e federalismo globale*, by Raimondo Cagiano de Azevedo, Florence, Il Ventilabro, 1996). According to information provided to me by Marc himself before he died, Christian Roy and Isabelle Lemoulec-Deschamps are preparing an analytical biographical reconstruction as well as a detailed study of his intellectual production. The two historians have had free access to Marc's personal archives, mostly "perdus, soit mangés par les rats (cachés dans une grange de la banlieue parisienne) soit brûlés par mégarde (par un personnage devenue célèbre, à savoir l'Abbé Pierre) – *Archivio storico Università degli Studi di Pavia - Fondo CEMR (from now on ASUP Foundation CEMR)*, c. *Alexandre Marc*. Letter from Alexandre Marc to Fabio Zucca dated June 16th 1994.

German section, summoned a “*session d'études municipale*” in Bad Dürkheim from March 14th to March 16th 1952¹⁶. During the debate, Marc stated that European unity would only make sense if it were federal. It was therefore necessary to solemnly express the need to achieve municipal and regional freedom within a European framework by summoning the “*Etats-Généraux des Communes d'Europe [...] germe d'une nouvelle institution européenne...La Chambre des Communes Européenne*”¹⁷ Thus, for the first time Marc demanded greater municipal autonomy not only at a national but also at a European level, as well as a role for local authorities within what was then perceived as the imminent unity of western Europe.

Between January 12th and 14th 1957 in Strasbourg, the Council of Europe summoned the first European Congress of Local Authorities (ECLA)¹⁸. Officially this meeting was planned to allow representatives of local institutions to take part in the consultative assembly's activities

¹⁶ *Archive Conseil des communes et régions d'Europe-Roissy* (from now on *ACEMR-Roissy*) the ACEMR-Roissy Archives, found in storage at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport, were given to the Historical Archives of the European Union – Florence (from now on the ASUE) creating the aforementioned CEMR, but the new shelf marks match the previous ones with those inventory numbers being used in this book). c. 15, f. *documents div. 1956-'57. Université internationale, Session d'études municipale [Bad Dürkheim, 13 au 16 mars 52]. Ordre du jour*, Ibidem, letter from Arthur Ladebeck to Alexandre Marc dated February 26th 1952; letter from Ch. Laederich to Alexandre Marc dated March 12th 1952. The meeting was also useful in promoting the creation of the CEM's German section and was attended by about thirty local administrators and Austrian, French, Italian, Luxembourg and German federalists.

¹⁷ *ACEMR-Roissy*, c. 15, f. *documents div. 1956-'57*, report on speeches made in Bad-Dürkheim entitled *Sous l'égide du C.C.E.*, p. 3.

¹⁸ *Archive Conseil de l'Europe-Strasbourg* (from here on *ACE-Strasbourg*), dossier 0901, v. 4, 1954-1956-1957. *Assemblée Consultative. Conférence européenne des pouvoirs locaux. Annuaire Janvier 1957*. On the ECLA see Conseil de l'Europe, *La Conférence des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux de l'Europe, Strasbourg*, Strasbourg, Conseil d'Europe, 1980; Maria-Angels Clotet y Mirò, *La cooperacion internacional de los municipios en el marco del Consejo de Europa*, Madrid, Civitas, 1992, pp. 97-185. Clotet y Mirò's work is restricted to the organizational aspects of the ECLA.

when addressing issues concerning municipal or regional responsibilities¹⁹. Thus, for the first time the principle was established that international institutions were not authorized to adopt provisions concerning decentralized administrations without the municipalities or their representatives being previously consulted. In this sense the ECLA was a clear success achieved by the CEM, which, as previously mentioned, had listed among the association's objectives that of guaranteeing the participation and representation of local authorities within European institutions. For the federalists in the CEM, and in particular for Umberto Serafini²⁰, secretary of the Italian section of the

¹⁹ ACE-Strasbourg, *Assemblée consultative, dossier 406, projet de résolution, 10 octobre 1955*, p. 2.

²⁰ Umberto Serafini (1916-2005) was born in Rome in 1916. He attended the Normale in Pisa, but World War II and his deployment to the Libyan front, temporarily prevented him from graduating. He took part in campaigns in North Africa until December 1941 when he was captured. Having returned to Italy at the end of the war, he graduated in philosophy from Rome University and then started his political career in the "Movimento Comunità", becoming one of Adriano Olivetti's main assistants. During the same period he also joined the European Federalist Movement thereby participating in the battles for a federal Europe. In 1951 he began to work for the creation of an association of local institutions at a European level. Founded in 1952, the Italian Association for a Council of European Municipalities, of which he was elected secretary general, founded and edited the movement's monthly magazine called "Comuni d'Europa". Serafini's biography at this point coincides largely with the history of the movement he contributed to found and develop and basically led until his death. For information on Serafini see his autobiographies *I libri e il prossimo*, Florence, Passigli, 1991 and *La mia guerra contro la guerra*, Rome, Europea editrice, 2002. The following books are equally indispensable for setting his political activities in a broader context: Umberto Serafini, *Adriano Olivetti e il Movimento Comunità una anticipazione scomoda un discorso aperto*, Rome, Officina, 1982; AICEMR [Umberto Serafini], *Breve storia del Consiglio dei comuni e delle regioni d'Europa nel quadro di due secoli di lotta federalista*, Rome, Salemi, 1995. Fabio Zucca's book, *Autonomie locali e federazione sovranazionale. La battaglia del Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe per l'unità europea*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2001. The monographic number of "Comuni d'Europa" dated December 1985 dedicated to him and Fabio Zucca's, "Umberto Serafini e Altiero Spinelli fra federalismo infranazionale e sovranazionale", in *Comuni d'Europa*, n.s. no. 20, June 2008, pp. 20-36. I am personally preparing his

Movement of Local Autonomies, obtaining a summons for a congress at the Consultative Assembly was the premise for the creation of a similar institution at the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and future European institutions.

The ECLA, however, was a consultative body, created to express opinions to a Consultative Assembly with no real power at all. Thus, it was nothing but a faded copy of the *Assemblée représentative des communes et collectivités locales* which CEM promoters would have liked to partner with a freely elected European Parliament, partly following the model of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Action taken to promote a representation of local powers at the Strasbourg Assembly had been initiated by Jacques Chaban-Delmas²¹. In November 1951, a few months after the founding of the movement of European local autonomies, the mayor of Bordeaux asked the consultative assembly to add to the day's agenda a proposal promoting the creation of a special commission for Municipal and Regional Affairs. The grounds for this motion included an explicit reference to the founding of the Movement of European Municipalities and to the resolutions adopted during the constituent assembly. In his opinion, the fact that municipalities had set up an organization at a European level, proved that local authorities wished to actively participate in the integration process and emphasized the possibility of involving other forces in the battle for the continent's unity. His motion was supported by the presidency of the Assembly, which resulted in the approval, on September 20th 1952, of resolution no.

biography as well as a collection of his editorials published by "Comuni d'Europa"

²¹ On the role played by Chaban-Delmas and Umberto Serafini in encouraging the representation of local authorities in European institutions see Fabio Zucca, "L'Europe des communes et des régions à travers l'action de deux de ses acteurs principaux. Jacques Chaban-Delmas et Umberto Serafini", in *Quelles architectures pour quelle Europe? Des projets d'une Europe unie à l'Union Européenne [1945-1992]*, by Sylvain Schirmann, Brussels, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford, Wien, Peter Lang, 2011, pp. 93-111.

20 that resulted in the creation of the Special Commission for Municipal and Regional Affairs. Its official task was to study the impact decisions made at a European level had on local affairs, and was therefore authorized to establish contacts with government and municipal bodies²².

This first victory achieved by the CEM's French section and in particular by the mayor of Bordeaux, who in the meantime had been elected President of the Commission, was received with a degree of disappointment by at least part of the CEM and in particular by Italian and Luxembourg federalists. During the constituent assembly it had, in fact, been decided to take action so that European local authorities would obtain representation in European institutions. As the chairman of the movement's European Action Committee, Jacques Chaban-Delmas had instead acted only in relation to the Council of Europe where he played a direct political role. Divergences did of course emerge, also in the absence of Chaban-Delmas, during the second session of the movement's executive committee held in Palermo from January 30th to February 1st 1953²³. After a bitter debate, the various positions found common ground in a single document that included a number of observations made by constitutionalist federalists. Chaban-Delmas was then invited to also take action within the ad hoc assembly appointed at the time to draft the project for a Charter of European political authority. Once again he chose to operate within

²² *ACE-Strasbourg, Assemblée consultative. Texte adopté pendant la 4 Session Ordinaire (Deuxième partie). Résolution 20 tendant à la création d'une commission spéciale des Affaires communales et régionales.*

²³ *ACEMR-Paris, armoire D, c. Reunions statutaires, procès verbaux, 1951 à 1971. 11ème session du comité exécutif, Palerme 30 janvier-1 février 1953. Procès-verbal, p. 2.* On that occasion four resolutions were presented addressing relations between the CEM, the Special Commission for Municipal and Regional Affairs and the Strasbourg Assembly. The first, presented by the French delegation, basically accepted the conduct of the mayor of Bordeaux; the others, drafted by the Italian delegation led by Umberto Serafini, secretary of the CEM's Italian section, disapproved of the decisions based on the charters and on programme documentation

the framework of the Council of Europe, thereby extending the timeframe for intervention. It was in fact only after he obtained a formal mandate from the Special Commission for Municipal and Regional Affairs, that on June 22nd 1953, the mayor of Bordeaux wrote a letter to the President of the ad hoc assembly's Constitutional Commission inviting him to consider the possibility of studying ways of ensuring the representation "*des collectivités locales dans les futures institutions européennes et notamment dans celles de la Communauté européenne*"²⁴. While the modalities of his intervention were impeccable, it should be observed that it took place with serious delay compared to the requests in the Palermo mandate and events linked to the *ad hoc* Assembly. As known, the Charter of the CPE had been approved on March 10th 1953 and the text had been the object of a debate during later intergovernmental conferences.

Continuing his work aimed at linking the CEM to the Council of Europe, the mayor of Bordeaux also organized the participation of one of the special commission's work groups at the October 1953 States-General of Versailles, as the local European authorities had decided to name their two-yearly political conferences which have so far involved thousands of local administrators, and later summoned a meeting of this commission during the holding of the second States-General of European Municipalities in October 1954 in Venice. Thanks to these initiatives, the reports and resolutions of the States-General²⁵ were officially sent to the Council of Europe. Among them, particular political importance was attributed to the resolution with which the

²⁴ *ACE-Strasbourg, Conseil de l'Europe, Assemblée consultative, dossier 0902-364. Commission spéciale des affaires communales et régionales, Strasbourg, le 27 juin 1953.* Copy of the letter sent by Jacques Chaban-Delmas to Heinrich von Brentano on June 22nd 1953.

²⁵ *ACE-Strasbourg, Assemblée consultative, dossier 0902-366, Commission spéciale des affaires communales et régionales. Compte rendu des Etats généraux des communes d'Europe réunis à Versailles les 16, 17 et 18 octobre 1953, auxquels participait un Groupe de travail délégué par la Commission spéciale des Affaires communales et régionales. Strasbourg, le 15 mars 1953* – the correct date was March 15th 1954.

Venice States-General asked the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers to transform the Special Commission into a "*Commission de plein exercice*" e la costituzione di "*un Groupe de travail permanent où les déléguées des organisations communales et internationales pourraient collaborer étroitement*"¹²⁶.

Once again as proposed by Chaban-Delmas²⁷ the consultative assembly took the initiative. Making use of its right to consult experts, on October 14th 1955 it deliberated to proceed with the summoning of "*une conférence des représentants de toutes les associations nationales qualifiées de pouvoirs locaux des pays membres*".

The CEM used its international organization and its national sections to support the creation of an assembly of local European authorities as the precursor of a possible senate of local European bodies²⁸. Between January and March 1956 pressure was applied on Spaak, Bech, Martino²⁹, as well as on the German and French governments³⁰.

²⁶ *ACE-Strasbourg, Assemblée consultative, dossier n. 0901, années 1956-1957-1958. Commissions des pouvoirs locaux. Conférence européenne des pouvoirs locaux, Strasbourg, le 17 octobre 1957*, p. 1 and following for other quotes.

²⁷ *ACE-Strasbourg, Comité des ministres, dossier 0902-368, Assemblée consultative, dossier 0902-368*. On the basis of previous deliberations and recommendations, the mayor of Bordeaux ensured that the Special Commission unanimously adopted a draft resolution envisaging a yearly summons of a conference of representatives of national associations of local authorities.

²⁸ The decision was taken during the meeting of the *bureau international* held in Metz on January 21st and 22nd 1956 ["L'action du C.C.E. en faveur de la Conférence européenne des pouvoirs locaux", in *Communes d'Europe*, no. 3, Mars 1956, p. 12].

²⁹ *ACEMR-Roissy, c. Bureau international, f. bureau international 1956*. Copy of the letter sent by Emile Hamilius to Gaetano Martino, dated April 9th 1956. The President of the CEM requested an official meeting with the Italian Foreign Minister in order to discuss relations between the CEM, the Special Commission for Municipal and Regional Affairs, and the Council of Europe.

³⁰ Joseph-Jean Merlot intervened with Paul Henri Spaak, Henry Cravatte met with Joseph Bech, Umberto Serafini spoke to Gaetano Martino, Heinz Hoose, secretary of the Rat der Gemeinden Europas, intervened with the German government, while Gaston Defferre, at the time President of the *Association*

Thanks to such action, as the chairman of the CEM's European Action Committee, Jacques Chaban-Delmas was received by the Committee of Ministers in Strasbourg on March 1st. There he obtained a radical change in the attitude adopted by the Committee, which, although postponing once again a decision to allocate funds needed to summon the conference, abandoned its prejudicially negative attitude. There is no doubt that the international political atmosphere, once again favourable to agreements between states within a European framework, [The Rome Treaties were signed on March 25th 1957] made easier the lobbying work undertaken by the CEM with governments, the representatives of which approved the principle of summoning a "*conférence de représentants des associations nationales de pouvoirs locaux des pays membres, proposée par la Résolution 76 (1955) de l'Assemblée Consultative*"³¹. In this case too the expected opposition was voiced, but was in part overcome thanks to support from Fernand Dehousse, at the time President of the Strasbourg Assembly³². Residual unfavourable attitudes resulted in the conference not having a permanent status and the agenda for the day was restricted to a debate on subjects linked to "*les intérêts régionaux et locaux dans le cadre de la construction européenne*"³³. The conference held its first session from January 12th to the 14th 1957 and, as proposed by the CEM, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, whose

française pour le Conseil des communes d'Europe (d'ora in poi AFCEM), addressed both the French government and the institutional bodies of the Council of Europe.

³¹ *ACE-Strasbourg*, doc. 527, *Assemblée consultative, huitième session ordinaire, 18 juillet 1956*, pp. 1-3.

³² Together with Bareth, Dehousse intervened to persuade the UIV to change its attitude to the summoning of a Conference of Local Authorities. The Assembly's President thereby started to work closely with the CEM and with Chaban-Delmas, who thanked him officially at the ECLA's first session [*ACE-Strasbourg, dossier 0901, année 1956-1957-1958, ECLA, Strasbourg, le 17 janvier 1957, compte rendu des débats de la ECLA, 1ère séance*, p. 12].

³³ *ACE-Strasbourg*, doc. 527, *Assemblée consultative, huitième session ordinaire, 18 juillet 1956*, p. 2.

role in these events escaped no one, was elected its first President. The ECLA's political importance was greater than that originally assigned to it by the permanent working group³⁴. The Conference consisted of 135 members³⁵, the same number as the consultative assembly, appointed by the national and international associations of local authorities and by the Strasbourg Assembly.

The Strasbourg Assembly should have provided real answers to the demands presented by the ECLA, quite a difficult achievement considering the consultative assembly's lack of power. According to accounts by the Congress's secretary Alois Larcher³⁶, even the ECLA's promoters were aware that it would be impossible over the short term to transform the Congress into a European senate equipped with power, but had decided to pursue their work to create an institutional precedent.

It was left to the Italian federalist Natale Santero, a member of the consultative assembly's Commission of Local Authorities³⁷, to propose

³⁴ For the CEM the ECLA was the "première institution communale européenne ["Conférence européenne des pouvoirs locaux", in *Communes d'Europe*, no. 13, January 1957, p.2).

³⁵ *ACE-Strasbourg, dossier 0901*. The CEM tried to guarantee adequate representation for its national sections. Its attempts clashed with those of the UIV which in turn tried to influence the formation of delegations..

³⁶ Alois Larcher, one of the ECLA's representatives at the Council of Europe, worked for Jacques Chaban-Delmas (as reported to me in Strasbourg on March 17th 1995. A report is preserved at the *ASUP, c. Larcher*).

³⁷ As requested by the CEM, in 1957 the Special Commission for Municipal and Regional Affairs was transformed into a permanent commission and its name changed to the Commission of Local Authorities. *CEMR-Roissy*, c. 16. *Projet de procès verbal du Conseil de présidence, Luxembourg les 4 et 5 mai 1957*, p. 3). According to Larcher the fact that there was no longer any reference to the regions in the new name did not hide any political choice, but was the result of a bureaucratic oversight no one wished to correct (Alois Larcher, March 17th 1995 cit.). As always in this first phase of the history of relations between local authorities and institutions in Strasbourg, most of the credit for the positive results should be attributed to Chaban-Delmas. He applied pressure on his "cher ami" Fernand Dehousse so that the consultative assembly would approve the transformation of the Commission as desired by the CEM [*ACE-Strasbourg, dossier 02514, année*

and obtain³⁸, in agreement with Umberto Serafini and the CEM's³⁹ international secretariat, the institutionalization of the ECLA, which, equipped with its own charter on September 13th 1961⁴⁰, has continued until now with its meetings, playing a cultural role, providing a possible political-institutional example.

The Congress's resolutions were also later adopted by the Council of Europe's consultative assembly, however, in view of this assembly's aforementioned lack of political power, the proposals never had any real follow-up⁴¹.

In 1967, the CEMR managed within the ECLA to promote and then create the consultative committee of the local authorities of the six countries of the EEC that was to be acknowledged as the Community's interlocutor only in the Seventies.

1952-1957. Letter from Jacques Chaban-Delmas to Fernand Dehousse dated April 27th 1957).

³⁸ In April 1957 Natale Santero, representing the Commission of Local Powers, presented to the consultative assembly a project of recommendations which included a request that the ECLA should be summoned in 1958. After the second session of the conference was held, Santero once again requested that the ECLA be summoned in 1959 (*ACE-Strasbourg, doc. 637, Assemblée consultative, rapport sur la représentation des pouvoirs locaux au sein des institutions européennes, 11 avril 1957*).

³⁹ After initially experiencing perplexities, the entire CEM supported the experience of the ECLA, which in the movement's projects became a possible model for the representation of local authorities at future European institutions. Thus, after the summoning of the first conference, the Association of Municipalities began to work on obtaining the summoning of the second session (*ACEMR-Roissy, c. 16. Projet de procès verbal du Conseil de présidence, Luxembourg les 4 et 5 mai 1957, p. 4*).

⁴⁰ Ministers' delegates "rendant hommage aux résultats obtenus par les conférences européennes ad hoc des pouvoirs locaux qui se sont réunis jusqu'à ce jour" adopted the *Charte de la Conférence européenne des pouvoirs locaux* on September 13th 1961. The document envisaged the creation of the ECLA "sur une base biennale" (*ACE-Strasbourg, dossier 0901 1956-1962, comité des ministres, résolution (61) 20 adoptée par les délégués des ministres le 13 septembre 1961*).

⁴¹ A.P., "L'Istituto europeo di credito comunale", in *Bollettino Associazione nazionale dei comuni italiani*, no. 4, April 1958, p. 3.

Umberto Serafini, in a document dated 1960 entitled *The regions and Europe*, had equally stated that the ECLA would have to become one of the Council of Europe's permanent bodies and thus also one for the European Common Market (ECM). The objective was to lead local authorities, in particular the regional aspect of autonomies, to play a role of political interlocutors for the government of the community institutions⁴² as set out during the third national congress of the AICEM held in Frascati in 1958⁴³.

⁴² *Pavia University's historical archives- additional archives- the Umberto Serafini archive* (from now on *ASUP -Fa- Serafini*, c. 4, f. 2. Document dated 1960 entitled "Le regioni e l'Europa" later published in *La sentinella del canavese*, February 19th 1960, p.1.

⁴³ "La rappresentanza dei poteri locali nel quadro della CEE", in *Comuni d'Europa*, no. 10, October 1958, p. 11.

3. From the election of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage to the Committee of the Regions

In October 1962 the EEC's Commission published a "Memorandum on the Community action programme during the second stage" which set out a number of general guidelines for long term regional economic policies, with no mention, however, of a possible role for local authorities⁴⁴. This document should not be considered surprising if one considers that the 1951 Treaty of Paris on the ECSC, the 1957 Treaty of Rome that gave life to the EEC and the one on atomic energy (EURATOM)⁴⁵ made no reference to local authorities if not in marginal notes of no political importance whatsoever. The preamble of the Treaty on the EEC only envisaged harmonious economic development between the various European regions perceived more as a geographical reference than a political-territorial one⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Giuseppe Grosso, "Necessità di una strutturazione democratica della politica regionale della Comunità", in *Comuni d'Europa*, no. 3, March 1967, p. 3. The article written by Grosso, at the time mayor of Turin, is a summary of his report at the "Talks in European regional policies" sponsored by the CEM and by the European Community, held at Europea House in Otzenhausen in Saar on February 6th to the 8th 1967. This text is a precious document for reconstructing the events that resulted in local European bodies establishing a first link with the European Communities.

⁴⁵ Among the many contributions available on the Treaties of Rome, see the classics, Mario Ferrari Agradi, *Europa: tappe e prospettive di unificazione*, Rome, Cinque lune, 1958; Achille Albonetti, *Euratom e sviluppo nucleare*, Milan, Ed. di Comunità, 1958; Id., *Preistoria degli Stati Uniti d'Europa*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1960; Gaetan Mellaerts, *La genèse du marché commun*, Lausanne, Centre de recherches européennes, 1968; Walter Hallestein, *L'Europe inachevée*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1970; Pierre Gerbert, *La construction de l'Europe*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 1983; Louis Cartou, *Communautés Européennes*, Paris, Dalloz, 1986; *Il rilancio dell'Europa e i Trattati di Rome*, by Enrico Serra, Brussels, Milan, Paris, Baden-Baden, 1989.

⁴⁶ Mario Caciagli, *Regioni d'Europa. Devoluzioni, regionalismi, integrazione europea*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003. On the CEM's role as a 'prompter' for Ministers involved in drafting the Community's charter treaties see Fabio Zucca's "Conseil des communes d'Europe e il rilancio europeo di Messina", in *Messina quarant'anni dopo. L'attualità del metodo in vista della Conferenza*

The first sign of a possible political cultural change in the EEC Commission's attitude to local authorities appeared in June 1963, when the CEM managed to directly involve the Commission in the organization in Brussels of the Conference on Territorial Planning and Regional Policies. The conclusions drawn at this conference indicated how territorial institutions should be acknowledged as having competence regards to "territorial planning and regional policies". It was also following these conclusions that in 1964 the Commission formally invited the CEM to produce the first "Memorandum concerning regional policies in the Common Market", delivered in the first few months of 1965, which was the basis for the report made by European MP Giovanni Bersani in January 1966 to the European Parliament as Speaker of the Economic and Financial Commission on the Common Market's regional policies. The report, agreed on with the CEM, clearly acknowledged for the first time the need to adopt regional policies that also involved local institutions as the representatives both of particular and overall interests. After a wide-ranging debate, the document was unanimously approved by the European Parliament on May 8th 1966. Following this first success, the CEM's objective was to continue the battle for Europe on two fronts:

Through increasingly widespread integration and greater power for the European Parliament, while waiting for it to be elected by direct and universal suffrage, which together must result in a marked and widespread increased role and participation of democratically organized regional and local autonomies⁴⁷.

In the multi-decade long work of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CCRE-CEMR) – the movement changed its

intergovernativa del 1996, by Luigi Vittorio Majocchi , Bari, Cacucci, 1996, pp. 243-60.

⁴⁷ Giuseppe Grosso, "Necessità di una strutturazione democratica della politica regionale della Comunità", in *Comuni d'Europa*, no. 3, March 1967, p. 4.

name in 1984 - the issue of how local authorities would be represented in European institutions remained on the agenda and merged with that of the democratic political forces and economic, social and cultural personalities involved in the battle for European unity and its democratization, with the election of the European Parliament through direct and universal suffrage. It was in such a perspective that during the conference on *The role played by the regions in a federal Europe*, held in Naples in July 1970 and organised by the ME's Italian Council, that AICEM director Gianfranco Martini⁴⁸, spoke of how the relationship between European regionalization and integration was complementary, since both were "the symptoms and effects of an overall crisis affecting the organizations and functioning of the centralized national state". There was therefore a need to transfer the power and sovereignty of states both downwards to the regions and upwards to a European federation. According to Martini, regionalization, with the consequent acknowledgement of the role played by intermediate bodies at a European level, would have an "explosive function" going well beyond "the problem of decentralisation" because it implied a profound change in the existing institutional system at a national and

⁴⁸ Gianfranco Martini was born in Lucca on June 23rd 1925. In 1943, to avoid forced recruitment by the army of the republic of Salò, he took refuge in Lendinara, in the Polesine, where in 1951 he was elected mayor, a position he held for a decade and then was elected councillor of the province of Rovigo. After ensuring his municipality joined the newly created Italian section of the CEM, he attended the first States-General of the Municipalities of Europe held in Versailles in 1953 and from then on became increasingly involved on the dual federalist battle for European unity and for municipal autonomy. In 1964, invited by Umberto Serafini, he moved to Rome, becoming one of the AICEMR's highest-ranking managers and therefore also of the CEMR. In this dual role he was appointed a member of the CPLRE, he presided over the association of Local Democracy Agencies and was the European head of CEMR twinning. On Gianfranco Martini see Roberto Di Giovan Paolo and Gianfranco Martini, *Piccoli padri. Una conversazione sulla nascita dell'Unione Europea e il suo futuro*, by Ines Caloisi and Piero Fabretti, Pavona di Albano Laziale, Iacobelli, 2010.

supranational level⁴⁹. In closing the conference, Umberto Serafini, at the time the AICEM's secretary general and an authoritative member of the CEM's supranational bodies, explained how the direct election of the European Parliament would be the turning point for a "renewed importance of the entire organization" of the Community and "therefore also of the regions"⁵⁰.

The position adopted by the CEM in April 1975 during the States-General held in Vienna was of particular importance on the eve of the decision that led to the process destined to result in the first direct election of the European Parliament, with the movement representing local autonomies committed to the battle addressed at supporting the direct election of the first European Parliament and the representation of local and regional powers in the European institutions⁵¹. One should not forget that in the Sixties a close political link was established with the European Parliament not yet elected by direct universal suffrage. The CEM had managed to set up a formal and informal series of meetings and debates with the European Parliament, the Commissions and individual MEPs directly interested in regional and local affairs. This work led to the creation of the European Parliament's group for local and regional problems, whose work ended only when Parliament created the Commission for Regional Policies, since with its specific competence it seemed to be an essential, albeit not exclusive, reference point for regional and local authorities. In particular the Commission played an important role in promoting the European Community's Conference of Regions. It was

⁴⁹ ASUP –Fa- Serafini, c. 4, f.2 *Conference on The Role played by the Regions in a Federal Europe*, Naples July 4th -5th 1970, paper presented by Gianfranco Martini, p. 3.

⁵⁰ ASUP –Fa- Serafini, c. 4, f.2 *Conference on The Role played by the Regions in a Federal Europe*, Naples July 4th -5th 1970, paper presented by Umberto Serafini, p. 18.

⁵¹ AICEMR [Umberto Serafini], *A brief history of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions within the framework of two centuries of federalist battles* cit., pp. 102-8.

the final document of the first conference held in January 1984 that insisted on the need for the European Parliament to ensure the continuing and regular participation of regional and local authorities in its activities. Furthermore, this document also stated that other institutions must implement the repeated statements made in support of this aforementioned participation “officialising their relations with the suitably adapted, enlarged and reformed consultative council to offer all possible representation to the Community’s regions” and recommended that, while respecting the competences of the EEC’s Commission, it should establish a direct dialogue with the regions for all matter concerning European territorial institutions.⁵² This tendency gradually increased and was further implemented when, elected by direct universal suffrage on June 7th-10th 1979, the European Parliament held the first Conference of the Regions in Strasbourg on January 25th-27th 1984⁵³.

Between the Seventies and the Eighties the Regions and the European territorial institutions began to play a role, both because a number of centralized member states reorganized themselves with increasingly emphasized administrative decentralization - first Italy and France and then Spain – and because others, such as Belgium, implemented progressive federal reforms of their country’s organization⁵⁴.

In 1975 the European Regional Development Fund was created, marking the beginning of a first embryonic European regional policy. Its implementation also took place due to the impulse provided by the entrance of new countries, such as Great Britain, which at least formally acknowledged the important role played by local

⁵² “The Final statement” in *Comuni d’Europa*, February 1984, no.2, p. XXIII.

⁵³ “Conferenza delle Regioni della Comunità europea e dei paesi candidati Spagna e Portogallo”, in *Comuni d’Europa*, February 1984, no. 2, p. XIII.

⁵⁴ Fiorenzo Ferlaino and Paolo Molinari, *Neofederalismo, neoregionalismo e intercomunalità. Geografia amministrativa dell’Italia e dell’Europa*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2009 pp. 33-256.

government⁵⁵ as well as being the ‘exchange currency’ used to ensure Great Britain and Ireland would accept the mechanisms of European agricultural policy.

In the mid Seventies, in cooperation with the IULA, the CEM fostered the “Consultative Committee of Local and Regional Authorities” with the objective of a creating a forum for meetings and dialogue between European local authorities and the institutions, with Parliament and the Community’s Commission reacting in a positive manner starting a constructive dialogue⁵⁶.

Consistent with the policy of establishing a continuous relationship with the European institutions, in December 1982 the CEM had delivered to the European Parliament’s institutional commission a broad ranging document in which, in addition to supporting the need for a reform of the Treaties in a federal sense, it documented and expressed the need, once again together with the IULA, for the institutionalisation of the “*le Comité Consultatif des Institutions Locales et Régionales des Etats membres de la Communauté*”, a body identical to the economic and social committee already envisaged by the Treaties. The objective was to democratize the institutions, bringing local administrators to take part in establishing European policies. The CEM thereby proposed to amend the Treaties by including in the preamble the acknowledgement “*que les Collectivités locales régionales constituent un des principaux fondements démocratiques de la construction de l’Europe à laquelle elles participent à leur niveau de compétence*”.

⁵⁵ On the role played by local institutions in the evolution of democracy in Great Britain see Adolf Gasser, *Geschichte der Volksfreiheit und der Demokratie*, Aarau, Sauerländer, 1939 Id., *Gemeindefreiheit als Rettung Europas. Grundlinien einer ethischen Geschichtsauffassung*, Basel, Bücherfreunde, 1943.

⁵⁶ F.P. [Fabio Pellegrini], “Il Comitato delle regioni e degli enti locali”, in *Comuni d’Europa*, no. 3, March 1994, p.5.

It was also proposed that a new article should be added, envisaging the institutionalization of an “*organe consultatif des collectivités locale set régionales, qui viendreaient prendre sa place au sein des Institutions Communautaires*”⁵⁷.

Simultaneously, thanks to the stubborn and strategically important work done by Umberto Serafini and Gabriele Panizzi⁵⁸, the Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union, sponsored and drafted by Altiero Spinelli⁵⁹ voted in a plenary session by the European Parliament on

⁵⁷ ASUP -Fa- Serafini, c. 11, f. 27 *Contribution du C.C.E. aux travaux de la Commission institutionnelle du Parlement Européen* on December 23rd 1982.

⁵⁸ Gabriele Panizzi was born in Latina on March 11th 1938. He was a member of AICEMR and President of the Rome section of the European Federalist Movement, Vice President of the Altiero Spinelli Institute of Federalist Studies, municipal councillor for the Municipality of Terracina from 1960 to 2001, councillor for the Lazio Region from 1975 to 1990 and then President of this region from 1984 to 1985, and a MEP representing the Italian Socialist Party in 1994. During the Fifties he met Umberto Serafini who involved him in the battle for a United States of Europe, a battle he is coherently still fighting today. Interview with Gabriele Panizzi recorded in Rome on October 22nd 2009 and preserved at the ASUP CEMR.

⁵⁹Thanks to the highly positive work undertaken by the National Committee for the Celebrations of the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Altiero Spinelli, today he is the object of important studies and conferences. See among other books his uncompleted autobiography, his diaries, his papers, many unpublished, and a number of biographies such as, Altiero Spinelli, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio. Io Ulisse*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1984; Idem, *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio. La goccia e la roccia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, republished as one book by Il Mulino, Bologna, 1988; Idem, *Diario europeo*, by Edmondo Paolini, 3 v., Bologna, Il Mulino, 1989-1992; Idem, *Il Manifesto di Ventotene*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991; Idem, *Il progetto europeo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1985; Idem, *Discorsi al Parlamento europeo 1976-1986*, by Pier Virgilio Dastoli, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987; Idem., *Una strategia per gli Stati Uniti d'Europa*, by Sergio Pistone, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1989; Idem, *L'Europa tra Ovest e Est*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1990; Idem, *La crisi degli Stati nazionali*, by Lucio Levi, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991; Edmondo Paolini, *Altiero Spinelli. Appunti per una biografia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1988; *Altiero Spinelli e l'unificazione dell'Europa*, a cura di Edmondo Paolini, Rome, s.n., s.d. [ma 1990 o 1991]; Piero S. Graglia, *Unità europea e federalismo. Da "Giustizia e libertà" ad Altiero Spinelli*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996; Edmondo Paolini, *Altiero Spinelli. Dalla lotta antifascista alla battaglia per la federazione europea*

September 14th 1983 and approved by absolute majority on February 14th 1984, officially acknowledged the need for local and regional authorities to participate in the creation of the European Union⁶⁰. The preamble for the project for the new Treaty also stated:

The High Contracting Parties, Member States of the European Communities, have decided to create the European Union.
Convinced of the need to enable local and regional authorities to participate by appropriate methods in the unification of Europe.

On April 13th 1984 the European Parliament approved a resolution that basically indicated the need to involve local authorities in the European integration process⁶¹ while later constitutional projects drafted by the European Parliament clearly indicated the need to create a Committee of the Regions⁶².

The first appearance made by local authorities within the Community's institutions only took place in 1988, when, as proposed by Parliament, the Commission at last created the consultative council of regional and local authorities with the decision dated June 1988 no. 88/487/EEC⁶³. The Council, installed on December 20th that same year, was organized as a subsidiary body composed of forty-two members appointed by the Commission following joint nominations by the Assembly of European Regions, the IULA and the CCRE. The new institution was to be consulted on common policy

1920-1948: documenti e testimonianze, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996; Daniele Pasquinucci, *Europeismo e democrazia. Altiero Spinelli e la sinistra europea 1950-1986*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2000; Piero S. Graglia, *Altiero Spinelli*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2008; *Altiero Spinelli e i movimenti per l'unità europea*, by Daniela Preda, Padova, CEDAM, 2010.

⁶⁰ Gabriele Panizzi, "La battaglia per l'Europa e il Comitato delle Regioni", in *Comuni d'Europa*, n.s. n.15, March 2007, p. 49.

⁶¹ F.P. [Fabio Pellegrini], "Il Comitato delle regioni e degli enti locali", in *Comuni d'Europa* cit. p.5.

⁶² Umberto Serafini, *Breve storia* cit. p. 154.

⁶³ F. P. [Fabio Pellegrini], *Il Comitato delle Regioni* cit. p. 5.

provisions of interest to the regions⁶⁴ and functioned until 1993 when it was replaced with new institutions created by the Maastricht Treaty.

According to Umberto Serafini and the federalists in the movement of local European autonomies, the role of the Regions and local authorities should in all events have been a political one and therefore also supersede institutional aspects perceived as a means. According to the federalist leader,

In addition to their normal duties, the European Regions have also inherited a fundamental substitute task; that of representing the people's Europeanist majority at least for the countries of "small" Europe and Spain so as to re-launch the path towards European supranational political union. The Regions must not distance themselves with corporative illusions from the lower levels of local autonomies, but instead lead them, since it will be the Europe of the Regions that will allow us to move towards a democratic federal status, otherwise the history of a free Europe will end and we will forever decline to colonial status⁶⁵.

Loyal to these principles, Umberto Serafini asked Gabriele Panizzi, at the time a councillor for the Lazio Region, to present the draft law 204 dated April 8th 1986 to the Lazio Regional Council, which, with reference to the treaty creating the European Union approved by the European Parliament, set up the "Permanent Committee of local and regional power and activities for the European Union". According to its proponent, the Committee was expected to play an "autonomous innovative role within an organizational framework of interdependency from a municipal to a regional level, both national and supranational"

⁶⁴ Marco Mascia, *Il Comitato delle Regioni nel sistema dell'Unione Europea*, Padova, CEDAM, 1996.

⁶⁵ *ASUP -Fa- Serafini, c. 9 f. 2 document prepared for Panizzi for the Lazio Region on April 9th 1986.*

as well as being a clear example of what should be done at a European institutional level⁶⁶.

Meeting in Paris on May 23rd 1990, the CCRE's presidency unanimously approved a political resolution asking Parliament and the Commission "that, in addition to the two houses of Parliament, it should become compulsory to consult the consultative council of regional and local communities at the European Community's Commission."⁶⁷ This resolution was once again referred to during the XIII States-General of the Municipalities of Europe held in Lisbon in October 1990, which acknowledging the decisions taken by the European Council held in Dublin on June 25th and 26th, envisaged a summoning of two intergovernmental conferences. The first to debate Economic and Monetary Union and the second to address political union requesting a European currency, the coordination of common policies, the integration of an authentic social Europe and the ratification of a treaty for political union taking into account territorial bodies. The final resolution stated the need for

the creation of a European Union with authentic responsible executive powers (derived from the Community's Commission) and legislative and controlling powers exercised by a bicameral system consisting of a People's Assembly (the European Parliament) and an Upper House (representing the states and ensuring the representation of regional and local authority⁶⁸).

It was only the complete application of the Maastricht Treaty, signed on February 17th 1992, that in 1994, finally implemented all that had been deliberated ten years earlier by the European Parliament through the creation of the Committee of Regions, the objective of

⁶⁶ ASUP -Fa- Serafini, c. 4, f. 3 Regione Lazio. *Proposta di legge n.204 di iniziativa dei consiglieri: Mechelli, Panizzi, Marroni, Massolo, Molinari e Splendori. Iniziative della Regione e degli enti locali per l'Unione Europea.*

⁶⁷ Umberto Serafini, *Breve storia* cit. p. 154.

⁶⁸ F.P. [Fabio Pellegrini], "Il Comitato delle regioni e degli enti locali", in *Comuni d'Europa*, cit. p.5.

which was to encourage cooperation between the regions of the Union's member states. The Committee, which took office on March 9th and 10th 1994, therefore became one of the Union's representative bodies alongside the Council of Ministers and Parliament. The importance the interested bodies attributed to the Committee when it was created is confirmed by the fact that its members were important politicians from regional governments and mayors of large cities. Members of the Committee also recognised the essential role that the CCRE had played in its creation, electing as its first President France's Jacques Blanc –President of the Languedoc Roussillon Region, Mayor of Canourghe and a member of the CCRE's French section – and as the first Vice President, the Catalan Pasqual Maragall –Mayor of Barcelona– President of the CCRE.

The main function of this Committee, consisting of 189 incumbent members and as many substitutes, was to express opinions addressed at the Council and the Commission, but not to Parliament. Local institutions therefore acquired a new institutional role, albeit partly losing its privileged political relationship with the European Parliament. The issues on which it was compulsory to consult the Committee were education, within the framework of social policies, public health, trans-European transport, telecommunications and energy networks, economic and social cohesion. The Committee was therefore in a category of community organizations having consultative functions together with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Parliament itself. Further enlargements of the Community preceding the Union then strengthened the perception of the positive role European territorial institutions could play as strategic players for the integration of candidate countries.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Committee of the Regions, *Un'Europa di regioni e città. Strategie e prospettive per un'Unione Europea allargata*, The European Communities Office of Official Publications, Luxembourg, 2001.

After its installation, the Committee of the Regions was reconfirmed as having the functions attributed during the 1997 Conference of Amsterdam, renewed in 1998 and reformed with the Treaty of Nice approved at the European Council held in the French city on December 11th 2000 and signed on February 26th 2001, after being ratified by the then fifteen member states of the European Union, which came into force on February 1st 2003. The Treaty that adopted a Constitution for Europe (*constitutional Treaty* signed in Rome on October 29th 2004) furthermore establishes that the Committee of the Regions is also a consultative body of the European Parliament, thereby becoming one of the instruments for a possible multilevel governance of a new Europe.

Nowadays the Committee of the Regions has its headquarters in Brussels and consists of 344 members representing regional and local institutions (Art. 263 of the Treaty as modified by the Treaty of Nice). Since 1994, as proposed by central governments, members are appointed every four years. It is obvious how this system must be overcome to guarantee greater democracy within the Committee, even though now the representatives already form alliances and oppose one another both on the basis of their belonging to the various political groups and by national and regional delegations, as well as following geographical criteria (thus for example a Mediterranean Group⁷⁰ has been formed) and on the basis of belonging to urban/industrial or agricultural regions with deliberative or only administrative powers, between regions in the North, the South and the East, between representatives of Regions or other local bodies. These various aggregations prove the vitality and potential of possible

⁷⁰ On the work of the Mediterranean Regions see Silvia Bolgherini, *Come le regioni diventano europee. Stile di governo e sfide comunitarie nell'Europa mediterranea*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006.

new convergences of political and territorial interests rather than a weakness of the Committee as some have maintained⁷¹. In view of this brief historical reconstruction that emphasizes the role local European bodies have played in creating European integration through coherent work implemented for over half a century, there is a statement by Frédéric Vallier, secretary general of the CCRE, made in Berlin when he was elected, that still seems valid today. According to Vallier, the role played by local authorities, also regards to the crisis that has profoundly affected European countries, remains that of providing a first response for citizens, because they “are clearly aware of the reality of a situation, are capable of mobilizing consciences more that state policies... Local policies are the people’s real spokesperson”⁷². The CCRE, the European section of the IULA, in tune with the Committee of the Regions, is therefore preparing to embark upon a new battle for relations between citizens and the European Union at a time at which the European Union is experiencing a serious crisis, and, as has always happened in the past, this may lead to positive new scenarios if the new leading players in this history will be capable of continuing the Europeanist and federalist work of their fathers.

⁷¹ Mario Caciagli, *Regioni d'Europa. Devoluzioni, regionalismi, integrazione europea*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003, p. 105.

⁷² Daniele Salerno, “Questo è il bello della democrazia. Intervista a Frédéric Vallier nuovo segretario generale del CEMR”, in *Comuni d'Europa*, no.s. n. 25, April 2010, pp. 9-11.

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