



The History of an Idea: From a “Europe of Nations” to Federalism

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Federalism in theory and practice from a historical point of view

- Integration approaches: What is federalism
- The model of the peaceful world federation
- History of the federalist idea
- The fight of the federalists for European democracy between the two world wars
- The role of federalism in the establishment of the European Union
- The EU-model and the world
- Federalist self-determination



Wegen General Tafeln und in der neuen Tafel die allein Europam begreiff. Doch wann man anfehen will und darzu rechnen die groffen Landſchaften die gegen Dienacht gehen ſolt wol die breite Europes vortreffen die länge. Wie aber Ptolemæus Europam beſchrieben hat iſt ſein länge größer dann die breite. Das iſt ein malgemeß daß Europas iſt ein trefflich fruchtbar und wol erba-

Europa regina (Europa as a Queen) in Sebastian Münster's "Cosmographia", 1570
(Wikimedia Commons)



Heinrich Bünting's map of Europe, 1582 (Wikimedia Commons)

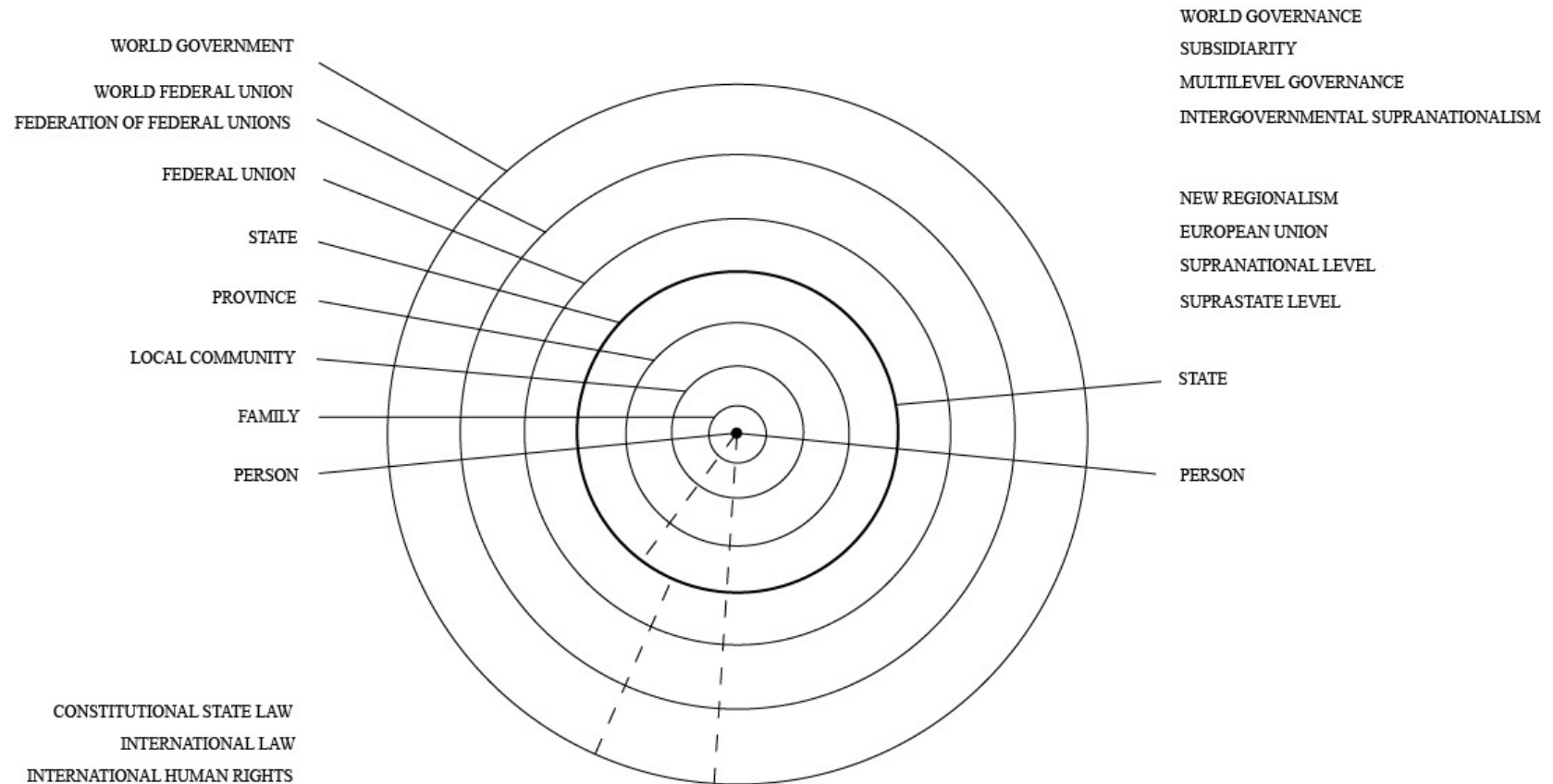


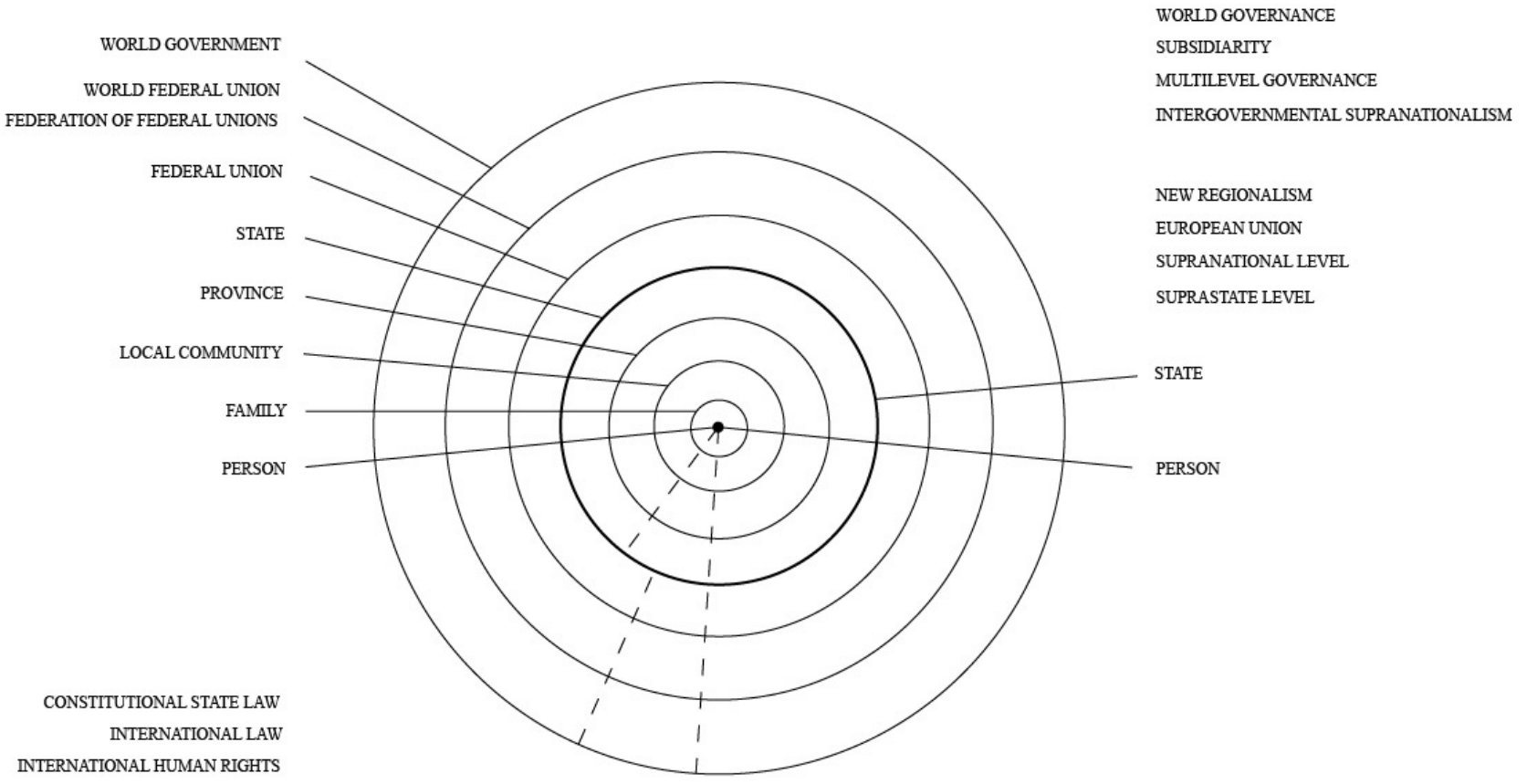
Europa, symbol of liberty. Monument Joseph Sec, 18th century, revolutionary period. Aix-en-Provence. France

Ventotene Manifesto (1941)

- “Modern civilization has taken as its specific foundation the principle of liberty ... every man must be an autonomous life centre”. (Spinelli – Rossi: Ventotene Manifesto, 1941)
- Call for a European union, with the participation of everybody, based on the principle of liberty and personal autonomy.
- Federalism versus intergovernmentalism

Peaceful world federation





Classical Nationalism

- Nation and state are the same (nation=state)
- Nation is embodied by the people, predominant ethnic/language group
- Unitary centralized unilingual/cultural nation state
- Placing primary emphasis on promotion of national culture and interests as opposed to other nations

Conservative intergovernmentalism


- Nationalism
- Euroscepticism
- Criticism of the EU (too elitist, bureaucratic, undermines the nation state)
- “European Family of Nations” (M. Thatcher)
- Intergovernmental agreements and bargaining
- Denial of the importance of supranational institutions

Intergovernmentalist functionalism

- States and national governments are in the centre, and they are the actors
- Recognition of the importance of institutionalization based on the lowest common denominator, and under governmental control
- Intergovernmental negotiated decisions in supranational independent institutions
- Subsidiarity (nationalist interpretation)
- Multilevelism (nationalist interpretation)

Federalism

- Democratic social organization philosophy and method
- Persons are in the center, personal principle (popular sovereignty), associations, transfer of fields, competences
- Bottom-up internal and external democracy in the framework of the Western system of liberties (bicameral parliamentary union with government or open democratic institutions)
- Division of the federal parliamentary governance of the common competences and the state competences in one institutional structure
- Subsidiarity
- Multilevelism



The principles of the European (Western) system of liberties


Representative Parliament created by general elections

- Separation of powers
- Executive branch that is either responsible to the Parliament elected by the people for a specific length of time, or subject to popular recall
- Judiciary independent of the executive branch
- Free press; freedom of thought, assembly and other civic rights
- Extensive local autonomy
- (István Bibó: Reflections on the Social development of Europe, 1971-1972).
- International relations: Democracy among states

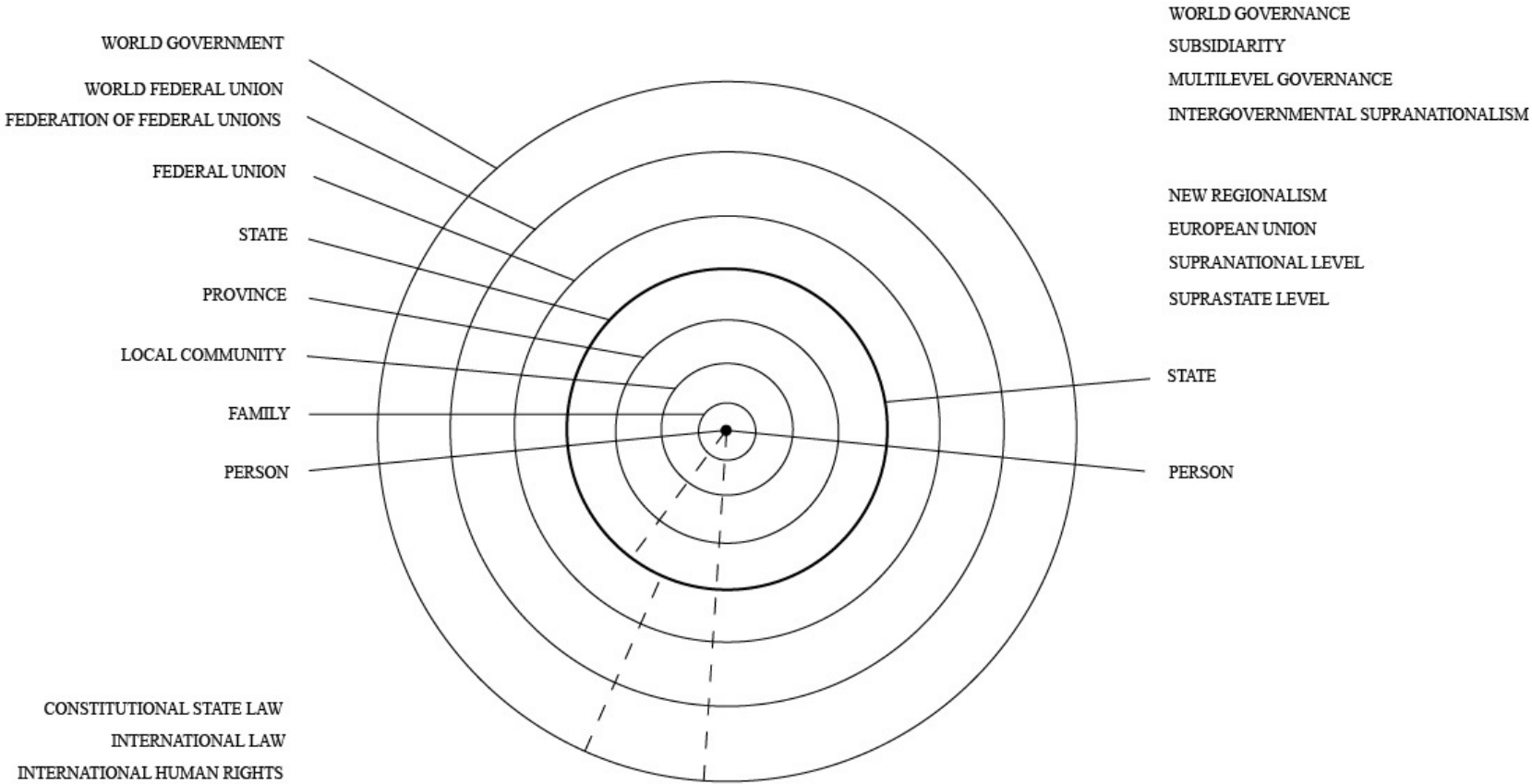
Functionalism

- Cooperation between different functions of the states
- Linking authority to a specific activity (function), and breaking it away from the cooperating states' sovereignty, and organizing these functions in the framework of supranational institutions
- Intergovernmentalist functionalism (A. Moravcsik)
- Federalist functionalism (J. Monnet)

Subsidiarity

- To entrust common institutions only with those powers which “they may carry out more satisfactorily than the states acting independently”. (Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union (Spinelli draft), 1984.
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Peaceful World Federation



History of the federalist idea

- Aristotle, 4th century BC - personalist federalism, no sharing of sovereignty
- The Peace Plan of George Podiebrad, 1462-1464
- Union of Utrecht, 1579 – sharing sovereignty, federal assembly
- Althusius, *Politica*, 1614 - complete confederation, partial confederation, popular sovereignty, democracy, federalism

Johannes Althusius (1614)

- “Complete confederation is one in which a foreign realm, province or any other universal association, together with its inhabitants, are fully and integrally coopted and admitted into the right and communion of the realm by a communicating of its fundamental laws and right of sovereignty. To the extent that they coalesce and are united into one and the same body they become members of that one and the same body.” (Althusius, *Politica*, 89-90.)

Johannes Althusius (1614)

- “A partial confederation is one in which various realms or provinces, while reserving their rights of sovereignty, solemnly obligate themselves one to the other by a treaty or covenant made preferably for a fixed period of time. Such a partial confederation is for the purpose of conducting mutual defense against enemies, for extending trust and cultivating peace and friendship among themselves ... with a sharing of expenses.” (Althusius, *Politica*, 90.)

History of the federalist idea

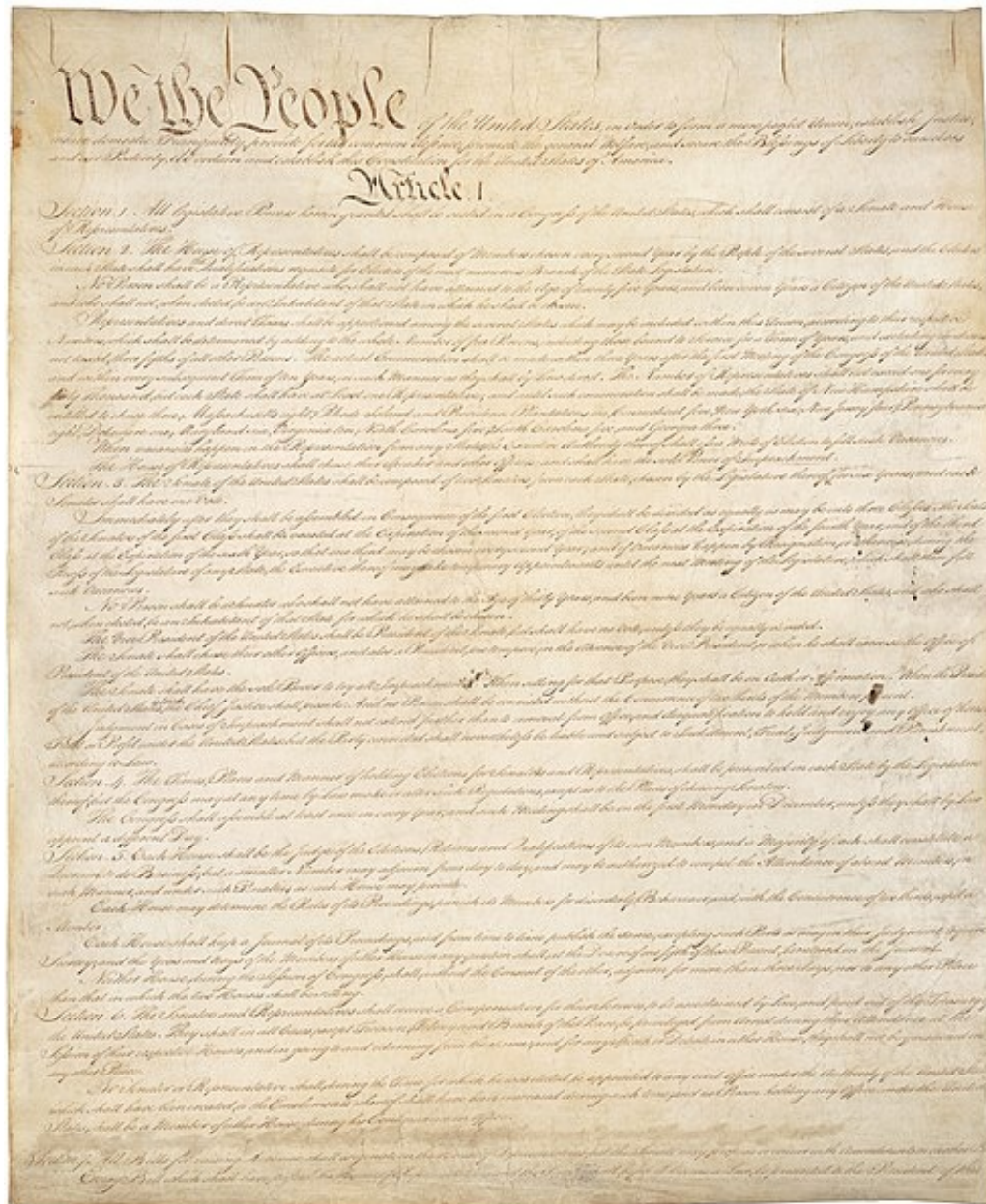
- John Locke, 1689 – civil government, representative parliamentary system
- William Penn, 1693 – representative bicameral parliamentary system between states
- Abbé de Saint-Pierre, 1713 – federal union under a European council
- Montesquieu, 1748 – federal republic directing the shared common matters by common institutions

Declaration of Independence, 1776

- The American Revolution (1765-1783)
- Declaration of Independence, 1776
- “That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”
- Liberty as a social organizing principle



Howard Chandler Christy, Signing of the Constitution (Wikimedia Commons)



Constitution of the United States, U. S. National Archives (Wikimedia Commons)

Constitution of the USA (1787)

- Constitution of the United States of America, 1787 – federal republic under a president
- Rejection of feudalism; self-determination, popular sovereignty, democracy, federalism, bottom-up state
- Bicameral Congress: House of Representatives (people), Senate (states), federal government, co-decision procedure, separation of powers, Bill of Rights
- No, or very limited, voting rights for women, Native Americans, and African Americans

Swiss Confederation, 1848

- Constitution of the Swiss Confederation of 1848
- Federal republic under the Federal Council
- Bicameral Federal Assembly composed of the Council of the States (citizens of the cantons) and the National Council (citizens of the federation); Federal Council (government), President (1 year, no power)
- Federal council was the collective head of the state



Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) (Wikimedia Commons)

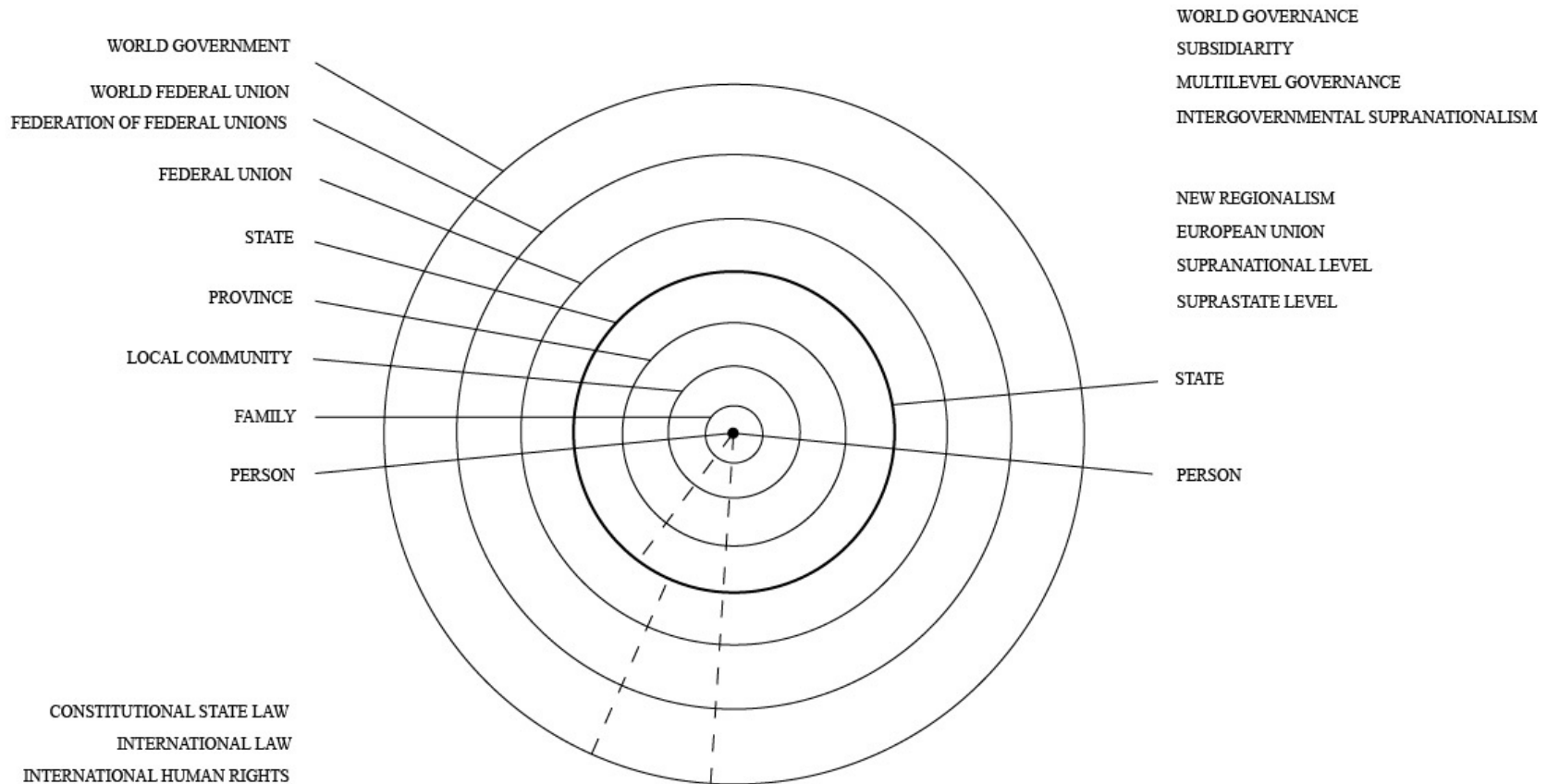
Tocqueville

- “The noble has gone down the social ladder, and the commoner has gone up; the one descends as the other rises. Every half century brings them nearer to each other, and they will soon meet.” (Tocqueville: Democracy in America, 1835-1840)
- The old regime was losing power; gradual participation of more and more social classes in the shaping of states
- Tocqueville: The Old Regime and the Revolution, 1856

Tocqueville

- “Another form of society is afterwards discovered in which several states are fused into one with regard to certain common interests, although they remain distinct, or only confederate, with regard to all other concerns. In this case the central power acts directly upon the governed, whom it rules and judges in the same manner as a national government, but in a more limited circle. Evidently this is no longer a federal government, but an incomplete national government, which is neither exactly national nor exactly federal.” (Democracy in America, 1835-1840)

Peaceful World Federation





Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 (Wikimedia Commons)

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789

- Article 1. “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.”
- Article 3. “The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation.”
- Human and civil rights: no discrimination, right to legal defence, safety, privacy, property; freedom of thought, speech, press, assembly, movement, religion

French unitary nation state and its opposition

- French Revolution (1789-1799)
- Abolishing absolutism and feudalism
- Self-determination, popular sovereignty, democracy
- Plebiscite, unitary nation state, no federal republic
- Colonization and centralization policy of the ancient regime continued
- Kant: Perpetual Peace, 1795 – Foedus pacificum
- Proudhon, Du principe fédératif, 1863
- Central European thinkers – multinational federal state

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865)

- Criticism of colonization, the unitary nation state, the Italian and German unity
- Expansive authoritarian national monarchies and empires are not able to establish federation
- General Idea of the Revolution in the 19th Century, 1851
- Du principe fédératif, 1863
- Federalist European union composed of small political entities as bottom-up free associations of people (the follower of Althusius and the representative of the peaceful world federation)



How could the Europeans realize the system of liberties? 1.

- Controversially and inconsistently
- Authoritarian centralized nation states and national empires
- Totalitarian states - Fascism, National Socialism; Communist dictatorship (They embraced the idea of the European unity)



How could the Europeans realize the system of liberties? 2.

- The reasons of the failure of democratic modernization:
- No colonization policy according to the system of liberties
- Strong retrograde power of the old authoritarian and centralizing past
- New wave of colonization, imperialism, nationalism; center-periphery system of rich and poor countries; fictive world economy; corrupt business mentality
- First World War, world economic crisis, Second World War
- People did not know what to do, how to continue the revolutionary process of democratization



Ortega y Gasset: The revolt of the Masses

- “Europe had created a system of standards whose efficacy and productiveness the centuries have proved. Those standards are not the best possible; far from it. But they are, without doubt, definite standards as long as no others exist or are visualised. Before supplanting them, it is essential to produce others. Now, the masspeoples have decided to consider as bankrupt that system of standards which European civilization implies, but as they are incapable of creating others, they do not know what to do.” (Chapter 14.2, 134.)



The fight of the federalists for European democracy between the two world wars

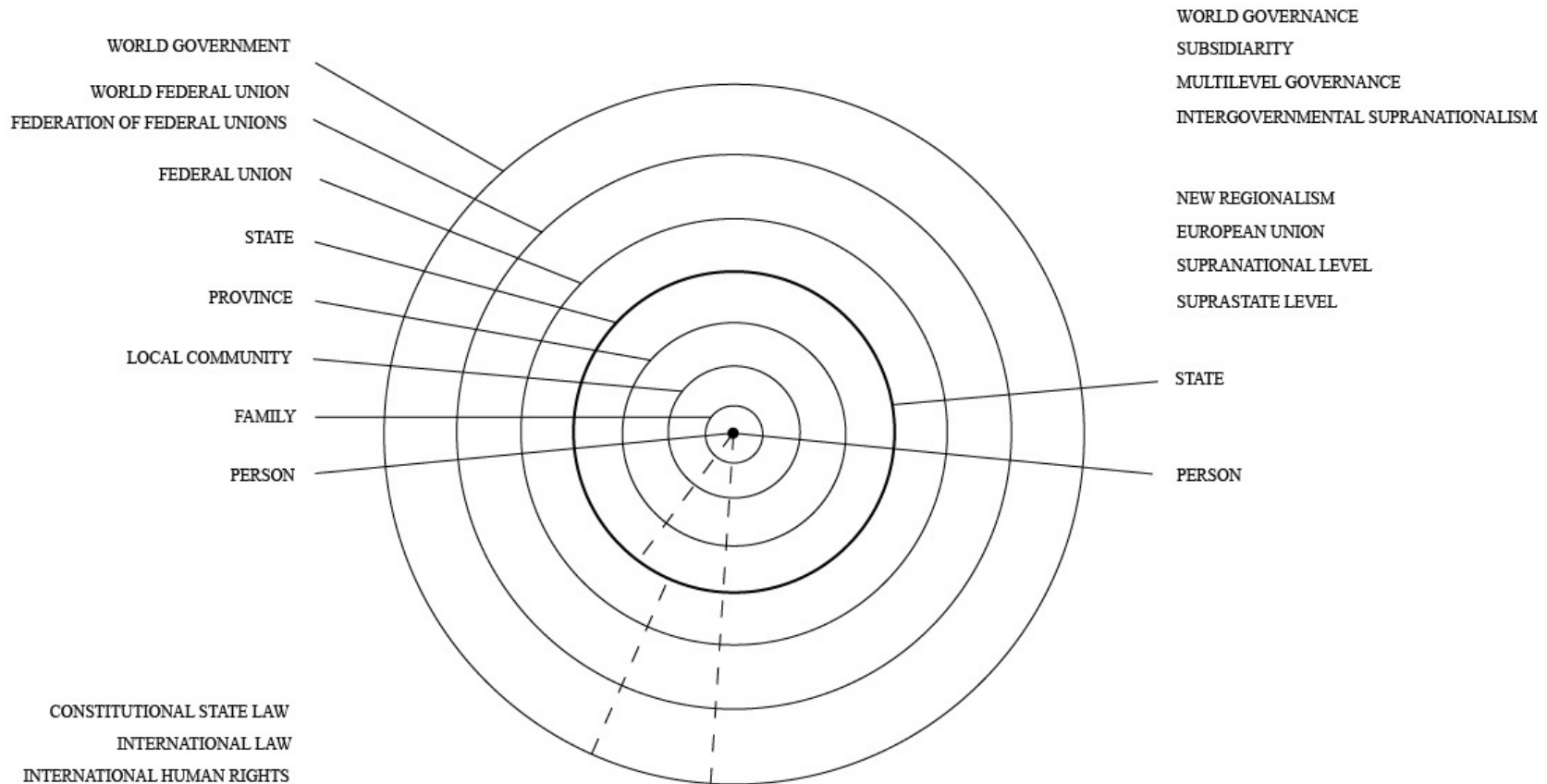
- Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894-1972)
- Pan-European Movement
- Paneuropa, 1923
- European convent; international arbitration (conflict solution);
- Paneuropean customs union; EUS as a constitutional bicameral parliamentary federation (USA as an example); Paneuropa as a regional union inside the League of Nations
- Briand Plan (1930)
- “Revolution of fraternity” = federalism
- Total State - Total Man
- European Parliamentary Federation



The fight of the federalists for European democracy between the two world wars

- L'Ordre Nouveau, 1933-1938 – nonconformist integral or personalist federalist group, Proudon's ideas
- Ventotene Manifesto, 1941
- Resistance Movement, Geneva Declaration, 1944 – European constitutional federation with a government
- United Nations Organization, 1945 – independent coordinating agencies (functionalism), regional commissions of the ESC
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 (rejection of imperialism, colonization, exploitation, slavery, racism and nationalism)
- Revival of the idea of peaceful world federation

Peaceful World Federation



The role of federalists in the establishment of the EU

- Starting the plurarist European policy with federalism as a political force in opposition to intergovernmentalism (unionism)
- Montreux, 1947 – split into two oppositional groups:
- Constitutional federalists (Spinelli)
- Integral or personal federalist (Rougemont, Brugmans, Marc)
- European Parliamentary Union (independent) (Coudenhove-Kalergi)

Constitutional federalist

- European Federalist Movement led by Spinelli
- American Constitution, The Federalist Papers
- European Constituent Assembly, elected by the people, framing the constitution – political union
- Immediate establishment of federal political institutions and a federal government directly responsible to European citizens
- Social reform and decentralization start automatically

Integral or personal federalist

- Rougemont, Brugmans, Marc
- Union of European Federalists led by Brugmans
- Nonconformism
- No political union, no constitutional federalism, persons (“living forces”) and groups federating gradually on their own initiative
- Gradualism, functional supranational institutions representing what the integration could achieve
- Integral = composed of constituent parts

Denis de Rougemont (1906-1985)

- “A federation is a living phenomenon which grows bit by bit from the association of persons and groups. In this sense it can be said that European Federation is already being slowly constituted, in a small measure everywhere, and in all sorts of ways. Here there may be an economic agreement; there a new relationship is established. Here a supranational functional organism takes shape; there a group of small countries forms a customs union.” (The Federalist Attitude, Montreux, 1947)

Alexandre Marc (1904-2000)

- Federalism has not only an institutional aspect.
- Federalism is a philosophy having its own doctrine, attitude to life, and method of organization and action.
- It is a principle of political, economic and social transformation of all the structures of society and the body politic.
- It needs the involvement of 'living forces' (people, working class) in the organization of society.
- ("From Unionism to Federalism", La Fédération, no. 40. May 1948)

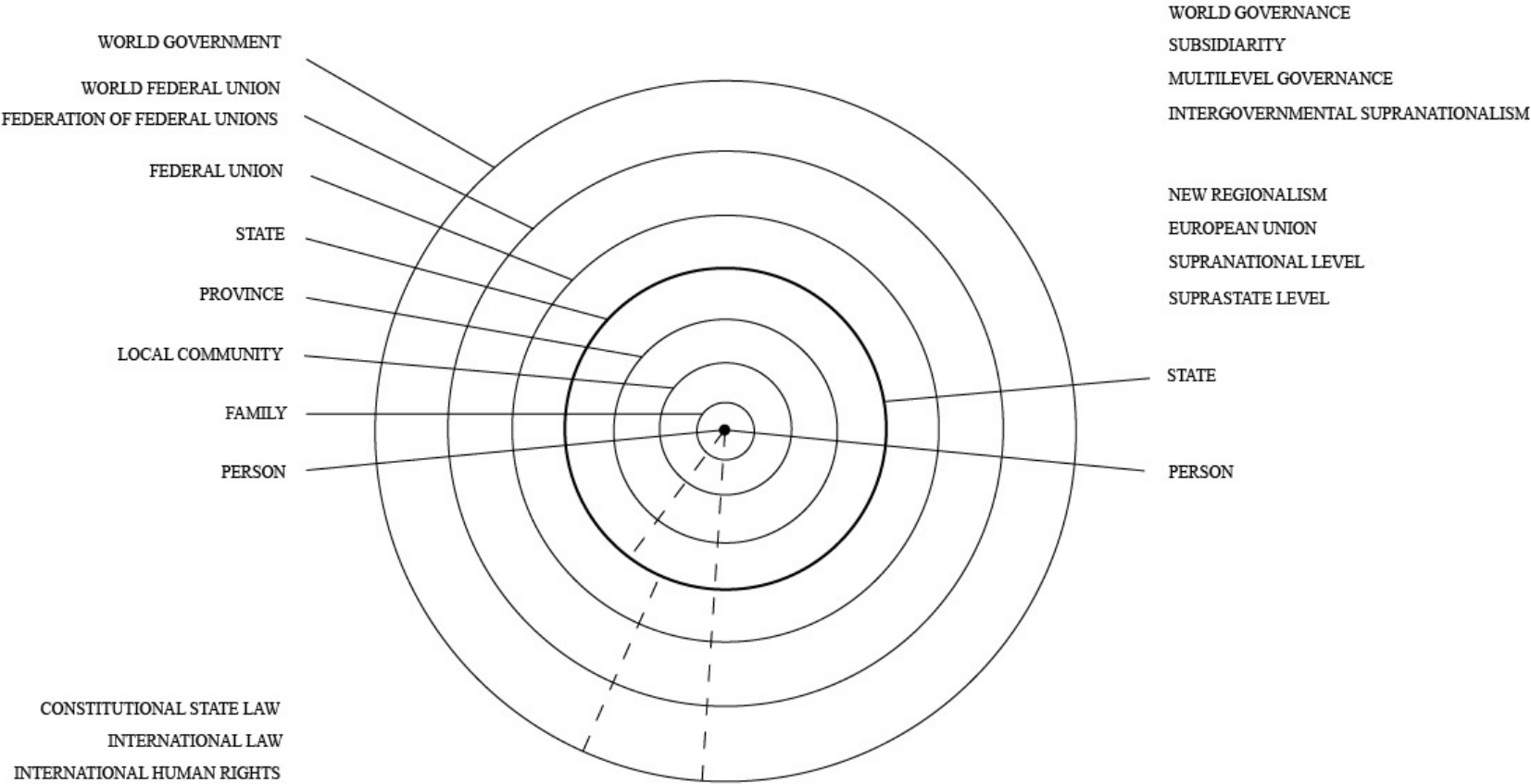
European parliamentary federalist

- European Parliamentary Union led by Coudenhove-Kalergi
- Swiss-type constitutional federal union under a federal government established through a European constituent assembly
- The parliaments and parliamentarians of Europe have to take the lead in the battle for Europe.

European federalists



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Congress of Europe, Ridderzaal, The Hague, 9 May 1948
(National Archives – Wiki Sources)



The Hague Congress (May 1948)

Reconstruction of the intergovernmentalist Western Europe with the American aid (April 1948) – intergovernmentalist majority

Scenario 1. Constitutional federalism (withdrawn, waiting position)

Scenario 2. Integral or personal federalism (active minority)

Scenario 3. European parliamentary federation (independent)

Scenario 4. Intergovernmentalism – no federalist revolution, institutionalism based on national sovereignty, transnational European assembly (majority)

Scenario 5. Functionalist intergovernmental economic sectoral cooperation, coordinating agencies (majority)




Interlaken parliamentary federalist constitution plan (September 1948)

- Draft constitution of the United States of Europe as a European Parliamentary Federation led by a federal council, a bicameral European legislative parliament, and a federal court (European Parliamentary Union, Coudenhove-Kalergi)



Council of Europe (1949)

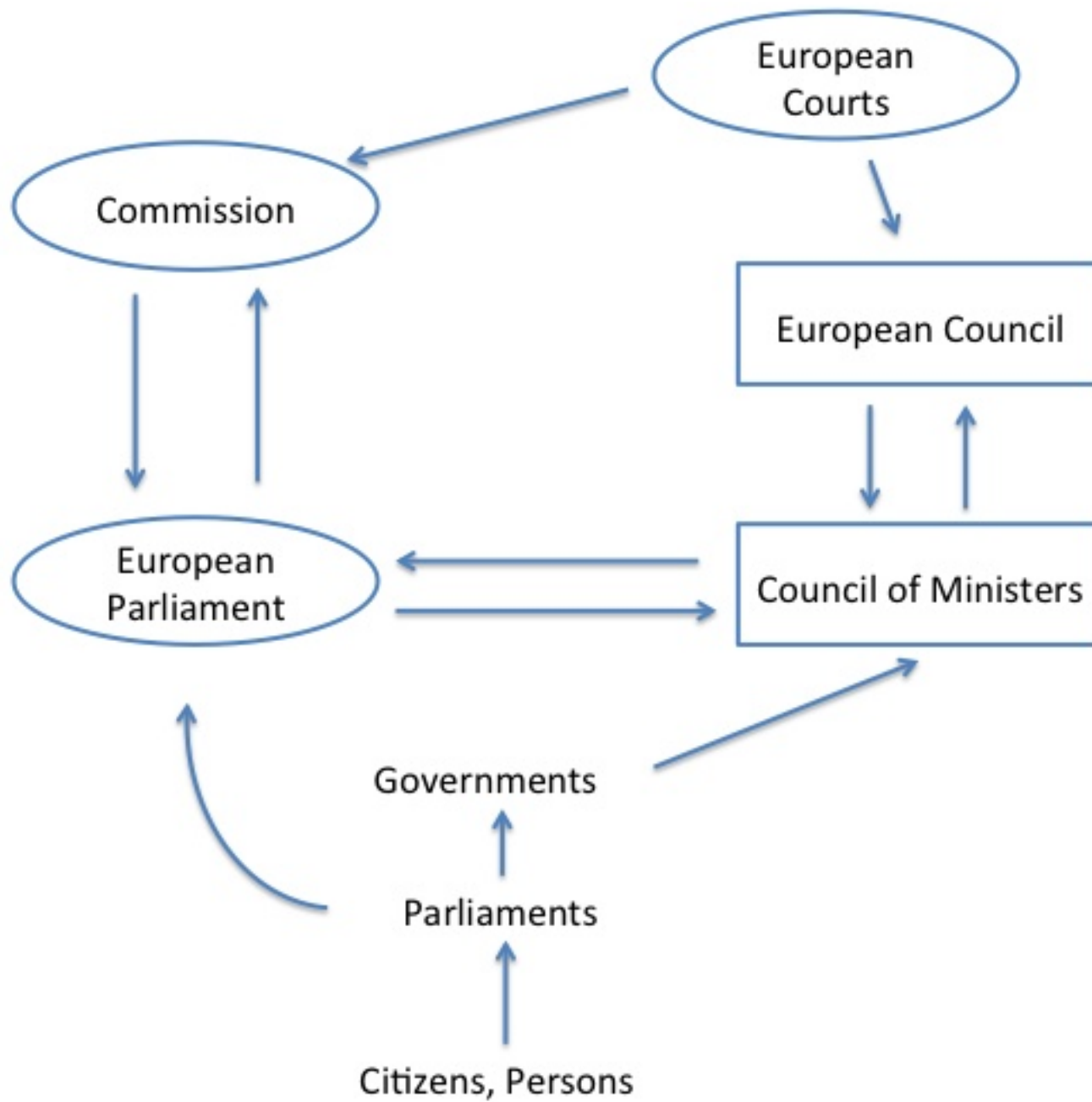
- Intergovernmental organization (no sharing sovereignty)
- Committee of (Foreign) Ministers
- Consultative Parliamentary Assembly (composed of the members of national parliaments)
- The first transnational assembly
- The first step toward federal union



Schuman Declaration (1950)

Federalist functionalist integration

- “Monnet-method” – Federalist functionalist sectoral integration, sharing sovereignty, personal federalism
- European Coal and Steel Community (1951) - the first supranational community (High Authority, Common Assembly, Court of Justice [federalist part]); Council of Ministers [intergovernmentalist part] in one institutional structure
- Chain reaction, spill-over



Personal federalist functionalist

- Supporting personalist international democracy and popular sovereignty
- Bottom-up association policy of free and autonomous persons in all those fields of life which demand common organization
- Gradual transfer of functional common fields toward supranational institutions directed by the principle of subsidiarity and multilevelism
- Supranational institutions – Western system of liberties

Spinelli on the Monnet-method

- “The step-by-step Monnet-method” represented “the first breach in the Chinese wall of national sovereignties” but sectoral integration could not solve the problem of a federal governmental structure.
- It allowed governments to become not only internal national but also supranational players. The High Authority needed to ask the views of the Council in giving advice, and so Council developed into a real decision-making power.
- (Spinelli, *The Eurocats*, 27-28, 33)



Supranationalism

- “Supranationality in structural terms, therefore, means the existence of governmental authorities closer to the archetype of federation than any past international organization, but not yet identical with it. While almost all the criteria point positively to federation, the remaining limits on the ability to implement decisions and to expand the scope of the system independently still suggest the characteristics of international organisation.” (Ernst Haas, *The Unity of Europe*, 52)

Theories of European integration 1.

1. Council of Europe, 1949 – intergovernmentalist
2. Schuman Declaration, 1950; ECSC, 1951 – sectoral personal federalist functionalist
3. EDC, 1952 – sectoral personal federalist functionalist
4. EPC (Draft Treaty Embodying the Statute of the EC), 1953 – constitutional federalist with intergovernmentalist elements
5. EDC and EPC were rejected, 1954 - intergovernmentalist
6. EEC – intergovernmentalist functionalist; Euratom – sectoral personal federalist functionalist

Theories of European integration 2.

- 7. De Gaulle, intergovernmentalist; Luxembourg Compromise (1966) intergovernmentalist functionalist
- 8. Spinelli's parliamentary reform, (1984) – parliamentary EU, subsidiarity
- Constitutional federalist and personal federalist functionalist cooperation with the aim of a parliamentary European union in opposition to intergovernmentalist functionalism



Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union (Spinelli draft), 1984

- Federalist versus intergovernmentalist democratic policy
- Strengthening the European Parliament (a bicameral parliament - Council the second chamber)
- Subsidiarity: to entrust common institutions only with those powers which “they may carry out more satisfactorily than the States acting independently”.
- Democratization of the co-decision procedure, enlargement of the fields of supranational cooperation, clear division of competences

Theories of European integration 3.

- Delors reform – gradual personal federalist functionalist
- Federation of nation states and people
- Treaty of Maastricht (1992) (EMU, Single Market) – intergovernmentalist functionalist with federalist elements; open to federalism, but rejected the name



Fischer debate

- The “Monnet-method” is not enough.
- “The transition from a union of states to a full parliamentarisation as a European Federation, something Robert Schuman demanded 50 years ago. And that means nothing less than a European Parliament and a European government which really do exercise legislative and executive power within the Federation. This Federation will have to be based on a constituent treaty.” (Speech at the Humboldt University, Berlin, 2000)



Treaty of Lisbon (2007)

- Recognised the legal personality of the EU
- Strengthened the EP in EU legislation
- Multilevelism: exclusive, shared and supported competences (exclusive: customs union, internal market, monetary policy, common commercial policy, common fisheries policy)
- Subsidiarity
- The door is open for further democratization



European Union

- EU is an intergovernmental functionalist and federal functionalist supranational union of nation states based on subsidiarity and multilevelism in the framework of the Western system of liberties with a democratic deficit.
- Federalist driving force
- Historical product of the fight and compromises on an originally federalist goal for the benefit of the intergovernmentalists (Coudenhove-Spinelli-Rougemont-Brugmans-Monnet- De Gaulle - Spinelli-Delors), with an intensifying federalist parliamentary struggle
- Transnational multilevel democracy open to democratic federalism
- The message of the Ventotene Manifesto is relevant



Europe's future

- Europe's future is bottom-up personal federalist functionalist association policy and a new-type constitutional federalist parliamentary European Union, based on multilevelism and subsidiarity in the framework of the Western system of liberties.



EU-model and the world

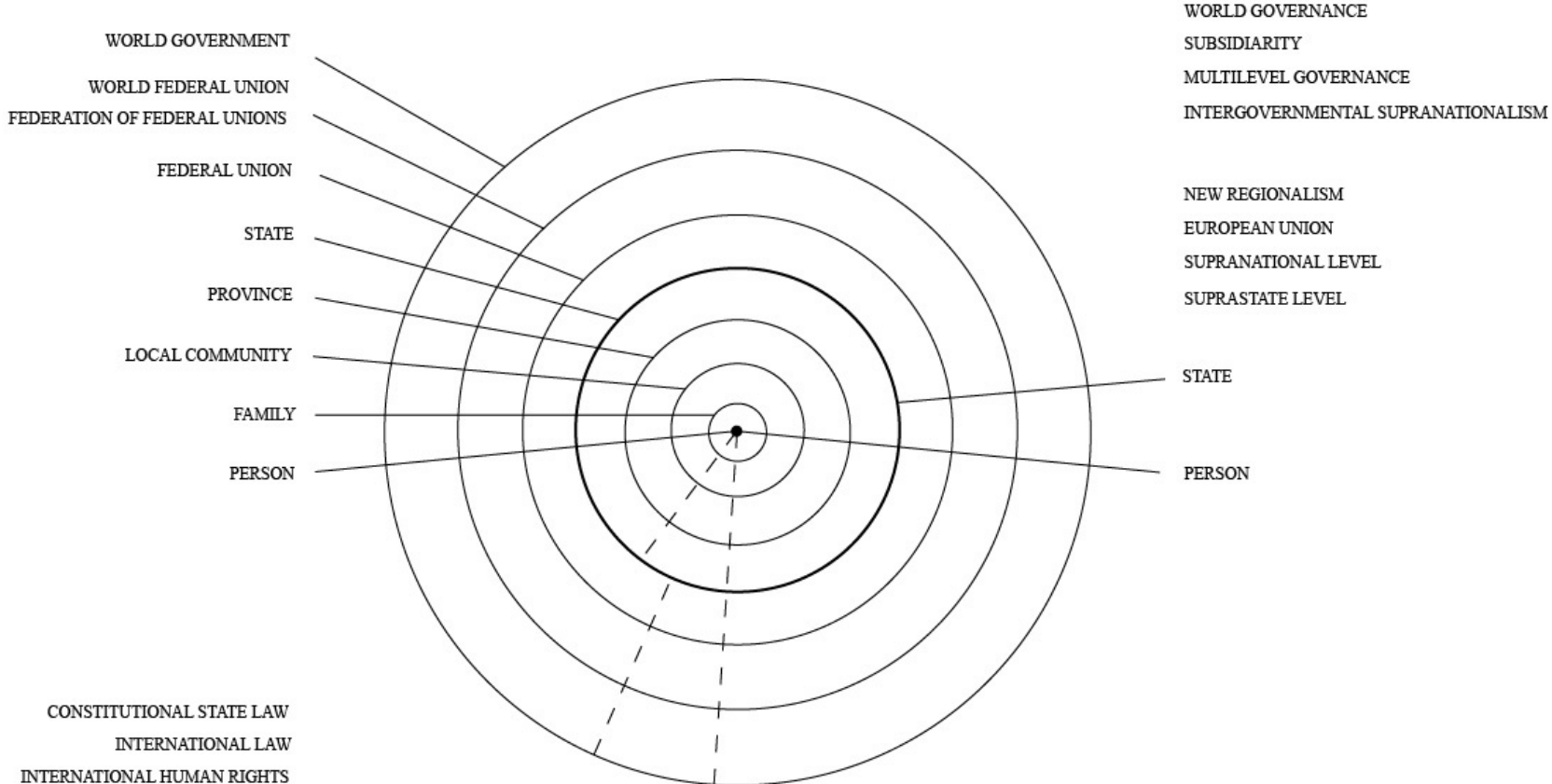
- Yes and no
- Yes, because of its achievements in the democratization of the international relations.
- No, because the EU is a historical product.
- Intergovernmentalism is dominant in the world, but federalist functionalism is regarded as a means of democratization of the inter-state (international) relations.



EU - UN

- The EU-model's multilevelism and subsidiarity is suitable for the democratization of the intergovernmental United Nations in the field of common global competences.
- The special agencies should be reorganized as parts of the competences of the Economic and Social Council (ESC).
- Fields representing common global interest should be transferred to the ESC, and the member regions (Europe, Africa, Asia, South America) should play a coordinative role towards the ESC and the member states.

Peaceful World Federation





Federalist self-determination

- Federalist functionalist
- Constitutional federalist
- Personal federalist functionalist
- European parliamentary federalist
- Other



Thank you for your attention!

Informations about the lecture

- The presentation slides, the lecture draft with recommended literature, and recommended on-line literature are available on my website:

<http://www.eva-boka.name>

The figure of the peaceful world federation:

https://www.eva-boka.name/test/Boka_Eva_abra.jpg