

NATIONALISM AND MODERNISATION IN THE XIX-TH CENTURY CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE

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Was nationalism - as an autonomous social force - an important pillar in the modernization process developed during XIX-th century in the Central Eastern Europe (CEE)? Historians and social scientists have taken the historical inevitability of the nation state and nationalism for granted but have virtually ignored the socioeconomic and political difficulties impending nation building or the distinctions between the socioregional identities that characterize precapitalist "moral economies" and those of mature capitalism. Dominant actual social philosophy and historiography in the CEE treated the nation state as the exclusive alternative to the "idiocy of rural life" and precapitalist parochialism and viewed nationalism as natural and primordial. Enlightened liberalism and Marxist tradition pioneered and led this outlook on the nation state. This approach was not only ethnocentric but partisan. Most CEE historiographers until now were, in a way, nationalists and propagandists. The structural-functionalist view which was developed by some academics proved us that they were influenced in their research activities by economic and state forces alone. Regarded from this perspective, a mature national identity was considered indispensable to modern man's social and moral well-being. The omission of "evil" nationalism with its versatile forms and aspects seems largely from the failure of the scholars and academics to distinguish between merchant capital as a social and economic category and industrial capitalism (the accepted sign of modernization in almost every part of the world) as a socioeconomic, political and moral system, or their neglect to differentiate between the spatial articulations and social solidarities of seigneurial (feudalist) societies and these of industrial capitalism. J. Bernal (1969) was the first which demonstrated that historiographers almost all over the world recounted the exploits of past nationalist leaders and provided historicist justifications for the political and economic objectives of the nationalist intelligentsia. A recent similar attitude could be found at Eric Hobsbawm (1992) who put it like this: "Historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers in Pakistan are to heroin addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market". In this respect nationalistic social scientists, especially in CEE, treated nationalism as a manifest, selfevident principle upon which rationally-oriented societies, products of the modernization process, could build their future. At best they regarded antinationalists and antistatalists as

deferential in their discourse upon industrial capitalism and centralized states bureaucracies. Often they were branded as traitors to the "national cause".

Today more than half a century after the Second World War, it is realistic to assume that nationalism will continue to be a universal historical principle decisively structuring international relations and the domestic order of states. To conceive of nationalism as a political aberration or as an inevitable phenomenon is to disregard its unbated impact upon politics and history of mankind. Though we might justifiably abhor its extreme forms, which were especially rampant in the years before and after the First World War and even today in the new liberated Europe, we cannot conveniently forget it as a pathological manifestation or an cultural artefact in the history of modern societies, nor dismiss treatment of its historical impact as irrelevant. The present state of affairs in Europe (East and West alike) is a living proof. It would be irresponsible and naive to ignore the dangers that nationalism and nationalist thinking undeniably pose for societies in the age of industrialism and post-industrialism. This alone makes it more necessary than ever to arrive at a clear understanding of nationalism and the political and social problems related to it in our case the modernization process.

The liberal doctrine regarding nationalism is reflected in some versions of liberal modernization theory which closely linked nationalism and (to) the early phase of modernization - for instance see Karl Deutsch (1966-a, 1966-b), David Apter (1963), John Breuilly (1982), Yael Tamir (1993) and their disciples. In contrast with this trend, Ernest Gellner (1972, 1983) in spite of similar premises asserted that: "... nationalism is a phenomenon connected not so much with industrialization or modernization as such, but with its uneven diffusion". In the same thinking stream we can include Elie Kedourie (1960), Kenneth Minogue (1967), Peter Alter (1991), Raymond Pealson (1983), etc.

The leftist thinkers-marxist and neo-marxists - tried in an almost uncomfortable way to blend nationalism with modernization and socialism. Tom Naim's work (1977) is an outstanding example in this respect, together with the plethora of recent and contemporary CEE historiographers. The conservative thinkers, Gidon Gottlieb (1993) for example, perceive nationalism as an extreme danger for the state and in this respect advocate the necessity of a world government in spite of the fact that many conservative thinkers still found valuable ideas in the nationalist ideology. Discussing about nationalism and the modernization process we can find some singular positions and attitudes expressed by such scholars like: Anthony D. Smith (1971, 1976, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1986, 1994), Benedict Anderson (1983), Peter Sugar (1969, 1980), etc.

The special historical literature dedicated to the problems of nationalism and modernization in CEE was with few exceptions the work of historians living in this area and it is poor and strongly parazitated by the ideological and political factors. Also, the authors try hardly to demonstrate in an old fashioned way that their nation

is different from the surrounding neighbours and the modernization process took place earlier and with more sound results. All of them establish a close and straight link between modernization and nationalism forgetting that in this region we have to speak about ethnonationalism rather than nationalism pure and simple and/or ethnicity. This deterministic view prevail even nowadays. The recent romanian or hungarian literature is illustrative in this respect. The western authors like Peter Sugar (1969,1980), Hugh Seton Watson (1965, 1977), Boyd C. Shafer (1963, 1972, 1982), Richard Clogg (1973), Michael Hertzfeld (1982), Raymond Pearson (1983), Michael Kent (1984), etc. emphasize that in CEE we have to deal with "new nations" and a different type of nationalism and in this respect they try to explain how modernization and nationalism come together during the last century.

Using a different methodology and perspective I'll try to prove and demonstrate in my research that there is not an intricate, natural link between nationalism and modernization. I consider nationalism, or to be more specific ethnonationalism (as Walker Connor named it) as an autonomous social force with more development potential than any come before because nationalism is classless in origin and practice - in spite of the centre-periphery theory -, altruistic in its objectives and has little to do with the strict material interests of any particular class. Viewed thus, nationalism seems in a way, over and above civil society. In my opinion the modernization process is far more complex and cannot be reduced to a nationalist component. Formulated by a middle class nationalist intelligentsia, nationalist social and economic reforms were shrouded in ambiguity. The resulting vagueness promoted the nationalist cause by promising everything to everyone without specifying how the social contradictions of "rural" societies were to be resolved in the modern nation state. As a matter of fact, we have to deal in the CEE with an almost anarchical distribution of nationalities which was never truly reflected by the political maps or by the different territorial arrangements in the course of Modern History. Moreover we have in this specific european region during last century nations without a state and states inhabited by various nations. The process of modernization cannot be fixed like in a puzzle game right over the development of nationalism and its roots could be found at the very beginning of the XIX-th century. The uneven diffusion of nationalism in this zone could be traced in the late XVIII-th century under a different name and form (the Dacist ideology as an example). Finally, we cannot equal nation, state, modernization and nationalism for the sake of simplistic theories which still prevail in the scientific communities.

I intend to conduct my research using the social change model and the analytical qualitative methodology in an interdisciplinary manner. In this respect, I believe that I shall satisfactorily prove that nationalism is not the *sine qua non* condition for the modernization process and vice-versa. I am sure that a research conducted in this manner will illuminate some of the most acute problems of the CEE historiography which has to deal now with a confused historic past and a tragic

present regarding the problems of nationalism, ethnic minorities and modernization
- to be more actual - transition.

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