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Two Types of Nationalism in Europe?

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While intellectuals and some politicians in the West have seen Europe approaching the 'postmodern' age, in which the conception of a national state would become outdated and would be replaced by a new multinational and multicultural entity, the 'backward' neighbours in the East have been said to be prone to succumb to a resurgence of nationalism. Thus, analysts like Schöpflin¹ saw confirmed the old concept² of two essentially different forms of nationalism: the enlightened Western, that is supportive of democracy, and the backward Eastern, that is an obstacle to any genuinely democratic society. The differences are, however, not well described by this reference to geography. Rather, two (or more) different conceptions of nationalism are to be found competing for influence within particular countries in both the East and the West.

What is Nationalism?

Nationalism is a contentious issue. Analysts cannot agree on its definition and its role in society. Most contend, however, that nationalism is a specifically modern phenomenon, which became salient in the eighteenth³ or nineteenth century.⁴ Ernest Gellner convincingly demonstrated⁵ that nationalism, rather than corresponding to a universal and ancient human need, marked a profound break in human history. He stated that the industrial revolution in the West necessitated

a radical change in the relationship between polity and culture, and that this in turn produced nationalism. The salient feature of the preceding agrarian societies was, according to Gellner, cultural diversity and fragmentation in small autonomous sub-communities, each of which lived in its own specific idiom. A peasant had no need to communicate with the elite of high culture who existed beyond his/her experience (which was usually limited to the size of his/her valley). The modern industrial and predominantly urban society required mass literacy and a high degree of social mobility, which could only be achieved by nearly universal access to a state-sponsored 'national' educational system. This, in turn, could only be successful if conducted in a vernacular accessible to the entire population of the country. Thus, a need for cultural homogenisation arose and gave birth to the political doctrine of nationalism, 'which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent'.⁶ Nations were being 'created' either by turning the 'low', spontaneous and oral cultures into literate and cultivated ones, or by imposing the existing 'high' culture on the available and diverse idioms of peasants. Nationalism can then be characterised as 'the organisation of human groups into large, centrally educated, culturally homogenous units'.⁷ In short, Gellner concludes that modernisation leads to nationalism and nationalism engenders nations, and not the other way around. And

since ours is a time of a never-ending process of modernisation, we live in the 'Age of Nationalism':

'Nationalism - the principle of homogenous cultural units as the foundations of political life, and of the obligatory cultural unity of rulers and ruled - is indeed inscribed neither in the nature of things, nor in the hearts of men, nor in the pre-conditions of social life in general, and the contention that it is so inscribed is a falsehood which nationalist doctrine has succeeded in presenting as self-evident. But nationalism as a phenomenon, not as a doctrine presented by nationalists, is inherent in a certain set of social conditions; and those conditions, it so happens, are the conditions of our time.'⁸

Gellner's conception has been criticised for being simplistic and historically inaccurate, and there are good examples which seem to refute the assumption that nationalism only became important in the nineteenth century as a result of modernisation.⁹ Gellner's description does, however, provide an accurate reflection of the actual historical evolution of nationalism in Central Europe.

The main aim of Gellner's study is to explain why nationalism emerged and became pervasive in modern times. It does not, however, explicitly explore the issues which are probably more pressing for the present political development of Central Europe: What is the relationship between nationalism and liberal democracy? Why did some forms of nationalism (German, Italian, even Slovak and Hungarian) become virulent in the first half of our century and others not? Is nationalism a deadly enemy of liberalism, or its natural ally?

Is the Best Nation No Nation?

Nationalism was originally regarded as progressive and supportive of the development of liberal democracy. Alexis de Tocqueville

and John Stuart Mill, for example 'perceived in the sentiments of nationality an important source of social solidarity, and of the political stability of a liberal society'.¹⁰ The Italian nineteenth-century liberal Giuseppe Mazzini was convinced that 'democratic nationality was the necessary precondition for a peaceful international order'.¹¹ This has changed dramatically in the twentieth century, with Europe experiencing fanatical nationalism leading to wars, ethnic cleansing and the Holocaust. Hence, despite all the disagreements about the true nature of nationalism, most analysts today view it as a hindrance to the development of a liberal democracy.¹² Some (like Beiner, Habermas and Hobsbawm) say that this hindrance has to be superseded altogether, others (like Dahrendorf, Kymlicka and Tamir) see how democracy and nationalism can be reconciled.

Civic versus Ethnic Nationalism

The liberal defenders of nationalism are mostly indebted to the original Enlightenment ideal of the nation as an agency of democratic power that was able to challenge the old suppressive order of the 'ancien régime' (Rousseau). Hence, French and American nationalisms have traditionally been regarded as the epitome of civic nationalism. They were based on the political ideas of revolutionaries who fought for the 'sovereignty of the people'. The membership of the community was thus defined primarily in political terms; civic virtues were more important for the new republic than ethnicity, common culture, or even common language. The only means of exclusion were the territorial boundaries of a country. For that reason anybody, at least in theory, could become a French, or American citizen by acquiring the necessary civic virtues (of which French- or English-language proficiency was but a part).¹³ This voluntaristic notion of na-

tional identity is usually contrasted with ethnic nationalism, which is exclusionary, since the belonging to a nation is in this case defined by birth, blood and ethnicity. While the former conception of a nation is ideally conceived of as a voluntary association, the latter is seen as a community of fate.¹⁴ Ethnic nationalism emerged in the late nineteenth century and is said to be pertinent to the people of Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁵ While civic nationalism is usually associated with liberalism, exclusionary ethnic nationalism has often been conducive to authoritarian regimes. It is the latter that is feared by many critics of nationalism.

The distinguished Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm argues that, 'in spite of its evident prominence, nationalism is historically less important' in world politics today.¹⁶ Given that 'characteristic nationalist movements of the late twentieth century are essentially negative, or rather divisive', Hobsbawm is hopeful that ultimately 'nationalism will decline with the decline of the nation state'.¹⁷ He goes as far as to suggest that "nation" and nationalism are no longer adequate terms to describe, let alone to analyse, the political entities described as such, or even the sentiments once described by these words.¹⁸ From the fact explored by Gellner, that national identities are to a certain extent arbitrary results of nationalism based on myths and half-truths, Hobsbawm infers that their importance should subside with time. This seems to be plausible considering that citizens in a truly modern (and enlightened) society are expected to act following their reason rather than feelings and attachments connected with some 'imagined communities'.¹⁹ Hobsbawm tacitly assumes that by showing that particular national traditions are more often than not invented and manipulated, the allegiance of people to their nations can be undermined.²⁰

But the simple fact that national identities are social constructs and not something inherently 'natural' does not mean that they can be easily abandoned, or subdued to some form of enlightened cosmopolitanism. Imagined communities should not be confused with imaginary ones.²¹ As Anthony Smith accurately observed, 'whenever and however national identity is forged, once established, it becomes immensely difficult, if not impossible (short of total genocide) to eradicate.'²²

Habermas seeks to overcome 'the ghosts of the past' by replacing conceptions of ethnically defined nationalism with a cosmopolitan notion of a 'Verfassungspatriotismus' (constitutional patriotism), based on shared principles of justice and democracy, which would make the idea of a federalist European Union (comprised of European rather than national citizens) a politically viable concept.²³ Habermas argues that the political unity of European nations cannot be based on the shared traditions, cultures, and languages that characterised successful nation-states. Instead, European citizenship must rely on a 'post-national' constitutional patriotism that is yet to be created.²⁴

Ralf Dahrendorf rejects Habermas's project as utopian and looks for arrangements which would accommodate the needs of the majority of people throughout the world who cannot live without a national identity, with the requirements of a modern and open society (Karl Popper). He proposes the creation of a heterogeneous national state - as opposed to a homogeneous state built on the idea of an ethnic nation - which is liberal and open for people of other ethnicities.²⁵ 'To be proud of the basic law is not enough,' argues Ralf Dahrendorf. 'As Taylor notes, even the model experiments in constitutional patriotism, France and the United States, have always also required many of the trappings of nation-states, including founding myths, na-

tional symbols, and ideals of historical and quasi-ethnic membership.’

Yael Tamir raised more serious objections to the contractarian theories that have national values hidden in their liberal agenda. If the liberal state were a truly voluntary association based on contract in which citizenship was ideally based on shared principles of justice and democracy (not more and not less), then two problems would arise. Firstly, all those complying with the criteria of constitutional patriotism could become citizens - which is clearly not a practical option for virtually all of the existing states. Secondly, anyone questioning the values of justice and democracy (certain anarchist groups, for example) could be stripped of their citizenship - which certainly does not correspond to any conceptions of justice.²⁶ Indeed, civic nationalism, according to Tamir, can be more exclusive than culturally based nationalism:

‘Contrary to widespread perceptions, national communities might, in some respects, be more open and pluralistic than communities in which social bonds rely on a set of shared values. [...] But in a society where social cohesion is based on national, cultural, and historical criteria, holding non-conformist views does not necessarily lead to excommunication.’²⁷

Tamir supports her statement with the example of the United States, where communists were marginalised precisely because they did not share the political values of the state. However, many examples from Central Europe could be put forward to show that a culturally defined nationalism can be at least as damaging and divisive. Thus, Slovak nationalists (including Meciar) have repeatedly accused their political opponents of being ‘not Slovak enough’. Moreover, citizenship in Slovakia - as in any multinational state - cannot be founded solely on a culturally and/or ethnically defined nation, as this would exclude, amongst others, the large

Hungarian minority. It appears that both ethnic and civic forms of nationalism can cause problems for political communities. The age of nationalism is, however, not over yet.

Even George Schöpflin, who is very sceptical about the potential dangers of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe, acknowledges that:

‘Democracy rests on the strongly cohesive identities provided by nationhood - there is no democratic state that is without this... On its own democracy is not capable of sustaining the vision of past and future that holds communities together politically, because it does little or nothing to generate the affective, symbolic, and ritually reaffirmed ties upon which community rests.’²⁸

Thus, it can be argued that today, as in the past, some conception of national identity is still needed in order to support and sustain liberal democracy. Furthermore, not only democratic states, but most people, cannot, or do not want to do without a sense of belonging to a nation. Whether we like it or not, ‘features characteristic of a nation - language, history, culture, religion, geography - are among the most substantive components of individual identity’.²⁹ Hence, Stuart Hampshire was right to observe that: ‘In the last analysis, a sane nationalism is to be justified by a utilitarian argument - that most men and women are happy only when their way of life prolongs customs and habits which are familiar to them’ [my italics].³⁰ The crucial question is to determine what constitutes a sane nationalism.

The answer to this question was sought by Yael Tamir in her 1993 study *Liberal Nationalism*.³¹ Yael Tamir tried to show that ‘the liberal tendency to overlook the value inherent in nationalism is mistaken’,³² and she explored ways in which nationalism may in fact contribute to liberal thinking.

Tamir's liberal nationalism is polycentric, which means that it 'respects the other and sees each nation as enriching a common civilisation', unlike ethnocentric nationalism, 'which sees one's own nation as superior to all others and seeks domination'.³³ This conception is considerably more optimistic about the actual potential of nationalism for modern liberal democracy, than those put forward by most writers on nationalism. 'Nationalism', Tamir argues, 'is not the pathology of the modern age but an answer to its malaise - to the neurosis, alienation, and meaninglessness characteristic of modern times.'³⁴ The proponents of liberalism have more in common with some proponents of nationalist projects than is usually assumed. Both liberals and nationalists concede the importance of seeing individuals in a social context. Tamir suggests that 'the liberal tradition with its respect for personal autonomy, reflection and choice, and the national tradition, with its emphasis on belonging, loyalty and solidarity, although generally seen as mutually exclusive, can indeed accommodate each other.'³⁵

Since people in Central Europe as elsewhere do need some sense of national identity, it is important to conceptualise the possibility of a nationalism that is liberal. Nationalism not only answers some urgent psychological needs, but also fulfills important political functions. As analysed above, national identity can foster feelings of solidarity in a given community and alleviate alienation of individuals in modern societies. Furthermore, it gives people a sense of continuity by strengthening the perception of a society as a partnership between 'those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born'.³⁶ Imagining themselves as a part of a larger community with a glorious and long-lasting past and a promising future, individuals can transcend their own limits, and even their own mortality.³⁷ In this way

'membership in a nation promises individuals redemption from personal oblivion'.³⁸ It is tempting to dismiss these needs as irrational feelings that should be overcome. But the conception of a community with a present, a past and a future also has some important moral implications. Indeed, without it, we would not be able to talk meaningfully about the historical responsibility of a nation.³⁹ If Germans were serious about their non-national politics, they would not be able to accept - as a people and as a nation-state - the moral or even the practical responsibility for the crimes of the Second World War.

Two Types of Nationalism?

Whether or not liberal nationalism in Tamir's fashion is possible, most scholars of post-communism would argue that it is certainly not an option for Central and Eastern Europe.⁴⁰ While the West was seen as coming to terms with the dangers of nationalism (either by overcoming nationalism, or adapting it to the requirements of a liberal democracy), it was expected that the post-communist world of Central and Eastern Europe would succumb to the nationalistic ideologies of ancient ethnic hatred. The war in Yugoslavia appeared to confirm analysts' worst fears, and the apparent resurgence of nationalism in general after the end of communist power seemed to confirm the proclaimed existence of 'two types of nationalism'.

As early as in the 1970s, the English historian of ideas John Plamenatz argued that the Slavic nations of Eastern Europe were doomed to adhere to Eastern nationalism, which is mostly (if not invariably) illiberal.⁴¹ Since the nations of Central and Eastern Europe were modernised considerably later than the Western nations, their peoples suffered from 'a feeling of inferiority or inadequacy'.⁴² They had to catch up by imitating their more successful West European rivals.

Nationalism born out of frustration leads, according to Plamenatz, to extremism, as shown by the ascendance of Nazism in Germany and fascism in Italy after the First World War. The underlying nature of German and Italian nationalism is, however, Western (i.e. free of frustration), because it was already culturally strong and rather liberal in the nineteenth century.

Thus, while Germany and Italy can be seen as an integral part of the West, meaning Europe - even if their liberal development was interrupted by the historical 'accidents' of fascism and Nazism - the Eastern European Slavic peoples had always been backward and were impeded in their development by traditions which were of little help in addressing the needs of modern times. When Germans and Italians fought for the establishment of their modern national states, they were already prepared culturally. The people in the East, on the other hand, had to create both: their states as well as their nations! 'Drawn gradually into a civilisation alien to them ... they have had, as it were, to make themselves anew, to create national identities for themselves'.⁴³

According to Plamenatz, these peoples - forced to adopt an alien civilisation - were historically marked as Eastern, meaning virtually non-European. Their relationship with the West was an ambivalent one, characterised by feelings of admiration mixed with envy and resentment. There was thus 'Eastern' nationalism that is 'both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates, and is apt to be illiberal'.⁴⁴ In other words, while the West (Germany included) finally found a sane nationalism, Eastern Europe was doomed to remain 'wild' for considerably longer.

More than twenty years later, George Schöpflin still subscribes to Plamenatz's dichotomy by averring that nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe shows charac-

teristics that are 'in many respects substantially different than in Western Europe, for both historical and contemporary reasons'. The most important factor influencing current developments is, according to Schöpflin, the traditional backwardness of these societies, a consequence of which is 'the weakness of civic elements of nationhood'.⁴⁵ Furthermore, in Central and Eastern Europe 'there is a long tradition of using or rather abusing nationalism for political purposes not connected with the definition of nationhood'.⁴⁶

Isaiah Berlin also distinguishes between the 'sated nations ... of North America, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand', and the ones in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where 'after years of oppression and humiliation, there is liable to occur a violent counteraction'.⁴⁷ Thus, despite some truly liberal personalities (such as Václav Havel and Adam Michnik) who influence political life in Central and Eastern Europe, Berlin is convinced 'that the possibility, unfortunately even the likelihood, of ethnic strife abounds in that part of the world'.⁴⁸

J. F. Brown similarly noted that while 'nationalist violence had burned itself out in the West', in the East it seemed to be making up for lost time. According to Brown 'the imprisoning past' is endangering the present.⁴⁹ This is a past in which 'nationalism in the East was characterized by its virulent intolerance'.⁵⁰ Thus, all the nations of Eastern Europe are - virtually by definition - illiberal.⁵¹

This differentiation between two concepts of nationalism can only be maintained by a purposeful interpretation of European history. While any instances of nationalistic excesses in Eastern Europe are considered by Schöpflin to be fundamental to the tradition of the region's backward history, both German National Socialism and Italian fascism are explained away as temporary aber-

rations resulting from 'loss of faith in building on the existing European tradition'.⁵² Similarly, more recent problems in Northern Ireland, and Basque separatism in Spain, are seen as exceptions to the rule which states that problems with nationalism are by and large limited to Central and Eastern Europe.⁵³

One does not need to subscribe to Milan Kundera's view that Central Europe has always been an indispensable part of the West, to agree that there are significant differences between the historical experiences of, say, Russia and the Czech Republic, which make the concept of 'Eastern nationalism' a crude generalisation with limited explanatory value for the Visegrad Four countries. Moreover, it is questionable whether 1920s-1930s German nationalism was any more 'Western' (i.e. liberal) than, for example, the Czech nationalism of the first Czechoslovak Republic. While Germans sought to overcome the economic and political problems of the interwar period by turning to National Socialism, Czechoslovakia remained true to certain basic principles of liberal democracy considerably longer. Hence, either German nationalism should be seen as traditionally Eastern, or the Czech variant should be classified as traditionally Western. Or does the whole dualistic approach beg more questions than it provides answers? Are, indeed, all nationalisms 'Eastern' to a certain degree?

Nationalism as a 'Continental' Problem - Germany and Central Europe

A positive answer to the last question could be derived from Liah Greenfeld's *Five Roads to Modernity*, which considers the development of the English, French, Russian, German and American nations not only by comparing them, but also each on their own terms. Upon closer study of particular historical cases, it becomes clear that the

evolution of nations has almost always been characterised by some feelings of inferiority with regard to their competitors, and that the formation of nations has more often than not been 'an expression of existential envy, resentment'.⁵⁴

Greenfeld acknowledges that the distinction between Western and Eastern types of nationalism does not make much sense geographically, because 'if we assigned individual societies to any of these originally geographical categories on the basis of civilizational characteristics, we might have to characterise many Western European societies as "Eastern Europe," while most of the "West" or "Europe" would paradoxically move to another continent [the USA].'⁵⁵ She concedes, however, that it is possible to distinguish between 'Western, less Western, and anti-Western nationalism in Europe and elsewhere'.⁵⁶ In this way, any society can be located on an imaginary map, which need not bear any resemblance whatsoever to the actual geographical location of that society.

I want to argue, however, that the terms Eastern and Western nationalism are nevertheless of little use, and indeed are misleading, because they can hardly be conceptualised outside of their geographical connotations. Moreover, I believe that forms of liberal and illiberal nationalisms co-exist within each European nation; analysts should take care not to 'condemn' a nation to be and remain illiberal in inclination because of its history. National identities are human creations, and thus can, and do, change.

Clearly, Greenfeld's account (unlike Gellner's) does make it clear how virulent nationalism came about. The danger is, however, that by explaining German history from the perspective of its disastrous results in the twentieth century, we are led to believe that these results were logical and thus somehow necessary.⁵⁷ Greenfeld states that

‘Germany was ready for Holocaust from the moment German national identity existed’.⁵⁸ But to view National Socialism as a mere consequence of traditional German hatred of the West, and the desire of Germans to overcome their feelings of inferiority by offering their salvation to humankind is misleading. Obviously, there were other factors involved (social, economic), and even the German literary and philosophical tradition consists of more than a few nationalistic writings. Many influential contemporaries of Herder, who is usually held responsible for the birth of irrational, ethnically defined and thus illiberal nationalism, regarded themselves as cosmopolitans. Thus, even a nation formed by a ‘purely Eastern type of nationalism’ did not necessarily have to end up with a totalitarian regime.

Will the nations of Central Europe, because of their ‘imprisoning past’,⁵⁹ remain prone to an illiberal nationalism - as the various concepts of Eastern nationalism imply? Not necessarily. Firstly, even Herder’s theory of nationalism could be reconciled, at least partially, with the needs of liberal democracy. Herder, whose ideas, according to Greenfeld, anticipated Nazism, could be equally regarded as an antecedent of multiculturalism. To claim superiority for a particular nation goes very much against Herder’s basic idea that ‘at bottom all comparisons [between nations] are out of place. Every nation has its centre of happiness within itself.’⁶⁰ Indeed, Tamir’s polycentric liberal nationalism is explicitly derived from the ideas of romantic nationalist writers who defined nations in cultural rather than political terms.⁶¹

Secondly and more importantly, the present is never totally dependent on the past.⁶² Nations are ‘imagined communities’,⁶³ and their histories are always, to a certain extent, created, rather than simply documented by disinterested observers. Ernest Renan was

right to suggest that the formation of nations is characterised not only by the invocation of common memories and a shared past, but also by a shared amnesia, a collective forgetfulness.⁶⁴ The ‘true’ character of a nation is constantly being reinvented; old symbols can and do attain new meanings. Even nationalists can be critical of their own particular culture; ‘they can aspire to change it, develop it, or redefine it’.⁶⁵

Indeed, as David Miller observed, a distinguishing aspect of national identity is that it is an active identity: ‘The nation becomes what it does by the decisions that it takes.’⁶⁶ Historical narratives and myths are reinterpreted in order to fulfil the requirements of the present, and fierce polemics within a nation are often conducted in order to determine which parts of its history are to be seen as its highlights and which as a national shame.

As Miller has pointed out, ‘It is precisely because of the mythical or imaginary elements in national identity that it can be reshaped to meet new challenges and new needs.’⁶⁷ What Masaryk means to the Czechs, Tiso to Slovaks, Pilsudski to Poles and so on, can and does change over time and has serious political implications.⁶⁸ In this way different concepts of a nation compete for dominance within a particular national community at any given time in its history, and they also change dramatically throughout history. Yael Tamir stressed the importance of critical participation in a nation:

‘The assumption of national obligations implies the reflective acceptance of an ongoing commitment to participate in a critical debate about the nature of the national culture, suggesting that individuals have a reason to adhere to their national obligations even after the establishment of a national state.’⁶⁹

This is obviously not limited to the experience of the small nations of Central Europe. Debates in the 'older' democracies about what it means to be a 'good' American,⁷⁰ Australian or German, can be just as controversial as in the countries that only recently freed themselves from communism. Furthermore, those nations that today pride themselves on being liberal all have illiberal pasts.

To label certain national cultures as intrinsically illiberal is crudely reductionist. What Kymlicka argued in defence of the cultures of national minorities is also valid for independent national cultures:

'To assume that any culture is inherently illiberal, and incapable of reform, is ethnocentric and ahistorical. Moreover, the liberality of a culture is a matter of degree. All cultures have illiberal strands, just as few cultures are entirely repressive of individual liberty. Indeed it is quite misleading to talk of "liberal" and "illiberal" cultures, as if the world was divided into completely liberal societies on the one hand, and completely illiberal ones on the other.'⁷¹

Having shown that the (essentially Manichean) distinction between Eastern (i.e. illiberal) and Western (i.e. liberal) nationalism is not helpful in analysing the post-communist transition in Central Europe, I am far from suggesting that nationalism does not pose any problems for the development of liberal democracy. Nor can I deny that certain historical experiences of the nations of Central Europe may prove detrimental to their further advancement.⁷² Clearly, however, the potential role of nationalism is more complex and ambivalent than any dualistic classification would suggest. A national culture and its history is never one or the other, liberal or illiberal. Nationalism in Central Europe has been used for the legitimisation of both left-wing and right-wing dictatorships,⁷³ but it has also repeatedly

been employed as a tool of national liberation, thus furthering the case of liberal democracy.⁷⁴ Indeed, it can be argued that all the revolutions of 1989 were to a certain extent nationalistic. The Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians and Poles felt that the end of communist power also meant the end of foreign (i.e. Russian) domination and that their national identities were traditionally hostile to communist ideology. The end of communist power in Central Europe showed the ultimate failure of communist leaders to activate support for their ideology by resorting to nationalism. Their attempt to ally the national allegiances of citizens with loyalty to the socialist home-country had failed.

One of the most important factors influencing the success of the post-communist transition and the ensuing integration into the European Union will be the outcome of the contest between different forms of nationalism within the particular countries of Central Europe. The crucial question is whether liberal nationalism will be able to gain the upper hand over nationalism deriving its strength from xenophobia and chauvinism. Many recent developments would suggest that it is the latter that is gaining momentum, posing a real danger to the development of liberal democracy in all four countries of Central Europe.⁷⁵ The fears of Hobsbawm, Plamenatz, Schöpflin and others who warned against the legacy of an illiberal type of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe appear to be justified.

Has, then, liberal nationalism any chance at all of succeeding in Central Europe? Are the expressions of extreme nationalism isolated incidents, or do they correspond to the attitudes of large or even dominant parts of the societies in Central Europe? These questions require more extensive studies of the countries in focus. But it is evident that any study of post-communist developments will not be furthered by simplistic concepts along the

lines of the 'two types of nationalism' schema. The outcome of the dynamic political processes taking place in today's Central Europe is not predetermined by the region's 'Eastern' past, however this past is defined.

Endnotes:

- 1.Schöpflin, George, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity in Europe', in Charles A. Kupchan, *Nationalism and Nationalities in the New Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), pp. 37-65.
- 2.Kohn, Hans, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study of its Origin and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944), Plamenatz, John, 'Two Types of Nationalism', in Eugene Kamenka (ed.), *Nationalism* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973), pp. 22-37.
- 3.Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991); Berlin, Isaiah, *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas* (London: Hogarth Press, 1979); and Hobsbawm, Eric, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- 4.Gellner, Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983). As Eric Hobsbawm put it, 'The modern sense of the word [nation] is no older than the eighteenth century, give or take the odd predecessor' - Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism...*, p. 3. But see also Smith, Anthony D., 'A Europe of Nations - or the Nation of Europe?', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 30, no. 2, 1993, pp. 129-135, and Scruton, Roger, *The Philosopher on Dover Beach* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1990), p. 304.
- 5Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism...*
6. *ibid.*, p. 1.
7. *ibid.*, p. 35.
- 8 *ibid.*, p. 125.
- 9Anthony D. Smith challenged this 'modernist fallacy' above all on historical grounds, by arguing that 'expressions of fervent attachment to the concept of the nation as a territorial-cultural and political community' go back as far as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries 'in France, England ... as well as in Poland and Russia' - Smith, Anthony D., *Nations and Nationalisms in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 38. Roger Scruton went back even further: 'when

the King James Bible has God say to Abraham "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18), this is surely not so far from the national idea of recent history' - Scruton, *The Philosopher...*, p. 304. See also O'Brien, Conor, *God Land* (Cambridge: Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

10.Gray, John, Isaiah Berlin (London: Harper-Collins, 1995), p. 99

11.Urbinati, Nadia, 'A Common Law of Nations: Giuseppe Mazzini's Democratic Nationality', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Spring 1996, p. 203. 12Roger Scruton, who argues that nationalism is indeed a necessary precondition of a thriving liberal democracy, is a notable exception - see Scruton, *The Philosopher...*, pp. 299-328.

13.Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism...*, p. 21.

14.Smith made an important qualification of this ideal-typical classification, asserting that 'every nationalism contains civic and ethnic elements in varying degrees and different forms' - Smith, Anthony D., *National Identity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), p. 13. I will explore this issue further below in my discussion of 'two types of nationalism'.

15.Eatwell, Roger, *European Political Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 238; Crawford, Keith, *East Central European Politics Today* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 126-128; and Smith, *National Identity...*, p. 11. But as Hobsbawm shows, the Americans and French were not the only peoples 'freely offering membership of a "nation" to anybody who wanted to join it, and "nations" accepted open entry more readily than classes. The generations before 1914 are full of great-nation chauvinists whose fathers, let alone mothers, did not speak the language of their sons' chosen people, and whose names, Slav or Magyarized German or Slav testified to their choice' - Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism...*, p. 39. Even the nations in Central Europe were thus to a certain extent voluntaristic. But as Tamir suggests, 'claiming that national obligations could be seen as voluntarily assumed says nothing about their nature' - Tamir, Yael, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 87. See my discussion below on liberal nationalism.

16. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism...*, p. 181.
17. *ibid.*, pp. 164, 182.
18. *ibid.*, p. 182.
19. Anderson, *Imagined Communities...*
20. In a speech to the Central European University in Budapest, Hobsbawm appealed to the moral responsibility of young Central and East European students of history to pursue historical truth, thereby preventing the rise of nationalism - Hobsbawm, Eric, *On History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1997), pp. 1-10. Hobsbawm also denounced Slovak nationalistic myths in the British television documentary *Stories My Country Told Me* (broadcast on SBS TV, 28 September 1997).
21. Tamir, Yael, 'The Enigma of Nationalism', *World Politics*, no. 47, April 1995, p. 423.
22. Smith, 'A Europe of Nations...', p. 131; and Kymlicka, William, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 185.
23. See also Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship...*, p. 238.
24. Beiner, Roland (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 255-282, 315.
25. Dahrendorf, Ralf, 'Die Zukunft des Nationalstaates', *Merkur*, vol. 9, no. 10, 1994, pp. 751-761.
26. This was illustrated by the recent incident involving the Canadian and Australian authorities' dealings with the Ukrainian war criminal, Konrad Kalej. While Canada was free to enforce Kalej's deportation from the country, Australia was not able to take away his Australian citizenship. See *The Age*, 25 August 1997.
27. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. 90. See also Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship...*, pp. 105-106.
28. Schöpflin, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity...', p. 42.
29. Tamir, 'The Enigma...', p. 427.
30. Gray, Isaiah Berlin..., p. 104.
31. Characteristically, the title of her study was seen as a contradiction in terms and thus provocative, or even 'weird' - Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. ix.
32. *ibid.*, p. 4.
33. Tamir, 'The Enigma...', p. 430.
34. *ibid.*, p. 432.
35. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. 6.
36. Burke, Edmund, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 195.
37. Anderson, *Imagined Communities...*, and Smith, *National Identity* ..., p. 160.
38. Tamir, 'The Enigma...', p. 433.
39. For example, this conception enables us to consider the implications of the present Australian government's policy towards the first inhabitants of Australia. It was expected that Australian Prime Minister John Howard would apologise on behalf of the Australian people for the unjust treatment of the 'stolen generation'. When he refused to do so on the grounds that apologies can only be made by individuals (effectively thereby denying the existence of a national community with a past and a future), his argumentation was seen as inadequate not only by Aboriginal activists, but by many members of the Australian public at large. In contrast, American President Bill Clinton was able and willing to take responsibility and to apologise on behalf of the American people for the history of slavery.
40. See for example Brown, J. F., *Hopes and Shadows* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994); Chirot, Daniel, 'National Liberations and Nationalist Nightmares', in Beverly Crawford (ed.), *Markets, States and Democracy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995); Greenfeld, Liah, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992); and Schöpflin, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity...'.
41. See also an earlier study by Hans Kohn, who distinguished between an 'organistic' and a 'voluntaristic' idea of nation to contrast Eastern and Western nationalism - Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism...* On Kohn's dichotomy see also Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. 83, and Snyder, Louis L., *Encyclopedia of Nationalism* (New York: Paragon House, 1990), pp. 173-176.
42. Plamenatz, 'Two Types of Nationalism...', p. 29
43. *ibid.*, p. 30.
44. *ibid.*, p. 34.
45. Schöpflin, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity...', p. 49.
46. *ibid.*, p. 52.

47. Cited in Gardels, Nathan, 'Two Concepts of Nationalism: An Interview with Isaiah Berlin', *The New York Review of Books*, 21 November 1991, p. 19. 48. *ibid.*, p. 21.
49. Brown, *Hopes and Shadows...*, p. 172.
50. Woolf, Stuart (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 24.
51. Ernest Gellner slightly refined Plamenatz's dualistic classification by introducing the notion of four different time zones of Europe. The basic assumption, however, remains the same: the further the observer moves East, the greater the danger posed by nationalism for liberalism. See Gellner, Ernest, 'Nationalism Reconsidered and E. H. Carr', in *Review of International Studies*, no. 18, 1992, pp. 113-118.
52. Schöpflin, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity...', p. 43.
- 53'. With one or two exceptions, the democratic systems were able to deal with these [nationalistic] movements [in the West] fairly successfully - Northern Ireland and the Basque country represent main failures', writes Schöpflin (*ibid.*, p. 46). Virtually identical is the assessment of Daniel Chirot: 'yet in Western Europe, internal nationalist disputes are the exceptions, not the rule: only in Northern Ireland and over the Spanish Basque issue is there much violence.' (Chirot, 'National Liberations...', p. 51).
54. Greenfeld, *Nationalism...*, p. 372.
55. *ibid.*, p. 18.
56. *ibid.*, p. 22. Incidentally, this is more or less what Plamenatz originally suggested when he argued that Eastern nationalism could be found as far afield as Africa, Asia and Latin America, though he hesitated to call it non-European - see Plamenatz, 'Two Types...', p. 23.
57. 'We are very good at predicting what has happened', as Martin Krygier pointed out in his lecture 'Constitutionalism in Poland' at La Trobe University, 23 October 1997.
58. Greenfeld, *Nationalism...*, p. 384. This sort of interpretation of German national history was recently revived with Daniel Goldhagen's controversial study, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (New York: Knopf, 1996).
59. Brown, *Hopes and Shadows...*, p. 172.
60. Ignatieff, Michael, 'Strange Attachments', *The New Republic*, 29 March 1993, p. 43.
61. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. 79.
62. The British anthropologist of Polish origin Bronislaw Malinowski demonstrated that this is rather the other way round: the present creates history. Historical figures and events are appropriated (by nations) for current purposes, and are true or 'valid in virtue of - and only in virtue of - satisfying a current need.' According to Malinowski, beliefs about the past should be seen as 'charters' of current practices - see Gellner, 'Zeno of Cracow', in *Culture, Identity and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 62, and Gellner, Ernest, *Anthropology and Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 16. Similar arguments are put forward in Krygier, Martin, 'Is There Constitutionalism after Communism? Institutional Optimism, Cultural Pessimism and the Rule of Law', forthcoming in *International Journal of Sociology*, and in Adam Czarnota and Martin Krygier (eds), *The Rule of Law after Communism* (Darmouth: 1997).
63. Anderson, *Imagined Communities...*
64. Gellner, 'Zeno of Cracow...', p. 6.
65. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. 89.
66. Miller, David, 'In Defence of Nationality', *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1993, p. 7.
67. *ibid.*, p. 9.
68. Consider for example the current contest in Slovakia for the right interpretation of the Slovak State of 1939-1945. The controversy surrounding the publication of Milan S. Durica's *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, which sought to play down Slovak responsibility for the Holocaust, provided an opportunity for both ends of the political spectrum to present their respective points of view. The controversy even had international implications - the book was published with the financial assistance of the EU and, later, it was the EU which helped to prevent its distribution to Slovak high schools. See Sme, 22 April 1997.
69. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism...*, p. 89.
70. When Richard Rorty called for more patriotism and a sense of national pride, which he saw declining in the USA, he triggered a lively discussion about nationalism and democracy (see Rorty, Richard, 'The Unpatriotic Academy', *The New York Times*, 13 February 1994, p. E15). See also the special issue on nationalism in *Boston Review*, October/November 1994, with

contributions among others by Martha Nussbaum, Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer.

71. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship...*, p. 94.

72. Yes, they are economically rather backward and fragile. As Milan Kundera showed, the nations of Central Europe, being geographically and culturally the 'in-between' lands, developed a sense of vulnerability that has had a profound impact on their political situation - see Kundera, Milan, 'The Tragedy of Central Europe', *New Review of Books*, 24 April 1984, pp. 33-36.

73. Ludovít Stúr, for example, who has always been regarded in Slovakia as the nation's spiritual father, was appropriated first by nationalist leaders in the Slovak Nazi puppet state; the propaganda chief Alexander Mach turned him into the 'Hitler of the nineteenth century' - see Schwarz, Karl-Peter, *Tschechen und Slowaken: Der lange Weg zuer friedlichen Trennung* (Wien, Zürich: Europaverlag, 1993), p. 150. Later, communist leaders in socialist Czechoslovakia saw in Stúr a liberator, a Slovak antecedent of communism. It would hardly be possible to make

a case for Stúr as a predecessor of liberalism and Western integration of Slovakia (he was strongly opposed to both the West and its liberalism), but Slovaks can (and do) invoke the more recent legacy of Milan Hodza (a Slovak proponent of liberalism, who called for a Central European confederation as early as in the 1940s).

74. As early as in 1956, before Russian troops suppressed the revolutionary upheaval in Hungary, the director of the Hungarian News Agency sent a memorable telex to the outside world: 'We are going to die for Hungary and for Europe' (Kundera, 'The Tragedy...', p. 33.) This short statement expressed loyalty to the nation as connected with allegiance to the ideals of freedom and democracy, i.e., Europe.

75. Expressions of anti-Semitism in Poland (Pater Jankowski), violent racist attacks on Gypsies in the Czech Republic, rising tension between the ruling coalition and the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and expressions of chauvinism in Hungary seem to have proven the conception of two types of nationalism correct.

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