NATIONALISM AND GLOBALIZATION: A CENTRAL EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Milan BUFON
Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Republike Slovenije Koper, SI-6000 Koper, Garibaldijeva 18
e-mail: milan.bufon@zrs-kp.si

ABSTRACT

The article deals, on the case of Central Europe, with the relations between nationalism, which could be sought as a tendency towards maintenance and spreading of cultural diversity, and globalization, as a tendency towards social and economic integration. In this particular part of the European continent, nationalism, in contrast to classical state-based Western-European nationalism, which combines state and national affiliations in one single nation-state identity, derives from a separate cultural identity, which is cultivated by different national groups independently of the actual political organization of their social setting. The very Central-European experience in terms of nationalism seems to be particularly important from the point of view of understanding not only modern social processes and developments in Europe, but also the viability of a new European paradigma aiming at twin cultural diversity with social and economic integration, and its possibility to be adopted on a wider global scale.

Key words: Central Europe, nationalism, globalization, maintenance of cultural diversity within the framework of social and economic integration

1. CENTRAL EUROPE: A GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL OR CULTURAL REGION?

After half a century of apparently stable post-war subdivision into two blocks, each with its sphere of interest, the European continent has found itself in a whirl of radical changes that on the one hand have triggered off a series of new processes and have uncovered, on the other hand, those that up till now have been going on in a more latent form. But the political revolution of 1989 was not only concerned with the disintegration of multinational states, which could be perceived as a renewed nationalism within the framework of the collapse of the single-party state system, it has also rediscovered the specificity of a very particular part of the European continent, the forgotten middle, which has once again become evident and significant on the political and cultural map of Europe.

Here, the first problem emerges, namely what could be the definition of Central Europe. From the geographical point of view things are everything but defined. Some are seeing "Mitteleuropa" as a pure fiction, some

are limiting it to only those countries, representing the "West of the East", who disliked the communist political reality in which they lived; a group of authors is restricting the area to only the former East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria, another group is extending it to southern Germany, Switzerland, northern Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary and western Ukraine. Perhaps the most suitable is the definition proposed by Frank Carter who has included, in the notion 'Central Europe', Germany, Austria, and the Visegrad group, represented by the Czech Republik, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and Slovenia. As both terms, i.e. Central Europe and Mitteleuropa, are suggesting, it is a land "between", which is a fairly relative definition pretending to be based on some generally accepted cultural, historical or political limits and boundaries (Rey, 1996). The problem is that there are no such limits or boundaries and that Central Europe as a central region has been continuously in relation with the outlying areas not only in the west and east, but also in the north and south, being in the same time a buffer/barrier zone between contesting parties or a bridge connecting different

European external and historically powerful regions.

Thus Central Europe could be seen as an area between the three major units of Eurasia, which have been identified by Galtung with the EU (European Union), RU (Russian Union) and TU (Turkish Union). These three cultural and political superplots have in Sarajevo an ideal common point of contacts and conflicts. From this point of view Central Europe is an area between or connecting the four major European religions, facing on the one hand the Catholic/Protestant border and on the other hand the Orthodox/Muslim border. But Central Europe is also an area between or connecting the four major ethno-linguistic units of the continent: the Germanic, the Romance, the Slavic and the Hungarian-Baltic. Again, different dividing lines could be defined following the ethno-linguistic borders and their changes: whilst the Romance/Germanic, the Romance/Slavic and even the Slavic/Hungarian-Baltic linguistic boundaries have remained quite solid over centuries, the most volatile has been between that of Germanic and Slavic tongues. Perhaps this situation of cultural contact explains why Central Europe has performed such an eventful part in the continent's history, where the traditional Germanic prevalence has been in the most recent past replaced by the Russian-Soviet one.

Even if this part of the continent has been historically associated with the imperial geopolitical construction of the Habsburgs and has represented the ground for the German policy of "Drang nach Osten", it cannot be simply included in or be labelled with the term "Germanity". The Habsburgs actually developed a multinational state model which may be seen as an alternative to the classical west-European nation-state territorial and social organization and to the rival Prussian too. Of course, the "Austria felix" period was happy enough for the dominant society, but was increasingly felt as a "prison of peoples" by the non-Austrian and non-dominant nations and societies, those who lost their history and those who remained without history. This emerging Central European nationalism led to the fragmentation of the Austro-Hungarian empire after the First World War, but the weakness of the new states, some of which maintained the multinational structure and some adopted the nation-state model, made them to be subordinated to Germany first, and the Soviet Union after the Second World War. The imposition of the Iron Curtain stopped every process of political and social transformation in the partitioned Central Europe. Yet the 1990s events have simply led to a logical normalization of the global setup and the removal of the post-war geopolitical consequences: Germany has reunited, whereas the small nations in the area have undergone the same developmental phase, in which the outbreak of war overtook them: the phase of national emancipation (Bufon, 1996b).

2. CULTURAL NATIONALISM IN CENTRAL EUROPE

In a geographical sense, we are dealing in Europe with different forms of nationalism, including what Orridge has called proto-nationalism in Western Europe, where the already existing states have shaped nations connecting citizenship loyalties with national identity, the unification nationalism in Germany and Italy, and the separation nationalism lying behind the creation of new states out of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, Russian and other empires. Looking at the content of nationalism, we may agree with Hutchinson, who has proposed a distinction between political and cultural nationalism. He argues that political nationalists tend to create a "polis" of educated citizens united not by a common historical descent but by current common laws and interests. To mobilize a political constituency, they may adopt specific ethno-historical identities within a given territorial homeland and they may become ethnicized or re-traditionalized. But their objectives are, however, essentially modernist: they are concerned with a functional entity, the state.

By contrast, the cultural nationalism is a movement interested in the uniqueness of the nation, its ethnolinguistic specificity and its historical roots. For this reason the proponents of this form of nationalism are not politicians or legislators but are above all historical scholars and artists who form cultural and academic societies seeking to recover the original force of the nation and project it to the members of the same nation. Even if political nationalism is usually linked with the proto-nationalism in Western Europe aiming to transform the existing state into a people's state, and cultural nationalism with the developments in Central and Eastern Europe, that is not always corresponding to the actual phenomena in the mentioned areas, neither is completely true that the latter is merely a mystical or conservative form of the first. Surely, cultural nationalism is a defensive response by educated elites to the impact of exogenous modernization on existing status orders, and behind its evocation of the folk and the past there is a dynamic vision driving to unite or recreate a nation which, integrating tradition with modernity on a higher level, will restore its former or expected standing in a world of nation-states.

Thus in Western Europe the rise of nationalism was a predominantly political occurrence and it was preceded by the formation of the future national state; in Central Europe nationalism arose not only later, but also generally at a more backward stage of social and political development. Here, the question was not how to transform citizens into members of a nation, but how to organize a suitable political territorial unit to the emerging nationhood. As a consequence, frontiers of an existing state and of a rising nationality rarely coincided, and nationalism grew in protest against and in conflict with

the existing state pattern to redraw the political bounda-
ries in conformity with ethnographic demands. Since
Europe is a cradle of modern nationalism, its key rela-
tion is now represented between the two most important
units of modern social and political development of the
continent: states and nations.

As not every ethnic group has achieved sufficient
self-identity confidence or a sufficient level of institu-
tional organization to be considered as a nation, not
every nation has evolved into a nation-state. In fact,
there are above 60 different ethnic groups or nations in
Europe, of which only half have their own states (Bufon,
1997). The "stateless" ethno-linguistic minorities are after
the recent collapse of Central and Eastern European
multinational federations located only in Western
European countries, particularly Spain, France and Great
Britain, but they are also present in Russia, which has
maintained the original Lenin's federal constitution.
Some of these ethno-linguistic minorities have been
more successful in preserving their separate identity,
language and culture in a context of social standardiza-
tion on a state level and started fighting for political le-
gitimacy, usually in the call for some form of autonomy
(i.e. the Catalans), other have been reduced to small and
politically weak communities, who have received some
form of recognition only in the last few years (i.e. the
Gaels in Scotland).

Now the situation in Central-Eastern is different, as
the "late" nation-state based nationalism produced a
large number of small countries, in which there is ac-
tually no room for the "stateless". Here, every single
ethnic group has slowly developed its national character
and finally emerged not only as a cultural, but also as an
autonomous political entity. Yet the past political and
historical events have produced an even higher and
more complex ethnic fragmentation: cultural and lin-
guistic groups have in many cases been separated by
changing political borders and political attitudes, thus
creating different ethnically mixed areas and a large
number of national minorities, which are usually quite
small but have intensive cultural relations with their
mother-country. In the Balkans, in particular, each
country and nation has cultivated a mythical memory of
its past role and territorial extent, causing irredentistic
expectations and tendencies to open up political border
disputes. On the one hand nation-states are trying to in-
strumentalize their own minorities living in the neigh-
bouring countries for the achievement of their political
goals, on the other hand they are seeking to obtain an
ethnically more homogeneous or cleansed state territory
to avoid foreign interferences (Koch, 1992).

Unfortunately, this is not only a speciality of the
Balkans, but it is representing a practice, which has
been to a greater or lesser extent, or in a more or less
virulent form, adopted nearly everywhere in Europe and
in the rest of the world in the period of state or primary

nationalism. As a matter of fact, there are no specific
models or geographical clusters concerning the relations
between nation and state: countries with no or limited
presence of internal and external minorities (up to 10%)
are located in Northern-Western (Iceland, Portugal,
Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, the
Netherlands) as well as in Central-Southern Europe
(Italy, Poland, Czech Republik, Austria, Germany,
Romania, Greece and Slovenia); the same could be said
of the countries with a higher percentage of internal or
external minorities (from 10% to 20%), including
Estonia, Spain, Moldavia, Lithuania, France, United
Kingdom, Bolgaria, Croatia, the Federal Republic of
Yugoslavia, Russia, Slovakia, Belarus, Ukraine, the
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and
Luxembourg (Bufon, 1997).

3. MINORITIES IN CENTRAL EUROPE: REMINDERS OF THE NATION-STATE EVOLUTION OR CEMENT FOR FUTURE INTEGRATION PROCESSES?

Ironically, modern transformations are consuming
the classical nationalism at the very moment when nu-
merous peoples are still demanding in the language of
nationalism and nation-state structures, that their unreal-
ized needs and quest for a "modernist revolution" are fi-
nally to be met. We may agree with most students of
ethnic identity and nation-state formation that national-
ism emerged and coincided with or accompanied the
growth of capitalism between the late 17th and 20th
centuries and represented an important tool in the quest
for a practical modernism even under the umbrella of
the new movements for nation-statehood after 1989. But
we may question the functionality of the nation-state
concept and its practical usefulness in terms of aspira-
tions concerned with political control, cultural auton-
omy or economic viability (Sapsin, 1992). From a politi-
cal economic perspective, classic European state-based
nationalism has been abraded by the growth of interna-
tionalization of capital on a global scale and integration
processes on a continental scale. The latter first
ploughed its way gradually and not without difficulties
within politically stable states, where the process of na-
tion-state building was long over and has resulted in the
formation of solid territorial states: on the one hand,
starting with the 1960s, it created new common inter-
state co-ordinating bodies, which have already under-
taken many of the original state competences, on the
other hand it contributed to disintegrate the previous
non-flexible model of industrialization, characterized by
capital and job concentration as well as depopulation in
peripheral areas and forced introduction of internal
standardization (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983).

The fostering of a more balanced regional develop-
ment resulted also in a strengthening of regional charac-
teristics, which the new model could no longer ignore.

Regional characteristics have in turn always been preserved in Europe by persistent historical and cultural elements of ethnic and linguistic variety. Therefore it is not surprising that the process of European integration based on the new regional development model was accompanied by a parallel process of ethnic or regional awakening of minorities and other local communities (Aarebrot, 1982). Naturally, state authorities, guided by pragmatic criteria, yielded to their demands only to the extent, to which these claims functionally matched the need for a sufficient level of internal decentralization and effective cross-border cooperation. Now the events tendentially leading to a consolidation of internal decentralization and external integration of Western European countries have been suddenly upset by the rapid disruption of apparently static and mainly centralized single-party regimes in the East. Yet the fundamental cause that determined the sudden collapse of these regimes is most probably the same that contributed to the more developed regions' gradual transformation: the obsolescence of a socio-economic paradigm based on centralized industrialization and social standardization, with the difference that in Eastern Europe this development model could not benefit from those important corrective mechanisms that stemmed from Western democratic multi-party systems.

For this reason, what took place in these countries was not a gradual transformation, which in fact was impossible, but radical and mostly instable overthrows which, of course, influenced the whole European and global balance of power. When in future these nations will have completed their internal nation-building processes, they will undoubtedly enter the phase of mutual integration, yet till then a sharpening of national conflicts and other forms of international confrontation, stemming also or mainly from their unstable socio-economic conditions, is to be expected. Quite naturally, all these changes also influence the events in the rest of Europe, where the emergence of a unified Germany and its increasing political and economic influence have destroyed the previously existing balance of power. What has become evident is that the new European order is to be found not only in the integration of the western part of the continent, but in the building of the so-called Common European Home. A home where not only the powerful but also the marginal ethnic and linguistic groups will be well accepted (Bufon, 1996b).

Minority issues are therefore coming to the fore again in a reunited post-1989 Europe. Traditionally, during the nation-building period great attention was devoted to border national minorities that from then on have always been the object of particular treatment. The problem of national minorities became particularly dramatic after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, when new Central European and Balkan states began to shape; frequently these countries were characterized by the presence of extremely ethnically mixed areas and by a huge number of ethnic groups with different levels of cultural, social and economic developments. Within this framework, the principle of the protection of national minorities, recognized as legal subjects, was introduced, but it gave rise to a series of internal and international frictions, which countries tried to solve with the introduction of certain forms of reciprocity (Kymlicka, 1995). As the concept of reciprocity is partially incompatible with the principle of national sovereignty, widely accepted after World War II, in the great majority of cases it was simply removed from international political practice. In the last period, minority issues seem to constitute a real stumbling block in the Central-Eastern European nation-building processes, and have been perceived as a threat to the achieved political stability in Western Europe too. It is no coincidence that among the fundamental conditions for the recognition of new Central-Eastern European states the achievement of a sufficient level of minority protection occupies a pre-eminent role, while for the reasons of political opportunity, Western European countries are considered to have already achieved such a level of protection through international and internal acts.

4. 'UNITY IN DIVERSITY': A POSSIBLE COMMON EUROPEAN CULTURAL RESPONSE TO GLOBALIZATION

The above mentioned situation is well illustrated by the fact that the European Union has not adopted any common policy concerning its minority groups and lesser used languages, even if the European Parliament has produced several resolutions and recommendations in this direction. On the other hand, the Council of Europe introduced, in 1993, a frame convention for national minorities, known as Vienna declaration, and a more detailed European charter for regional or minority languages, which has been up till now actually signed and ratified by only a limited number of European states. Nevertheless, the clash between state apparatus and minority demands has highlighted the management of inter-group relations as the chief security issue of contemporary Europe. The conventional view, held by many Western states until the last period, was that the state should not discriminate against or in favour of particular sub-groups. This view, known under the individual rights approach, is now challenged by an alternative view, the group rights approach, which recognises that there are permanent entities within society whose potential and expectations cannot be met by reference to the recognition of individual rights alone (Williams, 1997). According to this situation, the fundamental 'philosophy' of minority protection has also undergone deep changes, since today the principle of multi-cul-

turalism that goes beyond the traditional concepts of cultural adaptation or rather assimilation is already widely accepted. The complex linguistic and cultural processes we are witnessing in Europe, particularly in the reas of cultural contact, are increasingly influencing the shaping of people's personalities. This makes them 'multi-lingual' and 'multi-cultural', despite the opposition of traditional 'uni-national' political structures. Modern studies on the economic bases of ethnic and social discrimination have drawn attention to the fact that in terms of economic and social costs the keeping of forms of discrimination is much more expensive than their removal. Therefore there is no doubt that these analyses can have a positive effect on pragmatically-oriented political decisions.

For this reason the principle that minorities, and border national minorities in particular, are to enjoy at least a minimum level of protection is already largely accepted as is their right of cultural integration with their mother country. With the abandonment of the old demands for boundary revision, pursued by various nationalistic myths, modern societies are intensifying their efforts to increase border or rather cross-border cooperation and in this framework the spatial function of national minorities is acquiring greater importance. Thus, if on the one hand it is true that the majority or dominant group, independently of its political attitude towards the minority, cannot deprive it of its potential regional role, then on the other hand the actual implementation of this role still very much depends on its institutionalization and wider social promotion (Klemencic and Bufon, 1994).

Research investigations in Central European border areas have shown that the intensity of cross-border cooperation depends above all on the presence on both sides of the border of urbanized areas and also of national minorities, together with traditional cultural and social ties on the basis of consolidated former territorial units (Bufon, 1994 and 1996a). This situation could be explained by the need for the local population to maintain the historical regional structure, which the various border changes destroyed, especially in the gravitational, economic, social and cultural senses. Paradoxically, the greater the problems in the political division of a homogeneous administrative, cultural and economic region, the greater is the probability for such a politically divided area to develop into an integrated border region. These new forms of cross-border regionalisms are of particular interest in Central Europe, where they have not only an important functional role in the implementation of social and economic integration at the inter-state and inter-regional levels, but also in the preservation of cultural features and the strengthening of inter-ethnic coexistence and cooperation. This is especially the case in those areas where there are national minorities or historic cross-border regional communities

present, and such areas are more a rule than exceptions not only in Central Europe.

As Mlinar has argued recently, globalization represents a threat of the deterritorialization of society and space. For neonationalists such processes are anathema to their existence, but globalization process is not merely the sum of its constituent parts, it has a simultaneity of both increased uniformity and increased diversity. New possibilities re-awaken or give birth to alternative identities, practice and preferences. And nowhere is this more evident than in the cultural infrastructure of world cities, with all their multicultural choices and exotic consumption, quite distinct from most of the state's remaining territory. In such a milieu, emerging or re-born linguistic identities are nurtured and expressed; and so o are their opponents who wish to impose a pristine cultural order. Thus, Europe is simultaneously undergoing processes of centralisation and fragmentation. These processes pass through the nation-state and are more and more throwing into relief questions of collective identity between modern and functional aspects of 'demos', and primordial and cultural aspects of 'ethnos'. Culture is therefore going to be one of the key political battlefields in future (Schlesinger, 1992), but is unlikely that a European cultural identity will supersede powerfully entrenched national and ethnic identities.

In this perspective, advocates of an open, culturally plural European social order are seeking to reduce the power of the state by boosting both the power of the region and that of the EU. For the optimist Europe, deepening the idea of multiculturalism, will become the first post-modern, multicultural political system of the twenty-first century. To the pessimist, the combination of 'unity' and 'diversity' will only be a recipe for inefficient federalism and the artificial reproduction of fragmented cultural identities. The fundamental issue which increases tensions concerns the relative autonomy of constituent groups within any policy of multiculturalism. Actually, most minority cultures and lesser used languages are increasingly dependent upon the state for legitimising their access to the media, for granting them permission to establish schools, or for upholding in law several of their key values and principles. The debate is then whether such minority cultures are better respected at an all-European level, rather than within established nation-states. But what about small nations and small nation-states? Are they to be dependent and inexorably tied to the territorial, economic, demographic or political largesse of the state? On the one hand language and culture of minorities and small nations are in danger of being somehow 'expropriated' by external state and super-state forces, while on the other hand globalization and integration processes are reinforcing as powerful as English, French or Russian national community identity in response to the challenge of alternative sub- or super-state identities (Featherstone, 1990).

There is then the contradiction between social change, causing social and spatial mobility, and the influence of stable historical, ethnic and cultural settings. If, on the one hand, it is true that Europe is witnessing an increase in mixed marriages and in social and residential mobility, it is also true that regionalism and different cultural landscapes have an effective influence on the adopted or re-discovered local identity. From this point of view some strategists and macro-economic theorists are arguing that the pace of change and increasing alienation will occasion greater resistance in culturally more traditional societies, particularly in those straddling the fault-line between the EU and Central Europe. Bugajski, for instance, is warning that in multiethnic countries of Central and Eastern Europe with large and territorially compact minorities, cultural, linguistic, religious and regional differences will continue to fan frictions and conflicts, especially if political reforms and administrative decentralization fail to satisfy rising minority aspiration for cultural and political self-determination. But exactly the same arguments are on the base of reflections on the development of neo-nationalism or regionalism in Western Europe. A difference could be detected perhaps in the fact that in Central Europe, in contrast with the situation in the western and eastern part of the continent, given the size and the structure of its nation-states there is closer relation between the cultural (nation) and the functional (state) dimension, which is also deriving from its experience of cultural nationalism. In addition, the cross-border cooperation has transformed previously suspect or fragile Central European strategic regions into pivotal nodes in an expanded European network of communication and trade, between the Germanic and Romance, and the Slavic cultural areas and regions (Bufon, 1998a).

5. CONCLUSION

The persistence of a mosaic of regional, ethnic and national identities in Central Europe has produced a cultural based nationalism, which has led to the fragmentation of obsolete multi-national political and territorial formations, and contrasts sharply with the classical Western European state based nationalism, which in turn has been characterized by a severe internal cultural standardization. In this respect the process of social, economic and political integration, which takes place not only within the EU but, in perspective, between Western and Central Europe and their different historical experiences concerning nationalism too, opens up new problems: the different scales of regionalism, and regionalist movements and demands, which are oriented on a sub-state level in Western European, and on a super-state level in Central European countries, and more generally, the problem of how to combine different territorial identities in a single functional space. Multi-

cultural habits, past political experiences of multi-national coexistence and intensive cross-border relations within the framework of common historical regions seem to facilitate integration of Central European nations in the 'common European home', as they do not have to replace their state-based identity with a super-state one as the dominant Western European nations have, but just to re-locate the same cultural-based identity into a wider functional unit.

The German European orientation is thus very telling. With the reunification, its identity and role in Central Europe has changed for it is no longer just a 'Western' nation. Moreover, whether Central Europe becomes a zone of convergence or divergence within the continent, this depends to a considerable extent on the approach of its most powerful member, assuming that we can preferably expect a European Germany rather than a German Europe. Yet it is not a case that Austria is very keen to rediscover the Austro-Hungarian empire's experiment, stressing its flexible federalism and its liberalism in respecting the rights of small language groups, but also trying to re-establish many of the old historic inter-regional associations, which have found their first expression through the idea of the 'Alpe-Adria' working group, launched in Venice in 1978. Within this frame even past regional centres confined to an inevitable decline by the creation of new boundaries, as in the case of Trieste, are anxious to rekindle old affinities with their usual hinterland (Carter, 1996).

Of course, both 'old' and 'new' European nation-states have to cope with a conservative reaction, which seeks to close, limit and protect the 'national' character of states, particularly from the 'newcomers' and the non-European racial groups, even though it creates tensions also among the autochtonous ethno-linguistic groups and regional communities, who have now to deal with globalization processes, posing a threat to the conventional territorial relationships and opening up new forms of inter-regional and global information, and multi-service networks. Nevertheless, Central Europe seems to be an area of extreme interest for the study of different simultaneous identities and their transformations, which is corresponding to the study of political and cultural borders in a spatial context where geography and place are periodically reinterpreted and transformed. Political boundaries are currently re-emerging and receding again as one those numerous elements which denote the diversity of cultural and social settings, from which people constantly depart or to which they return in their everyday life, and in which they feel 'at home'. This original diverse territorial affiliation has been restricted by nationalism to only nation-state patriotism, where variegated conglomerate of local and regional communities had to standardize into a single national entity. Nowadays modern electronic society on the one hand confines time and space to a virtual reality on the

surface of a PC or TV monitor, while on the other hand it stretches it to the last outpost of the global village (Bufon, 1998b).

Once again Europe, the mother-land of nationalism, and the continent where political borders and different territorial and cultural identities are mostly inter-related, is facing new challenges of how to represent, in the best possible way, its numerous interests within one system. From this point of view, the Central European experience in terms of ethnic fragmentation and inter-ethnic relations between cultural coexistence and national conflicts could give a response, which can be useful to understand how the current transformations concerning globalization and deterritorialization effect the persistent maintenance of regional, ethnic and national identities, and the corresponding cultural spaces. One of the key questions in future European political-geographical developments is thus to find a new way between convergence and divergence tendencies in the social, cultural, economic and political sphere, the other, to work out if the European programme, which could be summarized in terms of 'unity in diversity', is not only practicable but also exportable on a world-wide scale. Otherwise, nationalism, as a pre-eminent European phenomenon, will have to face and be absorbed by a new global 'melting-pot' future development.

DRUŽBENI IN PROSTORSKI PROBLEMI GLOBALIZACIJE IN NACIONALIZMA V SREDNJI EVROPI

Milan BUFON

Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Republike Slovenije Koper, SI-6000 Koper, Garibaldijeva 18
e-mail: milan.bufon@zrs-kp.si

POVZETEK

Prispevek obravnava različne odnose in vidike nacionalizma in globalizacije v posebnem delu evropskega kontinenta, to je v Srednji Evropi. Čeprav ne obstajajo širše sprejete definicije o tem, kaj naj pod imenom in pojmom "Srednja Evropa" dejansko razumemo, še posebno glede geografske opredelitve tega območja, pa lahko vendarle trdimo, da ima Srednja Evropa samosvoj in izviren položaj ravno do fenomenov nacionalizma in globalizacije. Ta del Evrope namreč označuje mozaična persistenca različnih regionalnih, etničnih in nacionalnih identitet, ki je omogočila razvoj posebne vrste nacionalnega gibanja, ki prvenstveno temelji na kulturi in kulturni pestrosti. Kulturni nacionalizem je tako tudi v najnovejšem obdobju privedel do nadaljnje fragmentacije srednjeevropske politične karte in delitve tukajšnjih večnacionalnih državnih sistemov, in se v tem pogledu javlja kot nekakšno nasprotje klasičnemu zahodnoevropskemu državnemu nacionalizmu, ki je osnovan na notranji družbeni in kulturni standardizaciji oziroma homogenizaciji. Zaradi tega odpira proces družbene, ekonomske in politične integracije, ki se odvija ne le znotraj držav članic EU, ampak v perspektivi tudi med Zahodno in Srednjo Evropo in njunimi različnimi zgodovinskimi izkušnjami pri razvoju nacionalnih gibanj, nove in aktualne probleme. Ti zadevajo vprašanje različne orientacije regionalizma in različne regionalne zahteve, ki so usmerjene na poddržavno teritorialno raven v Zahodni in na naddržavno v Srednji Evropi, ter v širšem smislu vprašanje povezovanja različnih teritorialnih identitet v enotni funkcionalni prostor, kakršnega predstavlja EU. Iz tega zornega kota ponuja srednjeevropska izkušnja v smislu etnične fragmentacije in razvoja interetničnih odnosov med kulturno koeksistenco in nacionalnimi konflikti zanimiv odgovor in model, ki utegne biti zelo koristen za razumevanje načina, kako sodobne transformacije v zvezi z globalizacijo in družbeno deteritorializacijo vplivajo na persistentne oblike regionalnih, etničnih in narodnih oziroma nacionalnih identitet ter spreminjanje njihovih odgovarjajočih kulturnih prostorov. Eno izmed osnovnih vprašanj bodočega politično-geografskega razvoja evropskega kontinenta je namreč naslednje: kako oblikovati novo razvojno strategijo med konvergenčnimi in divergenčnimi tendencami na družbenem, kulturnem, ekonomskem in političnem področju ter na osnovi te preveriti ali je novi evropski civilizacijski program, ki bi ga lahko povzeli z geslom "združeni v različnosti", ne le mogoč, ampak tudi uporaben na širši svetovni ravni. Alternativa taki strategiji bi bila, da se nacionalizem, kot izraziti evropski fenomen, sooči in združi z nekim novim globalnim razvojnim trendom svetovnega "talilnega lonca".

Ključne besede: Srednja Evropa, nacionalizem, globalizacija, ohranjanje kulturne različnosti v pogojih družbenega in ekonomskega povezovanja

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