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## **In Search of Identity: Nationalism and Religion in Eastern Europe**

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At the beginning of the 1990s an anecdote was very popular in Bulgaria: ‘Someone asks radio Yerevan how many European states there will be in the year 2000. The answer is: eight, namely, the United States of Europe, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro.’ We might also add the former Soviet republics.

The anonymous author of this anecdote has aptly expressed the two simultaneous trends in the social–economic, political and cultural processes in Europe after the Fall of the Berlin Wall: on the one hand, the striving for, and concrete steps towards, the further development of supranational spaces and entities at different levels, such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; and on the other hand, renationalisation and regionalisation, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Unfortunately, this disintegration reflects the separatist nationalistic attitudes suppressed for some decades under the cover of internationalist ideology and practice, and its extreme expressions were the bloody events in former Yugoslavia and Nagorny Karabakh, which once again reminded us of the importance of interethnic tolerance.

One of the best television reports that I have seen on the war in former Yugoslavia ended with the revelation of a Russian volunteer: ‘There aren’t any atheists in the trenches here!’ I had the opportunity to see personally the gaping wounds of the war during my trip from Rijeka to Dubrovnik in April 1994, and through conversations and discussions with people of different nationalities and denominations to feel the subtle insidious bonds between their sense of ethnic belonging and their intimate religiosity, which were so skilfully exploited by unscrupulous politicians and military men. The Orthodox and the Catholic faiths were unalterable characteristics of the Serbian and the Croatian population. This gave a new – sacred! – dimension to the resentment and the hatred.

Thus I came to the idea, more emotionally than rationally, of investigating the relations and alliances between two essential phenomena of the history of humankind – religion and nationalism – in their specific forms and relations in postcommunist European societies. Because of my position as a witness and participant in the hectic and often surprising events in this region, this paper is far from claiming to give cool diagnoses or to commit itself to lofty prognoses. This is not only because the specific character of these very historical processes makes the ground for such claims fairly questionable. My primary aim is to understand and explain better the world I am living in: typically behind the academic concepts and constructions concerning

ongoing radical social–political transformations are hidden thousands of human fates.

In this work I seek to examine postcommunist nationalism – its historical background and preconditions, its social–cultural origin and nature, its normative basis and its contemporary manifestations – in the light of the increasingly growing influence of its ideology and practice. I argue that, in comparison with the primarily secular and rational–political character of the nationalism which emerged at the end of the eighteenth century in Western Europe, the ‘later’ nationalism which arose in the nineteenth century in Central and Eastern Europe can be interpreted more as a ‘secular–religious’ phenomenon. It was based to a great extent on religious–cultural differences, it developed within and through religious communities and institutions, and it used religious symbols and certain elements of religious doctrines. My contention is that its postcommunist inheritor (in the distinct forms it takes in different countries) is making use of the same arsenal and could be construed as a specific political religion. In this context, I analyse the role of religion in its inter-relatedness with Eastern European nationalism: on the one hand, as a catalyst for delimitation, alienation and animosity towards the ‘other’, and on the other hand, as a factor which creates and preserves identity and stimulates intrasocietal integration.

### **Historical and Social–Cultural Reconstruction of the Problem of Nationalism and Nations**

Questions about the essence and forms of nationalism lead to a large variety of answers, descriptions and definitions. They preoccupy people in different humanitarian fields – historians, social and political scientists, philosophers, social anthropologists. Imanuel Geiss remarks that ‘nation and nationalism belong to those 1001 themes on which not even two scholars are at one with each other’.<sup>1</sup> However, all scholars are unanimous about the intricacies of the phenomenon that make it so resistant to one-dimensional conceptualisations. Nationalism is connected both with the building of nations and national states, and with already existing ethnic identities and communities. It can take various forms: religious, conservative, liberal, fascist, communist, cultural, political, integrationalist, separatist. That is why careful research on nationalism presupposes an interdisciplinary approach and perspective.

In this section I seek to present the essential problem areas, theses and ideas connected with nationalism on the basis of some of the most influential studies on the subject. In my presentation I retain a critical distance from some of the predictions about the end of nationalism, the untenability of which came to the surface in the perspective of the events in Eastern Europe after the collapse of communism.

#### *Towards a Definition of the Key Concepts*

The main difficulties with respect to the definition of the concepts of nationalism and nation are connected with the unavoidable failure of efforts to find agreed and adequate formulae about these multifarious and multiform phenomena. The concept of nationalism may be interpreted positively, for instance, when it is considered to be a factor in personal and societal self-definition, a doctrine of freedom and sovereignty, or an agent in movements for freedom and emancipation. But it may be explained in negative terms as well – when it inspires intolerance, arrogance, hostility and oppression of other nations, and thus constructs new ‘us’–‘them’ boundaries. Nationalism may tolerate modernisation and social–cultural development, but at the same time it may be a synonym for an artificial mythologisation of

the past and the instrumentalisation of ethnic, religious and cultural differences. As Peter Alter has found,

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries on the plea of nationalism the historically-developed great multinational states such as the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburg monarchy or the Soviet Union were split up into numerous successor states. In the last one-and-a-half centuries on the plea of nationalism new states such as Greece, Italy, Germany, Finland and Poland have come into being. In the late nineteenth century nationalist interests were important incentives for the colonial expansion of the European powers. ... In the name of nationalism wars were waged and atrocious crimes committed. ... On the other hand, hopes for a free and just social order were bound up with nationalism. ... Nationalism contains, it seems, opportunities and risks. It appears in so many different forms and 'national' expressions that there are often doubts as to whether all these refer to one and the same object. ... This implies inevitably, at least for the time being, the following conclusion: there is not just *one* nationalism. ... That is why it would probably be more appropriate to speak about *nationalisms* instead of nationalism.<sup>2</sup>

Despite these difficulties, efforts at analysis and interpretation are going on, perhaps because the phenomenon itself – in defiance of certain prognoses of decay – has turned out to be so alive and has even experienced new reincarnations in the last few decades.

The term 'nationalism' was used for the first time in 1774 in a work by Johann Gottfried Herder, and has spread into everyday language since the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> According to Hans Kohn, one of the fathers of nationalism studies, nationalism is a phenomenon which brings together, as though into focus, all problems of modern history and the present day. It is deemed to be first of all 'a state of mind'. In his historical investigation *The Idea of Nationalism*, the author has traced back and analysed the origin and development of nationalism as ideology and practice. Before the rise of nationalism at the end of the eighteenth century, religion was the great force dominating political and cultural life. At that time the dividing lines did not coincide with national frontiers, but with the borders of religious civilisations. That is why the rise of nationalities and of nationalism was accompanied by a modification in the religiosity of the people. Religion exerted a sometimes constructive and sometimes obstructive influence on nation-building. Occasionally religious confrontations divided or weakened nationalities. In some cases they contributed to the emergence of new nations, as in the case of the Catholic Croats and the Orthodox Serbs. National churches frequently sustained and protected the national identity. In international conflicts religious differences played an important role in defence mechanisms, especially of weaker nationalities, as in the cases of Catholicism in Ireland and in Prussian Poland.<sup>4</sup>

Sociologists have pointed out to the intimate relation between nationalist and religious movements. Both have an inspirational and sometimes revivalist character. 'Both of them are fundamentally cultural movements with incidental political consequences'.<sup>5</sup> These consequences, however, are not incidental; rather, they have been conditioned by the stages of historical development. At a given time in history, religion, essentially a spiritual movement, had very fundamental and substantial political impli-

cations. It molded and dominated politics and society. At present, the same is true of nationalism.<sup>6</sup>

The historian Eugen Lemberg has construed nationalism as an ideology which creates demarcations and integration simultaneously:

Hence what makes nations nations, or – generally speaking – what binds together big social groups into self-conscious, active, national, or nation-like communities, and demarcates them from their environment, is not any common quality such as shared language, origin, character, culture, or submission to a common state authority. Quite the opposite: it is a system of notions, values and norms, a picture of the world and society; and this means an ideology, which makes a group, designated by any of the above-mentioned characteristics, conscious of its common belonging, and ascribes to this common belonging unique value; in other words it integrates this group and demarcates it from its environment.<sup>7</sup>

Eric Hobsbawm has drawn upon Ernest Gellner's explanation of nationalism as first of all 'a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent', but has criticised his preference for the perspective of 'modernisation from above', because it 'makes it difficult to pay adequate attention to the view from below'. Nations, these 'dual phenomena', are constructed essentially from above, but they cannot be understood correctly without an analysis 'from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist'.<sup>8</sup> Hobsbawm interprets nation as a product of an intentional, continued and often oppressive activity. For him the primary meaning of nation has been of a political nature and the 'principle of nationality' itself has had reality since 1830. In this perspective, nationalism has been only one of the new ideologies of the nineteenth century, which have had immediate, concrete and rapid political confirmation.

The 'principle of nationality' which diplomats debated and which changed the map of Europe in the period from 1830 to 1878 was thus different from the political phenomenon of nationalism which became increasingly central in the era of European democratization and mass politics. In the days of Mazzini it did not matter that, for the great bulk of Italians, the Risorgimento did not exist so that, as Massimo d'Azeglio admitted in the famous phrase: 'We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians'.<sup>9</sup>

A review of the published literature shows that nationalism has been defined as 'spiritual constitution' ('*Geistesverfassung*'),<sup>10</sup> as 'political principle',<sup>11</sup> or as 'integration ideology'.<sup>12</sup> Another group of investigators have tended to interpret nationalism through its affinity with religion. Carlton Hayes wrote an essay 'Nationalism as a Religion'.<sup>13</sup> Heinrich Winkler called it 'Ersatz religion' ('*Religionersatz*').<sup>14</sup> According to Eric Voegelin, nationalism has been one of the 'political religions' of Modernity.<sup>15</sup> Elie Kedouri has interpreted it as a form of secular millenarianism.<sup>16</sup>

The attempts at explanation of the concept of nation seem to be burdened with similar disagreements and controversies to those connected with the concept of nationalism, and this seems inevitable, bearing in mind their theoretical and practical reciprocity. Generally, most of the authors share the vision of nation not as a 'substance', but as an intellectually constructed order (*eine gedachte Ordnung*), in which

the variability and the differing practical relevance of the notions of nation come clearly to the surface. ... According to the character of the intellectually constructed orders, through the concept of nation different elements of social reality have been explained and raised as points of reference and orientation for actions.<sup>17</sup>

The authors use different starting-points to explain the essence of nation and this logically leads to different emphases and interpretations. Some scholars investigate the historical origin and the 'ethnic origins of nation'.<sup>18</sup>

While we can no longer regard the nation as a given of social existence, a 'primordial' and natural unit of human association outside time, neither can we accept that it is a wholly modern phenomenon, be it a 'nervous tic of capitalism' or the necessary form and culture of an industrial society.<sup>19</sup>

Another group of authors endorse the ideologically constructed and determined nature of nation. Benedict Anderson designates nation as 'imagined community' and the German translation of the title of his book (*Die Erfindung der Nation*) underscores the idea of artificial invention.<sup>20</sup> Eric Hobsbawm considers nation as 'pseudo-community', constructed through the 'invention of traditions'.<sup>21</sup> According to Ernest Gellner, nation is an 'invented community'.<sup>22</sup>

The formulations surveyed above can be seen as specific expressions of the vision of nation as a historically powerful, but not inevitable, form of collective identity. Another articulation of this vision, extremely popular in the last two decades, interprets nation as *socially constructed* rather than naturally given. As Bernhard Giesen points out,

Already German romanticism imagined nation as a project which had to be artificially fulfilled. In the new comparative study of nations an empirical glance at the multitude of nations leads to the assumption that this multitude is not a substratum, but a *result of political development* and cultural *modification*. ... The perspective thus delineated opens up a new horizon for comparison: besides the multitude of nations, the differences of the historical epochs come to the fore, in which national identity is asserted and defined all the time in a different manner by the different social 'bearing groups', and in respect of different cultural traditions.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Question of Types of Nations*

Generally the various types of national identity differ in the features they emphasise and to a greater or lesser extent manifest themselves in the complex relations between nation and state.

Views about the 'foci' of national identities in the study of nationalism vary not so much in their content as in their emphasis on one or another aspect. Following the classification of Bernd Estel, one may identify the following aspects:

- One or more (distinguishing) *qualities*, combining and expressing the 'essential' features of the nation and of the individuals belonging to it;
- One or more *events* of extraordinary or sacred character and of crucial importance for the origin and/or the building of the nation;
- Particular *values*, which have to be collectively carried out: they impart to the nation dignity and are often connected with fulfilment of a special *mission* by the means of which a given nation identifies itself.<sup>24</sup>

Typically, those who define nationalism as ‘integration ideology’ accentuate the following major points:

- Homogeneity – be it ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, or simply based on a shared historical destiny – which bestows a feeling of being different, a consciousness of extraordinariness in relation to other social groups and entities;
- Development of the consciousness that the given national group has to follow a particular political task or historical mission, which later becomes the core of the national ideology;
- Harking back to shared natural or historical origins and hence to an ancestry or a historical community.<sup>25</sup>

How should we interpret these foci or aspects of national identities in the perspective of the debate about the relations between nation and state, which has acquired new practical significance in the last decade? A great many of the theoretical constructions are based explicitly or implicitly on the famous differentiation between state-nation (*Staatsnation*)<sup>26</sup> and cultural nation (*Kulturnation*), suggested by Friedrich Meinecke:

We conceive nations here not in their initial origins, which as a rule, as already mentioned, go back to a coalescence of small clans and groups, but in their developed stage. ... We can divide nations into cultural and state-nations: into those which rest basically on a certain commonly experienced cultural possession, and those which rest basically on the unifying power of a shared political history and constitution. Shared language, shared literature, and shared religion are the most important and effective cultural goods that create and hold a cultural nation together.<sup>27</sup>

Thus the state-nation is oriented towards the idea of individual and collective self-definition as nation; belonging to a state is equated with belonging to a nation. The state-nation arises as a result of an internal process of transformation, as a politically conscious community of citizens, equal before the law, regardless of their social and economic place, ethnic origin and religious belief. According to the definition of Ernest Renan, nation is ‘an everyday plebiscite’. The classic examples he refers to are France, Great Britain and the United States. In contrast to them, cultural nations are oriented according to such criteria as shared origin, language, religion, customs, history and dwelling-region. The sense of community develops independently from the state. This is the specific characteristic in the rise of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>28</sup>

This differentiation has its opponents, who insist upon a strict demarcation between nation and state. According to Hugh Seton-Watson,

The distinction between ‘cultural nation’ (a community united by language or religion or historical mythology or other cultural bonds) and ‘political nation’ (a community which in addition to cultural bonds also possesses a legal state structure) has at times been useful, but too often has been misused.<sup>29</sup>

The author emphasises that centrality of the distinction between states and nations to his study and argues powerfully that

States can exist without a nation, or with several nations, among their subjects; and a nation can be coterminous with the population of one state,

or be included together with other nations within one state, or be divided between several states. There were states long before there were nations, and there are some nations that are much older than most states which exist today. The belief that every state is a nation, or that all sovereign states are national states, has done much to obfuscate human understanding of political realities. A state is a legal and political organization, with the power to require obedience and loyalty from its citizens. A nation is a community of people, whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture, a national consciousness.<sup>30</sup>

However, for most scholars the typology ‘state-nation’ *versus* ‘cultural nation’ retains its innovative and constructive significance. It has often been developed further and amplified. On the basis of his understanding of nation as ‘primarily an intellectually constructed order, a culturally determined notion which defines the collective of people as an entity’ and asserting that nation does not have a natural origin, but is merely an order of social living which alters with time and adjusts to the constellations of power, M. Rainer Lepsius suggests the following classification:

- People-nation (*Volksnation*): organised on an ethnic basis and constitutionally indifferent.
- Cultural nation (*Kulturnation*): organised on the ground of a common culture shared by its members.
- Class-nation (*Klassennation*): a new notion for the identification of a national state. Its theoretical and practical development provides an example of the high resilience of the concept of nation and of its vulnerability to manipulation by the elites in power.
- Nation of state citizens (*Staatsbürgernation*): established politically on the normative basis of legally interpreted individual rights.<sup>31</sup>

Rudolf Stichweh discusses nations and national states from the perspective of the idea of world-society (*Weltgesellschaft*). The relation between nation and state has been historically developed in two alternative directions. On the one hand, there has been a continuous deliberate attempt at unifying and moulding particular already existing states and their citizens; France and Spain provide typical examples of this process. On the other hand, the endeavour to establish a state organisation, or to gain political autonomy, has often been motivated by the postulated existence of a nation, as in the cases of Italy and Germany. Consequently, the author differentiates ‘political *versus* ethnic nations’. The definition of nation as ‘a society which is a community’ (‘eine Gesellschaft, die eine Gemeinschaft ist’) implies the ‘intermediary place’ of nation and national state in social-cultural processes. Thus their place is ‘between bondage to traditionally secured local units and the ambiguity of the world-society which is leading worldwide, through all imaginable communications, to the unity of one and only one system’. Nation provides a relatively stable identification and this assures it a decisive advantage in comparison with the vagueness of ‘world-society’ on the one hand and with the exhausted capacities of local settings on the other. In this sense, emphasises Stichweh, national identification and the exalting of nationalism – as Karl Deutsch had already noted in the 1960s – have to be understood as a consequence of social mobilisation and the growing expectancy and insecurity caused by it. Facing this insecurity, the success of nation proceeds to a great extent from the fact that in a certain sense nation *excludes inequality* (because it externalises it in the world-society) and *includes a seeming equality* (of all members



of the nation). Very important seems also to be ‘the guarantee of a relative cultural homogeneity inwards and ... the maintenance, and even reinforcement, of cultural differentiation between particular national states’.<sup>32</sup>

When we consider the workings of the world-society, claims Stichweh, we have to pay attention first of all to ‘the diminution or reinterpretation of national-cultural idiosyncrasies, insofar as they are incompatible with the other cultures in the world-society’. This is especially important ‘for those national states which take upon themselves a leading political role in the system of the world-society ... the states which demonstrate such a cultural-missionary trait are thereby deprived in the system of the world-society’. The world-society standardises particular components of national statehood in the form of national sovereignty. However, the historical preconditions for the building of a worldwide structure go back to medieval Christianity, to the jurisprudence of Rome. They can be seen in

the vision that above the level of single states there exists a political macro-order which has the form of a republic, in the expansion of the European state system among states outside Europe, in natural law, and in the formulation of the idea of human rights and related semantic traditions.<sup>33</sup>

Hence the optimal social-political and cultural development is seen in ‘world-society’ as a political system in which ‘the national states are acting as constitutive units’ and which puts all the states on the same footing through ‘the equal basic structure of national sovereignty’.<sup>34</sup>

*Nationalism and the National State: Some Historical Analyses and Prognoses in Nationalism Studies*

Nationalism has its political, economic and cultural preconditions, often rooted deeply in the past. According to the historian Hans Kohn such factors as language, territory and traditions and such sentiments as attachment to the native soil, to the *Heimat* and to the kin<sup>35</sup> assume different positions in the scale of values when the community psychology changes. Both the idea and the first forms of nationalism emerged before the age of nationalism. The idea goes back to natural group feeling of common descent and to the missionary consciousness of the ancient Hebrew and Greek civilisations. It was revived in Europe later, at the time of the Renaissance and the Reformation.<sup>36</sup> Despite the fact that national peculiarities began to manifest themselves in a conscious form with the break-up of the medieval universal order, that time cannot be conceived as a nationalistic epoch; it was generally dominated by religious faith and sentiments. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the nationally-based states of Western Europe still considered themselves to be parts of the one Christian world; but the end of the same century registered the end of the medieval universalism. However, this end brought about statism and not nationalism. Only in the closing eighteenth century did nationalism begin to legitimise the state. The new state for its part promoted the nationalisation of religion. The later bond between the state and nationalism was a consequence of the separation of state and church. During the French Revolution the idea of nationalism was infused into the political form of a modern centralised sovereign state. This state integrated the masses politically and culturally into a nation.<sup>37</sup>

In principle, as Kohn notes,

Nationality, which is nothing but a fragment of humanity, tends to set

itself up as the whole. Generally this ultimate conclusion is not drawn, because ideas predating the age of nationalism continue to exercise their influence. These ideas form the essence of Western civilization – of Christianity as well as of enlightened rationalism: the faith in the oneness of humanity and the ultimate value of individual. Only fascism, the uncompromising enemy of Western civilization, has pushed nationalism to its very limit, to a totalitarian nationalism, in which humanity and the individual disappear and nothing remains but nationality, which has become the one and the whole.<sup>38</sup>

National characteristics, according to Kohn, are a product of social and intellectual processes. They are neither prehistorically nor biologically determined. Kohn outlines clearly the patterns of nation-building in Western and Eastern Europe.

While the formation of national characters has gone on through many centuries, the crystallization has taken place in the age of nationalism. In the Western world, in England and France, in the Netherlands and in Switzerland, in the United States and in the British dominions, the rise of nationalism was a predominantly political occurrence; it was preceded by the formation of the future national state, or, as in the case of the United States, coincided with it. Outside the Western world, in Central and Eastern Europe and in Asia, nationalism arose not only later, but also generally at a more backward stage of social and political development: the frontiers of an existing state and of a rising nationality rarely coincided; nationalism, there, grew in protest against and in conflict with the existing state pattern – not primarily to transform it into a people's state, but to redraw the political boundaries in conformity with ethnographic demands. ... Nationalism in the West arose in an effort to build a nation in the political reality and the struggles of the present without too much sentimental regard to the past; nationalists in Central and Eastern Europe created often, out of the myths of the past and the dreams of the future, an ideal fatherland, closely linked with the past, devoid of any immediate connection with the present and expected to become sometime a political reality. ... While Western nationalism was, in its origin, connected with the concepts of individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism current in the eighteenth century, the later nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe and in Asia easily tended towards a contrary development. Dependent upon, and opposed to, influences from without, this new nationalism, not rooted in a political and social reality, lacked self-assurance; its inferiority complex was often compensated by over-emphasis and over-confidence. ... Nationalism in the West was based upon a nationality which was a product of social and political factors; nationalism in Germany did not find its justification in a rational societal conception, it found it in the 'natural' fact of a community, held together, not by the will of its members nor by any obligations of contract, but by traditional ties of kinship and status. German nationalism substituted for the legal and rational concept of 'citizenship' the infinitely vaguer concept of 'folk', which, first discovered by the German humanists, was later fully developed by Herder and German romanticists. ... This difference in the concepts of nation and nationalism was a historical consequence of the difference in effect produced by Renaissance and Reformation between Germany and Western Europe.<sup>39</sup>

All this goes together with a considerable distance between state and society ('as if belonging to two different worlds') – a situation that lasted in Germany until the later nineteenth century and in Russia until the twentieth century. 'In both cases the state molded and shaped the society'.<sup>40</sup>

Russian and German influences met in the Eastern European zone that stretched from the Baltic to the Aegean Sea and separated the Western from the Eastern Empire. The eastern zone was far less consolidated than the western zone. The different ethnic groups living there lacked both political and spiritual integration. In Eastern Europe the age of nationalism began with the Greek war of independence. The national consciousness of the Southern Slavs awoke much later. Differences in religion and tradition divided them much more strongly between the West and the East than other Slavs.<sup>41</sup>

Hence the age of nationalism deepened distinctions among the peoples. The two different understandings of nationalism were expressed through the concepts of 'nation' and 'fatherland'. The one was first of all a rational universal concept emphasising political liberty and the rights of man. It was future-oriented, looking towards a society of free individuals.

The other was basically founded on history, on monuments and graveyards, even harking back to the mysteries of ancient times and of tribal solidarity. It stressed the past, the diversity and self-sufficiency of nations. ... In the new age nationalism, taking the place of religion, is as diversified in its manifestations and aspirations as religion itself. Yet in all its diversities it fulfills one great task – giving meaning to man's life.<sup>42</sup>

At the end of the German edition of *The Idea of Nationalism* Hans Kohn expresses a cheerful vision of a post-Second World War age of pan-nationalism. In this new epoch free national life would lay the foundations of the world-citizenship anticipated by the thinkers of the Enlightenment.<sup>43</sup> However, events some decades later revealed this optimistic picture to be precipitate.

Undoubtedly the model of national state has imposed itself as the dominant paradigm in modern European history. This model is, however, by no means fixed once and for all, but has its historical development, its phases and stages. According to Theodor Schieder the history of the national state in Europe is a whole epoch in itself. It has

its common characteristics and forms of appearance up to the national symbols and the repository of the political language. The paradox of this national state epoch lies exactly in the fact that, by ever more intensifying national differentiation, the unity of the same, or similar, historical principles is still preserved.<sup>44</sup>

The author distinguishes three stages in the history of the principle of the national state: Western, Central and Eastern European.

During the first stage, the modern nations of England and France established themselves through a revolution within the state, in which the community of citizens settled the state anew on the basis of particular political values and – at least in France – on the will of the people, the *volonté générale* in the sense of Rousseau. The subjective declaration of belonging to a national state, and not the language, the *Volksgeist* or the national character, is the only sign of a political nationality. Nation is first

of all a community of state citizens, and not a language or folk community. ... The second stage witnesses the appearance of national states through the bringing together of separated parts of nations; this was the hour of the movements for national unity in Germany and Italy. Their ground was entirely different from the French idea of nation. In the German part of Central Europe, where no extended statehood with a settled union of state citizens such as in France existed, an entirely non-politically understood idea of a people developed from the time of Herder. It was deemed to exist before and above the state as a creative power which should express itself in the language and in a peculiar *Volksgeist*. ... During the third stage ... the great empires and kingdoms – the Polish–Lithuanian, the Swedish, the Ottoman, the Habsburg, the Russian – acquired a crucial historical place. Of these great monarchies ... the Habsburg–Austrian, the Russian and the Ottoman persisted to the very age of national movements in the twentieth century; they became the preferred scene for these movements whose consciousness developed not *on the base of*, but *against* the states, called by their antagonists ‘prisons of the peoples’. ... In the domain of the great dynastic kingdoms, the national state was built not by uniting the separated parts, but by *disjunction*, by secession. All East–Central European states which wanted to be national states, from Serbia, Greece, via Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, to the lands of the Baltic boundary zone, arose through disjunction from the great kingdoms. This has been of basic importance for their political consciousness; it explains certain militant, aggressive traits of theirs. ... The three European stages of the national movement fall in the time between 1789 and 1919; each of them brings a sharpening in respect of the previous.<sup>45</sup>

Schieder’s historical examination leads him to the idea that ‘the hour of the national state in Europe has run its course’. He sees the need to develop means of overcoming national diversity in the European community as an immediate agenda and predicts: ‘When the national state ceases to be a quasi-religious value, the European convulsion could resolve itself.’<sup>46</sup>

It is not difficult to discern a trend common among the scholars who study nationalism from a historical perspective. They often have a distant relationship with the contemporary social and political dynamics of the nationalist movements and are inclined to prognosticate the end of the national state in the name of a pan-, post- or supra-national social order supposed to emerge within a foreseeable future. Unfortunately, reality at the end of the twentieth century does not seem to be taking this seriously.

According to Hobsbawm (who also resolutely criticises the project of the ethnically determined national state<sup>47</sup>)

The links between religion and national consciousness can be very close, as the examples of Poland and Ireland demonstrate. In fact, the relation seems to be grow closer where nationalism becomes a mass force than in its phase as a minority ideology and activists’ movement. ... Yet religion is a paradoxical cement for proto-nationalism, and indeed for modern nationalism, which has usually (at least in its more crusading phases) treated it with considerable reserve as a force which could challenge the ‘nation’s’ monopoly claim to its members’ loyalty. ... On the other hand

the world religions ... are universal by definition, and therefore designed to fudge ethnic, linguistic, political and other differences.<sup>48</sup>

However, the author fails to pay attention to the historical fact that the 'transnational religions' have as a rule experienced various splits and have often existed in ethnically or nationally defined forms.

Further reflection on ethnic-religious identification leads Hobsbawm to the conclusion that

conversion to different religions can help to create two different nationalities, for it is certainly Roman Catholicism (and its by-product, the Latin script) and Orthodoxy (with its by-product, the Cyrillic script) which has most obviously divided Croats from Serbs, with whom they share a single language of culture. But, then again, there are peoples which clearly possessed some proto-national consciousness, such as Albanians, while divided by numerous religious differences.<sup>49</sup>

Hobsbawm is unanimous with Gellner that 'a people's junction with larger cultures, especially literate cultures, which is often mediated by a conversion to a variant of a world religion, does allow ethnic groups to acquire assets which may later help to turn them into nations and to structure them as such'.<sup>50</sup>

Hobsbawm's conclusions just show once again how complicated, contradictory and unpredictable the link between nation and religion is, and how contestable all generalisations and theoretical constructions on this matter are.

Hobsbawm dismisses statements that the birthday of the political idea of nation and national consciousness was 1789, the year of the French Revolution, as nothing more than 'exercises in programmatic mythology'. He takes a critical stance to the call of Mazzini: 'Every nation a state, only one state for the entire nation'.<sup>51</sup> According to Hobsbawm, nationalism has its phases of development and the nationalism of 1880–1914 differs greatly from that of the Mazzinian phase. Hobsbawm argues that nationalism reached its apogee during the period 1918–1950. The triumph of the 'principle of nationality' at the end of the First World War was a result of the collapse of the multinational empires in Central and Eastern Europe and of the Russian Revolution. After the Second World War it became clear that the programme of the homogeneous territorial nation 'could be realized only by barbarians, or at least by barbarian means'.<sup>52</sup> Subsequently, the Marxist theorist comes to his general conclusion that the national state today is an anachronism and that striving after national independence on a state level can be seen only as a phenomenon of 'balkanization'. In the German edition of *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* one reads:

The national movements typical of the last third of the twentieth century are essentially negative, or more precisely separatist. They insist on 'ethnic belonging' and language differences, partly connected with religion. On the one hand, one can see in them successors, or occasionally inheritors, of the small state movements which set themselves against the Habsburg, the Ottoman, or the Russian Empires, that is, against the forms of political organisation which were seen as historically overcome in the name of a (perhaps misunderstood) political model – the *national state*. On the other hand, most of them are exactly the opposite, namely, a rejection of modern forms of political organisation on a national as well as on a supra-national level. Again and again they give the impression that they

are reactions out of weakness and fear, attempts to erect barricades against the powers of the modern world.<sup>53</sup>

Hobsbawm is eager to express his nostalgia for 'the great achievement of the communist regimes':

As we can see now in melancholy retrospect, it was the great achievement of the communist regimes in multinational countries to limit the disastrous effects of nationalism within them. The Yugoslav revolution succeeded in preventing the nationalities within its state frontiers from massacring each other certainly for longer than before in their history, though this achievement has now unfortunately crumbled. The USSR's potential for national disruption, so long kept in check (except during World War II), is now patent. ... Indeed, it may be argued that the current wave of ethnic or mini-ethnic agitation is a response to the overwhelmingly non-ethnic and non-nationalist principles of state formation in the greater part of the twentieth-century world. However, this does not mean that such ethnic reactions provide in any sense an alternative principle for the political restructuring of the world in the twenty-first century.<sup>54</sup>

And here it must be asked whether the author's admiration for the antinationalist 'achievement' of the communist regimes – a term which the people who had to enjoy this and many other achievements under communism would find fairly contestable – can be employed as an argument in defence of the predicted end of the national state and the emergence of a 'supranational new order'.

However, the idea of the overcoming of nation is in no way a product of contemporary thought. It constitutes an essential trend in the secular hopes of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century utopian ideologies about a new humanity and finds attempts at its political fulfilment first of all in the secular promises of Marxism.<sup>55</sup> In a broad historical perspective, nationalism is one of the modern secular-religious messianic movements towards world harmony. Nations are deemed to act as the necessary mediators between person and humankind, and to ensure the particular national ways of universal political–revolutionary messianism.<sup>56</sup>

Yet theorists are far from unanimous when discussing the future of the national state. Some tend to see its inevitable end already at hand. But most of them admit that nationalism and the national state have their firm roots in the psychology and the behaviour of people on the one hand and in international politics on the other. Prophecies of Francis Fukuyama's type about the triumph of western democracy over 'toothless and meaningless European nationalism'<sup>57</sup> turn out to be precipitate. Visions of a 'postnational society', current until not long ago, are questioned by the emergence of a whole range of new national states.

Not only has the 'national state' as a supreme principle of social organisation obviously been experiencing its 'renaissance' recently ... also the 'return of the people' – or better in the plural: 'the peoples' – must itself be acknowledged, and we should add that these phenomena ... have the weight of real factors, and are developing a considerable current historical influence.<sup>58</sup>

In this sense,

It is not the idea of nation that must be overcome in Europe, but the fiction of a fateful, objective and inseparable unity of people, history,

language and state. Given the impossibility of the fulfilment of this project in a cramped Europe without war and continued oppression, 'ethnic cleansing' and mass-murders, the fiction has led again and again to the mass-neurosis of integral nationalism, to the faith that nation should be the highest value of the community, and that this community should reveal itself in an ethnically uniform national state.<sup>59</sup>

Schulze comes to the following conclusion:

In the course of a thousand years we, the Europeans, have got accustomed to our old states and nations; they will exist for a long time yet. ... But they changed again and again in the past, and they will change in the future as well; they will gradually fade and withdraw in order to make way for a nation Europe, whose image we anticipate only vaguely today.<sup>60</sup>

This vision is shared wholeheartedly by other scholars, such as Wolfgang Lipp:

For a long time, the great political tasks of the present have no longer rightly been called only 'nation' or 'reconstruction of the nation', but their name is Europe, and they aim at the creation of a bigger 'European state order', going beyond nationalities. ... To be European, to become European, should mean to be capable of multiculturalism.<sup>61</sup>

However, the actual social-political processes of our time pose new questions and raise new doubts about the 'Beyond the Nation' project, particularly when one looks at the events in Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of communism.

### **Nationalism as Political Religion: the Case of Eastern Europe**

The rapid growth of both national and religious activities, connected with the search for national and religious identity in post-totalitarian societies, has made national and religious movements increasingly significant. This situation raises a number of questions to be studied. How did the totalitarian regimes that dominated this part of Europe during the last 50 years influence religious and national consciousness? What are the consequences of the processes of transition for national tensions and conflicts? Is the religious revival in Eastern Europe a result of the persecution of religion under communism, or it is connected with a 'return of religion' in Europe and worldwide (a phenomenon acknowledged by some authors, although contested by others), which takes especially dramatic forms in this region? What is the place of nationalism in the process of social mobilisation, indispensable for the achievement of the political and economic transformation in Eastern Europe? What is the role of religion in the national(ist) movements there?

Discussing these questions in this section I seek to emphasise the continuity and contextuality of social processes. Generally, postcommunist nationalist ideologies and practices have their roots in the past and in this sense they are to be studied in their historically determined continuity. They are to be examined in the context of the collapse of communism on the one hand and of common European trends of (post-)modernity on the other.

#### *Europa Orientalis – a Different Europe?*

According to a popular view, the borders in Europe are determined and marked by confessional splits. The political division of Europe into Eastern and Western by the

Iron Curtain produced a further differentiation.<sup>62</sup> Since the collapse of communism the theme of the differences between Latin and Orthodox Europe has become topical again, particularly in the light of the wars in former Yugoslavia.

Religion or church denomination is only an extreme abbreviation for the complex social, political and spiritual ensembles that over 1500 years drifted away from one another like two enormous continents, and in recent times crashed together again. ... Between Germany/Italy in the West and Russia/Turkey in the East was the domain of the stateless peoples, or the peoples without history, as they were called in the nineteenth century. ... In this respect, the Latins and the Orthodox in the East were structurally equal: they were bound together in bigger state unions, with different status, with limited autonomy. ... They were mostly without political rights ... or they had only restricted rights. ... The differences in the character of the great states should be taken into consideration as well – autocratic Russia, the Ottoman Empire with its peculiar *millet* structure, the supranational, and hence not nationalist, structure of the old Austria.<sup>63</sup>

The development of modern nations in Western Europe in the nineteenth century was connected primarily with social–political and economic interests. Religious differences were not a ground for social and ethnic divisions and conflicts; religion was not a nation-building factor. At the same time, nationalisms in Eastern and Central Europe were associated not so strongly with the economic interests of the various national groups as with the struggle for national political independence and were usually connected with the rather clear religious differences between the dominant political oppressor and the oppressed national groups. National conflicts, however, arose not only between the oppressing and the oppressed, but among the very oppressed nations and national groups as well. For instance, nationalities such as the Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Belorussians and Lithuanians were all oppressed within the Russian Empire, but they also started to perceive each other as real or potential national rivals and oppressors. In these horizontal ethnic relations the cultural differences between the ethnic groups, perceived and reinforced by nationalism, were deeply associated with religion.<sup>64</sup>

The Orthodox peoples within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire also experienced an unprecedented rise of religious nationalism in the nineteenth century. According to Alexander Schmemmann, the Orthodox Church entered this new period

deeply disunited by these nationalisms, having lost the consciousness of its universal mission. Broken up into small worlds that treated each other with suspicion and hostility and felt no need for each other, it submitted to what Solovyov called ‘provincialism of local traditions’. Having first become Eastern, Orthodoxy would now become thoroughly national.

People merged entirely with the church and made it the bearer of their national ideals. This nationalism was connected not only with hatred towards the Muslim oppressor, but also with hostility towards the other Orthodox nations, and thus the living unity of the church was betrayed and replaced by a theoretical unity. The church became not only the herald of the Christian ideal but also a symbol of national struggle – a source of religious nationalism that poisons the Orthodox East down to the present day.<sup>65</sup> For instance, the liberation struggles in Bulgaria in the nineteenth century started with actions that aimed at the reconstruction of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and its independence from the Greek. Its autonomy was



proclaimed in 1870 with a *firman* from the Turkish sultan, which led to condemnation of the Bulgarian Church for its 'phyletism' and to its isolation from the other Orthodox Churches up to the middle of the twentieth century.

Other examples of what Hans Kohn calls organic 'eastern' forms of nationalism (in contrast to the civic and rational 'western' versions), dating back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were the Greek yearning for an ethno-religious revival of the Orthodox Byzantine Empire, the intellectual romantic myth of the redemption of a Catholic Poland and the Slavophile movement in Russia against the westernisation of the country through restoration of pre-Petrine Muscovy and its Orthodox monastic traditions.

A distinction between the western and the eastern trends in the interpretation of the idea of national state and its practical realisation continues to be made today. According to Michael Ley,

Contemporary Europe is marked by two opposing trends: in the West the principle of national state has been increasingly buried as a result of rapid modernisation and internationalisation of the economy and society, while eastern societies after the break-up of real socialism have seen their future exactly in the principle of the sovereign national state. Thus, for different reasons, the two processes have brought about nationalism as a result. Nationalism in the West is a protest movement of socially endangered strata who suspect a loss of their status in the modernisation process, while nationalism in Eastern Europe is successfully actuated by the post-communist elites as a new legitimisation ideology. Therefore the specificity of the nationalist trend in the West is its 'strata' character, while the eastern version carries the sign of a collective loss of identity.<sup>66</sup>

### *Nationalism – a Political Religion*

The idea of modern mass movements as political religions is by no means a new one. The term was used in 1938 by Eric Voegelin, when in his book *Die politischen Religionen* he made an attempt at interpreting the religious roots of these movements and the religious-political nature of (political) communities. The issue is the sacralisation of eminent historical entities such as nation, state, race or class and consequently the emergence of a new inner-worldly religiosity in the place of supernatural beliefs.

The life of people in a political community cannot be limited to a profane domain in which we have to deal only with questions of the organisation of rights and power. The community is also an area of religious order; and the knowledge of a political situation is incomplete at a decisive point if it does not include the religious powers of the community and the symbols by which they are expressed, or if it actually includes them, but does not understand them, and translates them into nonreligious categories. ... The language of politics is also always infused by religious insights, and thus becomes symbolic in the specific sense of the interpenetration of the worldly and the transcendent-divine experience.<sup>67</sup>

Discussing the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, Max Weber gives a detailed consideration of the interrelation between religion and social development, interpreting it as an 'adequacy' relationship.<sup>68</sup> Defining the nation, he argues that this

concept belongs to the 'sphere of values' and emphasises the specific character of the feeling of solidarity between the members of a particular nation.

If the concept of 'nation' can in any way be defined unambiguously, it certainly cannot be stated in terms of empirical qualities common to those who count as members of the nation. In the sense of those using the term at a given time, the concept undoubtedly means, above all, that one may exact from certain groups of men a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups. Thus, the concept belongs in the sphere of values.<sup>69</sup>

In his work *Nationalism as a Religion* Carlton Hayes discusses the similarity of nationalist and religious rhetoric, pointing out the religious symbolism used by nationalism: sacralisation of the nation, glorification of dying for the fatherland as the greatest exploit and so on.<sup>70</sup> Emphasising the historical example of the experience of solidarity in wars of liberation and particularly the case of nineteenth-century German history, Thomas Nipperdey gives a succinct formulation of this interrelationship: 'In the national the religious is secularised and the secular sacralised'.<sup>71</sup> With regard to the exclusive exaltation and sanctification of the essence and interests of the nation in national(ist) ideology, Heinrich Winkler talks about the 'transformation of nationalism into an Ersatz religion'.<sup>72</sup> Michael Ley sees the religious element as the major reason for the continuing currency of nationalism: 'this religious element makes nationalism the most persistent ideology in modern societies'.<sup>73</sup> Hajo Funke pays attention to the manifold relations between nationalism and religion, which can hardly be explained by the idea that nationalism is a concomitant and a consequence of the secularisation of religion. He emphasises their similarity:

They both integrate social groups in a supra-individual entity and make individual existence valuable; both indicate to their adherents specific roles in their environment; both suggest the foundation of morality, the normative basis for the people's life together, require from people a distinct responsibility, and propose a pattern for the imposition or forgiveness of guilt.

But while the highest religious instance – God – is transcendent, the difference between immanent and transcendent in nationalism is smoothed down in favour of the (sanctified) nation. The paradox here is that nationalism claims a universal validity for something particular. Besides, it manifests its Ersatz-religious character by stripping religion and religious symbols of their 'primary meaning' and by their functionalisation.<sup>74</sup> The symbols in nationalism communicate for the people 'a numinous existence *per se*, beyond and above the individuals of which it consists – an art of sanctification which was earlier accredited basically to the supreme beings'.<sup>75</sup> 'In the case of nationalism, the modern nations understand themselves as religious communities, and the nation becomes a subject of a secular history.'<sup>76</sup> Günter Rohrmoser argues powerfully:

One often overlooks the fact that in the emancipation processes in the modern world nation has played nothing less than the role of a religion, that it has been the impetus of social integration and identification of the individual with a bigger entity, transcending his or her personal needs. If a belief or a vision on behalf of which people are ready to die could be called religion, then the idea of nation was, and is, a religion.<sup>77</sup>

The vision of nationalism as a political religion implies a consideration of the relationship between politics and religion. The inner dynamics and complexity of this relationship need a presentation in a wider historical and systematic perspective. In the present study, however, I limit myself to those aspects which seem to me indispensable for the further analysis of the Ersatz–religious nature of nationalism.

The debate on the relationship between religion and politics is topical for the whole history of ‘modernity’ and is usually conducted within the framework of a theory of secularisation and a vision of the decay of the transcendent. In recent years, however, it has acquired new dimensions, emphases and connotations in connection with the increasing popularity of the diagnosis that the age of rationalism and modernity has come to a serious crisis, or even to its end. As has happened so often in the history of social ideas and ideologies, reality has taken its architects, doctors and prophets by surprise once again. Enlightenment prognoses about the end of religion are turning out to be precipitate and ill-founded in the light of new events and processes, and are being hastily replaced by assertions of the crisis of immanence and the return of religion in the world. Allegedly secular modernity is today understood and explained through its ‘säkulare Religions- oder Glaubensgeschichte’.<sup>78</sup>

As an ideology and a movement of modernity, nationalism may be interpreted from the innerworldly–eschatological, revolutionary–religious perspective appropriate to the big mass movements of modern times – movements that have endeavoured to transform and perfect humanity.<sup>79</sup> National aspirations towards freedom, justice and political power, particularly when they are marked by national messianism, are an important part of the history of secular–religious revolutionary movements.

The contemporary constellation of relations between religion and politics raises further questions. Is discourse about a repoliticisation of religion justified, or is it more appropriate to interpret these processes as a rereigionisation of politics, where politics is frequently seen not as a neutral strategy for limitation of evil, but as a domain in which religiously based morality acquires ever-growing significance? Or do we have to do with an amalgam of both these processes?

The revival of religious and ethical issues may be discussed in reference to attempts to achieve religious transcendence of the segmented everyday experience of highly differentiated societies, and simultaneously to find alternatives in the face of the deeply threatening nature of the modernisation process; attempts which lead to the linking of religion and politics.<sup>80</sup>

Despite the fact that religion and nationalism are based on different and even contradictory principles and values (the universalism and personalism of religion *versus* the particularism and antipersonalism of nationalism; the Christian idea of man as image of God *versus* the negative nationalist attitude towards the enemy, the adversary), nationalism and religion very often build up strong alliances.<sup>81</sup>

In a comparative perspective the Russian scholar Babinski outlines two ways in which nationalism and religion are basically similar: in the type of social bond which prevails in both national and religious groups; and in the social functions of religious and national identities and ideologies. If we follow the typology of human societies presented by Tönnies as ‘Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft’ and by McIver as ‘community and association’, both religious and national groups should be placed much closer to ‘community’ than to ‘association’. They are both kept together more by emotional than by purely rational ties. National bonds and membership are often specified in national ideologies in terms of a sharing of common blood, ancestry and kinship. Such expressions as ‘motherland’ and ‘fatherland’ emphasise the fact of

belonging to one big national family. Religious groups, for their part, employ a range of symbolic phrases such as ‘brothers in faith’, ‘children of God’ and so on to describe the ‘kin’ relations between their members. Both national and religious value-systems are oriented towards the sacred (for instance, the ‘motherland’ is deemed to be ‘sacred’ not only in a metaphorical sense). Members of a particular nation have often been mobilised by their leaders to defend their religion, even if ‘only’ the nation and not the religion was in danger. Arguments used to explain and rationalise the importance of one’s own religion and nationality are frequently similar. Both national and religious groups try to dominate and control the life of their members and they may even combine their efforts to this end. According to Babinski this possibility arises because national and religious loyalties are not exclusive or competitive, as the relations between nation and state sometimes are. He outlines some further similarities such as ‘internal exclusiveness’ (a person can belong fully to only one nation or religious group) and universality (the percentage of people who do not belong to any national or religious group is very low). As historical religions are much older than nations, modern nations often build up their national bonds upon already existing religious groups and ties. Religious heroes and saints may become symbols and heroes of the nation (for instance, St Patrick in Ireland, St Stephen in Hungary, St Adalbert and St Stanislaw in Poland, St Ivan Rilsky in Bulgaria).<sup>82</sup>

As I have already mentioned, nationalism is often defined as an Ersatz religion, that is, as a phenomenon which has taken the place of a religion which has allegedly declined. This definition might be convincing with regard to the initial forms of nationalism, in connection with the specific trend of modernity to orient its ‘faith’ towards secular phenomena such as science, technical progress and so on, and to invest it in them and in this sense to produce Ersatz religions. The emphasis in the definition of nationalism as ‘political religion’ is slightly different and it seems to me appropriate not to fail to distinguish between the ‘pure’ Ersatz-religious forms of nationalism, more typical for the earlier ‘classic’ stages of nationalism, and later nationalist ideologies and practices with their interpenetration and amalgamation of religion and politics, involving the instrumentalisation of both, as well as the purposeful application in politics of the symbols, functions and even the institutional structures of religion.

The concept of nationalism as political religion may be compared with the concept of civil religion, if only in order to draw attention to the different senses in which they use the term ‘religion’. Since Robert Bellah revived this concept of Jean-Jacques Rousseau at the end of the 1960s, ‘civil religion’ has experienced numerous and often quite contradictory interpretations.<sup>83</sup> Originally civil religion was described in the American context as a series of ‘covenants’ which shaped society and its self-understanding. According to Theodor Schieder it comprised ‘an attempt to locate and arrange religious phenomena in politics ... to pay attention to the social necessity of a political value-system. ... Thus, civil religion was for Bellah not a religious over-determination of the state institutions but the centre of political morality.’<sup>84</sup> ‘By “civil religion” Bellah understands a specific phenomenon which plays a crucial political role in America, despite the separation between state and church. ... Bellah wants to revitalise the *ethical* movement built into American civil religion ... and to lay the foundation of a democratic-republican ethics with universal orientation.’<sup>85</sup> Civil religion thus places religion deliberately and purposefully at the service of a particular social order. Because it aims at societal integration, it reveals itself as inclusive and non-dogmatic, in contrast to political theology which considers politics

as a means for the realisation of a religious order and often takes a dogmatically rigorous, restrictive and exclusive stance.<sup>86</sup>

At first sight, nationalism might seem to be similar to civil religion because both of them specifically instrumentalise some religious symbols, rites and moral attitudes in the name of politics. Civil religion transforms transcendent values into a pure this-worldly morality and thus in principle abolishes the transcendent dimension. Nevertheless, civil religion does not have an Ersatz-religious character; it is constructed around the common elements of the major creeds in America, that is around 'genuine' beliefs and symbols. For its part nationalism – as ideology and practice, or simply as consciousness and attitude – may find expression within the framework of the activity of certain religious institutions (as, for instance, in the case of the foundation of 'autonomous national Christian churches', a concept which is a contradiction in terms). This kind of utilisation of nationalism (or of politics as a whole) for allegedly religious aims inevitably results in the politicisation of religion and therefore in the decline of its original message, orientation and mission in the world. An example of this is the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which tried to survive during communist times by political manoeuvring and supporting the populist-nationalistic initiatives of the government; consequently it lost the chance to be the institution that would integrate and legitimate society. A contrasting case is that of the Catholic Church in Poland, which did not compromise with the official regime and became not only a centre of national unity but a buttress of resistance to communism as well.

Postcommunist nationalism – even construed as political religion – does not seem to have much in common with the idea of civil religion. Bellah's notion proceeds from and is oriented towards the model of the modern liberal western state. Although it borrows elements from the Christian – mainly Protestant – tradition in the United States, it lacks orientation towards any particular confessional content. Civil religion may be interpreted as evidence of a moral crisis in the politics of this state, which some authors – including Bellah himself – connect with the lack of a religious dimension, and as an attempt to find a way out of this crisis. My contention is that religious 'revival' in postcommunist society – no matter how contestable this process may be and what forms or orientation it may take – places powerful emphasis on confessional, historically inherited and psychologically internalised Christian symbols, practices and archetypes. Traditional religious identities are being revitalised, instrumentalised and set into action by postcommunist nationalism(s). Nationalist policies in Eastern Europe overtly confront the activity of so-called new religious movements which are typically deemed to represent the interests of foreign (mostly transnational) missions and organisations, and therefore to be the cause of new points of conflict and differentiation. I consider the issue of new religions and postcommunist society in detail elsewhere, so here I will limit myself to a reference to Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, according to whom the new religious phenomena are moving the problems of human *Zusammenleben* with dramatic speed from the level of national states, or even continents, to that of the world as a whole.<sup>87</sup>

### *Nationalism, Religion and Postcommunism*

In 1989 Günter Rohrmoser wrote with prophetic insight:

When in the Soviet Union the question of an alternative to Marxism–Leninism is seriously put – and this might be soon the case ... then the symbiosis between religion and nationalism, as Dostoyevsky anticipated

it, could gain attractive power. The question of the relationship between politics and religion has not only outlived the collapse of the doctrine of the two kingdoms in our century ... it has gained a vital new significance for the resolution of problems connected with the survival of the scientific–technical civilisation.<sup>88</sup>

Rohrmoser turned out to be a good prophet: in a very short time the problem of spiritual alternatives arose in Eastern Europe. The general crisis of modernity acquired dramatic forms in this region, because it was radicalised by the thorough-going political cultural and economic transformation that followed the collapse of communism. ‘Perestroika’ put the need for comprehensive social mobilisation on the agenda. In this context nationalism soon revealed its vitality and attractiveness as a source of collective and personal identity and meaning.<sup>89</sup>

The new political order in the countries of Eastern Europe has revealed a persistent tendency to seek legitimisation by nationalist ideas. The practice has shown the danger hidden in this strategy: the boundary between nationalism which stimulates social integration and that which incites aggressiveness, separatist aspirations and even attempts at the assimilation of indigenous minorities and/or neighbouring countries is too easily broken.

The causes of nationalist revival in postcommunist societies are manifold and complex. A possible approach is to investigate them from a historical perspective. We need to take into consideration the fact that by the time of the Second World War the process of nation-building had not been completed in the Eastern European countries. The absence of state continuity (with two exceptions, Russia and Hungary) favoured the persistence of ethnic forms of identity and hindered the development of national identity. Under communism the so-called national question was artificially eliminated and simplified. The oppression of national self-consciousness in the name of communist internationalism under the cynical project of ‘Unity and Fraternity’ (which actually aimed at the sovietisation of Eastern Europe) fostered latent forms of nationalism. Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, the communist regimes made some attempts to strengthen the dominant ideology by administering moderate doses of nationalism.<sup>90</sup> As Mommsen has found,

The increasing shift towards national values in all ‘real socialist’ societies from the 1970s was a sign of a pervasive identity crisis among wide circles of the population, primarily among the intelligentsia. ... The loss of identity was compensated for by the activation of national and to some extent also religious traditions. The rise of strong national movements during the process of transformation of the system and liberation of the people from state guardianship should therefore come as no surprise. Multinational states were the first affected. The search for identity on the part of particular nations and peoples within these states has often taken the form of controversy with neighbouring ethnic groups, cultural and religious differentiation, territorial claims and confrontation with the ruling state centre.<sup>91</sup>

According to Adam Michnik, post-totalitarian nationalism is ‘the last word of the withdrawing communists, and simultaneously the manifestation of an outcry against this antinational system’.<sup>92</sup> Following the view that postcommunist nationalism has its origin partly in presocialist traditions and partly in radicalised protest against Soviet dominance, Erhard Stölting emphasises its populist nature:

One general feature of Eastern European nationalism today is its populist strategy. In practice ... it always opposes the radical reconstruction of the economic structures. It professes predominantly a radical anticommunism, but recruits its adherents first of all among those who fear reconstruction. National feelings are stimulated in order to divert attention away from economic problems or from persistent economic decline. The responsibility for broken promises is always laid on others.<sup>93</sup>

Nationalistically-minded individuals are to be found in various social groups. They are often intellectuals, concerned with cultural interpretations of the folklore and history of particular nationalities. Their works provide the symbols and language for populist national movements. They might be members of ecological and human rights organisations or youth groups for whom nationalism is an emotional reaction rather than a rationalised ideology. Old communist cadres – functionaries from the state, the Party and the economy – are among the most active nationalists;<sup>94</sup> but in Eastern Europe there are also nationalists among the members of democratic groups. Stefan Troebst describes what Tom Nairn calls the ‘Janus head’ of nationalism: ‘Leading figures and members of independence movements in the Baltic states are personally nationalists *and* democrats at one and the same time, and like the German revolutionaries of 1848 they take their stand against an antinational and authoritarian political system.’<sup>95</sup>

A pertinent question that logically arises here concerns the function of the national state during communism. May we call a ‘national state’ a state that did not defend any national interests but betrayed them in the name of homogenisation of the Soviet type? The communist state was an antinational state. This means, among other things, that part of national identity (if not national self-definition as a whole) constructed itself without the help of the state and even in opposition against it.

In this respect it is interesting to look at the paradoxical features which post-communist nationalism often displays. While nationalism in the West may be seen as ‘an antimodern movement within modernity’,<sup>96</sup> in Eastern Europe nationalism and the national state are part of the protest against the transnational economics and politics which put under question the very idea of the national state and can thus be seen as manifestations, and even the basis, of the processes of modernisation and democratisation. Thus in the case of Eastern Europe it is probably appropriate to speak of ‘late national states’, because the states there became explicitly ‘national’ only after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The revitalisation of the old national traditions and religious beliefs in Eastern Europe thus runs alongside attempts at ‘modernisation’ and ‘democratisation’. Nationalist trends compete with explicit and openly-declared pragmatic prowestern orientations. Postcommunist societies understand and follow their own ‘road to Europe’, where the idea of Europe typically symbolises democracy and civil society, in different ways. Sometimes, however, the endeavour ‘to be European’ takes comic forms, particularly in some Balkan countries with their inferiority complexes that Western Europe has been instrumental in helping to create. Tom Gallagher, for instance, writes:

‘Balkan’ today is a metaphor for arbitrary and unpredictable behavior, fanaticism, and lawlessness. The contributions to the Balkan mentality made by the Greeks, the Byzantines, and the Ottomans are often seen as being of dubious assistance in enabling the region to engage with the modern world. The cultural impoverishment of the Balkans is sometimes

thought to stem from the failure of the region to experience the civilizing effects of the Renaissance, the Reformation, or the Enlightenment. By contrast, Western ideas and movements that have put down roots – nationalism, industrialism, socialism – often seem to have been drained of their original worth, saddling the Balkans with even more problems than before. It is not surprising that today more nations of south-eastern Europe are ready to deny their Balkan heritage than to publicly embrace it. Croatia's president Franjo Tudjman, delivering a state of the nation speech in Zagreb on January 22, 1997, denied the country's Balkan heritage in forthright terms: 'Reintegration of Croatia into the Balkans is totally unacceptable for the Croatian people ... Croatia belongs to Central Europe and Mediterranean circles. A short Balkan episode in Croatian history must never be repeated. ... We should add a new article, a constitution ban, on attempts to merge Croatia with any Yugoslav or Balkan state or federation.' Tudjman was not the first, nor is he likely to be the last, Balkan leader to talk in such unrealistically snobbish terms about his neighbourhood. In 1919, Romania's founder, King Carol I ... declared that 'we belong to the Balkans neither ethnographically nor geographically nor any other way'.<sup>97</sup>

Another specificity of postcommunist nationalism also needs to be taken into consideration. In principle, nationalism is a manifestation of the objective necessity of cultural homogeneity.<sup>98</sup> The hostile policies of Eastern European countries towards nationalists and minorities may be interpreted as 'an attempt to achieve modernisation through homogenisation'.<sup>99</sup> This contradictory process displays a further paradox of nationalism. It is directed towards an internal homogenisation of society and at the same time creates further differentiation, delimitation and dehomogenisation (between the particular society and the outside world on the one hand and within the society itself on the other, when, for instance, the titular nation oppresses minorities and thus provokes reactions). Michael Ley emphasises another paradoxical characteristic: nationalism is an important factor in the process of modernisation through which traditional identities are being destroyed. At the same time, major pre-conditions for nationalism and nation-building are a nostalgic contemplation of traditional values and an emphasis on genealogical myths. In order to smooth down the hardships of the modernisation processes, nationalism promises 'a return to the values of an imagined nation that existed in the past in one or another form'. Nationalism thus operates as an antimodern modernisation factor and nation becomes a modern transformation of traditional, premodern realities such as ethnies.<sup>100</sup> A comparison between nationalism and another antimodern phenomenon within modernity – fundamentalism – reveals that the two have much in common: a backwards-looking orientation, an emphasis on tradition and a search for foundations.<sup>101</sup>

An emphasis on tradition and a search for foundations are unavoidable consequences and accompanying phenomena of the social-cultural and spiritual experiences of crisis and contingency. According to Günter Rohrmoser

Not only individuals are affected by the experience of contingency. There are conditions in which peoples and nations experience extreme contingency, of a fateful, catastrophic kind. These peoples, like individuals, then have to look back, to search for religious 'sources', in order to stabilise their collective existence and to safeguard it from a relapse into irrationalism.<sup>102</sup>



The function of religion in codifying and transforming contingency is explored in detail by Niklas Luhmann.<sup>103</sup> Nationalism then takes over and continues to perform the same function of rendering worldly dynamics bearable. In doing so it seeks to present itself as a fateful necessity and to crown itself with a holy aura.

Franz-Xaver Kaufmann formulates six functions of religion: to create identity, to provide guidance for behaviour, to overcome contingency, to promote social integration, to provide a cosmic perspective and to distance people from the world. He comes to the conclusion that 'Obviously, today there is no single institution or basic complex of ideas which is in a condition to fulfil all these six functions *simultaneously* in a way acceptable for most contemporary people; in this sense there are no "religions" any more.' Consequently, he argues, the functions of religion are carried out by different agencies.<sup>104</sup> My contention is that nationalism can be seen as one of these agencies. Naturally, the 'taking over' by nationalism of some of the functions fulfilled earlier by religion is not a mere 'change of the actors'. The process sets up new constellations of power relations and creates new emphases. Kaufmann points out that, for example, 'the unity of medieval society was religiously constructed ... was primarily a symbolic, and not a political unity, providing a framework for the processes of socialisation. ... Christianity acted more as ... a power which legitimated the symbolic order rather than as a power which integrated society.'<sup>105</sup> The major purpose of nationalism, however, is political integration rather than symbolic legitimisation, although it pursues its aims through the aid of secular-religious symbols of unity. Nationalism takes on most of the functions of religion, with the exception of those 'providing a cosmic perspective' and 'distancing people from the world' (which, because of their completely other-worldly orientation, stay out of the scope of its influence). In this way, nationalism manifests itself as a successful, if not as the most successful, political religion.

An appropriate approach to the study of the place and functions of 'genuine' religion in postcommunist societies is that of cultural models, proposed by Patrick Michel. He suggests that the religious revival since the fall of the Berlin Wall is to be discussed from the perspective of the fact that all these countries belonged to the same political system for more than 40 years. The uniformity of the communist governments towards religion is reflected today in the uniformity of the programmes and activities of the civil societies (in construction), regardless of their different historical and national traditions.<sup>106</sup>

Originally the Soviets planned to homogenize the vast European empire that had fallen into their hands at the end of the Second World War. In Milan Kundera's neat phrase, the aim was to achieve 'the minimum of diversity over the maximum of space' in a region that, on the contrary, was defined by 'a maximum of diversity over a minimum of space'.

The churches, however, by their very nature subverted this aim. They became the focus for political opposition, and not only because of their 'other-worldly' orientation. They were the only legal structures with buildings, leaders and (albeit limited) finances around which initiatives from below could be organised. Catholic churches also had a link to an 'international' centre outside the control of the communist government.<sup>107</sup>

Michel argues that the influence of religion in postcommunist societies generally operates in three dimensions: above the social-political field as a witness to other-worldly reality; within this field as a power offering reassurance about the preservation of values; and under this field in the form of symbols. 'Religion is unrivalled as

a producer and vector of axiological attitudes, which always carry ideological or political implications. It is capable of resurfacing in the most unexpected places, of creating and occupying social, aesthetic, symbolic, or cultural space alike.<sup>108</sup>

The political–religious role of nationalism in the post-totalitarian search for identity is connected with the specific features of the relations between religion and church on the one hand and the political and social system on the other.

In the West the process of separation of the churches from the state and from the political sector is already completed. The churches are no longer state institutions, but free and voluntary communities. They are no longer situated in the political sector, but in the sector of civil society. This situation implies differentiation between religious beliefs, national identity and political state citizenship.<sup>109</sup> That is why in modern western societies a sheer politicisation of religion has no place as a rule. Instead, there is general respect for an institutionally differentiated social order.<sup>110</sup>

In Eastern Europe during communism religious attitudes and orientations acquired the meaning of acts of political opposition. (Unfortunately, only some churches managed to protect themselves from total state control and to become places of freedom.) The processes of coalescence of religious and national identity, to varying extent typical of all Eastern European countries, impeded attempts at sovietisation and the full homogenisation of the region. The churches revealed themselves as wardens of national and cultural traditions. Later they played an important role in the rise of social movements for human rights. The revival of religion after the collapse of communism has been connected with spiritual quests, interest in church traditions, and restoration of persecuted religious communities. It has run, however, hand in hand with the rise of an aggressive ‘self-proclaiming of a collective religious identity which in the past was intermingled with ethnic and national identities, but under communist rule disappeared, or was repressed’. The emergence of a free ‘religious market’ is to be mentioned as well.<sup>111</sup> The challenge of religious pluralism and of new religious groups to the traditional churches, as well as generally to postcommunist society, has brought about the urgent need for a redefinition of the public space and of the role of religion in Eastern Europe.

Without a clear separation of the religious and the political sectors the post-communist revival of religion will contribute to the further aggravation of ethnic and nationalist conflicts. The solution, according to Jose Casanova, is to be found in the western model:

Churches ... must cease to regard themselves as the community cults of a national state, and must become voluntary religious communities, anchored in civil society rather than in the nation. This step would facilitate the setting up of democratic states and political societies on the individualist principle of state citizenship rather than on that of ethnic identity.<sup>112</sup>

## **Conclusion**

I have tried to avoid generalising assessments and judgments. This is particularly important, I think, when the foci of discussion are complex and delicate realities such as nation, religion, nationalism and the national state. An appropriate strategy in a discussion like this seems to be that of ‘discerning the spirits’ – that is, asking why and how particular high ideas such as national independence and self-determination are being transformed from integrating and identity-creating factors into destructive

forces. Other questions to be answered concern the role of religion in this context – not only of the official denominations and institutionalised Christian churches, but of religious beliefs, attitudes, archetypes and sentiments ('invisible religion', to use the apt phrase of Thomas Luckmann) which are rooted in societal memory. Is this role comparable with the role of nationalism as secular political religion, or are these phenomena incommensurable because of the principal difference in their orientations (outer-worldly *versus* inner-worldly)?

As I have argued on the base of a range of sources, the issues outlined above often receive contradictory interpretations. In addition, events since the fall of the Berlin Wall have presented new challenges to the existing prognoses. They have demonstrated the inexhaustible dynamics and vitality of religion, nationalism and the national state, and discredited predictions of their imminent end. Theorists have consequently had to record the 'return' of these phenomena in history. Thus religion and nationalism are coming back, perhaps without having ever really gone away.

I do hope that my critical attitude towards such predictions will not be misconstrued. I find the idea of the overcoming of nationalism and the national state in the name of the cultural and social-political principle of pan-nationalism indisputably attractive. My deep conviction is that the authentic definition of a human being is primarily spiritual, rather than of an ethnic or class nature. Nevertheless we live in a reality which imposes multiple identifications and the national one – for good or bad – still to a great extent moulds the way we perceive ourselves and others.

As for the role of religion today, I would like to see it as a witness to the transcendent and a spiritual corrective to our faulty and imperfect world rather than as an instrument of politics. And, if its instrumentalisation cannot entirely be avoided, I cherish the almost utopian idea that it might stimulate a positive search for and creation of identity rather than inter- and intra-societal hatred and conflicts. This is a role of indispensable importance in view of the thoroughgoing mobilisation which postcommunist societies need in order to overcome the hardships of the economic, social, cultural and spiritual transition. The primary task of these societies is to come to terms with the complex situation and to discover and defend constructively their own new image. However, the events of the last decade, particularly in the Balkans and in the former Soviet Union, as well as the current trends in these parts of Europe, do not present an optimistic picture.

This is why the problem of nationalism and religion, of their new faces and the relations between them, is a crucial one. Its solution lies beyond the interdisciplinary efforts of benevolent scholars, beyond the realistic dialogues between politicians and beyond the fervent prayers of priests. This is the concern of every single person, because national frontiers and religious divisions emerge first of all in people's hearts and only afterwards on geographic maps.

## Notes and References

- <sup>1</sup> Imanuel Geiss in Peter Alter (ed.), *Nationalismus: Dokumente zur Geschichte und Gegenwart eines Phänomens* (Piper, Munich, 1994), pp. 12.
- <sup>2</sup> Alter, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17. (There is a published English translation of this book, but the quotations from Alter in this article are my own translations from the German – IM.)
- <sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
- <sup>4</sup> See Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* (Macmillan, New York, 1967), pp. 14–15 (German translation: *Die Idee des Nationalismus* (S. Fischer, Frankfurt am Main, 1961)).
- <sup>5</sup> The last sentence is quoted by Hans Kohn from Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, 2nd edn (University of Chicago Press, Chicago,

- 1924), p. 931.
- <sup>6</sup> Kohn (1967), *op. cit.*, p. 23.
- <sup>7</sup> Eugen Lemberg, *Nationalismus. Band 2: Soziologie und politische Pädagogik* (Rowohlt, Reinbeck b. Hamburg, 1964), p. 52.
- <sup>8</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992), pp. 9–11 (German translation: *Nationen und Nationalismus: Mythos und Realität* (Campus, Frankfurt am Main, 1991)).
- <sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 44.
- <sup>10</sup> Karl Deutsch, *Nationenbildung – Nationalstaat – Integration* (Bertelsmann-Universitätsverlag, Düsseldorf, 1972).
- <sup>11</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1983); Hobsbawm (1991), *op. cit.*
- <sup>12</sup> Lemberg, *op. cit.*; Theodor Schieder, *Nationalismus und Nationalstaat: Studien zum nationalen Problem im modernen Europa* (Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1991).
- <sup>13</sup> Carlton Hayes, 'Nationalism as a Religion', in Carlton Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (Macmillan, New York, 1926).
- <sup>14</sup> Heinrich Winkler, 'Einleitende Bemerkungen', in Heinrich Winkler (ed.), *Nationalismus in der Welt von Heute* (Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1982), pp. 7–11.
- <sup>15</sup> Eric Voegelin, *Die politischen Religionen* (Fink, Munich, 1993).
- <sup>16</sup> Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (Hutchinson University Library, London, 1961).
- <sup>17</sup> M. Rainer Lepsius, 'Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland', in Winkler (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 12–28, here p. 26.
- <sup>18</sup> John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1982); Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Methuen, London, 1977); Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1986).
- <sup>19</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- <sup>20</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Die Erfindung der Nation: Zur Karriere eines erfolgreichen Konzepts* (Campus, Frankfurt am Main, 1988) (English edition: *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, London, 1991)).
- <sup>21</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Traditions* (CUP, Cambridge, 1983).
- <sup>22</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.
- <sup>23</sup> Bernhard Giesen, 'Einleitung', in Bernhard Giesen (ed.), *Nationale und kulturelle Identität: Studien zur Entwicklung des kollektiven Bewußtseins in der Neuzeit* (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1991), p. 12.
- <sup>24</sup> Bernd Estel, 'Grundaspekte der Nation', in Bernd Estel and Tilman Mayer (eds), *Das Prinzip Nation in modernen Gesellschaften* (Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen, 1994), pp. 13–83, here p. 41.
- <sup>25</sup> Schieder, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
- <sup>26</sup> In the English editions of the works of Friedrich Meinecke 'state-nations' is translated as 'political nations'. I prefer, however, to stick closer to Meinecke's original expression (see Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat: Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaates* (Oldenbourg, Munich, 1919)).
- <sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 2–3.
- <sup>28</sup> See Alter, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27.
- <sup>29</sup> Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
- <sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7.
- <sup>31</sup> Lepsius, *op. cit.*, pp. 13, 15 ff.
- <sup>32</sup> Rudolf Stichweh, 'Nation und Weltgesellschaft', in Estel and Mayer (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 83–96, here pp. 83–87.
- <sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 88–89.
- <sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p. 92.
- <sup>35</sup> Hans Kohn states explicitly that 'They are the natural elements out of which nationalism is

formed; but nationalism is not a natural phenomenon, not a product of “eternal” or “natural” laws; it is a product of the growth of social and intellectual factors at a certain stage of history’ (Kohn (1967), *op. cit.*, p. 6).

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 187 ff.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 329–31.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p. 369.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 534, 537, 543.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p. 574.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, p. 561.

<sup>44</sup> Schieder, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 89–90, 279.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 285, 286.

<sup>47</sup> At the beginning of the German edition of his book *Nation and Nationalism Since 1870* Hobsbawm argues that ‘Ein ethnisch und/oder sprachlich begründete Nationalismus, der für jede “Nation” einen eigenen souveränen Staat anstrebt, ist als allgemeines Programm nicht praktikabel, ist für die politischen und selbst für die ethnischen und sprachlichen Probleme der Welt am Ausgang des 20 Jhdts. irrelevant und hat mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit schlimme Folgen, wenn tatsächlich der Versuch unternommen wird, ihn in die Praxis umzusetzen’ (Hobsbawm (1991), *op. cit.*, p. 7).

<sup>48</sup> Hobsbawm (1992), *op. cit.*, pp. 67–68.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 131, 134.

<sup>53</sup> Hobsbawm (1991), *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>54</sup> Hobsbawm (1992), *op. cit.*, pp. 180–81.

<sup>55</sup> Gottfried Küenzlen, *Der Neue Mensch: Zur säkularen Religionsgeschichte der Moderne* (Fink, Munich, 1994), p. 60.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 80, 139, 142.

<sup>57</sup> Hagen Schulze, *Staat und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte* (Beck, Munich, 1994), p. 334.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*, p. 341.

<sup>59</sup> Wolfgang Lipp, ‘Regionen, Multikulturalismus und Europa: Jenseits der Nation?’, in Estel and Mayer (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 97–113, here pp. 97, 101.

<sup>60</sup> Schulze, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

<sup>61</sup> Lipp, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 107.

<sup>62</sup> Jose Casanova, ‘Chancen und Gefahren öffentlicher Religion: Ost- und Westeuropa im Vergleich’, in Otto Kallscheuer (ed.), *Das Europa der Religionen* (Fischer, Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 181–210.

<sup>63</sup> Geiss, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–21.

<sup>64</sup> Grigori Babinski, ‘Nationalism and religion in East Central Europe’, in Irena Borowik (ed.), *The Future of Religion: East and West* (Nomos, Kraków, 1995), pp. 136–45, here pp. 136–37.

<sup>65</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *The Historical Roads of Eastern Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, New York, 1992), p. 281.

<sup>66</sup> Michael Ley, ‘Historische und theoretische Überlegungen zum Nationalismus’, in Michael Ley and Ernst Gehmacher (eds), *Das Ende des Nationalismus* (WUV, Vienna, 1996), pp. 9–44, here p. 10.

<sup>67</sup> Voegelin, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>68</sup> Friedemann Büttner, ‘Zwischen Politisierung und Säkularisierung – Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer islamischen Integration der Gesellschaft’, in Erhard Forndran (ed.), *Religion und Politik in einer säkularisierten Welt* (Nomos, Baden-Baden, 1991),

- pp. 109–37, here p. 155.
- <sup>69</sup> Max Weber, ‘The nation’, in Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1948), pp. 171–79, here p. 172.
- <sup>70</sup> Hayes, *op. cit.*
- <sup>71</sup> Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800–1866: Bürgerwelt und starker Staat* (Beck, Munich, 1982), p. 300.
- <sup>72</sup> Winkler, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- <sup>73</sup> Ley, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- <sup>74</sup> Hajo Funke, ‘Nationalismus als Ersatzreligion: Zum Nationalismus von Fußballfans in Deutschland – eine exemplarische Studie’, in Forndran (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 109–37, here pp. 115ff.
- <sup>75</sup> Norbert Elias, *Studien über die Deutschen* (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1990), p. 189.
- <sup>76</sup> Ley, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- <sup>77</sup> Günter Rohrmoser, *Religion und Politik in der Krise der Moderne* (Styria, Graz, 1989), p. 46.
- <sup>78</sup> See Friedrich Tenbruck, ‘Die Glaubensgeschichte der Moderne’, *Zeitschrift für Politik*, vol. 1, 1976, p. 23; and particularly Küenzlen, *op. cit.*
- <sup>79</sup> See Küenzlen, *op. cit.*, pp. 83, 139.
- <sup>80</sup> Karl Gabriel, ‘Gesellschaft im Umbruch – Wandel des Religiösen’, in Hans-Joachim Höhn (ed.), *Krise der Immanenz: Religion an den Grenzen der Moderne* (Fischer, Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 31–49, here p. 45.
- <sup>81</sup> Babinski, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–39.
- <sup>82</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 141–43.
- <sup>83</sup> See, *inter alia*, Schieder, *op. cit.*, and Heinz Kleger and Alois Müller (eds), *Religion des Bürgers: Zivilreligion in Amerika und Europa* (Kaiser, Munich, 1986).
- <sup>84</sup> Schieder, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- <sup>85</sup> Kleger and Müller (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- <sup>86</sup> Michel Zöllner, ‘Individualismus und Populismus – Religion und Politik in Amerika’, in Forndran (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 77–90, here p. 78.
- <sup>87</sup> Franz-Xaver Kaufmann, *Religion und Modernität* (Mohr, Tübingen, 1989), p. 10.
- <sup>88</sup> Rohrmoser, *op. cit.*, p. 161.
- <sup>89</sup> We should note that the trend towards the revitalisation and reinforcement of separatist ethnic and nationalistic attitudes is not limited to Eastern Europe. It has been an important phenomenon in some regions of Western Europe, such as the Basque region and Northern Ireland, since the 1960s, although of course as a result of different developments from those in Eastern Europe.
- <sup>90</sup> Ley, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
- <sup>91</sup> Margareta Mommsen, *Nationalismus in Osteuropa: Gefährliche Wege in die Demokratie* (Beck, Munich, 1992), pp. 7–17, here p. 12.
- <sup>92</sup> Quoted in Stefan Troebst, ‘“Demokratie als ethnische geschlossene Veranstaltung”: Nationalistischer Integrationsdruck und politische Formierung der nationalen Minderheiten in Bulgarien (1989–April 1991)’, in Wolfgang Höpken (ed.), *Revolution und Raten: Bulgariens Weg zur Demokratie* (Oldenbourg, Munich, 1996), pp. 117–72, here p. 124.
- <sup>93</sup> Erhard Stölting, ‘Soziale Trägergruppen des Nationalismus in Osteuropa’, in Estel and Mayer (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 299–322, here p. 299.
- <sup>94</sup> For more details see *ibid.*
- <sup>95</sup> Troebst, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
- <sup>96</sup> Ley, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
- <sup>97</sup> Tom Gallagher, ‘To be or not to be Balkan: Romania’s quest for self-definition’, *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Summer 1997, pp. 63–83.
- <sup>98</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nationalismus und Moderne* (Rotbuch, Berlin, 1991), p. 73.
- <sup>99</sup> Ley, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- <sup>100</sup> *ibid.*, p. 18.

- <sup>101</sup> On fundamentalism as ‘modern antimodernism’, see Gottfried Küenzlen, ‘Religiöser Fundamentalismus – Aufstand gegen die Moderne?’, in Höhn (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 50–71, here pp. 59ff.
- <sup>102</sup> Rohrmoser, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
- <sup>103</sup> Niklas Luhmann, *Funktion der Religion* (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1977).
- <sup>104</sup> Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 85–86.
- <sup>105</sup> *ibid.*, p. 79.
- <sup>106</sup> Patrick Michel, *Politics and Religion in Eastern Europe: Catholicism in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia* (Polity, Oxford, 1991), pp. 8, 19.
- <sup>107</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 4, 22.
- <sup>108</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 15–16, 19.
- <sup>109</sup> See Casanova, *op. cit.*, pp. 193, 196.
- <sup>110</sup> Martin Riesebrodt, ‘Zur Politisierung von Religion: Überlegungen am Beispiel fundamentalistischer Bewegungen’, in Kallscheuer (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 247–75, here p. 250.
- <sup>111</sup> See Casanova, *op. cit.*, pp. 198–200.
- <sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, p. 202.