

To: Dr Spyros C. PHILIPPAS
The Academic Affairs Office
The NATO Office of Information and Press
1110 Bruxelles
Belgique

From: Dr Dimitrina MERDJANOVA
Bul. Simeon Veliki, bl. 18
7500 Silistra
Bulgaria

8 June, 1999

FINAL REPORT

Project: Nationalism and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe

In this work I examine post-communist nationalism - its historical background and preconditions, its socio-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 seventeenth 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, developed within and through religious communities and institutions, and used religious symbols and certain elements of religious doctrines. My contention is that its post-communist 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 analyze the role of religion in its inter-relatedness with the East 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 the intra-societal integration.

1. Historical and socio-cultural reconstruction of the problem of nationalism and nations.

The questions about the essence and forms of nationalism lead to a large variety of answers, descriptions and definitions. They occupy the minds of numerous representatives of different humanitarian fields - historians, social and political scientists, philosophers, social anthropologists, etc. According to the witty remark of Imanuel Geiss: «Nation and nationalism belong to those 1001 themes, on which not even two scholars are at one with each other» (Geiss 1994: 12)¹. However, all scholars are unanimous about the intricacies of the phenomenon making it so resistant to one-dimensional conceptualizations. 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, integrationist, separatist, etc. That is why careful research on nationalism presupposes an interdisciplinary approach and perspective.

In this chapter 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 it. In my presentation I retain a critical distance towards some of the prognoses and predictions about the end of nationalism, whose untenability came to the surface in the perspective of the events in Eastern Europe after the collapse of communism.

/A/ 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 the efforts to find agreed and adequate formulas 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 the personal and societal self-definition, a doctrine of freedom and sovereignty, or an agent in the 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 modernization and socio-cultural development, but at the same time it may be a synonym for the artificial mythologization of the past and the instrumentalization 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, 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, or Poland came 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 be probably more appropriate to speak about *nationalisms* instead of nationalism» (Alter 1994: 16-17).

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

¹All quotations from German sources in this text are translated into English by me (I. M.).

The term «nationalism» was used for the first time in a work of Johann Gottfried Herder, and has spread into everyday language since the middle of the nineteenth century (Alter 1994: 18-19). 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 the modern history and of 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 analyzed the origin and development of nationalism as ideology and practice. Before its rise at the end of the eighteenth century, religion was the great force, dominating political and cultural life. At this time the dividing lines did not coincide with national frontiers, but with the borders of religious civilizations. 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 the defense mechanism, especially of the weaker nationality, as in the cases of Catholicism in Ireland and in Prussian Poland (compare Kohn 1967: 14-15). «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'². 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 implications. It molded and dominated politics and society. At present, the same is true of nationalism» (Kohn 1967: 23).

The historian Eugene 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,

² Here Hans Kohn quotes from the book of Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, 2nd ed. (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1924), p. 931.

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» (Lemberg 1964: 52).

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 criticized his preference for the perspective of «modernization 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» (Hobsbawm 1992: 9-11). The author has interpreted 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 (Hobsbawm 1992: 44).

A review of the published literature shows that nationalism has been defined as «spiritual constitution» («Geistesverfassung») (Deutsch 1972), as «political principle» (Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 1990), or as «integration ideology» (Lemberg 1964, Schieder 1971). Another group of investigators have tended to interpret nationalism through its affinity with religion. Carlton Hays wrote the essay «Nationalism as Religion» (Hays 1926). Heinrich Winkler called it «ersatz-religion» («Religionsersatz») (Winkler 1978). According to Eric Voegelin, nationalism has been one of the «political religions» of Modernity (Voegelin 1993). In his turn, Elie Kedourie interpreted it as a form of secular millenarianism (Kedourie 1960).

The attempts at explanation of the concept of nation seem to be burdened with similar disagreements and controversies as 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»), at which «the variability and the different practical relevancy 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» (Lepsius 1982: 26).

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» (Armstrong 1982, Seton-Watson 1977, Smith 1986). Another group of authors endorse the ideologically constructed and determined nature of nation. Benedict Anderson designates nation as «imagined community» (Anderson 1983), and the German translation of his book underlines the idea of artificial invention: it is titled «Die Erfindung der Nation» («The Invention of Nation»). Eric Hobsbawm considers nation as «pseudo-community», constructed through the «invention of traditions» (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). According to Ernest Gellner, nation is an «invented community» (Gellner 1983).

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. «Already German romanticism imagined nation as a project which had to be artificially fulfilled. In the new comparative study of nations the 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 very 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 the different cultural traditions» (Giesen 1991: 12).

/B/. The question about the types of nations

The types of national identity differ in their emphasis and to a greater or lesser extent manifest themselves in the complex relations between nation and state.

The views about the «foci» of the 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, these aspects are:

/a/ one or more (distinguishing) *qualities*, combining and expressing the «essential» features of the nation and of the individuals, belonging to it; or

/b/ one or more *event(s)* of extraordinary or sacred character, and of crucial importance for the origin and/or the building of the nation; or

/c/ particular *values*, which have to be collectively carried out. They impart the nation dignity, and often are connected with fulfillment of a special *mission*, by the means of which a given nation identifies itself (Estel 1994: 41).

Typically, nationalism as «integration ideology» accentuates the following major points:

/a/ homogeneity - be it ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, or simply based on a shared historical destiny - which bestows the feeling of being different, the consciousness of extraordinariness in relation to other social groups and entities;

/b/ development of the consciousness that the given national group has to follow a particular political task or historical mission. This self-interpretation becomes later the core of the national ideology;

/c/ harking back upon shared natural or historical origins, hence upon an ancestry or a historical community (see Schieder 1991: 105).

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 deal of the theoretical constructions are based on the famous differentiation between state-nation («Staatsnation»)³ 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 ... Despite all necessary stipulations, we can divide nations into cultural and state-nations, into such, which rest basically on a certain commonly experienced cultural possession, and such, 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» (Meinecke 1919: 2-3).

Hence, the state-nation is oriented towards the idea of the 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's plebiscite». The classic examples 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 (see Alter 1994: 26-27).

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

³ In the English publications of the works of Friedrich Meinecke «state-nations» is translated as «political nations». I prefer, however, to stick closer to Meinecke's original expression.

misused» (Seton-Watson 1977: 4). The author emphasizes the distinction between states and nations (Seton-Watson 1977: 1).

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 has not a natural origin, but is merely an order of social living which alters in the time and adjusts to the constellations of power, M. Reiner Lepsius suggests the following classification:

- people-nation («Volksnation»): organized on an ethnic basis, and constitutionally indifferent;

- cultural nation («Kulturnation»): organized 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 (compare Lepsius 1982: 13, 15 ff.).

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 molding particular already existing states and their citizens, and France and Spain provides typical examples of this process. On the other hand, the endeavor to establish its own state organization, 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 the socio-cultural processes. Thus their place is «between the binding to the traditionally secured local units and the obscurity of the world-society which is leading worldwide 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 the world-society on the one hand, and with the exhausted capacities of the local settings on the other. «In this sense, national identification and the exalting of nationalism - Karl Deutsch pointed at this already in the 1960s - have to be understood as a consequence of the social mobilization and the growing expectancy insecurity caused by it. Facing this insecurity, the successfulness of nation proceeds to a great extent from the fact that nation *excludes the inequality* (because it externalizes it in the world-society), and includes a seeming *equality* (of all members of the nation)». Very important is also «the guaranty of a relative cultural homogeneity inwards and ... the maintenance, and even reinforcement, of the cultural differentiation between the particular national states» (Stichweh 1994: 83-87).

Considering the workings of the world-society, we have to pay attention first of all to «the diminution or reinterpretation of the national-cultural idiosyncrasies, in so far 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 ... and the states which demonstrate such a cultural-missionary trait, are thereby deprived in the system of the world-society». The world-society standardizes 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 the medieval Christianity, to the jurisprudence of Rome. They can be seen in «the vision that above the level of the single states 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 the natural law, in the formulation of the idea of human rights and related semantic traditions» (Stichweh 1994: 88-89).

Hence, the optimal social-political and cultural development is seen in the face of the 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*» (Stichweh 1994: 92).

/C/. Nationalism and national state: some historical analyses and prognoses of 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, traditions, such sentiments as attachment to the native soil, the *Heimat* and the kin⁴ 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 the natural group feeling of common descent and the missionary consciousness of the ancient Hebrew and Greek civilizations. It was revived in Europe later, at the time of the Renaissance and the Reformation (Kohn 1967: 18-19). Despite the fact that the national peculiarities began to manifest themselves in a conscious form already with the break-up of the medieval universal order, that very 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 etatism, and not nationalism. Only in the closing eighteenth century nationalism began to legitimize the state. The new state on its part promoted the nationalization of religion. The later bond between the state and nationalism was a consequence of the separation of the state and church. During the French revolution, the idea of nationalism was infused into the political form of a modern centralized sovereign state. This state integrated the masses politically and culturally into a nation (Ibid.: 187 ff.).

In principle, as Hans 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» (Kohn 1967: 20).

National characteristics are a product of social and intellectual processes. They are neither prehistorically nor biologically determined (Kohn 1967: 329-331).

Russian and German influences met in the East 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 ideal integration (Ibid.: 534). In Eastern Europe the age of nationalism began with the Greek war of independence (Ibid.: 537). The national consciousness of the Southern Slavs awoke much later. The differences in religion and tradition divided them much stronger between the West and the East in comparison to the other Slavs (Ibid.: 543).

Hence, the age of nationalism deepened the distinctions among the peoples. The two different understandings of nationalism were expressed through the concepts of nation and fatherland. The one was a first of all rational universal concept emphasizing 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...» (Kohn 1967: 574).

⁴ 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: 6).

At the end of the German translation of *The Idea of Nationalism* Hans Kohn has expressed a cheerful vision about a post Second World War age of pan-nationalism. In this new epoch the free national life would lay the foundations of the world-citizenship anticipated already by the thinkers of the Enlightenment (Kohn 1962: 561). However, the events some decades later revealed this optimistic picture to be precipitate.

Undoubtedly, the model of national state has imposed itself as dominant paradigm in the modern European history. This model is, however, by no means fixed once for ever, 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 by 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» (Schieder 1991: 87). The author *distinguishes three stages in the history of the principle of national state: Western, Central and East 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 *volonte generale* 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 witnessed 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 since 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 most preferable 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, Rumania, 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 1779 and 1919; each of them brings a sharpening in respect to the previous» (Schieder 1991: 89-90, 279).

The historical examination leads the scholar to the idea that «the hour of the national state in Europe has run». 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» (Schieder 1991: 285, 286).

It is not difficult to discern a trend common among the scholars who study nationalism from a historical perspective. They often have a distant relation to 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, the reality at the end of the twentieth century seems not to have taken leave of the irrelevancy and impracticability. It seems still less to take earnestly the scholars' warnings and prognoses.

According to Hobsbawm (who also resolutely criticizes the project of the ethnically determined national state⁵), «The links between religion and national consciousness can

⁵ At the beginning of the German translation of his book *Nation and Nationalism Since 1780* 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: 7).

be very close, as the examples of Poland and Ireland demonstrate. In fact, the relation seems to 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» (Hobsbawm 1992: 67-8). However, the author fails to pay attention to the historical fact that the «transnational religions» as a rule have gone through different splits, and have often existed in ethnically or nationally defined forms.

Further reflection on the ethnic-religious identification leads the author 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 (Ibid.: 70). 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» (Ibid.: 71).

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

Hobsbawm argues that nationalism reached its apogee during the period 1918-1950. The triumph of the «principle of nationality» at the end of the World War I 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 program of the homogeneous territorial nation «could be realized only by barbarians, or at least by barbarian means» (Ibid.: 131; 134). Subsequently, the Marxist theorist comes to his general

conclusion that 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 translation of *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* one reads: «The national movements typical for the last third of the twentieth century are essentially negative, more precisely said - 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 pointed themselves against the Habsburg, the Ottoman, or the Russian empires, i.e., against the forms of political organization which were seen as historically overcome in the name of a (may be misunderstood) political model - *national state*. On the other hand, most of them are exactly the opposite, namely, a rejection of the modern forms of political organization on a national, as well as on a supra-national level. Again and again, they make the impression that they are reactions out of weakness and fear, attempts to erect barricades against the powers of the modern world» (Hobsbawm 1991: 194).

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» (Hobsbawm 1992: 180-1). And here is to be asked, whether the author's admiration for the anti-nationalist «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 not to say arrogant – can be

employed as an argument in defense of the predicted end of the national state and the emergence of an «supranational new order»?

However, the idea of the overcoming of nation is in no way a product of the contemporary thought. It constitutes an essential trend in the secular hopes of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries' utopian ideologies about a new humanity, and finds attempts at its political fulfillment first of all in the secular promises of Marxism (Küenzlen 1994: 60). 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 the universal political-revolutionary messianism (compare Küenzlen 1994: 80, 139, 142).

Yet, theorists are far from unanimous when discussing the future of 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 behavior of people on the one hand, and in the international politics on the other. The prophecies of Francis Fukuyama's type about the triumph of the Western democracy over the «toothless and meaningless European nationalism» (see Schulze 1994: 334) turn out to be precipitate. Visions of a «post-national society», current until not long time ago, are questioned by the emergence of a whole range of new national states. «Not only the 'national state' as a supreme principle of social organization during the new time obviously experiences its 'renaissance' meanwhile ... also the 'return of the people' - or better in plural: 'the peoples'- must itself be acknowledged, and we should add that these phenomena ... have the weight of real factors, and are developing most considerable current historical influence» (Lipp 1994: 97, 101).

In this sense, «not the idea of nation 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 fulfillment 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 the 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» (Schulze 1994: 337).

2. Nationalism as political religion: the case of Central and Eastern Europe

The rapid growth of both national and religious activities, connected with the search for national and religious identification in post-totalitarian societies, has brought about the growing significance of the national and religious movements. This specific 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 the religious and national consciousness? What are the consequences of the system's transition for the national tensions and conflicts? Is the religious renaissance in Eastern Europe a result of the persecution and ban of religion under communism, or it is connected with the «return of religion» in European history 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 mobilization, 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?

When discussing these questions in the following chapter I seek to emphasize the continuity and contextuality of the social processes. Generally, the post-communist nationalist ideologies and practices have their roots in the past and in this sense they are to be studied in their historically determined continuity. Subsequently, they are to be examined in the context of the collapse of communism on the one hand and of the common European trends of the (Post)Modernity on the other.

/A/. Europe occidentalis - 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 through the Iron Curtain produced a further differentiation (Casanova 1994: 181-182). Since the collapse of communism, the theme of the differences between the Latin and the Orthodox Europe has become topical again, particularly in the light of the events of the wars in the former Yugoslavia. «Religion or Church denomination is then only an extreme abbreviation for the complex social, political and spiritual ensembles which over 1500 years drifted away from one another like two enormous continents, and in the new time 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 - the autocratic Russia, the Ottoman empire with its peculiar *Millet* structure, the supra-national in itself, hence not nationalist, structure of the old Austria» (Geiss 1994: 20-21).

The development of modern nations in Western Europe in the nineteenth century was connected primarily with social-political and economic interests. The 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 political national 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 ethnic horizontal relations the cultural differences between the ethnic group, perceived and reinforced by nationalism, were deeply associated with religion (compare Bobinski 1995: 136-137).

The Orthodox peoples within the boundaries of the Ottoman empire experienced also 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 with hatred not only towards the Muslim oppressor, but with hostility to 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 days (Schmemmann 1992: 281). For instance, the struggles of liberation in Bulgaria in the nineteenth century started with actions which aimed at the reconstruction of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and its independence from the Greek. The autonomy was proclaimed in 1870 with a firman of the Turkish sultan, which led to condemnation of the Bulgarian Church for its «filetism» 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 from the eighteenth-nineteenth century, 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 westernization of the country through restoration of the pre-Petrine Muscovy and its Orthodox monastic traditions.

The key difference between the Western and the Eastern trends in the interpretation of the idea of national state and its practical realization has survived until nowadays. According to Michael Ley, «Contemporary Europe is marked by two opposing trends: in the West the principle of national state has been ever more committed to the ground through a rapid modernization and internationalization of the economy and society, while the 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 suspected a loss of their status in the modernization, while nationalism in Eastern Europe is successfully actuated by the post-communist elites as a new legitimation 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» (Ley 1996: 10).

/B/. Nationalism - a political religion

The idea of modern mass movements as political religions is by no means a new one. The term was used already in 1938 by Eric Voegelin, when in his book *Die politischen Religionen* he made an attempt at the interpretation of the religious roots of these movements on the one hand, and of the religious-political nature of (political) communities on the other. The case in point is the sacralization of immanent historical entities such as nation, state, race or class, and consequently the emergence of a new inner-worldly religiosity in the place of the supernatural beliefs. «The life of people in a political community cannot be limited to a profane domain in which we have to do only with questions of the organization 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 non-religious 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» (Voegelin 1993: 63).

When 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 (see Büttner 1991: 155). Defining the nation, he argues that this concept belongs to the «sphere of values» and emphasizes 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 (Weber 1948: 172).

In his article *Nationalism as Religion* Carlton Hayes discusses the similarity of nationalist and religious rhetoric, pointing out the religious symbolism, used by nationalism: sacralization of the nation, glorification of dying for the fatherland as the greatest exploit, etc. (Hayes 1926). Emphasizing the historical example of the experience of solidarity in the wars of liberation, and particularly the case of nineteenth century German history, Thomas Nipperdey gives a succinct formulation of this interrelation: «In the national the religious is being secularized and the secular - sacralized» (Nipperdey 1983: 300). With regard to the exclusive exalting and sanctification of the essence and interests of nation in the national(ist) ideology, Heinrich Winkler talks about «transformation of nationalism into an ersatz-religion» (Winkler 1978: 9). 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» (Ley 1996: 9). Hajo Funke pays attention to the manifold relations between nationalism and religion, which hardly could be explained by the idea that nationalism is a concomitant and a consequence of the secularization of religion. He emphasizes their similarity: «They both integrate social groups in an 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 an instance for guilt-imposition or guilt-forgiveness.» But while the highest religious instance - God - is transcendent, the difference between immanent and transcendent in nationalism is smoothed down in favor of the (sanctified) nation. The paradox here is that nationalism claims an 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 functionalization (see Funke 1991: 115 ff.). 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» (Elias 1990: 189). «In the case of nationalism, the modern nations understand themselves as religious communities, and the nation becomes a subject of a secular history» (Ley 1996: 13). Günter Rohrmoser argues powerfully: «One often overlooks the fact that in the emancipation processes in the modern world nation has played not 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 its 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» (Rohrmoser 1989: 46).

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 moments 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 usually runs in the frames of the theory of secularization and the vision about 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. The reality surprised its architects, doctors and prophets once again, as has often happened in the history of social ideas and ideologies. The Enlightenment's prognoses about the end of religion are turning out to be precipitate and ill-founded in the light of the new events and processes, and are being hastily replaced by assertions of the crisis of the immanence and the return of religion in the world. The alleged secular Modernity is today understood and explained through its «*säkulare Religions- oder Glaubensgeschichte*» (see in this regard Tenbruck 1976 and particularly Küenzlen 1994).

As an ideology and a movement of Modernity, nationalism may be interpreted in the innerworldly-eschatological, revolutionary-religious perspective of the big mass movements of the new time – the movements, which endeavored to transform and perfect humanity (compare Küenzlen 1994: 83, 139). National aspirations after freedom, justice and political approval, particularly when they are marked by a national messianism, are an important part of the history of the secular-religious revolutionary movements.

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

The revival of the religious and ethical issues may be discussed in their reference to attempts «to transcend religiously the segmented everyday experience of highly differentiated societies, and simultaneously to find alternatives in the face of the seemingly insurmountable menaces of the radicalized and reflexive modernization processes». Notable here is «the binding of mysticism and social-political practice» (Gabriel 1995: 45).

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 negative nationalist attitude towards the enemy, the adversary, *versus* the Christian idea of man as image of God), nationalism and religion very often build up strong alliances (Babinski 1995: 137-9).

In a comparative perspective the Russian scholar Babinski outlines two basic similarities between nationalism and religion: the type of social bond which prevails in both the national and religious groups on the one hand, and the social functions of religious and national identities and ideologies on the other. If we follow the typology of human societies, presented by Tönnies as *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* and by Mclver 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 the terms of a sharing of common blood, ancestry and kinship. Such expressions as «motherland» and «fatherland» emphasize the belonging to one big national family. Religious groups, on their part, employ a range of symbolic phrases such as «brothers of faith», «children of God», etc., 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). In the past, the members of a particular nation were often mobilized by their leaders to defend their religion, even if «only» the nation and not the religion was in danger. Similar arguments are frequently used to explain and rationalize the importance of one's own religion and nationality. Both national and religious groups try to dominate and control the life of their members, and they may even join their efforts in this direction. According to the author, this possibility arises from the fact that 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 could fully belong to only one nation or religious group) and universality (the percentage of the 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) (compare Babinski 1995: 141-3).

As I already mentioned, nationalism is often defined as an ersatz-religion, i.e., as a phenomenon which has taken the place of the allegedly declined religion. This definition might be convincing in regard to the initial forms of nationalism, in connection with the specific trend of Modernity to orient its «faith» towards secular objects as science, technical progress and other, 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 the later nationalist ideologies and practices with the emphatic interpenetration and amalgamation of religion and politics, with the instrumentalization of both,

as well as with the purposeful application of the symbols, functions and even the institutional structures of religion in politics.

The idea of nationalism as political religion may be compared with the idea of civil religion, probably only to outline the different sense in which they use the term religion. After Robert Bellah revived for a new life the old concept of Jean-Jacques Rousseau at the end of the 1960's, the idea of «civil religion» has experienced numerous and often quite contradictory interpretations (see on this matter among the other authors Schieder 1987 and Kleger / Müller 1986). Originally, the American civil religion was seen to be a series of «covenants» which shaped society and its self-understanding. According to Theodor Schieder, it presented «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 center of political morality» (Schieder 1996: 75). «Under '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 re-vitalize the *ethical* moment, built in the American civil religion ... and to lay the foundation of a democratic-republican ethics with universal orientation» (Kleger / Müller 1986: 8). Thereby, civil religion 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 realization of a religious order, and often takes a dogmatically rigorous, restrictive and exclusive stance (Zöller 1991: 78).

At first sight, nationalism might seem to be similar to civil religion because of the specific instrumentalization of some religious symbols, rites and moral attitudes in the name of politics by both of them. Civil religion transforms transcendent values into a pure this-worldly morality and thus principally 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. On its part nationalism - as ideology and practice, or just 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», which is a contradiction by definition). Such utilization of nationalism (or of politics as a whole) for allegedly religious aims inevitably results in the politicization of religion and therefore in the decline of what is seen to be its original message, orientation and mission in the world. An example of this is the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which tried to survive during the communist regime exactly through political maneuvers and support to the populist-nationalistic initiatives of the government. Consequently it lost the chance to play the role of the institution which integrates and legitimates society. An opposite case is to be found in the face of the Catholic Church in Poland, which did not compromise with the official regime and became a center of national unity and resistance against communism.

Post-communist 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 according to the model of the modern liberal Western state. It lacks any particular confessional content. Civil religion may be interpreted as evidence for a certain 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 post-communist society – no matter how contestable this process may be and what forms or orientation it may take - emphasizes powerfully the confessional, historically inherited, and psychologically internalized Christian symbols, practices and archetypes. The traditional religious identities are being re-vitalized, instrumentalized, and set into action by the post-communist nationalism(s). The nationalist policy in Eastern Europe overtly confronts the activity of the so-called new religious movements in these lands. They are typically deemed to present the interests of foreign missions and organizations, and thereby to produce extra points of conflicts and differentiation. I consider the issue of new religions and post-communist society in detail elsewhere, and here I limit myself to a reference to Franz-Xaver Kaufmann. According to him, the new religious phenomena «unfold new religious virulences» and shift with a dramatic speed the problems of human *Zusammenleben* from the level of national states, and even continents, to a world-historical level (Kaufmann 1989: 10).

/C/. Nationalism, religion and post-communism

In 1989, Günter Rohrmoser wrote with prophetic insight: «When in the Soviet Union the question about an alternative to Marxism and Leninism is seriously put, and this might be soon the case ... then the symbiosis between religion and nationalism, as Dostoevsky anticipated it, could gain attractive power. The question of the relationship between politics and religion has not only outlived the collapse of the teaching about the two kingdoms in our century ... it has got a new vital significance for the resolution of the problems connected with the survival of the scientific-technical civilization» (Rohrmoser 1989: 161).

Rohrmoser has 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 radicalized by the overall political, cultural and economic transformation after the collapse of communism. «Perestroika» has put on the agenda the need for extreme societal mobilization. In this context nationalism as a source of collective and personal identity and meaning has soon revealed its vitality and competitiveness. However, the trend towards the re-vitalization and reinforcement of the separatist ethnic and nationalistic attitudes is not limited to Eastern Europe. Although a result of different developments, it has been current in some regions of Western Europe such as the Basque region, Northern Ireland and other since the 1960s.

The new political order in the countries of Eastern Europe has revealed a persistent affinity towards legitimization 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 neighbor countries, is too fragile and easy to cut across.

The causes for the nationalist revival in the post-communist societies are manifold and complex. A possible approach is their investigation in a historic perspective. The fact that by the time of the Second World War the process of nation-building was not completed

in the East European countries is to be taken into consideration. The absence of state continuity (with two exceptions: Russia and Hungary) favored the further existence 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 sovietization of Eastern Europe) brought about latent forms of nationalism. Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, the communist regimes undertook some attempts at the strengthening of the dominant ideology by moderate portions of nationalism (Ley 1996: 26). «The reinforced shift towards national values in all 'real-socialist' societies since 1970s was a sign of the penetrating identity-crisis among wide circles of the population, and first of all among the intelligentsia ... The loss of identity was compensated for by the activation of national, partly also religious, traditions. That is why the rise of strong national movements in the process of the transformation of the system and the liberation of the people from the state guardianship was not astonishing. This affected first of all the multinational states. The search for identity on the part of the particular nations and peoples there has often taken the form of controversy with the neighboring ethnic groups, of cultural and religious differentiation, of territory claims and confrontation with the ruling state center» (Mommsen 1992: 12).

According to Adam Michnik the post-totalitarian nationalism is «the last word of the withdrawing communists, and simultaneously a manifestation of the outcry against this anti-national system» (quoted in Troebst 1996: 124). Following the view that the post-communist nationalism is related partly to the pre-socialist tradition and partly to the influence of the radicalized protest against the Soviet dominance, Erhard Stölting emphasizes its populist strategy: «The common feature of East European nationalism today is, among other things, its populist strategy. In practice ... it always opposes the radical reconstruction of the economic structures. It professes predominantly a radical anti-communism, 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 reasons for broken promises are always laid on others» (Stölting 1994: 229).

Nationalistically-minded people are to be found in different social groups. They are often intellectuals, concerned with cultural interpretations of the folklore and history of the particular nationalities. Their works provide the symbols and language for the populist national movement. They might be members of ecological and human rights organizations, as well as of different youth groups, which join the nationalist circles, but for which nationalism is an emotional reaction rather than a rationalized ideology. Although most active are the old communist cadres: the state-, party- and economy-functionaries (see for more details Stölting 1994: 299-322), nationalists in Eastern Europe can be members of democratic groups as well. Stefan Troebst points at this, as Tom Nairn calls it, «Yanus head» of nationalism: «The protagonists and adherents of the movement for independence in the Baltic states are personally nationalists *and* democrats at one time, and they stay - like the German revolutionaries of 1848 - against an anti-national and authoritarian political system» (Troebst 1996: 125).

A pertinent question which logically arises here concerns the function of the national state during communism. May we call «national state» a state, which did not defend any national interests, but betrayed them in the name of a homogenization of the Soviet type? In other words, the communist state was an anti-national state. This means, among other things, that a part of national identity (if not national self-definition as a whole) constructed itself without, and even against the state.

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 anti-modern movement in the Modernity» (Ley 1996: 12), as a protest against the trans-national economics and politics which put under question the very idea of the national state, nationalism and the national state in Eastern Europe are often seen as manifestations, and even bases of the processes of modernization and democratization. Thus, in the case of Eastern Europe it is probably appropriate to speak of «late national states», because the states there become outspokenly «national» only after the Fall of the Berlin Wall.

The re-vitalization of the old national traditions and religious beliefs in Eastern Europe runs together with attempts at «modernization» and «democratization». Nationalist trends compete with the explicit and openly-declared pragmatic pro-western orientations. In

different forms and ways post-communist societies interpret and pursue their «road to Europe», where the idea of Europe typically symbolizes democracy and civil society. Sometimes, however, the endeavor «to be European» takes comic forms, particularly in some Balkan countries with their inferiority complex (see on this matter, for instance, Tom Gallagher 1998: 68-69).

Another specificity of post-communist nationalism is also to be taken into consideration. In principle, nationalism is a manifestation of the objective necessity of cultural homogeneity (see Gellner 1991: 73). The nationalist and minorities-hostile policies of the East European countries may be interpreted «as an attempt to achieve modernization through homogenization» (Ley 1996: 28). This contradictory process displays a further paradox of nationalism. It is directed towards an internal homogenization of society and at the same time creates further differentiation, delimitation, and de-homogenization (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 the minorities and thus provokes respective counter-reactions). Michael Ley emphasizes another paradoxical characteristic: nationalism is an important factor in the process of modernization 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 the genealogical myths. In order to smooth down the hardships of the modernization processes, nationalism promises «a return to the values of an imagined nation that had already existed in the past in one or another form». Thereby, nationalism operates as an anti-modern factor of modernization, and nation becomes a modern transformation of traditional, pre-modern realities such as the ethnies (Ley 1996: 18). A sweeping parallel between nationalism and another anti-modern phenomenon of the Modernity - fundamentalism – reveals much in common between both: the orientation backwards, the emphasis on tradition, and the search for foundations. (See about fundamentalism as «modern anti-modernism» Küenzlen 1996: 59 ff.).

Generally, the accentuation of tradition and the quest for foundations are unavoidable consequences and accompanying phenomena of the socio-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 art. The peoples then, like the individuals, have to look back, to search for religious 'sources', in order to stabilize their collective existence and to safeguard it from a relapse into irrationalism» (Rohrmoser 1989: 67). The function of religion to codify and transform contingency is explored in detail by Niklas Luhman (Luhman 1977). Nationalism takes over and performs further exactly the function of rendering the worldly dynamics bearable. Besides, 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: creation of identity, providing of guidance for behavior, overcoming of contingency, social integration, providing a cosmic perspective, and distancing people from the world. He comes to the conclusion that «Obviously, today there is no single instance or central complex of ideas which is in condition to fulfil all these six functions *simultaneously* in an acceptable for most of the contemporary people way; in this sense there are not 'religions' any more.» Consequently, the functions of religion are carried out by different instances (Kaufmann 1989: 85-86). My contention is that nationalism can be seen as one of these instances. Naturally, the «taking over» of some of the functions fulfilled earlier by religion on the part of nationalism is not a mere «change of the actors». It sets up new constellations of power relations and creates new emphases. For example, as Franz-Xaver Kaufmann points out, «the unity of the medieval society was religiously constructed ... was primarily a symbolic, and not a political unity, providing a framework for the processes of socialization ... Christianity acted more as ... a power which legitimated the symbolic order rather than as a power which integrated society» (Kaufmann 1989: 79). The major purpose of nationalism is political integration rather than symbolic legitimation, although it is pursued through the aid of secular-religious symbols of unity. Nationalism takes on most of the functions of religion, with exception of those of 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 and power). In this way, nationalism manifests itself as a successful, if not as the most successful, political religion.

An appurtenant approach to be used for the study of the place and functions of the «genuine» religion in post-communist societies is that of cultural models, proposed by Patrick Michel. According to him the religious revival after the Fall of the Berlin Wall is to be discussed from the perspective of the fact that all these countries have belonged to the same political system for more than forty years. The earlier uniformity of the methods and activities of the governments in respect to religion is reflected today, in one way or another, in the uniformity of the methods and activities of the civil societies [in construction], regardless of their different historical and national traditions (Michel 1991: 8, 19). «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 contrary, was defined by 'a maximum of diversity over a minimum of space'». In this regard the Church created a split in the uniformity of the totalitarian system. It could become the center of the political opposition, not only because of its «other-worldly» orientation. It was the only legal structure with its buildings, leaders and (albeit limited) finances, around which the initiative from below could be organized. Catholic churches had also a link to an «international» center outside the control of the communist regime (Michel 1991: 4, 22).

In general, the influence of religion in post-communist societies has the following three dimensions: /1/ over the social-political field as a witness of the other-worldly reality; /2/ within this field as a value-preserving and assuring power, and /3/ «under» the social-political field in the form of symbols. «Religion is unrivaled 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» (see Michel 1991: 15-16, 19).

The theme of the political-religious role of nationalism in the post-totalitarian search for identity is connected with the theme of the specific relations of religion and church with the political and social system. These relations generally follow the paradigm of separation of Church and state.

In the West the process of separation of the Church from the state and from the political sector is already completed. The Churches are no more state institutions, but free

and voluntary communities. They are now situated in the sector of the civil society and no more in the political sector. This situation implies differentiation between religious beliefs, national identity, and political state citizenship (see Casanova 1995: 193, 196). That is why in modern Western societies «a sheer politicization has no place as a rule». Instead, a respect for the institutionally differentiated social order is to be largely observed (Riesebrodt 1995: 250).

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 one extent or another typical for all East European countries, impeded attempts at sovietization and full homogenization 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 (see Casanova 1995: 198-200).

The post-communist ascent of religion – no matter how problematic it may be within the secularization paradigm - without the separation of the religious and the political sectors can 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 have to 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 instead of ethnic belonging» (Casanova 1995: 202).

Conclusion

In the above submitted work I have tried to avoid generalizing 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 national state. An appropriate strategy in a discussion like this seems to be the «discernment of the spirits», that is, the questioning and examination of why and how particular high ideas - for example the idea of 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 institutionalized Christian Churches, but of religious beliefs, attitudes, archetypes, and sentiments (the «invisible religion», if we 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 principle difference in their orientations (outer-worldly *versus* inner-worldly).

As I argued on the base of different sources, the issues outlined above often receive contradicting interpretations. In addition, the events after the Fall of the Berlin Wall have presented new challenges to the already current prognoses. They have demonstrated the inexhaustible dynamics and vitality of religion, nationalism and national state, and discredited the predictions of their imminent end. Consequently, the theorists have had to record the «return» of these phenomena in the history. Thus religion and nationalism are coming back, perhaps without having ever really gone away.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alter, Peter (Hg.): *Nationalismus. Dokumente zur Geschichte und Gegenwart eines Phänomens*, München 1994.
- Anderson, Benedict: *Die Erfindung der Nation. Zur Karriere eines erfolgreichen Konzepts*, Frankfurt/New York 1988.
- Armstrong, John: *Nations before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill 1982.
- Babinski, Grigori: *Nationalism and Religion in East Central Europe*. In: Irena Borowik (Ed.): *The Future of Religion. East and West*, Krakow 1995, p. 136-145.
- Büttner, Friedemann: *Zwischen Politisierung und Säkularisierung - Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer islamischen Integration der Gesellschaft*. In: Erhard Forndran (Hg.): *Religion und Politik in einer säkularisierten Welt*, Baden-Baden 1991, S. 109-137.
- Casanova, Jose: *Chancen und Gefahren öffentlicher Religion. Ost- und Westeuropa im Vergleich*. In: Otto Kallscheuer (Hg.): *Europa der Religionen*, Frankfurt / M. 1995, S. 181-210.
- Deutsch, Karl: *Nationenbildung - Nationalstaat - Integration*, Düsseldorf 1972.
- Elias, Norbert: *Studien über die Deutschen*, Frankfurt / M. 1990.
- Estel, Bernd: *Grundaspekte der Nation*. In: B. Estel und T. Mayer (Hg.): *Das Prinzip Nation in modernen Gesellschaften*, Opladen 1994, S. 13-83.
- Funke, Hajo: *Nationalismus als Ersatzreligion. Zum Nationalismus von Fußballfans in Deutschland - eine exemplarische Studie*. In: Erhard Forndran (Hg.): *Religion und Politik in einer säkularisierten Welt*, Baden-Baden 1991, S. 109-137.
- Gabriel, Karl: *Gesellschaft im Umbruch - Wandel des Religiösen*. In: Hans-Joachim Höhn (Hg.): *Krise der Immanenz. Religion an den Grenzen der Moderne*, Frankfurt / M. 1996, S. 31-49.

- Gallagher, Tom: *To Be Or Not To Be Balkan: Romania's Quest for Self-Definition*.
 In: Daedalus. Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences,
 Summer 1997, p. 63-83
- Gellner, Ernest: *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca & London 1983.
- Gellner, Ernest: *Nationalismus und Moderne*, Berlin 1991.
- Giesen, Bernhard: *Einleitung*. In: Bernhard Giesen (Hg.): *Nationale und kulturelle Identität. Studien zur Entwicklung des kollektiven Bewußtseins in der Neuzeit*, Frankfurt am Main 1991.
- Hayes, Carlton: *Nationalism as a Religion*. In: C. Hayes: *Essays on Nationalism*, New York 1926.
- Hobsbawm, Eric: *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992 (2nd edition). German translation: *Nationen und Nationalismus. Mythos und Realität*, Frankfurt & New York 1991.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. & T. O. Ranger (Eds.): *The Invention of Traditions*, Cambridge 1983.
- Kaufmann, Franz-Xaver: *Religion und Modernität*, Tübingen 1989.
- Kedourie, Elie: *Nationalism*, London 1960.
- Kleger, Heinz und Alois Müller (Hg.): *Religion des Bürgers. Zivilreligion in Amerika und Europa*, München 1986.
- Kohn, Hans: *The Idea of Nationalism*, New York: The Macmillan Company 1967 (9th printing). German translation: *Die Idee des Nationalismus*, Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag 1961.
- Küenzlen, Gottfried: *Der Neue Mensch. Zur säkularen Religionsgeschichte der Moderne*, München 1994.
- Küenzlen, Gottfried: *Religiöser Fundamentalismus - Aufstand deden die Moderne?* In: Hans-Joachim Höhn (Hg.): *Krise der Immanenz. Religion an den Grenzen der Moderne*, Frankfurt / M. 1996, S. 50 - 71.
- Lemberg, Eugen: *Nationalismus*. Band 2: *Soziologie und politische Pädagogik*, Stuttgart 1964.

- Lepsius, M. Rainer: *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland*. In: Heinrich Winkler (Hg.): *Nationalismus in der Welt von heute*, Göttingen 1982, S. 12-28.
- Ley, Michael: *Historische und theoretische Überlegungen zum Nationalismus*. In: Michael Ley und Ernst Gehmacher (Hg.): *Das Ende des Nationalismus*, Wien 1996, S. 9-44.
- Lipp, Wolfgang: *Regionen, Multikulturalismus und Europa: Jenseits der Nation?* In: B. Estel und T. Mayer (Hg.): *Das Prinzip Nation in modernen Gesellschaften*, Opladen 1994, S. 97-113.
- Luhmann, Niklas: *Funktion der Religion*, Frankfurt / M. 1977.
- Meinecke, Friedrich: *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat. Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaates*, München und Berlin 1919.
- Michel, Patrick: *Politics and Religion in Eastern Europe. Catholicism in Hungary, Poland and Chechoslovakia*, Cambridge 1991.
- Mommsen, Margareta: *Nationalismus in Ostteuropa. Gefährliche Wege in die Demokratie*, München 1992, S. 7-17.
- Nipperdey, Thomas: *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1860. Bürgerwelt und starker Staat*, München 1983.
- Riesebrodt, Martin: *Zur Politisierung von Religion. Überlegungen am Beispiel fundamentalistischer Bewegungen*. In: Otto Kallscheuer (Hg.): *Europa der Religionen*, Frankfurt / M. 1995, S. 247-275.
- Rohrmoser, Günter: *Religion und Politik in der Krise der Moderne*, Graz-Wien-Köln 1989.
- Schieder, Theodor: *Nationalismus und Nationalstaat. Studien zum nationalen Problem im modernen Europa*, Göttingen 1991.
- Schmemmann, Alexander: *The Historical Roads of Eastern Orthodoxy*, Crestwood, New York 1992
- Seton- Watson, Hugh: *Nations and States. An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, London 1977.

Smith, Anthony: *Nationalism and the Historians*, in: Anthony Smith (Ed.): *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Leiden- New York-Köln 1992, S. 58-80.

Smith, Anthony: *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford 1986.

Stichweh, Rudolf: *Nation und Weltgesellschaft*. In: B. Estel und T. Mayer (Hg.): *Das Prinzip Nation in modernen Gesellschaften*, Opladen 1994, S. 83-96.

Stölting, Erhard: *Soziale Trägergruppen des Nationalismus in Osteuropa*. In: B. Estel und T. Mayer (Hg.): *Das Prinzip Nation in modernen Gesellschaften*, Opladen 1994, S. 299-322.

Tenbruck, Friedrich: *Die Glaubensgeschichte der Moderne*. In: *Zeitschrift für Politik* 1/23 (1976).

Troebst, Stefan: «*Demokratie als ethnische geschlossene Veranstaltung*»:

Nationalistischer Integrationsdruck und politische Formierung der nationalen Minderheiten in Bulgarien (1989-April 1991). In: Wolfgang Höpken (Hg.): *Revolution und Raten: Bulgariens Weg zur Demokratie*, München-Oldenburg 1996, S. 117-172.

Voegelin, Eric: *Die politischen Religionen*. München 1993.

Waldmann, Peter: *Ethnischer Radikalismus. Ursachen und Folgen gewaltsamer Minderheitskonflikte am Beispiel des Baskenlandes, Nordirlands und Quebecs*, Opladen 1989.

Weber, Max: *The Nation*. In: Hans H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills (eds.): *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd 1948, pp. 171-179.

Winkler, Heinrich: *Einleitende Bemerkungen*. In: Heinrich Winkler (Hg.):

Nationalismus in der Welt von heute, Göttingen 1982, S. 7-11.

Zöller, Michel: *Individualismus und Populismus - Religion und Politik in Amerika*. In:

Erhard Forndran (Hg.): *Religion und Politik in einer säkularisierten Welt*, Baden-Baden 1991, S. 77-90.