The Nation as a Challenge for Liberal Society and Economic Globalization

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the European nation state and the concept of nation. It takes the insights of Miroslav Hroch on the nation and nationalism as a starting point in order to discuss contemporary developments of the nation, and to outline the particularities of Western and Central & Eastern European nation states. The emphasis is on the nation state and political power, and on the relationship between the concept of nation and economic globalization and the liberal society. The first part outlines how modern European nation states developed, considering Hroch's argument that the role of emancipated citizens was crucial in most Central & Eastern European nation-building processes, in contrary to Western Europe. The paper in a second part examines how contemporary European elites have reshaped the view of the nation state, and points to the role citizens have played in this process. Thereby, the focus will be on the question how political elites have challenged the concept of the European nation state with the liberal society and economic globalization, and how the nation has fought back via political movements and populists. The paper concludes with the insight that the concept of nation has increasingly clashed with economic globalization and the liberal society, which had led to serious negative consequences for western liberal democracies.

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Introduction

The nation state is back again in Europe: The referendum to leave the European Union in the United Kingdom was successful in June 2016. The main aim of the Brexit referendum had been to take back control, that is to transfer decision-making from transnational and international structures back to the national level. In Europe, the British decision had been most extreme. The decision might have been extreme, but in the context of bringing the nation state back into the game, not an exception: All across the continent, citizens increasingly pressured to limit the competences of international institutions and to scale back transnationalism.

Populists were to head larger protest movements and political parties, and their main demand was to focus on the sovereignty of the respective nation state, to bring back control. Donald Trump, President of the United States, spearheaded the development with his America First claim. The nation state would reclaim his place in the second decade of the twenty-first century, through a modern form of nationalism, and this was somehow astonishing to transnational elites. Western elites in particular had supported the growing economic interdependence and the liberalization of societies since the later twentieth century – and this development had generally been supported by the respective European populations until the financial crisis of 2008. Already before the crisis, it had become evident that economically interdependent states and societies and the concept of the nation state were hard to reconcile. The nation state would tend to look inward and to focus on the collective, while interdependent states and societies would emphasize rights of individuals and an outward, global perspective. As the modern nation state was increasingly questioned, this was met by the resistance of European citizens who still supported this collective category of human community, and felt emotionally attached to it.

This paper tries to explore why the nation state and the concept of nation is still that popular in Europe in the early twenty-first century. In order to find the answer we both have to outline contemporary developments, but also have to immerse ourselves in history. Different ways of forming national states have determined how single European populations regard the concept of nation and the nation state. The formation of national states has been historically limited to Europe, and was a process that latest for centuries. Therefore, this paper exclusively focuses on European societies. The first part gives an overview of the development of modern European

nation states, drawing mainly on the insights of Miroslav Hroch. The paper in a second part examines how European elites have changed their view of the nation state, and the role citizens have played here. In the twenty-first century, European elites have preferred the liberal society and economic globalization over the concept of the European nation state, but they have been met with increasing resistance from their respective populations, of whom a significant percentage did not want to sacrifice the nation for the sake of economic globalization and the liberal society. The paper concludes with the insight that the concept of nation is a serious challenge to economic globalization and the liberal society – above in its modern nationalist form –, potentially limiting liberalism and democracy, that is modern liberal democratic political systems.

Modern nation states

In human history, there has been the recurring question of how to successfully integrate large social groups. Criteria of integration have been for example family and clan-based structures, religion, language etc. Those questions usually have been attached to sentiment and emotion, and of course to exclusion and inclusion. Individuals who did not fulfill the respective criteria or did not submit to certain codes were rigorously excluded.

The Age of Enlightenment and the French Revolution had weakened the power position of religion, and it increasingly became difficult to legitimate power by the grace of God. Subsequently, individual human beings and their ethnic background became more important than religion,[1] and turned into a dominant characteristic of human community in Europe. The concept of the nation proved useful here as it allowed to transfer social community to larger human communities. This concept was not really new: Already during the early sixteenth century the word nation was applied to a population from a given location: This population held the sovereignty, which was the prerequisite for solidarity and loyalty.[2] More than three hundred years later, Davies proposed the following definition: "a uniquely sovereign people readily distinguishable from other uniquely defined sovereign peoples who are bound together by a sense

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[1]   The religious connotation remained important until at least the mid-twentieth century; and is of importance in many European countries today. For example in southern European Balkan countries religion for decades had been more important than any other criteria to define social community.

[2]   In Bohemia, Jan Komenský – Comenius – defined a nation sometime later as a "community of people who occupy a common territory, have a common past and a common language, and are bound by a love for their common homeland"; *Gentis felicitas*, published in 1659; quoted in Miroslav Hroch, *European Nations. Explaining Their Formation* (London: Verso, 2015), 3.

of solidarity, common culture, language, religion, and geographical location."[3] Modern states are predominantly nation states, and "build their unity and their understanding as nation states on cultural, ethnic, political, or historical bonds." [4]

In a historical view, the nation is a "constituent of social reality of historical origin" [5] as opposed to the contemporary interpretation that above all see the nation as a subjective product of national consciousness, that is nationalism. A nation in the original sense was understood as a combination of several kinds of objective relationships and their subjective reflection in collective consciousness, such as a common past, linguistic and cultural ties, and a conception of all group members being equal.[6] The last point is important: Even if the nation was an exclusive concept it was deeply inclusive for its members, that is it generated a high sense of community in establishing multiple relationships. [7]

The concept of nation can be regarded as the historical answer to the crisis of the old social order that had generated increasing inequality of ever growing populations of human beings. The new national order was based on the understanding that all members of a given entity should be equal. The nation as a concept was successful, and often supported by increased mobility, social communication or mass education; also the rationalization of bureaucratic processes accelerated the formation of nation states. There was a significant correlation between the creation of modern nations and industrialization, that is the establishment of capitalist economic systems, but nation-building processes had often started long before industrialization.[8] The nation had been an answer to both social modernization and social crisis.

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[3]   Norman Davies: *Europe. A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 382.

[4]   Stephan Leibfried, Evelyne Huber, Matthew Lange, Jonah D. Levy, and John D. Stephens, *The Oxford Handbook of Transformations of the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 19. In comparison, Eric Hobsbawm only granted the nation legitimatory power if it was connected to a modern territorial state, the nation state: *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 9-10.

[5]   Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985), 3.

[6]   Miroslav Hroch, "From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe," in *Mapping the Nation* , ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (New York and London: Verso, 1996), 79.

[7]   Those relationships had formed gradually, and the absence of any of those – linguistic, historical, economic, religious, political etc. – relationships had not prevented the existence of a nation; Hroch in *European Nations*, 9 also mentioned the similar definition of Antony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno, Nev.: Univ. of Nevada Press, 1991), 14.

[8]   Marxists and others have argued that capitalism had created nation states.

What about the relationship between the nation and the state? Sentiments of belonging to a historical collectivity might very well have existed for centuries, but it is only in contemporary times that they founded and justified a particular form of political organization. [9] The modernization of European societies – or social progress – increasingly was not compatible with the old social order, and required an answer. A larger population in combination with the concept of nation proved a powerful political instrument; and the state was increasingly related to the nation as a community in Europe.[10] Across Europe in the nineteenth century there was not an uniform answer, as sometimes is suggested, and not every nation disposed of a state. France has been widely understood as a European model case when it came to the formation of the nation and a nation state. However, each population or region reacted differently to the challenge of modernization and crisis. Sometimes the answer would be elitarian and of a top-down nature; the concept of nation would be either used to underline the strength of already dominant political entities or as an instrument to challenge the various European Empires.[11] Most, often answers to meet social modernization and crisis were triggered by the people or a pre-modern form of civil society.[12] It is here, where different traditions of how to interpret the nation become relevant: as a national movement pushing independent administrative structures, or as a concept realized within already existing administrative structures.

Staatsnation and *Kulturnation*

Nation-building processes have been determined by social, cultural and political history; specific values, traditions and moral codes, often influenced by religion.[13] Even if those processes cannot

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[9]   Dominique Schnapper, *Community of Citizens: On the Modern Idea of Nationality* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 19.

[10]   Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), 83.

[11]   We can observe this development across Europe, especially in regard to the most powerful European states and Empires of that time, notably France, Denmark, Great Britain, Prussia, the Russian Empire, the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. Poland is an interesting case in this context – the concept of nation allowed to unite rebellions against the three occupying Empires of Prussia, Tsarist Russia and the Habsburg Monarchy during the times of partition.

[12]   Today, we also can observe this phenomena well: Brexit and the election of Donald Trump President of the United States have been popular answers to the contemporary crisis of western societies.

[13]   Hroch has identified five broad categories relevant for historical nation-building processes: (1) connections to the past of a given people; (2) language and ethnicity, (3) modernization, mainly the influence of industrialization on social structures, but also communication, education or literacy; (4) conflicts of interest and (5) sociopsychological aspects: emotions and identity. Hroch, *European Nations*, 23-25. Hroch, *European*

be generalized, two different developments can be identified based on either the existence of stable and centralized state administrative structures or the existence of national movements. European populations who disposed of centralized state structures and overtook the concept of nation as a legitimizing factor for their social community, and political power, can be termed *Staatsnation* – state nations. The populations who did not have established state structures, but pushed common cultural codes and traditions via national movements are characterized as *Kulturnation*.[14]

The state nation was an early modern state: It concentrated on civic equality and introduced the concept of nation in order to strengthen the relation between individual populations and ruling elites. In France, the state had been created even before a nation developed.[15] This process has been similar in the United Kingdom, and is also reflected linguistically: Just consider the proximity of the terms state and nation in the English and French languages. In both cases, nation referred to all persons governed by the same ruler.[16] The concept of the nation had the very negative implication that other ethnic groups who inhabited the respective territory were forced to subdue under the national narrative established by the ruling class – for the sake of national development and civic equality. State territory turned into national territory when the respective elites embraced the concept of nation as a powerful tool to legitimize their power over a given territory, and to include reluctant or even rebellious populations. This top-down model to create a nation from above has however been more an exception in Europe. Even if there were several

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Nations, 26 also underlined "little regard is given to the differences between the social and cultural situations in which 'classic' modern nation-formation occurred, and those characterising the current situation."

[14]   There has not been an established term for *Kulturnation* in the English language. This differentiation has been above all made in a German-speaking countries, For example, the *Staatsnation* – a state nation, is a community regarding itself as nation within certain borders and a certain loyalty towards the state or crown – and the *Kulturnation* – the culture nation, emphasizes culture and language. Compare with Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1908). For theoretical concepts on the nation, above all the ideological and political aspects of the (German) ethnic definition of a nation, Hroch recommended Heinz Ziegeler, *Die moderne Nation. Ein Beitrag zur politischen Soziologie* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1931).

[15]   Eugen J. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1976) in his rich study of rural France shows that was only partly ruled by French officials, educated by French teachers; largely leading its own life until the First World War.

[16]   Hroch, *European Nations*, 3. "In English, therefore, a connection is logically made between 'nationalism' and the state, i.e. a struggle for statehood;" ibid, 4.

examples for such a model: The United Kingdom[17] and Denmark – that had the character of Empires; then France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands or Sweden.[18] Poland's effort to transform the multiethnic confederation into a modernized state was disrupted mainly by Prussia and Russia.[19] Also the Russian and Ottoman Empires and the Habsburg Monarchy were dominated by one developed national culture.[20]

In contrast, another situation was more common all over Europe: A certain ethnic group – or more precisely outstanding and often educated individuals – sensed social communities were ready to go beyond established social organization. The time was ripe to combine both social crisis and modernization in order to create a new social order, which was the nation. A nation was mainly understood to unite. It was an umbrella concept for diverse populations who had expressed their will to form anew as a larger social unity. Most often there were certain prerequisites without whom nation-building would not have been successful, such as culture and language, and also religion.[21] In this context, Ernest Renan denied the importance of objective categories: Ethnics, language or religion were not important. It was above all the individual will to become part of a nation. The nation would be a subjective and spiritual project.[22] He of course had the French tradition in mind – the state nation tradition – and less the Central & Eastern European tradition[23] – where nations were perceived as a larger group of people who existed

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[17] Officially the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland since 1801; the 1707 Acts of Union had declared the kingdoms of England and Scotland were united into one kingdom by the name of Great Britain.

[18] Hroch, *European Nations*, 40-43 in detail on France, England, Spain, The Netherlands and Sweden – his main criteria being a civic society forming within an established state whose right to exist was not disputed by anyone.

[19] Poland and France were the first to adapt an own constitution in 1791 respectively, and became the first constitutional monarchies in Europe. Further modernization in Poland was disrupted by the Second Partition of 1793, which led to insurgent warfare against the foreign aggressors, and the final partition in 1795, Russia taking over sixty percent of the territory; the rest was distributed quite equally between Habsburg and Prussia.

[20] Even if this culture was strongly dominated by religion, both in the Russian and Ottoman Empires.

[21] See the categories of nation-building mentioned in footnote 13.

[22] "Une nation est une âme, un principe spirituel. Deux choses qui, à vrai dire, n'en font qu'une, constituent cette âme, ce principe spirituel. L'une est dans le passé, l'autre dans le présent. L'une est la possession en commun d'un riche legs de souvenirs ; l'autre est le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de continuer à faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis." Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* Conférence faite à la Sorbonne le 11 mars 1882 (Paris : Calmann Lévy, 1882) 30, 2e éd.

[23] Plus the European successor states of the Ottoman Empire that are also subsumed under the term Central & Eastern European here.

objectively and were united by their national struggle. In contrary to the state nation that always focused on political autonomy, national movements would emphasize cultural autonomy, including common tradition, language and religion;[24] the strive for political autonomy would follow later. National movements fueled the formation of a national ruling class, eager to seize power and cement it within an own national state.

Hroch identified almost thirty successful European nation-building processes, and most of them followed the culture nation path.[25] Germany and Italy crossed categories as they combined both state traditions with national movements in order to unite fragmented parts, often with strong regional traditions.[26] Another example was Poland that had ceased to exist as an independent political entity in the later eighteenth century, as three European Empires split it up among themselves. However, the vision of a cultural and political unity was maintained until Poland regained state independence in 1918 – but lost it again in 1939 when its territory was occupied again by German and Russian forces. The most powerful example for the desire of national self-determination and the power of historical legacies is the existence of a democratic Polish underground state between 1939 and 1945.[27] For many in Poland, full national self-determination was only reestablished with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.[28] In the Soviet Union, the Russian nation was the crucial nationality and effectively controlled the party

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[24]   See also Hroch, *European Nations*, 5, on the differences, underlining that the *Kulturnation* had "to ascertain which characteristics would be appropriate in defining a new community, thereby differentiating it from the other communities."

[25]   Miroslav Hroch, *Das Europa der Nationen. Die moderne Nationsbildung im europäischen Vergleich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2005), 43.

[26]   Italy in fact had never become a real nation state. Italian philosopher Caccirari in an interview stated: "Vielleicht bedeutet 'italienisch sein' zu einer Nation gehören, die aus vielen Nationen besteht, zu einem extrem komplexen 'Archipel', der nicht auf einen Nenner zu reduzieren ist. Massimo Cacciari in an interview with Urs Gehringer, "Ein Haufen Phrasen," *Weltwoche*, December 7, 2016, https://www.weltwoche.ch/amp/2016-49/hintergrund/ein-haufen-phrasen-die-weltwoche-ausgabe-492016.html.

[27]   Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1944) and Stefan Korboński, *Fighting Warsaw: The Story of the Polish Underground State, 1939–1945* (New York: Funk&Wagnalls, 1968).

[28]   The *Red Army* quickly replaced the German *Wehrmacht* when it began to retreat in later summer 1944 and was to stay until the early 1990s. This ensured Russian dominance over Poland for more than four decades. See the view of the Institute of National Remembrance: "From 1944 to 1989, Poland was under the Communist rule. Despite changes during that period, Poland had no sovereignty though it enjoyed recognition in the international arena. During that forty-five year period, all key decisions regarding both Polish foreign and domestic policies were made in Moscow. At the same time, despite changes brought about by social upheaval in 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976 and 1980, Poland was under totalitarian rule." Institute of National Remembrance, "Brief History of Poland 1939-1989," https://ipn.gov.pl/en/brief-history-of-poland/1,Brief-history.html.

and the state; the Russian language and culture dominated over all the other languages and cultures. [29]

But back to history: In the Habsburg Monarchy, national movements attempted to liberate themselves from the German cultural and linguistic dominance in the nineteenth century. As a rule, a national movement alone was not sufficient for an independent nation state – the consent of the Great Nations was necessary, above all in Central & Eastern Europe.[30] This is also the reason why their nation-building efforts would only be successful after a significant disruptive event. The First World War was a such an event. It questioned the former social organization of Europe, and prompted that the nation state became the dominant social organization of larger human communities in Europe. Some nations only reluctantly were granted sovereignty and their own nation state, [31] while others saw their struggle for national liberation brutally suppressed.[32]

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[29] Apologists of the Soviet Union underline its character as a progressive multinational state; and put forward the following arguments that speak against a Russian-dominated state: ethno-territorial federalism, distinct (but in reality brutally suppressed) national intelligentsias, the official cultivation of national cadres and national languages (that were often also brutally suppressed, above all the Ukrainian and Belarussian languages). Those formal features of the Soviet Union had little to do with the reality on the ground – the Soviet Union was not an institutionalized state in the western sense, but a totalitarian bureaucratic structure, where informal codes and processes mattered much more than certain institutional arraignments everybody knew they had been only installed for the outside world – such as general Supreme Soviet elections. Those formal features helped the Soviet Union to sell their model internationally, above all in western leftist circles, that often happily supported the Soviet state as a progressive social model in contrary to backward nationalist western Europe.

[30] This combined with the tradition of *Kulturnation* might be the reason, why centralized state structures are generally met with distrust.

[31] Czechoslovakia would benefit from the support of US President Wilson, while Germany had strongly opposed sovereignty. Of course, Slovakia was not benefit from sovereignty within this construction, and the strong German minority from the beginning had not been ready to arrange itself with cultural and political marginalization. Kevin J. Navara, *Dreams of a Great Small Nation: The Mutinous Army that Threatened a Revolution, Destroyed an Empire, Founded a Republic, and Remade the Map of Europe* (New York: Public Affairs, 2016) and Josef Kalvoda, *The Genesis of Czechoslovakia* (New York City: Columbia University Press, 1986).

[32] The Ukrainian independence movement was brutally suppressed by Russia starting from 1917 until 1956, and even led to genocide in 1932/1933: "Around 5,000 peasant revolts against the Soviet policy of collectivization with more than 1 million involved took place in Ukraine just before the Holodomor. This largely overlooked fact proves that Ukrainians did resist Soviet occupation not only in 1917-1919 but throughout the 1920s and up to 1932 when the Holodomor was designed to finally break down that independent spirit." Bohdan Ben, "Holodomor: Stalin's Punishment for 5,000 Peasant Revolts," *Euromaidan Press*, November 23, 2019, http://euromaidanpress.com/2019/11/23/how-ukrainians-resisted-holodomor-5000-peasant-revolts/; "About the Holodomor. Background Data." Holodomor Research and Education Consortium, *Euromaidan Press*, November 22, 2014, http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/11/22/about-the-holodomor-background-data/. On the period of the Second World War and the Ukrainian insurgency movement see Володимир В'ятрович, Ігор Дерев'яний, Руслан Забілий, Петро Солодь. *Українська Повстанська Армія. Історія Нескорених. Третє видання*. Львів (2011).

The Second World War put an end to this development in Central & Eastern Europe, sovereignty was abolished or national struggle again brutally suppressed. The concept of Empire was introduced with the Soviet Union. This meant the loss of sovereignty that had been established as a result of the First World War, for example of Czechoslovakia (Habsburg Monarchy), or the Baltic states and Finland (Russian Empire) that now all were absorbed by the modern form of Russian Empire.[33]

A much discussed question, especially in the German-speaking context, is the relationship between war and nation. War was both a negative and a positive factor in regard to nation-building: For Central & Eastern Europe war strengthened national identities and was an opportunity to push for self-determination. However, war did not automatically grant national independence, it also took it away: Historically, the First World War facilitated national sovereignty, and the Second World War limited it. The mechanism of war has functioned until today. Russia embarked on a war against Ukraine since 2014, in order to secure its political and cultural influence over the country – the effect was that Ukrainian national identity was strengthened significantly.[34]

In Germany, but also in Italy – the emphasis on the nation, its overinterpretation in a spiritual sense as the only way to realize the ideal society and ideal man – unleashed very negative energies. The concept of nation had facilitated an aggressive ethno-nationalism in times of crisis in the German case.[35] As a rule, the concept of nation did not result in destructive warfare, above

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[33]   Finland kept its nominal independence and was not transformed into a communist state, however it belonged to the Soviet Union's sphere of interest and de facto did not conduct independent policies, notably in the sphere of foreign policy. Central & Eastern European states became satellite states of the Soviet Union, above all East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. This new Russian Empire was masked as a progressive social organization that finally would guarantee social equality: socialism-communism. In fact, the need to ensure social equality was used to justify the limitation of political liberty, and Russian dominance. It became ultimately clear with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that the worst enemy of socialism – the nation state – had secured both more social equality and political liberty.

[34]   In a poll, ninety-two percent of Ukrainian citizens found they were ethnic Ukrainians in early 2017, "Среди молодежи от 18 до 29 лет доля этнических украинцев приближается к 100%. Среди тех, кому за 60, – менее 90%," *Zerkalo Nedeli*, April 12, 2017, zn.ua/UKRAINE/bolee-90-grazhdan-schitayut-sebya-etnicheskimi-ukraincami-245309_.html, quoted in Paul Goble, "Making Ukraine Mono-Ethnic – Putin's Greatest Achievement and most Fateful Failure," *Window on Eurasia – New Series*, April 14, 2017, http://windowoneurasia2.blogspot.cz/2017/04/making-ukraine-mono-ethnic-putins.html. For a detailed discussion see Volodymyr Kulyk, "National Identity in Ukraine: Impact of Euromaidan and the War," *Europe-Asia Studies* 68, no. 4 (2016): 588-608.

[35]   A comparison with Russia, the second country responsible for the Second World War, is also interesting : Also here, the combination of Empire with the reckless enforcement of political and cultural autonomy for Russians would be fatal.

all in small nations with historically strong national movements. The factor that proved fatal was the combination of Empire with the reckless enforcement of political and cultural autonomy for a certain ethnic group. The loss of Empire resulted into sharply decreasing political and cultural influence, mostly going hand in hand with dramatically worsening socioeconomic conditions, producing perfect conditions for external aggression.[36] Those mechanisms have also worked in the later twentieth and earlier twenty-first century: Serbia met the collapse of Yugoslavia with aggressive ethno-nationalism and destructive warfare; Russia used the same instruments since the collapse of the Soviet Union in order to meet domestic political frustration and socioeconomic depression, partly occupying the territory of sovereign nations.[37] In regard to the genocide in the twentieth century, it has to be underlined that the nations most affected in Europe – Armenians, Ukrainians and Jews – did not dispose of their own nation state that would have been able to take measures against those who wanted to annihilate them.[38] The establishment of Israel and an independent state of Ukraine as democratic nation states enabled them to defend against foreign military aggression. Those positive aspects of nation states should of course be recognized.[39]

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[36] Very well described for the German example in Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany,* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968).

[37] Moldova (Transnistria; first half of 1992), Georgia (Abkhazia; August 2008), Ukraine (occupation of Crimea; February/March 2014, and subsequently the effort to occupy the Donbas, which has resulted in trench warfare since later summer 2014). On Georgia and Moldova see Nico Popescu and Andrew Wilson, "The Limits of Enlargement-lite: European and Russian Power in the Troubled Neighbourhood," European Council on Foreign Relations, *ECFR Policy Briefs* (2009). On Ukraine: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, "10 facts you should know about Russian military aggression against Ukraine," December 19, 2019, https://mfa.gov.ua/en/10-facts-you-should-know-about-russian-military-aggression-against-ukraine. Steven Pifer, "Russian Aggression against Ukraine and the West's Policy Response," The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation; Brookings, March 4, 2015, https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/030415_Pifer_Testimony.pdf. In addition, Russia questioned the right to sovereignty of the Baltic states on multiple occasions, and increasingly after 2014. James J. Coyle, Defending the Baltics is a Conundrum," *Hill*, April, 15, 2018, https://thehill.com/opinion/international/382964-defending-the-baltics-is-a-conundrum. And James J. Coyle, *Russia's Border Wars and Frozen Conflicts* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[38] Besides that fact that the Ottoman Empire – responsible for the genocide on the Armenians – and Stalin's Russia – responsible for the Holodmor – above all understood themselves as traditional nineteenth century Empires. In regard to Ukraine, national aspirations had been destroyed in the Russian Civil War (1917-1922), and another attempt to push for autonomy was crashed by Stalin in 1932/1933; see footnote 31 for material on the topic.

[39] We have again seen lately that the fate of the Kurdish people has been affected negatively by the fact that they have not been granted an own nation state.

National movements, nation states and nationalism

Ethnic groups who lived on the territory of multinational empires in the nineteenth century differed from modern nations: There was no ruling elite, above all in business and education. They neither had political autonomy nor a common culture and language. Nation was a program, a vision.[40] It is clear that something new was to be created, but this would not be a project that came out of the void. It would be build on common features, fragments would be put together to a larger whole that made sense. In general, emerging national movements clashed with the ruling elites of multinational monarchies who understood that they were an inherent threat to their political power. The most important demand was equality, first of all cultural equality. The demand for equality went hand in hand with civic emancipation. As a rule, national movements within Empires demanded all nations to be equal, and the main target were ordinary people.[41] This to some extend could be compared to today's democratic demand for equality and emancipation of persons inhabiting a certain territory; which however is mostly supported by the ruling elite.[42] National movements in Central & Eastern Europe as a rule only developed political programs in a later stage, and concentrated on spreading the concept of national identity, based on cultural, linguistic, but also social factors. If political independence was achieved, and complex social structures established, the national movement had been successful: A new nation emerged.

For France or Great Britain the modern nation had been the answer to social crisis. As a consequence, old religious and political legitimations were questioned. In France, this resulted in a de facto exchange of the elite, while elites in Great Britain reached a compromise.[43] The formation of the Italian and German nation had the character of a national movement, but the

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[40]   Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 43 and Hroch, *European Nations*, 31.

[41]   Consequently, the revolution of 1848 took over both demands: civic emancipation and that all nations would be equal. A demand less common in the state nations. Compare with Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 126. There were of course significant differences between Empires: Tsarist Russia focused on orthodoxy, autarchy and centralized administration. In contrary, the Habsburg Monarchy did not pressure for a centralist state, and features of the historically independent kingdoms of Hungary, Croatia, Bohemia remained relatively strong. Notably, Bohemia and Hungary had become hereditary Habsburg domains after the Battle of White Mountain (1620) in the case of Bohemia and the Battle of Mohács (1687) in the case of Hungary when Leopold I reconquered almost all of Hungary from the Ottoman Turks.

[42]   The difference to modern social equality or political liberty movements is that they are historically new and are not based on a larger collective – most often those are rights of small social minorities or even individual rights. We will discuss this in more detail below.

[43]   Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 44 and Hroch, *European Nations*, 33. See also the example of Spain where a concept of the nation beyond monarchy developed only slowly. Also the strong ethnic identity of Basques and Catalans always had been an impediment to fully realize the concept of a nation state in Spain.

focus was clearly on the political aspect: The goal was to form a common state. The elite fully identified with the idea of the nation, and the nation state had been formed before the people had been fully mobilized.[44] Germany became the late nation – *verspätete Nation* – and managed to retain strong elements of a *Kulturnation* that often had replaced the missing central political element in order to hold Germans together.[45] We could argue that the lack of mobilization played out negatively in order to support the political aspect of the nation state in Italy. While regional identities largely accepted the cultural umbrella as necessary in order to constitute the common nation state, they never fully accepted the political legitimacy of the national state.

New elites were not eager to share power with lower social strata or interested in a democratization of political processes – this had been very visible with England or Prussia where the participation of the masses was actively discouraged. Mann underlined the aspect of power here: When nations started to emerge after 1840, they did as communities strengthening the state – France and England – as communities creating the state – Germany [or Italy], or as communities dismantling the state.[46] National movements had to rely on mass mobilization; which was significantly higher than in state nations.[47] As a consequence, the identification of citizens with the nation would emphasize cultural aspects over political power.

As long as nation-building processes are concerned, national identity, national conscience or national mobilization have been put forward by the supporting forces, while national movements

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[44]   Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 45 and Hroch *European Nations*, 33: "This is what led to the post-1860s efforts to 'create the Italians' for the already existing Italy. It also explains why there was such a drive within the newly formed German Empire to establish an integral, truly national, German (Prussian-Protestant) identity against the 'foreign' (Catholic and socialist) elements.

[45]   In this context, German tradition of *Kulturpatriotismus*, love for the own culture, had already emerged in the seventeenth century, and pushed the use of German at the detriment of Latin and French. This was combined with elements of a state nation, that is the German *Reich* was built on the tradition of the *Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation*. It was a highly federalized entity with little political power which however was held together by common cultural codes, Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 57. The entities were in their majority ruled by dynasties from different cultural backgrounds with century-long traditions. The sentiment of common codes and a supranational community was strong enough to create a closer union with the German Confederation in 1815, collapsing only over a struggle of power redistribution between Austria and Prussia in 1866, won by Prussia which alienated Austria, that is Habsburg, from the German Union. Also Peter Alter underlined that the Germans would regard themselves as nations in the later eighteenth century: "Fraglos verstanden sich die Deutschen seit dem ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert als Nation – einen eigenen Nationalstaat gewannen sie erst 1871" Alter, *Nationalismus*, 16.

[46]   Michael Mann, *The Sources of Power, vol. 2: The Rise of Classes and Nation States*, *1760-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 218-219.

[47]   Hroch, *European Nations*, 33.

or an armed fight for independent statehood has been often termed secessionist, nationalist or even fascist by opposing forces.[48] Empires – or multinational states dominated by one nation – as a rule have not regarded national movements, and even less an armed fight for independence, as legitimate. Consequently, nationalism on the one hand and national identity on the other hand developed to instruments in political power struggles, above all between the end of the First and the Second World War. Since the later twentieth century, the term nationalism would be increasingly used for politics preferring the dominant ethnic groups of an existing nation states in order to question the nation state as a legitimate concept to establish social order.

And what about research? After the Second World War, western research moved away from the understanding of nation as a primordial category. The nation was no longer a community of blood, and should not be exclusively defined by ethnic features, that is language and culture, a nation was only a nation if its members were aware of it, thus a subjective category; and nationalism was a manifestation of the nation or even a precondition for it.[49] Notably, political scientists and sociologists tend to define a nation subjectively, while most historians and historical sociologists agree that nations exist objectively as a large group of people, held together by communication and cultural ties, and a greater sense of togetherness.[50]

Generally, nationalism had been a label for value-orientated political controversies from the beginning of the twentieth century onward.[51] Often nationalism would be used when in reality the discussion would be about the nation;[52] and nationalism became the most important category to analyze developments regarding the nation and the nation state.[53] Today, nationalism basically

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[48]   Hroch, *European Nations*, 16-19 on the use of the term national identity.

[49]   Hroch, *European Nations*, 8. Hroch also mentioned that in the first half of the twentieth century, research into the concept of the nation was conducted in German, in the second half primarily in English, and the nation was redefined as a state community; ibid.

[50]   Hroch, *European Nations*, 11.

[51]   Hroch, *European Nations*, 4.

[52]   Peter Alter had stated in the mid-1980s that research had not reached a consensus on how to define nation and nationalism despite decades of research. This was still true more than thirty years later. The lack of accepted definitions is a good indicator for the fact that a generalization of the issue is impossible. Peter Alter, *Nationalismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 13.

[53]   Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 8 had found that the term could not be used as an instrument of critical analysis at all: "Angesichts der völlig uneinheitlichen Verwendung des Begriffs ‚Nationalismus' ist es sehr schwierig, ihm irgendeinen konsensuellen Sinn zuzuordnen oder ihn als Instrument der kritischen Analyse zu verwenden. Deshalb hat sich der Verfasser entschlossen, auf diesen Terminus möglichst ganz zu verzichten." And in the English translation (Hroch, *European Nations*, 15-16): "Which of these three concepts of 'nationalism'

means a political system that is based on and benefits a certain ethnical group.[54] The value-oriented use of nationalism in research implicitly rules out that a certain ethnical group can be considered the legitimate pillar of the state and the political system. Researchers from Central & Eastern European or from small nations still point to the positive sides of nationalism[55] – in contrary to German or Anglo-Saxon research.[56] This had been very evident after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which will be discussed immediately below.

For now let us stick with two, additional, and important lines of arguments in order to delegitimize the nation and the nation state in the second half of the twentieth century: One claim was that nations had been invented.[57] On the one hand this was a convenient simplification, as an invention did not request to analyze specific and complicated social processes that resulted in the formation of nation states. On the other hand, invention made it difficult to accept the nation as legitimate entity. It was no longer a complicated social process that lasted for decades, it was something that could be traced back to mostly unknown individuals who perhaps had not had the

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[negative, positive or neutral] is a suitable instrument for an analysis of historical processes? I dare claim that not one of these is fully adequate: the first for its one-sidedness, the second for its ambiguity, and the third for its hypocrisy […] In this book, the term 'nationalism' […] refers to an excessive worshipping of one's own nation, connected with overvaluing it and placing it above other nations." The additional difficulty was that the term nationalism was derived from, as well as associated with, the term nation, whose historically determined connotations in various languages would be very different, Hroch *European Nations*, 4.

[54]   See for example Gellner's definition: "principle which holds that the political and national unity should be congruent": Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 1. Hroch, *European Nations*, 12 reminded that Gellner had often been interpreted as finding the nation had been a product of nationalism; while his focus had been on the objective roots of nationalism, which were modernization through industrialization.

[55]   Recently, this has been very palpable in regard to Russia; formerly this also was the case for the United States. Already before the election of Donald Trump President of the United States, there had been a tendency to reduce any love for the country to nationalism; and with Trump being president America Frist became toxic.

[56]   See for example Ghia Nodia who argued that the experience of anticommunist revolutions required to rethink the relationship between nationalism and democracy, in "Nationalism and Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 3, no. 4 (October 1992): 3-22, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/225508. See also: "the failure of mainstream Western political science to keep pace with developments in the postcommunist East is at least partly due to the West's one-sided understanding of nationalism and its relation to democracy […] it is presumed that social developments cannot be explained in a really ‚scientific' way unless they can be traced to economic conditions."

[57]   Mainly based on Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). He had argued that a nation only existed if its members could imagine being part of a certain community of humans, the majority of whom they did not know and would never get to know personally. Anderson had been widely interpreted that an invention of nations was possible – the German title had been more explicit in this regard: *Die Erfindung der Nation – The Invention of the Nation*. Miroslav Hroch, *European Nations*, 12. Miroslav Hroch in *Europa der Nationen*, 24 underlined that Anderson had dismissed such an interpretation.

best idea. The invention of the nation reduced the historical importance of nation-building processes in Europe. This enabled to reject the concept of the nation as an important category to influence social order in Europe. Nation was neither relevant as a historical category and process, nor important for today's political systems – notably in regard to the ever growing powers the European Union claimed since the later twentieth century.

Yet the formation of nation states had nothing to do with a modern, managed project. A nation only succeeded under particular social, political and cultural conditions, and it never was a linear process. Hroch for his part categorically dismissed that nations had been culturally constructed, invented, by somebody shouting nationalist slogans.[58] As we have seen above, most European nation-building processes had relied on national movements and were not supported by state structures. In those cases – and this is the majority of cases in Europe – an invention would have been difficult. This does not rule out that those nations were constructed for some part: Mostly, there were only dialects and no common standard language, that however was already forming with mass education. Local historical narratives also had to be reduced to a common denominator which became the national histories, and so on. The most important difference to the invention of the nation is that those were processes, a great majority of Hungarians, Bulgarians or Czech consented with and supported actively, nation-building was based on civic engagement. It was neither a top-down measure nor an individual project, and had nothing to do with modern project management – for the culture nations it was a collective process in which great parts of society participated.

Another, second variation of deconstructing the nation and to deny the concept of nation substance has been to reduce the nation to a practical concept instead of an enduring collectivity. This would allow to get rid of the nation as a substantial analytical category. It additionally enabled to think about nationalism without nations, that is to switch the focus from the nation to nationalism. Thus, the nation would be eradicated as an analytical category, and replaced by nationalism. [59] Europe had invented the nation, introduced it as a practical concept. According to

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[58]   Compare with Hroch, *Europa der Nationen*, 7 and 8.

[59]   Rogers Brubaker's work has been a very influential in this regard. In *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 21 and 22 he stated to "refrain from using the analytically dubious nation of 'nations' as substantial, enduring collectivities […] to think about nationalism without nations […] to understand the power of nationalism, we do not need to invoke nations."

this logic, Europe would now also be able to abandon it: Europe would be the graveyard of the nation state at the end of the twentieth century, as nationalism after the collapse of the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia had finally discredited this concept. [60]

It has been common to regard nationalism as a crucial determinant of European history after the Second World War: Nationalism became a subjective condition for the existence of a nation, or put it in another way, without nationalism a nation did not exist. Western scholars have regarded the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold World War almost exclusively in terms of nationalism, above all ethnic and nationalist violence. Consequently, it also was assumed that national movements had been determined by the idea of nationalism in the nineteenth and earlier twentieth century. As we seen above, national movements had pushed for self-determination and sovereignty. A wide-spread contemporary phenomenon, at least in Western Europe, is to equate the demand for self-determination – which includes both the interest, or the will of the people and demands for identity – with nationalism. This of course also has to do with modern political developments that increasingly questioned individual identity could be connected to a collective category, the nation; the quest for a collective would be negative and nationalist.[61] Here, the individual should be reduced to the individual, and content herself and himself with individual autonomy.[62]

Nationalism, and not individualism, served as a unifying factor during Communism, and also after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Almost all nation states that emerged from the rubbles of this empire had to cope with sizable ethnic minorities – often Russian – and the problem of unstable and insecure political majorities. The nation became utterly political.[63] Failure to tame aggressive national feelings could again lead to chauvinism, racism, and fascism. Above all Russia faced this problem, and by some was termed fascist as it had developed a fully authoritarian political system with a personalist dictator and a cult of the leader in the second

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[60]   Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

[61]   The relationship between the individual and the nation, and liberalism and nationalism will be discussed further below.

[62]   It also could be said that the other is always nationalist, and oneself patriot..

[63]   Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy"; also finding ⬜Almost all such countries have governments that are guilty, at least by Western standards, of adopting less than perfectly liberal minority policies. I do not see any hope for speedy solutions to the numerous ethnic issues that trouble these countries."

decade of the twenty-first century.[64] This can be explained by the tradition of Russian statehood as an Empire. During the Soviet period, this tradition allowed Russia to pose as the leader of the communist world. [65]

The ugly side of nationalism in Russia is supported by the necessities of political power, and would not be based on excessive ethnicity per se. Until today, the Russian leadership is fixed on an imperial concept of Russian statehood. And nationalism has served as a tool to guarantee Empire. The destructive force of nationalism was best visible as Russia and Serbia tried to save their former Empires in the early and mid-1990s. This aggressive conduct was an old historical phenomenon, and had more to do with the loss of Empire and power over others than with nationalism and excessive ethnicity.[66] The collapse of both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was hard to accept psychologically, and a humiliating experience for both power elites and the titular nations of Russians and Serbs, which led to frustration, and aggression, that is the determination to regain political power by force. Those mechanisms had already worked in the case of the Germ *Reich* after the First World War – territories and power were gone, and from a German perspective, the nation had been internationally humiliated. Nationalism above all was used as a short-hand in order to legitimate a given power position and claims to power, and to delegitimize the demands for sovereignty of other nations.[67]

In non-German or non-Russian regions, national socialism or communism were regarded not only as a politically, but as a nationally hostile force, those were alien systems imposed by foreign occupiers. This was a nationalism targeting foreign occupiers, and generally interpreted positively by those fighting against occupation. Another possibility for the outbreak of negative

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[64]   Alexander J. Motyl, "Putin's Russia as a Fascist Political System," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* (2016), http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2016.01.002.

[65]   Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy"; and: " The spread of communism and the expansion or reassertion of Russian rule were almost synonymous […] It was thanks to communism that Russia reached the peak of its might and influence."

[66]   Of course we can circumvent this problem in finding the Soviet Union was a peacefully institutionalized multinational state such as Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 23. This unfortunately had nothing to do with the reality on the ground: Both the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union were established by brutal force and held together by brutal force, including a gruesome prison camp system. It was suppressed nationhood and nationality – leftists/communists would rather emphasize American and British efforts to cultivate nationalist and anti-Soviet movements – together with an utterly inefficient and corrupted central economic planning system that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, not its support of nationhood and nationality.

[67]   Showcases had been Russia brutally suppressing the Chechens' fight for independence in the 1990s fearing a collapse of the Russian Federation, with which humiliation after the collapse of the Soviet Union would have been perfect.

national feelings would be the general weakness of politics, and the lack of a robust political response in regard to nationalism. As Nodia underlined: If people would not have institutional achievements to take pride in – for example a strong economy and respected political leadership – they would fall back on their linguistic or cultural identities.[68]

We could argue in this context that in order to understand the power of nationalism, we do not need the nation. However, neither Russian or Serbian nor Ukrainian or Croatian nationalism functioned without the nation. Nationalism always required the collective, based on cultural, religious and other powerful elements, without it, nationalism would be useless. A similar development has happened with ethnicity or national identity, they are regarded as a perspective on the world – a perspective that has to be condemned in general – rather than a real entity in the world that might have an impact on political power.[69] And here again we come back to the category of power. The next section examines more closely why for the sake of power, western political elites prefer nationalism over the nation, or identitarian over national identity.

Elites, citizens and the nation in the early twenty-first century

Western societies after the Second World War developed very successfully as modern nation states, and enabled a degree of economic development and social welfare unprecedented in human history.[70] Consequently, for liberals such as Ralf Dahrendorf, the nation state had been one of the key achievements of modernity and continued to be the only political model in the twenty-first century in which individual liberty would be secured.[71] Still, attitudes toward the nation has varied across Europe. In the last centuries, the concept of nation has been an important instrument of political power, above all in times of social crisis. Still, the nation had not been the most important factor that legitimated power.

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[68]   Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy".

[69]   Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5.

[70]   This of course was also pushed by strong welfare measures after the Second World War, and a general policy of easing social hardship. The period of general wealth lasted until the later 1970s; afterwards, accelerating economic globalization pushed western societies into increasing social inequality. After the Great Recession of 2008, it had become clear that the economic model was no longer benefiting large social strata in European societies.

[71]   "Der Nationalstaat bleibt weiterhin der einzige politische Raum, in dem die Verfassung der Freiheit gedeiht." Ralf Dahrendorf, "Der Nationalstaat erneut unter der Lupe," Project Syndicate, April 14, 2006, https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-nation-state-revisited/german. This means that only the nation state would guarantee democracy.

Historically, ruling dynasties [72] and state institutions, including armies, were far more important factors. Formerly, the monarch had legitimated power with religion and an alliance with the Church. The influence of religious institutions had faded with the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution, and religious legitimation would be slowly replaced by the idea of all humans being equal, to be represented by a sovereign nation state. Subsequently, the nation would legitimate political power of the important European Empires and dynasties. [73]

For most Central & Eastern European countries, the nation had been a tool that promised sovereignty and the liberation from Empire. Here, a ruling class in a western sense did not exist – that is powerful dynasties backed by administrative and military structures. Ruling classes and formalized social structures were formed during nation-building processes. Only in a later stage, this nation-building process could successfully lead to an independent state. In contrary to most Western European nations, Central & Eastern European nations were only able to erect powerful state structures after national independence and with the consent of the Great Powers. Nation was the concept that secured cultural independence and legitimated political power, and ensured a formal equality in a world of nations.

The nation had been an important instrument of political power until the end of the Second World War, and then would be slowly replaced by other concepts. This development was mainly visible in Western Europe and among the respective elites, best expressed in equating the nation with nationalism. [74] One reason is the historically weaker position of the nation as a legitimatory

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[72]   After the French Revolution 1789, France was the only Republic – with interruptions – in Europe. The big European powers continued to be all constitutional monarchies, such as southern parts of the German Reich, while Prussia was an absolute monarchy – as well as Tsarist Russia. Other examples are the Habsburg Monarchy; but also Spain, the Netherlands/Belgium or Sweden. The European tradition of monarchy was only questioned fundamentally with the period of the First World War.

[73]   The Habsburg monarchy was an exception here as it did not push national categories, in contrary to France, Spain or the German Empire. The Ottoman Empire until its collapse in 1918 would base its power on religion. Therefore, the rebellions in southern eastern Europe against the Ottoman Empire in the early nineteenth always had a religious and a national aspect, for example in Bulgaria, Serbia or Greece – even if Greece after its national independence was ruled by a Bavarian King.

[74]   Especially in Germany, the thinking was wide-spread that any nationalism led to fascism: ⬜Nicht nur die politische Linke, sondern viele Meinungsführer vertreten eine einfache, unheimliche Theorie: Jegliche Form von Nationalismus führe in der Konsequenz in den Faschismus. Und eine Demokratie mit patriotisch gesinnten Bürgerinnen und Bürgern verstärke diese Tendenz sogar." [Not only the political left, but also many opinion leaders are support a simple and weird theory: Any form of nationalism consequently leads to fascism. And democracies with patriotic citizens even push this development] Thomas Zaugg, "Demokratie heisst nicht Wahrheit, sondern Freiheit," *NZZ*, November 25, 2016, http://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/wie-viel-nationalstaat-vertraegt-die-welt-demokratie-heisst-nicht-wahrheit-sondern-freiheit-ld.130534.

factor for political power; and of course the discretization of the nation in the first half of the twentieth century with fascism and National Socialism. In particular the latter made it difficult for Germany to display positive attitudes toward the nation. In addition, loyalty to the state has been generally more important than loyalty to the nation – the nation has traditionally been understood as a cultural and not a political category.[75] In terms of political power, this devastating period prompted a significant detachment from the nation state in Germany. Several factors played an additional role, such as the de facto loss of German national sovereignty after the Second World War; German political decisions had to either please the United States or the Soviet Union. After the German Reunification in 1990 and the final reestablishment of national sovereignty, the new German national question was solved in melting German identity with European identity.[76] This was facilitated by the fact that West Germany already had been heavily engaged in the common European project, beginning with the emergence of the European Economic Community (1957), and its later transformation into the European Union (1993). In the course of European integration, Germany together with France became the drivers of a potential future European state (and nation).

European integration combined with a broader economic globalization since the 1970s significantly changed social and economic structures – not only in Germany, but in the whole western world. The lose attachment to the nation as a political concept now was of an advantage, and for example allowed German elites and administrative structures to adapt the legitimatory concepts for state power. In the early twenty-first century, it had become increasingly clear in most of Western Europe that the new legitimating concepts for the state and political power would be the liberal society and a globalized economy.[77] Those nations showed more readiness to adapt new concepts, and a less dogmatic approach toward the nation, than for example Poland, Hungary, but also Slovakia and other countries. Central & Eastern European nations had just

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[75]   Even if National Socialism abused this concept politically.

[76]   The concept of identity is a complicated one – modern western societies have been dominated by individualism, thus identity has been based on individual, ego-centered experience; and not understood as a relationship with a collective. The aspects of identity will be discussed in another paper. Here, identity is mainly understood as a political category, that is the identification with a certain larger collective. National identity thus would mean the identification with a given nation, and European identity support of European Union integration and creation of European identities.

[77]   See below for a detailed discussion on the relationship between the nation, liberal society and economic globalization.

reestablished their national sovereignty, and national state structures, in the last decade of the twentieth century. Those states were liberated from the political and cultural influence of Russia, that is the Soviet Union, and revived their cultures and traditions, and intensively reflected their national histories since the outbreak of the Second World War, which for most of them had meant the end to their national independence.[78] The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 prompted a national awakening, and some, notably the Ukrainian nation, for the first time were internationally accepted.[79] In this context, the historical concept of the nation proved stronger than the relatively new European identity concepts[80], and those could not replace the legitimatory power of the nation.

So has the west renounced from the concept of nation, while the east still sticks to it? Here, it is crucial to underline differences in the attitude toward the nation according to social class, but also according to political affiliation. In regarded to political affiliation, there has been the interesting development that the attachment to the nation has varied according to political preferences. In the twenty-first century, right-wing parties or populists and their supporters[81] often underline their emotional attachment to the nation, both in Western and Central & Eastern Europe, while leftists all over Europe define those attachments as nationalist or even fascist and racist.

In addition, Western European states have faced the challenge, that a significant part of their populations – namely the culturally proud or socioeconomically deprived – might place loyalty to national institutions or national concepts over loyalty to elites who seemingly are loyal to other

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[78]   Historiography was distorted by a communist world view. Communist rule meant that the national narrative was eradicated. For the case of Poland this for instance meant that the history of the democratic Polish Underground State during the Second World War was completely eradicated from national historiography. This has also been a reason for the general view, notably in research, that Poland lacks a democratic political tradition.

[79]   The successor states of the Soviet Union subsequently faced the problem of strong Russian minority groups, who were used by Russia to exert political power on those states, and to discredit those states for their nationalism in front of the western world. Above all for the alleged abuse of minority rights. Those were the Baltic states or Ukraine for example.

[80]   Or the relatively alien concept of the liberal society and economic globalization. In regard to the liberal society, Central & Eastern European societies never had been liberal societies; and economic globalization was only possible when combined with cheap labor, only a very tiny elite profiting from the developments connected to it.

[81]   Populists are generally understood as political activists or party representatives who stand in opposition to the ruling elite and do not agree with a modern interpretation of identity or limited sovereignty. They often refer to national categories: They are used as a powerful political tool, and help to transfer negative emotions, such as frustration or even aggression, into political support for alternative political movements or parties.

concepts, such as economic globalization and the liberal society, and transnational institutions. As we already see here, cultural or national self-confidence is difficult to reconcile with a liberal society, and socioeconomic hardship since the later twentieth century has been often prompted by economic globalization.[82]

The Brexit referendum in June 2016 had been an example of different interpretations what it should take to legitimate political power. For the British elite, the European Union and transnational institutions had replaced national institutions as legitimatory powers. Consequently, practically the whole British elite had been against leaving the European Union. However, a majority of voters would not follow their recommendations to Remain, and prefer a return to national institutionalism. The Leave vote with 51.9 percent was a vote for British institutions, and an anti-establishment vote.[83] What was important for British citizens – or more precisely for English and Welsh citizens, as Scotland and Northern Ireland had voted to Remain – was the ability to govern themselves, without interference from foreign powers, notably the European Union. An important argument for Brexit had been that European Union decision-making undermined British parliamentary democracy.[84] It was this very idea of institutional sovereignty that stood in the foreground for many, tied more to the British Parliament, than to the concept of nation as such.[85]

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[82]   See below for a more detailed discussion.

[83]   For material on the issue see: Anand Medon, "Why the British Chose Brexit. Behind the Scenes of the Referendum," Foreign Affairs (November/December 2017), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2017-10-16/why-british-chose-brexit. See for economic globalization and immigration (the liberal society) being a factor to vote for Brexit: Stephanie Rickard, "Populism and the Brexit Vote," *American Political Science Association*, Comparative Politics Newsletter 26, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 120-123. And in detail on the economic globalization vote: Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig, "Global Competition and Brexit," American Political Science Review 112, no. 2 (May 2018): 201-218, https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0003055417000685.

[84]   On taking back control, that is to bring back parliamentary sovereignty: Juliette Ringeisen-Biardeaud, "'Let's Take back Control': Brexit and the Debate on Sovereignty," *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique / French Journal for British Studies* 22, no. 2 (2017), https://journals.openedition.org/rfcb/1319. See for a Remain position, avoiding the notion of nation state or nation: Robin Niblett, "Britain, the EU and the Sovereignty Myth," Chatham House Research Paper (May 2016), https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-05-09-britain-eu-sovereignty-myth-niblett.pdf. National questions however would be discussed when it came to the problem that constituent nations of the United Kingdom, Scotland and Northern Ireland, had voted Remain – vs. England and Wales that voted Leave.

[85]   The English nation state identity was never Europeanized as the concept of the European Union did not go together with British, that is predominantly English, understandings of parliamentary democracy and external sovereignty. For the case of France, political elites increasingly incorporated Europe in the nation state identity of the Fifth Republic in the 1980s and 1990s. Besides, any legitimate idea about political order must correspond with core elements of the respective national tradition: In the case of France, this is state-centered Republicanism, and in the case of Germany federalism, democracy and social market economy. In addition,

Populists across Europe had taken over the claim that a given nation state was no longer controlled by its people – or national institutions –, but by outside forces. Another example of this line of argument had been the Front National in France.[86] Here, however, the sovereignty argument was weaker than the equality argument; and therefore populists who emphasized the need for national sovereignty of the French would lose to elites who stressed equality of the people.[87] This also could have been explained by the tradition of a strong and centralized nation state and the ideals of the French Republic, notably equality for all citizens. This explains also why France, together with Germany, had turned into the driving force of European Union integration. This integration process had been generally supported by citizens of both countries, and voluntarily turned a part of their institutional sovereignty over to European Union institutions; a development that had traditionally been met with larger resistance in the United Kingdom with its strong tradition of independent national institutions.[88]

The general French and German public in principle consented to a modernized form of identity, that is national identity becoming part of a larger European identity – what was rejected in the United Kingdom. What however was not accepted in all three cases was ever increasing

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new visions can be best implemented in times of crisis (but also are challenged in times of crisis; see the migration crisis in Germany in 2015), and over time new identities become embedded in institutions and political culture. In the respective study, nation state identities are of a pure institutional and elitarian character as the authors concentrate on the discourse of party elites in France, Germany and Great Britain in order to understand their identity constructions with regard to the nation state and to Europe. Martin Marcussen, Thomas Risse, Daniela Engelmann-Martin, Hans Joachim Knopf and Klaus Roscher, "Constructing Europe? The Evolution of French, British and German nation state identities," *Journal of European Public Policy* 6, no. 4 (1999): 614-633, https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343504.

[86]   Front National party leader Marine le Pen claiming that "France was not in the hands of the French anymore," Ingrid Melander, "'France Is not for Sale', far-right FN chief Le Pen Tells Rally," *Reuters*, September 18, 2016,   https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-france-election-lepen/france-is-not-for-sale-far-right-fn-chief-le-pen-tells-rally-idUKKCN11O0ND, and for a comparative perspective including the UK and Trump: Angelique Chrisafis, "'The Nation State is Back': Front National's Marine Le Pen Rides on Global Mood," *Guardian*, September 18, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/18/nation-state-marine-le-pen-global-mood-france-brexit-trump-front-national. The long-term talking points of the Front National however had been Islam and national identity, and not the EU undermining French sovereignty, which also was a rather absurd argument as France had been an important founding member and a driving force for a politically integrated Union together with Germany.

[87]   Notably in the 2017 French presidential elections when Marine le Pen from the Front National lost to Emmanuel Macron who had proposed a third way, theoretically promising more equality for French citizens.

[88]   It is clear that we cannot equate the influence of the democratic United States over West Germany (BRD) and the totalitarian Soviet Union over East Germany (DDR). What we can state is that both German parts or states had to adapt to the broader necessities of the two dominating forces of the Cold War in Europe.

immigration.[89] The migration crisis of 2015 marked a turning point for Germany in regard to identity-related issues. Ever increasing immigration sparked the popularity of populists, most of them organized within the Alternative für Deutschland Party, most of whom aggressively demanded to take the country back for the German nation, finding that Germany had been sold out to immigrants.[90] Those populists exploited the broadening fear among citizens that immigrants posed a deep threat to German culture.[91] This was combined with a mounting skepticism toward European integration of Germany's conservative elites since the introduction of the common European currency, the euro, in 1999,[92] whose shortcomings had been fully revealed since the financial crisis of 2008.[93] In contrary to France and Britain, the deep roots of German *Kulturpatriotismus*, that is the support and emotional attachment to the own culture,

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[89]   Generally, a great majority of Britons has found that immigration has been too high; see for details: Anthony Wells, "Where the Public Stands on Immigration," YouGov, *Politics&Current Affairs*, April, 27, 2018, https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2018/04/27/where-public-stands-immigration. See also a majority of French citizens finding immigration had been too high; only a minority of fourteen percent found it had a positive impact (twenty percent in Germany): "Sondage : les Français jugent sévèrement l'immigration," *Figaro*, September 15, 2017, https://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2017/09/15/01016-20170915ARTFIG 00297-sondage-les-francais-jugent-severement-l-immigration.php. For German attitudes toward immigration see footnote 89.

[90]   Thorsten Brenner, "Handling the Alternative for Germany," *Foreign Affairs*, September 29, 2017, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2017-09-29/handling-alternative-germany; Charles Lees, "The 'Alternative for Germany': The Rise of Right-Wing Populism at the Heart of Europe," *Politics* 38, no. 3 (June 2018): 295-310, https://dx.doi.org/10.1170/0263395718777718.

[91]   The German Institute for Economic Research showed that a plurality of Germans in early 2016 saw immigrants as undermining the core values of German society: Jürgen Gerhards, Silke Hans and Jürgen Schupp, "Einstellungen der BügerInnen in Deutschland zur Aufnahme von Geflüchteten," Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, *Stimmungsbarometer zu Geflüchteten in Deutschland* (2016), 471, https://www.diw.de/documents/publikationen/73/diw_01.c.534432.de/16%E2%80%9321%E2%80%931.pdf. This was in line with party leaders calling for a more positive attitude to German history.

[92]   The right-wing populist party, AfD, "provided a home for conservatives who thought that many of Merkel's policies—ending nuclear energy and the military draft, endorsing same-sex unions, and raising the minimum wage—had moved her Christian Democratic Union (CDU) too far to the left. Since there was a mainstream conservative view opposing many of these decisions, the AfD could now occupy space to the right of the CDU without suspicion of being undemocratic or of harking back to the Nazi past." Jan-Werner Müller, "Behind the New German Right," *New York Review of Books*, April 14, 2016, https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/04/14/behind-new-german-right-afd/.

[93]   See for almost two hundred German economists demanding to stop the Europeanization of debt via the European Central Bank in 2011: Philip Plickert, Holger Zschäpitz, February 24, 2011, "Ökonomen gegen größeren Euro-Rettungsschirm," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/konjunktur/massenpetition-deutscher-vwl-professoren-oekonomen-gegen-groesseren-euro-rettungsschirm-1596745.html; "Top-Ökonomen warnen vor einer großen Unwucht im Euro-System," December 21, 2018, *Welt*, https://www.welt.de/finanzen/_article185898164/Euro-Krise-Top-Oekonomen-warnen-vor-einer-grossen-Unwucht-im-Euro-System.html.

would prove the main factor of fueling populism and support for the concept of nation and the nation state.

As western elites detached from the nation, they were regarded more and more as representing certain policies and institutions alien to a growing part of their populations.[94] The most contested policies were immigration and a policy of open borders and economic globalization policies that supported outsourcing, rationalization, automatization and optimalization, all those processes leading to growing hardship of lower earning social groups. Especially after the financial crisis of 2008, there seemed to be an increasing need of western elites to support the liberal society and economic globalization. We could also argue that liberal and economic interest were preferred; at the detriment of the nation, and national interests.

The nation, liberal society and economic globalization

Why had western elites turned away from the nation? Two points seem important here: One is fear of the people – the nation allowed ordinary citizens of a given state to legitimate their political demands. Equating the nation with nationalism allowed to take the people out from the political game. Political demands were less powerful if those were individual demands or demands from discriminated or minority groups.

Another important point were social and economic developments that directly challenged the concept of nation from the 1960s / 1970s onward. The most visible and very emotionalized factor was high immigration to western countries since the second half of the twentieth century. As a consequence, strong ethnic and religious minorities formed in France, Germany or the UK, and in

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[94]   The percentage of dissatisfied citizens could be best expressed as a combined figure of those not voting and those supporting populists in general elections. Of course, we could also argue that those not voting were generally satisfied with their situation and therefore would not vote. Still, low voter turnouts should be interpreted as a problem for ruling elites and not as a confirmation of their policies. In the case of France, the 2017 presidential elections saw a support of 33.9 percent for Le Pen, and the general turnout had been at a historical low with 48.7 percent. In this case, it was proof that neither Le Pen nor the winner of those elections, Emmanuel Macron, had been found to bring a solution to the country's problems. Will Worley, "French Election Turnout Worst in Modern History," *Independent*, 12 June 2017, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/french-election-turnout-emmanuel-macron-parliament-france-victory-fn-marine-le-pen-national-front-a7785366.html. In the 2017 federal elections of Germany, the AfD received 12.6 percent with a high turnout of 72.2 percent which can be partly explained by voter mobilization for the AfD; a low had been reached in the 2009 elections with a turnout of 70.8 percent (the AfD had been a political factor in Germany since 2013). On the election see Viola Neu and Sabine Pokorny, "Bundestag Election in Germany on 24 September 2017 – Election Analysis," Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Politics and Consulting Division (September 2017), https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=cd506c88-890a-9a1d-e15e-245bf8989553&groupId=252038.

other western countries.[95] In addition, markets became more powerful than the nation. It could also be argued that the economic necessities of markets, as a rule tied to cost-benefit calculations, replaced the collective and emotional concept nation. In this sense, Europe was rationalized – but also began to lack identification, as neither the concept of the European Union would prove appropriate to replace the nation as a factor of identification. What markets did offer was consumption: In a world dominated by markets, and no longer nations, individuals were transformed from politically emancipated citizens who could actively influence national policies and the well-being of their countries into consumers of goods and services. Individual consumption replaced the collective category nation as an identifying factor in the modern European state. The consumer could actively support the well-being of the country with individual spending decisions; more than with his former role as politically emancipated citizen. Consequently, the nature of the modern European state would be determined by individual consumption and the role of particular markets in a global economy. In the early twenty-first century, the economic constraints going hand in hand with this development had turned into a serious challenge for democratic politics. Not only citizens, but also policy-makers, had swapped their standing of politically emancipated members within a larger emotional collective for a passive participation in highly intransparent and unsustainable economic circuits, the course of which they were no longer able to influence politically, and could only participate actively in as consumers.[96]

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[95]   In contrary, Central & Eastern European societies, also two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, had not changed in a way that would have allowed to question the unity of nation and state. The Second World War had led to an ethnic homogenization of important countries in the region. For example, Poland after genocide and ethnic cleansing neither had significant Jewish nor Ukrainian or German minorities. Communism did not go together with mass immigration as western countries faced it. Also post-1989/1991 immigration was rather limited – in contrary, countries such as Poland, Romania or Bulgaria experienced a huge emigration wave to western countries, namely the UK. In some countries, such as Poland, the lack of cheap labor was replaced by Ukrainian (mass) immigration. The Czech Republic did not experience significant emigration, but also a huge influx of Ukrainian and to a lesser extent of Slovak workers, which in this case satisfied the demand for cheap labor in a booming globalized economy.

[96]   This also results in the important question if consumers are happy citizens. The Easterlin paradox had established in 1974, that across individuals and countries higher income would result in higher happiness, but over time, income growth would not be associated with higher happiness levels. The consequences of consumer choice on happiness however have been underresearched. Is this because consumption does not lead to happiness? Research in the field argues that consumption, such as expenditures on clothing and leisure are determinants of happiness, while expenditures on food and housing are not significantly related to life satisfaction [This of course is only possible in societies that do not have to cope with food and housing shortages]. Luca Stanca and Ruut Veenhoven, "Consumption and Happiness: An Introduction," *International Review of Economics* 62, (2015): 91-99 .

In this context it has to be stated, that the relationship between consumption and political participation has been not an issue in research.[97] Nonetheless, in regard to both decreasing political participation and political interests – in particular among younger generations grown up in a world of consumption – the following question should be asked: Isn't consumption a crucial factor that has negatively influenced general political and social engagement, and led to a setback in the political emancipation of European citizens? The politically accepted role of the ordinary European citizen had been reduced to regular voting in elections. As long as consumption would be ensured for all social classes,[98] politics could function relatively independently from the actual interests of citizens; such as a healthy environment, which economic globalization increasingly threatened, or a healthy society, its cohesion increasingly threatened by individualization, fragmentation and immigration.

Economic globalization has been the most important development that affected western European societies in the second decade of the twentieth century; and it went together with the increasing fragmentation of societies due to immigration and the liberalization of society. The latter meant to question formal social conventions in regard to marriage, sexuality and family life in general. The outcome of those deconstruction processes could be termed the liberal society. This means that the western nation state since the second half of the twentieth century, and Central & Eastern European nations after the collapse of the Soviet Union, had to be brought together with two concepts – economic globalization and a liberal society – that would not necessarily go together with the concept of nation and the nation state.[99]

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[97]   What has been an issue is political consumption, that is boycotts and ethical, political or environmental considerations when purchasing goods or using services. This link of politics and consumption could be regarded as an expression of individual citizens to mask their political impotence. Generally, citizens were no longer able to influence the actual political process that for example would have resulted in better regulation of working conditions or would have prevented environmental damage – instead, they had to resort to consumption, to voice their political discontent. As a rule, this did not change the unsatisfactory situation, for example in regard to working conditions in the service sectors or in regard to environmental damage (namely caused by modern agriculture or tourism); possibly it only mitigated the individual feeling of helplessness.

[98]   Actually, Brexit showed that this thinking would be ultimately wrong: Cheap consumption possibilities in the long-run was not powerful enough to stay in the European Union. The reasons to vote for Brexit had been the lack of decent jobs and high immigration because of globalization, and the lack of control of the sovereign over international developments. Brexit thus also could be interpreted as bringing the nation back in, and reestablishing sovereignty.

[99]   Research consented that globalization did not go together with the nation state. Often, this was not discussed as an explicit problem of the nation state, but rather as a problem of liberal democracy. See for example David Held and his proposal of cosmopolitan democracy: *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

In the early twenty-first century, the general picture emerged that a modern, progressive social order had developed in Western European states, while Central & Eastern European states stuck to a backward nationalist order, emphasizing the will of the people. The collective of the nation was perceived as unreal, constructed, while the individual – and liberalism – would be real.[100]

The general discretization of the people and the nation as nationalist[101] in Western European states could also be explained by the fact that Western European nationalism would be understood to focus on the civic rights of individuals, and would attach less importance to social or ethnic affiliations. In contrary, Eastern European nationalism would stress collective rights and ethnic affiliation.[102] This concept had been proved wrong by research, but was still pushed by western politicians, media representatives or so-called experts on the issue. To detach the sovereign people from the nation and from ethnicity also could be interpreted as a strategy of the elite to strip ordinary citizens from power. [103]

The consensus among elites in Western Europe – less among elites in Central & Eastern Europe – was largely that the classic state organization as a nation state no longer was a sufficient legitimization for state power in the twenty-first century. [104] The former concept of the nation

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[100] The nation additionally would be a concept connected to strong emotions, while the individual would be deprived of emotion. See for a longer discussion on the rational concept of democracy and the irrational concept of nation (Nodia uses nationalism for nation): Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy."

[101] This often resulted in the claim that democracy and nationalism were mutually hostile. Nodia in "Nationalism and Democracy" in contrast found that nationalism was a component of liberal democracy.

[102] Miroslav Hroch, *Europe*, 8 had pointed to the influence of Hans Kohn's postulation of a progressive – liberal and democratic – western nationalism, based on English liberalism and the ideals of the French Revolution, and a reactionary non-western nationalism, which led to research differentiating nationalism according the geographical region; and already saw the nation as a product of nationalism: Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, [1944] 1948), 8th ed.; and with some modification of his concept: Hans Kohn, *Nationalism. Its Meaning and History* (Malabar, Fla.: Robert E. Krieger, 1982 [1965]). See also for a critical discussion of Kohn's concept arguing that the civic state has been a myth; and both the West and the East only became civic from the 1960s onward, and both will show ethno-cultural elements even when their nationalism are termed civic. Taras Kuzio, "The Myth of the Civic State: A Critical Survey of Hans Kohn's Framework for Understanding Nationalism," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25, no. 1 (2002): 20-39, https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01419870120112049.

[103] German literature in general acknowledges that the people, the *demos*, is needed in order realize democracy, and has much more problems with the *ethnos*. See for example: Emerich Francis. 1965. *Ethnos und Demos. Soziologische Beiträge zur Volkstheorie* (Berlin: Duncker&Humblot), 74 finding that ethnic homogeneity is not necessary; Dieter Fuchs. 2000. "Demos und Nation in der Europäischen Union," in: Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Friedhelm Neidhardt (eds.): *Zur Zukunft der Demokratie. Herausforderungen im Zeitalter der Globalisierung* (Berlin: Edition Sigma), 219f. The *demos* is formally defined through the constitution and its support for democracy. This would later become popular as *Verfassungspatriotismus*.

[104] Few studies focus on the legitimacy of today's nation states. A comparative study of legitimation discourses in Switzerland, Germany, Britain and the United States found that liberal justifications of the nation state

state was based on the claim that politics should represent society. This was expressed by parliamentary democracy, that is government by the people, through elected representatives. This understanding of democracy however was is pushed into the background, and democracy increasingly detached from majoritarian popular views and the common good, and turned to particular and individual interests.

The socioeconomic explanation for this development it that it had proved impossible to reconcile the nation state with the requirements of economic globalization, a liberal, diverse society, and also the requirements of an even tighter European integration. This also had consequences for political power: Decision-making was increasingly passed to higher regulative bodies or international agencies, and had to be interpreted within in a broader context of internationalization, standardization, and supranational integration.[105]

In regard to economic globalization this relationship concerns the old question of how to bring together individual or group economic activities with social organization. If economic activities are largely reduced to a given territory, social organization on the level of community or of a larger social group, that is within a region or also the nation might be sufficient. As a rule, transnational markets and capital do not stick to borders. If economic activity, and the supply and demand chain, is spread over the whole world, then social organization will necessarily transgress certain boundaries. High economic interdependence only goes well together with an adapted social organization. And social organization in the later twentieth, and above all in the first two decades of the twenty-first century adapted to an economically interdependent world. This interdependent world did not necessarily go together with a traditional nation state.

One important aspect was that a globalized social class developed whose living and working spaces had nothing to do with the previous social organization as a nation. Its members defined

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prevailed: Steffen Schneider et al. *Democracy's Deep Roots. Why the Nation State Remains Legitimate* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 154. In an earlier paper, the same authors argued that globalization and transnational integration do not necessarily weaken the popular support of the state or lead to a crisis of legitimacy; and different institutional arrangements and political cultures shape how legitimation is communicated in every political system: Achim Hurrelmann, Zuzana Krell-Laluhová, Roland Lhotta, Frank Nullmeier and Steffen Schneider, "Is there a Legitimation Crisis of the Nation-State?" *European Review* 13, no. 5 (2005): 135, https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1062798705000220. However, also here, the concept of nation is not a topic and the focus is on institutions, more specifically on political institutions, political community, the constitution and democracy.

[105]   Some of those challenges for sovereign nation states were multinational companies, global capital markets, transnational bodies associated to them, such as the WTO; but also the European Union regulation or legal conventions in general. Others were international crime or dictatorships that tried to undermine the western social order.

themselves not as Germans or French in the first line, but as members of a certain class who shared specific social characteristics, that is they graduated at selected universities, preferably they visited law or business faculties, are habituated to specific linguistic codes and life styles and feel little attachments to lower social classes of their own countries. That means they share an elitist view of society, which also implies that the members of the globalized social class feel themselves as leaders of social progress.

Social progress is most of all expressed with the liberal society. This is an open and diverse society – it includes many social groups that are not hold little together beyond the fact of economic globalization and a liberal political framework, that is allowing individuals to enjoy maximal civic liberties and according political rights. Consequently, the nation state has been challenged by liberalism and liberal democracy.

Generally, it has to be underlined that most western states already had been democracies before the Second World War – even if this concept suffered greatly before the war. Afterward, the democratic nation state emerged strengthened in Western European states – and in the rare cases where it existed in Central & Eastern European states, democracy was abolished, as well as the nation – and replaced by the collective concept of communism and totalitarian, later often transformed into authoritarian political rule.[106]

The democratic nation state in the west in the meantime had to be reconciled with the liberalization of societies and economies. Liberal democracy was the political concept that politically legitimized the support of the liberal society and economic globalization, and the depreciation of a democracy based on the concept of nation. The concept of liberal democracy does not regard the nation as crucial in order to maintain a democratic political system.

Liberal democracy transferred the sovereignty from the people to the individual, with the goal to increase liberties in regard to political and social powers, notably religious and cultural freedoms. This transfer has been facilitated by the concept of liberalism, which emphasizes rights

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[106]   Western Germany would be added as a new democratic state, as Weimar had failed – Germany had not been ready for a democratic political system, yet. After the war, democracy was for example abolished in Czechoslovakia, but also in Poland if we regard the Underground State as a democratic endeavor. Stalin had ordered to arrest the most important leaders of the Polish Underground State who were subsequently put to trial in Moscow and sentenced for trying to secure an independent Polish state in June 1945. The United Kingdom and the United States would not protest against the Soviet Union destroying democratic leadership and additionally withdraw support for the legitimate Polish government in exile, which enabled Stalin to install a communist puppet government in Poland. See Norman Davies, *Europe at War 1939-1945: No Simple Victory* (London: Macmillan, 2006), 195 and 444.

connected to individual liberty and private property. In principle, the nation was also based on individual political liberty, but this political liberty was realized collectively as a nation. Consequently, the collective concept of the nation also ensured individual equality – as long as an individual belonged to a given nation.[107]

With increasing economic globalization and the growing fragmentation of western societies, collective categories potentially would hinder rapid social and economic progress. Instead, individual liberty and a focus on individual rights, and a society based on regulations and laws – commonly understood as the rule of law – would support social and economic change. Liberal democracy in principle would be well suited in order to rule over a fragmented society that lacked overall social cohesion as it emphasized individual rights and freedoms. This individualization should enable people of diverse backgrounds to live together in a given state.[108] The individual would be liberated from political repression, and the focus would be on what the individual could expect from the state; with little common social duties apart from paying taxes.

So has liberal democracy turned into the only legitimate form for a modern European state in the twenty-first century? At the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century, this could be confirmed with European state leaders and media condemning the few European states that stressed the collective, and the nation. Those were mainly Central & Eastern European; as a rule Hungary and Poland were considered as examples for an illiberal development that had to prevented at any cost in other countries.[109] Generally, liberal democracy was understood to be the

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[107]   The contemporary social concept that focuses on the individual, and the concept of humanitarian individualism, has never been able to generate a high degree of inclusiveness among its members. The concept of humanitarian individualism in principle does not exclude, and is able to include almost all social communities and individuals, but this comes at the expense of social community: The concept of humanitarian individualism is not able to generate a larger and strong social community; while it enables that smaller and strong social communities coexist, which however have nothing in common.

[108]   See for example the definition in Collins Dictionary: "a democracy based on the recognition of individual rights and freedoms, in which decisions from direct or representative processes prevail in many policy areas," Collins Dictionary, March 10, 2017, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/de/worterbuch/englisch/liberal-democracy. "Liberalismus stellt die rationale Lösung dar für die Aufgabe, mitten in der Vielfalt regieren zu müssen," Francis Fukuyama in an interview with Felix E. Müller, "Das Ende der Geschichte ist vertagt," *NZZ* am Sonntag, March 18, 2017, https://nzzas.nzz.ch/notizen/francis-fukuyama-ende-geschichte-ist-vertagt-ld.152130.

[109]   See for example the definition in Collins Dictionary: "a democracy based on the recognition of individual rights and freedoms, in which decisions from direct or representative processes prevail in many policy areas," Collins Dictionary, March 10, 2017, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/de/worterbuch/englisch/liberal-democracy. "Liberalismus stellt die rationale Lösung dar für die Aufgabe, mitten in der Vielfalt regieren zu müssen," Francis Fukuyama in an interview with Felix E. Müller, "Das Ende der Geschichte ist vertagt," *NZZ* am Sonntag, March 18, 2017, https://nzzas.nzz.ch/notizen/francis-fukuyama-ende-geschichte-ist-vertagt-ld.152130.

best political system available for Europeans. And in fact, it was the political system that suited the necessities of economic globalization and the liberal society best. It also was an ideologized system that excluded its critics, that is criticism of this system was not accepted as legitimate. All over Europe, supporters of the nation state and the collective concept of nation were the denied the legitimacy of their demand, and its political representation.

Liberal democracy is to a great part a vision for a modern society, based on individual and social progress, and possibly an ideal society with equal citizenship.[110] This vision most often has had little to do with social and economic realities on the ground, as liberal democracy has supported a system of economic globalization resulting in striking socioeconomic inequalities,[111] reducing the sovereign, to his or her vote in elections, without an actual chance to influence politics; notably to improve the socioeconomic standing of those suffering from economic globalization – as this would have hindered further progress into this direction. Political power of naturally free and equal individuals – the sovereign – had been replaced by the power of global markets, and single powerful elements operating within this environment. [112]

In addition, there has been a stinking discrepancy between liberal migration regimes and the realities of western societies, that have largely failed to integrate immigrants – as most of them still function as nation states socially. This of course was due to the fact that the nation was still strong as a concept, and western societies often were not that liberal as the official view saw

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[110]   The new man was regarded as rational, i.e. and he had freed himself/herself from emotional burdens tied to irrational connections to language, traditions, religion etc. This understanding somehow did not correspond with the fact that language and culture were still important.

[111]   "When we look at income inequalities at a transnational European level, their extent seems quite substantial, as we have seen. This is the case even when we situate the European values within the global context. For example, Palma (2011) and the OECD (2015) show that the ratios of the top to the bottom income deciles in the USA are not much greater than those we have calculated for the European area […] At the same time, internal inequalities have been increasing in many European countries (Braconier and Ruiz-Valenzuela, 2014; OECD, 2011 and 2015). Taken together, these two processes are responsible for the high level of economic inequality that we found in Europe at the present time." (88-89). Rosário Mauritti, Susana da Cruz Martins, Nuno Nunes, Ana Lúcia Romão and António Firmino da Costa, "The Social Structure of European Inequality: A Multidimensional Perspective," *Sociologia, Prolemas e Prácticas* 81 (2016), http://journals.openedition.org/spp/2339. See also for an earlier paper that found large income gains among the ten percent of top earners were main drivers behind this evolution – large income gains of top earners have been a direct effect of economic globalization. Kaja Bonesmo Fredriksen, "Income Inequality in the European Union," OECD, *OECD Economics Department Working Papers 952* (April 2012), https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/5k9bdt47q5zt-en.pdf.

[112]   Such a crucial industry sectors – namely the automotive industries; banks and attached financial industries and other conglomerates. The fact that those were operating globally as a rule, provided them with significantly more political power than the sovereign in respective European countries.

them. Larger immigration, and economic globalization, had prompted that the concept of nation increasingly became a destabilizing factor for western societies. This was best expressed with the Brexit referendum and the election of Donald Trump President of the United States in 2016.

But why would individuals and social groups still adhere to national feeling and national symbols in a modern, secular, and global world – could this possibly have to do with identity-issues?[113] As the Brexit vote showed, for some identity issues were important, but for others, socioeconomic realities were more important. Not all social groups had profited from economic globalization or a liberal political framework. Working conditions and income had significantly deteriorated after the economic crisis of 2008 for lower income groups – and this often concerned ethnic groups who still considered themselves the sovereign of a given Western European nation state. And those who claimed their identity issues and socioeconomic interests were important suddenly had to realize that their demands would no longer be considered politically legitimate, as those demands threatened the liberal society and economic globalization.

Bringing the nation back in

To question the nation had also meant to question the subjective collective.[114] A modern state denied that it needed the legitimatory power of a subjective collective. And what about the European Union as a subjective collective? Western European elites as a rule proposed the European Union as an alternative to the nation. The difference however was that the European Union was a political project of European elites, with a heavy focus on the common regulation of specific industries or consumer-related questions. Citizens for their part had never entered a direct social contract with this organizational structure,[115] and as a rule had no emotional relation with this organization that as a rule was perceived as an administrative structure far away from

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[113]   Roland Holton, *Globalization and the Nation-State* (MacmillanPress: London, 1998),146: "The underlying point is that the nation has emerged, sometimes over a very long time period, out of ethnocultural feelings and sentiments that become embodied in myths about origins and in senses of a common heritage. These components of ethnocultural community, for example in the traditions, of Jewish or Armenian people, persist over logger time frames than modernists suppose." See mainly Anthony D. Smith on the issue the persistence being based for example on religious cultural forms or ethnic cores, such as myths, memories, symbols.

[114]   Anderson in *Immagined Communities* had noted that the subjective collective was based on a set of ideas rated positively by the members of this very collective.

[115]   See also John Locke's *Second Treatise on Civil Government* that established all men were free "to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature". (2nd Tr., §4); available at: http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7370.

ordinary people. And for some, the European Union and its dominating members France and Germany had been increasingly perceived as a dominating centers that imposed values certain members did not agree with.[116] The gap between Western and Central & Eastern Europe was best illustrated by the 2015 migration crisis when Germany opened its borders, and subsequently tried to force refugee quota upon the whole European Union, with Central & Eastern European governments refusing to oblige.[117] Their decisions were also prompted by the huge resistance of the respective populations against outer forces determining the ethnic composition of their respective nation states.[118] The Central & Eastern European understanding of national sovereignty would not go together with European Union-imposed mass immigration.

As it had became clear in the early twenty-first century, neither the administrative structure of European Union nor the liberal society combined with economic globalization, and their focus on the individual citizen, had been strong enough to replace the subjective collective of the nation.

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[116]   For example, conservative and Catholic citizens in Central & Eastern Europe claimed that Christian and family values, as well as those related to national tradition and culture, are at risk.

[117]   "Warsaw (along with Budapest, Bratislava, and Prague) argues that the EU decision on forced refugee quota from September 2015 was illegal in the first place, as, for instance, the Council applied a majority decision instead of unanimity, which was originally proposed by the Commission. Once the relocation scheme was decided upon, Warsaw and other CEE governments began speaking of the 'EU dictating' […] Warsaw argued that the 'open arms policy' of Germany equaled legal infringement in the EU, as Berlin suspended the Dublin convention by itself in September 2015, thus forcing the hand of other countries to reintroduce border controls and build fences […] the relocation scheme was doomed to fail, since the relocated refugees will leave the CEE anyway and move to wealthier EU member states. This has been a recurring theme in Poland [and other Central & Eastern European states], as indeed the bulk of asylum seekers arriving in Poland through the Eastern EU border leave the country even before their asylum application has been processed." Ireneusz Paweł Karolewski and Maciej Wilga, "Poland and the European Union," Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics (February 2018), available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323497016_Poland_and_the_European_Union.

[118]   From Central & Eastern Europe, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Austria and Lithuania, and then Poland had a negative view on the overall impact of immigration (14-15); for most of those, the cultural background of immigration, notably in regard to religion was important (22); the Czech Republic [Slovakia had not been part of the study, but has had similar figures to the Czech Republic] and Poland were the two states with the lowest support of Muslim immigration (25); in general, there was a social consensus in Central & Eastern Europe that such immigration should not be allowed – Poland being the most divided in this regard due to the relative polarization of society into younger urban liberals supporting a liberal world-view and older rural conservatives opposing it (32-33). Overall, the authors of the respective OECD study found (32): "public opinion is relatively unfavourable to immigration [above all in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania and Hungary]. Work skills are not seen as all that much more important than religious background, and opinion tends to be more negative towards Muslims than toward migrants from poorer non-European countries. In other words there are strong symbolic boundaries between members of nation and outsiders. In these countries the public is fairly consensual, with no major divisions between social groups in their attitudes." Anthony Heath and Lindsay Richards: "How Do European Differ in Their Attitudes to Immigration?" Findings from the European Social Survey 2002/03 – 2016/2017, OECD, *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers* 222, available at: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/0adf9e55-en.pdf?expires=1586269561&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=111BE9D835EB7DA8624E5A9DF59D2C42.

Citizens in Britain and Central & Eastern European countries increasingly made clear that there were limits to both individualization and internationalization. Their aim was to regain sovereignty in supporting political parties that claimed to bring back the nation. The concept of the liberal society, and liberal democracy, was for example questioned in Poland and Hungary.[119] Here, elites had been less ready to question the social order of their states. This was a combination of citizens' resistance and the fact that economic globalization and the liberal society would be less dominant in most of those countries.[120]

In the United Kingdom, it had been immigration and trade policies, and the requests to take back control culminated in a referendum in which a majority voted for the country to leave the European Union.[121] The ruling elite in Britain, in comparison to France for example, had been far more receptive for the demands to reestablish sovereignty, also for the sake to retain political power.

What do we know about citizens and their attitudes toward the nation, toward the nature of political community?

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[119] See quite exemplarily in the work of Ivan Krastev; for example "Eastern Europe's Illiberal Revolution. The Long Road to Democratic Decline," *Foreign Affairs* 49 (May / June 2018), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/hungary/2018-04-16/eastern-europes-illiberal-revolution. See also here for the case of Hungary, a symbol for illiberal nationalism for liberals, Andras Biro-Nagy, "Why Orban Won. Explaining Fidesz's Dominance in Hungary," *Foreign Affairs*, April 10, 2018, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/hungary/2018-04-10/why-orban-won. See also for a description of what western research has generally understood as Eastern Central nationalism for the case of Hungary and Poland: "It rather appears that what is given with one hand to the Polish and Hungarian citizens in economic terms is taken away with the other at the level of freedoms and political accountability […] The economic project of Orbán and Kaczynski has been underpinned by a so-called illiberal ideology which, while fairly vague, has appealed to local constituencies thanks to the reference to national identity and the invocation of the sovereignty of the people in opposition to purported internal and external enemies. As they appeal to the 'people', these governments maintain that the liberal rule of law model promoted by the EU is overly formalistic and undermines the paramount democratic principle that all decision-making power derives from the nation." Walter Rech, "Some Remarks on the EU's Action on the Erosion of the Rule of Law in Poland and Hungary," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 26, no. 3 (2018): 1-12, https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2018.1498770; here page 6.

[120] Even if the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland or Hungary were well integrated into the global supply and demand chain as extended and cheap workbench; above all for the automotive industries. See Will Kymlicka in an answer to David Held on the will of citizens to confront globalization with domestic citizenship; global citizenship not being realized very soon: "Citizenship in an Era of Globalization," in *The Cosmopolitan Reader*, ed. Garrett W. Brown and David Held (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 437-438. Earlier, Mann held that the expansion of global networks seemed to weaken local interaction networks more than national ones: Michael Mann, "Has Globalization Ended the Rise and Rise of the Nation-State?" Review of International Political Economy 4, no. 3 (1997): 472-496, https://doi.org/10.1080/096922997347715.

[121] Officially on January 31, 2020.

The national interest remained important for a growing part of citizens, and in the early twenty-first century the need for the national would become utterly political again: As traditional parties in Western Europe had ignored topics important for their electorate, above all immigration, the political gap was filled with political movements and later political protest parties. This was a predominantly western phenomenon: New political movements and parties would emerge and take a political position against western elites, against the new legitimatory factors of political power, that is economic globalization and the liberal society. It was immigration, that generated significant support – also in the context of Brexit – and helped to translate public dissatisfaction on a political level. Such movements and parties were successful with classical nationalist demands: They suggested the nation state was threatened by uncontrolled immigration, but also by the very elites who adapted policies in order to abolish the nation state, and suggested the renationalization, for example of the economy, foreign policy, and culture and respective language.[122]

Overall, political community and the thoughts of citizens – the subjective collective – was rarely a study object. Instead, the focus would be on abstract categories such as the rule of law, democracy or political institutions also in regard to guarantee individual rights or freedoms – or on populists who had captured the nation, and the subjective collective, as this collective had been abandoned by western elites. In addition, it is necessary to underline that research in general centered around data and the attempt to quantify human behavior, often via election analysis. This meant that complex social processes were often reduced to mathematical correlations or single events, such as elections.

When it came to elections and election analysis, political community and emotion – opinions and single views of citizens – indeed could play a significant role. This to a point reflected the view that the citizen's function in a democracy was to elect a certain political party. There were two important issues connected to it: Voting was first of all an individual act and detached from collective categories, and second the opinion of a given citizen was not important as such, as long as a given political party could sell its program to potential voters and they would vote for the

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[122]   The nationalization of language had been a very popular topic in France for example; see also on the other issues: "What Does France's National Front Stand for?" *France 24*, May, 28, 2014, https://www.france24.com/en/20140528-france-national-front-policy-eu. See also the political programme of the AfD, among others with the demand of a Europe of Nation States: "Manifesto for Germany. The Political Programme of the Alternative for Germany," Alternative for Germany (2017), https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/111/2017/04/2017-04-12_afd-grundsatzprogramm-englisch_web.pdf.

respective party. In sum, as long as the power of the elite would be ensured, opinions and views of populations mattered little. Such an approach however risked that political parties in particular or the elite in general failed to assess the general mood in society, or of the subjective collective that officially did not exist. Such an ignorance could become dangerous to established political power as the Brexit referendum and the election of Donald Trump President of the United States in 2016 have shown.

In particular, institutionalism has prevented to regard issues in a decontextualized manner: This approach formalizes social choices, which are understood as being part of an institutional arrangement. This approach might function for the western context, but also here, there are exceptions – Italy for example – and it certainly does not function for the largely informalized Central & Eastern European context. As a rule, institutions are only a façade for highly informalized social processes, and are an instrument in order to legitimate social processes or political decisions, but they rarely determine informal decisions or processes.[123] Institutions are also not able to grasp the subjective collective that remains of crucial importance in many European countries. We could also argue that institutionalism makes sense for states with a strong state administrative and institutional tradition; notably France and the United Kingdom, but also Germany. Different analytical categories are needed for states with a *Staatsnation* and a *Kulturnation* tradition. Hence, institutionalism does not function well for the latter, which are nation states that have emerged as a result of national movements. In this context, the paper would strongly recommend to extend analysis to informal categories, and the subjective collective is a very strong, informal category that has proven its strength in recent years, as the support for populists and populist parties all over Europe demonstrates.

So, citizens all over Europe, have pressured to bring the nation, the subjective collective, back in. How is this collective understood in the early twenty-first century – are there substantial differences to former conceptions of the nation?

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[123]   Research had several shortcomings: First of all it was the economization of political science and its attached branches: government, social policy, policy analysis, international relations etc. – that is the fact that quantitative research dominated over qualitative research and thorough intellectual analysis. Second, the predominant objects of analysis have been institutions – not actors, such as individual politicians or businessmen and their networks, or single citizens. In this line, modern works focused on institutional aspects, but seemed to have forgotten that a state largely is made up by its citizens. Important topics discussed are largely abstract: sovereignty, global, multi-level governance, transnational regulatory institutions, the economic role of the state, the global economy. Other concepts are taken for granted and not explained sufficiently, such as the concept of liberal democracy.

Formerly, elites had captured the subjective collective, and instrumentalized it in order to legitimize modern political power, and created the nation state. Other nations – mainly in Central & Eastern Europe, had positioned themselves against Empire first in demanding cultural and social autonomy for the respective subjective collective, then in fighting for political independence. Today, modern nationalist movements demand the liberation of the nation from a very elite that formerly belonged to this very subjective collective nation, but alienated from this collective, as it found other concepts more powerful to legitimize power in a modern society. The main difference seems to be the fact that formerly, both elites and citizens were quick to support and to identify themselves with a subjective collective, while today this subjective collective was rejected in favor of individualization and internationalization [124] by a majority of western European elites and also a significant percentage of Central & Eastern European elites; and also rejected by more progressive citizens who still would form majorities in most Western European countries, in contrary to important Central & Eastern European countries; starting with Poland and Hungary.

The concept of nation had developed to a power instrument against the elite and into an element that further disrupted societies that already lacked cohesion, above all in Western Europe. The revival of the nation would be destructive twofold as it rejected a further individualization for modern western societies and questioned the power of established elites. Ghia Nodia had underlined that the nation had been destructive for communism and constructive as it provided unity in a world of disarray – it had developed to a grave threat to liberal democracy, and into one of its major sources of hope. [125]

In contrary to former interpretations of the nation, the concept would no longer unite different social groups in order to build a new society and a new nation; or serve as a power instrument for an established elite to justify their power ambitions. Such a concept of nation had been highly inclusive for the members of this subjective collective, but excluded all persons who did not belong to it. This interpretation of inclusion and exclusion of course always opened the doors for political abuse, mobilizing the included against the excluded. Today's interpretation

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[124]   This new social order of individuals involved in globalized relationships however only would function within the framework of the nation state as crucial services maintaining society, such as the wide range of modern health services, education, transportation and also to a large extent the food industry could only be provided in a sustainable form within the framework of a nation state.

[125]   He uses nationalism instead of nation. Compare with Nodia, "Nationalism and Democracy."

would build on the same mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion: Similar to former times it would allow for inclusion if individuals or social groups were ready to identify with the subjective collective. In contrary to former times, howver, such an approach would be problematic or even impossible from a legal viewpoint – the rule of law and liberal democracy had strengthened individual rights or groups rights which would have to be limited when confronted with the subjective collective. This would be the most important challenge of bringing back the nation back in – to reconcile the largely informal and emotional subjective collective with a individualized and formalized, rule of law-based society.

Conclusion

The examples of Hungary and Poland in the twenty-first century have proven that individualized rights and the rule of law have priority in the modern world of European nation states when confronted with the concept of the nation. The nation and Central & Eastern European concept of the nation state has not apparent advantages, when confronted with the western concepts of liberal democracy and open society and economy. Its collective focus in a world of individual possibilities seems backward and limits individual liberties and freedoms secured by modern rule of law concepts.

But still, most of Central & Eastern European states stick to the concept of nation – the immigration crisis of 2015 and its consequences have demonstrated this in an almost shocking way to a larger western public and European Union politics. We could ask what would be the advantages of such a nation state, understood as being an utterly illiberal state in the case of Poland and Hungary? It seems, that the political parties and politicians supporting this concept still believe in the capability of the nation state to guarantee equal treatment of citizens, and to provide general welfare and security. This understanding has been demonstrated above all by the socioeconomic policies of Polish and Hungarian national conservative and populist governments, attempting to ease the socioeconomic inequalities generated by economic globalization; in

addition severely limiting the liberal society as supported by Western European states, that is an open society going hand in hand with mass immigration and the political protection of individual sexual or modern social identities. Thus, Central & Eastern European countries very much adhere to the historical concept of a nation state that has evolved form a larger national movement, and been dependent on the emotional attachment of ordinary citizens.

This concept of a nation as a rule is not connected to an external aggressive state nationalism – it has rather the features of withdrawing from too much external involvement. Its purpose is to delimit, to draw boundaries and red lines when confronted with the modern challenges of economic globalization and the liberal society. Outward directed nationalism has predominantly been a problem of powerful states, such as France, Germany or Russia, the two former masking it with European Union unification politics – the common currency euro has been a notorious example – and the latter masking classic forms of aggreassive nationalist warfare with hybrid military assaults. A more urgent problem in Western European countries has been that populists have politicized the nation, that is poplulist nationalism. This above all had to do with the fact that western mainstream politics ignored the negative implications of economic globalization and the liberal society for their respective populations. Some felt culturally threatened, and a larger and more significant percentage had to face the decline of their socioeconomic living conditions. However, mainstream politics had turned away from a concept of society that tried to ensure the well-being of the collective – the focus on the individual had prompted that the collective was carelessly neglected. The most severe consequences of this ignorance were Brexit and the election of Donald Trump as US president in 2016, together with an overall strengthening of populist movements and parties in Europe. Most of those called for a renewed self-determination of the people, and requested to put the interests of a given nation first. This perhaps had again showed that in times of crisis – as for many citizens above all in Western European countries economic globalization and the liberal society had led to both a cultural and a socioeconomic crisis – the turn to the collective of ordinary citizens expressed their hope for a solution. In general it therefore can be stated that individualization and internationalization would be ill-suited to face a larger social crisis, and Europeans would again turn to collective identities.

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