

## *CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALISM – A REMAKE*

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In a geographic perspective, citizenship is legally defined as the granting of rights, including the right to vote, by a political power, in return for a few duties and benefits. The word is used in a broader sense as an active attachment of individuals to public life, through action and critical reflection. As originally in the defense of the Greek city, citizenship is expressed in modern times by nationalism.

### **THE NATIONALIST CITIZENSHIP OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

The beginning of the 20th century is the great era of national geographies in Europe. In the introduction to *Deutschland, Einführung in die Heimatkunde*, Friedrich Ratzel (1898) states that “a confidence like that of the child for his native home must be the goal of the national geographer. Above all the German must know what he owes to his country. The present research was born out of the conviction that this goal can be achieved by showing how the soil and the people are at one with each other (*wie der Boden und das Volk zusammengehören*). The author emphasizes the spiritual bond with the soil, which “is created in the hereditary habit of cohabitation, in the common work and the need to defend oneself against the outside world...The habit of cohabitation not only binds the members of a people together, but also connects them to the soil, where the remains of the previous generations lie. From this, religious ties to certain sacred places arise, ties that are much stronger than mere habit or common work. The need for protection creates secure borders around the country and fills them with strongholds”. It is according to him a modern vision of the world: “many are those who see in the national unity a first fact, sanctioned by the time.

In Great Britain, Halford Mackinder published *Britain and the British Seas* (1902), in which he showed that “the country has two complementary, not antagonistic, qualities: insularity and universality. It was insularity without isolation that immediately made the British state “a world unto itself” and a great European power. Her geographical position has thus given Britain a unique share in the destiny of the world.

For Italy, the formation of its national unity was a lengthy process. Feretti (2014), after quoting Metternich’s phrase at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 that “Italy is not a nation, but a mere ‘geographical expression’”, points to the publication as early as 1844 of two issues of the *Annuario Geografico Italiano*. Its author Annibale Ranuzzi writes that “this publication has a double purpose; scientific and patriotic.

According to Brubaker (1992), in his comparative analysis of France and Germany, “modern national citizenship is an invention of the French Revolution. In *La France de l’Est* Vidal de la Blache (1917) develops a vigorous nationalist plea: “a people, small or large, is a person, whose physiognomy can, like all things, undergo the alteration of time, but which keeps through the ages the fundamental traits that it has contracted in constituting itself in the land of which it has made its domain. Following its annexation by Germany in 1870 “Eastern France lives in a state of friction, generating a chronic malaise. Without distinction of language and religious beliefs, all parts of the population make a front against the foreigner”. In this text, we find the essence of what makes nationalism: the consciousness of the personality of a nation, based on geographical space and maintained by the hatred of the foreigner, surpasses all other quarrels, be they religious or linguistic.

This nationalist patriotism led to the two world wars of 1914 and 1940. It gave rise both to a form of internal citizenship and to external imperialism: Nazi Germany’s claim to a “living space” in Central Europe and Japan’s in Southeast Asia. There was also the imperialism of the United States in Latin America, that of Russia (under the guise of communism) in Eastern Europe, and the colonialism of Great Britain and France in Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East. After 1945, the division of the world by the “cold war” froze the developments.

## A CITIZENSHIP BASED ON A POLITICAL CULTURE

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 opened a new era in Europe. The general perception of an atmosphere of international peace facilitated the opening of borders. Many deplored the economic globalization that capitalist development took advantage of, but this globalization was not only economic. It has reduced nationalism on the European continent. In the context of the construction and progressive enlargement of the European Union, it has made national citizenships lose their aggressive character.

There has been a decline in citizenship associated with common ancestors and nationalism for an active citizenship corresponding (Habermas 1994) “to an attachment to a political culture based on democracy and civil rights”. Society is aware of entering an era of unprecedented global migration in which territorial boundaries and national societies are radically transformed: “some refute the system of the nation-state and imagine transnational belonging as the only tenable system in a global age” (Caroline Nagel 2004). According to Ulrich Beck (2003), it is therefore necessary to “rethink our conception of democracy, which first took the form of the city, and which today seems to have reached its final stage in the national form of parliamentary democracy organized in states...in order to reinvent it in the transnational constellation”. In other words, it would be necessary, as Nancy Frazer (2014) seeks, to “trans-nationalize” the public sphere described by Habermas.

In these years, the nation-state is the object of a profound political contestation. Gilles Deleuze (1992) asserts that “spaces are not given but are constructed in diverse ways by political practices and discourses”. Pierre Bourdieu (1993) also rejects the idea of “implicitly adopting the state as the natural container of social dynamics. The “state spirit”, which he rejects, is a diffusion by public policies of categories of thought and mental structures that reflect the structures of the state. Anthony Giddens (1987) considers the Nation-State as “a stock of powers for the expression of capitalist social relations”. For him, the nation-state serves as a means of organizing the oversight and discipline of the transition from the old absolutist systems to bourgeois democracy and the market economy, and he seeks to identify the different scales of the interweaving of the Nation state and the world system in conflicts and wars. In a reflection on the teaching of geography, Michel Riou (1988), for his part, wishes to “get out of the geographical postulate of the States, as we got out of the political postulate in history. It is urgent to make our students citizens of the world. And to hell with the states, as soon as possible”.

Ehud Shapiro (2018) goes further and imagines a global cloud community, with a single country, the Earth, and global citizens, which of course presupposes a world court, a world constitution, and a world currency. Yussef Al Tamini, in the same book, is inspired by the American and French revolutions, which established the separation of church and state: “a historical parallel can be made quickly. If these revolutions led to a separation of Church and State, could the digital revolution lead to the separation of Territory and State?” In Rainer Bauböck’s book (2018) Liav Orgad points out that 71% of 15–24-year-olds worldwide use the internet. In a 2016 BBC global survey, 56% of respondents saw themselves as global citizens first, more than national citizens. A multitude of activities go beyond national frameworks without any intervention of states, but however the influence of individuals on the creation of international law is zero, since international meetings are held between representatives of

states according to the Westphalian principle (one state, one vote). There is a virtual community like Bit nation (<https://bitnation.co/>), founded in 2014, which opens the possibility of creating new DBVNs (Decentralized Borderless Voluntary Nation) within it, which anyone can join or leave whenever they want.

We can see that these years of calm in the Western world have led to the development of an often-enthusiastic cosmopolitan civic thought, which the war in Ukraine has abruptly interrupted.

## **2022: THE WAR IN UKRAINE, A NEW ERA**

If the illusion of a “world state” was unrealistic, European defenders of a cosmopolitical position could “consider the European federal state as a first step towards the establishment of a transnational network of regimes capable, even without a world government, of conducting domestic policy on a planetary scale” (Habermas 2000). At the end of the First World War, in France, the geographers Jean Brunhes (1921) and Camille Vallaux already wrote that the political system of the modern world was called upon to undergo profound transformations: “internally, the old centralized states seem to us to correspond, by their organization, to an outdated state of civilization; they will therefore have to change their frameworks and their geographical form. Outside, a kind of cooperation by groups of States will become necessary, either to balance the conditions of life within the groups, or to resist the pressures and violent attempts of other groups. The States will no longer know anything but relations by groups... We will see how the frontiers between groups of different civilizations dig deeper ditches than the political, military and economic frontiers that we have known between States. These barriers will be further reinforced with all the power of modern tools.... Samuel Huntington (1997) similarly asserts that the fault lines between civilizations “are the front lines of the battles of the future.

. Central Europe poses a particularly obsessive problem which is due to the dilemma of Russia, which is part of the European cultural ensemble of Christian origin, but which remains clinging to its imperial status of nation state, which would like to be analogous to that of China, which has been able to constitute a cultural area around it. The war in Ukraine, which put an end to more than thirty years of European calm, illustrates the difficulty of defining cultural limits. It showed the insecurity created by the intellectual and strategic uncertainties of a country like Russia, torn between citizenship based on nationalism and citizenship based on attachment to a political and moral culture.

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