Nationalism at the centre and periphery of Capitalism

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Nationalism is a particularistic rather than universalist ideology, and when it takes its most radical form, its consequences are terrible – more violent than those resulting from any other major capitalist ideology. For this reason – and because the wealthy countries are loathe to see it in developing nations -, nationalism is always treated as a suspect ideology. However, as nationalism is the ideology that legitimizes nations, and seen as modern society is territorially organized into nation states, the ideology of nationalism is strong and omnipresent. Other ideologies are also important, but as competition between nation states is the widest-reaching economic and political factor in global capitalism, nationalism, albeit often disguised and denied, has always played a central role.

During the cold war, the main ideological conflict seemed to be that between liberalism and socialism; but as soon as the Soviet Union began to collapse, it became apparent that even the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union was a clash of two nationalisms. Furthermore, when we look at the most extraordinary feat of political engineering in history (the construction of the European Union), we can read it as a negation of nationalism – and indeed it was, if we consider the decision of France and Germany to restrain their nationalisms and no longer make war. However, we could also interpret the European Union as an attempt to produce an ampler, multiethnic and multilingual "nation" – the European nation – through the formation of a broader nation state in which the various components nonetheless maintain their own national identities.[1] Nationalism therefore continues to play a fundamental role in the political life of humanity. As Benedict Anderson (1991, p.3) once observed: "the 'end of the nationalist era' so insistently prophesied, is not even remotely close. In fact, the sense of belonging to a nation is the most universally legitimized value in the political life of our time".

Nationalism is fruit of a capitalist revolution that also spawned another important, essentially bourgeois ideology, liberalism, as well as the ideological triumvirate of socialism, efficientism and environmentalism, whose origins are, respectively, the working class, the professional middle class and the middle class in general. Liberalism is the ideology of freedom of thought and expression and of economic freedom; it is the value/belief system that justifies both civil rights and the not necessarily radical thesis

of laissez-faire - the invisible hand. What was originally a revolutionary ideology against the absolute state and mercantilism became one of the bases of modern conservativism. Nevertheless, liberalism continues to be a pivotal accomplishment of humanity in terms of affirming civil rights and the state of law.

Nationalism, on the other hand, is the ideology that unifies a nation, it is the sense of common destiny that guarantees the cohesion a nation needs to protect its territory, organize a State and thereby a nation-state. It is the ideology of national autonomy, security and economic development. The nation, in turn, is a reasonably homogeneous social group that shares a common destiny and either has, or has the conditions to produce, a nation-state – the territorial political units in into which humanity is divided under capitalism. Nationalism is an originally bourgeois ideology, though with a popular connotation, as it only makes sense when capitalists, the working class and the professional class put aside their differences, embrace a common destiny and rally together in competition with other nations.

Socialism, for its part, is the ideology of social justice. Marx defined it as a mode of production, but this form of societal organization never concretized and there is no prospect of it doing so in the foreseeable future. In compensation, a large number of socialist values envisaging substantive equality among human beings have been incorporated into the legal frameworks of modern nation-states, where they have become part of the shared fabric of modern society. Socialism is the ideology of social rights that primarily addresses minorities, the oppressed, the poor, the worker, women and ethnic minorities.

Efficientism – or the ideology of efficiency, to avoid the neologism – is the ideology of instrumental rationality, of the definition of the best or least costly means toward a given end, in other words, of efficiency and productivity. It is an originally technocratic or professional ideology that emerged over the course of the 20th Century, as families gave way to bureaucratic organizations as the fundamental units of production, giving rise to a new class of professionals or technicians who play a decisive role in society insofar as they have, or aim to achieve, a monopoly on the new strategic factor of production: administrative, technical and communicative knowledge.

Lastly, environmentalism arose at the tail end of the 20th Century, when it finally dawned on humanity that industrial societies were destroying nature. This is originally a middle-class ideology, whether bourgeois or professional, but, unlike the other four ideologies, this is now one shared to greater or lesser degrees across all social classes.

These five ideologies roughly correspond to the five major political goals of modern societies: security, liberty, autonomy and economic development, social justice and environmental protection. When these ideologies radicalize, they become anti-democratic and anti-human

fundamentalisms. This is true of liberalism, which becomes neo-liberalism, of socialism, which degenerates into statism, of efficientism, which can reduce progress to economic growth, and environmentalism, which can spin off into a denial of progress. This, however, is particularly true in relation to nationalism, which, when radicalized, defines itself on ethnic terms, ceases to be the driving-force of inter-national competition and turns inside against compatriots of different races or religions, eventually corrupting into racism. Hence the democratic societies of the 21st century make agreements concerning their political goals in order to prevent ideologies from radicalizing and perverting. This is why, in talking of nationalism, it is not unusual to distinguish between ethnic nationalism and political nationalism. Whilst a nation may have one of its most solid bases in a given ethnicity, the nationalist radicalization of this trait clashes directly with the universal values modern societies developed and agreed upon in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

Liberalism, nationalism and efficientism, socialism and environmentalism respectively correspond to the goals of liberty, security, and economic development, social justice and the preservation of nature. As these five goals are political, society pursues them through politics and, by extension, through the State. As these goals are not always compatible amongst themselves, politics – the art of compromise and persuasion – attempts to combine them as reasonably as possible. The most advanced capitalist and democratic societies are nationalist, though this does not prevent them from being liberal, social and environmental as well. As Neil MacCormick has observed (1999, p.67) "there is an important place in the contemporary world for liberal nationalism", as there is also a place for social and environmental nationalism. It therefore makes no sense to define nationalism as did Mirsolv Hroch (2000, p. 88): "nationalism stricto sensu is a vision that confers absolute priority to the values of the nation over and above other values or interests". This, in fact, is a definition of fundamentalist nationalism.[2]

Nationalism is the unifying force in modern nation-states, that is, of the politico-territorial tripartite units of nation, state and territory into which modern humanity is distributed. In the nation-state, country or National State, the nation is national society, while the State is the constitutional/legal system and the organization it provides. In this sense, the State, endowed, by definition, with the power of coercion needed to ensure the rule of law, is the institutional instrument par excellence of the collective action of a nation.[3] While the politico-territorial unit in the more advanced pre-capitalist systems was the Empire, in capitalism this role has fallen to the nation-states that now cover the entire terrestrial globe. In Empires, the old State had only one objective, security; the other four political goals emerged only with the capitalist revolution and separation.

Thus came the separation between public and private, between the State and national society, the latter sometimes bearing the connotation of nation, sometimes of civil society. Hence, nation and nationalism are, respectively, the societal form and ideology of capitalism; which is why Ernest Gellner (1983), Benedict Anderson (1991) and Anthony D. Smith (2003), despite their differences in theoretical lineage, associate nations with modernity, that is, with the capitalist revolution and economic development. Only thus can we explain the sheer ideological force of nationalism within capitalism.

Montserrat Guibernau (1997) offers two other perspectives from which to understand nationalism – one essentialist, according to which nationalism derives from the ancient and immutable character of the nation; and the other psychological, which relates nationalism with the need for self-identification. However, while the first is simply an equivocal thesis, the latter is a result of nationalism and of the constitution of nations. The need to belong to a group stems from the essentially social nature of the human being, but this necessity has assumed, over the centuries, various forms that have nothing whatsoever to do with nationalism.

The nation and civil society are two sides of the same politically organized society that began to emerge with the capitalist revolution and the formation of the modern State. While the nation is the form into which modern societies organize themselves in their pursuit of economic development, civil society is the way they arrange themselves to fight for liberty and social justice. In both cases, politically organized society is distinct from the "people" - here understood as a group of citizens with equal rights -, because in both the nation and civil society individual powers are weighed on the basis of their capacity for organization, knowledge and capital. Nations, though identified with or unified by nationalism, are nonetheless composed of social classes bound by conflict.

In old societies, the only social class capable of organizing itself was the landed, armed oligarchy, which often confused itself with the State. However, with the advent of capitalism and the emergence of a new class - the bourgeoisie – , rich and powerful, but with no direct control over the State, society, now politically organized itself, was separated from the institution under the guises of the nation or civil society. It was Hegel who first took note of the separation in course between society and the State, referring to politically organized society as civil society or, tellingly, bourgeois society.

At the same time, another term – nation – was being used to identify that same politically organized society. While civil society is a concept historically associated with the universal goals of liberty, justice and the protection of nature, the political goals the nation seeks are national autonomy and economic development. In order to organize itself politically

to achieve these goals, the nation needs the State as the instrument of its collective action and must also secure a territory so that it can then establish its nation-state. As such, a nation only really exists when a people has a State or is fighting for one with a reasonable chance of success.

In this conception, the State is always the expression of society; it is the institution society creates in order to regulate the behavior of its parts and therefore ensure the obtainment of its political goals. If society is authoritarian, with the balance of power tilted wholly in the favor of the elite, then the State will be authoritarian. As these social disparities between the ruling strata and the people diminish, the State democratizes. The smaller the differences of power derived from money or knowledge, and the more cohesive the nation and civil society, the more democratic and stronger the State will be – and therefore the more capable of fulfilling its role as instrument of collective social action.

The five ideologies of the modern society are present to greater or lesser degrees in the value and belief systems of each citizen, and in the respective institutions. As the political objectives they pursue are all final, but not necessarily compatible, what we see in our societies and states is a huge social compromise. Each society looks for a reasonable combination of these five objectives and their respective ideologies. These combinations vary depending on level of economic and technological development, and this allows us to speak of models of capitalism. In this article I will concentrate on nationalism and, naturally, on the nation.

Nationalism, nation-state and development

Nation and nationalism – the former, a form of society, the latter, an ideology – are two complementary social realities that emerged from the capitalist revolution. Nationalists generally look for their national roots in bygone times – the Germans, for example, liked to identify themselves with the Germanic nation, the French with the ancient Gauls, but today there is near-consensus among scholars to the effect that the nations and national revolutions that led to the formation of the nation-states are a modern phenomenon (Hobsbawm, 1990; Hutchinson & Smith, 1994; Thiesse, 2001).

Walker Connor (1994, p. 154), studying the formation of the French nation – one of the oldest in the world – cites a study by Eugene Weber, according to which "as recently as 1870, most of the rural population and townsfolk did not see themselves as part of the French nation, and many still did not as late as the outbreak of the First World War". For each people, the capitalist revolution begins with the commercial revolution and the emergence of the bourgeoisie and ends with the Industrial Revolution that gives rise to the phenomenon of economic development; in other words, the process of the accumulation of capital and the incorporation of technical

progress, leading to sustainably higher per capita incomes. Between the two revolutions, or in conjunction with the latter, comes the national revolution, i.e., the formation of the nation-state and, therefore, the transformation of a people into a nation.

Nationalism remains essential after the national revolution, as economic competition between nations becomes increasingly stiff the more the markets open to it – it is therefore a nationalism expressed through a national development strategy or national competition strategy: a conjunct of institutions, policies, agreements and practices that create investment opportunities for entrepreneurs and unify the nation.

A nation may not necessarily have a single language, single religion, or even a shared ethnicity, but it always has a common history capable of bestowing a reasonable degree of cultural homogeneity on a large social group, which is why, as Otto Bauer (1979) pointed out, a nation has "a common destiny".[4] Nations are social constructions because they endlessly cast and re-cast themselves through the history, myths and symbols with which they identify. The fact that nations are essentially defined by the possession of a shared destiny means that they are a structure by which societies organize themselves politically. It is through nationalism that a society seals its identity and sets its goals. Nationalism is just this self-reflection, or, as Álvaro Vieira Pinto (1960, p.307) suggests, it is "the authentic consciousness of the national reality". Nationalism is how a nation sees itself reflected in two fundamental objectives: economic autonomy and development.

While a common religion is not a pre-requisite of nations, nationalism will often use religion as an agent of social cohesion and legitimization in its construction and consolidation of the nation-state. The first nation-state in history was England, and it is no accident that Henry VIII was the pioneer in the practice by founding the Anglican Church. While the adverse reaction of wealthy countries to those developing today in the Middle East is largely associated with their religious fundamentalism, as in the case of Iran, in reality this is a manifestation of nationalism using religion as a form of legitimization – no more nationalistic, therefore, than was and is the very construction of Israel, likewise predicated on religion.[5] For their part, leftwing political movements in Latin America, such as in Morales' Bolivia, are essentially expressions of nationalism – of the endeavor to obtain national cohesion and to construct a State to serve it as an instrument of development.

There is a relationship of mutual reinforcement among the nation, State and nation-state: the first being a form of society; the second, its main institution; and the third, the politico-territorial unit proper to capitalism. The State expresses the nation, but the latter only exists if the State is constituted and, in addition to regulating the nation, also succeeds in

exercising sovereignty over a territory in which to situate the nation-state. A nation only warrants the name when it has become a society that not only has a shared destiny, but which is also cohesive and strong enough to obtain autonomy, equip itself with a State and a territory, and thereby establish a nation-state.

These three social realities born of the capitalist revolution are, however, intrinsically linked to the objective of economic development because, insofar as capitalist societies define themselves by the accumulation of capital and incorporation of technical progress by companies in constant competition, these societies are inherently dynamic and, therefore, a necessary stage for economic development. Capitalism, for its part, is a type of societal organization whose legitimacy does not depend on tradition or strength, but on its capacity to produce more well-being.

Finally, economic development is the very condition of national independence. This is why nations, one of the two forms of politically organized capitalist society, are always focused on their own security or autonomy and economic development. However, modern societies have other goals as well, such as liberty, social justice and the protection of nature. When these are the goals under discussion, we do not speak of nations, but of civil society. In fact, it is one and the same society, but the forms of interaction and the weights of the different players (always dependent on the capital, knowledge and organizational capacity of each member) vary according to how that society is organized as a nation in pursuit of autonomy and economic development, or as a civil society engaged in the struggle for liberty, justice and sustainable development.

According to Ernest Gellner (1983), the most notable analyst of nationalism, human history can be divided into three stages – pre-agricultural, agro-literate and industrial -, and nationalism is the fundamental ideology of the third. In industrial societies, which I call capitalist, the nation-state is the form of politico-territorial organization that replaced the Empire. While in the more advanced pre-capitalist societies, Gellner's agro-literate societies, the classical empires were content to conquer neighboring societies and exact taxes, but without interfering in modes of production, in industrial societies nation-states are basically concerned with industrialization or economic development, and so they require standardized modes of communication, shared by all of their members, in order to ensure rising productivity. This means that speaking a common language is a near-necessity, and public education an absolute pre-requisite, because it is education that will define the symbols of this shared social communication and teach the increasingly more advanced modes of production. In this context, nationalism "entails the imposition of high culture upon a society in which low culture was largely, if not totally prevalent among the population. It means the bureaucratically supervised

diffusion of a language of technological communication through schools" (Gellner, 1983, p.57).

Nationalism is therefore the product and instrument of the capitalist revolution, or modernization. In this process, in which a certain degree of social cohesion and political legitimacy is essential, the role of nationalism is to ensure national economic autonomy and development. Nationalism is the ideology of the nation-state, which is, in turn, the form of politico-territorial unity typical of capitalism. During the commercial revolution, the bourgeoisie did not organize itself into nation-states, but into city-states through which it could practice its small volume, high-risk, high-yield and monopolistic blend of long-distance trade. This form of commerce was effective enough to permit the accumulation of originary capital, but not to trigger the Industrial revolution.

For this to happen, it would take economies of scale, incompatible with long-distance trade, but possible through the formation of large nation-states. Thus the national revolutions preceded the respective industrial revolutions, giving rise to the first true nation-states: England and France.[6] It is essentially these two economies of scale that are behind the association between the monarchy and the bourgeoisie in the constitution of the nation-state. What interested the monarchy was the expansion of its power, the bourgeoisie, the chance to expand its trade and make the transition to large industry. It is therefore no accident that the nation-state and nationalism are intrinsically identified with capitalist development.

Though originally a bourgeois ideology, as it was the bourgeoisie that stood to gain the most from the formation of the nation-state or National State, there had to be more to nationalism than just that. A dominant ideology only makes sense if, on one hand, it widens its sphere of influence and justifies the prevailing system of power whilst, on the other, also serving the interests of the dominated. Nationalism, with the union of national society as its raison d'être, could only make sense if it also had some mass appeal. Only thus could it garner the solidarity to rally men to the defense of the national territory - the patriotism it takes to make someone willing to die for his country – and to economic competition with other nations. Nationalism had to be able to offer mutual gains for both the capitalists and the workers, and these could only derive from increased productivity and economic development.

For the revolutionary socialists of the 19th Century, like Marx and Engels, nationalism was unacceptable precisely because it affirmed the very solidarity that they, faced with the enormous exploitation that existed then, rejected. This was what made them internationalists. At the same time as they denied that the workers could share the gains of economic development through pay-rises tied to increased productivity, they affirmed the utopian possibility of a global socialist revolution. History, however,

was beginning to show signs of what would become clear some time later: that this share was possible; that in capitalism, in the process of economic development, salaries do tend to rise in proportion to increases in productivity. However, this relatively balanced growth does not occur naturally: it depends on the active demands of the socialists. This is most likely why socialists – in other words, those who value social justice – are also nationalists and anti-Imperialists. It is not enough for them to struggle against the inequalities in their own nations, they also have to fight against inequality among nations – something obtained through their cohesion, nationalism and, consequently, their capacity to agree on a national development strategy.

Nationalism of the centre and the periphery

A counterpart to the nationalism of nations at the centre is internationalism; whilst for those on the periphery or in development, the counterpart is cosmopolitanism or even a colonial mindset.[7] Nationalism is the ideology of those who recognize the competitiveness that exists between nation-states, consider it the government's duty to defend the national interest, i.e., national jobs, knowledge and capital, who believe that economic development should be achieved through investments financed with domestic reserves and that government decisions concerning national interests ought to be taken in accordance with national criteria. This concept of nationalism is valid as much for the citizens of developing or peripheral countries as for those of the wealthy, central nations.

Reflecting on peripheral countries, Helio Jaguaribe (1958, p. 21) defined nationalism as "the proposition that configures and conserves an historically possible nation, considered necessary by its members, but still not politically formed". The colonial or dependent mentality of the cosmopolitan implies the existence of a colonial inferiority complex that leads to the acceptance of the subordination of the nation as "natural". For the cosmopolitan, the dependency of his nation is inevitable and perhaps not even damaging. He underestimates the competition between nations and the ideological hegemony of the centre; believes that the country does not have the resources to finance its development and that it therefore has no choice but to rely on foreign capital; reckons that a policy of confidence building is essential in order to secure access to this inflow; and understands that the government should make no distinction between foreign and domestic capital. However, an individual in a rich country with this same mindset toward developing countries would not be called cosmopolitan, but rather globalized or imperialist, because such points of view cater to the interests of imperial domination. Or should such a person allow his leftist thinking coax him to reject nationalism in pursuit of a just and solidary world, perhaps the best description would be utopian

internationalist. A third stance would be that of the anti-imperialists who frown upon their nation's exploitive designs. However, contrary to what occurs in peripheral countries, even those who reject imperialism on the part of their countries are still nationalists because of their identification with their nation.

Though the elites of wealthy nations are resolutely nationalist insofar as they have no doubts as to their government's duty to defend national jobs, knowledge and capital, they frequently disguise this by branding the ideology 'violent' and advocating more interdependency and cooperation among peoples. This is the unconscious but effective rhetoric of domination – a means by which these elites neutralize the resistance of developing nations to their exploitation, or, at a more advanced stage, to their capacity for industrial competition. The nations of the developed world are well-knit, almost devoid of citizens who are not nationalists, such that the label ceases to be distinctive and can even take on a pejorative connotation applicable to other nations. In this manner, nationalism is rhetorically related to economic populism and its defenders identified with backwardness and resistance to modernity. And should there be any resistance to this negative view, there is always the handy distinction between nationalism, which is bad, and patriotism, which is good.

This condemnation of nationalism among wealthy nations is a throwback to their own internal experiences, to the days in which nationalism was expressed in anti-Semitism or, like today, in a backlash against the immigrant. Understood in these terms, nationalism is mere racism. However, it is important to note that this is not the type of nationalism we are talking about here, not only because it is radical, but because it is an ethnic nationalism that targets fellow countrymen and women whose citizenship it denies. It is this nationalism that led Pierre Birnbaum (1993), for example, to speak with indignation, not against Nazism - the very limitrophic expression of ethnic nationalism -, but against the hatred that had created "two Frances": one republican and rational, the other conservative and nationalist. Though I recognize that this breed of nationalism is always skulking in the wings of any national society, this is definitively not the kind of nationalism to which I am referring in this article.

Partha Chatterjee (1993), for whom anti-colonial nationalism is a fundamental category, summed up the fate of nationalism in the post-World War Two world as follows. In the 1950s and 60s, nationalism was seen in a positive light as part of the anti-colonial struggle, but, as soon as one began to think of modernization in terms of economic development, nationalism was relegated to the background. By the 1970s nationalism had become a problem of ethnic policy. More recently, nationalism has come to be viewed by the rich countries and the developing nations ideologically subordinate

to them as "a dark, primitive and unpredictable force that is a threat to the calm and order of civilized life". The result of this ideological operation of "accusing" others of being nationalists is the undermining of any possible resistance on the part of exploited and/or rival nations. It is one of the many ways through which the ideological hegemony of wealthy nations changes the meaning of words and exercises domination.

Nationalism is therefore implicit in the central nations, while among the peripheral countries, if not explicit, readily branches off into cosmopolitanism. When cosmopolitanism becomes dominant, as it did in Brazil between 1822 and 1930 and again from the early 1990s, the nation is weakened and the country can be best defined as a semi-colony rather than as a nation. Besides its origins in the ideological hegemony of the imperial powers, cosmopolitan is also the result of the temptation of the elites of developing countries to associate themselves with the ruling strata of the core countries as opposed to forming a national pact with their own people.

In rich countries, where class struggle is always present, the elites have no choice but to establish some form of alliance with the rest of the society, because they need the nation. In peripheral countries, on the other hand, whilst the nation is likewise important to economic development, the elites all too often feel more comfortable siding with those of the dominant nations, thus reinforcing the thesis that "capital knows no frontiers" – a patently leftist argument that is actually false, but which favors imperial domination. As István Mészáros (1987, p. 15) reminds us, "colonial domination is traditionally inseparable from the local ruling class' willingness to submit".

Nationalism and Imperialism

Nationalism is inevitable in relationships between nations – international relations – because, should one utopian decide to relinquish its nationhood, rather than follow suit, the others will take full advantage of their neighbor's naiveté. Hence, in international relations, the realist theory that presupposes a nation's defense of its interests prevails among players across the board. Nationalism is a powerful ideology and it is present in both the relationships between similar nation-states competing against each other on the same stage and between the nations of the centre and those on the periphery. When it comes to equal nation-states, these nationalisms will sometimes clash and sometimes cooperate, but between ill-matched nations, such as between the centre and the periphery, imperialism will always emerge on the side of the strong and in inverse proportion to the anti-imperialist nationalism of the weak. There are various historical theories of imperialism that here is not the place to run through (cf. Lawrence, 2005), suffice it to recall that imperialism is a necessary condition not least in the

power relations between nation-states, but in the measure of how advanced or backward one is in relation to the other. Rich and powerful nation-states do not submit rich but smaller nation-states to imperialism because of their strong mutual interests in solidarity. However, in relation to medium or low wealth states, imperialism is inevitable, though subject to change as the power balance shifts.

In the first phase, when the level of development on the periphery is extremely low, the relationship is essentially one of exploitation, though as these countries industrialize, exploitation will gradually give way to competition. While competition between rich nations may be fierce, they have something very important in common – a high wage floor –, which nurtures their solidarity in the face of the periphery, where low wages confers a competitive edge. As such, while small wealthy nations are not imperialist, it is still fair to associate the imperial centre with the rich and the periphery with the developing countries. Large or small, central nations feel threatened by competition from the cheaper products coming in from the periphery along with a swelling influx of poor immigrants.

When the balance of power is tilted heavily one way, imperialist relationships on behalf of the wealthy nations are inevitable, regardless of the wishes of this or that government. Just as inexorable is a relationship of imperialism between mid-wealth countries and their poorer neighbors.[8] However, a developing country's power of resistance does not solely depend on its level of economic development, but on cultural factors as well. When they won their independence in the wake of World War Two, the dynamic Asian nations showed much more fervent nationalism than did the Latin-American, whose independence had come some 150 years earlier. Though there are many reasons for this, one key may be that the Latin-American elites shared or believed they shared the same race as their European dominators, which their Indian counterparts clearly did not. This racial connection helped the Latin Americans associate themselves more readily with the central elites than with the Asians.

Furthermore, the higher cultural level of the Indian civilizations in existence before the fall of the imperial yoke, in comparison with those in pre-1500 Latin-America, cannot be ignored. While the West only managed to subjugate Asia during the brief period of 1800 to 1950, imperial domination in Latin America lasted far longer and ran much deeper. In Asia, one exception was the Philippines, which, in the absence of any significant civilization, was colonized as early as 1571 - first by the Spanish and later by the Americans – and would remain under imperial rule until 1946. This is most likely why their elites, like those in Latin America, like to associate themselves with the West (Constantino, 1978). It is therefore no accident that per capita growth in the Philippines since 1950 has been much lower than that of their more dynamic neighbors.[9]

The empire/colony, centre/periphery relationship involves an issue of level of domination. The greater the disparity between the power of the empire and that of the colony, the more brutal is the former's exploitation of the latter and the easier it becomes to co-opt the local elites. Thus, when a peripheral country develops and begins to carry more weight in relation to the centre, the empire has to change its domination strategy. The one-sided balance of power can be total, as in the case of the European decimation of Amerindian civilizations; or partial, as became the case in relations between the empires and the Latin American nations after their formal independence in the early 19th Century and, more partially still from the 1990s, when these countries, after sixty years of reasonable autonomy, subordinated themselves once again to the core nations. In this latter case, direct use of force becomes unimportant, what matters is ideological domination.

In this respect, the armies of the core nations make way for their universities, cinema and trade associations. The crux today is to co-opt those intellectual elites whose interests do not clash with those of the centre in order to gain power over the business elites who have something to gain, but much more to lose. Among the intellectuals, economists play a fundamental and strategic ideological role, which is why the centers put such effort into luring them into graduate and doctoral studies in their universities.

Under the most brutal forms of imperialism, the goal is to sack and enslave, while under more formal imperial regimes, it is to levy taxes. In the case of imperialism over semi-colonial nation-states, like those in Latin America after their formal independence, the modes of exploitation are much more sophisticated. For a long time, economic liberalism was a powerful weapon that was wielded to prevent peripheral nations from industrializing. Ha-Joon Chang's Kicking Away the Ladder (2002) remains the best account yet given as to how commercial liberalism was used by the rich nations as a tool of imperialist domination.

More recently, as it became apparent that industrialization was going to happen one way or another, new forms of exploiting and neutralizing development in the peripheral nations had to be found. Contrary to what many may think, the main instrument of new imperialism is not commercial globalization, but financial globalization.[10] Commercial globalization is an opportunity which many mid-wealth nations are taking full advantage of in order to grow on the back of cheap labor. Financial globalization, however, only benefits the rich. The key idea is to open the capital accounts of peripheral nations while convincing them that they do not have the resources to finance their development and therefore "can only grow with foreign funds" – in other words, with current accounts in deficit and mounting external debt. The result is that the countries that accept this advice lose control over their own real exchange rates, which appreciate,

producing not growth, but rather an overwhelming substitution of internal reserves for external inflow and debt.

In fact, the policy of growth through foreign capital merely strengthens the tendency toward exchange rate over-valuation that already exists in developing countries, especially those rich in natural resources that end up falling victim to Dutch disease. Countries that do not check this tendency and strive to neutralize Dutch disease, and, on a wider level, manage their exchange rates, find themselves condemned to sluggish growth rates. This is what is happening across Latin-America, with the exception of Chile and, particularly, Argentina over the last five years. Meanwhile, the dynamic Asian countries, which have rejected the conventional orthodoxy and preserved their national sovereignty, are experiencing soaring growth, catching up with and becoming stiff competitors of the core nations.

When nationalism gains the upper hand on cosmopolitanism, as occurred in the 1930s in various parts of Latin America, the country acquires or reacquires the nationhood that allows it to compete internationally. As such, it assumes the vocation or role of the capitalist nation-state, which is to compete. This is not to say that nation-states cannot cooperate, indeed they cooperate precisely so that they can set the rules for competition. The United Nations and other such multilateral agencies are the most significant result of this cooperation – though this does not imply any neutrality on the part of the members. Some of these institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which are controlled by shareholders, end up functioning as agencies of the rich nations, as was made clear during the foreign debt crisis of the 1980s, when they adopted a course of action clearly biased toward the rich countries, and again in the 1990s, when these agencies became the instruments of financial globalization and the foreign capital growth strategy.

The Brazilian economy is currently showing very slow growth, at rates far lower than the other developing countries, especially its dynamic Asian counterparts. According to the neoliberal logic, Brazil's failure to develop is due to a "lack of reforms" and to the populism of our politicians. However, as I see it, this near-stagnation stems from an underlying political cause and its specific economic ramification. The political cause is the loss of nationhood that befell the Brazilians: the atrophy that attacked the nation in the late 1960s and that gathered pace in the late 80s; while the economic cause is Brazil's acceptance in the early 90s of the "strategy" proposed by our competitors up north, i.e., the conventional orthodoxy, and principally the policy of financial opening and growth through foreign capital inflow that saw control over our exchange rate spin from our hands (Bresser-Pereira, 2007).

Nations do not tend to fortify, rather they pass through moments of greater or lesser cohesion. This would explain the famous observation by Ernest Renan (1993, p.55), for whom "a nation's existence is […] a daily plebiscite". Without the constant renewal of a commitment on behalf of its members, and unless its nationalism is endlessly reaffirmed, a nation loses cohesion and can even disappear. In the case of Brazil, the ideology of nationalism prevailed from 1930 to 1960, and it was during this period that we saw the concomitant occurrence of the Brazilian national and industrial revolutions. In 1964, however, after a serious economic and political crisis, the two nationalist groups that had driven the earlier development – the industrial bourgeoisie and the public bureaucracy -, terrified by the political radicalization caused by the Cuban revolution of 1959, brought an authoritarian military regime to power in Brazil. Though both classes continued to be nationalist, over the course of the next twenty years nationalism lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the democratic sectors of Brazilian society. The theory of dependency that took hold after the 1964 coup, and became dominant from the early 70s, played a decisive role in undermining nationalism by peremptorily declaring the impossibility of the existence of a national bourgeoisie in Brazil and by accepting association with, or submission to the North as a means toward developing in its absence.

Photo: Agence France Presse

Ernest Renan (1823-1892).

Toward the end of the 70s, as a kind of practical contradiction of the theory of dependency, a wide-reaching national and public pact was struck between the business class, working class and middle class that would culminate in the democratic transition of 1984. The new regime came to power in 1985, but was unable to handle the external debt crisis inherited from the 1980s and that descended into fiscal upheaval and inertial hyper inflation. This failure, allied with the theory of dependency, weakened the Brazilian nation still further, such that it was incapable, with the dawn of the 1990s, to withstand the neoliberal wave and, more broadly, the ideological hegemony of a United States that seemed irresistible after the Soviet collapse. Hence, since 1991, Brazil has faithfully adhered to the precepts of the conventional orthodoxy and achieved unsatisfactory growth. The only bright moment of competent economic policy during this period has been the Real Plan (1994) – a strategy to stabilize high inflation that was based on a national theory, largely developed by Brazilian economists, known as the inertial inflation theory, which was entirely at odds with the proposals of the conventional orthodoxy of the day.

Nationalism and particularism

Of the five major contemporary ideologies, nationalism alone is particularist. According to Barbosa Lima Sobrinho (1963, p.11), while patriotism or nativism, both of which to some degree overlap with nationalism, can look beyond conflicts of interest, "the substance of nationalism is an antagonism of interests or ideas". The other ideologies that arise with nationalism are universal and can therefore be shared equally by all humanity. While even from a Utopian perspective, the world could not survive without the other four ideologies, it could do without nationalism, as all men would be brothers - hence its rejection by that little seed of Utopia embedded in us all. While liberalism and socialism's proposals for economic and political organization are open to all humanity, those of nationalism are limited to a given nation. Though liberalism recognizes this contradiction, it stops short of rejecting nationalism because it also understands that the national cohesion it promotes is what legitimizes bourgeois domination. The revolutionary socialists, on the other hand, true to the utopian element in their world view, reject nationalism out of hand, envisage a socialist revolution in the short-term and hold an internationalist credo, supposing that the working class of the wealthy nations will show solidarity with those in developing countries.

Ernest Gellner, as emphasized by Roman Szporluk (1988, p.27), dismissed this thesis of solidarity as a myth: "For Gellner, it is nationalism rather than Marxism that is best equipped to deal with the political and social consequences of industrialization". However, this might look rather different to the reformists or social democrats, for whom nationalism can be

an important flag, insofar as they see economic development and therefore the national and bourgeois revolution as a condition for the creation of more equitable societies, on the one hand and because nationalism can help unite the nation behind the anti-imperialist struggle, on the other. Many others, such as Michael Löwy (2003, p.259), prefer to distinguish between nationalism and "national emancipation movements", claiming that, "while national movements are emancipatory, nationalism is often a 'false solution'".

The particularism at the heart of nationalism goes against the grain of the utopian aspirations of universal cooperation and solidarity, but is coherent with aspirations toward justice on the global level. As David Miller (1995; 2000, p. 177) has demonstrated in his work, nationalism and a people's self-determination are key to global justice. More specifically, he claims that global justice can be resumed in three chapters: "the obligation to respect basic human rights on the global level; the obligation to refrain from exploiting vulnerable individuals or communities; and the obligation to guarantee all political communities the chance to achieve self-determination". Furthermore, nationalism is coherent with the logic of the society in which we live.

In pre-capitalist societies, depending on their level of development, individuals were organized into families or tribes, and later into families and empires, whilst in liberal capitalism they were organized into families, family-run companies and nation-states. Under today's technobureaucratic capitalism, people are organized into families, organizations and nation-states. The social role we expect individuals to play is that they show solidarity to the family, company, associations and nation-state to which they belong. They are also expected to cooperate, as the functional logic of these three social systems does not rest on competition alone, but also on cooperation – required at the very least in order to set the rules for competition. Nevertheless, this solidarity with family, company and nation-state is rational. Nationalism is nothing if not the basic solidarity of the citizen to his or her homeland or nation.

In the capitalism of the globalized world, more so than at any other moment in capitalist development, nationalism and a nation's ability to fix an informal national development or competition strategy are essential if economic development is to concretize and catch-up occur. However, this fact is not enough to lead the citizens of developing countries – even those that have had no socialist revolution - to resist nationalist particularism. In addition to the bombardment of hegemonic thought raining down upon it from the North, another factor that holds against nationalism is its history of terrible violence. When nationalism becomes radical it is far worse than liberalism or socialism, leading to war and even genocide. This makes it easier for the North, whose nationalism is not in play here, to delegitimize

nationalism in the South. Nevertheless, the nationalism of the peripheral countries resists attack.

Nationalism is therefore alive and well in developing countries. Leyla Perrone-Moysés (2007) recently published an excellent book whose title, Vira e mexe, nacionalismo, is a line from Mário de Andrade. Though this renowned essayist has little sympathy for nationalism, what she brings to the fore with this title is the ideology's capacity for survival. Though incessantly under fire from hegemonic and universalist criticism, nationalism holds out and, every now and then, pops up again. Starting from the universalist perspective, Perrone-Moysés (2007) remarks on something that strikes her as a paradox: "In today's world, globalized by the economy and information, we are simultaneously seeing a weakening of the nation-state and a relapse into nationalism. The more capital and information ignore borders, the more those borders are reinforced for and against individuals". With this, she is criticizing the nationalism of the wealthy nations, which close their borders to the world's poor at the same time as globalization strengthens its hold worldwide.

However, there is nothing contradictory about this increase in nationalisms within the globalized framework. Globalization, as the consequence of a general opening of the markets, led to an extraordinary level of economic competition among nation-states, making it all the more necessary for these to be able to formulate national competition strategies. In other words, it has become still more necessary for the democratic, liberal, social, environmentally-minded nation of today to also be nationalist.

One of the pillars of modern democratic theory is the protection of minority rights – first and foremost of the capitalist minority itself, but also of ethnic and cultural minorities. It is up to the Constitution of each nation-state to guarantee these rights. However, international society has no such constitution, nor a State to enforce the only document that comes close to serving such a function: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As such, in the absence of this global State, there is nothing else for it than for nations to declare themselves as such and defend their own interests. For three centuries, since at least the Peace of Westphalia, nation-states in formation were concerned with establishing their borders, threatening war in balance-of-power diplomacy; since the end of the cold war, international policy has tended to drop the threat of war in international relations among major powers in favor of the fiercer economic competition among nations that is globalization itself (Bresser-Pereira, 2003).

Deep within nations today there is mounting criticism against multiculturalist particularism. Ever-growing international migration toward the wealthier nations initially resulted in multiculturalism, but has more recently fostered a need for national integration. In place of this multiculturalist political thesis of the recognition of the other that

increases the number of identities and conflicts, the new proposal is that this recognition be identified with equal rights to participation for all minority groups (cf. Fraser, 2007). This proposal makes sense in the context of a democratic nation-state, where the subject (the rights-bearer of which Alain Touraine speaks [2005; 2007]) is a reality: a citizen recognized by both the society and the law. However, it ceases to do so on the global level, where there is no global State to enforce those rights. The robust criticism someone like Zygmunt Bauman (2005) might make of the identitarism that has gained force in the contemporary world fails to draw this necessary distinction. On the internal plane of modern democracies it is possible for groups to identify themselves as subjects without negating the universal values of the societies in which they live because those values are guaranteed by the institution, but the situation is rather more complex on the global level, where there may still be universal values, but no laws to enforce them. Here, it is national identity that enables a group to join forces in order to secure their values and interests. When these are based on competition, nationalisms tend to be softer and international cooperation more sprightly than under relations of exploitation, but in either case there is no alternative to nationalism, as the dominant principle in international relations is not cooperation.

In short, nationalism is one of the five major ideologies born of capitalism. Like the others, it is democratically legitimate so long as it rejects ethnic criteria and is adopted with moderation, eschewing fundamentalisms. When employed radically, nationalism is terrible, as are all other ideologies when converted into the kind of fundamentalisms that turn socialism into statism, liberalism into neo-liberalism, efficientism into technobureaucratic domination and environmentalism into an affront to science and technology. The nationalism endemic to democratic societies is liberal, efficientist, socialist and environmentalist, compatible with the degree of economic and political development modern societies have obtained. It is a modern nationalism that rejects war, respects other nations and promotes international cooperation on problems that transcend national boundaries, such as global warming, contagious diseases, drugs and organized crime. In a highly competitive world, nationalism is essential if a country is to formulate a national economic development strategy and, if it happens to be a developing country, gradually attain the standard of living of the developed nations, but it has to be combined with the other major political objectives of modern societies and with respect for the rights of other nations.

Notes

1 The European Union is not yet a nation, but already has a constitution, many laws, a commercial policy, budget, flag and single currency.

2 This historian of national movements in Eastern Europe is aware of this and defines what we would normally call nationalism as "national movements" – "the concerted effort to obtain all of the attributes of a full nation" (Horch, 2000, p.87-8). This definition, however, is unacceptable.

3 Notethat I have distinguished between the nation-state and the State; the former is a politico-territorial unit while the latter is an institution. I can therefore use the plural "states' to refer to nation-states, while the singular will always refer to the institution that, according to Weber, holds the monopoly on legitimate violence because it determines the law, is the law and has the power to enforce the law.

4 Anthony Smith (1994, p. 148) is generally seen as a scholar whose definition of nationalism involves a shared ethnicity. In fact, what he shows is that ethnicities are usually the origins of nations (which is not to say that they must stay that way) and that the transition from ethnicity to nation is both "difficult and problematic" and occurs when a lead group opts to create a State and subsequently effect the "bureaucratic incorporation" of the other social groups around it.

5 Robert Pape (2005) studied 375 cases of suicide bombings in the Middle East and concluded that 95% of these attacks were primarily motivated by nationalism, with only 5% being religiously driven.

6 I do not consider Portugal and Spain among the first nation-states, because the Industrial Revolution, the crowning moment of the capitalist revolution, would only occur there much later on.

7 I am using the term "cosmopolitanism", originally employed by Helio Jaguaribe (1962), in avoidance of the stronger expression "surrenderism".

8 Relations between Brazil and Bolivia are a case in point.

9 While average per capita income in Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia grew nine-fold (1011%) between 1950 and 2003, per capita income in the Philippines a little less than doubled, to 136%.

10 David Harvey wrote a good book entitled New Imperialism, in which he stresses that the main form of this imperialism is ideological hegemony; thus the change in Imperial content between commercial opening and financial opening goes unnoticed.

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ABSTRACT - In this work I show that nationalism, together with liberalism, socialism, efficientism and the environmentalism, is one of the ideologies of the modern societies. In the first section, I define nation as the form of society politically organized that is born with the Capitalist Revolution and leads to the formation of the nation-state, and nationalism as the corresponding ideology: its objective is the autonomy and the national economic development. In the second section, I distinguish the nationalism of the central countries from that one of the peripheral countries; while in the first the nationalism is implicit, in the peripherals is explicit or then turn to the cosmopolitism. In the third section I argument that the imperialism, even being inevitable between strong and week countries, will change its characteristics when this relation of forces is modified as a consequence of the nationalism of the dominated ones. Still in this section, I make one brief reference to Brazil. Finally, I come back to the ideologies of the capitalism to show that, differently from the others, the nationalism is a particularist ideology, which increases the resistance to it and facilitates the task of domination of the central countries. Yet, the nationalism does not disappear because it is an organizer principle of the capitalist society.

KEYWORDS - Ideology, Nation, Nationalism, Globalization.

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