

**CULTURE AND DIFFERENCE!****DARKO ŠTRAJN**

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ABSTRACT

The theoretical starting point of this paper was found in the work of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, which was first published in 1983. The author's thesis about the origin of nations and nationalism comprises an analysis, that shows how printing and market capitalism produced the nationhood. Further on Anderson shows how nationalism is built within nations as "imagined communities". So-called "globalism" in our post-modern age somewhat changes the framework of the (re)production of national identities, as determined by Anderson, and the paper discusses a number of aspects to determine what is changed, how it is changed, which mechanisms are at work nowadays and how are they affecting cultural, social and political environment. Some concepts of Walter Benjamin, concerning so-called mass culture are taken into account. Special attention is paid to some phenomena in former socialist countries and their coping with the challenges of interculturalism and the demands of free market economy.

KEY WORDS: nation, nationalism, capitalism, imagined communities, globalism, post-modern age, mass culture, socialism, interculturalism

The film *Rams and Mammoths* (1985) by the Slovene director Filip Robar-Dorin ends in a peculiar, grotesque and ironic visual allegory. Two drunken musicians walk through the mountainous Slovene Alpine country discussing the fact that a sister of one of them has married a Bosnian man. Their dialogue is spoken in a very rude and vulgar manner; among the swearing, chauvinist and nationalist expressions are also heard. Then suddenly, passing a freshly ploughed field, they see a vision of a virgin dressed in white. They reach for the virgin, pull her down and tear at her robe. As the camera moves back, we see them having sexual intercourse with the soil. Beside a Brechtian comic effect especially a Slovene viewer sees that the author is ridiculing the traditional notion of "love for the Slovene soil." Depending on the viewer's attitude the meaning may be grasped as an effective mocking of nationalism or as blasphemy. Considering that the film had been shot in the mid-eighties, when some events were already readable as signs of the approaching deep social and political change, we may say that the film ironically and prophetically anticipated the future.

The creation of the independent state of Slovenia emphasised strongly a range of questions of national identity. This doesn't imply that such questions haven't existed before, at least as much as self-awareness of members of the Slovene ethnicity or culture are con-

cerned. But the acquiring of political independence along with democracy, which made Slovenes a "complete nation," as some recognised public figures put it, represented a shift towards a reconstruction of the very concept of a Slovene nation. Such a shift, of course, triggered a reinterpretation of the whole of Slovene history, which quite often comes close to a complete reconstruction of the national mythology, history etc. On the political side of such trends all parties take care to pay at least some attention to questions of national identity, but some of them are also riding a wave of surging nationalism. Each of these aspects, in its own way, reflects an awareness that "we", namely the Slovenes, are making a difference, which "others" should recognise. At the same time, in many public debates within the country, the question of "who are we?" is a matter of endless deliberations on different levels of public discourse. Of course Slovenia isn't alone in this respect. The question of what a difference a particular nation makes is, to an extent, omnipresent virtually everywhere, but it is much more pointedly so in so called new nations of the recent period.

IMAGINED COMMUNITIES

What, however, had changed in the recent period of a decade or so, is the new perspectives in which cultural categories are perceived. These changed perspectives concern even the most sophisticated theories in the increasingly interdisciplinary field of social sciences as well as it concerns common views and opinions of the public at large. Through the change of this perspective the notions and concepts of culture have been submitted to an intensive reformulation since a range of theories has to come to terms with a transformed construction of reality. As we see things now, this transformed perspective is inherent within the broad context of a range of the "post" phenomena, such as post-modernism, post-industrialism, post-socialism, post-traditionalism, etc. Somehow a change in the order of political, social and cultural realities, which was marked by the collapse of communism, functioned as a catalyst for the forming of a new interpretative framework. Within this new framework, which we comprehend under the term of globalisation, "all of a sudden" a number of ideologies, models of interpretation and paradigms became obsolete. However, as much as social sciences were blamed for not anticipating the big historical event, they had provided notions and concepts, which were not only explanatory. They were "produced" within the process of change that, as we may point out nowadays, has run in parallel modes with the East as well as with the West. The inherent institutional reflexivity (a category elaborated upon throughout the work of Anthony Giddens) of contemporary societies makes it difficult to see a clear dividing line between a perception of reality and the "reality itself", since even quite common perceptions are permeated with concepts and categories that were derived from the social sciences. Of course, throughout the existence of any culture there has been complex of mutual relationships between the way people think about the world, a symbolisation of this thinking and whatever is imagined as the world itself. This complexity had grown, but not in a linear mode. Therefore, the symbolic order of cultures has undergone a number of qualitative changes through history. In times of restructuring vast changes have always taken place, that have comprised economy, politics, ideologies, religions, art, etc., and also all kinds of institutions, which one way or another determined communities.

The creation of nations appears to be a crucial result of the political and simultaneously cultural restructuring at the end of the medieval world. Benedict Anderson in his book (first published in 1983) defines nations as "imagined communities":

“It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” (Anderson. 1991; 6)

The starting point of Anderson’s survey originated in his amazement when he faced the fact of so-called “war between communist states,” which happened in Indochina in the years 1978 in 1979 and had involved Vietnam, Cambodia and China. Anderson thus remarks that “none of the belligerents has made more than the most perfunctory attempts to justify the bloodshed in terms of a recognizable *Marxist* theoretical perspective.” (p. 1) Therefore, it is obvious that the ideology, which is based on the “imagining” of a national community, namely nationalism, proves to be much more resistant than many social scientists had reckoned – particularly the Marxist ones. As Anderson points out elsewhere in his book, the force of a nationalist ideology is even more surprising (we may note, especially for intellectuals) since, compared to other mass ideologies of the last two centuries (such as liberalism, conservatism and communism), nationalism lacks intellectually strong founding fathers. Anderson was not alone among many, who found nationalism of any kind somewhat unintelligent and limited in ideology, so much so that the question of where it derives its power from seems even more important and difficult at that. Considering that these “imaginings” of nation in its extreme variations led masses of people to colossal sacrifices, one cannot easily dismiss this question. Our author considers that the “...beginnings of an answer lie in the cultural roots of nationalism.” (p. 7)

Of course there are many different meanings of the category of “culture.” Anybody who is involved in any field of social sciences and humanities somehow cannot avoid taking into account a “cultural” hyper-framework in whatever his/her considerations of any subject may be. In the end we cannot but accept that a basic connotation of “culture,” one way or another, includes a national signifier. Whether we try to decipher some sophisticated discourse or we just prattle about the trivialities of daily life, we somehow take it as a naturally given fact that everybody is determined by being “something” and has a sense of “belonging” to a nation. Therefore, we have to realise that the category of “culture” is unavoidably connected to “nationness”.¹ Therefore, it is no wonder that the category of “nation” is overloaded with a range of meanings, attributes, symbols, etc. Not only radical nationalist discourses on “our nation,” which may be uttered by politicians or other public speakers, usually presume the *existence* of a nation for centuries or even millennia.² What we are dealing with in such cases falls under the meaning of what Eric Hobsbawm called the “invented traditions.” (Hobsbawm, 1983.)

What such “inventions” do as a rule is that they disregard the historical facts, so that they absorb, into the history of a nation, a part of the past in which much more diversified and of course different communities have existed. They disregard the fact that the modern nations were “produced” at a certain and not too distant time in history. As much as the creation of nations has been a complex process, which resulted from many interacting and inter-related factors and agents, there have had to be at least a few of them which were decisive. Following Anderson’s elaboration, from which we cannot represent all details and arguments, such factors and agents were cultural – languages above all and also what was happening on the religious front with the emergence of the Protestant Reformation – but supported by the means and mechanisms of the concurrently nascent capitalism.

“In pre-print Europe, and, of course, elsewhere in the world, the diversity of spoken languages, those languages that for their speakers were (and are) the warp and woof of their lives, was immense; so immense, indeed, that had print-capitalism sought to exploit each potential oral vernacular market, it would have remained a capitalism of petty proportions. But these varied idiolects were capable of being assembled, within definite limits, into print-languages far fewer in number. The very arbitrariness of any system of signs for sounds facilitated the assembling process.” (Anderson, 1991; 43)

The consequences of this were, as Anderson writes (pp. 44/45), decisive for a formation of national consciousness in “...three distinct ways. First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars.” As the author points out elsewhere, of course, due to many political, social and economic reasons, these unified fields do not always correspond to a particular nation in the same manner in all cases. ³ “Second, print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language, which in the long run helped to build that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation.” The third aspect comprises a fact of new “languages-of-power” by which, we may add, the first two are completed within a political dimension. The processes that led to these consequences were “unselfconscious” at first, but later they were (and still are) manipulated in different ways. ⁴

Anderson’s assertions on the relevance of “print-language” and the capitalist market, represent just another case of the theoretical insight, which makes a reader wonder whether this rather transparent finding is really new. For the reader it looks as if he/she had known about this before with a kind of a *deja vu* effect. Such an effect usually comes forth when a slight change of perspective, due to an epistemological shift, elucidates a truth that has always been there on the surface, too visible to be taken seriously enough. In any event, Anderson’s analysis (of which we have seen only a small fragment) reveals the basic mechanisms, which formed, helped to preserve and developed communities, that are commonly called nations. Of course print-languages became a material for the outstanding development of linguistics, which in their normative capacity helped to consolidate nations as cultural entities. As well as such agents as economy, politics and military power cannot be dismissed as less relevant, Anderson’s survey makes clear that without this cultural aspect, such communities as nations would not be recognisable at all.

DE-TRADITIONALIZATION

Another author, Walter Benjamin, whom Anderson pays tribute to within his book, came across the concept of reproduction decades earlier (more precisely, in the thirties), in a broader sense than the one that comprises solely printing. Benjamin’s essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* is a short but very condensed “multi-layered” text, which has proven, in the last decade or so, to be a source of various interpretations of modernity and post-modernity. Many very important aspects of the text concern aesthetics, but we do not have room to deal with them in this paper. Thus, we shall only emphasise his concept of mass culture. Comparing it to what we just have discussed regarding Benedict Anderson, who determined that the printing and capitalist market are producing nations

as particular communities, we may be able to see that Benjamin is actually defining the universalising potential of basically the same agents. (However, Benjamin wrote about this reproduction in a much broader sense and about its impact within the industrial society between the world wars.) The above mentioned essay, namely, gives a most far reaching definition of mass culture, which obviously tends to transcend the boundaries of such particular communities as nations are.

“The mass is a matrix from which all traditional behaviour toward works of art issues today in a new form. Quantity has been transmuted into quality. The greatly increased mass of participants has produced a change in the mode of participation. The fact that the new mode of participation first appeared in a disreputable form must not confuse the spectator.” (Benjamin, 1969; 239)

Speaking in more or less broadly accepted general sociological terms, mass culture is made possible by a large range of structurally interdependent components such as modes of industrial production, individual freedom, general education, leisure and of course the media. The culture of today is mass culture or, as we may say, there is no culture unaffected by mass culture. If, as Benjamin had written, the very notion of art gets thoroughly changed by the process of mechanical reproduction, then we should presume that the world, being mirrored, expressed, articulated...in such art, is somehow transmuted. Benjamin's notion of the mass as a “matrix” clearly refers to sociologically definable realities, and the author's concentration on works of art should be understood as a paradigm of a broader comprehension of culture as it has become transformed in accordance with developments of the industrialised societies. Although Benjamin does not confront the problem of nation in this text, it is, however, implicitly more than understood that his notion of mass culture does not presuppose any boundaries. On the contrary, mass culture, which is based on the reproduction of cultural goods, breaks all kinds of barriers: between classes, between low --and high - brow culture, and between nations as well, in spite of its “disreputable forms” at the outset, by which Benjamin's nemesis in the form of fascism is also meant. Although Berger's and Luckman's notion of “the social construction of reality” had yet to be articulated, we can take Benjamin's analysis as basically pointing to approximately the same meaning. Benjamin's text transcends the boundaries of the age in which it was written. Some political motives, the most visible among them being the intellectual revolt against fascism, clearly belong to historical determinations, which caused Benjamin's strong criticism of the idea of “the autonomous work of art.” Such a stand could be well understood within the logic of the text itself, which is seeking to define artistic production as a kind of a “material force”, as an agency of emancipation – not only as a product of a solitary intellectual effort (which an autonomous work of art is usually recognised to be), but also as a consciousness and the Freudian unconscious creating force. The mechanical reproduction, which according to Benjamin emancipates “the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual” (Benjamin, 1969; 224), thus worked as the mechanism that preceded and prepared the ground for the globalisation of today. Since Benjamin's discourse makes evident through its lucidity that the author anticipated the impact of modern media, we should point out that his assumptions were based on what had been known to him in his time: print, phonograph, photography and film. All these kinds of media still lacked the attribute of interactivity, which we may surmise to be a powerful instrument of globalisation, especially in the

near future. Nevertheless, Benjamin's observation of the effect of reproduction on rituals is a far-reaching insight. As it is freeing art from ritual (and we may broaden this 'space' to culture in general,) reproduction is identified in Benjamin's analysis as a mechanism of transcending the contexts in which the meanings of rituals are functional.

To make this point clearer, we can connect it to some aspects of Giddens' work on the problems of globalisation. The notion of ritual evokes the concept of tradition, which Giddens defines as follows:

"Tradition, I shall say, is bound up with memory, specifically what Maurice Halbwachs terms 'collective memory'; involves ritual; is connected with what I shall call a *formulaic notion of truth*; has 'guardians'; and, unlike custom, has binding force which has a combined moral or emotional content." (Giddens, 1996; 15)

Giddens defines 'tradition' in view of deconstructing it as he confronts it to a transformative impact of forces within 'de-traditionalization'. In this view Giddens states that "...the connection between ritual and formulaic truth gives traditions their qualities of exclusions." (p. 33) For this reason traditions give ground to the distinguishing of the "other": "Tradition hence is a medium of identity." (p. 34) In short, although risking a simplification of Giddens' analysis, Giddens assumes that through a process of de-traditionalization or the 'evacuation of tradition', we arrive at a form of society, which he determines as a *post-traditional* society. This is, in his view, the first form of the global society. Modernity destroys tradition, but, as we can gather, it also creates a space of a reformulation of tradition. However in the context of reflexivity, which becomes intensified at the outset of globalisation, traditions need to be discursively justified. This position of tradition enables a "preparedness to enter into dialogue" or, "otherwise tradition becomes fundamentalism," which in Giddens' words "may be understood as an assertion of formulaic truth without regard to consequences." (p. 56)

Since we have in mind - when we are speaking about traditions and identities in the post-modern context of globalisation - the phenomena of nation, we obviously have to deal with what Homi K. Bhabha understands as "... the splitting of the national subject." (Bhabha, 1994; 147). The cultural attributes obviously play a very important role in determining the field, where an inter-play of identities and traditions is mixed with ideologies, politics, various public discourses etc.

"The boundary that marks the nation's selfhood interrupts the self-generating time of national production and disrupts the signification of the people as homogeneous. The problem is not simply the 'selfhood' of the nation as opposed to the otherness of other nations. We are confronted with the nation split within itself, articulating the heterogeneity of its population. The barred Nation *It/Self*, alienated from its eternal self-generation, becomes a liminal signifying space that is *internally* marked by the discourses of minorities, the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense locations of cultural difference." (Bhabha, 1994;148)

Globalisation has actually just begun and such observations, and more or less sophisticated surveys, point towards changes that are already here and which are still to

come. Nations and nation-states however remain to exist. They are bound to change not only in their political and economic profiles, but as well in their “substances”, hence also in their cultural substructures. Identities, derived from traditions, which are formulated anew, the so called imagined communities, which still are confined to nations etc., are intersected by supranational culture, which is carried by the de-traditionalization and mediated by ever more effective global communication. Of course, especially after the destruction of the political and ideological divisions at the end of the eighties, the global market became the structurally determining force of transformation. The outcome, however, is by no means certain.

We can establish that at this point in time one part of the world is ‘more globalized than the rest’, and we may agree with Bhabha, that these divisions and differences are compulsively internalised by different nations. The result of globalisation is, hence, a series of mostly induced differences within separate cultures, as well as sometimes conflicting and sometimes ‘dialogic’ splits between traditionalism and post-traditionalism. Obviously here we have to deal with some new mechanisms of communication, which makes the notion of a “global Babylon” possible. And, can we compare what is happening now to the age, which Benedict Anderson persuasively describes as the beginning of the era of imagined communities? Is global communication, which is accompanied by the capitalist free market producing a new form of community as the print-languages and capitalist markets were producing new types of communities on their level and in their time?

Today’s media, the interactive ones included, are representing a changed and changing reality, which is marked by an expansion of culture. Never before has the international exchange of goods been so “culturalised.” This includes not only material goods, but also “spiritual” ones within a very broad spectrum. There is a phantasmal universe in which icons are produced to feed any individual imagination almost anywhere in the world, and these icons support a stream of individual identifications with celebrities, patterns of behaviour, and life-styles on a global level. As opposed to the printed materials of previous centuries, the representations of global culture are devising a visual field, where above all the moving images are decidedly determining a range of modes of perception. The Freudian unconscious has never been turned “inside out” so much. These changes are bringing us from “grapho-sphere to video-sphere.” (Debray, 1994) ⁵ The Babylon of the 21st century is a global stage, where an immense plurality comes forth. What is perceived in many texts in the field of cultural analysis as the colonial look, is being increasingly dislocated, although far from being erased. But inevitably the plurality comes forth only to be reduced in its scope. Abstractions and common denominators are absorbing it, as the particular representations are being selected and deselected, according to a self-generating rule of recognisability. Still, one may observe that the global market lives on an exchange, which is comprising everything from food and drinks to the educational services and of course the flow of capital, which with its first looming crisis of the global economy will become somewhat problematic. The signifying elements within this global exchange are precisely different identities, which could be illustrated in an immense number of culturally marked items, as for example: German cars, Dutch flowers, Indian tea, American software, French structuralism, and more recently, even Icelandic genetic coding.

However, the global market and global culture are not in any sense a ground for a working and harmonious global community. There is no doubt that we have to deal with a strong hierarchy of differences and with classes of identities, all of which raise questions as to how to come to a set of working global values and how to create global institutions

capable of managing many problems. As the forming of the imagined communities, the nations, sustained a pattern of constitution of the nation-state, also an emerging global community will have to attain forms of institutionalisation, which, hopefully, will make it possible to confront the consequences of the "unbridled capitalism".⁶ Will the imperfect world community, with Giddens' reflexive societies for its background, enable a mastering of the processes, that are triggered by global capitalism? Or, are we bound to "repeat the history" of the nation-states with its variety of forms of domination, violence and wars only now at some new, yet unknown level?

A DISPUTED IDENTITY

The film, which we mentioned at the beginning of this paper, could be understood as a symptom of this current state of affairs, as reflected in a very particular culture, which has been aiming to make its own different identity recognisable, to invest the world - already overloaded with differences - with one difference more. I am talking about the Slovene enacting of the independent state here, but the Slovene case has been just one specific case amongst others. At the time when the dissolution of multi-ethnic socialist conglomerates brought about the perspective of new independent states, an incomprehension in Western political circles was supported with a claim, that these movements run contrary to the prevailing trends towards integration. This incomprehension was based on a degree of ignorance. "Paradoxically, state socialism, which saw itself as the prime revolutionary force in history, proved much more accommodating towards tradition than capitalism has been." (Giddens, 1996; 51) The socialist Yugoslavia, apart from the political reality of a single Party rule, did not suppress the cultural diversity of nations within the federation. On the contrary, the system has been designed to prevent the domination of one nation over the other. Only when the system faced its crisis, the system's mechanisms of prevention of such domination began to dissipate. In the context of the chain of events, which are now making a part of history of the end of communism, the idea to create a new independent state had grown in Slovenia, as the negative answers to the question "why not?" lost their persuasive power. Of course, that was the time, when the *realpolitik* temporarily ceased to exist. Although the Slovene nationalists may claim on the ground of their "invented tradition", that the plan of independence has been around for centuries, it all happened in a situation which had been created by many circumstances and sudden opportunities.⁷ In a lively social situation a collective will was formed to make a difference!

Making such a difference meant, at the same time, a reformulation of the Slovene identity. The sociological picture of the Slovene society contrasted quite a bit against the impression one may have had, for instance, while observing the situation in the year 1989. Public life at the time had been permeated by movements for democracy or so called movements of civil society. By way of illustration we may quote a study by Janez Kolenc, who summed up quite extensive research of the public opinion, values, etc. "Analyses of the functioning of some agencies of the political socialization points out that in Slovenia a traditional political culture has been preserved, and it is prevailing. For such a culture the character traits of egotism in personal, social and ethnic sense are visible." (Kolenc, 1993, 232) Further on, Kolenc gives an extensive list of orientations based on the above mentioned patterns of the political culture, among them patriarchal attitudes, tendency

towards uniformity in the way of life and mentality, conservatism, etc. This part of the Slovene political culture still forms the bases for a kind of cultural and consequently political attitudes that run contrary to the investment of the "Slovene difference" within the global context. They view the inevitable global impacts within the Slovene society as "intrusions" or a "great danger" for the Slovene identity – albeit as they understand it. The Catholic Church is contributing its share by repudiating the secularisation or at least pluralistic religious influences (such as the New Age movements) from the global culture. Some political parties are very much scared by opening the Slovene real estate market, claiming that "foreigners will buy all of our beautiful land" and will leave with the Slovene capital.

The identity becomes, therefore, a rather empty signifier of a controversy over the very meaning of what a nation, and a new one at that, in a global context should be. The difficulty, which obviously is not just only Slovene, lies in two modes of viewing this identity. The first mode presupposes identity as a traditionally pre-given heritage and therefore includes it into a kind of unifying, excluding monistic reductionism. The opposite view, already a product of a nascent global community as we may say, understands a particular identity as invested by internal differences and plurality. In such a specific nation as the Slovene one these differing trends instigate a strong controversy. Therefore, the visual allegory of identity as a virgin, who is bound to be raped, seems quite appropriate.

POVZETEK

Sprememba v redu političnih, družbenih in kulturnih realnosti, ki jo je označil padec komunizma, je učinkovala kot nekakšen katalizator oblikovanja novega interpretativnega okvira. V tem novem okviru, ki ga opredeljujemo s pojmom globalizacije, je "nenadoma" kar nekaj ideologij, modelov interpretacij in paradigem postalo odvečnih. Simbolni red kultur je v tej zgodovini bil potemtakem podvržen vrsti kvalitativnih sprememb. V dobi prestrukturiranja so se vedno dogajale velike spremembe, ki so zajele ekonomijo, politiko, ideologije, religije, umetnost itd., pa tudi vse vrste ustanov, ki na različne načine opredeljujejo skupnosti.

Teoretsko izhodišče referata smo našli v delu Benedicta Andersona Zamišljene skupnosti, ki je bilo prvič objavljeno l. 1983. Avtorjeva teza o izviru narodov in nacionalizma obsega analizo, ki pokaže kako sta tisk in tržni kapitalizem proizvedla narodnost. Anderson nadalje pokaže tudi kako je nacionalizem vsebovan v narodu kot "zamišljeni skupnosti". T.i. "globalizem" v našem postmodernem času je nekoliko spremenil okvir (re)produkcije nacionalnih identitet, kot jih razume Anderson. V referatu pretresamo vrsto vidikov, da bi ugotovili kaj se je spremenilo, kako se je spremenilo, kakšni mehanizmi delujejo danes in kako zadevajo kulturna, družbena in politična okolja. Upoštevani so posamezni koncepti Walterja Benjamina o t.i. množični kulturi. Posebno pozornost pa smo namenili nekaterim pojavom v Sloveniji kot nekdanji socialistični deželi.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: narod, nacionalizem, kapitalizem, zamišljene skupnosti, globalizem, post-moderna doba, množične kulture, socializem, interkulturalizem

NOTES

- 1.** There is an exception to this rule, which could be based on an anthropological ground. Some cultures of so called indigenous people could be taken as a separate category, since obviously such increasingly rare cultures are not based on a “nationness” with all usual attributes. The term of “culture” used to be applied in various anthropological discourses in ways which are nowadays critically re-evaluated in a framework of the debate on the “colonial look”.
- 2.** Especially in some “new countries” (like Slovenia or Croatia), which were established after the fall of such socialist multi-ethnic conglomerates as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, a newly acquired statehood instigated assumptions that a “millennium old dream” had come true. Since some 1000 years ago human communities were organised in a way that hadn’t resembled any nation such as has appeared much later, such statements are very clearly pure recent inventions projected into the distant past.
- 3.** There are cases, like the English and Spanish languages, which are used in many different countries, which consider themselves to be homes for different nations. And there are opposite kinds of cases, in which one language is actually used only in one country etc.
- 4.** Anderson gives the example of the Thai government, which “actively discourages attempts by foreign missionaries to provide its hill-tribe minorities with their own transcription-systems and to develop publications in their own languages: the same government is largely indifferent to what these minorities speak.” (Anderson. 1991, p.45)
- 5.** Since my aim is only to put forth some features of the nascent global culture, and not any extensive analysis, I do not quote from the actually vast quantity of very insightful literature, which has been published in recent years on the topic.
- 6.** One of the top contemporary philosophers, *Slavoj Žizek*, who happens to be a Slovene, pointed out in a newspaper article that “people in the chaotic global dynamics increasingly lack what Jameson calls the *cognitive mapping*: comprehensive orientation as a capacity to place one’s experience into a broader semantic framework.” (In the Slovene daily *Delo*, 6th February, 1999)
- 7.** Since the creation of independent Slovenia happened in the context of the collapse of Yugoslavia, which brought about one of the most traumatic experiences for modern Europe, there are still many views that accuse Slovenia to be, to a great extent, responsible for the chaos in the former Yugoslavia. Since this paper does not aim to discuss politics in any length, I am leaving these complicated aspects out.

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