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## **BORDERLANDS OF NATIONS, NATIONS OF BORDERLANDS**

Minorities in the borderlands and on the fringes  
of countries

**REGION AND REGIONALISM**  
**No. 13 vol. 1**

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## FOREWORD

In the past two years, the European continent has become the target of mass migration of various ethnic and religious groups who, for reasons of security or economic hardship, have decided to leave their homelands and go into dangerous exile, mostly by sea. In order to reach the world perceived by them as an oasis of security and prosperity, and above all tolerance for racial, ethnic, cultural and religious differences, the arrivals are deepening the already large diversity of the Old Continent's population, where the various minorities have been living for a long time.

Particularly interesting is the question of the functioning of national and religious minorities in the borderlands between countries, as well as the formation of such borderlands by different nations. Therefore, the editors propose that number 13 of *Region and Regionalism* addresses the issue of *Borderlands of nations, nations of borderlands*.

The proposed subject matter met with the lively response from the authors, so much so that the number of submitted papers prompted the Editorial Board to divide them into two volumes. The first volume, collects the works discussing *Minorities in the borderlands and the fringes of countries*.

It was divided into two parts. The first includes papers on the functioning of *Minorities in the borderlands*. The volume opens with a paper by Jan Kłos from the Catholic University of Lublin entitled *The modern idea of religious toleration versus the state*, in which the author uses a philosopher's point of view to discuss the relationship between an efficient and ideologically neutral state and a world-wide religious tolerance, which is of particular importance in the light of the massive influx of people of other faiths into Europe (especially the controversy triggered by the influx of radical Muslims). The author emphasises that the idea is not new at all, and has been present in states since antiquity. The contemporary aspect involves a question of whether a state has the right to decide the beliefs of its citizens. Since the seventeenth century, Europe has faced

the problem of further divisions within Christianity, and is now struggling with the problem of radical Islamism. Locke's version of the idea of separation of Church and state is mentioned. The author argues that in modern philosophy, it is possible to recognise the right to diversity of religious views of citizens and its acceptance by the state.

The next paper, entitled *Minorities in protected areas. Theoretical approach and political visions* submitted by Slovenian author Jernej Zupančič from the University of Ljubljana, discusses minorities in protected areas. The author points out that the minorities existing in European space are particularly vulnerable. Declarative support for minorities by the EU institutions is met with a real ethnocentric policy of the governments of some European countries. Minorities living in borderlands that were declared protected landscapes due to their natural values (the parkisation of space) are in a peculiar situation. On the one hand, it brings economic benefits to the population, including minorities, but on the other, it significantly limits their freedom to operate in such space.

In the third article, Roman Szul from Warsaw University (Euroreg) addressed the problem of *Regionalist, ethno-linguistic and separatist/independence movements in Europe after the Second World War and European integration*. The author argues that the EU states favoured regionalisms, but only until they turned into separatist and independence movements. EU membership stabilises the internal situation in individual countries. On the other hand, the Union, perhaps unconsciously, supports the separatist trends in other states, sometimes leading to their disintegration, and then returns to the policy of maintaining their unity by force, although the instruments that can be used for this purpose are mostly ineffective.

Italian geographer from the University of Milan Antonio Violante devoted his paper *The new Balkan antemurale* to the issue of influx of refugees to Europe, some of which have chosen to travel from Turkey to the Balkans. The author analyses the course of this trail, its potential measured by the number of refugees. It shows the paradox of immigrants getting to Europe through Greece, a member of the Schengen area, but having to leave the area in the Balkans in order to get to other members, then being unable to re-enter in Slovenia, Austria and Italy, as they encounter closely monitored and tightly fenced borders. The influx of refugees also creates conflicts among Schengen states, whose politicians accuse each other of inadequately securing borders. The states outside the Schengen Area and the EU, such as Serbia and Macedonia, have taken over the obligation of stopping the wave of immigrants. The author points to the key significance of the land border between Greece and Turkey and, above all, the marine border between Asia and the Greek islands.

Marcoandrea Spinelli from the University of Modena in Italy took up the issue of the *Invisible exclaves*, or isolated areas inhabited by Slovak and Czech minorities in Serbia. These are remnants of the eighteenth-century internal emigration within Austro-Hungary, groups that were not later repatriated. The author shows the reasons for the migration, mainly economic ones (miners looking for work in mines) and discusses the reasons for their continued existence in foreign Serbian or Hungarian environment, or their decisions to return to their ancestral homeland, also for economic reasons.

Marek Battek from Wrocław University of Technology uses his paper *Cyprus as the borderland of nations* to present a specific case of two conflicted nations, Greek and Turkish, inhabiting a small island, an EU member. The conflict has been going on for more than half a century, taking on various forms, from open armed struggle to the frozen status quo, which proved particularly persistent and led to the division of the island into separate geopolitical units. The author discusses the possibility of resolving the dispute in a peaceful manner.

A similar problem was raised in by Marek Sobczyński from the University of Łódź in his paper about another island, namely Sri Lanka (*Sri Lanka as the borderland of nations*). He showed the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict and its genesis, spanning over two millennia. Both papers devoted to national conflicts on small islands, constituting confined spaces of rivalry, are based on the authors' studies in the regions described.

The second part of this volume has been titled *Minorities on the fringes of countries*. It is opened by a paper by Ryszard Żelichowski from the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw *Flemings over the border. Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie*. The author describes the historical region of Flanders, the genesis of its division by borders and the eternal rivalry between France and Germany to influence this land of rich merchant cities. He also discusses the situation of the Dutch-speaking population in the northern region of France and in Belgium. This is a diametrically opposite situation, as France does not recognise national minorities at all in its territory, while in Belgium, Flanders is a constitutive part of the federal monarchy. The Flemish people are the most dynamic, rich and innovative social group in Belgium.

In the paper by Alessandro Vitale of the University of Milan entitled *Building a new border: the case-study of the new barrier between Ukraine and Russia, and the problem of minorities*, the author discusses the current problem of conflict between the two post-Soviet states and the fate of national minorities. The author analyses the functions performed by the Ukrainian-Russian border, describes its extensive infrastructure and the dynamics of phenomena around it.

He also discusses Ukraine's aspirations to establish its borders and their effective control. He argues that in eastern Ukraine, the traditional definitions and rules of establishing borders have been questioned, and the intercultural dialogue between the two states is conducted through the viewpoint of the Russian minority in Ukraine and its separatist and anti-Ukrainian aspirations.

Very similar issues are discussed in another article by Ukrainian author Roman Slyvka from the I. Franko University in Lviv on *The preconditions for conflicts in Donbas and Crimea: similarities and differences*. Based on the results of the census, the author shows the distribution of ethnoses in conflict regions and discusses their long-term activities aimed at torpedoing the functioning of the state. He names several reasons, namely postcolonial heritage (treating these areas as former Russian colonies), the shortcomings of the political transformation and the inertia of the functioning of the Ukrainian state in its complex geopolitical situation.

Hungarian author Zoltán Hajdú from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Pecs uses his critical article entitled *The political geographical aspects of cross-border illegal migration at the south Hungarian borders since the collapse of the bipolar world* to return to the issue of migration crisis in Europe and the role of Hungary in stopping the wave of refugees. The author relates the development of the crisis on the southern border of Hungary with Serbia and Croatia, which led to the construction of long fortifications along the border, which effectively halted the uncontrolled crossings by refugees. He also points to the political solution, namely the EU's pact with Turkey, which has led to a significant reduction in the influx of immigrants.

The first volume of *Region and Regionalism* (No. 13) closes with a paper by Joanna Szczepankiewicz-Battek of WSB University in Wrocław, on the *Geographical coverage of Sorbian languages*. The author presents a borderland minority, fighting for centuries for their identity, while undergoing gradual Germanisation. Since the end of the Second World War, due to the changing borders, the minority has found itself in the periphery of Germany, along its eastern border.

The editors hope that the material collected in the volume will inspire further research into the boundaries of nations and national minorities who have come to live on the peripheries and in the borderlands of states.

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Section 1

**MINORITIES IN THE BORDERLANDS**



## **THE MODERN IDEA OF RELIGIOUS TOLERATION VERSUS THE STATE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In this paper I shall focus on the question of toleration within the State with reference to its origins, for the idea of toleration is not new. By saying this, I am not claiming that it has been practiced all over the world from times immemorial. What I am saying is that toleration has always been present in world history either as a theoretical postulate (at times even put into practice), or as a desire when it was missing. We can find some traces of the question about toleration as early as antiquity. We know, for instance, that the philosopher Socrates was charged with the corruption of young people because he did not believe “in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other new spiritual things”<sup>1</sup>. What is implied in this accusation is that – to render it in a more contemporary language – it is the State that is entitled to determine what its citizens should believe. Anyone who dares to undermine this requirement is bound to be punished. One State and one religion – such was the underlying principle and the precondition of political safety. Therefore Socrates was brought to trial and sentenced to death because he seemed to have violated this principle.

The story of Socrates brings to mind the main perspective I am going to consider, which is the question of varieties within a more or less closed state system. If we can imagine the State as an area structured in a concrete way and inhabited by a concrete people, a question arises: to what extent is this area unified or homogenous? Does it allow for any differences? Varieties are said to

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<sup>1</sup> Plato, *The Apology*, <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~freeman/courses/phil100/04.%20Apology.pdf> (8.10. 2016).

be an evidence for the State's openness, i.e. its democratic shape, but democracy itself as a political idea is not unanimously comprehended, let alone universally endorsed.

In this text I would like to show that the modern idea of toleration, which had brought forth the idea of separation between the State and the Church, is ineffective in solving social problems of toleration on the grounds of religious varieties. Rather, it causes clashes and conflicts or else eliminates religious freedom. It is far more appropriate to assume the idea of distinction, thereby assenting to the specific characters of the two systems: the socio-political system of the State, and the religious system. Being distinct, they can be combined into a fruitful cooperation.

## **2. THE MODERN ORIGINS OF TOLERATION**

The modern equivalent of toleration was born in 17<sup>th</sup> century Britain, but practically it was quite popular before that time in other countries in Europe. The fact that Poland accepted the Jews who were expelled from Europe and began to settle in Poland is an example of toleration. The Polish king (Sigismund II Augustus) is often cited as having said: "I am not a master of your consciences". And this is also an example of toleration. Now the question is what had happened with this practical manifestation of toleration, why it had to be theoretically defined and explained. There are two causes in general: one religious and one philosophical. The fact of the Reformation in the West (the second schism in Europe) called for the need of a peaceful coexistence of the rising number of Christian fellowships other than Roman Catholics. Seventeenth-century intellectuals thought it particularly inappropriate to be engaged in military conflicts on account of religious differences. Quite naturally, religion was expected to be an area where freedom of conscience reigned, not coercion. The philosophical cause of toleration can be found in empiricism, one of the dominating (aside to rationalism) modern philosophical idea, with its main elements: reason and experience. In line with the empiricist philosophy we are products of our own experience – the primary sense data translated into the conceptual world by our mind. The consequence of this new approach is that nothing can enter the mind if it has not been produced or accepted by its immanent logic. And the practical conclusion in the context of interest results as follows: a free choice should hold sway in religion.

The idea of religious toleration became particularly topical in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the period of military conflicts on the grounds of divided confessions. It dawned on intellectual Europeans that they should come up with a theoretical foundation for toleration. The philosophy of empiricism seemed to be the right solution then, for it provided a plausible way out of the religious puzzle. Taking into consideration the abundant panorama of religions it seemed quite right to make them all a matter of private opinions, and separate the private affairs from the public. Thus the Church was pushed to the area of privacy, and the State was made public.

Let it be observed that at the same time modernity set into motion the process of levelling (as we shall see from Locke's idea of toleration). The main driving force of this process being rationality narrowly understood, for if we comprehend toleration as a kind of homeostasis, with one universal logic, it is after all the decision of the majority that dominates, since universal logic is believed to be shared by all rational people alike, so it has “no address”, no unique traits. Levelling also meant transparency – the religion that was approved of by the State was supposed to be transparent, i.e. without any appeal to whatever mystery it could entail (reason does not like mysteries). Now the argumentation of a religion with transcendent claims cannot be held true merely by virtue of a majority decision or an individual choice; in the deistic form of Christianity transcendence is explained away. Therefore when 17<sup>th</sup> century Europeans wished to have political peace, they naturally resorted to political means, and combined religion with power (although they originally sought to separate them). There is no other way out if one claims that the religion of the people should be the same as the religion of their ruler. Such a religion then becomes a tool of oppression. It cannot be different, once religion is merely yet another product of the thinking mind.

### **3. JOHN LOCKE'S IDEA OF TOLERATION**

Reducing religion to a private judgment of the thinking mind, Locke excludes Roman Catholics and atheists from toleration. Roman Catholics are excluded because they are not rational enough, i.e. they hold ideas their minds have not produced, or accept ideas from outside without appropriate attendant evidence. They accept dogmas, that is, philosophically (or, to be precise, epistemologically) speaking, they hold ideas by way of obedience rather than rational

argumentation. They are excluded and earned the derogatory name of Papists who “are not to enjoy the benefit of toleration because where they have power they think themselves bound to deny it to others”<sup>2</sup>. And he excluded atheists because they cannot be trusted. Locke writes:

Promises, Covenants, and Oaths, which are the Bonds of Humane Society, can have no hold upon an Atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all. Besides also, those that by their Atheism undermine and destroy all Religion, can have no pretence of Religion whereupon to challenge the Privilege of a Toleration<sup>3</sup>.

Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* was originally written in Latin as *Epistola de Tolerantia* and published in Holland, the haven of Calvinistic ideas, in 1689. It was Locke's plea to Christians to renounce persecution on account of religious varieties. The question is: did he succeed? If the answer is yes, to what extent? If no, the question is why? As I have said, in Holland Locke was exposed to Calvinistic ideas. He criticizes Roman Catholics that they “are subjects of any prince but the pope”, therefore “such opinions” and “fundamental truths [...] ought not to be tolerated by the magistrate in the exercise of their religion unless he can be secured [...] that the propagation of these dangerous opinions may be separated from their religious worship [...]”<sup>4</sup>. It is just amazing that such a subtle philosopher, as John Locke certainly was, could not disentangle himself from certain pitfalls of biased views. He claimed toleration, which in his case meant separation between the matters of the State and the matters of the Church, and yet at the same time proposed, for the sake of peaceful coexistence, an official state religion. No wonder then that instead of toleration he introduced intolerance for centuries onwards. His worst enemy was narrow rationalism, which claimed that in fact religion could be considered as any other social matter (discussed in purely rational and logical terms). Contemporary social philosophy has called it disenchantment of religion, taming of religion, or secularising. Religion could be accepted, but only as a well-defined point of view without any aspirations to the supernatural. Such is the deistic position. If we appeal to general rules and principles in the hope of reconciling all participants of political life, we are certainly setting into motion the process of levelling. The rationalist

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<sup>2</sup> J. Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, par. I, [files.libertyfund.org/files/2375/Locke\\_1560\\_EBk\\_v6.0.pdf](https://files.libertyfund.org/files/2375/Locke_1560_EBk_v6.0.pdf) (8.10.2016). By saying this, Locke simply points out that Roman Catholicism rejects the idea of private choice as the only criterion of religion and abides by the objective truth.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

wishes to play it safe, hence he is forever torn in between the cosy world of universal concepts and the unsteady territories of idiosyncratic beliefs.

Thus it was yet another step on the path of the process of disenchantment. How can one claim freedom of religion, if only such religions can be approved of, which are accepted by the magistrate? Disenchantment and rationalization of religion are destructive for its very nature. Strangely (and logically) enough, the process that was supposed to bring relief from religious persecution, ushered in oppression instead. And this happened not only in Britain, which up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century imposed a very oppressive system for Roman Catholics, but also abroad. In Britain, for instance, Catholic citizens were disabled from holding public office, unless they were communicant members of the Anglican Church. Puritan communities in America became also oppressive for their fellow believers.

If Locke was in favour of the separation of the Church (or religion) from the State, how could have the magistrate been made to decide whether certain religions could be tolerated or not? I understand that, obviously, the State must be on its guard against any destructive currents that are bound to overturn its order. We take it as natural to stamp out any revolutionary attempts. But I do not understand why it should have bothered Locke, if the requirement of obedience to the pope was of religious rather than political nature. No doubt the process of levelling is at work in his argumentation, the process that erodes the transcendent claims.

He sought to preclude coercion on account of religion. And he rightly assumed that the mind cannot be coerced into holding certain views or withholding others. Indeed it is the mind's nature to work in freedom. But on the other hand it is not true that the only way of holding ideas or assenting to them is intellectual (that we always have to give reasons for our beliefs, that are clear for intersubjective communication). And only such views that are clear (clear and distinct, one might add the modern Cartesian requirement) are safe for the State. After all the latter is a product of rational efforts on the part of its citizens.

Struggling against the alleged Roman intolerance, Anglican intolerance was introduced instead. It was manifested by certain political acts, e.g. the Thirty-Nine Articles, Toleration Act. From then on any person who wished to hold an important public office was obliged to subscribe to the Anglican creed. Stephen Macedo defined Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* as an impassioned plea "for a separation of sacred and secular concerns, and the confinement, and the confinement of political authority to certain narrowly drawn 'civil interests': the security and property of individuals, goods of the body rather than the soul" (Macedo 1993, p. 622). Contrary to Locke's intentions, however, his idea of

toleration never completely separated the two areas in question. Indeed the boundaries are blurred, for it is difficult to discriminate between sacred and secular concerns if one kind of rationality is applied, namely that of the State. In such cases usually the tendency is to absorb the area of religion, i.e. it was made merely an object of reason and experience.

#### 4. TOLERATION – THE AMERICAN CONTEXT

The Lockean concept of toleration was conveyed to the New World and is articulated in the Constitution. And the Toleration Act, as Samuel Adams (1722–1803)<sup>5</sup> commented, stated that “every subject in England, except Papists [...] was restored to, and re-established in, his natural right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience” (Adams 1963, p. 178). I should have written “paradoxical Toleration Act” because we find seeds of intolerance in the very wording of the document, i.e. “except Papists”. Such statements were obviously in essence intolerant, and any religion that cherished toleration in line with them ended up as no religion at all. It is interesting that Samuel Adams mentions Magna Charta as a good example of civic liberty, but Magna Charta was a Catholic document!<sup>6</sup>

Samuel Adams noted that “mutual toleration in the different professions” of religion “ought to be extended to all whose doctrines are not subversive of society. The only sects which he thinks ought to be, and which by all wise laws are excluded from such toleration, are those who teach doctrines subversive of the civil government under which they live. The Roman Catholics or Papists are excluded by reason of such doctrines as these, that princes excommunicated may be deposed, and those that they call heretics may be destroyed without mercy; besides their recognizing the Pope in so absolute a manner, in subversion of government, by introducing, as far as possible into the states under whose protection they enjoy life, liberty, and property, that solecism in politics, *imperium in imperio*, leading directly to the worst anarchy and confusion, civil discord, war, and bloodshed” (Adams 1963, p. 177).

The public man was born. Such was the message that was brought to America – the precondition of public affairs is that religion be separated from political matters. This is how the relationship between the two areas is defined in the American Constitution. We read there that “no religious Test shall ever be

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<sup>5</sup> He has been called “the Father of the American Revolution”.

<sup>6</sup> It was initiated by Bishop Langton (c. 1150–1228).

required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States” (*The Declaration...* 2002, art. VI, p. 36). And in Amendment I we find:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, of the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances (*The Declaration...* 2002, Amendment I, p. 43).

These two points are especially interesting in this context, since if we consider Locke as the intellectual predecessor of American democracy we find a considerable discrepancy between what Locke proposed, what was then the British practice, and what was implemented in America.

On the other hand it was hardly imaginable to find an American, holding an important official position, who could quote no religious affiliation. Such people were simply not trusted. And this is again much in accordance with what Locke placed in his exposition of toleration: “atheists were not to be trusted.”

Now if we compare the former statement with that of the famous statement of the Declaration, namely “that all Men are created equal [...]” (*The Declaration...* 2002, p. 9) we have clear encouragement for religious liberation. The liberation movement found a strong support in the Bible, and that was such a support that no serious Christian could possibly deny. Obviously, this claim could be denied, but only on the grounds that the blacks were refused to be treated like human beings.

Now a question arises: what happened to these original declarations, if we are witnessing attempts to remove religion from the public sphere? Democrats establish organizations, such as Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good and Catholics United, whose main purpose is naturally to support the political cause of the democratic party and to drive a wedge between the Pope and American Catholics. The point is to modernize the Church, to open it to the modern trends of syncretism and political correctness. I think such attempts can easily be accounted for. If we put the two realities (the Church and the State) on the same level, we are forever engaged in a duel: the dialectic of separation versus appropriation and subjugation. The end result of separation is either a hostile relationship or the process of taming the opponent. One of the systems (usually the State) thus brought into a collision with the other tends to absorb it; the reversal of this situation would happen in a typical theocratic regime. Under such circumstances the cause of religious freedom is lost.

Why was toleration introduced? Why was there a need for a reflection on toleration in the 17<sup>th</sup> century? First of all we must say that the basic precondition

for toleration is difference. Toleration is not needed where we have a certain level of homogeneity. If the basic precondition of toleration is difference, then toleration must respect difference. If it does not respect difference, it undermines the reason for its very existence. Let us observe this interesting and fundamental point. Toleration and difference coexist, although they have a tendency for mutual annihilation. Toleration, when misunderstood, struggles against difference; and difference, for its part, is set against toleration.

## 5. SEPARATION VERSUS DISTINCTION

There can be two options: either the religious sphere has been reduced, or the public sphere has expanded. This alternative “either-or” is obviously possible where theoretical separation is working. Because separation can be imagined as a clash of two physically outlined areas. In this case, it comes only natural that if one area expands, the other one must necessarily diminish. Only distinction allows for infiltration, and only distinction eliminates hostile clashes.

I think that distinction would have even solved the question of the races. As long as Americans held on to the idea of separation, it was next to impossible to find a solution. It was difficult to revive the Lockean liberal ideal, for instance, if the South in the 19<sup>th</sup> century stuck to the feudal image of society and the North had already entered the age of industrialization. The Southerners who kept defending slavery were in the grips of some illogical argumentation. They

could not remove the Negro from the human category, and, not being able to do so, their logic of inequality was bound to backfire on themselves. Again we are confronted with that strange intellectual rationale whereby the South, assailing Locke, found itself going back to the hierarchical world that the theories of Locke had destroyed (Hartz 1955, p. 170).

I think that the bone of contention is inherent in the very work of Locke, in his conception of toleration, which is – to say the least – conditioned. So the choice that Hartz poses before the South: whether it wants to be Biblical or Greek, for, as we know, Aristotle claimed that slavery was a natural state, is still of value. At the same time I do not agree that America could find some solution in Locke because he was not that clear-minded about toleration as he seemed to have been.

Seventeenth-century empiricism seemed to be the right solution of the problem of mixed confession within the British state. And one of its main

representatives, John Locke, set to the task of elaborating a new doctrine of toleration. His epistemology amounts to defining the human mind as a product of experience. Our primary ideas come directly from the senses, and our secondary ideas are created by the mind. All in all we are masters of our minds. No one can impose on me from without what I do not understand from within. I have created my individual reservoir of ideas and will not admit any foreign ideas that do not fit to what I already have.

This philosophical stance seemed to fit very well. Let us make religion a matter of personal choice, indeed a private business, then we shall solve the problem of any contest on the grounds of religion. At the same time, however, in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, Locke suggested that it would be better to have one official religion, and it should have a religion shared by both the ruler and his subjects. Separation then becomes oppressive because we propose toleration (religion is a private matter), and at the same time we suggest that there should be one official religion within the state.

The British historian Lord John Acton (1834–1902) proposed distinction rather than separation. Separation can be (and often is) enforced institutionally, distinction allows for interdependence. In Acton's writings distinction is set in opposition separation. He writes the following:

All liberty consists *in radice* in the preservation of an inner sphere exempt from State power. That reverence for conscience is the germ of all civil freedom, and the way in which Christianity served it. That is, liberty has grown out of the distinction (separation is a bad word) of Church and State (*Letter CXI* 1906, p. 254).

The term “distinction” emphasizes the fact of being different, although not necessarily separate. If I were to give an example, I would show the case of two twins. They are distinct because they are different, and yet they not have to be separated – as having no contact with each other. Distinction allows for interpenetration. Another example can be taken from nature. Each organ within a body is important but different from another organ, i.e. it is distinct from it, for it plays a different function. Separation would immediately introduce a kind of opposition; distinction stresses coexistence. In this sense a religious person is not forced to be “privately” religious, but can be religious quite officially. Distinction does not call for separation between private life and public life, in the sense that they are entirely and radically different, for they are both integrated with inherent shades of meaning.

If we abide by distinction rather than separation, there is no problem of interference. This charge of interference is often raised when politicians do not

wish to be criticized by an independent institution (assuming that it is distinct and independent). Once a body is distinct it can penetrate any social and political area, assessing it from its own point of view. There are no taboo areas. I presume therefore that inasmuch as separation is artificial and imposed from without, distinction is natural and given from within. Following the way of distinction man is never a complete part and parcel of any political system, but always distinct from it.

If a true religion has claims to the human person, it is impossible to separate it without destroying it, or at least destroying its sense in the individual human being. Besides, if we separate the Church from the State, we thereby treat them as if they were placed on the same level, governed by the same kind of rationality. Now by applying the same kind of rationality to the State and the Church, by using the same measure clashes seem to be inevitable, unless one initiates the process of levelling. Where a religion is made into a state religion, with a national Church on top, conflicts apparently disappear. Surprisingly, the religion exposed to such rationalizing processes may disappear as well, at least a theistic religion. It is constantly reduced or modified to fit into state rationality, into a state template. In the United States, where religion is neither established nor prohibited by the Congress, the same processes are under way.

The case of religion is especially interesting here, for religion has various forms of its manifestation. It is internal and external: the believer tends to express his or her beliefs in everyday life, religion has its institutional and normative expressions etc. Ultimately, it is not possible to delineate the same determining lines of religion. Hence if we propose separation, we risk a conflict.

Our knowledge amounts to probability. The higher it is, the readier we are to assent to a given truth, but it is hardly ever complete. The final gap between probability and assent is covered by the readiness of our very person to give assent.

If religion and the state are considered on the same level, ignoring their idiosyncratic rationalities, then a clash inevitably follows. Either the state usurps the function of religion, or religion interferes with the state. Thus we have either a kind of dictatorship in which the state has a say in matters that naturally remain within the jurisprudence of the Church, or else we have to confront a theocracy. Under communist regimes it was a party official who often intervened when the persons they do not accept are nominated bishops.

The problem of the border between the State and the Church, as I think, can only be solved when we consider the State and religion not on the plane, but in a two-dimensional structure; in other words when we apply spatial geometry

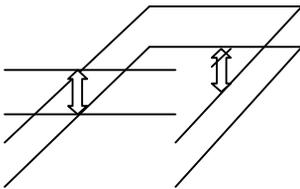
instead of plane geometry. It is a grave error to regard this relationship as that of separation, while it is distinction. Now we can understand separation on a plane in the following manner. The curved line denotes the conflicting border area:



The space between the two rectangles can be regarded as the area of friction, tension, or conflict. The two figures seem to have nothing in common. And attempts to cross the barrier is interpreted as interference or intrusion.

Now let us imagine that we are dealing not with a Euclidean plane, but with three-dimensional space. And the rectangles are placed one above the other. Then, when viewed from above or from below, they can be interpreted as almost one figure, although we know that there are two of them because they are different.

In this process of usurpation (when the Church and the state are believed to be separated and this separation is theoretical only) there are pressures to “modernize” the Church. Therefore anyone who holds simply an orthodox position is called conservative. And conservatism is immediately thought to have a derogative connotation. If, however, the Church is distinct (distinguished) from the state, they both, like two bodies in space, move (along two different planes).



Or, they revolve round two different orbits.

In this figure above the space in-between the State and the Church, between, let us say, religion and science, faith and reason are not set in opposition or confrontation. It is the space of interrelation, interpenetration and inspiration.

They do not have to be separated, therefore there is no danger of appropriation or elimination, which come to the same result.

Religion has its universal claims, but at the same time it takes on particular forms. This is true especially of Catholicism. When it takes these forms, it resembles a plant that grows on a concrete soil, with its special, say, mineral contents, and its peculiar geometrical positions (whether it is plain or crooked). The essence is the same, but its concrete shapes differ. This what we call idiosyncrasy. Now the danger is that the form may become dominant and oblivious of the foundation. This is what happens under the circumstances of politicization, aestheticism, and expedience.

The situation is therefore the following: either we have an invisible religion that pretends to have no concrete historical form or we have a visible forms of religion. The former is in danger of being totally diluted, as it is linked with individualistic claims to domination. The latter is in danger of exploiting the form for political purposes. Therefore Newman so harshly criticized the Anglican Church for losing its life.

I think that distinction does not introduce into everyday life anything artificial, for it allows for coexistence. Historically speaking, for instance, America felt relieved from British interference when the British Empire eventually understood that America was different, that she wanted to pursue her own way.

Now the question is why the idea of separation failed or has proved to be insufficient. I think the reason is its narrow rationality. Separation would admit of no views based on faith. We can understand that “voluntary consent” was important for Locke in the same manner as it was important for the American founders. At the same time, however, we may have doubts whether this “consent” must be justified in the way that any rational person can admit. In its true essence religion does transcend any civil order, therefore to claim toleration and at the same time separation must of necessity end up in contradiction. If something transcends a given order, it cannot be ultimately evaluated by that order, and cannot be limited in its attempts to penetrate this order. Now penetration can be approved of because, and especially when, it is carried out in a different dimension. If I were to give an example by way of illustration, I would say that religion resembles a kind of radiation for which solid bodies are no obstacles. That is why not only does it have a right, but often even a duty, to assess political decisions, social issues, civil actions. And it does so on the basis of its own inherent nature.

Now the question arises whether these charges have any historical grounds, whether indeed human liberty and reason, its only ordering factor, are sufficient “for the great end of society” and for “the best good of the whole” (Adams 1963, p. 177. If the latter two aims are the only ones, then naturally we have the right to ask: what is the great end of society? And: what is best good of the whole? Who is to provide the great end and the best good? If it is the State, how does it know what the great and the best good are? If the citizens themselves, can then unanimously arrive at a common decision as to their great end and best good? I think it seems only prudent that man, as being both individual and social, political and civil, has to go beyond his political system in order to arrive at the right definition of what his great end and best good are. He has to transcend his political order. And such transcendence is often provided by religion, assuming

that it has not absorbed by the political order itself, that it remains transcendent. And if it remains transcendent, it has the right to develop in its own individual way. Ultimately, we arrive at a conclusion that the aforementioned charges are groundless.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Toleration is a strong theme in contemporary debates. Seventeenth-century thinkers dealt “only” with divisions within one religion, namely, a divided Christianity. Nowadays Europe has to come to grips with interreligious divisions, due to the growing number of Islamic groups. When considering the state-Church relationship, Locke's empiricist approach proposed separation. I have opted for distinction throughout this paper. If European toleration was born as a result of modern philosophy, with its attendant ideas of unified rationality, it seems only right to appeal to distinction.

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## **MINORITIES IN PROTECTED AREAS THEORETICAL APPROACH AND POLITICAL VISIONS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In political geography and in the wider context of ethnic studies, numerous empirical studies on the situation and role of ethnic minorities were conducted in the last few decades. Geographical characteristics of settlement and functional space play an important role in this subject. Minorities are predominantly settled in the border regions of countries. Border regions are mostly peripheral, with numerous economic weaknesses, poor infrastructure, and regressive population movements (Klemenčič and Bufon 1991, p. 98). Study of borders, from political to culture, from historical to cultural, represents one of the central themes of modern political geographies. Minorities and borders are a “classic” issue of our geographic discipline, as they discuss two subjects (space and population) of a state and its political manifestation (Bufon 2008, pp. 9–29). On the other hand, tendencies for the protection of minorities, their language, culture, and identity are evident. Due to bilateral relationships and international circumstances, most minorities now have at least minimal protections in Europe, which in some cases explicitly refers to their settlement space. True territorial autonomies of regions, in which minorities had a significant or even main role, i.e. minorities being the implicit reason and subject of regional autonomy, are much rarer. Subjectivity of minorities is being recognised – a characteristics that can only be realised under circumstances of a certain political participation of the minority community (Bufon et al. 2014, p. 13). More progressive visions of minority policies assume an actually leading role of minorities in, for instance, promotion of cross-border communication and establishment of international relationships. In these cases, minorities are the object of political and geographical analysis by themselves, as

a subject and supporting element of border area (Zupančič 2005, pp. 34–38). The third form of territorial protection are protected areas. Political geography rarely – or marginally – studies such areas. This is not the central focus of our discipline. However, we should not overlook the fact that the act of establishing a protected area is by its very nature a distinctly political move: a measure that establishes in the national, or even international, space a new form of border, thereby directly and indirectly causing a number of consequences. Within the framework of EU, their scope is increasing due to increasing awareness of vulnerability of habitats for certain plant and animal species (*Der neue Fischer Weltatmanach* 2017, pp. 9–10). Preservation of biodiversity is a declared European value and objective. Preservation of geodiversity is also increasingly emphasised, intended for protecting *in situ* locations of varied, interesting, and exceptional elements of abiotic nature (geological, geomorphological, and hydrological phenomena) (Stepišnik 2017). It is interesting that preserved localities of biodiversity and geodiversity are situated in remote areas, away from the largest agglomerations with high population concentrations, industrial capacities, and transport and technical infrastructure (*Protected planet* 2015). It is logical that valuable natural features are better preserved in peripheral areas of countries. However, it is also expected that national countries have an interest in controlling the border regions due to completely different, predominantly cultural and political, as well as security-based reasons. Especially when the border region of a state is settled by ethnic minorities (Zupančič 2017, p. 472).

The article discusses the subject of ethnic minorities in protected areas of European countries. It thereby attempts to determine, based on a comparative analysis, the relationship between protected areas and minorities living in such areas. Minorities and protected areas are subject to national preservation and protection policies. The article is part of a wider interdisciplinary study of minorities' situation<sup>1</sup> in Europe and the effects on them. It is not possible to make definite conclusions mid study, but preliminary results indicate a high likelihood of confirmation of the hypothesis that protection measures in settlement areas of minorities are a form of state control over minorities; such measures actually replace the control of state borders after the suspension of military, police, and customs control of borders within the context of European integration processes.

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<sup>1</sup> The research is emphasizing the political, formal (or juridical), linguistic and socioeconomic position of minorities in Europe as a comparative study. There was author's idea to put particular attention to these disputed issues about the protected areas, when noticed that the case of Slovenes in Porabje (Hungary) in Őrszeg National Park (hung. Őrszegi Nemzeti Park) is far to be the only case.

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The other important study question addresses the approaches to development initiatives of minorities in protected areas.

Due to limited space, protected areas in Europe can only be briefly discussed in this article. This is otherwise a very wide multi-disciplinary subject. Most attention is focused on territorial interconnectedness and on cause-effect relationship of two key variables: minorities (and protection of minorities) and protected areas. Discussions on minorities in protected areas and specific problems of minorities have so far been quite rare, and covered the issues mostly as an actual situation and not as part of national border- and minority policies.

## 2. THEORETICAL DISCOURSE OF PROTECTION

Protection of areas due to any reason is the exclusive right or privilege and, on the other hand, primary obligation of a state. A mature nation employs protection measures to ensure an area for a long term, because it values it as exceptional and nationally important. Above all, protection is a measure of limiting encroachments on one hand and increasing the symbolic values of landscape elements on the other hand. Protection is first a measure of spatial policy, since it sets limits and conditions for the scope, methods, and forms of permitted human activity in protected areas. Established regulations has a predominantly limiting character for residents, who can continue to exploit their existing residential and functional space only within certain limits and under certain conditions, and receive as compensation substitute or compensatory measures, such as annuities for maintenance of cultural landscape in limited geographical conditions, relocations of business activities to border areas outside protected areas, financial compensations, and similar measures (Zupančič 2017). Simultaneously, forms of park arrangements increase the flow of visitors, especially in national and regional parks. Tourism becomes the main activity, with its form adapted to protection regimes. For visitors, this is an organised area of demonstration and symbolisation. Natural and cultural heritage objects are by acts declared as nationally important, and, together with their location, become more visible and recognisable, and the interpretation of the object is modified as well. Justification for national protection and defining an area as a subject of national importance presupposes territorial and frequently also ethnic association with the majority population. While this causes almost no significant changes<sup>2</sup> in settlement areas

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<sup>2</sup> Regarding the ethnic or/ and cultural dimensions of local life.

of minorities, this measure represents a significant qualitative change in the settlement areas of ethnic minorities.

A certain political consensus regarding protection is first required to establish protection of certain areas. Expert interpretations can have a significant role, but that is not always necessary. Frequently, expert justifications follow the political decision. The first national park in the world, Yellowstone in the US, was declared in 1872 in the spirit of growing economic and political power of the US, after over a century of unrestrained exploitation of natural resources and destruction of the biosphere (under the assumption that such resources are almost unlimited in this vast country), when the number of some species of typical American fauna decreased to critically low levels (Zupančič 2013). The national park immediately became the pride of the US and a role model followed by other countries. It is characteristic that countries had a political need to protect a part of their territory. Almost all countries throughout the world have national parks (*Protected planet* 2016). The uniqueness of biosphere or geosphere elements is measured within national borders; these areas had been declared protected because they have prestigious characteristics within the national borders. International importance is an additional element that strengthens the national significance of protected areas as well. Furthermore, a park's prestige also reflects well on the state that owns and manages the park (*Protected areas in Europe* 2012). National parks are a state's prestige, brand, symbolic and public (national) space. It is therefore in a state's almost "natural" interest to establish park protection over certain parts of the national territory, even if the uniqueness of individual objects or the whole is not fully justified by expert opinion.

The uniqueness of different valuable natural features is not the only motive for establishing a park regime. A comparative analysis of protection implementation shows specific trends and tempo, as well as the direction of protection. Objects and thus the reasons for protection are constantly expanding, as is the scope of protected areas. Behind these trends, we can detect a paradigm of parkization<sup>3</sup>, as a specific spatial relationship and certain government-regulated and directed regional policy, specifically in peripheral areas<sup>4</sup>. Implementation of European directives increased the interest for park protection, primarily for protection of wetland, coastal, island, riparian, and mountain habitats (*Natura*

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<sup>3</sup> The term describes the tendency, policy or even ideological or / and paradigmatic endeavors to put the distinct areas under some protected regime.

<sup>4</sup> See f.e. the areas on the whole Carpathian mountain ridges (Ruffini and Ptaček 2009).

2000 *Barometer* 2016). However, we should not ignore the fact that larger protected areas are characteristically located in border region, specifically after 1995. This matches the time of suspension of security and economic control on political boundaries. Some countries (e.g. Greece; similar trends can be followed also in Croatia) declared protection of island areas that were under threat of purchase by foreigners when the region joined the European Union. Such an example is also Slovenia. On Karst, along the Slovenian-Italian border, when the pressure from potential real estate buyers increased (buyers were mostly from Trieste in Italy), they started considering a park protection of the entire area, which should deter or completely prevent real estate manipulations by foreigners. Prices of real estate soared, which had an extremely negative effect on possibilities of real estate transactions by the locals. In this case, the initiative for park protection (which is even more extraordinary!) arose on the side of local residents when they also faced the negative effect of new migration pressures<sup>5</sup>.

In the studied context of the relationship between a protected territory and a minority (population), we must especially highlight the changes in the local environment that occur after the establishment of a protection regime. Protection means that an object of local ownership (of residents) is transferred under the domain of the institution (park management), which at the same time represent the government. The local territory thus falls under direct governmental jurisdiction. With protection, specific internal borders of administrative and political character are established, which have a significant effect on the structure of protected area. Limiting its use on one hand and increased symbolism of the protected while on the other hand have a conservative effect: the area should retain the specific structure and appearance in order to fulfil the key function – long-term protection of content and their public accessibility (Zupančič 2015a). This indirectly increases the monitorability of residents if they are located in protected areas. Residents frequently experience this circumstance, together with limitations on management, as an obstacle (Zupančič 2017). It is not a coincidence that residents are proud of the sights in their local town, but are not happy with the limitations imposed in the park. Residents are moving away due to the limitations and monitoring, the area is becoming empty and the cultural landscape is deteriorating. Protected areas increase the dependency on the holder and implementer of restrictive policies – the government. To a large extent, this matches the “classic” approach of national countries to their border areas.

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<sup>5</sup> According to field research in 2013, 2014, 2015 done by students; totally 634 questionnaires both on Slovene (majority of them) and Italian side of border.

### 3. SETTLEMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF MINORITIES IN EUROPE: BRIEF OVERVIEW

By rough estimates, close or even more than 30 million people fall within the category of various ethnic minorities in Europe (Pan and Pfeil 2000) – or even more (Zupančič 2015b, pp. 145–160). This represents evidently strong impact to national- and international politics within Europe (Rosecrance and Stein 2006). They differ significantly in terms of number, legal situation, and political status, but share some common circumstances. Most minorities are settled in border areas of countries. This is the logical consequence of rivalries in recent history of European nations, which established their own national countries during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century; this means they realized the main goal of national movements (White 2004). Minorities were formed on intersections of stateforming nations. Border areas are consequently ethnically mixed (Bufon 2004). From the 89 traditional minority ethnic groups compared<sup>6</sup> in Europe, almost three-quarters (71%) are settled in border areas of political units (Zupančič 2015b, p. 156). This also considers the situations of ethnic communities within federations, as for instance in some federal nations within Europe as well as in the European part of Russia<sup>7</sup>. Internal political borders also create minority situations (Braucher and Lesser 1999). The general tendency is that larger minority communities are predominantly located along borders, while smaller communities more often form isolated settlement nuclei (Zupančič 2010, pp. 230–234).

Characteristic for the Iberian Peninsula is the situation of Catalans and Basques. The cores of settlement are in regions with established cultural autonomy, whereas a smaller part of the settlement area is in predominantly Castilian regions with the Spanish language. In France, the settlement area of Catalans and Basques is designated as an area of special regional languages (Pan and Pfeil 2000). The ethnic concept of France is completely different (Haarmann 2004). In Italy, larger minority communities are located in the border area of the Alpine arc: Francophones in the Aosta Valley, German speaking population of South Tyrol (main part of Trentino Alto-Adige region)<sup>8</sup>, and Slovenians along east Italian borders (Klemenčič and Bufon 1991). Slovenian minorities are settled in areas of south Austria and along the borders with Croatia and Hungary. The

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<sup>6</sup> Ethnic minorities, that were included in author's research.

<sup>7</sup> Russia was not included in comparative research, but some situations are quite comparable with European minority context. The federal units of Russian federation are a typical result of "divide et impera" politics.

<sup>8</sup> Trentino Alto-Adige is an Italian province with particular regulation and autonomy.

Hungarian-Austrian border is also intertwined with minorities; however, in this location, minorities are dispersed in a wider border area (Klemenčič and Klemenčič 1995). The region of the Pannonian Basin generally has a lot of minorities, from small and dispersed to some concentrated and quite large. This is especially true for Hungarian communities in Serbia, Romania, Ukraine, and Slovakia (Kocsis and Kocsis-Hodosi 1998). Some are characterised by large and concentrated settlement nuclei (Székelys and Transylvanian Saxons in Transylvania, Romania); the gain particular organization of political life due to their size (Costachie 2000). The areas of Serbian Vojvodina, Romanian Banat and Dobruja, and further in Moldavia and south-eastern Ukraine are categorised as ethnically extremely heterogeneous areas with predominantly territorially isolated minorities (Crampton and Crampton 1996; similar as well as in: Sewan and Dippold 1997). Completely new minority and border situations developed after the ethnic wars in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Relocations of entire communities created new types of de facto minorities, at least in the local and regional context, despite significant language relatedness (Banac 2006, p. 33). This is especially true for Bosniaks, specifically because of their religious affiliation (they are Moslems) (Klemenčič and Žagar 2004, pp. 89–94). In Greece and Bulgaria, the issue of Macedonians persists, as governments do not recognise their ethnic subjectivity, while they are settled across extensive border areas. Albanian communities are a peculiarity in all countries they live (Eberhardt 2003). Due to the high birth rate, minority population in Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, and Greece are growing in numbers (Zupančič 2015b). Turkish minorities are smaller and in the form of settlement nuclei, except in Greek and Bulgarian Thrace, where they form a relatively compact settlement core that borders on Turkey (Brunner and Lemberg 1994).

In the countries of Central Europe, minorities are extremely border-based, except for some ethnic groups (e.g. Sorbs and Frisians) (Klemens 1995). Their number and spatial distribution were significantly affected by migratory flows during the decade after the Second World War. The population of border area of the Czech Republic and Poland was largely replaced with the relocation of Germans and the compensatory flow of different Slavic population (Magocsi 2002). However, after 1990 a partial revitalisation of German community occurred. In the region of the Baltic arc, new Russian minorities emerged in addition to traditional minority communities (especially Polish) with the reformation of statehood – the result of Russification approach from the time of the Soviet Union. Their situation is specific, as many do not have a citizenship (Zupančič 2010, p. 241). Similar circumstances are occurring in the wide belt of Eastern Europe, in Ukraine and Belarus. The formal minority situation of

Russians is not actually such, considering the real situation of Russian in these areas. The north part of the Scandinavian Peninsula is settled by groups of Sami people (or Lapps). In the conditions of boreal subecumene of the European north, they preserved the nomadic and seminomadic customs (Klemens 1995, Haarmann 2004). A peculiarity in terms of European minorities are Swedes in Finland. Due to historical tradition and their relatively large numbers, they are not really perceived as minorities. They have a special autonomy on the Åland Islands (Pan and Pfeil 2000).

We can conclude this brief review of minority situations in Europe with the communities of Romani and Vlachs (Haarmann 2004). The former are present in almost all European countries. Since the Romani people settled permanently very late, their territoriality is weakly expressed and specific. Some groups are still migrating (Zupančič 2014, pp. 23–45).

#### 4. MINORITIES IN PROTECTED AREAS

Tendencies for protecting border areas are evident due to government interests for certain forms of control over state borders, even though they are promoted by very different interests. It is hard to prove that limiting norms and control is aimed at minorities, but it seems indicative in some cases. Parkisation varies in its activity, depending primarily on the protection regime (strictest in areas of national parks and less strict in landscape and regional parks or in Natura 2000 areas) (more in: *Natura 2000 Barometer*). Namely, landscape and regional parks predominantly emphasise cultural characteristics of areas and consequently generally include the local population to ensure the success and rationality of management. In certain situations, the local population can actually be responsible for protection norms, as it expect to benefit from this activity. A park regime justifies compensatory financial measures and promotes sustainable use of local resources. Theoretically, protected areas provide quite a few development options for minorities as well, under the condition, of course, that these minorities are accepted as a specific cultural element of this environment (Zupančič 2013)<sup>9</sup>. Herein frequently lies the problem. From the perspective of

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<sup>9</sup> In USA and Canada, as well as in Australia, indigenous people (Native Americans in North America, Aborigines in central parts of Australia) are protected by particular territorial protection of their natural environments – s.c. Indian-Reserves (or Reservates). The idea is far from any European sense of ethnic protection, but explains that the particular cultural aspects can strictly be incalculated into some models of minority protection, in fact! (Zupančič 2013, pp. 193–196).

ethnocentrically oriented national states and their policies, an interpretation of cultural characteristics of border areas represents an opportunity to cover minority characteristics with state (national) characteristics<sup>10</sup>. The minority element, such as the local toponymy, language characteristics, cultural monuments, and other objects, can quickly become the object of concealment or even ignorance. This is just a continuation of policies less inclined towards minorities, which are replaced by elements of majority culture.

From the Iberian Peninsula to the north of Scandinavia, we can monitor the trend of parkisation as a form of establishing protected border areas. Around 37% of European minorities lives with a certain form of protection, which represents around close to half of all European border minority areas<sup>11</sup>. The presence of minorities along borders represents a statistically significant increase of likelihood of establishment of protected areas. However, minorities and particularly their cultural characteristics are relatively rarely the object of park protection. Protected areas are more often seen as an instrument of government policies that have a less than favourable effect on minorities. This article cannot systematically present all situations of minorities in protected areas. We shall therefore focus on cases of minorities in South Alpine arc between Aosta in Italy and western regions of Hungary.

Larger minorities that achieved a certain level of autonomy and can therefore manage their settlement area on the local and regional level have an undisputed advantage. French-speaking Aosta is an Italian region in the Alpine arc that has a formal special position due to language and cultural characteristics. In this respect, language is an essential element and an object of protection by itself. The effects of territorial autonomy are even better expressed in South Tyrol (Zupančič 2010). The numerous and well-organised German-speaking community of South Tyrol also achieved the economic autonomy, which enables not only investments into, for instance, development of alpine agriculture, and consequently preservation of settlement and cultural landscape, but is aggressively focusing on economically promising segment of tourism and transport. This also benefits the small community of Ladin people in the same region. Cultural characteristics are the object of economisation, which allows both minorities to develop their own culture and strengthen their identity (Zupančič 2005). In this

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<sup>10</sup> B. Comrie (2009) explains details of linguistic politics and the differentiation between countries. Further reading about the linguistic distribution in Europe in "Languages of Europe", available on website. H. Haarmann (2004) or C. Pan and B.S. Pfeil (2000) and L. Klemens (1995) explain just basic (statistical) issues.

<sup>11</sup> Estimated by author; this are preliminary results, the changes are possible!

regard, the large scope of protected areas in the region represents a protective measure against migration pressures both from other parts of Italy (due to completely economic motives!) and other areas. This allows the two minorities to preserve jobs and maintain economic development, while also indirectly maintaining the settlement, preventing the proportion of minority population to decrease. The situation is different on the settlement areas of Slovenians (as well as Friulian people) in the east border belt of Italy (Bufon 2008). In Alpine valleys of Julian Alps, cultural characteristics of Slovenians are not the object of protection, and protection approaches do not grant the local population even the compensatory economic advantages in protected areas. Some valleys in Slavia Veneta (Beneška Slovenija) are close to be emptied. In the Austrian Carinthia, the Slovenian settlement core in the south border belt in the Karawanks is almost entirely under a specific protection regime. The Austrian minority policy was never favourably inclined towards the Slovenian minority and had significantly limited the development of bilingual topography, for instance (Klemenčič and Klemenčič 1995, pp. 202–206). Even though the cultural heritage of the Karawanks is exclusively Slovenian, guides present it as generally South-Austrian (Carinthian, regional), while the language is not even mentioned. Attempts at Germanisation of originally Slovenian toponymies have been going on for decades. On the other hand, however, the protection regime implemented some economic advantages for farmers and the tourism sector, which provide economic compensation in less favourable mountain regions. However, the cultural heritage elements of the Slovenian minority did not become an explicit object of protection within the regional park (Bandelj et al. 2016).

In the past, the Slovenian-Austrian-Hungarian tri-border region has always been a peripheral area. After the Second World War, the “iron curtain” ran through this area, contributing to the peripheralisation of the area. After 1990, the borders opened, but cross-border communication was very scarce due to the extremely peripheral character of the area. All three countries decided to promote the border triangle in the spirit of the new Europe of open borders and protection of natural and cultural heritage. Establishment of a protected area seemed an excellent pro-European idea. Austria approached in a minimalistic manner and employed the weakest regime to primarily protect individual wetland habitats. Slovenia used the concept of a landscape park in the hilly area of Prekmurje region to implement state economic interventionism in the least developed Slovenian region. According to experience, the park has so far failed to bring any economic advantages for the locals. Romani settlements had quite a few problems with the construction of municipal infrastructure due to limitations of the park (Zupančič 2014, pp. 206–209). Hungary declared a national

park in the border area, even though Órség (where the National Park has been established) has been significantly altered by the population. This is the wettest and most forested part of Hungary, and is declared and interpreted as such in the Hungarian national strategy for protected areas. Only valuable “national” features are interpreted and promoted, leaving practically no room for the Slovenian minority. The park has become a pragmatic circumstance for the Slovenian minority, a limitation without offered economic and cultural compensations. This in effect only reestablishes the measures of state control in the area of the former “iron curtain”. The park regime has a predominantly negative effect on the Slovenian minority (Šiftar 2016).

## 5. CONCLUSION: PROSPECTS OF MINORITIES IN PROTECTED AREAS

Minorities are a politically and culturally sensitive part of European space. Declarative support by European institutions added a few incentives, whereas the political practice of most European countries indicates the deep roots of ethnocentric attitudes. With the liberalisation of cross-border communication, we can observe the trend of establishing protected areas in border regions. Minorities benefit only in a small number of cases, while parkisation<sup>12</sup> quite often has a detrimental effect on minorities. The question of minorities' development prospects in protected areas is therefore quite appropriate. These prospect can be identified in three directions: strengthening receptive capabilities of minorities, implementation of compensatory measures, and development of alternative economic activities in protected areas and their borders.

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<sup>12</sup> Here: the general orientation how to solve the local problems of peripheral regions by state-interventionism. The ideas about “green future” of these areas thru eco-tourism and limited agriculture offen faces with rough reality: the escape of people, the only holders of any kind of progress.

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# **REGIONALIST, ETHNO-LINGUISTIC AND SEPARATIST/INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

After the Second World War in Europe three processes took place: 1) activation of regionalist and ethno-linguistic movements, 2) occurrence of separatist (independence) movements which in some cases led to emergence of new states, and 3) European integration (with the European Union as its most important institutional form). These three processes evidently shaped, among other things, conditions of life and activity of “borderland peoples” being the main subject of this volume of “Region and Regionalism”. Location and “timing” of these three processes were uneven in space and time: while in the western part of the continent two processes prevailed over the whole postwar period: that of activation of regionalism<sup>1</sup> and ethno-linguistic movements and that of European integration, in Central and Eastern Europe after the end of the cold war separatist (independence) tendencies came to the fore leading to disintegration of some states being in the moment of disintegration outside the EU. What should be underlined, no member state of the EU (and its predecessors) was disintegrated (or lost a part of its European territory) despite strong centrifugal tendencies in

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<sup>1</sup> In political sciences the term „regionalism” is used in two different meanings: as a movement of integration (cooperation) of states located in a given region of the world (such as European integration) and as a movement promoting or defending political, economic and/or cultural identity of regions as parts of nation states. The former can be called “supra-national regionalism” and the latter – “sub-national regionalism”. In this paper the term “regionalism” is used the latter meaning.

some of them. The aim of this paper is to investigate these three tendencies, in particular to answer the question of relationship between European integration and the two other processes: to what extent the European integration facilitated (encouraged) regionalisms and ethno-linguistic movements, what was the impact of European integration (and of the EU specifically) on encouraging or discouraging separatist (independence) tendencies in states within and outside the EU.

Appearance of European integration after the Second World War was new a phenomenon in politics, mentality and even morality in Europe. It was a result of considerably changed perception of many ideas, such as nation and nationalism, regionalism, internationalism, modernity, etc. To present importance of the “mental revolution” enabling European integration, it seems necessary to trace back intellectual evolution in Europe in areas related to collective identities.

## **2. A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: “LEGITIMATE” AND “ILLEGITIMATE” IDENTITIES AND UNIVERSALISM IN EUROPE**

Over the history some collective identities (identifications) in some eras were regarded as “legitimate” or “illegitimate” (or “tolerated”). The “legitimate” identities were rewarded and the “illegitimate” identities were fought against by those in political and/or symbolical power, using ways and means in accordance with the then ideologies, technology, mentality etc. The system of “legitimate” and “illegitimate” identities met with various reactions ranging from full acceptance to opposition. Three such eras can be distinguished: pre-modern, modern and postmodern.

### **2.1. The pre-modern era: Christian universalism**

We can assume that from the point of view of identities the pre-modern era lasted from the beginnings (or consolidation) of Christianity until religious wars and emergence of modern nation states, in other words more or less over thousand years from 600 to 1600. Of course, it was a very differentiated period, full of events, but its detailed presentation is beyond the scope of this analysis. It should be added that this analysis considers mostly Western Europe (or more precisely: Western Christianity Europe), because in the eastern part of Europe history diverted considerably from that in Western Europe, although some similarities between the two parts of Europe can be observed.

The pivotal element in the political, mental and cultural construction of (Western) Europe in this era was Christian universalism. It means, the Christendom formed a community – *civitas Dei* – composed by the Pope as representative of the God in the Earth, monarchs, priests of various ranks, hierarchically organized social strata, and what made this set of elements a community: common faith, common Church with its centralistic structure with resulting common “rules of the game”, common class of rulers (the then monarchs and aristocrats could take thrones and possessions in places irrespective of those monarchs' and aristocrats' territorial origin just like present day CEOs can take positions in international companies irrespective of those CEOs' place of birth) as well as common *lingua franca* (Latin) and a common portion of knowledge.

In this era the “legitimate” identities were those compatible with the dominant version of Christian doctrine and with the political order centered on the Church.

There were also neutral or tolerated identities. These were all territorial, ethnic, socio-professional and familiar identities. It is worth mentioning that out of these identities there would emerge future powerful national and ethnic identities which eventually destroy the Christian universalism.

The “illegitimate” identities were those religious identities which were incompatible with the dominant version of Christian universalism (heresies).

The arbiter of legitimacy of identities was the Church, and within it specialised institutions guarding doctrinal correctness. At their disposal were instruments of enforcing legitimate identities: symbolical (praise or condemnation), institutional (acceptance or exclusion from the community), transcendental (promise of eternal salvation or condemnation) and physical (expulsion, elimination). There were several reactions to this system: active acceptance (and efforts to maintain it), passive acceptance (observance of the rules without attempts to “correct” behaviours of dissidents), passive rejection (emigration), and active rejection (intellectual, political, military). Rejection not necessarily was addressed against the whole system, rather more often than not it was directed against some particular aspects of the system (as for instance conduct of the clergy, financing the Church, etc.) and its aim was not to destroy the system but to improve it, but the final result was erosion and collapse of the system.

From the point of view of the present situation, the era of Christian universalism is relevant for two reasons: it was a supra-national European community that in the future was inspiration for a new kind, secular, European community, and secondly, the Christian universalism was compatible with feudalism which conserved ethno-linguistic differentiation of Europe and gave birth both to nationalisms and ethno-regionalisms.

## 2.2. The modern era: nationalism

The primetime of the modern era, or the era of nationalism, was the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, or between Napoleonic wars and the end of the Second World War. (The period between the disintegration of the Christian universalism and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be regarded as a transition period, as “early modernity”). The main feature of this era was the primacy of Nation, of national community over other forms of collectivities. Nation (or better to say: nations) became the highest value and building a nation (“nation-building”) was the highest duty. Nations were built mostly on the ground (or emerged from the ground) of pre-modern kingdoms, more seldom duchies and ethno-linguistic groups. Emergence of nations as the primary form of collectivity was a result and a cause of the erosion of the Christian community. Two kinds of nations in that era must be distinguished: state nations (or nations having their states) and stateless nations (or nations without their state organisation).

Nation-building (nationalism) was tightly connected with the idea of modernisation. Modernisation, grown up to the position of a new religion, understood as developing industry, education, transportation systems (roads, railways), etc., eradication of superstitions, unification of language and culture, alphabetisation of the population served the goal of building (consolidating) a nation, nationalism (or national pride) motivated for efforts for modernisation. Nations were condemned to compete against each other as each nation wanted more: state nations wanted more territory and annihilation of stateless nations within their boundaries, stateless nations wanted more freedom and more people, and each nation felt insecure and obliged to defend its territory or human substance. The dominant rule of the game in relations between nations was: the stronger is always right, and the use of military force is a legitimate way of solving problems.

In such a situation the “legitimate” identity was the national identity. Other identities were judged depending on their contribution to the national idea.

“Tolerated” identities were all religious identities (provided that they had no political implications, otherwise they fell into the category of “legitimate” or “illegitimate” depending on whether they strengthened or weakened the national identity), social-professional, familiar, local (as long as they were a source of folklore and did not oppose the nation-building).

“Illegitimate” were regional, ethnic and supra-national (cosmopolitanism) identities as opposing or hindering the process of nation-building and modernisation (or even threatening disintegration of the nation) or detracting people from mobilisation against internal and external menaces to the nation. A special

problem were ethno-linguistic (national) minorities as they presented a challenge to the idea of homogeneous nation, were suspected of separatism (irredentism) and could be used by external enemies to weaken the nation<sup>2</sup>. Only those regional identities were tolerated which were considered as a necessary intermediary step in the transition from local identities to the national identity (“from peasants to citizens”).

“The arbiters” of legitimacy of identities were national governments and national elites. In the case of stateless nation the “arbiters” were national elites composed mostly by intellectuals.

Instruments of enforcing legitimate identities were symbolic (“symbolic violence”, intimidation, ridiculing), institutional (education, law, armed forces, etc.) and physical (expulsion, incarceration, exile, elimination, extermination).

The concrete “mix” of instruments of diffusing (imposing, inculcating) national identities depended on political, economic, ethno-linguistic, geographical, etc. circumstances, and first of all, on the status of a given nationalism – whether it was a state nationalism or a stateless nationalism. Crucial element was education which served eradication of illiteracy, diffusing of the knowledge of the national language and spreading the sense of belonging to the nation. Needless to say, state nationalisms had more means at their disposal to carry out the policy of “nationalisation” of their inhabitants in comparison with stateless nationalisms, but the latter were not absolutely deprived of such means, especially in central and eastern Europe where the empires (Habsburg, Ottoman, Russian) revealing many traits of pre-modern political organisations were too weak, too poor, too internally differentiated or simply not striving to transform themselves into nations to impose the “one state – one nation – one language” model, and the stateless nationalisms there were strong enough to fight back some concessions in the field of education and even politics (political autonomy).

The division into state and stateless nationalisms was changeable as in the course of events several stateless nationalisms became state nationalisms as a result of unification of pre-national state formations into national states (Germany, Italy, Romania) and getting independence from larger empires (in the Balkans before the First World War and in central-eastern Europe and Ireland after this war). Newly established nation states usually followed the model of nation building, in such a way they did not change the logic of the modern era.

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<sup>2</sup> As Milan Buffon puts it: “[...] in the period of classic nationalism, autochthonous national minorities were perceived as some kind of a ‘foreign matter’ or ‘fifth column’ which needed to be physically removed or in any other way ‘disabled’ (assimilated)” (Buffon 2014, p. 17).

As regards reactions of the “illegitimate” identities, several attitudes could be observed: submission, emigration and resistance (peaceful and violent). Submission meant acceptance and internalisation of the idea of being a part of a given nation (or at least behaving as if one believed to be part of this nation and were “civilised” and “modern”), mastering of the national language (with the tendency to abandon other languages), etc. by people revealing undesirable identities. Large-scale migrations in defence of ethno-national identities were rather rare, but one of them deserves mentioning: it is migration of Jews-Zionist to Palestine (*Eretz Israel*) since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Resistance of the “illegitimate” identities, as mentioned above, in some cases led to political and cultural autonomy and independence of new states.

The logic of the era of modernity and nationalism was largely rejected after the Second World War giving birth to the postmodern era and a search of a new European universalism. Before analysing this era it is worth to research in a more detailed way into this part of the modern era which directly led to the revision of the logic of nationalism and modernity. This part of the history is the period of the two world wars.

### **2.3. The two Big Shocks in Europe and the divergent conclusions**

The two world wars were an apogee of the era of nationalism and modernity. Both were big shocks but the conclusions drawn from them were absolutely divergent.

Conclusions drawn from the First World War, especially by those who lost it (especially Germany, Hungary, Ukrainian nationalist movement, but also by other national movements), even more strengthened the existing rules of the game. These conclusions were: 1) nation is the highest value – our nation is the chosen nation and has a mission to fulfil, and therefore it has the right to use any means to achieve it, 2) stronger nations are always right – we must be the stronger (in relation to our external and internal enemies) to win the confrontation, 3) sub-national (regional, ethnic) identities in our country is a threat and in other countries is an opportunity – we must intensify the fight against them in our country and support them in other countries to undermine our enemies, 4) supranational identities blur the boundaries between nations and weaken national mobilization – they must be fought against.

The idea that our nation must be strong, unified and free of undesirable elements, combined with the theory of Darwinism and inequality of human races led on the one hand to rejection of democracy (as a system hindering unification

of the nation), and on the other hand to the radical anti-Semitism, and other forms of racism and inter-ethnic hatred.

The final result was the birth and spread of fascism (Nazism) and the outbreak of the Second World War with millions of dead, the holocaust, inter-ethnic pogroms, mass deportations and forced migrations and sufferings on the scale not registered before in the history of humankind.

The conclusions drawn from the Second World War were radically different and implied a change of the rules of the game: 1) nation is not the highest value, nationalism must be reduced not to threaten peace and human rights, 2) stronger nations are not always right, rights of smaller nations must be protected, confrontation between (European) nations must not be the way of doing international politics, 3) minority (regional, ethnic) groups in our country need not to be a threat and in other countries must not be an opportunity, 4) supranational European identity weaken nationalisms and enables peaceful cooperation benefitting all nations and peoples. The Cold War division of Europe made that these conclusions led to different situations in both parts of Europe, but the idea of peaceful coexistence of nations and discrediting of nationalism was common to both parts.

#### **2.4. The postmodern (late modern) era: in search of a European universalism**

The postmodern or late modern way of thinking stemmed from the rejection of the ideology that led to world wars. Its main characteristic was the “shrinking” of the nation which left space to both supranational and sub-national identities. At the same time modernity (modernisation) in the sense of improving material conditions of life, was decoupled from the idea of nationalism: nation-state no longer had the monopoly for modernisation.

As regards the space for supra-national identities, one can speak of appearance of a kind of a new European universalism with European integration (and the EU as its main form) and “European” values as its manifestations. As in other eras, there are “legitimate” and “illegitimate” identities, arbiters, instruments and reactions (fig. 1).

“Legitimate” identities encompass a broad range of identities: supra-national, national, local, ethnic, religious and other (all of them provided that they can be accommodated in democratic-legal ways).

“Illegitimate” are racial, nationalistic, xenophobic, etc. identities denying peaceful coexistence of peoples, equality of rights and democracy.

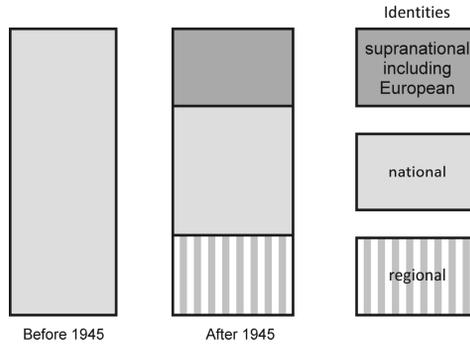


Fig. 1. “Legitimate” identities in (Western) Europe before and after 1945  
Source: own elaboration

“The arbiters” of legitimacy are undefined European elites and defined institutions like European Court of Human Rights, Council of Europe with its Venice Commission, etc.

Instruments of enforcing legitimate identities include moral (condemnation), institutional and physical actions. These actions are mostly undertaken on the level of each nation state, in accordance with its internal law, which, otherwise, must be compatible with European standards. There are also attempts at institutionalisation of instruments at the EU level.

As to reactions of the “illegitimate” identities, these entail submission and resistance (peaceful and violent) in the form of Euro-sceptical, xenophobic, racist movements and attitudes.

Summing up the discussion on “legitimate” and “illegitimate” identities, the following figure presents “legitimate” identities in Europe before and after the end of the Second World War.

### 3. EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND ETHNO-REGIONALISM AND SEPARATISM IN WESTERN EUROPE AFTER 1945

The postmodern era facilitated both European integration and activation of sub-national identities in the form of ethno-regionalist and separatist movements. Summing up the general relationship between European integration and sub-national movements it can be said that:

- 1) European integration was parallel to, and interrelated with, the process of activation of ethno-regionalist movements,
- 2) European integration preserved territorial integrity of states participating in the process of integration.

Both European integration and activation of ethno-regionalist movements were a result of the weakening of nationalism, which opened room for legitimisation of both sub-national and supra-national identities. At the same time European integration confirmed the principle of intangibility of national borders and eliminated the threat that ethno-regional minorities could be used to subversive activities by other states. Therefore, ethno-regional movements ceased to be regarded as a threat to national unity. Also the idea of decentralisation and regionalisation promoted by the European Union created favourable atmosphere for expression of regional identities. The relationship between the European Union and regionalism and regionalisation was confirmed by several institutions and actions, such as the Committee of the Regions (a consultative body of the EU), EU's funds (mainly dedicated to regional development) benefitting regional government and encouraging regionalisation of member states, etc. There appeared even a conviction of "symbiosis" between the EU and regions, whose expression was the idea of "Europe of regions" (Applegate 1999, Biscoe 2001, Mathias 2006, Cabada 2009).

There were also other factors favourable for demonstration of ethno-regionalist and ethno-linguistic identities: paradoxically it was their weakness. After decades or centuries of homogenising policies these identities and ethno-linguistic and ethno-regional communities behind them were generally weak enough not to present a real challenge to stability of states. Additionally, processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, the spread of mass media usually presenting unified national culture as well as market rewarding cultural mass production for the national audience (in national languages) rather than for small regional audiences (in regional languages) further eroded ethno-linguistic and ethno-regional groups so that central governments and national elites could afford to be generous towards them. What is more, in the atmosphere of post-modernism diversity (be it biological or cultural and linguistic) became a value. In such circumstances ethno-regionalist and ethno-linguistic movements received another legitimisation.

Apart from the general tendency for activation of ethno-regionalist movements there were country-specific conditions conducive to these movements, e.g.: in Germany the federalisation was imposed by the occupying powers after the war as a measure to weaken German nationalism, in Italy a form of autonomy was given to some regions to assuage separatist and irredentist tendencies (Alto Adige/South Tyrol, Val d'Aosta, Sicily, Sardinia, Friuli-Venezia Giulia), in the United Kingdom the demise of the British empire weakened the British and strengthened Scottish and Welsh identities, in Spain democratisation after the end of Franco regime activated "frozen" ethno-regionalist and nationalist move-

ments, in Belgium there was a continuing process of emancipation of Flemings, reinforced by the economic strengthening of Flanders in relation to the southern regions, resulted in federalization of the Belgian state (in the early 1990s).

It must be underlined that despite the above mentioned examples of regionalism and separatism **no one state participating in the process of European integration** (members of the European Union and its predecessors) **was dismembered or lost a part of its European territory** (losses of non-European territories as a result of decolonisation, e.g. the loss of Algeria by France, were unrelated to European integration)

This is due to two factors to which European integration contributed indirectly or directly:

a) long lasting economic prosperity which reduced the sharpness of economic conflicts within individual countries, acceptance of intangibility of national borders and refrain from supporting separatist tendencies in other states as rules of conduct of participants in European integration,

b) active discouragement by the EU of separatist/independence demands in some countries or the threat that leaving an EU member state would mean leaving the EU (Flanders in the early 1990s, Scotland 2014, Catalonia in recent decades).

Summing up the discussion of the relationship between the EU and regionalism and separatist (independence) movements in EU members states, it can be said that the EU was favourable towards regionalisms, expressing ethno-regional identities as long as they did not threaten territorial integrity of member states. This is not surprising given that the EU is an intergovernmental inter-state organisation and safeguarding territorial integrity is the highest duty of any sovereign state.

#### **4. ETHNO-REGIONALIST AND SEPARATIST/INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPE (IN COUNTRIES BELONGING TO THE EUROPEAN UNION)**

Ethno-regionalist and separatist/independence movements in Western European EU member states represent a very rich a differentiated set of phenomena that cannot be described in details in a paper like this. Therefore the aim of the beneath presentation is only to point out to the very existence of them as illustration of the above thesis that in the era of postmodernity European integration is parallel to the activation of sub-national identities.

**United Kingdom** can be regarded as a “nation of nations”, in which Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are “nations within a nation”. Therefore it is hard to speak of Scotland and Wales as of typical examples of ethno-regionalist movements. Nevertheless, given that the UK is a nation state, Scotland and Wales can be considered as its regions.



Fig. 2. United Kingdom

Source: based on <https://www.google.pl/search?q=united+kingdom>

Scotland and Wales deserve attention for their strong identity, and for the movement for recognition of this identity and for getting autonomy.

Scottish identity can be termed as “civic nationalism”, in which every inhabitant of Scotland is regarded as a Scot, and the main aims of autonomy movement is getting more say in deciding on Scottish affairs and make Scotland visible abroad as a “European nation” (“Scotland – equal among equals in Europe”) (Keating 2001). Ethno-linguistic factor in Scottish identity plays a marginal factor, although the two local languages – Scottish Gaelic and Scots play a role of symbol of Scottish identity.

Welsh identity has a stronger ethno-linguistic component as the Welsh language, spoken by a 20% minority but regarded as ancestral language by more Welshmen, is considered as symbol of national identity of Wales, and its safeguarding is an important aim of the Welsh movement.

Movements for autonomy of Scotland and Wales underwent a significant evolution in the post-Second World War. At the beginning of the 1980s in both regions referenda were held on granting them autonomy. In both cases the result was negative. The mood changed after conservative governments in the UK and by the end of the 1990s in new referenda on autonomy in both regions the result was positive. In 1999, in the framework of the so called “devolution” both Scotland and Wales received a kind of home rule, greater for Scotland and smaller for Wales. Also Northern Ireland received autonomy, but it was rather a compromise between the two opposing parties (Protestant unionists and Catholic irredentists) rather than an aim of a would-be Northern Irish autonomy movement.

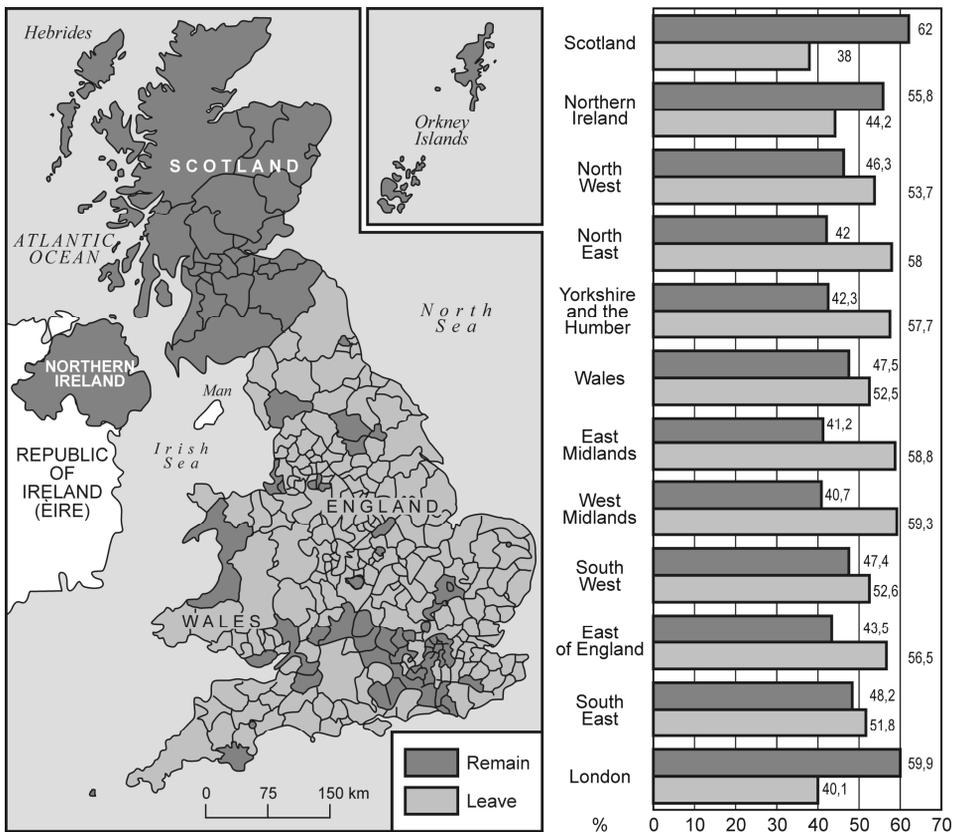


Fig. 3. Brexit: results of the referendum

Source: based on <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2016-brexit-referendum/>

In Scotland Scottish National Party (SNP), representing Scottish pro-European civic nationalism and declaring independence of Scotland as its goal, came to power. As a result of agreement between the Scottish government (of Alex Salmond) and the British government (of David Cameron), in September 2014 referendum on independence of Scotland was held. One of reasons to vote no for independence, raised during the referendum campaign, was that leaving the UK would automatically mean leaving the EU, and most Scots would like to remain in the European Union. The result of the referendum was 45% yes (in favour) and 55% no. The Scottish referendum was the most serious challenge to territorial unity of a member state of the EU. It can be assumed that, to some extent, the desire to remain in the EU discouraged Scottish voters and secured unity of the United Kingdom<sup>3</sup>.

Scottish desire to remain in the EU was confirmed at the referendum on Brexit (leaving the EU by Britain) in June 2016. While British voters as a whole voted for Brexit (52% to 48%), the overwhelming majority of Scots (62%) voted for remaining in the EU, and what more, for remaining in the EU were all Scottish constituencies (fig. 3).

**Spain** is another country of Western Europe with strong ethno-regionalist and separatist (independence) tendencies. They are a product of long history dating back to the period of *reconquista* in early middle ages. During the Spanish nation-building they were subdued, especially during Franco regime after the civil war. The end of this regime in mid 1970s opened the way for democratisation and for regionalisation of Spain. Undoubtedly, the desire to join the European Economic Community encouraged undertaking democratic reforms, and vice versa, democratisation of Spain facilitated its road to “Europe” (the EEC). The democratisation and regionalisation released frozen ethno-regionalist and separatist identities and movements.

Regions with the most vivid ethno-regionalist or nationalist identities and aspirations are Basque Country and Catalonia. Among other things, distinctiveness of these regions is manifested in the fact that they have two official languages: Spanish (Castilian) and Basque or Catalan. What perhaps deserves more attention than objective differences between Catalans and (the rest of) Spaniards is the growing emotional aversion dividing them (Grau 2015). In these two regions radical wings of ethno-regionalist movements strive for breaking

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<sup>3</sup> This opinion is confirmed by the present leader of the Scottish National Party and First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon who said to a SNP conference in October 2016: “Some who voted No believed that staying in the UK offered greater economic security, a stronger voice in the world and a guaranteed place in the EU” (Sturgeon 2016).

away from Spain and establish independent states. In recent years separatist (independence) tendency is especially strong in Catalonia, where this tendency is represented not only by radicals but also by the regional government. In November 2014 it organised an independence referendum (considered illegal and invalid by the Constitutional Court of Spain). Majority of voters, which however represented minority of inhabitants of the region, voted for independence<sup>4</sup>. The present regional government in office since December 2015 announced its will to declare independence of Catalonia in 18 months (or by mid-2017) (fig. 4).

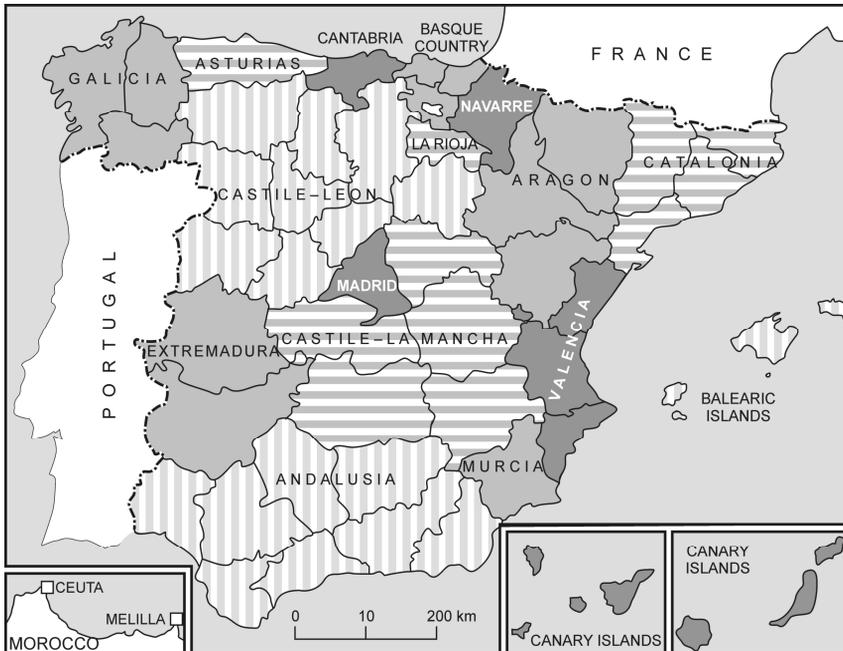


Fig. 4. Spain

Source: based on <https://www.google.pl/search?q=spain+regions>

It should be underlined that both in Basque Country and Catalonia most regionalist (nationalist) leaders, like Scottish nationalists, declare desire that their regions (independent countries after independence) remain in the European Union. This creates unfavourable conditions for realisation of independence

<sup>4</sup> On November 9, 2014 Catalan government organised an unofficial referendum called “public opinion investigation” in which most participants (80%) voted for independence but the turnout was well below 50%, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29982960>.

aspirations as it is unlikely that the EU, which is after all an intergovernmental organisation, would recognise unilaterally declared independence of regions belonging to its member states<sup>5</sup>.

Other regions with strong ethno-regionalist identities are Galicia, Balearic Islands, Valencia (all of them have two official languages) and Canary Islands. It should be added that also other regions have their cultural specificity distinguishing them from the rest of Spain although with relatively weak ethno-regionalist movements.

**Belgium.** For historical reasons Belgium is a country composed by two big ethno-linguistic groups: Flemish (Dutch)-speaking and French-speaking, plus a small German-speaking group (fig. 5).

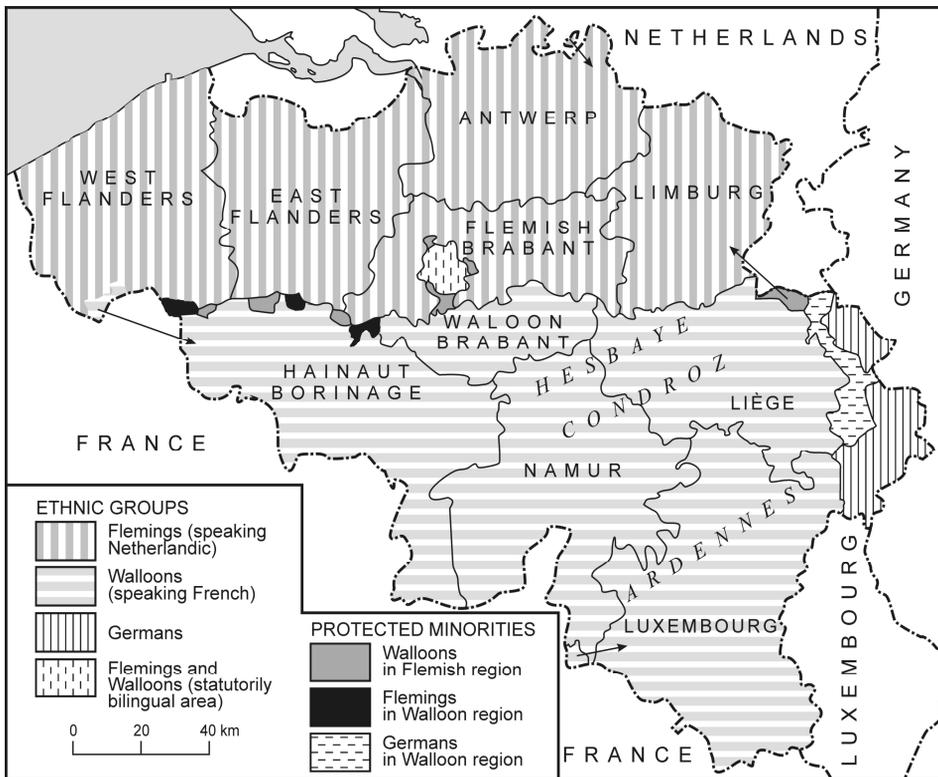


Fig. 5. Belgium: ethno-linguistic groups

Source: based on <http://kids.britannica.com/elementary/art-750/The-ethn-and-linguistic-composition-of-Belgium>

<sup>5</sup> See: *Brussels says an independent Catalonia would need to leave EU*: <http://www.euractiv.com/video/brussels-independent-catalonia-n-530496>.

Additionally, what makes the situation even more complicated, the capital city Brussels, predominantly French-speaking, is located within the Flemish-speaking territory. After its creation in 1830 Belgium was dominated by French speakers, both in political and socio-economic terms (French as the only official language of the state and the dominant language of education, culture, business, etc.). Flemish speakers were under multiple domination: political, linguistic-cultural and socio-economic as they were predominantly peasants. This multiple domination and the feeling of discrimination triggered emancipation and centrifugal tendencies among the Flemings. These resulted in transformation of Belgium in the 1990s into a complicated federation composed by three regions: Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels, and three linguistic communities: Flemish (Dutch), French and German. (Flanders and the Flemish Community have common government, its headquarters are located in Brussels). The most radical demands, especially by Flemish separatists (independentists) encountered an insurmountable obstacle: Brussels. Flemish nationalists could not resign from Brussels, but at the same time they could not absorb this big French speaking city, not mentioning the possible opposition by the French-speaking community and inhabitants of Brussels themselves.

An important role in discouraging tendencies to divide Belgium was the attitude of the European Union which warned that in the case of the division and the probable conflict around the fate of Brussels, it would withdraw its offices from this city (Rossel 1997).

**Italy** is a country with relatively strong ethno-regional and linguistic differentiation expressed in ethno-regional identities and movements, in some cases even in separatist tendencies. This situation has its roots in the complicated history of this country, especially in the lack of Italian statehood until the late 19th century, a statehood which could not culturally and linguistically homogenise regions and ethno-linguistic communities which had developed their identities during centuries of independent evolution.

Of special importance is the region Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol with its sizable German-speaking population which in the early post-Second World War period revealed strong irredentist tendencies. An agreement between Italy and Austria (regarded as a kind of protector of interests of German-speaking population in this region) and the far reaching autonomy, especially in matters related to language and culture, as well as a specific organization of the socio-political life in the region in the form of parallel societies (German-speaking and Italian-speaking) put an end to separatism in this region.

Similar tendencies, although on a smaller scale, were also present in Valle d'Aosta whose population claimed to be ethnic French and revealed a desire to

be attached to France. Also in this case the autonomy, including recognition of French as co-official language of the region, assuaged the situation. Autonomist or ethno-regionalist tendencies appeared in other regions too, such as Sicily, Sardinia and Friuli-Venezia Giulia resulting in granting formal autonomy to these regions and recognition, to some extent, of regional languages (Friulian, Sardinian) as well as recognition of Slovenian minority. In recent decades, especially in the 1990s, a regionalist movement (alternatively called “Lega Nord” or “Padania”) representing socio-economic (and to a lesser extent cultural) interests of northern regions, got a salience becoming a considerable element in the political life of Italy (fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Italy – regions in 2103

Source: based on <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/lgcolor/itregions.htm>

It can be said that “Europeanisation” of Italy after the Second World War on the one hand instigated regionalist and ethno-regionalist movements, and on the other hand helped to channel separatist tendencies into manageable regionalisms. In such a way European integration contributed to safeguarding territorial integrity of Italy.

**France** is known for its centralism and “Jacobinism” meaning disrespect for cultures, languages and identities in French boundaries other than the standard Paris-based culture and language and all-national French identity (fig. 7). One of results of this is the far advanced process of cultural and linguistic assimilation of ethno-regional groups into the French standard. After the Second World War ethno-linguistic diversity of France was officially recognised as enriching France. In such a way ethno-regionalist movements were legitimised.

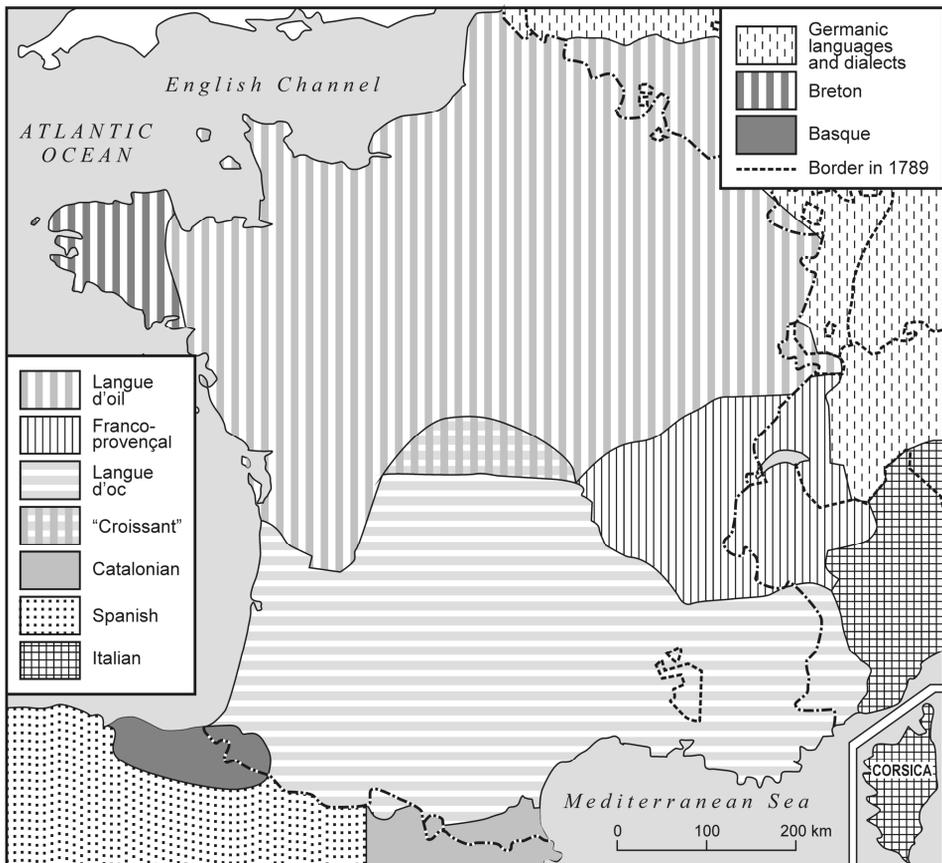


Fig. 7. France – regional languages

Source: based on <https://www.google.pl/search?q=langue+d%27oil>

There appeared several ethno-regionalist movements engaged in protection of regional languages and cultures. One can mention Occitan, Breton, Basque, Alsatian, Corsican and other movements in continental France (including Corsica). One of their expressions is establishment of schools in which regional languages are taught (although the number of children in these schools represent only a small fraction of school children in these regions). In one case, namely of Corsica, the movement took a more radical form of separatism combined with criminal activities, before it faded out squeezed by security forces and a lack of wide-spread support by the Corsican population.

**Other Western European EU member countries.** Ethno-regionalist identities and movements, stronger or weaker, exist practically in all Western European countries. For instance, in Germany we can mention Bavaria with its strong regional identity and a specific folk culture, a multi-regional movement for safeguarding the Low German language (Plattdeutsch) in the north of Germany, as well as the two recognised national minorities: Danish in Schleswig-Holstein and Sorbian in Saxony and Brandenburg. In the Netherland Friesland distinguishes itself for having two official languages: the regional Friesian language apart from the all-national Dutch language. We can also speak of a Limburger ethno-regionalism given the official recognition of its idiom as a regional language. In Sweden extreme regions: Scania in the south and Lapland in the north differ from the rest of Sweden for their specific languages and identities. Lapland or Sami region stretches over the other Nordic countries: Norway and Finland. In Finland Swedish speaking areas in Aland Islands and in the continent enjoy a special status. Even in the ethnically homogeneous Portugal a regional idiom was recognised as a “regional language” (Mirandés, in the north-east, around the town of Miranda do Douro). Denmark represents a peculiar case of an EU member state whose parts: Greenland and Faroe Islands enjoy autonomy to the extent that they have left the EU (without leaving Denmark). In the Republic of Ireland there are, still shrinking, areas called Gaeltacht, meant to protect the Irish language.

As can be seen from the above discussion, West European countries are characterised by presence, and even rise in the postwar period, of ethno-regionalist identities and movements. In some cases they have grown to separatist or independence movements, like in Scotland, Catalonia, the Basque Country or Flanders. Nowhere, however, this has led to disintegration of a state. This can be attributed, among other things, to European integration and to the EU itself.

## 5. THE EUROPEAN UNION AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF EUROPEAN STATES OUTSIDE THE EU

When analysing the relationship between the European Union (as the main manifestation of European integration) and the fates of non-EU European states, especially from central-eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War<sup>6</sup>, one can draw two conclusions:

- the EU (as an organisation) undertook conscious actions (not always successful) for maintenance of territorial integrity of states
- the EU (more as an idea than as an organisation) exerted unconscious and unplanned influence leading to disintegration of some states (tearing effects of the attraction force of the EU).

**Disintegration of the Soviet Union.** The Soviet Union until its disintegration was a federation composed by a number of “republics”, with Russia being the biggest and politically the strongest, stretching from central Europe to Caucasus, Central Asia and Far East (fig. 8). It was not only a vast territory but also, a multi-cultural (multi-civilisational) area. Among differences between republics-members of the USSR of crucial importance were: the feeling of belonging to the Western (European) civilisation or the lack thereof, and the intensity of national identity in relation to the all-Soviet identity. Of relevance was also the geographical location of republics, but it was highly correlated with the two above characteristics.



Fig. 8. The breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991

Source: based on <https://www.google.pl/search?q=soviet+union&client>

<sup>6</sup> An in-depth analysis of changes of state territories in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 and before the 2014 crisis in Ukraine is presented by M. Sobczyński (2013). His analysis, however, does not touch directly the role of the European Union.

Three republics located in the western part of the USSR, at the Baltic Sea: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, distinguished themselves from the rest of the USSR by the two characteristics: strong feeling of belonging to the Western civilisation (in contrast to predominantly Christian-Orthodox or Muslim republics of the rest of the USSR, these three were mostly Catholic or Protestant), and by strong national identity and weak (if not negative) Soviet identity. These characteristics made them wishing to leave the Soviet Union and join “Europe” (the European Union) when the “window of opportunity” opened with the *glasnost* and *perestroika* in mid-1980s. National emancipation and independence movements in these three republics disproportionately highly contributed to the final disintegration of the USSR. In such a way, the European Union, as an idea, unconsciously and indirectly contributed to the breakdown of the Soviet Union.

**Yugoslavia.** The case of Yugoslavia is similar to that of the Soviet Union in that in both cases there were federal multi-cultural states with a part of “republics” (members of federations) defining themselves as belonging to western civilisation and considering that leaving the federation would enable them to fulfill their pro-European aspirations (fig. 9). In the case of Yugoslavia these were Slovenia and Croatia. The declaration of independence in 1991 of these two republics started the process of disintegration of the Yugoslav federation.

One of elements which encouraged leaders of these two republics to leave Yugoslavia were rules of the game in the integrating Europe (in the European Union) which excluded territorial claims. What in the past, during the establishment of the “first Yugoslavia” after the First World War, and then of the “second Yugoslavia” after the Second World War, pushed Slovenians and Croats to ally with Serbs to form Yugoslavia, were to strengthen their position in conflicts over territories with their neighbours, especially with Italia over Istria and Adriatic Sea coast.

Sometimes the aim of Slovenians and Croats was to gain the contested territory, sometimes to defend it. Given that almost the whole disputed territory after the Second World War belonged to Slovenia/Croatia, these republics had practically nothing to gain and their principle aim was to secure the status quo. Rules of the game in the EU eliminating territorial claims of one member state against another assuaged fears of Slovenians and Croats, and made their alliance with Serbs useless. (It can be said that the same rules dispelled Polish fears when breaking away from the Soviet block and joining the UE). Given the political situation in Yugoslavia at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s this alliance was more than useless, it was a burden. In such a way the European Union indirectly (and some EU countries directly by diplomatic support for Slovenia and Croatia) encouraged these two republics to break away from Yugoslavia. Unlike most of

the post-Soviet states, most post-Yugoslav states does express desire to join the EU, so the attitude towards the EU was not so strong factor tearing apart Yugoslavia. The problem was, however, that the readiness of individual republics to join “Europe” was different, and the two most ready did not want to wait for the others.



Fig. 9. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991

Source: based on <http://www.icty.org/sid/321>

Of course, disintegration of Yugoslavia was a complicated phenomenon that cannot be reduced to just one factor – the passive role of the European Union. The aim of the above discussion was only to point out to existence of this factor, as one of more ones.

**Czechoslovakia.** The disintegration of Czechoslovakia, which came into effect in 1993 and was negotiated earlier, deserves a special comment as it strongly differed from the two above cases (fig. 10)<sup>7</sup>. One can hardly speak of cultural differences and different attitudes of Czechs and Slovaks towards Europe. What is more, the vast majority of Czechs and Slovaks were against

<sup>7</sup> An interesting analysis of the dissolution of Czechoslovakia is presented by Belgian scholar H. Rossel (1997), who compared cases of Czechoslovakia and Belgium in times when events in Czechoslovakia were closely watched in Belgium as many Belgians expected (feared) that Belgium would follow Czechoslovakia.

dissolution of their common state, Czechoslovakia. (For this reason, there was no referendum on dissolution of the federation, and the decision was confirmed by the parliament only). The driving force behind the dissolution of Czechoslovakia were personal ambitions of two politicians – Czech Václav Klaus and Slovak Vladimír Mečiar, heading two parties active in their respective republics, and their diverging views how to run the economy (Klaus advocated free market liberal model while Mečiar social-democratic approach). Being leaders of the two most successful parties they decided to divide the federation. This decision was pushed through the parliament. The European Union, as an organisation by its diplomats, unsuccessfully tried to dissuade the two men from dividing Czechoslovakia.



Fig. 10. Czechoslovakia, 1969–1990

Source: based on <https://www.google.pl/search?q=czechoslovakia+map>

The European Union could not, or did not want to, use its most convincing argument: the threat that dividing Czechoslovakia would block the way to the EU for the successor states. The European Union, unwittingly, alleviated the dissolution of Czechoslovakia offering a model of inter-state relations in which national borders are not obstacles for free movement of peoples (apart from goods, capitals, etc.). The promise of openness of the future Czech-Slovak border and equal treatment of Czechs and Slovaks in both states (including the treatment of the Czech language in Slovakia and Slovak in Czechia as the local language without any test of language competencies) were enough convincing that possible opponents to the dissolution did not undertake actions to stop the dissolution.

**Serbia-Montenegro.** The role of the European Union in the dissolution of the federal state of Serbia and Montenegro (2006) consisted, on the one hand, in unintentional contributing to separation of Montenegro from Serbia, and, on the other hand, in intentional attempts either to stop this dissolution or to make it “civilised”. For the small Montenegro, independence was a way of getting rid of links with Serbia undergoing hardships after the collapse of Yugoslavia and suffering from sanctions imposed by Western powers for its activities in Kosovo. As independent state Montenegro had more chances to profit from contacts with the EU. One of evidences of cooperation of Montenegro with the EU was adoption by Montenegro (still being member of the Serbia-Montenegro federation) of the euro, tolerated by the EU. Independence would even further enlarge chances for profitable relations with the EU. As to the final dissolution of Serbia-Montenegro, EU diplomacy required that the dissolution had to be confirmed in referendum in Montenegro by a “clear majority” of at least 55% of voters. By setting this threshold, instead of usual simple majority, the EU in a way discouraged Montenegrins from secession, but, at the same time, by promising to recognise independence of Montenegro after the referendum, the EU paved the way for Montenegro's independence. The final result of the referendum was slightly more than 55% for independence.

**Macedonia.** The inter-ethnic conflict in the post-Yugoslav republic of Macedonia in the early 2000s, between Macedonians and Albanians, threaten territorial integrity of this multi-ethnic state. Radical Albanian irredentists, encouraged by successes of Albanian separatist in the neighbouring Kosovo, supported by a part of the Albanian population claiming discrimination by Macedonian authorities, started a guerrilla war against Macedonia. The direct involvement of EU diplomacy (its “special envoy” Javier Solana) helped to find a solution accepted by the two parties which enlarged rights of the Albanian minority while retaining predominantly Macedonian character of the state. One of elements of this agreement was to avoid “cantonisation” of the country (division into ethnic cantons).

**Secession of Kosovo from Serbia.** Events that led to the declaration of independence of Kosovo from Serbia (2008) were largely beyond the control of the European Union, and unlike other cases, possible joining of the EU by the secession country was not a meaningful reason of the secession. As regards the role of the EU in this secession, it can be only mentioned the failed attempt by a European diplomat to negotiate an agreement between Kosovo and Serbia. Consequently, the EU turned out to be too weak or not willing to influence the situation in one of European countries outside its boundaries. On the contrary, separation of Kosovo has some impact on the EU revealing differences among

EU members towards the issue of unilateral declaration of independence by a region of a state<sup>8</sup>.

**Ukraine** represents the most complicated case of the role of the European Union in unintentional encouraging separatist tendencies and in intentional efforts to safe territorial integrity of a state (fig. 11).

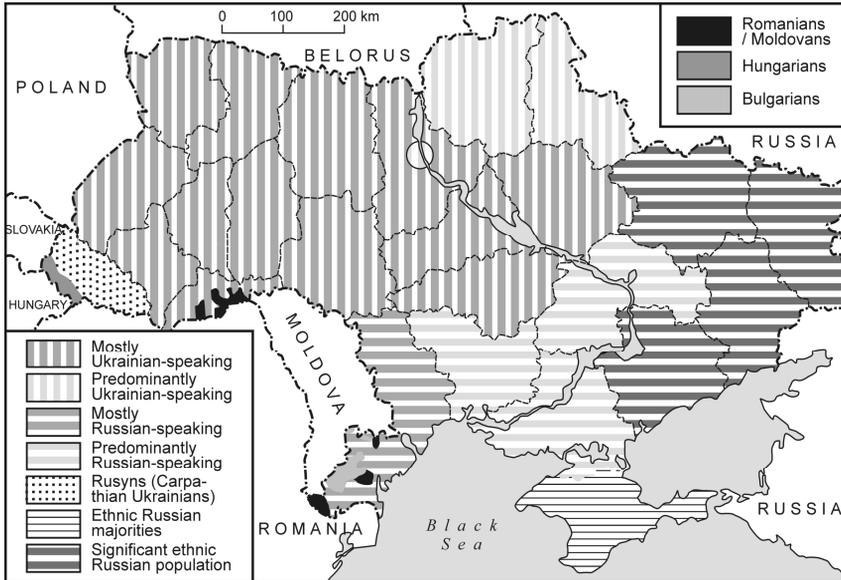


Fig. 11. Ukraine (before 2014)

Source: based on [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ethnolinguistic\\_map\\_of\\_ukraine.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ethnolinguistic_map_of_ukraine.png)

There have been at least three crucial moments in the latest history of Ukraine where territorial integrity of this state was under threat and in which the EU played an important role. The first was the so called “orange revolution” in 2004/2005 where, following presidential election, there was a serious conflict between the two camps representing two presidential candidates and more importantly, two parts of this ethnically mixed country. Mediation of the then Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski, together with former president of the European parliament, Pat Cox, helped to reach a compromise and end the conflict. It is worth underlining that the mission of Kwaśniewski – Cox was officially backed by the European Union. Consequently, it can be said that in

<sup>8</sup> A detailed comparison of the cases of Kosovo's (2008) and Crimea's (2014) independence declarations and inconsistent reactions to these two cases internationally is presented by A. Violante (2014).

that case the EU played an active and intentional role in protecting peace and maybe territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The second moment was in November – December 2013 and at the beginning of 2014. In 2013 Ukraine negotiated association agreement with the EU. At the same time Russia offered Ukraine “stick and carrot” to dissuade it from association with the EU. Conditions offered to Ukraine by the EU were far from being satisfactory for Ukrainian president Yanukovich (especially when one takes into consideration Russian threats of economic sanctions in the case of signing agreement with the EU). One can suppose that EU’s restraint in offering Ukraine better conditions was motivated by the desire not to antagonise Russia, and not to waste money in the hopelessly inefficient and corrupted Ukrainian economy. In such circumstances president Yanukovich refused to sign the association agreement. This decision was regarded by a part of Ukrainians, especially in western regions, as rejection by the president of association with the European Union and, in general, as breaking links with Europe. This triggered protests centered in the prolonged confrontation between protesters and government forces in Kiev Independence Square (*Maidan* in Ukrainian) which culminated in bloody clashes and toppling down of president Yanukovich at the beginning of 2014. The main demand of protesters was to force Ukrainian authorities to take pro-European course. Protesters were also encouraged by politicians from EU countries coming to *Maidan* and creating impression that the European Union would welcome Ukraine. The direct result of events in Kiev was the secession of Crimea and its incorporation/annexation by Russia, and the revolt in the eastern-most regions of Ukraine – Luhansk and Donetsk. Considering the role of the European Union in these events it can be said, first, that the EU as the idea divided the Ukrainian society – one part of it wanted to join (associate with) Europe while the other preferred integration with Russia, and second, that the EU as an institution was partly responsible for the crisis by not offering conditions of association that would offset the Russian offer, as well as for not correcting the false illusions made by some politicians from EU countries as if the EU supported the anti-government protests. It can be added that EU diplomacy failed to peacefully settle the conflict at *Maidan*. In such a way, the EU, unwittingly, contributed to the (partial) disintegration of Ukraine.

The third moment came immediately after the second. The secession of Crimea, revolt in Luhansk and Donetsk together with a pressure from Russia and the pro-Russian sentiments in the east of the country made that Ukraine was faced with a threat of losing further regions or even with a total collapse. In this critical moment the European Union demonstrated its solidarity and support for Ukraine. Among its expressions were sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU,

extraordinary supplies of natural gas to Ukraine and diplomatic mediation (the so called Minsk negotiations between Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France) which meant that Ukraine was not left alone. Although the leading role was played by some EU countries (especially Germany), but the fact that the EU as a whole supported these activities can be interpreted as an EU action. In such a way, the EU as an institution consciously help Ukraine to defend its existence and to stop the process of unraveling the country.

## 6. FINAL REMARKS

Summing up the previous discussions it can be said that the European Union:

- favours regionalisms in its member states but only until the moment when they transform themselves into separatist/independence movements,
- successfully stabilizes situation within member states.

Outside its boundaries it acts in an ambiguous way:

- unconsciously contributes to disintegration of non-member states,
- consciously tries to preserve territorial integrity, with various results, as sometimes it lacks real will or lacks effective instruments to influence behaviours of political actors.

An interesting test of the role of the European Union in relation to independence/separatist tendencies will be the fate of Scotland after Brexit. In 2014, when United Kingdom was still member of the EU, the perspective of leaving the UK which maybe would have meant leaving the EU, discouraged some Scots in the referendum from voting for independence and thus saved unity of the United Kingdom. After Brexit, the attraction force of the EU will act against unity of the UK and for independence of Scotland. In such a situation several scenarios can be imagined: “business as usual” (no change in the place of Scotland in the UK), “devomax” (or maximal devolution of power of the UK central government towards the devolved Scottish government) without formal representation of Scotland in the EU, “devomax” with a formal representation of Scotland in the EU, independence of Scotland and its EU membership. The least probable scenario seems to be the “business as usual”, and the main question seems to be whether Scotland will gain a form of presence in the EU<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Scottish First Minister and leader of Scottish National Party Nicola Sturgeon (Sturgeon 2016b) in a speech to an SNP conference left no doubt: if conditions of Brexit are disadvantageous for Scotland, Scottish government will exploit any way to secure Scotland's interests in the EU, including demanding powers to strike international deals: “As well as Parliamentary action, over the next few weeks we will table specific

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proposals to protect Scotland's interests in Europe and keep us in the single market – even if the rest of the UK decides to leave. [...] So the Scottish Government will set out a plan for Scotland. [...] We will seek to make this plan a key element of the UK's Article 50 negotiation. It will require substantial additional powers for the Scottish Parliament. All the powers in our areas of responsibility that currently lie with the EU – and significant new powers too. Powers to strike international deals. And greater powers over immigration. Powers not just to protect our economy, but also our values”.

## **THE NEW BALKAN ANTEMURALE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Since the second half of the 2015 an all the way into the first three months of 2016 the number of those exiled<sup>1</sup> coming from Turkey towards Europe and in need of international protection has grown exponentially compared to previous periods. According to the data provided by UNHCR, during 2015 there were 856,723 registered arrivals from the sea, while since January 1<sup>st</sup> to May 2016 there were 154,914; around 49% of the arrivals have been from Syria, 26% from Afghanistan and 16% from Iraq<sup>2</sup>. The most frequently used itinerary was the so-called Balkan route, from Turkey towards Greece and then Macedonia, Serbia. From there the asylum seekers have tried to re-enter the Schengen space by reaching Hungary, or alternatively, Croatia then Slovenia, in order to reach their ultimate target, the countries of north and central Europe. The elevated percentage of women (21%) and children (37%) – whereas men were 41% –

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<sup>1</sup> There is a base of uncertainty in Europe over how to name those who are part of the anthropic movement in Asia, running from wars in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. They are defined migrants, extra-communitarians, refugees, asylum seekers, runaways, often using one or the other term carelessly, as if they were synonyms. However, the meaning differences are profound: “migrants” is a generic term that does not describe the reality of those running from wars in their countries; “extra-communitarians” now is a derogatory term, despite the fact that half of the world population that does not have a citizenship of one of the 28 European countries can respond to that name; “refugees” involves the recognition of a “status” that gives the right to protection, that however those who have entered Europe still have not obtained. Therefore, we could agree on the term suggested by Paolo Rumiz: “exiled” (Rumiz 2016, p. 5) despite the fact that the media or publications regarding this issue do not seem to use it.

<sup>2</sup> Refugee/Migrants Emergency Response – Greece, 3 May 2016 (<http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean>).

documented by the UNHCR proves that these were refugees in need of international protection and not economic migrations<sup>3</sup>.

The EU structure, the single states' governments and the citizens of the countries involved were unprepared for the size of these migratory phenomena, unprecedented in the history of Europe, ever since the Cold War. Yet in that age those running away from communist Europe were welcomed benevolently in the West, at first as a welcome guest and then rapidly introduced into the society of the Country chosen as new home by the refugee. In those years the western world accepted on its territory those coming from society with failing systems, feeling as the depository of a way of life that was so "right" and exuding wealth that it could allow generosity acts of accepting without any reserve those who were unlucky enough to live oppressed by "wrong" political regimes. Even in front of the waves of refugees running from ex-Yugoslav civil wars during the 1990s, the rest of the continent accepted those new refugees without discrimination over their nationality and religion. On the other hand, in 2015 and 2016, those asking for asylum and running from current wars in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan were considered an issue of public order to be eliminated as soon as possible; the priority of European governments was to contrast the phenomena and close – or at least control – the state borders despite the Schengen regime<sup>4</sup>, instead of attempting to ensure satisfying humanitarian conditions to the refugees.

## 2. THE BALKAN ROUTE

In particular, since 2015 the xenophobe political parties and those putting the migrants issue at the top of their program lists are gaining credibility in the continent. There is the will to stop the affluence, especially of Muslims and

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<sup>3</sup> <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83> (accessed September 2016).

<sup>4</sup> The control of borders is done following criteria whose rules are variable according to the current situation. The author's experience – in September 2016 – saw that during the passage between Italy and Switzerland, even without documents control (that the Schengen agreement excludes for the adhering countries) the Swiss police looks carefully the vehicles coming from Italy, while there is nobody doing the same on the opposite route from Switzerland to Italy, lacking in any sort of control. Obviously mere looks are inadequate to establish anyone's identity yet are sufficient to see if there are people of colour aboard, or anyway people with non-European traits: if found, those corresponding to that description would have been immediately checked. Such an "asymmetric" procedure could be explained by the fact that Italy is a country of arrival for migrants and refugees and has a persistent anthropic movement towards central and northern Europe, while there is no such phenomena from Switzerland to Italy.

without making the distinction between economic migrants and those asking for asylum because they are running from wars or various discriminations (political, religious, sexual, etc). On the contrary, the idea that the increase of immigration and manifestations of Islamic terrorism are related is gaining consent<sup>5</sup>.

Aside from Brussels' institutional intentions, Europe is shifting from “continent without borders” with free movement of people (and goods) to a group of states more and more oriented to guard their own borders. The proof of this theory is the construction or the mere announcement of the intention to make interior barriers that were almost completely gone after the end of the cold war, and the reinstating of border controls that will prevent the free circulation between states, even inside the Schengen area. These new measures are not the result of decisions shared between various countries. They are not instated by countries at southern and south-east borders of Europe that do absorb the immediate impact of the arrivals (Italy and Greece). On the contrary, they are wanted by the “intermediate” countries that lay between outside EU borders and that are the main destination target of the migrants and asylum seekers. A part of the ruling political class in these countries induces the public opinion to fear that such an anthropic flux will bring: 1) upturn of the existent social order; 2) costs that are impossible to sustain in their economies if there were to be assistance measures for the migrants, even if they are just passing through; 3) a reduction of work offer for the locals in favour of the newcomers; 4) the terrorists that could be mixed in the migrants' masses could convey Islamic Jihad.

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<sup>5</sup> A humanitarian shelter to anyone who is in need of it does not require the knowledge of the religion of the person. Consequently, there is the belief that those asking for asylum in Europe are only masses of Muslims, possibly bringing religious fanaticism. But in reality, Iraq and especially Syria were inhabited by millions of laical middle-class citizens with a large component of Christians. Anyway, the proposal of a selective shelter based on religion arrived even from highest institutions. The Slovak Prime minister Robert Fico expressed his opinion in 2015 in regard to Europe being menaced by an onslaught of migrants: he claimed that if his country accepted forced distribution of asylum-seekers under an EU quota system, “we will wake up one day and have 100,000 people from the Arab world and that is a problem I would not like Slovakia to have” (Cameron 2015). The fact that he had used the term “Arabs” as synonym of “Muslims” is obvious from his availability announced soon after to give shelter to 200 Christians in Slovakia. The Czech President Miloš Zeman in 2011 had defined Islam as the “enemy of Euro-Atlantic civilisation”. “Calling someone a moderate Muslim is like calling someone a moderate Nazi” (Cameron 2015). Furthermore, at the beginning of September 2011 the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Cyprus, Socratis Hasikos, declared that his Country would accept 300 refugees of Christian-Orthodox religion (Franco 2016, p. 78).

Therefore a reset of the controls inside the Schengen area or of physical barriers were announced, projected or produced in France (close to the Italian border nearby Ventimiglia), Austria (Brenner), Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary (next to the border with Serbia), Bulgaria. The building of these “walls” is opposed by those states where those anthropic masses are just passing by, aiming to establish themselves elsewhere. These “transit” countries do not intend to register the migrants and asylum seekers in their own territories, and they demand that they cross the territory in shortest time possible and without leaving traces of their passage, in order not to have to take care of the asylum demands and humanitarian assistance that the refugees are entitled to according to international norms, in accordance with the Dublin Regulation<sup>6</sup>.

This way the interests of those states coincide with those of the migrants who wish not to register themselves on the territory of the countries they first reach or transit through. In fact, they aspire to an identification in their definitive

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<sup>6</sup> Dublin III Regulation, aligned with the principles of the 1951 Geneva UN Refugee Convention, has been adopted by the EU and also by non-member countries such as Switzerland and Norway, valid since July 19<sup>th</sup> 2013. It prohibits the requests of asylum in more than one country, and the request has to be examined in the state the applicant entered first. The Dublin Regulation has been criticized by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (<http://www.refworld.org/decid/49c0ca922.html>, accessed September 2016), since the system cannot guarantee reasonable timeframes of examination of the asylum seekers' requests, sometimes solved only after years of waiting: furthermore this norm does not consider the needs of family reunifications, and it weighs heavily on southern EU countries such as Italy and Greece, being these two the main entrance to the continent. According to the Dublin Regulation, if those who present requests of asylum in one EU country enter another, they need to be sent back to the former country. Consequently, in 2015 Hungary was overwhelmed by asylum requests by refugees of Asian origin, and since June 23<sup>rd</sup> of the same year has denied those entering from Serbia after passing through other EU countries. On the other hand, since August 24<sup>th</sup> of this year decided not to apply the Dublin Regulation to Syrian refugees, preferring to examine on its own territory their asylum requests. Other member states such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary itself denied their availability to discuss the contents of the Dublin Regulation, and on the other hand they refused to introduce quotas of refugees to be accepted that were decided within the Community (in regard to this: Migrant crisis: Hungary migrants start walk to border – BBC News, on <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34155701>, accessed on September 2016). Therefore, in front of this anthropic movement whose impact upon Europe could not have been foreseen, the EU countries consider it a public order emergency and therefore do not apply the currently valid international treaties, or have refused to introduce common measures, preferring to protect national interests.

destination countries and not those who give them immediate refuge, in order not to be forced to remain there.

This situation has led to a “rebordering” of the interstate borders inside EU, especially those inside the Schengen space that were de facto declassified (prior to the 2015 migratory crisis) to mere administrative boundaries. But this rebordering that again re-stiffened the borders after the end of the cold war and brought back walls inside the continent, is really the result of unilateral decisions of single states, both against the Schengen norms and the will of the country on the other side of the wall. Such initiatives not only interrupt the Schengen free circulation, but obviously slow down also the circulation of goods both on roads and rails because of the reinstatement of inter-border controls, resulting in an increase of costs of transport and damage to the economy. These “unilateral” walls are built or are announced to be built all over Europe: in Calais between France and UK, Brenner between Austria and Italy, and on the passage between Denmark and Sweden. But they are visible especially on roads and in the branches of the so-called “Balkan route”.

FYROM has built a barrier on the Greek border next to Idomeni, considering that Greece does not have any interest in keeping migrants and refugees coming from Turkey on its territory<sup>7</sup>. Also, the Budapest government has opposed entrance to those who are incoming from Serbia, in front of the possibility of the migrants taking residence in Hungary. For this reason, this country – first among the Schengen states – has built a barbed wire wall next to the Serbian border between August and September 2015. Its government, lead by Viktor Orbán, has opposed the plan for displacement of quotas of 160,000 migrants between the EU countries, located mostly in Greece and Italy, announced in September 2015 by the European Commission. The Hungarian Prime minister challenged Brussels over the displacements, declaring that “it is not possible to redesign the cultural and religious identities of Europe”. He held a referendum on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 against the European plan of quotas displacement where the xenophobe

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<sup>7</sup> The informal Idomeni camp has been forcibly removed by the Greek police in the last week of May 2016, when it had over 8.000 refugees trying to reach the heart of Europe. Over one of the tents there someone had wrote “We want to go to Germany”, which speaks volumes as to the intentions of the asylum seekers (Greek police move to shut down Idomeni refugee camp, 25 May 2016, on <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/05/greece-begins-idomeni-refugee-camp-evacuation-160524051404401.html>, accessed September 2016). Their destiny was probably different from that wishful thinking: after the transfer to government camps, and following an identification, there was no transfer to Germany or another country of the so-called rich Europe, but an asylum in Greece or an expulsion in Turkey.

imprint is immediately visible in the way the question was posed: “Do you wish for the EU to prescribe the forced displacement of non-Hungarian citizens in Hungary without the approval of the Hungarian parliament?”<sup>8</sup>. Prior to vote, Orbán covered the streets of the country with posters inviting citizens to rebel to the EU. Furthermore, he declared that Hungary was in war with two entities at the same time: migrants and Brussels<sup>9</sup>. Other xenophobe initiatives have been put in place by Croatia, Slovenia and Austria, that in front of a possible deviation of the migration flux towards their territories have announced or actuated measures that would “seal” their borders, in order to take back control of them: such an initiative was not legal for Slovenia and Austria who adhere to Schengen, that allows free circulation of people with limited interruptions only in case of exceptional events.

These re-examinations of controls on interstate borders are sometimes accompanied by political overturns that were unimaginable prior to the intensification of migrations, especially along the Balkan route, caused mainly by waves of Syrian refugees that were no longer accepted in Turkey since 2015. In fact, Austria saw the xenophobe party lead by Haider win the first electoral turn: he set his whole campaign upon the defence of national borders from the migrants' menace.

### **3. THE EXTRA-COMMUNITY BALKANS AND THE SCHENGEN EUROPE**

After the political elections in spring of 2016, Serbia saw the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) win the majority of parliament seats in Belgrade, lead by the prime minister Aleksandar Vučić. This politician had started his career in the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) lead by Vojislav Šešelj, a fervent nationalist, promoter of the “Great Serbia” political project and party companion of Vučić until 2008. The current prime minister has changed his positions afterwards to moderate and pro-European, opposed to those of the nationalist right wing lead

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<sup>8</sup> As it was easily predictable, the overwhelming majority of voters – 98% – have voted against the foreigners and against EU. However, this referendum, irrelevant to the European institutions, has not produced any effects upon Hungarian laws because it failed to reach its quorum. In fact, according to the local Constitution, the only valid referendums are those who see at least half plus one of the votes among those who have the right to vote, while in this case there were only 43%.

<sup>9</sup> Information from Z. Hajdu, who discusses this situation in this volume.

by Šešelj and pursuing a EU-hostile policy, oriented towards a closer friendship with Putin's Russia, united by an anti-western vision.

In regard to this topic, it is significant to examine the reactions of Russia and of the USA after the Serbian Progressive Party's win. While the congratulations extended by the Russian prime minister Dimitry Medvedev to his colleague Vučić were merely formal, inside the limits of diplomatic courtesy, the USA secretary of state John Kerry touched tangible issues, functional to a significant encouragement of Serbia's getting closer to the USA and generally to the West. In fact, Kerry's message mentioned America's availability to sustain Serbia in the promotion of rights, the fight against corruption, economy development and above all, wishes for Serbia to “normalise their relationship with Kosovo” (Janjić 2016). When we translate from the diplomatic language the latter, this means soliciting Serbia to recognise Kosovo's independence and that up to 2016 still had not been accepted, in order to conform Belgrade's position to the one upheld by almost all Western countries.

These signals of Serbia's approach to the West indicate Serbia's full will to integrate into “the important Europe”, if Belgrade works on contrasting migratory fluxes that march along the “Balkan route”. This does not come without a *do ut des*: it comes with a prospective of a more rapid admission into the EU, perceived as a club of the privileged whose membership is really a social upgrade. Therefore, Serbia as “guardian” at the doorstep of the rich West, whose role is to control the entrance doors in front of masses of foreigners that push Europe's borders in the attempt to take part in its wealth. Such a myth of being *antemurale* against the menace of an external invasion, is well known in Europe and studied by the Norwegian Pål Kolstø who described its characteristics:

The *murus*, or “wall”, is of course the ultimate boundary metaphor, the last line of defence of cosmos or order, against the forces of chaos or disorder. The *antemurale* myth, then, stresses not only that the group as an integral part of the true civilization, but also that it represents its very outpost. As this “wall” throughout history has been assailed time and again by the dark forces of the other side, the group has been chosen by divine providence to sacrifice itself in order to save the larger civilization of which it is a part (Kolstø 2005, p. 20).

In particular, according to P. Kolstø's (2005, p. 25) reflections, “some Orthodox peoples, such as the Serbs, may find themselves the last bastion, *antemurale*, in relation to Islamic world”. We could safely conclude that Serbia is looking to assume the role of Western Europe's bulwark in front of a Muslim invasion coming from the East, as it happened in past centuries even if it is in a not purely dramatic context (for the defenders), in the so-called Balkan route of Muslim population running from 2015 and 2016 wars. Such a value of

a western *antemurale* is particularly felt in the Serbian mentality, as it showed, and is a part of this nation's identity. Such value had been lost momentarily with the wars at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that culminated in the conflict between Serbia and the NATO, with the latter perceived as the armed arm of the West, relegating the Balkan state among its enemies. But even then the ruling class prior to Milošević's fall characterised Yugoslavia as the strongest and most relentless European barrier against the menace of the USA colonialism<sup>10</sup>. However, this new anti-American position did not stop the then Yugoslav president Vojislav Koštunica from proposing his country to the West as the new *antemurale* against global terrorism immediately after the 9/11 (Antić 2005, p. 202)<sup>11</sup>. On the other hand, with the new migrations coming from Asia, Serbia can reclaim its previous function of the defender of the West, like in the past centuries facing the Ottoman menace and also during the Cold War with the Soviet threat.

We can perceive a signal of this intention to change in Serbia's attitude in the closure of the aid centre for the refugees in Belgrade that was built in August 2015. It was situated in the Mostarska street 5 and called "Refugee Aid Miksalište", and founded by a group of volunteers that wanted to assist the transiting refugees. Even after the Balkan route was closed in March 2016, the centre still helped hundreds of refugees that were blocked in the city. This initiative was supported by public and private institutions, such as the Swiss Embassy in Serbia, Caritas, other religious associations and NGO-s. However, the municipal council had decreed that the centre situated between the right Sava's shore and some old unused railways should be dismantled in order to make space to a controversial project named "Beograd na vodi", tendered to a private company from the UAE, contrasted by the local civil society but supported by the prime minister's party (Corridore 2016).

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<sup>10</sup> This refers to a speech given by Milošević in Berane, Montenegro, in September 2000, as A. Antić (2005, p. 198) Reminds. According to the author, back "the media loyal to the regime warned the US colonialism was threatening Europe's integrity and humanistic value system, its civilisational and political traditions and its independent decision-making role in the world affairs" (Antić 2005, p. 198).

<sup>11</sup> This new availability of the ruling class, especially the Serbian one, was not entirely shared by the remaining public opinion, which was fiercely anti-American even after 9/11 (Violante 2013). Without claiming that the author's opinion on such topic has any statistic value, he remembers that while at the university of Belgrade in 2001 where he was teaching at the Philology Faculty, there was no solidarity towards the Americans in the comments that followed the attack, nor there was any satisfaction in offers of collaboration: on the contrary, the comments were quite poisonous over the fact that after the 1999 bombings against Yugoslavia, the USA deserved what happened to them.

This is a new role for Serbia: instead of favouring the outflow of refugees towards Croatia and Hungary, as it should happen if Serbia chose to pursue uniquely its own national interests, they are trying to keep them on their territory despite the impossibility to offer comfort and complete assistance. Therefore, Serbia is now “at EU's service” trying to contain human masses that are pushing her borders, exactly as in the past when Serbia was a bulwark against the eastern invasions. Consequently, the situation created is even more of a paradox: in front of an internally divided European Union that is incapable of expressing a common line of action because it is overwhelmed by nationalistic egoisms of its member states, Serbia is stepping up as the containment barrier, “the bottleneck” along with FYROM for the masses of asylum seekers that arrive in Schengen Hungary in minimum measure. This is certainly not an entirely selfless availability to conform to the Union's needs, but it aims to favour a more rapid annexion into the EU.

Since the 2016 spring the vigilance at the Albanian border with Greece has been increased because of the possibility of the refugees' flux towards the Schengen area could pass through Albania and then the Strait of Otranto, since the itinerary across FYROM and Serbia had been closed.

Yet such prospective is seen by the Albanian government with ill-concealed satisfaction, more than being a possible source of worry. In fact, Albania faces the eventuality of the end of those times where Albanians were pushing the Western Europe's borders at first in order to escape the oppression of a totalitarian state and then as economic migrants looking for a better future. This was happening while both the neighbouring Italy and the European institutions were trying to contrast that phenomenon by making the visas requirements difficult if not impossible to satisfy, along with other bureaucratic measures aiming to discourage immigration.

Yet today Albania's vigilance on the Greek borders, monitoring a possible incoming flux of refugees and Asian migrants, appears to put the country on the other side of the wall, the privileged and wealthy one, where it is important to stay vigil and avoid others' intrusions aiming to share such wealth. This situation stands despite the fact that Albania, not differently from FYROM and Serbia, can assume only the role of the transit periphery towards the heart of the continent and most certainly not that of a destination country.

In such context, Albania asks for an “au pair” collaboration with the EU, giving its availability to perform also a humanitarian role towards the refugees and Asian migrants. Such a helping hand towards Bruxelles does not come without strings attached: it gives Tirana a further push towards the goal, which is joining the EU.

Therefore, in spring 2016 the most monitored border is the Greek one, especially near Kapshticë. In regard to this issue, the March 2016 declaration of the minister of internal affairs of Albania Saimir Tahiri is quite clear: “it is human that, when it happens, without a common solution there will be problems not only for Albania, but for the whole of Europe”. Albania's government has cleared that the country will not shut down its borders in front of a refugees flux, but in exchange it will expect European support in order to manage the people traffic, that will not be able to stay on Albanian territory if not for a short period of time (Vale 2016).

#### **4. NEW WALLS AND NEW MINORITIES INSIDE EUROPE**

When the German chancellor Angela Merkel announced in August 2015 that Germany would welcome hundreds of thousands of Syrians coming from Greece and other Balkan states, she de facto cancelled in a single moment the Dublin Regulation that imposed to the refugees the request for asylum to be made only in the first country they reached while entering Europe. This opening has had severe consequences for Merkel<sup>12</sup> in terms of politics, provoking chain reactions that altered the continental balance: on one hand the “Balkan route” was opened by the asylum seekers who were trying to reach Germany through Turkey and Greece and other Balkan countries, while on the other – as mentioned before – there were sparks of hostility towards the refugees from governments and national public opinions, inducing the building of walls, barriers and suspension of free circulation guaranteed by Schengen. Such initiatives arrived as a consequence of a flux of almost million people who arrived in Europe after Merkel's declarations, along an itinerary that started at the border between Greece and Turkey. It is safe to say that the policy of opening that Germany presented was not particularly appreciated by the neighbouring countries where there was no solidarity, resulting in a “political avalanche... bringing a dangerously high potential to dismember the European Union” (author's translation, Guérot 2016, p. 165). Such a movement of people through the Balkan route that was – as mentioned – perceived in single states as a threat to public order has stopped since March 18<sup>th</sup> 2016 after the agreement between the EU and Turkey. The agreement saw Turkey getting six billion euro from Brussels, the abolition

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<sup>12</sup> During the vote in the Berlin land in September 2016, the CDU (the Chancellor's party) went from 23.3% to 17.6% compared to 2011.

of Schengen entrance visas for Turkish citizens and the renewal of negotiations for a rapid admission into the EU, and in exchange it would guard the European borders. In order to manage this, Turkey would have kept inside its territory two million of Middle Eastern refugees, stopping them from entering Greece. Furthermore, following the agreement, for every refugee Europe would send back to Turkey, Turkey would send as Syrian in Greece following priorities dictated by humanitarian emergencies: non-accompanied minors, women with children, sick in need of cures. This statement was stipulated by the Council of the European Union and it shows a dose of hypocrisy along some narrow-mindedness. In fact, it was created “in order to break the business model of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk”<sup>13</sup>: therefore it was supposedly inspired by humanitarian reasons and not a will to expel out of the EU borders masses of asylum seekers. But there is more: the article 3 says that “Turkey will take any necessary measures to prevent new sea or land routes for illegal migration opening from Turkey to the EU”, throwing another layer of hypocrisy over the true motivations behind this treaty. In fact, on one hand it uses the generic term “migrants” instead of “refugees” or “asylum seekers”, in order to declass the whole emergency to a mere issue of illegal immigration, as if it were a problem of public safety<sup>14</sup>; then it hides the non-existence of a “legal” possibility for the Syrians to migrate from Turkey to the EU. This is quite some narrow-mind thinking, as S. Liberti (2016) has remarked, considering the mandate given to Turkey by the EU to guard its borders in exchange for money. This statement is even more radically critiqued by the geopolitical magazine *Limes* through the words of one of its authors, Fabrizio Maronta, who sees the “mechanism of repatriation contemplated by the agreement.... as a prospective juridical and logistical nightmare that is difficult to get away from” (Maronta 2016, p. 122). In regard to this, Maronta observed how the Geneva 1951 Refugee Convention (that the EU adheres to) prohibits the possibility of sending back “asylum seekers in Countries that do not guarantee their adequate protection, assistance and integration prospectives” (Maronta 2016, p. 122): these guarantees are not available in Turkey. According to Maronta, Turkey could deport masses of people who would risk their lives in their countries of origin, violating the European principle of *non-refoulement* (Maronta 2016, p. 124). After March 2016 the “Balkan route” was drastically

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<sup>13</sup> The text of the statement is available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/> (accessed September 2016).

<sup>14</sup> Among other things, in the Article 1 of the statement: “... restore public order” (ibidem).

reduced, as mentioned above, yet however was not entirely closed. In fact, on one hand the arrivals in Greece have stopped almost completely, except for a slight upswing after the attempted Turkish coup in July<sup>15</sup>; on the other the anthropic movement left residues that are not entirely absorbed, prisoners of borders difficult to cross and making new minorities, illegal but nevertheless not less real, as if they were pools of water that the ground – now waterproof – cannot absorb. The country that maintains the highest numbers of asylum seekers is Greece: according to UNHCR sources reported by S. Maraone (2016) in August 2016 there were 57.115 of them trapped in 55 camps, most of them controlled by the military. Europe prefers maintaining a low profile over the issue of the exiled, kept along the “dead end” from Greece to Hungary passing across FYROM and Serbia<sup>16</sup> as intermediary countries that are not in demand for asylum because they are “outside Schengen”. This serves to avoid waves of xenophobia such as the ones seen anyway in Hungary which were alimanted by the government itself.

The refugees were de facto divided in watertight compartments, separated by barriers that Europe thought long gone. This happened not only at the external borders of the “European fortress” near Ceuta and Melilla in Spain, along the eastern Polish borders, in sea between Lampedusa and African shores and in the Aegean sea between Greek islands and Turkey; since 2015 the walls were back even inside the continent where they were once destroyed after the Cold War and after the abolition of the visas regime in 2009/2010 towards Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM and Albania. Inside these renewed barriers, the new “nations of borderlands” that were named by Massimo

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<sup>15</sup> According to S. Maraone (2016), someone who knows the “Balkan route” from her own personal experience, afterwards the arrivals to the islands of Lesbos and Chios have reached around 200 per day. The author has personally visited a refugee camp in the Chios capital which was run by UNHCR and in August 2016 it had around 1000 people awaiting registration which could have three possible outcomes: family reunification in a European locality, asylum in Greece or return to Turkey. The medium afflux was around 40–50 people per day coming from the nearby Turkish shores. The treatment to its “guests” was acceptable: they were free to leave the camp, differently from those in a government camp in the centre of the island which was presided by the military. What weighed heavily on the life conditions of the Chios refugee were however three negative elements: 1) the refusal of contact with them by the local population; 2) the forced inactivity for men and especially women, forced to do nothing for months and months (better were the conditions of children, “animated” by international volunteers); 3) fights that sometimes became physical between refugees of different nationalities.

<sup>16</sup> Through two holes open in barbed wire between Serbia and Hungary the passage is allowed for 30 refugees per day as per Hungary's government orders.

Franco “The Fifth World” (2016, p. 101–114)<sup>17</sup>, the population lives without – sometimes by choice – its original identity and without being censured or recognised by the states they entered. These refugees, people on the run and the stateless, were more than 60 million already in 2014 and therefore prior to the great 2015 exodus, according to the UNHCR (Cattaruzza and Sintès 2016, p. 83–84, Franco 2016, p. 104): “nation” without territory<sup>18</sup> that nevertheless occupies marginal spaces at the states’ borders and sometimes also central places such as train and bus stations. They are not perceived by “host” EU countries as a humanitarian emergency to be faced with shared efforts, but as a problem of public safety where the only victims are their citizens<sup>19</sup>.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

There is the paradox situation of the migrants coming through Greece into Schengen Europe, but however trying to get out of it only to get back into Schengen by arriving into Italy, Hungary or Slovenia. The building of walls of the mere announcement of intention to produce them results in continuous conflicts between countries<sup>20</sup>: Italy against France at Ventimiglia prior to the Balkan route; France against UK at Dover; Italy against Austria at the Brenner; Slovenia against Croatia; Serbia against Hungary; Greece against FYROM. In front of refugees coming from Asia – mainly Muslims – and after having exited the humiliating visas regime that pushed it almost into a non-European world, Serbia can feel almost back into the West, finally at the “right” side of the barricade. The new function of FYROM and Serbian citizens as “guard dogs” of EU that they hope to join soon. Furthermore, Albanians are aspiring to this too, hoping that because of the “walls” built by Bulgaria, Hungary and Croatia, the

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<sup>17</sup> Such definition follows those of: First World that coincides with the rich one lead by the USA and western Europe; the Second World meaning communist states guided by Soviets, symmetrically opposing the First one; the Third World, or the developing Countries and/or not aligned to any of the two superpowers during the Cold War; the Fourth World, or the poorest countries of the planet, without concrete possibilities of development and forced to depend upon international humanitarian help.

<sup>18</sup> It is in fact a nation, since its members share the political project of recognition hoping to exit an ambiguous illegality, that is however not shared by the rest of the world.

<sup>19</sup> An example of this are the posters placed by the Hungarian government warning the population about the illnesses brought by migrants, who were almost gone in 2016 because they went elsewhere.

<sup>20</sup> In regard to this, M. Franco (2016, pp. 32–34).

refugees' flux will turn from Greece to Albania, chosen as transit country towards Schengen Italy.

Europe has gone from wealthy land whose citizens could freely move inside the Union without inter-states barriers which were typical in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to a continent dominated by the inhabitants' fears to lose the elevated way of life they reached. It is easily perceived that it is the rest of the non-Western world that who threatens said wealth. Yet while attempting not to lose it, not only they tried to “seal” the external EU borders from possible unwanted intrusions<sup>21</sup>, but because the states did not trust each other anymore they closed their borders to the free circulation of people once again.

Inside such a context that has rapidly deteriorated in 2015, the Aegean island of Chios can be chosen as the symbolic eastern border of Europe, but in the wrong way. In the hundred years that passed between the famous 1822 massacre and the Greek-Turkish conflict that culminated in 1922, just like the rest of the Eastern world this island could have been called a melting pot between the west and the east<sup>22</sup>. Today this border is no longer a place of conflict or even meeting, but it sure is one of closure and isolation: on one side there are the Europeans and on the other the Asians running from their war-thorn countries, separated just by few meters but not anymore for cultural and economic exchange that suited everyone. What poses a halt to this is a wall made of fear on both sides: those who want to enter because they are terrified to return to the horrors they came from, and those who are afraid they will be forced to share what remains of the wealth corroded by the advancing of a world that is more and more interconnected and certainly not favourable to Europe.

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## **INVISIBLE EXCLAVES SLOVAK AND CZECH MINORITY IN SERBIA**

“The transformation process in Serbia is not yet finished and people from this country spend their life inside this process, without understanding its phases. Now, expectations and hopes are slowly disappearing and people are starting to accept the void time they live in. Maybe this period will bring new challenges, but these fading expectations and this silent acceptance are themselves the difference between the past and the present in Serbia. I do not see ideals that could drive us towards a better future, we should only hope in something that is not worse than the absolute worst”

*Vladimir Valentik*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The ethnic composition in Vojvodina is beyond comparison if we take Western Europe into account. The northernmost region of Serbia, the most developed area of the entire country, is inhabited by more than twenty ethnic groups, with as many as six official languages. Each national minority in Serbia has a special Parliament (Nacionalni Savet Nacionalnih Manjina) and most of them have their headquarter in Vojvodina (fifteen out of a total of twenty-one).

Among them, there are many peculiar cases. As a matter of fact, Vojvodina is home to one of the most interesting example concerning the concept of exclaves. Several ethnic groups, whose nationalities are included within the European Union ones live in this area. These are Hungarian, Croatian, Romanian, Czech and Slovak.

They might also be further divided into two groups, using the Rogers Brubaker's definition that takes into account the distance from their respective national homeland. Hungarians, Croatians and Romanians are closer to their "external national homelands", whereas Czechs and Slovaks are farther away from theirs. My article will focus on the second group, namely Slovak and Czech villages, in order to understand what it means to feel culturally part of a nation which in turn is part of the European Union, but at the same time live outside of it.

Within the "metropolitan corridors", as defined by Karl Schlögel, namely amongst Brussels, Berlin, Paris and Strasbourg, these exclaves are invisible territories, to which the right to be part of the European Union is denied on the grounds that they are already part of a non-member country, as is currently the case with Serbia.

In this age of clashes between different civilisations, my aim is to analyse, through archival research and interviews, this paradigmatic case of the clash within a single civilisation or nationality.

## 2. SLOVAKS IN SERBIA

The Slovak minority comprises less than fifty thousand people. We may further divide the Slovak community into two different groups. The first group includes Slovaks from Pivnice and Selenča. They came from West Slovakia, around the towns of Myjava and Nitra; their dialect is different from those spoken by Slovaks in Serbia. They were Catholics, but many of them changed their religion so as to become Lutheran Evangelical Protestants. The second group is made up by the Slovaks from all the others villages. They arrived from the central part of Slovakia, around Banská Bistrica and Zvolen; from eastern Slovakia, around Poprad, Jelšava and Málinec; from Northern Hungary, around Balassagyarmat. They were and still are Lutheran Evangelicals.

Vojvodina is divided into three areas, according to the shape of Tisza and Danube rivers (fig. 1).

The first group of Slovaks arrived in Bačka<sup>1</sup> between 1745 and 1773. They later occupied Stara Pazova and few other villages in Sarmia<sup>2</sup> in 1770. Then,

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<sup>1</sup> Years of foundation of the most important Slovak towns in Bačka: Bački Petrovac and Kulpin in 1745, Gložan in 1756, Selenča in 1758, Kisač in 1773, Pivnice and Lalić in 1790.

around 1786, a few families moved to Banat<sup>3</sup>, in Aradac, near Zrenjanin. Finally, between the years 1802 and 1826, they settled in various villages of South Banat.



Fig. 1. Vojvodina

Source: based on <http://www.istockphoto.com/pl/wektor/serbia-polityczne-mapy>

A turning point in the history of these communities came with the Treaty of Passarowitz, signed on July 21, 1718. As a result of this treaty, the Ottoman Empire definitively lost Banat and part of Syrmia. This area remained quite uninhabited.

In the spring of 1744, a farmer called Matej Čanji left his land near Málinec, in the centre of Slovakia, and arrived to potentially cultivable lands between Bački Petrovac, Futog and Glozan. Since these lands were largely unpopulated, the landowner (named Čarnojević) and the farmer found an agreement: Čarnojević needed vassals and Čanji promised to supply them in exchange for his freedom. Čanji came back the following year, 1745, with one hundred and twenty-nine families (the man was not married himself), forty-five bulls, one hundred and thirteen horses, fifty-three cows (a cow could not have calves), ten pigs, fifteen sheep and several plants. He became a free man and he and the Slovak families he brought along started to work those lands.

<sup>2</sup> Years of foundation of the most relevant Slovak towns in Syrmia: Stara Pazova in 1770, Bingula in 1859, Erdevik in 1860, Lug in 1902.

<sup>3</sup> Years of foundation of the biggest Slovak towns in Banat: Aradać in 1786, Kovačica in 1802, Padina in 1806, Janošik in 1823, Hajdučica in 1826 and Belo Blato in 1883.

However, these kind of migrations were not allowed in the Austro-Hungarian empire under the administration of the Archduchess Maria Theresa of Austria. Therefore, the first migrants were forced to get back to Slovakia every winter. During that period, one of Maria Theresa's bigger concerns was how to effectively protect the borders against the Ottoman Empire. She did not want Serbian people to be the only ones to protect these borders, since she feared they would soon feel as the rightful owners of those lands. Moreover, this area had two major drawbacks: it suffered from a shortage of drinkable water, due to the difficulties in building deep wells, and it was also lacking enough trees. Hence, it was becoming a barren area, no longer suitable for agriculture. The Archduchess prompted the reclamation of this territory, through the construction of channels and wells.

So, a solution had already been outlined by the Slovaks themselves. Thus, Maria Theresa decided to move Slovaks as well as Hungarians, Romanians, Germans, Basques (some Basque surnames are still present in the Kikinda area) towards the borderlands.

To sum up, there are three main reasons behind this migration. Firstly, an economic reason: life in Serbia was much better than in Slovakia, where they lived in mountainous areas. Secondly, a military reason: Maria Theresa needed them as a defence alongside the border. Thirdly, a religious one: there were many small strifes between Catholics and Protestants in Slovakia. Protestants were the minority, therefore some families decided to leave.

Many interviewees remarked that the Slovak minority of Vojvodina is the one that has best-preserved their traditions and culture as compared to all the other Slovak minorities across the world. That was possible due to several reasons:

1. Their religion was different. They were the only Protestant group in Vojvodina at the time they migrated.
2. They used to mainly marry each other, within Slovaks families.
3. They started building a school and a church in every village as soon as they settled down. The first school was built in Bački Petrovac in 1745 and the first church in Glozan in 1789. Teachers and priests followed promptly.
4. They built libraries.
5. They also created three High Schools throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in Kovačica, Bački Petrovac and Stara Pazova.
6. They have set up several publishing houses. The first one, HL Print, was founded in Bački Petrovac in 1918.

Under the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1880–1918), the main problem was Magyarisation. The relationships between Hungarians and Slovaks were trouble-

some, primarily due to religious differences. Hungarians insisted on Hungarian liturgy and on education being exclusively in Hungarian language, to which Slovaks responded by setting up vehement protests and insurrections. This resolute Hungarian chauvinism had the paradoxical result of strengthening relationships between the Slavic people, namely between Slovaks and Serbs.

At the end of the First World War, the role of Slovaks increased, since in 1918, there were also Slovaks representatives in the Assembly that decided the annexation of Vojvodina into the *Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca* (1918–1929). Under this Kingdom and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia<sup>4</sup> (1929–1945) the situation was remarkably better for Slovak people. They started to feel free to publicly speak their own language and education began to be planned in Slovak. In 1932, Ján Bulik set up an organisation called *Matica Slovačka* in Serbia, which ended up being a big step towards the preservation of Slovak culture, language and traditions.

Tito was deemed to be a great leader by many interviewees, since in socialist Yugoslavia, Slovaks were allowed to organise everything in their own language: schools, documents, associations. As Marci, an old man from Padina, told me, «here, in my village, there is a school where every subject is taught in Slovak. This is democracy! In which country could it happen? The European Union should come here, in Kovačica, to understand how we live». Slovaks felt protected in socialist Yugoslavia; they were part of a large country, but they felt like they belonged there. They were proud to be part of Yugoslavia: «it was a perfect country», «teachers taught us to be part of this country», «Yugoslavia was actually more advanced than many countries that have entered the European Union a few years ago», «now Serbia is now definitely underdeveloped if compared with what Yugoslavia was thirty years ago». These are some sentences that several Slovak interviewees told me about that period. According to that, it seems reasonable to affirm that Yugonostalgia is indeed present among this community.

Although it may be true that life under Tito was in some respects better than now, since life standards were actually higher (as many scholars interviewed agreed upon), and that they were already living in a «sort of European Union» of their own, academics' interviews did not show the same level of nostalgia. Vladimir Valentik explained me that «if you didn't want responsibilities, Yugoslavia was the best country for you, but if you had responsibilities, you were not in the right country. Yugoslavia looked after its citizens, but they could not

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<sup>4</sup> From now on, written Yugoslavia instead of Yugoslavia due to coherence with Serbian quotations and names.

look after themselves». For instance, organisations such as Matica Slovačka were prohibited in socialist Yugoslavia: it was reestablished in 1990, during the renaissance of nationalism.

During Milošević's leadership something started to change. Nationalism became the most important aspect in everyday life. Serbs gave Slovaks a bad nickname (“totica”, “totovi”) and Vojislav Šešelj, a Serbian politician, stated during an interview that Vojvodina was a region for Serbian people, adding that «we should give a sandwich to Hungarians and two sandwiches to Slovaks for their coming back home». Nevertheless, there were no violent episodes, nor any actual discrimination towards Slovaks. Many Slovaks even defended Milošević during the interviews I collected. According to them, someone else (namely The European Union and the United States) had decided that Yugoslavia had to disappear, since it was the demonstration that a different kind of society, a non-capitalistic one, was a practicable alternative; therefore, they needed to eliminate the very possibility of that.

Many young Slovaks fought for JNA (Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija) during the war, but other Slovaks could also be found on the opposite side, fighting for the Croatian Army. I was told many stories of Slovak soldiers that saved each other's lives by speaking their own language.

As far as religion is concerned, the majority of Slovaks in Serbia are Evangelical Lutherans; that is rather curious since in Slovakia Catholics outnumber Lutherans. Many interviewees declared that they feel spiritually closer to Swedish, Norwegian, Danish or German people than to Slovaks; they even connected their religion to their professional abilities: working is one of the most relevant aspect of their lives and earning money is considered a righteous activity.

There are just twenty-two to twenty-four Slovak priests per twenty-eight churches. As a result, someone has to manage more than one church. That means that in some villages liturgy cannot be regularly celebrated every Sunday. For this reason, substitutes are sometimes needed, including women. Liturgies are more frequently attended by elderly people than young ones. According to the Lutheran priest in Selenča, Vladimir Valenta, «the Lutheran Slovak Church was born in contrast to the German one and the Hungarian one. There is no difference between them in the liturgy, only the language is different».

There are no Slovak Calvinists, but there are indeed Slovak Catholics, although only in the village of Selenča. The reason is simple: the only inhabitants of this village are Slovaks, and they have always celebrated liturgy in their own language. Relationships between Protestants and Catholics in this village were really troublesome: there were no mixed weddings; the two

communities were completely divided between Protestant East Selenča and Catholic West Selenča. The border ran in the middle of the village; the fact that it passed right through the main square was a particularly intense source of strifes between factions. There were separate restaurants and schools, where they also had different teachers. In the sixties, under Tito's regime, his Socialist Party decided to build a new school and to establish classes of mixed faiths. As a result, relationships improved, even though during the Balkan wars of the nineties a Catholic priest stated that it would have been better to fight with the Croats against the Serbs; he died a few years later, leaving no tension between the two factions. It was this kind of situation that permitted Slovak Catholics to survive and maintain their religion and their nationality.

All of the Slovak Catholics, except for those in Selenča, have been assimilated into Croat or Hungarian communities in the last two centuries. In some villages in Vojvodina, including Temerin and Bačka Topola, there are many people that consider themselves Hungarian, despite bearing Slovak surnames. This kind of assimilation was virtually immediate: they even considered themselves Hungarians as far back as at the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century, only a few decades after their arrival in Vojvodina. Religious assimilation can also be found among Lutherans: approximately five hundred people became Hungarians during the last two centuries, either in their own interest or because of the forced Magyarisation under the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1880–1918)<sup>5</sup>.

I came upon several unusual religious movements in every Slovak village I visited; they managed to survive thanks to the funds they receive from European or American branches of the same movements. I also noticed that their presence is often connected with Protestant faith. They can be found especially in Protestant villages and in Protestant families when the village is ethnically mixed. Adam Jonas, a historian from Belo Blato, explained it this way: «if you are Protestant, you are more inclined to protest and to create an alternative religion». These movements are: Baptists, Spirituals, Nazarenes (very similar to Amish), Pentecostals, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Modrý Križ followers, Methodist. The most important Methodist church in Serbia is in a Slovak village named Kisač. Ana, pastor of this church, told me that the first Methodists were actually German people, who arrived in Vojvodina in 1898 to spread their faith, and that Kisač is the capital of the Serbian Methodist church.

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<sup>5</sup> There was also a peculiar example of assimilation in Ostojićevo. Approximately 300 people declared themselves Slovaks until discovering in the last two decades their Polish traditions. Now they declare themselves Polish.

The two strongest religious movements are the Baptists and the Spirituals. There are many Baptist churches all over Vojvodina, among which Bački Petrovac church is especially noteworthy. It is one of the broadest: this village is home to the largest Baptist community in Vojvodina, for a total amount of one hundred and sixty members. Baptists are divided into Northern Union (Vojvodina and Belgrade) and Southern Union (Šumadija, the Serbian region with Niš); one of their goals is to actually spread their religious message to the Southern Union. The Baptist church arrived in Vojvodina in the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, brought by missionaries from the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The first presence of the Spiritual church<sup>6</sup> in this region dates back to 1924, when a missionary named Adam Valenta came back from the United States with the task to spread their religious message. In 1925 Ján Balca decided to organise a tour covering many villages in Vojvodina with the goal of popularising the Holy Bible, translated into Slovak for the first time in that area. The largest Spiritual community is located in Padina, with more than two hundred and fifty people; there are approximately fifty churches.

Finally, Nazarenes are remarkably similar to Amish: they are really private and reserved people, who started to use modern technology within the last generation. Nazarene women are also easily recognisable for wearing thin veils on their heads.

I visited the following villages<sup>7</sup>: Syrmia (Lug, Ljuba, Slankamenački Vinogradi), Banat (Kovačica, Padina, Hajdučica, Belo Blato, Janošik), Bačka (Bački Petrovac, Gložan, Kulpin, Pivnice, Selenča, Lalić, Kisač). Bački Petrovac's municipality is the only municipality in Serbia where Slovaks are the absolute majority. Pivnice, Lalić and Selenča are really close to each other, but when Tito had to decide about the shape of those municipalities, he chose to assign these villages to three different municipalities. By doing so, he created three small minorities in each municipality, according to his precise socio-political view.

In every Slovak village the following associations can be found:

- Matica Slovačka. It is an apolitical, civil and non-religious organisation, with twenty thousand members divided into thirty departments;

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<sup>6</sup> They called themselves *Duhovni*, from *duh*, which means spirit in Serbian.

<sup>7</sup> Syrmia: Lug is in the municipality of Beočin, Ljuba is in the Šid's one and Slankamenački Vinogradi is in Inđija's one. Banat: Kovačica and Padina are inside the municipality of Kovačica, Janošik is in the municipality of Alibunar, Hajdučica is inside the municipality of Plandište, Belo Blato is in Zrenjanin's one. Bačka: Bački Petrovac, Kulpin and Gložan are inside the municipality of Bački Petrovac, Kisač is in the municipality of Novi Sad, Pivnice is inside the municipality of Bačka Palanka, Selenča in the Bač's one and Lalić in the Odžaci's one.

- Kulturno Umetničko Društvo, a cultural association that organises many events;
- Udruženja Žene (women's association);
- In addition, the former Svetozar Milentić organisation is worth mentioning. It used to actively oppose Germanisation and Magyarisation.

The only Slovak institution in Serbia, Nacionalni savet slovačke nacionalne manjine, the National Council of the Slovak minority, is located in Novi Sad. It was created in 2003 and it consists of a president, Ana Tomanova-Makanova, and twenty-eight members. Only Slovaks registered on a special list are allowed to vote for the Council, but every Slovak may register. The Slovak Council pursues four aims: to preserve the language and culture, and to provide education and information.

Many interviewees pointed out that national political parties are entering the Nacionalni Savet: there are five parties for less than fifty thousand people. Problems have arisen from the fact that some political parties are indeed Serbian and not Slovak. The most important of them is the recently founded Slovaci Napred: its name refers to the party of the First Prime Minister, Aleksandar Vučić. It is undoubtedly the strongest party in Serbia, trying to use its power to influence the choices and political drive of the Nacionalni Savet, especially since the president of Slovački Nacionalni Savet – Ana Tomanova Makarova – is connected with the opposition party, Demokratska Stranka, whose most famous representative is Boris Tadić. The president of Matica Slovačka, Katarina Melegova-Melihova, told me that «the politicisation of the Slovak Council is objectively one of our biggest mistakes, it should not have happened».

Insofar as Belgrade Parliament is concerned, it is almost impossible to have even a single Slovak representative elected, since it was calculated that it would require sixteen thousand votes: that means a third of the Slovak community would have to agree upon the same representative, but as many interviewees pointed out, that would be an extremely complicated goal to achieve.

Assimilation is the most serious issue affecting every minority. Slovaks have tackled it by creating elementary schools with classes only held in Slovak (with Serbian as secondary language) for eight years in the villages of Bački Petrovac, Kulpin, Gložan<sup>8</sup>, Kisač, Padina, Selenča, Pivnice. Lug and Lalić only teach the first four years in Slovak. In their three “High Schools” in Kovačica, Bački Petrovac and Stara Pazova, they try to preserve their language and maintain the

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<sup>8</sup> In Gložan, there is a strange situation since many Serbian children and youngsters choose to study Slovak language at school and are members of Slovak associations. The percentage of Serbian people in Gložan is less than 5%.

study of their literature. There is also a “Medical High School” in Novi Sad that offers the possibility to study in Slovak. Finally, at the universities of Belgrade and Novi Sad, it is possible to get a degree in Slovak literature. Slovak associations are also fighting against the disappearance of their language by creating and printing books in Slovak language. One rather peculiar effect of their effort is that their Slovak is purer than the one spoken in Slovakia, which is full of Anglicisms and Germanisms. Slovački Nacionalni Savet will shortly have to face the challenge of complying with a current law which requires school classes to have a minimum of fifteen children. Slovak villages are currently bypassing the law by creating classes with children of different ages, thus avoiding the problem. Nevertheless, they will have to find a different solution in the near future.

Slovački Nacionalni Savet has two other significant problems. The government is cutting time from television and radio channels that deal with national minorities. The government justifies these cuts with insufficient funds, but many interviewees said that they believe it to be a political move instead. Moreover, when the Serbian state organised the foundation of the Assemblies for national minorities, it did not create a Ministry of national minorities: that was a mistake, according to several representatives of the Slovak community. Many minor problems could be more successfully dealt with by a national political entity with a general supervising task that would easily connect all the Nacionalni Savet to the Serb Government. Problems reported by interviewees included in many situations great complications in getting documents in their languages (not only Czechs and Slovaks, but several minorities have the same problem) due to the fact that Serbian employees of the City Hall often use different excuses to only print them in Serbian. Another issue that was pointed out is that concerning the status of the language: in Indija municipality, for instance, Slovak inhabitants are still waiting for the Slovak language to become an official language, albeit there is one Slovak village, Slankamenački Vinogradi, in this municipality.

### **3. CZECHS IN SERBIA**

The Czech minority is quite small, there are only one thousand eight hundred twenty-four of them. Many Czechs prefer to declare themselves Serbian, especially after a mixed wedding<sup>9</sup>. The Czech community can be divided into

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<sup>9</sup> After a wedding, sons and daughters of a couple usually take up the nationality and religion of their father. There is only one particular case, regarding families with

two groups: Czechs from Veliko Središte and the ones from the other villages. The group from Veliko Središte came directly from Czech Republic; they were and still are Protestants, members of the Reformed Hussite Church<sup>10</sup>. These families came from South Moravia, more specifically from the areas of Brno, Jihlava and Klobouky u Brna.

Other Czechs in Serbia first moved to Romanian Banat around 1760. There are still some Czech villages (from seven to nine) in that area (Garnic and Eibentahl being the largest). They later moved from Romanian Banat to Serbian Banat around 1820; according to some sources, the first Czechs arrived in Vršac back in 1822. They tried to settle down in Jasenovo, but native Serbian families were not welcoming towards them, which included giving Czechs a negative nickname, Pemci. As a consequence, they decided to move towards Bela Crkva and Kruščica, across the Danube. The first Czechs were carpenters, blacksmiths, miners and soldiers. These families came from Bohemia, around Plzeň and Kutná Hora, and they already were or eventually became Catholic. We can say that this Czech minority coming from Serbia and the one coming from Romania belong to one family, as they tend to point out.

This migration was driven by economic reasons, since life in Serbia was easier than it was in Czech Republic or in Romanian Banat<sup>11</sup> owing to more cultivable lands and civil rights; by military reasons, because the Austro-Hungarian Empire employed them as a defence force to deploy alongside the threatened border with the Ottoman Empire; by religious reason, since the majority of Czechs were Hussites, running away from the Catholic areas in Bohemia. There was a second migration towards Gaj, Dobričevo, Vršac and Veliko Središte in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially caused by women seeking marriage opportunities.

There are also Czech families in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Zrenjanin, Kragujevac, and in other Serbian towns. They moved to Serbia via different means than the ones aforementioned: they usually moved family by family, outside of any organised migration flow. They were academics (lawyers, engineers, musicians...) and most of them ended up converting to the Orthodox faith.

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a Catholic mother in the Slovak village of Selenča where it might be possible that sons and daughters become Catholic since the Catholic church in this village is very demanding and their influence over Catholic families is substantial.

<sup>10</sup> Reformed Hussites Church was founded by Jan Hus (1372–1415). He was a predecessor of Protestantism, since he preceded both Luther and Calvin. This church is different from the Slovak Lutheran Evangelical one.

<sup>11</sup> In this area Czechs used to live in *zemunica*, something that is more or less like a cave.

Throughout their history, the major problem the Czech minority had to face was Magyarisation, especially between 1880 and 1918, when Hungarian influences increased. Many Czechs became Hungarian and (probably) also Catholics during that period. Under Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca (1918–1929) and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929–1945) many teachers and priests came from Czech Republic. In that period, they tried to preserve Czech language, but, regarding religion, Catholicisation continued and Protestantism within the Czech minority slowly disappeared. During the Second World War, many Czech soldiers helped Tito's Partisans. Socialist Yugoslavia was regarded by many interviewees as the best period of their lives, a period of relative wealth and social rights. Some scholars disagree, and argue that some problems arose instead. Nevertheless, nobody believed that the Czech minority was at that time discriminated against. One actual problem was that it was impossible to maintain relationships with relatives in socialist Czechoslovakia from the fifties to the seventies. During the Balkan wars of the nineties, Czech soldiers fought for *Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija* (JNA), the Yugoslav Army. Generally speaking, that was not cause of any relevant clash, with the exception of Belgrade, where a few tense encounters were reported during Catholic liturgies, as the priest was in fact Croatian. Czechs were afraid that the Serbs would think they were Croatian and not Czech. In the nineties, owing to the war between Serbia and Croatia, Czechs from Serbia lost contact with Czechs from Croatia<sup>12</sup>. Before the war, there were no problems between these two communities, but that changed after the war. Now, thanks to the newborn Czech Republic, their relationships resumed in recent years. As a peculiar side effect, it seems that the war between Croatia and Serbia helped restore relations between Czechs themselves.

Inasmuch as religion is concerned, one noteworthy aspect is that many interviewees stated that most people within the Czech minority are actually atheists, exactly as it is in Czech Republic.

Aside from that, in the community of the believers, one significant issue is that Czech minorities in Serbia lack Catholic priests (this is a problem for Czech Republic as well, since nowadays many priests who work in Czech Republic come from Poland). Their priests are in fact Hungarian, but they have to read in Czech, although they are often unfamiliar with this language to the extent of not being able to pronounce it correctly, or even not knowing the meaning of what they are reading aloud. This obviously leaves the people attending the liturgy very displeased, as many interviewees admitted. Moreover, these priests usually visit every village just once a month.

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<sup>12</sup> The biggest Czechs communities in Croatia are around Darovar and Bjelovar.

In Gaj, Catholic liturgies are attended by Czechs, Hungarians and Croats. Since the Czech minority is larger than the Hungarian one, the liturgy is always held in Czech language, even when the priest is Hungarian himself; the same is true during weddings between Hungarian people and baptisms of Hungarian children, when the liturgy must be held in both languages, even if all the guests are Hungarians.

The situation in the Protestant community is a little different: the Hussite pastor goes to Veliko Središte four times per year, but he comes directly from Czech Republic.

This is the Hussite Church in Veliko Središte (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. The Hussite Church  
in Veliko Središte  
Source: author's photo

I visited the following Czech villages: Bela Crkva, Kruščica and Češko Selo in the municipality of Bela Crkva, Gaj in the municipality of Kovin, Vršac and Veliko Središte in the municipality of Vršac and Belgrade.

There is only one village with a Czech majority, namely Češko Selo; there are thirty-eight inhabitants, and only three are Serbs. Czech is the official language only in Bela Crkva, its municipality. Until 1972, there was a school where subjects were taught in Czech language; but it was forced to close because there were no children to attend it. Nowadays there are only three children in this village. There is an amusing legend about Češko Selo: Czech Republic did not know about the existence of a Czech

minority in this area of Serbia, but in 1996, the Czech ambassador of Serbia, Ivan Bušniak, planned a visit to some Czech villages in Romania; on his way to the Romanian border, his driver took a wrong turn. He passed by Crvena Crkva, where he saw a road sign: Češko Selo. He followed it, and that is how Czech Republic found out about it. From that moment, economic help from Czech Republic has been arriving directly in these villages, without passing through Croatia.

Kruščica seems to be the village that received the most economic assistance from Czech Republic, but that comes as no surprise since this village has the largest Czech community (except for the one in Bela Crkva, which is indeed larger, though the overall percentage is smaller). Czechs arrived in Kruščica in 1826 and the population has not changed since, staying at approximately two hundred. In recent years, they have built a soccer field and provided the area with a new canalisation system and a modern trash collection system, all owing

to these funds. They are currently building a Czech Etnokuća, which is a sort of museum that shows the interior of a typical Czech house and what daily life was like in the past.

There are no Czech political parties. There have been attempts to establish them over the last decades, but they were all unsuccessful, even in local elections. There are two Czech associations in every Czech village: Matica Češka and Češka Beseda, although not that many people have showed actual interest in these associations, which basically share the same members. Each Češka Beseda section is completely independent: it organises its events by applying to Češki Nacionalni Savet for funding. The main goal of Češka Beseda is the preservation of Czech language and Czech culture and the protection of Czech traditions. Finally, Udruženja Žene, a women's association, can be found in every Serbian village; among its members there are several Czech women.

Czech minority has also its own council, the Nacionalni Savet Češke Nacionalne Manjine. It consists of a president, Jože Sivaček, and fourteen members. It was established in 2010, when Serbia created these small Councils (Nacionalni Savet) for every national minority. Only Czechs included in a special list can vote for Parliament, though every Czech may register.

One of the biggest problem for Czechs is assimilation. People from small villages are often forced to find a partner of a different nationality; the alternative would be to marry a relative.

According to Jože Sivaček, there are only two ways to preserve the Czech minority: to maintain Czech traditions and to preserve Czech language through national associations and institutions. Češki Nacionalni Savet reached its linguistic goal a few years ago, and now Czech can be studied in four state schools: two elementary schools in Bela Crkva, one in Kruščica and one in Gaj; lessons held in Czech were in fact suppressed in Serbia in 1974, only to be resumed in 2011. Approximately between sixty and seventy children are studying Czech (among them there are also a few Serbian ones). Moreover, there is now a teacher that teaches two hours per week in every village where Czechs live, all organised by Češka Beseda. There are no Czech High Schools in Serbia, but the Belgrade University offers the possibility to study Czech literature.

#### **4. TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN UNION?**

The way the European Union is regarded by Czech minorities is not homogeneous. On the one hand, elderly and middle-aged Czechs and Slovaks do not want to join the European Union, since different regulations and restrictions

would bring about many changes to the way they work, cultivate, raise animals and sell their products, as well as the way they prepare their rakija. On the other hand, young people do not care much about the European Union, even though many of them wish to travel to Europe and, especially, to Czech Republic and Slovakia. The role of young people is obviously crucial in this argument since their commitment is the only way to preserve the language, culture and traditions; unfortunately, they are not interested in it as they are also leaving Serbia. In the last year, one hundred thirty youngsters and forty teenagers went to Slovakia to attend university or high school there. It was partially the same in the past: many Slovak people went to study to Slovakia, but they came back when their studies were finished; instead, now they tend not to come back and to remain in their motherland. The consequence is that the death rate is higher than the birth rate. As Rastislav Surovy, former president of Matica Slovačka, said: «against assimilation we can fight; against migration, we will lose».

What seemed to annoy my interviewees the most, is that they cannot understand why Czech Republic and Slovakia consider them second-class citizens; but this way of thinking is also one of their main reasons many are planning a future outside of Serbia.

Slovakia has a special system to deal with Slovaks from Serbia. It gives them a document, *Krajanski Preukaz*, which allows Slovaks to work, live and have a health insurance in Slovakia for a period of ten years, although they cannot do the same in any other European Union countries. After those ten years, their chance to obtain Slovakian citizenship is substantially higher. Many young people are moving to Slovakia and, as soon as they find a good job there, their parents and their kids are bound to join them in Slovakia as well. Entire families left Serbia in the last five years. Someone said the figure amounts to roughly two thousand people every year.

With regards to Czech Republic, obtaining a Czech citizenship is not at all simple: applying requires to demonstrate that at least one grandparent is Czech and entails a lot of documents, yet it is possible to work in the motherland for a period of up to ten years with a hope of meeting all the requirements. The president of Češki Nacionalni Savet, Jože Sivaček, reminded me that as soon as Romania entered in the European Union, Romanian Czechs fled to Czech Republic; now those villages are emptying out. Sivaček thinks that the Czech minority in Serbia will face a similar future, since this process has already started.

The way to obtain a Hungarian or Romanian citizenship is actually less intricate. In order to get the Hungarian document, one only has to pass a special exam in Hungarian language and have at least one grandparent born within the Austro-Hungarian Empire; therefore, the success rate of such applications is

considerably higher. In Romania, things are even simpler: one only has to do anything on behalf of the Romanian country, even something as seemingly petty as playing in a Romanian football team.

In conclusion, I would like to end my article in the same way I opened it, with a few words from the editor of HL Print publishing house Vladimir Valentik: «there is nothing patriotic in this coming back home, just economic reasons. There is no poetry, there is poverty».

*English verification by Jarosław Sawiuk*

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## **CYPRUS AS THE BORDERLAND OF NATIONS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Cyprus is an island in the north-east part of the Mediterranean Sea (35°N, 33°E), near the coast of Turkey. It is a small country (ranked 171 by territory, and 161 by population in the world), just 9,251 km<sup>2</sup> (of which 3,355 km<sup>2</sup> are in North Cyprus)<sup>1</sup>. The population of the Republic of Cyprus is 1,205,575 (July 2016 est., official 98.8% Greek)<sup>2</sup>, while that of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is 313,626 (2014)<sup>3</sup>.

The population of the Republic of Cyprus is concentrated in central Lefkosia (Nicosia) and in the major cities to the south: Paphos, Lemessos (Limassol), and Larnaca. Mount Olympus (1,951 m) is the highest point of the island.

### **2. POLITICAL HISTORY OF CYPRUS**

From antiquity to today, Cyprus has been home to various nations. As a strategic location in the Middle East, it was subsequently occupied by several major powers. Before 1191, the island was under the influence of Greek, Roman and Byzantine cultures, with a mainly Greek population. In 1191 it was occupied by the crusaders, and in 1570 the island was conquered by the Turks, which led to the arrival of the Turkish population. Greek and Turkish cultures coexist peacefully, gradually intermingling. The descendants of the crusaders and representatives of the Republic of Venice had to leave the island or face persecution

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)

<sup>2</sup> [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)

<sup>3</sup> [www.devplan.org](http://www.devplan.org)

(Adamczyk 2002, pp. 25–31). Cyprus was placed under British administration (as a side effect of the Turkish-Russian war) based on the Cyprus Convention in 1878, and was formally annexed by Britain in 1914. Until 1914, Britain tended to support Turkey and the Turks in Cyprus. From 1878, the Enosis movement was developing, which sought to join the island to Greece. Since 1915, the Entente promised Greece annexation of Cyprus, but in 1925 it became a British colony (Adamczyk 2002, pp. 68–82).

After the Second World War, the aspirations for independence were growing in Cyprus. In order to regain autonomy, in 1952 the Greeks founded an underground army of the EOKA (National Organization of Cypriot Fighters), while also conducting political activities. At the same time, the Turks strove to maintain the *status quo*. Under agreements in Zurich (1959) and in London (1959), the clashes ceased, with the island finally being granted sovereignty on 19 February 1960. The form of government was to take into account the interests of both the Greeks and the Turks (fig. 1).

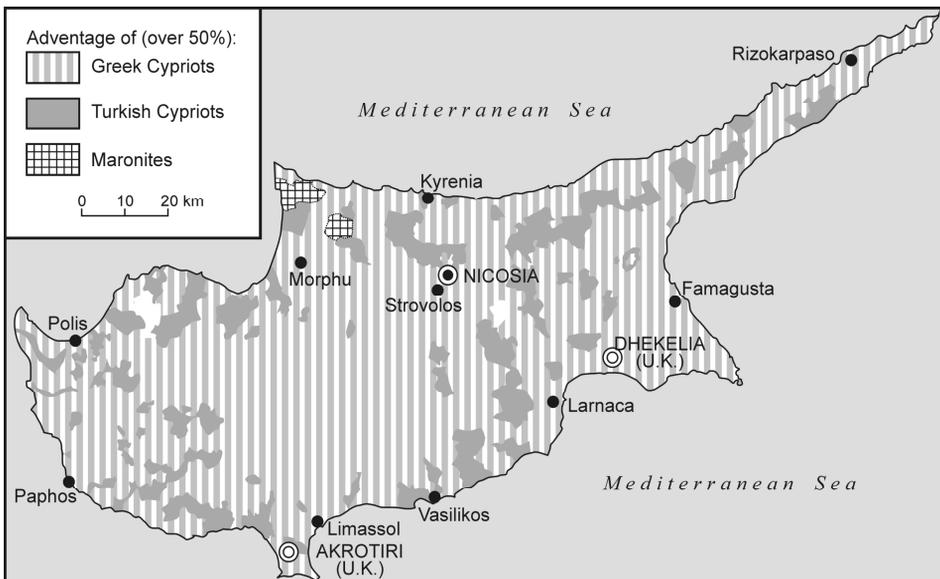


Fig. 1. Ethnographic distribution in Cyprus in 1960

Source: based on [pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cypr#/media/File:Ethnographic\\_distribution\\_in\\_Cyprus\\_1960.jpg](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cypr#/media/File:Ethnographic_distribution_in_Cyprus_1960.jpg) (20.3.2017)

The first president was Archbishop Makarios III, and the vice-president was Dr Fazıl Küçük. Extraterritorial British military bases (Akrotiri and Dhekelia) remained in place. Soon there were aspirations to join Cyprus to Greece. This

caused an armed conflict between the Greek and Turkish population. Bloody clashes lasted until 1974. As a result, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was established (proclaimed independence in 1983), but it is not recognised by the international community. Between the two parts of the island a buffer zone was established, under the control of UN troops (UNFICYP).

There were resettlements of the Turkish population to the north and the Greek population to the south. Both nations shared deep hostility. In 2004, the Republic of Cyprus became a member of the European Union, and in 2008 it adopted the euro. This reduced the tension between the two parts of the island.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

In 1974, Cyprus was divided into the southern Greek part and the northern Turkish part. The result was a mass displacement of people and the growing hostility between Greeks and Turks. The island has been separated by a buffer zone supervised by UN forces that cannot be crossed (fig. 2) (Kałuski 2017, p. 235). The 2003 agreement made it possible to create several border crossings. Two of them are in Nicosia (Ledra Street and Ledra Palace), only for pedestrians. Crossing Astroetiris–Zodeia is intended for cars only. Crossings Ayios Dhometios–Metehan, Pyla–Pergamos, Agios Nikolaos–Strovia and Limnitis where you can cross by foot and car.

The buffer zone is varied in width, from a few dozen metres in Nicosia to a few kilometres outside the city. The situation in Nicosia is reminiscent of that of Berlin before it was united – the buffer zone is fenced by walls, or by the blind walls of the buildings. In the country areas, the buffer zone is substantially free of vegetation. Traffic through the buffer zone is small, a significant portion are tourists, not only from EU countries, but also many Russians or East Asian arrivals. Border control is meticulous, and in relation to the people of the two parts of Cyprus it is rigorous. Traffic is difficult because vehicle insurance is not mutually recognised, it is not even possible to drive an assistance vehicle in the event of an accident.

There are still strong tendencies to include the Republic of Cyprus as part of Greece – there are Greek flags hanging on the buildings everywhere (Cypriot flags are much less visible!) A similar situation occurs in Northern Cyprus – where authority is held there by groups *de facto* headed from Turkey.

Negotiations for unification, or at least the normalisation of relations, have been running for 40 years without any results. In recent years, there have been

signs of agreement, but the current political situation in Turkey can have a negative impact. Negotiations have again been delayed in the fall of 2016 (Zszywanie 2017).

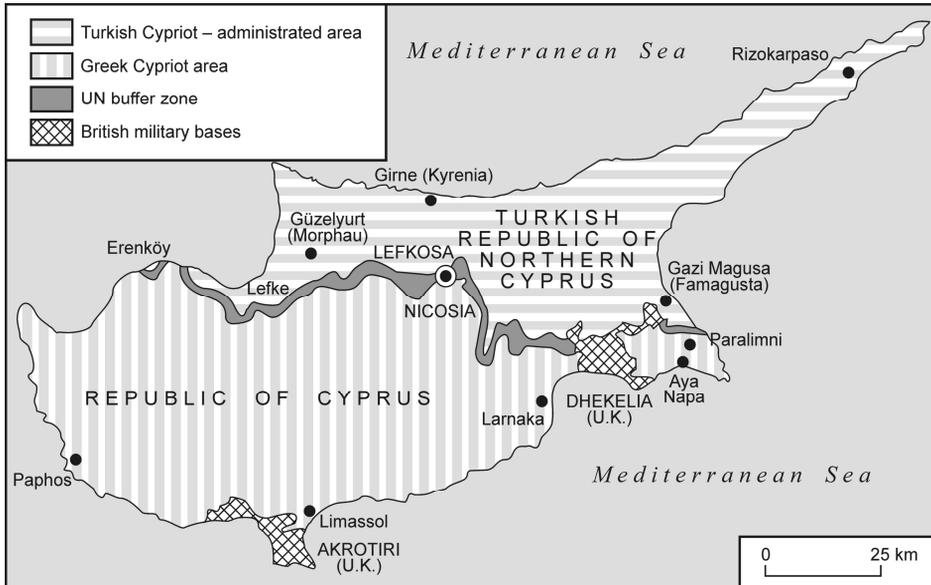


Fig. 2. The political division of Cyprus Island  
Source: M. Sobczyński (2006, p. 233)

An important factor in Cyprus are the two large British military bases, with the status of extraterritoriality. Both Cypriots and tourists can visit these areas, though some parts are barbed off and strictly guarded. British Army vehicles are often found on the highways, and aircraft and ships are also visible.

A separate factor may be the number of immigration of Russians and the Chinese, settling in Cyprus. Due to exceptionally favourable tax regulations, a large number of prosperous Russians or Chinese are seeking the right of permanent residence in the Republic of Cyprus, and often receive it. It depends on the investment of significant amounts (half million euro). In order to obtain citizenship, the required amounts are much higher (several million euro). Moving to Cyprus gives these people security because of the authoritarian nature of their country of origin, as well as financial benefits. There are also many people of various nationalities, both retirees and employees of the tourism industry. One of the signs of this can be seen in the signage round the island, with signs and information, etc. in different languages – in addition to Greek it is English, Russian, Chinese, and sometimes also Arabic.

One of the most important sectors of the economy is tourism. The island is visited by several million tourists a year, development opportunities are still significant – in the period outside the main tourist season, there are still large reserves for accommodation, and the weather conditions are favourable almost all year round. The second important sector of the economy is shipping – Cyprus is home to a significant portion of the world's freight fleet, due to exceptionally favourable regulations and very low taxation.

Also in Northern Cyprus, tourism is an important part of the economy (21% GDP – *Economic...* 2015). Northern Cyprus trying to develop the industry, but without a clear success.

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## **SRI LANKA AS THE BORDERLAND OF NATIONS**

### **1. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

Situated on the island of Ceylon, Sri Lanka is characterised by geographical isolation constituting a certain barrier to migration. This isolation is not absolute, though, as it is separated from the Indian subcontinent by a 55-km-wide Palk Strait, which includes an archipelago (Adam's Bridge), which serves as a natural connection between Ceylon and the continent, facilitating the migration of waves of population from India and thus considerably shaping the variation of political entities on the island (*Sri Lanka* 2006, p. 38).

The terrain of the island does not pose any significant barriers to migration either. While the central and southern parts of Ceylon include a mountain range culminating in Pidurutalagala (2524 m above sea level), in practice the mountains, cut by river valleys and depressions, do not constitute a significant obstacle to communication (*Sri Lanka Map* 2015).

The small area of the island (65,268 km<sup>2</sup>) results in all rivers flowing from the central range in all directions to be small (the longest one, Mahaweli, is only 334 km long) and, as such, not a communication barrier either (Rotter 2006, p. 251). One curious thing in Ceylon is the absence of natural bodies of water. All of them are anthropogenic (*Rivers ...*2004).

Despite its small area, Ceylon is highly diverse in climate, with the southern part in the equatorial climate zone, while the northern part is in the tropical zone. The climate, especially rainfall, is determined by monsoon winds. North, east and south-east of the island lie in a dry zone that encompasses more than 58% of Ceylon. The south-western fragment is the wet zone (encompassing just 20% of the island), with an arching, narrow transitional zone stretching between them (and taking up 22% of the island) (fig. 1) (Rotter 2006, p. 251). The diversity of climate, soil and plants in Ceylon has had a clear impact on land use and its alimentary potential, as well as on the formation of nations on the island.

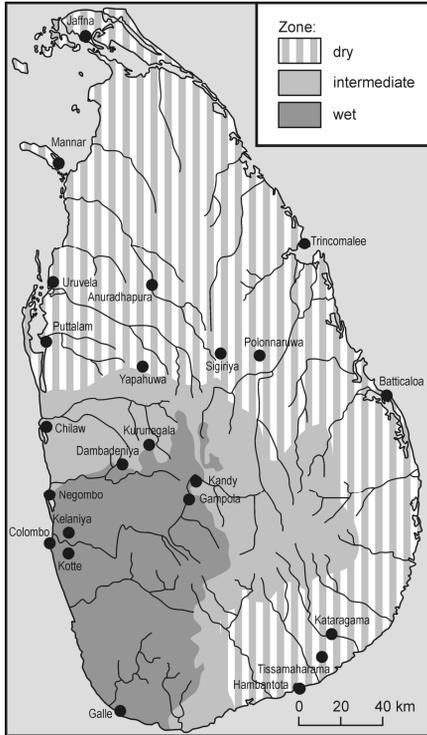


Fig. 1. The climate zones in Ceylon  
 Source: author's elaboration according to:  
 Ministry of Mahaweli Development and  
 Environment, [http://www.climatechange.lk/  
 Climate\\_Profile.html](http://www.climatechange.lk/Climate_Profile.html) (3.03.2016)

## 2. ORIGINS OF POPULATION, HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT IN CEYLON AND FIRST MIGRATIONS

A Sri Lankan legend says that Ceylon was where paradise, where Adam and Eve gave birth to the humankind, was located. A trace of his foot can even be found on Adam's Peak (Bonifat'eva and Sučkov 1985, p. 19). In fact, however, the island was not the cradle of humanoids. They came to Ceylon from the Indian subcontinent via Adam's Bridge. This happened about 500 thousand years ago.

The Balangoda culture, created by cave-dwellers that used fire and farmed, dates back to the Mesolithic times. The collapse of this culture is associated with the first historically documented wave of immigrants from India, which flowed in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. In the Sabaragamuwa Mountains, the culture has survived up to approx. 1000 AD (Kusio 2002, p. 254).

The Veddas are considered to be the indigenous people of Ceylon, although modern representatives of this tribe are in fact a mix of indigenous and immigrant populations (Seligmann and Seligmann 1911, p. 26, Shukri 1990, p. 261). Anthropologists associate the Vedita people with both primitive South African

Khoisan family, which also includes the San people, as well as with Australian Aboriginals (Perera 1990, p. 148, Lord and Bell 2007, p. 61). The current population of approximately 400 lives in eastern Sri Lanka, in villages near Mahiyangana (Attanapola and Lund 2013, p. 175).

Both Vedda people and later Sinhalese derive their origin from the local mythology, recorded in epic *Mahawamsa* (*Great Chronicle*), referred to as a chronicle of the island (*The Mahāvamsa...* 1912). Prince Vijaya, who came from north-western India to marry Kuveni of the Veddic tribe of Yaksha (Kusio 2002, p. 254, Bandara and Tisdell 2005, p. 1, Lord and Bell 2007, p. 61).

The influx of Sinhalese people from the north of the Indian Peninsula occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. According to the *Mahawamsa* this ethnic group stems from Prince Vijaya of the Kshatriya caste (Perera 1988, p. 5). The founders of the people was to be the grandmother of the prince, Suppadevi, who was the daughter of the king of Vanga (Bengal) and the princess of Kalinga (Odisha). Suppadevi ran away from the family home to the country Lada (Gujarat), and married a lion (*sinha*), hence the name Sinhala people (children of a lion). At age 16, her son Sinhabahu with his mother and sister moved to a more densely populated region and the lion, in search of his family, devastated the area, but was killed by the son. After the death of the king of Vanga, Sinhabahu was named his successor, but he shortly left the kingdom and founded the city of Sinhapura in the Lada. He married his sister, with whom he had 16 sons. The eldest son Vijaya was a brawler and his father had to drive him out of town. Vijaya set sail with 700 companions to Tambappanni (Sanskrit name of Ceylon), where they arrived on the day of Buddha's death (between 563 and 483 BC) (Codrington 1926, p. 11, Lord and Bell 2007, p. 63). This place is defined as located on the southern bank of the estuary Malvathu River (Seneviratna 1987, p. 8). The relationship between Vijaya and a Yakshi spirit (Kuveni) gave the world a girl and a boy, the first Vedda people. Vijaya, with the help of Kuveni, defeated other demons inhabiting Sirivatthu and Lannapura (today Laygale and Laggala hills) (Upham 1833, vol. 2, p. 172). According to some messages, “Yaksha” and snake demons “Naga” are fairy creatures (Perera 1988, p. 4), but the predominant theories claim that these names signify primitive Veddic tribes, which should be backed by the fact that they mated with the invaders and gave them offspring.

Finally, Vijaya brought a wife from the Indian subcontinent, a Pandu princess, but had no children. In order to perpetuate the power of the family, he wanted to bring his younger brother from Gujarat, but he did not come, but sent his youngest son Panduvasdeva, who took over power from Vijaya.

This myth is deeply rooted in Sri Lankan historiography, as it explains the early relations between the Sinhalese and the Vedda. The arrival of Panduvasdeva is associated with the second wave of settlement from India, this time from Bengal and Odisha (Kusio 2002, p. 254).

The Sinhalese (Sinhala) dominated the population of the island and established the first state in the north-western part of Ceylon (Rajarata), which existed from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC to 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, with a capital in Anuradhapura.

After the colonisation of the island by Sinhalese, it started to be called the Sinhala Dwipa (the island of the Sinhala). The ancient Greeks imported pearls from Ceylon and called the island Taprobane (Taprobanam) and later Palaisimundu, as noted by the explorer and historian Megasthenes around 300 BC in *Indika* (Lord and Bell 2007, pp. 15, 22). Arabs used the name Serendib, which was a stripped Sinhalese name of the island (Kusio 2002, p. 254). The Chinese, who knew Ceylon earlier than the Europeans, called it Si-lan. This name was used to coin the Portuguese name Celão, Dutch Zeylan and English Ceylon. Sinhalese called their homeland Lanka. When the colonial name was abandoned in 1972, the country was named Sri Lanka (Holy or Beautiful Lanka).

First settlers from India were probably followers of Hinduism, but in the years 273–236 BC Indian emperor Ashoka the Great of the Mauryan dynasty, sent missionaries in all directions with the task of spreading Buddhism. He treated Ceylon in a special way by sending his own son (or brother, according to other sources), prince Mahinda Bhikku (Mahendra). As the story goes, he met the king Tissa of Anuradhapura (who reigned between 250 and 210 BC) while hunting near Mihintale. The stranger asked the king for mango and during the conversation persuaded him to accept the new faith, for which the monarch received the title of Devanampiya (Beloved of the Gods) (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 16). The mission was continued by Mahinda's sister, Princess Sanghamitta, who brought relics from India (the collarbone of Buddha and his begging bowl) and a branch of the sacred tree Bo (Kusio 2002, pp. 254–255, Lord and Bell 2007, pp. 26, 77). The ficus which grew out of the branch is considered the oldest tree in the world and is now a place of worship in Anuradhapura (fig. 2), while the nearby Thuparamaja temple holds the remaining relics of Buddha (Cave 1904, p. 51). According to the Sinhalese, Buddha himself visited Ceylon four times (Obeyesekere 1911, pp. 2, 17) and, even though this cannot be proven in any historical sources, the places related to the supposed visits are considered to be sacred. The texts brought to the island by Mahinda were translated into Pali, from which contemporary Sinhalese writing derives. Ceylon became a centre of the Buddhist Pali canon. Here, in Aluvihara, the *Tripitaka* was written, the sacred text of the Theravada, while Kandy hosts the biggest Buddhist relic – the

tooth of Buddha. Buddhism became the state religion in Ceylon (Kusio 2002, p. 254) and the stupas became a permanent feature of the landscape of Ceylon, and today the main architectural tourist attraction (Elkanidze 1990, p. 53, Ranaweera 2004).



Fig. 2. Sacred Bo tree in Anuradhapura  
Source: author's photo

The main Tamil settlement wave did not come to the island until the 10<sup>th</sup> century, but already in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC the people, or its Dravidian predecessors, came from the Indian subcontinent by land via Adam's Bridge (Kusio 2002, p. 255, Lord and Bell 2007, p. 66). Archaeological sites in the north-west of Ceylon show the similarities between the cultures and the megalithic findings in southern India (Bopearachchi 2004a, b). Tamil invaders often sat on the throne in Anuradhapura and they finally conquered it in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In 145 BC, Tamil general from Kola named Elara conquered Anuradhapura and ruled it for 44 years, as stated in the *Mahavamsa* (*The Mahāvamsa...* 1912, pp. XXI, 20, 13). Tamils ruled the northern part of Ceylon twice more, in 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and 5<sup>th</sup> century AD (Kusio 2002, p. 255).

Until the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, Tamils also professed Buddhism, and the coexistence with Sinhalese was peaceful. The ethnic and religious division of the island started late, in 14<sup>th</sup> century, when the Tamil north and Sinhalese south diverged religiously and linguistically.

The third ethnic and religious group of Ceylon, the Muslims, are the descendants of Arab merchants who explored the Indian Ocean. First contacts were made in ancient times, when Arabs had their own street in Anuradhapura, where

they traded horses and spices (Zulkiple and Jazeel 2013, p. 183). Back then, though, they were not followers of Islam yet, as it spread in the west coast from Galle to Jaffna in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Arabs monopolised European trade with Ceylon until the Portuguese came to the island. After the occupation the coast they were living along, the Muslims sought refuge in the Kingdom of Kandy, in the interior, populating the towns of Gampola, Mawanella, Welimada and Akuressa, where they still live (Lord and Bell 2007, p. 71). During the Dutch and British colonisation, Indonesian and Malay workers, also Muslim, were brought to the plantations (Zulkiple and Jazeel 2013, p. 185). The British also brought Indian Muslims from the Kush Peninsula.

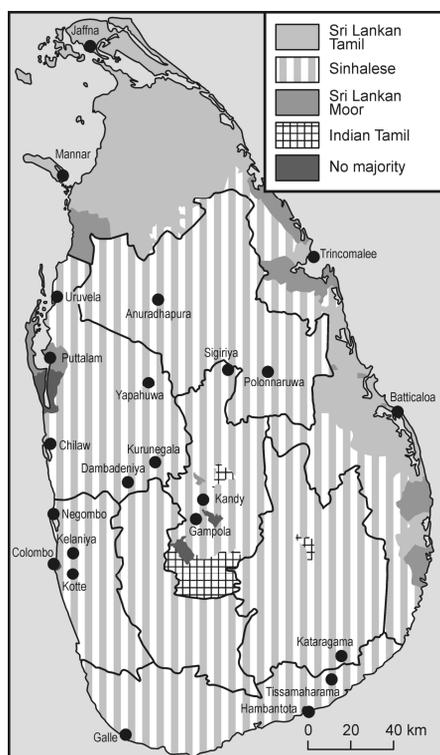


Fig. 3. Spatial differentiation of occurrence of ethnically-dominated areas in Ceylon (2012)

Source: author's elaboration according to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics\\_of\\_Sri\\_Lanka#/media/File:Sri\\_Lanka\\_-\\_Ethnicity\\_2012.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Sri_Lanka#/media/File:Sri_Lanka_-_Ethnicity_2012.png) (4.04.2016)

The dominant population of Sri Lanka according to the 2011 census are Buddhist Sinhalese, constituting 75% of the population and populating over 77% of the island (fig. 3). The second largest ethnic and religious group are mostly Hinduist Tamils, divided into two groups: indigenous Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils who came from the subcontinent relatively recently (during the British colonisation). The first group represents 11% of the population and dominates in almost 17% of the island in the north and east of the island, while

the Indian Tamils brought to work in plantations constitute little more than 4% and live in various places, even though their domination can only be seen in three enclaves of the Central Massif that constitute as little as 2% of the island. Muslims (ethnically descendent from Arabs, Malays, Bengals), known here as Moors, are a significant group in the ethnic and religious structure, with 9% of the population and dominating in several enclaves constituting less than 4% of the island on both coasts. Less than 1% of Sri Lanka are mixed areas, where no ethnic group predominates.

The European population appeared in Ceylon as late as the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The relationships between Portuguese and Dutch colonists with local population, both Sinhalese and Tamil, lead to the formation of a small mixed community, which feels Dutch in origin and dubs themselves Burghers or Dutch Burghers (Boxer 1980, pp. 226–227, Lord and Bell 2007, p. 73). According to the 2011 census, there is less than 40 thousand Burghers (or 0.19% of the population).

The spread of the Christian faith on the island is attributed to St. Thomas the Apostle, who arrived in 52 AD with the mission to the Indian Kerala, and the faith spread through him to Ceylon in 72 AD, which was proven by a crucifix found archeologists in Anuradhapura (Elias 2004, p. 203). However, a more significant influx of Christians involved European colonisation, first Portuguese started in 1505 (Catholicism), then Dutch from 1656 (Calvinism), then British from 1796 (Anglicanism).

### 3. NATIONAL GENESIS OF PRE-COLONIAL COUNTRIES IN CEYLON

The beginnings of the history of political and territorial structures in Sri Lanka not only are lost in the mists of time but, even worse, are intertwined with fables, legends and stories closely related to the beginning of Buddhism on the island. It is therefore difficult to discern which structures and characters were historical and which were legendary, which is not facilitated by Sri Lankan historiography, biased by religious ideology. It seems that the ethnic structure already existing before the Sinhalese came to the island became interwoven with the founding myth. The same myth is intertwined with the structures that, as historical studies show us, were created after the 543 BC. *Mahavamsa*, the main source of knowledge about the island's history, informs us almost solely about Sinhalese rulers, with only incidental mentions of Tamil settlement. There is no doubt, though, that Sri Lanka has been a multiethnic country since time immemorial (Ross and Matles 1990, p. 5).

As the tribes of Yaksha and Naga are considered to be the first population, they are attributed with creating the initial territorial structures. The Naga tribe probably created Nagapida and Kelaniya (fig. 4). The problem is that the genesis of this people is still disputed by historians. The Nagas (Nayinaar) came from the Tamil kingdom of Chera located in the Indian subcontinent, where they watched borders, defense walls and borderland fortresses. Ptolemy described the Nagas as a Dravidian people, who spoke Tamil (Seneviratna 1987, p. 6). There are also views that the Nagas were not Tamils, but a separate people (Holt 2011, p. 74). It is therefore difficult to say unambiguously whether the first territorial structures in Ceylon were created by Veddas, Yakshas, who surely were such a people, but did not form any lasting structures, or a people of Tamil origin, maybe Nagas.

The Kingdom of Nagadipa included the northern part of Ceylon, with the rulers seat situated on the island of Nainativu in the Palk Strait. According to *Mahavamsa*, during his second visit to Ceylon in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, Buddha had to resolve a dispute between the rulers of Nagadipa Kelaniya concerning a richly decorated throne (*The Mahāvamsa...* 1912, p. 7).

The Kingdom of Kelaniya included the western part of Ceylon, and the seat of the ruler was in Kelaniya (now a suburb of Colombo) (Weerakoon 2002). Newer studies show, however, that Kelaniya stretched over the river Heda, on the east coast, on the Gulf of Arugam, which is contrary to its previous location, and was built much later, in 237 BC.

The founder of the first Sinhalese political-territorial structure of Ceylon was Prince Vijaya, who in 543 BC settled on the west coast between the modern towns of Chilaw and Mannar. The capital was located in Nuwara Tamm, near the modern Puttalam (Upham 1833, vol. 2, p. 176). The country, like the whole island, was called Tambapanni (fig. 4). Vijaya's leaders were pushing inland, expanding the territory in the north-western part of Ceylon, and founded more cities between the rivers of Malwathu and Kala (Perera 1988, p. 5). The economy was based on the cultivation of rice, that needed relatively even ground and the ability to irrigate easily using canals (Ross and Matles 1990, p. 10).

After the death of Prince Vijaya in 505 BC, the capital was moved to Upatissa Nuwara (also called Vijtapura, located near today's Mannar). In 504 BC, the nephew of Vijaya Panduvasa came from India to marry the daughter of Buddha's cousin Sakya Pandu (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 8). His six brothers-in-law founded cities that they ruled over: Anuradhapura, Uruvela, Dighayu, Vijitagama and Ramagona Rohana (now Mahāgāma in Hambantota district) (Codrington 1926, p. 12, Seneviratna 1987, p. 8). At that time, the historic division of Ceylon

into three great provinces happened. Rajarata (also called Pihiti) is a part of the island located north of the rivers Mahaweli Ganga and Deduru, with major centers in Anuradhapura (the capital) and Polonnaruwa where Sinhalese domination was indisputable. This province occupied 28,750 km<sup>2</sup>, or nearly 44% of the island. To the south of these rivers, on the west coast of Ceylon was Maya (also called Dakkhinadesa), cut off in the south by Kalu Ganga, with its capital in Dedigama, also dominated by the Sinhalese. It occupied an area of almost 11 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, which represents less than 17% of the island. South of the Mahaweli Ganga and the Kalu Ganga was the Rohana province, including a central massif known as Malaya (Blaze 1933, p. 12, Kusio 2002, p. 255). This province, with the seat of the ruler in Magama, Kataragama, and later in Tissamaharama, covered an area of nearly 26 thousand km<sup>2</sup> or less than 40% of the island. The reign of Sinhalese there was illusory for a long time, as there were still strong structures of the indigenous Veddic population (fig. 5).

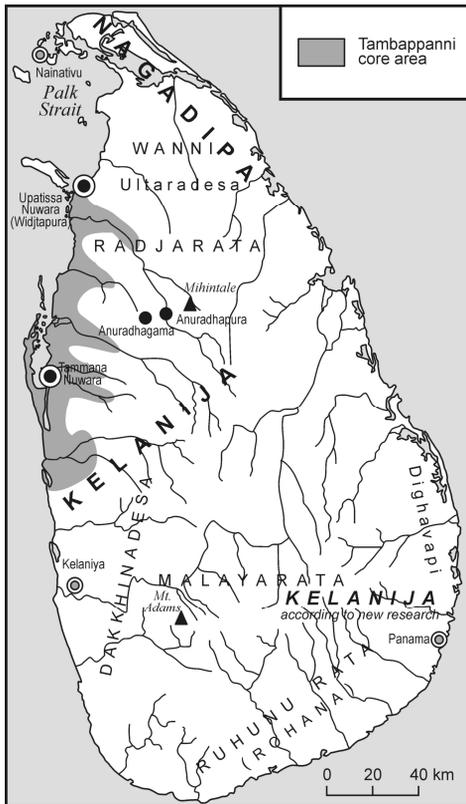


Fig. 4. Ceylon in pre-state times and the historical regions of the island  
 Source: author's elaboration according to:  
 Kusio (2002, p. 256);  
<https://sirimunasiha.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/ancient-map.jpg>;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces\\_of\\_Sri\\_Lanka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces_of_Sri_Lanka) (3.03.2016)

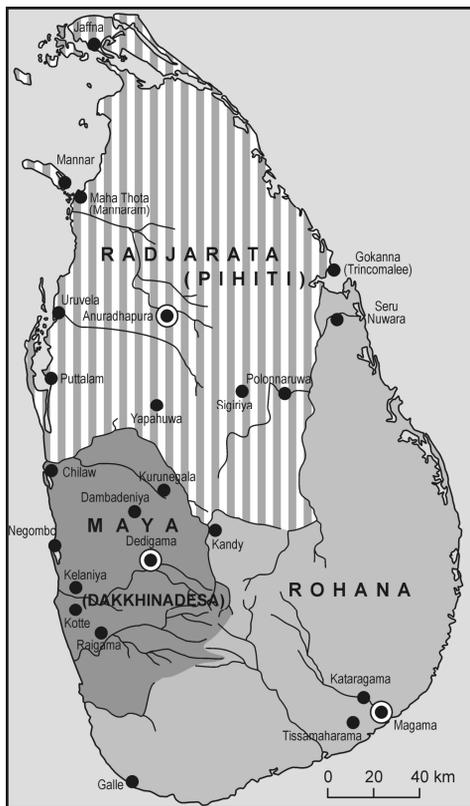


Fig. 5. Political division of the Kingdom of Anuradhapura  
 Source: author's elaboration according to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anuradhapura\\_Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anuradhapura_Kingdom) (3.03.2016)

Pandukabhai (reigned 437–367 BC) is considered to be the first historical king, who ended clan conflicts among the Sinhalese and initiated the political state, making deep social transformations (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 12). This ruler organised efficient administration, built water reservoirs and irrigation systems, cared for the poor and the religious life. Unfortunately, the story of his reign is also hard to discern from myths and legends. The very origin of the ruler is unclear. Some sources indicate Aryan origin (*The Mahāvamsa...* 1912, p. 67), while others claim that the king came from the Tamil kingdom of Pandya (Caldwell 1881, p. 14). Pandukabhaya's reign lasted up to 70 years, and his most important achievement was to transfer the capital of the country in 377 BC to Anuradhapura (Codrington 1926, p. 12). The city remained the capital of the Sinhala state for over 100 years. At the apex of its development, it was believed to have approx. 2 million inhabitants and covered an area of 40 km<sup>2</sup> (Bandaranayake 1994, p. 4, Lord and Bell 2007, p. 221).

Initially rulers controlled only the northern part of Ceylon, but it was not absolute dominion. Periodically, independent political-territorial structure

emerged, especially in the final period of the Kingdom of Anuradhapura (in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries). During this reign, from king Devanampya Tissa (307–287 BC), Buddhism was implemented and strengthened on the island.

After the death of the charismatic ruler, a period of destabilisation started in Ceylon, which involved both internal divisions in the Sinhalese state, periodic elimination of their power to the indigenous rulers in the south but, above all, more and more frequent occupation by rulers from the south of the subcontinent (Tamils).

This happened for the first time in 237 BC, after king Suratissa of Anuradhapura, the last in Vijaya's dynasty was dethroned by Tamil horse merchants who came from southern India – Sena and Guttgaka, who ruled for another 22 years (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 23). Murdering the usurpers did not result in political normalisation, the Sinhalese regained the throne for just one decade (215–205 BC) and were succeeded for the next 44 years in Anuradhapura by Elara, the Tamil leader of the Chola. He divided the country into feudal governorships, ruled by the Sinhalese, who styled themselves kings of their countries (Lord and Bell 2007, p. 27). The Sinhalese ruler of Rohana, Dutugemunu started an armed uprising against Tamil reign by organising a north-bound expedition to take power from the Tamil invaders using an offensive elephant named Kandula (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 26, Codrington 1926, p. 16). He conquered 32 local kingdoms to finally defeat Elara in an elephant duel. In 161 BC, this ruler of Anuradhapura provided the Sinhalese with power over the whole island for the first time.



Fig. 6. Great Stupa (Ruwanwelisaya)  
in Anuradhapura  
Source: author's photo

Under Dutugemunu (161–137 BC), Anuradhapura has been significantly expanded. Great temples were built in vast parks, including Ruwanwelisaya (the Grand Stupa) (Codrington 1926, p. 17) (fig. 6). Dutugemunu is recognised in Sri Lanka as a great ruler, and *Mahavamsa* devotes almost 30% of its chapters to descriptions of his achievements. His role in strengthening Buddhism and founding monasteries is especially appreciated.

King Dutugemunu did not establish clear rules of inheritance and the rule of dozens of his successors was a period of great fluctuations on the throne (with the average term of below one year), dynastic murders, civil wars and dethroning (Lord and Bell 2007, p. 28). Between 103 and 89 BC Tamil kings ruled Anuradhapura.

The Vijaya dynasty expired in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, and the Kingdom of Anuradhapura was swept in the rivalry of two families: Sinhalese Lambakanna and probably Hindu Moriya. The victorious Vasabha gave rise to the Lambakanna dynasty that ruled until the death of king Mittasena in 436 (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 55, Kusio 2002, p. 255).

The subsequent period in the history of the Kingdom of Anuradhapura was characterised by strong internal tensions and the raids of Tamils from the Indian subcontinent. The area under Sinhalese control was limited to the south-eastern part of the island – Rohana. Anuradhapura was finally liberated from foreign domination by king Dhatusena Moriya, the builder of the largest water reservoir in the capital (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 77, Pieris and Naish 1920, p. 11, Codrington 1926, p. 21).

Further fate of the Sinhalese Kingdom of Anuradhapura were tightly connected to the growing influence or invasions of the Tamil rules from India. While trying to move away from the enemy, the Sinhalese moved their capital southwards several times, always placing it in the centre of the island, and not on the coast.

The first relocation took place after the assassination of Dhatusena by his son Kashyapa who, fearing retaliation from his brother Mogallana, who fled to India, in 477 moved from Anuradhapura to Sigiriya, a rock towering 200 m over the plain (Cave 1904, p. 122, Obeyesekere 1911, pp. 80–82, Codrington 1926, p. 21, Seneviratna 1987, p. 26, Bandaranayake 1994, p. 7). The place, decorated with over 500 frescoes, is now protected by UNESCO and is one of the symbols of Sri Lanka (fig. 7).

Moggallana regained the throne in 495 and returned the capital to Anuradhapura, but the country became the fief of the rules of Tamil Indian kingdoms, who manned the throne with their puppet kings (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 85). Formally the Sinhalese Kingdom of Anuradhapura fell into decline and was the object of frequent invasions of the Chola Empire, which ended in 933 with king Mahinda V losing power and being exiled to the south of the island and, later in 1017, being deported to India (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 131, Codrington 1926, p. 26, Seneviratna 1987, pp. 28–29) (fig. 8).

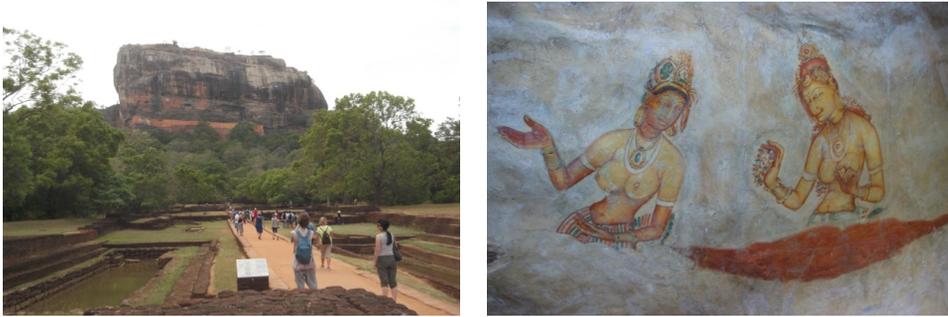


Fig. 7. Sigiriya – temporary seat of the king of Anuradhapura – Kashyapa, included in the UNESCO protection of the world cultural and natural heritage  
Source: author's photo

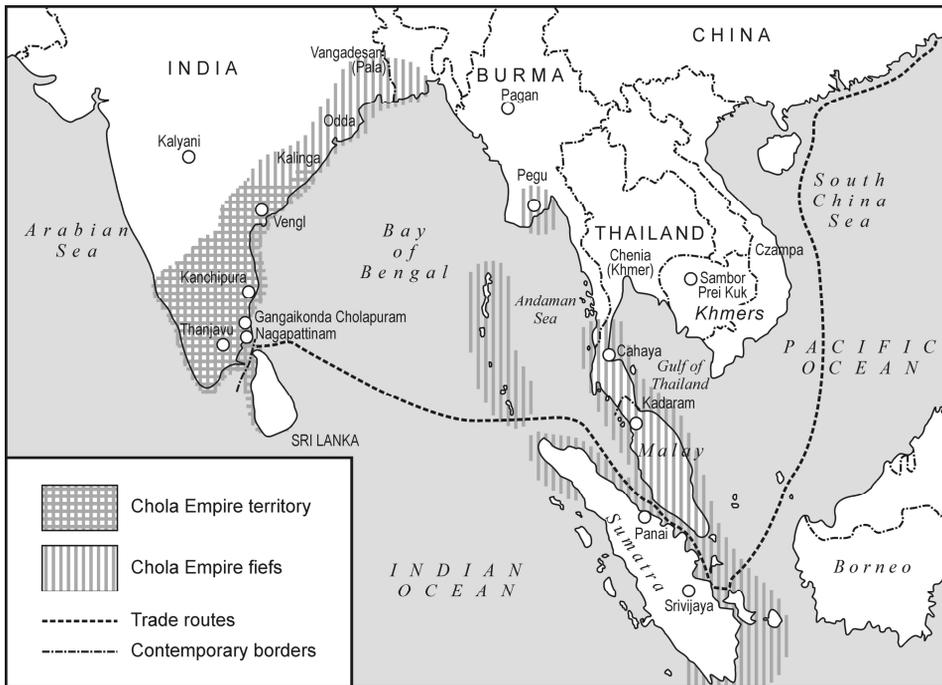


Fig. 8. The spatial extent of the Chola Empire in 10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries  
Source: author's elaboration according to: <http://www.leisuretravelsrilanka.com/-blog/Anuradhapura> (4.04.2016)

Formally, the Kingdom of Anuradhapura under the Tamil rule survived until 1070. By then, the Chola Empire reached the Malay Archipelago, and its regression ended the 1500 years of independent Ceylon.

Despite only a 75 year period of Tamil occupation Anuradhapura, whose buildings spread out over a distance of 25 km, was completely ruined. Tamil governors moved the capital to Polonnaruwa, which retained its functions even after the occupation ended. Anuradhapura has never risen from recession, and today, despite being one of the key objects of tourism in Sri Lanka, has a population of only 50.6 thousand (2012).

Throughout its existence, from prince Vijaya to Mahinda the 5<sup>th</sup> (543 BC to 1017 AD) the kingdom of Anuradhapura (Rajarata) was ruled by five dynasties: Vijaya (until 205 BC), whose representative Pandukabhaya founded the kingdom of Anuradhapura, Ruhuna dynasty, related to them (until 66), Lambakanna (until 455), Moriya (until 684), and the second Lambakanna (until 1017). Rajarata was also temporarily ruled by Tamil kings from the Indian subcontinent, or Tamil occupation in 237–215, 205–161, 103–89 BC, 436–463 and 1017–1070 AD. Thus, the Tamil rule in the Kingdom of Rajarata with its capital in Anuradhapura lasted for 160 years, but we should also add the rule of the house of Moriya of unknown Hindu origin (462–491 or 28 years). This means that the Sinhalese reign lasted for 87% of the Kingdom of Anuradhapura's existence.

Polonnaruwa was a city located at the passage through the Mahaweli Ganga river and was one of five main administrative centres of Rajarata. As shown by archaeological research, it is older than Anuradhapura. According to local mythology, it was founded in 400 BC by the brother-in-law of king Panduwasā – Vijitha (as Vijithagama). It became the capital of the Kingdom of Anuradhapura, occupied by the Chola Empire, after the old capital was conquered and the Sinhalese statehood was removed in 1017. The Tamils dubbed it *Djananathamangalam*.

The Tamil reign did not include the whole island, as Sinhalese rulers kept control over the south part. This is where the offensive was launched from by the King of Ruhuna – Vijayabahu, who resided in Kataragama, which banished the Tamil invaders after a 17-year war. Polonnaruwa was conquered in 1070, after a 7-month siege, but also a civil war in the Chola Empire, when Burma and Panja also rose against them (Codrington 1926, p. 33). Vijayabahu founded another dynasty and Polonnaruwa again became the capital of the Sinhalese state, now called the Kingdom of Polonnaruwa. Vijayabahu reestablished Buddhism, weakened during the reign of Hindu Tamils. In Polonnaruwa, a new temple was erected to protect the tooth relic of the Buddha. Reservoirs were rebuilt, some new ones were also constructed in order to expand the irrigation of the rice fields. The network of roads and shelters for pilgrims was also expanded.

The Kingdom of Polonnaruwa was ruled alternately by two Sinhalese dynasties, Vijayabahu and Kalingha, with just one year of Tamil reign. After 1211, however, it was ruled by just two Tamil dynasties – Pandyan and Kalinga from the Indian line. Of the 180 years of existence of the Kingdom of Polonnaruwa (1056–1236), Sinhalese rule lasted 157 years or 83.5%.

The most outstanding ruler of Polonnaruwa was Parakramabahu, who took the throne in 1161, following a 40-year civil war (Codrington 1926, p. 33). It was during his reign that the city gained its most important buildings that have lasted to this day (Obeyesekere 1911, pp. 154–167). The lack of water has forced the construction of an artificial reservoir Parakrama Samudra (the Sea of Parakrama), with an area of 2030 ha with 11 channels to distribute water (Seneviratna 1987, pp. 30–31). The monarch's residences were built on the shore (the Palace, Baths, Summer Palace), that can compete in size and beauty with the later gardens of Versailles. A citadel was built, which served as a *de facto* administrative centre of the country, as well as numerous temples, including the famous Gal Vihara, carved in stone, with the monument of the resting Buddha (Senadeera 1990, p. 243) (fig. 9). The history of Ceylon from the period of the reign of King Parakramabahu is described in the other Sinhalese epic chronicle besides *Mahavamsa*, the *Culavamsa...* (1998).

The conquest and destruction of Polonnaruwa by the Tamils caused the Sinhalese elites and Buddhist monks to leave the city and found new capitals, whose names served as the names for consecutive kingdoms (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 178, Casparis 1990, p. 67). The abandoned capital was taken over by the jungle in early 14<sup>th</sup> century, and the remains were only discovered during British rule by archeologist Stephen Montague Burrows in 1886 (Mitton 1917, p. 131).

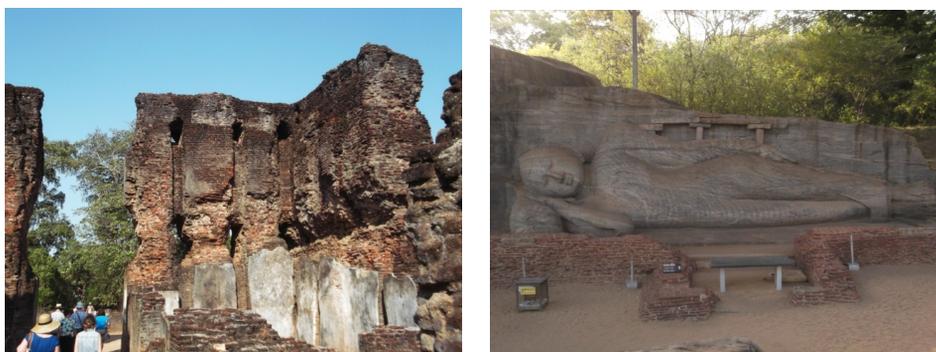


Fig. 9. Polonnaruwa – the ruins of the royal palace  
and the rock temple of Gal Vihara  
Source: author's photo

Until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Sinhalese rule in Ceylon was well-grounded and Tamils did not create any political entities, just occupied the island during the invasion of their troops from India or by imposing their kings or the fief system on the kingdoms of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. It was only after the invasion of the Jaffna Peninsula in 1215 of the ruler of Kalinga in India (today's Odisha state) named Magha, that the Tamil Jaffna kingdom was formed in the north of Ceylon with its capital in Nallura (now the northern part of Jaffna) (Codrington 1926, p. 38). Initially, the kingdom covered only the peninsula and did not exceed the area of 1330 km<sup>2</sup> (fig. 10).

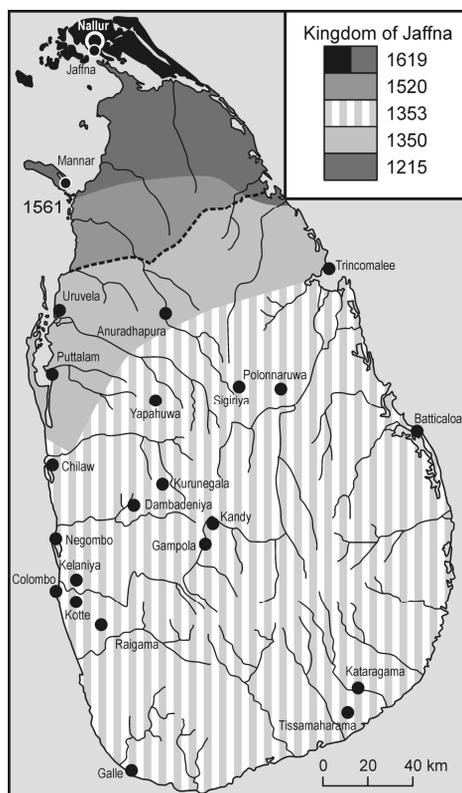


Fig. 10. The territorial transformations of the Jaffna Kingdom in the years 1215–1619

Source: author's elaboration according to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaffna\\_kingdom#/media/File:Jaffna\\_Kingdom.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaffna_kingdom#/media/File:Jaffna_Kingdom.jpg) (4.04.2016)

Tamils quickly conquered the north-eastern and north-western part of Ceylon, divided into a number of local monarchies (Wanni), expanding their territory at the expense of Sinhalese Polonnaruwa, which they ultimately ruined. Around 1350, the Kingdom of Jaffna controlled an area of 16.6 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. For a brief period after 1353, the Tamils imposed a fief system on all Sinhalese kingdoms in Ceylon. Only once, around 1450, the Jaffna Kingdom was invaded by the Sinhalese Kingdom of Kotte, which occupied the northern part of the

island until 1467. After the invaders were pushed out, the economic potential of Jaffna was rebuilt, basing it on pearl and elephant trade. Even though it was also feudal, the Jaffna Kingdom had a more modern system, developed Tamil literature, opened an Indian academy and strengthened Hinduism by building numerous temples.

The regression of the Jaffna Kingdom started with the arrival, in 1505, of Portuguese colonists, for whom the Palk Strait that connected all Tamil countries was strategically important. Around 1520, a stable border between Tamil and Sinhalese states emerged, and the Jaffna Kingdom occupied around 7.5 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. In 1617, a civil war broke out in Jaffna, which the Portuguese used to limit the area of the kingdom and by putting their citizen Don Constantine de Bragança on the throne, to finally, in 1619, remove all independence of the first pre-colonial Tamil state in Ceylon.

After the Jaffna invasion of Polonnaruwa, Sinhalese king Vijayabahu III chose Dambadeniya in western Ceylon to be his new seat and erected a fortress there.

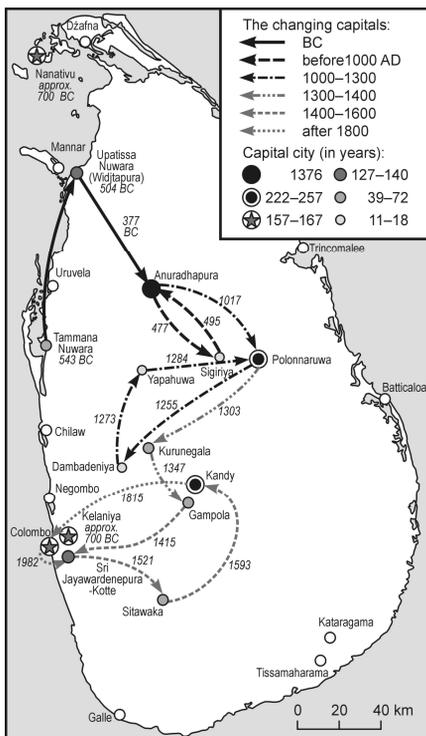


Fig. 11. The changing capitals of Sri Lanka over the ages  
Source: author's elaboration

there. The Kingdom of Dambadeniya peaked during the reign of king Parakramabahu II (1236–1270), which saw not only economic development, but also the creation of significant poetic works, including ones penned by the monarch himself (Codrington 1926, p. 43). The ruler united three kingdoms in Sri Lanka, and even reclaimed Polonnaruwa, where he crowned himself (Kusio 2000, p. 256), but the city was not fit to serve as a capital any more and was soon reclaimed by the Tamils from Jaffna. Another Sinhalese ruler, Bhuvaneka Bahu, faced with the Tamil invasion in 1272, moved the capital again, this time to Yapahuwa in the west coast (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 188). After being conquered by the Tamils, Yapahuwa fell into regression and abandoned, to be inhabited only by Buddhist monks. Despite the threat from the invaders from India, the next

ruler, Parakramabachu III (1287–1293) reclaimed Polonnaruwa again to move his seat there, as well as to hide the tooth of Buddha relic in a local temple (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 189, Codrington 1926, p. 44). In 1303, the ruler died and the capital of the Sinhalese state was once again moved by his successor, this time to Kurunegala in the south (fig. 11–12).

Kurunegala served as the capital for over four decades, with the peak of the Kingdom of Kurunegala during the reign of king Parakramabahu IV (1302–1326), when several temples were built, including Alutnuwara Dewale in the capital and Asgiriya Vihara in Kandy (Codrington 1926, p. 45). For unknown reasons, in 1347, king Parakramabahu V started his reign in another Sinhalese capital, Gampola (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 190).



Fig. 12. Kurunegala – city center, left in the background an ancient citadel hill; Kandy – Dalada Maligawa temple (Tooth of the Buddha), the final location of the relic  
Source: author's photo

At the end of the existence of the Kingdom of Kurunegala, decentralisation tendencies grew in the Sinhalese state, with two concurrent centres of power. King Bhuwanekabahu IV resided in Gampola, while his brother Parakramabahu V stayed in Dedigama, 50 km away, and only moved to Gampola after inheriting the throne (Obeyesekere 1911, pp. 194–195) (fig. 13). At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the house of Alagakonnara, newcomers from southern India, Hindus fleeing the subcontinent due to Muslim invasion, seized the throne. They effectively stopped the Tamil dynasty of Arya Chakravarti, which tried to expand to the southern Sinhalese islands. A representative of this house, Nissanka Alagakonnara, erected the Jayawardanepura fortress in the coast, called Kotte (meaning fortress in Sinhalese) (Kusio 2002, p. 257).

The last king to rule in Gampola was Bhuvaneka Bahu V, who ruled for 29 years. At the same time another ruler, Veerabahu II, resided in Raigama (non-existent city east of today's Horana) of the Alagakonnara (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 196).



Fig. 13. Gampola – the centre of the town, now with less than 30 thousand inhabitants; Kandy – the city centre  
Source: author's photo

In 1415, the last ruler of Gampola, Parakramabahu VI, moved his seat to Kotte, thus initiating another Sinhalese political and territorial structure in the history of Ceylon, namely the kingdom of Kotte. This was another state that succeeded in taking control over the whole island (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 203, Codrington 1926, p. 47).

Similarly to many Sinhalese kings, the ruler of Kotte was faced with defending the independence against the Tamil invasion from Jaffna. In a north-bound offensive, Parakramabahu IV conquered the Wannu region and succeeded in driving out the king of Jaffna. The Tamil political-territorial structure briefly disappeared from Ceylon making it the last time until Ceylon finally became independent in 1948 that the whole island was ruled by the Sinhalese. However, the king of Kotte had some internal troubles, as the middle part of Ceylon, Udarata-Kandy tried to break away. Parakramabahu VI managed to conquer Kandy and pacify the secession (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 198). Following the death of the king, a fight for the throne erupted in Kotte and the Tamils rebuilt the Kingdom of Jaffna. Udarata also separated as an independent Sinhala kingdom with its capital in Senkadagala (today's Kandy). Before the death of Bhuvanekabahu VI in 1477, the kingdom of Kotte occupied just the south-western part and a small area in the north-west of Ceylon, but it survived up until the arrival of European colonists and was formally disbanded on May 27, 1597 (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 204, Kusio 2002, pp. 257–258).

The geographical location of the new Sinhala Kingdom of Udarata was very beneficial to its defensive function. It occupied a hard-to-reach Central Massif, as well as the eastern and south-eastern parts of the island, reaching the coast. The most important centres were located in mountain valleys. Therefore, this structure resisted European colonisation in Ceylon the longest and survived until October 1818.

Kandy, originally called Senkadagala or Senkadagalupara, was founded in the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, in the Kingdom of Gampola (Codrington 1926, p. 45) (fig. 13). The new dynasty and the kingdom of Kandy was founded by a member of the royal family from Kotte – Sena Sammatha Wickramabahu (who ruled from 1437 to 1511). He initially recognised the formal supremacy of Kotte, but his successors achieved full sovereignty. When Rajasingha I assumed power, perturbations followed, as the king left the throne of Kandy to take the reign of the neighbouring kingdom of Sitawaka. The normalisation of internal situation in Kandy came when Konappu Bandara assumed power and crowned himself as Vimala Dharma Suriya I. He managed to consolidate Buddhism and bring the tooth of Buddha to Kandy, where it stayed.

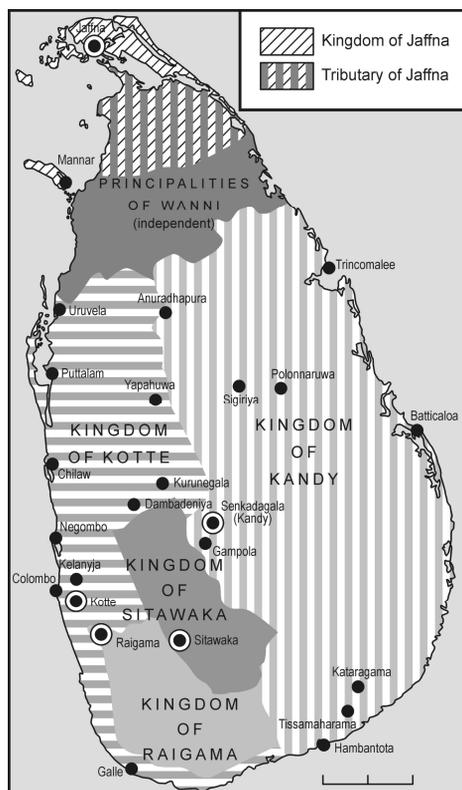


Fig. 14. The political-territorial structures of Ceylon before the Portuguese invasion in 1505

Source: author's elaboration according to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinhalese%E2%80%93Portuguese\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinhalese%E2%80%93Portuguese_War) (5.04.2016)

Immediately before the arrival of European colonisers, Ceylon was therefore divided into six political-territorial units (fig. 14). The largest area in the centre, east and south of the island was occupied by the Sinhala kingdom of Kandy (Udarata). Its area was around 32 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, or more than 48% of the island. To the north, there was the Jaffna Kingdom, which occupied just its namesake

peninsula, or only 1.3 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. However, the northern part of Wannī region recognised the power of Jaffna as a fiefdom, so the total area of the Jaffna Kingdom was around 4.5 thousand km<sup>2</sup> or 7% of the island. The southern part of the Wannī region, an area of approx. 5.7 thousand km<sup>2</sup> (almost 9% of Ceylon), was occupied by independent Tamil tribal duchies. The west coast was controlled by the second-largest structure, the Sinhala kingdom of Kotte (13.7 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, almost 21% of the island). In the southern part of the borderland between Udarata and Kotte, there were smaller monarchies of Sitawaka (4.6 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, 7% of Ceylon) and Raigama (5.2 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, almost 8% of the island), that gradually grew more and more independent of their neighbours.

#### **4. ETHNIC GENESIS OF THE POLITICAL AND TERRITORIAL STRUCTURES IN COLONIAL-ERA CEYLON**

On November 11, 1505, Portuguese fleet appeared at the coast of Ceylon, led by the son of the first governor of Portuguese India – Lourenço de Almeida. The Portuguese did not meet the local kings in peace, so they left quickly, only to come back in 1518 to conquer and colonise the island (Małowist 1992, p. 242).

In 1518, the Portuguese were allowed by the king of Kotte to erect a fortress in Colombo for trade purposes, and to create a cinnamon monopoly to compete with the Muslim one. The fort was built by Lopo Soares de Albergaria (Silva 1987, p. 475). The presence of the Portuguese complicated the political situation in Kotte. In 1521, the state broke apart when the ruler of Kotte, backed by the Portuguese, clashed with his brother, who ruled Sitawaka and was in turn supported by Udarata and the ruler of Indian Calicut (Obeyesekere 1911, pp. 211–215). During the conflict, which lasted until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Sitawaka grew in independence and Kotte fell into dependency with Portugal. The successor to the Kotte Kingdom's throne, Dharmapala, was a vassal of the Portuguese and was baptised as King John, which weakened his position among his own subjects (Codrington 1926, p. 52). The act of baptism was treated as treason and became a pretext for rulers of Sitawaka to attack Kotte. John had to flee to Colombo under the care of Portuguese troops. On the day of the childless passing of Dharmapala on May 27, 1597, the rule of the Kingdom of Kotte was transferred to Portugal, and the kingdom ceased to exist (Codrington 1926, p. 55, Kusio 2002, p. 258) (fig. 15). Administratively, Ceylon belonged to Portuguese India, with capital in Goa.

Apart from colonisation, the Portuguese also started their missionary work by locating a Catholic mission in Mannar, which belong to Jaffna Kingdom.

In 1544, the Tamil army massacred the entire population, both clerics and converts in the mission (Philalethes and Knox 1817, p. 226). In response, the Portuguese punitive expedition won Jaffna, but ultimately settled for just annexing the island of Mannar in 1561 (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 231). An expedition in 1591 has led to the conquest of Jaffna and the vassalisation of its king. The formal annexation of the Kingdom of Jaffna to the Portuguese Ceilão took place in 1619 (Kusio 2002, p. 259). Jaffna's lands were taken over by Portuguese owners, which was the only example of agrarian colonisation in the region (Silva 1987, p. 355).

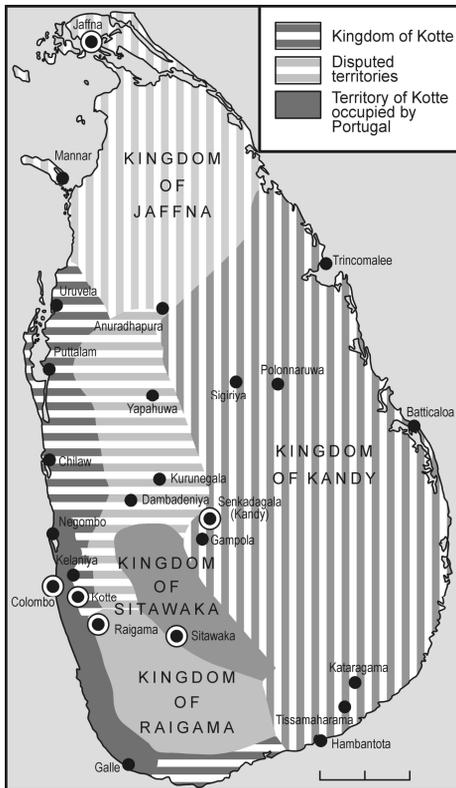


Fig. 15. The political and territorial structures in Ceylon at the beginning of Portuguese colonisation around 1520  
Source: author's elaboration according to: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinhalese%E2%80%93Portuguese\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinhalese%E2%80%93Portuguese_War) (5.04.2016)

The Portuguese reign in Ceylon changed the political structures of the island, both in number and spatial range, as well as significantly altered the Sinhala-Tamil relations. Tamils still living in northern Ceylon lost the sovereignty of their Jaffna Kingdom, while the Sinhala lost control over most of the Kingdom of Kotte, which nonetheless survived the Portuguese rule. In the remaining part of Ceylon, the Sinhalese kingdom of Udarata (Kandy) strengthened, but the Sinhala kingdoms of Raigama and Sitawaka also formed, which meant the

*de facto* weakening of Sinhala statehood (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 226, Codrington 1926, p. 52). The Kingdom of Kandy was the only independent political-territorial structure in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ceylon to preserve the Sinhalese culture, Buddhist religion and its relics against the invasion of Latin culture (Kusio 2002, p. 260) (fig. 16).

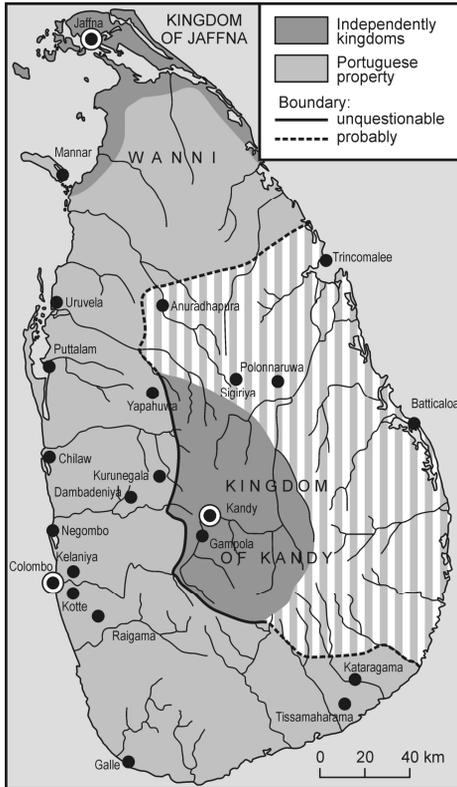


Fig. 16. The maximum reach of Portuguese power in Ceylon in the 1630s  
Source: author's elaboration according to: M. Ramerini and D. Köster (1998), J. Kusio (2002, p. 259), K.M. Silva (2008)

At the end of their reign in Ceylon, Portugal itself became part of the Spanish monarchy and, before they freed themselves, they started losing property in Ceylon to another coloniser, the Netherlands, whose ships arrived on the island in 1609 (Philalthes and Knox 1817, p. 117, Silva 1987, p. 483).

Anticipating their expansion to Ceylon, the Dutch started a relationship with the Kingdom of Kandy, and its ruler Rajasinha II made a treaty in 1638 against the Portuguese (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 247, Schrikker 2006, p. 21). The Dutch took over the monopoly in trading with the island, promising military support against Portugal in exchange. The Dutch invasion of Ceylon began from the eastern coast, with landings in Trincomalee on May 2, 1639, in Batticaloa – on May 18 and on the south coast in Galle – on March 13, 1640. The last port to be

taken over at this stage of the invasion was Negombo in the west coast (Philaethes and Knox 1817, p. 113).

The conquered lands were called the Zeylan colony (Boxer 1980, p. 155, Kusio 2002, p. 260). The Dutch possessions were territorially more modest compared to the Portuguese ones, and the Kingdom of Kandy remained sovereign and kept access to both coasts. The Dutch controlled the entire north of the island (Jaffna and Wannai), the east coast near Trincomalee and from Batticaloa through the south coast to Negombo in the west, but the belt they controlled was only a dozen or so kilometers wide. Only in the south-west, the colonists' property reached deeper inland to include the former Portuguese cinnamon plantations (the old Kotte and Sitawaki lands). The Kingdom of Udarata fully controlled the interior of Ceylon, including almost all the ancient capitals (fig. 17). However, control over almost all of the coast meant the *de facto* economic blockade of the Sinhalese state (Boxer 1980, p. 203). The hopes of Udarata rulers of taking over the Kotte throne have not materialised either (Kusio 2002, p. 260).

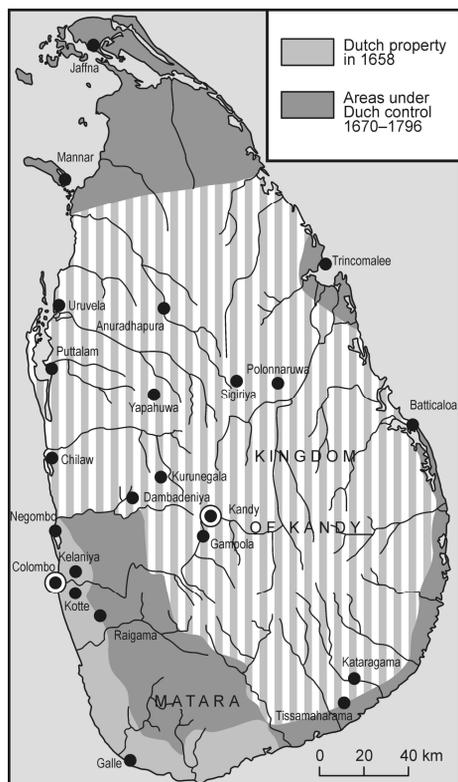


Fig. 17. The maximum reach of Dutch power in Ceylon in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 Source: author's elaboration according to: M. Ramerini and D. Köster (1998), J. Kusio (2002, p. 260), K.M. Silva (2008)

The total area of Dutch Ceylon (Zeylan) directly administered by the colonial metropolis was just over 4 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the areas formally belonging to Udarata, but actually controlled by the Dutch occupied 15.7 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, which means that the Dutch reign included the area of less than 20 thousand km<sup>2</sup> or approx. 30% of the island. Sinhala Udarata fully controlled an area of nearly 46 thousand km<sup>2</sup> or 70% of Ceylon and was the only sovereign state on the island.

The Dutch-Kandy relations were correct for more than 150 years, even though there were tensions. The Dutch invaded Kandy twice. When the Sinhala dynasty expired in 1739, the Nayakkars from Indian Madurai took the throne, a Dravi family which was foreign to the Sinhala (Schrikker 2006, p. 24). This resulted in numerous unrests, during which the monarchs had to be defended from overthrowing by Dutch military interventions. The Dutch won Kandy and occupied Udarata from February 19 to August 31, 1765 (Kusio 2002, p. 261, Schrikker 2006, p. 39).

During the Dutch reign, there were two Calvinist seminars operating in Ceylon (in Colombo and Nallur near Jaffna), and a small population of both Sinhala and Tamils underwent conversion, but the religion did not remain in the island after the Dutch were driven out of it (Boxer 1980, p. 156).



Fig. 18. Galle – Portuguese and Dutch forts  
Source: photo by A. Wosiak and K. Krupska

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in view of the significant weakening of Portugal and the Netherlands concentrating on their South-Western Asian acquisitions, there was a rivalry between two colonial powers, France and Great Britain, in the subcontinent, which had its repercussions in Ceylon.

The first attempts to locate both metropolies in Ceylon took place in 1782, when the British occupied the port of Trincomalee in the east coast (January 8

– August 30), but they were driven out by the French, who took over the port from August 30, 1782 till January of 1784, turning it into their main naval base in the Indian Ocean, with the fleet of Admiral de Suffren, stronger than the British forces, stationed there (Philalethes and Knox 1817, p. 135, Dziewanowski 1996, p. 320).

The actual invasion of the British East India Company in Ceylon occurred on August 2, 1795. Trincomalee was captured on August 31, Batticaloa on September 18, Jaffna on September 28, and finally Colombo on February 16, 1796 (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 284). Under British rule, Ceylon was part of the Madras presidency. The British respected the autonomy of the Kingdom of Kandy and entered into a treaty with it (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 287). Ceylon was separated from British India, as a separate colony, on October 12, 1798. In 1802, under the Treaty of Amiens, the transition from Dutch administration and into the British Empire was sanctioned (Schrikker 2006, p. 134). Thus, the rank of the colony was raised on January 1, 1802 and it became the British crown colony (Codrington 1926, p. 28).

After the political situation on the island stabilised, the British controlled all the coast, while the Sinhalese controlled the interior (fig. 19). In the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, British Ceylon occupied an area of over 31 thousand km<sup>2</sup> while the Kingdom of Kandy still controlled the territory with an area of 34.5 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, or nearly 53% of Ceylon.

However, the British divided the island into 5 provinces, the biggest being the Eastern (almost 18 thousand km<sup>2</sup> and over 27% of the island's surface), with the North being close second and resembling the Tamil state of Jaffna in its furthest reach. The Central province was the smallest (6.7 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, slightly more than 10% of Ceylon), the area of the Kingdom of Kandy. The Southern Province recreated the old Rohana (12 thousand km<sup>2</sup> or 18% of the island), while the Western region covered the area of the Kingdom of Kotte (almost 11 thousand km<sup>2</sup> and 17% of Ceylon).

Like the Dutch, the British used the Sinhala's dislike of the Dravidian dynasty's rule in Kandy (Dziewanowski 1996, p. 334). The Dravidian king of Udarata was forced to sign the so-called Kandyan treaty on March 2, 1815, by which the kingdom became a separate British province under the control of a governor (Obeyesekere 1911, p. 305). The Sinhala population, dissatisfied with the conciliatory policy of the monarch, started an uprising in July 1817, which ended in defeat and the annexation of the kingdom of Udarata by the British crown colony of Ceylon on November 21, 1818 (Skinner 1891, p. 215, Mitton 1917, p. 24). The last sovereign Sinhala political-territorial structure ceased to exist (Obeyesekere 1911, pp. 315–321).

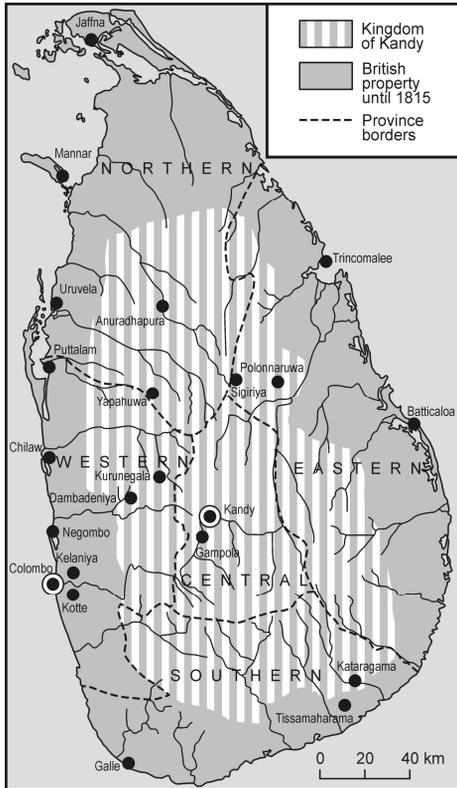


Fig. 19. The British rule in Ceylon until 1815  
 Source: author's elaboration according to:  
 J. Kusio (2002, p. 261)

On the conquered mountainous lands of Udarata, the British started tea, coffee and rubber plantations, with workforce imported from Tamil Nadu and Kerala in India, including a large Tamil population (Ferro 1997, p. 140). Taking advantage of the mild, cooler mountain climate, a climate station in Nuwara Eliya was built, styled after British architecture, to rest in the so-called “April season” (Kuprina 2007, p. 102) (fig. 20). Railways were built and ports expanded (Kusio 2002, p. 261).

The British governed Ceylon through their governor in Colombo, which served as the legislative and executive until 1833. After 1833, the legislature was taken over by the Legislative Council elected by the governor, but including three representatives from the main ethnic groups on the island (*History...* 2006, p. 18). This quasi-parliament worked until 1920.

The people of Ceylon did not rise again, but focused on political activity aimed at regaining independence. Moreover, the Sinhalese sought to achieve a position in the administration that would reflect their population, as the British preferred the Tamils, even in ethnically Sinhala regions (Nayak 1996, p. 86).



Fig. 20. Nuwara Eliya – British mountain resort in the Central Massif  
Source: author's photo

After the First World War, the economic protests intensified, erupting in riots, and the British made some arrests, including the Sinhala leader Stephen Senanayake. The idea of liberating this politician consolidated a group of activists, which led to the creation of the first political party in Ceylon in 1919 – the National Congress, which united the Sinhala and Tamil organisations (Kusio 2002, p. 262). This organisation was headed by a Tamil – Arunachalam Ponnambalam (Ravindran 2009, p. 2).

The constitutional reform in Ceylon performed by governor William Manning in 1920–1924 democratised the system of the crown colony, introduced autonomy and general elections, which was not met with positive response from the local elites, that viewed this as a threat to the unity of the national movement. This was promptly confirmed as the Tamils joined the National Congress and in 1921 formed their own political organisation – the Great Tamil Council (Sri-skandarajah 2004, p. 5, Richards 2014, p. 9).

The constitutional committee, under the direction of Lord Donoughmore, recognised the claims of the Sinhalese and in 1931 the constitution was changed (*History...* 2006, p. 19). Besides general election, a new body, the State Council, was introduced, with legislative and executive powers, created on the basis of territorial representation, which struck the minorities, mainly Tamils, who initially boycotted the reform (Kusio 2002, p. 263). To calm the internal situation, in 1943 the British announced the creation of a local government with broad powers, except for foreign and defense policies, that remained reserved for the colonial metropolis. Work on the parliamentary system of the colony were started in 1944 by Lord Soulbury's Commission (Jessy 2004, p. 135, *History...* 2006, p. 21). At the same time, the Tamil organisation transformed into the All Ceylon Tamil Congress (Nayak 1996, p. 90, Richards 2014, p. 9).

## 5. POLITICAL AND ETHNIC RELATIONS IN INDEPENDENT CEYLON

Due to the diminishing superpower position of the United Kingdom, the war-time political reforms had to be revised by weakening the position of the metropolis in post-colonial union, that the Commonwealth of Nations was becoming, devoid of the adjective “British”.

British unequivocally supported the Sinhalese United National Party, led by Don Stephen Senanayake. The party won the parliamentary elections in 1947 and formed a government, which was autonomous in internal affairs (Kusio 202, p. 263). The next step was to award, under the Constitution of February 4, 1948, sovereignty within the Commonwealth – the Dominion of Ceylon (Nayak 1996, p. 106, Kuprin 2007, p. 30). That meant the *de facto* independence, while maintaining a monarch in common with the metropolis.

The Sinhalese seizure of power that pushed other ethnic groups away, mainly the Tamils, favoured in the colonial period, had to spark internal conflicts. Only the British could see this as a chance to maintain their political influence as a necessary mediator in internal disputes and the inevitable confrontation with India, who viewed themselves as spokespeople for the Tamils, that had 60% of seats in colonial administration (Richards 2014, p. 9). The citizenship act of the new Ceylon government deprived approx. 800 thousand Tamils brought to the island by the colonists (Nayak 1996, p. 110, Jessy 2004, p. 79). The government of D.S. Senanayake led a Sinhalese settlement action in the east, where Tamils dominated (Veluppillai 2006, p. 102).

The process of expanding the sovereignty of Ceylon proceeded gradually and intensified after the elections in 1956, won by the coalition of United People's Front and the Freedom Party (Ross and Matles 1990, p. xxviii). The government of Prime Minister Solomon Badaranaike increased activity in the international forum with Ceylon joining the United Nations and, in 1961, the so-called non-aligned movement, which gave rise to the choice of the socialist way of development and economic dominance of the state in the economy (*History...* 2006, p. 22). The discrimination against minorities also became deeper. In 1956, Sinhalese became the only official language, and Buddhist traditions became the interpretation of social policy (Jessy 2004, p. 80, Gombrich 2006, p. 24).

Tamils demanded territorial autonomy (Nayak 1996, p. 114) and took action of civil disobedience, which was met with a hostile reaction of the Sinhalese majority and the cleansings in 1958. (*History...* 2006, p. 23, Richards 2014, p. 10). The Sinhalese community did not fully accept the government policy,

which resulted in the 1959 murder of the prime minister, performed by Buddhist monk Talduwe Somarama (Votta 2007, p. 18). The government was headed by the prime minister's wife, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the first female prime minister in the world.

In the 1960s, governments were formed alternatively by the United National Party (of Dudley Senanayake, the first prime minister's son) or the Freedom Party of Mrs. Bandaranaike. Her rule brought a sharp turn towards socialist, nationalisation and agricultural reform. As much as 80% of the land on the island is owned by the state (Baldwin 1991, p. 111). The political radicalisation led twice, in 1971 and 1987–1989, to an attempted coup on the island by the Maoist, Sinhala-dominated People's Liberation Front (JVP) (Kusio 2002, p. 264, Jessy 2004, p. 183).

Left-wing political transformations made the continuation of the dominion state impossible, so the Republic of Sri Lanka was proclaimed on May 22, 1972, while maintaining membership in the Commonwealth (Kuprina 20017, p. 31). The name change was associated not only with the rejection of monarchy, but also of the colonial name of Ceylon, in favour of the Sinhalese name of the island – Lanka. Buddhism became the state religion (Revindran 2009, p. 3, *Sri Lanka: Sinhala nationalism...* 2007, p. 6). Tamils were gradually ousted from administration, with only 5% of them serving in offices in 1970 (Omvdet 1984, p. 25). In 1972, Tamil organisations formed the United Tamil Front, adding in 1975 the term “Liberation” to the name (TULF) (Richards 2014, pp. 11–12).

The 1977 elections were won by the United National Party, which followed the socialist way for the next 17 years, which resulted, among others, in transforming the state, on August 7, 1978, into the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (Ross and Matles 1990, p. xxix). This was followed by turning the system into a presidential republic, with Junius Richard Jayewardene as the head of state (Kusio 2002, p. 264). In 1982, some capital functions were moved from Colombo into the far outskirts, to the former capital of the Kingdom of Kotte, now known as Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte.

The lack of solution to the Tamil problem throughout the whole independence of Ceylon – Sri Lanka escalated the conflict to the extent that made co-existence of both nations in one state impossible. After the Tamil representation left the united National Congress, the Tamil powers became very fragmented, which made it easier for the Sinhala to implement their nationalist policies. The unification of Tamil organisations happened in 1975, as part of the Tamil United Liberation Front, headed by Samuel James Veluppillai Chelvanayakam. Its aim was to achieve territorial autonomy for the Tamils, in the former Kingdom of

Jaffna (Stokke and Ryntveit 2000, p. 296). It is estimated, that Tamils populated an area of 19,509 km<sup>2</sup> (Ravindran 2009, p. 2).

The government's rejection of these claims led to the radicalisation among Tamils in the north and their support of the aims of armed organisation Tamil New Tiger, which had been active since 1975 (Richards 2014, p. 12). With the rise of social acceptance, this rebel army which united 37 guerilla groups, transformed into the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Tamil name of Ceylon), radicalised their political goals and demanded an independent Tamil state in northern Ceylon.

In the 1970s, the fights against government troops took place mainly in the Jaffna Peninsula. Tamil troops were led by the charismatic leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. The guerrilla, which was unique worldwide, formed not only land forces, but also their own air force, special forces, female troops and navy, equipped with primitive submarines (Richards 2014, pp. 23–28).

After the state of emergency was imposed by the Sinhala government in the north and the army in Jaffna was strengthened, the Tamils declared war on the Lankan state on November 27, 1982 (Richards 2014, p. 13). Attacks on government facilities spread over the whole island, and the Tigers' advances to the south, in the Wannu region, became bigger and bigger.

In the absence of the will to compromise among the Sinhala, on July 23, 1983 the Tamils declared the secession of Tamil Eelam in northern Ceylon with its capital in Jaffna. This was the second separate Tamil state in Ceylon in history, related territorially to the initial Kingdom of Jaffna. The official response to that came in the form of a constitutional amendment on November 14, 1984 that gave local government powers to provinces (including those populated only by Tamils), but with the Tigers controlling the whole north of the island and large portions of both coasts, this was not enough to satisfy their demands. Both sides of the conflict proclaimed socialist ideology (Richards 2014, p. 39). The lack of will to agree made the Lankan government proclaim that the separatists were a terrorist organisation, though this view was not shared everywhere in the world (Nayak 1996, p. 286, Lunn et al. 2009, p. 15).

The war continued for over thirty years, broken by truces for peace negotiations, and a large strain on the economy. Lack of control over a large part of the territory weakened the Sinhalese economy, forced them to overspend on armaments, limited the possibility of democratic reforms, developing tourism and extracting resources. It also worsened the political position of Sri Lanka in the region, as it was viewed as an unstable and undemocratic state.

In 1983, India joined the conflict in Ceylon. Both sides hoped to benefit, Tamils counted on support for their efforts, since help came from the govern-

ment of the Indian province of Tamil Nadu. The Sinhalese hoped that India would persuade the Tamils to limit their demand to autonomy. In 1987–1989 Indian peace-keeping forces came to Ceylon. At the same time, Tamil civil local administration was formed, headed by the Secretariat of Tamil Eelam (Richards 2014, p. 40). The Tamil Tigers also set up the International Secretariat in order to obtain international recognition of their statehood, but primarily for raising funds for the war, mainly from the Tamil diaspora. Support came from 32 countries all over the world (mainly Canada, Australia, the United States, France and Great Britain). Institutions to support the post-war reconstruction of Eelam were also established in Western countries (Richards 2014, pp. 51–52). The Tamil Tigers had their interest offices in 48 countries in total (*Evolution...* 2011, p. 3).

The Sri Lankan government also made attempts to end the conflict. In 1988, they introduced the merger of two provinces into one North-Eastern Province with an area of almost 15 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, or almost 23% of Ceylon, under the shared Tamil-Muslim rule, and recognised Tamil as the second official language of the country (Ross and Matles 1990, p. xxxv, Kumara 2010, p. 69). However, these concessions were insufficient for radicalised Tamils, who were until that point contrasted by the neutral Muslims, but also sparked reaction from the Sinhalese, who created the extreme nationalist organisation – the National Liberation Front (Kusio 2002, p. 265).

Geopolitical changes in the world after 1989, and the loss of Soviet support, deepened the isolation of Sri Lanka. In the absence of the will to resolve the conflict peacefully, Indian troops left Sri Lanka in 1990 (Lunn et al. 2009, p. 10). Relations with India have deteriorated under president Ranasinghe Premadasa, a supporter of forcible resolution to the conflict (Kuprin 2007, p. 32). The radicalisation could also be seen among the Tamils, the Tigers took Jaffna, which so far remained under government control, and started the formation of administrative structures of their own state. Sri Lanka replied with an economic sea blockade of Eelam. Tamils reached for terrorism, with suicide attacks on the island and beyond. There have been successful attempts on the lives of Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 (Calvocoressi 2002, p. 538) and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993 (Richards 2014, p. 24, Yass 2014, p. 68).

The situation did not change when the daughter of two former prime ministers Bandaranaike, Chandrika Kumaratunga, took power (Sriskandarajah 2004, p. 9). All subsequent rounds of peace talks broke down. In 1995, government troops launched an offensive on Jaffna, which was a victory, but at a price of a large number of Tamil civilians killed, with 65 thousand dead and approx.

500 thousand refugees. The city returned to Sri Lanka, but the guerrillas quickly cut its land connections with the rest of the country (Sobczyński 2006, p. 251) (fig. 21).

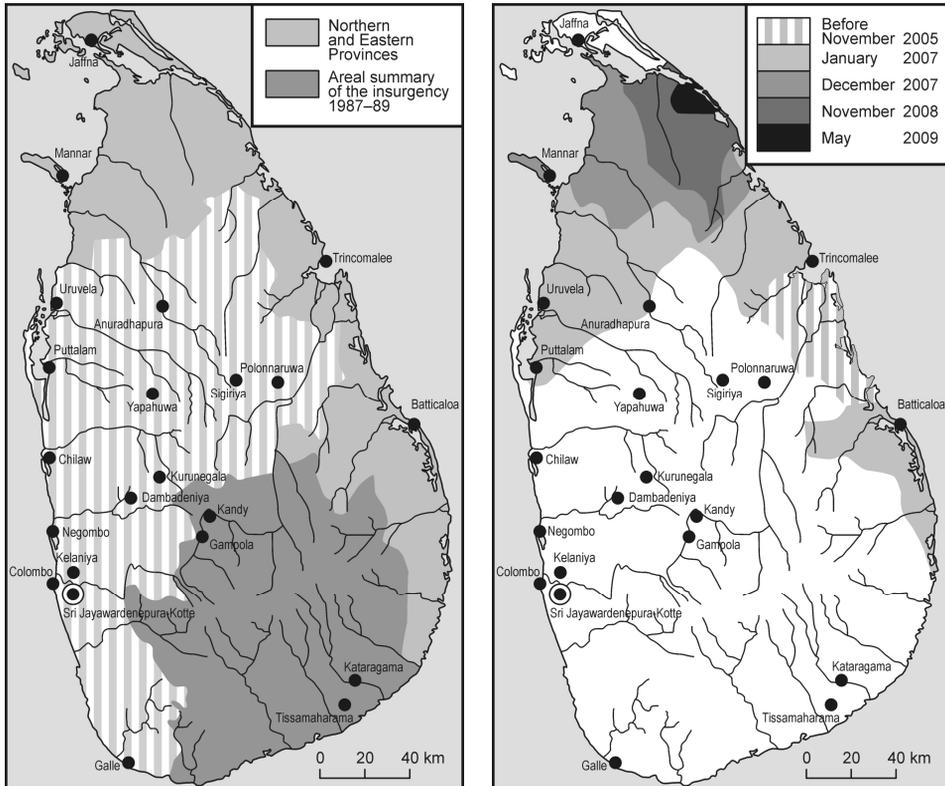


Fig. 21. The civil war in Sri Lanka, as of 2005 and the territorial variability of Tamil Eelam in the years 2005–2009

Source: author's elaboration according to: J.S. Kumara (2010, p. 70), J. Richards (2014), S. Yass (2014, p. 70), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eelam\\_War\\_IV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eelam_War_IV) (5.04.2016)

In 2005, the Tamil Eelam still controlled an area of over 8 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, with the Tigers partially controlling further 9 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. In total, a quarter of the overall area of Ceylon was somehow related to Tamil rebels. In subsequent years, government forces quickly conquered 71% of the island and further reduced the territory of Tamil Eelam. In December 2007, Eelam still covered an area of 3.6 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, or nearly 6% of the island. In 2008, this was only 2.5 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, less than 4% of Ceylon.

The final offensive of government troops, carried out in breach of international law, began in late 2008, and was aimed at the area of approx. 320 km<sup>2</sup>, on the north-eastern coast of the island that was still controlled by the Tamils and around the last capital of Tamil Eelam – Kilinochchi. It led to the heroic death of Tamil leader Prabhakaran, on May 16, 2009 on the beach near Mullattivu. Three days later the last troop of the Tamil Tigers was disbanded (Richards 2014, pp. 68–69, Yass 2014, p. 70). The bunker, in which Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed now attracts 3 thousand tourists per day (Rees 2013, p. 95). The state of Tamil Eelam, which in its last phase covered an area of merely 250 km<sup>2</sup>, ceased to exist (Parasram 2012, p. 1). The entire island once again became a Sinhalese country.

The process of including the Northern Province into the Sri Lankan infrastructure lasted several years (Silva-Ranasinghe 2010, p. 3, Hogg 2011, p. 13, Mittal 2015, pp. 15–22). The reconstruction of statehood was also helped by Tamil political organisations, mostly the Tamil National Alliance, a moderate party supporting the end of the civil war, but also the idea of territorial autonomy, with 16 seats in the Sri Lankan parliament (*Sri Lanka: Tamil politics...* 2012, p. 8).

Since the beginning of the conflict until 2009, 284.4 thousand people had to leave their homes in Ceylon. In 2003, R. Wilkinson (2003, p. 6) estimated the number of displaced to be over a million people. In September 2010, UN agencies reported 230 thousand displaced persons on the island. 85 thousand refugees found shelter in High Security Zones created by the army. Furthermore, the region of Puttalam grouped over 65 thousand Muslims. This means that well over 300 thousand people went through a phase of internal refuge (*No war ...* 2011, pp. 8, 10). The fact that Sri Lanka is not a party to the UN Convention on refugees is an additional problem (*Migration...* 2013, p. 73).

An independence referendum was carried out among the Tamil diaspora in the world (Norway, Canada, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Italy, the UK and Australia) in 2009-2010, in which 99% of voters were in favour detachment of Tamil Eelam from Sri Lanka (*Tamil...* 2016).

The 2011 census distinguished two categories of Tamils. Indian Tamils accounted for 4.2% of the population, while the Sri Lankan Tamils for 11.2%. In addition, 9.2% were descendants of Arabs called Moors (Richards 2014, p. 8).

Since 2009, there have been no ethnic incidents on the island. Tourists return to the country, even though the territory of Eelam are still inaccessible to them.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The whole history of territorial-political structures in Ceylon of 2,560 years is a struggle between two nations, Sinhalese and Tamil, for territory and domination over the opposite side. Throughout this time, the Tamils were the minority. They managed to create only two states of their own, the Jaffna Kingdom (13<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries) and the State of Tamil Eelam (21<sup>st</sup> century), but repeatedly ruled in nominally Sinhalese states, as suzerains, occupiers or even rulers. They also conquered the whole island a couple of times.

Almost all sovereign political-territorial structures on the island were the work of the Sinhalese as well as Tamil immigrants from the Indian subcontinent. These were, successively, the duchy of Tambapanni founded by Vijaya, and the kingdoms of Upatissa Nuwara (Vijitapura), Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. Attacked from the north by the Tamils, the Sinhalese adopted a strategy of moving the capitals of their kingdoms south to protect them against invasions. Thus the kingdoms of Sigiraya, Rohana, Dambadeniya, Yapahuwa, Kurunegala, Dedigama, Gampola, Raigama, Kotte and Udarata (Kandy) were formed (Mitton 1917, p. 251). Only the last capital survived the colonial period in a relatively unchanged urban layout and with original buildings (Bandaranayake 1994, p. 16).

At the time of the arrival of the Portuguese to the island, there were already five geopolitical units, four Sinhalese kingdoms – Kotte in the west coast, Kandy in the central, southern and eastern parts of Ceylon, and the kingdom Raigama and Sitawaka between them, and the Tamil kingdom of Jaffna in the north. The Portuguese expansion did not cover the whole Ceylon, but was limited mainly to the west coast. The Portuguese subdued the kingdoms of Kotte and Jaffna, with the second one ultimately annexed to the colony, thus eliminating the only Tamil statehood, but lost the war with the Sinhalese kingdoms of Udarata (Kandy) and Sitawaka, expanded at the expense of the disintegrating Kotte. The Portuguese were expelled from Ceylon by the united forces of Sinhala and Dutch.

The reign of the Dutch in Ceylon was less expansive than the Portuguese. The Sinhalese kingdom of Udarata (Kandy) remained separate and generally, apart from a period of a few months of colonial occupation during the transition to Dravidian dynasty, did not come into conflict with the Dutch. The area controlled by the Sinhalese was larger than in Portuguese times, but the occupation of almost all of the coast by the Netherlands led to the economic blockade of sovereign Udarata.

Following the British-French rivalry in India, Ceylon became the British property, with the Dutch unable to protest as they were busy conquering the

Malay Archipelago. Initially, the British recognised the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Udarata, but the internal conflicts in the country related to the rule of a foreign non-Sinhalese Dravidian dynasty persuaded them to also conquer the interior. This was initially limited to introducing formal colonial administration, followed by the total eradication of Sinhalese statehood. Ceylon became the colony of British India, reporting to the Madras presidency, then a separate colony, to ultimately become a member of the British Empire as a crown colony. The colonists made profound social and political reforms, gradually introducing democracy and politically activating the society, which in turn led to ethnic conflicts as they favoured the Tamils in colonial administration.

After the Second World War, the disintegration of the British Empire favored the independence of colonies. Ceylon first became a dominion in the Commonwealth, and was associated with the United Kingdom by a common monarch, then became a republic within the Commonwealth, and later as a socialist republic of Sri Lanka.

Throughout Ceylon's independence period, the issue of Sinhala-Tamil relations was not solved in a democratic manner. This led to over thirty years of civil war, during which one third of the island, mostly in the north, was home to the insurgent state of Tamil Eelam, forcibly removed by the Sinhalese troops at the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Currently, there is only one state in Ceylon, Sri Lanka, dominated by the Sinhalese, with a semblance of democracy and a socialist system operating within the frames of market economy.

The history of Sri Lanka is a story of a struggle between two main ethnic groups, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, over territory and sovereign statehood on the limited space of the island. Except for the medieval times, the Tamils were usually defeated in this struggle, even though they managed to establish their own dynasties within formally Sinhalese political units. After Sri Lanka became independent, any attempts at establishing a *modus vivendi* acceptable to both sides of the conflict failed.

Traditionally, the bad situation of the minority is blamed on the politicians from the dominant group, in this case the Sinhalese, who failed to create a democratic system of government or an efficient economic system, replacing it with the so-called third way, a flavour of socialism, often supported by religious and nationalist ideologies. This does not allow an optimistic look at further developments. A maxim by German general Carl von Clausewitz seems appropriate: "peace is a truce between two wars".

*Translated by Jarosław Sawiuk*

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Section 2

**MINORITIES ON THE FRINGES  
OF COUNTRIES**



## **FLEMINGS OVER THE BORDER NORD-PAS-DE-CALAIS-PICARDIE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Flanders<sup>1</sup>, which is today associated with the Dutch-speaking region of the Kingdom of Belgium, has a long and stormy history. Its name comes from the County of Flanders (Flandria), which at the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century stretched from the Strait of Dover to the Scheldt estuary. The inhabitants of Flanders are Flemings and the adjective related with them is Flemish (Minahan 2000, p. 769). After many administrative divisions throughout the centuries, caused mostly by a succession wars of neighbouring states, lands of the former County of Flanders have become parts of today's Republic of France, Kingdom of the Belgium and Kingdom of the Netherlands. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the western part of the historic County of Flanders forms part of the French region “Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie”<sup>2</sup>, its central part constitutes the Flemish region of the Kingdom of Belgium and the eastern part is called the Zeelandic Flanders and belongs to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. During the 80-year war (1568–1648) the predominantly Catholic County of Flanders found itself under the strong influence of the ideas spread by the representatives of the European Reformation movements. The Flemings were divided by the religion affiliations. Although the lands from the Strait of Dover to the Scheldt estuary were torn between Romanic and Germanic cultures, one common feature, fundamental for their national identification has prevailed – the same language (despite the existence of local dialects). The objective of this article is to analyze the present situation of the Flemings

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<sup>1</sup> Dutch: *Vlaanderen*, French: *Flandre*.

<sup>2</sup> Since 28 September 2016 under new name – Region Hauts-de-France (effective 30 September 2016).

and Flemish culture in the Netherlands, Belgium and France. The key to understand the unique situation of the Flemings over the borders lies in their history and territorial divisions.

## 2. FLANDERS APPEARS ON THE EUROPEAN MAP

The County of Flanders came to existence in the 9<sup>th</sup> century and was a feudal fief in West Francia (Latin: *Francia occidentalis*) or the Kingdom of the West Franks (*regnum Francorum occidentaliū*), which was then the western part of Charlemagne's Empire. It was inhabited and ruled by the Germanic Franks. West Francia was formed out of the division of the Carolingian Empire in 843 under the Treaty of Verdun<sup>3</sup>. The division of the Frankish realm, together with earlier Frankish partitions (855, Treaty of Prüm and 870, Treaty of Meerssen) were “carried out without any regard to linguistic and cultural continuities, which resulted in conflicts in Western Europe until the 20<sup>th</sup> century”<sup>4</sup>.

One of the characteristic features of the late Middle Ages development of Flanders' trading towns was the affluence of their inhabitants. Towns such as Ghent, Bruges and Ypres formed one of the richest and most urbanized parts of Europe. Their wealth was based on the weaving of wool, in neighbouring lands, into cloth for both domestic use and export. As a consequence, they developed a very sophisticated culture with impressive achievements in the arts and architecture, which competed with the northern Italy (Vaughan 2004, pp. 239–245).

The western districts of the County of Flanders fell under French rule in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century (fig. 1). The remaining parts of Flanders went to the counts of neighboring Hainaut. The apogee of power of these autonomous urban communes is illustrated by the famous Battle of the Golden Spurs (11 July 1302), near Kortrijk.

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<sup>3</sup> The Treaty of Verdun was signed in August 843 and was the first of the treaties that divided the Carolingian Empire into the kingdoms among the three sons of Louis the Pious. Lothair received the central portion of the empire Lorraine, Alsace, Burgundy, Provence (which later became the Low Countries), and the Kingdom of Italy called Middle Francia; Louis the German received the largest component of the Holy Roman Empire called East Francia which became the high medieval kingdom of Germany and Charles the Bald received the western portion, which was called West Francia and later became France.

<sup>4</sup> Polish text directly referring to this issue: M. Kozłowski (2013); for other general approaches see for e.g.: R. McKitterick (2011), B. Zientara (1996). The quoted important point was made by an unanimous author in [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty\\_of\\_Verdun#cite\\_ref-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Verdun#cite_ref-1).

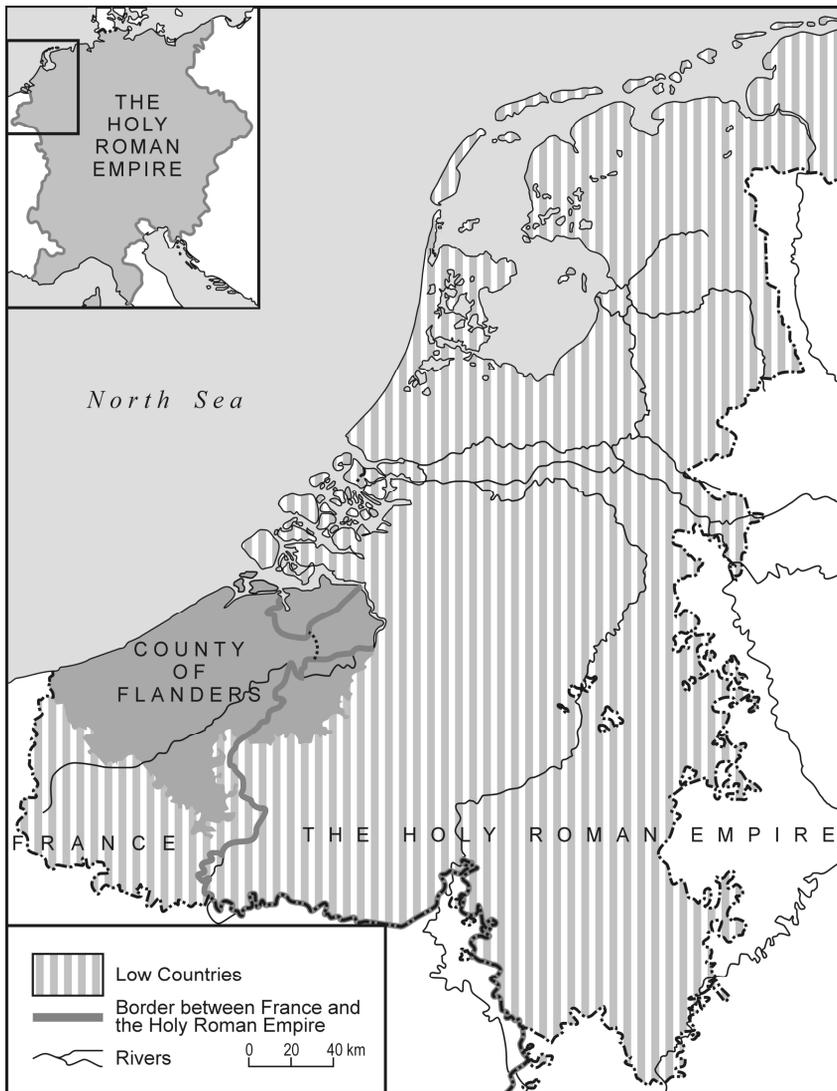


Fig. 1. County of Flanders (1350) in relation to the Low Countries and the Holy Roman Empire. The county was located where the border between France and the Holy Roman Empire met the North Sea

Source: based on – author Sir Lain, the map “Lage landen omsteeks 1350” in the *De bosatlas van de geschiedenis van Nederland*, p. 145 (2011), licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license

An untrained Flemish infantry militia, consisting mainly of members of the craft guilds (notably that of the weavers) defeated a professional force of French and patrician Flemish cavalry, thus checking the growth of French control over the area. It is so named for the spurs supposedly taken from the vanquished. The

towns of Flanders rebelled against the occupying French army and besieged the French garrison at Courtrai castle [...] This victory led to a generation of political ascendancy of the weavers' guild in the urban centers and ended the threat of French annexation<sup>5</sup>.

Although the uprising was defeated and Flanders two years later remained part of the French Crown, the Battle of the Golden Spurs was a milestone on the road to national identification of the Flemish people.

## 2.1. Dukes of Burgundy – collecting the lands

The Duchy of Burgundy<sup>6</sup> existed from 1032 and roughly conformed to the borders and territories of the modern region of Burgundy. Philip the Good (1396–1467), the Duke of Burgundy and his successors, came to own considerable possessions, numerous French and Imperial fiefs (Vaughan 2004, p. 29–53). Further north were the Low Countries, collectively known as the Burgundian Netherlands (Prevenier and Blockmans 1986, pp. 57–112)<sup>7</sup>. The seventeen provinces “collected” by the dukes of Burgundy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century were the core of it what later became the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, plus most of the modern French department of Nord with Artois, French Flanders, and French Hainaut. It also included enclosed semi-independent fiefdoms, mainly ecclesiastical ones, such as Liège, Cambrai and Stavelot-Malmedy<sup>8</sup>.

In 1477 the reigning House of Habsburg decreed that official documents in Flanders should be written in Dutch, not French, although French remains the language spoken among a larger part of the elites.

After the Treaty of Venlo (1543), being an effect of the Italian Wars 1542–1546 among Francis I of France and Suleiman I of the Ottoman Empire against the Holy Roman, Emperor Charles V and Henry VIII of England, the Seventeen Provinces comprised (fig. 2, tab. 1).

<sup>5</sup> Battle of the Golden Spurs or Battle of Kortrijk (Ditch), Battle of Courtrai (French), Encyclopædia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-the-Golden-Spurs>.

<sup>6</sup> Latin: *Ducatus Burgundiae*, French: *Duché de Bourgogne*, Dutch: *Hertogdom Bourgondië*.

<sup>7</sup> Also: van M. Damen and L. Sicking (2010).

<sup>8</sup> Dutch: *De Zeventien Verenigde Nederlanden*, *Belgium Foederatum 1543–1579*.

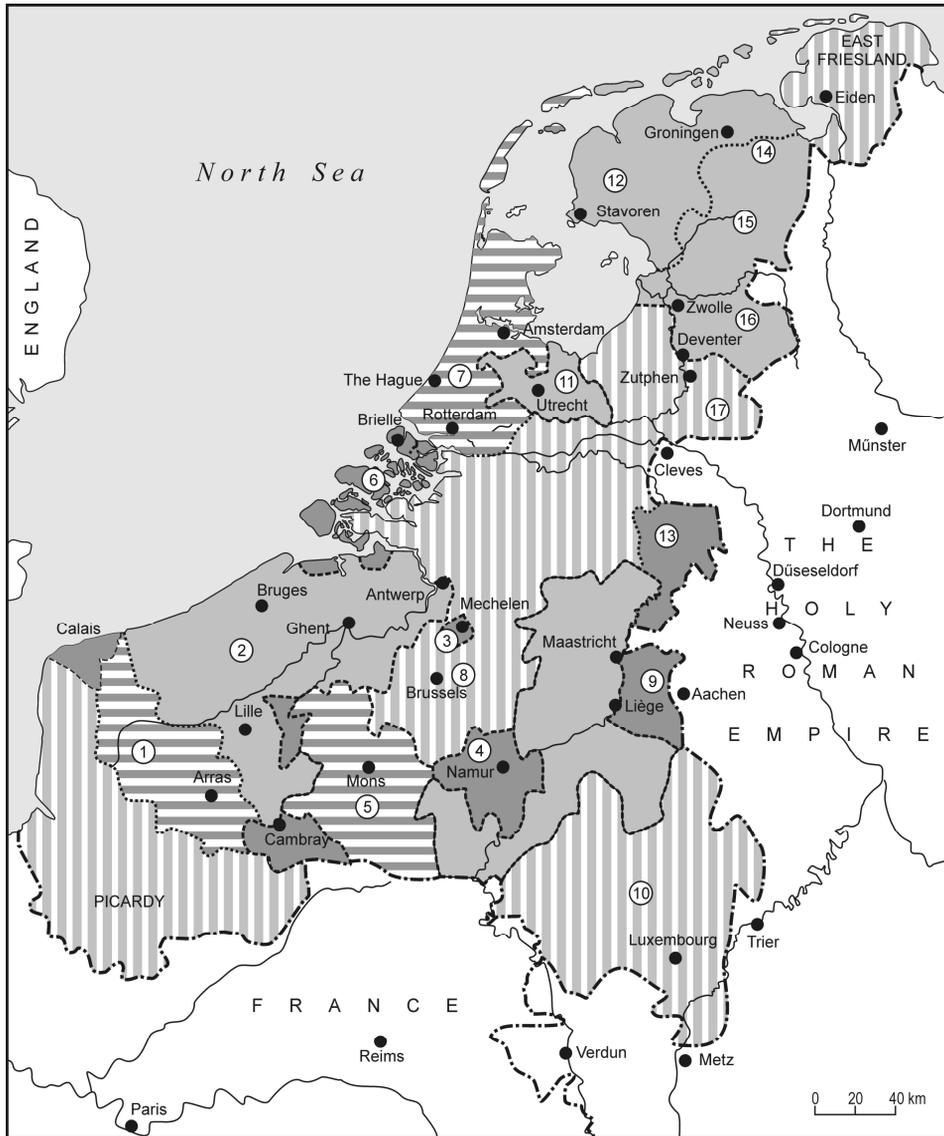


Fig. 2. The Seventeen Provinces

Source: based on – author Denis Jacquerye, map of the Low Countries in 1477, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 1.0 Generic [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d8/Map\\_Burgundian\\_Netherlands\\_1477-en.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d8/Map_Burgundian_Netherlands_1477-en.png)

Table 1. The Seventeen Provinces

1	The County of Artois
2	The County of Flanders, including the burgraviates of Lille, Douai, Orchies, the Lordship of Tournai and the Tournaisis
3	The Lordship of Mechelen
4	The County of Namur
5	The County of Hainaut
6	The County of Zeeland
7	The County of Holland
8	The Duchy of Brabant, including the Lordship of Breda, the Margraviate of Antwerp, the counties of Leuven and of Brussels, and the advocacy of the Abbey of Nivelles and of Gembloux
9	The Duchy of Limburg and the “Overmaas” lands of Brabant (Dalhem, Valkenburg and Herzogenrath)
10	The Duchy of Luxembourg
11	The Prince-Bishopric, later Lordship of Utrecht
12	The Lordship of Frisia
13	The Duchy of Guelders
14	The Lordship of Groningen (including the Ommelanden)
15	The Lordship of Drenthe, Lingen, Wedde, and Westerwolde
16	The Lordship of Overijssel
17	The County of Zutphen

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeen\\_Provinces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeen_Provinces).

In 1548 the then emperor Charles V (born in Ghent) decreed that “the Low countries” – a term used as the official one for the first time then – will form a more or less independent unity, taking Flanders away from under the French crown<sup>9</sup>.

## 2.2. Under the Spanish Rule

Catholic emperor Charles V tried to prevent the triumphant conquest of the northern Europe by the religious novelties coming from the German states and Switzerland. Despite all the efforts of the emperor and his son Reformation ideas

<sup>9</sup> In the Pragmatic Sanction of 1549 it was determined that the succession will be arranged identically in all Dutch provinces. Since the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century this area was often referred to by the common name of “Seventeen provinces”.

gained grounds in the big cities of the Low Countries (Israel 1998, p. 74f). With his abdication in 1555, the Burgundian Netherlands passed to his only son Philip II, since 1556 the King of Spain. The bloody terror of Philip II's governors against followers of the protestant schism from the Roman Catholic Church, an exploitive taxation policy caused by expensive wars with Italy, England and France and efforts to modernize and centralize the devolved-medieval government structures of the provinces, led to a revolt, which spread throughout all provinces of the Low Countries. In 1568 the Netherlands stadtholder<sup>10</sup> William I of Orange stood against Philip II. An Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) began. Its final outcome brought the independence from Spanish rule of the northern provinces of the Low Countries.

The seventeen provinces were divided between the Dutch Republic (roughly the provinces of contemporary Kingdom of the Netherlands) and the southern provinces, which remained under Spanish rule and were called the Spanish Netherlands or Southern Netherlands (Israel 1998, p. 29f). The division begun with the Union of Atrecht<sup>11</sup>, which was an accord signed on 6 January 1579 in Atrecht by the nobles loyal to Philip II. The Southern Netherlands comprised territories of today's Wallonia (region of the Kingdom of Belgium) and the Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardy) regions in France.

Table 2. The Union of Atrecht

The regions that signed it were:
1. County of Hainaut
2. County of Artois
3. Lille, Douai and Orchies (Lilloise Flanders)
4. Prince- Bishopric of Cambrai
The regions that favored the Union, but did not sign it, were:
1. County of Namur
2. County of Luxembourg
3. Duchy of Limburg

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union\\_of\\_Arras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_of_Arras).

<sup>10</sup> Dutch: stadhouder. A medieval function in the Low Countries which during the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries developed *de facto* into a hereditary head of state.

<sup>11</sup> French: Arras.

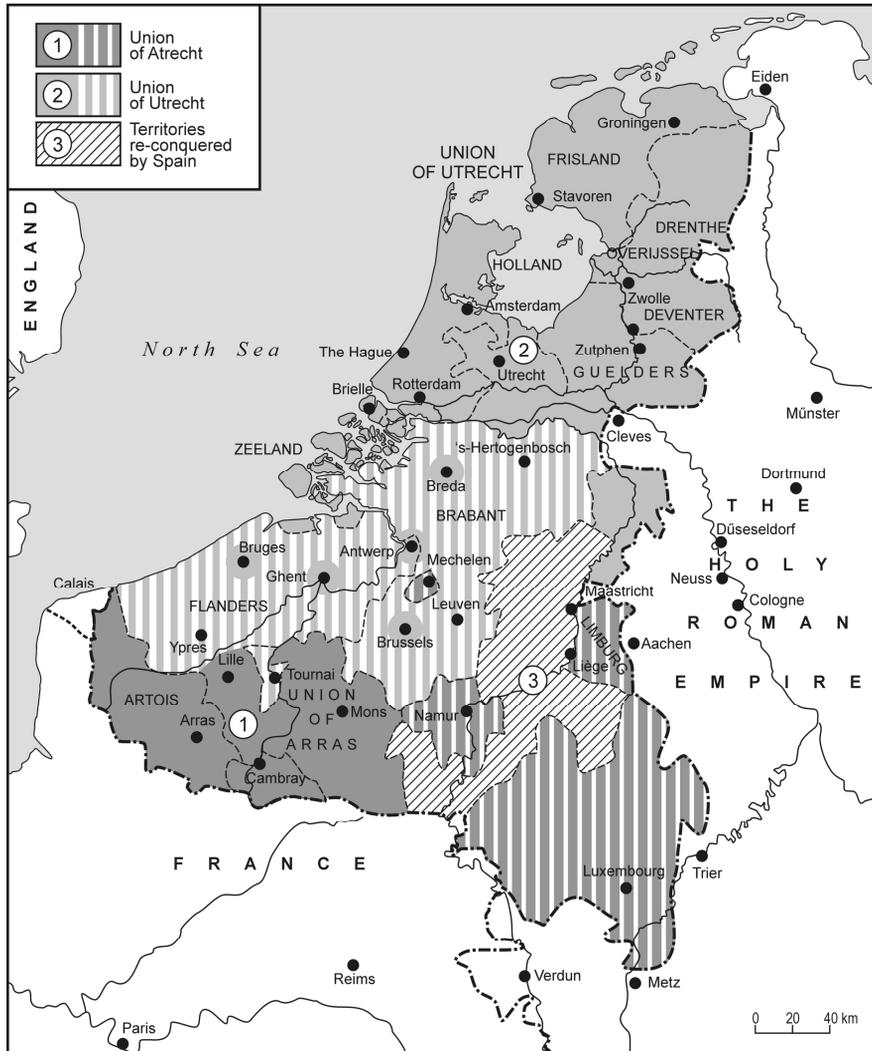


Fig. 3. The Spanish Netherlands, the Union of Atrecht and the Union of Utrecht (1579)

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Source: based on [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Union_of_Arras_and_Utrecht_1579-en.svg)

Map\_Union\_of\_Arras\_and\_Utrecht\_1579-en.svg

The second step was the Union of Utrecht signed on 23 January 1579, by a number of the northern provinces of the Low Countries, in which they promised to support each other in their defense against the Spanish army. This was followed in 1581 by the Act of Abjuration, the declaration of independence of the provinces from Philip II (fig. 3). The Union of Utrecht is regarded as the

foundation of the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands (Provinces), which was finally recognized by the Spanish Empire in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, an end result of the both of the Thirty Years War and the Eighty Years' War. The Union of Utrecht was signed by (tab. 3):

Table 3. The Union of Utrecht

1	The County of Holland
2	The County of Zeeland
3	The Lordship of Utrecht
4	The Duchy of Guelders (Gelre, the three northern quarters with Zutphen)
5	The Lordship of Groningen (and the Ommelanden)
6	The Lordship of Frisia (Frisland)
7	The Lordship of Overijssel (divided between 1580–1597 into a Spanish-controlled part in the East (capital: Oldenzaal) and a republican-controlled part in the West. Both had their own stadtholder. By 1597, the Lordship was reunited by the conquests of Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange. Oldenzaal was re-conquered by the Spanish in 1605, but definitely lost in 1626
Also: the County of Drenthe (It had no voting rights in the Union of Utrecht and wasn't considered as one of the Seven Provinces)	

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch\\_Republic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_Republic); <https://www.britannica.com/place/Netherlands/History#ref414017>.

Table 4. The Generality Lands

Brabant of the States ( <i>Staats-Brabant</i> ): the northern part of the Duchy of Brabant, most of the present province of North Brabant
Flanders of the States ( <i>Staats-Vlaanderen</i> ): the northern part of the County of Flanders, present Zeelandic Flanders and nowadays part of the province of Zeeland
Overmaas of the States ( <i>Staats-Overmaas</i> ): several small territories between Maastricht, Liège and Aachen, e.g. Dalhem, Valkenburg and Hertogenrade. The city of Maastricht was a condominium of the United Provinces and the Prince-Bishopric of Liège. <i>Overmaas</i> literally means “beyond the Meuse” or “Trans-Meuse” (from the perspective of Brussels). The 19 <sup>th</sup> century term “Staats-Limburg”, invented for nationalistic reasons, is historically and geographically incorrect
Upper Guelders of the States ( <i>Staats-Opper-Gelre</i> ): as a result of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) a part of Spanish Guelders was ceded to the United Provinces, e.g. Venlo and Echt; another part came to Prussia and a small part around Roermond was left for the Austrian duchy of Guelders
Westerwolde and Wedde: what is now the south-eastern part of the province of Groningen was a generality land between 1594 and 1619, after which it became part of said province

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generality\\_Lands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generality_Lands).

Along with the signatory-provinces the Republic had a structure called the Generality Lands, Lands of the Generality or Common Lands (Dutch: *Genera-liteitslanden*) (tab. 4).

### 2.3. The Dutch Republic

The Dutch Republic, officially called the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands, was the first republic in Europe (fig. 4). It was a confederation of seven provinces with their own governments and a number of the so-called Generality Lands. These latter were governed directly by the States-General (Dutch: *Staten-Generaal*), the Parliament. The States-General were seated in The Hague and consisted of representatives of each of the seven provinces.



Fig. 4. Map of the Dutch Republic

Source: based on <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d0/Tachtigjarigeoorlog-1583.png>

The divisions of the seventeen provinces were primarily based on adherents of old and new order, which was expressed in support of different values identified with religious streams but not on language. It became central issue almost three centuries later. The role of French language was indisputable, at least among the contemporary elites until birth of first Dutch national state in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **2.4. From the Kingdom of Holland to the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1795–1839)**

The Southern Netherlands were ruled by Austrian Habsburgs while the Republic of Seven United Netherlands (Provinces) enjoyed the status of the republic. They were united again under the rule of revolutionary France and later of Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1806 French emperor set up for his third brother, Louis Bonaparte, a puppet kingdom named after the leading province, the Kingdom of Holland<sup>12</sup>. The idea was to better control of the Netherlands in the time of continental blockade. Although popular among the Dutch, King Louis did not perform to Napoleon's expectations and the kingdom was dissolved in 1810. The Netherlands were annexed by France and became part of the French Empire. After the defeat of Napoleon, at the Congress of Vienna, the former Low Countries gained real independence. The new state was officially called the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815–1839)<sup>13</sup> and was created mainly as a strong buffer state north of France (fig. 5). This state, a large part of which belongs to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was made up of the former Dutch Republic (Republic of the Seven United Netherlands), the former Austrian Netherlands and the former Prince-Bishopric of Liège. The House of Orange-Nassau gave the monarchs to this new state.

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<sup>12</sup> Dutch: Koninkrijk Holland, French: Royaume de Hollande.

<sup>13</sup> Dutch: Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, French: Royaume uni des Pays-Bas. The latter never was the French official name of this short-lived kingdom. This French unofficial name stayed in the common language to avoid any confusion with the rest of the Netherlands after the Belgian Revolution of 1830. Both in international treaties and national legislation was the country indifferently referred in French to *Royaume des Beligues* (“Beligues” in the plural) and *Royaume des Pays-Bas*.

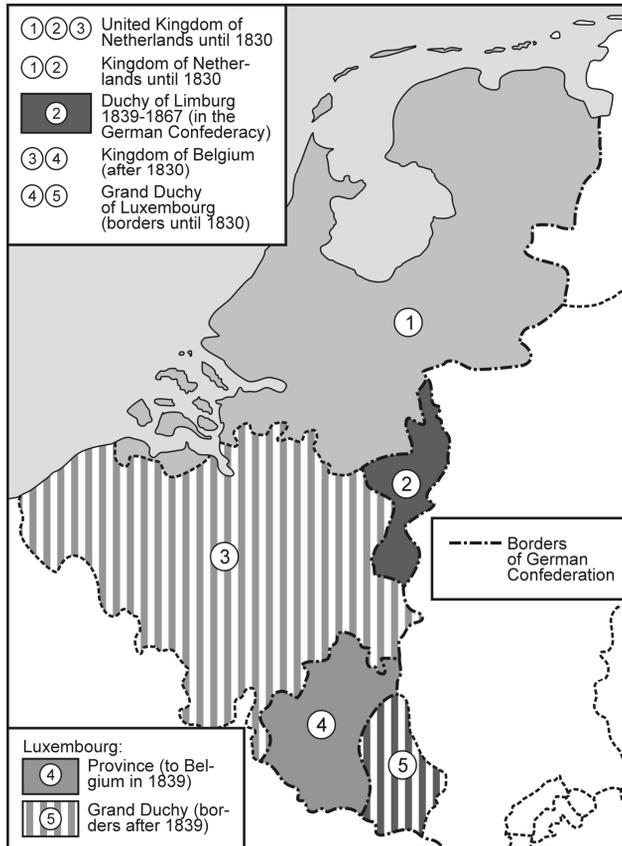


Fig. 5. United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815–1839)

Source: based on Känsterle – own work originally at nl: Afbeelding:NLLuxDB.png.  
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## 2.5. The Belgian Revolution and Secession (1830–1839)

The United Kingdom of the Netherlands collapsed after the 1830 Belgian Revolution. William I (1772–1843), King of the Netherlands<sup>14</sup>, refused to recognize a Belgian state until 1839, when he had to yield under pressure by the Treaty of London (1839), where the exact borders were agreed upon.

Much was written about the causes of the Belgian Revolution<sup>15</sup>. Briefly one may say that the people of the south were nearly all Catholics and half of them

<sup>14</sup> Originally, the official title of William I, was the King of the Netherlands (in Dutch: Koning der Nederlanden).

<sup>15</sup> See for example classical publications of: J.S. Fishman (1988), E.H. Kossmann (1978, pp. 151–60), Witte E. et al. (2009, s. 21–47), R. Coolsaet (2001, pp. 19–45).

were French-speaking. Many outspoken liberals regarded King William I's rule as a despotic one. There were high levels of unemployment and industrial unrest among the working classes. One of the key issues was a linguistic reform in 1823, which intended to make Dutch the official language in the Flemish provinces, since it was the language of most of the Flemish population. This reform met with strong opposition from the upper and middle classes who at the time were mostly French-speaking (Kossmann 1978, p. 128). On 4 June 1830 this reform was abolished.

Religion affiliation was another cause of the Belgian Revolution. In the politics of the South Netherlands the Roman Catholicism was the most important factor. Its partisans fought against the freedom of religion proclaimed by the king William I that was at that time still supported by the liberal faction (Kossmann 1978, p. 123). Over time the (southern) liberal faction began to support the Catholics, partly to accomplish its own goals: freedom of education and freedom of the press (Kossmann 1978, p. 129). The Belgian Revolution of 1830 crystallized this antagonism.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Kingdom of Belgium went separate ways<sup>16</sup>. The lands of historical County of Flanders became part of Nord-Pas-de-Calais (France), Flemish Region Flanders (Great Flanders, Belgium) and Zeelandic Flanders (The Netherlands)<sup>17</sup>. Below I will concentrate on the situation of the Flemings in those countries.

### 3. FLEMINGS IN EUROPE

#### 3.1. The Kingdom of the Netherlands

The region which is now called Zeelandic Flanders<sup>18</sup>, was not part of the historical County of Zeeland but a part of the County of Flanders initially ruled by the House of Habsburgs. The region was the front line in the Eighty Years' War and was conquered by the Dutch Republic in 1604. As such, it was the only

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<sup>16</sup> After the Belgian Revolution, the Belgian monarch has been called King of the Belgians. In Dutch: Koning der Belgen; in French: Roi des Belges (and not Roi de Belgique).

<sup>17</sup> Flanders, New York. Flanders is a hamlet and a census-designated place (CDP) in Suffolk County, New York, USA. The population was 4,472 (2010). It is located in the town of Southampton on the south side of the Peconic River at its mouth in Peconic Bay, Riverhead across the river to the north.

<sup>18</sup> Dutch: *Zeeuws-Vlaanderen*, Zeelandic: *Zeëuws-Vlaonderen*.

part of Flanders, which took part in the insurgency, and became part of the new republic. Zeelandic Flanders was subsequently ruled directly by the Dutch General States (parliament) as one of the Generality Lands and called Flanders of the States (Dutch: *Staats-Vlaanderen*). After occupation by the French in 1795, the area accrued to the département of Escaut. Before the formation of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815, Zeelandic Flanders was territory of the Dutch province of North Brabant for a few years, but when the present province Zeeland was formed, Zeelandic Flanders became a part of it, even after the 1830 Belgian Revolution that separated the remainder of Dutch Flanders from the Netherlands.

Zeelandic Flanders is the southernmost region of the province of Zeeland in the south-western Netherlands (fig. 6). It lies south of the Western Scheldt that separates the region from province of Zeeland. Zeelandic Flanders is bordered to the south by Belgium.

Since the reform of administrative division on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2003 Zeelandic Flanders consists of three counties: Sluis, Terneuzen and Hulst. The area of Zeelandic Netherlands is 875,80 km<sup>2</sup> (733,19 km<sup>2</sup> land and 142,61 km<sup>2</sup> water), the population of 106,161 (density of 145 inhab./km<sup>2</sup>)<sup>19</sup>. It borders the Belgian provinces of East and West Flanders and is situated along the Western Scheldt, a North Sea estuary, and has no land access to the rest of the Netherlands. Zeelandic Flanders is connected to Flushing on Walcheren to the north of the Western Scheldt by the Western Scheldt Tunnel. It borders also the Zwin nature reserve in the West and the Drowned Land of Saeftinghe in the East.

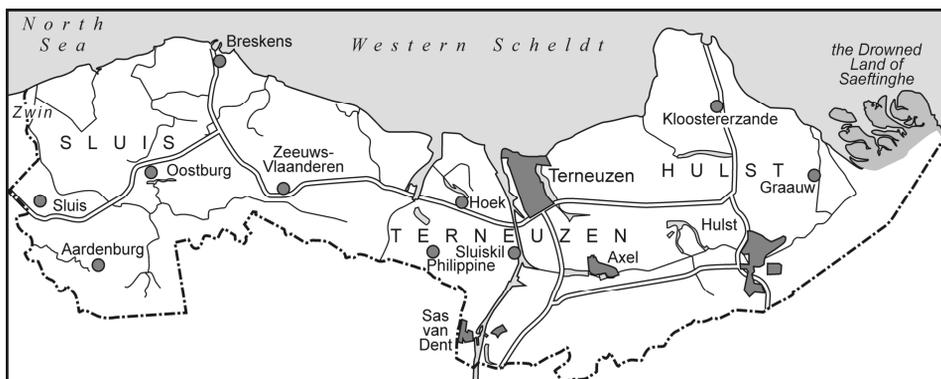


Fig. 6. Zeelandic Flanders

Source: based on <http://www.danifra.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Logo-Zeeuws-Vlaanderen-vlag.jpg>. Frank V. <http://www.danifra.com/flag-of-zeelandic-flanders/>

<sup>19</sup> On the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2013, <https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeeuws-Vlaanderen>.

Table 5. Dialects and languages

Dialects: Zeelandic Flemish. In the eastern part, East Flemish with some Brabantian influence is spoken
The population of Zeelandic Flanders was 106,522 with 145 per km <sup>2</sup> (2010)
Language: The native dialect of the western part of the region is Zeelandic Flemish or also called Seelandish, a variety of West Flemish. In the central regions, the <i>Land-van-Axels</i> and <i>Land-van-Cadzands</i> dialects of Zeelandic, itself a transition between West Flemish and Hollandic, are spoken. In the eastern part, East Flemish with some Brabantian influence is spoken. Because some smaller areas were isolated by water, and thus being small islands there are some dialects that differ slightly with the “normal” dialect. This way, some villages have their own dialect, which people from the provinces above the “big rivers” (the Waal and the Lek) cannot understand. The provinces above the big rivers include the provinces of North-Holland, South-Holland, Utrecht and Gelderland

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeelandic\\_Flanders#Language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeelandic_Flanders#Language).

The Zeelandic Flanders (Dutch: *Zeeuws-Vlaanderen*) has a national anthem, which was written in 1917 by Jacob Pattist and J. Vreeken with the music by A. Lijssen. The anthem was a reaction to Belgian annexation plans, revealed during the First World War. The Netherlands remained neutral but the Belgians considered their neighbour a pro-German state and demanded therefore Zeelandic Flanders and Limburg to be annexed by the Germans. In Zeeland reaction to the Belgian requirements was extremely negative. As a result of it there was written a propaganda song that stressed the bond between the region and the Netherlands. Later it grew to the Zeelandic-Flemish anthem.

### 3.2. The Kingdom of Belgium

The lands of the Southern Netherlands united under the rule of King Leopold I of Belgium (1790–1865) and his successor went through different stages of political transformation. From the unitary Kingdom, concentrated on defense of the newly born state, throughout most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the federal state in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, Belgium is a federal constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of governance. It is divided into three regions and three communities that exist next to each other. Its two largest regions are the Dutch-speaking region of Flanders in the north and the French-speaking southern region of Wallonia. The Brussels-Capital Region is an officially bilingual (French and Dutch), an enclave within the Flemish Region

(Parijs van 2012, 7f). A German-speaking Community exists in eastern Walonia<sup>20</sup>. Belgium's linguistic diversity and related political conflicts are reflected in its unique solution of this problem.

### 3.3. Municipalities with language facilities

There are 27 municipalities with language facilities in Belgium which must offer services to its residents in Dutch, French or German, in addition to their official languages (fig. 7). All other municipalities – with the exception of those in the Brussels region which is bilingual – are unilingual and only offer services in their official languages, either Dutch or French.

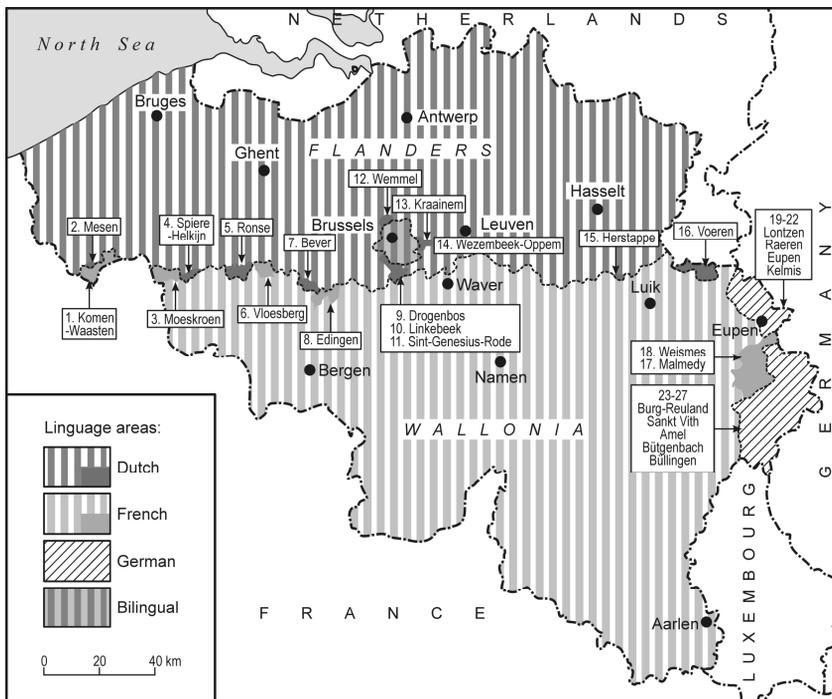


Fig. 7. Municipalities with language facilities

No. 3. Mouscron (French: *Moeskroen*, Picard: *Moucron*) is a Walloon city and municipality located in the Belgian province of Hainaut/Henegouwen, along the border with the French city of Tourcoing, which is part of the Lille/Rijsel metropolitan area.

The Mouscron municipality includes the old communes of Dottignies (*Dottenijs*), Luingne, and Herseaux (*Herzeeuw*). Mouscron is a municipality with language facilities for Dutch-speakers

<sup>20</sup> The German-speaking Community, [http://www.belgium.be/en/about\\_belgium/government/communities/german-speaking\\_community/](http://www.belgium.be/en/about_belgium/government/communities/german-speaking_community/).

Belgian law stipulates that: twelve municipalities in Flanders must offer services in French; of these twelve, six located around Brussels are now believed to have become majority French-speaking. Wallonia contains two language areas: in the French-speaking part of Wallonia, four municipalities offer services in Dutch and another two offer services in German. All municipalities in the German-speaking part of Wallonia (annexed after the First World War) offer services in French. In Brussels, Dutch and French are co-official. At the federal level, Dutch, French and German are all official languages<sup>21</sup>.

### 3.4. Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie

Former Nord-Pas-de-Calais, since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016, “Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie”<sup>22</sup> is a densely populated region with its 330.8 people per km<sup>2</sup> in just over 12,414 km<sup>2</sup> and with 5,987,883 million inhabitants<sup>23</sup>. It is 7 percent of France's total population, making it the fourth most populous region in the country, 83 percent of whom live in urban communities. Its administrative centre and largest city is Lille (Dutch: *Rijssele*). The second largest city is Calais, which serves as a major continental economic/transportation hub with Dover of Great Britain 42 kilometers away. This makes Nord-Pas-de-Calais the closest continental European connection to the British Isles<sup>24</sup> (fig. 8).

Nord Pas de Calais, the French name of the Strait of Dover, North Strait of Dover), consisted of the departments of Nord and Pas-de-Calais. Nord-Pas-de-Calais borders the English Channel (west), the North Sea (northwest), Belgium (north and east) and Picardy (south).

The majority of the region was once part of the historical (Southern) Netherlands, but gradually became part of France between 1477 and 1678, particularly during the reign of King Louis XIV (“The Sun King”, 1638–1715).

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<sup>21</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Municipalities\\_with\\_language\\_facilities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Municipalities_with_language_facilities).

<sup>22</sup> “La carte à 13 régions définitivement adoptée En savoir plus sur”: [http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2014/12/17/la-carte-a-13-regions-definitivement-adoptee\\_4542278\\_823448.html#stkLME8ij9dzqpV1.99](http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2014/12/17/la-carte-a-13-regions-definitivement-adoptee_4542278_823448.html#stkLME8ij9dzqpV1.99).

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.insee.fr/fr/ppp/bases-de-donnees/recensement/populations-legales/france-regions.asp?annee=2012>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hauts-de-France>.

<sup>24</sup> Official website: <http://www.nordpasdecalspicardie.fr/>.

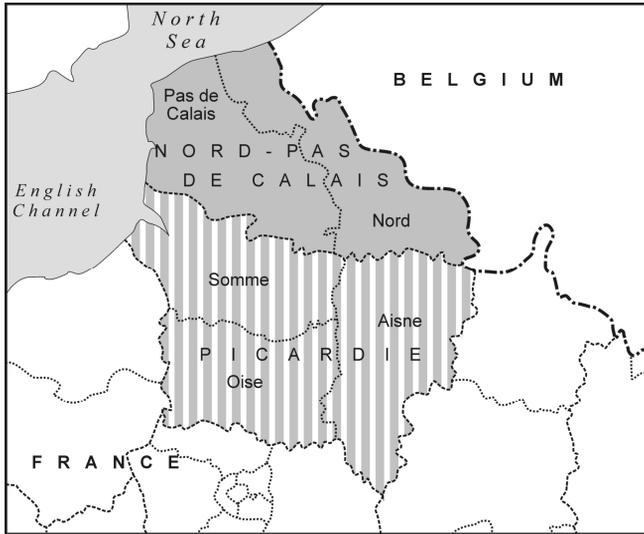


Fig. 8. Nord-Pas-de-Calais and Picardie

Source: based on [http://france3.regions.francetvinfo.fr/picardie/sites/regions\\_france3/files/stylestop\\_big/public/assets/images/2014/07/16/prog4189868.jpg?itok=VB\\_tW5Ku](http://france3.regions.francetvinfo.fr/picardie/sites/regions_france3/files/stylestop_big/public/assets/images/2014/07/16/prog4189868.jpg?itok=VB_tW5Ku)

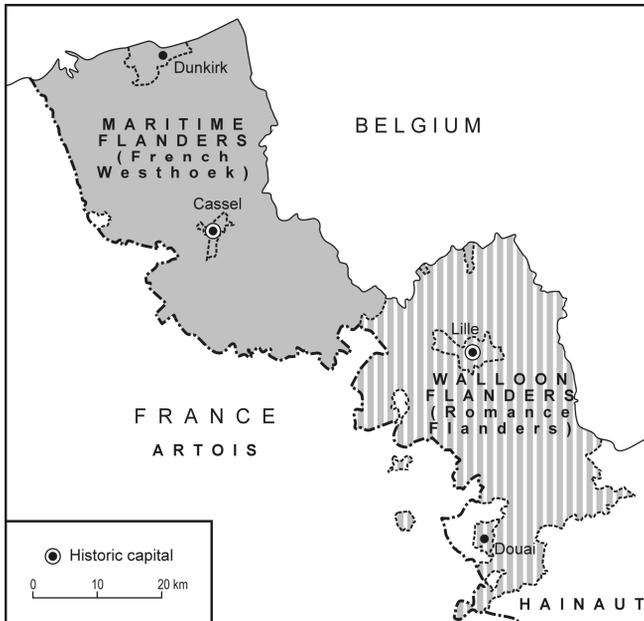


Fig. 9. French Flanders (territorial extent on the eve of the French Revolution)

Source: based on author Ross, licensed under the Creative Commons

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carte\\_de\\_la\\_Flandre\\_fran%C3%A7aise.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carte_de_la_Flandre_fran%C3%A7aise.png)

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The historical French provinces that preceded Nord-Pas-de-Calais are Artois, Flanders, French Hainaut and (partially) Picardy. These provincial designations are still frequently used by the inhabitants. French Flanders<sup>25</sup> is a part of the historical County of Flanders in present-day France. The region lies in the modern-day region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais. Together with French Hainaut, it makes up the French Department of Nord.

It consists of two regions: French Westhoek to the northwest, lying between the Lys River and the North Sea, roughly the same area as the Arrondissement of Dunkirk; Lilloise Flanders (French: *La Flandre Lilloise*; Dutch: *Rijsels-Vlaanderen*), historically also called Walloon Flanders, to the southeast, south of the Lys River and now the Arrondissements of Lille and Douai (fig. 9).

### 3.5. Languages

While the region is predominantly French-speaking, it also has two significant minority language communities: the western Flemings, whose presence is evident in the many Dutch place names in the area and who speak West Flemish, a dialect of Dutch (perhaps 20,000 inhabitants of Nord-Pas-de-Calais use Flemish daily and an estimated 40,000 use it occasionally, both, primarily in and around the arrondissement of Dunkirk) and the Picards, who speak the Picard language and who have been working to revive this nearly-extinct regional speech since the 1980s<sup>26</sup>. Although neighbouring Belgium currently recognizes and fosters both Picard and Dutch, and a few city-level governments within Nord-Pas-de-Calais have introduced initiatives to encourage both languages, the national French government maintains a policy of linguistic unity and generally ignores both languages, as it does with other regional languages in France.

During the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Roman practice of co-opting Germanic tribes to provide military and defence services along the route from Boulogne to Cologne created a Germanic-Romance linguistic border in the region that persisted until the 8<sup>th</sup> century (fig. 10). By the 9<sup>th</sup> century, most inhabitants north of Lille spoke a dialect of Middle Dutch, while the inhabitants to the south spoke a variety of Romance dialects. This linguistic border is still evident today in the place names of the region. Since the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the linguistic border began a steady move to north and the east and by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the

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<sup>25</sup> French: *La Flandre française*; Dutch: *Frans-Vlaanderen*.

<sup>26</sup> Or *Ch'ti* (speakers, *chitimi*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_Flanders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Flanders)).

linguistic border had shifted to the river Lys in the south and Cap-Griz-Nez in the west<sup>27</sup>. French Flemish (Dutch: *Frans-Vlaams*, and *flamand français* or *Fransch vlaemsch* in France) is the West Flemish language as spoken in the north of contemporary France (Ryckeboer 2002, p. 21f).

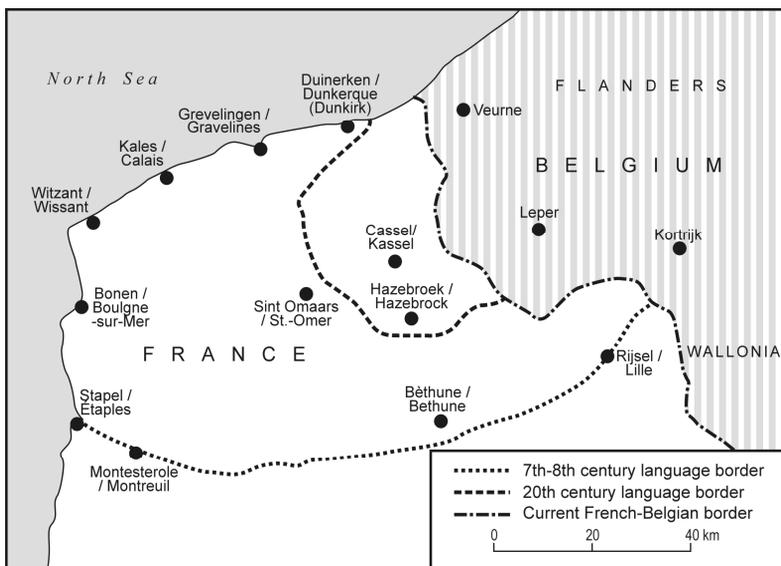


Fig. 10. Historic regression of Dutch in the Western periphery

Source: released into the public domain by its author, I. Finnind, based on [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:France\\_Flanders\\_language-no.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:France_Flanders_language-no.svg)

Place names attest to Flemish having been spoken since the 8<sup>th</sup> century in the area that was ceded to France in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and which became known as French Flanders. Its dialect subgroup, called French Flemish, meanwhile, became a minority dialect that survives mainly in Dunkirk (*Duinkerke* in Dutch /*Duunkerke* in West Flemish – dune church), Bourbourg (*Broekburg* in Dutch), Calais (*Kales*), Saint-Omer (*Sint-Omaars*) with an ethnic enclave Haut-Pont (*Haute-Ponte*) known for its predominantly Flemish community and Bailleul (*Belle*).

This area roughly covers the *arrondissement* of Dunkerque (Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region). It is often referred to as “Flandre maritime” (maritime Flanders) and people used to speak of “Flandre flamingante” (Flemish Flanders) as opposed to “Flandre Lilloise” or “Flandre wallingante” (Walloon Flanders)<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> <http://dictionnaire.sensagent.leparisien.fr/French%20Netherlands/en-en/>.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/document/neerlandes/an/i1/i1.html>.

French-Flemish, as previously mentioned, has about 20,000 daily users, and 40,000 of occasional speakers. There has been an active movement to retain the West Flemish language in the region for the last 40 years, but the language's status appears to be moribund<sup>29</sup>.

French Flemish is taught in a few schools in the French Westhoek. The L'Akademie voor Nuuze Vlaemsche Taele/Institut de la Langue Régionale Flamande (ANVT-ILRF) was given permission to carry out experimental lessons in four public schools (in Esquelbecq, Noordpeene, Volckerinckhove, Wormhout) for the school years of 2007–2008 until 2010–2011, after which it would be evaluated<sup>30</sup>. Afterwards, all requirements were met but it was only allowed to continue them, but not to expand to other schools or to the *collège*. On the other hand, the private Catholic education began teaching Dutch in collèges in Gravelines and Hondschoote.

### 3.6. Flanders Fields

French President Charles de Gaulle, who was born in Lille, called the region a “fatal avenue” through which invading armies repeatedly passed (Holmes 1992, p. 384). Over the centuries it was conquered in turn by the Celtic Belgae, the Romans, the Germanic Franks, England, the Spanish and Austrian Netherlands, and the Dutch Republic. After the final French annexation in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, much of the region was again occupied by Germany during the First and Second World Wars.

When the First World War started, the region became a strategic target for the Allies and the Central Powers, mostly because of the coal and mining resources. During the war the region was split in two: the German holding the French Flanders and Cambrai area, the Allied controlling Atrecht (Arras) and the Area of Lens. When the region was finally liberated by the Canadians, the whole country was devastated, Atrecht being destroyed at 90 percent. The Nord-Pas-de-Calais became one of the main theaters of the conflict, with many battles occurring between 1914 and 1918. Nowadays, there are 650 military cemeteries

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<sup>29</sup> [http://broom02.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=French%20Flemish&item\\_type=to pic](http://broom02.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=French%20Flemish&item_type=to pic) <http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/document/neerlandes/an/i1/i1.html>

<sup>30</sup> “French Flemish is not a dialect; it is a regional language.” Couché is chair of the ANVT, the Akademie voor Nuuze Vlaemsche Taele, an organisation dedicated to the preservation of French Flemish. “Flanders Today”, “French Flemish: group defends a dying language”, <http://www.flanderstoday.eu/living/french-flemish-group-defends-dying-language> <http://www.anvt.org/>.

throughout the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, mostly British and Canadians as well as large memorials like Vimy or Notre Dame de Lorette.

During the Second World War, the name “French Flanders” referred to all of Nord-Pas-de-Calais, which was first attached to the military administration of German-occupied Belgium, then part of *Belgien-Nordfrankreich* under a Reichskommissar, and finally part of a theoretical Reichsgau of Flanders. During the occupation it was attached to the Military Administration in Belgium and Northern France, ruled from the Wehrmacht Kommandantur in Brussels. The Nord-Pas-de-Calais region was used for such vengeance weapon installations like V-1 “ski sites” that launched attacks on England and massive bunkers for the V-2 rocket and V-3 cannon. Operation Crossbow counteroffensive bombing by the Allies devastated many of the region's towns. Although most of the region was liberated in September 1944, Dunkirk was the last French town to be freed from German occupation (on 9 May 1945) (Warmbrunn 1993, p. 76)<sup>31</sup>.

Flanders Fields is a common English name of the First World War battlefields in an area straddling the Belgian provinces of West Flanders and East Flanders as well as the French department of Nord-Pas-de-Calais, part of which makes up the area known as French Flanders.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The territories of the medieval County of Flanders over the centuries were a victim of the rivalry of emerging states, mainly Germany and France. The centralized monarchies, which were multinational and multicultural in their nature, because of their size and range, did not pay attention to any local differences as long as they were loyal to the ruling monarch. The wealth of Flemish towns gave them some local autonomy but the wars conducted by the competing kings and princes, often caused by the changing alliances stemming out of the succession interests, made the lands of the Low Countries a profitable reward for the winning side. The Reformation ideas divided the Low Countries and the unfortunate rule of the king Philip II of Spain caused their permanent division. The North part joined protestant Europe and the South the Habsburg, Catholic Europe. The religion was not anymore the binding factor of the old Low Countries. The only common features were based on the values related with the Germanic culture and the language. The latter played not important role in

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<sup>31</sup> Also: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nord-Pas-de-Calais>.

the internal relations until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Dutch was considered by the elites in United Kingdom of the Netherlands as a language of the low classes and farmers. The educated Flemings spoke French. Division of the Netherlands into two independent states changed the situation of the Dutch language and Dutch culture dramatically. The Kingdom of the Netherlands was a national state where the interests of the Dutch speaking population and their cultural values were secured. The Kingdom of Belgium went through long and painful transformation which in the 20<sup>th</sup> century led to the situation that the national interests of the Flemish people were protected by the institutions of the federal state (Witte et al. 2009, p. 376). The Region of Flanders and the Region of Brussels respect the rights of the Flemish majority in the Kingdom of Belgium.

The western parts of the County of Flanders, which became part of the Republic of France are in totally different position. The French Republic does not recognize any minorities on its territory<sup>32</sup>. The Flemish language is not afforded any legal status in France, neither by central nor regional institutions. It enjoys no official recognition, either by the public authorities or by the education system<sup>33</sup>.

French Flemish does not enjoy any official recognition in France, with the exception of a Ministerial memorandum of 1982, which was supposed to facilitate teaching of the language. Despite the additional obstacle of the absence of any written form of French Flemish, its relationship to Dutch, which is one of the official working languages of the European Union, could contribute to its preservation. Knowledge of Dutch is, moreover, vital for any understanding of the historical background and cultural and linguistic roots of the region. This knowledge is also extremely useful for economic and tourist dealings with the region's Belgian and Dutch neighbours<sup>34</sup>.

The Belgian side undertakes many efforts to preserve diminishing range of the Dutch language. The Flemish-Dutch Cultural Institution "Our Heritage" (Dutch: *Ons Erfdeel*) has been publishing since 1957 a monthly cultural magazine under the same title. It has a seat in the small Belgian town Rekkem located on the French border by the city of Rijssele (French: *Lille*) and dedicates

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<sup>32</sup> Marie-France Gaunard-Anderson, from University of Lorraine, touches upon this subject in her paper ("Minorities and borders in France: bridges for cross-border and co-operation") presented on the 15<sup>th</sup> 'Łódź' international conference on political geography *Borderlands of nations, nations of borderlands*, Złotniki Lubańskie, September 14–16, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> [http://broom02.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=French%20Flemish&item\\_type=to pic](http://broom02.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=French%20Flemish&item_type=to pic).

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/document/neerlandes/an/i1/i1.html>.

much attention to the problem of the inhabitants on both sides of the Belgian-French border<sup>35</sup>. Among other important publications are the bilingual yearbook “De Franse Nederlanden – Les Pays-Bas Français”, the yearbook “The Low Countries” in English, and a quarterly “Septentrion” published in French, which is focused on art, literature and culture of Flanders and the Netherlands. The Dutch speaking population in French Flanders has been slowly diminishing and has difficult years ahead in the times of the growing radicalism and xenophobic programs of some French political parties.

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<sup>35</sup> One of the latest examples of such publications is the book titled *Grens-Frontière 1713–2013* [The Border 1713–2013] and is edited in 2013 by Luc Devoldere, long time managing editor of “Ons Erfdeeld”.

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## **BUILDING A NEW BORDER: THE CASE-STUDY OF THE NEW BARRIER BETWEEN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA, AND THE PROBLEM OF MINORITIES**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays there is an evident tendency of building new boundaries as fortified barriers in Eastern and Balkan Europe. It represents a dramatic historical shift. Except in the cases of new boundaries of Hungary, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Norway<sup>1</sup> – or the project of building new boundaries and walls between Estonia and Russia in the Narva Region – between these countries and their South or East, mainly due on the problem of the current migration crisis, new borders as fortified boundaries and barriers are under construction because of the new active foreign policy of Russia in the “near abroad”. This is the case of the new barriers that are currently under construction between Ukraine and Russia. They derived not only from the civil war in the eastern part of the country, but also from the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula (in March 2014) – part of Ukraine since 1954 – marking the first time since the immediate aftermath of the Second World War that an European state seized and incorporated territory from another state, establishing a dangerous precedent. Russia's annexation changed dramatically the perception of stability of post-Soviet borders. This dramatic event served to accelerate a process of what might be called a “hard bordering” between Russia and Ukraine (Filippova 2016, p. 65). Moreover, shortly after the annexation the Ukrainian government

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<sup>1</sup> Even Norway announced on August 24, 2016, that it was erecting a 660-ft. steel fence at its northern Skorskog border point with Russia, to deter migrants from entering the country via the Arctic Circle.

announced plans to construct a “Maginot Line” on its eastern border with Russia, in order to avoid further possible Russian invasions.

The building of new boundaries has many theoretical and practical consequences. The borders of a nation may have very meaningful foreign policy implications. First of all, some scholars have argued that nations with more (fortified) borders tend to be involved in more regional wars than nations with few borders, arguing that proximity may become the catalyst for conflict. Moreover, borders drawn with more reference to a political map than to realities on the ground, may also have a profound (and destructive) foreign policy effects (Hudson 2007, p. 147). The geography of Russia's borders augurs for increased levels of cross-border and near-border conflicts. As it is well known, the travail of Russia's “near abroad” has been a long-standing security vulnerability both in contemporary times as well as historically. Moreover, violations of the international recognised borders and new boundaries under construction, even more fortified and scrutinized as a response to (current or potential) aggressions, are a clear demonstration of an enormous restructuring process of the international system of states in Eastern Europe.

As van Houtum pointed out, the simplest way to understand the significance of borders is to examine them by their function: borders serve a purpose (Houtum van 1998, p. 21). Anssi Paasi wrote that borders help us to create and perceive differences, indispensable for us in order to build contexts and meanings and to construct meanings in order to make sense of an otherwise complex society in which we live (Paasi 1999). Borders continue to influence socio-spatial behaviours and attitudes, how we perceive different places, and how we interpret our own actions. How borders are drawn has important consequences for international stability. As well known, the social construction of the nation as a political institution originates from state attempts to commit people to a territory (Taylor and Flint 2000, pp. 29–30) and modern sovereignty is strongly connected to modern borders. Today we take sovereignty for granted but even in the West it is largely a modern phenomenon. Most societies, in most parts of the world, throughout most of history, have not known the practice. In fact, even the idea of separate and separable political communities was not clearly established in the medieval world and in Eastern Europe in particular<sup>2</sup>. Conceptions of territoriality are neither fixed nor constant across time and place. Control over borders is an attribute of sovereignty but the “essential” attribute of it have always been very fluid. The attempt of today in this region is to build a clear-cut system of boundaries protecting exclusive jurisdictions that is in

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<sup>2</sup> See also A. Vitale (2016).

a deep contrast with the real status of sovereignty in Eastern Europe, the resurgence of power politics and territorial conquests. An active fear for survival is currently at stake.

## 2. THE FUNCTIONS OF RUSSIAN-UKRAINE BORDERS

The construction of an exclusive political border is a decisive part of the process of Ukrainian nation-building (also on symbolic scale: it defines also the European or Eastern Slavic character of this country) and strengthening the state under permanent threat after Independence, making this case-study a fascinating case for analysis of the concrete border-drawing exercise. The new borders may become a material manifestation of a new permanent opposition between Ukraine and Russia and at the same time a crucial constituent of Ukrainian national identity. What we see today is an enormous effort to exclude the other, both from the Russian and the Ukrainian sides. The Ukrainian nation-building process in the recent past and particularly the post-Maidan history have projected Russia as eternal other to Ukraine. In order to build a coherent nation, it is necessary to define who “us” actually are and what actually “ours” and to demarcate that difference the border is perceived as necessary<sup>3</sup>. The Ukrainian identity is under construction vis-à-vis its neighbours, reflecting the typical role of borders in constructing various forms of identity, as well as the multilayered nature of that identity (Donnan and Wilson 1999). The borders are playing a key-role in the Ukrainian nation and in the current process of identity and nation-building.

The second function of this border is to try to assure military defence. Borders are seen as a guarantee to ensure territorial integrity. Ukraine's borders are closely associated with potential threats and national security. The annexation of Crimea has shown the interrelatedness of borders, strategic concerns and questions of national identity (Filippova 2016, p. 66).

The third is directly linked to sovereignty and depends on the fact that elements of territorial state are basic to international recognition. Despite the fact that criteria of international recognition of the states deeply changed across the Twentieth century (Vitale 2012), the crucial point for recognition purposes has been that the state maintain effective territorial control. The idea that it is necessary the requirement of firm control remains highly influent in this part of

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<sup>3</sup> As wrote Beatrix Haselberger: “How could we acquire a national identity if we were not able to distinguish between «us» and «them»”? (Haselberger 2014, p. 510).

Europe and it is quite understandable because after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the prospect of contesting and renegotiating state borders has become everyday reality. This is the case especially of a newly independent state such as Ukraine, permanently seeking to secure national cohesion and territorial integrity as tools of existential survival (Filippova 2016, p. 67). However, it is necessary to underline that the building of new borders between Russia and Ukraine also depends (as it happens in central Europe) on the standards for border management and enforcement, requiring (following new international agreements) Ukraine to develop a new migration policy, create new forms of control, strengthen the borders with Russia. Demands to enforce borders are motivated by EU concerns about security threats from outside the Union. Border policies implemented by Ukraine's political class bear the stamp of the two neighbours: Russia and the EU.

### **3. THE PROBLEM OF DYNAMIC BORDER CHANGE**

The Russian-Ukraine borders are international state borders. They formally have been in existence since Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union, on August 24, 1991. They have inherited their location from the administrative territorial division between the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR and some land from the first real demarcation between both countries which took place in 1918, after the fall of the Russian Empire, when Ukraine managed to recover all its territories of former Ukrainian governorate and annexing neighbouring counties (such as Kursk and Voronezh) where ethnic composition of inhabitants was predominantly "Ukrainophone". Moreover, the former internal boundaries of USSR became international after the Ukraine's independence and this process exacerbated border issues and the situation of ethnic minorities. Ukraine means "borderland", which is an appropriate name for a country which frequently endured much of its history as a frontier for her neighbors. In the years that have passed since the Ukrainian declaration of independence, the country had not fortified its borders on the east. Much of the Ukraine-Russia border is just on maps. There are no natural barriers or border fences. Ukraine's borders with its neighboring Soviet Republics (Russia, Belarus, Moldova) were purely administrative lines, not controlled and not demarcated. The Ukrainian-Russian border was one of the busiest among post-Soviet borders: 20 to 30 million persons crossed it per year. Russian and Ukrainian citizens could cross it with internal passports. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the question of the precise territorial delimitations of the Ukrainian borders with Russia has been

a permanent source of tension and a point of irritation. It took years for the Russian political elites to accept Ukrainian independence, and until the mid 1990s the Ukrainian-Russian border issue remained open. One of the reasons why Moscow was slow in dealing with the Ukrainian border issue was that “keeping the issue suspended”, Moscow thought it could use its eventual concession as a bargaining chip. But it happened mostly because after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, the problem of ethnic minorities significantly changed the meaning of new borders. An evident strategy of the Kremlin has been that of using minorities (not only in Ukraine) in order to destabilize new states and to achieve, sooner or later, a new configuration of Ukraine's borders<sup>4</sup>. As a consequence, nowadays former soviet internal borders are defined in Russian official discourse by the nationality of inhabitants. There was an evident shift in the concept of borders: they present now, within this discourse, an evident linkage with ethnicity rather than statehood. Hence the concept of borders based on nationality was the precondition for Russia's pressures on Crimea that ended in a “punitive” land-grab. It seems that respect for the borders established with the collapse of the Soviet Union can no longer be taken for granted. In the recent past Russian foreign policy decision-makers have demonstrated an ability to annex territories and create puppet states and dependent regions such as Eastern Ukraine, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria, using the ambiguous policies of protecting “compatriots” (*sootechestvenniki*). As Harvey pointed out, nationalism is first of all a specific type of human territoriality and a territorial form of ideology (Harvey 1989). As well known, nationalism manipulates various attributes of national pride (the army, the armaments and the borders) and assures unequivocally, when it became possible, also expansionist forms. Border unresolved disputes between Russia and Ukraine are currently created by the difficulty to solve the controversies through a process meeting appropriate standards of lawfulness that allows to consider the border as permanent. This is the case of Russian attempt to correct the map of the world, beginning from the former Soviet space and the case of minorities, used as a tool of influence.

The main problem is that the exercise of power through a set of central political institutions and a clear spatial demarcation of territory remain crucial points for Ukraine. New imposed boundaries undermine the exclusive and legitimate exercise of power and authority over former areas, referred to

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<sup>4</sup> Russia's foreign policy concepts throughout the Putin's presidencies have repeatedly claimed a right to protect the interests of Russian “compatriots” living beyond its borders.

Ukrainian sovereignty, according to sovereign territorial ideal. The attempt to build new boundaries reveal a dramatic legitimacy shift and a consistent political-geographic change. Due to the fact that the territorial norms of the modern state system display a remarkable tenacity, international recognition of a state presumes that statehood implies control over territory. Moreover, according to the doctrines of international law state boundaries, once established, should be seen as legitimate and state governments should have the right to control territory within their boundaries (which means that they should have sovereignty over their territories) (Murphy 2002, p. 199). Ukraine is a *de jure* sovereign state that entered after centuries of failed attempts into the international system of states in keeping with established practice in international law. As a sovereign state it had, and continues to have, the right to expect other states to respect its territorial integrity. In fact, Ukraine after its independence negotiated and concluded border agreements with all states contiguous with it, thus formalizing its territory as inherited from the precursor state, the Soviet Union. Needless to say, the issue of Ukrainian statehood as it is manifested geographically is strongly related to the problem of its borders. Implications of non-recognition could be very serious in the international context in the practical sense. Thus, both Ukraine and Russia are bound to build new fortified boundaries, in order to reassert their sovereignty over highly contested territories either internally (e.g. civil war) or externally (e.g. interstate warfare). The building of new, strong boundaries, depends on the necessity of the regimes of territorial legitimacy and is a strategy by which the states seek to legitimate themselves after their entrance into the system of states.

The problem of Ukraine's Eastern borders is also connected with the legitimacy of the new Ukrainian state and as such it remains a symbol of "unfinished nation building". For Ukraine, to have its borders legitimised by international treaties and arranged according to international standards it was a necessary precondition for building an independent statehood. Nation and state-building processes in both countries, problems of "divorce" and of building new relations based on principles of national sovereignty have shaped the context of the Ukrainian-Russian border issue since 1991. Various parties and politicians in Russia (from the nationalists to the neo-communists) did not hesitate to claim Crimea and parts of Eastern Ukraine on historical and language related grounds. In Ukraine, similar territorial claims to Russia (most often for Kuban as a former Ukrainian ethnic territory) were only marginal and limited to some radical nationalist groups. Ukrainian nationalists would like to transform this new border into a frontier between cultural-"civilisational" macro-regions. Success in this endeavor would exclude Russia from Europe, firmly place Ukraine in the

West, institute new geopolitical blocs and certify the edge of Europe as the Ukrainian-Russian border.

Geopolitical interests too dictate to Ukraine the need to strengthen and carefully protect its eastern border, avoiding any alliances or security agreements with Russia and looking for a union with the West. For Ukrainian leaders, the eastern border is crucial not only as a protective barrier around the national economic space but also as a major political and ideological symbol of independence.

#### 4. THE NEW UKRAINE'S BOUNDARIES

Ukrainian diplomats have lobbied for the delimitation and demarcation of the border, but the Russians were rather reluctant in this respect. Indeed, for Russia in the 1990s, the border with Ukraine was not the issue of first priority: Russia had to cope with new borders of around 13,000 km total length, some of them going through zones of military and ethnic conflicts. But the deeper reason was rather political than technical: Russia considered “internal” the borders inside the CIS and declined any discussions on demarcation as not compatible with “partnership relations.” Russia's new position on demarcation can be explained by its new accent on “sovereignty” as the centre of its national doctrine. The worst consequence is that the new borders reflect an exclusionary approach – according to the Western model of the nation-state – of the domination of the majority nation. It means that the pressures to build new boundaries between Ukraine and Russia are reciprocal and internationally based.

After the annexation, the *de facto* land border between Ukraine (the Kherson region) and Crimea became an international border without international recognition. The previous negotiations on delimiting the waters of the Azov Sea are no longer relevant. The consequences for the shipping routes to the ports of Odessa, Nikolayev, Belgorod and Kherson are enormous. Kyiv refused any acknowledgement of the territorial changes. Russia increased its military presence along the demarcation line and in response to this military buildup Ukraine also deployed more troops and resources closer to the border with Crimea. Every day there are significant clashes (with several casualties) on this border, especially near Armyansk and at the isthmus of Perekop. The secession of Crimea has been a destructive process (especially for trade, social cooperation and coexistence), reinforced by the use of borders. It every day confronts the new authorities on the Peninsula with serious problems related to the need to establish a new relationship with Ukraine, on which the Region is profoundly dependent, such as

deliveries of raw materials and supplies, the transport and tourism sectors, the need to rebuild the financial system, transborder cooperation and so on. Closing the land border between the peninsula and the rest of Ukraine (including two railway lines, two major and two minor roads), the only way to supply Crimea would be the ferry on the strait of Kerch. This situation of the border, along with the strong militarization of the peninsula, causes not only serious supply difficulties but also contributes to the collapse of trade and tourism (one of the main source of richness in Crimea: approximately 70% of tourists coming to Crimea were from Ukraine). Moreover, in June 2014 Ukrainian government planned to build a wall along the border of Russia, known as “Ukrainian Wall” or, significantly, “European Wall” (*Project Wall* which officially started on 10 September 2014) – due on the war against pro-Russian separatists and the Russian military intervention in Eastern Ukraine – taking into account the goal to prevent the infiltration by the adversary into the territory of Ukraine, Russian military and hybrid warfare intervention in the country and to cut off Russian



Fig. 1. A part of the Project Wall on Eastern Ukraine

Source: <https://www.behance.net/gallery/19754607/Wall-on-Ukraine-Russia-border>

support for insurgents in Ukraine's Eastern regions, obtaining at the same time a clear fortified “European” border and consequently a visa-free regime with the EU for Ukraine and a closer position to NATO membership (fig. 1–2).

On 18 July 2014 the National Security and Defense Council presented a plan to build engineering structures at the Ukraine-Russia border. It instructed the government to conduct unilateral demarcation of the Ukraine-Russia border. This project is planned to be finished in 2018. Ukrainian government official proposed on 13 June, 2014 building a 2,000 kilometer fence between the two countries. Topped with barbed wire and electrified, the fence would be protected by ditches and anti-personnel mines. The \$130 million-project is far from becoming a reality. But it illustrates very well how hostile relations

between the two bordering nations have become. Ukrainian officials say the wall will enhance national security, improve the business climate and bring Ukraine closer to NATO membership and EU integration. The former Ukraine's Prime Minister Yatsenyuk claimed the fortifications would serve as Europe's de facto

eastern boundary, while also helping Ukraine reassure its European partners that it is in full control of its borders. Russia erected 40 km of fortified walls, and more than 100 km of defensive trenches on its border with the rebel Ukrainian regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. Ukraine planned to seal itself off from Russia by building a 2,000-kilometer fence at a cost of \$150 million. But the project has been delayed due to its enormous cost to a cash-strapped state. A freshly-dug anti-tank ditch running along a short stretch of metal fence topped with barbed wire marks the start of a new border defense that Ukraine hopes will protect it from Russia. But over two years later, only a small fraction of the \$250-million (225-million-euro) project that Kiev hopes could help withstand a Russian invasion has been built. Nevertheless, Ukraine has already built 115 kilometers (71.5 miles) of anti-tanks structures, 82 kilometers (51 miles) of rocade roads, 412 kilometers (256 miles) of intrusion detection strips and 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) of metal fences and 49 observation towers along the national border in Sumy, Chernihiv and Kharkiv regions since the project began in 2014. Over 230 kilometers of anti-tank trenches, 45 kilometers of drag road, 103 kilometers of lateral roads and 75 kilometers of fences and lookout towers were established. 400 million hryvnia (\$15.8 million) were spent on the construction in the Kharkiv and Chernihiv regions in 2015. In 2017 the plan will be to start construction in the Luhansk region.



Fig. 2. The original project of the Ukraine's fortified Eastern border  
Source: Internet

Curiously, this new boundary's project coexists with a *de facto* loss of Ukraine's eastern regions, now under the strong control of the Kremlin and a new fortified boundary, erected by the Russians, along the demarcation of annexed region of Crimean peninsula: in both cases the movement of peoples became increasingly difficult as Ukraine and Russia raised barriers to entry. Now, it is quite evident the deep contrast existing today between the rigidity of new borders, both many practical problems in the determination of boundaries and the high dynamism of the political map of the European regions, where the reality is still the plurality of ethnos and the presence of different cultures. The problem of ethnopluralism has a direct bearing on the question of borders since much of the problem is due to the fact that many national minorities are linked to a majority population group in neighbouring countries (Delanty 2011, p. 123) and the notion of borderland is particular relevant in the context of inter-civilisational zones of overlapping identities. Moreover, as S.R. Ratner (1996, p. 605) pointed out: "Once boundary lines assume new significance, their location becomes even more critical".

This statement is particularly true, taking into account the length of the border to be protected: it measures 2292.6 km which is almost one third of the overall length of the state borders of the country. It crosses urbanised and densely populated territories, which have a crucial importance for the economies of both countries and which until recently were deeply integrated. Obviously, the additional problems *Project Wall* may stimulate (not only geographic and economic but also social and ethno-political) are enormous. It may hinder transborder cooperation, interactions across state borders and exacerbate ethno-national conflicts with a snowball effect of migrations and territorial and political fragmentation. This case-study demonstrates the role of war and aggression in providing justifications for hardening of borders and power practices related to state borders.

It is very relevant and useful to study the building of modern state borders in Eastern Europe where flexible regional, multilayered and hybrid identities are widespread. More complex is the issue of Ukraine's borders with Russia and potential future restrictions on movement between the two countries. Given the very close cultural, social, ethnic and economic ties between Ukraine and Russia, visa requirements and border checks have proven highly disruptive (Mrinska 2006, Krok and Smętkowski 2006). Ukraine remains a pluralistic, multi-ethnic state and contains a typical ethnically plural society: her role is to be a bridge between East and West. The use of borders against invasions may end in a totally inefficient and counterproductive effect.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The traditional definitions and comprehensions of borders have been challenged primarily because the context in which they were created and existed has also altered (Anderson and O'Dowd 1999). Control over borders is one of the attributes of sovereignty that today seems increasingly precarious. Nowadays we see sovereignty as held by states or peoples and tied to a clearly fixed territory. But in Eastern Europe is increasing an extensive range of “imperfect sovereignty”, implying forms of political fragmentation, international protectorates and so on. The attempt to create an alignment and a coincidence of the functions and roles of socio-cultural, ethno-political, and economic boundaries in order to establish a reference for people's identity is increasingly difficult. The attempt to reinforce the old aspect of sovereignty using the boundaries became much more difficult than in the past. In fact, many of the states created over the past forty years lack the capacity to provide even minimal self-defence. Sovereignty at the end of the twentieth century appears to be still “conditioned-sovereignty”. Particularly in this case study, the length of territory hinders the building of very long fortified boundaries. They might resemble a dream, full of fallacies and difficulties. As Oleksandr Sushko pointed out, despite new borders Ukraine may find itself in a growing security vacuum that will create a perfect environment for the further marginalisation of the country (Sushko 2010). Moreover, the political and cultural dialogue between Russia and Ukraine is strongly informed by the presence of national minorities living on the territory of neighbouring states (Filippova 2016, p. 71): this fact hinders even the reinforcement of the socio-cultural boundaries.

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## **THE PRECONDITIONS FOR CONFLICTS IN DONBAS AND CRIMEA: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Geography of conflicts is a promising area of science, especially during the ongoing territorial and political conflicts (TPC) in Ukraine, which was faced with serious security threats between 2014 and 2016. Conflicts estimated by the “Conflict Barometer” (*Conflict Barometer 2014: disputes, non-violent crises, violent crises, limited wars, wars, 2015*) to be at the “war” level have influenced the safety of Central-European and Baltic region's post-socialist states. Many causes can be identified as key to conflict eruption in Southern and Eastern Ukraine. They often involve spatial characteristic features that determine the basic plan (final goal) of those initiating the conflict, directions and limits of its distribution, intensity, cyclical character (due to some seasonal phenomena), forms and means of struggle for territory and even the timelines of those conflicts. In this respect, geography of conflict is much more closely related in its subject matter to military geography or the art of military tactics and strategy of fighting than to geopolitics and international relations theory. In the conflict, the subject of the territorial struggle looks for the most vulnerable places in the opponent's positions, meaning to cause considerable losses that would neutralise the opponent and implement the plan of control over the territory and its resources. Therefore, vulnerability is not only the consequence of but also the condition for a successful territorial combat. In its absence, intensification of vulnerability becomes a means of struggle. Vulnerability of both Ukraine as a whole and its individual regions has become one of the most important prerequisites for the emergence of conflict zones.

## 2. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

There is quite a vast experience of W.N. Adger (2000), R. Leichenko and K. O'Brien (2002), S.L. Cutter et al. (2003), S. Sterlacchini (2011), J. Bryan (2015) in researching vulnerabilities of people who are exposed to negative effects of natural hazards and threats, or vulnerabilities caused by political conflicts or other economic and social factors.

Vulnerability is one of the concepts in use of which it is difficult to reach a consensus, and is characterised by many interpretations, since it depends on research approaches and perspectives. There is no clear understanding of the term “vulnerability” in literature, so it is open to interpretation – says S. Sterlacchini (2011).

He believes that vulnerability reflects the ability of an item or a set of items (organised into the system) exposed to danger to withstand the damage (Sterlacchini 2011). In geography, vulnerability is defined as the degree to which a community, structure, service or geographical area may be damaged or destroyed, based on their natural properties or locations under the influence of specific hazardous risks (*Glossary of Environment Statistics* 1997, p. 76). The concept of “vulnerability” is characterised in detail by the authors of United Nations’ “Human Development Report 2014”. It states that in places where social and legal institutions, authorities, political space or social and cultural norms and traditions fail to serve the members of the society equally, and where they create structural barriers for some people and groups preventing them from implementing their rights and choices, they generate structural vulnerability (*Human Development Report* 2014, p. 19).

Three main groups of people who are more vulnerable to threats are distinguished: 1) the poor, informal workers, socially excluded; 2) women, people with disabilities, migrants, minorities, children, the elderly, youth; 3) whole communities, regions. The report indicates major threats that affect the growth of vulnerability: 1) economic shocks, health shocks; 2) natural disasters, climate change and industrial hazards; 3) conflicts, civil unrest. Three main prerequisites for vulnerability growth are defined: 1) limited capabilities; 2) location, position in society, sensitive periods in the life cycle; 3) low social cohesion, irresponsible institutions, poor governance (*Human Development Report* 2014, p. 19). Nowadays, vulnerability is considered the property of regional systems (Sterlacchini 2011). Vulnerability is the inter-action between threats (in TPC – political threats – R. Slyvka) and systemic vulnerability that produces certain results. It is clear that vulnerability is a dynamic characteristic (Cutter et al. 2003).

In political geography, a long tradition of vulnerable countries and their separate parts can be traced. 19<sup>th</sup>-century mercantilism defined a vulnerable state as one deprived of significant natural, human resources, as well as markets for finished goods. Political geographers often talk about the vulnerability of borders connected with probable aggression of neighbours. A well-known theory of “natural borders” was popular by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and was used to justify territorial expansion and annexation. Orographic borders, river, lake and sea borders were considered reliable and profitable. The fatalism of impact of natural boundaries on international relations is justified in popular scientific and journalistic literature. The idea of people's vulnerability in some regions of Latin America as a legitimate reason for the implementation of “humanitarian intervention” of US forces is described in J. Bryan's (2015) article, which points to the paradoxical situation when the hegemonic state intervened to protect vulnerable people, while being the one who caused this vulnerability in the past (Bryan 2015). This interpretation of aggressive action is quite appropriate to explain Russia's interference in Ukrainian or Syrian internal affairs.

In the context of Ukraine, the vulnerability of this country's plain borders was described by S. Rudnytskyi (Рудницький 1923). J. Лупа (Липа 1992) considered the Black Sea coast to be the only reliable line of independent Ukraine. Polish-American political scientist and geostrategist Zbigniew Brzezinski pointed to geopolitical vulnerability of Ukraine (1997). In the context of vulnerability issues, Ukrainian geographers M.O. Baranovskyi (Барановський 2010), M.S. Dnistrianskyi (Дністрянський 2006), F. Zastavnyi (Заставний 2006), and O. Shablii (Шаблій 2001) paid much attention to the problem of uneven regional development, which should be interpreted as a threat to national security. In 2002, *Transit* published Mykola Riabchuk's article “Ukraine: One State, Two Countries” (Riabchuk 2002) which was followed by a comment addressing the discourse of two Ukraines in a critical way<sup>1</sup>. N.W. Bagrov (Багров 2002), M.S. Dnistrianskyi (Дністрянський 2011) predicted possible negative consequences of unbalanced regional and foreign politics and the growth of devolution processes in the Crimea and South-Eastern Ukraine. The development of southern and eastern regions of Ukraine in terms of their frontier position was investigated by O. Afanasiev (Афанасьєв 2012), and in terms of their political weight by S.W. Adamovych (Адамович 2009). O. Vendyna and V.A. Kolosov (Вендина и Колосов 2007), T. Zhurzhenko (2002, 2010, 2014) studied the interaction between Russia and Ukraine in the borderlands. In their studies, A.B. Shvets (Швец 2007, 2013) and A.N. Yakovlev (Яковлев 2008)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iwm.at/uncategorized/the-myth-of-two-ukraines/>.

emphasised the socio-cultural conflicts in the Crimea. Ukraine's vulnerability due to blurred legal status of the Crimean autonomy was described by Y. Roznai and S. Suteu (2015).

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, scientific discourse on the issue of vulnerability of some regions and countries to the conflict emerged. It involved the concept of “Eurasian Balkans” (Brzezinski 1997), crush zones (O'Loughlin, 1999), buffer zones (Prevelakis 2009), in-betweenness (Rey and Groza 2009), overlapping territorialities (Agnew and Ulrich 2013), or failed/fragile states (Marshall and Cole 2014).

When developing a geographic approach to understanding the vulnerability of a region to the emergence of TPC, we paid special attention to the ideas presented by S. Rudnytskyi (Рудницький 1905), the founder of Ukrainian geography, expressed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He stated that, in general geography, every object and every phenomenon is thoroughly investigated, focusing on four major issues: morphological, content-based, dynamic and genetic (Рудницький 1905, p. 25). Shablii notes that due to this approach, Rudnytskyi differentiated between two types of geographic laws: 1) spatial (horologic), that can also be called laws of territorial structure, and 2) genetic (laws of generation, development) (Шаблій 2001, p. 411). In our opinion, in terms of political geography, spatial (horologic) laws are able to explain the morphological and structural peculiarities of conflict regions. Their dynamic and genetic properties belong to genetic laws. According to O. Shablii (Шаблій 2001), in modern geography, the so-called functional laws are singled out; they reflect the essential links between entrances and exits of local natural, social or natural-economic systems in the process of changing their states (Шаблій 2001, p. 411). Assuming that the zone of TPC distribution is a kind of dynamic territorial social system, the change of state is influenced by the purposeful fight (public and hidden, inner and outer, violent – using force, soft – using the power of authority, hybrid – a combination of the previous two) to gain control over the territory as well as its properties and resources. This fight involves the interaction with the systemic vulnerability of the territory, resulting in attempts of the fighting subject to set control (*de jure* or *de facto*) over the disputed territory.

We suggest considering the conflict zone a vulnerable territorial and political system. Its opposite in terms of quality is a geographically stable political system. In political geography, it is appropriate to use the term “conflict region vulnerability”. It can be defined as the degree to which the region is vulnerable to political threats based on its geographical location, physical and geographical conditions, socio-geographical structures, political status and functional capacity.

Assuming that the goal of acknowledged rational politics is to achieve a sustainable level of territorial and political system (minimal vulnerability to conflict), it seems logical that another possible extreme manifestation – vulnerable territorial and political system (maximal vulnerability to conflict) is possible as well. The transitional state is a so-called transit territorial and political system. The latter may have three dynamic qualities: 1) structural (aimed at achieving stability of territorial and political systems); 2) destructive (aimed at reducing the stability of territorial and political systems); 3) fluctuating (random deviation from the previous development of territorial and political system).

Extreme ideal condition of a territorial and political system involves the implementation of the religious concept of universal Christian Peace (or Islamic Ummah), or secular concepts such as utopian ideal city-states of Plato, Campanella or More, communist utopia of Marx and others. Ensuring peace by means of various military, political, social, economic and cultural tools is actually the way to reduce the vulnerability of the territorial and political system to the threats and risks, the extreme of which is war. The ultimate vulnerable territorial and political system is the “bellum omnium contra omnes” according to Thomas Hobbes works *De Cive* (1642) and *Leviathan* (1651). The aim of territorial and political organisation of the society is to achieve resilience to threats and risks that a war, destruction, radical lifestyle changes may bring. At this stage, a territorial and political system may be exposed to fluctuations, i.e. a deviation from the constructive or destructive development as a result of shock effects. The latter include climate changes (Hsiang et al. 2011), ecological crises and spread of epidemics (Barnett 2009; *Environment and Security Program Report*, 2009), the deterioration of market opportunities and resource cycles in the world economy (Collier et al. 2008, Kennedy 2014) and mass migration.

The destructive direction of the territorial and political system is carried out by the subjects of the struggle for territory and its resources. Their goal is to take advantage of preconditions that can be well described according to five parameters: 1) positional vulnerability; 2) structural vulnerability; 3) historical vulnerability; 4) dynamic vulnerability; 5) functional vulnerability. If they do not manifest clearly enough, the subject may deliberately act in the direction of individual components of vulnerability. This destructive effect can be amplified or attenuated by shock effects, such as falling prices for energy resources and a decrease in the capacity of “petrol filling countries” in terms of aggressive rhetoric and actions. The Crimea and Donbas remain vulnerable regions of Ukrainian territorial and political system. Thus, the investigation of vulnerability phenomenon is an important task for geography of conflicts as a structural component of political geography.

### 3. POSITIONAL VULNERABILITY

Ukraine is one of the largest countries in Europe by territory; its area constitutes 5.7% of the total area of the region. The total length of Ukrainian state borders is 7,700 km, land borders accounting for 5,740 km. The total length of Ukrainian state borders with Russia is 2,063 km. First of all, they are the borders, that Ukraine inherited from the USSR; but, taking into consideration the conditions and circumstances of their establishing, they were mainly imposed unilaterally during the period when Ukrainian people were not an equitable subject of international relations and were not able to implement its right of self-determination over their whole ethnic territory (Дністрянський 2006, p. 298). However, owing to the increase in Ukraine's fragility caused by a number of internal and external factors, control over individual borderlands, especially in Donbas and the Crimea, which border with Russia, has become complicated.

The geopolitical buffer position of Ukraine has become a classical definition of the state's position in political geography. This positional vulnerability of Ukraine found extreme expression in S.P. Huntington's (1993) findings concerning the presence of civilisational faultline that passes through its territory. One of the first to point to the geographical position of Ukraine was Brzezinski (1997; *Бжезинский видит...* 2015). Most Ukrainian politicians<sup>2</sup> themselves pointed out the positive functions of this position, as Ukraine had to become a bridge between the East and the West (*Україна может...* 2016). Thus, the mass consciousness of Ukrainians have a mental image of it being a buffer country. By 2013, 42% of Ukrainians were in favour of Ukrainian non-aligned status, but at present, the number of such people hardly reaches 25%<sup>3</sup>. The end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s passed under the imperative of multi-vector foreign policy of Leonid Kuchma. As a result, Ukraine has become a non-aligned country. This largely happened due to the pressure from Russia. It was a hybrid technology that allowed for creating the conditions for open and concealed occupation of post-Soviet countries. Last, but not least, Ukraine has become a victim of Russian aggression because of the adoption of this status. This may be reminiscent of the "Trojan Horse", as it opened space for the onset of Russia<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Preferably, the pro-Russian, such as Viktor Medvedchuk, one of the negotiators in the peace talks in Minsk.

<sup>3</sup> [http://gazeta.ua/articles/politics/\\_na-referendumi-ukrayinci-golosovali-b-za-nato-sociologi/709089](http://gazeta.ua/articles/politics/_na-referendumi-ukrayinci-golosovali-b-za-nato-sociologi/709089).

<sup>4</sup> [http://gazeta.ua/articles/politics/\\_na-referendumi-ukrayinci-golosovali-b-za-nato-sociologi/709089](http://gazeta.ua/articles/politics/_na-referendumi-ukrayinci-golosovali-b-za-nato-sociologi/709089).

Ukraine has not gained all characteristics of a geopolitical buffer at once; it happened after the state's refusal to participate in Russia-initiated Eurasian integration projects at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In particular, Ukraine's participation in the CIS was inactive, the state kept away from the joint projects with Russia within the framework of common defence and economic policy. On the other hand, Ukrainian attempts to find new platforms for cooperation with the West proved unsuccessful. At various times, Ukraine's intention to participate in the project of NATO-bis or to join the Visegrad Group were announced. Ukraine has been looking for alternative platforms to integrate with Europe participating in the Central European Initiative, BSEC, and GUAM for 25 years of its independence. President Leonid Kuchma tried to find ways of rapprochement with NATO under the "Partnership for Peace". In January 2008, the proposition from the second Yulia Tymoshenko cabinet for Ukraine to join NATO's Membership Action Plan was met with opposition. A petition of over 2 million signatures has called for a referendum on Ukraine's membership proposal to join NATO. The opposition called for a national referendum to be held on any steps towards further involvement with NATO. In February 2008 57.8% of Ukrainians supported the idea of a national referendum on joining NATO, against 38.6% in February 2007<sup>5</sup>.

In 2013, Yanukovich's attempts to bond with the EU in the framework of association failed, causing protests against the autocratic regime created by him and sparking the Revolution of Dignity. Under such circumstances, Donbas and the Crimea became a buffer region of the buffer state. Not coincidentally, they were marked as a zone of instability, "Eurasian Balkans", on Brzezinski's geopolitical map. What was important here is that in Donbas there was a delimitation line not only between Ukraine and Russia, but also between European values and the values of the old Soviet totalitarianism. Moreover, Donbas received another frontier – the contact zone with Turkey, the Middle East and the Caucasus.

Both regions are close to areas of territorial-political instability and international legal vacuum (Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh). All together, they form the "post-Soviet zone of instability". Strategists in the Kremlin granted the title of the centre of this area to the Crimea. No wonder that now Kremlin states that Ukraine has to forget about the return of the Crimea, apparently in exchange for the stabilisation of the situation in Donbas. In the future, even if a new base is built near the port of Novorossiysk, consolidating the position of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, Crimea would still be the center of

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<sup>5</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine%E2%80%93NATO\\_relations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine%E2%80%93NATO_relations).

gravity of the Russian military footprint, consolidating its ability to project force deep into the Mediterranean (Goşu and Manea 2015, p. 10). In short, the annexation of Crimea is already shifting the geography of control in the wider Black Sea region. In the past, the Black Sea used to be called a Russian lake; now it is becoming an A2/AD Russian bubble<sup>6</sup> (Goşu and Manea 2015, p. 10).

The Ukrainian-Russian border in Donbas, mostly flat and continental, makes Ukraine more vulnerable to the prevailing Russian armed forces. A small access of Donetsk region to the Sea of Azov makes it vulnerable to amphibious assault landings as well. The viability of the project aimed at creating separatist “republics” in the Donbas is dependent on the constant supply of new materials and military manpower from Russia. Furthermore, the evidence points to the fact that Russia’s reserves of “volunteers” now appear to have been exhausted. Consequently, in mid-August 2014, Russia began to send regular soldiers to Ukraine. These latest reinforcements are fighting not for ideological motivations or material incentives, but on the direct orders of their military superiors (Mitrokhin 2015, p. 220). The peculiarity of the Crimea is its absence of land border with Russia. Maritime boundary runs along the inland sea waters of two basins – the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. The presence of the naval base of Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol and the lack of its own powerful navy did not allow Ukraine to defend the peninsula against the aggression.

The vulnerability of Azov basin is explained by its unique location, which is described as an enclosed sea of the semi-enclosed Black Sea, which is a part of the greater Mediterranean Sea. After the collapse of the USSR, the Sea of Azov lost the status of internal Soviet sea basin. Russia was deliberately weakening the Ukrainian position in marine basins. One example of this is the territorial dispute between Russia and Ukraine in 2003 centred on Tuzla Island in the Strait of Kerch. Article 2 of the *Agreement between Ukraine and the Russian Federation on the Ukrainian-Russian state border dd. 28.01.2003*<sup>7</sup> defines a navigation mode in using the Azov-Kerch basin and complete loss of the status of internal waters of Ukraine and Russia. Under this agreement, Ukraine had to coordinate the visits of foreign military vessels in their ports with Russia.

Thus, one of the consequences of morphologically positional vulnerability of Donbas and the Crimea was the idea of the Russian leadership to invade the Crimea and Donbas by force, which would later cause the “domino effect”, with all the other Ukrainian regions pleading to join the Russian Federation.

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<sup>6</sup> Anti-Access / Area Denial Weapon.

<sup>7</sup> [http://interlegal.com.ua/en/publications/occupation\\_of\\_the\\_territory\\_of\\_ukraine\\_in\\_focus\\_of\\_maritime\\_law/](http://interlegal.com.ua/en/publications/occupation_of_the_territory_of_ukraine_in_focus_of_maritime_law/).

#### 4. HISTORICAL VULNERABILITY

For many years after achieving its independence, Ukraine maintained an invisible “colonial umbilical cord” connecting the Ukrainian society with Moscow. It was less pronounced in western and central Ukraine, in comparison to the southeast of Ukraine. Putin's famous statement on Soviet Union's collapse as the greatest “geopolitical catastrophe” of the 20<sup>th</sup> century reflects the desire of modern Russia to fix an a situation that, in their view, was unfair, through reintegration of the post-Soviet countries into the neo-imperial project. The strategy of “short leash” was applied to most European post-Soviet countries neighbouring Russia. Everywhere it found vulnerable regions in the state mechanism, it followed a masking strategy – covert interference in the internal affairs of pro-European neighbours, maintaining the slogans of fraternal relations with neighbouring nations. In case of Moldova, the region of Transnistria became vulnerable, in Azerbaijan it was Nagorno-Karabakh, in Georgia – South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and in Ukraine – the Crimea and Donbas. Only the countries involved in political, military and economic integration projects spearheaded by Russia (Organizacija Dogovora o Kolektivnoj Bezopasnosti, ODKB; The Eurasian Economic Union, EAEU) could avoid separatism and military conflicts. Political instrumentalisation of historical memory played a key role in Kremlin's strategy.

Historical vulnerability is one of prerequisites of the fact that Ukrainian-Russian violent territorial and political conflicts occurred in Donbas and the Crimea, but not in other border regions of Ukraine, that also had the experience of national statehood formation; for example, Galicia, located in the west (declaration of statehood of West Ukrainian People's Republic in Lviv in 1918) and Transcarpathia (declaration of independence of Carpathian Ukraine in Khust in 1938). After 1991, the western regions turned from the periphery of the Soviet empire into the main base of the national democratic movement, as well as a gateway to Europe. Simultaneously, Eastern Ukraine, which formed an industrial core of the USSR and contributed essentially to the intellectual and administrative potential of the Soviet system, with its overwhelmingly Russian-speaking population, was marginalised on the new symbolic map of Ukraine (Zhurzhenko 2002).

It is obvious that Russia regarded these border regions of Ukraine as the weakest link in the territorial and political system of Ukraine. Loosening the regions historically less loyal to the national state, according to the Kremlin, could cause disintegration of the entire Ukraine, or its significant weakening due to its internal conflicts.

The main features of historic vulnerability of Donbas and the Crimea are: 1) the dissemination of Russia's imperial and Soviet discourse among the people of both regions, including the myth about the threat from the West; 2) existence within the overlapping cultural and information spaces between Ukraine and Russia; 3) the prevalence of communist ideas and developed traditions of social paternalism; 4) post-Soviet industrial inertia; 5) the renaissance of Orthodox Moscow-oriented fundamentalism in late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries; 6) marginalisation of Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar identity, culture and nation-state model.

There are common and diverse features in the manifestation of historical vulnerability in the Crimea and Donbas. Common to these two regions is a strong position of the Russian-imperial and Soviet discourses. It can be explained by the lack of experience in being under the influence of European democratic culture. The role that the locations of the regions played in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union was an important "brick" strongly embedded in the imperial myth about the historical role of Russia/USSR development.

Differences between regions lie in the fact that Soviet, not Russian imperial conceptual discourses are represented in Donbas. However, there is a more visible tendency of the ruling political and economic elite to positioning itself as a part of global establishment. However, for ordinary citizens, regional authorities prepared a simulacra of the Soviet era. Kyiv did not conduct any active cultural, educational and information policy here, de facto turning Donbas into cultural autonomy of Ukraine.

At the same time, the local political and intellectual elites of eastern Ukraine, above all in Kharkiv, Donetsk and Luhansk, reinvented their regions as borderlands, first of all in order to justify the close cultural ties and economic cross-border cooperation with Russia. Stressing cultural diversity, bilingualism and the depoliticisation of ethnicity, the concept of borderlands also helped legitimise the lack of a strong national identity (Zhurzhenko 2014).

Due to poorer resources and industrial capacity, there were not many powerful business structures in the Crimea. Thus, higher political positions were occupied by people from the former communist elite. A mixture of nostalgic Imperial Russian and Soviet concept discourses was more common in the Crimea.

For crystallisation of political myths, the cultivation of the idea of the threat posed by any Western influences is crucial. What is important here is that the association of market reforms in late 1980s and 1990s with its negative impact of Western liberal ideas led to the pauperisation of the population. Skillful manipulation of political technologists during national elections necessarily implied the use of techniques of juxtaposing east against west, not only in Ukrainian context, but also in the context of Europe and Russia.

An excellent perception of the West in Donbas mythology was the predominance of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution and the Great Patriotic War (the Second World War) as a liberation war against the German invaders and the role of Donbas in ensuring victory over the enemy. The regional elites of Donbas and the Crimea supported the cult celebration of the “Great Victory”. Especially pompous ceremonies in pseudo-Soviet style began to reemerge when Yanukovich became president of Ukraine. The regional mental map illustrates a taxonomy that is so brilliantly represented in the names of settlements, streets and squares, as well as political iconography of monuments of Lenin, Artem, Zhdanov, Voroshilov and other members of the Bolshevik leadership.

In the Crimea, a mixture of old imperial myths about the colonisation of the Crimea in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the apogee of which was the Crimean War (1853–1856), was predominant. A symbolic series associated with the defence of Sevastopol from German occupation (1941–1942), Yalta Conference (1945) and the redistribution of the postwar world, Turkish threat as a member of NATO during the Cold War gained its popularity. In addition, common myths of Soviet propaganda about Crimean Tatars as traitors of the Soviet fatherland, sparked by accusations of collaboration with the German occupation authorities, were spread. In such landscape, this mythology found its reflection in the imperial pseudo-Greek and Soviet topology. Moreover, Tatar names of places after the deportation of the Crimean Tatar people almost disappeared. The presence of a large military base and Russian personnel contributed to justification of Fleet location in Crimea and preservation of myths about the threat.

A characteristic feature for both regions was the common Russian cultural and information space, almost total domination of Russian media and cultural figures. Russian cultural products (especially works of popular literature, films and television shows) dominate the Ukrainian market and serve to export Russian imperial history and Russian patriotism, to glorify the Russian and Soviet army and security services, and to excite anti-western sentiments (Zhurzhenko 2014).

In Donbas, the influence of Russian pop culture in the working environment was manifested to a great extent. In the Crimea, a mixture of modern Russian mass pop culture and traditional Russian high culture, writers, poets and artists connected with creative relations to the Crimea such as Alexander Pushkin, Anton Chekhov, Ivan Aivazovskiy, Appolinary Vasnetsov, Vasily Aksenov persisted. They actually created artistic images, original artwork for the Russian-imperial discourse of the new Promised Land for the Russians.

One common characteristic of both regions is the post-Soviet inertia of economic development, commitment to communist ideas and deeply rooted

ideas of social paternalism. Russian media (especially television) has fostered deeply paternalistic model of behaviour of Donbas inhabitants. This behavioural model is closely connected with the conviction that all basic public goods should be obtained from the transcendent “father”, the image of which is constantly represented by Putin. A feeling of special mission of these regions in the scale of the Soviet Union and levelling their importance in Ukrainian period was common (*Донбас і Крим: стратегія повернення* 2015).

One of the peculiarities of Donbas is its pronounced inertia of post-industrial development, and the cult of “honourable professions” of metallurgists and miners associated with it, as well as so-called “noble dynasties of workers” in the era of socialist competition. It was not as pronounced in other regions of Ukraine. Therefore, the post-Soviet mythology for the population of Donbas was firmly intertwined with the ideas of communist industrialisation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This strengthened the foundation of regionalism in eastern Ukraine. Soviet internationalism and the preference of class over ethnic identity served to construe Donbas as a “special case” that escaped the logic of the nationalising state. The rejection of ethnic categorisation and the emphasis on local identity was a typical reaction to what was perceived as the “nationalism” of Kyiv and western Ukraine. This defensive borderlands discourse was linked to the trauma of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It evoked an undifferentiated, common cultural space with a local population that valued blurred or hybrid Ukrainian-Russian, eastern-Slavic, Orthodox or residual Soviet identities (Zhurzhenko 2014).

The common feature of both regions in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods was the weakness of Ukrainian national democratic movement, Ukraine's deprivation of “national” construction in southern and eastern regions; marginalisation of pro-Ukrainian activists; negative myths about the Ukrainian national liberation movement, and its representatives and symbols. One jarring example of this came in 2008 when students of Donetsk National University launched an initiative to name their university after its famous graduate, poet, dissident and political prisoner Vasyl Stus. At that time, the initiative was supported by the President of Ukraine, Minister of Education and Science, as well as cultural and public figures. They were opposed by the Regional Council, the Party of Regions and the administration of the university itself. In addition to naming the university after Stus, another initiative appeared to name the university after Vladimir Degtyarev (Soviet Communist Party functionary). As a result, the old name remained unchanged<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://misto.vn.ua/news/item/id/9164>.

Both regions stayed away from the Ukrainian national state-building process during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, except for a few episodes of pro-Ukrainian actions in the Crimea. In Donbas, there were attempts to create pseudo-national formations under the protection of Russia, namely the pro-Bolshevik Donetsk-Kryvyi Rih Republic in 1918, the South East Ukrainian Autonomous Republic in 2004. The Russian army led by Denikin and Wrangel in 1920–1921 carried out unsuccessful attempts to transform the Crimea into a sort of outpost in the restoration of the Russian Empire. Crimean Tatar national movement failed in 1918. Being the part of the RSFSR (approximately 30 years), the Crimea was suffering from the levelling of national and state life of Crimean Tatars and other ethnic minorities. The quintessence of such policy was initiated by Stalin's act of deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944. In early December 1991 in Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea, attempts were made to take an appeal to the Presidium of the USSR to withdraw the Act of 1954 on the transfer of the peninsula to Ukraine. After the referendum on December 1, 1991, a representative body of the Crimean Tatar, the Mejlis, drafted the Constitution of the Crimean Republic, in which the right of self-determination was given only to Crimean Tatars, Karaites and Krimchaks, which evoked suspicious and sometimes hostile reaction of non-Tatar population of the peninsula, and led to excessive politicisation (Адамович 2009, pp. 371–374). Thus, the experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> century shows the historical vulnerability of these Ukrainian regions to the development of conflict processes.

## 5. STRUCTURAL VULNERABILITY

As part of Ukraine, Donbas and the Crimea were different in rather distinct structural characteristics that increased their vulnerability to external intervention. Among them administrative, ethnic, religious, political, criminal and economic structures were identified.

**The administrative structure.** Ukraine is a non-classical unitary state. This is due to the presence of a single autonomous entity, the Crimean Autonomous Republic, in addition to its 24 regions and 2 cities of national subordination (Kyiv and Sevastopol) in its composition. Ukrainian unitarianism was inherited from its predecessor, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). In 1991 a referendum, which had a positive outcome for Crimean separatists, was initiated. Against this backdrop, Kyiv offered a compromise, suggesting restoration of rights for the Crimean autonomous region and the rise of its territorial and

political status to the level of the autonomous republic as well as the exclusion of Sevastopol from its composition. It was an adequate way to resolve peacefully and legally the problems of separatism. This was done through full participation in the political system of the parent state, as well as through various degrees of regional administrative, cultural and/or fiscal autonomy (Roguski 2015, p. 92). The so-called territorial autonomy was formed; it had no right to secede from Ukraine, possessed its own constitution, government, including the cabinet and parliament, and the formal use of three official languages: Russian, Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar.

Other regions of Ukraine were characterised by federalist sentiments rather than those of separatists. Movements for the withdrawal of Ukraine from the Soviet Union were most active in western regions (historic Eastern Galicia, Volhynia, Bukovina and Transcarpathia, but to a lesser extent) and Kiev. The main claim to communist leadership and the Soviet authority was the connivance of Ukraine's political and national rights. Donbas of the late 1980s was also marked by significant dissatisfaction, primarily with the economic policies of Moscow in one of the oldest industrial regions, which suggested the closure of unprofitable mines in order to provide economic support for coal mining in Kuzbas (now an industrial region in Russia). For the population of Donbas, majority of which were Russianised and educated in terms of socialist internationalism by the Communist Party of the USSR, Ukrainian national political rhetoric of Western politicians often sounded alien. However, there was a strategic alliance between the two politically most active regions of the USSR, possible for joint upholding the sovereignty of Ukraine, according to Adamovych (2006). The high degree of Ukrainian patriotic sentiment prevalent in Western Ukraine's political culture could hardly be supported by other regions of the USSR. That is why, before the proclamation of Ukraine's sovereignty in 1991, the idea of the appropriateness of the federal structure in Ukraine that would make it possible to combine the efforts of all the regions to struggle for independence and develop a regional political culture and the economy in the forms that were used in late 1980s and early 1990s, was widely spread in the circles of Ukrainian intellectuals. However, very soon Ukrainian politicians took the issue from the political agenda on the basis of alleged threat of separatism in the Crimea and Transcarpathia and the risk of territorial claims from neighbouring countries. The development of Ukraine during the tenure of President Kuchma between 1993 and 2003 was marked by the formation of soft autocratic regime power vertical, which excluded the likelihood of an increase of autonomist and federalist movements, but on the contrary, contributed to centralised region management.

Ukraine provided Crimean Tatars, excluded from Crimean political life in the 1990s, and created shadow institutions dealing only with Tatar interior affairs and serving as a platform for the Tatar community on the peninsula, with limited personal autonomy. Their representative body, Majlis, was legalised by presidential decree of May 18, 1999, when it received the status of advisory committee of Ukrainian Presidential Administration (Wilson 2013, p. iiiii). This mechanism ceased to function after 2006 (Aydin 2014, p. 83). However, neither local nor state authorities officially recognised the Crimean Majlis as a co-creator of the legislative process. The Ukrainian Parliament did not pass legislation regarding the status of indigenous people for the Crimean Tatars until after the Russian annexation either. This law would have provided the Tatars with the right to national self-determination, and thus grant national-territorial autonomy in Crimea (Aydin 2014, p. 83–84).

Russia agreed with Crimean autonomy establishing, but preserved its substantial instrument of influence on Ukraine – and extraterritorial military base of the Black Sea fleet numbering 25 thousand people, with the main forces localised in the city of Sevastopol. By 1995, the time of signing Ukrainian-Russian agreement on the Black Sea Fleet, the question of the fleet ownership and the perspectives of nuclear weapons had been the main agenda of Ukrainian-Russian relations. The agreement provided for the base localisation until 2017, but pro-Russian President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich signed the Kharkiv Pact<sup>9</sup> (2010) and prolonged its duration until 2042. Now, it is clear that Russian military presence on the peninsula did not only project military threat to the Ukrainian Crimea but also legitimised the presence of Russian authorities and security forces both on the territory of Russian bases and all over the Crimea.

As far as Donbas is concerned, during one of Ukrainian political crises in 2004, which resulted in the Orange Revolution, the Eastern regional elites tried to implement the idea of creating autonomous territorial and political structures, such as South East Ukrainian Autonomous Republic. Their main goal was to maintain control over political and economic life, not only in Donbas, but also in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Odessa, Mykolaiv, Kherson regions and in the Crimea. This scenario was completely typical of Kremlin's geopolitical ambitions to keep industrial regions of Ukraine under control, but until the Ukrainian-Georgian war in 2008, Russia had not dared to use the tools of direct intervention in the territory of the former Soviet Union. The Eastern autonomist

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<sup>9</sup> Agreement between Ukraine and Russia on the Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine was a treaty between Ukraine and Russia whereby the Russian lease on naval facilities in Crimea was extended beyond 2017 until 2042.

movement disappeared as a result of the resolution of the situation through the mediation of the EU.

**Ethnic structures** in Donbas and the Crimea differed greatly from those prevailing in other regions of Ukraine. Donbas, which was exposed to massive Russification and Sovietisation during the Soviet period, had no internal prerequisites for ethno-political conflicts. The most irritative problem was the functioning of the Russian language as regional or the second official one in the state. However, there were no manifestations of internal conflicts between the ethnic communities of the region; they were rather conflict breakouts between supporters of pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian policy.

People who consider Russian as their native language are not exclusive characteristics of the Crimea and Donbas; they are predominant in almost all largest cities of Ukraine, except Kyiv, Lviv and Kryvyi Rih. Particularly, in 2001 in Sevastopol they amounted to 90% of all residents, in Mariupol – to 89%, in Donetsk – 87%, in Luhansk – 85%, in Kharkiv – 66%, in Odessa – 65% and in Zaporizhia – 57%. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the most powerful Russian communities of Donbas included Donetsk (899 thousand inhabitants, who considered Russian their native language), Mariupol (450 thousand inhabitants), Luhansk (420 thousand) Makiyivka (370 thousand) and Horlivka (260 thousand). The Crimea in its turn had its largest Russian communities formed in Sevastopol (340 thousand) and Simferopol (300 thousand) (Лозинський 2012, p. 55). In such circumstances, it is difficult to talk about any policy of forced Ukrainisation because, de facto, it did not exist. Instead, R. Lozynskyi (2012) states that:

1) if in Europe mostly the horizontal type of bilingualism, in which both languages have equal status, is predominant, in Ukraine the vertical bilingualism is widespread, which means that in the majority of regions the Russian language has a higher social status due to prolonged restrictions of the Ukrainian language;

2) a prejudicial attitude towards the state language remains in some regions of the state;

3) important methods of Russia's influence on neighbouring countries is an attempt to interfere in their language policy and political pressure to strengthen the role of the Russian language in these countries, implementing the slogans to ensure the language rights of the population, particularly the Russian-speaking one (Лозинський 2012, pp. 113–114).

In 2001, about 240 thousand people in Ukraine spoke the Crimean Tatar language freely. Crimean Tatars live in all administrative regions of the Crimea. Their share ranges from 10 to 30% of all residents of Crimean districts. Majority of the population considering the Crimean Tatar language native live in the

northern foothills of the Crimean Mountains, namely in the city of Simferopol itself (over 25 thousand people), and such districts as Bilohirsk (over 19 thousand people, 25% of the total population), Bakhchysarai (over 19 thousand people, 20%), Dzhankoi (17 thousand, 20%) and Kirov (14 thousand, 25%) (Лозинський 2012, p. 55).



Fig. 1. Ethno-geographic structure of Donbas and temporarily occupied territories in the context of rural regions and municipal councils (as of 2015)  
 Source: <http://www.mil.gov.ua/multimedia/infografika-ato.html>;  
 М.С. Дністрянский (2006)

Nevertheless, 2014 military operations resulted in the loss of Ukraine's control over the territories, where not only Russian-speaking majority lived, but in fact the Russians were the majority (fig. 1). They are mainly the largest, by population, urban agglomerations of Donetsk, Makiyivka, Yasynuvata, Yenakiyevo, Krasnodon, Luhansk, Krasnyi Luch, Antratsyt, and only one agricultural district, Stanychno-Luhansk, though with Russian population prevailing, remained under the control of Ukraine.

Sambanis believes that with increasing speed of ethnic and religious diversity (fractionation), the risk of conflict grows too (Sambanis 2001). On the other hand, P. Collier (2001) denies this claim.

If ethno-social, ethno-religious and ethno-political structures that operate in the Crimea today were analysed, it would turn out that at present they have a number of properties that suggest its vulnerability. According to Dnistrianskyi, the densest concentration of ethnic conflicts can be observed in areas characterised by: a) a high degree of ethno-geographical mosaic; b) mismatch between ethno-geographical structure and territorial organisation of the political sphere; c) a relatively high level of self-awareness and political activeness of ethnic communities or groups that are in a discriminatory position (Дністряньський 2006, p. 67). We claim that all these features are typical of the Crimea. According to Dnistrianskyi's estimation, a mosaic of ethnic structure is a vulnerable characteristic of the Crimean TPC. During the post-Soviet period, ethnic mosaic index of Eckel in Ukraine decreased from 0.42 (1989) to 0.37 (2001), while in the Crimea, it has slightly increased from 0.54 (1989) to 0.59 (2001) (tab. 1). This is due to returning deported people, Crimean Tatars, to the Crimea (Дністряньський 2006, p. 219).

Table 1. Changes of the degree of ethnic mosaic index from 1989 to 2001

Ukraine, regions, autonomy	Population					
	Total		Rural		Urban	
	1989	2001	1989	2001	1989	2001
Ukraine	0.42	0.37	0.25	0.24	0.48	0.41
The Crimean Autonomous Republic	0.54	0.59	0.57	0.67	0.45	0.51
Donetsk region	0.55	0.53	0.45	0.42	0.56	0.53
Luhansk region	0.53	0.51	0.44	0.41	0.54	0.52
Ternopil region	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.14	0.08

Source: M.S. Дністряньський (2006, p. 219).

Long before the annexation in 2008, Korostelina recorded ten conflict indicators that were also uncovered in Crimea: High salience of Soviet, Russian, and regional identity; High economic deprivation; Threat of violence and economic threat; Threat to culture; High distrust of national government; Russians' negative stereotypes; Perception of Russians as a “fifth column”; Low tolerance; High level of ethnic mobilisation; Desire for independence (Korostelina 2008, p. 90). These ideas were pronounced by the Russian elite, too. In an interview on the eve of Crimea's annexation, the last leader of the USSR, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate who is credited with ending the Cold War, declared that Putin should not stop at Crimea. All of southern Ukraine, Gorbachev said, is Moscow's rightful dominion. “In essence, in history, it's just like Crimea”, he told a Russian news website. “Its population is Russian. It was civilised by Russians” (Shuster 2014).

The complexity of controlling the Crimea by Ukraine was explained by the return of deported Crimean Tatar people in the times of Stalinism (1944). In terms of absence of a legal framework for the restitution of property among the repressed Crimean and Tatar population, property and land conflicts accompanied by squatting land, aggravated (more about conflicts in the Crimea: ШИВЕЦ 2007, 2013, ЯКОВЛЕВ 2008).

In order to pacify separatist movements, Ukraine provided the Crimea with a status of an autonomous republic within the unitary Ukraine in 1991, but it did not offer a clear model of relations between the indigenous peoples of the Crimea. Peninsular position and continuous Russian propaganda contributed to strengthening regional identity of Russians in the Crimea. In parallel, propaganda was aimed at the sacralisation of the Crimean territory for Russian citizens to create an image of the unjustly lost homeland. And this despite the fact that in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Russians were only the second largest ethnic group after Crimean Tatars, indigenous people of the Crimea (tab. 2).

Table 2. Crimean population of the 19<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>th</sup> centuries

Ethnic group	Crimean population in %			
	1897	1939	1989	2001
Russians	33.11	49.6	65.6	58.5
Ukrainians	11.84	13.7	26.7	24.4
Crimean Tatars	35.55	19.4	1.9	12.1
Other	19.51	17.3	5.8	5.0

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crimea>.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Tatars accounted for only 12% of the population in the Crimea. The biggest problems of the long-suffering minority prior to the Russian annexation were poverty and significant obstacles in the official support of the Crimean Tatar language and culture. Acquiring Ukrainian citizenship lasted unfeasibly long time. Since Tatars did not have Ukrainian citizenship, they were not able to elect their representatives for solving public affairs not only in the Crimea, but also at the level of Ukraine. Socio-economic disqualification overlapped with political disqualification, which led to lower living standards resulting from the exclusion from administrative offices and to anti-Tatar policies carried out primarily by pro-Russian political elites (Klípa 2006). A principle problem was the fact that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian government did not bring the desired improvement of the social status of Crimean Tatars.

A researcher of geography of conflicts, A.B. Shvets (Швєт 2007), stated that during the years that had passed since the repatriation, socio-cultural confrontation in the Crimea was continuously changing in its qualitative (more rigid) and quantitative (more recorded conflict situations) respects (fig. 2).

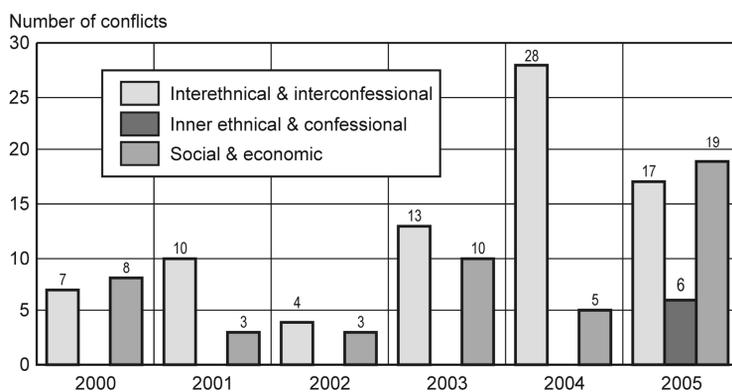


Fig. 2. Number of conflicts by three type of manifestation in the Crimea  
Source: A.B. Shvets (Швєт 2007)

A.N. Yakovlev (Яковлев 2008) distinguishes between two types of areas within the range of the Crimea: the first marked by the apparent predominance of confessional forms of socio-cultural differences (foot-hill Simferopol, Bakhchysarai and Bilohirsk regions); the second characterised by the domination of social and economic contradictions (municipal councils of southern coast of Yalta, Alushta, Sudak, Feodosia).

Meanwhile in Donbas, people of the Muslim Volga Tatar origin formed the business elite, which includes Ukraine's richest man Rinat Akhmetov, the main

sponsor of the “Party of Regions” ruling prior to the Revolution of Dignity. It was his authority and financial support that made it possible to develop aggressive election campaigns in Donbas and to place their pro-Russian people in leadership positions of Ukrainian policy (Kuzio 2014). Thus, an ethnic factor was used by Russia to the fullest extent in order to destabilise the internal expense of “Russian speaking compatriots”.

The positivist approach of Ukrainian patriots, based on the perception of a fundamental thesis that the ethnic origin of most residents of Donbas is an automatic reason for their loyalty to the Ukrainian state has not been justified. Unfortunately, disinformation imposed by political propaganda and the media is capable of influencing the political process in the regions of Ukraine. The lack of citizens' critical attitude to destructive information facilitated the development of the sense of “other Ukraine”, which was manifested in the Crimea and Donbas. “Otherness” is effectively used as a manipulation tool by both external and internal political subjects. Promotion of regional “otherness” acquired such forms that, according to D. Harvey, provoked deeper fragmentation of lifestyles, the emergence of a myriad of new political and cultural subjects, the revival of regionalism, localism, and a series of fundamentalisms (Minca 2009, p. 366).

**The religious structure.** According to official data of January 1, 2013, there were 33,581 religious communities in Ukraine, representing several dozens of churches, denominations, trends and currents. The number of religious communities, with 10 thousand people or more, was gradually decreasing in eastern and southern areas, reflecting at the same time the overall reduction of religious population. The densest was a network of religious communities in Ternopil (13.2 communities per 10,000 people), Transcarpathia (9.5), Lviv (9.5) and Ivano-Frankivsk (8.3) regions, while the lowest one was recorded in Luhansk (1.6), Donetsk (1.4) and Kharkiv (1.3) regions (Дністрянський 2014, p. 230). This suggests a different historical experience of religious life in individual regions of Ukraine in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Eastern Ukraine was more affected by 70-year long atheistic policy of the Bolshevik regime. That's why a great part of the inhabitants of the Crimea and Donbas after the revival of the Orthodox Church in the 1980s and 90s became neophytes. Moreover, unlike the western, northern and central regions of Ukraine, which in varying degrees were represented by the Greek Catholic (UGCC), the Orthodox Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) and the faithful of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC), Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, in the Crimea and Donbas Orthodox the Church of Moscow Patriarchate was relatively predominant. We can assume that neophytes to a greater extent accepted obvious or hidden propaganda of clergymen's political ideas uncritically. The role of the Patriarch

of the Russian Orthodox Church Kirill promoting the geopolitical concept of “Russian World” is widely discussed in Ukrainian politics, which is the result of his overt comments. For example, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2009, according to the official website of the Moscow Patriarchate, Kirill, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, presented his “program speech” at the opening of the Third Assembly of “Russian World”. What is especially notable in this speech is the fact that the Primate of the largest national Orthodox Church during his 25-minute speech did not mention the word “Christ”, only three times he referred to “God” and at the same time 38 times repeated the word-combination “Russian World”, a term that in the context of patriarchal speech sounds like a geopolitical concept hardly related to the teachings of his Church<sup>10</sup>.

According to Patriarch Kirill's point of view, the tasks of the Russian Orthodox Church are: to ensure the Russian World plays a role of a “powerful player on the world stage”; “to save values and lifestyles precious to our ancestors, focusing on which they created the Great Russia itself”; “to become a strong subject of international global politics”<sup>11</sup>. Numerous paramilitary structures of Russian, Don and Kuban Cossacks promoted the idea of protection of Orthodoxy in the context of “Russian World”. Obviously, the appearance and activities of such organisations before or after the conflict had a very clear goal – to show that Ukraine should be deprived of the influence of competing confessions – UGCC, UOC KP and UAOC.

Consequently, this complex internal religious structure of Ukraine was used as a precondition for undermining the political situation. Against the background of Donbas, the peculiarity of the Crimea was a rapid development of a network of Muslim communities (414). The organisation of the religious life of Muslims has every reason to be based in Ukraine upon constructive terms, as evidenced by the religious infrastructure development (7 schools, 90 Sunday schools, 5 periodicals) (Дністрянський 2014, p. 235). Moreover, with the increase of the influence of Turkish preachers in the Crimea, suspicion of the spread of political Islamism among the Crimean Tatars as possible allies of Turkey emerged among the pro-Russian forces (Швец 2007). Using the theme of Turkish threat is an old Soviet myth, another mean of mobilising people loyal to Moscow. It also contributed to the reasoning of Russian propaganda and fighters in favour of the establishment of “Russian World” on the peninsula. Moreover, Turkey's foreign policy, changeable in relation to Russia in terms of the ongoing conflict in

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<sup>10</sup> [http://gazeta.dt.ua/POLITICS/geopolitika\\_vid\\_patriarha\\_tsarstvo\\_nebesne\\_vs\\_ruskiy\\_svit.html](http://gazeta.dt.ua/POLITICS/geopolitika_vid_patriarha_tsarstvo_nebesne_vs_ruskiy_svit.html).

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.russkiymir.ru/fund/assembly/the-third-assembly-of-the-russian-world/>.

Ukraine, did not confirm the connection of such myths with reality. On the contrary, the annexation of the Crimea and the implementation of legislation and political culture of Russia, as M. Solík and V. Baar claim (2015), can provoke manifestations of Islamism on the peninsula.

As M. Dnistrianskyi (2014, p. 232) notes, the fact of the identification of large populations, including local, with certain denominations is a generator of regional alienation, especially in combination with historical and geographical factors.

**Economic vulnerability.** The share of Donetsk and Luhansk regions made up 11.7%, and 4% respectively in the structure of the gross regional product in 2012 (*Обсяг реалізованої...* 2012). Powerful industrial enterprises are located in the territory of Donbas. The region manufactures large volumes of production in mining, metallurgical, machine building, food and chemical industries. The share of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the total volume of industrial production in 2012 was 27% (fig. 3).

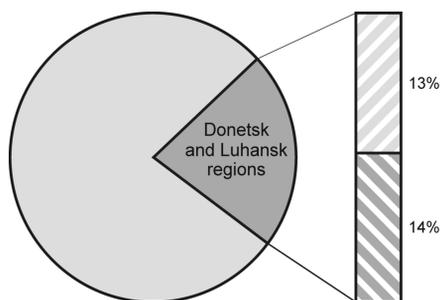


Fig. 3. Proportion of Donbas and temporarily occupied cities of regional importance in the total volume of industrial production in Ukraine in 2012, in %

Source: *Обсяг реалізованої...* (2012)

The potential of natural resources in the region is characterised by significant reserves of mineral resources that are of great importance on a national scale. First of all, they are the resources of Donetsk coal basin. According to structural and tectonic features, the area of Donbas is divided into thirty coal-bearing regions that differ in their tectonic position, coal composition and supply (*Горючі корисні...* 2009, p. 232). Nineteen coal-producing regions are located in Ukraine. Seventeen of them are of the greatest significance. The remaining two coal-producing regions today have no commercial value. About 80% of Ukrainian coal is mined in Donbas (in 2012 the combined share of Donetsk and Luhansk regions accounted for 78.5% of total coal production in Ukraine, in 2013 – 76.6% and in January-May 2014 – 76.1%). The share of Donetsk region

in the production of the extracting industry in 2013 was 24.1%, and that of Luhansk – 8.4%<sup>12</sup>. Besides, Donetsk region provides more than 90% of national production of rock salt and clay for refractory materials, and 79% of fluxing limestone<sup>13</sup>; Luhansk region is responsible for 80% of national supplies of titanium ore and quartzite, which are raw materials for the steel industry<sup>14</sup>.

Donbas is a major metallurgical center, with considerable production capacities located there; they are represented by large enterprises of national importance in cities like Alchevsk, Stakhanov, Luhansk, Mariupol, Khartsyzsk, Donetsk and Yenakiyevo. The share of two regions in the structure of steel production in 2012 accounted for more than 45%, Donetsk and Luhansk region – 36.4% and 8.7% respectively<sup>15</sup>. Donetsk and Luhansk regions play an important role in the production of chemicals; in 2013, their share in total sales of such products in Ukraine reached 15.9% and 12.9%, respectively<sup>16</sup>.

Significant capacities of heavy and raw material intensive engineering are located in Donbas. The region specialises in manufacturing locomotives and rail cars, machinery and equipment for metallurgy and chemical industry, material handling and mining equipment<sup>17</sup>. The share of Donetsk region in the manufacture of engineering products in 2012 was 17.4%, while that of Luhansk – 6.9%<sup>18</sup>. Besides, military-industrial complexes were also operating before 2014, such as JSC “Topaz” in Donetsk, which was involved in the development and mass production of complex radio systems and systems for special purposes, radio equipment for a wide range of uses, and PJSC “Luhansk Cartridge-Manufacturing Plant” in Luhansk producing small arms ammunition (Slyvka and Zakutynska 2016, p. 102).

Above all, the critical importance of industrial East Ukraine for the enrichment of the budget and the GDP of the whole country should be mentioned. Problems in this region are immediately experienced by all Ukraine. Economic structures of Donbas can be seen as a precondition for the region's vulnerability to conflicts. According to Bogatov's fundamental article “Recent developments

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/1639/>.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.kr-admin.gov.ua/dpasport/1.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.ukrproject.gov.ua/sites/default/files/upload/lugansk\\_dlya\\_saytu\\_1.pdf](http://www.ukrproject.gov.ua/sites/default/files/upload/lugansk_dlya_saytu_1.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>; [http://donetskstat.gov.ua/statinform/promisl7\\_2.php](http://donetskstat.gov.ua/statinform/promisl7_2.php); [http://www.lugastat.lg.ua/sinf/promis/promis1013\\_8.php](http://www.lugastat.lg.ua/sinf/promis/promis1013_8.php).

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/1639/>.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.kr-admin.gov.ua/dpasport/1.pdf>; [http://donetskstat.gov.ua/statinform/promisl3\\_2.php](http://donetskstat.gov.ua/statinform/promisl3_2.php).

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.lugastat.lg.ua/sinf/promis/promis1013\\_8.php](http://www.lugastat.lg.ua/sinf/promis/promis1013_8.php); <http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/1639/>.

in Donbas coal industry” (2003), the state monopoly has given way to a monopoly of large, regional financial–industrial groups. Such a monopoly is already established in the coking-coal industry and is in the process of forming in the energy-coal industry as well. These groups consider the coal mines as the bottom tier of the metals industry and the principal source for cost cuts in metal production. The controlling groups keep coal prices down to allow the ferrous metal producers to compete in the international market. The prices, regulated by the state, and the state subsidies are set at levels that only allow mines to cover their operating costs, leaving them no money for development. The monopoly existing in the Ukrainian coal market has virtually put a block on its development and growth. On the one hand, it prevents the creation of a competitive coal market, so prices that would cover both production costs and mine investment cannot be set. On the other hand, it controls the external investment streams. The large financial-industrial groups of the Donbas have a firm grip on its coal industry and the future of this industry is thus entirely dependent on them (Bogatov 2003, pp. 165–166).

Business elite tried to use economic control over the industrial region of Donetsk as a resource in the struggle for political monopoly in Ukraine in 2000s. When their protégé, Viktor Yanukovych, left the country, they began to support the force scenario in order to maintain their monopoly position and shady business schemes at least in the richest region of Ukraine. V.V. Kravchenko and M.O. Zamykula (2014) prove that political elites of Donetsk had claims to giving their city the status of the capital center and were mentally ready for them, but did not have a similar historical tradition (as in Kyiv or Kharkiv). This situation provoked mass stereotypical thinking (used to promote DNR), which raised the morale of the region and was meant to separate Donbas from the rest of Ukraine. Here we can cite such examples of popular slogans as “Donbas feeds Ukraine”, “Donbas does not blather”, “Donbas decides everything” (Kravchenko and Zamykula 2014). One should bear in mind that none of these slogans explained any reasons for the uneven distribution of wealth and poverty in Donbas, specific problems of pollution, gender relations and demographic decline. The readiness of Donetsk business elite to such course of events was demonstrated with an attempt to create South East Ukrainian Autonomous Republic back in 2004. In the spring of 2014, they skilfully exploited the phobias and ambitions of Donbas residents so that extremists took up arms.

The economic component of structural vulnerability in the Crimea is significantly different. The structure of industrial production of the peninsula is dominated by food, machine building and metalworking, fuel, chemical and petrochemical industries. The main branches of plant industry are cereal and

vegetable cultivation, horticulture, viticulture; breeding livestock – dairy cattle, poultry and sheep. A separate role is played by huge resort complexes. History of many Crimean enterprises started after 1954. Economic growth of all industries in the first decade after the transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine is the most significant evidence of Ukrainians' decisive contribution to postwar revival of the peninsula (Москалец 2008). Indicative in this respect is the first interview of the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, who said that Ukraine had invested \$100 billion in the Crimea<sup>19</sup>.

“The role of the Crimea in the formation of GDP (of Ukraine) is insignificant. Crimea gives only 3% of total GDP of Ukraine. During the last few years it was only a recipient, and its influence was insignificant in the overall Ukraine's GDP” – said the Director of World Bank of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova affairs in 2014<sup>20</sup>. Sevastopol city gave 0.7% of the state GDP. In 2013, the Crimea was only in 15<sup>th</sup> place among 27 administrative regions in terms of gross regional product per capita, while Sevastopol occupied the 10<sup>th</sup> place<sup>21</sup>. Gross regional product of the Crimea and Sevastopol steadily increased from 2004 to 2008, but with the beginning of the global crisis, it decreased to the 2006 level, and prior to the last “pre-war” year it gained its lost position. The peninsula earned half of the funds it needed itself, the other half was sent to the peninsula from the “mainland”<sup>22</sup>.

One peculiarity of the industry on the peninsula is the location of quite a large number of institutions and enterprises of the military-industrial complex, which were inherited from the Soviet Union. They were of urban importance. In post-soviet years many plants of this type were closed or reduced their production. Among them were: Feodosia research institute that produced parachute systems for military and space vehicles; Feodosia factory “Hidroprylad” which created marine underwater weapons; Feodosia optical factory, which at times of Ukraine was transferred to produce mainly peaceful goods; in Sevastopol – “Sevmorzavod” and aircraft factories. Demilitarisation in Ukraine during the 2000s explains the lack of orders, layoffs and restructuring of work. This could cause dissatisfaction of former employees and promote hope for the revival due to investments and orders from Russia, which on the contrary carried out the policy of militarisation of the economy. This created a loyal public opinion about Russia's politics.

<sup>19</sup> <https://slon.ru/posts/73137>.

<sup>20</sup> <http://dt.ua/ECONOMICS/chastka-krimu-u-vvp-ukrayini-stanovit-ne-bilshe-3-141028.html>.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>.

<sup>22</sup> <http://ua.krymr.com/a/27693639.html>.

The development of such sentiments was influenced by the fact that among 6 million of tourists in 2013, 65% were residents of Ukraine, the share of Russians in the tourist flow did not exceed 20%<sup>23</sup>. However, higher Russian financial solvency against the backdrop of the global oil boom made them more attractive customers for local workers of tourism industry; and for many of them Russian guests were the most desirable. However, the current critical situation of this sector demonstrates the hollowness of such judgments.

To sum up, in Donbas, ideas to stop subsidising other regions of Ukraine prevailed as an argument for autonomy. Meanwhile in the Crimea, dissatisfaction with insufficient attention paid to the economic problems of the region were predominant. The imbalances in the development of some regions of Ukraine had a long history, and some deepened in modern times. At some point, they became the subject of political speculations. We are talking primarily about touting ideas that, in case of separation from Ukraine, even with the continuation of the current level of production, can actually increase their standard of living on the residents of the industrial south-eastern regions of Ukraine, especially ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking population, by means of information and psychological influence. D. Gorenburg (2015) provides us with more information about the Russian view of Ukrainian reality.

## 6. DYNAMIC AND FUNCTIONAL VULNERABILITY

**Dynamic vulnerability.** Ukraine can be characterised by two specific features during its independence: being late with reforms and “delayed” European integration. According to T. Kuzio (2011), until recently, there have been four factors that had caused the inability of the Ukrainian state to reach effective changes (Ukrainian state's immobility, p. 54), as well as the existence of corruption in the country: political culture, weak political will and civil society, lack of institutions that can effectively fight corruption, weak ideology and mutual dependence of political parties and business areas.

The country's transient situation increases its vulnerability. The cessation of old political practices is very difficult and, as it was before, was implemented by force by elites in the form of Orange Revolution (2004) and the Revolution of dignity (2013–2014), as well as *de facto* war in Donbas. One of the most respected rankings “Polity IV” allows us to trace the inconsistent development

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<sup>23</sup> <http://ua.korrespondent.net/main/3392657-turpotik-do-krymu-skorotyvsia-maizhevtrychi>.

of democracy in the country. The system of division of political regimes of the world into categories is as follows: 10 points for the most democratic states, -10 for the most autocratic. On this scale, anocracy occupies an intermediate interval from -5 to 5, indicating the transitional state of regimes. Throughout its brief history, except for 1993, Ukraine belonged to the category of democracy, mainly at the lower boundary of this indicator (fig. 4).

The authors of “Polity IV” state, that during the early years of independence, tensions over the terms of economic privatisation, the status of the former communist party and officials, and conflicting relations and orientations with Russia to the east and the European Union to the west polarised groups and led to political paralysis. A compromise was reached between leading members of the “old regime” and the reformers that culminated in a unity coalition and led to the July 1994 election of Leonid Kuchma as president. The “unity of necessity” felt the strains of post-communist transition and began to unravel during the 1999 election campaign as Kuchma began to assert his independence and attempted to consolidate power<sup>24</sup>.

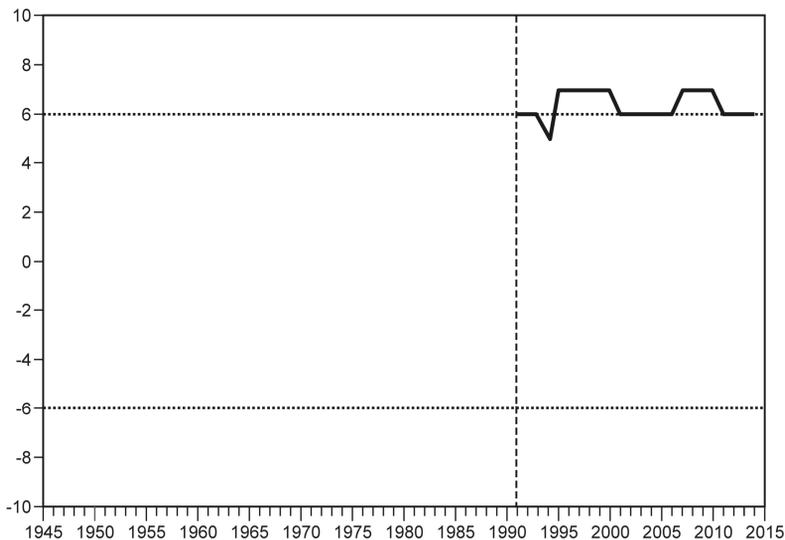


Fig. 4. Authority trends, 1991–2003, Ukraine

Source: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/Ukraine2010.pdf>

Such constant balancing between East and West has created a favourable environment for cultivating illusions of a “special path”. It has turned Ukraine into a buffer state between the EU and Russia. In terms of poor inter-regional

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/Ukraine2010.pdf>.

consolidation, it has caused multidirectional dragging of borderlands into the sphere of influence of neighbouring countries. According to T. Zhurzhenko (2014), as geopolitically amorphous “in-between” zones, they generate hybrid identities and create political, economic and cultural practices that combine different, often mutually exclusive values. Moreover, borderlands are associated with multiculturalism, cultural authenticity and cosmopolitanism. Yet from the nation-building perspective, their ambiguity is nothing to be celebrated. Mixed and overlapping identities and multiple loyalties pose a challenge to the nationalising agenda and potentially threaten the integrity of a nation-state (Zhurzhenko 2014).

However, according to Rostow's dynamic model (Rostow, 1996), an indispensable prerequisite of irreversibility of democratic transit is to achieve national unity. The next phase is a long-term political struggle, during which new elite emerges and tempers, institutions of civil society appear, citizens' participation in political processes increases, i.e. the process of instilling political culture takes place.

According to O.W. Radchenko (Радченко2009), constant political and geopolitical balancing of Ukraine resulted in rapid transformation and emergence of the democratic model with dominant state as the initiator and leader of democratic reforms. It is characterised as a “defective” regime with formal (from the first point of view) democratic institutions which in their real essence are authoritarian (Радченко 2009). At the same time, Ukraine got in the “trap of oligarchic capitalism”. In the late 90s and early 2000s, groups closely related to power and business got the opportunity to make fortunes on monopolies (energy, metallurgy, food and chemical industries), withdrawing part of funds through offshore companies, reinvesting the other part in political life and the support of the *status quo*. The growth of Ukrainian economy in 2002–2008 was driven by rapid growth of China and some countries in Southeast Asia that needed supply of metal and other raw materials produced in our country, as well as the policy of low interest rates of major world central banks around the world<sup>25</sup>. Actually, it was this period when Donbas' regional elites got the chance to accumulate and concentrate funds and resources of political influence. During the global economic crisis, these drivers disappeared, but the economic model of Ukraine based on them remained in a state of inertia. In order to encourage changes, structural transformations in the economy had to occur, but that would put an end to the political and economic domination of financial and industrial groups

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<sup>25</sup> <http://politeka.net/242581-tretya-promyshlennaya-revolutsiya-ukraina-teryayet-vremya/>.

of Donbas. A prolonged and critical course of the transition process in Ukraine led to increased social unrest, doubt and frustration among the Ukrainian population, both in the southeast, as well as in the western and central regions. One of the reasons for this slow transition is the lack of a common vision for the directions and outcomes of the process. The revolution of dignity had to protect the pro-European course and accelerate reforms, but it faced a considerable opposition on the part of regional elites of Donetsk, Luhansk, Simferopol and Sevastopol, due to the risk of them losing their political and economic positions. This forced them to stir up anti-Ukrainian and, as a result, pro-Russian propaganda among the masses.

Its success was facilitated by the fact that after the election of President of Russia Vladimir Putin in 2000, the dynamics of national economies of Ukraine and Russia differed substantially. If in 2000 Ukrainian GDP per person amounted to 56% of the Russian index, in 2013 this ratio deteriorated to 35%. In such circumstances, much of the population of Donbas and the Crimea, already having a pro-Russian sentiment, influenced by the propaganda of economic success was prone to idealise uncritically a neighbouring state and to compare Ukrainian modest successes to those of Russia. We call it uncritical idealisation, since income distribution, despite significantly worse macroeconomic indicators, was much fairer in Ukraine. This may at least be explained by the dynamics of Gini index, which is significantly better in Ukraine (fig. 5).

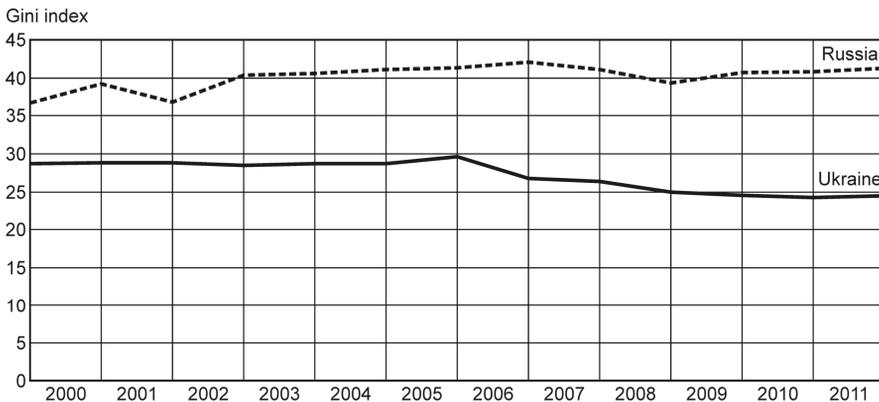


Fig. 5. Dynamics of Gini index in Ukraine and Russia in 2000–2012

Source: [https://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9\\_&ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nslm=h&met\\_y=si\\_pov\\_gini&scale\\_y=lin&ind\\_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:UKR:RUS&ifdim=region&tstart=972338400000&tend=1351029600000&ind=false](https://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_&ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nslm=h&met_y=si_pov_gini&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:UKR:RUS&ifdim=region&tstart=972338400000&tend=1351029600000&ind=false)

The geopolitical effect of demonstrating the economic component of Russia's “soft power” amplified due to significant labour migration of the population of Donbas and the Crimea to the neighbouring state (flow of labour migrants to Russia amounted to 43% of the total number in 2013) (Сирочук 2014). Significantly higher earnings in Russia in comparison to other countries reinforced this effect (fig. 6).

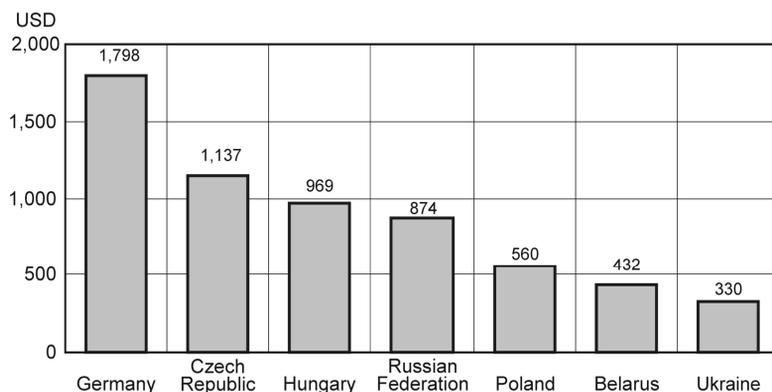


Fig. 6. The size of the average earnings of Ukrainian migrants in different countries and the average salary in Ukraine, 2010–2012

Source: *Звіт щодо методології...*, 2013, p. 57; [http://www.bankstore.com.ua/ua/component?option=com\\_bankstore/Itemid,233/task,showcurrencydailyrates/bank\\_id,123286/currency\\_id,16/rate\\_type,0/year,2010/month,1/day,1/](http://www.bankstore.com.ua/ua/component?option=com_bankstore/Itemid,233/task,showcurrencydailyrates/bank_id,123286/currency_id,16/rate_type,0/year,2010/month,1/day,1/)

Thus, the transient situation of Ukraine has led to the development of dissonance in regional policy. This in turn led to an increase of separatism and hope for external intervention as a way of solving problems. Changing such sentiments will not be easy, as experts say. Researcher Motyl is sure that the main factor here is the economy. “If in the next 5 years, Ukraine shows rapid growth, the regions beyond the control of the government will become loyal to Ukraine. The state simply has to provide Ukrainians, and especially residents of Donbas, with those economic opportunities it has been promising for the past 25 years”, says the historian<sup>26</sup>. This is the way, he states, to overcome the pro-Russian sentiments, as they are partly based on the belief “that Ukraine has not fulfilled its promises and Russia could theoretically do it”. The expert believes that having seen the improvements, East will be ready to talk with Ukraine in the same language<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/society/2016/07/160704\\_ukrainian\\_Donbas\\_ag](http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/society/2016/07/160704_ukrainian_Donbas_ag).

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/society/2016/07/160704\\_ukrainian\\_Donbas\\_ag](http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/society/2016/07/160704_ukrainian_Donbas_ag).

**Functional vulnerability.** As Tomeš and others suggest, among experts there is a consensus in assessing the impact of one factor of political origin on the conflict, namely the weakness of state power, failure to provide basic public functions and prevent undermining legitimate governments, which is also the cause of these conflicts (Tomeš et al. 2007).

On this occasion, it is appropriate to recall the hierarchy of territorial and political systems and functions of territorial and political areas by V.A. Kolosov (Колосов и Мироненко 2002, pp. 291–292) and to combine it with the concept of dysfunction of social institutions coined by Merton. Merton believes that some things may have consequences that are generally dysfunctional or are dysfunctional for some and functional for others. For example, poverty may benefit the rich because they are allowed to maintain more of their wealth, but it certainly does not benefit the poor who struggle. At this point, he suggests the conflict theory, although he does believe that institutions and values can be functional for society as a whole. Merton states that only by recognising the dysfunctional aspects of institutions, can we explain the development and persistence of alternatives (Mann 2009).

Based on the combination of these approaches, in the case of Donbas and the Crimea, manifestations of dysfunction of political and geographical areas at different levels in Ukraine can be traced, which led to the destabilisation of the situation and gave grounds for regionalism and separatism.

1. At the level of primary self-administrative territorial units: crises of political culture, inability to adapt to the national and global impacts;
2. At the level of large cities, metropolitan areas, administrative and territorial units of the second order: difficulty in transferring national impulses to the regions;
3. At the level of large administrative and territorial unit of the first order: failure to regulate stability and variability of state political system and crisis of regional political culture;
4. At the level of a large political district (in case of Donbas and the Crimea – the South-East of Ukraine): loss of influence on the national political system and development of the whole country;
5. At the state level, failure to provide administrative impact;
6. At the level of international community: the inability to regulate interactions within the post-Soviet countries (Ukraine and Russia); destruction of indigenous macro-regional features of post-Soviet political culture.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

As T. Zhurzenko (2014) wrote, with the annexation of Crimea and the military conflict in the East, the era of post-Soviet ambiguity and tolerance of blurred identities and multiple loyalties has ended. An important conclusion can be made that the vulnerability of the state and its individual regions to conflicts is particularly manifested in countries that are in a state of transformation. Vulnerability is the result of incompleteness, inconsistency and non-systemic character of transition to democracy. It creates conditions for conflict manifestation in post-Soviet states. The growth of economic power in Russia and authoritarian tendencies is accompanied with simultaneous restoration of its hegemony in relations with neighbouring countries. The reaction to such geopolitical challenges could be the formation of an effective state. The only way for a relatively successful modernisation of post-socialist countries is the Euro-Atlantic integration. Almost completed or fully completed final transformation of post-socialist Baltic countries and those of Central Europe were manifested in their integration into NATO and the EU, despite numerous protests from Russia. Due to a number of internal and external reasons, Ukraine did not go through a similar path.

Because of the burden of post-colonial heritage and developmental inertia, as well as vulnerable features of its geopolitical position, Ukraine did not manage to undergo rapid transformation, at the same time “freezing” (Hawrylyshyn 2006) the vulnerable status of Donbas and the Crimea. Pro-Russian separatists supported by Russia could take the advantage of existing problems that had emerged not only in the times of independence, but long before the struggle of Ukrainian people against imperial and Soviet power for their state. This is due to the effects of weak and inconsistent dynamics of democratic and market development. In western and central regions of Ukraine, the social costs of transformation from socialism to capitalism were partially compensated by the appeal of Ukrainian elites to the patriotism of local people. But in regions in the South and East, less linked to the Ukrainian statehood movement, government failed to convince the public of the positive effects of post-socialist changes for the majority of society, which led to the cultivation of competitive regional policy (“people of Donbas”) and supranational identities (“Soviet person”, “Orthodox person”). By 2014, Russia had actively contributed to the process facing no resistance on the part of regional authorities in the Crimea and Donbas and, moreover, it had gained the support of the central government under President Yanukovich. This is what made it possible to prepare the ground for

interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine, occupation and annexation of this part of its territory.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the willingness of Russia to use historical, positional, structural, dynamic and functional vulnerability of border areas of neighbouring states to initiate and support the conflict is obvious, taking into consideration the fact that during its independence Russia participated in the establishing of a number of zones characterised by “frozen” conflicts in Moldova (Transnistrian Moldovan Republic), Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia), Ukraine (the Crimea, DPR and LPR). Against this background, the willingness of Ukraine over the past 25 years to participate actively in the cross-border cooperation of borderlands resulted in the formation of the “Bug”, “Carpathian”, “Upper Prut”, “Lower Danube” and “Sloboda” Euroregions.

Russia's strategy to strengthen Ukraine's vulnerability failed during 2014. It is obvious that most of countries and, what is more important, an absolute majority of Ukrainian society rejected the idea of returning to the era of power redistribution, boundaries, the Cold War, the restoration of the imperial projects of the past. In order to preserve its sovereignty and integrity, modern Ukraine is ready to set an example of converting historical vulnerability to perspective advantages, to neutralise positional vulnerability, to find a balance in economic, social and religious structures, to ensure the positive dynamics of changes and ensure reliable operation of the regions and the state as a whole. The study of preconditions of conflict development in terms of their historical, positional, structural, dynamic and functional vulnerability appears to be a promising area of research in political geography of post-socialist countries, especially in terms of prevention of such conflicts.

*English verification by Jarosław Sawiuk*

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# **THE POLITICAL GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER ILLEGAL MIGRATION AT THE SOUTH HUNGARIAN BORDERS SINCE THE COLLAPSE OF THE BIPOLAR WORLD\***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The bipolar world and the end of Cold War oppositions brought about fundamental changes in Europe and across the globe. During and immediately following the era of the collapse of European Socialist Federal regimes, the geography of states in Hungary's neighbouring environment was thoroughly reorganised. The allied Socialist neighbouring countries were dissolved, and the former republics were transformed into new independent states. Depending on the peaceful or bloody nature of the transformation, the respective countries saw the arrival of refugees.

Albeit in the course of the transformation of the milieu made up of the neighbouring states, Hungary's borders remained unchanged, the character, functional and political content of borders underwent several basic transformations in various border areas. Due to the Hungarian state borders and the reorganisation of allied relations, considerable functional changes occurred at “the Federation's borders, i.e. where they were aligned with Hungary's borders”.

From the beginning of the 1990s, new global processes began to unfold. These resulted in the accelerating globalisation of the economy, making it even more obvious that globalisation does not only produce winners but territorial losers as well. The crisis hotspots of the Near and Middle East have not disappeared, instead, certain countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, then Syria) entered into an almost permanent political, social, economic and modernisation

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crisis, and a state of war. The “mass refugee training” was built on conflicting external and internal forces and their self-reinforcing effects in each of the countries in question. The massification of “client wars” introduced new features into the complex system of relations.

Hungary, as a member of NATO (1999) and later of the European Union (2004), became a collective actor rather than an individual participant of global processes through a natural process. Hungary had to meet the most severe challenges from the South (just as in history). The South Slav war conflicts (1991–1995), the accompanying waves of refugees, the air war against Serbia started in the spring of 1999, the renewing waves of Kosovar refugees still emerged as European-scale issues. The majority of Hungarian society demonstrated solidarity towards South Slav refugees, irrespectively of their ethnic or religious affiliation.

Between 2013 and 2014, the primary challenge was the massive apparition of Kosovar migrants at the Southern state borders, while only a limited number of migrants or refugees arrived from other territories. The daily illegal border crossing peak extended beyond 1,200 persons. The majority of Kosovars also headed towards Germany, as Hungary was not an attractive destination or opportunity for them, they regarded the country as a mere “transit area”, not as a settlement country.

In 2015, a new challenge, intercontinental migration emerged at the Hungarian-Serbian border. Masses of Middle Eastern migrants, and a smaller proportion of African migrants appeared at the borders, unanticipated by the Hungarian society and the political sphere and causing a panic-like reaction. The Hungarian political leadership – due to a lack of effective European aids to manage the processes – applied unilateral and much-debated solutions.

Pursuant to a unilateral decision, the Hungarian fences constructed at the Hungarian-Serbian, and later on, the Hungarian-Croatian state borders contributed to the handling of the migration challenge, and while they produced virtual diversion effects, they received highly negative reactions from international, European political players and the press. Owing to the construction of fences, inter-state relations between Hungary and Serbia, Hungary and Croatia, Hungary and Austria, and even Hungary and Germany deteriorated temporarily.

Owing to the fences, Hungary was able to avoid the direct effects of the massive intercontinental migration wave, however, European political leaders wanted to delegate the issue of migration and refugees within the EU to the competence of the Commission, by introducing mandatory migrant quotas. This would mean that migrants deterred by the fence could enter Hungary through a “back gate”.

## 2. HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS: THE FIRST PHASE OF ILLEGAL MIGRATIONS, 1988–1998

In the era of the bipolar world, in addition to the iron curtain dividing Europe (West-East), a specific “Socialist iron curtain” in terms of “non-state, military, official structures” was erected between small Socialist countries and the Soviet Union, which, based on a conscious Soviet decision, hindered the cultivation of interpersonal relationships on a massive scale. Even tourism-related movements consisted predominantly of state-organised, collective trips (fig. 1).

Due to internal social, economic and political relations characterising former Socialist countries, the transformation process was launched and executed under heterogeneous conditions. In the federal states (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union), the crisis of the state and the internal social, economic and political regime change occurred simultaneously.



Fig. 1. The two „Iron Curtains” in 1988  
Source: Z. Hajdú (1995)

Due to the situation encountered in neighbouring countries, illegal border crossers to emerge at the Hungarian-Romanian border for the first time were predominantly Romanian citizens of Hungarian nationality. In 1988, some

13,000 people crossed the green border illegally. In 1989, the number of illegal entrants exceeded 17,000. The approach adopted by the political sphere and the state towards illegal border crossers was defined by the existing bilateral agreements, the captured illegal entrants were forced to return to Romania, and mostly suffered the serious consequences of their failed attempt to escape.

Due to pressure exerted by society and the church, the Hungarian political sphere had to abandon its “legal, yet inhuman practices”. Thereafter, neither the Hungarian nor the considerably smaller proportion of Romanian illegal entrants were repatriated. They were permitted to continue on their way towards the West.

In 1989, Hungary was the only Socialist country to become a member of the Refugee Organisation of the UN, which created new legal bases and opportunities shaping the possible approach towards illegal border crossers, thereafter regarded as refugees.

In 1989, the Hungarian political leadership encountered special problems due to the massive emergence of citizens arriving from GDR, which captured the attention of the international community as well. GDR citizens arrived legally with passports as tourists and, afterwards, they refused to leave the country. From “illegal tourists” they were transformed into “illegal residents”, and finally were officially referred to as refugees, with refugee camps established to host them (Zugliget, Zánka). During the event of the “Pan-European Picnic” (August 19, 1989) a share of GDR citizens “illegally broke through” the Hungarian-Austrian border. On August 21, 1989, a GDR citizen was shot at the Hungarian border (he was considered to be the last victim of the Hungarian Iron Curtain), and following a complex political bargaining process, Hungary “released” GDR citizens, who were permitted to cross the Hungarian-Austrian border with their GDR passports and return to the GDR.

The issue was complex, as it affected the basic regulations of the entire system of socialist federal republics of the period, i.e., in order to cross the western Iron Curtain bordering any other country, a person was obliged to hold a valid passport from the country in question. The massive release of GDR citizens contributed significantly to the internal desintegration of the GDR, and ultimately, the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

The desintegration processes of Yugoslavia from the summer of 1991 created a totally new neighbourhood environment along the southern borders of the state. First, Slovenia (during a 10-day-long local war involving no serious losses) and later on, Croatia (during a series of bloody conflicts) seceded from the Federation, entailing the acceleration of the process of desintegration. Between 1991–1995, masses of people arrived from Croatia and Bosnia-

-Herzegovina (a part of them without any official documents) to Hungary. (Their number reached 50,000 in 1991 and 16,000 in 1992). Albanians, Bosniaks, Croats, Hungarians, Serbs, etc. were all represented among those fleeing from war. Hungary and the Hungarian society aided the refugees without any ethnic, linguistic, religious discrimination. Those who wanted to were free to continue their journey to Western Europe or overseas, while those who really demanded accommodation in refugee camps received all the necessary support as well as full board. (The last refugee camp for refugees arriving from the territory of former Yugoslavia, located in the proximity of the southern border in Vés in Somogy county was closed only in 1998. Mainly old refugees resided there until that year).

The self-destruction of the Soviet Union in December 1991 was not followed by massive illegal or legal migration towards Hungary. Albeit Hungarians, Ukrainians, Russians arrived from neighbouring border areas, their number remained low.

The velvet divorce of Czechoslovakia on January 1, 1993 did not result in cross-border migratory movements through the new Hungarian-Slovakian border. No-one felt jeopardised by the dissolution of the state.

The due significance of the functional transformation of the Hungarian-Austrian border in 1995 related to the EU accession of Austria is rarely recognised. The EU border opened up new cooperation opportunities for Hungary.

Overall, between 1988–1998, Hungarian state borders were affected by massive illegal migratory processes on several occasions. Hungarian Governments almost always handled the problems of citizens of various ethnicities in a politically responsible and humane manner, and strived to resolve their problems via international conventions. A small share of illegal immigrants settled down in Hungary.

### **3. HUNGARY IN A TRANSIT SITUATION: BETWEEN SENDING COUNTRIES AND DESTINATIONS**

Hungary obtained NATO membership in the spring of 1999 and EU membership in May 2004. These accessions entailed a changing significance of state borders and Hungary remained a “landlocked island country” for a brief period under the aegis of NATO since it could count no NATO members among its neighbours. In terms of political geography, the situation of Hungary is unique since its state borders were entirely aligned with the external borders of the alliance. EU membership represented a changing context both in terms of internal and external borders.

Post-2000, albeit illegal migration was still present in the life of the country, its size was not significant in numerical terms. The institutions of asylum created in Hungary pursuant to the regulations of Act LXXX of 2007 (on asylum) were able to tackle the situation of refugees arriving from neighbouring countries and increasingly from remote crisis zones. The country became a member of the Schengen Area in 2007, which imposed a unified, community-level border regime in every respect.

The number of illegal migrants, particularly those arriving from various war-stricken zones showed a gradual increase from the beginning of the 2010s. This growth was transformed into a virtual explosion in 2014. According to the analyses of the UN High Commission for Refugees, a total number of 50 million people had to leave their home during 2014 at the global level. The majority of the exiled became refugees within their own nation, while a total number of 14 million people were forced to leave their home country. The overwhelming majority of international refugees (86%) were admitted by neighbouring developing countries of Africa and Asia.

In the aftermath of the conflicts in Iraq and, later on, in Syria, millions of refugees remained trapped in the neighbouring Muslim states. (Lebanon and Jordan became the major refugee-receiving countries in the region.) Turkey obtained a strategic role in European migration processes since it had accepted approx. 1.8–2 million Syrian refugees by 2015.

In order to hinder the augmentation of the number of refugees at the Greek-Turkish land border, Greece (with the express approval and support of the EU) constructed a massive, strictly controlled border fence in 2012, which was occasionally able to prevent the massive influx of refugees. Turkey – as a NATO member and potential EU member state – did not wish to prevent the massive outflow of refugees and migrants of Syrian and other nationalities via the sea. The large-scale outflow of refugees relieved internal tensions, while at the same time providing a new negotiation and bargaining position for the country vis-à-vis the EU.

The prolonged internal economic, social and political crisis of the NATO and EU member state, Greece, partially contributed to its inability and lack of willingness to halt and register the masses arriving from Turkey to the islands of the Aegean sea (as a means to obtain a bargaining position in Europe) – notwithstanding that it would have been obliged to do so under the Schengen system. Greece “exported” hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants towards Macedonia, a country aspiring for EU membership.

Macedonia was unable to resist the migration pressure and passed the problematic masses on to Serbia. Serbia was faced with a difficult situation since

it encountered a delicate challenge in the course of EU negotiations. Serbia, besides providing minimal services and serving as a parking lot for refugees for a short while, oriented the masses towards Hungary.

Hungary as an external Schengen border of the EU, encountered a special challenge on the Serbian border section. According to the EU rules of the game, it was obliged to execute its tasks in line with the Schengen border Code, ensure the global control of both official border crossings and the green border, take measures against illegal entrants in light of the formerly defined protocols and perform registration-related tasks.

Hungary was ill-prepared (while it was able to gain a thorough picture of the intensifying migratory movements – if not from the observation of the processes themselves, at least from the situation analyses of FRONTEX) to meet the challenge of the arrival of unprecedented masses of “non-law abiding” people from Serbia. Refugees and migrants – as opposed to the previously arriving masses from Kosovo – did not wish to register themselves in Hungary, since they considered the country as a mere transit zone.

The destination country marking the end of the “migration path of the Balkans” was Germany, whose leadership, owing to historical liabilities and value-based considerations, called for a migration policy targeting the “admission of all refugees” from mid-September 2015.

Hungary found itself in a trap, constituting a transit area between sending and receiving countries in such a way that the majority of refugees and migrants did not wish to enter into a relationship with Hungary (fearing later repatriation). The conflict between the legal obligations arising from the Geneva Convention, the Dublin regulation and Schengen and the political intentions began to adopt a structural character.

Albeit in 2015 Germany demonstrated its political will to establish an inclusive refugee welcoming society, in 2016, various unfavourable phenomena questioned the pertinence of the solidarity-based approach towards immigrants on behalf of a part of German citizens. Meanwhile, divisions among German political leaders and within society have become more pronounced. Due to the changing scope of the issue, the country has to decide sooner or later to what extent it is willing and able to pursue its policy of welcoming refugees and migrants. This decision will ultimately shape the situation of the potential and effective transit countries.

#### 4. HUNGARIAN “FENCE-BUILDING RESPONSES” TO MIGRATION CHALLENGES AT THE SOUTH- -HUNGARIAN BORDER

Since 2012, Hungarian refugee organisations have become aware of the beginning of a new chapter in the history of illegal migration. Individuals, families, smaller groups of Near-Eastern origin started to appear in growing numbers alongside the Kosovar refugees. The bulk of refugees arriving at this period supposedly decided to embark on the voyage out of their own free will, and exploited the “services” offered by human smugglers on a complementary basis.

The first turning point occurred during 2013–2014 (tab. 1) when the number of illegal arrivals, those registering as refugees suddenly doubled. What had previously been a professional issue gradually drifted into the political arena, since managing and ensuring the mass transfer of illegal migrants demanded this shift. The negative impacts of the process of illegal migration penetrated into the everyday life of inhabitants of Southern Hungarian areas touched by the phenomenon.

Table 1. The evolution of the number of asylum seekers and refugees,  
2012–2016

Period	Asylum seeker	Refugee	Protected	Admitted	
		Obtaining refugee status			
2012	I	457	21	55	27
	II	363	23	108	17
	III	538	12	80	2
	IV	799	31	85	1
2013	I	2,322	26	45	3
	II	9,419	47	54	1
	III	4,404	54	40	–
	IV	2,755	71	78	–
2014	I	2,736	45	51	5
	II	2,699	95	42	1
	III	8,711	58	44	1
	IV	28,631	42	99	–

2015	I	33,549	29	96	3
	II	33,239	44	68	–
	III	109,175	35	73	1
	IV	1,172	38	119	2
2016	I	7,182	39	109	4
	II	15,309	48	56	2
	III				
	IV				

Source: KSH: [http://www.ksh.hu/docs/xstadat\\_evkozi/e\\_wnv001.html](http://www.ksh.hu/docs/xstadat_evkozi/e_wnv001.html).

The examination of persons demanding refugee status based on their previous, documented citizenship clearly shows that during 2013 and the beginning of 2014, Kosovars constituted the majority of illegal border crossers, and from mid-summer onwards, the number and proportion of Afghans, Syrians and Iraqis increased at an accelerating pace.

Between 2014 and 2015, fundamental changes occurred in the size of illegal immigration. It became crucial for Hungarian authorities to distinguish refugees from economic migrants within the mass of illegal migrants. The decisions of Hungarian asylum authorities (2014, Month I–XI – 2015, Month I–XI) reveal that while 232 asylum applications were accepted in 2014, this figure dropped to 123 in 2015, while the number of persons granted humanitarian protection rose from 205 to 318. The fundamental shift occurred in the number of rejected asylum applications which rose from 17,473 to 135,963.

The number of illegal crossings at Hungarian borders attained 400,000 in 2015. Illegal daily border traffic can be monitored on the basis of police statistics ([www.police.hu](http://www.police.hu)). The bulk share of migrants arrived from the direction of the Serbian-Hungarian border. Migrants showed a “moderate” willingness to cooperate with Hungarian authorities, in reality, they regarded the country merely as a transit zone.

Migration-related processes did not only affect Hungarian border areas, but the cities situated along the principal railway lines and motorways. Keleti railway station won an international reputation due to the incidents and the chaotic situation which developed there and which the city's inhabitants deemed intolerable.

Keleti constituted a unique case since this was where the joint efforts of church, civil organisations and individuals to aid refugees were most visible. (The refugee issue and the proper attitude to its management caused a division between ecclesiastical personalities, not only within the political sphere).

The Hungarian government decided to seal off the Hungarian-Serbian green border with a fence (June 17, 2015). The construction of a 175 km-long fence advanced at a rapid pace. Thereafter, migrants appeared at the Hungarian – Croatian border, particularly at the land border section of the Baranya Triangle. (Only individual attempts to enter across the Drava were recorded). The construction of the 41 km-long fence along the common border was completed by 15 October 2015 (a piquancy of the situation was that the Serbian mine barrage built during the South Slav conflict was removed from the land border section of Baranya only in the spring of 2013, just before the EU accession of Croatia), provoking an extremely hostile reaction from the Croatian Government (fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Hungarian fences on the borders  
Source: *Magyar Idők*, October 7, 2015

Albeit in this game of “hide-and-seek” with migrants, the idea of constructing a fence along the internal border between Hungary and Slovenia within the Schengen Area did emerge, barbed wires appeared only on a minimal section for a period of three days and were shortly removed.

Preparatory works were implemented at the southern Hungarian-Romanian border at the prolonged section of the Hungarian-Serbian border, however, no extensive constructions were initiated.

Fences – besides all other potentially functional interpretations – carry a basic message transcending that of each previous constructions (iron curtain, mine barrage, etc.), namely, that they were not constructed in order to prevent the outflow of Hungarians, nor as a defense against citizens of neighbouring countries, but against specific “third parties”.

Migratory processes gave rise to specific internal and external tensions. Viktor Orbán employed a combative, war-like rhetoric in the fight against illegal immigration and a migrant-friendly Brussels.

In 2015, the issue of the supervision of the southern borders, albeit in a symbolic manner (contingents of 50 people arrived from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland), was delegated to the competence of the Visegrad countries. During autumn 2016, the Austrian Parliament authorised the deployment of 80 soldiers in order to ensure the control of the southern borders of Hungary. This gesture signified that the rest of the three Visegrad countries also consented to and supported the strict control of external borders.

According to Hungarian governmental data, a total number of 17,351 illegal migrants were stopped during the first semester of 2016, 330 people were held in detention centers, and „illegal border traffic was confined almost exclusively to the Hungarian-Serbian border”. The tight Croatian border control prevented illegal crossings along the Hungarian-Croatian border section. The irregularities and crimes surrounding illegal migration impose a heavy burden on the Hungarian judicial system. Between the end of September 2015 and the end of June 2016, 4942 criminal proceedings were initiated related to the destruction of the fence (the trial surrounding the battle of Rösztke gained international notoriety), in 2015, 1176 human smugglers were summoned to trial in Hungary.

At the beginning of July 2016, the Hungarian Government constructed a 8 km-wide deep border zone along the southern state borders. Illegal migrants captured within the deep border zone were immediately sent back to Serbia without court proceedings. In parallel with the construction of the fence, transit zones were built between Horgos in Serbia and the internationally renowned town of Rösztke in Hungary, and also between Kelebia and Tompa. Those seeking to enter were submitted to strict control, and a total of 100 migrants per transit zone were admitted to the country each day. (This daily figure had dropped to 15 by September, 2016). Due to the strict Hungarian border control regime, thousands of migrants were trapped in Serbia, Croatia, and it has not become easier to reach Western Europe from the direction of Croatia, either. As a significant outcome of the refugee and migration crisis, the Government declared a state of emergency in those counties that were most exposed to the massive migration (Bács-Kiskun, Csongrád, Baranya, Somogy, Zala, Vas).

## 5. EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENTS, A PERMANENT CRISIS

The major achievement of the Summit of the European Union and Turkey in November 2015 (whose major agreements have since been interpreted in different ways by the Turkish people and EU leaders) was that theoretically, it created the possibility of restricting the outflow of migrants from Turkey, while, in practice, its impacts have hardly been felt. (While in December 2015, an average number of 5000 refugees arrived each day from Turkey to Greece, at the beginning of January, the daily average was 3000 persons).

In addition to a financial aid of 3 bln euros, the European Union hinted at the possibility of the acceleration of pre-accession negotiations and the elimination of the visa obligation. The channelling of the financial aid is increasingly becoming a function of the effective steps Turkey is willing to take. (In this respect, the Dutch Presidency during the first Semester of 2016 may constitute a milestone).

EU leaders adopt a novel approach to organising the defence of common EU borders (FRONTEX). FRONTEX, its major mid-term organisation, is responsible for ensuring common, effective border supervision both along external land and sea borders. (The planned cooperation is opposed by a number of member countries). Hungary is potentially affected by this solution due to its relation to the external Schengen Area (Serbia, Ukraine) and the internal Schengen Area (Croatia, Romania). If a member country fails to perform its obligations in the realm of border control and supervision, this would authorise FRONTEX to proceed in an arbitrary manner.

Besides Hungary, the EU has a key role in shaping the future of the borders of Hungary and the processes characterising the southern border section. This does not only imply that the admission of new member states is based on the unanimous decision of the entire Community (who will be our future neighbours within the EU, along the southern border, only Serbia qualifies as a potential candidate), but that further potential enlargement (the remaining areas of the Balkans, Turkey) will also entail fundamental consequences.

The global refugee and migrant crisis requires that the international community reach a consensus on who may qualify as a refugee, whose support is not only being prioritised by the current international treaties in force, but by the humanitarian system of values as well – and who are considered as “mere migrants” whose admission or rejection may be judged on the basis of a different set of criteria. (The distinction is all the more crucial since a radical increase of both categories is anticipated).

The Hungarian refugee quota referendum held on 2 October 2016 serving to decide whether the EU is authorised to settle migrants in Hungary without the consent of the Hungarian Parliament was not valid, since it was attended only by 43.3% of those eligible to vote, thus participation did not attain the minimal threshold prescribed by the law. The rate of submitted pro-government “no” votes was particularly high (98.3%), the weight of “yes” votes was only 1.7%, which is probably due to the rate of consciously submitted invalid votes (6.3%).

The European Union must soon make a long-term decision defining its Common Migration Policy (implying “mere migrants” in this approach), and also its structural policies targeting neighbouring areas. The decision is far from being simple if we consider the current processes and existing structures, not to mention its potential impacts and perspective outcome.

The EU may impose various types of structural decisions concerning external (mainly African and Near-Eastern) migration processes: either it may maintain, fundamentally restrict (by imposing special selection criteria) or completely break with its welcome policy towards migrants from the neighbouring African and Near Eastern areas. The major obstacles to maintaining the current size of immigration are not primarily demographic and material in nature, but social and internal policy-related. Massive restriction or complete abolishment may lead to a situation of a “fortress under siege”, which would require an unprecedented tightening of border control along the external frontiers of the EU.

The EU must rearticulate its neighbourhood policies within the macro-region, particularly its strategies concerning Islam in a generally visible and understandable way (after the failed attempt to export democracy, the failure of sneaking neo-colonial integration, and a questionable outcome of “supported abandonment”). In the case of Turkey, these approaches may emerge in the context of a multi-dimensional network. In the scenario of the country's EU accession, one of the strongest and most self-assertive states of the Islamic world would be included within the borders, at the same time, this would not guarantee the EU's capacity to open up towards the most unstable macro-regions of the world.

*English verification by Jarosław Sawiuk*

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## THE GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF SORBIAN LANGUAGES

Lusatian Sorbs – nowadays the smallest of the Slavic nations – came to Central Europe from the vicinity of central Dnieper around the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., during the so-called “Migration Period” of the Slavic people (Strzelczyk 2000, p. 6). They were one of the Polabian Slavic tribes, the majority of which were conquered during medieval times and fully assimilated by more powerful and expansive Germanic tribes. Apart from the Lusatian Sorbs only the group of so called Hannover Wends, living in a couple of villages in the area of the Lüneburger Heide in Lower Saxony have been able to maintain their difference and a certain cultural distinctiveness. Even so, this language is spoken now by tens of people at the most (Kłos 1994). Contemporary investigations, including by Heinz Schuster-Šewc, show certain similarities between the languages of the Lusatian Sorbs and Balkan Serbs (Siatkowska 1991). The Germans call all Slavic inhabitants who have been living for a long time in their state – with the exception of Poles and Czechs – Wends, which is nevertheless understood pejoratively by the people called that way, who describe themselves as “Sorbs”. The Polish word *Łużyczanin* (German: *der Lausitzer*), however, means in German every inhabitant living in the area of Lusatia, regardless of their language and national identity (Szczepankiewicz-Battek 2005, p. 77).

The contemporary Lusatian languages – Upper Lusatian and Lower Lusatian – belong to the group of West Slavic languages (including Polish, Czech, Slovak and Kashubian). Upper Lusatian displays significant similarity to Czech, and Lower Lusatian more to Polish. Apart from them there are some dialects in between, and the most characteristic of them is considered that in the vicinity of Slepó (German: Schleife). The inhabitants of this enclave have preserved their certain cultural distinctive features until today. These languages nevertheless evolved in the past.

During early medieval times, there were Slavic tribes living within range of the River Kwisa (German: Queis) and the River Bóbr to the east, the place called Kopanica (nowadays Köpenick – the eastern part of Berlin) to the North, the western border was created by the River Soława (Saale) and the River Dubje, and the southern one by mountains, e.g. Rudawy (Ore Mountains), Smreczany – Fichtel Mountains (German: Fichtelgebirge), with the south-eastern border situated close to the Lusatian Neisse sources (Šořta 1984, pp. 13–17). This territory can be considered as the greatest reach of Lusatia as a region. The majority of the Lusatian tribes during the 9<sup>th</sup> century were influenced by the state of Great Moravia (Šořta 1984, p. 10). Since the 10<sup>th</sup> century it was constantly diminishing, due to German expansion, not only military, but also economic and cultural as well. On the Lusatian territories conquered by Germans two marches were created: the one of Meissen (Upper Lusatia) and the other of Lusatia (Lower Lusatia). As late as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Sorbian population still reached Wittenberg in the West. Martin Luther was not keen on the Lusatian people (despite the fact, that his wife, Katharina von Bora, had her roots there), he considered them in his “Table Talk” (“Tischreden”) as “the worst among all nations” (Cygański and Leszczyński 1995, p. 34). His closest collaborator, however – Philipp Melanchton – was proud to have a Lusatian as a son-in-law (Mahling 1991). In spite of Luther's scepticism, who was sure the Sorbian language would not stand the test of time, in 1548 a translation of the New Testament into Lower Lusatian appeared. The author of it was a clergyman from Lubanice near Źary – Mikławř Jakubica. It is the oldest monument of literature in this language (Piwoński 2000, p. 92). Still in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, translations of the “Little Catechism” of Luther into lower and upper were created, and part of the lectures on theology at the Viadrina University (Frankfurt/Oder) was given in Sorbian languages (Šořta 1984, p. 34). The oldest preserved written document in Upper Lusatian is the Bautzen-Oath (German: Der Burger Eydt Wendisch) – a secular document with an oath of loyalty towards the king of Bohemia, written by the burghers of Bautzen – until recently dated to 1532. Nevertheless, it is believed that its origin could stretch back to the very beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> (Leszczyński 2000, pp. 7–19). The preserved Bible translations (both Protestant and Catholic) into Upper Lusatian did not arrive until the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The new church order of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was accepted by the majority of the Lusatian population – with only some places, generally monastery areas or the Bautzen deanery, remained Catholic. The Reformation in this area was nevertheless entirely peaceful, and the reciprocal attitude of the Catholic and Protestant populations was always at least a proper one. Since 1524 until today, the biggest

church of Bautzen – St. Peter's church – has been used together (and with no conflicts) by confessors of the two faiths.

The Reformation accepted from its very beginning the rule that services, sacraments and other church activities (e.g. marriages or funerals) must be held entirely “in a language understandable for the people”. Everyone, regardless of their sex or their financial status, was obliged to read the Bible by themselves, which caused a speedy growth in their educational level and an increased request for religious writings in their mother tongue. Initially, Catholicism underestimated the meaning of national languages during worship services – the first Upper Lusatian religious books appeared in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Upper Lusatia had almost no Catholic population). At the beginning, however, only a few confessors were able to use them, because until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the majority of them were illiterate. The Protestants of Lusatia at that time were gaining an awareness of their national and linguistic identity far more quickly than the Catholics. At the same time, they were more quickly subjected to Germanisation. A common Protestant aspiration to become educated and to gain social rise caused a need for education in the German language. Getting work and living in a mostly German area was leading to the assimilation of Lusatian Sorbs in an area with a German majority. The Lusatian Catholics nevertheless constituted a significant minority in Saxony (despite the fact that the Saxon rulers around the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century were converting to Catholicism and since then the Catholics were preferred in their court). They tending to change their social position more seldom than the Protestants, and they left their places of origin more rarely (almost all of them were involved with agriculture). Because of this, they assimilated within the German environment far more weakly. A significant improvement in the level of educational among Lusatian Catholics came only in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A great role in awakening of their national consciousness belonged to well educated teachers and clergymen of both confessions, as well as artists (poets, painters and composers) who identified themselves with this ethnic tradition. The government of the united Germany considered the ethnic emancipation of Lusatian Sorbs as a disadvantage and tried to oppose it (the intensity of these processes was different regarding the political option represented by the authorities). Generally, the most popular way for the authorities to deal with the population was to send people who did not speak Lusatian languages to work in the Lusatian area. At the same time, educated Lusatian people were sent to work in other parts of Germany. This politics was more successful in the case of the Protestants, since the Catholic church of Lusatia was part of the Prague bishopric until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, being mostly independent from Berlin in its personnel decisions. Particularly

significant was the Germanisation of areas close to the borders with Poland and the Czech Republic, to separate the Sorbs from other Slavic nations with a kind of special “cordon” (Szczepankiewicz-Battek 2005, p. 268). Since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a significant population of the poorer and more underdeveloped Lower Lusatia were leaving to seek work in Berlin or another great cities of Germany. Men worked in industry and women mostly as domestic servants in more affluent bourgeois homes. Remaining in a pure German environment, frequent mixed marriages were not advantageous for maintaining the language and culture of their Slavic ancestors. The Catholics Sorbs, living mainly in a consistent group of villages, a dozen or so, towards the northwest from Bautzen (known as Catholic Lusatia), emigrated very seldom (the soil of the Upper Lusatia is much more fertile than that of Lower Lusatia). They were, instead, maintaining their language and traditions in a much more intensive way.

Population registers, executed since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on behalf of state authorities, and statistical-demographic inquiries of ethnographers (the majority of them were of Lusatian origin themselves) show huge differences of statistical data concerning the number of Sorbs. According to official state statistics, the number of Sorbs was distinctly smaller than according to the scientific data. Apart from – undoubtedly a strong one – pressure from the side of state authorities to understate the number of population of the ethnic minorities (other minorities, including Poles, faced the same problems), also the different methodology of these inquiries played a certain role. According to suppositions of the Prussian authorities (and then of the united Germany), anyone who declared that their mother language (German: *Muttersprache*) was not German was considered to be a representative of an ethnic minority. In practice, however, everyone who was able to communicate in German, was recorded during the common listing as a member of the German nation. Already at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, almost all Sorbs were bilingual (Marciniak 1991).

Facing the common education duty in Prussia and Germany, it meant that everyone who was professionally and/or in another way active in public, was considered to be German. Although there were still schools educating in their mother languages on the territories inhabited by minorities until 1871, German was taught there as well. According to this registration, “Sorbs” were only those people who did not work professionally and were not active in public, mostly poorly educated women. The last cases of the complete ignorance of the German language (including a passive understanding) were noted around 1930 in the “primeval forest villages of Upper Lusatia”, only amongst women (Marciniak 1991).

The ethnographers, however, recorded as “Lusatian” everybody who declared a knowledge of Lusatian language, or even who merely described themselves as “Sorb”. For example: official registers from 1843 and 1846 gave the number of 133 thousand Sorbs, while Jan Arnošt Smolar, at around the same time (about 1841) estimated their number at 164 thousand. Official registers of 1885 and 1890 showed 113 thousand Sorbs, while Arnošt Muka (very exact research from 1880–1884) found 166 thousand. The official register of 1910 gave 103 thousand, whereas Adolf Černý (research conducted in 1904–1905) showed the number 146 thousand (fig. 1). The official register in 1933 showed 57 thousand, while the research of Polish scientist Olgierd Nowina (1936–1938, during the Nazi times) mentions about 111 thousand Sorbs (Marciniak 1991).

The first societies, aimed at promoting the knowledge of Lusatia and Lusatian languages, were the Lusatian Preachers Society, for students of Protestant theology (1716, University of Leipzig) and the society “Sorabicum” (with a status close to that of the contemporary scientific circles), mainly for German students of other faculties, and the Upper Lusatia Scientific Society (1799, Zgorzelec/Görlitz; Cygański and Leszczyński 1995, pp. 56–59). During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a couple of other organisations came into being – for Catholics and Protestants as well, in Upper and Lower Lusatia. The societies for confessors of both faiths were this time working separately, and reciprocal contacts of the Catholics and the Protestants were marked with much more reserve, though they were not hostile towards one another. Such an attitude was imposed on members by authorities of both churches in conflict, which confirmed that the feeling of religious independence was, in this period, still dominant over the solidarity with members of the same nation (Szczepankiewicz-Battek 2005, p. 125). The greatest role in the integration of Sorbs of both faiths, living in the Upper and Lower Lusatia, was played by “Domowina”, founded 1912 – a federation of many societies and associations.

There was not only the Germanisation politics from above, which caused the acceleration of the assimilation processes of Sorbs in the German environment at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The more powerful practical impact on this was caused by progressive industrialisation. Until the 1860s, the lowlands of Lower Lusatia were among the most backward areas of Germany (Arasimowicz 1993). A discovery of huge lignite deposits in Lower and Middle Lusatia caused German people to flock to these areas (mines needed many workers) and saw the destruction of many indigenous Lusatian villages, liquidated step by step, as mine pits were growing bigger. Many farmers sold their farms voluntarily and took up jobs in the mines (Scholze-Šořta 1997), because it meant an improvement of their financial situation for them.

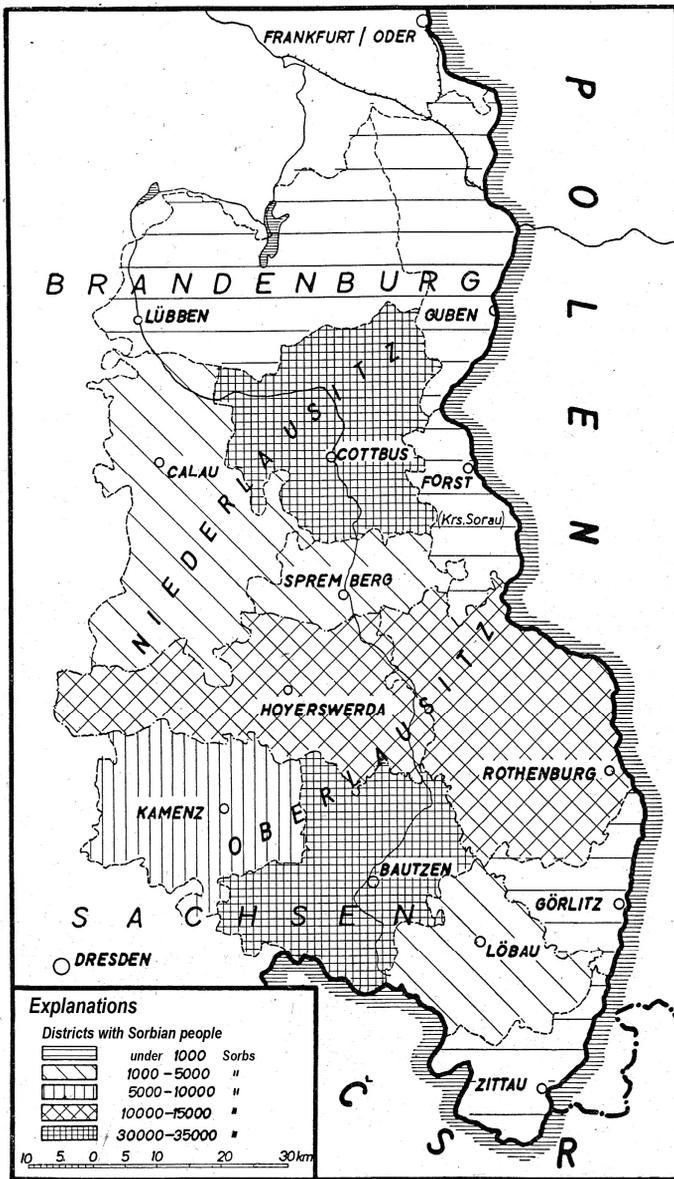


Fig. 1. Deployment and strength of Sorbian population in 1900

Source: according to: E. Tschernik (1954)

The Sorbs (in Lower Lusatia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with numbers estimated at 40–50 thousand – Wiatrak 1992), dispersed and displaced to bigger places, living in an environment with a German majority, began using Lower Lusatian more and more rarely, and their integration in their own environment became

step by step weaker. “Roads and railways, along which German newcomers were heading for Lusatia, divided Lusatian territories step by step into a row of language isles” (Scholze-Šořta 1997). The Germanisation of Sorbs was also advanced by more and more numerous mixed marriages, with the children born in them declared to be German nation and using the German language.

Apart from opencast lignite mining in Lower and Middle Lusatia, the textile (mainly wool) and glass industries were also developing intensively (Arasimowicz 1993). Only in the Spreewald vicinity (Lusatian: Błota), due to physical-geographical conditions (flood plains of the River Spree, hard to get into and not attractive to potential industry) did the population of the place manage to preserve their language and culture for much longer. For example, they used their characteristic, picturesque folk dresses. From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Spreewald became an attraction for tourists, because of its natural and cultural values. Since 1892, boat rides for tourists on the Spree River canals were being organised, often connected with visiting Lusatian villages (Żochowska 1993).

The diminishing number of Lusatian people at the end of the 19th century was caused not only by Germanisation, industrialisation and migrations from the villages to the cities, but also massive migrations overseas (from Upper and Lower Lusatia), with destinations as far flung as Texas and Australia (Marciniak 1991).

The First World War brought serious population losses to Lusatia (from the Bautzen district alone, more than 3000 mobilised soldiers died) (Šořta 1984, p. 100). Among the victims there were many Sorbs, which can be estimated by a study of names of the dead on the monuments in their remembrance, which – according to the decree of German authorities – were created in every municipality. In terms of the economy, this area was prosperous during this time, because textile and metallurgy factories executed many deliveries for the army. Farmers were very much against the war, because of food requisitions for the army (Šořta 1984, pp. 100–103). After the war was over, Lusatian activists tried to create an independent Lusatia through diplomatic channels. They were not successful. The Sorbs accepted the creation of the Weimar Republic with enthusiasm, because they counted on the Republic government appreciating the laws of ethnic minorities. At this time, the number of the Sorbian minority was estimated at about 100 thousand (Scholze-Šořta 1994). This era also saw serious difficulty in the form of conflict between the various political groups of the area: the leftist organisations contacted the communists. The communist party condemned the discrimination of ethnic minorities many times during this period in Germany, and its activists spoke out many times on this in the press and at gatherings as well. The conservative, right wing groups, especially those

connected with Catholicism, joined the anti-communist movement (Cygański 1994).

When the Nazis took charge in Germany, the country saw a drastic intensification of sanctions against all ethnic minorities. The Sorbs became yet more victims of these politics. Already in April 1933, many Sorbian activists were arrested, and attacks against minorities appeared in the media, accusing them of “actions against the German nation”. Admittedly, after a couple of months this course was mitigated under the influence of international subjects, but all Sorbian organisations were subordinated to national socialists. The repeated intensification of the repression came after 1936, when drastic restrictions on the usage of Lusatian languages came into being. The Germanisation of children and youths in education increased; talking and writing about the Sorbs as an ethnic minority was forbidden in the media. Officially they were “Germans using a non-German language”. Descriptions such as “Wends” and “Wendish” were forbidden, and there were attempts to present the most outstanding Sorbian artists (e.g. the poet Handrij Zeler) as German artists. In 1937, the activity of “Domowina” was forbidden, Lusatian inscriptions (signs, boards, even inscriptions on graves) started being destroyed, and over 60 places with Sorbian names were given new, German ones (Cygański and Leszczyński 1997, pp. 37–42). These changes later became known as the “Nazi renaming”. Sorbian teachers and clergymen of both faiths were removed from Upper Lusatia and forced to work in another parts of Germany (often under in positions they were over-qualified for). After the outbreak of the Second World War, these activities were intensified; many Sorbian activists ended up in prisons and concentration camps, where some of them died or were killed. The Nazi politics against ethnic minorities in the Third Reich was tending towards their complete Germanisation. The ways of achieving it – apart from banning Sorbian languages and activities of Sorbian organisations of all kinds – should have been displacements of the Sorbs to areas inhabited only by Germans, and their dispersal in this environment (though this was never actually achieved). The Sorbs were also forced to enter the Wehrmacht, and women were in the work services (German: *Arbeitseinsatz*). The armed anti-Nazi resistance in Lusatia did not reach far, and the Sorbs relied mostly on the tactic of passive resistance instead (Cygański and Leszczyński 1997, pp. 43–47).

After the Second World War was over, the Sorbs started reactivating their organisations and their cultural life. The renewed attempts to create an independent Lusatian state failed (one of the projects was the creation of... the Socialist Soviet Lusatian Republic – fig. 2). Other projects, with the aim of incorporating Lusatia to the Czech Republic or Poland, were also not supported.

LUSATIA LUŽICE LUŽICA LUŽIČA LUŠACE

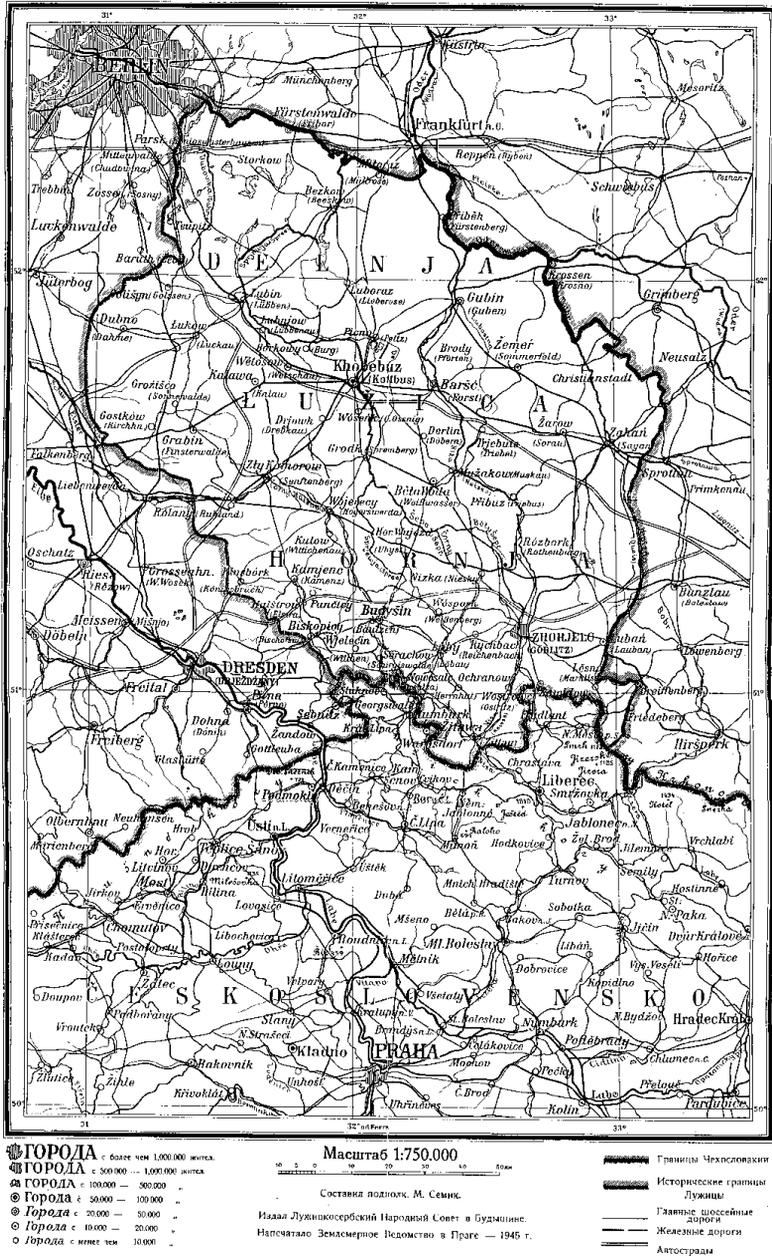


Fig. 2. Reach of the planned Socialist Soviet Lusatian Republic  
 Source: from the collection of K.R. Mazurski, according to J. Szczepankiewicz-Battek (2005)

One of the most frequent arguments of international opinion was, in this case, the simple fact that the territory of Lusatia was not inhabited by a numerous, dense group using Sorbian languages, but by clusters of Sorbian people with of more an “island” nature. In addition, the relative economic and politic weakness of the Sorbs in comparison with the Germans living in the same area was also emphasised (Cygański and Leszczyński 1997, pp. 48–62). The rectangular Lusatian area, (its border from the west was a political boundary between Germany and the Czech Republic, and from the east – the Lusatian Neisse River, from the north – the northern border of the Spree Woods, and from the west – the line of cities Lübben – Senftenberg – Bischofswerda to the Czech border) had an area of about 7,000 km<sup>2</sup> and with a population of about 800,000, including, at most 100,000 Sorbs declaring their access to this ethnic group, and about 300,000 Sorbs after Germanisation (who admitted their Lusatian roots, but did not know any Sorbian languages). Only a part of them were able to become Sorbs again (Cygański and Leszczyński 1997, pp. 61–62). The problem was additionally complicated by forced migrations of the German population from the areas given to Poland under the Potsdam agreement. A significant number of the displaced (coming mostly from Upper Silesia and Oppeln Silesia), mostly Catholics, were settled in Upper and Lower Lusatia which changed the population structure of this area entirely: the percentage of Sorbs diminished, while the percentage of Catholics grew, including in the indigenously Protestant areas. There was also no success with creating a single administrative unit in Lusatia – particular fragments of it were incorporated in different districts.

The authorities of the German Democratic Republic – a state working in the period 1949-1990 officially supported the Sorbian aspirations to preserve their own language and culture, though they dealt with this group as with a unique heritage park, ideally suited to show off on the international area as an example of an “excellent” attitude towards ethnic minorities in a socialist state. In the whole Lusatian territory, bilingual signs with street and square names were erected. The Sorbian organisations and institutions were given high state subsidies for their cultural activity (publishing houses, press, radio, theatres, folk groups, ethnographic museums etc.) and the development of tourism. All the time, primary and secondary schools gave Sorbian languages instructions or had Upper or Lower Sorbian languages taught as one of the subjects (Marciniak 1991). After the war, the Catholic and the Protestant church services in Sorbian languages, banned entirely during the Third Reich period, were reactivated, though encountered problems due to the insufficient number of clergymen able to speak these languages (especially for the Protestant people of Lower Lusatia). At the same time, the whole Sorbian population was very strongly invigilated by

the political police – the Stasi, and the posts in Sorbian organisations were only given to the individuals whose attitude caused no doubts about their loyalty towards the socialist state (activists, who declared their secular attitude, were preferred). The Lusatian Protestants were especially subordinated to control, because the majority of the democratic opposition of the German Democratic Republic was connected with the Protestant Church. The Catholic GDR citizens were oppressed less, because the authorities of the Catholic Church emphasised their complete loyalty towards the state authorities, and Catholic Sorbs were almost never engaged in resistance. Living in a consistent aggregation (known as Catholic Lusatia) – a group of villages, a dozen or so, northwest from Bautzen – the Catholics preserved their identity much better than the dispersed Protestants. According to a contemporary researcher, in 1648 90% of Sorbs were Protestants and 10% Catholics, but by the 1980s, the percentage of Catholics among Sorbs had reached 23% (Elle 2006).

In spite of the officially positive attitude of the GDR authorities towards the Sorbian minorities, this ethnic group was diminishing in number during the real socialism period step by step. The most outstanding researcher of the post-war time – Ernst Tschernik (Arnošt Černík) – established in the years 1955–1956 the number of Sorbs living in the countryside at 72,000 (Marciniak 1991). The urbanisation of the region was progressing very quickly (in 1950, the percentage of urban population was 19.8%, but by 1975 it was already 43.2% – Arcimowicz 1993), and relocation to cities usually ended up with denationalisation, or at least with the loosening of connections with another Sorbs. The main reason for this phenomenon was industrialisation. In the GRD there were almost no coal deposits, which is why lignite became the basic solid fuel stock. Lignite pits on the Cottbus area alone occupied approx. 200,000 acres (1/4 of the area of the district), with 12 mines in Lower and Middle Lusatia giving more than 50% of the production in the country, and 1/6 of the production of the world. Until 1989, the economy was led entirely as a robbery, with no environment or water protection of any kind (Arasimowicz 1993). The pits caused the majority of the Lusatian villages to be destroyed: between 1945 and 1989, 71 locations (with 13,543 people) were entirely destroyed, and a further 42 locations (8823 people) were partly destroyed, with their inhabitants forced to move to the nearby cities (Förster 1995). This meant the further dispersal of Sorbs among Germans. In the agricultural area of Upper Lusatia, it was the collectivisation of agriculture that played a significant role in people abandoning their Sorbian nationality. Family farms (where Upper Lusatian was spoken), were converted into large state-owned farms, where Germans were working, too (Scholze-Šolta 1994). Then, German became the language spoken there. Even indigenous Sorbs, speaking

Lusatian languages in their homes, were almost always forced to use German at work (the reason was partly because Sorbian languages do not have large vocabulary in certain areas, e.g. technology). The influx of German people on the Lusatian territory also led to more mixed marriages; it is estimated that since the end of the war, at least 50% of Sorbs were in such relationships, where German is usually the everyday language. According to S. Marciniak (1992), “the Sorbs are, in fact, bilingual and bicultural. An incontestable truth is that all Sorbs can speak German at least as well, as their mother tongue”. The disappearance of knowledge of Sorbian languages was also influenced by the situation of education. Despite the fact that (at least in Upper Lusatia) during the whole GDR period access to Lusatian schools was not particularly difficult, the number of children and youths who wished to attend these schools was diminishing steadily. Schools with German as the language of instruction were at a higher level and were better able to prepare their graduates for college studies. In 1964, the number of children taught Sorbian had dropped by about 25% in comparison with a few years earlier (Marciniak 1991). This trend continued, with the number of pupils at schools with Lusatian languages of instruction decreasing. At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, within just a couple of years, the number of children at schools with Sorbian languages dropped from 4,500 to 3,000, namely by about 30% (Scholte-Šolta 1994).

The reunification of Germany in 1990 put the Sorbs in a completely new situation. Attempts to create Lusatia as a separate unit (a federal one) failed: Upper Lusatia was incorporated to Saxony, and Lower Lusatia to Brandenburg, with the border between both areas being artificial across the lignite pits. The government of the Federal Republic of Germany admittedly guaranteed the political rights for Sorbs, including the right to maintain their language and their culture, but economic difficulties, including the fall of the majority of industrial plants, once giving work to the population of the region, induced many of the people – Germans and Sorbs as well – to seek their livelihood in Western Germany. This is hardly surprising, since 1996 the unemployment rate was about 17.7% in the Bautzen area, reaching as much as 25.6% in Senftenberg (Cygański and Leszczyński 1997, p. 150). In just a couple of years, the Lusatian population diminished by about 30–50%, and the majority of those who left were young people, leaving their family homes, or people who planned to start a family later. According to the vicar of one of the Catholic communities in Lusatia, the number of the First Communion children decreased from 20–30 a year in the eighties, to just 5–6 children a year at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The economic crisis and political changes sometimes caused occasional conflicts between the Germans and the Sorbs living in the same area.

Their indirect topics were mostly discussions concerning the recent past (Germans involved in democratic resistance in the GDR, often bore a grudge against Sorbs that they were not cooperating very intensively) and also money. It was often considered that the subsidies given to the Sorbs for their activities were too high during times of crisis. The majority of these conflicts were, however, staved off as time passed by.

In the 1990s, other Sorbian organisations came into being, including those promoting Sorbian languages in the church (the existence of these was for reasons of “ideology”, not possible during socialism times). One difficulty was, however, a significant restriction – compared to the GDR – of state subsidies for the activities of ethnic minorities associations. The rapidly decreasing number of children taught at schools with Sorbian languages led to a school closing down in Chrościce in 2001 – and that was one of the most significant places of Catholic Lusatia – resulting in fervent resistance of the Sorbs. However, an interest in teaching at schools with the Upper Lusatian language is clearly decreasing, and the reasons for closing schools down are purely economic, rather than political. After the reunification of Germany, the methods of exploiting lignite pits were also partly changed – some pits, where exploitation had come to an end, were re-cultivated (mainly as water reservoirs for recreational and leisure purposes), but also as botanic gardens or racecourses. In others, the exploitation continued, but with greater respect for the natural environment, as far as possible. Still, villages inhabited by Sorbian population were disappearing, despite strong protests from local people, Germans and the Sorbs. The process of diminishing the territories inhabited by the Sorbs continues. Nowadays (since the reunification of Germany), the area of the “Lusatian ethnic area” is estimated at about 3,000 km<sup>2</sup> at most (Scholze-Šolta 1994); in addition to that, the Sorbian population is dispersed throughout the whole of the Lower Lusatian and part of Upper Lusatian area. The only two enclaves where the Sorbs live in dense groups, maintaining their language and traditions, are the dozen or so villages in the Bautzen area, known as Catholic Lusatia, and seven villages belonging to the Protestant community of Slepó (German: Schleife) in the Middle Lusatia. Other territories are a row of “islands”, which are not purely Lusatian and, although the Sorbs live there, the German population is a majority (Scholze-Šolta 1994). A surprise for many may be the fact that Germans living in Sorbian enclaves sometimes become Sorbs (Marciniak 1992), though, this means more the acceptance of some Sorbian elements of culture (festive traditions, folk dresses, local dishes), and it is very rarely connected with a wish to learn Sorbian languages. Sometime the acceptance of elements of the Lusatian culture by non-Sorbian people is with a view to attracting more tourists to the region, since

many characteristic elements of the material culture of Lusatia are significant tourist attractions. Although the maintenance of these elements is decided mainly by commercial reasons, it would be difficult to take this the wrong way, as long as it is helping, at least in part, this characteristic and valuable culture to survive. In the reunited Germany, the Sorbs are involved in political activities – many of them take positions in local authorities. Since 2008, Stanislaw Tillich, a Sorb coming from the Catholic Lusatia and an activists of the CDU (Christian Democrats), has been the prime minister of the Saxony government.

During the general register in Germany (2002), about 60,000 people declared their Sorbian nationality. Of these, however, only half at best (about 30,000) has a passive knowledge of any of the Sorbian languages, and just 15,000 an active knowledge. Of these, only about 1,000–2,000 at most know Lower Lusatian, though there are many more people speaking Upper Lusatian and using it in their everyday lives (fig. 3).

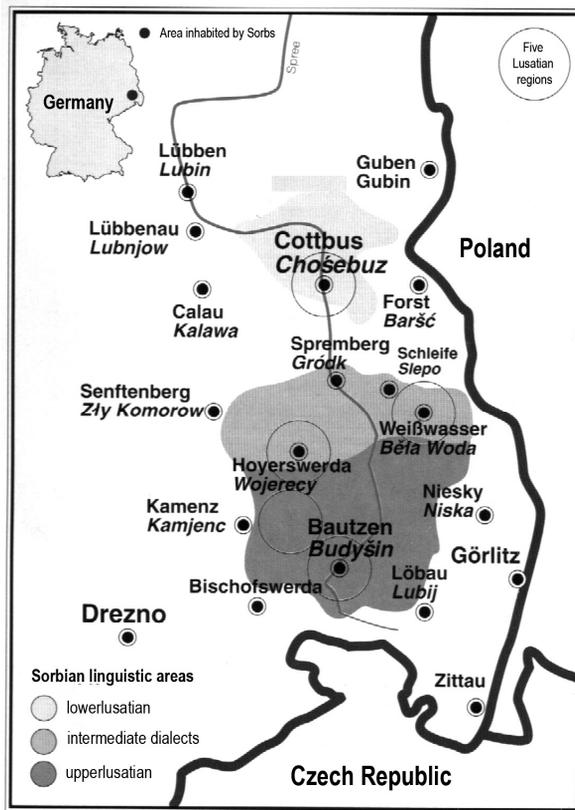


Fig. 3. Contemporary reach of Sorbian languages  
Source: according to L. Elle (2001)

Ludwig Elle, at around the same time (2006), estimated the number of people using the Sorbian nationality at around 50,000, and those who know one of the Sorbian languages “well” (and can speak it fluently) at about 20,000. The Sorbs live in around 80 municipalities – in all these municipalities there are bilingual signs with place names and names of streets and squares. In Germany, there are no regulations concerning a fixed strength of the minority (Elle 2006). Population changes, decreasing number of pupils at schools with a Sorbian language in lecture, and, at the same time, a growing interest in language courses among people who are not of Sorbian origin, caused a need to work out other forms of teaching Sorbian languages. Since 1998, a project named “WITAJ” [“Welcome”] is being followed in Lusatia, modelled on successful similar programmes from, for example, Scotland and Wales, where learning the local language (often close to disappearing) is carried out at kindergartens and at schools in the frame of regional education. Upper or Lower Lusatian is a school subject for all children attending these kindergartens or schools, regardless of the declared nationality. Special courses are also organised for interested adults, including foreigners. Recently, however, (2017) the Lower Sorbs submitted a protest to the Brandenburg government because of planned restrictions of the project tasks (less course hours and the introduction of minimum numbers in groups – 12 participants).

Protests in Lower Lusatia are still continued to save another locations (mainly old Sorbian villages to be erased because of lignite pits expansion). Almost all people of the area take part in them, regardless of the declared nationality (fig. 4). Apart from ethnic reasons, environmental questions and re-cultivation of areas destroyed by previous economy led as a robbery are, of course, significant as well. However, one must clearly say, that the situation of Lusatia improved very much, since Germany was reunited. The protests are supported by the Greens and by activists of ecology associations from Germany and another countries including Poland (Gromm 2001).

S. Marciniak (1992) draws attention to the inevitability of certain processes taking place in ethnic minorities, especially those that are dispersed. One of these is an acceleration of loosening the distinctive features. Firstly, the elements of the own, distinctive material culture (e.g. dresses, home equipment, personal objects) are abandoned in favour of the material culture of the surrounding majority. Then the traditions are abandoned, if they are not compatible with the traditions of the majority (for example, the way of celebrating feasts and family occasions). At the third stage, communication in the ethnic majority language narrows down.



Fig. 4. Protest of the Proschim municipality people against devastation of Lusatian villages (photo: M. Battek)

Some ethnic or religious minorities attempt to counteract these processes through the forced isolation of their members from people outside the religious or ethnic group (ban on mixed marriages, participation in religious services or practices of the “majority”, a ban of breaking the characteristic mysteries of the group to the “outsiders”, sometimes even a ban on social contact), but it does not guarantee that the cultural identity will be preserved through the minority members, since it is a rule that individuals who are not ready to obey these rules will leave the community and break all connections with it. During a time of globalisation, it is the language of minorities that disappears first (for example, in tourism, using a language not understood by visitors makes communication with them not easier, but even more difficult – Szczepankiewicz-Battek 2005, p. 305). M. Cygański and R. Leszczyński (1997, p. 155) noticed that even the disappearance of a language does not necessarily cause the whole culture of the given group to vanish, because another elements – religion or another historic traditions then begin to integrate the minority group. Languages of ethnic minorities are, however, an important element of cultural heritage and UNESCO is decidedly supporting all activities leading to their maintenance. Processes of reactivating vanishing languages, being carried out in some European countries, show that such activities may be successful, though they require a great deal of effort and significant financial outlays.

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