Nation, nationalism, State

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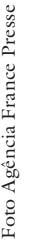

Definitions

A NATION, in the modern political sense, is a community of individuals who are linked socially and economically, share a given territory and recognize the existence of a common past - even if they differ about aspects of this past. The community has a common vision of the future and believes that this future will be better if they remain united than if they separate - even if some aspire to change the social organization of the nation and its political system,
the State.

In this sense, it is possible to speak of a Brazilian nation, of a Mexican nation, of an Indian nation, of an American nation, and so on, even if social groups within these nations can have different interpretations of their past and distinct aspirations for their common future, without, however, any significant group desiring and fighting for secession.

Nationalism is the sentiment of considering the nation to which one belongs, for one reason or another, better than other nations and thus, to have more rights. Extreme manifestations of this sentiment are xenophobia, racism and imperial arrogance. Nationalism is also the desire for affirmation and political independence before a oppressive foreign state. When the State has already become independent, it is the desire to assure within the territory better treatment from the State, or at least treatment equal issued to foreigners, whether individuals or entities. The significant nationalist movements from a political perspective - the most simple historic manifestations of which stem from ethnic, linguistic identification or to belonging in the past to a political organization - have as their principal objective the establishment of a State or the modification of the policies of the State to defend the interests of those in the movement.

Nationalism

The prejudice of considering one's nation better than the others has its origin in the idea that the divinities had chosen a people, a certain nation, as elected, that is, the nation as a set of individuals who worshipped a certain divinity. The case of the Jewish people, the so-called chosen people, is classic. It is this conviction that has political consequences until today, with the Near East being the principal and most complex focus of world tension. Japan is another interesting case to the degree in which the emperor was considered

a Child of the Sun and as such symbolized the concrete link between the Japanese people and the supreme divinity. China, traditionally considered itself so superior to its neighboring peoples, and to distant peoples, that it would not even accept maintaining political relations at the level of sovereign states with other States. These could, at most, offer tributes to the Middle Empire, the center of civilization, whose emperors believed they were directly linked to celestial divinities.

The case of the United States, a civilization more recent than the Chinese, Jewish and Japanese (and even than the French, German and Russian) is a distinct one, but the roots of American nationalism can be found in the Protestant religion. The latter posits that material success is a sign of divine approval, of salvation itself, of a pre-destiny. From a collective point of view, the material success of the American society signifies divine approval that American society had been elected by the Lord and that for this reason, not only could but should assume the role of leader and of model for all societies and States. This salvational mission of the United States is clearly expressed in U.S. foreign policy documents. The declaration by President George W. Bush that he had literally spoken with God, and the growing presence and enormous influence of extremely conservative, bellicose and nationalist religious fundamentalism, are revealing factors of this conviction of the people, that it is a chosen nation and therefore, superior in relation to other nations.

One of the principal nationalist movements developed in Germany and was based on the superiority of a supposed Aryan, Germanic and pure race. It led to the taking of the State by the National Socialist Party, with terrible consequences for the world, and in particular, for those considered members of inferior races, in particular the Jews, who became victims of a policy of physical elimination, the Holocaust.

Nationalism in the developed countries, in particular in the Great Powers, and their pretense to national superiority, led to expansionist and aggressive policies, both on the European continent as well as in the formation of the colonial empires. This was accompanied by an explicit ideology regarding the inferiority of the local peoples and cultures and even, at times, the idea that they are different and even inferior human beings. In a shocking example of this prejudice, the former commander in chief of U.S. forces in Vietnam, General Westmoreland, publically referred to the Vietnamese as being different "from us" to justify certain actions of American troops.

The central characteristics of the international system of the past five hundred years since the discovery of the Americas have been imperialism and colonialism. The foundation of this domination, in addition to force, was the ideology of racial and civilizational superiority in relation to the colonies and their peoples and forceful aggression against the political, social and cultural systems of the dominated nations by the European metropoles. (This also

took place in the creation of the "continental empires" as in the territorial expansion of the United States to the West, and of Russia, to the East and South). Slavery was the maximum expression of this domination and the slaves were considered inferior beings, without souls, and therefore naturally subject to the judgment and will of their masters. Lord Acton, in an article published in 1862, maintained that the most perfect states are those that, like the British and the Austrian Empires, include various, distinct nationalities without oppressing them because "the inferior races are elevated by living in a political union with intellectually superior races".

In the countries of the periphery, ex-colonies, or ex semi-colonies, nationalism has a radically different nature from the nationalist movements that developed in Europe, which had their reputations definitively tarnished by Nazi-fascism, which had arduous followers and sympathizers in various European countries in addition to Germany and Italy. It can be said in passing that the current "cosmopolitans" often erroneously equate European nationalism and the nationalism of the periphery to disqualify the anticolonialist, anti-imperialist and now antiglobalization movements – by accusing them of being "nationalists" (to which they usually add the term populist). The nationalist movements in various colonies - with natural variations in time and space - were movements of affirmation of nationality, for the revival of traditions, language, political autonomy and independence, in relation initially to the European colonial metropoles. They later were transformed into movements for political affirmation and independent economic development for the States that originated from the former colonies.

Nation

At the end of the Roman Empire, the invading Barbarian tribes occupied the Roman provinces and established feudal territories in which various tribal leaders had their political and military sovereignty recognized, even if in a somewhat limited form. This established for the first time, through the differentiation of local languages and popular Latin, the seeds of the modern nations and States. The Church had special importance in this process, to the degree to which these feudal lords converted to Christianity and recognized the authority of Rome.

These feudal systems - loosely beholden to a central power, in general the master of a feudal territory with more land and population - corresponded to a set of fiefdoms, small territories that progressively came together by force of the various systems of political inheritance (which after all were also patrimonial), the regime of the first born and marriage. Disagreements over hereditary rights, wars of conquest and the patrimonial personal relationships of the feudal masters with their territories, periodically caused populations of distinct origins to be submitted to the sovereignty of distinct masters.

This is how the European National States were formed, which, in reality, do not correspond to homogeneous nations, but to groups of populations of distinct ethnic origins, with different degrees of miscegenation, distinct traditions and at times different religions. Absolutist regimes ruled in these States based on the doctrine of the divine right of kings over all of their subjects (including the noble descendants of the feudal masters). The monarchs mutually supported themselves in this pretension. These absolute monarchs had the ideological support of Rome, until Protestantism came to ferociously oppose, in bloody wars, some of these States, which continued, however, to believe in and defend the divine right of kings.

The idea that the State was born with the nation does not correspond to reality in the majority of cases, because the nation was in fact a posterior ideological construction, very often "constructed" by the State. The natural emergence of nations in reality was impossible because of the ignorance of the masses, the diversity of ethnicities and religions, the absence of real, effective traditions, the late fixation of languages and the diversity of oral traditions. Therefore, the emergence of a nation only became possible after the rise of the modern State, which organized an administrative center for the State and as a consequence, gave rise to public education, military service and the will of the leaders to unify the populations. Nevertheless, if this took place, that is, if nations were built by States, it is necessary to clarify how the State arose.

Thus, nation and nationalism, despite being diffuse concepts, had and have a strong impact on the political reality and are found closely tied to another concept which, although a concept, is the most concrete fact of the daily reality of all individuals - the State. All the theoretical and practical questions related to the nation and nationalism, such as to what degree each nation should correspond to a State; if the nations to be considered as such should be ethnically, linguistically or religiously homogeneous; if nationalism would always be a perverse and dangerous political manifestation; if nationalism tends to Nazism, and so on, are of special interest when examined under the light of the concept and the reality of the State.

The primitive formation of the States

Despite important differences in the process of formation and evolution of the current States, a general – if a bit schematic - description of their formation can be made, which must be adjusted and qualified in accordance with each historic and geographic circumstance of a specific State. But the general dynamic can be considered reasonably valid for all.

The diversification of productive activities and social functions caused, even in the most primitive societies, conflicts of interest that made necessary the existence of norms to discipline the relationships between individuals and

groups and which - whether accepted as valid by all or imposed - allowed for a peaceful coexistence without a permanent need for force and violence to guarantee obedience.

The struggle for hegemony (that is, for the right to extract natural wealth from a certain territory and organize human work) led to the subjection of some communities by others and to the definition of territories and their frontiers, within which this hegemony was exercised in practice by the definition of norms and by the capacity to make them accepted - if necessary by force.

Naturally, the hegemonic groups in each society sought to justify and explain their hegemony by means of their supposed ties with the divinities that protect those communities, which confirmed the right to govern, and therefore, to elaborate the norms of conduct and insure compliance.

Borders separated geographic territories dominated by distinct hegemonic groups whose leaders sought to accentuate the existing differences in culture, language, tradition and religious practices between the communities separated by frontiers. This encouraged the rivalries and notions of superiority that characterize nationalisms.

Borders define the physical limits of the exercise of hegemony (of sovereignty) of groups and were established in the past as the result of struggles. They were set along natural barriers to the exercise of force such as seas, lakes, rivers and mountain ranges, obstacles that contributed in the past, when distances were very significant, to the development of distinct languages and traditions.

As societies became more populated, the need arose to organize permanent institutions responsible for establishing norms of conduct, to assure obedience to them and to finance their operation, by collecting taxes. In primitive and smaller communities, all individuals could participate in the establishment of social norms and all could, in principal, participate in the social organisms charged with establishing obedience to these norms.

To the degree that the communities grew in population and productive activities diversified, individuals could no longer participate directly in elaborating and executing norms and resolving conflicts. It became necessary to choose representatives to govern societies by means of systems whose differences stem, as Aristotle defined in his work Politics, from an a priori judgment about human nature. The basic question, according to Aristotle, was if all individuals are essentially equal or unequal; and if unequal, if one family could be considered better than the others; or if some individuals could be considered essentially better than others. Depending on the nature of this a priori conviction, the possible political regimes would be democracy, monarchy and oligarchy, with their variations. It is obvious, however, that there was never a theoretical debate about human nature before the definition of the political regimes of the human communities, primitive

or not, which were defined through the intense conflict of interests within each community and the struggle of various groups for hegemony.

In any case, even in absolute monarchies and authoritarian regimes, the king or the dictator does not govern alone, does not prepare the norms of conduct alone, and does not guarantee obedience to them alone. He must make use of assistants, nobles, ministers, apparatchiks or aides with whatever name they may have, to whom he delegates the exercise of part of his functions and prerogatives and whose political and military support he needs to remain in power. It is possible to imagine that, at the beginning, the choice of these individuals was made from the core of those families in the hegemonic groups that initially organized the community and their systems of production and defense from other communities.

The distinct political regimes, forms of government, are merely different systems for selecting the representatives of a community to exercise the public functions and the form of financing the exercise of these functions, which are to legislate, execute and judge. The set of institutions that exercise these functions of legislating, executing and judging on behalf of the group of citizens of a society is called the State. An essential and preliminary function of the State is the organization of its defense in relation to the territorial pretensions of other States. This guarantees its sovereignty over its territory and the population that inhabits it. The State, even in its primitive forms and of limited scope, is therefore essential for peaceful coexistence of the various groups of individuals that inhabit a given territory and for the defense of their interests in confrontation with other communities organized under the form of the State. Naturally, the religious systems, with their norms for social conduct and with the powerful instrument of divine sanction, were an integral part of the States.

The modern State has a monopoly on the use of force that is an essential and indispensable prerogative for the efficient maintenance of a system of norms and government.

The historic evolution of the primitive communities by means of wars, and the consequent incorporation of territories and subjection of the populations found in them, eventually led to the constitution of the modern States. It is in those cases in which this incorporation of territory and population was not accepted that have been found the more or less violent demands for autonomy or independence, as in Spain, China, Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union, Canada, Belgium and so many other countries.

This historic evolution of communities and nations led to the constitution and definition of territories within which was exercised the sovereignty of each one of the 192 States that are current members of the United Nations (UN). Their peaceful co-existence can only take place through obedience to the principles of Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Charter which call for: peaceful settlement of disputes; equal rights and self determination;

respect for human rights and basic liberties; sovereign equality; and abstention from threats or the use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State.

The French Revolution in 1789, the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the Chinese Revolution in 1949 were three great attempts to modify a social system for organization of the State. Each had enormous consequences in the history of humanity. The first triggered the elimination of feudal rights and the transformation of the absolute monarchies in Europe (and of their colonial empires, in particular in Latin America) by affirming that "each people is independent and sovereign". The second began the first experience with a social model and political alternative to capitalism and liberalism and reinforced the self-determination of peoples - in competition with the United States, which defended the idea only for Europeans. The third began the transformation of the Chinese state and economy with the consequences that now find China, upon growing an average of 10% for each of the past 20 years, transformed into the world's second largest economic power.

The vision of the State at the beginning of the 21st century

Current society is characterized by the concentration of wealth and power, accelerated technological transformation, social instability, individual anxiety and frustration, religious fundamentalism and by the consumption of consciousness altering products such as alcohol, cocaine, ecstasy and other narcotics.

Control of the State is essential for the dominant classes in modern societies, whether they are highly developed or underdeveloped. This involves control of the system of norms and institutions that define and guarantee the fundamental characteristics of the production system, and which, regardless of the reason, legitimize certain privileges.

In the modern democratic system, however, which is the result of a history of struggle and of conquests of the oppressed sectors of society, each citizen - a concept that has been defined in different forms over time and space - has a vote in the process of choosing the directors of the State. In turn, under capitalism, each monetary unit corresponds to a "vote" in the market, and therefore, in the social decisions about what and how to produce and how to consume. The benefits that stem from these decisions are highly concentrated in the hands of the megacompanies, that is, of their shareholders-owners and their delegates, or their best employees, the so-called executives.

The large and permanent challenge that the detainers of economic power must confront in modern societies with democratic regimes - in which each citizen corresponds to a vote - consists in transforming economic power into political power. This transformation is essential to guaranteeing the survival of the fundamental norms of the economic and social system and eventually, to promote, to the degree that this is necessary, its controlled,

reformist and non-revolutionary modification - that is, without altering the fundamental relations of property. In the early days of liberal democracy, this challenge was still not raised, because the regime was based on tax collection, individuals were only citizens to the degree to which they had a certain income, or property, or paid taxes.

The first goal, therefore, in the process of transforming economic power into political power, must be to separate the mass of citizens from the activities of the State and of politics - which is the activity by which the State is controlled - or to reduce to a minimum and control the participation of this mass in politics and the State. Thus, it is necessary to promote a negative image of the State and of politics at the heart of the mass of society, but certainly not among those who compose its elites.

The image of the State diffused in current society, in which individualist values predominate, exalted by the media, the educational system and even by religions, is that the State is the modern Leviathan, the source of all Evil.

According to this vision, the charging of extorsive taxes (as low as they may be in reality) to feed a parasitic bureaucracy, which prepares thousands of useless and confused regulations - which stimulate corruption and inhibit the liberty and creativity of the originally pure and happy individual - stems from the existence of a State that each day infringes on individual liberty and numbs social development. This vision, which has persisted for centuries, originated in the criticism of the arbitrary practices of the absolute monarchies of the Renaissance and Enlightenment. The nascent bourgeoisie and its political representatives struggled against these monarchies to implant capitalism and liberalism as forms of economic and political organization, before the industrial and technological revolution.

In this Leviathan State of the 21st century, the politician, the man of the State, is seen to reign maliciously as an Evil being. He is incompetent and incapable of confronting the evils that afflict society; dishonest, he eludes the citizens who he periodically betrays; xenophobic he stimulates conflicts; and corrupt, he defends foreign interests, or those of the powerful or the interests of the social incompetents who fail in the individual struggle for success, while taking advantage of the "benefits" of the positions that they occupy.

Disdain and even loathing for politics (and for politicians) are systematic and stimulated daily by the mass media, which seeks to make the middle and working classes believe that political activity is not worthy of a "good man", who should be exclusively dedicated to his professional activity whether he is a worker, an employee, a technician, or an independent professional who risks being corrupted.

In the strategy of stimulating this loathing and disdain (with the goal of distancing the "inferior classes" from the temptation of governing society), it is necessary to demobilize these "classes", deviate and distract

their attention. The more unequal and exclusionary the society, with greater ostentation of wealth and the more striking poverty, the more important is this strategy.

The attention of the large working masses and of the middle classes is distracted by the creation of new cults and the promotion of the heroes of these new cults. This is undertaken by the mass media, particularly television, and by the massive supply of banal audiovisual entertainment, musical spectacles, journals and magazines, sporting events and advertising. Society is a show in which everything is transformed into a spectacle, including politics.

The principal new cult is that of the body, manifest through "body building", plastic surgery and corrective diets (the soup diet, fruit diets, protein diets, diets by blood type or vitamins...). Its heroes are athletes, artists and fashion models, while it disdains the cultivation of the spirit and culture, more by omission than by direct attack.

The second cult is that of money, in which the entrepreneur is seen as the great hero, a dynamic, astute, tireless worker in search of personal success. This cult tries to convince everyone that anyone can become successful and rich by simply following the strategies described in business self-help books: If Harry Potter Ran General Electric?, Smart Couples Finish Rich, or The Tao of Warren Buffet and Sun Tzu – The Art of War for Executives, etc.. The entrepreneur is thus the hero who confronts the politician-villain, he is the victim of the State, he employs the masses, he is in favor of peace. The heroes of these two new cults are models for the young and the scorn of the elderly who can no longer be athletes or entrepreneurs – they are failures for not being rich and given that their experience has no value in the society of the new and of programmed obsolescence.

The ideal world for the individuals of the new 21st century society - from which all utopias are driven away, and in which those who propose to confront social inequalities and change the structures of power that created and maintain them are always ridiculed - would be a world without governments, without violence, without drugs, without politicians, without norms, without taxes, where everyone would be physically and financially successful, athletes and entrepreneurs, a world in which, above all, the State would not exist.

The real 21st century world

In the real 21st century world, there are 192 States and an ever larger number of nations, and therefore, it is a world in which conflicts and divergences proliferate among and between the States, and in which the permanent elaboration of norms and incessant political activity are inescapable realities.

There are not only 192 States today, but the number of States has been growing since 1946 when the United Nations charter was signed by its

founding States. The member states of the UN grew from 51 in 1946 to 152 in 1980 to 192 in 2008. To the degree in which nationalisms – stimulated or natural – are heightened, other States may arise, as was the recent case of Kosovo, a highly nonviable state, but which opens an important precedent that affects the most strategic interests of the United States and Europe. The stimulus to the local nationalisms in Europe weaken the new European nationalism which is concretized in "European citizenship" by making the political action of the European Union more difficult, while the stimulus to nationalism on the periphery has the effect of weakening the large States such as China, India and Russia. Politically, if the nationalisms are strengthened, this economically weakens these large competitors and harms the globalization process by multiplying the number of States.

The armed conflicts of the 20th century were the most bloody and destructive of the entire history of humanity. The end of the communist regimes, to whose existence and action the conflicts between States was attributed, reduced neither the number nor the intensity of these conflicts.

The increase in the number of States is certainly due to the vitality and success of the nationalist movements in their struggle against the domination of colonial empires and against the States under whose domination were found unredeemed national groups, such as those in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

The formation of States certainly occurred differently in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. The current states, particularly in Latin America - where the institutions of the local populations existing at the time of the conquest were either totally eliminated, as in the case of Mexico and Peru, or were fragile, as in the case of Brazil - are often the result of the transplantation of European institutions made by the metropoles in their colonies. In Africa, a century and a half later, the colonies had borders arbitrarily traced which, later would survive decolonization. These borders separated ethnicities, languages and traditions, and gave reason to the conflicts which, however, often had their real origin in disputes for the exploitation of natural resources. In Asia, European colonization took place indirectly and found much more sophisticated political and administrative systems on which it imposed itself. Today, those previous forms of organization, or at least their spirit, survive in the political organizations of the Asiatic State.

In turn, the current process of European integration is not a process of elimination of the State and of its fundamental characteristics, but a process of gradual unification of the independent States that cede part of their sovereignty to the supra-national organs of the European Union. This is a phenomenon similar to that which occurred in the past in Germany and Italy, and has nothing to do with any supposed historic trend to end borders, but corresponds to a redesigning of borders and citizenship. In reality, it involves the gradual formation of a new (and enormous) State in a process similar but

not equal - because the States, in the European Union, still maintain a much larger number of sovereign prerogatives – to those involved in the formation of the United States, Germany and Italy.

Capitalism and the campaign to end the State

Modern capitalism is based on private ownership of the means of production. Its principal objective is profit. This supreme objective makes indispensable the permanent expansion of production on which, in turn, the division of labor, and therefore, the extension of the market ultimately depend.

The greater the extension of the market, the greater the possibility for the division of labor, and thus for greater productivity, production, consumption, profit and human happiness - given that, according to Jeremy Bentham, since it is impossible to measure human happiness, it could be considered that the more goods an individual (and a community) can consume, the greater their "happiness". It is for this reason that GNP growth is praised with such joy, despite the high degree of dissatisfaction of common individuals even in the more developed countries. It is clear that for the excluded masses, the increase of their "happiness" can only occur when they are able to achieve minimum and decent levels of consumption of physical and cultural goods.

Thus since its early days, capitalism, as a form of organization of production, distribution and consumption of goods, sought to expand markets through the incorporation - by peaceful or violent means - of populations and territories into its production system. It also sought to assure the existence of political systems for the elaboration of and execution of the norms that would guarantee its expansion and peaceful operation.

Market formation - which was at first local, then regional, then national, later continental and finally global - was interrupted from 1914 -1989, a period in which there were two World Wars, the Great Depression of 1929 and the Russian Revolution of 1917, which implanted the socialist regime in Russia that was expanded to Eastern Europe, China and Asia. In addition, in many States decolonization led to the organization of mixed economic production systems with a high degree of State participation, as in Latin America. These events fragmented the world economy in various forms, interrupting the globalization of markets and the integration of the world economy. Many analysts understood this to be a prelude to communism's inevitable defeat of capitalism.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the removal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe and Afghanistan, the disintegration of the Soviet Union into 15 independent states, the adherence to capitalism of the formerly communist European regimes, China's new economic policy and the reorganization of the economies of the former colonies of the periphery by means of conditionalities linked to foreign debt renegotiations, created the opportunity for

globalization. That is, they allowed the formation of global markets to resume with complete ideological and practical vigor, through the incorporation of these "new" territories.

At this beginning of the 21st century, for globalization - which corresponds to the expansion of capitalism and to its permanent technological transformation - to be efficient (maximization of profits), there must be uniformity in the norms that regulate economic activity in the distinct sovereign territories. The removal of the economic question from the political arena is also required by establishing neoliberal policy and its fundamental precepts of private property and the free interplay of market forces as absolute and untouchable truths. This requires privatization programs (which even extend to managing national security forces and prison systems), deregulation and commercial and financial liberalization, the reduction of taxes on capital and the non-discrimination between national and foreign capital.

What could be more useful to strongly assist this harmonization of norms than the elaboration of theories that call for the end of Nation States (and of nationalisms), the end of borders and the benefits of the minimum-State, accompanied by the negotiation of international norms that lead to the adoption by sovereign States (in the impossibility of their political subjection by force) of those neoliberal policies, relegating any other policies to the realm of the illegal and the "absurd"? In sum, efficient economic globalization depends on a global political governance that assures its operation and impedes national attempts to reverse and limit the rights of multinational megacompanies. Nevertheless, paradoxically, since there is no world State, globalization requires National States to internalize the norms negotiated internationally and to guarantee their enforcement.

At the periphery of the world economic and political system, where former colonial states such as Brazil are to be found, there are extraordinary disparities of income and power within territories, as well as between these former colonies and the countries that integrate the developed and powerful center of the international system. The growing disparities of power between the center and the periphery of the system can be seen in the growing gap in per capita income and in the accumulation of military capacity between the developed States and developing States. This requires the States - the only entities on the periphery capable of confronting the power of the multinational megacompanies and of the "international" agencies and the developed States - to strive for a peaceful coexistence among the social sectors within their territories affected by the neoliberal policies. They do this by attempting to execute development policies and combating poverty, which often means restricting the formation of global markets and the free interplay of market forces.

These policies are called nationalist and "populist" and their defenders are accused, criticized and ridiculed by the press, which is controlled by

multinational entertainment and information companies that are intimately tied to the multinational megacompanies and dependent on them, not only as a consequence of their common ideological interests, since they are also private companies, but also because of the system of advertising.

The imbalances relating to population, territory, production, armed forces and technological development between countries of the center and the periphery make the idea of world government impossible and utopian. The idea is conveniently substituted by the idea of global governance, which is exercised by the international agencies that were created after World War II to assure peace, political security and economic stability. Or, when these agencies for one reason or another are found insufficient or become inconvenient, by new international or multinational agencies that may be created.

The permanent attempts of the States at the center of the system to impose their economic and social policies, the growing asymmetries of wealth and power between the societies of the center and the periphery, the growing hiatus between them, and the attempt of the States at the Center to impose on the periphery - through violence or economic pressures - changes in the political and economic regime, trigger strong antiglobalization and nationalist movements.

The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, as well as the constant migratory movements, due to differences in opportunities for individuals between the periphery and the center - combined with periodic migratory waves caused by conflicts and natural catastrophes - cause xenophobic nationalisms to re-arise in the highly developed countries. In turn, the economic development of China and India has created a strong demand for energy, food and minerals, which has led to the accumulation of enormous reserves by the countries that export petroleum, gas, minerals and agricultural commodities. The decision of these countries to invest these resources (in "sovereign funds") in companies of the center of the world system has provoked an unprecedented movement to impose restrictions on the flow of foreign capital aimed at the central countries, whose directors and analysts argue that these restrictions are necessary for strategic political reasons.

This rapid expansion in demand for energy, minerals, and foods in countries such as China and India resulted from their legitimate aspiration to achieve decent levels of consumption for their populations – which correspond, as a whole, to more than one third of the world population. Combined with demand from Western societies, it has had enormous environmental impact, particularly on climate change, the control of which makes more State intervention in the economy nearly unavoidable. This in turn will affect the physical and ideological dynamic of capitalism.

Universities, international agencies, the press and governments from the highly developed countries remain, however, convinced that for the countries of the periphery, nationalism, which is the opposite of globalizing

cosmopolitanism, and populism, which is the opposite of radical liberalism, are two twin evils to be attacked and eradicated at any price. These underdeveloped countries are told that for their own good (or suffering), their best option is to give in to the whims of the violent waves of wild and radical globalization. The merits of this globalization are highly praised despite the economic crises resulting from deregulation, financial speculation and the growing economic and social hiatus between the center and periphery of the system. This process has been accompanied in the central countries by a rebirth of economic nationalism and of xenophobic nationalism against the immigrants of the periphery. This periphery is always seen as inferior since it is black, Indian, or yellow, barbarous, infidel and turbulent.

Although the illusions held by the peripheral States regarding the benefits of globalization and of the possibility of a New World Order – sparked by the end of the Soviet Union – have been erased, these States continue their efforts at economic development, as in the case of China; at political affirmation, as in the case of India; and in the struggle against poverty, as in the case of Brazil. They have come to coordinate their international action, proposing reform of the United Nations and of the central agency of the international political-military system, the Security Council; reform of the world trade system through the action of the G-20 in the Doha Round; the organization of blocks of States, as in the case of the African Union; and the reform of the system to combat climate change and of the energy matrix. Only by means of their coordinated action can they defend their right to development and to political independence in a world system that is characterized by economic instability, by the violence of the powerful, by the desperation of the weak, by extreme poverty and wealth and by the threat to the survival of humanity.

ABSTRACT - Nation and nationalism correspond to realities that have a strong effect on politics and that relate to the most concrete fact of daily life for all individuals: the State. In the periphery, nationalism has a radically distinct nature if compared to the nationalist movements that developed in Europe and whose reputation was tarnished by Nazi-Fascism. The real world of the 21st century is one in which conflicts and divergences proliferate within and between States, and in which the permanent elaboration of norms and political action are inescapable realities. Attempts by States at the core of the world system to impose economic and social policies, the growing asymmetries of wealth and power and the attempt of core States to impose on the periphery, through violence or economic pressure, changes in political and economic regimes, lead to the re-emergence, on a greater scale, of anti-globalization movements and nationalisms.

KEYWORDS - Nation, Nationalism, State, Globalization.

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