

Can nationalism be cosmopolitan?

Unification vs. stateless nationalisms

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Many scholars have traditionally viewed nationalism as a solipsistic and particularistic ideology, antithetical to, and nearly incompatible with, universalism (Vincent 2002). This firm critique of nationalism is shared by mainstream Liberal philosophers and historians of ideas like Kenneth Minogue (1967) and Elie Kedourie (1974; 1993) and by their Marxist counterparts, like Eric Hobsbawm (1983).¹ Such a widespread disapproval also points towards the intrinsic difficulties of combining nationalism with cosmopolitanism (Conversi 2001; Resnick 2006). Despite rhetorical claims to the contrary, cosmopolitanism always risks being permeated by nationalism, since the latter is the dominant ideology of the modern age.

Can we say the same thing regarding nationalism ‘s relations with *liberalism*? Despite the historical fact that in the 19th century most nationalists were also liberals, things have changed. Nowadays, the very notion of ‘liberal nationalism’ (Tamir 1993) has been scrutinized and subject to contestation, in particular when and while it is used to legitimise forms of nationalism which can hardly be defined as ‘civic’, specifically ‘left’ Zionism (Nimni 2003: 17-18). In other words, it represents a failed “attempt to reconcile Zionist convictions with the liberal belief in individual rights and personal autonomy” (Beiner 1999: 137-9). These difficulties with the notion of ‘*liberal nationalism*’ are not limited to the case of Israel and can be extended to virtually all nationalisms in the world. I show how this problematic relationship can be seen, first, in the evolution of Italian nationalism soon after the country’s unification and, secondly, in Serbian nationalism during the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Walker Connor underlines the “general insensitivity that one national group and its leadership customarily exemplify towards the rights of other groups” (Connor 1973: 17). This clearly points to the deep irrational character of even the most rationally-looking nationalist movement: for instance, irrationality lies in the incapacity to

¹ For a critique of the limits of mainstream liberal thought in this respect, see Kymlicka (Kymlicka 1989; 1996). For a critique of Hobsbawm, see Hastings (1997: 1-34) and Smith (1998: 117-141).

coordinate one's efforts with those of potential allies, simply because the latter do not belong to the same ethno-biological pool, while indicating a manifest failure in empathy and compassion. This anti-universalist inclination is largely incompatible with cosmopolitan rationalism, because the incapability to coordinate efforts with other groups is often self-defeating, as most Twentieth Century wars have demonstrated. Connor develops his argument further by focusing on the unreasonable, illogical, unsound character of most nationalisms: "The peculiar emotional depth of the 'us-them' syndrome which is an intrinsic part of national consciousness, by bifurcating as it does all mankind into 'members of the nation' versus 'all others,' appears thereby to pose a particularly severe impediment to coordinated action with any of the 'others'" (Connor 1973: 17).

It seems that, as soon as a group grasps the levers of power, it is unable to recognize the validity of any rival anti-state sentiments. The phenomenon dates back to the inception of nationalism as the principal legitimizing political principle of the modern age (Conversi 2012b). In his London exile, Giuseppe Mazzini discovered how his international Young Europe project had ineluctably foundered in the face of the instinctive solipsism of the various "Young" movements (Young Italy, Young Ireland and the like). This irrationality leads ultimately to a widespread sense of *sacro egoismo* and an all-pervasive moral relativism: "Though very sensitive to real or imagined threats to the survival and aspirations of one's own group, appreciation of this same sensitivity among other groups is apparently very difficult to project" (Connor 1973: 16). Yet, I have explored a few instances in which 'inter-nationalist' empathy, or even cooperation, has worked well, at least for some time and at least amongst stateless nationalisms (Conversi 1993).

As Zygmunt Bauman rightly reminds us: "few known nations enthusiastically endorsed the right of the others to the same treatment they claimed for themselves . . . The national game has been a zero-sum game: sovereignty of the other has been an assault against one's own. One nation's rights were another nation's aggression, intransigence or arrogance" (Bauman 2000: 54). In its extreme form of '*homo homini lupus*' selfishness, nationalism reveals its most irrational, self-defeating character. Most types of nationalism, like other kinds of group behaviour, share this irrational impetus. As Connor puts it, it is the particular linkage between groupness (and hence exclusion) and ethnicity (hence, putative descent and kinship) that makes it particularly impermeable to rational reasoning (Connor 2003). Nationalism is therefore seen as the most pervasive form of '*particularism*', the latter being an umbrella-term used to cluster several current anti-universalist trends (Vincent 2002).

Whereas Anthony D. Smith postulated that modern nations form around a pre-existing ethnic core (Smith 2004), Walker Connor claimed that nationalism is intrinsically ethnic (Connor 2004). Thus, nationalism as loyalty to the nation is 'ethnicist', while patriotism, or loyalty to the state, can be 'civic' (Connor 2004). However, for other

scholars, patriotism cannot be 'civic' and can hardly be distinguished from ethnonationalism. For instance, Andrew Vincent notes how patriotism's kin-like, hence ethnic, features can be easily discerned in its Latin origin from *pater* (Father) and in correlated terms such as 'patriarchal', 'patron', 'patronage', 'patrician', and so on (Vincent 2002: 111).

In contrast, cosmopolitanism as an ideology and world vision aims to transcend nation and ethnicity. The two are compatible only insofar as nationalism may be seen as a possible, even necessary, step to achieve the goal of a *cosmopolis*. But if, even in order to reach this goal, nationalism promotes conflict, we assume that the two are mutually exclusive and incompatible. Within the extensive literature on cosmopolitanism, the absence of nationalism as a significant issue is startling.

Moreover, the cosmopolites' moral order is plural and should in principle reject the homogenizing pressures of the nation-state and its accompanying nationalism. I say 'in principle' because we know that some 'cosmopolitans' have been all too eager to press a common culture over the rest of mankind: Condorcet's cosmopolitanism was not really *sui generis* when he claimed that the need for an universal language could be satisfied in French (Conversi 2001; Kymlicka 1999).

All states in the world are susceptible to nationalism. Typically, nationalism has expanded through successive 'contagion' waves: Beginning with the French revolution through the French revolutionary wars and the Napoleonic campaigns, nationalism has spread like wildfire in places in which it was hardly conceivable a few years before (Conversi 2012b; 2012c). For instance, before the Napoleonic invasion, most German intellectuals were cosmopolitan and Francophiles, but, after the defeat at Jena-Auerstedt in 1806, most turned, nearly overnight, into militant anti-French nationalists. This event inspired Johann Gottlieb Fichte's vehement anti-cosmopolitan discourses and pamphlet, *Reden an die Deutsche Nation* (Addresses to the German nation), which, rejecting Herder's philosophy of cultural pluralism, asserted the superiority of the German nation over all other nations (Fichte 2008; Monaghan 2001). Similar shifts have been common throughout modern history: Nationalism is an emotionally charged force, which can change the way people perceive and describe themselves before and after a critical event. In turn, nationalism changes and adapts in response to new critical events.

The passage from cosmopolitanism to nationalism is worth studying by itself. One of this conference's goal was to explore the possible relationship between nationalism, liberalism and cosmopolitanism against the backdrop of expanding populism and xenophobia. In the next section, I address two cases that can describe well the vulnerability and malleability of the relationship between liberalism, cosmopolitanism and nationalism, in particular between the latter two.

I begin with Giuseppe Mazzini, at a time when liberalism was largely conceived within the framework of established or emerging nation-states and its primary liberty

concerns were ‘national freedoms’ – quite differently from contemporary liberalism. I will subsequently move to the late Twentieth century with the example of Serbian ultra-nationalism.

Fake cosmopolitans: Giuseppe Mazzini, violence and the nation-state.

Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) is conventionally indicated as a leading example of cosmopolitan and liberal nationalism as he tried to align nationalism and liberalism to attract international support to the Italian cause (Bayly and Biagini 2008). These credentials were in part derived from his rhetorical ability to take advantage of Europe’s peculiar situation at that time, like the *springtime of peoples* in 1848 and the anticipated expansion of democracy and human rights. Mazzini was hailed by his contemporaries as a ‘cosmopolitan universalist’ (Ridolfi 1997), endowed with a ‘Kantian’ philosophical outlook (Urbinati 2008). He was happy to exploit international support for the Italian cause as a road into the British left, particularly the Chartist movement (Mastellone 2008). As we know, Mazzini achieved a truly international standing once he set to found and support kin movements and journals throughout Europe inspired by his *Young Italy* (*La Giovine Italia*, f. 1831 in Marseille).² Emulators and sister organizations sprung up in various countries, from *La Giovine Svizzera/ La Jeune Suisse* (f. 1834 by Mazzini himself and opposed to Swiss neutrality), *Young Ireland* (f. 1839, Irish: *Éire Óg*), *Junges Deutschland* (Young Germany, f. 1830, before *Young Italy*, as a literary group), *Młoda Polska* (Young Poland, f. 1890), to the sinister *Young Turks* (f. 1889), who 26 years later supervised some of the most atrocious crimes against humanity in the whole century, including the Armenian genocide (1915) (Üngör 2011). Mazzini’s project culminated in the foundation of *Young Europe* (f. 1834-5), which many incorrectly indicate as an inspirational source for European unification (Isabella 2008). Although these associations shared an aversion for obscurantism, while predicating secularism and rationalism, they also appealed to popular emotions unleashed by nationality. Most important, they envisioned their respective nations as homogeneous, organic and internally ‘congruent’ bodies (Conversi 2007; 2008).

As recent, less Italo-centric, scholarship has indicated, Mazzini was not a moderate, but a fierce nationalist contemplating the systematic use of political violence as a way to foster a general insurrection which would lead to a united Italian

² In Spain, the journal *La Joven España* (1836-1837) also emulated Mazzini. In 1870 a group of literati founded *La Jove Catalunya* (Young Catalonia), a group of cultural revivalists not particularly concerned with political activities, despite their Mazzinian name. But they were also inspired by the Romantic awakening of European stateless nations, in particular by Italian, German and Irish nationalisms (Conversi 1997: 19).

Republic (Riall 2008). He was an intransigent *nation-statist*,³ who aimed to build a centralized state on the Jacobin model. Because various independent kingdoms, duchies, marquisates, bishoprics, episcopates, republics and the Papacy, constellated Italy's most recent history, Italian unification could only be achieved through unordinary doses of violence. And since the beginning, the practical application of Mazzini's ideas yielded authoritarian results.

The outcome was the appearance in the European map of a new centralizing and nationalizing state, *in lieu* of several independent or semi-sovereign polities. Mazzini and his political heirs showed no sympathy for federalism and even less for centrifugal inclinations. If a regionalist movement like the one emerged in Catalonia in the late 19th century had emerged in Italy, Mazzini would have probably not hesitated to use ruthless force to clamp it down with all available means.⁴ Given Mazzini's sympathy for covert action, as shown by his relations with the *Carbonari* conspirators, he might have mixed state repression with state terror and mafia-style direct and indirect threats— particularly after the unification with the South. Although this statement remains largely speculative (Mazzini died in 1872, that is, a few years after Italian unification), we can infer this trajectory from the way the new unitary state reacted to related phenomena -- and, later on, from how easily fascism appropriated Mazzini.

The authoritarian trend is clearly visible in the way Italian élites reacted to the spread of *briganti* and *brigantaggio* (brigandage), a phenomenon that predated Italian unity, but that began to attract opponents to the central state after unification. The state's response was a series of massacres and the introduction of highly repressive laws, accompanied by a thorough rewriting of history that denied any political valence to brigandage (De Jaco 1980; Gaudioso 1987; Molfese 1964). Given that most brigands gravitated around peasant societies, they were easily branded as 'anti-modern' through the usual ideological armour of peasant-bashing, which had been routinely used in France (Weber 1976) and elsewhere in Europe (Scarpino 2005) to build centralised states. As soon as the brigands gained popular support, the goal became to frighten, shock and terrify the local population (De Simone 1994; Sacchi et al. 2000). Immediately after unification, states of exception (*regime eccezionale*) were routinely declared in order to '*tutelare l'ordine pubblico*' (protect the public order) with new draconian laws passed to repress brigandage, particularly between 1861 and 1865 (Martucci 1980). Moreover, one of the first measures taken in 1860 by the newly formed Kingdom of Italy was mass conscription (*servizio di leva*): since the start the military draft acted in tandem with the elementary school system to shape and

³ On the use of the term '*nation-statism*', see (Mann 2004).

⁴ Mikhail Bakunin shifted from pan-Slavic nationalist to anarchism, and, on the footsteps of Mazzini, he predicated a United States of Europe.

structure a unitary Italian identity (Conversi 2013). But, as elsewhere in Europe, the hub of political brigandage was formed by those anti-Jacobin forces that most resented the consequences of the French revolution and its long tail of political upheavals.⁵ The federal anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) was one of the few who had grasped the violent impact of Mazzinian nationalism (Proudhon 1862: 9-37). Among liberals, Lord Acton was particularly concerned with the ominous signs of authoritarian centralism emerging with Italian unification (Acton 1919).

Risorgimento nationalism slowly but steadily became an irredentist, expansionist and imperialist ideology. Its broader maximalist agenda was put in practice after the erstwhile romantic intelligentsia had seized the levers of power. *Populism* was also an element of Mazzinian ideology since its inception, with the idea of ‘communicating with the people’ being one of his recurrent obsession (Sorba 2008). But Garibaldi, the true hero of the people, overtook Mazzini’s populism and charismatically embodied it. The *religious* dimension of Mazzini’s nationalism has also been discussed as part of the man’s ideological radicalism (Riall 2008). Echoing biblical proportions, Mazzini was often described as the ‘Moses of Italian (Levis Sullam 2008).⁶

Most important is the Mazzinian connection with fascism. The Mazzini-Garibaldi model of national liberation ensconced in fact a more authoritarian nucleus which would then be fully exploited by fascism (Baioni 2006; 2010; Banti 2005). Mazzini has a high place in the fascist pantheon and the most radical of fascists, like Farinacci and Balbo, referred to him as Italy’s spiritual father. Mussolini himself, as many other fascists, constantly referred to Mazzini as Italy’s founding father.⁷ An ideal thread from the Risorgimento to fascism runs through the exaltation of war as a forging tool for the new generation of fascist militants. War propelled the Mazzinian spirit of figures like the fascist ‘hero’ Italo Balbo (1896-1940). Like other fascists, Balbo was an ardent follower of Mazzini throughout his life. His university thesis focused on “*The economic and social thought of Mazzini*”, while his description of D’Anunzio at Fiume and the Charter of Carnaro evoked Mazzinian visions of unity and nationality (Segrè 1987: 30). Finally, Balbo fully identified Mussolini as the avatar of Mazzini (Segrè 1987: 70 and 76).

⁵ On political brigandage in post-revolutionary France, see Lewis (1983).

⁶ After the war, Italy’s top patriotic warmongers (nationalists, futurists, *d’annunzianos*, syndicalists), who gained a leading role at the war’s onset (Conversi 2009), entered into an existential crisis. Risorgimento nationalism always remained their common reference point. As Lucy Riall emphasized, since at least Mazzini’s ideological formulation (Riall 2008) and Garibaldi’s military practice (Riall 1998; 2007), Risorgimento had a radical and violent component. On the relations between Risorgimento and Fascism, see (Baioni 2006).

⁷ On Mussolini’s Mazzinian formation, see the chapter *Making the 'Man': 'Mazzini', Nationalism, and the Aesthetics of Violence, November 1914-May 1915*, in (O’Brien 2005)

I have used here the Mazzinian example to demonstrate that it is not possible to identify cosmopolitan nationalism from the start. Nationalism is a malleable Janus-faces force (Nairn 1977; 1997) which can encompass xenophobia and intolerance, moderation and radicalism, violence and pacifism, confrontation and ‘pactism’—and will shift from one to another depending on various factors, like the international context or, most importantly, whether it can be manifested in a centralised state with its own army. The next section focuses on Yugoslavia as a case of state disintegration in which an anti-nationalist, implicitly cosmopolitan, rhetoric served to conceal the strong nationalist drive at the centre, and at the level of the highest institutions in Belgrade, the country’s capital.

Yugoslavia and *Realpolitik*’s ‘doubled-voiced discourse’

The second example I want to use concerns state fragmentation, rather than national unification. The breakup of Yugoslavia is usually considered a particularly bleak scenario (Conversi 2000). Nevertheless, if one includes the long-term costs of Italian unification, including two world wars and the rise of fascism, the toll has been incomparably higher for Italy. Here, I show that the disastrous evolution of conflict in the former Yugoslavia was largely depended on the bad press enjoyed by the two seceding republics, Slovenia and Croatia (Conversi 1998). Neither country could display an internationally esteemed figure like Mazzini to perorate its cause, so their centralist opponents gained the upper hand. Belgrade had the advantage of a network of embassies and consulates abroad with their relatively well-paid staff mobilized by a strong nationalism churning out an incessant stream of propaganda. As a consequence, international audiences often were unable to read Belgrade’s true intentions— as the very notion of Yugoslavia became increasingly permeated with Serbian nationalism (Taibo 2000). With its control over the mass media (Kent 2006; Thompson 1999), a state is always in an ideal position to diffuse its message. Moreover, Serbian intellectuals were mobilized to promote Slobodan Milosevic’s interests and its ultra-nationalist agenda (Cohen 1996). Their official discourse espoused liberalisms and cosmopolitanism and many of them described themselves as anti-nationalists, cosmopolitan or universalists, despite all evidence of the contrary.⁸ Some represented themselves internationally as the true heirs of unitary Yugoslavism and even Titoism. Serbian ‘anti-nationalists’ spoke a language that was easily understood by global elites (Conversi 2002).

The Bakhtinian notion of ‘double-voiced discourse’ can be useful here. By referring simultaneously to Yugoslavia and Serbia, to socialism and liberalism, to

⁸ On the role of the Yugoslav-based journal *Praxis International* (now *Constellations*) in combining cosmopolitanism, Marxism, post-Marxism and covert nationalism, see (McBride 2001: 19-ff).

dissidence and conformism, to nationalism and anti-nationalism, to unity and separation, Serbian intellectuals, diplomats and state-run media were masters in double-speak or double-voiced discourse. According to Bakhtin (1895-1975), a double-voiced discourse occurs when: 'the word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention' (Bakhtin 1981: 352). In this discourse, two voices simultaneously speak: the first was the one we normally hear, the second can only be heard beyond the imposed limits. In Belgrade, the discourse was doubly directed: towards the outside world in the guise of Yugoslavism, and towards Serbian constituencies in the shape of Serbianism. Both discourses were uttered by the same voice and succeed in captivating their respective audiences, each in abeyance of the other. The 'Yugoslavist' parlance reflected the state-centric environment of an international society dominated by nation-states, while its antithesis lingered on in the contrasting ethnicist discourse silenced by that dominance. Through ambiguity and *multivoicedness*, two 'voices' co-existed in the rhetoric with which the highest representatives of the Yugoslav state spoke as the truth was told twice: the truth of *Realpolitik* and the truth of ethnic nationalism. Belgrade's official discourse carried the international community towards an emphasis on unity, while its actions propelled in the opposite direction. Therefore, the distance between the political and the societal sphere was maximised, even though the former is deemed to represent the latter. On the international stage, it became a 'dialogue of the deaf', externalising and dramatising the regime's intestine ideological tensions (Conversi 2000).

A second aspect is the extreme reluctance of the international community to accept state disintegration and the recognition of new states (Conversi 2000). It took several thousands dead for the international community to accept that the Yugoslav unitary state had failed and that it was therefore necessary to recognize diplomatically the seceding republics (Blitz 2006). Since Germany was chastened for 'prematurely' recognizing Croatia and Slovenia, it easily became the fall guy and scapegoat of the international's community 'secession-phobia.' Serbian propaganda promptly and effectively seized on this, accusing Germany of a sinister plot to dismember Yugoslavia and promote a new 'fourth Reich' through an axis with Croatian nationalists. This argument was so effective that it was reiterated *ad infinitum* by several world leaders, including top British Tories and the US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher (Conversi 1998; 2006).⁹ All of them found 'German-bashing' an acceptable discourse to persist in their stubborn resistance to the recognition of new states.

⁹ For a strong rebuttal of my argument considering the role of diasporas and the 'failures of European diplomacy', see Radeljic (2012). On diasporas see Conversi (2012a)

Admittedly, this is not a unique case. Most new states have been historically recognized during limited historical trends and unique spans of time, in successive secessionist waves, like WW1, the post-colonial order and the breakup of the Soviet empire.¹⁰ Secessionists do not easily find allies even if the price to pay is genocide with its pyramid of skulls, as in the case of Biafra (1967-1970).¹¹ The descent into ethnic cleansing turned into one of Europe's most abysmal moments, sarcastically 'the hour of Europe' (Glaurdic 2011). However, the new states emerging from the ashes of disintegration often adopted strict ethnic criteria of citizenship. For instance, the new Slovenian state withdrew citizenship rights from non-territorial ethnic minorities creating the problem of the 'erased' (Blitz and Lynch 2011; Zorn 2011). The long tail of destruction in Yugoslavia, and particularly the Bosnian genocide, deeply divided the European continent, with political elites in some countries covertly supporting the *genocidaires* but many others mobilized in the search for solutions and in defence of the victims. A host of humanitarian actions were then taken across the world, from Asia to the USA and the Middle East, as well as in Europe. In the next section, I describe how many of these actions took place in Catalonia turning it into a cosmopolitan society in which universal human rights became a high priority.¹²

Catalan cosmopolitanism: defining moments

At the time of Yugoslavia's collapse, international reactions varied widely from an unbending support for the Milosevic regime, as in the case of Greece, Israel and most British Tories, to a mounting wave of empathy and solidarity, as in Spain and a few other Western countries.¹³ Probably nowhere outside Bosnia was the tragedy more heartfelt than in Catalonia: although spontaneous initiatives took place in most of Spain, it was in Catalonia where the greatest number of actions in support of the victims took place (Conversi 2000). Here, the sheer number of activities in the defence of human rights in Bosnia far surpassed similar mobilizations in other regions and countries of the world. In this respect, Catalonia was actually at the vanguard of a worldwide movement for democratic and universal human rights. These mobilizations may provide a good hint to indicate the unordinary diffusion of cosmopolitan values

¹⁰ In recent years the trend to grant recognition in clusters has been complicated by a few isolated cases, like East Timor (2002) and Southern Sudan (2011).

¹¹ The world-famous Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe has recently published an account of the secessionist war in Biafra, which had caused up to three million dead mostly from disease and hunger (Achebe 2012).

¹² 'Cosmopolitan' should be meant here to mean the promotion of, and participation into, "a new cosmopolitan order based on continental alliances" exemplified by Europe as a 'cosmopolitan community' (Cronin 2011; Habermas et al. 2003; Habermas 2012).

¹³ For the case of Greece, see (Michas 2002). For Israel, see (Primoratz 1996; 1999) and (Kofman 1996). For Britain, see (Conversi 1996; Simms 2001).

amongst many sectors of Catalan civil society.¹⁴ The condition of statelessness is possibly a good predictor of cosmopolitan attitudes and values. In general, the Yugoslavia tragedy was lived with more intensity among ‘nations without a state’ than in the capitals of grand nations-states like Britain, France or Italy. Solidarity ‘caravans’ were particularly active in areas in which both regional nationalism and Green parties coexisted, often in combination with Catholic groups, like in South Tyrol (Langer 2011: 272 and 309; 2012; Levi 2007: 180). Simultaneously, powerful governments and sectors of the public opinion, as in France and the UK, cast all their weight behind the preservation of centralized polities in spite of their dismal human rights record. In contrast with most official governments, non-governmental representatives of stateless nations have usually expressed more active solidarity for the victims of Serbian ‘ethnic cleansing’.¹⁵

Particularly in Catalonia the internationalist movement in defence of the Bosnian people gained widespread popular resonance, involving influential social actors. The variety and richness of local initiatives remains unmatched to this day, as a multi-coloured, vibrant array of grass-roots organizations sprung up in support of Bosnian refugees and, in general, the victims of ethnic cleansing. For instance, the Catalan NGO ‘Optics for the World’ (*Òptics pel món*) was founded in 1995 to provide glasses and optical parts for the Bosnian refugees.¹⁶ During the climax of war, Sarajevo became Barcelona’s ‘XI district’ (District 11).¹⁷ Perhaps, only amongst the non-Zionist Jewish diasporas one could enumerate a number of similar initiatives (Conversi 2000: 19-20) – although in Israel itself ‘all governments have adopted a consistently pro-Serbian stand’ and ‘Israeli public opinion failed to respond to Serb atrocities in a way comparable to the response in many other countries’ (Primoratz 1999: 79).¹⁸ In Spain, memories of the Civil War and its international dimension were evoked (Taibo 2000). A solidaritarian tradition, simultaneously Christian and secular, was brought back to life as a form of empathy for the powerless, which resonated genuinely amongst the public at large.¹⁹ The unique condition of Catalonia as a vigorous civil society and as a stateless nation contributed to make the indirect experience of the horrors of Bosnia widely felt (Conversi 2000).

¹⁴ Elsewhere, I claim that Catalan nationalism’s cosmopolitan features have deep historical roots (Conversi 1997).

¹⁵ Of course, not all stateless nationalisms or regionalisms reacted similarly. For instance, Umberto Bossi’s *Lega Nord* in Italy described Milosevic and Serbia as champions of the ‘civilized’ world against immigrants, ‘fundamentalists’, ‘terrorists’ and other threats.

¹⁶ See ‘*Introducció: Òptics pel món. UPC, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya Barcelona*’, URL: <http://www.upc.edu/opticsxmon/menu1>, last accessed on October 20, 2012.

¹⁷ On the ‘partnership’ Barcelona- Sarajevo, see (Council of Europe 2002: 33-34).

¹⁸ On pro-Serbainism amongst high-ranking Zionists in Israel, see (Kofman 1996).

¹⁹ For an historical-political analysis of this sense of ‘empathy’, see Conversi (1993).

Conclusion: From notional to ‘survival cosmopolitanism’

Nationalist movements are often attributed an indefensible solipsist attitude. Two cases have been analysed here: Mazzinian ‘liberal’ nationalism since the 1830s and Serbian nationalism in the 1990s. The article has shown how their ‘double-voiced discourses’ served to conceal more extremist underpinnings behind notional forms of ‘cosmopolitanism’. Therefore, the article argues that the fusion between cosmopolitanism and nationalism cannot be realized if the nation is prevalently viewed as an organically homogeneous entity.

This becomes an insurmountable obstacle at a time in which the global environmental and other crises impel us towards the inescapable necessity of cosmopolitan thinking and multilateral action. Which forms of nationalism are most likely to be inspired by cosmopolitan goals? And, hence, which forms are more suitable to tackle contemporary challenges? Stateless nations tend to operate within more tolerant parameters as long as they do not attain the monopoly of legitimate force, which can only be achieved by controlling the central state.

The approaching global era is characterized by a series of alarming, drastic, interlocked risks, with climate change as the common denominator. In this situation, some sort ‘*survival cosmopolitanism*’ is slowly emerging to face unprecedented challenges to humanity as a whole rather than to specific nations. In this context, nationalism, particularly nation-states nationalism, remains the main obstacle. If we realize that our entire world is on the verge of cataclysmic disruption, we may also realize that cosmopolitanism can provide a more suitable framework to shift from unilateralism to multilateralism at every level of political decision-making – including the search for some sort of universal leadership. In this context, nationalism is generally ill suited because it can obliterate the need for common solutions. Moreover, the lack of global leadership may provide a vacuum in which populists, fundamentalists, jihadists, and ultra-nationalists find new opportunities to thrive. ‘Survival cosmopolitanism’ is also a suitable framework for addressing the looming crisis of modernity from the perspective of political ideology.

The economic and financial crisis may be only a trivial irritant in comparison to more vital issues that require the concerted action and effort of all of the world’s governments. The impending climate catastrophe, our main legacy to future generations, needs impeccable coordination and no concessions to unilateralism. Only via universalism and multilateralism can such vital challenges be tackled. Thus, nationalism, particularly if attached to a self-declared ‘nation-state’, has become increasingly incompatible with the new challenges of the future.

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