

GEOGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

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POVZETEK

GEOGRAFSKA RAZVRSTITEV NARODNOSTNIH SKUPIN PREBIVALSTVA

Prispevek obravnava problem nacionalnih manjšin. V svrhu pravilnega razumevanja temeljnega izrazoslovja avtor opredeljuje termine narodnost, narodnostna in etnična skupnost ter nacionalne jezike, religijo in prostor v socio-političnem kontekstu. Tri zgoraj omenjene skupnosti je potrebno razumeti v hierarhičnem okviru in različno glede na njih razprostranjenost in število. Vse tri skupine so lahko predstavnice manjšin znotraj meja posamezne države. Izvor, prostorska razporeditev, socialni in ekonomski položaj ter odnosi napram dominantnemu narodu, oziroma politična vloga manjšin ter njih formalni status so lahko različni. Avtor poizkuša tipizirati manjšine iz različnih zornih kotov. Razlikuje med štirimi tipi prostorske soodvisnosti med državo, dominantno narodnostjo in manjšino. Glede na druge, kombinirane etnično-teritorialne karakteristike opredeli še nadaljnjih devet manjšinjskih kategorij. Ob upoštevanju etnogeneze ugotovi osem različnih zvrsti manjšin.

The main aim of my paper is to present geographical classifications of ethnic minorities. However, to understand the matter in a better way it seems purposeful to introduce roughly the range and contemporary meaning of the most important terms connected with this problem, such as:

Nation, nationality and ethnic group

In the everyday language all these terms are used interchangeably. In fact, according to political literature, these three categories of human communities are formed hierarchically, i.e. they are taxonomically differentiated. Nation becomes the basic unit of classification, whereas nationality and ethnic group form taxons of respective lower levels.

The term "*nation*" has many meanings. In the broader sense it is mostly associated with the influence of political factors and identified with the idea of a state. In the narrower sense it accentuates cultural relationship of a specific group of people.

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There exists an objective and a subjective conception of the nation. The former assumes that the objective factors, such as: common origin, language, religion, tradition etc. determine belonging to a nation. The latter states that belonging to a nation is an act of will and results from the declaration of particular individuals according to their subjective beliefs. The subjective factor plays a particular role in determining national affiliation of people living in bilingual border zones or within regions where is a common language for different nations.

Contemporary definitions of a nation reflect both the criteria: objective and subjective. According to the Polish Great General Encyclopaedia, for example, a nation is: "a historically created, stable community of people formed by common vicissitudes, culture, territory and economic structures, manifesting itself in the national consciousness of its members". J. Wiatr adds that such community was based on common political institutions and manifests itself in the "sense of belonging to a state as a basic factor of group consciousness" (p. 213).

According to many authors, *nationalities* are the communities having different objective features from other population groups as well as distinct feeling of separateness from these groups and their own identity, though, unlike the nations, deprived of sovereignty. They are not part of another nation with its own statehood, too. Thus, in a way, they are the nations "in statu nascendi". Wiatr states that "nationality is not something qualitatively different from a nation, it is a social group of the same type, but not complete, missing some features of a mature nation. In particular they miss a fully-developed sense of belonging to a state" (p. 216). That is why nowadays many nationalities tend to shape their own forms of statehood in order to become real nations.

J. Byczkowski finds that majority of the feudal European nationalities at the beginning of the development of capitalism formed nations and only a few, such as, Catalonians, Basques or Bretons remained at the level of nationalities up to contemporary times (p. 17). In the former Soviet Union, instead, societies that formed union republics, such as Bialorussians or Georgians were treated as nations and those for whom autonomous republics or districts were allotted, even though they were as numerous as for example Tartars (with population over 5 million people) were treated as nationalities. Thus, to a great extent, it is only a formal criterion.

Communities that have not got fully-formed objective and (what is more important) subjective features of a nationality, that is in particular a sense of self-knowledge and national consciousness, cannot be treated as nationalities. They are regarded as *ethnic groups* in a narrower sense. According to the Polish Great General Encyclopaedia an ethnic group is "a social group that has a different language, or at least different dialect, a certain sense of togetherness among its members, individual culture and individual name. These features are seldom to be found together, however, two or three are necessary to consider such group as ethnic one".

As a rule such groups are not numerous and they occupy economically neglected areas, so called "spheres of shadow" (e.g. Frisians in Germany, Friulians in Italy, Tartars in Poland).

According to the above findings, in case of existence on the territory of a country certain minority groups that are parts of independent nations we can talk about *national minorities*, in case they form whole or part of nationality communities they become *nationality minorities*, and in case of taxons of the lowest level they become *ethnic minorities*. In practice the second category is seldom used and nationality minorities are included either in national or ethnic minorities.

The essence of minority

According to the Polish Great General Encyclopaedia national minorities are "groups of population of a certain state, different from majority of its people by their national belonging and not occupying a politically and administratively different territory within the federation". Thus, Macedonians in the former Yugoslavia, Slovaks in Czechoslovakia and Bialorussians in the Soviet Union cannot be regarded as minorities. They were simply nations that form a federation. However, groups of the same people in neighbouring countries that do not have federal structures will form minority there (Macedonians in Greece, Slovaks in Hungary, Bialorussians in Poland).

According to Pierre George the term "minority" means groups of people who are "marginal", inferior in number and simultaneously marginal politically, socially, economically, as well as culturally. To be "in minority" implies coincidentally being of second rate legally or socially.

The history of Europe shows how relative can be relations between minority and majority. Germans in Czech borderland, who created a minority within the whole Kingdom of Czech, transformed into privileged majority when this kingdom became a part of Austrian Empire with German domination; then Czechs formed a minority. Afterwards, they changed again into minority when Republic of Czechoslovakia was established in 1918. The story recurred during and after the World War II respectively.

Representatives of minorities possessing their own territories often stress that they are minority in a state but not within their own territory. Although many members of dominant nation used to infiltrate to this territory, still they are generally in minority there. That might be the reason why in the process of creating national states a double approach to the relations between the main nation and its subordinate ethnic groups was formed. According to J. Stefanowicz the dominant nation was trying to differentiate between "political nation" authorised to have its own statehood and "culture nation" often called nationality or people (in Herder's meaning of

“Volk”). It also defined the idea of motherland as a collective obligation of its citizens irrespective of their origin.

The approach to such conception varied, on the whole, however, the idea of motherland defined in this way enjoyed popularity and nowadays most minority movements recognise double belonging: to their own ethnic group and to motherland-state to whom they stay loyal. Only most stubborn separatists openly refuse obedience.

Pierre George states that there is a discrepancy between unification tendency of a state and minorities' aspiration for preserving their national and/or cultural identity. Settlement of this discrepancy is much easier in a federal structure of a state than in a centralised one.

In Stefanowic's opinion our era is characterised by a rather widely spread crisis of state centralism that was so successful in the past centuries. Many national and ethnic groups deprived of their independence for centuries, or even never having it, and, as it were, absorbed by the nation and the state in which they live, become aware of their togetherness. It manifests itself in a passionate need of acknowledgement and fight for their identity. The consequence is a “mutiny of minorities”, a phenomenon, the political expression of which is a desire of guaranteed equality of human rights, cultural and economic autonomy and, in extreme cases, of political sovereignty. The phenomenon is often accompanied by increase of nationalism that becomes the driving force of many emancipation movements.

Sources of nationality conflicts and explanation of reasons for their differentiation as to the scale and intensity of claims, farsightedness of political aims and the choice of methods and degree of determination in the fight for their implementation can be found in the origin of particular minorities.

Role of territory and state

The terms “nation”, “nationality” and “ethnic group” generally refer to people with a common culture. And it is commonly known that among cultural factors the major components are: language, religion and tradition. However, the nation, as well as the lower taxons, are also organically tied with a common territory.

In peoples' mentality there exists something that one can call a territorial feeling or a territorial need. And nationalism bases on a natural or embittered idea that it is an imperative to protect, complete, or enlarge national territory, or even to conquer new “living space” for the nation that has to fulfil “a special historical mission”. To be sure, there are also examples of homeless nationalism, but even people without their own homeland sustain a mystical concept of a territory, a spiritual dream of land of their own, once possessed and later lost, or never possessed but longed for.

People still do identify themselves not only with a particular group but also with

a particular portion of the earth's surface, a certain region, often with a touch of pride. Much more rarely other needs are more strongly felt than territoriality. According to Glassner and de Blij, people exhibit territorial behaviour in those places where they spend most of their time, "at home". Their territory is more than just a place of residence, it is a refuge, a fortress shielding them from the foreign, often hostile, world outside. This is quite understandable then that territorial feeling is especially strong in case of minority people.

Edward Soja states that when human society began to increase significantly in scale and complexity territoriality reasserts itself as a powerful behavioural and organisational phenomenon. Thus, in the course of history, territorial behaviour of nations leads to political territoriality which is particularly expressed in the state. According to Hartshorne a nation is "a group of people, occupying a particular area, who feel themselves held together in terms of common acceptance of particular values that are of such prime importance to them that they demand that their area and people should be organised in a distinct state.

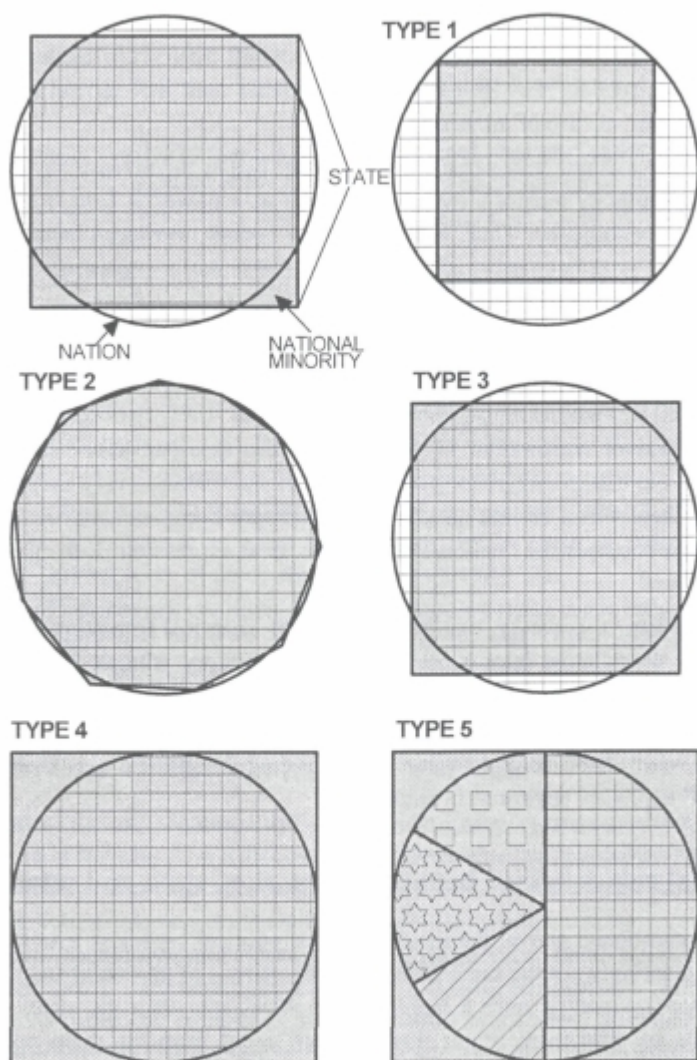
Peter J. Taylor recalls that: "Traditional political geography was largely organised around the trilogy of territory-state-nation so that behind every successful territorial state there was a vibrant nation. Hence territory becomes national "homeland" and the state becomes the "nation-state" as the ideal expression of the political will of nationalism".

The problem is, however, that in the course of historical formation of such a nation-state it was almost impossible to shape its territory without including into it smaller ethnic groups that do not belong to the nation creating the state, or parts of neighbouring nations. Thus the relationships between the dominant nation, state and minorities seem to be central to our understanding in political geography because they are all explicitly territorial in nature.

Spatial relationships between the nation, state and minorities

As we mentioned above, the most important political aspect of a nation it is that is predominantly not the same as the body of citizens of particular state. There are many nations extending over a larger geographical area than the state, simultaneously there are also many states that embrace, apart from the main nation, some smaller "sub-nations" and/or fragments of bigger neighbouring nations. They are just national minorities, that is, according to Norman Pounds: "national groups which constitute individually only a minority within a state".

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STATE NATION AND NATIONAL MINORITY



Pounds distinguishes three types of spatial relationships between state, nation and national minorities (p. 146). They do not fit in, however, with all the examples provided by the "real life" so we widen his list of two extreme types (1 and 5) and names of particular "models". Here it is the complete typology of relationships between the nation, state and minorities:

1. The state does not embrace the whole area occupied by the nation. Parts of it form significant national minorities in neighbouring countries (Hungarian model).
2. The state embraces one nation without significant national minorities (Portuguese model).
3. The state embraces most of its dominant nation, a small part of which forms national minorities in neighbouring countries. It contains small national minorities, too (Polish model).
4. The state contains almost the whole of the nation which it represents, together with large and significant national minorities (French model).
5. Multinational state which is a partnership of two or more national groups with more or less equal status. Such states have generally federal political structure with separate union republic for every distinguished nation, who is not treated as minority then. Apart from them there are, however, some other smaller groups not constituting political units of their own which can be regarded as national or ethnic minorities (Yugoslavian model).

Classification of minorities according to criteria of ethnic-territorial relations

From ethnic-territorial point of view also taking into account relations with other nations, we can classify present-day minorities into several categories, namely:

1. **Minorities composing compact fragments (a chips) of neighbouring nations that have got their own state.** Within this category we can distinguish two sub-categories:

- 1a. **Minorities composing fragments of neighbouring nations that formerly conquered, temporarily occupied, or in any other way dominated over a nation among which the present-day minorities live** (for example: Germans in Poland, Turks in Bulgaria, Hungarians in Slovakia).

In this case relations between the two societies may not be good. Aversion may be reciprocal for minorities that were previously an integral part of a dominant nation, and felt as being "higher" or "better", lost their privileged position and feel frustrated now. A nation among which they live now, for its part, may feel anxious that these minorities may constitute a potential "fifth column" of a stronger and hostile neighbour.

1b. Minorities composing fragments of neighbouring nations that have had more or less correct relations with the nation among which they live (Italians in France, Romanians in Yugoslavia, Slovaks in Poland etc.).

In this case mutual relations between dominant nation and minorities can be relatively better, although some animosities may exist. In both these cases the rank of this category of minorities will be, however, comparatively high for there exists a real power abroad that can take care of them.

- 2. Minorities representing a compact "chip" of non-neighbouring nation that has got its own state** (Germans in Romania, Slovaks in Yugoslavia, Albanians in Italy etc.)

In this case there is still somebody that can take care of the minority, for instance on the international forum, but the lack of the direct contact with the motherland causes that such minorities can be more susceptible to assimilation processes.

- 3. Minorities representing compact part of neighbouring nation** (or rather nationality) **that has not got its own state** (Catalonians and Basques in France, Retho-Romans in Italy etc.).

In this case there is still somebody that can claim to their rights, although indirectly. On the other hand such minorities in their aspiration for national unity and territorial integration, or even creation of the national independent state, may evoke a lot of political problems, both of internal and external character (as for instance Kurds in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey or Basques in Spain and France do). Neighbouring states may then use them as an instrument of political pressure each against the other, but may also collaborate in suppressing their aspirations of national emancipation.

- 4. Minorities constituting small self-contained nationality without their own state** or autonomous political unit within federal state, **entirely compactly living in one state** (Brettons and Corsicans in France, Serbo-Lusatians in Germany etc.).

They often recognise the state as their homeland and are susceptible to assimilation processes when do not feel discriminated. If they feel discriminated, however, as there is nobody to claim to their rights, they may be determined to struggle for their autonomy even in spectacular, terroristic manner (as for instance Corsicans do).

- 5. Minorities originating from aboriginal societies** (native Indians in the U.S.A., Tribesmen in India, Aborigines in Australia etc.).

In general, they are socially and economically handicapped and live on the margin of the country's life. There is nobody to support them and they feel too weak to struggle for their rights. There are, however, some exceptions, namely:

Lapps in Scandinavian countries and Inuit/Eskimo people in North America and Greenland, who were able to call into being quite strong emancipation movements. Paradoxically, political partition of their in territories has given them some advantage.

Apart from **minorities that occupy more or less compact territories of their own**, we can also distinguish some categories of **dispersed minorities without their own compact area of residence**.

6. Minorities originating from nations living for ages in diaspora. Among them we can recognise two sub-categories:

6a. Minorities originating from nations living for ages in diaspora that have reconstructed their national state (for example: Greeks, Jews and Armenians).

Their situation is partly similar to this of the 2nd category. The difference is that living in a dispersion among dominant nation they have been much more assimilated than the others. Still, many of them have bi-national identity or even feel more connected with the newly reconstructed national state, thus decide to emigrate partly there (as many Jews, especially in Eastern Europe do now).

6b. Minorities originating from nations living for ages in diaspora without their national state (Assyrians, Gypsies).

It has seemed they have no chance to survive in a modern world any more and will either have to assimilate or live on a margin of social life. However, the renaissance of Assyrian culture in Sweden, as well as an emergence of international Roma movement seem to show new prospect for such groups.

7. Minorities descending from other, contemporary waves of migrations, of different origin and character.

These newcomers have generally dispersed all around the state of residence, with tendency to cluster especially in big cities. They tend both to assimilate within dominant nation and to preserve at least some elements of their native culture (rather religion than language). In general, they are treated as so-called "integrated minorities".

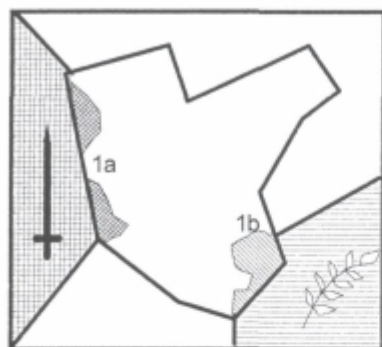
As we have mentioned above, we may divide all the categories of minorities into two groups:

- i – these having their own territory, and
- ii – these living in a dispersion among majority.

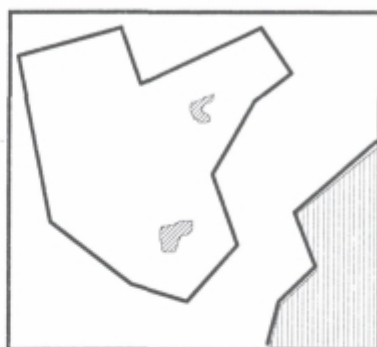
The territory, that is one of most important components of national identity, of a peculiar value in case of minorities, may be of different character and origin. As the territory of a dominant nation expanded around its "core area" (which has been gen-

CLASSIFICATION OF MINORITIES ACCORDING TO CRITERIA OF ETHNIC-TERRITORIAL RELATIONS

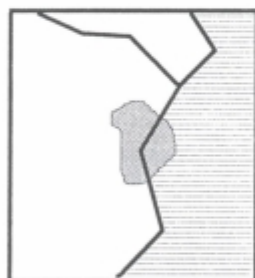
I. MINORITIES WITH THEIR OWN TERRITORY



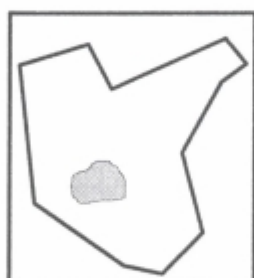
Category 1



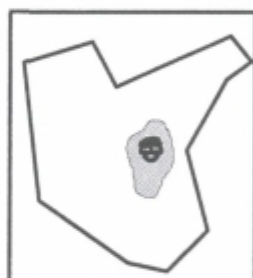
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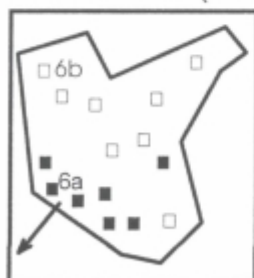


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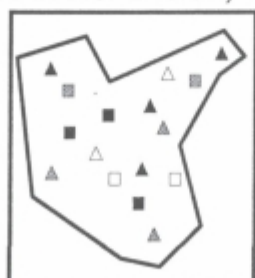


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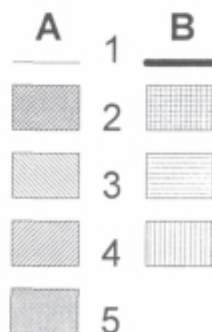
II. MINORITY WITHOUT THEIR OWN TERRITORY (LIVING IN DISPERSION)



Category 6



Category 7



erally centrally situated within the state), most of the small nationalities and ethnic groups could survive only at the frontier areas, that is, at present-day borderlands. Similarly, most of the national minorities originating from neighbouring nations have lived there, too, as they have been zones of transitions between two or even more nations. Those wide, less inhabited frontier areas might be also zones of royal or lordly colonisation (as for instance "Wilde Fields" in Polish Ukraina) in which different national or ethnic groups could be involved.

Within inner areas of the state there could either survive small enclaves of ethnic groups or nationalities at the inner marginal zones (somewhere in swampy areas, as for instance Serbo-Lusatians in Germany, or high in the mountains, as for example Dagestan nationalities in High Caucasus Mountains), or appear dispersed clusters of foreign colonists.

Genetic classification of minorities

From the genetic point of view we can divide minorities into two main groups, namely: autochthons and newcomers, and next into several categories, as follows:

I. Autochthons

1. **Aborigines, "tribals" and other primary groups of a very archaic or even unknown origin** (for instance, Negroit Weddas in Sri Lanka, Ainos in Japan, Pygmies in Congo, Indians in the U.S.A, Lapps in Scandinavian countries etc.) All of them are undoubtedly "in situ", as they were probably the first humans occupying those territories.
2. **Other ethnic groups and nationalities of a very old origin** (for example: Basques, Bretons, Welsh, Dagestan nationalities etc.). They are also unquestionably autochthons that have got undisputed rights to their territories.

II. Newcomers

3. **Invadors and conquerors who after liberation of a conquered nation remained partly among them** (Tartars in Russia, the Swedes in Finland, Frenchmen in Algeria etc.).

Although they might live on their present-day territory for ages, their rights to this land may still be questioned, as the case of Turks in Bulgaria has shown.

4. **Settlers** – this is a very wide category of newcomers that consists of minority groups of different origin.

There has been a great variety of foreign settlers' clusters, enclaves, or even larger zones of different origin in many countries all around the world. Those created by invadors and conquerors using settlers of their own nation have been classified to the 3rd category. Apart from them there are, however, two other sub-categories of settlers, namely:

4a. Settlers settled by conquerors but originating from other nations or nationalities (the example might be Tamils in Ceylon, Hindus in Trinidad or Guyana etc.). These settlers, as an instrument of occupants, may not be well treated by native nations.

4b. Settlers settled by own rulers, landlords and other possessors (for example Tartars in Poland, Finns in Sweden, Germans in Russia). They should be regarded as useful guests, but sometimes are not.

There have been many reasons for which both conquerors and own possessors settled foreigners within their countries. They could be used as military settlers to defend state's frontiers (as Tartars in former Poland), as colonists to colonise "no man's lands", deteriorated zones, or just less inhabited areas (German settlers in Silesian principalities after Mongolian invasion, Slovak farmers in Hungary, Schwabs in Romania, Dutchmen to cultivate swampy areas in northern Germany), as farmhands to work on plantations (Tamils in Ceylon, Mexicans in the U.S.A.), as shepherds or herdsmen to make useful mountain pastures (Osetians in Georgia), as burghers to organise newly located towns (Germans and Jews in many East European countries), as craftsmen or other specialists to develop manufacture (Germans and Czechs in the 19th century Polish textile centres), as miners (Poles in France and Germany) etc.

- 5. D. P' s. (displaced persons)** – people removed by force from their own abodes and displaced to new areas of residence, for instance in colonies or other subordinated countries (for example Negro slaves from Africa to American countries, Polish compulsory workers to Germany, Crimean Tartars and Caucasian nationalities transplanted by the communist regime to other Soviet republics on a charge of collaboration with Germans etc.) Although they have been victims of tyranny, they might not be accepted in new places of residence and again persecuted, as it happened in case of Meschetian Turks displaced by Stalin from Georgia to Uzbekistan.
- 6. Refugees** – people who escaped from their own countries because of: wars (for example Palestinians in other Arabic countries), civil wars (Spaniards in France, Greeks in Poland, Bosnians in Slovenia), massacres (Armenians in Georgia after Turkish massacres, Cambodians in Thailand after Pol Pot extermination), hunger and calamities (Ethiopians in Sudan, Sahel people in neighbouring countries), religious discrimination or persecution (transfer of Muslims from India to Pakistan and Hindus reverse after partition of British India), political suppression (Chilean leftists after gen. Pinochet upheaval, East European anti-communist dissidents, etc.). In general, most of the refugees treat their flight temporary, thus tend to lie in the borderland, close to their native country boundary. The stay might become,

however, permanent as it happened in case of Armenians in Georgia, Turkmen in Iran or Serbs in Croatian Krajina.

7. **“Gastarbeiters”** – people who emigrated for economic reasons. Most of them treat their stay in a country in which they have found a job as temporary, but some of them remain and create smaller or bigger minority groups (as for instance Turks in Germany, Algerians in France, Palestinians in Kuwait do). Although they are regarded as “integrated minorities” and mostly are susceptible to assimilation processes, they may evoke some social problems.

GENETIC CLASSIFICATION OF MINORITIES

AUTOCHTONS	1. “ABORIGINES” “TRIBALS” AND OTHER PRIMARY GROUPS OF ARCHAIC ORIGIN
	2. OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS AND NATIONALITIES OF VERY OLD ORIGIN
NEWCOMERS	3. INVADORS AND CONQUERORS
	4. SETTLERS: a) SETTLED BY CONQUERORS b) SETTLED BY OWN RULERS OR POSSESSORS
	5. DISPLACED PERSONS
	6. REFUGEES
	7. “GASTARBEITERS”

Divisions between particular genetic categories of minorities are not distinct. Just opposite, they are rather relative and may mash in the course of history. For example, the Jews in ancient times were conquerors that conquered Kanaan land, but they were regarded as autochthons by later conquerors of that territory – Babylonians, Egyptians, Romans etc. For Arabic invaders in the 7th century the clusters of Jews that remained in Palestine seemed to be almost communities of aborigines. Now, after thirteen centuries, Arab population in Israel may be regarded as autochthons, while Jewish citizens as newcomers: conquerors or, at least, settlers. It means that among all the categories of newcomers we should probably make a distinction between those of “the old time” and these of “the new time”. To be sure, many of the old newcomers have got real “*ius soli*” rights till now.

Conclusions

There are few true nation-states in the world today. Most countries are home for two, three, or numerous nations and ethnic groups. Rank and hierarchy of particular groups depends on their number, level of cultural development, economic power, social mobilization, strength of national feeling and political organization, relations with dominant nation and other national groups in the country, position in a public life of a state, contacts with compatriots abroad and a scale of their support etc. German minorities in Central Europe, for instance, have got proportionally high position in national hierarchy because of their economic power, cultural development, good social and political organization, as well as “*Vaterland's*” support. Similar high position have reached Hungarians, while peasants’ Bialorussian or Slovak societies have never achieved it, and uneducated and homeless Gypsies have always been on the bottom of the hierarchical ladder. However, the rank and hierarchy of particular national groups is variable and may change in the course of time according to changing opportunities.

There is probably not any state in the modern world, even if it is regarded as being nation-state, in which every group of population would completely accept the cultural tradition, language or religion of the majority. It means that there are groups which do not recognize themselves as a part of a dominant nation in the country. They often feel discriminated socially, politically, or, at least, economically and, hence, determined to fight for equal rights or self-determination.

In 1978, Freedom House in New York published a list of 91 ethnic minority groups that allegedly were being denied self-determination in 46 countries. The list is certainly open to question, yet it does indicate that cultural pluralism is not only worldwide but also a prominent element in political unrest nearly everywhere (after Glassner and de Blij, p. 534).

If not a full independence, or a federation status, a more or less wide cultural,

economic or political autonomy is a desire of most of the national and ethnic minorities. It seems to be a guarantee of the mainainance of their cultural identity, political self-realization, prosperous economic life and good relations both with other groups within the state and with the rest of their nation in the motherland. And although this vision is often far from reality and this beatiful dream might change into nasty disillusionment when realized, it should be realized. It is important not only for minorities themselves because of their need of self-determination, but also for dominant nation for it may help to improve its image among other nations both within the country and abroad. It is also important for Europe as a whole for it might precipitate an emergence of trully democratic "Europe of motherlands" of all of the European nations not only major ones.

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