This article aims to analyse nationalism on the basis of theoretical insights developed by Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Anthony D. Smith. Their ideas are important since these three scholars help to discern what might be done to diminish the possibility of conflicts because of ethnic, national and cultural differences. An extensive part of the article is also devoted to the practical analysis of manifestations of nationalism within the Belgian society related to historically conditioned misunderstandings between the Flemish and the Walloons.

Keywords: Nationalism, culture, ethnicity.

INTRODUCTION

Although people tend to believe that the phenomenon of national identity has already lost its importance due to intensive decay of national values in different contemporary societies, the rise of extreme nationalist ideologies and hostile attitudes towards representatives of certain ethnic and migrant groups in Europe reveal that much more light still needs to be shed on the subject in order to understand what steps should be taken to diminish the possibility of dramatic conflicts and violent clashes in the future. The aim of this essay is to discuss different attitudes towards nationalism, ethnicity and the concept of a nation by comparing theoretical ideas, which have been developed
by three famous scholars: Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Anthony D. Smith. Some practical examples related to nationalism and other theoretical concepts will be mentioned in order to make the text more vivid. Besides, it will be sought to examine the impact of nationalism upon various political processes that affect Belgium and makes it less influential on the global arena. Much attention will be paid to the following variables: the use of separate languages, the role of cultural peculiarities and different approaches to religion, politics and migration.

The author of this article firmly believes that many negative stereotypes might be rejected if the knowledge about these delicate issues gets expanded even further. Although the contemporary world is growing more multicultural and multinational, many individuals are quite attached to their nations and places of origin. Therefore philosophers and theoreticians should work even harder to discover available points of contact in order to decrease possible discord among different communities. Representatives of migrant and ethnic groups should also become more aware of sensitive peculiarities, communicate more openly, learn how to avoid conflicting differences and develop a sense of unity as a necessary prerequisite for peace and harmony. Here, a special role might be attributed to culture which can be interpreted either as “essentially territorial” or as “general human ‘software’”. Although the first interpretation still prevails, adequate attention should be devoted to the second one as well.

CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT NATIONALISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CULTURE AND STATEHOOD

Looking from the theoretical perspective, the modernist approach has been “represented paradigmatically by Gellner and Anderson” while Anthony D. Smith has given much support to the basic tenets of primordialism. Modernists tend to diminish the significance of the concept of a nation and claim that all peoples are gradually merging together into one multi-national entity. The successful enlargement of the European Union by accepting many countries of Central and
Eastern Europe as well as the incorporation of a philosophical idea about the potential formation of the United States of Europe into a coherent political strategy after ratifying the Treaty of Lisbon serve as eloquent examples which prove that the modernist approach towards nationalism holds many seeds of truth in itself. The primordialists, in the meantime, reject the attitude of their opponents and consider that nationhood and ethnicity form a necessary basis for a healthy state. As Anthony D. Smith puts it, “human beings retain a multiplicity of allegiances in the contemporary world” but at the same time they seem to experience great tension by having to choose “between loyalty to a national state and solidarity with an ethnic community, within or outside the boundaries of that state”\(^3\). For instance, the Flemish government has recently introduced a special immigration package under the title “Migrating to Flanders: Starterskit for family migrants”. It includes several brochures, video testimonials, checklists and a short survival guide. All materials are available online at a special website www.migreren.inburgering.be and they can be accessed completely free of charge. Apart from French and Dutch versions, one can read and download the information given in four foreign languages: Arabic, English, Russian and Turkish. Originally, this initiative has been expected to accelerate the integration of newly-arrived immigrants into the Flemish society. However, the local Moroccan community stands in opposition to the spread of such informational material to its members. Some of provided explanations about the obligation to educate small children, the necessity to lead a healthy lifestyle or the requirement to be diligent and dutiful at a workplace have been seen by the members of the Moroccan community of Flanders as too outspoken, primitive and even overtly offensive. The situation has already become especially tense after the public address of Geert Bourgeois, the Flemish Minister of Administration Affairs, Home Affairs, Integration, Tourism and the Flemish Border Community. Speaking on Flemish television, he has indicated that it might be extremely challenging for the government to naturalize the Moroccans properly since “one quarter of them are not even able to speak to their neighbours”\(^4\). In contrast, the second-generation of Moroccan immigrants living in Belgium also
face serious problems of self-identification. Being born in the country and enjoying their citizenship as well as a decent command of French and Flemish, these people frequently fail to adapt to their respective societies due to ethnic, cultural and religious differences. Analyzing the situation of Muslim immigrants and their children in Belgium, Thérèse De Raedt distinguishes two important trends: “The policies in Flanders resemble the Anglo-Saxon model […] and are partly influenced by the Dutch model, which is, however, more ‘strict’ in subdividing the immigrants by nationality. […] The French-speaking community, influenced by France, has opted for the assimilation model where immigrants, or ‘new’ naturalized Belgians, have to assimilate with the autochthon population”\(^5\). Quite frequently, despite all efforts to become accepted, some Belgian citizens of Moroccan descent are still seen by their compatriots either as undesirable aliens or as insufficiently naturalized individuals. Paradoxically, they also happen to be quite distant from the cultural heritage of their parents since their personal relationships with Morocco and its traditions have already become weak and much more complex. Therefore such individuals experience a deep crisis of self-identification. Sometimes they choose to define themselves as Muslims and become fascinated by extreme manifestations of this religion, including wearing dark female veils or burning people’s automobiles in some isolated districts. This tendency has already provoked a fiery debate about social controversies that produce much concern as far as the traditional perception of Belgian national identity and its recent transformations are concerned. The example discussed above demonstrates quite clearly that certain issues related to easily noticeable ethnic or religious differences and various aspects of nationalism continue to remain sensitive and important. Thus, the primordialist approach cannot be written off as completely irrelevant as well.

In fact, different definitions of nationalism happen to be very useful to perceive major changes in the aftermath of political upheavals as well as social challenges and cultural transformations taking place within many countries. Quite an interesting interpretation of nationalism has been introduced by a gifted British sociologist, political
scientist and philosopher of Jewish and Czech descent Ernest Gellner (1925 – 1995) whose academic interests seem to be truly varied and cover such challenging topics as the question of freedom, different aspects of civil society, the interdependence of culture and organization as well as the constant friction between Christianity and Islam to name just a few. His major scholarly works include Words and Things (1959), Contemporary Thought and Politics (1974), Muslim Society (1981), Nations and Nationalism (1983), Culture, Identity and Politics (1987), Plough, Sword and Book (1988) and Nationalism (1997).

One of Ernest Gellner’s three central notions is that of culture. In his famous book Nationalism Ernest Gellner defines this concept by making a direct reference to “a shared style of expression in words, facial expression and body language, style of clothing, preparation and consumption of food” as well as distinguishing certain “patterns of conduct transmitted through emulation”6. In addition, he places a special emphasis on various cultural peculiarities that, in turn, might be seen as a necessary stimulus for the formation of a nation. Chris Hann insightfully notes that “Ernest Gellner’s theory of nationalism depends upon a theory of culture, which shows him to belong in the ‘romantic-holist’ tradition that runs from Herder to Malinowski and beyond”7. Developing his ideas, Ernest Gellner wanted to reveal that each society has always been inclined to construct its own cultural values which are accepted and internalized by a certain group of people. To show in what ways cultural elements may influence the individual, Ernest Gellner argues that “a mode of transmission of traits or activities from generation to generation […] is no longer dependent on being inscribed into the genetic constitution” but at the same time it is worth remembering that “[cultural] diversity is enormous and that change can be exceedingly rapid”8. In this context less attention is given to people’s ethnic background or racial features which have been inherited from the ancestors. Instead, the focus of attention is shifted to the impact of different cultures that not only take part in a harsh competition for domination but undergo inner transformations as well. The scholar also notes that “the very diversity of cultures which is of the essence of humanity also includes diversity over time:
cultures can change fast, and sometimes do so”. Looking from the practical perspective, it can be easily noticed that strong societies are capable to use their military or economic potential in order to impose their cultural values and religious beliefs or even their language, upon weaker ones. In some rare cases this tendency might also take the opposite turn as well. All in all, the introduction of alien cultural elements into traditional patterns can rapidly change the lifestyle of a particular community beyond recognition. This process may also damage identities of people to a great extent and eventually cause a serious threat of assimilation. For instance, many Lithuanians were influenced by Russian culture during the Soviet occupation. At that time, most people had to belong to the Communist Party and speak Russian rather fluently in order to get a decent workplace. There was almost no alternative to Soviet television channels or Russian popular music. Those individuals who decided to listen to radio stations *The Voice of America* and *Free Europe* or demonstrated a clear preference to rock music and jazz frequently ended up being dissidents. From 1987 to 1989 three rock marches and several smaller rock festivals were organized in Lithuania. According to the historian Birutė Kukliūtė, during the Soviet era “rock was labelled ‘the American ideological weapon’” and for this reason numerous “attempts were made to control it with all might”. Many young Lithuanians, in the meantime, found rock marches especially attractive. They felt deeply attached to rock music because prohibited concerts offered a rare chance to communicate much more freely and keep the idea of Lithuania’s independence alive at the same time. In the Soviet Union, there was practically no line of separation between social, cultural and political spheres because they had merged into one coherent whole. In fact, the majority of the population did not manage to avoid strong waves of Soviet and predominantly Russian cultural invasion. Some Lithuanian intellectuals spotted initial signs of decay of Lithuanian culture and attempted to reverse the unfavorable course of events by encouraging people to resist the threat of assimilation either actively or passively. Numerous families, for example, encouraged their children to collect folk songs or develop a strong interest in Lithuanian literature by taking part in
special literary circles operating at secondary schools. Other people, especially young ones, became interested in protecting the nature of Lithuania from excessive pollution. Various forms of cultural resistance proved to be helpful and the mood of the populace changed. To put it simply, many cultural movements gradually transformed into a political movement called Sąjūdis and finally the independence of Lithuania was successfully restored. This example demonstrates that culture might be directly related to statehood on the condition that individuals are willing to unite and collaborate as one nation.

Another important notion closely related to culture is called nationalism. Ernest Gellner defines this concept as “a political principle which maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bond”\(^1\). In other words, people who make up a certain political entity are required to share and cherish the same cultural values. Otherwise, a concrete nation and its statehood might be seen as unacceptable or, at best, experiencing a severe lack of legitimacy. In this context much heed should also be paid to the state which is expected to apply various means associated with power and even coercion to maintain cultural homogeneity. In order to achieve this objective, according to Ernest Gellner, it is absolutely necessary to make sure “that the positions in this institutional power center be manned by members of the ‘national’ culture, the one which defines the unit”\(^2\). This implies that all levers of power should be entrusted merely to those individuals who define themselves as being inseparable from prevalent cultural and political patterns. In fact, endeavors of the Chinese government to subdue repetitive revolts of the Tibetans by brutal military force and limit the access to certain western sites operating on the Internet may serve as an extreme example showing that cultural homogeneity is often perceived as an absolute prerequisite to political stability. Undoubtedly, the dramatic situation of the Uyghur minority currently living in Northwestern China has also been conditioned by severe restrictions in the realms of religious freedom and cultural expression:

*Today, Uyghurs are in two groups: those who want an independent Uyghur state and those who realize that it is easier to conform to traditional Chinese culture. It seems that the Uyghur youth want*
to be able to practice their religion without worrying about persecution, but they also believe that going to Chinese schools, wearing traditional Chinese clothing, and living comfortably with Han Chinese in Xinjiang are more acceptable than constantly being targeted by the Chinese government. […] As more Uyghurs conform to the traditional Chinese way of life, the government believes that its restrictions are working and the Uyghur independence movement is getting smaller.\textsuperscript{13}

On the one hand, reckless ambitions of the Chinese government to strengthen its rule and cultural domination in the region of Xinjiang could make the prospects for the Uighur independence rather obscure. On the other hand, extreme pressure on the local inhabitants might produce opposite results by turning the Chinese state highly repulsive and repugnant to ordinary people. There are two choices that most Uyghurs and Tibetans can make at present: some of them follow the path of resistance by taking part in violent rebellions or burning themselves to death while others tend to adapt to the regime in order to avoid killings and repressions. However their unfulfilled desire for freedom, cultural expression and traditional religious practices may break out any time and unexpectedly transform into a large-scale political and national uprising similar to the Arab Spring in the Middle East.

Although various controversial measures to achieve cultural homogeneity are especially noticeable in totalitarian countries, some democratic states are also willing to secure a high degree of similarity among their citizens. Before the election of Barack H. Obama, for instance, some Americans were extremely worried about his birthplace and race as well as his relationship with Islam and the middle name of Arabic origin. In the meantime, the mass media played a vital role as the main catalyst by inciting discussions on these touchy subjects. There were serious doubts publicly raised that Barack H. Obama might not be a natural-born citizen of the United States. To settle the issue once and for all, a short form of his birth certificate was posted on a special webpage entitled “Fight the Smears” in 2008. However, fiery debates about Barack H. Obama’s birth certificate and potential
forgeries never stopped. Contrary to all expectations, these talks became even more important after his victory in the presidential race of 2008 because a single biographical fact could have made Barack H. Obama ineligible to hold the office of President. As a result, a sizable number of Americans became concerned over the issue to such an extent that the far-right birther movement has been successfully created. In order to shut the mouths of more than a few opponents, including the Governor of Alaska Sarah Palin and the business magnate Donald Trump, a decision to release a long form of the birth certificate of the U.S. president on the official webpage of the White House was made in 2011. Afterwards, Barack H. Obama addressed some journalists in a press conference and made a short public statement on the issue to bring all speculations and conspiracy theories about the legitimacy of his presidency to an end:

\[I\text{ think it started during the campaign. And I have to say that over the last two and a half years I have watched with bemusement, I’ve been puzzled at the degree to which this thing just kept on going. We’ve had every official in Hawaii, Democrat and Republican, every news outlet that has investigated this, confirm that, yes, in fact, I was born in Hawaii, August 4, 1961, in Kapiolani Hospital.}\]

This long-lasting and highly politicized public dispute about the exact site of Barack H. Obama’s birth might seem unnecessary and even paradoxical to many political experts and commentators. However, some active members of the birther movement continue to openly claim that the 44th president of the United States has not yet submitted enough information to prove his constitutional eligibility despite the availability of the birth-certificate online. Such an unexpected turn of events demonstrates that a strong desire for cultural homogeneity still exists even in the American society which has traditionally been regarded as a melting-pot of cultures. Therefore it is more than obvious that a well-developed tradition of democracy, freedom of speech and clearly defined legal procedures serve as vital safeguards against potential manipulations as far as the limits of cultural homogeneity within a particular nation are concerned.
The third concept central to Ernest Gellner’s theory about nationalism is referred to as organization. Importantly, the relationship between culture and organization is regarded as mutually dependent. According to Ernest Gellner, both of these concepts should be characterized as “the raw material, so to speak, of all social life”\textsuperscript{15}. The scholar claims that culture and organization are quite widespread and even universal because they typically make the indispensable foundation for any functional community. However not all communities that possess their own cultural and organizational structures can be defined as nations. Therefore a major scholarly challenge, in this case, has been to clarify in what ways different aspects of organization and culture contribute to the rise of the nationalist sentiment among individuals and shape its manifestations in everyday life.

In order to trace back the beginnings of nationalism, Ernest Gellner has concentrated on three periods of human history. The first period is made known as “the foraging age” and it seems to be less important to the analysis of nationalism since at that time “communities […] were too small for the issue of nationalism to arise at all”\textsuperscript{16}. These people were reliant on each other as well as extremely dependent on the mercy of nature that provided them with shelter, food and clothing. Being forced to live under demanding circumstances, they had no other option but to give a clear preference to cooperation and communication rather than self-definition in order to survive. The second period is referred to as “the agrarian age” that has always been notable for “an enormous increase in the complexity of the division of labour and of social organization”\textsuperscript{17}. At this point of history, the basic social model consisted of three different groups. People who earned their daily bread from agricultural activity, craftsmanship or trade belonged to the lowest layer of society. The ruler and his nobility occupied the very top position of the hierarchy. Meanwhile the clergy was destined to stay in the middle of the social pyramid. Above-mentioned social divisions were closely related to the formation of a state and its potential transformation into an empire. Willing to demonstrate the complexity of the situation, Ernest Gellner makes an interesting observation:
The characteristic political unit of the agrarian age is generally either much smaller than the limits of a culture – city-states, village communities, tribal segments – or very much larger: culturally eclectic empires which have no reason whatsoever to limit their expansion when they encounter linguistic or cultural boundaries (of which they may be wholly ignorant, and to which they are indifferent)\(^{18}\).

In fact, there were too types of loyalty because ordinary people not only had to maintain a close bond with their respective communities but pledged their allegiances to the ruler. Peasants and craftsmen remained quite separate from other social groups, so they spoke their own dialects and developed the folk culture. Meanwhile members of the nobility and churchmen felt especially attached to their rank and perceived themselves as completely separate entities. These three groups of people could hardly share any common cultural elements, except those related to religion, because of their different social backgrounds. Therefore a great division between elitist or “high” and popular or “low” forms of culture has become unavoidable for many centuries. Speaking about linguistic differences, one should remember the situation in England immediately after the Norman Conquest as an eloquent example. At that time, French became the language of the ruling while other population continued to speak English. Latin, in the meantime, retained its dominant status as the language of the Church. Having in mind all these aspects, it is possible to conclude that the representatives of all layers of English medieval society considered themselves as subjects of the same king. In other words, the preference was given to the political interests of a certain dynasty in power while other divisions related to descent or the use of separate languages seemed to be insignificant.

Analyzing the third period of human history, Ernest Gellner points out that it should be labeled the industrial age and indicates that “nationalism” as well as “economic growth” constitute “two main principles of political legitimacy”\(^{19}\). These elements are believed to create especially favorable circumstances to more intensive social mobility, increase the level of anonymity and encourage the atomisation
of society. In fact all of these principles are considered to be inseparable from “modern society” which has also become dependent on “the semantic nature of work”\textsuperscript{20}. People often feel themselves less attached to a concrete place of living, more flexible in the performance of professional duties but greatly dependent on their abilities and very individualistic. Having all these factors in mind, political power should be seen as closely related to impressive rates of production. When there is little production and almost no profit, social, economic and financial structures of any state become unstable and the ability of the government to impose its strategies upon ordinary people decreases. (E.g. Massive strikes and violent demonstrations in Greece because of financial difficulties show how closely interconnected the economic prosperity of a nation and the political stability of the state are.) Individuals, in the meantime, might be entrusted with several ambitious tasks at a time. Firstly, they ought to be able to deal with constant changes on the job market. Here, a special role is attributed to “increasing equalisation of conditions” because this process makes it possible for many people to get into various layers of society more easily despite their different backgrounds\textsuperscript{21}. Secondly, they may be expected to develop marketable professional skills, have no language barrier, develop good communication skills and integrate into a high-level cultural system which takes up the dominant position. These requirements are impossible to ignore for every person who wants to become an integral part of a certain society. In most cases, culture becomes accessible to contemporary people due to widespread literacy as well as the general system of education. It is important to note, however, that modern perceptions of the world are being shaped by a certain version of culture which “[pervades] the entire society displacing folk or low culture”\textsuperscript{22}. In fact, citizens of different countries might have quite opposite attitudes towards the same question. For instance, abortion laws in Sweden and Poland are strikingly different in spite of the fact that both countries are geographically close and belong to the European Union. In Poland abortion is considered to be illegal. Meanwhile Swedish laws are extremely liberal on this issue and even permit gender-based abortions upon the request of a
woman. In this context one should remember that Poland has always been famous for its deeply-rooted Catholic traditions while Sweden has already become a very secular country lacking lively ties with the Protestant tradition. Therefore it is possible to make an observation that namely dominant cultural values determine unique peculiarities of every nation to a great extent. The example of Sweden illustrates the idea of Ernest Gellner that “the Age of Nationalism in Europe is also an Age of Secularism”23. However, most Poles traditionally believe that human life should be respected from the moment of conception. Therefore their institutions, including hospitals or schools, need to adapt accordingly. Besides, many cultural elements tend to be taken over from closest relatives, teachers or spiritual leaders. Thus chances are that a big part of the young generation of Poles will cherish the same attitude towards the sanctity of life due to a great influence of the general surroundings. Although Ernest Gellner endeavors to prove that modern nationalism is built on the basic tenets of secularism, he also admits that “Polish nationalism and Catholicism would be hard to separate”24. The role of the Catholic Church and adequate governmental policies are very important in this case because many Polish people perceive their national identity as consisting of strong patriotic feelings as well as their faith.

Another interesting attitude towards nationalism is presented by the famous American scholar Benedict Anderson of Irish and English descent who has worked for many years in Indonesia and Thailand. His controversial book *Imagined Communities* (1983) has provoked a heated argument among numerous politicians, philosophers and theoreticians concerning the concept of nationalism. Even ordinary people, who do not seem to be interested in analysing their national identity, are aware of the main idea of the above-mentioned book, at least. As a philosopher and influential scholar, Benedict Anderson emphasizes that nationalism has always attracted much attention. Moreover, he states that “nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time”25. Therefore, never-ending discussions about the devaluation of nationhood seem inevitable to him. Indeed, millions of people, living in the contemporary world, describe
themselves as an inseparable part of a certain bigger entity, which is typically referred to as a nation. This phenomenon becomes more noticeable during the Olympics Parade, when various national flags are proudly carried by different sportsmen. At this unique moment they are being watched by compatriots who experience a feeling of satisfaction and reaffirm their nationality in a symbolic way. It is obvious that nationalism has maintained its power to the present day. However, there is no single definition of a nation, despite its overwhelming popularity, because everybody perceives this concept in a different light. As Benedict Anderson states, “[n]ation, nationality, nationalism – all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse”\textsuperscript{26}. In order to avoid possible uncertainties, a clear distinction between these three elements has to be made. Traditionally, the concept of a nation encompasses a certain group of people who are of common descent and share the same cultural heritage. The members of this group usually speak one language, live in a fixed territory and form a state. The term “nationality” is frequently explained as the right to belong to a certain nation, which is acquired by birth. Meanwhile nationalism is usually regarded as a certain form of patriotism or simply love for the homeland. However, in the course of history, nationalism happened to be transformed by politicians into perverse nationalist movements, such as Nazism. Therefore this word can sometimes bear certain negative connotations.

Trying to change traditional attitudes towards these concepts, Benedict Anderson rejects the conservative approach and provides one of the most controversial definitions of a nation. In his opinion, it should be considered as “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”\textsuperscript{27}. It is defined as imagined because the members of a certain nation will never be able to get acquainted or meet most of their compatriots. However, despite this obstacle people are eager to consider themselves united as a single and harmonious community. In other words, a nation comes into existence on condition that an impressive number of people imagine themselves to be a part of it. Importantly, the nation is usually “imagined as limited” since it lacks flexibility and fails to include the
entire mankind. However, the majority of people believe that their respective nations are quite real and remain unwilling to regard them as a fruit of imagination. They even feel emotionally and culturally attached to a particular nation and sometimes choose to sacrifice their lives for its defense.

Nationalism is perceived by Benedict Anderson as a partly utopian ideology, which “invents nations where they do not exist.” In addition, he explains that the only possibly true communities are small primordial villages, where all the inhabitants could easily communicate and get acquainted with each other. However, the degree of reality can also be questionable here. Larger communities, in his opinion, are purely imagined and they are differentiated “not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.” In order to explain this paradox in detail, he provides two examples of imagined communities: the Javanese villagers and the French aristocracy. In the first case, the relationship between people is based on “stretchable nets of kinship and clientship.” On the one hand, the villagers fail to understand the concept of society and they do not even have an appropriate word to define it in their native language. On the other hand, they still see themselves as a community and experience unity either by emphasizing common descent or by making everyday business deals. The French aristocracy makes a very complex system which includes different nobles. Despite all social differences, they usually have two things in common: their titles and complex family trees, which usually are closely intertwined. Therefore they define themselves as a unique entity, which should at any cost be separated from others. However, these ideas are closely related to the continuous thirst for illusionary unity within their own class.

Polishing his arguments, Benedict Anderson also introduces an interesting concept of “official nationalism” which, in his opinion, has emerged “after, and in reaction to, the popular national movements proliferating in Europe since 1820’s.” This type of nationalism becomes important if there is a big cultural and linguistic gap separating members of the ruling class from ordinary people. As a result of strong nationalist movements, many representatives of the European
aristocracy had to ensure and protect their status by defining themselves as the French, the German or the Polish and by applying harsh policies of assimilation. The scheme of behavior happened to be quite simple. If the ruler of a certain country attributed himself to a certain nation and expressed a clear preference to a particular language, his subjects were forced to behave in the same manner. Educational and administrative systems were exploited in order to achieve a sufficiently high level of national homogeneity more rapidly. Benedict Anderson metaphorically describes these efforts as a painful process of “stretching the short, tight, skin of the nation over the gigantic body of the empire.”

Having in mind great ethnic and linguistic diversities inside the British Empire or the Czarist Russia, one can easily conclude that some individuals objected to being perceived as Russians or Englishmen for two significant reasons. Firstly, many people supported other versions of nationalism than the official one. Secondly, they lived quite far away from the political centre, practiced another religion and spoke a different language. As Benedict Anderson puts it, hostilities within certain nationalistic entities which have originated from empires are unavoidable due to “a discrepancy between nation and dynastic realm.”

The case of the Chechens proves that various forms of the official nationalism might be fiercely rejected despite all efforts. During the czarist era the Chechens could not be completely assimilated by the Russians because of the geographical location (the Caucasus has always been distant from St. Petersburg or Moscow), the language barrier (before the Revolution only a limited number of Chechens could speak Russian) and religious differences (most Chechens were Muslims). Russian emperors wanted to subjugate their subjects by diminishing the use of their language and imposing orthodoxy as a dominant religion. When this objective remained unattained, some bloody revolts broke up and many Chechens ended up being killed or exiled. During the Soviet era, the communists chose to follow the same track but they decided to propagate atheism instead of religion. At that time linguistic differences became not so noticeable in Chechnya because of the prevalent educational model which required a perfect command of
Russian. The geographical distance lost its initial importance due to modern means of transport, including automobiles, trains and planes. Therefore, religion acquired more importance among the Chechens since they began looking at Islam as the main and only element of their self-identification. This factor has become vital during recent violent wars between Russians and Chechens. The former refer to their enemies as infidels while the latter apply the term “terrorists” extensively. In general the rise of militant and radical forms of Islam should be regarded as “a product and a vehicle of globalization”\(^{35}\). The only difference is that some terrorists aim to undermine the dominance of the United States while others consider Russian authorities to be their major enemy. Having this context in mind, one has to acknowledge that even the global terrorism cannot remain separate from “a process of localization”\(^{36}\). In other words, terrorists may plan certain destructive actions globally but at the same time they strike locally in order to achieve concrete aims. Besides, hatred might be directed towards different governments but the initiators of terrorist attacks always make use of the same beneficial elements of globalization starting from the availability of the Internet as well as social networks and finishing with the impressive power of the CNN effect to attain their objectives.

In comparison to Ernest Gellner’s ideas, Benedict Anderson seems to be more concerned with language as the basic element of nationalism but he also acknowledges that “nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artifacts of a particular kind”\(^{37}\). From the modernist perspective, the Reformation and the invention of the printing press served as a driving force for nationalism. Before the schism of the Catholic Church most books were meant for the clergy or scientists, who were taught to speak Latin. After the rise of Protestantism and the subsequent formation of capitalist societies, people started reading newly printed and much cheaper books in their native languages. The best examples of this sudden change are numerous translations of the Bible as well as Martin Luther’s theses into the German language. His other works were also written in German and became extremely popular at the time. In Benedict Anderson’s opinion, “Luther became the first
best-selling author so known.38 The widespread usage of vernaculars in documentation, religious services and literature as well as everyday communication encouraged the birth of nations as imagined communities. Benedict Anderson describes how this processes affected the formation of the so-called national consciousness:

First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken languages. [...] Second, print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language, which in the long run helped to build that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation. [...] Third, print-capitalism created languages-of-power of a kind different from the older administrative vernaculars.39

From that historical moment the development of any language and has always been determined by its spread through printed books. After some time, a possibility of linguistic domination has been turned into a political tool. It should be noted that inability to write, read or express ideas in the native language inevitably leads to the decay of national consciousness. If no books are available in a certain language, very few people will be interested in using or learning it. Subsequently, many individuals may alienate from their culture and experience the danger of assimilation.

In the past, the spread of vernaculars enriched people’s imagination and laid the foundations for the contemporary idea of a nation-state at the same time. Some difficult languages even served as a shield against dangers of denationalization. For example, the Lithuanian language due to its complex structure, which had derived in the 2nd century BC, seemed too difficult to learn for many occupants throughout the history. In the 19th century the usage of the Lithuanian language in printed form was banned by the czarist Russia. Lithuanian books were secretly published in Germany. Later, they were illegally transported across the border and brought to ordinary people by book-bearers. Afterwards, these books (mostly prayer books and bibles) were used in hidden schools or at home. As a consequence, Lithuanians managed to preserve their national identity.
and traditions from complete destruction. On the other hand, some colonized nations employed the language of their colonizers to encourage the freedom movement. For example, major national literary works in Mexico or Peru were written in Spanish. However, the aim of the local writers was to emphasize the need for national liberation from the Spaniards. From Benedict Anderson's perspective, the above-mentioned tendencies can be regarded as strengtheners of what he perceives as an imaginary concept of a nation. At present, the government of Lithuania puts a special emphasis on the protection of the Lithuanian language from foreign influences. For this reason, there are certain disagreements with some members of the Polish minority who are reluctant to support the usage of Lithuanian in some secondary schools where the majority of schoolchildren are of Polish descent. There is also certain discontent concerning the inability to write down names and surnames in the passports using the Polish alphabet. In fact, these problems derive from the desire of Lithuanian and Polish to relate the sense of the belonging to a concrete nation to linguistic preferences. Such a tense situation caused some serious apprehensions about the bilateral relations between Lithuania and Poland despite the fact that the Polish Ambassador to Lithuania Janusz Skolimowski characterized them as “not that bad” after taking part in a discussion with Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius. However, red and white paint recently sprayed over Lithuanian-language signs in the Puńsk district as well as other acts of vandalism against Lithuanian monuments located in Poland indicate that some active steps should rapidly be made to increase mutual understanding on both sides. As many Lithuanian intellectuals, including a famous translator Antanas Gailius and the Reverend Julius Sasnauskas suggest, it is highly necessary “to surmount political discord, extinguish the fire of polarisation that is often fuelled by short-lived political ambitions.” There is no doubt that a variety of cultural initiatives might greatly assist in building new bridges of friendship between Lithuanians and Poles.

Contrary to Benedict Anderson’s ideas, Anthony D. Smith (b. 1933) does not express any considerations about the existence of a nation as
an imagined entity. His major works are the following: *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1987), *National Identity* (1991) and *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (2009). Importantly, he pays much attention to the relationship between nationalism and ethnicity since it facilitates the understanding of the formation of different nations. The scholar notes that there are many important social and ethnic factors involved in this process such as the continuity of the past into the present and the future, customs, traditions and recollections about the native country. Willing to avoid possible misconceptions, Anthony D. Smith uses two different terms: “a nation” and “an ethnie”. He refers to a nation “as a named community possessing a historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs”42. Meanwhile an ethnie is described as “a named community of shared origin myths, memories and one or more element(s) of common culture, including an association with a specific territory”43. From the ethno-symbolic point of view, the inner structure of contemporary states contains important elements of both concepts which are very much interrelated. For instance, public order and laws are usually based on prevailing customs, traditions, and religion to a bigger or lesser extent.

Interestingly, a term “ethnie” comes from the French language and generally refers to a set of experiences that a group of people passes from generation to generation. According to Anthony D. Smith, it is an element, “which unites an emphasis upon cultural differences with the sense of an historical community”44. This term, however, does not eliminate initial tribal differences. Besides, different bits of new information are being added all the time since life is continuously changing. In fact, modernists failed to recognize ethnicity as one of the most important features of the nation. Instead, they emphasized the role of “the nation as a legal-political community” and focused on questions related to the territory, citizenship and public culture45. However, this definition of the nation seems to be too narrow when the state consists of a major dominant ethnic group or of many different ethnic groups, which are very much eager to maintain their identity. In that case, the understanding of the notion of a nation undergoes significant changes
and much attention is paid to the ancestry, language, shared cultural values, and history. From this point of view, the nation should not be seen just as an imagined community or a nameless assembly of people but as a group of compatriots who are sharing the same ethnic background.

According to Anthony D. Smith, the sense of belonging to a certain nation cannot be regarded as a sign of national awareness since “inclusiveness does not of itself define or validate nationhood”46. In Germany, for example, children of Turkish immigrants are more likely to consider themselves Turkish even if they were born in this country. On the one hand, they are officially regarded as citizens of Germany and they can live in the country without any legal restrictions; on the other hand, these children do not see themselves as a fully-integrated part of the German society. In other words, there is a deep conflict of identity, which prevents the appearance of their national awareness or the feeling of being German. In addition, Anthony D. Smith is convinced that a nation can never be a mass phenomenon at the initial stage of its existence. In order to support this idea, he discusses the development of the national awareness in Italy. He claims that after the struggle for independence “a nation of Italy already existed” but in reality quite few Italians associated themselves with this new-born nation47. The internal psychological alienation between ordinary people and their nation as a whole disappeared after some time. Finally, the idea of a nation as the basis for the state has been gradually engraved into the minds of the many. At present, the existence of Italy to the majority of Italians is as real and natural as a bottle of wine on their tables at dinnertime.

After comparing the contradictory ideas of all theoreticians, some serious questions immediately arise. The concept of a nation may seem to people extremely problematic and fluid. Under certain circumstances it might be difficult to decide whether the nation is a cultural formation, a real entity or an imaginary concept. For this reason there is a strong need to mention the complex relationship between nationalism and globalization in more depth. Some analysts believe that there is a certain link between the two phenomena. For
other academicians numerous attempts to find such connections seem completely unacceptable. A German sociologist Ulrich Beck, for instance, states an opinion that today we should speak about “world society without a world state and without global governance” which is left at the mercy of “globally disorganized capitalism”48. The concept of a nation in his opinion has absolutely no value since “the space controlled by national states” happens to be squeezed “in a container”49. It should be noted, however, that one may easily notice two dominant theoretical interpretations about the connection between globalization and nationalism. On the one hand, nationalism might be placed in opposition to globalization. According to Ulrich Beck, globalization should be perceived as characterizing “the processes through which sovereign national states are criss-crossed and undermined by transnational actors”50. On the other hand, globalization could also be regarded as a major impetus to cherish nationalist sentiments or safeguard certain forms of ethnicity. As Daniele Conversi notes “globalization destroyed national boundaries by superimposing a plethora of supra-national and corporate networks on them” but it is no longer possible to ignore the fact that “the formation of new elites and the spread of capitalist wealth have led to nationalist self-assertion, while cultural impoverishment spurred a generalized need for compensatory ethnic assertiveness” 51. Frankly speaking, the only one acceptable solution is to reach a compromise between the real and the imaginary. In fact, primordialists as well as modernists unveil one part of the universal truth. Nobody can deny that national identities are influenced by the spread of unique values and the wide use of vernacular languages but to some scholars the concept of a nation as an imagined community seems unacceptable. Instead, they tend to emphasize the importance of traditions and culture. In fact, the extensive analysis of historical and cultural trends, mythologies, linguistic and ethnic features is the only way to develop a more holistic concept of the nation. Nationalism should not be regarded as radical and extremely dangerous. It should get rid of negative connotations and transform into the effective means of enriching communication between different nations. The next section of this article
will be devoted to the analysis of nationalism in Belgium in order to understand how a certain civic consensus can be reached despite all kinds of possible tension.

THE QUESTION OF NATIONALISM IN BELGIUM: PECULIARITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS

When a conversation about the Kingdom of Belgium is started, people usually mention its famous artists such as Pieter Bruegel the Elder and René Magritte, Brussels bureaucracy, delicious chocolate, exceptional beer and French fries, usually served with some mayonnaise. However, the local population has not yet succeeded in creating a completely united country. Belgian society consists of two dominant ethinical groups: the French and the Flemish. (There are a considerable number of Jewish people living in Belgium but their situation requires a separate analysis). The majority of inhabitants of Belgium tend to associate themselves more with one of these ethnic groups and less with the Belgian state itself. Therefore ethnicity frequently becomes more significant than citizenship: there are different languages, newspapers, TV channels and even separate neighborhoods in major cities. It sometimes seems that these two different, opposite and even hostile worlds are mysteriously squeezed into one limited space (metaphorically perceived as a container in Ulrich Beck’s terms) and they are forced to co-exist under complicated circumstances. As Britt Cartrite observes, “Belgium represents perhaps the most extreme example of ethnopolitical mobilization in the western world”52. On the one hand, the Flemish as well as the Walloons see Belgium as an artificial state and often ask themselves when it will disappear from the map. On the other hand, the separation of Flanders and Wallonia would probably cause many economic and political problems since both regions are closely connected with each other. The aim of this section of the article is to examine what transformations could possibly take place in Belgium due to historical events and potential changes.

Speaking about the development of the state of Belgium, Britt Cartrite distinguishes five main factors, which caused many complexities.
The first factor is related to “a gap between ethnoterritorial elite aspirations and the broader electorate”; the second factor centers upon “the historical pattern of the evolution of Flemish aspirations” and their unattained goals, which provoke continuous discontent and radicalization of the Flemish community and its eagerness for separation from Belgium; the third factor is usually defined as “the reliance in recent decades on constitutional revisions rather than legislation to address communal concerns”; the fourth factor is often described as the absence of communication and “agreements among ethnic elites in which the Belgian state has little effective representation” and the fifth one is presented as “a shift in ethnopolitical mobilization in which the governing institutions of each region now take the lead in advancing the ethnic / regional cause”\(^5\). Each of these factors plays an important part in the process of further regionalization, which someday in the future may lead to the disintegration of Belgium per se.

It should be emphasized that Belgium is not only culturally divided into a Dutch-speaking north and a Francophone south. Another difference between the two is closely related to economics. Flanders is a wealthy region and Wallonia remains a poor one. These economic, linguistic and ethnic divisions influence the local political reality and accelerate the formation of anti-state segments of society to some extent. Therefore, the demands of ethnic movements are quite often put above the national interests since “elite leaders continue to advance the cause of devolution with a hesitant polity accepting these changes”\(^5\). Clearly, Belgian politicians are very much aware of the power of identity politics in Belgium and they are inclined to adapt to the above-mentioned tendencies as much as possible. Although it may seem that they have been especially gifted at reaching compromises, Flemish and French communities are very much influenced by different economic circumstances, social preferences, and traditions.

Looking from the historical perspective endeavors to separate ethnic identities and territories have repetitively become a major obstacle to the harmonious development of the Belgian state and its effective influence upon citizens. There were two nationalistic groups actively operating in Belgium: the French-speaking Wallingants and
the Dutch-speaking Flamingants. The former were associated with the French language and culture, secularism and the support for the working class. Meanwhile, the latter were in favour of capitalism and the Roman Catholic Church. They demanded cultural and linguistic equality as well as separate universities for the Flemish. According to Britt Cartrite, major changes occurred at the end of the 1960’s “when the sudden increase in votes for ethnic political parties began the process that culminated in dramatic constitutional revisions of the unitary Belgian state”, but later such ethnic parties as Volksunie or Rassemblement Wallon failed to “become the largest parties on the national stage”\textsuperscript{55}. In 1970 the French and the Flemish were officially given the right to create cultural communities and use their languages for legal, educational, cultural and political purposes due to the constitutional reform. Despite all the necessary changes, these two ethnic groups remained quite alien to each other and the idea of a single state was finally abandoned.

After three additional constitutional reforms, Belgium has gradually developed into a federal state consisting of three regions: the Brussels-Capital Region, the Walloon Region and the Flemish Region. Commenting on this issue, Geneviève Warland emphasizes that “Flemish identity seems to be more self-centered than Wallonian identity” which, in turn, has already taken over many of its elements from the French model, including the absolute preference for the French language.\textsuperscript{56} Due to significant linguistic, cultural and ethnic differences, the Flemish and the Walloons are distant from each other while living in the same country. As Henry Tulkens correctly observes, “relations between different linguistic communities [...] inevitably take the form of a rivalry” and such a tense situation makes chances for a permanent and beneficial dialogue rather slim.\textsuperscript{57} Therefore, in people’s opinion, the concept of the Belgian identity has lost some of its value and remains less significant to the present day.

The party system in Belgium consists of three main parties: the Christian Democrats, Liberals and Socialists. They are usually regarded as inseparable from the phenomenon of pillarisation. A very interesting analysis of all three pillars of the political system of Belgium is
provided by Vytautas Pugačiauskas who describes each of three pillars in detail and pays much attention to their relation to social classes. He notes that the Catholic pillar is formed not as an easily managed and strong organization but as “an electoral alliance”, which unites “the Christian labour movement with the four estates, the Christian farmers and the Christian middle classes”\textsuperscript{58}. Meanwhile the social pillar is characterized as “less divided and, with no internal cleavages except the linguistic one”\textsuperscript{59}. Besides, it is devoted to the formation of the welfare state as well as the defense of the working class’ interests using the power of trade-unions. The third pillar is formed by liberals but it deserves little attention because the number of voters, who traditionally support liberal ideas, is rather small in comparison to the electoral support given to the previous two pillars. This tripartite political structure continues to dominate on the political stage. It usually serves to form new governments and prevents ethnic parties from gaining more power among the wider circles of society to some extent. Thus, it is possible to claim that identity problem has not been a decisive political factor to the majority of voters for several decades. On the one hand, ordinary people seem to be more interested in regional affairs, economic development or unemployment levels in their communities now. On the other hand, they are not allowed to take part in making important political decisions as citizens of Belgium. The legal right to negotiate and solve controversial problems is reserved to members of the political elite. Britt Cartrite refers to this phenomenon as “a historical tradition”\textsuperscript{60}. However, the representatives of the elite tend to associate themselves exclusively with their respective regions or communities. Thus, they construct their politics on “linguistic issues and regionalist solutions” which quite often do not satisfy the needs of the entire state and the demands of the electorate\textsuperscript{61}. Finally, the gap between the elite and voters grows wider and wider. People find themselves divided and unable to make impact on the transformations of their society. Therefore the sense of belonging to a certain state continues to weaken. Therefore, the Belgian state was very close to a dangerous point of disintegration during the governmental crisis of the year 2007.
Another power, which affects the political situation in Belgium, is related to unattained objectives of the Flemish. The main Flemish goals were presented in 1840 and these include: the usage of Dutch in Flemish-dominated territories as well as in the courts, municipalities and other institutions. The establishment of the Flemish academy and the equality of privileges at the University of Ghent have also been very important issues. Unluckily, the government of Belgium has always been hopelessly slow in responding to the above-mentioned demands. This passivity provoked the constant discontent among the Flemish and finally resulted in the expansion of their goals. In other words, as soon as any common agreement between the Walloons and the Flemish is implemented, the latter start striving for additional liberties or rights. According to Britt Cartrite, their “political aspirations are continuously expanding ahead of legislation or institutional reform” and serves as the basis for further radicalization of Belgian society.”

For example, when the official decision to recognize Dutch as one of the country’s languages was made in 1963, the Flemish movement has continued to push for the entrenchment of linguistic rights and increased autonomy for Flanders. In other words, the Flemish elite were and still continue to be inspired by success and keep asking for compromises and institutional reforms, which intensify the danger of the disintegration of Belgium.

Interestingly, despite four major constitutional reforms that took place in the history of Belgium, the Flemish and the Walloons have not been able to reach any agreement concerning the degree of centralization of Belgium. Various conflicts occur on the political arena due to different attitudes within both ethnic groups. If the Walloons are more inclined to support a more centralized state, the Flemish usually stand for a decentralized state. There are certain divisions between the Flemish themselves since some of them are satisfied with “various reforms within a Belgian framework” and some Flemish keep fighting for “reunification with the Netherlands or an independent Flemish state”.

Meanwhile, the Belgian government is forced to maintain its powers and keep the equilibrium between these extremes at the same time. It is a very difficult task, indeed.
Obviously, the only rational way out of the continuous opposition between the two ethnic groups is a compromise. According to Britt Cartrite, continuous negotiations between the Flemish and the Walloons “would seem consistent with democratic principles” but it is very unlikely that ideologically and ethnically different political parties would be willing to sacrifice their regionalist ambitions, listen to their opponents and search for a common solution “without asking too little or too much”64. This problem might be aggravated even further by the constant sense of inequality and injustice, which provokes discontent among the Flemish. Since their demands have never been fully met, Flemish politicians seem to be tired of being ignored by their own state. Moreover, the ineffective work of various Belgian institutions as a possible mediator can make things even worse. Britt Cartrite states that their failure to apply necessary laws and constitutional amendments increased “the severity of the ethnic conflict” in Belgium to a great extent65. Federalist ideas no longer seem attractive to the Flemish and the Walloons as well as the members of their elite. In addition, radical political leaders are eagerly applying more pressure to the Belgian state by emphasizing “the need to preserve and protect the nation”66. Meanwhile the Walloons are not inclined to negotiate with the Flemish or look for compromises, despite the fact that their region is economically weaker and heavily dependent on subsidies. In fact, the Walloons are divided into two groups: some of them are living in Brussels and others reside in different parts of Wallonia. The members of the first group tend to develop a special Brussels’ identity (Bruxellois) and the rest tend to preserve their Francophone identity. However, in both cases, “two separate regional identities are emerging” inside Wallonia and their need of being Belgian gradually disappears67. Besides, the Francophone community is more willing to support the disintegration of Belgium than accept possible political power of the Flemish. Consequently, there is little desire to negotiate at all and a gap between different the Flemish and the Walloons and their respective regions may get wider and wider in the future.
It has been hoped for a long time that the presence of the institutions of the European Union as well as extensive immigration from other countries will stop the fragmentation of Belgium. As Britt Cartrite indicates, these hopes appear to be doubtful because the inhabitants of Brussels and immigrants “appear reluctant to ‘choose sides’ in the ongoing conflict” or participate in the reconstruction of the Belgian identity. When the country experienced a deep political crisis due to its politicians’ inability to form a new government after the Belgian general elections of June 10th, 2007, the mediation of the king Albert II and the presence of European institutions on the Belgian soil brought some unexpected stability. However, a new governmental crisis struck Belgium in 2010. As a result, the state has already been operating for more than a year without a full government. It seems that people have understood that after a final breakup Belgium might turn into a big cake that could easily be divided among the Netherlands, France and Luxembourg. There are some serious calls heard to preserve the national unity and a number of Belgian student organizations have recently taken part in a series of public events entitled La Révolution des Frites. In order to attract more supporters, the students not only distributed French fries free of charge but organized a collective striptease and dancing parties in various Belgian cities. Their main objective has been threefold: to defend the idea of the Belgian federalism, safeguard the social security system and spread the positive message about Brussels as a multi-cultural capital where all major ethnic groups as well as immigrants might peacefully live together. In fact, it would be much better for Belgium to remain an important European country than fall to pieces and turn into three provinces of neighboring states. The international community supports similar view but it may only watch various processes taking place inside Belgium and hope that necessary compromises between the Flemish and the Walloons will be reached for their own good. However, the nearest future of Belgium seems to remain rather bright, due to the tradition of federal coexistence and close relationships with the EU.
CONCLUSION

The main objective of this article has been to analyze the phenomena of nationalism. It has also been important to provide some practical examples that might be interesting, make the text harmonious and pay more heed to important concepts and definitions. Comparing basic differences in the realms of theory and practice, one can make a conclusion that every contemporary state is destined to develop its own version of nationalism. In order to complete this challenging task without excessive tension, it is necessary to take into consideration such important factors as historical developments, cultural heritage, linguistic homogeneity or heterogeneity and the role of religion. All these elements are very important if one really wants to understand what makes a particular nation unique. Despite a powerful impact of globalization, nationalism and nations should not be perceived as purely imaginary and separate from the reality because most contemporary societies accept the nationalist sentiment as inevitable. On the other hand, it would be dangerous to completely rely on cultural and religious similarities as well as ethnic ties since such a tendency might provoke violent conflicts similar to those in Rwanda or Kosovo. Therefore it is so important to find new solutions by avoiding all types of discrimination, finding common grounds for consensus and enriching certain models of nationalism with humanistic ideals. The case of Belgium can serve as an illustration that some patterns of harmonious co-existence might be achievable in the contemporary world. Being made of the Flemish, the Walloons and various groups of immigrants, this country has succeeded in maintaining its integrity as well as close economic, financial and political relations with the European Union. The creation of the image of Belgium as an open and flexible European country has given many positive results, including impressive financial assistance, economic prosperity and adequate political status on the international arena. In fact, Brussels is currently known not only as the capital of the Kingdom of Belgium but as that of the EU. Finally, the former Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy has also been appointed to the position of the first president.
of the European Union. Such a twist of events proves that moderate nationalism can be greatly useful if there is enough political wisdom to encourage a continuous dialogue among all groups of people living inside the country and cooperate with numerous other states as well as the influential European bureaucracy.

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SANTRAUKA

NACIONALIZMAS KAIP SVARBUS TARPTAUTINIŲ SANTYKIŲ ELEMENTAS

Reikšminiai žodžiai: nacionalizmas, kultūra, etniškumas.