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Debating Nationalism in the South Caucasus in the Context of Integrated Nationalism

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Abstract

Flag-waving that symbolises the rise of nationalism is everywhere and has become a global trend. In that sense, states need to develop nationalist strategies to survive. However, due to the needs and capacity of the states, there are different types of nationalism. Aggressive and destructive nationalism is one of them and refers to the founding states of the modern order. For example, in his second time in office, US President Donald J. Trump prioritised destructive and aggressive nationalism in favour of strengthening the state in terms of radical economic actions. In this sense, democracy, which emerged as one of the most efficient tools for maintaining order, is now obsolete. Therefore, destructive and aggressive nationalism aims to strengthen the state rather than the nation. For this reason, leaders of the founding states of modernity have been following destructive and aggressive nationalism. Thus, it seems that the adoption of nationalism has already become a necessity for the states.

However, due to their priorities being oppressed, small nations of modernity need different nationalist strategies in the nihilistic time of politics. Therefore, I am offering a new type of nationalism for the young nation-states which were under colonial regimes on the eve of nationalisation in the 19th and 20th centuries. South Caucasian nations are one of them, and due to the regional and global geopolitical limbo, those nation-states are still vulnerable to the possible threats, challenges and need for integrated nationalism that I am offering in this paper. In this sense, I argue that integrated nationalism would eliminate possible radical nationalism and facilitate integration into the international community, which could guarantee their independence. In this regard, integrated nationalism aimed not to compete with the destructive and aggressive nationalisms of the big nations. Rather, integrated nationalism aimed to develop a strategy that would facilitate integration into the international community.

On this occasion, Azerbaijan developed multicultural nationalism that aimed to reduce its possible radical nationalism and create an inclusive national strategy that embraces all minority groups within ethnic and religious backgrounds. Parallel to that, Armenia is supposed to pursue an integrated nationalism that would facilitate making amendments to its constitution regarding its claim over Azerbaijani territory. Georgia, which is considered the Ukraine of the region due to its conflict with Russia, has the potential to threaten regional security and stability. In this respect, the Georgian integrated nationalist strategy would be decisive in establishing a stable and precedent-setting environment in the region.

In this paper, I argue that integrated nationalism could be a solution, even regarding language disputes in Azerbaijan. Due to its historical background and capacity, Azerbaijani society needs to implement Turkish, English, and Russian languages along with the official languages. In this regard, radical nationalism regarding language issues can be balanced through integrated nationalism. The paper aims to shed light on rising nationalism within the framework of the three nations of the South Caucasus. The peculiarity of nationalism in the South Caucasus requires integrated nationalism, which would facilitate enhancing regional and global cooperation and guarantee the peace and security of the region.

Keywords: South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Integrated Nationalism