

## Nationalism and fundamentalistic Attitudes

Nationalism has revivals despite of horrible historic examples. Why?

This is an approach for an answer:

Nationalism and other related attitudes, like fundamentalistic religious believes, or conspiracy theories, seem to be one possible human reaction to being over-challenged.

From the evolution of life, the human species inherited two contradicting survival strategies, which can be helpful in two different types of situations.

### Strategy 1: "Fact guided Thinking and Acting"

**Fact guided thinking and acting** is the best-known method for obtaining the best possible understanding of reality, to master the challenges of your life and to improve the circumstances of your life. This is the main path of human survival strategy.

But it must also be mentioned that **fact guided thinking and acting** for humans is a cumbersome method, not comfortable, and not flattering, and often exhausting, which can be over-challenging as well. By looking to what you do not know, you also see how badly humans can apply this method.

### Strategy 2: "Ousting"

Ousting is a reaction when external influences

- are experienced unbearable for your empathy and emotional strength, and when they
- are felt over-challenging for your orientation, capabilities and means

These personal and social shortcomings may leave you behind

- with a feeling of disorientation as you may not understand what happens,
- with a feeling of losing control, making you helpless and unable to determine what to do
- with losing your confidence, that you are well prepared for the next challenge.
- You may feel like a loser failing in life, like being defeated, likely to lose the appreciation of others.

This mix of feelings is unbearable. If **fact guided thinking and acting** is not seen as way out to recover from the defeat, then **ouusting** is the only strategy left.

But ouusting can also be a reaction long before things are unbearable. It may be enough,

- if only fact guided thinking appears to be too uncomfortable, and exhausting,
- if empathy challenges the own responsibility to a too uncomfortable extend,
- if changes are felt and treated as unwelcome disturbance, before trying to understand them.

Also, this is a personal but unnecessary defeat. The main purpose and method of ouusting is

- the shielding and denying of the real challenge, the real fear, or the real threat
- and to get rid of the unbearable feeling, of having failed, of having been too weak due to
  - insufficient orientation
  - insufficient self-confidence
  - insufficient skills
  - insufficient support and resources
  - insufficient persistence for fact guided thinking

The question is how to get rid of these deficiencies without fact guided thinking and acting?

How to restore a new orientation, self-confidence and strength for being respected?

The aim is to find a justification and method, which promises that there is no need to understand and adapt to a changing development. Politics has to provide a protection against disadvantages of occurring changes and has to organize a strategy of strength against experienced personal defeats.

## The Nature of Nationalism

These questions and claims have to be answered and implemented by nationalistic politics.

### What can Nationalism offer

If shielding from responsibility to react, due to real current changes, is a main task,

- then an alternative picture of the current development has to be drawn, independent of facts.

The promise and expectation is

- a new orientation, which is given by a leader,
- identifying responsible and guilty people, who have caused all the problems,
- to whom you can feel superior and who also are candidates for bashing.
- The offer includes an artificial challenge to fight an enemy, what will not solve any problem, but makes you self-confident as an important member of a powerful nationalistic troop.
- If empathy is an obstacle in this battle, hate is a protecting stance against empathy with others. Consequently, hate needs a justifying narrative. This narrative is a part of the battle.

The nationalistic battle strategy has known variations:

- Inciting one group against another
- The humiliation and contempt of parts of the population or foreigners
- Spreading hatred and envy against the so-called establishment
- Attacks against any fact-based thinking and working (e.g.: hostility against science)
- Spreading mistrust against democratic institutions (e.g.: against the reliability of the voting system)
- Logically all this is done without giving any evidence, as facts are not accepted as base for arguments. What counts is the disorientating effect. The more confusing, the better.

All of this is deeply antidemocratic and a frontal attack on people and their human rights.

Most disturbing for an ousting-process are those people who keep on going with the method of "fact guided thinking and acting". They constantly remind nationalists of their defeat, and of things which ousting aims to get rid of. They are natural enemies for nationalists and fundamentalists.

Respecting facts, which are the same for everybody, is the only base humans have, for mutual understanding, for respecting each other and finally for productive cooperation, democracy, and prosperity. Disregarding facts prevents mutual understanding, disregards human dignity and will destroy democracy.

The abandon of fact guided thinking and the loss of orientation due to the invention of alternative conspiracy theories, caused by human over-challenge, deficiencies, and defeats, celebrate revivals, despite of terrible historical examples, like genocides, wars, and all sorts of discrimination and violence, which were caused by nationalistic attitudes. This is no surprise.

The abandon of fact guided thinking leaves no room for historical facts.

### The difficulty to communicate

The discussion between people who follow fact guided thinking is about exchanging facts and proving what pretensions really have the quality of facts. Facts are agreed to be a reason to modify the own opinion.

For nationalists and fundamentalists, their opinions are based on a believe in a leader. Facts are no reason to change the own opinion. Facts are shielded by pretentions without evidence.

The step from following an orientation given by a leader, to a self-controlled orientation based on facts, which are also judged autonomously, is a step to become your own leader. This step is far from being comfortable and a long-lasting process.

To initiate this step is the real challenge. It is about creating empathy for the real world and the real people, who are dealing with their real challenges and uncertainties. And it is also about gaining self-confidence and strength by coping with real challenges instead of fearing to be defeated by them.