

## **Regionalism of (in) Central and Eastern Europe in the light of cultural circulations**

In the geographical studies, contrast between Eastern and Western Europe appeared. This sectional difference often enjoys fundamental importance, as for example the west/east partition between Greek and Roman Christianity, between the two main divisions of Indo-European languages, and other elements as e.g. cultural aspects, democracy, individualism, prosperity and creativity (Murphy et al. 2009). The area of study that we wish to question is the Central-East Europe, which should be firstly defined (geographically, historically and culturaly). Central and Eastern Europe is not that simply described geographically and is not easy to define. For example, the Hungarian historian Jenó Szűcs (Szűcs, 1985) distinguishes three Europes and this "our part" is situated between the "German world" and the Russian world ". From the geopolitical point of view, we are here in a "zone of faults and crushing" (Foucher, 1993) where the borders, the peoples have been constantly moving, especially from the 16th to the 20th century. The object of the research is to identify and to measure what remains of CEE as a "region" in the light of cultural flows, between a strong Russian soft power and the strength and tools of "Europeanization" supported by UE institutions and policies.

In general, cultural flows have been neglected by the literature, even as they have a great deal to say about regional identities, and the centre-periphery organisation of Europe and the World. Nevertheless, territorial dynamics also rely on "soft power" policies and their effects. The position of the region in question in this respect is not well known. The EU still promotes itself using the slogan "Unity in diversity", and many tools exist to promote cultural exchanges, translations, and diverse cultural (e.g. cinematic) productions. But what are the effects of these policies in the CEE region? Economically, this region has become an integrated periphery of the EU. What is attitude towards culture? Do cultural flows attest to a total "Westernisation" of the CEE region, or not? What remains of former links with Eastern Europe, and of internal links within the CEEC group? In this research some approach will be analysed: center-periphery relationships, regional connections, neighborhood geography, cultural relations, strength and range of relationships (similarities and differences). Two main question are the most important in proposed research:

Q 1 How cultural relations can show ties in the region? (and therefore a form a regionalization)

Q 2 How to measure cultural connections on an inter-state scale? (methodological approach)

The flows which will be taken into consideration are cultural circulations, or human circulation for cultural purposes. Thus we wish to measure the contribution of culture to the regionalisation of Central and Eastern Europe. The hypothesis is that the flows that are less frequently observed allow to shed light on new regional forms, or prove that some regional structures are resistant to certain changes and external stimuli. The role of culture in globalization is beyond doubt (Appadurai, 1996). "International flows and circulations (...) testify to the processes of regionalization" (Marei & Richard 2018). When we observe the flow of cultural goods, services and people in search of experiences and cultural services (tourists, students), what regions do they create? Are they the same as institutional or different regions? Why? The main elements of discussion, and the major results of the project will address regional analysis of CEE at the beginning of the twenty-first century: the thesis will shed light on the role of culture in regionalization, which have neglected by the literature. Parallel to the statistical analysis of data and its mapping, the thesis will discuss which is the role of EU cultural policies, of various actors in cultural exchanges such as tourist offices and agencies, tourists, publishers, national authorities in cultural and academic affairs, etc. which is a very innovative approach. This project of research is innovative, because the crucial issue of regionalism, or the division of Central and Eastern Europe into regions has never been addressed in the light of cultural flows. A consideration of this profile will thus help a better understanding of the place of this region in the European continent and the world to be gained.