

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH
(APRIL PAPER)

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Lofgren, Orvar 1989, 'The Nationalization of Culture', *Ethnologia Europea*, XIX, pp. 5-24.

The proposed article to be discussed/rethink & review/applied toward own research project involved me in a process with much more questions than answers, this time. It lays coherently (in a post-modernist manner), on my theoretical findings, after previous material signed by 'cold-mind' Brubaker and 'vanishing-structuralism/modernism' Ivy and tracing new parallel questions on national culture(/memory) as "battle arena, where different interest groups use arguments about national unity or heritage in hegemonic struggles" (Lofgren 1989, p. 5) in the context of Moldova's 'revisiting the national project'. Or, the nation building official rhetoric in the post-soviet Moldova would also be contoured as a nation building (post-soviet ideological) project. Besides, it is remarkable all the above mentioned authors avoid insistently looking at the 'nation' as at rigid construct(s); the fact facilitates methodologically and enforces theoretically my research.

Following each by other the well-structured sub-topics of his article on "The Nationalization of Culture", Orvar Lofgren emphasizes the crucial importance for actual research on nation & nationalism to use "the new kinds of interdisciplinary dialogues developed in the field of study of national culture and identity" (Lofgren 1989, p. 6-7), although pointing on/inviting to rethink the still "underdeveloped and ambiguous analytical framework" in this field (*national identity, culture, mentality* etc.). The proposed subject to be analyzed in this study concerns "the problem of the making and constant remaking of national identity and culture, as an arena of contestation between different interests" (Lofgren 1989, p. 7), mainly in a comparative dimension of "Swedishness" and "Hungarianness".

The author delineates the nation of national identity from national culture, defining the last as "that kind of collective sharing which exists on a national level or within a national cultural space". (To me, in this regard, the author is closed to a similar tool for research applied by Ivy as 'the national voice'.) As for the questions "what & how" is shared at the national level, I think to go beyond them and look for another comparative perspective of "what & how" is shared in the national rhetoric from above vs from below.

Interesting to be putted into value is the idea to see “another perspective on this communicative process” in the discourse on the disintegrating national culture, “a discourse which is as old as nationalism itself” (Lofgren 1989, p. 18). It becomes again actual for the post-soviet Moldova; being as a land *in between*; accordingly to my empirical data, the official discourse of national identity is strongly competing with the memory/local discourses of regional/local identity. In this context, would be also interesting for my research to investigate the tendencies of instrumentalisation the “‘Sunday Best’ version of the national culture’ (Lofgren 1989, p. 14) on behalf of the official discourse (“state folklorism”, “national peasants” etc.). I consider, the author’s invitation “to devote more attention to how this kind of national sharing is produced and reproduced in everyday life, asking how deep, how long and how wide it is” (Lofgren 1989, p. 23), calls both for a study of rhetoric *and* practices.

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Respectfully,

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