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In recent decades, we have witnessed a revival of the concept of the region, emphasizing it to the detriment of nation states and thereby increasing their importance in everyday life. This trend back harks to the idea of regionalism that was popular at the turn of 19th and 20th centuries. Due to its functionality with these ideas, the current revival of regions is often referred to as a new regionalism, or neo-regionalism. However, the approaches of new regionalism are attempting to avoid the negative aspects of traditional regionalism, especially national patriotism. Furthermore, this understanding of what a region is has changed. It is no longer perceived as a political entity, but rather as a flexible construct shaped by the idea and goals of a certain group. It is a flexible space of action, a place to identify with, a group of people who share the same cultural and economic resources. Strengthening the role of the region is seen as a tool for the activation of local communities that can result in mutual cooperation and the future development of the area. In this context, the role played by specific actors and institutions with their own distinct political, economic, and cultural interests is crucial.

The European Union has had a major impact on the recent revival of regionalism in the current European environment. In accordance with the concept of the Union of Regions, the EU provides a high degree of ideological, political, and financial support, resulting in intense processes on the construction of distinctive regions with strong identities. Frequently, this results in the simple implementation of a prescribed procedure, despite the intended effort to motivate the general public to be more active. The regional level has the opportunity to develop a series of diverse regions that have formed from the bottom up. Various strategies are used in the construction of regions, such as working with language, generating new names, and creating symbols, the development of local traditions. Activities working with the region’s past, which is interpreted according to the current needs of a certain group of actors, is essential in this process. Increasingly, the processes of regional marketing and place branding are being used to construct a regional identity, the outward manifestation of which is the production of a large quantity of visual material. Nevertheless, efforts to promote the region in order to support its development also have negative aspects. The construction of a region’s image and identity is not always conflict-free, and in the effort to maximize attractiveness and increase “sales” it does not always take into account local values that have been sustained over the long-term.

V posledních desetiletích jsou evidováno obnovení jmen regionů, jejich zastoupení na úrovni národních států a postupně jejich významu v kladenském životě. Tyto tendence odkazují na myšlenku regionálního hnutí založeného na obnově obecnosti a vytvoření určitých sociálních a kulturních institucí, jejichž účelem je obnovit tradiční regionální hnutí. V případě některých zemí se zástupci regionů národních států a obce usilují o zavedení nových regionálních jmen v rámci EU. Významnou rolu hraje i regionální marketing a place branding, kterým se systematicky využívá ve vytvoření nových regionálních obrazů.

[Diagram] Historical Geography Research Centre

MODERN REGIONALISM

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