Theorizing Nationalism

EDITED BY RONALD BEINER

THEORIZING
NATIONALISM

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INTRODUCTION

Nationalism's Challenge to Political Philosophy

Ronald Beiner

— Try to be one of us, repeated Davin. In heart you are an Irishman but your pride is too powerful.

— My ancestors threw off their language and took another, Stephen said. They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them. Do you fancy I am going to pay in my own life and person debts they made? What for?

— For our freedom, said Davin.

— No honourable and sincere man, said Stephen, has given up to you his life and his youth and his affections from the days of Tone to those of Parnell, but you sold him to the enemy or failed him in need or reviled him and left him for another. And you invite me to be one of you. I'd see you damned first.

— They died for their ideals, Stevie, said Davin. Our day will come yet, believe me.

Stephen, following his own thought, was silent for an instant.

— The soul is born, he said vaguely, first in those moments I told you of. It has a slow and dark birth, more mysterious than the birth of the body. When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.

          —James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

Both of these points of view are in some respect humanly attractive.[1] The problem, philosophically, is that they are *radically incompatible*. The challenge that nationalism poses to political philosophy is to retain a sensitivity toward the power of these two ideals of life, those of Davin

and of Stephen, without in any way diminishing the radicalism of their philosophical opposition.

The contributors to this volume occupy different positions along the spectrum ranged between these two poles, Davin's nationalism and Stephen's antinationalism. Some of the contributors, no doubt, believe that it is possible to mediate the nationalism–antinationalism debate in a way that allows one to preserve the best of both worlds. My own sympathies tend more in the direction of Stephen Daedalus's impulse to "fly by those nets." But I am far from thinking that the human desire for a sense of belonging, rootedness, loyalty, and collective memory, as well as the desire to seek political support and protection for these feelings, can be easily dismissed. Moreover, I appreciate the efforts of liberal theorists to give full weight to these human desires, and to try to defend the nationalist impulse in a way that is entirely faithful to liberal principles. These arguments, too, need to be taken very seriously. If the essays gathered together in this volume prove anything, it is that the liberal–nationalist debate remains an open-ended dialogue (as do all living debates in political philosophy).

Why has it taken philosophers so long to rise to the normative challenges posed by nationalism? As many students of nationalism have remarked, there is an amazing disproportion between nationalism's political importance as one of the leading social phenomena of the modern world, and the virtual lack of intellectual endeavor at the highest level either to vindicate or to rebut its normative claims.[2] There have, of course, been lively and intellectually challenging debates about the history and sociology of nationalism that have been unfolding for several decades, and show no sign of abatement; this has not been matched, however, by an equally serious engagement with the philosophy of nationalism, at least until very recently. Nor has nationalism been a prominent topic within the established tradition of grand theorizing that defines the history of political philosophy. As Benedict Anderson has observed: "unlike most other isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbes, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers."[3] Bernard Yack puts the same point even more bluntly: "there are no great theoretical texts outlining and defending nationalism. No Marx, no Mill, no Machiavelli. Only minor texts by first rate thinkers, like Fichte, or major texts by second rate thinkers, like Mazzini."[4] This absence of master theorists of nationalism may explain why nationalism has been largely neglected by philosophers and theorists, for political philosophy and theory are to a large extent tradition-bound disciplines. But this really isn't an answer, since it simply raises in turn the question: Why *hasn't* the tradition of political thought generated towering philosophers who could do for nationalism what Locke did for liberalism and Marx

did for socialism? It may be that the business of nationalist politics involves too much local mythmaking to be conducive to the kind of more panoramic and universalistic reflection that yields a comprehensive articulation of a coherent political philosophy; this is more or less the view of critics of nationalism such as Eric Hobsbawm and Ernest Gellner.[5] As Conor Cruise O'Brien has noted, there is something peculiar about the very idea of "theorizing" nationalism, since theory aims at what is general, namely universal conceptions of moral and political validity, whereas nationalism exalts the particular: its practitioners are invariably preoccupied with satisfying the grievances of this or that national group, not with vindicating the legitimacy of national aspirations as a matter of general principle.[6]

One should not overstate the point. There *are*, of course, significant texts in the history of modern political thought that one must read in order to think normatively about nationalism: the writings of Herder;[7] Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*;[8] the Mill–Acton debate;[9] Renan's famous lecture;[10] Julien Benda's *The Treason of the Intellectuals*;[11] and perhaps a few others.[12] In any case, even if there were no such intellectual landmarks in the history of modern thought, this would certainly not relieve contemporary intellectuals of the responsibility to engage in normatively serious reflection on the philosophical meaning of nationalism. Historians and sociologists have already made notable contributions, and continue to do so; the question now is what philosophers and political theorists can contribute to clarifying the political appeal and normative status of nationalist claims. This volume is intended to help answer this question.

It is impossible within the limited compass of an introductory essay to do any kind of justice to the vast range of interesting and important normative questions that arise in considering the philosophical problem of nationalism. Let me propose five problem-areas, simply as a way of highlighting the kinds of issues that have begun to attract the attention of leading contemporary theorists and philosophers of nationalism. I'll list them here, and then comment briefly on each of them in the remainder of this essay:

1. Do nations have a theoretically demonstrable "right" to collective self-determination?

2. What is the relationship between nationalism and "modernity" (comprising our experience of modern social life and the political principles by which that experience has been theoretically articulated), and what is the normative significance of debates concerning the modern or premodern character of nationalism?

3. Can nationalism and liberalism be reconciled, at least at the level of theoretical principles, or are they, in their very essence, conflicting visions of the human good?

4. Is there a theoretically legitimate distinction between so-called "civic" and "ethnic" versions of nationalism, or is such a distinction, as Bernard Yack among others charges, merely the product of (unwarranted) liberal self-congratulation?[13]

5. Is nationalism "existentially" attractive, that is, as a choice of how to live one's life?

NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION

I think it is beyond question that the legacy of European colonialism, and by consequence, the process of decolonization as one of the major political phenomena of this century, has done much to legitimize nationalist principles. When one reflects on the great movement of postcolonial independence in the middle of the twentieth century, it is impossible to think of nationalism as an ideology of the right, for left-nationalisms have been no less conspicuous, perhaps more conspicuous, in our century; just as the movements of national liberation from the dominant empires of nineteenth-century Europe make clear why liberal nationalism was a coherent and attractive creed for nineteenth-century figures like Mazzini (and Mill). To make *no* concessions to the normative force of nationalist thought would entail not only embracing the nineteenth-century empires within Europe (as Lord Acton seems to do), but also denying the moral legitimacy of the politics of anticolonialism in the twentieth century. For this reason, one can applaud Elie Kedourie for the theoretical consistency of his critique of nationalism, for Kedourie suggests, at least implicitly, that anticolonialism *is* theoretically dubious, to the extent that it rests upon nationalist principles. As he puts it in a crucial formulation: "[in judging whether a change of rulers is to be welcomed or regretted,] the only criterion capable of public defence is whether the new rulers are less corrupt and grasping, or more just and merciful, or whether there is no change at all, but the corruption, the greed, and the tyranny merely find victims other than those of the departed rulers."[14] By this he means: the nationality of the new rulers is *not* a legitimate criterion of moral-political judgment. Again, this way of thinking cannot be faulted for theoretical inconsistency, but I think it can be faulted for failing to take sufficient account of the kinds of moral intuition that have bestowed on this century's movements of postcolonial independence more-or-less-universal approbation. The kind of moral intuition to which I'm referring has been nicely expressed

by Isaiah Berlin as follows: "men prefer to be ordered about, even if this entails ill-treatment, by members of their own faith or nation or class, to tutelage, however benevolent, on the part of ultimately patronising superiors from a foreign land or alien class or milieu."[15]

So I presume that we can agree with Berlin rather than Kedourie that in a world of colonial empires, the principle of self-determination has an undeniable normative force.[16] But what happens when we leave the world of empires behind?[17] Is it theoretically coherent to try to apply the self-determination principle to *all* multinational or multiethnic states? (Admittedly, any national-secessionist movement will portray its relation to the majority culture as quasi-colonial, and will therefore present its claims as being on a moral par with those of postcolonial independence movements.) Carried to the logical limit, the theoretical consequences are somewhat catastrophic; for hardly any states today would be immune from having their legitimacy normatively subverted. As many students of nationalism have highlighted, the "nation-state" in any rigorous sense is not the norm today; the norm is multinationality.[18] As Gellner has put the point: we live in a world that "has only space for something of the order of 200 or 300 national states."[19] That leaves a vast number of potential nations, certainly many thousands, that could in principle claim statehood according to an ambitious application of self-determination principles.[20] If each of these potential nations put in its bid for full self-determination, only Iceland, South Korea, Japan, and perhaps a few others would be politically secure. Imagine a hundredfold multiplication of the kind of interethnic chaos we witnessed with the fragmentation of the Soviet Union. It seems a strange kind of normative principle that relies for its coherence on the willingness of most national groups not to cash in the moral voucher that the principle gives them.[21]

NATIONALISM AND MODERNITY

The question of whether nationalism is a radically modern construct or whether it draws upon authentically premodern experiences of nationhood has been hotly contested by historians and sociologists of nationalism, and there is no reason to anticipate an early resolution of these debates.[22] A related though somewhat different question is: Does the sense of nationhood precede, or is it the product of, nationalist *politics*, and what hangs, normatively speaking, on one's answer to this question? Kenneth Minogue offers one very forceful answer to the latter question: "Nationalist theory accords with the famous remark by Péguy: *Tout commence en mystique et finit en politique.* In the beginning is the nation, an unselfconscious cultural and linguistic nature waiting like

Sleeping Beauty to be aroused by the kiss of politics."[23] Minogue very clearly regards this Sleeping Beauty conception of nationhood as an utter mystification. A radically opposed view is formulated by Roger Scruton: "to suppose that we [Englishmen] could have enjoyed [our] territorial, legal, and linguistic hereditaments, and yet refrained from becoming a nation, representing itself to itself as entitled to these things, and defining even its religion in terms of them, is to give way to fantasy. In no way can the emergence of the English nation, as a form of membership, be regarded as a product of Enlightenment universalism, or the Industrial Revolution, or the administrative needs of a modern bureaucracy. It existed before those things, and also shaped them into powerful instruments of its own."[24] It should be obvious that Scruton is responding here not just to Minogue but to all those modernist sociologists, such as Gellner, who see nations as mythic entities fashioned by nationalist intelligensia.[25] Anderson, for instance, quotes from a history of Hungarian nationalism an extremely blunt formulation of this latter view: "A nation is born when a few people decide that it should be."[26]

In the debates we have just quickly reviewed, a radically modernist view of nations serves to debunk nationalist mythmaking, whereas the view that national sentiment is linked to authentically premodern cultural resources helps to legitimize these sentiments of national belonging. But the normative argument can go the other way: portraying nationalism as a fully modern political phenomenon can help in *vindicating* nationalist ideas over against the cruder depictions of nationalism as sheer atavism.[27] Charles Taylor's chapter in this volume offers an excellent example of how nationalism can be vindicated by stressing the emphatically modern character of nationalist consciousness. For a liberal defender of nationalism like Taylor, it is essential to show nationalism's inextricable dependence on modern notions of popular will and popular sovereignty because this will at least serve to demolish the most unflattering images of nationalism, as a relic of primitive forms of social life, or as a reversion to ancient tribalism.[28] Taylor's basic idea is that once we come to see how central the quest for identity is within characteristically modern experience, and what frustration is generated if the various identities are not given public recognition at the political level, we will have a much better appreciation of the reason for the prominence of nationalism (and much else in contemporary political life) in the modern political world.[29]

I don't think one can get as much normative mileage out of this idea of identity as Taylor thinks one can. No one can deny that struggles over identity are central to modern politics. But the sheer possession of a given identity confers no normative authority on the kind of politics that goes with that identity. To answer the normative questions that interest

us, it doesn't suffice to recognize the centrality of identity; we have to go on to ask *which* identities survive normative scrutiny. To dramatize this point, let me refer to a terrific film by Mira Nair that came out several years ago called *Mississippi Masala*. The film is basically a love story about an interracial romance set in Mississippi in the early 1990s. But the central pathos of the film revolves not around the clash of identities in the United States but rather the clash of identities in Uganda two decades earlier. The heroine of the film is an East Indian named Mina who falls in love with a black carpet-cleaner, but the romance is a scandal because of the trauma suffered by her family at the hands of Idi Amin's thuggish nationalism. The film opens with a passionate exchange involving Mina's father on the day of Amin's expulsion of the Ugandan Asians (in 1972), and it defines the central drama of the whole film. He says, "Uganda is my home," to which he gets the plaintive response (offered not as a political affirmation but simply as an acknowledgment of the prevailing realities), "Africa is for Africans . . . black Africans." The question for a political philosopher here is not the relevance of identity, but how to assess the normative claims embodied in conflicting visions of identity—in this case, the claims of African-nationalist identity on the one side and the claims of transethnic Ugandan identity on the other. The appeal to identity by itself gives us no reason to favor the distinctively nationalist way of conferring identity, as opposed to other possibilities, such as a determinedly nonnationalist civic identity.

LIBERAL NATIONALISM

It is not hard to see what motivates the political-philosophical project, shared by Yael Tamir, Charles Taylor, Michael Walzer, Will Kymlicka, and others, of vindicating a liberal-nationalist vision of politics. This project offers a dual attraction: first, the prospect of taking the illiberal sting out of nationalism, by liberalizing it, and secondly, helping to combat unthinking and dogmatic rejections of nationalist politics *tout court*, thereby facilitating (sometimes necessary) accommodation with nationalism.[30] On the one hand, it is clear that there is no shortage in the world of poisonous versions of nationalism for which no good normative case can or ought to be made. On the other hand, it seems to many that liberalism, especially in its more individualist versions, allows too little place for legitimate expressions of group identity, and moreover, that its attenuated conception of communal membership weakens the cultural resources necessary for a sustainable political community. It would be unreasonable, however, to imagine that liberal ideas of membership allow *no* place for collective identity, since every significant liberal polit-

ical philosopher that we can think of presupposes a world of discrete states that claim the allegiance of their members. Rather, the liberal ideal is to get as far from ideas of national exclusivity as would be consistent with the continued existence of these states. This universalistic aspiration of the liberal idea of citizenship is nicely summarized by Stephen Holmes in an essay commending "Liberalism for a World of Ethnic Passions and Decaying States." Classical liberals, he writes, were not driven by Enlightenment universalism to reject the pluralism of modern nation-states and to embrace the unrealistic dream of a single, worldwide liberal community. But it did lead them

> to support the definition of exclusive citizenship which most closely approximates universalism. Citizenship, in the pluralistic world of nation-states, can never be universalistic. But it can be based on accidental territorial coexistence rather than ethnic homogeneity or ascriptive community. The *jus soli* is a liberal principle of state-formation, which allocates citizenship according to birthplace, and it stands in sharp contrast to the *jus sanguinis*, which identifies co-nationals by bloodline and "constitutive attachments" rather than by historically accidental coexistence on the same (arbitrarily demarcated) piece of land.[31]

Is it possible to "beef up" liberal conceptions of citizenship short of embracing nationalism? This is clearly Jürgen Habermas's aim in developing his notion of "constitutional patriotism" (which is basically a Habermasian synonym for what others have labeled civic nationalism).[32] But as critics of Habermas have complained, it is not clear how Habermas's conception, with its strong aversion to more robust appeals to cultural identity, can offer much beyond a new name for liberalism.[33] Hence the attraction of trying to liberalize nationalism.

How well does the liberal-nationalist project succeed? Since Yael Tamir has done the most to put this on the agenda of contemporary political philosophy, let me start with a few comments on her version of the project.[34] My main response is that in Tamir's statement of the liberal-nationalist case, the nationalist side of the equation is so watered down that the nationalism in her political theory is barely detectable.[35] What nationalists want, typically, is not a vaguely defined "public space" for the display of their national identity, but rather, control over a *state* as the vehicle for the futherance of national self-expression.[36] No real nationalist would say what Tamir does, namely, that the "ideal of the nation-state should . . . be abandoned."[37] She refers to the idea of the homogeneous national state as "a pipedream," and she anticipates that new options, neither conventionally liberal nor conventionally nationalist, will present themselves once the obsolete nation-state ideal has been renounced: "Liberal nationalism advocates taking cultural and national

differences into account."[38] It seems to me quite misleading to call this a version of nationalism; a more accurate description of her position is: liberalism, with an attention to the ways in which people care about national identity and wish to see it expressed in some fashion. To be sure, Tamir sees allegiance to national community as intrinsically valuable. This may at least distinguish her liberalism from that of an ardent liberal individualist like George Kateb. Even Kateb concedes that strong group identity and membership should not be condemned "when the cultural group has been or is now being victimized and is struggling to overcome its victimization or the remains of it. Solidarity is needed." But he immediately goes on to insist that "cultural group solidarity is not intrinsically valuable, only provisionally and tactically and instrumentally so."[39] However, one can see group membership as intrinsically valuable without embracing any of the tenets of characteristically nationalist politics. And it seems that this is true of Tamir's position: what it is, really, is not any kind of nationalism, but rather, a form of liberalism that is not indifferent to concerns about national identity.

In pursuing my critique of nationalism as an alternative to liberalism, let me focus on what I see as the decisive problem; if this problem is as intractable as I think it is, then any attempt to synthesize liberalism and nationalism theoretically will be forced to drop either the liberalism or the nationalism when it comes to the crunch (or at least a serious philosophical wedge will be placed between one's liberalism and one's nationalism). The problem, in a nutshell, is how to privilege the majority cultural identity in defining civic membership without consigning cultural minorities to second-class citizenship. To simplify the argument, let us limit ourselves to discussion of Zionist nationalism, though the same analysis could be applied to any state conceived in nationalist categories. Let us leave aside Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and what justice toward them might require, and think only about Arabs who aspire to be citizens within a state that defines itself officially as a "Jewish state." What qualifies Zionism as a classic form of nationalism is not that it involves a celebration of Israeli nationality or Israeli citizenship, but rather, that it provides an ideology that specifies the properly nationalist *content* of this citizenship, namely Jewish national belonging (notwithstanding the fact that who counts as a Jew for this purpose is far from uncontroversial—so that eligibility or ineligibility under the Law of Return is sometimes hotly contested).[40]

Consider the following descriptions of Jewish statehood and what it means for the content of Israeli citizenship:

Israel's founders dreamed of, and its people have fought for, the creation of a Jewish state in the Holy Land. The blue and white Israeli flag

features the quintessentially Jewish symbol, the Star of David, and the national anthem proclaims that for 2,000 years its people have longed to return to and be free in Zion. None of this includes or even makes much sense to Israeli Arabs, most of whom are Muslim and have family histories on this land extending back hundreds of years. Moreover, while Israeli Arabs exercise many of the rights enjoyed by the Jewish majority, no one suggests all Israelis are equal. A small minority of Israeli Arabs focus their demands on achieving individual equality, but most demand collective or national rights, and by equality they mean that Israel should become either bi-national or declare itself the state of all its people.[41]

All of the state's symbols, national holidays, holy days, language, myths, and a great deal more, are drawn from Jewish history and experience. Israel was conceived in specifically Jewish memory.[42]

"Hatikva" . . . is exclusively Jewish. The national anthem of the state of Israel is one that 18 percent of Israeli citizens do not and cannot share.[43]

Similar issues are debated in a very lively exchange between Michael Walzer and James Rule occasioned by the original publication of chapter 11 of this volume.[44] Rule argues for the unmitigated antinationalist position that Israel's self-conception as an officially Zionist state is morally intolerable. In response, Walzer writes: "There can't be a political community of any sort that doesn't favor some particular people, members of the community over all others. This is what it means to share a common life."[45] This is beyond dispute, but it doesn't address the crucial issue here, which is whether it is morally proper for the state to favor one tribe over another *within* the boundaries of a shared civic life. To the latter challenge, Walzer answers: "There are also, obviously, internal discriminations—as when we choose what language to privilege, what history and civics to teach in the public schools, what holidays to celebrate. In every nation-state in the world, choices like these turn national minorities into the wrong kind of people. . . . [I]f [Rule] really wants to abolish national and cultural favoritism root and branch, he won't be able to accommodate any of the tribes."[46] But Walzer here presumes that every civic community conceives itself as the political expression of membership in a tribe. This isn't clear to me. It is indeed true that even "civic" nations like Canada and the United States privilege particular languages, holidays, cultural traditions, and so on. But does this prove that these political communities are just as tribal as states that define themselves in a more straightforwardly nationalist way? This surely cannot be the case with Canada at least, which at the moment is a binational state. But suppose Quebec does decide to leave in order to pursue its own "tribal" destiny. Will the residual Anglo-

Canada be a political tribe like Israel? A Canadian state minus Quebec would overwhelmingly privilege English, and to some extent would reflect a residual Anglo-Canadian culture; but does that mean that Canada would then be a uninational state in any meaningful sense? Would common ethnonational identity define citizenship for the Anglo-Canadians, Greek Canadians, Italian Canadians, aboriginals, West Indian Canadians, and so on, who would compose such a political community after the departure of Quebec?

If citizenship in Israel means citizenship in an expressly Jewish state, non-Jewish citizens are unavoidably second-class citizens in some sense, even if the state doesn't go out of its way to oppress them or to crush their minority culture. In a new state founded on the principle of *Québec pour les québécois*, anglophone Montrealers and aboriginals in northern Quebec will likewise be second-class citizens in some sense (at least until they assimilate to the francophone majority culture), even if the state of Quebec respects minority rights and affirms universal citizenship within its territorial boundaries. Nonnationalist conceptions of citizenship, by contrast, aspire to a transethnic definition of political community (even if in practice they fall short of this ideal). There are immediate existential choices here (precisely the kinds of dilemmas that prompt one to embrace political philosophy as a quest for first principles): for Jews, citizenship in Israel versus citizenship in (say) a multicultural Canada; for Scots, citizenship in an independent Scotland versus citizenship in a trinational or quadranational Britain.[47] For thoroughgoing nationalists, there must be something suspect about the desire to house different ethnonational communities under the umbrella of a shared civic community (which is precisely what defines binational Canada or trinational Switzerland or quadranational Britain).

Liberal nationalism, it seems to me, seeks to blur the sharpness of these existential choices. Any *principled* nationalist would have to consider it foolhardy and perhaps incomprehensible for a Jew to live in Canada when emigration to Israel is an available option; and consider it demeaning and perhaps a self-betrayal for a Québécois to abide continued subordination within a federation populated by an anglophone majority when self-determination is so readily within reach: simply voting *oui* in a referendum. Of course, it is possible to opt for citizenship in a nationalist polity without embracing illiberalism, oppression of others, and violent conflict (contrary to what strident antinationalists sometimes suggest); in this respect the liberal-nationalist thesis is true. If I trade in my Canadian citizenship for citizenship in a nationalist Republic of Quebec, or for citizenship in a Zionist Israel, I will still be a citizen in a relatively liberal political community. Nonetheless, the possibility of liberal nationalism in this sense doesn't mean further normative

scrutiny of the alternatives is unnecessary. There remains a normatively weighty choice of principle between, on the one hand, citizenship in a deliberately multinational or multicultural society, and on the other hand, citizenship expressly devoted to embodying "the passionate desire of men to be only with their own kind";[48] and political-philosophical debate ought to be able to illuminate our engagement with such alternatives.

To be sure, not every nationalist is a Milan Karadzic or Louis Farrakhan. There *are* more liberal and less liberal nationalists. There are, for instance, a great many liberal Zionists who not only have no sympathy for Jewish chauvinism but also considerable solicitude for the plight of Palestinians within a Jewish state (just as there are many liberal nationalists in Quebec who felt ashamed and sullied by the ethnocentric ranting of Jacques Parizeau on the night of October 30th, 1995). On the other hand, I think there is some risk that liberal defenders of nationalism, in trying to take the illiberal sting out of nationalism, will remove from it some of the very things that make nationalism philosophically interesting. It is very important for the philosopher of nationalism to keep in mind that the national idea has been such a potent force in the modern world, and opens up a far-reaching philosophical alternative to liberal conceptions of the meaning of life (one that may or may not be vindicated at the conclusion of a fully developed philosophical interrogation of its claims), precisely because it involves profound ideas of national belonging, national destiny, rootedness in a community of experience, memories of a shared past, and so on. These are powerful notions, and I am not sure that one is able to do justice to them by seeking to split the difference between liberalism and nationalism.

THE ETHNIC/CIVIC QUESTION

A good example of the liberal-nationalist defense of nationalism is Kai Nielsen's argument in chapter 6 of this volume, which very vigorously opposes the depiction of Québécois nationalism as a form of ethnic nationalism. My own view is that Nielsen is too quick to conclude that Quebec nationalism is entirely benign and innocent. Perhaps his account of cultural nationalism in Quebec would be more compelling if it were obvious that the French language and Québécois culture would be more secure in an independent Quebec than it is in binational Canada as it presently exists. But this is not obvious: maybe language and culture would be more secure; maybe not. There are plausible arguments on both sides of the question. At least the most militant Québécois nationalists seem driven by something else: namely, the ambition to turn a

sovereign Quebec into a state of the (ethno-)Québécois, similar to what Israel, defined as the "Jewish state," is for Zionists, and what Croatia, defined as the "state of the Croats," is for Croatian nationalists.⁴⁹ No doubt, it is unfair for Quebeckers who are not ethno-Québécois to assume that *all* Quebec nationalists are ethnic nationalists of the vicious sort: most are, as Nielsen argues, more liberal cultural-nationalists.⁵⁰ But those living in Quebec who are fearful of ethnic nationalism are not merely hallucinating, conjuring up ghastly phantoms that are, in reality, entirely absent from the scene. Thus Nielsen is being a bit too charitable in maintaining that the problem with Quebec nationalism is limited to a few "loose cannons."⁵¹ (It surely says something about the less savory side of Quebec nationalism when it turns out that one of these "loose cannons" happens to have been premier of Quebec, and hence titular leader of the nationalist movement—namely Jacques Parizeau: when Parizeau says *nous*, it is difficult to purge this of all ethnonational associations.) The issue here is *not* whether every nationalist movement will turn into a Rwanda-style bloodbath or a Yugoslav-style free-for-all of ethnocentric hatred. The issue is whether it is morally and politically attractive to give political priority (as nationalists do) to questions of national sovereignty and cultural self-affirmation. For instance, what are the broader consequences for the quality of political life in a multinational society of this politicization of cultural identity?

As Bernard Yack and Will Kymlicka rightly argue in their contributions to this volume, the state can never be culturally and linguistically neutral, and therefore one should be careful not to oppose nationalist myths by positing the countermyth of a liberal state that achieves a state of pure abstinence in relation to national concerns. However, that said, it would be unwarranted to conclude that, explicitly or implicitly, all politics are nationalist politics. Being concerned with the preservation of a language and cultural identity does not suffice to make one a nationalist, for if it did, one would be required to call Pierre Trudeau a Québécois nationalist, which would be absurd. Trudeau is an antinationalist because, for all of his desire to preserve French culture in Quebec (and elsewhere in Canada!), he does not believe that the self-affirmation of the Québécois nation ought to trump all other political concerns or be definitive of one's ultimate political commitments.⁵²

What defines nationalism is precisely the idea that concern over the national question trumps every other social-political concern. As Eric Hobsbawm rightly observes:

> [The relationship between nationalism and, for instance, the choice between capitalism and socialism] is of no significance to nationalists, who do not care what this relationship is, so long as Ruritanians (or whoever) acquire sovereign statehood as a nation, or indeed what hap-

pens thereafter. Their utopia—by now at least as shopsoiled by prac-
tice as some others—consists precisely in the achievement of Rurita-
nian (and if possible Greater Ruritanian) independence and rule, if
need be over the non-Ruritanians in their midst.[53]

It goes without saying that, for instance in Quebec, there are all kinds
of nationalists, more liberal and less liberal. But this fact doesn't lessen
my inclination to say that for the "real" nationalists, nationalists in the
strict sense, the issue is not adequate protection for the French language
and culture, for which there is, arguably, already ample provision in the
existing federation. Instead, the issue for them is Quebec's desire for a
nation-state in the strict sense ("to be a normal country" is the standard
nationalist formulation). This would not be too much of a problem, nor-
matively speaking, if the citizens of Quebec were, like those of Norway
or Japan, more or less ethnically homogeneous.[54] But the minorities in
Quebec justifiably perceive this ambition for a nation-state as an
attempt to diminish their citizenship.

What motivates some critics of nationalism to distinguish "ethnic"
and "civic" conceptions of nationhood is not the absurd notion that lan-
guage and cultural identity are politically irrelevant.[55] Rather, what ani-
mates the "civic" conception is the vision of a shared citizenship and
civic identity that would be in principle capable of transcending these
cultural preoccupations, however legitimate they may be, in a political
community where linguistic and cultural identities are in potential con-
flict. It doesn't require any blindness to the importance people place
upon their linguistic and ethnic heritage to say that the Czechoslovak
and Yugoslav federations embodied a noble impulse, and their collapse
in the face of nationalist agitation in each case conveys a real tragedy,
not just for the peoples concerned but for all human onlookers. If the
Canadian federation succumbs as well, the same may be said of it. So I
think that the ethnic nationalism/civic nationalism distinction, robustly
criticized by some very acute theorists, or some version of that distinc-
tion, is still worthy of philosophical defense.[56]

THE EXISTENTIAL QUESTION

This, in many ways the most interesting of the questions surveyed in this
introduction, is the one least addressed in the recent philosophical
debates about the problem of nationalism. There is a reason for this
neglect; the main explanation for it has to do with the dominance of lib-
eralism within Anglo-American political philosophy and its strong pref-
erence for questions of the right (what is normatively *permissible*) over
questions of the good (what are the most desirable ways to live a human

life).[57] Let me illustrate this contrast in reference to Michael Walzer's argument in chapter 11 of this volume. In his essay Walzer offers a persuasive case for accommodating nationalist aspirations. But even if one fully accepts Walzer's argument, it may be asked whether that argument exhausts the task of philosophical reflection on nationalism. Here one should distinguish between two quite different kinds of argument, namely:

1. The argument that if there is a clear desire on the part of a national community (Slovaks or Palestinians or Québécois) within an existing state to give political expression to its feelings of national belonging, it should be allowed by the majority culture to separate or to be otherwise accommodated in its national aspirations.

2. The argument that it is existentially or politically desirable for the individuals composing this community to have these nationalist or separatist aspirations in the first place.

Accordingly, one can look at the problem from two different standpoints: that of a member of the majority confronted by the (already existing) national demands of a minority (should we concede to their nationalist demands? resist? compromise?); or, that of a member of that minority, confronted with the moral-political question of whether to embrace nationalist politics (should *I* be a nationalist? should we as a community commit ourselves to this set of political goals rather than some other vision of politics?). It seems entirely coherent to give pronationalist and antinationalist answers to these two different questions. For instance: to the question of whether to accommodate nationalist demands (say in the case of Czechoslovakia), one could see the reasonableness of answering: "Yes, of course they (i.e., the Slovaks) should be *allowed* to have their divorce, if national divorce is what they want"; but to the question of whether life in a uninational state is in principle preferable to a binational state (which is, so to speak, a "marriage" of nations residing under a shared political roof), one could still answer "no" (say, from the standpoint of a Slovak who must decide upon his or her own political commitment). Philosophical liberals will be reluctant to extend the reach of political philosophy beyond questions of the first kind for fear of presuming to second-guess how individuals choose to conceive their own ends of life. For me, on the other hand, it seems unreasonable to stipulate that the former question, but not the latter, falls within the competence of political-philosophic reflection. Both questions, it seems to me, are legitimate concerns of political philosophy. To express the point once again in the Rawlsian vocabulary of right and good: it doesn't suffice to answer the question of whether accommoda-

tions with nationalism comport with what is *right* (what is normatively permissible); one must also address the more ambitious question, is nationalism (as a way of shaping the conception of how one should live) *good*?

Political philosophy as an intellectual engagement, going back to Socrates, is at bottom an attempt to answer the question of how to live ("the good for human beings" is the classical formulation of this existential question). Philosophical reflection on nationalism must therefore seek somehow to offer an answer to the problem of how to orient oneself among the diversity of life's possibilities. Here, I think, Kedourie's critique of nationalism, notwithstanding the compelling criticisms of it made by Gellner and others, retains a considerable force. What Kedourie captures is the aspect of nationalism that entails not just sentiments of national belonging, as a matter of spontaneous feeling, but, so to speak, the *ideologization* of these sentiments (what one might call the "ismness" of nationalism: the politicizing of prepolitical bonds of membership). According to a nationalist vision of the world, it doesn't suffice to feel a sense of attachment to one's national group; these feelings of attachment must be made a matter of ideological commitment, and enforced by political mobilization. From a consistently nationalist point of view, the noblest employment of political energies consists in striving to establish a one-to-one correspondence between ethnic-cultural identity and political identity. For *me*, being a nationalist would mean having to become a Zionist (therefore emigrating?), so as to align my (fairly attenuated and more or less assimilated) ethnic identity with a corresponding political identity. But in fact my political identity is completely different, defined by the idea of Canadian citizenship (which is itself imperiled by nationalist agitation). For a thoroughgoing nationalist, there must be something anomalous about this condition of non-coincident cultural and political identity (something "abnormal," in the terminology of Quebec nationalists), whereas for a nonnationalist like myself, this disjunction between cultural identity and political identity seems entirely legitimate and proper.

To return to the Joycean dilemmas broached at the beginning of this essay: all nationalists offer some version of Miss Ivors's challenge to Gabriel Conroy (in "The Dead")[54]—namely, her insistence that he make national identity central to the understanding of his own life (why go for holidays on the Continent instead of "visiting your own land"? why learn French or German when you have "your own language to keep in touch with"?), and, concomitantly, her charge that failure to do so constitutes being a traitor to one's people. It may well be that philosophical defenders of nationalism are able to show that some forms of national aspiration are reconcilable with human rights,

liberal principles, interethnic good will, and so on. It is much more doubtful that any political philosophers have offered, or ever can offer, a theoretical vindication of Miss Ivors's challenge in the fullness of its existential ambition.

NOTES

1. James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin, 1960), pp. 202–3. For another brilliant Joycean dialogue on nationalism, see "The Dead," in James Joyce, *Dubliners* (New York: Penguin, 1968), pp. 187–90. One easily gets the impression that the story was intended to express simple revulsion on Joyce's part toward the *völkisch* ideology conjured up in the figure of Miss Ivors, but this might be going too far. For a fine elaboration of the complexities in Joyce's position, see Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Ancestral Voices: Religion and Nationalism in Ireland* (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1994), pp. 44–49. O'Brien emphasizes that Joyce was not thoroughly alienated from the claims of Irishness, but rather felt the inner tension between the impulse to yield to Irish nationalism and the (ultimately prevailing) impulse to resist it.

2. See Benedict Anderson, "Introduction," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London: Verso, 1996), p. 1: "given what seems today the vast role that nationalism has played over two centuries of world-politics, why have so many seminal thinkers of modernity—Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Durkheim, Benjamin, Freud, Lévi-Strauss, Keynes, Gramsci, Foucault—had so little to say about it?" Cf. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 124n1 (paraphrasing Eric Hobsbawm): "the disproportion between the importance of nationalism and the amount of thought given to it."

3. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), p. 5.

4. Bernard Yack, "Ethnos and Demos: A Political Theorist Looks at the Idea of the Nation," manuscript, pp. 1–2. This is an earlier draft of chapter 5 of this volume.

5. Cf. Anderson's reference to "the 'political' power of nationalisms vs. their philosophical poverty and even incoherence": *Imagined Communities*, p. 5. Also: Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp.123–24: "Their precise doctrines are hardly worth analysing. . . . [T]he prophets of nationalism were not anywhere near the First Division, when it came to the business of thinking." Also: Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 65: "nationalism as an elaborated intellectual *theory* is neither widely endorsed, nor of high quality, nor of any historic importance." It is a little misleading to call Gellner a "critic" of nationalism. To be sure, he is certainly no friend of the ideologies that propagate nationalism; but strictly speaking his view is that nationalism is a matter for sociological explanation rather than normative judgment, since it is pointless to bemoan something that is a sociologically determined requirement of the modern world.

6. Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Paradise Lost," *New York Review of Books*, April 25, 1991, pp. 56–57. O'Brien argues that "nationalism-as-theory," to the extent that it exists at all, is always merely a façade for national feeling directed toward some particular national group.

7. *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, ed. F. M. Barnard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969). The two most important heirs of Herder within contemporary political theory are Isaiah Berlin and Charles Taylor (no doubt influenced by Berlin's Herderianism). According to Taylor, Herder's idea of *Volk* implies the mutual recognition of all peoples "in their irreplaceable but complementary differences, because they form together the entire choir of humanity" (Taylor, "Les sources de l'identité moderne," in *Les frontières de l'identité: Modernité et postmodernisme au Québec*, ed. M. Elbaz, A. Fortin, and G. Laforest [Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996], p. 351; my translation). One finds a similar conception in Michael Walzer's idea of what he calls "reiterative universalism," which he illustrates with the case of Mazzini: "Like the man who wanted to dance at every wedding, Mazzinni was eager to endorse every reiteration of Italy's national struggle." See Walzer, "Nation and Universe," *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values XI: 1990*, ed. Grethe B. Peterson (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), p. 550. For a fine summary of Berlin's views, see Stuart Hampshire, "Nationalism," in *Isaiah Berlin: A Celebration*, ed. Edna and Avishai Margalit (London: Hogarth Press, 1991), pp. 127–34.

8. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, trans. R. F. Jones and G. H. Turnbull (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

9. J.S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chapter 16; Lord Acton, "Nationality," in *Essays on Freedom and Power*, ed. Gertrude Himmelfarb (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1955), pp. 141–70.

10. Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?/What is a Nation?* (Toronto: Tapir Press, 1996), a bilingual edition with a trans. by Wanda Romer Taylor.

11. Julien Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, trans. R. Aldington (New York: Norton, 1969). For a contemporary work inspired by Benda, see Alain Finkielkraut's *The Defeat of the Mind*, trans. Judith Friedlander (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); part 1 offers an excellent account of some crucial episodes in the history of nationalist thought. Of particular interest is Finkielkraut's reconstruction of a dialogue between Herder and Goethe that directly parallels the dialogue between Davin and Stephen cited at the beginning of this introduction: again, the issue is whether the human spirit flies most freely when it has been liberated from its cultural roots to participate in a wider humanity, or whether this supposed liberation is in fact mere deracination, therefore spiritually deadening. For an eloquent restatement of the Herderian side of this debate, see Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Nationalism," *New York Review of Books*, November 21, 1992, pp. 19–23 (p. 22: "Like Herder, I regard cosmopolitanism as empty. People can't develop unless they belong to a culture").

12. There have been some interesting debates about whether to add Rousseau and Hegel to this list. See, for instance, Anne M. Cohler, *Rousseau and Nationalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1970); John Plamenatz, "Two Types

of Nationalism," in *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, ed. Eugene Kamenka (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), pp. 24–25; Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 28–29n1; Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 130; and Neil MacCormick, chapter 10 of this volume, p. 195. Certainly both Rousseau and Hegel believed that attachment to a national community would contribute in very important ways to attachment to the state. But for both of them the point is not to foster national feeling for its own sake (as would be the case for a nationalist); rather, the point is to draw upon it as a cultural resource in strengthening the *civic* community (the community of citizens holding membership in the state). In Hegel's case, I think we have decisive evidence of his nonnationalism. As Roger Scruton notes, it was Fichte's "experience of the helplessness of Germany before the Napoleonic armies that inspired" his nationalism ("In Defense of the Nation," in Scruton, *The Philosopher on Dover Beach* [Manchester, U.K.: Carcanet, 1990], p. 325). This is certainly true, and it proves at the same time that Hegel, with his great enthusiasm for Napoleon, could not possibly have been a nationalist.

13. This volume, p. 105. Yack's charge of Western-liberal self-congratulation against the civic/ethnic distinction ought to be taken seriously. Yet it is possible to defend the distinction without reference to politics in the West: for instance, there is all the difference in the world between the pan-Indian nationalism championed by Gandhi and Nehru and the Hindu nationalism that is presently gaining ground in India. Here, at least, is a case where it is a question not of celebrating "Western" nationalism relative to "Eastern" nationalism (Yack has in mind terms introduced by John Plamenatz), but of comparing two Asian nationalisms—one that is normatively attractive and another that is normatively repugnant (e.g., the Hindu militancy of the Bharatiya Janata Party). In fact, I am tempted to write: Nehru's pan-Indian "nationalism" versus the Hindu nationalism of the B.J.P., since it is not obvious to me or to other critics of nationalism that nationalism is the right term to describe a movement of transethnic civic emancipation, whereas it *does* seem obvious that Hindu nationalist politics is an instance of nationalism in the purest and most odious sense.

14. Kedourie, *Nationalism*, p. 135. Cf. Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism," in *Thought and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 153: "Life is a difficult and serious business. The protection from starvation and insecurity is not easily achieved. In the achievement of it, effective government is an important factor. Could one think of a sillier, more *frivolous* consideration than the question concerning the native vernacular of the governors?"

15. Isaiah Berlin, "The Bent Twig," in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, ed. Henry Hardy (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), p. 251.

16. However, as Walker Connor points out, calling this *national* self-determination is not unproblematic: "Although [the African and Asian independence movements] had been conducted in the name of self-determination of nations, they were, in fact, demands for political independence not in accord with ethnic distributions, but along the essentially happenstance borders that delimited either the sovereignty or the administrative zones of former colonial powers. This fact combined with the incredibly complex ethnic map of Africa and Asia to create, in the name of self-determination of nations, a host of multinational

states" (Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994], p. 5). Cf. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 169.

17. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, "Some Reflections on 'The Break-up of Britain'," *New Left Review* 105 (Sept.–Oct. 1977): 11: "The virtual disappearance of formal empires ('colonialism') has snapped the main link between anti-imperialism and the slogan of national self-determination . . . the struggle against [neocolonial dependence] simply cannot any longer be crystallized round the slogan of establishing independent political statehood, because most territories concerned already have it."

18. See, for instance, Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 1 and 196n1; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, pp. 66, 179, 186; Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, pp. 77, 155, 166.

19. Ernest Gellner, "Do Nations Have Navels?" *Nations and Nationalism* 2.3 (November 1996), 369.

20. For Gellner's interesting reflections on potential nationalisms, see *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 44–45.

21. This problem would not be so intractable if one could at least determine clear criteria for establishing in principle the range of legitimate claimants to statehood. But this is impossible, as Hobsbawm explains: "To assume that the multiplication of independent states has an end is to assume that 1. the world can be subdivided into a finite number of homogeneous potential 'nation-states' immune to further subdivision—i.e. 2. that these can be specified in advance. This is plainly not the case" ("Some Reflections on 'The Break-up of Britain'," pp. 12–13). The problem is further compounded by the fact that the open-ended character of national self-determination as a moral-political principle does nothing to constrain ambitious political elites, provided they have a sufficient degree of political creativity, from contriving new national identities (on the contrary, it virtually invites them to do so, by promising moral sanction): "'ethnic' identities which had no political or even existential significance until yesterday (for instance being a 'Lombard,' which is now the title of the xenophobic leagues in North Italy) can acquire a genuine hold as badges of group identity overnight" (Eric J. Hobsbaum, "Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Balakrishnan, p. 260). There is little reason to think that Umberto Bossi's dream of a republic of Padania is anything other than a cynical fabrication. But nothing prevents Mr. Bossi from invoking the morality of self-determination in pursuing his state-busting and state-inventing designs: all one has to do is invent a previously imaginary "people," give it a flag, and stir it up with a suitable amount of demagoguery until it starts to believe that its national rights have been violated, and presto, a new "nation" is born.

22. For an excellent display of this kind of debate, see the recent exchange between Gellner and Anthony Smith: Anthony D. Smith and Ernest Gellner, "The Nation: Real or Imagined?" and Anthony D. Smith, "Memory and Modernity," in *Nations and Nationalism* 2.3 (November 1996): 358–70, 371–88.

23. Kenneth R. Minogue, "Olympianism and the Denigration of Nationality," in *The Worth of Nations*, ed. Claudio Véliz (Boston: Boston University Professors Program, 1993), p. 74.

24. Roger Scruton, this volume, p. 288. This may be a suitable place to correct what I now regard as a somewhat misleading characterization, which I offered elsewhere, of Scruton's position. In my introduction to *Theorizing Citizenship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), I labeled Scruton a defender of "nationalism," whereas a more careful reading of his writings on this subject shows that he would certainly reject this as an appropriate category by which to describe his view. In his essay, "In Defense of the Nation," pp. 304, 311–13, and 318, Scruton distinguishes nationalism as an ideology used to "conscript" people to an artificial unity associated with the state, as opposed to the unconscripted bonds of national loyalty that are, presumably, by contrast quasi-natural; he even speaks of the "doctrine" of nationalism as something that "perverts" or "pollutes" the idea of the nation. It goes without saying that Scruton, in writing in celebration of national identity, must deny that it is any part of his purpose to conscript anyone to a redoubled devotion to waning national attachments.

25. For another interesting challenge to the modernist view, this time on behalf of Scottish nationalism, see chapter 10 of this volume, by Neil MacCormick.

26. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 73n17. Cf. Eric Hobsbawm, "Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today," pp. 259–60.

27. Cf. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 130.

28. Cf. Brian Barry, this volume, pp. 249, 260. A similar understanding of the strong linkage between nationalism and modern political principles is implicit in the following statement by Shlomo Avineri: "Nationalism is a two-headed animal. It is, on the one hand, a great emancipatory force, based as it is on ideas of liberty, self-determination and people defining their own culture and memory. But it also has the potential of turning xenophobic, intolerant of minorities, repressive of dissent" ("A Fate Worse Than Communism?" *The Jerusalem Post*, Sunday, September 8, 1991).

29. Cf. Taylor, "Les sources de l'identité moderne," pp. 347–54.

30. It is striking that even as vehement a critic of nationalism as Elie Kedourie concedes that any decision concerning "whether nationalists should be conciliated or resisted . . . is necessarily governed by the particular circumstances of each individual case" (*Nationalism*, p. xix). For some sensible suggestions concerning ways to accommodate and pacify nationalism in practice, see Elizabeth Kiss, "Five Theses on Nationalism," in *Political Order: NOMOS XXXVIII*, ed. Ian Shapiro and Russell Hardin (New York: New York University Press, 1996), pp. 288–332.

31. Stephen Holmes, "Liberalism for a World of Ethnic Passions and Decaying States," *Social Research* 61.3 (Fall 1994): 606.

32. For a clear statement of Habermas's challenge to nationalism, see "The European Nation-State—Its Achievements and Its Limits," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Balakrishnan, pp. 281–94. Patchen Markell, in "Making Affect Safe For Democracy? On 'Constitutional Patriotism'" (paper delivered at the 1997 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association), offers a helpful and insightful account of interesting tensions in Habermas's idea of constitutional patriotism.

33. See, for instance, Perry Anderson, "Nation-States and National Identity," *London Review of Books*, May 9, 1991, pp. 7–8: "[What interests Habermas is] merely a generic parliamentary order as such . . . such constitutional patriotism is vacuous. . . . [W]e can be sure we have not heard the end of the quest for German identity." Also relevant here is David Miller's challenge to Maurizio Viroli's idea of patriotism as an alternative to nationalism: "nationalism helped to form an inclusive political community from people divided by attributes such as class and religion. Since that is still our predicament today, it may seem that a direct attempt to get back to republican patriotism is anachronistic: we need the cement of a common culture to underpin our democratic politics" (review of *For Love of Country* in *American Political Science Review* 90.4 [December 1996]: 886). For an acknowledgment by Habermas of such challenges, see "The European Nation-State—Its Achievements and Its Limits," pp. 289–90.

34. Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

35. For a similar response to Tamir, see Sanford Levinson, "Is Liberal Nationalism an Oxymoron? An Essay for Judith Shklar," *Ethics* 105 (April 1995): 626–45 (p. 629: "Tamir is considerably more liberal than she is nationalistic"; p. 633: "It should be clear that zealous political nationalists will find relatively little attractive in *Liberal Nationalism*").

36. Cf. Bernard Yack, "Reconciling Liberalism and Nationalism," *Political Theory* 23.1 (February 1995): 172, referring to Tamir's "depoliticization" of national identity.

37. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 150.

38. Ibid., p. 145.

39. George Kateb, "Notes on Pluralism," *Social Research* 61.3 (Fall 1994): 535.

40. As far as Israel's Law of Return is concerned, Tamir's position is that it "would only be justified if the largest minority in the state, namely, the Palestinians, would also have a national entity in which they could enact a similar law" (*Liberal Nationalism*, p. 160). This is fine for Palestinians who become citizens of a Palestinian state, if and when such a state comes into existence; but it is hard to see how this stipulation elevates the civic status of Arab citizens within Israel.

41. Norman Spector, "Cultures Warring in the Bosom of a Single State," *The Globe & Mail* (Toronto), Saturday, September 7, 1996, p. D3. Spector is a former Canadian ambassador to Israel.

42. Alex Weingrod, "Palestinian Israelis?," *Dissent*, Summer 1996, p. 110.

43. Avishai Margalit and Moshe Halbertal, "Liberalism and the Right to Culture," *Social Research* 61.3 (Fall 1994): 495. Margalit and Halbertal tell the story of a Peace Now demonstration following the massacre in Hebron. Organizers decided that the demonstration should end with a minute of silence rather than the usual singing of "Hatikva" because it was felt "that a national anthem intended solely for Jews could not be sung at a joint demonstration of Jews and Arabs" (ibid., pp. 494–95).

44. James B. Rule, "Tribalism and the State" (with a reply by Walzer), *Dissent*, Fall 1992, pp. 519–24; "Letters," *Dissent*, Winter 1993, pp. 127–28; "Let-

ters," *Dissent*, Spring 1993, pp. 268–70. Cf. Amos Elon, "Israel and the End of Zionism," *New York Review of Books*, December 19, 1996, pp. 22–30. Elon argues for a "post-Zionist" conception of Israel, that is, the adoption of "a more Western, more pluralistic, less 'ideological' form of patriotism and of citizenship" (pp. 26–27).

45. *Dissent*, Fall 1992, p. 524.

46. Ibid.

47. It seems to me uncontroversial that Britain is a political union of (at least) the English, the Scottish, and the Welsh. It is obviously more complicated how the citizens of Ulster (with their divided identities) figure in this union, but even if one leaves them to one side, one can perhaps count the Cornish as a fourth (quasi-)nation.

48. George Steiner, "Israel: A View from Without," in *Imagination and Precision in the Social Sciences*, ed. T. J. Nossiter, A. H. Hanson, & Stein Rokkan (London: Faber & Faber, 1972), p. 339. Cf. Berlin, "Two Concepts of Nationalism," p. 19: "To be human meant [for Herder] to be able to feel at home somewhere, with your own kind."

49. For a very powerful vindication of the idea of the multiethnic state as a "political community of all of its citizens," and, correspondingly, a powerful indictment of the ethnic state (for instance, the kind of ethno-Croat state created by Franjo Tudjman), see Bogdan Denitch, *Ethnic Nationalism: The Tragic Death of Yugoslavia*, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

50. On the other hand, it is interesting how tricky it can be, even for a resolute federalist like Charles Taylor, to avoid getting drawn into an ethnic definition of Quebec's nationhood. For instance, in Taylor's brief to the Bélanger-Campeau Commission (December 19, 1990), he took as his starting point the following two facts: "1 Quebec is a distinct society, the political expression of a nation, and the great majority of this nation lives within its borders. 2 Quebec is the principal home of this nation, but branches of it have settled elsewhere in Canada and North America" (*Reconciling the Solitudes*, ed. Guy Laforest [Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993], p. 141). In other words, those individuals who live within the territorial boundaries of "Quebec" (= civic) yet who do not belong to the relevant (francophone) nation cannot be counted as full citizens of "Quebec" (= ethnic) defined as "the political expression of a nation." Taylor would surely resist the idea that Quebec should be defined as an ethnic state, yet that is precisely what his own statement asserts. As Walker Connor emphasizes throughout his book *Ethnonationalism*, even if nationalists *want* to purge their nationalism of "ethnonationalist" connotations (or at least want it to be seen that they want this), one shouldn't be surprised to find implicit appeals to *ethnos* lurking somewhere in the background. Cf. Yael Tamir, "The Enigma of Nationalism," *World Politics* 47.3 (April 1995): 420: "the more we learn about the emergence of nations and about the origins and the development of nationalism, the less credible is the nationalist image of nations as homogeneous, natural, and continuous communities of common fate and descent. Yet, it is precisely this image that nurtures the unique power of nationalism."

51. This volume, p. 127.

52. This should not be interpreted as an endorsement of Trudeau's politics with respect to the national question in Quebec. On the contrary, my view is that Trudeau's interventions in the Meech Lake and Charlottetown debates in the late '80s and early '90s helped decisively to defeat possible political compromises between federalists and nationalists, and therefore contributed to the present polarization in the debate concerning Quebec. I have discussed these issues in "Citizenship and Nationalism: Is Canada a 'Real Country'?," in *Citizenship after Liberalism*, ed. Mark Denham and Karen Slawner (New York: Peter Lang, forthcoming).

53. Hobsbawm, "Some Reflections," pp. 11–12.

54. One must hasten to add that normative questions are not absent even in the case of the homogeneous nation, since, for instance, in the Japanese example, the national homogeneity is acquired by keeping out immigrants. There is also, of course, the issue of ethnocentric attitudes in Japan toward the (numerically very small) ethnic Korean minority.

55. Again, Kymlicka replies very effectively to those who would postulate the linguistic and cultural "neutrality" of the civic-national state: "national minorities are no different from the members of majority nations [in regard to attachment to their own language and culture]. Anglophones in Ontario (or Illinois) are as deeply attached to their language and culture as Francophones in Quebec or the Flemish in Belgium. If the demographics were reversed, and Anglophones in the United States were outnumbered by Francophones or Hispanics, then they, too, would mobilize to gain official recognition and support for their language and culture. The only difference is that Anglophones in North America can take their national identity for granted. As Seton-Watson put it, national identity is 'passively treasured by nearly all citizens of modern societies, even if they do not know it,' since they take it for granted. But were their identity to be threatened, national majorities would mobilize in just the same way as minorities. [Note:] Or as George Bernard Shaw put it, 'A healthy nation is as unconscious of its nationality as a healthy man of his bones. But if you break a nation's nationality, it will think of nothing else but getting it set again.'" Will Kymlicka, "The Sources of Nationalism," in *The Morality of Nationalism*, ed. Robert McKim and Jeff McMahan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 62, 65n11.

56. A big part of the problem in pursuing this project is that different people use the term "civic nationalism" for radically different purposes (nationalists use it to fend off accusations that their nationalism is exclusionary and ethnocentric, whereas critics of nationalism use it to cast a moral cloud over "real" nationalism, that is, ethnic nationalism). Wayne Norman rightly points out that when someone like Michael Ignatieff describes himself as committed to civic nationalism, it suggests, misleadingly, that this is a particular species of nationalism, whereas Ignatieff himself, of course, intends it as a reproach to all forms of nationalism strictly speaking ("Les paradoxes du nationalisme civique," in *Charles Taylor et l'interprétation de l'identité moderne*, ed. Guy Laforest and Philippe de Lara (Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1998), pp. 162, 168). Therefore it might clarify the debate somewhat simply to drop the term

"civic nationalism" and replace it with references to citizenship (or Habermas's constitutional patriotism).

57. John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971) did more than any other work to establish and define this constricted philosophical agenda within liberal political philosophy.

58. See note 1 above.

CHAPTER 1

Nationalism

John Dunn

> Duty requires that men should defend not just whatever country
> they choose but their own particular fatherland. This requirement
> is the criterion by which the ethical activity of all individuals is
> measured; it is the source of all the recognised *duties* and laws
> which are known to every individual, and the objective basis on
> which each individual's position rests. For there is no room in liv-
> ing reality for empty notions like that of pursuing goodness for its
> own sake.
>
> —G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of
> World History: Introduction* (1830 draft)

Nationalism is the starkest political shame of the twentieth century, the
deepest, most intractable and yet most unanticipated blot on the politi-
cal history of the world since the year 1900. But it is also the very tissue
of modern political sentiment, the most widespread, the most unthink-
ing, and the most immediate political disposition of all at least among
the literate populations of the modern world. The degree to which its
prevalence is still felt as a scandal is itself a mark of the unexpectedness
of this predominance, of the sharpness of the check that it has adminis-
tered to Europe's admiring Enlightenment vision of the Cunning of Rea-
son. In nationalism at last, or so it at present seems, the Cunning of Rea-
son has more than met its match. There are two key episodes that have
caused this realization to sink in. The first was the abject collapse of the
touted proletarian solidarism of the Second International in August
1914 in the face of the mobilization of the European powers for the First
World War.[1] The second, a more arbitrary and disputable date on which
to fix, was the Nazi Seizure of Power in 1933. It is a nice point which of
these two episodes has generated the greater and more conclusive shock.

Certainly socialism has never looked the same since the parties of Engels and of Jaurès slunk into line and agreed to defend their fatherlands against the aggression of the largely proletarian armies of their foes. Socialism in one country was a natural political outcome of a movement that had split so effortlessly *along* national lines, even if its principal and somewhat unwitting architect, Lenin, was the most savage critic of this proletarian fission. But if the fate of socialism was the betrayal of a promise, the rise of fascism and above all the Nazi regime were the realization of a threat and a threat so dreadful in some of its manifestations that it is still hard for us to take in the scale and extension of the evil actions that it made possible. When the counter-revolutionary theorist Joseph de Maistre wished to assail the leaders of the Terror of 1793 he could measure the enormity of their deeds by accusing them of bringing the mores of the Iroquois and the Algonquin[1] to the squares of Paris— bringing back natural man to the center of civilization. When critics of the Soviet Union wished to pillory Stalin as a reversion to Russian barbarism they could describe him in a famous quip as Genghis Khan with a telephone. But even the most strained of historical metaphors has quailed at the task of characterizing Hitler.

There are of course other metaphors of the twentieth century as terrifying and perhaps in the end as shaming as those of nationalism—spectacular fears of the more or less literal detonation of the living space at least of industrial countries through the use of nuclear weapons or drabber, if not less hysterical, anxieties at the prospect of a steady destruction of the human habitat. But these are not as yet assemblages of steady choices backed by assured feelings and it remains hard to imagine their ever becoming such. Human life on earth may in fact terminate sooner rather than later and if it does so political agencies will have to share plenty of the blame for its doing so. But when and if it does do so, it will hardly be our collective choice.

Yet nationalism, by contrast, is very much our collective choice. It is the common idiom of contemporary political feeling, at least off parade. It is not necessarily an unthinking or a morally irresponsible feeling and it is a feeling that certainly has to compete with other political feelings. Why should it have come to be so dominant and why should we be so surprised, even so horrified at the extent of its prevalence?

It is easier to see a clear and convincing answer to the second question than it is to the first. If we are most of us nationalists in some measure now, we are certainly not necessarily insensitive to claims of supranational human solidarities and we are still more certainly most of us not at all like Nazis. Nationalism for most of us is not an exhilarating emotional commitment but simply a habit of accommodation of which

we feel the moral shabbiness readily enough ourselves. And it is hard for us altogether to lose sight of this shabbiness, just because nationalism does violate so directly the official conceptual categories of modern ethics, the universalist heritage of a natural law conceived either in terms of Christianity or of secular rationalism. The handbooks or official proclamations of this ethical heritage—from Samuel Pufendorf's seventeenth-century *De Officio Hominis et Civis*[3] through the American Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 to the United Nations Charter of our own day are intractably universalist. All of them take individual human beings, more or less as they are, as their fundamental ethical units and assess the legitimacy of possible laws or political arrangements in terms of the axiomatically identical rights that such human beings are presumed to possess. From the theory of justice suggested by scholastic philosophers in early modern Europe to that urged recently with such charm by John Rawls[4] there is no place for the nation or indeed for the sovereign political body as a unit of conceptual account. The rights of men are what lend to nations or states whatever rights these last can be properly accorded. Such other rights as they claim must be products simply of power, rights that they take and that they can hold, causal capabilities as Thrasymachus celebrated them in Plato's *Republic* and, as Plato himself insisted, facts that in themselves necessarily lack any trace of ethical authority.[5]

All this, of course, is a very Enlightenment way of thinking about the matter and a way that the intellectual heritage of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Germany from the Romantics and Herder, through, at least from some points of view, the thought of Hegel, to the broad historicist sensibility of thinkers like Max Weber and Meinecke,[6] set itself to bury without trace. In response to the easy cosmopolitanism of the *Aufklärung*, historicist thought has boldly espoused the claims of the parochial, of cultural idiosyncrasy and localism, of the folkways. The extent to which men vary according to time and place in the values that they hold dear and the projects that they pursue is seen theoretically as a species-specific characteristic of human beings as such and celebrated morally as the distinctive glory of the species. The universalist theory of the human species is that its destiny is to be intensely and necessarily particular.

There are, plainly, many extremely deep themes involved in this shift of intellectual and moral sensibility. What exactly, for example, are the relations between on the one hand the growing appreciation for the plurality of human cultures, a naturalist's joy in the astounding scope of human cultural differentiation and shame at the steady erosion of one endangered culture after another, and on the other hand the philosoph-

ical bemusements of ethical relativism—the view that all human values are in some sense specific to particular societies? And what connection is there between both of these shifts of intellectual sensibility and the pride of patriotism or the murderous shame of fascist aggression and racist tyranny, the heroism of national resistance and liberation or the barbarism of genocide? One should not think even of the moral hesitancy at the triumph of new cultures as a wholly modern phenomenon, as though culturally in the past all communities were confidently Social Darwinist, if without knowing it. There is a beautiful passage in Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*, written in prison at the very beginning of the seventeenth century, that could serve as a perfect text for rescue ethnography today:

> the inventions of mortall men are no lesse mortall than themselves. The Fire, which the *Chaldaeans* worshipped for a God, is crept into every mans chimney, which the lacke of fuell starveth, water quencheth, and want of ayre suffocateth; *Jupiter* is no more vexed with Junoes jelousies; Death hath persuaded him to chastitie, and her to patience; and that *Time* which hath devoured it selfe, hath also eaten up both the Bodies and Images of him and his: yea, their stately Temples of stone and durefull Marble. The houses and sumptuous buildings erected to *Baal*, can no where be found upon the earth; nor any monument of that glorious Temple consecrated to *Diana*. There are none now in *Phoenicia*, that lament the death of *Adonis*; nor any in Libya, *Creta*, *Thessalia*, or elsewhere, that ask counsaile or helpe from *Jupiter*. The great god *Pan* hath broken his pipes.'

To an at least partially Christian' Renaissance intellectual like Raleigh the obliteration of the gods of the ancient world by the Christian church militant was a process about which he could readily feel deeply in both directions. But the worship of Baal, for example, was not conducted in Greek or Latin and the point generalizes in any case with very little effort. All over the world today we can sense, if we will only listen for it, the great god Pan breaking his pipes; and it is now open to us, as it was scarcely open to Raleigh, to see this process as the essence of human history—not the passage from heathenism to faith, nor from barbarism and superstition to civilization and rationality, but the brutal natural selection of belief systems that are also always the site of meaning for the lives of real living men and women. To see human history this way is perhaps the essence of the historicist experience and it brings with it a condition that may perhaps be called—if a little solemnly—a state of hermeneutic ambivalence that is as imaginatively baffling as it is stimulating and that is both the central challenge facing any serious political theory today and a challenge that political theory at present is grotesquely failing to meet.

But it is not of course any such refined nostalgia for disappearing folkways or savoring of the pathos of the extirpation of ancient creeds that presents an immediate practical threat in the union of historicist theory and nationalist political action. Affirming the folkways is all very well within the folk; but it offers little grounds for optimism as a method of mediating between different folks. And in any case—What is my folk?—Which is my tribe? Or, as Captain Macmorris asks Fluellen in *Henry V*—What is my nation? Too many self-righteous tribes within a single state can be in itself a recipe for genocide—in Uganda and Burundi of course, in Ethiopia today, in Nigeria all too recently, in South Africa perhaps all too soon.[10] Tribal or national self-righteousness does not merely produce, as previous ethical recipes have consistently tended to do, an excess of just wars. It also produces altogether too many situations in which there seems no longer to be any conceptual, let alone practical possibility of a just peace. Watching on our television screens, as we do, the hideous back streets of Belfast or the picturesque alleys of the old city of Jerusalem, it takes very little distance or imagination to see that almost anything would be better than what is likely to happen next in them. But even infinite distance and omniscience in the face of the tangled histories of massacre and cruelty that have led up to the present of these two cities would hardly suffice to reveal a future for either that would be at all transparently a just future.

If ethical relativism is the philosophical thesis that the mores of any tribe are as good as the mores of any other tribe—or more felicitously that it makes no sense to ask whether the mores of any tribe are *better* than the mores of any other tribe—because good and better are *defined intratribally*—then it readily prompts the question of what is so special about tribes. Why not nations, states, even (hideous thought) empires— or at the other end why not provinces, cities, villages, even streets and households? Indeed if the mores of every tribe are as good as those of every other tribe, if it is a kind of epistemological duty so to regard them, why should not one presume that the mores of every individual person are as good as the mores of every other individual? (Not perhaps what every individual actually does but at least what every individual *approves* of doing.) But on second thought even this concession may well prove epistemologically unworthy. If nothing is special about what is good or bad, if good or bad are words that always carry with them their own private set of inverted commas, what can be so special about approval? Why should guilt not be seen simply as a form of weakness, a deficit in power? As Thrasymachus saw so clearly—or at least as Plato presents him as seeing—an ethical relativism in politics is linked conceptually to nihilism and nihilism as an ethical doctrine makes it impossible for an agent to have good reason to deny to themself anything that

they desire and are able to appropriate.[11] The rational man is the psychopath, negotiating obstructions to his desires with instrumental panache—and any internal inhibition in ensuring the way of his future desire is merely a personal or social superstition. A species whose habitat is a world of self-righteous nations or tribes or villages is a species of rational psychopaths whose rationality is impaired solely by their shared or private ethical superstitions. This is not an altogether attractive vision; but if human selves were in truth nothing more than bundles or collections of different perceptions (as David Hume put it)[12] there is perhaps no very pressing reason why it should not be judged as simply a true vision.

Nationalism, then, is simply one level in a conceptual continuum that reaches from the single morally irresponsible individual to the morally irresponsible species man the whole globe over—man, an intelligent being no longer conscious of a dependence on any being higher than himself and left to decide what ends to act for, all on his own—man become, as John Locke put it, "a god to himself."[13] Nationalism is simply one version of the self-righteous politics of ethical relativism. But it is certainly at present the version best sustained by political realities, the most causally effective version of this politics at any point on the continuum between the individual egoist and the self-righteously appropriative species.[14] The prevalence of nationalism is a moral scandal because the official ethical culture of almost the entire world is a universalist ethical culture. But, moral scandal though it be, its efficacy is unmistakable. If democracy is the resolved mystery of all constitutions, nationalism is perhaps the resolved mystery of all *boundaries* in a world that is densely practically related across boundaries—a world of international exchange and drastically unequal power and enjoyment. An appropriate symbol of the intuitive economic nationalism of modern populations is the extreme suspicion with which multinational capitalist corporations have recently come to be held—agencies that are not merely practically beyond the control of sovereign states, politically unresponsible, as internal institutions like armed forces may often prove in practice to be, but that are, because of their mode of organization, in effect constitutionally responsible to no agency at all for how they operate as a whole. There is no state today so ramshackle that it cannot muster an ideological proclamation of why its citizens should trust it. But multinational corporations *have* no plausible ideology of why anyone should trust them. All they can offer is the obvious truth that they trade as they can on the markets, as they find them (and trade should not be read in any narrowly legal sense). It is unlikely in fact that there are any multinational corporations as intensely undeserving of human trust by those whom they affect as a fair number of states today. But

even a true paragon among them, a multinational corporation *sans peur et sans reproche*, could not muster the ideological resources of the most barbarous of states.

Why should this be so?

Nations in the world today are in the first instance not, as the word still suggests, extended ideological glosses on kinship units, communities of birth. Rather they are simply states that are relatively happy with their statehood, states in which whatever other features of the social arrangements are widely felt to require amendment, at least no very large grouping within the population feels urgently that they would be much better off in two or more state units, in place of a single one. In this sense the nationhood of most states in the world today is potentially in jeopardy and the nationhood of not a few—including for example Great Britain and Canada—is plainly in jeopardy in actuality. But for our purposes at this point what matters is not simply that today somewhat more nation-states have their national status actively in question than would have been the case three decades ago, but rather what is more or less universally seen as the appropriate replacement for the nationally jeopardized state—namely the constitution of a plurality of states whose title to nationhood would be comparatively (at least for a time) beyond dispute. The rationality of this process of fission within allocative units to produce what are felt to be more trustworthy communities of common interest is not confined, of course, to nation-states. It can be seen at work as transparently and at least as actively within the process of state fission within the Nigerian Federation as it can within the politics of the British Isles. The search for a more intuitively plausible scale of community lies behind the worldwide pressures for decentralization and localization of political choice and control. The search for more locally advantageous distributive arrangements by the same token is a natural consequence of any at all participant political process. Since virtually all political distribution is zero-sum in character[15] in the present tense, whatever its longer-term consequences for all the parties concerned, there are bound at any time where distribution is actually occurring to be those who can clearly and accurately perceive themselves as losers and perceive others as winners. Those who are suffering discrimination, other things being equal, have the best of reasons for preferring to exercise the choices themselves. Of course other things never are equal—the present being in terms of political evaluation so much the least significant of political tenses. But illusory though its rewards may eventually prove, the present remains an amazingly powerful locus of political causation; and delayed gratification remains a singularly unenticing political program. The strains on states, the growing pressures toward fission, can thus be expected to increase for the present, and the

only forces that are at all likely in practice, at least in the reasonably near future, to diminish them would be a decrease in effective political articulation and participation, an increase in autocratic control either from the right or from the left. In its protracted predemocratic heyday, the Soviet Union certainly had less difficulty with its nationality question than the United Kingdom. This was hardly what one would have predicted late in 1917[16] and it is plain enough that the main agency that produced the difference, for as long as it lasted, was not the superior equity of the Soviet arrangements but rather, to steal a phrase from a recent British Tory prime minister in a rather different context, "the smack of firm government."

But if nationhood is now revealed in this fashion as the political Achilles heel of many modern states, it remains true that the vehicle in which the whole population of the world formally accepts its common species unity is a Union of *Nations* (or in its earlier version a League of Nations). Even at its most ideologically pretentious the species has not yet *conceived* a practical form in which to transcend the nation-state.

Late-twentieth-century political organization is the product of a geopolitical process, a process that has followed the constitution of a world market and that is in the broadest and most nebulous of terms a product of the dynamic of capitalist development. Now that this geopolitical and economic field has been constituted, has come into existence, the two broadly alternative ideological orientations toward its existence both implicitly recognize its centrality in modern political choice. Either to embrace the world market and the far from narrowly economic terms of trade that it brings with it, in accordance with classical liberal foreign trade ideology and the doctrine of comparative advantage, or to reject the world market and embrace some version of autarky as an exit from the imperialist noose,[17] "Economic Nationalism within One Country," is to see the nation as the key unit of political choice. The bold options for autarky or for an open economy, and all the more cowardly or prudent intermediary stages between these points that are what most nations opt for in fact, can only be and must be exercised at the level of the nation. Twentieth-century geopolitics is still conducted predominantly at the level of the nation-state and nation-states (obviously of very unequal power) are its official dramatis personae. If you do not happen to like your nation-state, the plain alternative at the political (if not at the individual) level is to make a new one. If you do not like India, try Pakistan. If you do not like Pakistan, try Bangladesh. If you do not like Nigeria, try Biafra. If you do not like Canada, try *Québec Libre*. If you do not like Britain, try Scotland. If you do not like Scotland, try, perhaps, the Shetlands.

Since twentieth-century nation-states are in this sense communities

of fate and not of choice, since despite Locke[18] one is everywhere today born a citizen of a particular state unless one has the transcendent misfortune to be born a citizen of no state at all, and since nation-states are, as we noted earlier, for the most part democratic in their own conception of their legitimacy (nervously eager, at least at the ideological level, to ingratiate themselves with their own populations as a whole, or at a minimum, to portray themselves as truly representing the latter), and since nation-states today are both organizationally and in terms of social process so much more participant societies in terms of literacy, media, physical communications, and public expression than any territorial states of the past, one can see readily enough the complicity between state powers and subject populations in determining the locus of the interests that these powers should represent.

Nationalism is the natural political sentiment for modern states and (although many items of nationalist sentiment may be morally pernicious and many others may reflect a dramatic level of false consciousness) there is a solid core of nationalist sentiment that is no more morally discreditable and no more inherently an indication of cognitive confusion than Bentham's principle of self-preference.[19]

If we ourselves are not for us, who else is likely to be?

But if nationalism is in some sense the natural political sentiment for the populaces of modern states and if its predominance in modern politics is thus nothing at which to be surprised, it has certainly not been at all a natural sentiment for most human beings in most of human history, nor even for the great majority of the populations of very large states at least until well into the twentieth century. The situation of a Chinese peasant before the mid nineteenth century was one to which peoples outside the empire were essentially (with the exception of a few Mongol forays) almost wholly irrelevant. The Chinese certainly looked down on foreigners,[20] those Chinese at any rate who had heard of the existence of foreigners. (One should remember that as late as 1936 when the nationalist students of Peiping and Tientsin went to the people in the approved Russian style to alert the Chinese peasantry to the threat of Japanese aggression in Manchuria, most of the peasants although they had heard vaguely of Japan, the homeland of the Eastern Dwarfs, had never heard of Manchuria, the nearest point of which was a mere hundred miles away.)[21] If the Chinese did indeed corporately look down on foreigners, the mandarins discharged this burden on behalf of Chinese society as a whole, along with all the other agreeable perquisites of their office. Cultural chauvinism is a common enough motif in history but on the whole until relatively modern times cultural chauvinism has been an elite prerogative—a pleasure for those with the leisure to savor it. Most peoples in history have had their cultural chauvinism done *for* them.

Any society by and large prefers its customs to those of other societies. Indeed to possess customs that one prefers to those of others is what from a cultural point of view it is to *be* a society. Any society is likely to fight, if the need arises and if it feels there to be any chance of success in so doing, for the ashes of its fathers and the altars of its gods.

Nor is chauvinism, where it exists, necessarily a defensive psychological adaptation. English popular chauvinism clearly existed to be appealed to in the audience for whom Shakespeare wrote *Henry V*; and, more urgently, it formed a major emotional theme in the English Protestant self-understanding as this can be seen developing from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*,[22] through the exploits of Sir Francis Drake and Queen Elizabeth's speech to her people at Tilbury[23] to the foreign policy of Cromwell[24] and the Glorious Revolution of 1688. When John Locke was packing his books to go into exile after the crushing of the Exclusion movement and the temporary triumph of Stuart absolutism, he tacitly titled the manuscript of his Whig tract the *Two Treatises of Government* (or so Peter Laslett has conjectured),[25] *De Morbo Gallico—on* the French disease—the fetchingly chauvinist English medical name for venereal disease. The conjecture itself is perhaps overbold since Locke was in fact a doctor and possessed a number of medical texts on the topic in question. But if the conjecture itself may well not be true, it is certainly *ben trovato*. Absolutism was seen by many English thinkers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a filthy Continental affliction and English or as it became British constitutional liberty were seen complacently as the natural political felicity of a naturally healthy people. British Protestant constitutional liberty was the ideological core of a political community in contrast to Continental European and often papist absolutist slavery throughout the period that English domination of the world economy was being generated. Here again an ideology of popular representation, a more participant economy, and a deeper emotional allegiance to the state power go very closely together. If nationalism is the resolved mystery of all boundaries, one can see readily enough why the English (along with their slightly earlier commercial rivals and Protestant coadjutors the Dutch) should have been the first to resolve the mysteries.

The articulation of this type of chauvinism is connected fairly directly to warfare. The great dates of national chauvinism are almost all either dates of battles or dates of peace treaties that conclude successful wars of national liberation—Bouvines, Bannockburn, Agincourt, the Spanish Armada, Valmy, the Battle of Britain. War has been the great motor of nationalist expansion, not simply in the mechanically important sense of territorial extension by military conquest—what made Spain and Italy and Germany and China and India and Russia into

the nations they now are—but also in the more elusive but psychologically at least equally significant sense of constituting national solidarity. The nineteenth-century French thinker Ernest Renan answered his 1882 query "What is a nation?" with the memorable phrase "a daily plebiscite"[26]—that is, a continuous exercise of popular consensual will. This is hardly a causally very adequate vision of the determinants of nationality but it does point to the centrality of will and commitment within the realities of nationhood. We have no reason today to acknowledge the existence of circumstances in which it would necessarily be agreeable to die for one's *patria*; but in any realistically imaginable political world there will remain circumstances in which it would still be, as Horace put it, decorous to do so. Within the present nation-state system states remain compulsive communities of minimal security, machines for human self-defense. And self-defense at a communal level, the defense of ways of living, rights, collective autonomies, cannot be an individualist matter, cannot be morally or practically discharged by individual egoism. "I love my country [*la patria mia*] more than my soul," said Machiavelli in a splendidly and characteristically histrionic phrase.[27] To choose to obey the universal requirements of Christian ethics, rather than to respond to the practical contingencies of communal defense, was a selfish and a communally irresponsible choice—within nature as it was and plainly would remain, it was a morally *wicked* option, however sanctimoniously and however sincerely rationalized. Christianity was the mortal foe of citizenship, encouraging a sickly concern for the health of the individual soul at the expense of the most pressing requirements of mutual practical responsibility. Nature precludes the normative universalism of moral absolutes, Christian or indeed secular. Machiavelli would certainly have regarded a secular pacifism in a militarily threatened country as being as improper an elevation of individual spiritual self-regard over the practically given duties of the citizen's station as he would a pacifism or Kantian dedication to truth-telling founded on Christian belief. Machiavelli, one may say, simply took consequentialism seriously from a moral point of view.

But it is probably more immediately revealing to note simply that he took the duties of citizenship or republican statecraft, the priority of right of community over individual, as axiomatic, as classical political theorists had done more effortlessly before the Christianization of Europe.[28] As Hegel observed three centuries later, hussars with shining sabers could teach men their public obligations,[29] could bring these home to them in a way in which daily life in peacetime could hardly be expected to do—eliciting a due moral commitment to a context of mutual relations that individuals are normally in a position to afford to treat in a detached and instrumental fashion. In recent European expe-

rience the hussars with shining sabers have taken the guise of SS armies, the Gestapo, or the military and police agencies of panzer communism. The experience, above all, of the European resistance in the course of the Second World War stands as a commanding reminder of the political obligation to lay down one's life for one's friends.

It is because of this stark conceptual boundary to the politics of egoistic self-preservation that the ties between membership of a moral community, the duty to defend such a community, and the resonance of nationalism as a political ideology are so intimate. It is hard to exaggerate the significance of the link between nationally predicated political sentiment and the military defense or liberation of what remain today national political communities. The process of national liberation is a process that has done much to form nations. It has not been simply a mechanical external protection of existing cultural and social units but rather a mode in which communities of cultural and social interaction have come to be created. To see the process externally is readily to see it as a process of rather threadbare ideological fiction, supplemented by coercion and murder, the American view of the role of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam.[30] But hussars with shining sabers have a lengthy ancestry. It was largely the Duke of Alba's imperial forces that made the United Netherlands into a nation. It was as much as anything else Napoleon, the agent of an imperialism rationalized in universal terms, that gave some real political substance to German nationalism.[31] And the same causal strand can be followed readily enough throughout European colonial expansion and its revanchement—Ireland, Latin America, China, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Algeria, Guiné Bissau, Kenya, Angola, Kampuchea—perhaps in the future even Israel and South Africa. Plainly one should not sentimentalize this process. The birthpangs of nations or even their rebirths are often hideous affairs, years or decades drenched in blood. Think of Kampuchea.[32] And history frequently leaves precipitates of problems that are beyond any morally plausible political solution—like the city of Belfast today, a historical absurdity of more than three hundred years depth, attempting to live amidst the ruins of three centuries of history.

Our political sensibilities in advanced industrial societies shy away from these histrionic issues. We think of politics in terms of production and distribution—as an allocation problem—and where violence enters our horizons at all at a level more complex than that of our safety in walking the streets, it does so more or less at the level of the unthinkable, a world war fought with nuclear weapons: *Götterdämmerung.* Those of us who are anxious about such matters express our anxieties, with varying degrees of hysteria or plangency. But even for the most anxious it is hardly a matter with much bearing on everyday life. Either

it will happen or it won't. Most believe it won't. You or I perhaps, some persons at any rate, believe it will. Some of those who believe it will, feel the need to bear witness to their expectations in as conspicuous a way as they can devise. But even the most spectacular witness can hardly with sanity be expected to have much *effect* on the probabilities of its occurring or not occurring. Either it will happen or it won't. For private citizens at any rate (if not for advisers of American presidents or British prime ministers) a high degree of fatalism seems apropos. And so blood and death and the community of unhesitating sacrifice appear to us to be nothing properly to do with politics, atavistic survivals within our own politics, bombs in London or Birmingham, kidnappings and murders in Quebec, or palpable indices that the politics of others in distant places—Chile, Argentina, Italy even, the Philippines, Yugoslavia, Kampuchea—remain the politics of savages, prepolitical, precivilized, barbarous. And thus the nationalism of tariff barriers or indigenization of employment appears as simply a component of modern political reason and the nationalism of those as yet unable to erect tariff barriers and the violence that disfigures this seems archaic and irrational, irredeemably morally ugly. Now it is certainly an error to hint, let alone to *argue*, that these values are simply misconceived—that civic peace and prosperity are not real political goods and goods self-evidently to be preferred to cheery mutual maiming and torture, let alone the hecatombs of slaughter required for (or at least incurred in) the liberation of some nations. But what must be emphasized very firmly is that the comfortable political vision of distributive politics as exhausting the political meaning of membership in a community is an extremely callow and superficial one. And if nationalism as a political force is in some ways a reactionary and irrationalist sentiment in the modern world, its insistence on the moral claims of the community upon its members and its emphasis that civic order and peace is not a given but an achievement that may well have to be struggled for again is in many ways a less superstitious political vision than the intuitive political consciousness of most capitalist democracies today.

It is in this sense broadly true that the populations of most if not all capitalist democracies today espouse a relaxed and peaceful economic nationalism but shrink back rather from the stridencies and the violence of those whose nations still appear to them to require liberation, to be still *unfree*. And it is natural for them thus to see the former versions of nationalism as harmless and the latter as purely damaging, fit conduct for Palestinians. Yet both of these more or less reflex judgments are disastrously inadequate. The relaxed economic nationalism of operating states, although it is a natural outcome of the dynamics of the world economy, poses a real threat to the future of the species, while the ter-

rorist politics of national liberation, unprepossessing though it certainly is in itself, is premised upon very deep truths about the human political condition that it is wildly imprudent for us to ignore.

The perils of economic nationalism are simple enough in outline. To treat economic cooperation in a rigorously zero-sum mood,[33] seeking permanently and at whatever external cost to others to minimize one's own losses and to maximize one's own gains, may be an ecologically viable practice in the short term. But it is a blatantly wasteful way in which to utilize the resources of the globe and the pretense that it does not diminish the natural inheritance of the species, does not violate what Professor Macpherson christened Locke's "sufficiency limitation,"[34] is palpably absurd. As a practice, it simply does not leave as much or as good in common to other men in the present, let alone in the future. But the deficiencies of such egoistic utilitarian consciousness, both imaginative and moral, are not in any sense peculiar to nationalism. They display themselves as conspicuously in the domestic politics of advanced industrial capitalist societies as they do in the international postures of all states in the world today.

The distinctive splendors and menaces of nationalism as such come out much more drastically in the relation between individual and community. In exploring the ramifications of this theme it would be hard to exaggerate the centrality of Germany, a culture without a state, as the nineteenth century dawned, confronting an all-too-effective state endowed with a universalist ideology. The late Professor Plamenatz has drawn a persuasive distinction between two political forms of nationalism in modern history.[35] On the one hand he sees a form, for which Germany is clearly prototypical, in which ethnic and linguistic groups that in terms of culture and civilization are clearly the equals if not the superiors of the polities that rule over them set themselves to forge independent political units of their own as the natural political expression of existing cultural and social capabilities. On the other he sees a form for which a good many of the states of tropical Africa would serve as very adequate prototypes, in which social groupings are in the simplest descriptive sense backward, largely preliterate, with low productivity, weak overarching social solidarities, and slight abilities to organize themselves for the better. Nationalism in these territories was a relatively powerful and unambiguous sentiment in the face of colonial rule but it has proved quite intolerably undirective in practice in the aftermath of independence and even in ideological terms has the greatest difficulty in transcending the level of rather brutal self-parody. The passage from *négritude*, a Parisian intellectual conceit, through for example Zambian humanism to the stage in which in Zaire, the former Belgian Congo, authenticity came to be defined in terms of President Mobutu's

proudly wearing the skins of endangered species is not an inspiriting cultural efflorescence.[16] But it is perhaps an adequate enough tracer at the cultural level of the degree of political and social progress over the time span in question.

In its early-nineteenth-century German context, from Herder to Fichte or Savigny for example, nationalism did become an explicit ideology of cultural particularism, a sturdy defense of the virtues of the Teutonic folkways in contrast with the brittle polish of Gallic cosmopolitanism, and alongside this a more intractably conservative affirmation of the merits of treating law as a practical expression of historical social continuity, a means for a community happy with itself to guarantee its own reproduction through time, as opposed to the Enlightenment image of the law as instrument of social invention and rationalization and appropriate field for the exercise of moral creativity.[37] Some of this movement of thought and feeling was, as Hegel for example proclaimed as resonantly as Marx did,[38] simply superstitious and irrationalist. But it was not this more or less effective ideological reinforcement to the practical conservation of social and political arrangements, which would have been much better abandoned, that has given to nationalism in politics such an appropriately filthy name. What achieved this consequence was the acquisition by these culturally self-defensive and self-protective communities of an altogether too effective single state of their own. Cultural nationalism at home, practiced between consenting adults in national privacy or bravely if somewhat furtively devised within someone else's imperial domain, was a harmless and in many ways an edifying business. But cultural nationalism abroad, as the impetus behind a potential conquest state, an ideology of self-righteous and externally irresponsible force was to leave such innocent imaginative gropings far behind. What *it* led to directly enough was the drive for *Lebensraum*, for cultural self-protection and for the physical space in which to practice such assertion to the full. And, when eked out with the more historically adventitious ingredient of racism, it led on beyond the early inspirations of the fascist regimes of Mussolini and Hitler to the charnel house insanity of the Final Solution.[39] This indubitably *was* something new under the sun. In comparison with this even the ideologies of past, of present and, one must blindly hope, of future imperialist rule are sensitive, humane, and balanced. The cheery acceptance of the Roman destiny to rule the peoples of the world, graciously sparing the vanquished and casting down the pretensions of any people who were haughty enough not to recognize this destiny, the more moralized complacencies of the French *mission civilisatrice*, lineal descendant of the universalism of 1789, or even the ideology of the erstwhile Soviet empire, shiftier in its practical application but at least more edifying

within its own explicit terms, all of these had their disfigurements. But none of them can hold a candle to the Third Reich. Since this is what modern nationalism, the nationalism of politicized folkways within the modern capitalist state *did* at one time lead to, it is scarcely surprising that we should view the relationship between cultural nationalism and the modern state with anxiety and suspicion.

It is important, of course, not to be too expansive with one's suspicions. We must separate as sharply as we can the question of what went wrong in Germany, a dense and firmly causal question about society, economy, and polity over a particular span of time, from the question of what went wrong in cultural nationalism, what fundamental ideological flaw within cultural nationalism as a set of values the German experience of 1933–45 did in fact disclose. There is an easy universalist answer that simply claims that there was never anything much right about nationalism, that any ideology of cultural self-protection was simply intrinsically reactionary and that is all there is or was to say about it. But this answer is so easy as not to be an answer at all. Indeed it is little more insightful or illuminating as a political judgment than the judgment that if the entire human race had been controlled in its conduct throughout its history by a profound understanding and acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount, most of the horrors of this history as it has in fact occurred would have been avoided. So indeed one might expect.

To see nationalism as being *simply* a bad thing is both politically shallow and morally—at least in part—mistaken. For cultural nationalism is in the first instance little more than the valuing of existing human social identity at a point in time when this has come to feel itself under pressure. It is not necessarily culturally bigoted—committed to the infliction of its own local cultural proclivities in a hegemonic fashion on the rest of the world. Indeed, as Isaiah Berlin has eloquently insisted,[40] the first great protagonist of cultural nationalism, the German social philosopher Herder, took the view that it was *necessarily* opposed to any such venture. Valuing the plurality of cultures and languages, the subtle ecological variety and nuance of human practices, distinctly for themselves, for their existent idiosyncrasy, rather than assessing their merits in terms of their conformity with or deviation from some supposedly humanly universal aesthetic or ethic, he refused to see hierarchy within the realm of cultures and insisted that, as structures of lived sentiment, they must instead be accorded intrinsic value rather than appraised sternly from the bastion of a single culture. Herder's thought was not especially rigorous. But he was, as far as we know, the first thinker to see at all clearly the very intimate and profound implications of the fact that man is above all else an animal that uses an extremely

elaborated language and to sense the profound political implications that the extent of (and the limitations on) practical intercommunication between human languages must present. Because both what man makes himself and a large part of what he is caused to become are mediated by human speech, the potential community of those with whom human beings can in practice communicate, to whom they can in practice render themselves lucidly intelligible, can be a human community in an altogether deeper sense than practical aggregations of human beings of any scale who are unable to address each other or comprehend each other with such directness. To understand a human being as a human being is to understand them as an actual or potential speaker, in terms of what, if speaking honestly and with due attention, they would have to say. This is an extremely banal point and it has been very extensively ventilated by recent social theorists, though unfortunately largely in German and by theorists who clearly experience some difficulty in making themselves lucidly intelligible even in that formidable tongue.[41] For the moment all we need note in this context is the dependence on such potential intelligibility of the possibility of real human commitment to one another, not simply as in Christian interpretations of universalist natural law as members of a biological species with obligations to preserve ourselves and other members of the species—but real commitment to one another as we actually are, highly elaborated and self-interpreted cultural creatures. Herder, it seems, sensed this when he wrote, with a scorn a little reminiscent of Edmund Burke's,[42] that "The savage who loves himself, his wife and his child . . . and works for the good of his tribe as for his own . . . is in my view more genuine than that human ghost, the . . . citizen of the world, who, burning with love for all his fellow ghosts, loves a chimera. The savage in his hut has room for any stranger. . . . The saturated heart of the idle cosmopolitan is a home for no one."[43]

Since we are all in some measure, in the age of television and air travel, cosmopolitans in ghostly communion, we must hope that Herder is wrong. And certainly when the political consequences of nationalism are considered on a world scale, as they plainly should be, it would be more than foolish to see its main consequence as the preservation of the bonds of social affection and its main beneficiaries as those who feel such affection most keenly. If we are all also in some measure nationalists now, we are scarcely such because we have all come to care for one another more.

So let us remember once again why it is that we *are* all nationalists now and ask in conclusion what perils are associated with this condition.

We are all nationalists now, *analytically*, because Marx's analytical universality—the insistence that modern social, economic and political

process must be seen as a totality at the level of the globe—has worn so much better than the political universality of his proletarians has done.[44] It was a misfortune perhaps—a nasty historical accident, a malign jest of *Fortuna*—that socialism should have had to start off so firmly within one country, though one may in retrospect see all too plainly that socialism was necessarily prone to this type of accident. But it was in any case always a necessity that socialism would have to begin within particular countries, with particular boundaries, controlled by particular powers. And in the long run it is hard to see how any set of boundaries could fail in some measure to resolve its mystery.

Within particular countries, however their polity is organized, it will continue to make sense for their inhabitants to define common interests and to will (and even to attempt to cause) their governments to protect these to the best of their abilities. The rational and moral core of nationalism in an all too practically integrated world is the protection within boundaries of local cultural and economic and political interests. The immoral (and sometimes, though not always, irrational) penumbra of nationalism is the attempt to enforce such interests to the direct damage of those of others.

The key question for the rationality of nationalism is the question of how far in such an integrated world it is correct for the inhabitants of different territories to see their interests, cultural, economic, or political, in zero-sum terms, as matters in which the gain of one is necessarily the loss of another. There is really no surviving tradition of thought that provides at all a plausible method of answering this question with any confidence or generality, though in different ways, liberal international trade theory and Marxist political rhetoric both pretend brazenly from time to time to be able to do so.

And the stumbling bemused idiom of thought that looks most realistic in its insistence on the idiocy of defining all interests in zero-sum terms—that deep terror that we may be systematically destroying in the pursuit of our several short-term interests the global ecology that offers our only habitat—*this* idiom has no boundaries to teach us its realities in modern daily life (because its only boundary is the globe itself) and controls no governments, compelled to enforce its definition of our common interests. If it does now constitute the conventional wisdom of the species as a whole, it is a conventional wisdom without a trace of political power at its disposal.

For human interests at the level that modern nationalism rationally articulates them within boundaries, modern history has duly created nation-states to defend them in some fashion. But for those more final interests that stretch across all boundaries and on which the very survival of the human species (and vast numbers of other species along with

it) arguably now depends, modern history has not so far been thought-ful enough to supply agencies with the least capability of defending them. It is easy to parody Marx's slogan with an appropriate modern analogue. "Human beings of the world unite, you have nothing to keep but your habitat." But as to telling us how to set about the project and how we could expect to be successful at it, that, alas, is quite a different thing.

NOTES

1. Georges Haupt, *Socialism and the Great War: The Collapse of the Second International* (Oxford, 1972). A third, and more recent, episode that has certainly driven the lesson home has been the aftermath of the collapse of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, followed both by the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself and of Yugoslavia.

2. *The Works of Joseph de Maistre*, trans. J. Lively (New York, 1965), p. 296.

3. Samuel von Pufendorf, *De Officio Hominis et Civis juxta Legem Naturalem Libri Duo*, ed. W. Schücking and trans. F. G. Moore (New York, 1927); Carl L. Becker, *The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas*, pb. ed. (New York, 1958).

4. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pb. ed. (London, 1973).

5. *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Francis M. Cornford (Oxford, 1941), pp. 14–39 (336b to 354c); A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 258–93.

6. For Herder see especially Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder* (London, 1976), pp. 143–216 and F. M. Barnard, *Herder's Social and Political Thought: From Enlightenment to Nationalism* (Oxford, 1965). For Hegel see especially Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge, 1975). For two illuminating perspectives on Weber's cultural relativism (and the limits of this) see W. G. Runciman, *A Critique of Max Weber's Philosophy of Social Science* (Cambridge, 1972) and David Beetham, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics* (London, 1974). For the historical context and the character of this transition in German thought as a whole, see the works cited in note 35 below.

7. Sir Walter Raleigh, *The History of the World* (London, 1614), bk I, chap. 6, para. viii, p. 96: "That Heathenisme and Judaisme, after many wounds, were at length about the same time under JULIAN miraculously confounded." For an assertion of continuity across this rift in a mildly startling context, see J. E. McGuire and P. M. Rattansi, "Newton and the 'Pipes of Pan,'" *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 21.2 (December 1966): 108–43.

8. For an elaborately argued case for seeing the Christian elements in Raleigh's expressed opinions simply in terms of "impression-management," see Pierre Lefranc, *Sir Walter Raleigh écrivain: L'oeuvre et les idées* (Paris, 1968), pp. 334–484, e.g., p. 484: "En profondeur, le mouvement conduit Raleigh vers les platonismes et accessoirement vers la pensée libertine; en surface, il simule le

puritanisme." It is certainly true that Raleigh possessed an exceptionally histri-
onic temperament and that he took pleasure in shocking his contemporaries.
But, on the evidence of the poetry and of his conduct during imprisonment in
the Tower, it is hard to believe that the audience to which he was simulating a
Puritan faith did not on occasion include himself.

9. William Shakespeare, *King Henry the Fifth*, act 3, scene 2, line 116.

10. This is not, of course, to excuse the present and notably odious tribal
hierarchy in that country.

11. Plato, *Republic*, ed. Cornford (359d), pp. 43–45. For a clear account
of Plato's argument at this point, see Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory: The
Early and Middle Dialogues* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 186–87.

12. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (bk 1, pt 4, section vi),
Everyman ed. (London, 1911), vol. I, p. 239.

13. John Locke, *Ethica B* (Locke Mss, Bodleian Library, C28, p. 141)
(quoted from John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke* [Cambridge,
1969], p. 1).

14. For recent arguments directed against this self-righteousness at the
level of the species, see Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, pb. ed. (London, 1977)
and Stephen R. L. Clark, *The Moral Status of Animals* (Oxford, 1977). And for
an admirably sane response to such thoughts, more firmly committed to the
species, see John Passmore, *Man's Responsibility for Nature: Ecological Prob-
lems and Western Traditions*, pb. ed. (London, 1974).

15. For a helpful introduction to the theory of zero-sum games, see Anatol
Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1960), chaps.
6–9. (The concept of the zero-sum is introduced in chap. 7). For the Prisoner's
Dilemma game and the ways in which (by altering the rules) it is possible to
improve upon the outcome, see chaps. 10–13.

16. E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, vol. 1 (London, 1950), part III,
"Dispersal and Reunion"; and Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet
Union: Communism and Nationalism 1917–1923*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.,
1964).

17. See, e.g., Samir Amin, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social
Formations of Peripheral Capitalism*, trans. B. Pearce (Hassocks, Sussex, 1976),
p. 383: "The transition, envisaged on a world scale, must start with the libera-
tion of the periphery. The latter is compelled to have in mind, from the begin-
ning, an initial local mode of accumulation."

18. John Locke, Two *Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett, 2nd ed.
(Cambridge, 1967), II, para. 117, ll. 8–13: "thus *the Consent of Free-men, born
under Government*, which only *makes them Members of it*, being given sepa-
rately in their turns, as each comes to be of Age, and not in a multitude together;
People take no notice of it, and thinking it not done at all, or not necessary, con-
clude they are naturally Subjects as they are men." Locke did not, of course,
intend to deny the legal fact that, according to English law, the status of subject
is indeed acquired at birth. But he had the greatest difficulty in reconciling this
fact with his theory of political obligation (see John Dunn, "Consent in the
Political Theory of John Locke," *The Historical Journal* 10.2 [June 1967]:
153–82).

19. For an extreme presentation of the implications of this principle, see Bentham's 1822 account of the publication of the *Fragment on Government:* "Now, for some years past, all inconsistencies, all surprises, have vanished: everything that has served to make the field of politics a labyrinth, has vanished. A clue to the interior of the labyrinth has been found: it is the principle of self-preference. Man, from the very constitution of his nature, prefers his own happiness to that of all other sensitive beings put together: but for this self-preference, the species could not have had existence. Place the chief care of each man in any other breast or breasts than his own (the case of infancy and other cases of intrinsic helplessness excepted), a few years, not to say a few months or weeks, would suffice to sweep the whole species from the earth" (*The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, ed. John Bowring, vol. X [Edinburgh, 1843], p. 80). When writing less histrionically, Bentham readily acknowledged that the happiness of nice persons includes a concern for the happiness of at least *some* others.

20. John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968).

21. John Israel, *Student Nationalism in China 1927–37* (Stanford, Calif., 1966), p. 136.

22. William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London, 1963).

23. For this speech, delivered on 9 August 1588, in anticipation of Spanish invasion, see J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth I*, pb. ed. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1960), p. 302. For an interesting discussion of the forces behind the formation of this orientation, see Carol Z. Weiner, "The Beleaguered Isle: A Study of Elizabethan and Early Jacobean Anti-Catholicism," *Past and Present* 51 (May 1971): 27–62.

24. For a brief account, see Christopher Hill, *God's Englishman: Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, pb. ed. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1972), pp. 148–61.

25. See Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Laslett, 2nd ed., pp. 62–64.

26. Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, Lecture given at the Sorbonne 11 March 1882, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1882), p. 27. "Une nation est donc une grande solidarité, constituée par le sentiment des sacrifices qu'on a faits et de ceux qu'on est dispose à faire encore. Elle suppose un passé; elle se résume pourtant dans le présent par un fait tangible: le consentement, le désir clairement exprimé de continuer la vie commune. L'existence d'une nation est (pardonnez-moi cette métaphore) un plébiscite de tous les jours, comme l'existence de l'individu est une affirmation perpétuelle de la vie."

27. See Machiavelli's letter to Francesco Vettori, April 16, 1527, some two months before his death: "amo la patria mia più dell'anima" (*Lettere*, 321: Niccolo Machiavelli, *Tutte le Opere*, ed. M. Martelli [Florence, 1971], p. 1250); and cf. his praise in the *Florentine History* (bk III, 7: in Martelli (ed.), *Tutte le Opere*, p. 696) of the Florentine leadership during the city's war with Pope Gregory XI in 1375–78: "tanto quelli cittadini stimavano più la patria che l'anima."

28. The absurdity of Christian political ethics, the core of Machiavelli's *negative* political doctrine, is a central theme of both *The Prince* and *The Dis-*

courses. But it is *The Discourses* and not *The Prince* that contains his positive political doctrine of the public good. For a penetrating account of his theory in its historical context, see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 117–38, 153–86.

29. G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1942), addition to para. 324, pp. 295–96. For a valuable discussion of Hegel's understanding of the political meaning of war, see Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 194–207, esp. 195–200.

30. For an especially clear picture of this kind, see e.g. Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966).

31. See note 35 below.

32. François Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero*, trans. N. Amphoux, pb. ed. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1978), is in places a trifle naive. But it explains why authoritative information on what has occurred is necessarily unavailable and provides convincing grounds for supposing that much which has occurred has been atrocious.

33. See note 15 above.

34. C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford, 1962), pp. 211–14. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Laslett, II, paras. 33, 34, 41 and 43, pp. 309, 314–16.

35. John Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism," in Eugene Kamenka (ed.), *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, pb. ed. (London, 1976), pp. 22–36. The role of Germany in the development of the intellectual appreciation of the significance of human cultural particularity and in the genesis of modern nationalist political theory can be investigated from a number of vantage points. The most striking of these remains the great trilogy of Friedrich Meinecke: *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* (1907), trans. Robert R. Kimber (Princeton, 1970); *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and its Place in Modern History* (1924), trans. D. Scott (London, 1957); *Historism: the Rise of a New Historical Outlook* (1936), trans. J. E. Anderson (London, 1972). (See also his slightly earlier and much briefer sketch *The Age of German Liberation, 1795–1815*, trans. P. Paret and H. Fischer [Berkeley, Calif., 1977]. For Meinecke's own development, see Robert A. Pois, *Friedrich Meinecke and German Politics in the Twentieth Century* [Berkeley, Calif., 1972]). The German intellectual context of the eighteenth century is treated in exceptionally illuminating fashion by Peter Hanns Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley, Calif., 1975) and over a considerably longer span of time by Leonard Krieger, *The German Idea of Freedom: History of a Political Tradition*, pb. ed. (Chicago, 1972). Klaus Epstein, *The Genesis of German Conservatism*, pb. ed. (Princeton, N.J., 1975) is a monumental study, relating the social and political background of different areas of Germany to the changing intellectual culture in an impressive fashion. For the Prussian experience in particular, see Henri Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism in Eighteenth-Century Prussia*, trans. F. Jellinek, pb. ed. (Chicago, 1974); Hans Rosenberg, *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience 1660–1815*, pb. ed. (Boston, 1966); Walter M. Simon, *The Failure of the Prussian Reform*

Movement 1807–1819 (Ithaca, N.Y., 1955); Peter Paret, *Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform 1807–1815* (Princeton, N.J., 1966); Peter Paret, *Clausewitz and the State* (Oxford, 1976). For an interesting study of a less militarily dynamic area in the eighteenth century, see. T. C. W. Blanning, *Reform and Revolution in Mainz, 1743–1803* (Cambridge, 1974). For the development of political theory more specifically, see Reinhold Aris, *History of Political Thought in Germany 1789 to 1815* (London, 1936); Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1954); George Armstrong Kelly, *Idealism, Politics and History: Sources of Hegelian Thought* (Cambridge, 1969). Studies that focus more directly upon the impact of the revolution and of Napoleon include Robert R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America 1760–1800*, vol. 2 (Princeton, 1964), chap. 14, pp. 425–58; Jacques Droz, *L'Allemagne et la Révolution française* (Paris, 1949); Jacques Droz, *Le Romantisme allemand et l'état: Résistance et collaboration dans l'Allemagne napoléonienne* (Paris, 1966). (See also his *Le Romantisme politique en Allemagne* [Paris, 1963].)

36. For two versions of the earlier portion of this historical trajectory, see Imanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement*, trans. Ann Keep (London, 1974) and Robert W. July, *The Origins of Modern African Thought* (London, 1968).

37. See above, note 35.

38. Two interesting texts of Hegel on specifically German political topics are available in English in Z. A. Pelczynski (ed.), *Hegel's Political Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1964), pp. 143–294. (For a characteristic comment, see p. 282: "One might say of the Wurtemberg Estates what has been said of the returned French *émigrés*: they have forgotten nothing and learnt nothing. They seem to have slept through the last twenty-five years, possibly the richest that world history has had, and for us the most instructive, because it is to them that our world and our ideas belong. There could hardly have been a more frightful pestle for pulverizing false concepts of law and prejudices about political constitutions than the tribunal of these twenty-five years, but these Estates have emerged from it unscathed and unaltered." For a useful discussion of this orientation of Hegel's thinking, see Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, 34–80, 181–83. For the intensity of Marx's reactions, see particularly his early articles, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. I (London, 1975), pp. 109–376.

39. Most of the attempts to trace the cultural roots of national socialism (or, more broadly, of fascism) have not been intellectually very convincing. For a variety of perspectives on the German and Italian regimes themselves, see Joachim C. Fest, *Hitler*, trans. R. and C. Winston, pb. ed. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1977); Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, pb. ed. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1962); J. P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People*, pb. ed. (London, 1975); Franz Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism* (London, 1942); Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure and Effects of National Socialism*, trans. Jean Steinberg, pb. ed. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1973); Adrian Lyttleton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy 1919–1929* (London, 1973); F. W. Deakin, *The Brutal Friendship: Mussolini, Hitler and the Fall of Italian Fascism* and *The Last*

Days of Mussolini, pb. eds. (Harmondsworth, U.K., 1966). For a broader perspective, see Ernst Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, trans. Leila Vennewitz, pb. ed. (New York, 1969). Nicos Poulantzas, *Fascism and Dictatorship: The Third International and the Problem of Fascism*, trans. Judith White (London, 1974) is a Marxist treatment, raising important questions but failing to provide convincing answers to these. For recent quarrels amongst German historians over the significance of the Third Reich, both for Germany itself and for the world at large, see Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989).

40. Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (London, 1976), pp. 157–63, 194–95.

41. See particularly the works of Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, trans. J. Viertel, pb. ed. (London, 1974) and *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. J. J. Shapiro, pb. ed. (London, 1972); and of Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. G. Barden and J. Cumming (London, 1975) and *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. and ed. David E. Linge, pb. ed. (Berkeley, Calif., 1977). For a helpful introduction to the work of Habermas, see Richard J. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (Oxford, 1976), part IV, "The Critical Theory of Society"; and Anthony Giddens, "Review Essay: Habermas's Social and Political Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 83.1 (July 1977): 198–212 and "Habermas's Critique of Hermeneutics," in Giddens, *Studies in Social and Political Theory* (London, 1977), pp. 135–64. For a more flat-footed Anglo-Saxon conception of the implications of such a viewpoint, see John Dunn, "Practising History and Social Science on Realist Assumptions," in *Action and Interpretation*, ed. Christopher Hookway and Philip Pettit (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 145–75.

42. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Everyman ed. (London, 1910), p. 44: "To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind. The interest of that portion of social arrangement is a trust in the hands of all those who compose it."

43. Herder, *Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (bk VIII, 5), quoted in Berlin's translation from Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder*, p. 178. For a translation of the greater part of the section of the text from which this is drawn see *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, ed. F. M. Barnard (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 307–11.

44. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (1845–46), *Collected Works*, vol. V (London, 1976), pp. 48–54.

CHAPTER 2

Theorizing Nationalism (Normatively): The First Steps

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> The forms that nationalism takes have been kaleidoscopic: religious, conservative, liberal, irredentist, diaspora, pan, etc. The fluidity and variety of national sentiments, national aspirations, and national cultural values create another obstacle to systematic research, as do the many different national identities. . . . The sheer variety of components of national identity and of possible causal factors has made it impossible for scholars of any discipline to study more than a few aspects and examples of the subject.
> —John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, *Nationalism*

What should a normative theory of nationalism be about? Nationalism, of course. But what does *that* mean? As Hutchinson and Smith emphasize in the quote above, nationalism takes many forms, each of which in turn incorporates a wide range of psychological, cultural, and political phenomena. So it should hardly surprise the neophyte student of nationalism that the major social theorists of nationalism dispute radically its very nature, its origins and causes, and its effects. Where is the philosopher to begin? Does it even make sense to presume that there is some core idea to this "ism" that we can try to make sense of in normative theory the way we can, say, when analyzing liberalism or socialism?

This chapter addresses the predicament of philosophers interested in nationalism. As a matter of fact, virtually all of us qualify, at best, as neophyte students of nationalism. For several identifiable reasons (which we shall not explore here) nationalism was ignored by philoso-

phers in the English-speaking world throughout the postwar years; perhaps especially by those who came of age during the era in which John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* served as the obligatory textbook and point of reference.[1] Again, for several identifiable reasons (which, again, we shall not explore here), the 1990s have seen philosophers scrambling to get a handle on nationalism. And this requires, first and foremost, making sense of the vast array of phenomena, and incompatible empirical theories about these phenomena, referred to above. Where are we to begin, and how far can we expect to get, given the obvious limits in our sociological understanding of the subject matter? Or to put it another way, what is the least that we need presuppose from the sociological and historical debates about nationalism in order to get a normative theory of nationalism off the ground?

It quickly becomes evident that conceptual, empirical, and normative issues about nationalism are tightly—in some case even inextricably—intertwined. All the more reason to be careful about the initial steps, since decisions about how we define nationalism, for example, will have important implications for the sorts of normative issues we are likely to find most pressing. But obviously our conceptual decisions are not in any way philosophically or empirically neutral. They must be informed by our sense of nationalist movements in history, as well as by our sense of some of the normative questions we want our concepts to help us to clarify. This implies that there is no logical priority of conceptual, empirical, or normative issues on this topic. But since we have to start somewhere we might as well begin by considering how close we can come to identifying uncontroversial answers to the conceptual questions about the nature of nations and nationalism.

WHAT IS A NATION?

The central concepts of nationalism are obviously not the sorts of terms the philosopher is going to be able to define adequately without leaving her armchair. Even J. L. Austin would have conceded that. But decisions can be made with an eye to clarifying and opening up, rather than confusing or closing off, the relevant empirical and normative issues.

We find the concept of a nation rather less protean and controversial than the concept of nationalism. For our purposes here we are unlikely to raise objections if we rule out the sense of *nation* that is synonymous with *state*.[2] We can also expect significant agreement about some clear cases of exemplary nations, such as the Germans, French, Argentines, or Japanese, as well as some clear examples of groups that are not nations, such as the Europeans, Londoners, or supporters of

Queen's Park Rangers. All characterizations of the nation in social theories refer to *communities* and try to distinguish national communities, on the one hand, from mere ethnic or racial groups, or communities defined entirely by political or territorial boundaries, on the other. Most theorists are inclined to accept that national communities tend to have a number of special traits, such as those enumerated in a definition by Anthony Smith, where a nation is a "named population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members."[3]

But at least since Renan's *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (1882), most theorists, including Smith, have acknowledged that any such list of characteristics is open to exceptions: for any such list there will be, among other things, some obvious nations that lack at least one of the characteristics. It is now common to think that all of these "objective" markers of nationhood are merely conditions that tend to foster the real necessary, and perhaps even sufficient, condition for being a nation, namely what Weber called the "community of sentiment." Certain communities qualify as nations because of the way the members think about their fellow members and the group itself. "[N]ations are the artifacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities."[4] Ultimately, communities are nations when a significant percentage of their members think they are nations. And virtually all theorists agree that part of what it is to think about your community as a nation is to assume that it requires the political means to exercise control over its destiny.

It is also important that a definition of *nation* leaves open the possibility of conceiving of nonnational political communities. It should be possible that are other kinds of communities to which political allegiance can be devoted. In other words, the definition should not be so broad that it implies that everyone is necessarily a member of a nation or that any form of identification with a political community (such as a state or superstate) is by definition nationalist. Although we leave open the possibility of a genuine nation-state, where the membership in the nation is (virtually) coextensive with membership in the state, or citizenship, we do not want to make them coextensive by definition. We will not clarify the normative stakes of nationalism by identifying it with patriotism, or by making every good citizen a nationalist of sorts. A fully worked out conception of the nation, then, will have to specify in as precise a way as possible (which may still be rather vague) exactly which kinds of shared myths, understandings, and memories are peculiar to nations. We can expect reasonable disagreement between theorists about these matters, even if they do share a common core concept of nationhood.

There is one prominent type of definition of *nation* that seems to depart from the consensus I have just outlined. It is best represented by Walker Conner's ethnocentric answer to the question "What is a nation?" "It is," he claims, "a group of people who feel that they are ancestrally related. It is the largest group that can command a person's loyalty because of felt kinship ties; it is, from this perspective, the fully extended family." In short, he believes that it is a "fact that nations are indeed characterized by a sense—a feeling—of consanguinity."[1] Now is this another, perhaps more specific, way of stating the characterization of nationhood sketched in the previous paragraphs, or is it, as Connor seems to think, a rival definition? On the one hand, we could note that many who accept the standard definition would agree with Connor that his definition is a rival. They would argue that nations like the United States and France are perfect examples of national communities where virtually none of the members believe there is a significant degree of shared ancestral blood. On the other hand, we could note that Connor's definition can be interpreted as merely specifying a narrow type of "community of sentiment," a special kind of loyalty, solidarity, and conviction (one based on mistaken beliefs about kinship); and hence, it is broadly consistent with the standard definition. In fact, both sides seem right, which suggests that Connor's claim fails not so much (or merely) as a definition of *nation* but as a *definition*. What he is doing, in effect, is accepting the standard definition and adding on to it some (contestable) empirical claims about the psychological mechanism sustaining the community of sentiments, namely, felt kinship ties. This makes for an unsatisfactory component in the definition: in part because the idea of felt kinship ties is as vague as the term being defined; and in part because even if we could settle upon a reasonably robust sense of what is involved in such ties, then it seems an empirical question whether they are really present in the groups we would like to call nations. Or to put it another way, if our best social-psychological understanding of felt kinship ties showed us that they exist or are effective only in much smaller groups than many of today's archetypical nations, we would drop that part of the definition rather than stop calling groups like the French and the Australians nations.

So what is the philosopher, keen to identify and clarify normative issues about nationalism, to make of these ways of thinking about nations? It seems reasonable to conclude that the idea of a nation, as it appears in contemporary social theory as well as the discourse of Western politics, is about as clear and uncontroversial as we could expect such a notion to be. That is, there is a fairly wide intuitive agreement on what a nation is, and legitimate disagreements about what groups may or may not constitute nations can take place within the terms of mutu-

ally acceptable definitions of *nation*. For example, two people could both accept Smith's definition of *nation* and yet dispute whether the Scottish are a national community because they disagree about the extent to which Scots share the right kinds of historic memories or political self-consciousness. In general, I think we can conclude that the conception of the nation sketched in the preceding paragraphs—the one based on the community of sentiments idea—will allow normative and empirical issues to arise and be debated in their proper forum. It leaves open the possibility, for example, that liberals will find a politics that takes nationality seriously to be either consistent or inconsistent with their principles.

These virtues of the above definition of *nation* are not shared by certain conceptions of the nation that have been relied upon by some fanatical nationalists and antinationalists. Consider, for instance, definitions of *nation* that tie it directly to (mythological) claims of ethnicity or race, and that include within them metaphysical "organic" properties and the value-laden subordination of individuals to the national will. Obviously if this was how we understood nationhood then, at least from a liberal-democratic perspective, any political glorification of the nation would be an automatic nonstarter. We have two good reasons for rejecting such ways of defining nations, however. First, because they simply exclude too many important ways that people and theorists have conceived of their nations within modern political traditions. And second, because most of those nations or nationalist movements that *have* conceived of themselves in such organic or racist terms fall within the range of national communities picked out by the more general definitions we looked at earlier. They simply have some very bizarre founding myths and historical "memories."

WHAT IS NATIONALISM?

Let us turn now to the much messier idea of national*ism*. One immediate explanation for its messiness is this. Whereas the term *nation* is used by everybody to pick out the same general kind of thing—namely, a human community—*nationalism* can refer to several distinct sorts of entities or processes. Consider the following ways Smith has noticed the term being used. As:

1. the whole process of forming and maintaining nations or nation-states
2. a consciousness of belonging to the nation, together with sentiments and aspirations for its security and prosperity

3. a language and symbolism of the "nation" and its role

4. an ideology, including a cultural doctrine of nations and national will and prescriptions for the realization of national aspirations and national will

5. a social and political movement to achieve the goals of the nation and realize its national will.[6]

In short, *nationalism* has been used to refer to a *process*, a kind of *sentiment* or *identity*, a *form of political rhetoric*, an *ideology*, a *principle* or set of principles, and a kind of *social-political movement*. Obviously these sorts of things are related, and we can see how—even if we decided that only one of these things should properly be called "national*ism*"— we would still want to use the adjective "national*ist*" to describe phenomena of the other sorts. Now if this multiplicity of things that can be called nationalist does not make the concept of nationalism conceptually confusing enough, we must remember that for each kind of thing (e.g., an ideology, political movement, or identity) there is considerable debate about what precisely are the necessary or sufficient conditions for its being nationalist.

Let us return again to the predicament of the philosopher trying to get enough of a handle on the nature of nationalism to begin to pick out and pursue the normative issues to which it *(it?)* gives rise. Let us take up the question with which this paper began: What should a normative theory of nationalism be about? The short answer to this question is, potentially: all of the things mentioned in Smith's list. Or to put it another way, *whatever we may, on grounds of conceptual propriety, decide to call "nationalism,"* a normative theory of nationalism should be concerned with the nature of national identities, the political attempts to forge them, the rhetoric and ideologies that are used in such attempts, and the principles nationalists use to justify these kinds of politics; among other things. This, I think, is the only fair and reasonable response to the initial intuition that nationalism is something we should subject to moral evaluation.

That said, what conceptual resources do we have for privileging one or more of these uses of *nationalism*? It would be advantageous if we could reserve the term *nationalism* for only one or two of Smith's categories (he himself uses it for ideological movements), since otherwise we seem to be inviting confusion. At the same time, we want to take care because it is clear that the hasty identification of nationalism with just one of these categories has often resulted in an unfortunate narrowing of the agenda of normative issues for a political theory of nationalism. Consider, for example, Gellner's famous dictum, that "Nationalism is

primarily a *political principle*, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent."[7] If we were to take this claim seriously (more seriously than Gellner himself does), then a normative theory of nationalism could quickly be reduced to a justification of the principle of national self-determination. For reasons that should become apparent, I believe this would be a serious mistake. It would lead us to ignore much that is interesting in nationalist politics; for example, the fact that nationalist movements may be in existence generations before the nations they will claim to represent, and that much of their political activity may be directed toward goals that have little direct connection with making the national and political units congruent.[8] Given the familiarity of political philosophers with the project of justifying principles, it should come as no surprise that many of their initial attempts to come to grips with nationalism in the 1990s have been reductionist in just this way.

We may begin by enquiring about the significance of the *ism* in *nationalism*. It is commonplace to concede that nationalism is "by far the most potent ideology in the world,"[9] but also that it is alone among major political ideas or systems in lacking a great theorist.[10] As Benedict Anderson observes, theorists of nationalism are often perplexed by the "'political' power of nationalisms vs. their philosophical poverty and even incoherence. In other words, unlike most other isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers."[11] Not to mention Rousseaux, Kants, or Rawlses, to give more philosophers their due. Of course some philosophers have written on nationalism, even in its favor. But none of these can be read as a grand theory of the sort that, say, Kant, Mill, or Rawls provide for liberalism, or Marx for socialism. The nationalist writings of Fichte or Heidegger read more like *exercises* in nationalism (and deluded exercises at that) than they do generalizable theories of nationalism. Herder, who is often cited as an intellectual founder of a certain brand of tolerant, universalistic cultural nationalism, in fact produced but a few pages on the subject. J. S. Mill's thoughts on it boil down to a chapter in which he views common nationality and language as necessary conditions for social unity and democracy; and Rousseau's ideas can be read mainly out of his advice to the government of Poland. According to Anderson, we should not regard the poverty of nationalist theory as a sign that the idea has been unduly neglected by political theorists, or that it is too feeble to support a sustained theoretical enquiry. Rather, we are being misled simply by thinking about this "ism" as primarily an idea or ideology. It would, he says, "make things easier if one treated it as if it belonged with 'kinship' and 'religion,' rather than with 'liberalism' or 'fascism.'"[12]

Anderson offers an important insight here, even if it is overstated. It

is overstated because nationalism surely does qualify as an ideology (or a family of ideologies) on common interpretations of that term. Nobody—Anderson included—would deny that nationalisms are, to cite a typical definition of *ideology*, "patterns of symbolically-charged beliefs and expressions that present, interpret and evaluate the world in a way designed to shape, mobilize, direct, organize and justify certain modes or courses of action and to anathematize others."[13] And as we have already seen, important aspects of nationalism can also be cast as a political doctrine of assigning rights and duties to nations. Nevertheless, Anderson is surely correct to point out the incongruity between the kinds of "isms" involved in, for example, nationalism and liberalism. Nationalism is not merely a different set of principles and background empirical assumptions vis-à-vis liberalism; the way, say, conservatism or social democracy are. It is a different kind of "ism," more akin in many ways to categories like capitalism, feudalism, or tribalism. (For example, like capitalism it arose in certain places at a certain time, and then spread around the world with technological progress; it is modern but has obvious primordial roots; it arose without any theorist thinking up a grand idea; it mingles with and modifies other political doctrines; it reorients people's worldviews in profound ways; it demands an institutional and political framework that requires justification; etc.) That is, *nationalism* clearly refers as much to social, cultural, political, and anthropological *phenomena* as it does to a system of beliefs or principles. (Some "isms" refer merely to phenomena, and not to any real doctrine at all; for example, hooliganism.) In effect, Anderson's point underscores the importance of the first item on Smith's list of the things to which the term *nationalism* can refer: "the whole *process* of forming and maintaining nations or nation-states."

So again I ask, where does this leave the philosopher trying to clarify the idea of nationalism enough to generate an agenda of normative issues? First, we can reaffirm that we should not define nationalism in a narrow way (e.g., merely as a set of political principles) that excludes from view much of what is interesting about the phenomena of nationalism. Second, it seems clear that it is acceptable and normal to use the term to refer both to kinds of cultural-political phenomena and to kinds of principles or ideologies. And third, we should realize that the question "To what does the term *nationalism* properly refer?" is neither necessary nor sufficient for an answer to our primary question, "What should a normative theory of nationalism be about?" Of course we *do* need a thorough understanding of nationalism to answer this primary question. But we need the knowledge contained in a book, or bookshelf, on nationalism; not merely that given in a sentence- or paragraph-length definition of the term. This is because we need a sense of the range of

elements within a political culture that can be colored by nationalism. We need to know the difference between nationalist and nonnationalist versions of political discourse, institutions, political projects, political movements, identities, and sentiments. It is the evaluation of these sorts of things that will ultimately be the business of a normative theory of nationalism. What we want is a way of evaluating when it is legitimate (if ever) to be a national*ist*; to feel like one, to talk like one, and to act like one.

EVALUATING NATIONALISM:
DRAWING UP THE AGENDA OF ISSUES

In order to give a more specific answer to the question with which we began, we must also consider briefly what *normative political theories* are about. The subject matter of normative theory varies significantly from tradition to tradition. Marxist and liberal theorists do not merely disagree over *principles*; they also evaluate different, if overlapping, *ranges of issues*. Even, say, Kantian and republican liberals consider divergent sets of problems (that is, they do not merely give different answers to the same problems). Hence, we can assume that the agenda for a normative theory of nationalism will also differ from one tradition or school to the next.

This is why it is perfectly natural that those within the mainstream of political philosophy should approach the topic by enquiring about the possibility of a liberal nationalism.[14] The predictable quips that this was an oxymoron could be attributed to two common misconceptions: first, the "category mistake," noted by Anderson, which wrongly assumes that liberalism and nationalism are "isms" on the same plane, so to speak; and second, the historically inaccurate identification of nationalism with its most extreme racist and fascist manifestations. Unless one assumes that "liberal cosmopolitanism" is a pleonasm—and the mainstream tradition of liberalism, which is dominated by concerns about justice within the state, has never assumed that—then there are surely all sorts of ways a good liberal can show, and act out of, concern for her national community. A liberal theory of nationalism will try to indicate the limits of nationalist actions (including the use of nationalist political rhetoric) for different kinds of liberal actors and institutions in different settings. That, in effect, is the beginning of the liberal's answer to the question with which we began this paper.

Pursuing the answer, however, will lead liberal theorists to what, for most of them, is largely uncharted territory. Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* taught two generations of political philosophers that their primary task

was to work out a conception of justice, and that the primary subject of justice was the "basic structure of society, or more exactly, the way in which major social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation."[15] Now there are certainly many important ways in which major social and political institutions can be involved in nationalist projects or manipulated by nationalist movements, even if these do not primarily affect how they distribute fundamental rights and duties. National military service, centralized national education systems, and state-controlled radio and television have long been the primary tools of nation building. A liberal theory of nationalism must accordingly focus on (a) what kinds of national identities, values, shared "memories," and the like can legitimately be forged by such institutions, (b) what political and institutional "methods" are permissible, and (c) how such decisions should be debated and decided in a democratic society. It is a curious feature of the recent philosophical forays into the field of nationalism, however, that these obvious institutional questions about nationalism-as-nation-building are rarely even posed, let alone pursued at length.

A further set of institutional issues of relevance to the evaluation of nationalism *has* been the focus of rich and extensive debates in recent years. I am thinking of the range of possible arrangements for institutionalizing certain kinds of minority rights and differentiated citizenship, including special representation rights in central institutions, federal and consociational arrangements, and multicultural rights for immigrants, among others.[16] These can be nationally relevant in either direction: for example, because a minority group within a larger state considers itself to be a nation deserving of political autonomy; or because the majority nation questions whether its rights would be threatened by granting special status to certain kinds of minorities. Thus far, however, the main academic debates about these issues have not revolved around issues of nationalism or the evaluation of nationalism. Rather the question has been whether it would be possible for minorities demanding group rights (or more rarely, for majority groups resisting them) to articulate and justify their demands without straying from basic liberal principles of equality and individual autonomy. But settling this issue would not exhaust the liberal evaluation of minority rights because it does not even broach the question of the *politics* of minority rights and differentiated citizenship. That is, even if it is possible to show how *in principle* minority rights can be justified deductively from liberal first principles (and I believe that Kymlicka's argument to this effect is most persuasive), there is still the question of what liberal constraints there might be on how arguments for minority rights should be conducted in the public sphere.

It is of significance that the leaders of minority groups—especially national minorities, that is, ethnocultural groups whose homeland has been incorporated into a larger state—typically argue for political autonomy in a language that seems to depart from the liberal lexicon. Their discourse does not (consistently) mirror the Kymlickian appeal to the need for a healthy cultural context as a necessary condition for the individual autonomy and well-being of the members of the group. They are more likely to speak like nationalists: to appeal to national identity and sentiments (rather than citizenship and sentiments of justice), to shared historical "memories," a common destiny, and rights to national self-determination. (And they do this often in codes and buzzwords that would only be picked up by their constituents.) This is true even of leaders of groups within liberal-democratic states who are good liberals in other respects and fully intend to conduct the affairs of state within their realm in ways consistent with modern, liberal constitutionalism. The question is, to what extent do they remain good liberals while talking like nationalists? When is it legitimate, from a liberal point of view, to employ a nationalist discourse with the explicit aim of nurturing and shaping a national identity, or mobilizing a population on the basis of that identity?

I believe this to be one of the central questions to be tackled by a normative theory of nationalism (in this case, from within the liberal tradition). The urge to evaluate nationalism is the desire to get a handle on both the ideology and the phenomena of nationalism; and while the ideology is at least partly characterized by certain principles, such as a right to self-determination and other minority rights, the *phenomena* of nationalism in democratic societies are primarily displayed in patterns of discourse, in modes of public justification, and in the sentiments, identities, and actions this discourse inspires. Yet this kind of question—concerning the duties of public discourse—has not been a major preoccupation of liberal theorists in the Rawlsian tradition (among others).[17] Liberals have, of course, expended great effort to explain which sorts of expression should be protected by rights to freedom of speech. But this is not what is at issue if we are asking about the acceptability of nationalist discourse, since it is not the sort of thing that anybody would envisage actually banning (with the possible exception of hateful, racist variants). Rather the issue is parallel to the question of the role that religious discourse can legitimately play in liberal political debates in a pluralistic society. This has not been a central issue in recent theory, but it has attracted some attention, and theorists of nationalism could do worse than to examine how applicable these frameworks and arguments might be for the case of nationalist discourse.[18]

A satisfactory answer to this question of when it is permissible to

"play the nationalist card" will also have to take into account the many benefits and risks (vis-à-vis other alternatives) for different kinds of groups in different situations. There will presumably be cases where it is obviously permissible for liberals to speak like nationalists (e.g., to mobilize a minority to fight for its legitimate but imperiled rights; or even to rally a larger nation to defend its reasonably just state against an invader) and other cases where it is obviously not (because the discourse is being used in an inflammatory way, or to distract attention from the shortcomings of the regime in power), and many more difficult cases demanding a sophisticated normative framework and careful sociological reasoning about, for example, the probable effects of encouraging a nationalist political culture.

After issues of legitimate forms and limits of nation building and nationalist discourse have been dealt with, a normative theory of nationalism must turn to constitutional issues and, ultimately, to matters of international law. In most cases where nationalism is a concern, more than one national group shares the state. And in these multination states, normative and sociological theories of nationalism should play a role in determining the shape of the federal or consociational arrangements that are to embody minority rights. It is an understatement to say that federal arrangements have received scant attention in mainstream political philosophy in recent decades.[19] This is a real lacuna because in democratic multination states, federal arrangements are usually one of the primary means of managing the tensions of overlapping ethnic and political identities. For this reason, it should be clear that normative theorizing about nationalism is necessary (though obviously not sufficient) for evaluating or designing federal arrangements. In most multination states, for example, it would be reasonable to expect that nationalist politics at either the federal or substate level would be destabilizing; so the federal constitution should aim to deprive potential nationalists of incentives or grounds for nationalist mobilization. In some cases it might do this by ensuring that minority nations have sufficient autonomous powers to protect their culture and language (thereby depriving minority nationalists of a fearful constituency), and also a significant presence within central institutions to prevent a majority nation from using the central government to promote its own particular identity and interests. The best prescription will of course differ dramatically from state to state.

The final item on this very quick and incomplete agenda for a normative theory of nationalism is the problem of rights to national self-determination. As we have already noted, there is a natural tendency for philosophers to identify nationalism with this principle, and hence to ignore most of the normative issues discussed above. There is no doubt,

however, that the question of national self-determination is a central problem for a philosophy of nationalism. After all, a community would not even be called a nation if it did not claim such a right; and at least since the First World War, trying to realize this right is the very core of the nationalist project. Rights to national self-determination are used to justify either (a) a realm of autonomy within a state, empire, multinational treaty organization or political union, or (b) secession from a state or decolonization from an empire. Accordingly it can be used to ground arrangements in constitutional and international law. A normative theory of nationalism would thus have to explain which sorts of groups would qualify for such a right, and what international or constitutional status it entitles them to.

Or at least that is the conventional wisdom. I am skeptical about the role or normative utility of the right to national self-determination, though this is not the place to develop these doubts at length. It can be argued that secession is not justified by this right, but rather by considerations of whether a territorially concentrated group (national or otherwise) has just cause, for example, because it is systematically exploited.[20] Similarly, it may well be that the linguistic and cultural factors that justify minority rights from liberal principles apply in the same way to ethnocultural groups whether or not they qualify as minority nations. If this is true, then the supposed right of national self-determination need not figure prominently in a normative theory of nationalism. Be that as it may, a normative theory of nationalism will still be centrally concerned with the issues of justifying political autonomy and the conditions of legitimate secession for national minorities, and of finding mechanisms in constitutional and international law to embody this autonomy and to resolve secessionist conflicts.

CONCLUSIONS

I do not pretend that the above constitutes a complete agenda of issues for a liberal theory of nationalism. For example, I have said little about the nature of identities and how they should be evaluated, or about economic and trade issues connected with sovereignty and nationalism. I do think, however, that the above survey contains a broader range of issues than most of the first wave of philosophical attempts to approach the topic in recent years.[21] I have also argued, implicitly, that philosophers have an important role in shaping nationalist studies in general. Although we are necessarily neophytes when it comes to understanding the phenomena of nationalism in all of its historical and sociological guises, this need not preclude a distinctly philosophical contribution to

the conceptual issues about the nature of nations and nationalism which continue to occupy sociologists and historians. At any rate, moderately well-read philosophers are certainly in a position to mediate these debates enough to generate a normative agenda for nationalist studies. Of course, for normative theorizing to proceed all the way to the stage of offering sound evaluations of the political and institutional choices in particular states, a very sophisticated historical and sociological understanding of nationalism is essential.[22] But this paper promised only to trace some *first steps* in theorizing nationalism. It succeeds insofar as they point in the right direction.

NOTES

1. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971).

2. See David Miller, *On Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 18f.; Brian Barry, chap. 13 of this volume.

3. Smith, *National Identity* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin, 1991).

4. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

5. Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994).

6. Smith, *National Identity*, p. 72.

7. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 1, my italics.

8. Nationalist leaders of a minority nation can attempt to foster discontent with the status quo by criticizing almost any policy of the central government. The terms of these criticisms may be internal to the policy domain (education, health care, or what have you), but part of the intended effect is to shift the loyalties and trust of the members of the minority nation away from the larger state and the central government. To "hear" nationalist discourse only when nationalists are calling explicitly for political autonomy may be to miss 95 percent of the content of a nationalist political culture.

9. Brian Barry, "Nationalism," in the *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 353.

10. See, e.g., Isaiah Berlin, "Nationalism: Past Neglect and Present Power," in *Against the Current*, ed. H. Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

11. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), p. 5.

12. Ibid.

13. David Kettler, "Ideology," in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p. 235.

14. Similarly, we should expect so-called communitarians to enquire about the relative merits of national (as opposed, say, to local, religious, or state) communities for providing the appropriate kind of soil in which individuals' identities and selves can be embedded; and so on for other political traditions.

15. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 7.

16. The most influential liberal theory of minority rights is clearly that of Will Kymlicka. See his *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) and *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

17. Although Rawls's *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), and the literature it has spawned, make significant steps in this direction.

18. For a pioneering attempt at this project, see Geneviève Nootens, "Liberal Restructions on Public Arguments: Can Nationalist Claims Be *Moral Reasons* in Liberal Public Discourse?" *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume 22: *Rethinking Nationalism*, ed. Jocelyne Couture, Kai Nielsen and Michel Seymour (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1998), pp. 237–60.

19. See Wayne Norman, "Toward a Philosophy of Federalism," in *Group Rights*, ed. J. Baker (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), note 2.

20. See Allen Buchanan, "Theories of Secession," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 26.1 (1997): 30–61; Wayne Norman, "The Ethics of Secession as the Regulation of Secessionist Politics," in *National Self-Determination and Secession*, ed. M. Moore (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 34–61.

21. The high points of the "first wave" of recent attempts by philosophers to grapple with nationalism include Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993) and Miller, *On Nationalism* (1995).

22. I have already suggested, for example, that the evaluation of the choice of a liberal political actor to engage in nationalist projects will depend in large part on a sober assessment of the long-term potential risks and benefits. In some cases the calculation of such consequences will require taking a stand on issues over which political sociologists themselves are divided.

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Difficulties in the Study of Nationalism

Yael Tamir

> Philosophical questions are not like empirical problems, which can be answered by observation or experiment or entailments from them. Nor are they like mathematical problems which can be settled by deductive methods, like problems in chess or any other rule-governed game or procedure. But questions about the ends of life, about good and evil, about freedom and necessity, about objectivity and relativity, cannot be decided by looking into even the most sophisticated dictionary or the use of empirical or mathematical reasoning. Not to know where to look for the answer is the surest symptom of a philosophical problem.
> —Isaiah Berlin, in R. Jahanbegloo,
> *Conversations with Isaiah Berlin*

Critics of recent philosophical analyses of nationalism suggest that nationalism is a unique social phenomenon that cannot, and need not, be theorized. Are there, indeed, some special features constitutive of nationalism that might defy theorization? Those answering this question in the affirmative point to the plurality and specificity of national experiences, as well as to the emotional and eclectic nature of nationalist discourse.

This paper defends attempts to theorize nationalism. The evident diversity of national experiences, it argues, need not stand in the way of constructing a theory of nationalism. Other subject matters of political theory—be they distributive justice, representation and participation, individual rights, or the common good—also exemplify diversity of private and public expressions. Hence, if the plurality of

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particular experiences hampers the possibility of developing a theory of nationalism, it must be an impediment to the formation of political theories in general. Should we then surrender attempts to write a philosophical exposition of justice, gender relations, or nationalism, and settle for history, sociology, or actual policy recommendations? Certainly not.

Why do claims concerning the uniqueness of particular experiences resonate more in discussions concerning nationalism than in all others? The answer is grounded in both the image of nationalism and the advantages accruing from fostering its nontheoretical image. A closer scrutiny of attempts to de-theorize nationalism will reveal that they could be classified into two different types: the first includes nationalist claims, the second consists of the examination and evaluation of national claims generated by scholars of nationalism.

The next sections are devoted to a more detailed analysis of these two types of claims. One must start, however, by clarifying the meaning of the term *theory* as used in this context. The diversity and uniqueness of particular national experiences cannot possibly defy the ability to write a history of nationalist ideas or provide a sociological or historical account of nationalist movements, but it may undermine attempts to structure an abstract, normative theory of nationalism prescribing certain norms and modes of political behavior.

The term *theory* is used here in this second connotation. The challenge can therefore be formulated as follows: Can one construct a general account of obligations, rights, or prohibitions applying to all cases of nationalism, or are these incidents so diverse and contextualized that they defy all attempts to generalize them? In what follows I argue that theories of nationalism can be constructed and urge more scholars to join the effort to improve them.

THE CALL OF THE WILD

One reason the task of constructing a general theory seems implausible is the nature of nationalist rhetoric itself. Nationalistic claims often lend themselves to unfavorable interpretations according to which they are no more than erratic outbursts of emotions from which no set of principles can be deduced. Hence, nationalism is depicted as the most radical antithesis of a theory, as lacking intelligible structure, logical coherence, and inner consistency. The assumption that nationalist thinking is inherently chaotic and unruly is best exemplified by Eli Kedourie's choice of Yeats's poem "1919" as the motto of his influential book on nationalism.[1]

> We pieced our thoughts into philosophy
> And planned to bring the world under a rule,
> Who are but weasels fighting in a hole.

For Kedourie, nationalism epitomizes the failure of the philosopher's attempt to subject the world to the rule of universal principles. The underlying picture, then, is that of two distinct groups pursuing conflicting ends: philosophers who use reason to explore and refine the structure of the world, and nationalists who evoke human fears and passions to entice their followers to subvert these attempts.

Kedourie is not alone. Nationalism is often portrayed as a chaotic, emotional, irrational force, subverting all rules and rational planning. For post–world wars generations, the first associations evoked by the term *nationalism* are the rhetoric of blood and soil, fiery exhortations to rally around the flag, demands for total devotion and self-sacrifice, and a collective feeling that sweeps away individual considerations. Nationalism, Ernest Gellner argued, is commonly presented as no more than a cry of passion, a tug of war against reason.[2] Ernst Kriek describes it as the call of "blood [which struggles] against formal reason; race against purposeful rationality; honour against profit; unity against individualistic disintegration; material virtue against bourgeois security; the folk against the individual and the mass."[3] And in what may be the best known attack on nationalism, Karl Popper claims that nationalism has a strong affinity with the revolt against reason and the open society, as it "appeals to our tribal instincts, to passion and to prejudice, and to our nostalgic desire to be relieved from the strain of individual responsibility which it attempts to replace by a collective or group responsibility."[4] The perception of nationalism as essentially a phenomenon exhibiting "the manifestation of emotions and unreason, of atavistic drives rather than rational deliberation,"[5] is thus pervasive.

The assumption that nationalism is an unruly expression of emotions and therefore cannot be forced into a theoretical framework is common even among sympathetic observers. Daniel M. Weinstock cites Jane Jacobs as an example. Like love, Jacobs argues, nationalism cannot have a rational justification. Trying to argue about national feelings, she concludes, is "as fruitless as trying to argue that people in love ought not to be in love, or that they must be, that they should be cold and hard-headed about choosing their attachments. It doesn't work that way. We feel; our feelings are their own argument."[6]

Nationalism is compared to love in its unruliness, yet love is perceived as grounded in noble feelings while nationalism is seen as no more than a caprice reflecting human desires and fears, "an irrational relic of, or retrogressive return to, a barbarous past."[7] In essence, claims

Hugh Seton-Watson, nationalism simply entails the application of the principle of popular sovereignty to the nation—"the rest of nationalist ideology is rhetoric."[8] In the same skeptical spirit, Stanley Benn suggests that, while nationalism is enormously important for historians and sociologists, "it would be absurd to treat it as if it invited serious rational criticism."[9]

A dichotomy thus emerges; on one pole is reason, which is equated with universalizable principles, and on the other passion, which is identified with unstructured emotions and paralleled with nationalism. The clear conclusion is that nationalism is a social force that lies beyond theoretical analysis. One may then gather a collection of nationalist rhetoric and policies and study their social and political impact, but it makes no sense to formulate a theory that could explain, structure, and guide the plurality of national expressions. If these claims could be justified, then many fine scholars are wasting their time in a vain attempt to tame an incorrigible shrew.

I have no intention to deny the extreme, irrational, erratic forms of some nationalistic expressions, but would argue that these expressions do not exhaust the whole of the nationalistic discourse. Nor do they offer the only kind of justifications for nationalist claims. It follows, then, that if one desires to structure a theory of nationalism, one must look beyond these expressions and uncover a structure overshadowed by rhetoric.

Many scholars of nationalism do acknowledge that some forms of nationalism are less erratic than others. Hans Kohn, John Plamenatz, and Anthony D. Smith all distinguish Western from Eastern forms of nationalism.[10] Kohn sees Western nationalism as essentially a rational and liberal way of thinking grounded in the notion of human rights. Eastern nationalism is its opposite: it is mystical, ethnocentric, and grounded in tribal feelings. For Plamenatz, Western nationalism characterizes culturally developed nations that can, from a position of self-confidence, approach each other on an equal footing, seeking cooperation on the basis of mutual respect. Eastern nationalism characterizes primitive nations who, motivated by feelings of inferiority, adopt belligerent polices. Smith speaks of Western nationalism as civic and political, and of Eastern nationalism as ethnic and genealogical.

Whatever the virtues of this dichotomy are, it is often used to disqualify the more structured and temperate forms of nationalism as worthy of that title. Hence, Neil MacCormick feels that his defense of a moderate version of nationalism needs to be prefaced by a somewhat apologetic statement: "Some may think this too weak a version of nationalism to merit the name, others that any version of nationalism is merely a stalking horse for chauvinism and xenophobia. To both I

would say that in this, and in other matters, there is much to be said for a golden mean."[11] MacCormick makes a valid claim. His moderate version of nationalism is still a variant of nationalism. Yet, as he suspected, his attempt to rescue nationalism from its extreme image is met with suspicion. If MacCormick's reasonable political position can be defined as nationalism, Gordon Graham argues, then "a good many people are nationalists unaware." Being horrified by such a thought, he hastens to reassure his audience that "such a moderate nationalism is not really nationalism at all."[12]

I disagree with Graham and have elsewhere shown both that moderate forms of nationalism exist and that attempts to disqualify them are grounded in an intentional neglect of the more general trends in nationalistic thought and an undue emphasis on its more ethnocentric, irregular forms.[13] In this paper I am less interested in refuting such claims and more in the motivations behind them. Hence, I examine arguments advanced by both nationalists and scholars of nationalism and investigate the nature of the urge to de-theorize nationalism.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING CHOSEN

Nationalists contribute their share to the nontheoretical perception of nationalist thinking by insisting on the uniqueness of its particular appearances. They thereby deny the option of defining a standard set of nationalist principles, as the very notion of a *standard* suggests a classification based on similarities.

Arguing that nationalist expressions could be standardized to fit into a theory presumes that some general trends cut across the myriad of arguments raised by different national groups. Though such trends exist, nationalists typically attempt to disguise them by grounding nationalist demands in the nation's distinct identity, history, culture, or religion, and by refraining from relying on a general theory that might fit other national groups. In this respect they differ from liberals, socialists, or democrats, who tend to go out of their way to demonstrate that their values and policies correlate with a general, universalizable theory. The preference for the particular and local is the most evident universal characteristic shared by all nationalist movements.

And yet, despite attempts to mask the resemblances between different nationalist claims the similarities are too obvious to ignore. The most striking example involves a topic that seems the least likely candidate for universalization—that of being chosen. According to Conor Cruise O'Brien, virtually every Christian nation adopted the image of a chosen people inhabiting a promised land and applied it to itself.

O'Brien provides the following list of nations, which he claims is merely a partial one: England, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States.[14] The belief that one's nation is chosen is not restricted to the Christian world and is shared by the Jewish people as well as by many Islamic nations such as Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and a host of others. But nationalists would never admit the fact that the claim that their nation is chosen and their land promised follows a general pattern. And for good reason: being chosen is only meaningful if others are not.

As this example shows, nationalist claims can be analyzed using two distinct and incompatible discourses. The first tells a story unique to the national group and refers to arguments meaningful only to fellow nationals. The second encompasses a universal dimension; it places the national narrative within a general framework and associates it with other national narratives, thus generating arguments that are meaningful within a general context.

This duality is evident not only in scholarly analyses of nationalism; as the following example shows, it is part and parcel of the nationalist discourse itself. Zionists couch their support for the establishment of the state of Israel in particularistic terms. They tell the story of the Jews' exile from their land, recall two thousand years of Jewish Diaspora, remember the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, their persecution, the emergence of anti-Semitism, and, of course, the Holocaust. They tell a very personal and particularistic narrative leading to the conclusion that Jews need a state of their own to secure their existence, where they can freely exercise their national-cultural-religious tradition. And yet one can claim that the right of the Jews to have a state of their own is embedded not in their own unique and tormented history but in more general claims. Suffering and persecutions may be good reasons to grant a group of individuals shelter, to protect them, to entitle them to compensation, but not to grant them national rights. If Jews have a right to national self-determination it is grounded in a universal principle stating that all nations have this right, rather than in their particular history. The best illustration of this approach is the Zionist saying that the Jews ought to become "a nation, among nations, in the law of nations."

According to this approach the right of a nation to self-determination does not derive from the fact that it was chosen by God, or that its members were persecuted or mistreated, but from its equality with other nations, or to be more precise from the equal status of its members. It is grounded in the right of all individuals to preserve and express their history, their language, their cultural heritage—all those aspects of their identity that bind them to their national group.

Adopting this line does not imply that the special history of a nation

does not play an important role in the construction and justification of actual nationalist claims. Whereas the general structure of the justification is independent of the contingent history of each nation, justifications for the particular way in which it should be implemented must depend on each nation's unique history. For example, while a general justification for the right to national self-determination could be adduced without reference to any historical contingencies, the justification of granting that right to a particular nation depends on the development of national consciousness and on the explicit demand of the nation's members to enjoy this right. Thus, in order to know how to implement this right it is important to follow the historical emergence of each nation and determine when it has achieved political maturity. Let us reconsider the Zionist example: the special history of Jews does play a role in determining where and when they became a nation deserving self-determination. In modern history, it could be claimed that Jews reached political adulthood in 1897, with the convening of the first Zionist congress, which was meant to transform the national question of the Jews into a political issue to be settled in the assembly of civilized nations.

The demand that the national homeland is to be established in a particular place is also influenced by the history of a nation. Hence, the demand to establish the Jewish state in the land of Israel rests on the constitutive role of this territory in the history of the Jewish people.

The particular narrative and the universal justifications thus join in explaining the nature of national rights and their implementation, but each carries a different message—the first glorifies the nation's history, language, and culture, while the second bears a message of humbleness and pluralism. The Jewish thinker Ahad Ha'am warns against the consequences of placing exclusive emphasis on the ethnocentric narrative. To be a nationalist, he argues, is to see oneself as different from, rather than as elevated above, other nations. The greatest virtue of the nationalist discourse is that it allows individuals to internalize general humanistic values in a national mold, to recognize themselves as members of a vast human family, but also as members of a specific group of people that has expressed its uniqueness throughout its long history.[15]

The temptation to overlook the universal message embedded in nationalism is nevertheless considerable. The implication of resorting to general justifications is that all nations have the same rights; hence, one's nation is only one among others, obliged by the law of nations. It is no coincidence that nationalists are reluctant to acknowledge this message, as it implies that they ought to see other nations' rights as a source of self-restraint. The moral test of nationalists, argues Michael Walzer, is their attitude toward the nations they are in conflict with.[16] Needless to say, few nations pass this test.

The particularistic nationalist discourse is especially well fitted to reinforce ethnocentric claims that lead to the dehumanization of the enemy and consequently to moral numbness. It is far easier psychologically, and far more beneficial politically, to disregard the fact that one's enemies, like oneself, belong to recognized national groups and are entitled to the same rights as oneself. Ethnocentric-nationalist language hardens the heart, and leads individuals to be impervious to others' misery, destruction, and expulsion, blind to injustice, hatred, and death. At the end of the day when national struggles occur, only a few members of each nation actively participate or support hostile activities, but many more are guilty of crimes of omission. They turn inwards and exhibit indifference to their enemies' suffering. This vice is inspired by the particularistic language of nationalism.

By preferring particularistic justifications to general ones, nationalists achieve another advantage: they can endorse an ethnocentric approach to culture and morality affirming that "all values and standards must necessarily be intrinsic to the national unit, grounded in its history and tradition. This view fosters the belief that nations, and their cultures, are not only unique but also incommensurable with each other. It thus follows that appeals to universality rest on a false view of the nature of man and history."[17]

The implication is that the evaluation of different cultural experiences is impossible, and the encouragement of cultural exchanges makes no sense: each nation must live according to its own norms, fostering its own values and modes of experiences. No external principles can guide its actions. If members of a nation deserve rights or benefits, it is because they are French, or Jewish, or German, namely, because they are different from, rather than similar to, members of other nations.

The nationalists' attempt to refrain from any generalization of their experience may indeed be politically beneficial, but it is theoretically misleading and morally wrong, and should therefore be rejected.[18] And yet unfortunately this trend is reinforced by arguments offered by some scholars of nationalism. Let me then turn to examine the nature of these arguments.

SIDING WITH THE UNDERDOGS

Having clarified why nationalists tend to prefer to couch their claims in particularistic and nontheoretical terms, it is still puzzling to find that scholars of nationalism often prefer to embark on a similar course. One possible explanation is that this approach allows them to align themselves selectively with national demands raised by underdogs—indige-

nous peoples, discriminated minorities, or occupied nations—whose plight reinforces the moral power of their claims, and dissociate themselves from nationalistic demands that are morally less appealing.

The distinction between more or less defensible national claims is made possible by their duality. We return here to another version of the tension between the general and the particular, yet here particular claims play a different role than in the previous discussion. They make reference to the particular history of the nation not in order to turn inwards, but in order to examine the particular national case in light of a general theory of justice.

Consequently we face, once again, two kinds of justifications. The first is grounded in a theory of nationalism; it assumes that if national rights rest on theoretically and morally sound grounds they ought to apply to all nations, regardless of their power, wealth, past suffering, or even the injustices they may have inflicted upon others. Such a theoretical approach suggests that national rights should not be reduced to measures of remedying past injustices or punishing outlaws, that they are neither a reward for good behavior nor could they be withheld as punishment from "*enfants mauvais.*"

The second kind of justification sees national rights in remedial terms. A demand for national rights, it argues, is only justified if it serves as a means to right a wrong, to compensate those who were victimized by nationalism. The justification of such rights must therefore make reference to the source of the injustice: the heinous events in the former Yugoslavia or in Rwanda, the persecutions suffered by native Indian nations, the Holocaust, the expulsion of Palestinians from their lands, and so forth.

In her challenging article "The Moral Significance of Nationalism," Lea Brilmayer explores the relations between the two kinds of justifications. Nationalism, she argues, is itself morally transparent, and this fact accounts for its ability to coexist equally well with good and evil.

> The argument is that the overwhelming relevant normative feature of today's nationalism is the justice (or lack of justice) of the claims nationalists advance on behalf of their nation. The single most important normative feature—indeed, perhaps, the only important normative feature—is the right of the nation to the thing that nationalists assert on its behalf, and this right is not itself a consequence of nationalism but a consequence of other underlying moral claims.[19]

If Brilmayer is right, we need not search for a theory of nationalism that explains what is due to national groups (or to individual members of these groups), by virtue of their nationhood. All that is required is an evaluation of the injustice experienced by particular nations. For exam-

ple, if annexation is morally wrong, then the Baltic states deserve to be liberated. Such a demand, if framed in terms of the wrongness entailed by annexation, would be justified even if raised by "multicultural, multireligious, and multilinguistic entities,"[20] rather than by distinct national groups.

And yet, the appropriate response to injustice depends on the nature of the group, and if the Baltic nations had not presented their claims in national terms, other types of reparations could have been considered: financial compensation or political measures ensuring their ability to participate in the political system ruling their lives rather than the establishment of their own nation-states.[21] Think of the remedies that might be offered to members of different disadvantaged groups, such as inner-city children, gays, women, or individuals harmed by natural disasters. In each case the compensation granted will have to take into account not only the harm done but also the needs and demands of those who have been harmed. For example, it might indeed make perfect sense to resettle individuals whose houses were demolished in a natural disaster in separate locations if they do not constitute a national-cultural group, but it will add insult to injury if as a result of such a disaster members of a nation have to disperse, thus losing their ability to retain their national life.

Nationalism therefore does matter, though it does not cover the whole of the moral domain. Consequently demands grounded in a theory of nationalism must be balanced against other moral considerations[22]—when nationalist justifications concur with these considerations there is a stronger reason to pursue them; when they conflict with other rights and obligations there may be reasons to override them; but in neither case are they redundant.

Few theoreticians of nationalism would deny these claims. Most of those who claim that nationalism matters do not argue that it exhausts the moral sphere, that groups (or individuals) who cannot ground their claims in nationalist arguments should be left unprotected, or that national groups must be granted all their demands, disregarding other moral considerations. Such an extreme position would indeed be indefensible. Brilmayer thus seems to be hoisting a nationalist strawman, in order to rebut nationalism altogether.

In fact, she senses that an outright denial of all claims grounded in a theory of nationalism would be misguided, and therefore ends her paper by presenting a more qualified claim. Nationhood, she argues, may generate prima facie entitlements to certain basic rights. Thus,

> while philosophers are mistaken if they are assuming that the rights nations have *must be* rights that they hold by virtue of their national

> status, this does not mean that there *cannot be* rights that they hold on
> these grounds. . . . It all depends on the precise nature of the right
> asserted, and whether it is one on which the question of entity status
> makes a difference.[23]

Hence, while rightly warning us against the unqualified use of national-
ist justifications, Brilmayer accepts their necessity. To develop appropri-
ate responses to different national claims we need a theory of national-
ism, as without it we will be unable to specify which rights are held on
nationalist grounds and which rights are held on other grounds, and to
place these claims in a larger, more general, moral framework. Unfortu-
nately scholars of nationalism often misconstrue the grounds of their
own justifications, for reasons that are worth examining. In the next sec-
tion I turn to examine a prominent example of such a confusion.

THE MUDDY MIDDLE GROUND

Individuals embark on the study of nationalism for a variety of personal
reasons that influence their theoretical approach. Will Kymlicka's main
objective is to protect the needs and rights of the native peoples of
Canada as well as of the Québécois, while sustaining the integrity of the
Canadian federation. Brilmayer has in mind the needs and rights of
Eritreans, as well as of some other disadvantaged African nations. David
Miller views nationalism from a social democratic perspective and deals
with its contribution to the development of the welfare state. Neil Mac-
Cormick, Joseph Carens, and I each from his/her own national experi-
ence attempt to demonstrate that it is possible to reconcile liberal and
national values even in circumstances of an ongoing national conflict.
And Michael Ignatieff revisits his own past when he travels across lands
affected by the most tormented national conflicts, and sees blood and
misery wherever he looks. All these approaches are legitimate, but for
the purpose of our discussion we need to know which are grounded in
a theory of nationalism and draw on national justifications, and which
are motivated by considerations of justice.[24] The difference between the
two approaches is not, as some may think, between general and partic-
ularized arguments, but between two kinds of general abstract theories.

   Discussions concerning nationalism, like discussions concerning
other political theories, can be held either at an abstract, theoretical level
or at a contextualized one. The former can make use of *a priori* theo-
retical arguments, aiming to structure general rules, while the latter must
be grounded in the contingencies of each case, aiming to offer guidance
regarding particular matters. The first level should outline principles, the
second should formulate policy recommendations.[25] These two levels

ought to nurture each other, but they ought not be dependent on each other, as this might result in unrealistic policies or a misleading theory. This section, then, sends a word of warning against the danger embedded in attempts to structure a theory that would fit the policies one wishes to endorse, thus imposing the contingent limitations of a specific case on a general theoretical structure.

In *Multicultural Citizenship*, Kymlicka attempts to develop a forward-looking theory of minority rights,[26] capable of benefiting those individuals in emerging democracies throughout the world, "looking to the works of Western liberals for guidance regarding the principles of liberal constitutionalism in multinational states."[27] This attempt fails, as Kymlicka tries to structure his theory to fit the unique political needs of the conflict that motivates his search for a theory in the first place.

Guided by a worthy motivation—to secure the rights of native peoples while preserving Canada's federal structure—Kymlicka tends to cluster a variety of justifications reinforcing the right of native peoples to retain their distinct national-cultural identity while dismissing the right of immigrants to do so. In the course of clarifying his terms, Kymlicka unveils the range of political concerns that influenced his decision to distinguish between nations and immigrant groups and, consequently, between a multinational society composed of different national groups and a polyethnic society composed of different ethnic groups. The use of the term *multiculturalism*, he argues, may lead to confusion, as it might imply that all cultural groups should be treated alike.

But this begs the question: why should different cultural groups, that is, national minorities and immigrants, be treated differently? Kymlicka's answer, though framed in theoretical terms, is political: granting all cultural groups the same rights may evoke strong political opposition. French Canadians, Kymlicka argues, "have opposed the 'multiculturalism' policy because they think it reduced their claims of nationhood to the level of immigrant ethnicity. Other people had the opposite fear, that the policy was intended to treat immigrant groups as nations, and hence support the development of institutionally complete cultures alongside the French and the English."[28] These fears are certainly legitimate, and prudent politicians will be well advised to take them into account. The question is whether a political theory, especially one aspiring to set general guidelines for groups placed in a variety of political contexts, should be tailored to meet these fears. The answer to this question is obviously no.

Let's take a closer look at Kymlicka's theory in order to illustrate the damages caused by disregarding the distinction between principles and policies. For valuable political reasons Kymlicka embarks on an unsuccessful theoretical attempt to draw a principled distinction

between national minorities and immigrant groups. The criteria he offers may fit the Canadian reality, but would not be valid in the Middle East, Asia, or Africa. Are Israeli Jews an immigrant or a national group? The same question could be asked with regard to the Palestinians, and if one looks back a century or two, with regard to most national groups. In fact, even regarding Canadians one may wonder whether French- or English-speaking Canadians are immigrant or national groups.

When does a group change its status? Kymlicka's answer alludes to the notion of *societal culture*. This criterion fails, both as an explanatory tool interpreting and predicting the actual nature of claims put forward by different national groups, and as a justificatory tool defining the kind of rights members of these groups are entitled to. Some national groups, despite having developed a thick societal culture over generations, may behave like minority groups. Realizing that they are too small, too weak, or territorially divided, they may wish for integration rather than autonomy or secession. The Samaritans are a good example. They are a small, ancient nation—remember the good Samaritan?—with a quite distinctive societal culture, yet with no yearning for independence. Its members acknowledge that, due to their circumstances, the benefits of joining a larger social unit outweigh the costs. The Middle East provides ample illustration of such groups—Druze, Circassians, Armenians, Bedouins—all fitting this pattern of behavior. In all these cases, members of small nations develop a set of aspirations similar to that of immigrant groups, not because they lack a structured societal culture but due to other contingencies, mainly size and location.

In contrast, immigrant groups that are large enough, territorially concentrated, and distinct from the majority culture may seek some of the rights traditionally sought by national minorities as was true, for instance, in the case of the Palestinians in Lebanon. Once the Palestinians developed into a sizable group, they endeavored to change the Lebanese political structure and acquire recognition equal to that of other national groups. This phenomenon has not slipped Kymlicka's attention. He admits that, in theory, immigrants can become national minorities if they settle together and acquire self-governing powers: "After all, this is what happened with English speaking colonists throughout the British Empire, Spanish colonists in Puerto Rico and French colonists in Quebec."[29]

From the point of view of actual claims, we have more of a continuum. On one of its ends stand individuals, who despite their isolation from their communities wish to retain, to the best of their abilities, their communal identity; on the other large national groups, which are territorially concentrated and culturally and politically organized, are to be

found. The precise location of each group along this continuum reflects its contingent conditions: its size, territorial position, history, political organization, and so forth. All of these factors, and many others, must be taken into consideration in the making of actual political demands, but can they determine the kind of rights to which individuals on different points along the continuum are entitled?

Making entitlements depend on contingencies leads to grave injustice. Let me explain this latter point: Suppose that a given set of circumstances precludes the translation of certain political principles into policy. For instance, let us assume that individuals who are entitled to enjoy certain national rights are unable, due to a wide range of contingencies, to implement these rights. Can we deduce from such a case that the principled justification of their rights is faulty, or that it should be modified? I think not; all that we can learn from an analysis of such a case is that in certain circumstances principles must be compromised. The awareness that circumstances have forced us to compromise our principles is, in itself, significant, as it calls for an attempt to change the limiting circumstances, to offer those who have been harmed some compensating measures, or, if neither option is feasible, at least to acknowledge the injustice done.[10]

Kymlicka's theory is an example of a case in which the weaving of actual political considerations into principles leads to a disquieting inequality of treatment. Kymlicka's theory gives preference to members of minority nations over members of immigrant groups. Such privileging is presented not as a compromise forced by the complexity of the Canadian reality but as a principle. Consequently, not only are members of immigrant groups disadvantaged in comparison to members of national minorities, they also lose their ground for complaint—in the Canadian case as well as in all other cases in which Kymlicka's theory will be adopted.

Let us take a closer look at the implications of Kymlicka's theory. According to this theory, as French Canadians constitute a national minority in Canada "a group of francophone parents can demand a French school where numbers warrant" while a group of Greeks, who "are not a national minority in Canada,"[11] are not entitled to either individual or collective rights regarding the official recognition of their mother tongue. Why should the state support the rights of francophones and native Indians but not of Greek parents to have classes for their children in their native language? (Assume that in both cases a certain threshold number of interested individuals exists.)

One possible answer is that the claims raised by members of national groups are of a stronger moral status than those of immigrants. I would agree that, in the Canadian case, this is indeed true. Neverthe-

less, this conclusion does not follow from a principled claim suggesting that national minorities ought to have certain national rights immigrants lack, but rather from additional reasons supporting, in the Canadian case, the rights of native peoples. This becomes obvious when one analyzes Kymlicka's justifications for granting special rights to native peoples. In the process of so doing he clusters arguments grounded in four different kinds of justifications:

1. *Granting individuals cultural-national rights*. As cultural-national membership is of immense significance to individuals; they have an essential interest in preserving it and a correlating right to do so.[32]

2. *Remedying injustice*. Individuals placed in a disadvantaged position due to some social action ought to be compensated. If granting them a certain liberty or power is the only way of compensating them for the injustice they suffered, it should be granted.

3. *Keeping promises or respecting contracts*. When individuals have voluntarily joined a political framework and were promised, or it was contracted with them, that they would enjoy a certain political arrangement, the promise or the contract should be respected.

4. *Improving representative democracy*. If electoral policies could be reformed to allow individuals, especially members of disadvantaged groups, better representation and better protection of their legitimate interests, such reforms should be welcome.

Only the first category of justifications is grounded in a theory of nationalism, as it refers to the importance of cultural and national identity to individuals. The other three categories are based on arguments drawn from liberal democratic theory: groups other than national minorities are also entitled to compensation if harmed; contracts should be respected whoever they benefit; and there are good reasons to improve the representation of all sectors of the population. In the case of Canadian native peoples all four kinds of justifications overlap and strengthen each other. Hence, Kymlicka's claim that the Canadian federal state should grant native peoples some preferences over immigrant groups is justified. But the grounds he offers for this distinctive treatment are flawed, and if carried to another context may promote injustice.

Just policies should take all the justifications into account. A theory of minority rights, however, should draw these justifications apart and analyze each component on its own. Two advantages ensue from upholding the distinction between principles and policies. The first concerns the ability to formulate a political theory free of the immediate

pressures that are characteristic of conflictual situations. The second concerns the ability to formulate effective policies that might fall short of what is demanded by the relevant principles, without ignoring the gap between what is morally justified and what is presently attainable. When principles and policies are forced to overlap in a nonideal world, either the policies would be too ideal to implement or the principles would be flawed and too conservative. What we need, then, is both an abstract theory of nationalism and actual policies.

IN DEFENSE OF AN ABSTRACT THEORY

A theory of nationalism must structure itself independently of all contingencies. Its basis must be a systematic view of human nature and of the world order, as well as a coherent set of universally applicable values. Some may find the abstract, decontextualized nature of such a theory frustrating, as the guidance it offers appears too vague. But this is true of most political theories that require translation into actual policies via a process of specification. No theory either can, or should, provide a chart including all the necessary modes of action demanded in each particular circumstance. No theory of freedom of speech can provide a final list of all the cases in which free speech should be protected. And no theory of justice can suggest *a priori* who should get what without resorting to socioeconomic data. In this respect, then, a theory of nationalism, like all other political theories, must be constructed in the abstract but cannot be implemented outside of a particular context.

It must generate some general principles that allow a critical evaluation of different nationalist claims and of the policies designed to meet them. It may also allow one to distinguish between a theory of nationalism and policies adopted by nationalistic parties (as one distinguishes between democratic, communist, or liberal theory and specific policies pursued by Communist, Democratic, or Liberal parties).

Although the grounds shared by all theories of nationalism may be rather slim, every theory of nationalism must begin with two descriptive assertions:

1. Humanity is divided into nations.
2. There are criteria for identifying a nation and its members.

These descriptive claims, however, need not be followed by a theory of nationalism. In fact, it would be entirely coherent to proceed from the above descriptive claims to a disapproving evaluation of nationalism, claiming that the division of the world into nations is destructive and

consequently encouraging attempts to develop individualistic attitudes and a purely cosmopolitan consciousness.

A theory of nationalism must take the opposite route, namely, it must follow the descriptive claims mentioned above by normative claims favoring a national world structure. Depending on the particular theory of nationalism in which they are grounded, such normative claims could draw on a broad spectrum of ways of justifying the importance of a national world order. Such justifications may include: metaphysical claims that attribute national diversity to God's will, psychological claims concerning the human need to structure personal identity in relation to others, and economic arguments linking nationalism with economic development. Normative support for the plurality of nations can be grounded in the instrumental value of national membership for individuals, either as a background for strong evaluation and choice, for self-development and self-expression, and most importantly, for self-esteem.[33] Or it can offer a more organic description of society, suggesting that individuals cannot function outside a national cultural context.

From a communitarian point of view, other instrumental justifications for a national world order could be invoked. Reference could be made to the important contribution of a shared national identity for improving social communication and ensuring better understanding and cooperation, or for creating a sense of togetherness that can help sustain mutual responsibilities not only among all living members of a community but also among past and future generations. One could, as John Stuart Mill did, point to the importance of national homogeneity for democracy, or to the importance of nationalism in promoting willingness to transcend egoistic concerns and in extreme circumstances sacrifice oneself for the common good.[34]

Such normative claims must be followed by a set of prescriptive claims concerning the means necessary to ensure the preservation of a national world order, as well as the welfare and prosperity of each particular nation. Among these means, the most important ones are those necessary for expressing and cultivating a shared national identity in the public space. These means justify linking the cultural and political aspects of nationalism, and they support demands for a distinctively national political sphere.[35]

A theory of nationalism is thus marked by a particular set of descriptive statements, which is followed by normative claims emphasizing the moral, social, and psychological importance of national and cultural membership, and then by a inventory of means necessary to secure it. And yet, theories of nationalism differ quite considerably. Their disagreement can be traced to three substantive issues:

1. The nature of the relations between the nation and its individual members
2. The normative justifications for the existence of nations
3. The political aspirations that nationalism supports

All theories of nationalism advance a normative claim supporting the preservation and development of national frameworks as such, disregarding their particularistic features. Inevitably, such theories embody a general commitment to the existence of all national groups, alongside a particularistic commitment to the survival and flourishing of each nation. In this sense, theories of nationalism are necessarily polycentric and advance a reiterated view of nationalism from which a universal notion of national rights could be derived.[36] No wonder, then, that nationalists committed to advancing their own national case, as well as scholars of nationalism committed to promoting certain specific claims concerning the needs of some nations who suffered severe injustice, are reluctant to turn to such a theory in search of support for their claims.

BETWEEN ABSTRACTION AND PARTICULARITIES

Those who criticize attempts to construct theories of nationalism find such theories less captivating and moving than journalistic accounts of nationalist struggles, less intriguing and informative than most historical and sociological analyses, and less poetic than nationalist narratives. Criticizing my own attempt to construct a theory of nationalism, Tony Judt claims that it is "disappointingly dry and abstract," and, as it is lacking in detailed examples "everything hinges on the logic and consistency of the concepts."[37]

I believe Judt's disappointment reflects an interdisciplinary disagreement. The study of nationalism, he argues, cannot proceed in the abstract, it must draw on the plurality of national experiences, rely on actual case studies, and be grounded in ample examples and references to particular national narratives. In short, it should look more like a sociological or anthropological inquiry than a philosophical one.

Is Judt right? Must a theory of nationalism draw on the plurality of national experiences, rely on actual case studies, and support itself with ample examples and references to particular national narratives? In short, must it look more like a sociological or anthropological theory than a philosophical one?

For political theory in general, the role and importance of examples is a sore question. Can examples explain, support, prove, or refute a political theory? What are the theoretical implications of the historical

and sociological details of the Canadian case, in which the national struggle did not deteriorate into violence? What can we learn from the fact that in the case of Northern Ireland it did? What are the lessons of the Nazi example, by far the most widely quoted one?

Unfortunately, this question is seldom discussed. A rare exception is an exchange between Ronald Dworkin and Michael Walzer. The occasion is the publication of Walzer's *Spheres of Justice*,[38] which offers an innovative way of thinking not only about justice but also about methodological issues. Walzer structures his argument using actual examples, thus hoping to break the grip of the formal style prevalent in Anglo-American political philosophy in recent years. In his review,[39] Dworkin questions the success of Walzer's attempt. Instead of expounding an abstract argument, he complains, Walzer offers anecdotal and historical examples of how in various societies, including our own, different principles of distribution have evolved. The wide range of examples Walzer draws on—from the meritocracies of China under the dynasties, to the Kula practices of gift exchanges among Trobriand islanders, to questions of education among the Aztecs—is captivating, Dworkin admits. It can widen our horizon and enrich our imagination, and yet it cannot substitute for a theory that could serve as an evaluative tool. We cannot leave justice to convention and anecdotes, Dworkin concludes. This conclusion applies to theories of nationalism as well. No amount of nationalist anecdotes can, on its own, offer sound grounds for a theory of nationalism.

The purpose of political theory, Plamenatz claims, "is not to tell us how things happen in the world, inside our minds or outside them; its purpose is to help us decide what to do and how to go about doing it. To achieve that purpose, it must be systematic, self-consistent, and *realistic*."[40] If political theory is to present a realistic utopia, it must be grounded in knowledge of some basic social facts. And yet, when one looks at the most important contributions to political theory in the last two decades, those of Oakeshott, Rawls, Dworkin, and Nozick, it is noticeable that none of these combines the philosophical analysis of political principles with an empirical understanding of political processes in a wholly successful way. Their work is philosophically sophisticated but poorly grounded empirically, and highly vulnerable to criticism of social scientists.[41] These political philosophers share the belief that "it would be more promising to focus upon a fundamental abstract description that would encompass all situations of interests."[42] And yet none of them suggests that we should ignore social knowledge all together. What must we know and what ought we ignore when constructing a political theory?

Rawls's constructive thought experiment offers one possible answer.

The purpose of the experiment is to find the most just and desirable way to govern a society in light of a *given* set of shared values and some basic social facts that are relevant to moral judgments. The process starts with a definition of the epistemological boundaries of the deliberations. These boundaries are determined by the veil of ignorance on the one hand and a set of basic social facts on the other. The veil conceals from the parties those facts that are morally irrelevant. The arbitrariness of the world must be corrected, Rawls argues, "by adjusting the circumstances of the initial contractual situation."[43] Yet some facts concerning the basis of social organization and the laws of human psychology cannot be ignored.

> Indeed, the parties are presumed to know whatever general facts affect the choice of principles of justice. There are no limitations on general information, that is, on general laws and theories, since conceptions of justice must be adjusted to the characteristics of the system of social cooperation which they are to regulate, and *there is no reason* to rule out these facts.[44]

It thus seems that there must be a distinction between general knowledge and contingent matters. The former is necessary for the construction of a theory of justice; the latter is destructive for that same purpose.

How are we to determine which kind of knowledge falls under what description? What is a proper reason to include a certain fact or exclude it? The question of what kind of knowledge is, or isn't, relevant for moral deliberations is bitterly debatable. Does the distribution of personal talents count as a contingent fact that morality should disregard or is it a social fact that a theory cannot ignore? Is the unequal distribution of resources to be seen as a basic social fact or a contingent one? What about the differences between the genders? And how should the distribution of the world into nations be regarded? How should we treat the recurrence of national-ethnic violence? This debate *cannot* be settled on the basis of particular test cases, or actual case studies, but only on the basis of abstract principles.

Like all other political theories, theories of nationalism must start by classifying different facts as general or contingent, relevant or irrelevant. In my own work I have claimed that such a theory must take into account general facts concerning the existence of nations, the role they play in human history, and their importance for their members. It should ignore the status, size, wealth, and power of each particular nation, as this knowledge is morally irrelevant.[45] Like all decisions of this kind, it is a debatable one, but looking at more examples will not save it from being essentially contestable. What is needed are not more examples and more test cases, but more elaborate argumentation that

would expose the basic presuppositions each theory relies upon (a task most political philosophers regretfully neglect).

While deliberating on the role of political theories, Ira Katznelson acknowledges that raising the level of abstraction may allow for the desirable philosophical rigor. And yet he worries that these advantages may be achieved at the cost of grave shortcomings: "So much so that this work risks dismissal as being beside the point in our disordered, disarranged world. Yet the historical and sociological temptation promoted as an alternative by Judt threatens to leave our attempts to discover decent ways of living unguided by useful theory or standards."[46] At the end of the day the criterion for accepting a theory or a set of standards as a guide must be that, in view of some set of abstract principles, they seem right, rather than that they have been captured in some conventional practice. As Dworkin states, "Otherwise political theory will be only a mirror, uselessly reflecting a community's consensus and divisions back upon itself."[47]

Those who criticize the appeal to abstract principles often expect these principles to do more than they possibly can. These expectations are grounded in the confusion between policy recommendations and guiding principles discussed earlier. Political theory, Judt argues, must aim at guiding judgments and promoting action; hence, it requires particularity as well as sociologically and politically plausible stories about the world. From this perspective, he asserts, it hardly makes sense to treat national membership as an abstract position. It is rather a "very particular, contingent, partial and variable, historical condition."[48]

The exact distance between a political theory and the social facts it relies upon is hard to define. The decision concerning which facts count for what purpose may be the most difficult decision a political philosopher makes. Hence, I can offer no solution to this debate. All I can say by way of conclusion is that contingent facts and particular narratives are indeed important for some purposes but are irrelevant, and even disruptive, to the construction of a general theory. As the discussion of Kymlicka's latest work revealed, when a set of excellent policy recommendations tailored to fit a particular conflict are presented as a general theory, that theory is likely to be misleading and may, at times, promote actual injustice.

I want to end where I began, and argue that the construction of an abstract theory of nationalism is both a necessary and a feasible task. Some may indeed benefit from sustaining nationalism's nontheoretical reputation, but their gains do not deserve our support. In fact, we need a theory of nationalism in order to undermine these gains, to remind national movements that other national groups enjoy the same rights they do, to encourage scholars of nationalism to evaluate national

demands on their own merits while disregarding their own sympathies, and to warn writers of theories of nationalism against letting the national conflict that motivates them be the sole guide to their perception of nationalism.

NOTES

1. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th, expanded ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. iii.

2. E. Gellner, *Thought and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 149.

3. Cited in G. H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, 4th ed., rev. by T. L. Thorson (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press, 1973), p. 816.

4. K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, vol. II, 4th (rev.) ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 49.

5. D. M. Weinstock, "Is There a Moral Case for Nationalism?" *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 13.1 (1996): 87.

6. Cited in ibid., p. 88.

7. I. Berlin, "The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs* 51 (1972): 19.

8. H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States* (London: Methuen, 1977), p. 445.

9. S. Benn, "Nationalism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967), volume 5, p. 445.

10. H. Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* (New York: Collier Books, 1944); J. P. Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968); A. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Duckworth, 1983).

11. N. MacCormick, chapter 10 of this volume, p. 203.

12. G. Graham, *Politics in Its Place: A Study of Six Ideologies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 140.

13. See Y. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

14. C. C. O'Brien, "Nationalists and Democrats," *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 August 1991, p. 29.

15. Ahad Ha'am, *The Collected Essays of Ahad Ha'am* (Tel-Aviv: Devir, 1964). (In Hebrew)

16. M. Walzer, "The National Question Revisited," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values XI: 1990*, ed. Grethe B. Peterson (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), pp. 532–56.

17. I. Berlin, *Against the Current* (London: Hogarth Press, 1979), p. 344.

18. If suffering is a necessary qualification of acquiring national rights then the sanctification of suffering is inescapable; if national rights could be supported on more general grounds then the reference to past sufferings might be avoided, and might be replaced with more forward-looking, reconciliatory policies.

19. L. Brilmayer, "The Moral Significance of Nationalism," *Notre Dame Law Review* 71.1 (1995): 7.

20. Ibid., p. 12.

21. See the distinction I draw between the right to national self-determination and the right to self-rule in "The Right to National Self-Determination," *Social Research* 58.3 (Fall 1991): 565–90.

22. This process demands that the specific features of each case be closely examined: the nature of the groups involved, the history of the conflict, and the possible violation of rights that would follow from the proposed arrangements. Only then will it be possible to determine what national rights are entailed in each specific case.

23. Brillmayer, "The Moral Significance of Nationalism," pp. 30–31.

24. Note that some approaches will combine both kinds of justifications. Still it will be important to know which kind of justification is grounded in a theory of nationalism and which ones are grounded in other types of theory.

25. The distinction between principles and policies somewhat parallels Weber's distinction in "Politics as a Vocation" (*From Max Weber*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills [New York: Oxford University Press, 1958], pp. 77–128) between the *ethics of conviction*, which refers to absolute values and need not compromise with reality, and the *ethics of responsibility*, which judges particular situations in a pragmatic fashon, not leaving absolute moral standards totally out of consideration but at the same time not letting them determine one's political actions.

26. W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 25.

27. Ibid., p. 194.

28. Ibid., p. 17.

29. Ibid., p. 15.

30. In her intriguing discussion of the faces of injustice, Judith Shklar reminds us that the definition of injustice is social and political. What usually passes for an injustice "is an act that goes against some known legal or ethical rule. Only a victim whose complaints match the rule-governed prohibitions has suffered an injustice. If there is no fit, it is only a matter of the victim's subjective reaction, a misfortune, not *really* unjust" (J. N. Shklar, *The Faces of Injustice* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990], p. 7). Injustice may sometimes be unavoidable, but we must not ignore it. Our normative rules ought to be structured so as to help us judge what is the best thing to do in each particular case, and to acknowledge injustice even when unable to alleviate it or forced to impose it.

31. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 46.

32. The structure of this claim follows Joseph Raz's definition of a right in *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 165–92.

33. See mainly the writings of Charles Taylor, on this matter especially *Philosophical Papers*, vol. I: *Human Agency and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. A. Gutmann (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 25–73.

34. See J. S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (esp. chap. 16) and D. Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

35. Defining the desire to preserve and enhance the national or cultural identity as the shared grounds of all theories of nationalism challenges the widely accepted interpretation of nationalism as necessarily prescribing the creation of a nation-state. The statist approach to nationalism is misleading in its endorsement of a specific political solution, which was popular in a particular historical setting, as the sole end and the only true interpretation of nationalism.

36. For a discussion of polycentric nationalism, see Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*; for the idea of reiterated nationalism, see M. Walzer, "Two Kinds of Universalism," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values XI: 1990*, ed. Peterson, pp. 509–32.

37. T. Judt, "The New Old Nationalism," *New York Review of Books*, May 26, 1994, pp. 49–50.

38. M. Walzer, *Spheres of Justice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

39. R. Dworkin, "What Justice Isn't," in Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 214–20.

40. Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, p. 29.

41. On the problem of abstraction in political theory, see M. Walzer and R. Dworkin, "'Spheres of Justice': An Exchange," *New York Review of Books*, July 21, pp. 43–46.

42. R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), p. 4.

43. J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 141.

44. Ibid., pp. 137–38; my emphasis.

45. Judt's criticism is that a veil that allows members to acknowledge the general division of the world into nations and to acknowledge the fact that they themselves are members of such nations "isn't hiding anything significant." This criticism is based on a misunderstanding of the role of the veil.

46. I. Katznelson, *Liberalism's Crooked Circle: Letters to Adam Michnik* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 160.

47. R. Dworkin, "Reply," *New York Review of Books*, July 21, 1983, p. 46.

48. T. Judt, "Reply," *New York Review of Books*, June 23, 1994, p. 64.

CHAPTER 4

Nationalism and the Narcissism of Minor Differences

Michael Ignatieff

Let me begin with a story, drawn from my experiences writing my book *Blood and Belonging*. It's March 1993; it's four in the morning. I'm in the command post of the local Serbian militia, in an abandoned farmhouse, 250 meters from the Croatian front line. This, by the way, is not Bosnia, but the war zone of central Croatia. The world is no longer watching, but every night Serb and Croat militias exchange small-arms fire and the occasional bazooka round.

This is a village war. Everyone knows everyone else: they all went to school together; before the war, some of them worked in the same garage; they dated the same girls. Every night, they call each other up on the CB radio and exchange insults—by name. Then they go back to trying to kill each other.

I'm talking to the Serbian soldiers—tired, middle-aged reservists, who'd much rather be home in bed. I'm trying to figure out why neighbors should start killing each other. So I say I can't tell Serbs and Croats apart. "What makes you think you're so different?"

The man I'm talking to takes a cigarette pack out of his khaki jacket. "See this. These are Serbian cigarettes. Over there they smoke Croatian cigarettes."

"But they're both cigarettes, right?"

"You foreigners don't understand anything." He shrugs and begins cleaning his Zastovo machine pistol.

But the question I've asked bothers him, so a couple of minutes later, he tosses the weapon on the bunk between us and says, "Look, here's how it is. Those Croats, they think they're better than us. Think they're fancy Europeans and everything. I'll tell you something. We're all

just Balkan rubbish." Actually, the word he uses is not "rubbish," but this is an academic book.

There is a message in this story.

First he tells you the Croats and Serbs have nothing in common. Everything about them is different, down to their cigarettes. A minute later, he tells you that the real problem with Croats is that they think they're better than we are. Actually, we're all the same.

It is as if the nationalist myth—that Serbs and Croats are radically distinct peoples who each deserve a separate homeland—is struggling with this man's lived experience that, really, not much distinguishes him from his Croat neighbors. The two planes of consciousness—the political and the personal—just can't confront each other. So they float around in his head. He lives with a numb puzzle in the watches of the night, waiting for the next mortar round.

Maybe firing off a few rounds is a way of resolving the numb puzzle. To hell with it, he curses. They don't pay me to think. Let's keep it simple. Violence at least does that. It keeps things simple.

What does this story tell us about nationalism and identity?

1. Identity is relational. A Serb can't define himself except in relation to Croats, and vice versa. They are brother enemies, the one a tragic mirror of the other.

2. Identity is divided: nationalist ideology does not swallow up personal identity. The fit is never perfect. In the gap, ordinary people dimly, sometimes agonizingly, perceive that they are spoken for by political language, rather than speakers of their own experience.

3. Nationalism does not simply "express" a pre-existent identity: it "constitutes" one. It divides/separates/reclassifies difference. It does so by abstracting from real life. It is a fiction, an invented identity. A form of narcissism, as we shall see. But how does nationalism "constitute" identity?

Here is a story we could tell. Neighbors live together in Yugoslavia. There are differences between Serbs and Croats, and there is a history of bad blood. But there is a state, presided over by Tito, and there is a local police station, with Serbs and Croats working together in the force, and if you have a problem, the police don't ask your nationality first.

Then Tito dies. The state begins to fall apart. Why? Because states whose legitimacy depends on the personal charisma of individuals can only fall apart with their deaths. Because communist regimes everywhere have shown no capacity to sustain electoral or political legitimacy

once they lose the capacity to intimidate their populations. What other principle of legitimacy is there in the postcommunist world except for nationalism? What other language exists to mobilize people around a common project? (The liberal alternative—which conceives of Yugoslavia's peoples as equal juridical subjects, as citizens, with an attachment of shared procedures: the rule of law and democratic accountability—is unavailable as a principle of mobilization. Why? Because for fifty years, communist political language has stigmatized this as bourgeois democracy.)

The same communist elite sets out to preserve power. In conditions of formal democracy, it must find a language of popular mobilization. Nationalism—Milosovic's "they will never beat you again"—teaches every politician in the Balkans what the paying tune sounds like. The nationalist dream of reuniting Serbs within one state is embraced because it provides a communist elite with a project, and a diversion. It is a politics of fantasy, leading the population away from "real" issues, like the stubborn backwardness of the south Balkans, into dreams of national greatness. It is a fantasy, at another level: reunifying Serbs, or Croats or Muslims for that matter, into a single national state can only be achieved by forcible population transfer, by ethnic cleansing.

Nevertheless, the political elites of each nation begin demanding states of their own. Where does that leave my Serbian friend, who lives in Croatia? As Croatia moves toward full independence, he sees the Serbs being dismissed from the local police station by the new Croatian government. He reads in his Serb newspaper about the atrocities the Croats committed against the Serbs during the Second World War. He'd heard something about this before, but now he pays attention. He begins to think: "I can't trust my neighbors, and come to think of it, we've always been so different. Who's going to protect me from them?"

Local warlords appear—ex-policemen mostly—and they tell him: *Tito is dead; the Croats are taking power; you've nobody but us to protect you.* Pretty soon, he is working for the warlords, spending his nights in an abandoned farmhouse trading shots with people he once called friends. In the space of three years, he has been delivered from the nation-state, back 400 years, to the late feudal world before the European nation-state began. In three years, he has been delivered from civilization—from interethnic tolerance and accommodation—to barbarism. He has been returned to the war of all against all: the Hobbesian world. The world we all live in now, the world, as Hans Magnus Enzensberger says, of permanent civil war.

Note here the causative order: first the collapse of the state, the Hobbesian fear, and only then nationalist paranoia, followed by warfare. Disintegration of the state comes first, nationalist paranoia comes

next. Nationalist sentiment on the ground, among common people, is a second order of consequence of political disintegration and elite manipulation. Nationalism did not destroy Yugoslavia from the bottom up; it was the elites who destroyed Yugoslavia from the top down.

But there still remains a major puzzle. If Hobbesian fear explains why neighbors turned into enemies, how do we explain the earlier step, how they begin to conceive of their differences, which are always there, as being identities that seal them off from everyone else around them? How do they begin to think of themselves as Serbs, above all else, and Croats, above all else?, These are people who share a common life, language, physical appearance, and a great deal of history. For nearly fifty years, being a Serb or Croat took second place to being Yugoslav; sometimes it took third or fourth place, to being a worker, or a mother, or any of the other identities that constitute the multiple range of our belongings. Nationalism is a fiction of identity, because it contradicts the multiple reality of belonging. It insists on the primacy of one of these belongings over all the others. So how does this fiction of the primacy of national identity manage to displace other identities? How does it begin to convince? Here we begin to reach for theory.

Sigmund Freud in 1919 observed that "it is precisely the minor differences in people who are otherwise alike that form the basis of feelings of strangeness and hostility between them." He went on, "it would be tempting to pursue this idea and to derive from this 'narcissism of minor differences' the hostility which in every human relation we see fighting against feelings of fellowship and overpowering the commandment that all men should love one another."

Note Freud's emphasis on ambivalence, on conflict within identity itself: feelings of difference fighting against feelings of recognition. It is not a sense of absolute separation of identity that leads to conflict with others, but division, or rather the refusal—by conflict itself—to admit a moment of recognition. Violence must be done to the self before it can be done to others. Living tissue of connection and recognition must be cauterized before a person can become a killing machine.

Note also that Freud is trying to understand something very basic: why it is that our "species being" counts for so little, our differences for so much. Why is it that common humanity is of such little consequence? Everyone on the battlefields of central Slavonia expresses surprise at this. "But we are all human beings," they say. Why is human identity so much less important than Croatian or Serbian identity?

There is a little verse by Chesterton that refers to

the villas and chapels where
I learned with little labour
The way to love my fellowman
And hate my next door neighbour

Generalized conviction that we are all human beings coexists perfectly well—as we all know—with deep, precise, historical loathing for actual human beings next door. This is a moral puzzle worth thinking about.

This phrase—the narcissism of minor differences—illuminates a paradox, the smaller the real differences between two groups, the larger such differences are likely to loom in their imagination. Or to put the point in dynamic terms, as real differences between groups diminish, symbolic, imagined differences become more salient.

The Croats and Serbs drive the same cars; they've probably worked in the same German factories as *gastarbeiters*; they long to build exactly the same type of Swiss chalets on the outskirts of town and raise the same vegetables in the same back gardens. Modernization—to use a big, ugly word—has drawn their styles of life together. They have probably more in common than their peasant grandparents did, especially since their grandparents were believers, and belief—Orthodox for the Serbs, Catholic for the Croats—would have been a real source of division. But their grandsons haven't gone to church for years. Real life is steadily reducing the salience of the differences between them. Nonetheless, nationalism has turned the imagined differences between them into an abyss, which can only be filled with gunfire.

Everywhere you look in the world today, one observes the same paradox of global integration of the economy and culture and ever more bitter and violent fragmentation of identities. As consumption patterns and lifestyles converge among human groups, they insist ever more violently on the marginal differences that divide them.

My use of terminology is suspect, dubious, question-begging—*major difference/minor difference; objective versus subjective; real versus imagined; difference as perceived from within versus difference perceived from without.*

For the moment, I want to hold onto the distinction merely between difference expressed in observable behaviors: lifestyle, consumption choice, dress, language, and difference perceived from within. Globalism may bring about convergence, that is, the reduction of "external" difference: in the way we live, consume, behave. But by that very act, it appears to exacerbate our anxiety to distinguish ourselves "internally," in self-image, from those whom we so increasingly resemble. Globalism

brings us closer together, makes us all neighbors; it destroys boundaries of identity and frontiers between states. We react by insisting ever more assiduously on the margins of difference that remain. (There are two observable results: the collapse of multi-ethnic states; and within developed and secure nation-states, the fragmentation of traditional class and party alignments along ethnic and religious lines.) How is it that differences that from the outside seem to be reducing are increasing "on the inside"?

This is where narcissism comes in. The facts of difference themselves are neutral. It is narcissism that turns difference into a mirror. In this mirror, a narcissist does not see the others in and for themselves; he sees them only as they reflect upon or judge himself. What is different is rejected if it fails to confirm the narcissist in his or her own self-opinion.

In the original Greek myth, Narcissus is an archetype of passive self-absorption. He stares at his own reflection, oblivious to the world. Narcissism begets intolerance. One observable characteristic of intolerant people is that they are actively uninterested in learning about those they purport to despise. Intolerance is a closed system. That's why prejudice is so uniquely unresponsive to rational argument. The differences between Serb and Croat are tiny—when seen from the outside—but from the inside they are worth dying for *because* someone will kill you for them.

Nationalism is the transformation of identity into narcissism. It is a language game that takes the facts of difference and turns them into a narrative justifying political self-determination. In the process of providing legitimacy for a political project—the attainment of statehood—it glorifies identity. It turns neighbors into strangers, turns the permeable boundaries of identity into impassable frontiers.

The problem with this is nationalism per se. Nationalism as a language understands that we're not just individuals—we need collective belongings, and for collective belongings to provide security for individuals these sites of belonging must have self-determination in some form. Nationalism addresses the central problem of interethnic relations—inequalities of power—and insists that human beings cannot be at home with themselves unless they have self-determination. Moreover, nationalist language understands deeply that people want to speak for themselves, rather than being spoken for. This is also true of the ethnic fragmentation observable in secure nation-states.

Elites may find this fragmentation frightening because it implies that there is no longer, if there ever was, a national consensus. But all that means is that groups will no longer allow themselves to be spoken for. No one wants their voice, their representation, to be taken for granted; no one wants their preferences aggregated into those of others. Blacks

will not let themselves be spoken for by whites; women speak in their own voice; "First Nation peoples" demand the right to speak for themselves. To long nostalgically for lost consensus is actually to long for the days when everyone knew their place, when silent minorities let elites speak for them. Instead of fragmentation, we should think of democratization: the chaotic, fearful, yet immensely productive logic of empowerment.

No, the problem with identity politics is not fragmentation. The problem, to use Hans Magnus Enzensberger's useful term, is *autism*: groups so enclosed in their own circle of self-righteous victimhood, or so locked into their own myths or rituals of violence, that they can't listen, can't hear, can't learn from anybody outside themselves.

What both nationalism and some forms of ethnic consciousness have in common is the proposition that listening to strangers is worthless, since no outsider can actually understand your group. What is denied here in the autism of identity politics is the possibility of empathy—the proposition, for example, that women can actually enter into and experience some, if not all, of a man's experience, that whites can know—by special acts of imaginative projection and empathy—what it is like to be black. Anglophones and francophones, Serbs and Croats—it is the "you just don't understand" aspects of identity politics that are frightening.

Autism is intimately connected to narcissism. What closes off these groups to others, to the possibility of listening and learning from others, is a refusal to engage with anything that might dislodge their narcissistic investment in victimhood, in a narrative of being wronged. This is victim's narcissism: the choice of closure over openness, of speaking over learning.

The problem, again, is not identity assertion. It's good to have a collective identity, to take pride and to find belonging in something larger than your career, your family, yourself. The problem is the systematic overvaluation of the self that goes with narcissism, and the mythic distortions of others that go with it.

The systematic overvaluation of the self results in systematic devaluation of strangers and outsiders. In this way narcissistic self-regard depends upon and in turn exacerbates intolerance. Freud himself made this connection between nationalism, narcissism, and intolerance in his essay *Civilization and Its Discontents*, written in 1929. There he observes that "it is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness."

Freud then goes on to observe sardonically that his own people, the Jews, have "rendered the most useful services to the civilizations of the countries that have been their hosts," by providing them with a convenient target for all their suppressed hostilities.

Freud's remarks about narcissism and intolerance were written on the eve of Hitler's coming to power. The following decade saw Freud himself and his family driven into exile. It cannot be accidental that it was an Austrian Jew who should have had such deep intuitions about narcissism and minor differences. No group was prouder to be German than the Jews; no national minority was more successfully assimilated. None of this saved Freud or Austrian Jewry. No matter how assiduously they assimilated, no matter how carefully they eliminated the differences that separated them from their fellow Germans, the simple fact of being Jewish remained; that simple, surely minor fact (minor, that is, to many Jews for whom it was a vestigial identity, one among many) Hitler turned into a major "biological" gulf between two races and cultures. As assimilation eliminated major elements of difference, minor vestiges acquired an increasingly neurotic salience among those, like Hitler, whose identities were threatened by Jewish assimilation. Hitler succeeded in redescribing assimilation as pollution; once this was done, reasserting the absolute gulf between the Aryan and the Jew was easily conceived as an act of purification. This language of purity and cleansing, so full of echoes today, is perhaps the most elemental of all languages of narcissism: the reduction of all difference to the distinction between the human and the nonhuman, between the valued and the despised. This is the trajectory, the path toward moral abjection, to which the narcissism of minor differences can (though it need not always) lead.

Let us pause here and draw some implications from what Freud is arguing. If intolerance and narcissism are connected, one immediate and practical conclusion might seem to be: we are only likely to be more tolerant of other identities if we also learn to love our own a little less. Breaking down stereotypical images of others is only likely to work if we also break down the fantastic elements in our own self-regard. The root of intolerance seems to be found in our tendency to overvalue our own identities; by overvalue, I mean we insist that we have nothing in common, nothing to share; it is the fantasy of purity, of boundaries that can never be crossed.

Freud's talking cure was conceived as a struggle to emancipate oneself from deluded self-images by a process of self-distancing, by standing apart and seeing ourselves through the eyes of others. Academic scholarship and journalism, it could be said, have the same function: not to worship at the idols of the tribe, to stand apart, not to worship but

to observe, to become the mirror in which we see ourselves as we truly are. Needless to say, we rarely approach this. Journalism and academic life are usually faithful adjuncts of national narcissism. The war in Yugoslavia actually began in the newspapers and television of Zagreb and Belgrade.

It is at this point that we should ask: What differences count as major, what minor? One could argue, in fact, that the human differences that matter are those between individuals within groups, and not between the groups themselves. Genetic research seems to show that there are no significant variations in the distribution of intelligence, cognitive or moral ability between racial, ethnic, or gender-based groups, but there are significant variations among individuals *within* these groups. Intolerance customarily fixes on the group differences as the ones that are salient and tends to ignore the differences between individuals in the loathed group. Indeed, in most forms of intolerance, the individuality of the person who is despised is all but ignored; what counts is merely his or her membership in the group. As I pointed out above, intolerant people are fundamentally uncurious, uninterested in the groups they despise except insofar as their behavior confirms their prejudices. Going further, one could say that intolerant people are uninterested in the *individuals* who compose despised groups; indeed, they hardly see "them" as individuals at all. What matters is the constitution of a primal opposition between "them" and "us." Individuality only complicates the picture, indeed makes prejudice more difficult to sustain, since it is at the individual level that forms of identification and affection can arise to subvert the primal opposition of "them" and "us." Intolerance, on this analysis, is a willed refusal to focus on individual differences, and a perverse insistence that individual identity is subsumed in the group. The difference between individual and group is major; the difference between groups is minor—yet perversely, intolerance focuses on the latter, rather than upon the former.

It is worth speculating that if intolerant groups are unable, or unwilling, to perceive those they despise as individuals, it is because intolerant individuals are unable or unwilling to perceive themselves as such. Their own identities are too insecure to permit individuation: they cannot see themselves as the makers of their individualities, and hence they cannot see others as the makers of theirs either. In their intolerance, they allow themselves to be spoken for by the collective discourses that have taken them over; they do not, as it were, speak in their own right. On this account, the narcissism of minor differences is a leap into collective fantasy that enables threatened or anxious individuals to avoid the burden of thinking for themselves or even of thinking of themselves as individuals. Why these identities should be so vulnerable will depend

on who they are and what threatens them. What should be observed is that the practice of toleration depends, critically, on being able to individualize oneself and others, to be able to "see" oneself and others in our singularity, or to put it another way, to be able to focus on "major" difference, which is individual, and to relativize "minor" difference, which is collective.

So what *can* we do about the increasing intolerance that goes with identity politics? We cannot assume that rising real incomes, modernization, homogenization, secularization, and the gradual leveling up of regions of backwardness can be reliably counted on to reduce ethnic friction and intolerance. Indeed, although perhaps only as a transitional phenomenon, modernization and "progress" may exacerbate relations between ethnic groups and lead to an increase in intolerance. Why? Because modernization gives them opportunities and spoils to squabble about, and if modernization raises all incomes, but does not reduce economic disparities between ethnic groups, it may exacerbate their competition. Even when modernization benefits all groups, it may still send them scurrying back toward the ghetto of fantasized identities.

Reduction of "objective" difference between competing groups does not necessarily, and by itself, lead to a reduction in "subjective" suspicion. Indeed, as groups converge "objectively," their mutual intolerance may grow.

Speaking as a liberal, therefore, I would say that it is time to jettison the traditional liberal fiction—enunciated since the days of Adam Smith—that global commerce will pacify the world, that everyone's objective interest in prosperity gives everyone an interest in social peace. Yugoslavia demonstrates that when ethnic groups feel their identity, culture, and survival at stake, they are willing to lay waste to what was one of Eastern Europe's most prosperous economies. If the Yugoslav war destroys the liberal fiction that we have an inertial interest toward interethnic accommodation, it also destroys the Marxist fiction that economic interests predominate in the determination of human action.

The paradox we need to think about is that if racism and intolerance depend on the production of fictions, they are best combated by something that is also a "fiction": namely the proposition that all human beings are equal, that their persons should be inviolable, and that they have enforceable rights by the simple fact of being human beings.

This is a fiction in the sense that when defendants appear in a Canadian courtroom, judge and jury are supposed to ignore their visible iden-

tities—as men, women, blacks, whites, rich, poor—and construe them as if they were simple, equal units of an indivisible humanity. We know how hard this thought experiment actually is, how rarely we achieve this. It is an abstraction process in which all of the institutions of a liberal society wish us to engage. It is an abstraction process that makes a major statement about identity. It says: we are first and foremost juridical subjects, first and foremost citizens, and this entails a range of practices and protections for all; all other identities are secondary, and if they confer advantage, they are to be sedulously counteracted. Without this abstraction process and the institutions that "enforce" it, we *would* be a tribal society.

Yet it has taken liberal society in the West 300 years to create this fiction. Only now are we actually beginning to live by it. First religion, then class and property, then gender, then race, and now age have all been progressively outlawed as grounds for withholding membership in liberal society. We have just reached this point, as we enter the era of the multicultural, multi-ethnic society. Every day we live in this society we're up against the liberal fiction: do we treat X as a rights bearing equal or as a poor black; we know what we must do. We usually fail, and they do too.

Yet without this fiction—that humanity is primary and difference is secondary—we are sunk. We will not have order or justice or fairness. It is all we have got. Although we know it is a fiction, it is the one that sustains liberal institutions. This fiction also sustains a particular epistemology, which is at the root of tolerance as a social practice.

The essential task in teaching "toleration" is to help people see themselves as individuals, and then to see others as such—that is, to make problematic that unthought, unconsidered fusion of personal and group identity on which racism depends. For racism and intolerance are, at a conceptual level, procedures of abstraction in which actual, real individuals in all their specificity are depersonalized and turned into ciphers or carriers of hated group characteristics.

To return to my starting point, my original story, intolerance is a form of divided consciousness in which abstract, conceptual, ideological hatred vanquishes concrete, real, and individual moments of identification. My Serbian friend is at the edge of recognizing his enemies as individuals, only to succumb to the nationalist fantasy of their radical otherness. There is a consciousness, an anguish, an uncertainty, which could be fanned into something decent and human if only he could read a newspaper or listen to a television broadcast that didn't poison him with hate and lies. If he had access to journalism and social science that

addressed him as a serious, rational individual, he might have a chance of becoming one himself. To the degree that individuals can ever learn to think for themselves, become true individuals, they can free themselves, one by one, from the deadly dynamic of the narcissism of minor differences. We can help.

CHAPTER 5

The Myth of the Civic Nation

Bernard Yack

What kind of community do members of modern nations make the focus of political legitimacy and loyalty? Answering that question has been difficult, especially since the idea of the nation is ordinarily called on to capture two distinct changes in the way modern individuals imagine political community. On the one hand, there is the development of a strong connection between cultural and political identities. On the other hand, there is the new way of imagining community that has developed to parallel the new organization of political power by the modern state. By breaking down and integrating local communities and overlapping jurisdictions, state sovereignty has in effect "nationalized" political community. It has taught us to think of those subjected to this new kind of power as members of distinct political communities.

Students of nationalism have generally focused on one or the other of these two momentous changes. The new connections between cultural and political community have received the most attention under the heading of ethnonationalism, the nationalization of political community under the heading of modernization or nation building. Those who look seriously at both changes usually urge us to distinguish them as separate phenomena inspired by two very different visions of the nation. The ethnic idea of the nation, we are told, celebrates inherited cultural identity and is exemplified by Germany, Japan, and most Eastern European countries. The civic idea of the nation, in contrast, is supposed to capture the freely chosen and purely political identity of participants in such modern states as France, Canada, and the United States.

This distinction between ethnic and civic understandings of national community reflects the two ways in which the term *nation* is used in everyday language: to point to cultural communities of origin and to characterize the political communities that correspond to modern states

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(as in expressions like the "United Nations"). The distinction also parallels and builds upon a long series of earlier conceptual dichotomies, such as Eastern versus Western nationalism,[1] *ethnos* versus *demos*,[2] cultural versus political states,[3] and German versus French understandings of nationhood.[4] Like all of these earlier dichotomies, the contrast between ethnic and civic nationalism serves both descriptive and normative goals.[5] In other words, it serves both to classify the different forms of nationalism that exist in the modern world and to distinguish the more valuable or acceptable forms of nationalism from their more dangerous counterparts. Distinguishing civic from ethnic understandings of nationhood is part of a larger effort by contemporary liberals to channel national sentiments in a direction—civic nationalism—that seems consistent with the commitments to individual rights and diversity that they associate with a decent political order.

THE CIVIC/ETHNIC DICHOTOMY

Michael Ignatieff's recent book, *Blood and Belonging*, provides an excellent illustration of this dual use of the distinction between civic and ethnic nations. Ignatieff is a self-professed cosmopolitan—how else, he asks, to describe someone "whose father was born in Russia, whose mother was born in England, whose education was in America, and whose working life has been spent in Canada, Great Britain, and France"?[6] But he recognizes that cosmopolitanism is only a viable option for a rather privileged subset of citizens of wealthy industrial societies. And even their security, he admits, rests upon their being able to take nationally defended citizenship rights for granted.

Accordingly, Ignatieff acknowledges that the Enlightenment vision of a cosmopolitan world society of rational individuals, a vision that he shares, cannot be realized, at least in the foreseeable future. Modern individuals seem to need a sense of belonging to a national community to support the very rights and freedom from fear that Enlightenment cosmopolitans strove to create.[7] But the Enlightenment's political legacy, he argues, can only be preserved in a *civic* nation, which Ignatieff conceives of as "a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values." The civic nation, Ignatieff argues, is a community created by the choice of individuals to honor a particular political creed. As such, it is relatively compatible with the Enlightenment legacy of rationalism and individualism, since it turns "national belonging [into] a form of rational attachment." Ethnic nationalism, in contrast, abandons that legacy because it insists "that an individ-

ual's deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen," that "it is the national community that defines the individual, not the individuals who define the national community."⁸

It is hard for anyone sympathetic to a relatively liberal, relatively cosmopolitan perspective on political life to reject such arguments. Nevertheless, I am skeptical about this familiar contrast between civic and ethnic nationalism. It all seems a little too good to be true, a little too close to what we would like to believe about the world. The civic/ethnic dichtomy parallels a series of other contrasts that should set off alarm bells: not only Western/ Eastern, but rational/emotive, voluntary/inherited, good/bad, *ours/theirs!* Designed to protect us from the dangers of ethnocentric politics, the civic/ethnic distinction itself reflects a considerable dose of ethnocentrism, as if the political identities *French* and *American* were not also culturally inherited artifacts, no matter how much they develop and change as they pass from generation to generation.⁹ The characterization of political community in the so-called civic nations as a rational and freely chosen allegiance to a set of political principles seems untenable to me, a mixture of self-congratulation and wishful thinking.

I am a Canadian citizen who has been studying and teaching in the United States for close to twenty years. As such, I am in the relatively unusual position of being able to choose my citizenship, to become an American citizen or remain a Canadian. Yet even though I have been given the right to exchange one identity for another, it seems absurd to me to suggest that I simply chose my current political identity, as a Canadian expatriate, for myself. If my grandfather's flight from the Tsar's armies had ended in Toledo rather than Toronto, I might be an American expatriate in Canada, grappling with the anti-Americanism of many Canadians, rather than a Canadian expatriate in the United States, grappling with the ignorance and condescension of many Americans.

The "civic" identity *Canadian* is no less an inherited cultural artifact than the "ethnic" identity *Québécois.*¹⁰ Residents of Quebec who think of Canada rather than Quebec as their political community are choosing one culturally inherited location of identity over another. They may make that choice because they believe that the Canadian government will better defend certain political principles, but those political principles do not in themselves define Canada. Canada is a contingent location for these principles, a location that comes with all kinds of inherited cultural baggage: the connection to Great Britain and British political culture; the history of tension and cooperation between French speakers and English speakers; the ambivalent relationship to Canada's overwhelmingly powerful neighbor to the south; and so on.

The same is true for the United States and France as objects of iden-

tification and loyalty. However much they may have come to stand for certain political principles, each comes loaded with inherited cultural baggage that is contingent upon their peculiar histories. That does not mean that we must accept the image of a true France or United States that some seek in the historical record. Collective identities are ever in the process of development and interpretation. Claims about our authentic or original identity most often represent ways of silencing debate about the interpretation of our complex and often contradictory cultural legacies.[11] But even if collective identities such as *French* and *American* are little more than sites for controversy and construction, these sites themselves are cultural artifacts that we inherit from preceding generations.

The political identity of the French, the Canadian, or the American is not based on a set of rationally chosen political principles. No matter how much residents of the United States might sympathize with political principles favored by most French or Canadian citizens, it would not occur to them to think of themselves as French or Canadian. An attachment to certain political principles may be a necessary condition of loyalty to the national community for many citizens of contemporary liberal democracies; they are very far from a sufficient condition for that loyalty.

It may be reasonable to contrast nations whose distinctive cultural inheritance centers on political symbols and political stories with nations whose cultural inheritance centers on language and stories about ethnic origins. But it is unreasonable and unrealistic to interpret this contrast as a distinction between the rational attachment to principle and the emotional celebration of inherited culture. In order to characterize "national belonging [as] a form of rational attachment,"[12] one must ignore the contingent inheritance of distinctive experiences and cultural memories that is an inseparable part of every national political identity. And one must pretend that it makes sense to characterize nations such as France, Canada, and the United States as voluntary associations for the expression of shared political principles. Such is the myth that surrounds the idea of the civic nation.

THE MYTH OF CONSENT

Defenders of this myth often cite Ernest Renan's famous description of the nation as "a daily plebiscite," a phrase that seems to point to individual consent as the source of national identity. But they rarely note that this phrase represents only half of Renan's definition of the nation. "*Two* things," Renan insists, constitute the nation:

One lies in the past, the other in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories, the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form. . . . The nation, like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavors, sacrifice, and devotion.[13]

The nation may be a daily plebiscite for Renan, but the subject of that plebiscite is what we will do with the mix of competing symbols and stories that make up our cultural inheritance. Without "a rich legacy of memories" there are no communal loyalties to be tested by consent. The myth of the *ethnic* nation suggests that you have no choice at all in the making of your national identity: you are your cultural inheritance and nothing else.[14] The myth of the *civic* nation, in contrast, suggests that your national identity is nothing but your choice: you are the political principles you share with other like-minded individuals.

This idea of a purely political and principled basis for mutual concern and solidarity has been very attractive to Western scholars, most of whom rightly disdain the myths that sustain ethnonationalist theories of political community. It is particularly attractive to many Americans, whose peculiar national heritage—with successive waves of immigration and a constitutional founding—fosters the illusion that their mutual association is based solely on consciously chosen principles. But this idea misrepresents political reality as surely as the ethnonationalist myths it is designed to combat. And propagating a new political myth, it seems to me, is an especially inappropriate way of defending the legacy of Enlightenment liberalism from the dangers posed by the growth of nationalist political passions.

The problems with the purely civic understanding of national community emerge clearly in the most influential recent version of civic nationalist thinking: Jürgen Habermas's defense of the idea of "constitutional patriotism."[15] Habermas uses this idea to combat the resurgence of ethnic chauvinism in the wake of German reunification. He proposes loyalty to the liberal democratic principles of the postwar constitution as an alternative focus for German identity. Accordingly, he contrasts two ways of characterizing the incorporation of the East German states into the federal union: on the one hand, as the restoration of "the prepolitical unity of a community with a shared historical destiny"; on the other hand, as the restoration of "democracy and a constitutional state in a territory where civil rights had been suspended . . . since 1933."[16] Habermas's defense of constitutional patriotism is to a great extent a defense of the second, purely civic description of German reunification.

Given the terrible history of German nationalism, it is understandable that one would seek to downplay the existence of a prepolitical

German identity. But Habermas's civic interpretation of German reunification merely justifies or legitimates the recent change of political regime, from communism to liberal democracy, in East Germany. It does nothing to explain or justify *reunification* with the Federal Republic. It may have been easier to establish a liberal democratic regime in East Germany by integrating it into an already functioning and wealthy liberal democracy such as the Federal Republic. But this option was not offered—or even contemplated—by the Federal Republic to the inhabitants of Czechoslovakia or Poland or any other former Communist state. How can one explain the peculiar form of East Germany's transition from communism without invoking the prepolitical community of shared memory and history that tied West to East Germans, a sense of community that led the former to single out the latter for special support and attention? Habermas's civic interpretation of reunification begs this question.

Habermas tacitly admits as much when stating that constitutional patriotism represents a way of situating universalistic principles "in the horizon of the history of a nation."[17] This statement clearly implies that the audience for arguments about the focus of political loyalty is not some random association of individuals united only by allegiance to shared principles, but a prepolitical community with its own cultural "horizon" of shared memories and historical experiences. Only the existence of such cultural horizons turns a particular collection of individuals into an audience for Habermas's arguments about the interpretation of German political history.

Habermas's plea for a constitutionally focused patriotism makes a great deal of sense *within* these cultural horizons. It is precisely because they share terrible memories of racist and militarist violence that it makes sense for Germans to cling to the Basic Law of the postwar constitution as their most valuable historical legacy. Habermas's argument works best as part of a struggle to interpret the significance of a particular community's legacy of shared memories. But as such it assumes the existence of the very prepolitical cultural community that he, like most defenders of the civic idea of the nation, rejects in the name of a community based on rational consent and political principle.

The existence of such a community is a tacit but usually unexamined assumption in the contractarian and neo-Kantian forms of political theory that Habermas favors. Social contract arguments serve to legitimate, through actual or implied consent, different ways of ordering the social and political relationships within a predefined group of individuals. For these arguments assume that there is sufficient reason for individuals deliberating about justice and the social contract to pay attention to each other's proposals and decisions, rather than to those made

by individuals outside of this group. Since the whole point of these theories is to determine the proper order *within* a given group of individuals, the assumption of a prepolitical community is safely tucked away in most of the debates about the meaning of liberal democratic principles. It is only in situations in which the boundaries of such groups are in question, as when considering the reasons for German reunification, that the assumption of prepolitical communal loyalties directly comes to light.

POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONALISM

Liberal critics of nationalism like to characterize the invocation of prepolitical national identities as part of the Romantic and irrationalist rebellion against the Enlightenment and modern political culture. But these familiar criticisms ignore the extent to which liberal democratic culture *itself* inspires people to think of themselves as members of prepolitical communities. This is especially true of the rhetoric of popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty arguments encourage modern citizens to think of themselves as organized into communities that are logically and historically prior to the communities created by their shared political institutions. To the extent that one condemns our tendency to look for prepolitical sources of political identity, modern democratic political culture is part of the problem, not the solution.

The doctrine of popular sovereignty insists that behind every state there stands a people, a community of individuals that makes use of the state as a means of self-government and thus has the right to establish the limits of its power. This doctrine was developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a way of countering fears that the dissolution of absolutist authority would necessarily lead to the anarchic war of all against all—claims supported by the belief that nothing but ascriptive social hierarchy binds individuals to each other. Locke and numerous other defenders of popular sovereignty responded to this fear by arguing that the dissolution of a particular form of government does not dissolve the group that institutes government, variously described as the community, the civil society, or the people (in contrast to the commonwealth or political society).[18]

Such notions directly influence liberal democratic culture (especially in the United States, where "We, the People" promulgated the Constitution). Modern citizens tend to imagine political community as something distinct from the state and the political processes it defines, a kind of cultural community that makes use of the state for purposes of self-government. When we are thinking about the relatively loose ties

that allow us to associate with each other in public and private, we call this prepolitical community "civil society." When we emphasize government accountability to this community, we usually describe it as "the people." And when we are emphasizing the identity drawn from this community, we most often call it "the nation." All of these concepts—civil society, the people, the nation—rest on the notion of a community set apart from and using the state as a means of self-government.

Habermas deals with this difficulty by putting a Kantian gloss on popular sovereignty arguments. He portrays popular sovereignty as an "abstract model" of individual self-legislation in which "consensus is achieved in the course of argument . . . from an identically applied procedure recognized by all."[19] Whatever its philosophical merits, this interpretation of popular sovereignty has little historical value. The contemporary political cultures that Habermas invokes as the basis for constitutional patriotism were at first established and defended in the name of the people and *la nation*, not in the name of the original position or the ideal speech situation. Moreover, the procedures for locating consensus that Habermas invokes as the basis for popular sovereignty assume that individuals know beforehand *with whom* they are seeking to achieve consensus. The abstractness of Habermas's understanding of communal consensus does nothing to eliminate this assumption, even if it makes it harder to locate. As long as there is little controversy about the historical referent for rhetorical invocations of the people, as in the English, American, and French Revolutions, this assumption tends to remain in the background. But disagreements about the historical identity of "the people" bring the assumption into question, creating severe difficulties for popular sovereignty arguments. We need to face up to the implications of our reliance on such assumptions, even if doing so makes us uneasy by showing how individual rights and political freedoms depend to a certain extent on the contingencies and vagaries of shared memory and identity.

Ethnonationalists, however, are no more comfortable with the real-world contingencies of communal identity than proponents of the civic nation. Ethnonationalists rid themselves of their discomfort by picking out one source of identity in our ever-changing communal heritage and turning it into a norm against which we should measure our political communities. But in order to portray ethnic community as the norm for political community, ethnonationalists must make a number of implausible claims about our communal identities. They must insist, for example, that we can each trace our cultural identities back to some discrete ethnic community; that these communities maintain their original character through time; and that even where there seems little evidence of ethnic consciousness, these communities persist in their original char-

acter, waiting like a sleeping beauty to be awakened by the kiss of national self-assertion. In truth, ethnic identities are part of a contingent and ever-changing legacy of shared memories and communal identification. Portraying them as the norm against which to measure the prepolitical sense of community associated with modern states requires a gross misrepresentation of the historical record.

The proponents of the purely civic idea of the nation rebel against the search for norms within the contingencies of our historical experience. But, as I have tried to show, the norms that they come up with tend to say much more about the way in which we should order lives within *given* national communities than about why the boundaries of these communities should take one shape rather than another. As a result, they, too, tend to propagate myths about national identity by redescribing contingent communities of memory and experience as if they were nothing more than voluntary associations of individuals, united by their shared attachment to a body of moral and political principles.

WHY THERE WERE NO GREEK NATION-STATES

One way of focusing attention upon the close connections that the citizens of so-called civic nations make between political and cultural community is to contrast them with their ancient Greek predecessors. This comparison is especially useful because, for the ancient Greeks, the distinction between *ethnos* and *demos* was an organizing principle rather than a moral aspiration. The inherited cultural identity that they shared as Greeks was clearly distinguished from their political identity as participants in one polis or another. As a result, the ancient Greeks actually separated cultural and political community in a way that it is difficult for modern citizens even to imagine, let alone emulate.

Students of Greek history have long been puzzled by this separation of cultural and political community. Why, they ask, did the Greeks, with their vibrant and wonderfully creative sense of cultural identity, not connect cultural community with a broader sense of political identity and loyalty? A great amount of ink has been spilled exploring the question why the Greeks did not, in effect, develop the idea of national community.[20] But if, as most students of nationalism agree, there is no necessary connection between *ethnos* and *demos*,[21] then it is *our* idea of political community, rather than the Greeks', that is odd and in need of explanation. Looking at Greek political practice and imagination helps make clear just how thoroughly we have integrated political and cultural identity.

Consider how the Greeks founded colonies. Citizens of one polis would set off to build or take over a new one. They took with them their

cultural and personal identities as Greeks, but not their political identity as members of the demos of the polis they left behind. As a result, they endured few of the painful loyalty struggles experienced by modern colonists both before and after the establishment of independence from the mother country. For the Greeks, to found a colony was to found a new political identity. A new polis brought into being a new demos, since the demos was nothing but the community of individuals organized to govern themselves. Cultural identity as Greeks was something that colonists carried with them wherever they went. But political identity depended on continued participation in a particular polis.

Or consider the relative casualness of treason in ancient Greek politics. I have always found this a little jarring, given the conventional wisdom that Greek political life entailed submergence in a collective political identity. Can one imagine an American Alcibiades returning and being given command of an American army after defecting to the Soviet Union and helping to reorganize the Soviet military? Or imagine the fuss if the two greatest leaders of a successful Cold War America went over to the defeated enemy, as Themistocles and Pausanius went over to the Persians. Such an event would be a monumental personal and political betrayal to be memorialized far more intensely than Benedict Arnold's treason. Yet, at least in Thucydides's recounting, these betrayals recur regularly without the attention we would give to them. Indeed, in Thucydides's judgment Themistocles "has a claim on our admiration quite extraordinary and unparalleled," a judgment that one could never expect to hear from a contemporary historian dealing with someone whose life ended in the betrayal of his or her country.[22] Putting ourselves and our politicians in the place of these Greek leaders, we expect some sign of inner turmoil and conflict of loyalty, but find none.

The reason for this difference, I believe, is that for us treason suggests a kind of self-betrayal, a betrayal of our own cultural and personal identity.[23] This is a telltale sign of the strong connection we make between political and cultural identity, even in liberal democracies. Lacking this connection, the ancient Greeks seem disinclined to treat treason as a form of self-betrayal. Alcibiades and Themistocles were still Greeks when they went to Sparta and to Persia. They took that element of identity with them wherever they went. But once they left Athens, or more to the point, once they thought Athens had rejected them, they were no longer Athenians. Like colonists embarking for a new community, they left their political identity behind them, something that modern politicians, no matter how venal and untrustworthy, find it very hard to do, and something modern citizens would find appalling.

Compare Themistocles's reaction to his ostracism and exile to that of a modern counterpart, Alfred Dreyfus. Dreyfus, completely innocent

and honorable, subjected to years of torture on Devil's Isle, remained loyal to the French nation throughout his ordeal and tried to prove his loyalty to an army that went to extraordinary lengths to destroy him even when fully aware of his innocence. Themistocles, in contrast, a man who was far from innocent of dishonesty and double-dealing, simply went off to join the Persians, the enemy he had done so much to defeat, after suffering the ingratitude of the Athenian people.

Judith Shklar constructed this comparison between Themistocles and Dreyfus in order to illustrate the difference between viewing political commitments as a matter of rational obligation and as a matter of emotional loyalty.[24] Themistocles's reaction to exile, she insists, is a reasonable response to an unjust world. His obligations to Athens were at an end after the citizenry voted to ostracize him. Dreyfus's reaction, in contrast, is for her a demonstration of the irrational lengths to which emotional ties of loyalty can drive us. The French army had cynically sacrificed Dreyfus to their vision of the nation, a vision that it was clear had no room for Jewish officers. How could Dreyfus still seek to prove his loyalty to an army that had betrayed him so callously and completely? Loyalty of this sort, Shklar declares, is nothing short of madness.[25]

I draw somewhat different conclusions from Shklar's comparison of ancient and modern exiles. The stark contrast between Themistocles's and Dreyfus's reactions to injustice strikingly illustrates a crucial difference between ancient Greek and modern attitudes toward political community. Dreyfus was so intent on demonstrating his loyalty to the French nation because that community was an important part of his personal identity. He took his French identity with him wherever he went, even to Devil's Isle; refusing to serve the nation and its army on his return would be like betraying himself. For Themistocles, in contrast, his abandonment of Athens raised few questions of self-betrayal. He, like other Greek exiles, could take his personal identity as a Greek with him wherever he went, but that identity did not require any demonstration of loyalty to the Athenian political community. Once he was no longer allowed to be an active part of that community, it no longer had any claims on his loyalty. Extreme though Dreyfus's expression of loyalty to an unworthy France may be, I believe that most modern citizens would find his intense struggle with conflicting loyalties easier to identify with than Themistocles's cold calculation.[26] For most modern citizens, as for Dreyfus, betraying one's political community involves self-betrayal in a way it did not for Themistocles and the ancient Greeks.

My brief comparison between Greek and modern citizens thus drives me toward a somewhat surprising conclusion: that (at least in one important sense) modern citizens are more loyal to, and more strongly

identified with, their political communities than their ancient Greek counterparts. This conclusion is surprising because we have been taught by Rousseau and others to think of ancient citizenship as complete subordination to the collective identity of the polis.[27] Moreover, it is hard to believe that the normally passive citizens of a modern nation could identify more with their political communities than ancient Greek citizens who spent so much more of their time fighting their country's battles and participating in its political life.

But participation is not the same thing as identification. For the ancient Greeks, political community referred to the sharing of self-government, not to the identity-shaping cultural community modern citizens experience. Indeed, I suspect that the relatively intense participation of Greek citizens in political life made it *harder* for them to identify with their political communities in the way that modern citizens do. It is far easier to declare "my country right or wrong" when I passively receive national policy from my representatives than when I am actively involved in making and executing it myself. When I am directly involved in the political process, then its ups and downs, victories and defeats are bound to affect me much more personally and encourage me to distinguish myself from my political community. The ancient Greeks appear to have had a passion for political activity, rather than an overwhelming identification with their polis. We are the ones, after all, who sanctify bipartisanship. Solon's laws, in contrast, punished those who did *not* choose sides in the city's political struggles.[28]

Because it brings political and cultural community together in a way that was foreign to the ancient Greeks, modern nationalism, whether of the civic or the ethnic variety, combines political loyalty with loyalty to oneself. Political betrayal involves self-betrayal for modern citizens, regardless of whether the betrayed cultural inheritance is more closely associated with political or ethnic symbols and stories. An American politician who calmly changed political identity simply because of a slight preference for French or Canadian political principles would probably seem just as peculiar and out of place in the world of the civic nations as the cold and calculating Athenian statesman Themistocles.

THE DEPENDENCE OF LIBERALISM ON NATIONALISM

The late Ernest Gellner once quipped that Marxists have been forced to come up with a "wrong address" theory of history in order to explain the success of nationalism: history had a message for classes that somehow got delivered to nations by mistake.[29] Liberal theorists are only beginning to face up to their similar disappointment. History, they

believed, had a message for individuals, but that message somehow got delivered by mistake to nations. The age of liberal individualism has also been the age of nationalism; liberal practices have been realized, for the most part, within the framework of national communities.

The myth of the civic nation reflects one strategy that liberals have pursued in order to salvage their hopes for modern politics: find and preserve a form of national community that is compatible with liberal political commitments. If only there were a viable form of national community that reflected shared political principles rather than some particular cultural inheritance, then the growth of national identity need not undermine social diversity and universal human rights. History's message could then still be delivered to individuals "care of" the civic nation.

But wishing won't make it so. The idea of the civic nation defends the Enlightenment's liberal legacy by employing the very concept—that of the political community as a voluntary association—whose plausibility has been undermined by the success of nationalism. The liberal legacy of individual rights and political rationality has developed within political communities that impart a kind of inherited cultural identity quite unforeseen by Enlightenment liberals. The battle to preserve that legacy is taking place *within* the framework provided by such communities. Within that framework we have every reason to construct and defend distinctions between more and less inclusive forms of national community. But in doing so we should not fool ourselves into thinking that what we are constructing is a freely chosen and purely civic form of national identity.

Even if the myth of the civic nation were true, I doubt that voluntary associations for the expression of shared political principle would be as conducive to toleration and diversity as their supporters expect them to be. There would be plenty of room for exclusion and suspicion of difference in a political community based solely on a shared commitment to political principles. We should be willing to exclude anyone from such a community who disagrees with its basic principles. Moreover, we might be inclined to exclude anyone whom we *suspect* of rejecting these principles. For if it is commitment to certain principles that makes one a member of a community, then we will probably want to know whether this commitment is genuine or a mask for subversion.

The possibility of intolerance and paranoia in a truly "civic" nation is far from academic or hypothetical. After all, American citizens have been denounced and persecuted for clinging to unAmerican political principles as well as for their foreign backgrounds. And as George Mosse reminds us, it was the decidedly civic nation of the French Jacobins that invented many of the techniques of persecution and mass

paranoia exploited by twentieth-century fascists and xenophobic nationalists.[30]

It is only because so few of us really take the idea of a community of shared principle seriously that it appears to be an antidote to exclusion and intolerance. Were Americans, for example, to make citizenship contingent upon commitment to political principles instead of the mere accident of birth (to citizen parents or on American territory), they might become considerably more suspicious of their fellow citizens' declarations of political loyalty. Birthright citizenship can promote toleration precisely by removing the question of communal membership from the realm of choice and contention about political principles.[31]

In the end, I believe that Renan got it right. Two things make a nation: present-day consent and a rich cultural inheritance of shared memories and practices. Without consent our cultural legacy would be our destiny, rather than a set of background constraints on our activities. But without such a legacy there would be no consent at all, since there would be no reason for people to seek agreement with any one group of individuals rather than another. Focusing exclusively on one or the other component of national identity inspires the contrasting myths of ethnonationalist and civic theories of political community, myths that exaggerate, on the one side, our inability to change, build on, and improve on the communal ties we have inherited and, on the other, our capacity to recreate ourselves in the image of our liberal theories.

NOTES

1. John Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism," in *Nationalism*, ed. Eugene Kamenka (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973).

2. Emmerich Francis, *Ethnos und Demos: Soziologische Beiträge zur Volkstheorie* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1965).

3. Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).

4. Ernest Renan, "What Is a Nation?" in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990); Louis Dumont, *German Ideology: From France to Germany and Back* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

5. Moreover, the normative slant in these dichotomies is not always in the direction of the "Western," "political" variant of nationalism. Meinecke's distinction between political and cultural states, for example, is clearly designed to support the superiority of the cultural version of nationhood favored by Germans.

6. Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1993), p. 11.

7. Ibid., pp. 11–13.

8. ibid., pp. 7–8. For similar arguments, see Bogdan Denitch's (*Ethnic Nationalism: The Tragic Death of Yugoslavia* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994]) defense of civic nationalism; Liah Greenfeld's (*Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992]) distinction between Anglo-American and continental European forms of nationalism; and Dominique Schnapper's defense of the idea of the civic nation, in which she attempts to prove that the "very notion of an ethnic nation is a contradiction in terms" (*La communauté des citoyens: Sur l'idée moderne de la nation* [Paris: Gallimard, 1994], pp. 24–30, 95, 178).

9. Indeed, the idea of the civic nation, with its portrayal of community as a shared and rational choice of universally valid principles, is itself a cultural inheritance in nations like France and the United States. One aspect of distinctly French and American political ideologies is to portray their own cultural inheritance as a universally valid object of rational choice (Dumont, *German Ideology*, pp. 3–4, 199–201).

10. Will Kymlicka, chapter 7 of this volume.

11. Herman Lebovics, *True France: The Wars over Cultural Identity 1900–45* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992). An appeal to original political principles, by the way, functions just as well as an appeal to cultural origins in shutting down debate about the meaning of one's political community. Opponents of multiculturalism, such as Arthur Schlesinger (*The Disuniting of America* [New York: Norton, 1992]), often use the appeal to original principles like "*e pluribus unum*" in this way.

12. Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging*, pp. 7–8.

13. Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" p. 19.

14. Renan's complaint about the "German" understanding of nationhood, according to which Alsatians owed allegiance to Germany in spite of their explicit identification with France, is that it *eliminates* choice from nationhood, not that it refers to cultural inheritance as a source of nationhood (ibid.). This view of nationhood does not allow the Alsatians to focus on the legacy of French cultural symbols and associations (many of which are explicitly political in nature), which, like the German language, is part of their cultural inheritance. For Renan a nation grows out of the choices we make within our cultural inheritance. For a treatment of current American debates about cultural identity that stresses choice within a complex cultural inheritance, see David Hollinger, *Postethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 1995).

15. Jürgen Habermas, "Citizenship and National Identity," in *Theorizing Citizenship*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); *The New Conservatism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), pp. 256–62.

16. Habermas, "Citizenship," p. 256.

17. Ibid., p. 264.

18. Edmund Morgan, *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America* (New York: Norton, 1988).

19. Habermas, "Citizenship," pp. 259–60; idem, "Volkssouveränität als Verfahren," in *Faktizität und Geltung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1992).

20. Moses Finley, "The Ancient Greeks and Their Nation," in idem, *The Use and Abuse of History* (New York: Viking, 1975).

21. Francis, *Ethnos und Demos*, p. 77.

22. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. B. Crawley, rev. T. E. Wick (New York: Modern Library, 1982), I.138.

23. Another factor in the casualness of treason among the ancient Greeks was the existence of networks of guest-friendships connecting aristocratic families in different cities (Gabriel Hermann, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987]).

24. Judith Shklar, "Obligation, Loyalty, Exile," *Political Theory* 21 (1993): 181–91.

25. Ibid., p. 191.

26. As an emigré from regimes, National Socialism and Stalinist Communism, with which she could not possibly have identified, it is not surprising that Shklar found it easier to identify with Themistocles than with Dreyfus.

27. Bernard Yack, *The Problems of a Political Animal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 10–16, 30–33, 71–85.

28. Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens* (New York: Hafner, 1950), p. 76.

29. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 129.

30. George Mosse, *Confronting the Nation: Jewish and Western Nationalism* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 1993), pp. 65–72.

31. Those, like Peter Schuck and Rogers Smith (*Citizenship without Consent* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987]) who complain about birthright citizenship as an anomaly in American political culture—a violation of its commitment to liberal principles of consent—fail to see this point. Birthright citizenship can have the effect of moderating our concern about our neighbors' commitments to shared principles, thereby promoting greater inclusion and toleration.

CHAPTER 6

Cultural Nationalism, Neither Ethnic nor Civic

Kai Nielsen

I

Quebec, as I write this (1996), is a province of Canada. It is a liberal part of a liberal society and a liberal state. The provincial government, whatever political party is in power, remains a government of a liberal democratic society. It is not an *a priori* necessity that that is so, but there is no empirical reason at all to think that this situation will change in the foreseeable future. It is not unreasonable to expect that in a few years Quebec will move from being a province to being a sovereign state. Will this very change, as many anglophones, allophones, and even some francophones fear, carry Quebec from being a liberal society into being an illiberal society? I will argue that such fears are utterly groundless.

It is true that what fuels the drive for the sovereignty of Quebec is Quebec nationalism and that it is a nationalism voiced principally, but not exclusively, by francophone Québécois (80 percent of the population of Quebec). This nationalism is committed to sustaining the existence of the national identity of the Québécois nation with its distinctive culture and institutions, including, very centrally, and as a necessary condition to preserve the rest, the French language surrounded in North America by a sea of English. The fear, on the part of some, is that this very nationalism, if it succeeds in its aim of establishing a sovereign Quebec, will destroy Quebec's liberal democracy. It cannot, those caught by this fear think, but undermine the liberal character of Quebec society, for "liberal nationalism" is an oxymoron. We cannot, the claim goes, coherently cobble liberalism and nationalism together.[1]

The strongest theoretical statement of that belief about the necessary

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illiberalism of nationalism comes from such staunch and even left liberal theoreticians as Judith Shklar and Brian Barry.[2] They despise nationalism, seeing it at best as a form of ethnocentrism, atavistic, backward-looking, exclusivist, and very often, even worse than that, a form of authoritarianism, even something that either is, or not infrequently tends toward, a fascist authoritarianism. In its very nature, the claim goes, nationalism cannot but be xenophobic, authoritarian, exclusivist and, where it has the opportunity, often expansionist as well.

Brian Barry, for example, who is both a tough-minded and close-reasoning left liberal, takes nationalism to be a doctrine that "claims that all people should give their highest loyalty to their nation" (p. 353). Nationalists, he adds, take it that "in politics . . . the pursuit of national interest" should subordinate all other interests to its achievement. Where national interests dictate it, national interests should be pursued "at the expense of the interests of other countries and without regard to other values such as the avoidance of bloodshed, respect for international law, or the maintenance of international co-operation through bilateral or multilateral treaties" (pp. 353–54).

Surely some nationalisms have taken this fanatical, antidemocratic, and antiliberal form and surely *all* nationalisms, in seeking at least some measure of political autonomy (some form of self-governance), and not infrequently outright sovereignty, for their nations, have in all instances, and I believe rightly, sought to advance the "collective cultural and material interests of those united by common nationality" (p. 353). But *pace* Barry nationalists need not *only* be concerned with those interests and they need not, and should not, be concerned to advance them at the expense of running roughshod over the interests or rights of others who are not a part of that common nationality (p. 353). *Such* a nationalism is indeed incompatible with liberalism and a cosmopolitanism that affirms moral equality (i.e., that the life of everyone matters and matters equally) and the related belief that the interests of all human beings have in principle an equal claim on all of us. That is to say, *such* a nationalism is at odds with some beliefs and principles that are an essential part of any civilized moral outlook. Such an egalitarian person committed to a cosmopolitan outlook obviously cannot accept the belief that people should give their highest loyalty to their own nation or even that it will necessarily be the primary focus of their identity and loyalty. Commitment to a country or a nation cannot rightly override all other commitments. Such a nationalism is plainly regressive and retrograde.

Nonetheless, national identity is indeed a very important identity, an identity essential for very many people to give meaning to their lives, vital for their secure sense of self-respect, essential for their sense of belonging and security: all things of fundamental value to human

beings. They are things that would be a central part of a good life for people in any society.[3] Still, however important, national identity does not exhaust their identity and it should not be their deepest loyalty. Moreover, sometimes loyalty to one's country or state-aspiring nation is something that is very wrong indeed. It would have been a very good thing if far fewer Germans would have remained loyal to the Nazi regime. We should say this, and very firmly and unequivocally, while still admiring the very character trait of loyalty—but not loyalty above all—in Nazis or in anyone else. Loyalty itself is a good thing, but the forms it takes can have such evil consequences that it would be better, all things considered, that the person or persons in question not have it. The sources of formation and sustaining of identity are diverse and a human being's being loyal to her nation is one important loyalty among many loyalties. It is a loyalty that sometimes should be overridden without thereby disappearing, as promises sometimes should be broken even though a commitment remains to the practice of promise-keeping, thereby keeping the constitutive belief that to break a promise is always prima facie wrong. Moreover, that they are sometimes broken is no threat to the practice of promise-keeping. It might even strengthen it. Similar, though not identical, things should be said about loyalty.

Nationalisms are not always intolerant or even exclusionist. Will Kymlicka well remarks that "some nationalisms are peaceful, liberal, and democratic, while others are xenophobic, authoritarian, and expansionist" (chap. 7 of this volume, p. 133). Earlier in this century, nationalist movements in Norway and Iceland were peaceful and democratic and present-day nationalisms in Belgium, Scotland, Quebec, and Wales are peaceful and democratic, fitting in well with a liberal conception of society. So it is (*pace* Shklar and Barry) not nationalism per se that is bad, but a certain illiberal type of nationalism and so, given the above examples, liberal nationalism is not an oxymoron.[4]

II

This may be granted only to be followed by the characteristic response that good nationalisms are *civic* nationalisms while the bad nationalisms are *ethnic* nationalisms. Ethnic nationalisms, rooted in an ethnic conception of "the nation," define membership in the nation in terms of descent. In a country such as Germany, where the conception of the nation is ethnic, you are German and have German citizenship because of descent, because, that is, you can trace your descent to Germans. If you are a Turkish, Spanish, or Hungarian "guest worker" in Germany, you cannot acquire German citizenship no matter how well you know

German, German history, or customs, no matter how attuned you are to German culture, how well you integrate yourself into German society, and no matter how long you have resided in Germany. A nationalism that emerged there without a change in the conception of the nation would be an ethnic nationalism. And it indeed is such an exclusionist nationalism that is bad.

Civic nationalism, by contrast, the story continues, rooted in a civic conception of nation, is a good or at least a benign or acceptable form of nationalism. Civic nations like the United States, Canada, Denmark, Australia, or Sweden are in principle open to anyone. They are not exclusionary. With a civic nationalism there is in principle at least an equal access for everyone to the cultural goods of and in the civic nation.

A small exercise in definition may help here. Ranging over nations that are civic, ethnic, or neither, I shall use "nation," as Kymlicka does, to mark "a historical community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory, or homeland, sharing a distinct language and culture."[5] "Nation," taken in such a sociological sense, is, as Kymlicka puts it, "closely related to the idea of a 'people' or a 'culture'—indeed these concepts are often defined in terms of each other."[6] This is not the only way that "nation" and the related terms can be and have been used. They plainly do not mark natural kinds. Some theoreticians, for example, and not without reason, speak of nonterritorial nations—nations in a diaspora; and there are still other uses. But Kymlicka's use is a familiar one that is reasonably determinate and useful and will catch, I believe, the phenomena relevant here. Moreover, even when in diaspora, as at one time Jews were, there was a conception of, and an aspiration for, a homeland. A nation, as I am using the term, must "be in aspiration (if not yet in fact) a political community."[7] It must aspire to self-government, to *in some way* control "a chunk of the earth's surface."[8] In that way a nation is very different from something that is merely an ethnic group.

In speaking of controlling a chunk of the earth's surface, I qualified it by saying "in some way." That qualification is essential, for a nation may not even in aspiration desire to be a state. The self-governance that some nations may have in mind is weaker than that. In any event statehood is impossible to achieve for all nations in our modern world, for there are more nations than there are, or even could be, states, where a state is taken in the familiar Weberian sense as an institution that successfully claims a monopoly of de facto legitimate force in a particular historical territory. But with the possible exceptions of Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Iceland, there are no longer, if there ever really were, any uninational states.[9] All states of any size, and even most very small states, are multinational states. And *sometimes* these different nations in

a single state share the same territory so that not all nations can reasonably aspire to be states. Think of conceptions of the black nation within the United States or a Mohawk nation within Quebec. But they can all aspire to be political communities where they have a sufficiently secure measure of self-governance to protect their public cultures. Sometimes—indeed I think typically—this requires a state, but sometimes it does not.[10]

Finally, for a nation actually to exist that matches Kymlicka's characterization, there must be a mutual recognition of membership at least by its members.[11] There must be a recognition that certain people are English, Irish, Finnish, and the like. In that important way nationality is not like a natural fact.

The above conceptualization of "nation" quite properly does not distinguish between an ethnic nation and a civic nation or derivatively between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism, though it does distinguish an ethnic group from a nation, whether ethnic or civic. Immigrant groups are paradigmatically ethnic groups. They, unless they are for a considerable time repressed, do not aspire to a homeland or to a distinct political community. Members of what will become such groups immigrate to what is for them a new country where they realize that they will have to adapt to and in large measure adopt the public culture of that country. They are quite distinct from historical national minorities "whose historic homeland has been incorporated into a larger state, through colonization, conquest or voluntary federation" (Kymlicka, chap. 7 of this volume, p. 132).

Immigrant groups in societies into which they immigrate form ethnic groups as distinct from nations. By contrast to the people who form nations in a state, immigrants in some sense choose (though sometimes it is pretty close to a forced option) "to leave their original culture and homeland and move to a new country. They know that this uprooting will only be successful if they adapt to their new country, including its language and customs" (ibid., p. 131). An ethnic group is distinguished from a nation, including an ethnic nation, by being a group with a common culture that does not seek to be a political community, does not seek self-governance, and certainly does not seek to constitute themselves into a state. There is no issue of secession with them. For them a crucial issue is how to integrate successfully into their adopted homeland while still preserving something of their ethnic identity.

However, an ethnic group may come to adopt a nationalist agenda, and typically an ethnic nationalist agenda, if it is prevented from integrating into the mainstream society either through mandatory segregation or severe and usually in part legal discrimination. It *may* even be the case that all nations were *originally* ethnic nations. But, however they

were originally formed, many of them are no longer ethnic nations and they do not now, whatever may have been true in the past, have an ethnic nationalist agenda. Their nationalism, if it exists, is not exclusionist. It is open to anyone, with a landed immigrant status within their territories, who wishes to come to have full citizenship and be part of that nation, to do so if they learn its language, history, and customs and are willing to abide by its laws.

As we have seen from our definition of "nation," it is given in *cultural* terms. A nation must have a pervasive public culture (a societal, encompassing, or organizational culture, all qualifiers of "culture" adopted by various authors writing on nationalism). Without such a pervasive encompassing culture, something there in the public domain of a society, it would not be a nation.[12] Having such a culture is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for something being a nation.

Defenders of the claim that civic nationalism is the only acceptable nationalism try to deny that civic nationalism is also a cultural nationalism by claiming that a civic nationalism is *a purely political conception* reflecting not some distinct culture but only a common commitment, across cultures, to the political principles of democracy and freedom. But this is false. Indeed, worse than being merely false, it is a piece of deceptive ideology and may even be incoherent. To be a member of any nation at all, even in the most laissez-faire liberal society, is to be accepted as being a part of a distinctive organizational culture in terms of which even this liberal individualistic nation is defined and which sets the parameters of national identity in the nation in question. It has, that is, a cultural component as much as the most traditional of ethnic nationalisms. To be an American, Australian, British, or a New Zealander, even though these societies are democratic and even if their economic policies and surrounding ideology are that of laissez-faire individualism, it still is *not* necessary for a citizen of such countries to be committed to principles of freedom and democracy in order to retain their citizenship. Sometimes members of these nations—citizens of these states—become fascists or fundamentalists or in some other way reject democratic political principles. These might even just be things that they were socialized into as children. They do not, particularly if they are native-born citizens, thereby or even just in fact lose their citizenship and cease to be part of (for example) either the American or Australian nations. Particular political commitments, or even any political commitments at all, are neither necessary nor sufficient for citizenship. For the native-born, at least, their having citizenship has nothing to do with their political beliefs.[13] Rather they automatically acquire citizenship by descent and at birth, and they cannot be stripped of it if they become committed to antidemocratic principles or practices. So nationality is

not determined even in "civic nations" by a commitment to democracy and freedom. Even more broadly, it is not a matter of the political beliefs the citizens of these societies have. When Spain became fascist the Spaniards did not cease to be Spaniards. And their nationality did not change when Spain again became a liberal democracy. It remained constant through all the political turmoil and revolution.

Civic nationalism—the ideology surrounding it to the contrary notwithstanding—is not a "purely political nationalism" linked to a commitment to democracy and freedom. Who is a national and what is a nation even in societies taken to exemplify civic nationalism is not so determined. There is always a distinct cultural component as well. Their nationality, as we have seen, is not determined by their commitment to democracy and freedom or by any other political belief or conception. A society could be both civic nationalist (*if* that is taken to be the opposite of ethnic nationalist) as well as a multiethnic society, while still being thoroughly antidemocratic. The people in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, when under military dictatorships, had, as they have now, a strong sense of national identity that was then, and still is, nonethnic. Whites, Blacks, Asians, and Indians under the dictatorships, as before and after, all had at least formal equal citizenship. These societies were plainly not ethnic nationalisms, but there was very little that was democratic about them. In point of fact they were not liberal democracies or liberal societies, but oppressive dictatorships. Moreover, and distinctly, it is not (for example) sufficient for a Finn immigrating to Canada to gain citizenship to carry with her her democratic principles and practices. That will not make her a Canadian citizen. To become a Canadian citizen she must know or learn at least one of the two official languages, know something of the history of Canada, and something of its laws and customs. A purely civic nationalism is a myth. It exists nowhere and could exist nowhere, given the very definition of what a nation is. And even without that definition, the conception of a civic nation is too thin for a society to so determine nationality or to give its people a sense of national identity. There is always a richer cultural component.

It should be evident from what has been said above that it is also a mistake to equate cultural nationalism with ethnic nationalism. Ethnic nationalism, as all nationalisms, is cultural, but not all cultural nationalisms are ethnic. Cultural nationalism defines the nation in terms of a common encompassing culture. But that culture can be, and typically is in the West, a liberal democratic culture. The aim of a nationalist movement is to protect, and, beyond that, if it can, to insure the flourishing of the culture of the nation that that nationalist movement represents. Where the nation has a state, that state will in certain respects privilege that culture, though, if it is also a liberal democracy, it will only do so

in ways that protect the rights of its minorities and indeed protect rights across the board. It will insist, at least in the general case, on educating children in the language of that culture and in its history and customs. And it will insist on the use of that language in the public domain. But it will not forbid in private domains the use of other languages or the adherence to other cultures. In the United States (Puerto Rico and Hawaii aside), English is the sole "official" language of the post office, the courthouse, and all other governmental institutions.[14] But in the synagogue, Hebrew can be used, as Latin was used in the Catholic church until the church itself, without any governmental prodding, changed its own policy. In such places (and they are not all religious places) the members of such organizations can use the language of their choice. It is the mistake of equating "ethnic nationalism" with "cultural nationalism" that leads to the unfair and indeed politically dangerous error of claiming, as Michael Ignatieff does in his *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, that Quebec and Flemish nationalisms are ethnic nationalisms. That is completely false. As Kymlicka accurately puts it, both "the Québécois and the Flemish accept immigrants as full members of the nation, so long as they learn the language and history of the society. They define membership in terms of participation in a common culture, open to all, rather than on ethnic grounds" (chap. 7 of this volume, p. 133).

III

What import, if any, does the above discussion of nationalism have for our thinking about what is to be done in Quebec over issues concerning Quebec sovereignty? It is easy, and I guess understandably so, for intellectuals to overestimate the import of more or less abstract arguments coming out in academic publications. Again and again intellectuals have been prone to such an overestimation. Still the considerations that have been advanced here might have a modest import. There is a widespread belief abroad both in and outside of Quebec, mainly, but not exclusively, among anglophones and allophones, that Quebec nationalism is an ethnic nationalism, and worse still, an ethnic nationalism of a backward and intolerant kind. The perception is that if such a nationalism prevails, it would destroy our liberal democratic society by stamping out the rights of anglophone and allophone Québécois. In some of the stronger reactions to the challenge of Quebec sovereignty, Quebec nationalism is seen as a backward-looking, Catholic-dominated, intolerant, almost fascist movement, isolationist and exclusivist, anti-Protestant and anti-Semitic, turning its back on the modern pluralist world

and in the process thoroughly rejecting liberal values. Whatever may or may not have been true of the old Quebec, nothing even remotely like this obtains today. Since the "Quiet Revolution," Quebec has been thoroughly transformed into a modern pluralist, largely secular liberal society.[15] Indeed, it is arguably more secularized and more liberal in its outlook than the rest of North America, perhaps Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City, Toronto, Boston, and some similar metropolises aside. But, be that as it may, surely modern Quebec society is as liberal as any society in North America. Yet fuelled by some of the popular media—including Quebec media, both anglophone and francophone (*The Gazette* and *La Presse*, for instance)—a not inconsiderable segment of the Canadian population both inside and outside of Quebec have been bamboozled into almost a paranoid fear of ethnocentric, intolerant Quebec "ethnic nationalism." A reasonable knowledge of the facts about Quebec francophones, the policies of the *Parti Québécois*, and the attitudes of intellectuals and professionals in Quebec would quickly and decisively dispel that. That there are a few loose cannons around who say extreme and absurd things—things that get played up in the media—does not gainsay that. They have little support in the community and the problem of loose cannons is a problem for and in every society. There are even Swedish fascists. It does not at all show that Québécois are intolerant or that Quebec nationalism is ethnocentric. Such a belief could not remain rational in the light of a reasonable knowledge of the facts.

If my arguments have been near to the mark, we can see that there is nothing inherently antidemocratic and fanatical about nationalism and indeed it can be quite compatible with liberalism.[16] We have also seen that so-called civic nationalism is a nonstarter. In the first place there is not, and probably cannot be, such a thing as a pure civic nationalism. *All nationalisms are cultural nationalisms of one kind or another. There is no purely political conception of the nation, liberal or otherwise.* Furthermore, civic-cum-cultural nationalism where civic nationalism is taken to be the opposite of ethnic nationalism, need not be democratic and liberal; it, as we have seen, can be, and has been, thoroughly antidemocratic while remaining multinational and nonethnic. Talk of civic nationalism had better be dropped from our political vocabulary (including the vocabulary of political theory), if we wish to be clear and coherent in our analyses in the real world. We should see that all nationalism is cultural nationalism. Sometimes it takes ethnic forms, sometimes it takes nonethnic but dictatorial forms (Brazilian, Chilean, and Argentinean nationalisms under their juntas) and sometimes it takes the form of liberal nationalisms, as was the case earlier in this century in Norway, Finland, and Iceland and as is the case now in Quebec, Bel-

gium, Wales, and Scotland. Not unsurprisingly, when a considerable segment of liberal democratic society goes nationalist, particularly if such a move is not then repressed, it usually goes and remains liberal nationalist. Germany during the Weimar Republic is the great exception. But there the circumstances were very unusual. There was the great depression, what was taken by Germans to be a humiliating and incomprehensible defeat in the First World War, and the bourgeoisie were terrified by what they took to be the Red Menace. The struggle, to return to normal cases in liberal democracies, may be, indeed typically will be, a hard one, but it will be fought out on a democratic terrain with civil liberties firmly adhered to. Quebec nationalists are committed to the protection of civil liberties in their society and this, plainly, includes the language rights of the historic anglophone minority as well as, across the board, their rights and the rights of immigrants and of the peoples of the First Nations. The policy of the *Parti Québécois* is to protect the rights of anglophones to an English-language education, to service in English in hospitals and various governmental agencies and to the use of English, as well as French, in the National Assembly. This is more generous, more widespread, and more of a sociological reality in Quebec than is the respect for parallel rights of francophones in the rest of Canada. None of this well-entrenched structure of rights and customs is threatened by Quebec nationalism, nor are any of the other elements of a liberal democratic society. Nationalism and liberalism can, and do, go comfortably hand in hand.

NOTES

1. For an opposite view, powerfully argued, see Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993) and Sanford Levinson, "Is Liberal Nationalism an Oxymoron? An Essay for Judith Shklar," *Ethics* 103.3 (1995): 626–45.

2. Levinson, "Is Liberal Nationalism an Oxymoron?" pp. 626–27; Brian Barry, "Nationalism," in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*, ed. David Miller (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), pp. 352–54.

3. This view has been powerfully challenged by Jeremy Waldron and in a somewhat different way by C. Kukathas and in turn plausibly defended by Will Kymlicka and David Miller. Waldron argues that in the modern world we are getting more and more happy and successful cosmopolitan people who move back and forth between cultures, taking a little bit from here and a little bit from there, without any need for rootedness in a particular culture or for having a sense of national identity. Kymlicka and Miller argue that Waldron seriously overstates his case and that the empirical evidence for the need for roots is strong and, like Herder before them, they also argue that local identities and cosmopolitan ideals need not at all conflict. After all, Herder did not negate the

Enlightenment, but provided it with a needed corrective. Still there is a lot more that needs to be said about this. I hope to turn to it on some other occasion. See Jeremy Waldron, "Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative," *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 25 (1992): 751–93; C. Kukathas, "Are There Any Cultural Rights?" *Political Theory* 20 (1992): 105–39; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 85–89; David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 146–47.

4. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*.

5. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 11.

6. Ibid.

7. Miller, *On Nationality*, p. 24.

8. Ibid., p. 25.

9. Levinson, "Is Liberal Nationalism an Oxymoron?" pp. 630–32.

10. Kai Nielsen, "Secession: The Case of Québec," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 10.1 (1993): 29–43.

11. Miller, *On Nationality*, p. 23.

12. In defining or analyzing "nation" or indeed almost anything else we should not look for necessary and sufficient conditions because that is exactly what we are not going to get. Historically, within analytic philosophy the viability of what is called truth conditional analysis was, until quite recently, generally uncritically accepted. It was believed that a concept has not been properly analyzed until we have been provided with a statement of logically necessary and sufficient conditions for the exemplification of the concept in question. Even a superficial examination of the history of such attempts reveals the truth of John Pollock's claim that for any philosophically interesting concept "truth condition analyses are just not there to be found" (John Pollock, "A Theory of Moral Reasoning," *Ethics* 96.3 [1986]: 508). The fact is that, in domain after domain, such attempts to analyze have failed. Think, for example, of the persistent, resolute, and often resourceful, but still failed, attempts to find suitable replacements for the intuitively plausible, but still demonstratively mistaken, analyses of knowledge as justified true belief. Repeatedly, truth conditional analyses in a whole range of very different domains have collapsed under pressure of counterexamples (what in other disciplines would be called disconfirming evidence). Persistent, and often acutely intelligent, efforts were made to provide such analyses, but slowly Wittgenstein's point sank in that the idea prevalent in philosophical logic that concepts are individuated by their truth conditions was just an unjustifiable dogma.

13. The need to qualify what I say to native-born citizens is *not* something to be welcomed. That in our liberal democracies naturalized citizens have had their citizenship revoked because their political views were not approved of by their government is not something of which a democracy can be proud. It, among other ills it creates, creates first-class citizenship and second-class citizenship.

14. This is so, even though the United States, unlike Canada, has no juridically official language.

15. The Quiet Revolution refers to the change in Quebec society in the last thirty years from an almost feudal hierarchical society to a modern liberal soci-

ety. Quebec became a society where (though within a liberal framework) French culture is predominant and where modernization has taken place, bringing with it a world where French Quebeckers are no longer dominated by either the English minority or the Catholic Church.

16. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*.

CHAPTER 7

Misunderstanding Nationalism

Will Kymlicka

A striking fact of twentieth-century history is the tenacity with which ethnonational groups have maintained their distinct identity, institutions, and desire for self-government. There are few examples in this century of national minorities—that is, national groups who share a state with larger national groups—voluntarily assimilating into the larger society.

North Americans often overlook this fact, because they fail to distinguish immigrants from national minorities. Immigrants choose to leave their original culture and homeland and move to a new country. They know that this uprooting will only be successful if they adapt to their new country, including learning its language and customs.

Immigrant groups rarely give rise to nationalist movements. They do not think of themselves as separate nations alongside the mainstream society and do not seek to establish their own autonomous homelands and self-governing political institutions.

This is true even of proponents of a more "multicultural" America, since they are primarily demanding greater accommodation of ethnic identity *within* mainstream institutions. These demands are evidence not of growing nationalism, although some paranoid critics have suggested this, but of a new, more pluralistic conception of integration within the American nation.

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An immigrant group will adopt a nationalist agenda only if it is prevented from integrating into the mainstream society, through mandatory segregation and legal discrimination. So nationalism will not arise if immigrant groups are guaranteed equal civil and political rights.

But that is not true of nonimmigrant minorities—groups whose historic homeland has been incorporated into a larger state, through colonization, conquest, or voluntary federation. These are the sorts of groups giving rise to nationalist conflict in Europe. They are rarely satisfied with individual civil and political rights. They want self-government, either through regional autonomy or complete secession.

The inadequacy of the immigrant model for national minorities is clear even in North America. The Québécois, Indian tribes, Puerto Ricans, and native Hawaiians have all fought for (and gained) some measure of self-government and local autonomy. Groups that are incorporated into a larger state not because they left their homeland and moved there, but because their homeland was conquered or annexed, often develop a distinct national consciousness, even though they may be free to assimilate.

In short, although there are virtually no cases of immigrants becoming nationalists, there are also few recent cases of national minorities accepting assimilation. If we focus on territorial nations rather than immigrants we can see that nationalism has been a constant factor of twentieth-century history.

Yet nationalism remains poorly understood, and Western leaders have been continually caught off guard by nationalist movements abroad, or indeed within their borders. For this reason, the appearance of the four books reviewed in this essay is welcome. Unfortunately, much of what they offer on nationalism obscures as much as it reveals.

This is particularly true of Michael Ignatieff's *Blood and Belonging* and William Pfaff's *The Wrath of Nations*. At the heart of both books is the distinction between "ethnic" and "civic" nationalism. "Ethnic" nations, like Germany, define membership in terms of shared descent, so that people of a different racial or ethnic group (for example, Turkish guest workers in Germany) cannot acquire citizenship no matter how long they live in the country. "Civic" nations, like the United States, are in principle open to anyone who lives in the territory. Ethnic nationalism is exclusive, civic nationalism is inclusive. Both Ignatieff and Pfaff argue that only civic nationalism is compatible with liberalism, democracy, and peace.

This is a familiar distinction, but Ignatieff and Pfaff badly misinterpret it. For example, Ignatieff equates "ethnic" nationalism with "cultural" nationalism. Cultural nationalism defines the nation in terms of a common culture, and the aim of the nationalist movement is to pro-

tect the survival of that culture. Examples of cultural nationalism include the Québécois or the Flemish in Belgium. Ignatieff calls these "ethnic" nationalisms. But that is clearly wrong. Both the Québécois and the Flemish accept immigrants as full members of the nation, so long as they learn the language and history of the society. They define membership in terms of participation in a common culture, open to all, rather than on ethnic grounds. The shift from an ethnic to a cultural conception of the nation in these cases has been a slow and painful one, but it is now firmly entrenched in citizenship laws and public opinion.

Pfaff and Ignatieff also overlook the fact that "civic" nationalism has a cultural component. They say that membership in a civic nation is based, not on descent or culture, but on allegiance to the political principles of democracy and freedom. This is obviously false of native-born Americans, whose citizenship has nothing to do with their political beliefs. They automatically acquire citizenship by descent, and cannot be stripped of it if they turn out to be fundamentalists or fascists. And it is only half-true of immigrants. The American government does require immigrants to swear allegiance to the Constitution, but it also requires them to learn the English language and American history. These legal requirements of gaining citizenship are intended to integrate immigrants into the common culture.

Membership in the American nation, just as in the Québécois nation, involves participation in a common culture. It is a legal requirement for children to learn the English language and American history in schools, and all levels of American government have insisted that there is a legitimate governmental interest in promoting a common language.

This is not necessarily wrong or oppressive. After all, the common culture that American immigrants must integrate into is capacious, leaving ample room for the expression of a particular ethnic or religious identity. And learning a common language and shared history helps ensure that immigrants are not disadvantaged in the mainstream economy or polity.

The point is that both ethnic and civic nationalisms have a cultural component. Of course, the way culture is interpreted varies from nation to nation. Some nations define their culture in ethnic and religious terms, others do not. These variations are crucial to understanding why some nationalisms are peaceful, liberal, and democratic, while others are xenophobic, authoritarian, and expansionist. Unfortunately, since Pfaff and Ignatieff downplay the cultural component of nationalism, they shed no light on the variations in how culture is interpreted.

For the same reason, they provide no real explanation of why people value their national identity. Pfaff says that national identity reflects a "primordial" desire for "community." But even if people have such a

primordial desire, why does this take the form of a bond to their *national* community, rather than their church, city, or workplace? Pfaff offers no explanation of this.

Ignatieff explains the affirmation of national identity in Eastern Europe as a response to the power vacuum created by the collapse of communism. But that puts the cart before the horse, since nationalist movements predated, and helped cause, the collapse of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. To be sure, the disintegration of the state made violence more likely, by leaving groups at each other's mercy. But the feeling of national identity underlying those groups preceded the collapse of communism.

The weakness of their explanations for the tenacity of national identity should not be surprising. Pfaff and Ignatieff treat nationalism as a matter of either political principle (civic nationalism) or ethnic descent (ethnic nationalism). But insofar as both civic and ethnic nationalisms are cultural phenomena, any plausible account of national identity must examine people's attachment to their culture, which Pfaff and Ignatieff largely ignore.

Similarly, both misinterpret the nature of nationalist conflict. They argue that ethnic nationalism is the cause of nationalist conflict, because of its ethnic exclusiveness. In fact, nationalist conflict is often caused by attempts by civic nationalists to forcibly incorporate national minorities. Consider the Kurds. The problem is not that Turkey refuses to accept Kurds as Turkish citizens. The problem is precisely its attempt to force Kurds to see themselves as Turks. Turkey refuses to accept that Kurds are a separate national group (the government calls them "mountain Turks"), and until 1990 banned the use of the Kurdish language in an attempt to coercively assimilate the Kurds. The violence in Kurdistan— one of the longest-running nationalist conflicts in the world—is not ethnic exclusion, but the forcible inclusion of a national minority into a larger national group.

The same process has occurred in America. The American government forcibly incorporated Indian tribes, native Hawaiians, and Puerto Ricans into the American state, and then attempted to coercively assimilate each group into the common American culture. It banned the speaking of Indian languages in school and forced Puerto Rican and Hawaiian schools to use English rather than Spanish or Hawaiian. The explicit aim was to make these groups see themselves as members of the American nation, not as members of a separate and self-governing nation. These groups resisted (often violently) the assimilationist policies, and today a measure of self-government is granted to each group.

It's essential to see that this aggressive expansionism was quite consistent with civic nationalism. After all, the aim was to turn Indians and

native Hawaiians into American citizens, with the same rights as other American citizens. Civic nationalism in the United States has historically justified the conquering and colonizing of national minorities and the coercive imposition of English-language courts and schools.

Much of the nationalist conflict around the world is the result of attempts by majority nations to coercively assimilate national minorities. This aggression is often rationalized precisely on the grounds that the majority nation is nonethnic. Since Indians will be treated as equal citizens of the American nation, just as Kurds will be equal citizens of the Turkish nation, what harm is done by abolishing their separate institutions and forcing them to join the larger nation?

The motivation of Québécois, Latvian, Flemish, Kurdish, or Slovak nationalists is not a fear of being excluded from a larger nation on ethnic grounds, but a desire to maintain themselves as separate nations. To treat ethnic exclusiveness as the sole, or even main, source of nationalist conflict is a striking mistake.

Ignatieff also misinterprets the relation between nationalism and democracy. He claims that civic nationalism is "necessarily democratic, since it vests sovereignty in all of the people." But consider virtually any country in Latin America. Most of these countries have a strong sense of national identity that is nonethnic. Peru and Brazil, for example, are extraordinarily multiethnic societies, granting equal citizenship to whites, blacks, Indians, and Asians. Yet there is nothing "necessarily democratic" about them. Civic nations can be military dictatorships as easily as liberal democracies.

Pfaff and Ignatieff are right to insist on the distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism. However, virtually every claim they make about this distinction—and its relationship to culture, violence, and democracy—is overstated. They present themselves as having seen through the myths of nationalism, but they propagate their own mythical conception of civic nationalism as inherently good, peaceful, and democratic.

Each book has some redeeming features. Pfaff has some interesting things to say about the deleterious impact of nationalist ideas in Asia and Africa. Ignatieff's book includes an account of his journeys to Yugoslavia, Kurdistan, Ukraine, Quebec, Germany, and Ulster, and his talks with the people affected, from workers and students to nationalist rebels and government ministers. He is a good interviewer, and their stories are often compelling. The book was written to accompany a BBC series of the same name, broadcast on PBS last year, which is worth watching. But although the interviews are interesting, Ignatieff's analysis of the events or feelings he encounters is seriously flawed.

These books do tell us something about the psychology of cosmopolitan liberals at the end of the twentieth century. Pfaff is an expa-

triate American columnist for the *International Herald Tribune* living in France; Ignatieff an expatriate Canadian living in England. They are multilingual citizens of the world whose ambitions took them beyond their countries' borders, and for whom borders are largely irrelevant. Confronted by nationalists who care deeply about borders, and indeed who often wish to redraw them so as to create smaller political units, many cosmopolitan liberals feel threatened and confused. Moreover, unlike liberals in the nineteenth century or the 1950s, liberals today no longer are confident that history is on the side of cosmopolitanism. These books provide revealing examples of the sense of anxiety and confusion engulfing cosmopolitan liberals today. For an explanation of nationalism, however, readers must look elsewhere.

For the historical origins of nationalism, Liah Greenfeld's book *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* is a useful starting point. According to Greenfeld, the national idea first arose among elites, rather than the middle or lower classes. Yet, she notes, this raises a puzzle, for nations are defined in terms of "the people"—the mass of population in a territory, including the members of different classes and occupations. Why would elites accept an ideal that viewed the people "as the bearer of sovereignty, the central object of loyalty, and the basis of collective solidarity"? Elites traditionally tried to dissociate themselves as much as possible from "the plebs" or "the rabble." How then did they come to identify with the people?

Some recent theorists have argued that "nation-building" was a functional requirement of modernization. Modern economics required a literate, educated workforce, which in turn required integrating the lower classes into a common culture, through standardized public education. However, Greenfeld insists that the national idea arose before modernization, in response to more contingent factors. She argues that it first arose in England in the early sixteenth century, adopted by Henry VIII to support his battle with Rome and then by Parliament in its battle with James I. Similarly, she argues, the emergence of nationalism in France, Russia, Germany, and the United States all predated industrialization. In each case, the idea of "the nation" served the interests of a particular elite group—such as the French and Russian nobility in their battle with absolutist monarchs, or the German intellectuals in their desire for social acceptance.

Greenfeld tracks the rise of the word "nation" and its correlates ("people," "country") with meticulous care, showing when they came into usage in each country, by whom, for what purposes. The result is an impressive but also daunting work of scholarship. I suspect that only

specialists will want to wade through the twenty pages detailing the various orders of the French aristocracy or the nine-page synopsis of an obscure work by the German Romantic Carl Moritz.

Greenfeld reminds us of the contingent origins of nations, but she doesn't explain their tenacious persistence. Her narrative ends at the beginning of the nineteenth century, by which time national ideals had been entrenched in the five countries she examines. She does not address how these national ideals became diffused to the masses or why national minorities have held on to their identity, despite powerful economic and political incentives to join larger nations.

This is not a criticism of her book, which succeeds admirably in the task it sets. Greenfeld is addressing the question of why feudal elites abandoned their traditional prenational identity for a national identity. She is not addressing the modern-day question of how to understand conflict between two or more groups whose national identities are already firmly rooted.

Greenfeld does touch on this issue at the end of her book. She argues that national identity has remained strong in the modern era because its emphasis on the importance of "the people" provides a source of dignity to all individuals, whatever their class. But (as she admits), this doesn't explain why any *particular* national identity is important, or why people aren't willing to abandon their original identity for another national identity that also would guarantee them dignity. Why shouldn't the Kurds be happy to be members of the Turkish nation?

To understand this, we need a clearer account of why national identity matters to people. The great virtue of Yael Tamir's book *Liberal Nationalism*—one of the few full-length philosophical discussions of nationalism—is that she tackles this question head on. Tamir is an Israeli philosopher, and the book reflects her attempt to reconcile Zionist convictions with the liberal belief in individual rights and personal autonomy.

Tamir begins by noting that nations—civic or ethnic—are cultures that provide their members with meaningful ways of life across the full spectrum of human activity (economic, political, educational, recreational, religious, and so on). Following Anthony Smith, we can call these "organizational cultures," to signify that they form institutionally integrated societies, not simply lifestyle subgroups or advocacy movements within a society.

The value of national identity, then, is tied to the value of cultural membership. Why is cultural membership important? Tamir starts from the liberal assumption that people are capable of making autonomous choices about their aims in life. But the ability to make these choices depends on "the presence of a cultural context," so that individual lib-

erty is dependent on membership in a cultural community. Over time, individuals can put these cultural contexts themselves in question and choose which culture they wish to live in.

Being able to express one's cultural identity is important for many reasons. Cultural membership is a precondition of autonomous moral choices. Actions performed in a cultural context are "endowed with additional meaning" because they can be seen both as acts of individual achievement and as contributions to the development of one's culture; and shared membership in a culture promotes a sense of belonging and relationships of mutual recognition.

This is a sensible account of the value of national identity, similar to the view of many nineteenth-century liberals. Tamir then argues that expressing one's cultural identity requires some degree of "national self-determination." Since Tamir defines nations as the bearers of distinct cultures, she construes the right to national self-determination as the right to ensure the continued existence and development of that distinct culture. This, she argues, does not require that each nation have its own sovereign "nation-state," which is in any event impossible. Instead, the right to develop one's national culture can be ensured by autonomy within multination states, through mechanisms such as federalism or consociational democracy.

The exact form of self-determination, she argues, is not important. What matters is that the culture have some "public expression." Without this public component, the existence of a nation as a distinct social unit would be jeopardized. Hence the state should serve an "expressive" role, actively reflecting a particular national identity in its symbols and institutions.

Tamir's defense of nationalist politics rests heavily on this claim regarding the need for the "public expression" of a culture. But her argument is not very clear. Why isn't freedom of speech and association sufficient to allow people to express their cultural identity? Why is the state needed for people to "share a language, memorize their past, cherish their heroes, live a fulfilling national life"? If people can collectively express their religious identity through freedom of association while still maintaining a strict separation of church and state, why shouldn't we maintain a separation of state and nation?

In places, Tamir implies that state involvement is simply unavoidable. She rightly argues that the state cannot avoid expressing a cultural identity when it adopts official languages and public holidays. On this view, state expression of a national identity is more regrettable than desirable, but since it is unavoidable, justice requires that we compensate national minorities for disadvantages this creates, and protect them from pressures to assimilate.

Yet at other times, Tamir implies that it is a positive good that states express a national identity, and that existing liberal democracies should do more to develop the "cultural essence of the state." She says that the "yearning for self-determination" is to see political institutions as "carriers of the national identity." On this view, political arrangements "should reflect the unique character and draw on the history, the culture, the language, and at times the religion of the national group, thereby enabling its members to regard it as their own." The argument here is not about the survival of the culture, but about the desire for political affirmation of self-identity and the desire to have a sense of ownership of government through one's nation.

Tamir's last chapter is entitled "Making a Virtue Out of Necessity," which captures the two strands in her thought. But it is unclear why liberals should see the political expression of national identity as a virtue to be promoted. In most nationalist conflicts over devolution of powers, boundaries, political representation, language rights, and so on, the ambitions of nationalists far exceed what is required to ensure the continued existence of the nation as a distinct society. Yet they all increase the public expression of the national culture and promote national identification with the state. Tamir's theory provides no way to resolve these conflicts, in part because she provides no clear basis for judging whether nationalist politics are a necessity to be minimized or a virtue to be promoted.

In my view, it is a mistake to make a virtue out of necessity. The boundaries of state and nation rarely if ever coincide perfectly, so viewing the state as the possession of a particular national group can only alienate minority groups. The state must be seen as equally belonging to all people who are governed by it, regardless of their nationality.

But it would be an even more serious mistake to ignore the ways in which states necessarily privilege particular national cultures. This is obvious in decisions regarding the language of schools, courts, and government services. Given the centrality of the state to modern life, a group without such language rights will face enormous pressures to assimilate. Decisions regarding immigration and naturalization also affect the viability of national cultures. Immigration can strengthen a national group, so long as the numbers are regulated and immigrants are encouraged (or required) to learn the nation's language and history. But if immigrants in a multination state integrate into the majority culture, then national minorities will be increasingly outnumbered and so increasingly powerless in political life. Moreover, states often encourage immigrants (or migrants from other parts of the country) to settle in lands traditionally

held by national minorities, reducing them to a minority even within their historic territory. (Consider the fate of Indian tribes and Chicanos in the American southwest.) Decisions about public holidays and school curricula also typically reflect and help perpetuate a particular national culture.

In short, there are many ways that government decisions play a crucial role in sustaining national cultures. If a national group has full language rights and control over immigration, education, and resource development policy, then its long-term viability is secured. If it lacks these rights and powers, its long-term viability is in grave jeopardy. So if national minorities do not wish to assimilate, they must struggle to gain those rights and powers, either through secession or regional autonomy. Since national majorities have historically been very reluctant to accept the demands of national minorities, the result is long-standing national divisions, sometimes flaring into violence.

This is true even in states that consciously avoid an "expressive" role. Tamir would like states to be more explicit about affirming a national identity—for example, entrenching an official language in their constitution. But even in a country like the United States, which avoids this symbolic trapping of nationalism, the problem for national minorities remains. What matters are not symbols, but the facts on the ground—whether a national minority has sufficient control over decisions regarding language, education, immigration, and economic development to ensure its long-term viability.

The failure of liberalism to understand nationalism is directly related to its failure to acknowledge these unavoidable connections between state and culture. The myth that the state can simply be based on democratic principles, without supporting a particular national identity or culture, has made it impossible to see why national minorities are so keen on forming or maintaining political units in which they are a majority. Indeed, as Ernest Gellner noted, once we recognize the inevitable links between state and culture, the question is not so much why nationalist movements arise, but why there aren't more of them.

CHAPTER 8

Modernity and Cultural Vulnerability: Should Ethnicity Be Privileged?

Brian Walker

One of the most important themes in current political theory is the attempt to determine the ways in which liberalism should recognize the role of cultural differences. A particularly influential position that has come to the fore recently is a theory that I shall call "culturalism." This is the theoretical position aimed at justifying a devolution of state powers to members of cultural groups so that they might maintain the integrity of their cultures, their customs and languages and the practices that make up their way of life. Writers such as Will Kymlicka, Joseph Raz, Avishai Margalit, Vernon van Dyke, Michel Seymour, Denise Réaume, and many others have advanced different versions of this culturalist position.[1] Culturalism has become a particularly strong movement within Canadian political theory, linking the long-standing Canadian discourse about consociational democracy into broader debates in Anglo-American theory on the relation between liberalism and the needs of cultural collectivities.

The political thrust of culturalism is toward strong decentralization. Culturalists justify a redistribution of political powers so that localized collectivities might have some of the powers usually associated with sovereign bodies, and so that decentralized states might thereby respond to and embody a broader range of the cultures and concerns gathered on their territories. Different cultural groups might be given a say over the public spheres in their specific territories so that the resulting federated, patchwork model of the state would allow a response both to the need to protect the rights of all and the need to address the cultural diversity that is an increasingly visible characteristic of modern states. Culturalism sees itself as supporting a deeper form of pluralism than that recog-

nized hitherto within democratic theory; not just a pluralism of needs and interests but also the deeper pluralism that arises from a recognition of the diversity of the histories and the backgrounds we come from.[2]

The political force of culturalism lies in its justification for the self-determination claims of minority cultures, and the most frequently cited groups that might stand as the beneficiaries of the arguments that culturalists advance are groups such as the francophones of Quebec, the Aboriginal peoples of Canada and so on. Culturalists start out with a *general* concern about maintaining the cultural backgrounds on which people rely, but their focus soon narrows to a more exclusive concentration on the needs and interests of *ethnic* groups. It is this narrowing of focus that I wish to concentrate upon in this chapter.

That local communities might benefit from a greater responsiveness to their concerns, a greater sensitivity to their cultural specificity and more powers to embody their specific local needs is a sensible suggestion and culturalists advance numerous valuable arguments in support of it. But the idea that our concern for cultural specificity should be concentrated on ethnic and racial groups seems a much less obvious point. As much as one might support the vision of decentralized society in which communities get more powers to embody and live out their particular visions of the good, it strikes me as both sociologically naive and unfairly narrow to think that we should concentrate on ethnic groups when we are thinking about redistributing the powers and rights necessary to protect cultural differences. In a globalized economy, where culture is created not just within ethnic enclaves but also by social movements, states, markets, and the media—and by a host of different *types* of community—it seems an illegitimate oversimplification to concentrate on the needs of ethnic communities over those of other groups. But this is the largely unquestioned assumption of most culturalists.

Culturalist writers hold many positions on the political spectrum and spin their arguments with greater and lesser degrees of care as to clarity and political consequence. In order to address the issues I am concerned with, I will concentrate on the figure who strikes me as having constructed the most careful version of the culturalist argument. Will Kymlicka is a representative of the liberal strain within culturalism, and is in many ways the most sophisticated representative of the culturalist position in modern political theory. He is intent on giving strong arguments for protecting cultures rather than merely stating polemical positions. He places issues of fairness and equality near the center of his theory. And Kymlicka recognizes the attraction of the liberal argument that he tries to convince us we should drop—the argument that we should see ethnicity and culture as being rather like religion, a matter of vital importance to individuals but something that the state should

touch only gingerly lest society be plunged into forms of factionalism that it might not survive. Kymlicka is also refreshingly precise about the practical differences his theory would make, the changes in public policy that would stem from the changes in perspective that he suggests. Because Kymlicka is attentive to a wider range of concerns and aware of a broader range of dangers than most culturalists, his failure to establish a convincing way out of the dilemmas of culturalism is, I think, all that much more compromising for the culturalist project as a whole.

My central claim is that Kymlicka takes what is essentially a very radical and far-reaching notion—namely, the idea that our belief in autonomy should lead us into a deep concern for our cultural background conditions—and robs it of its radical impact. He reads it through the lens of ethnic politics and thus allows it to be hijacked by a basically conservative agenda, conservative both in the sense that it limits our vision to an outmoded understanding of the principal sites where culture is re-created and that it locks us into an outmoded outlook on Canadian politics: one in which the principal way in which we would be concerned with the cultures of Canada would be by looking at the cultural struggles between the descendants of its original ethnic communities. I will try to show that concentration on ethnic communities is unjustified in terms of the culturalist theoretical premises that Kymlicka deploys, and sociologically naive about the complexity of the cultural institutions that people actually rely on.

KYMLICKA AND CULTURALISM

The liberal culturalist argument for differentiated rights that Kymlicka advances in his books *Liberalism, Community and Culture* and *Multicultural Citizenship* is based on the role that cultures play as the foundation for human capacities. Kymlicka's argument might be summarized as follows. Human beings are not interchangeable like the characters in liberal thought experiments (such as the agents behind Rawls's veil of ignorance, for example) but are, rather, deeply embedded in particular cultural communities. It is these societal cultures that give us our maps of the world and the basic skills and understandings that allow us to operate as autonomous and free and equal agents.[3] "Freedom involves making choices amongst various options, and our societal culture not only provides these options, but also makes them meaningful to us."[4] Liberal practices, such as those entailed in the gradual elaboration of a personal life-plan, depend crucially on these background understandings and capacities supplied by cultures. Cultural membership might thus be seen as what Rawls terms a primary good. Cultural background condi-

tions are what allow us to attain full agency and self-esteem.

But not all cultures face an equal chance. Cultural majorities (say, the white, anglophone majority in North America) face advantages of numbers and of institutional variety that ensure that the capacities and the forms of self-respect that their cultures make possible are relatively secure. There is little doubt that one will be able to remain an English-speaking North American as long as one wishes, since English culture is so strong and enduring, replicated through such a diversity of institutions worldwide. The same cannot be said, Kymlicka argues, for groups such as Aboriginal nations or the francophones of Quebec. It is possible to imagine the community institutions of either of these groups being eroded to the point that it would no longer be possible to thrive *as* Indians or Québécois, and where flourishing would require assimilating into the majority culture. If the cultural institutions of these communities disappeared, the foundation of self-respect and of civic capacity would be cut away from these groups and their members would have no choice but to become second-class members of mainstream culture. The claims for Québécois and Aboriginal peoples are particularly strong because at the time in which they were incorporated into the Canadian state these groups had ongoing societal cultures and they entered under the assumption that they would be able to maintain these.[5] The argument from culture and the argument from mode of incorporation together justify giving these groups certain differentiated rights such as constitutional vetoes, guaranteed political representation, and perhaps even self-government. In practical terms, this means supporting policies such as that which allows Aboriginal nations to disbar non-Aboriginals from living on their lands or voting in their communities or making other such arrangements to protect themselves from generation to generation.[6] Group differentiated rights are meant to level the playing field between cultural majorities and minorities in the struggle for the goods and resources that allow long-term cultural survival.

CONTEXTS OF CHOICE

There is much that is persuasive in this picture, particularly in its key argument about the importance of cultural background as a repertoire of meaning and strategies that an individual needs to attain full agency. But there are problems with Kymlicka's perspective as it now stands. Let me sum them up briefly before going on to address each point with greater care. First of all, this picture tends to adopt too readily the viewpoint of ethnic political activists who claim, counterintuitively, that the principal site of relevant cultural differences is still in the ethnos. This

misses the complexity of cultural reproduction in the late twentieth century: that our background understandings are produced in a broader range of institutions than the advocates of ethnic hegemony are willing to recognize. Because he uncritically accepts ethnic activist arguments, Kymlicka formulates the list of groups that might merit differentiated rights before he gets a full view of the range of groups that might legitimately claim such cultural protections. Second, the concept of "societal cultures" with which Kymlicka justifies limiting his focus to ethnic groups is anachronistic, and has little theoretical purchase on the cases he deals with. Third, Kymlicka crucially underestimates the importance of territory in cultural self-determination movements and thus he does not adequately recognize that his theory could be used to support policies of cultural de-differentiation and homogenization. There is a conflict between Kymlicka's stated ideals of cultural fairness and the territorial model of ethnic hegemony that he defends. I will examine each of these difficulties in turn. I will then go on to suggest an alternative perspective by means of which we might better address the problems of cultural deprivation that Kymlicka worries about.

The first reservation that I have about Kymlicka's account is that it creates an oversimplified contrast between ethnic minorities and communities within the mainstream. The question of cultural vulnerability in the late twentieth century is considerably more complicated than this picture of weak ethnic minorities locked outside the culturally vibrant majority culture. The sense of cultural precariousness is a very widespread sensation in the late twentieth century, much more common than Kymlicka's account would lead us to believe. The swift institutional changes of advanced modernity have brought about deep shifts in most major institutions and thus in the infrastructure for personal identity and autonomy.[7] Entire ways of life have been wiped out and the underpinnings of many traditions have been knocked away. This has rendered the problem of cultural vulnerability a very widespread one, not only for minorities, but for most individuals in the mainstream as well. To show what I mean I would like to single out two mainstream cultures that have undergone intense disruption within recent memory. I will talk about the destruction of the culture of the family farm and about the systematic undermining of urban neighborhoods. These are two examples of nonethnic cultures (institutional complexes that supply the repertoires of meaning and guidance that Kymlicka focuses on) that face serious threat within conditions of advanced modernity. They can stand as representative of the much broader range of institutions whose importance Kymlicka ignores.

For millennia, most people lived an agricultural life, which had its own folklore and culture, with knowledge and narratives passed down

from generation to generation. But within recent memory the development of agribusiness and of new agricultural technologies have rendered family farms impracticable and almost all but a tiny percentage of them are gone.[8] The pain of urbanization entailed with the loss of family farms was acute for many of the people who experienced it, causing great dislocation and disorientation. For those whose meanings and structures of sensibility were determined by the rounds of farm life, urbanization was a form of assimilation. It marked the loss of a rich culture, and generations of people were cast adrift in a foreign world. The disappearance of the family farm marked the death of a lifeway and of a structure of sensibility.[9]

A very different cultural institution in this regard is the urban neighborhood. The disappearance of urban neighborhoods is another example of a swift change in institutional structure that has devastating effects on cultural membership and on the life-chances of the people who rely on it. Neighborhoods play a crucial role as carriers of culture. They solidify a sense of identity and they serve as a site for groups to create a sense of community and security in a frequently hostile environment. This is particularly true for vulnerable minorities such as immigrants, gays and lesbians, and so on. Neighborhoods also play a particularly crucial role for the poor.[10] But in advanced capitalist societies, with their relentless emphasis on growth, homes and neighborhoods face constant pressure from gentrification, urban renewal, and real estate speculation.[11] Homes and neighborhoods come to be seen primarily in terms of their exchange value, and those who see them as cherished spaces of identity are forced to capitulate in the face of market forces.[12] Other neighborhoods are victims of the decline of the middle class, as jobs shift to the suburbs or simply disappear. William Julius Wilson and others have traced the resulting decay of crucial cultural neighborhood institutions such as churches and schools, stores and recreational facilities.[13] Wilson writes, "As . . . basic institutions decline, the social organization of inner-city neighborhoods (sense of community, positive neighborhood identification, and explicit norms and sanctions against aberrant behavior) likewise declined."[14] Thus the decay of the urban neighborhood erodes the bonds of cultural membership and the background conditions for autonomy.

The family farm and the urban neighborhood are just two institutions singled out from a vast number that are undergoing intensive change under conditions of advanced modernity. Such institutional changes cut people off from crucial forms of cultural membership. When the residents of an urban neighborhood are dispersed to housing projects or trapped among their crumbling institutions they suffer a real cultural deprivation, one measurable in heightened rates of crime and

substance abuse and violent deaths. Such cases give us a very stark example of the sorts of social ill with which Kymlicka justifies his normative argument for differentiated rights. And, indeed, these cases illustrate characteristics that might make them more fitting objects of normative concern than the ones Kymlicka concentrates upon. In cases such as the disappearance of the family farm and of the urban neighborhood, cultural deprivation is a real and present danger for actually existing people. Worries related to ethnic assimilation, by contrast, are about possible social ills that future generations may or may not suffer.[15] The assimilation that ethnic groups worry about is frequently not forced assimilation or the sudden wrenching disappearance of their institutions—as in the disappearance of family farms or urban neighborhoods—but is, rather, the slow adoption of another culture by members of later generations who decide that another culture offers them more attractive options.

Again, it is important to emphasize that I am choosing the example of the family farm and the urban neighborhood as representatives of a much larger set. I might have chosen the culture of the labor movement in the United States, or of fishing communities in Newfoundland, or of Christian small towns. Given that cultural deprivation stands as a clear and present danger to many nonethnic groups, and that assimilation does not necessarily push ethnic or linguistic minorities into a similar state of cultural deprivation, what can justify the exclusive focus that Kymlicka and most other culturalists place on the needs of *ethnic* cultural communities? After all, many different groups in society fight for the resources required to maintain their identity from generation to generation. If Kymlicka's argument is a valid one, and he convinces us that we should look on culture as a primary good, then surely all the groups that are threatened with the loss of cultural stability should be the focus of our concern. What justifies narrowing the focus onto the identity claims of ethnic groups?

Kymlicka's response to this is to draw a contrast between *types* of identity claim. There is something about belonging to a "societal culture" that grounds one's identity in a way that other groups do not. "Cultural identity provides an anchor for people's self-identification and the safety of effortless secure belonging."[16] Kymlicka follows writers such as Joseph Raz and Avishai Margalit in suggesting that "societal cultures" provide encompassing sensibilities that give their members the very basic narratives, maps, and pictures they use to make sense of the world.[17] Societal cultures provide these through a richer range and at a deeper level than do the other sorts of institutions to which people belong. This claim about the depth and the foundational nature of these institutions is crucial. Culturalists have to show not only that people see

particular institutions as important and vital to their identity—as I have emphasized, many of the broad range of institutions under threat within modernity are vital to their adherents in this way—but also that this high ranking is justified by the grounding nature of such allegiances. This is what distinguishes ethnic claims about institutions from those of farmers who might ask for subsidies because they want farm culture to survive (as farmers' groups have done in France) or groups such as R.E.A.L. Women who want subsidies to maintain "traditional" women's work at home. The argument here is that although many groups see threats to their identity as crucially important, what is at stake for a societal culture is a set of institutions that governs and per-meates and surrounds all life choices and thus justifies setting such groups off in a separate category.

But this answer, once again, overdraws the distinction between eth-nic groups and other sorts of cultural community. The vision of culture behind notions such as "encompassing groups" is based on a holistic conception of culture that is inappropriate for dealing with most of the cultural claims and institutions we find around us in North America.[18] The inappropriateness of the concept shows up quickly if we examine the empirical argument about moral orientation that it sponsors. Kym-licka's argument, which I quoted from above, is that we garner contact with our main orientational narratives through relating to a stable eth-nic community. But this seems to miss out on the complexity of the way in which modern individuals actually guide themselves. When a con-fused sixteen-year-old Montrealer wants to figure out what to do with her life, she does not ask herself what her great grandmother did on the farm in Gaspé. The experiences of a farm woman are just too dissimilar to anything we would run across in modern society, and would not be much help to somebody trying to find a way to answer our crucial mod-ern question: how to find meaningful work that will not insult our intel-ligence and spirit. The immense rupture that occurred in Quebec in the 1960s means, as Kymlicka recognizes, that many of the classic ideals of Catholic antimaterialism have come to seem outmoded and no longer serve as a source for guidance.[19] Nor does our confused Montrealer ask herself what an *ideal* Québécoise would do, for of course there is no such thing; there are as many ways of being a French Quebecker as there are ways of being a Maritimer or of being a member of the Dene nation. Being a Québécois does give you guidance as you plan for the reveillon and it probably gives you a taste for a certain sort of family gathering. But this membership in an ethnic group does not serve as a primary "context of choice" for the main moral decisions that people make.

Like most moderns, Quebeckers usually make their main decisions by reference to a broad range of institutions—by paying attention to the

media, by joining up with corporations and accepting their internal cultures, by going to university and adopting its meritocratic norms, by belonging to churches, and so on. All of these cultural institutions are transnational, in the sense that their particular local instantiations in a given language are governed by standards that hold true across many different territories and ethnic communities. As many sociological studies have shown, the supposedly foundational cultural traits we pick up within our ethnic communities are frequently overridden by the norms of these institutions we live and work in.[20] Institutions and technologies bring with them their own rationalities and standards. The Roman Catholic Church does not have different dogma in Kingston, Ontario, and in Chicoutimi, Quebec. IBM does not promote its managers for different reasons in Trois Rivières than it does in Thunder Bay. Mitsou and Madonna cannot plausibly be seen as exemplars of different ways of life.[21] This is not to deny the real differences between the two singers and between the two cultures. Mitsou sings yéyé as Madonna does not, and Madonna makes a sly use of African-American culture that would find little resonance in Quebec. My point is not that cultural differences do not exist, it is simply that concepts such as "encompassing groups" and "societal cultures" are inappropriate and confusing as a means of talking about these differences, at least in many of the cases that culturalists wish to talk about.[22]

Concepts such as that of a "societal culture" or "encompassing groups" are also confusing in the sense that they group together such a range of different criteria that they offer us little guidance when we attempt to make meaningful distinctions for modern cases. Kymlicka defines a societal culture as:

> a culture which provides its members with meaningful ways of life across a wide range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres. These cultures tend to be territorially concentrated, and based on a shared language.[23]

We can see how unhelpful this concept of societal culture is if we try to apply this definition to average citizens of a modern urban neighborhood. Let us imagine two Montrealers meeting together over the egg counter at the Marché Jean Talon. One has Italian as a mother tongue but speaks English at home with his wife and works in French. The other, whose mother tongue is French, works and lives in French. They likely rent similar sorts of apartments, share the same public transportation, have similar sorts of employment, watch many of the same television programs and so on. In terms of *way of life* established urbanites do not differ very much from each other; they tend to differ only in

the rather minor ways I listed above. Both groups are, of course, based on the territory where they live—"territorial concentration" is not a very helpful specifier. Where they differ, of course, is in the languages they speak, at least at home. If we look at language alone then those who have Italian and those who have French as their mother tongues should be seen as members of different groups. But if we consider ways of life, patterns of recreation, career choice, religion—the main criteria that Kymlicka, Raz, and others employ—then they must be seen as belonging to the *same* culture.

One might ask the question in another way. If two groups share a language but differ broadly in their way of life and have relatively low rates of interaction, do they still belong to the same societal culture? To see the difficulty raised by this question, take the same French-speaking Montrealer and compare him with another French speaker, but this time one who lives in a rural village rather than amidst all the glittering sophistication of Montreal. The mother tongue will be the same between these two French-speaking Québécois, but the differences in their ways of life are likely to be radical—urbanites and rural dwellers have different modes of recreation, different architecture, have divergent career paths, dissimilar tastes, and so on. One would find similar cultural differences if one considered English speakers; think of the cultural differences that distinguish a resident of a Newfoundland outport, a suburban software programmer in Kanata, Ontario, and a peach farmer in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. To suggest that language is what determines cultural background and that it can stand in as a marker for one's context of choice and way of life is misleading. It is also potentially pernicious as the basis for a theory of cultural protection. The idea that a Montrealer who moves to Toronto is exiled from her societal culture while a rural Newfoundlander making a similar move is simply moving around within the boundaries of her own culture vastly underestimates the complexity of what must be cared for—the texture of the fragile lifeworlds that people actually rely upon.[24]

North American culturalists tend to adopt the point of view of ethnic activists for whom an ingroup versus outgroup narrative gives relatively straightforward answers to the question of where cultures are most vulnerable and which deserve protections. But the context for cultural protection in conditions of advanced modernity is considerably more complex than this. Any number of cultural institutions would benefit if they were given compensatory resources to stave off the threats produced by modernization, and it is by no means obvious that ethnic groups should be singled out for concern. Indeed, given the tremendous resilience of ethnic communities and the deep attachment that most ethnic groups show to their institutions and communities, it might well be

thought that ethnic communities are *less* vulnerable than many other groups. Given the strong political powers possessed by national minorities, and given as well the fact that Kymlicka himself stresses that there are few modern examples of nations assimilating into other cultures,[25] it might well seem that modernity operates *in favor of* ethnicity and the forms of identity it produces, or at least does not put overwhelming pressures against it as it does against traditional family structures, the life of the family farm, against lives based on meditation and prayer, and many others. The cultural risks of modernity have a differential effect. But it is by no means obvious that ethnic groups face these risks in a particularly disadvantageous way.

Culturalists such as Kymlicka tend inexorably toward the creation of a hierarchy of deserving and undeserving cultures, those that merit cultural protections and those that must be left to fend for themselves. Given the enormous number of groups facing identity-disrupting changes, these lists are invariably too narrow. I shall suggest below how we might shift perspective so as to address issues of cultural deprivation without playing cultural game warden, dividing the endangered from the unendangered cultures. But first I would like to address the thorny issue of territory and cultural protection.

ETHNIC HEGEMONY VERSUS CULTURAL FAIRNESS

Much of the appeal of Kymlicka's writings lies in the seriousness with which he takes cultural belonging, in his recognition that without some community of reference behind us we cannot reap the benefits of the other goods our society makes available to us. Much of the moral appeal of *Liberalism, Community and Culture* stems from this argument about cultural fairness. But as Kymlicka's project has developed, he has given an ever larger place to an argument about the needs of national minorities, to an argument about terms of incorporation that suggests that groups that entered the social contract as fully operational societal cultures deserve the powers and resources required to maintain their societies as operational structures. This is in essence an argument advocating ethnic hegemony. Groups get the powers necessary to make their territories over in the image of their own ethnic cultures. Kymlicka assumes throughout that these two different arguments are mutually supporting, and that his early argument for cultural fairness unproblematically supports his concentration on national minorities. But I think these arguments in fact pull in two different directions. When Kymlicka leans toward supporting the ethnic hegemony of national minorities, he supports practices and policies that are likely to lead to

cultural homogenization and a resulting unfairness to many cultural groups. This stems, largely, from his unwillingness to recognize a set of difficulties stemming from the role that territory plays in nationalist self-determination movements.

I would like to look more closely at Kymlicka's defense of self-determination claims among French Quebeckers. I suggest that the argument that Kymlicka advances about the need to protect fragile contexts of choice would not work to defend nationalist projects of self-determination, at least not in cases such as that represented by Quebec. Only an argument about (merited) cultural hegemony would do this, and such an argument would in fact come into conflict with the protection of cultural fairness and diversity. This will help me show that what Kymlicka takes to be two mutually supporting arguments in fact pull us in two different directions.

As Marc Levine and others have pointed out, Québécois nationalism has always been centrally focused on the character of the island of Montreal.[26] The parts of the province of Quebec that are not owned by Aboriginal peoples are populated by a largely homogeneous and unilingual French population, whose hegemony and survival there has never been seriously questioned. The key territory for the nationalist project is the city of Montreal. It is the attempt to give the city of Montreal an exclusively francophone character (*un visage linguistique francophone*) that stands at the heart of the Québécois concern for promoting its distinct culture. But if one takes a nonracialist position, which concentrates on cultural contexts alone, then it would be hard to see why a need to protect fragile cultures would encourage—or indeed even permit—an attempt to give the island of Montreal a francophone *visage linguistique*.

What most characterizes the culture of Montreal is that it has always been the meeting place of many nations: a multicultural city of French, English, First Nations, and immigrant people who have built up its environments and created a mixed culture with rich tensions, a diverse history, intertwined and competing institutions, overlapping landmarks, and so on.[27] To promote the "cultural context" specific to Montreal means protecting just this constant overlap of communities. And of course there are many Montrealers who are attached to the city precisely because it allows the forms of identity that are centered on this intercultural meeting and overlap. Arguments about protecting culture cannot by themselves justify using majority rule to replace the institutions of this formerly bilingual, and still multicultural city, so as to give it a francophone *visage linguistique*. Such a change could only be justified by reference to the needs of a particular ethnic group. Only an argument that shows that the needs of the French-speaking Québécois eth-

nic group justify their usage of Montreal for their particularist cultural goals would support the promotion of a francophone *visage linguistique* on the island of Montreal. An argument for the protection of the specific cultural "context of choice" that we find on the island of Montreal would lead to quite a different result: to the protection of the *multi*-cultural character of Montreal against the policies of the largely homogeneous population on the territory around. This might mean granting differentiated rights to insure the protection of Montreal's culture from democratic subjection to the (in many ways radically different) culture in the rest of the province. The urban culture of Montreal is another example of an ethnically nonspecific culture, and of the sort of claim whose importance Kymlicka systematically discounts. It is only if we give primacy to a model of ethnic hegemony that we can justify the process of cultural de-differentiation involved with giving Montreal a francophone *visage linguistique*. The argument from cultural fairness and the argument for the cultural hegemony of national minorities give two distinctive readings of what should be done with the city of Montreal.[28]

Its title notwithstanding, there is a tendency in Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship* to give pride of place to the model of ethnic hegemony over the model of cultural fairness. Cultural fairness is portrayed as elusive and as in many cases as simply unavailable as a social option. Like most other culturalist writers, Kymlicka refers frequently to the impossibility of neutrality in state decisions about official language, and like many culturalists he tends to make this emblematic of the essentially controversial nature of all the cultural decisions that states make. Kymlicka suggests that in the areas of official language, national symbols, public holidays, and drawing internal boundaries, the state unavoidably supports the needs and interests of some groups and disadvantages others. This is a crucial point in the culturalist argument, but I think that we should be careful about accepting it in the form in which it is usually cast. When culturalists class all state decisions about national symbols, public holidays, and so on under the same rubric as choices about language, they make us seem locked into the model of ethnic hegemony. If all the cultural choices that a state might make are essentially deeply particularistic then there is really no alternative to the ethnic hegemony model. If all cultural decisions are deeply particularist, then there will always be winners and losers and the only thing a political theorist could do is help determine how to allot these positions fairly. This locks us into a model of ethnic hegemony over particular territories—one must either control the terrain or lose one's culture.

There are, it is true, a number of policy areas where the state is locked into making choices that will promote the interests of some of its cultural communities over others.[29] But culturalists are wrong to see all

cultural choices as analogous to the choice of official language, and they systematically underestimate the degree to which we could render public culture more open to the needs of all cultural groups. In many ways, choices about official languages stand in a category of their own. States must choose one or two official languages as the languages of state, for popular education and for the judicial system.[30] Some groups will necessarily be disadvantaged by the choice, and in this sense choice of official language is a zero-sum game; some will win and some must lose. But the case is quite different for such questions as the character of public symbols and national holidays. In these cases there is much more room for solutions that will be culturally just and that will minimize the degree to which they disadvantage or marginalize particular groups. If the Canadian government had chosen to represent itself with a flag based on either the Fleur-de-lis or the Union Jack (or both) it would have given a clear message to Canadians who were not French or English that they were second-class members of the Canadian community. By choosing a geographical/botanical symbol (the maple leaf) rather than an ethnic one, the creators of the Canadian flag took a step toward cultural fairness; they chose a symbol that would not automatically make one set of groups into civic foreigners.

We can imagine a similar move toward cultural fairness in the case of Quebec. Let us imagine the governors of Quebec opening up the province's public holidays to reflect the diverse makeup of the state and its cultural history. After all, many of the current public holidays in Quebec were designed to reflect and memorialize the history of French-Canadians in their struggle for survival; holidays such as *La Fête de Dollard, La Fête nationale du Québec*. But of course there are many other cultural groups in Quebec—notably the Aboriginal peoples and the anglophones, as well as more recent immigrant groups—who all also have their own painful struggles for belonging in the province and who have their own need to have some reflection of their presence in the official life there. We might imagine some of these holidays being renamed to reflect the continued presence of the anglophone "national minority," or the role of the Mohawk and the Cree. We might further imagine this process of cultural liberalization being extended to other areas such as the naming of public spaces and roads and monuments. One of the developments in the past twenty years that has been most offensive to the anglophone community of Montreal has been the way landmarks of English history have been allowed to fall into disrepair, been destroyed, or have been renamed to reflect francophone cultural projects: the renaming of Rue Dorchester as Boulevard René Lévesque, for example. A regime of cultural fairness would presumably give all groups on the territory some say in such controversial decisions. Decisions like these

are, after all, not like choices about an official language, where only one or two groups can be favored by having their language reflected in the courts and government. The name Rue Dorchester is in the French public language but reflects English history. In questions of public naming, the construction of monuments, and so on, there is room for many different groups to have their expressions mirrored on the territory.

This is what a movement to cultural fairness might look like in Quebec. This would recognize that various differently situated individuals in Quebec are relating to the same territory and using it in common as a space for their communities and to develop their sense of self. Anglophone Montrealers are not much helped by a knowledge that the English language is protected in Ontario or California. They want to know that their community and institutions and landmarks in the city where they live have some hope of enduring, that their children will not all have to move away because they feel hostility in the street or discrimination in the public sphere. Perhaps we might understand Kymlicka as advocating just this sort of development when he mentions that we should seek to promote liberalization in ethnic communities rather than see such struggles as essentially pernicious. Perhaps the sort of liberalism he envisions would ask that groups eschew culturally controversial choices where solutions that are more fair are available.[31]

But to the extent that Kymlicka would move to promote cultural fairness in this way he separates himself from the projects and outlooks of the national minorities to whom he encourages us to extend support. The renaming of territory or the ethnic use of public holidays and symbols are not *contingent* elements of cultural self-determination programs. They are at the very heart of what ethnic groups seek when they strive for self-determination. When a hundred thousand nationalists march down Sherbrooke Street chanting "Le Québec aux Québécois," they are not just talking about the establishment of a public language or about the protection of Québécois culture. They are talking about a whole relation between a people and a territory and the future. Kymlicka's arguments are consistently cast as if nationalism were essentially concerned with preservation, about not losing what one already has, about not forcing actually existing members of a society to give up who they are. What he misses is the futurity of nationalisms, the way that they are about expansion over territories already occupied by other groups. Nationalism is not about present generations and cultural needs, but about future generations, and about territory as ethnic property. It is not about protecting current contexts of choice. It is about creating new cultural contexts, ones in which the current (dangerous, threateningly impure) mix of many different cultures would be replaced by a more exclusive relation between a particular group and the territory that

it wishes to control. Like many other culturalists, Kymlicka tends to write as if differentiated rights were simply a matter of cultural recognition, as if the problem were that people needed to lift off the blinders of monoculturalism, recognize that people have radically different needs and perspectives, and accept that political policy must reflect this. Overlooking, as he does, the central role of territory and territorial expansion within cultural self-determination movements, Kymlicka does not see how frequently the support of hegemony for national minorities is likely to lead to a betrayal of the goods of cultural fairness with which he justifies his theory.

CONCLUSION

The attempt to create conditions of cultural fairness in an era of overlapping histories and identities has to take a different route from the one that Kymlicka traces out. On the one hand, political theorists must abstain from attempts to adjudicate interethnic struggles. Political theorists do not have the expertise to play cultural Guardian, determining which cultures are vulnerable and thus deserve protection and which do not. The rise and fall of cultural communities is a natural part of history, and we can no more say which cultural groups deserve a boost in their attempts to stave off assimilation than we can say which religious communities deserve help in trying to maintain their memberships. If the concern of the political theorist is primarily with the background conditions of the struggle, ensuring that intercultural striving goes on under conditions of maximum fairness, then it has to be recognized that ethnic groups take their place amidst a large number of very diverse associations, social movements, and subcultures many of which have interests and claims at least as strong as ethnic communities and in many cases stronger. And it has to be recognized as well that we are not locked into the model of ethnic hegemony. The idea of complete cultural neutrality is a chimera. But there is more room than Kymlicka is willing to admit for states to respond to the cultural diversity of their populations.

On the other hand, even though we might have some reservations about Kymlicka's central argument justifying differentiated rights for ethnic communities on the basis of their cultural vulnerability, a strong case can be made that political theorists should be more concerned with the problem of cultural deprivation than they usually are. Kymlicka makes a convincing case as to why we should worry about groups of people who are cut off from the tacit understandings that cultural traditions make available. But a realistic response to this intuition takes us in a radically different direction from that which Kymlicka sets out.

I argued above that it is unrealistic to look at ethnic groups as being distinctively vulnerable compared to the numerous other associations, communities, and subcultures that see themselves forced to change under conditions of advanced modernity. The claim that ethnic communities are "encompassing groups" is in many ways exaggerated, at least for modernized and urbanized groups such as the Québécois, and accepts far too much of the self-description of ethnic activists who are motivated by political interest. But it *is* possible to point out distinctive groups in society that are victims of high levels of cultural deprivation. There are distinguishable subgroups that suffer in a particularly acute way the perils of advanced modernity, a subclass that is systematically cut off from narratives of guidance, and that suffers as a result from all manner of sociological and psychological dysfunction. But the groups that are most systematically vulnerable to problems of cultural deprivation are not those characterized by their position in an interethnic struggle, but rather those who are set apart by the terms of the relation to an advanced capitalist economy. Those who are most vulnerable to the ills of cultural deprivation are the persistently poor.

The cultural deprivations of poverty are well known and thoroughly documented. Poor people tend to grow up with strong feelings of fatalism, helplessness, dependency, and inferiority.[32] The poor of every nationality lead lives of great social estrangement. The poor are cut off from the main social institutions of their cultures—not just political parties and trade unions, but even such everyday institutions as banks, hospitals, department stores, and museums.[33] Class subordination brings with it a sense of low self-worth and diminished self-esteem that hampers the life-chances of the poor, even in situations where their material situation improves.[34] Poor neighborhoods tend to lack the institutions that pass on cultural meanings—churches, stores, schools, two-parent families—and this, of course, feeds the social estrangement that the poor suffer.[35]

In North America it is above all the persistently poor who stand out as the victims of cultural deprivation and the resulting loss of autonomy. Members of the middle class of most ethnic groups do fairly well in terms of gaining access to the primary goods of culture. Education, access to narratives and to role models who illustrate workable pathways across the perils and potentials of adult life—these cultural prerequisites come eventually to the men and women who are able to afford them. A francophone member of the middle class and a middle-class anglophone are situated very similarly as far as access to cultural guidance is concerned. The poor of the Hochelaga district of Montreal and of the south end of Saint John, New Brunswick, share a parallel grim fate. The latchkey children of Quebec, British Columbia, and Nova Sco-

tia share a common isolation from the parents and family who would tell them stories, talk with them, and thereby root them in a tradition. I agree with Kymlicka that we should worry about those in society who are vulnerable to cultural deprivation. But the relevant differences in this matter are not between ethnic groups, but between particular classes. Of course, this is not to say that ethnicity is not a crucial element of analysis. In most societies some ethnic groups do better than others, and thus the ethnic group that one belongs to will often determine one's statistical chances of ending up poor and culturally deprived. Yet even so, if one's goal is to address the moral difficulties involved with cultural deprivation, then the focus of analysis should be placed on issues of class. As I have been stressing throughout, it is immensely difficult to determine which groups in society are most vulnerable culturally and which among the many vulnerable groups can legitimately claim the right to protections. If we focus on concrete standards of deprivation—income, education, lack of access to wealth and skills and work—we get a clearer and much less controversial idea of which people should be the focus of one's concerns. Under policies that would, for example, guarantee a basic income to those worst off in society, vulnerable ethnic groups would draw a greater (that is, differentiated) benefit. If one gives all poor people access to the same basic goods, the ethnic groups who are worst treated will benefit most from the policy. This is a way of arriving at the desired differential policy result without getting involved in the perilous process of playing cultural game warden.

If we shift our perspective in the way that I have been suggesting, focusing on fairness at the level of cultural policy, and on the cultural needs of the poor above all, then there are at least two clear lines of research that open themselves up for the theorist concerned with addressing the related problems of cultural deprivation and cultural de-differentiation. One line of research would be devoted to an analysis and critique of the class biases in the current economic restructuring that lead to a growing inequality between rich and poor, and to the growth of poverty. Questions of class and poverty are being consistently eclipsed by questions of identity and ethnicity in an era when it is particularly important to think clearly and to possess good empirical data about the ways in which the swift changes in advanced capitalism are victimizing the poor. Another area of research to which theorists might turn if they are concerned with staving off cultural deprivation and assimilation is what I would refer to as the social imaginary. In the face of a growing global system that threatens to flatten all particular cultures, we need a fair degree of institutional imagination to find ways to allow the messages and institutions of traditional (and nontraditional) cultures to be translated into a form relevant for late modernity. We

need institutions that soften, humanize, particularize, and open up different pathways at the level of everyday life. Encouraging the transfer of powers and authority to distinctive subunits does very little good if those subunits do not in fact possess a repertoire of means by which they might go about creating new institutions for themselves. Mere cultural separateness does not allow cultures to lead distinctive ways of life—all separatism guarantees is parallel monoculturalism. What is required for the maintenance and extension of cultural distinctiveness is an inventiveness at the level of everyday institutions, new ways of working, improved media of civil society, diverse relations with new technologies, and so on. What is needed are realistic, hard-eyed, unromantic, and self-correcting attempts to create new institutions and to improve the ones we have. One cannot have cultural difference without institutional differentiation. The one-sided cultural differentiation that comes along with advanced capitalism needs to be compensated for by a counter-movement of institutional creativity.

There have been eras in which a great deal of attention was paid to creating new institutions in order to open up new paths for social intercourse, to help citizens develop their faculties, and to establish means by which to incorporate the poor and the culturally impoverished. The Progressive Era in the United States was a high point for the social imaginary in this sense as, in the eyes of some at least, were the 1960s. The "War on Poverty," women's consciousness-raising groups, the American Indian Movement, health food stores, the growth of the gay and lesbian rights movement—all created important changes at the level of everyday life for a great many people. Many of the changes have proved to be enduring and deep. And even though these movements tended, over the long term, to benefit their middle-class members most of all, there was also a real and in many ways effective attempt to address the needs and interests of the poor.[36] There are still echoes of this social creativity in movements such as feminism, the ecological movement, and the gay and lesbian rights movements, each of which focuses a great deal of attention and ingenuity on developing alternatives to the standard institutions of everyday life, thereby creating true zones of cultural difference. It is in these movements that we find social critique tied to institutional innovation and thus some hope of extending cultural diversity. One does not find a similar hope in support for ethnoterritorial movements and the zero-sum struggles they bring inexorably in their train.[37]

NOTES

licka generously invited me to give a presentation to a meeting of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada network group where I benefited from the comments of Joseph Carens, Dominique Leydet, Diane Lamoureux, Wayne Norman, and Daniel Weinstock; I would also like to thank participants in discussions at McGill, UCLA, and at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and to acknowledge gratefully the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

1. Will Kymlicka, "Individual and Community Rights," in *Group Rights*, ed. Judith Baker (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz, "National Self-Determination," *The Journal of Philosophy* 87 (1990): 439–61; Avishai Margalit and Moshe Halbertal, "Liberalism and the Right to Culture," *Social Research* 61 (1994): 491–510; Vernon van Dyke, "Justice as Fairness: For Groups?" *American Political Science Review* 69 (1975): 607–14; Michel Seymour, "Anti-individualisme, droits collectifs et États multinationaux," *Lekton* 4 (1994): 41–80; and Denise Réaume, "Individuals, Groups, and Rights to Public Goods," *University of Toronto Law Journal* 38 (1988): 1–27.

2. This is particularly important as an argument addressed to liberal democratic theorists, because it has not always been easy to show democratic theorists why they should see self-determination movements as advancing serious moral claims worthy of attention rather than just as movements to be undermined or boxed in by political strategies of containment. There are several reasons for the typical democratic suspicion of such movements. First of all, liberal democrats frequently look on nationalisms and other self-determination movements as destructive and retrogressive forces, based on a concentration on the needs and interests of one's local community over the broader duties and concerns owed to all other human beings. Nationalism in the nineteenth century frequently went hand in hand with movements for democratization and the extension of rights and the creation of democratic constitutions. But few modern nationalisms have this progressive thrust and their projects of aligning political boundaries with the boundaries of particular ethnic communities seem—in a world where there are many more peoples than can practicably have states—inherently destructive and destabilizing. This is especially true in a time when the constant circulation of peoples has led to the dense intermeshing of diverse ethnicities and religious groups in almost all countries. There are also questions of fairness. If the state reflects the values of one group in society and coerces individuals into actively supporting a way of life that is alien to them (for example, by taxing them and then giving this money disproportionately to the projects of other ethnic, religious or cultural groups), then it does a grave injustice. This raises serious questions about the fairness (and stability) of regimes devoted to robust cultural projects. (This sort of worry is best elaborated by John Rawls in his various writings advocating an antiperfectionist state. See especially *A Theory of Justice* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971], pp. 325–29.) Finally, there are also problems of xenophobia and violence. Although defenders of self-determination point out that it is possible to imagine a political posi-

tion in which concern for one's ethnic group goes along with a more general concern for fairness, it is not always clear what relation this ideal position has with the actually existing nationalisms that we live with, most of which seem to encourage forms of xenophobia and, at least potentially, the possibility of violent struggle in order to guarantee the safety of the group. To the extent that culturalist arguments succeed then, they serve to overcome a very strong disinclination in democratic theory to take seriously the moral claims behind self-determination movements.

3. Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, pp. 164–66.

4. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 83. The examples that Kymlicka gives of societal cultures are exclusively ethnic groups—Puerto Ricans, Aboriginal peoples, the Québécois, and so on. He does not, as Margalit and Raz do, allow for the idea that various social classes and religious groups might also represent societal cultures (Margalit and Raz, "National Self-Determination").

5. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 79.

6. Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, pp. 138, 145–57.

7. See Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, trans. Mark Ritter (London: Sage, 1992), and Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

8. See Peter F. Drucker, "The Age of Social Transformation," *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 1994, 54–55.

9. An excellent meditation on urbanization as assimilation is Glenn Gould's 1968 CBC radio documentary, "The Latecomers."

10. As Logan and Molotch point out in their book *Urban Fortunes*, neighborhoods supply informal support networks that "provide life-sustaining products and services . . . neighbors and acquaintances who offer aid that can alter a way of life, such as referrals for an available job, a political connection to solve a problem, a welfare benefit, a lucrative criminal contact" (John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch, *Urban Fortunes; The Political Economy of Place* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987], p. 104).

11. I am following David Harvey in *Social Justice and the City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

12. Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*.

13. See William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

14. Ibid., p. 138.

15. It is, for example, very hard to imagine scenarios in which current-generation Québécois would ever lose access to the institutions through which they participate in their culture.

16. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 89 (quoting Margalit and Raz, "National Self-Determination").

17. Ibid., pp. 83–84.

18. Most, but not all. Some Aboriginal peoples who live in rural isolation may well exist as "encompassing groups" of the sort that Kymlicka talks about, and his argument would be proportionately stronger for such peoples. But the communities that could legitimately make the claim to be encompassing groups form a small subset of the groups whose claims Kymlicka's account is meant to

justify. I deal with the unconvincing nature of holistic views of cultural belonging in much greater (and, I hope, more adequate) detail in Brian Walker, "Rawls, Bakhtin and the Praxis of Toleration," *Political Theory* 23 (1995): 101–27.

19. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 88. Kymlicka notes this rupture but does not recognize how much it compromises his argument. Kymlicka suggests that the character of a community can change completely—Quebec can move from being a rural Catholic society with huge families to being an urbanized and secular society like most others without the importance of the Québécois community as a context of choice being in the least changed. But this sociological conception of culture as an assemblage of people in interaction marks a shift from the original, meaning-based, definition with which Kymlicka first justifies cultural protection. The value of cultures as contexts of choice was that they established a particular set of meanings that could orient people. The second view, of cultures as assemblages of people interacting with no reference to the distinctiveness of their institutions and narratives, does not support a claim against assimilation. If the question were merely how people could be guaranteed access to some sort of community, some set of narratives and not rendered rootless, then there should be no problem with assimilation. People do not lose cultural membership when they change cultures. They just move from being members of one culture to being members of another. When the Acadians of Louisiana lost their French and adopted English they gained access to a continent of other English speakers with whom they could deal without obstruction. They gave up their sense of predominant solidarity with one community for dual membership as Cajuns and as Americans. In becoming assimilated, people do not lose access to community and social narrative and cultural orientation. They just give up one set of these for another. If Kymlicka were to get an argument against assimilation off the ground, it would require a meaning-based account of culture, with practices and differences that could be endangered or dispersed—a particular repertoire that a group might want to protect.

20. See, for example, Alex Inkeles and David H. Smith, *Becoming Modern* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), as well as Alex Inkeles, "Understanding and Misunderstanding Individual Modernity," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 8 (1977): 135–76.

21. My point here is somewhat different from that made by Waldron (see Jeremy Waldron, "Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative," in *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, ed. Will Kymlicka [New York: Oxford University Press, 1995], pp. 93–119). Kymlicka answered Waldron's suggestion that many North Americans participate in highly cosmopolitan lifestyles (eating Chinese food, reading Grimms' fairy tales to their children) by underlining that such cosmopolitanism is primarily a lifestyle of the anglophone society of North America, and that for most peoples movement between cultures is highly painful. My argument is different. I am suggesting that many of the backgrounds from which cultural minorities come have already been rendered cosmopolitan, in the sense that their everyday life is pursued through institutions that they share with many other national groups and many other cultures. That is to say,

the institutional life they lead cannot be shown to have marked differences from that of the peoples who surround them. This is based on the assumption that if one is going to make claims about a group being culturally distinct one has to be able to flesh this out by showing that the actual institutions in which people participate are in some meaningful way differentiated from those of other groups. (This issue is somewhat complicated when we come to Kymlicka's theory because of a distinction he draws between cultural structure and cultural context. On this distinction, see note 19.) My argument here is that this institutional differentiation cannot be shown for the case of modern Quebec. Quebec is already, in this sense, a cosmopolitan society. Among Québécois, everyday life and its assumptions and the values of the people are only minimally different from that of other peoples around.

Quebec is also, incidentally, cosmopolitan in Waldron's sense as well. Anybody who has ever lived in Montreal or Quebec City knows that Quebeckers are just as likely as members of the anglophone mainstream to go out for Chinese food or pizza or to read their children to sleep with foreign fairy tales.

22. The concept "encompassing group" is appropriate for certain groups that, due to some form of isolation, have managed either to remain separate or to create a separateness that locks them off from transnational and trans-statal institutions. Some Indian nations are like this, as are some religious groups such as the Amish. But to describe national differences as isomorphic with differences between societal cultures or encompassing groups is highly implausible and becomes merely polemical when used for groups such as francophone Quebeckers, for many of the Aboriginal people living in cities, and so on.

23. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 76.

24. The disjuncture between the cultural backgrounds that we draw on and the borders of the ethnic groups we come from has a number of important ramifications for Kymlicka's defense of the claims of national minorities. It raises the possibility, for example, that there might be no necessary connection whatsoever between protecting contexts of choice and promoting the self-determination claims of ethnic groups. Numerous empirical examples suggest that the connection between the stabilization of cultural contexts and the role of ethnic communities is considerably more complex than Kymlicka recognizes. For example, there are numerous diasporic peoples in the world, many of whom have thriving members who seem to suffer little disorientation from the fact that they must share power with the ethnic communities around them. Minority status, indeed, often serves to increase a sense of solidarity among community members. Conversely, studies such as Durkheim's *Suicide* (*Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, trans. John Spaulding and George Simpson [New York: Free Press, 1957]) show that highly stable ethnic states can do a very bad job of providing a sense of meaning and orientation for their members, even in a country such as France, which for a long time stood as the classic model of a stable state that represented the will of a particular people. What if groups systematically misread the effects of these social and economic transformations and ascribed to their minority position developments that in fact affected minority and majority cultures alike? What if late modernity posed a generalized cultural threat that all collectivities had to deal with as they tried to reformulate their traditional lifeways in a con-

text of constant radical change? The culturalist perspective is relatively insensitive to the possibility that general structural transformations—for example, in state and markets and in the activities of firms and bureaucracies—might be determining what is experienced in local communities only as racism and the accumulated results of outgroup xenophobia.

25. Will Kymlicka, this volume, p. 132.

26. Marc V. Levine, "Language Policy, Education and Cultural Survival: Bill 101 and the Transformation of Anglophone Montreal, 1977–1985," *Quebec Studies* 4 (1986): 3–28.

27. The first three groups, at least, form "national minorities," to use Kymlicka's term, and the specific culture of the island of Montreal has grown up out of their meeting.

28. Now it might be suggested that the sorts of issues that I am raising here might lead us to see the case of Quebec as being a borderline one to which Kymlicka's arguments are misapplied, with the suggestion that they might be more adequate elsewhere. There are two responses to this. One is that if space permitted one could easily extend the arguments I have set out above to show that Kymlicka's background conception of ethnic communities as "encompassing groups" and ethnicity as a dominant "context of choice" renders his arguments inappropriate for most of the cultural struggles in North America and perhaps for other parts of the world. The other response is that the case of Quebec simply cannot be seen as being peripheral within modern culturalism. It is the case to which writers continually return, and one of the two central examples on which Kymlicka bases his argument and upon which he invites us to judge the merits of his ideas.

29. I look at such cases in Brian Walker, "Le libéralisme politique et le refus de l'assimilation," *Lekton* 4 (1994): 9–40.

30. Even here there is a large degree of choice as to how much a minority group will lose. Some states adopt an official language but permit visibility and social presence to other languages. Other states actively attempt to discourage public displays of all but the official language. Policies such as the latter are by no means required by the need to have a healthy public language, so even given the need to choose one or two official languages there is often space for the development of greater cultural fairness.

31. That Kymlicka sees some such process as warranted—at least for "mainstream" culture—is evidenced in his discussion of public holidays. Kymlicka recognizes that the official roster of holidays—Christmas, Easter, Good Friday, and so on—unfairly reflects the needs of Christian members of society. He suggests that considerations of fairness might move us to "have one Christian holiday (say, Christmas), but replace Easter and Thanksgiving with a Muslim and a Jewish holiday" (Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 223n9). This is liberalization as antihegemony, a move toward a vision of the state dedicated to cultural fairness, one that would aim at creating a state of affairs where there would be no victor and no vanquished in the struggle over public culture. The recognition that this project will never be entirely successful, that the state will always reflect a nonneutral cultural solution at the end of the day, does not compromise the utility of the fairness model as a regulative ideal.

32. Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," in *Poverty in America: A Book of Readings*, ed. Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh, and Alan Haber (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), pp. 405–15, at 411.

33. Ibid., p. 409.

34. Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962).

35. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged*, p. 138.

36. On the social imaginary, see Erik Olin Wright, "Preface, the Real Utopias Project," in *Associations and Democracy*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers (London: Verso, 1995).

37. I make this point in greater detail in Brian Walker, "Social Movements as Nationalisms," in the *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume 22: *Rethinking Nationalism*, ed. Jocelyne Couture, Kai Nielsen and Michel Seymour (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1998), pp. 505–47.

CHAPTER 9

How Liberal Can Nationalism Be?

Judith Lichtenberg

Thinking about nationalism today, most people schooled in the liberal tradition think of chauvinism and violence and xenophobia, warfare that tears neighbor from neighbor and divides countries long united. It has not always been so. In the nineteenth century, for example, nationalism was associated with freedom and liberalism; John Stuart Mill was one of its staunchest defenders. It becomes clear to anyone attempting to penetrate the vast literature on and varied history of nationalism that generalizations are risky. At least in part, the problem is that we don't know what nationalism is until we know what it is being contrasted with. Writing about a different matter, J. L. Austin once put this point (politically incorrectly) by saying that the contrasting term "wears the trousers."[1] Nationalists in nineteenth-century Italy wanted to unify previously independent regions; nationalism was an expansive, cosmopolitanizing force. In colonial territories, nationalists fought foreign domination; nationalism meant freedom and self-determination.

It might seem that we could reduce confusion by avoiding the term "nationalism" altogether. That appears not to be an option. The word not only refuses to die but has in fact emerged as central in contemporary political theory. Allied once more with the forces of good, it is now called liberal nationalism. The term is invoked explicitly by the Israeli philosopher Yael Tamir in her 1993 book *Liberal Nationalism*[2] and quite independently, it seems, by Michael Lind, whose book *The Next American Nation: The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution*[3] received a good deal of attention when it appeared last year. In several works[4] the influential Canadian philosopher Will Kymlicka has also developed a view that is best described in these terms. And other contemporary philosophers fit the description as well.

Even the term "liberal nationalism" is not univocal, however. The

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views of Kymlicka and Tamir have a great deal in common; Lind, on the other hand—who writes seemingly unaware of their work, and of Tamir's prior use of the term—stands for something quite different and in some respects at odds with their views. Nevertheless, both Tamir and Lind describe themselves as liberal nationalists, and Kymlicka clearly is one as well.

The possibility of a liberal nationalism is attractive. For nationalism seems to appeal to powerful human impulses and to fulfill important values. At the same time, we may suspect that it conflicts with moral commitments central to an adequate conception of liberalism. Liberalism, of course, is hardly more clear as a concept than nationalism. But I believe that two basic elements have been central to liberal thought: first, a certain conception of the equality of human beings; and second, an emphasis on individual freedom or autonomy. From these values others can be inferred: tolerance, respect for individual rights, and pluralism, for example.

Two inferences seem unavoidable. First, neither autonomy nor the equality of persons is self-explanatory, and there can be disagreements among those who call themselves liberal about how these values should be understood. The meaning of equality in particular has been the focus of intense scrutiny within political philosophy at least since Ronald Dworkin named it the core liberal value.[5] Second, if human equality and individual autonomy are both central to liberalism, then there can be conflicts within liberalism itself about the weight to be accorded each, in general (if that is a sensible question) or in particular cases. On the basis of these two ambiguities, a great variety of positions calling themselves liberal is possible.

If both nationalism and liberalism are broad, complex, and ill-defined, liberal nationalism will inevitably be more so. In what follows I aim to understand what recent writers have meant by liberal nationalism and why they are drawn to it; and to explore some problems with it, in particular tensions arising between it and the universalist assumption of equality implicit in liberalism.

NATIONS AS CULTURES

Nationalism in all its varieties is clearly a normative thesis; it advances a view about what ought to be the case. Thus the claim that there are nations, or that the United States is a nation, is not the articulation of nationalism. Nationalism can be understood as the claim that there ought to be nations, or that nations have certain rights or ought to do certain things. More commonly, nationalism is a particular rather than

a general normative claim: that *this* group has certain rights (to political autonomy or sovereignty, for example). But the rational nationalist must at the same time acknowledge that if his nation has certain rights, others similarly situated do as well. With the nationalist unwilling to grant the universal thesis, discussion is pointless.

But what is a nation? In common parlance, the term is often used interchangeably with "state" or "country." This view is unsatisfactory for at least two reasons. First, the argument for political rights such as statehood or autonomy rests on the premise of nationhood: groups demand states by arguing that they constitute nations. Thus states cannot be identical with nations. Second, it is clear that many, if not most, states today are multinational. There is no one-to-one correspondence between nations and states.

There is perhaps no completely satisfactory synonym for "nation," but I believe that "culture" comes closest. This is clearly a view shared by Kymlicka, Tamir, Lind, and other participants in the current debate. Although the term "culture" also has a broader meaning—we speak of a "legal culture" and a "political culture," for example—we have a fairly well-understood conception of what Kymlicka calls a "societal culture," and that is what a nation is. A societal culture "provides its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres. These cultures tend to be territorially concentrated, and based on a shared language."[6]

Similarly, Lind argues that nationhood is a matter of common language, common folkways, and common knowledge, "a body of material—ranging from historical events that everyone is expected to know about to widely shared but ephemeral knowledge of sports and cinema and music."[7] For Tamir nationalism means the "right to culture";[8] it follows that a nation should be understood as a culture.

The view that nations are cultures—"societal cultures," in Kymlicka's phrase, or "vernacular cultures," in Lind's—leaves open several issues. I shall only mention them here; some will receive more attention below. First, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between one culture and another (the culture of the United States versus that of Canada, for example). Second, cultures are rarely pure; they contain elements of other cultures (chili, a staple of Indian cuisine, was brought to India by the Portuguese from the Americas[9]). Third, within cultures we find subcultures whose members have a distinct sense of identity and belonging (Jews in the United States and other countries); the relationship between cultures and subcultures and between the loyalties of members to each may be subtle and complicated.

What ties members of a culture together? It is often thought that

common ancestry, or at least the belief in a common ancestry, binds them. Cultures united by common ancestry are sometimes called ethnic nations.[10] The nationalism they espouse seems to many people illiberal, because it makes membership dependent on something over which people have no control. You can neither acquire nor shed your ancestry. Thus German citizenship is defined by *jus sanguinis*, the law of blood. Ethnic Germans who have lived for decades in the former Soviet Union can easily become German citizens, while Turkish "guest workers" who have lived their whole lives in Germany may not. The common contrast with ethnic nationalism is civic nationalism, where citizenship is defined by *jus soli*, the law of the place.[11] Civic nations—France and the United States are examples—are assimilationist; membership is open to newcomers rather than being dependent on biological ancestry.

But neither the term "ethnic" nor "civic" is entirely satisfactory. Ethnicity need not be identified with ancestry; the same questions that are raised about nationality—whether it is open or closed, dependent on birth or not—can be raised about ethnicity.[12] Lind, for example, calls the United States an ethnic nation while explicitly disavowing either the belief in or the reality of common ancestry as a requirement. "Civic," on the other hand, implies a conception of nationhood that is more political, and less cultural, than Lind, Tamir, and Kymlicka mean to suggest. Lind, for example, explicitly rejects a conception of the American nation as defined by political commitments or beliefs: "A nation may be *dedicated* to a proposition, but it cannot *be* a proposition."[13] Political values are only a part, and generally a small part, of a culture, which generally consists of common language, folkways, and customs.

About these matters—what constitutes a nation, the meaning of culture—Kymlicka, Tamir, and Lind largely agree. And it seems to me they are right.

TWO ARGUMENTS FOR NATIONALISM

On this conception of nations as cultures, nationalism is the view that, as Tamir puts it, people have a "right to culture." Or perhaps we should say they have a right to *their* culture. Two questions immediately arise. First, why do people have a right to their culture? And second, what does such a right amount to? In this section I investigate the first question; in the next, the second.

Kymlicka, Tamir, and others, like Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz, explain the right to culture in terms of the importance of cultural belonging to individual well-being. Kymlicka is particularly concerned to show that cultural belonging can be justified on purely individualist

grounds, without reference to collectivist notions of the sort emphasized by some communitarians and by nationalists not known for their attachment to the liberal tradition. Cultural membership, Kymlicka believes, is crucial for two reasons. First, it "provides meaningful options, in the sense that 'familiarity with a culture determines the boundaries of the imaginable.'"[14] Second, cultural membership or national identity "is particularly suited to serving as the 'primary foci [sic] of identification,' because it is based on belonging, not accomplishment." But this means that "people's self-respect is bound up with the esteem in which their national group is held."[15]

Although there is something deeply plausible about the view that a sense of communal belonging is important to individual well-being, each of these arguments is flawed. Let us begin with the second. National identity, the argument goes, is well-suited as the primary focus of identification because it is based on belonging, not accomplishment. But race, gender, family membership, and genealogy (e.g., being a Mayflower descendant) are likewise not accomplishment-based. So far as this argument goes there is nothing distinctive about *cultural* belonging.

It is worth remarking at this point on the moral ambiguity of sources of identity based on belonging. When belonging is contrasted with accomplishment, the idea that, as Margalit and Raz say, identification is more secure when tied to the former rather than the latter seems plausible. Personal merit or achievement is irrelevant; you don't have to do anything to be a member of the group. (Your mother will love you no matter what you do.) Since achievement depends partly on accidents of natural and social endowment and on ordinary luck, there is an egalitarian element in the emphasis on belonging. But, as I argued earlier in describing the traditional concept of the ethnic nation, there is also something "illiberal" in basing membership on something over which people have no control. This is, after all, part of the reason we condemn racism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination; we believe that, to the extent possible, a person's fate should depend on her autonomous choices.[16]

Consider now Kymlicka's first argument for the value of cultural belonging: that familiarity with a culture "provides meaningful options," determining "the boundaries of the imaginable." On these grounds, it would seem that familiarity with more than one culture would extend those boundaries, providing a person with a broader range of options. And, however we understand options, the particular culture in which a person is raised may in fact provide fewer than a different culture would. If it is meaningful options we are after, one's inherited culture is not necessarily the best or the only one to have.

Jeremy Waldron makes a related point: "[Kymlicka's] argument shows that people need cultural materials; it does not show that what people need is 'a rich and secure cultural structure.' It shows the importance of access to a variety of stories and roles; but it does not, as he claims, show the importance of something called *membership* in a culture."[17] Waldron makes a powerful case for a cosmopolitan vision at odds with Kymlicka's:

> The cosmopolitan may live all his life in one city and maintain the same citizenship throughout. But he refuses to think of himself as defined by his location or his ancestry or his citizenship or his language. Though he may live in San Francisco and be of Irish ancestry, he does not take his identity to be compromised when he learns Spanish, eats Chinese, wears clothes made in Korea, listens to arias by Verdi sung by a Maori princess on Japanese equipment. . . . He is a creature of modernity, conscious of living in a mixed-up world and having a mixed-up self.[18]

About this picture the critic might respond in two ways. First, even if it is attractive to some people, perhaps it is just cosmopolitan parochialness to think it attractive to or descriptive of all or even most people. Second, the possibility of the cosmopolitan self seems to presuppose the existence of distinct cultures out of which emerges the rich cultural mélange that Waldron describes. If Maori and Chinese and Italian culture didn't exist in the first place, the cosmopolitan life that takes a bit of this and a bit of that would be impossible.

How might the cosmopolitan reply to these criticisms? He might acknowledge that in part he is making a virtue of necessity. (Perhaps once there were relatively pure cultures. But that was then, this is now.) If Waldron's vision describes only a tiny fraction of all the human beings who have ever lived, that will soon change. Whereas cultures used to be less permeable (although never impermeable), and cultural change was therefore slow and gradual, now in the age of instant telecommunications there is no stemming the tide. However unappealing or undescriptive it may seem, at the cusp of the twenty-first century the cosmopolitan self is no longer the preserve of freethinkers and jet-setters.

The cosmopolitan might continue in this vein: as the cosmopolitan self becomes more common, the existence of pristine cultures will become less common. This is not, of course, a defense of the eradication of "monocultures," as we might call them; it is only a claim of inevitability. Nevertheless, it might also be taken as a driving force behind liberal nationalism: we should do everything we can to preserve traditional cultures, which are in danger of being swallowed up or destroyed.

Now it seems hard to argue with this view, especially if we envision

the most likely alternative: the McDonaldization of everything. But imagine even that it is not McDonaldization. Picture the loveliest culture that you can—but there is only one, which permeates the globe. This is not an attractive vision. If the contrast with liberal nationalism—nationalism as the right to culture—were a single worldwide culture, liberal nationalism's appeal would be hard to deny. Part of its attraction, then, is the attraction of pluralism. A world encompassing many different ways of life is better than a world with only one, no matter how good the one.

So there are really two central appeals of liberal nationalism. One is the need for some kind of communal belonging to individual well-being. Kymlicka's dual account of this need is unsatisfactory, I have argued, both because the need is not best explained in terms of providing options, and because culture is not unique among affiliations in not being based on accomplishment. Still, Kymlicka is right that for most people cultural belonging is very important. It is hard to say a great deal about this in analytical (as opposed to poetic or literary) terms, perhaps because it is basically so very simple: for most of us, our native culture provides us with a sense of being at home in the world. This feeling goes far beyond liking or disliking, loving or hating; we can recognize the superior virtues of other cultures, but still feel the attachment bred of familiarity our own culture affords. The features of a culture that produce this sense of familiarity and well-being are its language and folkways, its sounds and smells, the innumerable subtle and, in the scheme of things, trivial customs and practices and ways of life we grow up with.

The other appeal of liberal nationalism is its implicit commitment to pluralism. There is something odd about this, for, viewed "from the inside," there need be nothing pluralistic about nationalism. The nationalist seeks political expression for her culture, and may care nothing for anyone else's. But insofar as liberal nationalism is a general creed, one of its most plausible premises is the belief that many cultures and ways of life are better than one.

TAMIR'S RIGHT TO CULTURE

The commitment to pluralism sounds very nice in theory; the question is what it means in practice. Let a thousand cultures bloom; let them live side by side in peaceful coexistence. Who could argue with that? Nationalism, however—even liberal nationalism—is a political doctrine. It concerns how states ought to behave with respect to cultures and their members, and what rights cultures have against states. We may be inclined to forget the political—the coercive—face of even liberal nationalism when we think in terms of the right to culture.

Many people have understood nationalism to be the view that "the political and the national unit should be congruent."[19] Taking nations to be cultures, it would follow that each culture should have its own state. But claims to statehood encounter two major problems.

One is that all territory on the earth is already taken. So claims to land never go uncontested. Secession and the creation of new states can never be simple, for the property and other claims of existing states and their members will have their merits, even when a culture demanding statehood has right and justice on its side. Complex negotiations, compromises, and agreements will always be necessary.

The other difficulty with the demand that nations be (or have) states is what Tamir aptly calls the "Russian doll phenomenon": "every 'national territory,' however small, includes among its inhabitants members of other nations."[20] If every culture had, by the very fact of being a culture, a right to statehood, we could face a practically infinite regress of states of diminishing size. This is not merely a serious practical problem. It is a sufficient reason to deny that cultures per se have a right to statehood. A culture must provide very good reason why it *needs* a state.

What constitutes a good reason? Michael Ignatieff, in a review of Tamir's book, argues that a people may legitimately demand a state when they "have good reason to believe that statehood is their only security for the future" against "the violence and the intimidation of their neighbors."[21] Margalit and Raz defend a more robust view, making a case for statehood when necessary to "protect the culture and self-respect" of the group.[22] Here it is not just that individuals are endangered because they belong to a certain culture, but that the existence of the culture itself is endangered. It follows that the culture itself is valuable and deserves protection and respect. And because its members' identities are tied up with the culture, their self-respect rises and falls accordingly.

It might be said that part of what it means to be a liberal nationalist is to sever the close connection between nationhood and statehood, as Tamir does explicitly: "it is the cultural rather than the political version of nationalism that best accords with a liberal viewpoint."[23] I want to examine this claim more closely, but it is worth reminding ourselves at the outset how few liberal nationalists there are in the world. Most nationalists today explicitly seek a state, either by secession—the creation of a new state—or by attempting to destroy, expel, or forcibly assimilate members of other cultures within the existing state. To take only one example, India's main Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, whose slogan is "one nation, one people, one culture," and which had a role in provoking the destruction of a Muslim mosque in 1992, calls for changes in laws on marriage, divorce, and inheritance that adversely affect Muslim practices; "repeal of constitutional auton-

omy for India's only majority Muslim province . . . ; and construction of a 'magnificent' Hindu temple on the site of the demolished mosque."[24] The current crop of scholarship on the subject notwithstanding, liberal nationalism has a tiny following among people who call themselves and are identified by others as nationalists.

Nevertheless, let us examine liberal nationalism on its merits. In the first place, it is a mistake for Tamir to claim that her view is not a political doctrine simply because it stops short of insisting that cultures should have states. Nationalism in all its forms is a political doctrine, as I have argued, because it concerns how cultures may express themselves publicly and thus necessarily has implications for what is politically permitted, required, and forbidden.

That Tamir's view is less innocuous than it might at first appear becomes clear when, late in the book, she asserts that "although it cannot be ensured that each nation will have its own state, all nations are entitled to a public sphere in which they constitute the majority."[25] Essentially, she advocates the withering away of the traditional state, to be replaced on the one side by autonomous national communities making decisions within, and on the other by regional organizations looking outward to the larger world. For domestic purposes, there is little to distinguish Tamir's national communities from traditional states. Her solution fails to answer the question, said to describe the various Balkan nationalists (and many others as well): "Why should I be a minority in your state when you can be a minority in mine?"[26] We need only replace the term "state" with "autonomous community." If we grant that about certain matters a state or community cannot be neutral—such as the choice of a language in which to conduct public affairs[27]—then either some minorities will be forced to endure alien cultural practices, or else they will perpetuate the Russian doll problem by themselves becoming the majority culture in a still smaller community.

Tamir's requirement that every nation have a sphere in which it is the majority is not only unrealistic; it may also be undesirable. Being a member of a minority culture can be a defining experience; for example, to be Jewish (outside of Israel and New York) is to be a member of a minority, and that marginal status has often seemed central to Jewish identity. The same goes, I suspect, for other cultures. Minority status may not necessarily be something to overcome.

KYMLICKA'S ARGUMENTS FOR NATIONAL RIGHTS

Kymlicka's aims are more modest than Tamir's. He defends collective rights for minority cultures within a multinational state, without sup-

posing that there must exist a sphere in which the minority forms a majority. Indeed, Kymlicka's project is not explicitly a nationalist one but rather the articulation of minority rights within a larger—culturally alien—society. Nevertheless, it shares with other nationalist projects the belief that members of a culture have a right to its public expression. Kymlicka's view is liberal in part because the group rights he asserts are protections for members against decisions of outsiders, rather than restrictions the group may impose on its own members. These rights do not "protect the group from the destabilizing impact of internal dissent," but rather from the effects of external decisions of the larger society.[28]

These "group-differentiated rights" can be of various types: "self-government rights" (political autonomy), "polyethnic rights" (public funding of cultural practices; exemptions, based on religious practices, from certain laws and regulations); and "special representation rights" (e.g., reserving a certain number of seats in the legislature for members of disadvantaged groups).[29] Such rights clearly go beyond a policy of simple nondiscrimination; they require governments to act affirmatively in order to protect minority cultures and enable them to express themselves publicly.

Kymlicka considers four arguments for group-differentiated rights for cultural minorities. The two most important are arguments about justice, which have implications for the obligations of the majority culture. The first, summed up in a Canadian Supreme Court judgment, is that "the accommodation of differences is the essence of true equality." Since the state cannot be neutral with respect to all cultural practices, group rights "compensate for unequal circumstances which put the members of minority cultures at a systemic disadvantage in the cultural market-place."[30] The second argument is that some minority rights can be inferred from historical agreements, like the treaty rights of native peoples or the agreement by which two groups agreed to federate.

The latter argument obviously applies only to some cultural groups, but they happen to be groups of particular interest to the Canadian Kymlicka. An important distinction in his theory is that between genuine national minorities—he would include in this category the Québécois and the various indigenous peoples in Canada and elsewhere—and ordinary immigrants, who, on his view, come to the new culture voluntarily and thereby, it seems, consent to assimilate to it. Kymlicka's argument from historical agreements tracks this distinction but does not capture all the reasons we may think native peoples have cultural rights against the majority. We may think these rights derive partly from the fact that just agreements were *not* made, and that indigenous groups were unjustly treated.

For both these reasons, then—the existence of prior agreements as well as historical coercion and injustice—we may think indigenous or federated groups have rights against the majority. But Kymlicka's first argument—that group rights compensate for the systemic disadvantages and inequalities minority cultures experience—holds also for immigrant groups, given the importance of cultural belonging and the circumstances under which immigration normally occurs. Kymlicka himself, in arguing for the importance of cultural belonging, insists that few people voluntarily choose to leave their culture.[31] When we think not only of traditional refugees—those fleeing political persecution—but also of people in dire or difficult economic circumstances seeking reasonable life prospects, the suggestion that such people's decisions are rendered so freely that in moving they choose to give up their original culture seems implausible.[32]

Many such immigrants do not actively choose to maintain their native culture; to the extent that these matters are under their control, they may assimilate as far as they are capable, which may mean simply that they do not try to prevent their children from assimilating. But the question whether to retain one's native culture is a live one in some parts of the United States, for example, where large numbers of Spanish-speaking immigrants, fleeing poverty and persecution and seeking not fortune but more modest economic opportunities, have settled. Their numbers are large enough, and concentrated enough, to make the prospect of a Latino culture or a bilingual society real.

But if the argument from equality supports extending cultural rights to immigrants and refugees, and not only to members of indigenous cultures and special groups like the Québécois, at the same time it renders the whole conclusion less plausible. For it seems impractical to extend such rights to an indefinite number of minority cultures. Now one might take this practical consideration as a reason to limit minority rights to indigenous and federated groups, as Kymlicka does, since these groups can avail themselves of the additional argument either that they have rights founded on a prior agreement or that their ancestors were unjustly coerced. Yet in some ways the case is stronger for immigrant groups, whose connection to their native culture may be more immediate than the connection of members of indigenous groups to theirs. How strong the tie is between members of indigenous groups and their culture will depend in part on how vital the culture has remained, and that in turn will depend partly on whether it has received support from the majority culture. So there is a certain circularity here.

Kymlicka's arguments from justice, then, are inconclusive, for several reasons. First, they require details about particular cases (and no one is more clear than Kymlicka about the importance of such details).

Second, the two arguments are distinct, each has independent merit, and they may pull in different directions. Depending on the causes of immigration and the strength of attachment to a culture by particular groups, immigrant groups might have as much or more of a claim to their culture as indigenous groups. Third, the possibility of multiple cultures each having legitimate claims to collective rights might call into question the whole thesis, depending on how much is required to satisfy these claims.

The third argument Kymlicka considers is that we should grant cultural minorities rights because doing so may advance the good of cultural diversity. Despite the plausibility of its premise, this argument, Kymlicka rightly claims, appeals to the interests of society at large and is therefore insufficient to generate minority *rights*.

Finally, Kymlicka argues that liberals are already committed to group-differentiated rights because they accept the premise that states may control their borders, and more generally may decide who possesses citizenship. The burden of proof is therefore on them, he believes, to show that group-differentiated rights within a state or among citizens are illegitimate. Kymlicka is making a consistency argument: if you distinguish between citizens and noncitizens, there is no basis on which to refuse to distinguish among citizens.

But appeals to consistency are always double-edged, and none more than this one. This argument begs a central question in the debate about nationalism and the significance of national boundaries: namely, whether it is legitimate to favor members of a nation over nonmembers and whether the privileges of membership can rightly be denied to outsiders. Kymlicka is aware that the thrust of the argument can push the other way; as he acknowledges, although on the one hand most people, including most liberals, accept the rights of states to control admissions, liberals are also committed to the equality of persons, which cuts against the exclusionary practices of states.

Michael Walzer, expressing a communitarian view that is a defense of national communities, puts the nationalist point explicitly. He argues that "the primary good we distribute to one another is membership in some human community," and that

> admission and exclusion are at the core of communal independence. They suggest the deepest meaning of self-determination. Without them, there could not be *communities of character*, historically stable, ongoing associations of men and women with some special commitment to one another and some special sense of their common life.[33]

Critics of this view question the moral significance of national boundaries and the rights of states to exclude.[34] They may acknowledge the

"good" of communal membership, but they also recognize that the radical inequalities between communities mean that its "goodness" varies depending on a community's particular assets.

There is no right answer to the question whether liberals are committed to the legitimacy of exclusionary national boundaries or not—or, therefore, whether consistency requires them to endorse Kymlickian minority rights. "Liberalism" is just too broad a term, embracing values that may and do conflict: on the one hand, a commitment to personal as well as societal autonomy that would reject a radical restructuring of global politics and thus accepts the existing world order of nation-states; on the other hand, a commitment to the equality of persons that, if taken seriously, makes it difficult to permit the gross inequalities in the distribution of basic goods that accompanies this world order.

It is these inequalities, after all, that constitute the most powerful argument against even the milder forms of nationalism. Who would deny communities the right to exclude people, if those people had someplace just as good (or even good enough) to go instead? Liberal nationalists like Kymlicka and Tamir appreciate this point. Thus Kymlicka argues that "a country forfeits its right to restrict immigration if it has failed to live up to its obligations to share its wealth with the poorer countries of the world"[35] and Tamir makes the identical point: "it is justified for a nation to seek homogeneity by restricting immigration only if it has fulfilled its global obligation to assure equality among all nations."[36] Given the facts of national selfishness and greed, the question is only whether this demanding qualification makes nationalism in *our* world illegitimate.

Lind, on the other hand, who favors strong restrictions on immigration as well as on trade between high- and low-wage countries to prevent corporations from taking advantage of cheap labor elsewhere, insists that "the goal of U.S. economic policy is to raise the living standards of ordinary Americans"; whether this "happens to promote global welfare is a matter of secondary importance."[37] This sounds more like good old nationalism than liberal nationalism.

In its purest version, nationalism means that the welfare of outsiders does not count at all; members care only about each other and about their collectivity. If this sounds like a caricature, we need only think of the standard view of international relations, in which nation-states are supposed to pursue their own interests. According to more moderate versions of nationalism (strains of which can also be found in the standard view), a nation may not harm outsiders but need not promote their welfare. How this differs from the purer view depends on where and how we draw the line between the infliction of harm and the failure to promote welfare. We can also imagine a spectrum of moderate nation-

alisms that vary according to the differential permitted between the care and feeding of members as against nonmembers. Kymlicka's and Tamir's assertions that global inequalities restrict a nation's right to exclude outsiders suggest a view far over on the liberal side of the spectrum. The question is only whether, in the absence of significant strides toward rectifying such injustices, there is much nationalism left.

LIND'S EGALITARIAN MELTING POT

The liberal commitment to equality, overlaid against the nationalist tension between insiders and outsiders, is nowhere more striking than in Michael Lind's version of liberal nationalism. At first blush, it is hard to see what, aside from the label, his view shares with those of Kymlicka and Tamir. They are multiculturalists who want to reconcile the existence of various cultures within one state; he is the enemy of multiculturalism, which he regards as the misguided "orthodoxy of the present American regime" and "an aftershock of the black-power radicalism of the sixties."[38] For Lind, liberal nationalism is the opposite of the cultural pluralism implicit in the multicultural ideal; it "is the idea of the American nation as a melting pot."[39]

What in Lind's conception, then, warrants the label "liberal nationalism"? First is his view that the American nation is "a cultural melting pot, and ultimately a racial melting pot."[40] Although American culture is ultimately "Anglomorph" in its "national grammar," black Americans in particular, as well as other ethnic groups, have made enormous contributions to the "national vernacular culture."[41] American culture is therefore "mulatto" in content, and is open to "anyone whose primary, or adopted, culture is . . . [this] 'mulatto' mainstream."[42] To revert to our earlier terminology, Lind's nation is ethnic if we mean by this cultural, but not if we mean rooted in ancestral ties (or even just the belief in ancestral ties).

Interestingly, Lind's claim about the nature of the United States—that it is *a* nation, not two or five—suggests that what divides him from Kymlicka and Tamir may not be so much beliefs about the value of multiculturalism (they like it, he doesn't) as beliefs about whether or where it exists. He denies that the United States contains five distinct cultures (as he claims most multiculturalists think).[43] Kymlicka, a Canadian, and Tamir, an Israeli, have little to say about this question. Although they are advancing general theories, they are, like all theorists, focused on certain particular cases—specifically the circumstances of their own countries. In principle, then, they might agree with Lind that the United States is a single nation with a single culture.

What kind of question is the question whether the United States is one nation or more than one? Is it a factual question? A conceptual question? A value question? Probably some of each of these. Answering it depends on the facts: "how things are" in the United States. It depends also on questions we raised earlier about what we mean by a culture, how we decide where one ends and another begins, how to draw the line between a culture and a subculture. But it's hard to answer this conceptual question without knowing in advance what we want to *do* with the concept of culture. And this is a question of value.

I do not have the space here to give the question "Is the United States one culture or more than one?" the treatment it deserves. But several points are in order. First, I think there is much to be said for Lind's view. For better or for worse, American culture is pervasive and nearly irresistible. But second, one of the central conclusions Lind wants to draw from this view, that we should decisively abandon affirmative action policies, does not follow. The best arguments for affirmative action concern counteracting ongoing discrimination or compensating people for the disadvantages produced by past or present discrimination; these arguments do not presuppose that the beneficiaries of affirmative action belong to different cultures.

It's important to note, in this connection, that whereas Kymlicka has much to say about indigenous and federated peoples—the cases of interest in Canada—he sheds much less light on the question of greatest import to Americans, the situation of American blacks. The case for thinking American blacks form a distinct culture is much weaker than it is for the Inuits or the Québécois, in part because "black culture" is so interwoven with American culture as a whole. In addition, native peoples form a much smaller proportion of the general population in the United States than in Canada (one percent versus three percent); there is no analogue to the Québécois in the United States; and Canada's much smaller population may magnify the significance of its minority cultures. Multiculturalism, then, is less plausible as a description of the United States than of Canada.

The other important reason for thinking Lind's nationalism is liberal, in addition to its inclusive understanding of the nature of the American nation, is its unashamed egalitarianism. Lind's attack on multiculturalism is motivated at least in part by his belief that it has divided and thereby harmed wage-earning Americans to the benefit of the "white overclass."[44] Whether or not one believes this analysis is sound, Lind's good faith is demonstrated by his calls for "unsubtle, crude, old-fashioned redistribution of wealth, through taxation and public spending";[45] changes in the credentialing of professionals that would loosen the hold of organizations like the American Medical Association and the Ameri-

can Bar Association to permit middle-class and working-class Americans to perform some of the jobs that now require advanced degrees;[46] and federal outlawing of "by far the biggest affirmative action program"—legacy preference, the preferential admission of children of alumni to elite colleges and universities.[47]

As inequality grows more pronounced in our society, and the distinction between what Lind calls the white overclass (with its sprinkling of nonwhite members) and everybody else becomes ever sharper, Lind's vision is, at least to an egalitarian like myself, very appealing.[48] It is, anyway, until one comes to the place (quoted above) where he calls for strong restrictions on immigration and on trade between high- and low-wage countries, arguing that U.S. policy ought to promote the interests of Americans and to consider only secondarily the welfare of other people. The commitment to equality within the nation comes at the expense of those outside its borders.[49]

Now of course the claim that the United States ought to promote Americans' interests hardly amounts to rabid ethnocentrism. It is, indeed, the expression not only of conventional wisdom but of universal practice. A politician who avowed the intention to put global welfare first would meet with disbelief, not to mention defeat. It is the recognition of how deeply entrenched nationalistic sentiment is—the realization that "nationalism will simply not go away"—that leads Tamir to describe liberal nationalism at the end of her book with what almost sounds like resignation: "making a virtue out of necessity."[50] Perhaps that is unfair, for Tamir, like Kymlicka, does not regard the bond among nationals as a *malum in se* (in Lind's term[51]) or even a weakness. It is a basic human need, satisfaction of which is required for a good life—something that must therefore be accounted for in our politics. But liberal nationalists know how easily this need can turn ugly.

LIBERAL NATIONALISM, EQUALITY, AND SOCIAL UNITY

Liberal nationalism—the right to culture—means being able to express one's culture in public and collective ways. Considered in itself, such a right seems attractive. Subjectively, it allows people to express their attachment to their culture, satisfying the need for cultural belonging; objectively, it promotes a plurality of cultures. The question is whether the right to culture conflicts with other things we care about. The threat of such conflict comes primarily from two sources: the value of equality and the need for social unity. I shall end with a brief discussion of each.

Nationalism, even liberal nationalism, puts great weight on the distinction between insiders and outsiders, members and nonmembers. As

we have seen, the importance of membership can conflict with liberalism's commitment to the equality of persons. On the one hand, it's obvious that individuals cannot be committed equally to all members of the human race. We care most about members of our family and a small circle of intimates, and the metaphor of concentric circles spreading out from there, and partly coinciding with geographic, ethnic, and national boundaries, seems roughly to describe the nature of most people's moral commitments. On the other hand, people's desire to join national communities different from their inherited ones derives largely from the maldistribution of "primary goods," in Rawls's sense: in particular material decency and freedom from persecution, oppression, and violence. Those seriously committed to the equality of persons cannot be indifferent to the radical maldistribution of these primary goods between nations (and within them as well, of course). Kymlicka and Tamir are highly sensitive to this issue; in response to it they moderate their nationalism when outsiders are deprived of an adequate share of resources. Lind, on the other hand, despite his egalitarianism within national boundaries, takes the "we take care of our own and let others do likewise" attitude we more commonly associate with nationalism.

This difference suggests that a conception of equality is prior in Kymlicka and Tamir, but not in Lind, to the commitment to communal belonging: *first* you equalize resources, then you can have your cultural belonging with its distinctions between members and nonmembers. For the traditional nationalist, on the other hand, membership *determines* the scope of the community over which considerations of equality apply. This is an enormous difference. Lind's nationalism is of this latter sort; his egalitarianism stops at the border. Kymlicka and Tamir take the former approach. The question is only whether, given the facts of global inequality, their liberal nationalism can exist in practice as well as in theory.

The other crucial question, it turns out, is not unrelated to the tension between nationalism and equality. It is whether nationalism undermines social unity. This is hardly a question for the traditional nationalist who believes that a nation ought to have a state: the limits of the nation are the limits of the state, and nationalism produces unity by drawing a sharp legal, political, and moral boundary between those within and those outside. But for Kymlicka and others who promote diverse national sentiments and ideals within a state, the question is whether members of different cultures will have enough in common to bind them into one society. For there is no escaping the fact that, even if there are cultures within which individuals have strong loyalties, there is also a larger entity to which some sort of allegiance is necessary.

We may worry, then, that the various national groups within a society will be at odds with each other, not only lacking a shared sense but

in fact experiencing conflict. This is one of Lind's concerns with multi-culturalism; and it is clear that, whatever its overall benefits, the emphasis on multiculturalism can produce intergroup hostility. (Lind solves the problem of social unity by defining diversity out of the picture; the United States is a single culture.) Such concerns may lead us to the conclusion that if the center is to hold, citizens of a state must partake of certain common practices or beliefs or attitudes no matter what their differences.

But what exactly, and how much, must they share? Kymlicka addresses this difficult question, although, by this own admission, in a sketchy and inconclusive way.[52] He offers as the best hope for unity—albeit with some doubts—Charles Taylor's suggestion that people might "'find it exciting and an object of pride' to work together to build a society founded on deep diversity." "Deep diversity" means that there exists not only a diversity of cultural groups in the society but a diversity of ways in which the members of these groups belong to the larger polity. Kymlicka means to distinguish here between, for example, the connec- -tions of indigenous or federated people to the larger society and those of immigrant groups (which may themselves vary).[53]

The question, then, is whether we can be different but equal—more precisely, whether we can recognize others as different but equal. Perhaps in the end such a commitment requires that we also recognize our *un*difference; the glue that binds us to the acceptance of difference-and-equality is the recognition that "we are all human beings" or some such idea.[54]

It would be nice if the commitment to deep diversity existed, and if it were sufficient for social unity. If not, then we must confront hard questions about whether the state may or must privilege certain cultural practices, and disadvantage others, in the interests of social unity. If, on the other hand, the commitment to diversity exists or can be made to exist, we might hope that it could be extended more broadly beyond state borders. If it can, then there is hope for the kind of global equality that is a moral prerequisite for liberal nationalism. It might be hard then to distinguish liberal nationalism from the cosmopolitan perspective with which it is usually contrasted. If it cannot, however—if the belief in difference turns out to be a deep psychological stumbling block to the commitment to equality—we will find ourselves slipping back to the nationalisms we know and hate.

NOTES

1. See J. L. Austin, *Sense and Sensibilia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 15. Austin's question was whether we ever perceive anything

directly, which many philosophers deny. His point was that "perceiving *indirectly*," which means different things in different circumstances, "wears the trousers," and that perceiving directly gets its meaning by contrast.

2. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993.

3. New York: Free Press, 1995.

4. See especially *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); also *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). Unless otherwise indicated, citations to Kymlicka are to *Multicultural Citizenship*, cited as *MC*.

5. See, e.g., *A Matter of Principle* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), chapters 8 and 9.

6. *MC*, p. 76.

7. Lind, *Next American Nation*, p. 265. Lind's conception of common knowledge resembles E. D. Hirsch Jr.'s idea of cultural literacy. See *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (New York: Vintage, 1988). Of course Hirsch's lament that not every American does know everything on his list suggests a slightly different view from Lind's, since presumably Hirsch would not deny that the ignorant Americans are Americans, partaking in American culture.

8. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, chapter 2.

9. For this and other examples of cultural impurity and cross-cultural influence, see Amartya Sen, "Our Culture, Their Culture: Satyajit Ray and the Art of Universalism," *The New Republic*, April 1, 1996.

10. Walker Connor, for example, thinks "nation" in its pure sense is synonymous with "ethnonation": "a group of people who believe they are ancestrally related." *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. x.

11. For a good discussion see Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).

12. Ethnicity might be open not only in the sense that it can be acquired, as by naturalization, but that it can be consciously or semiconsciously chosen. See Mary C. Waters, *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). Waters interviewed white Catholic Americans from a variety of heritages, many of them from mixed backgrounds. So-called ethnic identification, she discovered, was partly a matter of choice. So, for example, a person who was one-quarter Irish and three-quarters German might think of herself as Irish rather than German. According to Waters, the primary factors determining which ethnic identity people choose are surname, looks, and the relative social rankings of the ethnic groups.

13. Lind, *Next American Nation*, p. 5.

14. Kymlicka, *MC*, p. 89: the second clause quotes from Margalit and Raz, "National Self-Determination," *Journal of Philosophy* 87 (1990). In support of this view Kymlicka also cites Ronald Dworkin in *A Matter of Principle*, pp. 228–33.

15. *MC*, p. 89.

16. This question of the extent to which our identity is formed by attachments given to us, to what extent by choices we make, is of course one of the

central debates dividing communitarians from their critics—although putting the ques.ion in terms of "the extent to which" already assumes a more balanced, less either/or view than some of the discussions seem to imply. The contemporary debate begins with Michael Sandel's defense of communitarianism in *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982). Kymlicka rejects the view that we are identical with attachments we do not choose, and insists that we are able (although often with difficulty), and must be able, to question and revise them (*MC*, pp. 91–93). To decide whether this rejection of the communitarian view is fully compatible with the emphasis on belonging as a basis for identity would require a more extended analysis than I can provide here.

17. "Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative," in *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, ed. Will Kymlicka (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 107. See also Jeremy Waldron, "Multiculturalism and Mélange," in *Public Education in a Multicultural Society*, ed. Robert Fullinwider (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

18. Ibid., p. 95.

19. See, e.g., Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 1; E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 9. For further discussion of this issue see Judith Lichtenberg, "Nationalism: For and (Mainly) Against," in *The Morality of Nationalism*, ed. Jeff McMahan and Robert McKim (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 158–75.

20. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 158.

21. "Boundaries of Pain," *The New Republic*, November 1, 1993, p. 38.

22. Margalit and Raz, "National Self-Determination," p. 457.

23. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 58.

24. Kenneth J. Cooper, "Hindu Nationalist Party Looks to South and East India for Future Majority," *Washington Post*, June 24, 1996, p. A14.

25. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 150.

26. Attributed to the Yugoslav political theorist Vladimir Gligorov, "Balkan Tragedy," *Carnegie Quarterly* 41.1 (Winter 1996): 4.

27. For arguments defending this view, see Kymlicka, *MC*, pp. 108–15. E.g.: "It is quite possible for a state not to have an established church. But the state cannot help but give at least partial establishment to a culture when it decides which language is to be used in public schooling, or in the provision of state services" (p. 111). Even a bilingual state makes such choices, by excluding other languages; clearly no society could conduct official business, or require its citizens to be conversant, in more than a very small number of languages.

28. *MC*, p. 35.

29. Ibid., pp. 26–33.

30. Ibid., pp. 108, 113.

31. See esp. ibid., pp. 84–87.

32. According to the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees agreed upon in 1967 by the United Nations, a refugee is a person who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the coun-

try of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." See Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *The Refugee in International Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983). Some have argued that refugee status should be extended to those fleeing dire economic straits such as famine. But however we draw the line, it is clear that many people classified as immigrants or migrants suffer serious deprivation in their home country and are "pushed" by privation as much as they are "pulled" by the attractions of the new country.

33. *Spheres of Justice* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), pp. 31, 62; emphasis in original.

34. See, e.g., Judith Lichtenberg, "National Boundaries and Moral Boundaries: A Cosmopolitan View," in *Boundaries: National Autonomy and Its Limits*, ed. Peter Brown and Henry Shue (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), and Joseph Carens, "Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders," in *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, ed. Kymlicka.

35. *MC*, p. 224n18.

36. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 161.

37. Lind, *Next American Nation*, p. 323.

38. Ibid., pp. 97, 13.

39. Ibid., p. 298.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid., pp. 271, 275.

42. Ibid., p. 276.

43. The five derive from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's Directive 15, which since 1977 has governed the collection of census data and other federal data. Directive 15 divides people into five groups, four "racial" and one "ethnic": American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, White, and Hispanic. Respondents are supposed to check one. The status of Directive 15 is in question for the upcoming 2000 Census; OMB is currently considering changes in the categories (e.g., adding a "multiracial" category). Lind advocates abandoning them altogether (pp. 304–5), although the chance that this will happen is virtually nil.

44. "As Nixon realized, the greatest beneficiary of the demise of transracial class politics has been the white overclass. Since the 1960s, the effect—and, in the minds of at least some cynical conservative politicians, the purpose—of racial preference and the multicultural ideology that justifies it has been to divert attention from the class divisions in American society and focus it on racial/cultural squabbles" (p. 182).

45. Ibid., p. 324.

46. Ibid., p. 328.

47. Ibid., pp. 170, 331.

48. For evidence of the trend toward increasing inequality, see, e.g., Robert Frank and Philip Cook, *The Winner-Take-All Society* (New York: Free Press, 1995); and Steven Pearlstein, "Reshaped Economy Exacts Tough Toll," *Washington Post*, November 12, 1995, p. Al.

49. There is a vigorous debate about whether immigrants—legal or illegal—depress the economy for native workers. No one would deny the possi-

bility of these harmful effects were immigration massive enough; whether they exist at present levels, as Lind seems to assume, is a much debated question. For the argument that immigrants harm native workers, for example, Vernon M. Briggs Jr., *Mass Immigration and the National Interest* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1991); for the contrary view, see, e.g., Julian Simon, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989). Here I grant the assumption for the sake of argument.

50. Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, p. 167. "Making a Virtue Out of Necessity" is the title of the last chapter.

51. Lind, *Next American Nation*, p. 6.

52. MC, pp. 187–91. See also Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), chapter 8.

53. MC, p. 190 (quoting from Charles Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values," in *Options for a New Canada*, ed. Ronald Watts and D. Brown [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991], p. 189).

54. One might object to this way of putting the point because it excludes animals, for example, or intelligent extraterrestrials we might someday meet. If we believe such beings ought to be treated equally, then we will say something else instead: "We are all sentient beings," for example.

CHAPTER 10

Nation and Nationalism

Neil MacCormick

Sometimes work in a broadly liberal vein, such as the present essay, is suspected of embracing methodological individualism of a rather simplistic kind. Here, as in other recent work,[1] I hope to avoid any such reproach. This doesn't mean, however, that I wish to backtrack on my liberal commitments: I intend neither to deny nor to qualify the proposition that individual human beings are the bearers of moral value and of moral and legal rights. I continue to affirm that the good society is one in which individuals—*each* individual—are taken seriously; in which each human person has that fair opportunity of material well-being and that just extent of civil liberty that are essential to the flourishing of each one's individuality as a person.

There is a problem about this, though. It is the problem as to the concept of "an individual" that is presupposed in the affirmation of such a principle. Does it not presuppose the untenable ideas that "individuals" are logically prior to "society," and hence that "society" results from the coming together of preconstructed individuals? Such ideas are as untenable as the idea that anyone could literally be a "self-made man"; for they are the same idea. The truth about human beings is that they can only become individuals—acquire a sense of their own individuality—as a result of their social experiences within human communities. Thus "the individual" is as much a product of "society" as vice versa. Even political individualism is a program for *social* organization.

Among the concepts through which we can explore the connection between the individual and the social are those of "nation" and "nationalism." On the one hand, appeals to the nation and to nationalism have often served to legitimate the ruthless suppression of individuals and minority groups. On the other hand, it seems an arguable proposition that nations (and hence a certain kind of nationalism) are among the

preconditions of human individuality and therefore of that version of political individualism intrinsic to my view of "legal right and social democracy." Whether "nation" and "nationalism" are antithetical to or compatible with "individual" and "individualism" is therefore a question of some moment.

It is also a question of acute personal concern to me. I have been for a good many years a member of the Scottish National Party, and yet remain in some perplexity about the justifiability of any nationalist case within the terms set for me by the other principles to which I adhere and which I have expounded elsewhere. With a view to resolving both the general question and the particular perplexity, I present here an exploration of the concepts of "nation" and "nationalism." I do so with particular reference to the Scottish case.

Nations are manifestly groupings or communities of people. Manifestly they are not necessarily identical with states, for while there are some nation-states, there are some states that are not nations (e.g., the former USSR) and some nations that are not states (e.g., the Basque nation, whose members inhabit areas within two adjacent states). States are political entities that have a legal definition.[2] Wherever there exists a relatively independent and self-sufficient legal order having defined organs of government of a relatively centralized kind exercising effective jurisdiction over a certain territory, there is a state. The members, or citizens, of a state are defined by laws belonging to that legal order, which normally make some natural or specifically chosen connection with the given territory a condition of citizenship.

On this view, the United Kingdom is certainly a state; equally certainly, none of England, Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland is a state. Yet most people would consider that "England," "Scotland," and "Wales" are the names of nations; and at least some would say the same of "Northern Ireland," though that is manifestly a more than disputable point.

Many people would say that there is also a "British nation" that in some sense includes all the internal nations or parts of the United Kingdom. What is more, those who act on behalf of the United Kingdom as a state (members of governments and governmental officials) manifestly use and deploy the concept of "nation" in their actings on behalf of the British state. For example, the "National Industrial Relations Court" bore that name because it had, unusually, jurisdiction throughout the United Kingdom; likewise the "National Enterprise Board"; in legal terminology "nationality" is the name for citizenship, as in the "British Nationality Acts"; and by those who favor it, "nationalization" is a preferred term to "state control." "Nation," it seems, is a term with favorable connotations or resonances, "state" not so. States are legalistic

impersonal entities, nations are communities with culture and personality. It should not be surprising if those having charge of the cold legal persona, the state, seek to infuse it with the warm moral personality of "a nation."

But still that term rests unexplained. That a nation is a grouping or community of people not identical with a state is an essentially negative observation that fails in any event to distinguish nations from, for example, churches, universities, or, for that matter, private clubs.

The basic point to be made in a positive elucidation of nationhood is that nations are constituted by a form of popular consciousness, not by a mode of legal organization. In this consciousness, as Ernest Renan suggested in his lecture "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" of 1882, there is included a sense of a common past, and of a present will to live together. A nation is constituted by a relatively large grouping of people who conceive themselves to have a communal past, including shared sufferings and shared achievements, from which past is derived a common culture that represents a form of cultural continuity uniting past and present and capable of being projected into the future. This continuity is not a static one, but is in a sense "organic." The common culture, the common way of doing and living, the common language (though nations need not be identified with a single language, e.g., Switzerland), have changed over time, but the changes occur within and make sense within an uninterrupted tradition, and stem from each generation's own choices, as distinct from having been imposed *ab extra*.

Crucially and centrally this involves having a common name: "we in this nation call ourselves English, Scots, Swiss, or whatever"; and this in turn implies some notion of kinship, in the sense that members of the nation are all, however remotely, kin one with another, whether by birth or (as indeed in the parallel case of the family) by adoption. When, as is usual, the group is associated with, or lays claim to, some tract of territory, that, too, bears the common name, England, Scotland, Switzerland, or whatever.

As is indicated by my citation *in English* of the name of Switzerland, outsiders to a particular nation, in recognizing it for what it is, also have a name for it, not necessarily the same name as the members of the nation use. "Germany" is a most obvious case of this phenomenon. Thus, although the essential feature of a nation is a common form of consciousness of members of a group, the existence of a nation is not a purely subjective fact. It is capable of objective—at least intersubjective—recognition and thus subject to the use of common, publicly understood, names.

The point of all this was more elegantly put by Lord Simon of Glaisdale in his speech in the House of Lords case of *London Borough of Ealing v. Race Relations Board*[3] in 1972:

'Nation' and 'national' in their popular . . . sense are also vague terms. They do not necessarily imply statehood. For example, there were many submerged nations in the former Hapsburg empire. Scotland is not a nation in the eye of international law; but Scotsmen constitute a nation by reason of those most powerful elements in the creation of a national spirit—tradition, folk memory, a sentiment of community. The Scots are a nation because of Bannockburn and Flodden, Culloden and the pipes at Lucknow, because of Jenny Geddes and Flora Macdonald, because of frugal living and a respect for learning, because of Robert Burns and Walter Scott. So, too, the English are a nation— because Norman, Angevin and Tudor monarchs forged them together, because their land is mostly sea-girt, because of the common law and gifts for poetry and parliamentary government, because (despite the Wars of the Roses and Old Trafford and Headingley) Yorkshireman and Lancastrian feel more in common than in difference, and are even prepared at a pinch to extend their sense of community to southron folk. By the Act of Union English and Scots lost their separate nationalities, but they retained their separate nationhoods.

Tradition and folk memory, to which Lord Simon refers, are of course a matter as much of myth and heroic legend (Bannockburn, Flodden, Flora Macdonald) as of sober historical truth. As we see from such documents as the Declaration of Arbroath of 1320, the Scots of the time of Bannockburn had their own mythology going back further from their time than Bannockburn is from ours. And some of it belonged to the realms of pure fiction—perhaps even then it was not seriously believed that the highly Normanized if not in some cases purely Anglo-Norman signatories of the declaration were literally lineal descendants of a people who had made their way laboriously from Scythia to the Atlantic Northwest of the British Isles.

But the fact that mythical history contains elements of pure fiction does not detract from the fact that it is held and asserted as a common myth or tradition. And the latter is the key fact for this discussion. For in such shared consciousness inheres the sense of a common identity that is what we signify by ideas like nationhood.

Why, then, should this be so? Why is it something about which people care? A part at least of the answer to that must, I suggest, lie in the way in which, for each of us, our sense of individual personality and identity is derivative from a social context. Even our personal names are conferred on us, not (in most cases) personally chosen. We "place" ourselves through family, local community, nation, citizenship, religious affiliation, education, job, work community, and so forth. Of course, individuality goes beyond all that—but not in a way that renders all that superfluous or meaningless; human individuality presupposes social existence.

What is more, it is only through our membership of significant groupings that we can transcend the constraints of place and time. Each human being as an individual has no more than a short (no one knows how short) duration of life, and can never be in more than one place at a time. For each of us, then, a "nation" (but not only a nation) can provide a conceptual framework that allows us to comprehend our own existence as belonging within a continuity in time and a community in space. Here it is vital to observe that the sense of a common past that Renan identified has as its corollary a hope or will for continuity into the future. In being conscious of, and perhaps even taking pride or pleasure in, the links of tradition and community that we have with the past, each of us has the possibility of conceiving his actions and activities carrying that continuity into the future, changed and improved perhaps, but changed in a way that adds to rather than abolishes the richness of tradition. In the same way, because one is a member of a community, there is some common link between what one does here and others do elsewhere. Consciousness of belonging to a nation is one of the things that enable us as individuals in some way in this earthly existence to transcend the limitations of space, time, and mortality, and to participate in that which had meaning before us and will continue to have meaning beyond us.

Nations are not the only unities that can give this sense of continuity beyond an individual's own life-span. Families and a "sense of family" can have similar significance. Nor is this confined necessarily to aristocracies. My own father used to be set on his grandmother's knee in a humble house in Mull and asked, "Co tha thu [Who are you]?"; "Cha n-eil fhios agam [I don't know]"; "Is tu Iain mac Dhomhnuill 'ic Neill 'ic Iain 'ic Dhughaill . . . (You are John, son of Donald, son of Neil, son of John, son of Dugald . . .]"—and so on went the genealogy up to thirty-three generations, no doubt some of them fictitious. I have inherited a similar conception of having a familial past and (as it were) a hope for a familial future. The huge success of Alex Haley's *Roots* suggests that I am not alone in being glad to know my roots (and not only in the patrilineal line), and thus of having some small sense of contributing to a continuity, not merely seeing out my three score years and ten, if I get that far, for what it may serve me.

Churches, trade unions, political parties, schools, universities, firms, supranational groupings, empires, and all such durable and significant human groupings (whether or not inspired with intimations of divinity) can have a like significance to human beings in just the same way as can nations or families. What is more, such collectives may matter at least as much to their members as either nation or family. So all the more can and should the concept of belonging to mankind, and sharing a small planet with other animals and organisms.

"Patriotism is not enough," said Edith Cavell. And she was right. A sense of inclusion in any unity entails a sense that others are excluded. I am a MacCormick or a Scot in a way that necessarily implies that others are not. For any such *x* those who are *x* are *x* to the exclusion of others who are not *x*. And this can itself be taken as a ground for unfavorable differential (or worse) treatment of the outsiders. Hence the need for deeper and wider moral loyalties than those of nation, family, church, or whatever.

It is not so much a paradox as a perennial moral problem that undue love of one's own can lead to hatred or contempt of others. Family pride can degenerate into snobbery, love of one's university into an elitist contempt for the unscholarly, honorable national sentiment into the unspeakable evil of Nazism, firm religious commitment into harsh sectarianism.

Hence it is said by some that all such exclusionary sentiments are necessarily evil. We must abandon any particularistic love and give ourselves over only to universal love. But that seems falsehood to me. It is, I suggest, those who have a decent and moderate love of their own family, country, colleagues, coreligionists or whatever who can alone recognize as equally legitimate (because the same in kind) the love others bear for their own. Could one learn to love mankind universally if one had not first learned to love people in the concrete in the narrower range? What is more, respecting other people entails respecting the things they value. If I have no sense of what is my own to which I have special regard, I can hardly respect your sense of special regard for what is your own. "Patriotism is not enough. . . . I must have no hatred in my heart." But that does not imply that there is no place for patriotism and like sentiments.

Equally, because there is more than one form of grouping within which individuals may find a sense of identity and of community with others, it seems wrong to rank them in terms of more or less absolute claims of loyalty. Sometimes it has been held that a claim made by or on behalf of "the nation" (such claims may be made by governments in nation states, for example) necessarily and absolutely overrides every other possible claim on an individual—whether of family, of religious commitment, of friendship, of political loyalty, of professional or scholarly ideals, of solidarity with workmates, of personal conscience. That is a morally intolerable claim. If nationalism implies ascribing that sort of absolutist, overriding force to the claims of "the nation," then it is indeed a morally intolerable philosophy. But what is morally intolerable is the assertion of the *overriding* force of the claim, not the suggestion that some such claims are morally valid and politically justifiable.

Sometimes "nationalism" is taken to mean adherence to just that

morally intolerable principle, that the claims of a nation on its members override any other claim. This principle is commonly in turn grounded (or alleged by its proponents to be grounded) on the thesis that the nation is the highest form of human association, through which and only through which human perfection can be achieved, each human being having moral significance only as part of greater units, themselves only part of this greatest unity, the nation. It is but a short step from this to the view that nations in turn may be ranked in hierarchical order, superior nations having rights of domination over inferior ones.

As is well known, doctrines of that very kind arose within political philosophy toward the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. They emerge in various forms from the writings of thinkers such as Rousseau, Lessing, Hegel, Fichte, and von Savigny. Hence it has become in our own time something of a commonplace that, as Eugene Kamenka puts it, "Nationalism . . . is a modern and initially a European phenomenon, best understood in relation to developments that produced, and were symbolized by, the French Revolution of 1789."[4] Kenneth R. Minogue argues the same thesis in his admirable *Nationalism.*[5] And in the volume in which this essay first appeared, A. J. P. Taylor propounded a similar case.[6]

There is, as Mr. Taylor points out, an important connection between such doctrines and various forms of democratic theory. If "the nation" has overriding claims on its members, and just claims as against other nations, whether equal or inferior, the issue poses itself how we can identify the claims of a nation. The answer, obviously, is that they must be expressed by the nation, the whole nation, the sovereign people. The claims of a nation are, to use Rousseau's term, expressed in deliverances of the "general will" of the people. It is only a slight irony if we discover that this can in turn seem to justify the effective subjection of the entire people to a charismatic leader, Napoleon or Hitler, who is deemed to express and interpret the pure will of the people in a manner that transcends the mere squabbling of pseudodemocratic parties. But, be that as it may, the evident need that the nation be free to express its will leads logically to the view that there must be self-determination of nations and that, since the sovereign state is the supreme form of politico-legal order, each nation must be or become a sovereign state.

(Conversely, and not surprisingly, we find that wherever there are sovereign states, they [which is to say, their governing authorities] seek to legitimate themselves by adopting the rhetoric of nationhood and portraying the state as the institutional embodiment of a postulated nation. Since such rhetoric is powerful and since the citizens of a state do necessarily have at least legal institutions and defensive arrangements in common, and since nationhood postulates the existence in a group of

people of a shared consciousness of historical and cultural continuity, it is not surprising that states do in fact succeed in generating nations. The combination of their very existence and their official rhetoric creates the conditions for emergence of the relevant forms of consciousness. That there has been a United Kingdom for 270 years makes it unsurprising, and a fact that in itself demands respect, that so many adhere to a belief in and declare their loyalty to the "British nation.")

It is certainly true that the term *nationalism* first came into currency as a term of art in political discourse during that period in the early nineteenth century to which what I shall call the "orthodox theory" ascribes the beginnings of nationalism; and some variant on the principles I outlined above and stigmatized as morally intolerable has been held by many who have called themselves nationalists.

But the orthodox theory seems to me misleading in restricting the meaning of the term *nationalism*—which is in common use in a far wider sense, even among scholars—to denoting only principles such as those propounded by the early nineteenth-century theorists of nationalism. The orthodox theory certainly admits of the existence, prior to 1789, of nations characterized by a sense of nationhood, coupled with ideas of patriotism, even chauvinism and xenophobia. These are recognized as primitive forerunners of nationalism proper, yet they did, it is suggested, undergo a revolutionary sea-change in or after 1789, when in France first of all subjects became citizens, the state became a nation, and the sovereign nation arose to fill the void left by the demise of the absolute monarch. "France," as Mr. Taylor puts it, "became the title of a country not a king."[7]

What all this seems to me to render wholly obscure is the fact that long before then, and in different political systems and traditions, the concept "nation" figured significantly in political rhetoric and political argument. And it did so precisely by way of making the case that it was wrong to pursue political objectives aimed at absorbing one nation into another, or subordinating one to another. The distinctiveness of nations was, long before 1789, advanced as a reason why they ought to live under their own kings subject to their own laws; this was advanced as a matter of right, of the right of a people to live under their own laws and customs; and conversely it was represented as injustice if this were not allowed.

I can speak only of what I know, and I make no claim to expertise as a historian, but it seems to me that there is in the history of Scotland an abundance of evidence for the statements I have just made. And I see no reason at all to suppose that concepts and forms of argument that were evidently in common currency among the Scots were peculiar to them alone. I shall outline some of that evidence in a moment, but before doing so I shall explain why I think the point important.

No term seems as appropriate as "nationalism" to describe political principles that justify forms of government on grounds of their appropriateness to the distinctiveness of nations, or on grounds of the rights of nations. All such principles have it in common with the more virulent (and morally intolerable) principles advanced in the nineteenth century in the name of "nationalism," that they assume or assert the existence of nations as a politically significant fact, and as a ground both of collective and of individual rights. To apply a commonly accepted philosophical usage, we may say that within the concept of nationalism the nineteenth-century theories express but one conception of nationalism. There have been and are other conceptions of nationalism, and it remains an open question whether any of those others is morally acceptable. The orthodox theory errs in confusing the nineteenth-century Hegelian conceptions of nation and nationalism with the concept itself.

Now for the evidence of the pre-1789 sense of nationalism, which as I said I cull from my reading of Scottish history:

Let me commence by recalling the sixteenth-century attempts of Henry VIII to procure forcibly a union of England and Scotland through the "rough wooing" of the infant Mary of Scots on behalf of Henry's young son Edward. The "wooing" proceeded by way of devastation of southern Scotland, and it provoked from an anonymous writer a pamphlet entitled the *Complaynt of Scotland*, from which I quote:

> There is nocht tua nations vndir the firmament that ar mair contrar and different fra vthirs nor is Inglismen and Scottismen, quhobeit that thai be within ane ile and nychtbours and of ane langage. For Inglismen ar subtil and Scottismen ar facile. Inglismen ar ambitius in prosperite and Scottismen ar humain in prosperite. Inglismen ar humil quhen thai ar subieckit be forse and violence, and Scottismen ar furius quhen thai ar violently subieckit. Inglismen ar cruel quhene thai get victorie, and Scottismen ar merciful quhen thai get victorie. And to conclude, it is onpossibil that Scottismen and Inglismen can remane in concorde vndir ane monarche or ane prince, because there naturis and conditions ar as indefferent as is the nature of scheip and woluis.[']

A better authority than I (the late Professor G. S. Pryde) says that the above "no doubt . . . accurately reflected at this time the sentiments of Scotsmen."['] But one does not even have to believe that, far less to believe in the truth of the statements in the *Complaynt*, in order to believe that the concepts used and the principles tacitly appealed to in the *Complaynt* were available to its writer. Plainly the writer thought such ideas sufficiently current in his own community to make them worth using in a political pamphlet. A little later in the same century we find the same ideas far more elegantly and just as explicitly employed in George Buchanan's *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*.

Nor is this in the sixteenth century an exclusively Scottish thing. Read Spenser's *Faerie Queen*; read Shakespeare's histories. Are not these two greatest poets of the century profoundly moved by a sense of the English nation and of pride in its qualities and achievements? The elaborate allegory of Spenser perhaps brings this out most clearly, Gloriana serving at once to personify the true faith and the nation of England, and to justify the independence of both from the tentacles of Rome.

This is not a novelty in the sixteenth century either. Hector Boece's early sixteenth-century history of Scotland may be unreliable as history, but it is enormously revealing in the concepts of the antiquity and independence of the Scottish nation which it deploys.[10] Barbour's *Bruce*, the late fourteenth-century epic of the early fourteenth-century war of independence, though much concerned with knightly virtues and feudal conceptions of "freedom," is by no means silent on the nationalist points, as these lines may show.

> To Scotland went he [King Edward I] in high
> And all the land gan occupy . . .
> And stuffyt all with English men.
> Sheriffs and baillies made he then
> And alkyn other officeris
> That for to govern land afferis
> He made of English nation;
> That worthyt then so ryth fellone . . .
> That Scottis men might go na thing
> That ever might please to their liking.[11]

Most resonant of all, needless to say, is the famous letter of 1320 composed by Bernard of Linton, Abbot of Arbroath, for signature by the Scottish lords and despatch to the pope, making out the case for papal recognition of and support for Robert Bruce as king of Scots. The so-called Declaration of Arbroath—our declaration of independence—is a magnificent piece of rhetoric, as the following extract may show:

The divine providence, the right of succession by the laws and customs of the kingdom (which we will defend till death) and the due and lawful consent and assent of all the people, made him [Robert] our King and Prince. To him we are obliged and resolved to adhere in all things . . . as being the person who hath restored the people's safety in defence of their liberties. But, after all, if this prince shall leave these principles he has so nobly pursued, and consent that we or our kingdom shall be subjected to the king or people of England, we will immediately endeavour to expel him as our enemy, and as the subverter both of his own and of our rights, and will make another king who will

defend our liberties. For so long as there shall but one hundred of us remain alive, we will never consent to subject ourselves to the dominion of the English.[12]

This ringing assertion follows upon a historical sketch tracing the antiquity of the Scottish nation and its uninterrupted independence under its own chosen rulers.

Nor is this out of touch with the spirit of the time. Professor G. W. S. Barrow's *Robert Bruce*[13] demonstrates elaborately and at length that although the Anglo-Scottish war of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, whose turning point was at Bannockburn, arose from dynastic pretensions of Edward I to overlordship over Scotland, it was throughout seen from the Scottish side as primarily a national struggle. That the issue was focused upon the rights of the king of Scots as an independent sovereign tells us nothing more remarkable than that in contemporary political theory kingship was of the essence of the governance and constitution of an independent community. Nowhere is this more clear than in the period dominated by the military leadership of William Wallace, who at no time purported to act as anything other than guardian of the kingdom on behalf of the king, lawfully appointed by "the community of the realm of Scotland."

That the Declaration of Arbroath was in the form of a letter to the pope has significance, too. Since the plea for recognition of their king and for support against the English is explicitly founded on the national distinctiveness and immemorial laws and customs of the Scots, it appears that the composer of the letter supposed such to be a recognizable and adequate political justification for a political claim. He took it for granted that the principles at stake were ones that would commend themselves to any reasonable contemporary, and *a fortiori* to the pope. Again, the Scottish context does not imply that the principles involved were the exclusive property of Scots at that time.

Faced with such evidence at this, I cannot believe it reasonable or appropriate that the present orthodoxy as to the meaning of "nationalism" or its temporal location only in the period since 1789 be accepted. The principle that those who belong to distinct nations ought to have distinct governments based on their own distinctive laws and customs is far older than that. And there is no reasonable description to attach to such a principle other than to call it a "nationalist" one. To that conclusion it is quite irrelevant that the term "nationalism" as a term of art in political theory comes into general usage only in the nineteenth century; and it is equally irrelevant that in its usage then it was taken to denote only a particular and, as it happens, morally unacceptable conception of national rights and their political implications.

Nevertheless, in any context *nation* is a term that has *some* political implications. This is a point that must be made in order to complete the analysis offered earlier, which while differentiating "state" and "nation," failed adequately to differentiate nations from other communities distinguished by a form of historical and cultural consciousness. Apart from possible linguistic or territorial connections, the idea of a nation is that of a grouping that has or aspires to or conceives itself entitled to some form of specifically appropriate governmental or institutional expression. (I do not exclude from such "institutional expression" the possibility of a distinctive form of church or of religious organization; the significance, historically, of the Jewish faith, of the Catholic Church in Ireland, or in Poland, of the Church of Scotland, and [in a negative sense] of the Welsh movement for disestablishment of the Church in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, is very obvious in this context.) The mode of consciousness that constitutes a national identity includes a consciousness of the need for a form of common governance that recognizes and allows for the continued flourishing of the cultural and historical community in question.

In this there lies the germ of a principle that, unlike the absolutist conception of nationalism, is—far from being morally intolerable—morally acceptable or even mandatory.

The Kantian ideal of respect for persons implies (as I suggested earlier) an obligation in each of us to respect that which in others constitutes any part of their sense of their own identity. For many people, though quite probably not for all, a sense of belonging to some nation is an element in this precious fabric of identity. This comprises, as I suggested before, not merely a consciousness of a continuity with the past, but also a will or hope for continuity into the future; and also consciousness of a form of cultural community that requires protection and expression in appropriate institutional forms.

The doctrine of state sovereignty and the world order of mutually independent sovereign states—more commonly than not, soi-disant "nation-states"—that have emerged in and dominated the politics of the modern world, owe much to the "nationalism" embraced by nineteenth-century theorists. In the light of the past two centuries of history, neither can be said to have made a decisive contribution to the peace and happiness of mankind. For that reason one cannot but warmly welcome the hesitant moves of the past two or three decades toward a new form of world order, of which, in our corner of the world, an example is provided in the supranational confederation toward which the European Community is groping. Lord Soames, Lord Hailsham, and Sir Monty Finniston have all in different ways alluded to this phenomenon and rightly commended it.[14] A diffusion of governmental power among var-

ious levels of government, rather than a concentration of power in centers of local omnipotence, seems eminently desirable.

Yet if this newly emerging order is to be morally acceptable, to say nothing of its durability, it must fully allow for the rights of nationalities, and create the conditions of mutual respect and self-respect among the members of diverse nations, as the foregoing argument implies. I assert it as a principle that there ought to be respect for national differences, and that there ought to be an adoption of forms of government appropriate to such differences.

Arguing from these principles as a Scotsman of the late twentieth century, I contend that the constitution and government of the United Kingdom as they function at present do not adequately fulfill these requirements. Within the past hundred years, the languages of both my patrilineal and my matrilineal ancestors have been all but extinguished under the educational policy set by agencies of the state. The media of mass communication present a continuing rhetoric of "national" (that is, United Kingdom-wide) versus "regional" that consistently devalues the status of the "community of the realm of Scotland" and implies that only what emanates from London is "national." The Scottish institutions that there are have had defined for them, and have to some extent cooperated in defining themselves as having, an essentially parochial and provincial function and status. There is little or no prevailing sense of metropolitanism or cosmopolitanism anywhere or in any walk of life or institutional establishment within Scotland. Out of the remarkably rich cultural heritage of the country, what is most commonly recalled or resorted to by way of celebration and entertainment is the most cheap and meretricious; this might be summed up as the "Scotland the Brave" syndrome; "Here's tae us, wha's like us," being a question to which the true answer may be unpalatable.

The comparatively modern growth of state centralization—along with industrial and economic centralization—has contributed much to this. Equally significant has been the dominance, almost inevitable and certainly not founded in ill will, of a somewhat Anglocentric conception of Britain. Lord Hailsham hits the nail on the head when he refers to the way in which, out of deference to the sensibilities of Scots and Welsh, the English had changed the name of their country to "Britain."[15] That is just why the presently dominant spirit of British nationalism, expressed and embodied in the major institutions of the state, is profoundly inimical to the continuity into the future of "Scotland" and "Wales" as anything other than geographical expressions with historical connotations capable of being preserved or resurrected for the amusement of tourists.

This opinion is not without support from external and thus more

objective observations. For example, in the work quoted above on
Nationalism, Eugene Kamenka remarks that "Political power, aided by
geography, created the English nation out of Britons, Angles, Saxons,
Jutes and Danes and succeeded in absorbing the Norman conquerors, as
it is absorbing the Scottish and, with somewhat more trouble, the
Welsh, today."[16] To agree with that, one does not have to dislike or dis-
respect England, English people, the English way of life, or any such
thing. One can, as I do, genuinely love and admire the richness of the
English tradition, the splendid tolerance and peacefulness of the English
way of life, the almost infinite (despite present "racial" problems) abil-
ity of England to welcome and assimilate new elements from abroad
into the nation, and a host of other excellences down to the English pub;
one can love and admire all that, wish indeed to adopt and adapt to
some of these English excellences; and yet wish to be, and go on being,
something recognizably different.

It is also true that there is genuinely something in common among
all parts of the United Kingdom, to which Lord Hailsham has alluded
with appropriate indefinition as "the British thing."[17] One must recog-
nize how much of this stems from a common loyalty to a common
monarch and more generally to a more than admirably constitutional
royal house.

But it remains the case that the present governmental system of the
United Kingdom is profoundly inimical to the continuing existence of
the nations of the Scots and the Welsh, or so it appears. One form of
change that is, from this point of view, desirable is constitutional and
governmental change.

The principles put forward here do not, however, establish *what*
sort of change ought most to be favored. They certainly do not support
the facile assumption that sovereign statehood is the only acceptable sta-
tus fitted to the essence of nationhood. The concept of a "sovereign
state" is of much more recent vintage than that of a nation, and devel-
opments such as that of the European Community suggest that it may
have already had its day. It seems to me obvious that the nations of the
United Kingdom have so many common interests as to require and jus-
tify some common political institutions, whether through common
membership of the European Community or through specifically British
institutions such as a common crown, or both. If those political parties
that favor schemes of devolution, "home rule all round," or some kind
of internal federation within the United Kingdom do devise, and press
forward with, some such scheme otherwise than as a mere tactic to dish
the Scottish National Party electorally, I for one will be happy to see the
new political order given a full and fair trial. But previous experience
does not encourage optimism that the British Parliament will itself be

eager to do much if anything on these lines without the strongest of political pressure from Scotland and Wales.

Be that as it may, I hope that the principles stated here can be accepted not only as compatible with but also as an essential complement to the liberal commitments summarized at the beginning of this chapter.[18] If so, that very acceptance may in a small way help to foster a more genuine willingness to take seriously the rights of small nations as well of individual persons. Some may think this too weak a version of nationalism to merit the name, others that any version of nationalism is merely a stalking horse for chauvinism and xenophobia. To both I would say that in this and in other matters there is much to be said for a golden mean.

NOTES

1. Since the first publication of the paper reprinted here, I have added further reflections on the same theme; see in particular: "Is Nationalism Philosophically Credible?" in *Issues of Self-Determination*, ed. W. Twining (Aberdeen, Scotland, 1991); "What Place for Nationalism in the Modern World?" in *Hume Papers on Public Policy* 2 (1994): 79–95; and "Liberalism, Nationalism, and the Post-Sovereign State," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 553–67.

2. Broadly speaking, I follow Hans Kelsen's account of the state. See Kelsen, *General Theory of Law and State*, trans. A. Wedberg (Cambridge, Mass., 1945).

3. [1972] Appeal Court 342 at 364.

4. E. Kamenka (ed.), *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea* (London, 1976), p. 4. See pp. 12–13 for discussion of Renan's "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?"

5. K. R. Minogue, *Nationalism* (London, 1967) and of R. L. McLaughlin, "Aspects of Nationalism," in *The Scottish Debate*, ed. N. MacCormick (London, 1970).

6. See "Nations in History," *The Crown and the Thistle*, ed. C. MacLean (Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 1–8.

7. Ibid., p. 3.

8. This extract is taken from G. S. Pryde, *The Treaty of Union of Scotland and England, 1707* (London and Edinburgh, 1950), p. 3.

9. Ibid.

10. Rosalind Mitchison, writing of Scotland in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, says: "Nationalism, as distinct from patriotism, was an emotion of the time and the Scots shared it. . . . [A]t the end of the fifteenth century, under Hector Boece, an able Latinist and an unscrupulous historian, [they] started inventing their own history." *A History of Scotland* (London, 1970), p. 80.

11. *The Bruce* by Master John Barbour, ed. W. W. Skeat for the Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1893–94) bk. I, lines 183–84, 189–94. I have slightly modernized the spelling.

12. Quoted from G. W. S. Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, 1976), p. 428, the translation of the Latin text being that printed in *Miscellanea Scotica* (Glasgow, 1820), iii. 126 of the first print.

13. See esp. chapters 1–6.

14. See *The Crown and the Thistle*, ed. C. MacLean, essays by authors named.

15. "The Nation and the Constitution," in *The Crown and the Thistle*, pp. 71–80.

16. *Nationalism*, p. 13.

17. "The Nation and the Constitution," p. 71.

18. For a fuller account of the liberal principles I embrace, see Neil MacCormick, *Legal Right and Social Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

CHAPTER 11

The New Tribalism:
Notes on a Difficult Problem

Michael Walzer

All over the world today, but most interestingly and frighteningly in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, men and women are reasserting their local and particularist, their ethnic, religious, and national identities. The tribes have returned, and the drama of their return is greatest where their repression was most severe. It is now apparent that the popular energies mobilized against totalitarian rule, and also the more passive stubbornness and evasiveness that eroded the Stalinist regimes from within, were fueled in good part by "tribal" loyalties and passions. How these were sustained and reproduced over time is a tale that waits to be told. The tribes—most of them, at least, and all the minorities and the subject nations—were for several generations denied access to the official organs of social reproduction: the public schools and the mass media. I imagine tens of thousands of old men and women whispering to their grandchildren, singing folk song and lullabies, repeating ancient stories. This is in many ways a heartening picture, for it suggests the inevitability of totalitarian failure. But what are we to make of the songs and stories, often as full of hatred for neighboring nations as of hope for national liberation?

The left has never understood the tribes.[1] Faced with their contemporary resurgence, the first response is to argue for their containment within established multinational states—democratically transformed, of course, but not divided. This looks very much like a systematic repetition of the response of early twentieth-century social democrats to the nationalist movements that challenged the old empires. The "internationalism" of the left owes a great deal to Hapsburg and Romanov imperialism, even if leftists always intended to dispense with the dynas-

ties. So many nations lived together in peace under imperial rule: Why couldn't they continue to live together under the aegis of social democracy? So many nations lived together in peace under communist rule: Why . . . ? When Western Europe is forging a new unity, how can anyone defend separation in the East?

But unity in the West is itself the product of, or at least the historical successor to, separation. The independence of Sweden from Denmark and, centuries later, of Norway from Sweden (and of Finland from Sweden and Russia) opened the way for Scandinavian cooperation. The division of Belgium and Holland, and the failures of French imperialism, made possible the Benelux experiment. Centuries of sovereignty for the great states of Western Europe preceded the achievement of European community. It is important to note that what was achieved first, before community, was not only sovereign statehood but also democratic government. The Swedes could have held Norway indefinitely under one or another form of authoritarian rule. But the practice of democracy, even in its earliest stages, made it clear that there was more than one *demos*, and then separation became necessary if democracy was to be sustained. The case is the same in the East. Multinationalism as it has existed there is a function of predemocratic or antidemocratic politics. But bring the "people" into political life and they will arrive, marching in tribal ranks and orders, carrying with them their own languages, historic memories, customs, beliefs, and commitments.[2] And once they have been summoned, once they have arrived, it isn't possible to do them justice within the old political order.

Maybe it's not possible to do them justice at all. In Eastern Europe today, and in Caucasia, and in much of the Middle East, the prospects don't seem bright, given the sheer number of suddenly raucous tribes and the radical entanglement of their members on the same bits and pieces of land. Good fences make good neighbors only when there is some minimal agreement on where the fences should go. In the West, powerful states were created before the appearance of nationalist ideology, and they managed to repress and incorporate many of the smaller nations (Welsh, Scots, Normans, Bretons, and so on). The separations I have already noted took place alongside constructive processes that created large nation-states with more or less identifiable boundaries and more or less committed members. Similar efforts in Eastern Europe seem to have failed: there aren't many committed Yugoslav or Soviet citizens. The abandonment of these identities is startling in its scope and speed, and it leaves many people who had traveled under their protection suddenly vulnerable: Serbs in Croatia, Albanians in Serbia, Armenians in Azerbaijan, Russians in the Baltic states, Jews in Russia, and so on, endlessly.

There doesn't seem to be any humane or decent way to disentangle the tribes, and at the same time the entanglements are felt to be dangerous—not only to individual life, which is reasonable enough, but also to communal well-being. Demagogues exploit the hopes for national revival, linguistic autonomy, the free development of schools and media—all supposedly threatened by cosmopolitan or antinational minorities. And other demagogues exploit the fears of the minorities, defending ancient irredentisms and looking (like the Serbs in Croatia) for outside help. In such circumstances, it is hard to say what justice means, let alone what policies it might require. Hence the impulse of the left, uncomfortable in any case with particularist passions, to cling to whatever unities exist and make them work. The argument is very much like that of a Puritan minister in the 1640s, defending the union of husband and wife against the new doctrine of divorce:

> If they might be separated for discord, some would make a commodity
> of strife; but now they are not best to be contentious, for the law will
> hold their noses together 'til weariness make them leave off struggling.[3]

The problem, then as now, is that justice, whatever it requires, doesn't seem to permit the kinds of coercion that would be necessary to "hold their noses together." So we have to think about divorce, despite its difficulties. It is some help that divorce among nations needn't have the singular legal form of divorce in families. Self-determination for husbands and wives is relatively simple, even when important constraints are imposed upon the separated individuals. Self-determination for the many different kinds of tribes (nations, ethnic groups, religious communities) is bound to be more complicated, and the constraints that follow upon separation more various. There is room for maneuver.

I doubt that we can find a single rule or set of rules that will determine the form of the separation and the necessary constraints. But there is a general principle, which we can think of as the expression of democracy in international politics. What is at stake is the value of a historical or cultural or religious community and the political liberty of its members. This liberty is not compromised, it seems to me, by the postmodern discovery that communities are social constructions: imagined, invented, put together. Constructed communities are the only communities there are: they can't be less real or less authentic than some other sort.[4] Their members, then, have the rights that go with membership. *They ought to be allowed to govern themselves*—insofar as they can do that, given their local entanglements.

Democracy has, of course, no natural units. Self-determination has no absolute subject. Cities, nations, federations, immigrant societies—all these can be and have been governed democratically. The contemporary

tribes most certain of their singular identity and culture (the Poles or Armenians, say) are in fact historical composites. If we go back far enough in their history, we will find people's noses being held together (that's one of the methods of social construction). But if the descendants of these people, forgetting ancient indignities, regard themselves now as *fellow* members of a "community of character," within which they find identity, self-respect, and sentimental connections, why should we deny them democratic self-government?[5]

Except . . . unless . . . were it not for the fact that the self-government of tribe A, happily divorced, makes tribe B a vulnerable and unhappy minority in its own homeland. Locked into an independent Croatia, Serbs believe (not implausibly) that they will live in insecurity. And then, surely, the political unit has to be territorial, not cultural: all the tribes and fragments of tribes that live *here*—noses held together 'til they leave off struggling—must come under the authority of a neutral state and share a characterless citizenship. But these can't be our only options: the dominance of one tribe or a common detribalization. For the second of the two, if it isn't a mere cover for the first, would require coercion of a sort that, as I have already suggested, is neither morally permissible nor politically effective. We would not be worrying about Croatia and its Serbs, after all, if Yugoslavia had succeeded in imposing itself upon its constituent nations; it was, in theory at least, the very model of a neutral state.

Neutrality is likely to work well only in immigrant societies where everyone has been similarly and in most cases voluntarily transplanted, cut off from homeland and history. In such cases—America is the prime example—tribal feelings are relatively weak. But how can one create a neutral state in France, say, where the anciently established French rule democratically over the new immigrants from North Africa (even though the immigrants, many of them, hold "French" citizenship)? What imperial, bureaucratic, or international authority could detribalize the French? Or the Poles in Poland? Or the Georgians in an independent Georgia? Or the Croats in Croatia? And then the only way to avoid domination is to multiply political units and jurisdictions, permitting a series of separations. But the series will be endless—so we are told—each divorce justifying the next one, smaller and smaller groups claiming the rights of self-determination; and the politics that results will be noisy, incoherent, unstable, and deadly.

I want to argue that this is a slippery slope down which we need not slide. In fact, there are many conceivable arrangements between dominance and detribalization and between dominance and separation—and there are moral and political reasons for choosing different arrangements in different circumstances. The principle of self-determination is

subject to interpretation and amendment. What has been called "the national question" doesn't have a single correct answer, as if there were only one way of "being" a nation, one version of national history, one model of relationships among nations. History reveals many ways, versions, and models, and so it suggests the existence of many (more or less secure) stopping points along the slippery slope. Consider now some of the most likely possibilities.

The easiest case is that of the "captive," that is, recently and coercively incorporated, nation—the Baltic states are nice examples, since these were genuine nation-states, the nationality ancient even if statehood was only recently achieved and briefly held. The captivity was wrong for the same reasons that the capture was wrong. The principle involved is the familiar one that makes aggression a criminal act. What it requires now is the restoration of independence and sovereignty—which is to say: what principle requires is what practice in this case has achieved. And by a kind of imaginative extension, we can grant the same rights to nations that *ought to have been* independent, where the solidarity of the group is plain to see and the crime of the ruling power is national oppression rather than conquest. I see no reason to deny the justice of separation in all such cases.

Except . . . unless . . . . Conquest and oppression are not merely abstract crimes; they have consequences in the real world: the mixing up of peoples, the creation of new and heterogeneous populations. Suppose that Russian immigrants now made up a majority of the people living in Latvia: Would any right remain of Latvian self-determination? Suppose that French colonists had come (by 1950, say) to outnumber the Arabs and Berbers of Algeria: Would the right of "Algerian" self-determination reside with the French majority? These are doubly hard questions; they are painful and they are difficult. The world changes, not necessarily in morally justifiable ways; and rights can be lost or, at least, diminished through no fault of the losers. We might want to argue for partition in cases like the ones I've just described, leaving the "natives" with less than they originally claimed; or we might want to design a regime of cultural autonomy instead of the political sovereignty that once seemed morally necessary. We look for the nearest possible arrangement to whatever was *ex ante* just, taking into account now what justice requires for the immigrants and colonists, or their children, who are not themselves the authors of the conquest or the oppression.

The case is the same with anciently incorporated nations—aboriginal peoples like the Native Americans or the Maori in New Zealand. Their rights too are eroded with time, not because the wrong done to

them is wiped out (it may well grow greater, with increasingly deleterious effects on their communal life), but because the possibility no longer exists for the restoration of anything remotely resembling their former independence. They stand somewhere between a captive nation and a national, ethnic, or religious minority. Something more than equal citizenship is due them, some degree of collective self-rule, but exactly what this might mean in practice will depend on the residual strength of their own institutions and on the character of their engagement in the common life of the larger society. They cannot claim any absolute protection against the pressures and attractions of the common life—as if they were an endangered species.[6] Confronted with modernity, all the human tribes are endangered species. All of them, whether or not they possess sovereign power, have been significantly transformed. We can recognize what might be called a right to resist transformation, to build walls against modern culture, and we can give this right more or less scope depending on constitutional structures and local circumstances; we cannot guarantee the success of the resistance.

The just treatment of national minorities depends on two sets of distinctions: first, between territorially concentrated and dispersed minorities; and second, between minorities radically different from and those that are only marginally different from the majority population. In practice, of course, both distinctions are really unmarked continuums, but it is best to begin with the clear cases. Consider, for example, a minority community with a highly distinctive history and culture and a strong territorial base—like the Albanians in Kosovo, for example. Their fellow nationals hold the adjoining state; they are trapped on the wrong side of the border as a result of some dynastic marriage or military victory long ago. The humane solution to their difficulty is to move the border; the brutal solution is to "transfer" the people; and the best practical possibility is some strong version of local autonomy, focused on cultural and educational institutions and the revenues that support them.

The opposite case is that of a marginally differentiated and territorially dispersed community, something like the ethnic and religious groups of North America (though there are exceptions in both categories: the ethnic French in Quebec, say, and the religious Amish in Pennsylvania). By and large, the experience of marginal difference and territorial dispersion gives rise to very limited claims on the state—a good reason for doubting the dangers of the slippery slope. A genuinely equal citizenship and the freedom to express their differences in the voluntary associations of civil society: this is what the members of such minorities commonly, and rightly, ask for. They may also seek some

kind of subsidy from state funds for their schools, day-care centers, old-age homes, and so on. But that is a request that hangs more on political judgments than on moral principles. We will have to form an opinion about the inner strengths and weaknesses of the existing civil society. (A group that has been severely discriminated against, however, and whose access to resources is limited, does have a moral claim on the state.)

Once again, majorities have no obligation to guarantee the survival of minority cultures. They may well be struggling to survive themselves, caught up in a common competition against commercialism and international fashion. Borders provide only minimal protection in the modern world, and minorities within borders, driven by their situation to a preternatural closeness, may do better in sustaining a way of life than the more relaxed majority population. And if they do worse, that is no reason to come to their rescue; they have a claim, indeed, to physical but not to cultural security.

The adjustment of claims to circumstances is often a long and brutal business, but it does happen. We see it today, for example, in the geographically concentrated but only marginally different nations of Western Europe—Welsh, Scots, Normans, Bretons, and so on—whose members have consistently declined to support radical nationalist parties demanding independence and sovereign power. In cases like these, some sort of minimalist regionalism seems both to suit the people involved (small numbers of them—political, not ethnic or religious, minorities—always excepted) and to be politically and morally suitable. The case is the same with small or dispersed but significantly different populations, like the Amish or like orthodox Jews in the United States, who commonly aim at a highly localized and apolitical separatism: segregated neighborhoods and parochial schools. This too seems to suit the people involved, and it is politically and morally suitable. But no theory of justice can specify the precise form of these arrangements. In fact, the forms are historically negotiated, and they depend upon shared understandings of what such negotiations mean and how they work. The Welsh and Scots have had a hand in the development of British political culture, even if this is not quite the hand they think they ought to have had. Hence their ready adjustment to parliamentary politics. Both the Amish and the Jews have learned, and added to, the repertoire of American pluralism.

Arrangements of these sorts should always be allowed, but they can't be imposed. What has made *Great* Britain possible is probably the common Protestantism of its component nations. The effort to include the Irish failed miserably. It seems that the inclusion of the Slovenes in greater Yugoslavia failed for similar reasons. The case is the same for the

failure of communist internationalism in Poland and pan-Arabism in Lebanon. But I don't mean to argue that the religious differences crucial in all these cases necessarily make for separation. Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. The differences are different in each case. They have more to do with memory and feeling than with any objective measure of dissimilarity. That's why models like my own, based on such factors as territorial concentration and cultural difference, can never be anything more than rough guides. We have to work slowly and experimentally toward arrangements that satisfy the members (not the militants) of this or that minority. There is no single correct outcome.

This experimental work is certain to be complicated by the unequal economic resources of the different tribes. It is obviously an incentive to divorce if one of the partners—a nation, say, industrially advanced or in control of mineral resources—can improve its position by walking away from the existing union. The other partners are left worse off, though some of them, at least, were never involved in any sort of national oppression. They will contest the divorce, but what they are probably entitled to, it seems to me, is the international equivalent of alimony and child support. Long-established patterns of cooperation cannot be abruptly terminated to the advantage of the most advantaged partners. On the other hand, the partners are not bound to stay together forever— not if they are, in fact, different tribes who meet the democratic standards for autonomy or independence.

Often enough, separatist movements in the economically advantaged provinces or regions of some established union do not meet those standards. The best example is the Katangan secession of 1961, inspired, it appears, by Belgian entrepreneurs and corporate interests, without locally rooted support or, at least, without any visible signs of national mobilization.[7] In such cases, it is entirely justifiable for unionist forces to resist the secession and to seek (and receive) international support. Obviously, there is such a thing as inauthentic tribalism: here, the manipulation of potential but not yet politically realized differences for economic gain. It doesn't follow, however, that every wealthy or resourceful tribe is inauthentic. And so there are also cases in which resistance to secession is not justified and should not be internationally supported—so long as some agreement can be negotiated that meets the interests of the people left behind. Their fear of impoverishment must be weighed against the fear of oppression or exploitation on the part of the seceding group or against its desire for cultural expression and political freedom.

The dominant feeling that makes for national antagonism, the most

important cause (not the only cause) of all the tribal wars, is fear. Here I mean to follow an old argument first made in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*, where it forms part of the explanation for the "war of all against all." Hobbes was thinking of the internal wars of late medieval "bastard feudalism" but also—more pertinently for our purposes—of the religious wars of his own time. There are always a few people, he writes, who "take pleasure in contemplating their own power in acts of conquest." But the greater number by far are differently motivated: they "would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds."⁸ These ordinary men and women are driven to fight not by their lust for power or enrichment, not by their bigotry or fanaticism, but by their fear of conquest and oppression. Hobbes argues that only an absolute sovereign can free them from this fearfulness and break the cycle of threats and "anticipations" (that is, preemptive violence). In fact, however, what broke the cycle, in the case of the religious wars, was not so much political absolutism as religious toleration.

The two crucial seventeenth-century arguments against toleration sound very familiar today, for they closely parallel the arguments against national separation and autonomy. The first of the two is the claim of the dominant religious establishments to represent some high value—universal truth or the divine will—that is certain to be overwhelmed in the cacophony of religious dissidence. And the second is the slippery slope argument: that the dissidence will prove endless and the new sectarianism endlessly divisive, split following split until the social order crumbles into incoherence and chaos. Certainly, toleration opened the way for a large number of new sects, though these have mostly flourished on the margins of more or less stable religious communities. But it also, and far more importantly, lowered the stakes of religious conflict: toleration made divisiveness more tolerable.⁹ It solved the problem of fear by creating protected spaces for a great diversity of religious practices.

It seems to me that we should aim at something very much like this today: protected spaces of many different sorts matched to the needs of the different tribes. Rather than supporting the existing unions, I would be inclined to support separation whenever separation is demanded by a political movement that, so far as we can tell, represents the popular will. Let the people go who want to go. Many of them won't go all that far. And if there turn out to be political or economic disadvantages in their departure, they will find a way to reestablish connections. Indeed, if some sort of union—federation or confederation—is our goal, the best way to reach it is to abandon coercion and allow the tribes first to separate and then to negotiate their own voluntary and gradual, even if only partial, adherence to some new community of interest. Today's Euro-

pean Community is a powerful example, which other nations will approach at their own pace.

But—again—one nation's independence may be the beginning of another nation's oppression. It often seems as if the chief motive for national liberation is not to free oneself from minority status in someone else's country but to acquire (and then mistreat) minorities of one's own. The standard rule of intertribal relations is: Do unto others what has been done to you. Arguing for liberation, I have largely ignored the consistent failure of new nation-states to meet the moral test of the nation that comes next, to recognize in others the rights vindicated by their own independence.[10] I don't mean to underestimate the nastiness of tribal zealots. But weren't the zealots of the religious wars equally nasty? And their latter-day descendants seem harmless enough—not particularly attractive, most of them, but also not very dangerous. Why shouldn't the same sequence, harmlessness following upon nastiness, hold for contemporary nationalists? Put them in a world where they are not threatened, and for how long will they think it in their interests to threaten others?

That at least is the Hobbesian argument. No doubt there are men and women in every tribe—Serbs and Croats; Latvians, Georgians, and Russians; Greeks and Turks; Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs—who take pleasure in acts of conquest, who aim above all to triumph over their neighbors and enemies. But these people will not rule in their own tribes if we can make it possible for their compatriots to live "at ease within modest bounds." Every tribe within its own modest bounds: this is the political equivalent of toleration for every church and sect. What makes it possible—though still politically difficult and uncertain—is that the bounds need not enclose, in every case, the same sort of space.

Religious toleration, however, was enforced by the state, and the godly zealots were disarmed and disempowered by the political authorities. Tribal zealots, by contrast, aim precisely at empowerment; they hope to become political authorities themselves, replacing the imperial bureaucrats who once forced them to live peacefully with their internal minorities. Who will restrain them after independence? Who will protect the Serbs in an independent Croatia or the Albanians in an independent Serbia? I have no easy answer to these questions. In a liberal democracy, national minorities can seek constitutional protection. But not many of the new nations are likely to be liberal, even if they achieve some version of democracy. The best hope for restraint lies, I think, in federal or confederal checks and balances and in international pressure. The nationality treaties of the interwar period were notable failures, but some measure of success in protecting minorities ought to be possible if nation-states are sufficiently entangled with and dependent on one

another. Suppose that the leaders of the European Community or the World Bank or even the United Nations were to say to every nation seeking statehood: we will recognize your independence, trade with you or provide economic assistance—but only if you find some way to accommodate the national minorities that fear your sovereign power. The price of recognition and aid is accommodation.

What form this accommodation might take is not a matter to be determined in any *a priori* way (I have to keep saying this because so many people are looking for a quick theoretical fix). It will depend on the character of the new states and on a process of negotiation. Secession, border revision, federation, regional or functional autonomy, cultural pluralism: there are many possibilities and no reason to think that the choice of one of these in this or that case makes a similar choice necessary in all the other cases. As the examples I have cited from Western Europe suggest, choices are more likely to be determined by circumstances than by abstract principles. What is required is an international consensus that validates a variety of choices, supporting any political arrangement that satisfies the tribes at risk.

But there is no guarantee of satisfaction, and, sometimes, watching the tribal wars, some of us may yearn for the uniform repressiveness of imperial or even totalitarian rule. For wasn't this repression undertaken in the name, at least, of universalism? And mightn't it have produced, had it only been sustained long enough, a genuine detribalization? And then we would look back and say that just as the absolutism of early modern monarchs was necessary to defeat the aristocracy and eliminate feudalism, so the absolutism of imperial and communist bureaucrats was necessary to overcome tribalism. Perhaps the bureaucracies collapsed too soon, before they could complete their "historical task." But this line of argument repeats again the left's misunderstanding of the tribes. It is no doubt true that particular tribes can be destroyed by repression, if it is cruel enough and if it lasts long enough. The destruction of tribalism itself, however, lies beyond the reach of any repressive power. It is no one's "historical task." Feudalism is the name of a regime, and regimes can be replaced. Tribalism names the commitment of individuals and groups to their own history, culture, and identity, and this commitment (though not any particular version of it) is a permanent feature of human social life. The parochialism that it breeds is similarly permanent. It can't be overcome; it has to be accommodated, and therefore the crucial universal principle is that it must always be accommodated: not only my parochialism but yours as well, and his and hers in their turn.

When my parochialism is threatened, then I am wholly, radically parochial: a Serb, a Pole, a Jew, and nothing else. But this is an artificial situation in the modern world (and perhaps in the past too). The self is

more naturally divided; at least, it is capable of division and even thrives on it. Under conditions of security, I will acquire a more complex identity than the idea of tribalism suggests. I will identify myself with more than one tribe; I will be an American, a Jew, an Easterner, an intellectual, a professor. Imagine a similar multiplication of identities around the world, and the world begins to look like a less dangerous place. When identities are multiplied, passions are divided.

We need to think about the political structures best suited to this multiplication and division. These won't be unitary structures; nor will they be identical. Some states will be rigorously neutral, with a plurality of cultures and a common citizenship; some will be federations; some will be nation-states, with minority autonomy. Sometimes cultural pluralism will be expressed only in private life; sometimes it will be expressed publicly. Sometimes different tribes will be mixed on the ground; sometimes they will be territorially grouped. Since the nature and the number of our identities will be different, even characteristically different for whole populations, a great variety of arrangements ought to be expected and welcomed. Each of them will have its usefulness and its irritations; none of them will be permanent; the negotiation of difference will never produce a final settlement. What this also means is that our common humanity will never make us members of a single universal tribe. The crucial commonality of the human race is particularism. With the end of imperial and totalitarian rule, we can at last recognize this commonality and begin the difficult negotiations it requires.

NOTES

1. For a standard Marxist account, see Eric Hobsbawm, "Some Reflections on 'The Break-up of Britain,'" in *New Left Review* 105 (1977): 3–23. The most interesting leftist discussions of nationalism are those of the Austrian Marxists Otto Bauer and Karl Renner: see *Austro-Marxism*, ed. and trans. Tom Bottomore and Patrick Goode (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pt. III.

2. See the argument about the effects of mass mobilization in Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1953).

3. Henry Smith, quoted in C. L. Powell, *English Domestic Relations, 1487–1653* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1917), p. 75.

4. Hence Hobsbawm is surely wrong to argue that nations, because they are "imagined communities," serve ineffectively and inauthentically "to fill the emotional void left by the retreat or disintegration . . . of *real* human communities" (*Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990], p. 46; italics in original). Even small face-to-face communities, as anthropologists have taught us, are "imagined" in complex and elaborate ways.

5. "Community of character" is Otto Bauer's phrase; see *Austro-Marxism*, p. 107.

6. Cf. Will Kymlicka's argument for the protection of minority cultures in *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), esp. chap. 9.

7. Conor Cruise O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back: A UN Case Study* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1962).

8. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pt. I, chapter xiii.

9. See John Locke's anticipation of this result in *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689), ed. Patrick Romanell (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), pp. 52–53.

10. I elaborate on this "test" in "Nation and Universe," *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values XI* (Salt Lake City: Utah University Press, 1990), pp. 549–52.

CHAPTER 12

Nationalism and Modernity

Charles Taylor

Nationalism is much talked about these days. I suppose it's obvious why. The postcommunist massacres in the ex–Soviet Union and ex-Yugoslavia are reason enough. And suddenly this kind of frightening outburst seems in danger of becoming more the rule than the exception. For some people this is all the more shocking in that it seems like a throwback. The Bosnian savagery comes across to these people as an atavistic return, as though primeval identities and ageless mutual hatreds were being resurrected at the end of the twentieth century. But this can't be quite the right take on things, because so much in nationalism is quintessentially modern. The Serb-Croat wars disconcert us because they mix an unquestionably modern discourse—self-determination, rule by the people, et cetera—with other elements that seem to us alien to (what we understand as) modernity.

Can we hope to understand this? Is there even a "this" to understand here? Is there a single phenomenon? Maybe we're making things even harder for ourselves by assuming that there is something called "nationalism" that is the same wherever people make demands in the name of ethnic/cultural self-determination, so that Bosnian Serbs and Québécois are placed in the same category.[1] The differences are explained by the first being more "extreme" than the second, just as neat whiskey knocks you out, but diluted whiskey makes you mellow.

I want to argue that there are big differences here but also some links. Sorting this out will require thinking in more than one register. One-line theories of nationalism are as bad as such theories invariably are in social science. I am going to try to explore the ways in which various nationalisms are linked to modernity, both to central features of its political culture and to the stresses and malaise to which it gives rise.

Some explanations take up this topic from this latter perspective.

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Nationalism is an outbreak of emotion that is understandable when people are under strain because of, say, a disorienting social and economic transition, especially if this is accompanied by hard times. So we understand why lots of Russians voted for Zhirinovsky in the last election, even though we deplore it, just as we understand why Algerians voted for the Islamic Salvation Front in their last election. Now if things had been going better, if people had felt more secure, or if there hadn't been so much unemployment and hardship, these extreme and dangerous parties wouldn't have made the headway they did.

There is very often a lot of truth in this last counterfactual proposition. But it doesn't tell us what is really interesting to know: why nationalists or Islamic "fundamentalists" are the candidates waiting to take up the angry, disoriented protest vote. And this has a lot to do with the progress of what I am calling "modernity," even, perhaps especially, where it seems to take "antimodern" forms.

So I want first to trace the ways in which nationalism arises out of modern society and the modern state form. Ernest Gellner has an interesting theory of just this kind.[2] His is in a sense a functional account. It concentrates on modern societies as economies, which by their very nature need to be serviced and (to some degree) managed by the state.

A modern economy is by definition one undergoing growth and change. As such it requires a population that is mobile, both occupationally and geographically. People no longer will necessarily stay in the same métier throughout their whole careers, and certainly there cannot be the hereditary handing down of métier from parent to child that characterized many premodern societies. This flexibility can be attained only by a high level of general education, literacy, and numeracy, one unmatched by any previous society in history. The modern division of labor is multiform but shallow. That is, it is taken for granted that people can be retrained or at least that their children can. Vocations are no longer linked with the standing status divisions that marked many earlier societies, of which the extreme case is the traditional Indian caste system.

Moreover, this generalized and high level of culture has to be homogeneous. We need people who can communicate with each other and generally understand each other without having to rely heavily on familiarity with particular contexts of family, clan, locality, provenance, et cetera. To "do business" with each other, operate a system of courts, run a bureaucratic state apparatus, and the like, we need millions who can communicate without difficulty in a context-free fashion. A standard language must replace all the local and class dialects that abounded earlier.

Society needs in a sense a homogeneous culture, one into which people have to be inducted to be able to do business with each other across all the particularities of context and background. But how can they be inducted into this culture? Here is where the modern state takes on an especially important role.

In earlier "agro-literate" societies, the high culture was confined to a class, the literati and perhaps other top strata. The job of handing on this culture could be assumed by families in some cases or by special institutions that might be at some distance from the state (for example, the Church in premodern Europe). But in the modern context, the task of educating everybody up to scratch is too imposing and too vital to be left to the private sector. Both the scale of the educative enterprise and its essential uniformity dictate that it be assumed by the state. Modern societies/economies are all serviced, inescapably, by a state system of education.

A homogeneous language and culture is fostered and diffused and hence also to some degree defined by the state. Modern societies necessarily have official languages, almost official cultures. This is a functional imperative. Gellner takes issue with Elie Kedourie: it is not so much that nationalism as a sentiment, as a political aspiration, has imposed homogeneity. Rather, homogeneity is a requirement of the modern state, and it is this "inescapable imperative [that] eventually appears on the surface as nationalism."[3]

Now up to this last quote, I think Gellner is basically right. There can be differences in the detailed account, but it seems to me an undeniable feature of modern market, growth-oriented, industrial economies, embedded as they are in bureaucratic polities, that they force a kind of homogeneity of language and culture, both designedly, as through the education system, and by the very way they operate, as through their media. And it seems that this couldn't very well be otherwise. The demands of this kind of society in trained personnel—above all in *retrainable* personnel, capable of taking on ever-new technologies and operating by ever-new methods—and the need for intercommunication across vaster and vaster networks push inevitably to the diffusion of standardized, context-free languages, embedding within themselves a multiplicity of expert "language games." As a consequence of this, earlier "network" identities, linked to family, clan, locality, and provenance, tend to decline, and new "categorical" identities, which link us to a multitude of others nationally or even globally—on the basis of confession, profession, citizenship—take on more and more importance.[4]

Compared to earlier societies, which tended to be divided between a "high" culture, an appanage of a restricted class, and a set of partly overlapping "folk" cultures, this modern form tends to universalize a

species of "high" (literate) culture, putting a larger and larger proportion of its population through tertiary education, inculcating into many of them a "canon," as "high" cultures have always tended to do to their initiates. As Gellner puts it, "a high culture pervades the whole of society, defines it, and needs to be sustained by that polity. *That* is the secret of nationalism."[5]

All this seems true, but how does it account for nationalism? This seems evident enough to Gellner. If a modern society has an "official" language, in the fullest sense of the term—that is, a state-sponsored, -inculcated, and -defined language and culture, in which both economy and state function—then it is obviously an immense advantage to people if this language and culture are theirs. Speakers of other languages are at a distinct disadvantage. They must either go on functioning in what to them is a second language or get on an equal footing with speakers of the official language by assimilating. Or else, faced with this second distasteful prospect, they demand to redraw the boundaries of the state and set up shop in a new polity/economy where their own language will become official. The nationalist imperative is born.

People have raised objections to Gellner's theory on a number of grounds, most notably that it seems to have trouble explaining the rise of nationalism in preindustrial contexts, such as nineteenth-century Eastern Europe, and twentieth-century Africa. But I don't want to dwell on these difficulties, for which there are probably answers anyway. What concerns me is the incompleteness of the explanation.

Some people assimilate; they go without much protest into the mix-master of school and army and lose their regional dialects. They enter as peasants and emerge as Frenchmen.[6] Why do some put up a fight and create nationalist movements while others do not? Or again, if there are two languages widely spoken in a given state, why is it so difficult to come to some arrangement around a form of bilingualism? This does happen, of course, but alas, much more rarely than it should, and it is often fraught with strife and difficulty even where it has been adopted. Why should this be so?

Some people might think that the problematicity of bilingualism needs no explanation. It's so much easier to operate in a single language. The answer is: easier than what? If everyone were willing to agree happily to operate in a single language, we'd be crazy to insist on two. But if the alternative is strife, resentment, separatist movements, perhaps even the dissolution of the state, well, bilingualism isn't really that complicated. In my (admittedly jaundiced) experience of living in a bilingual state, pleas about the trouble and expense of bilingualism are generally technological pretexts for a chauvinism that dares not declare itself openly.

But if that is so, then the crucial explanatory bit is missing from Gellner's account. The reason why some minorities assimilate and others fight back has to be referred to the nationalism of the latter. The reason bilingual solutions are hard isn't because they're so complicated and expensive but because they're resisted (for example, under the bad faith pretext that they're complicated and expensive) on fundamentally nationalist grounds. That is, nationalism is still figuring in the account as an explanans, not as a successfully accounted-for explanandum.

What Gellner has done, which is very valuable, is define some of the very important stakes of nationalist struggle. Just because the modern state does sustain an official language/culture, it becomes of ultimate significance to those with a strong national identity to get some kind of control of a state. The state focus of so much modern national sentiment and national identity, which Gellner makes a matter of definition, is thereby partly explained, and this is no small matter. But the original energy fueling these struggles remains to be understood. Unless one takes the cynical view (espoused, for instance, by Pierre Trudeau in relation to Quebec independentism) that the whole thing is powered by the ambition of social elites to establish a monopoly of prestigious and remunerative jobs. The refusal of bilingualism is then easily explained: under this regime, members of our gang get 50 percent of the jobs; under unilingualism, we get 100 percent.

Once again, this certainly explains something but far from everything. It can't explain, for instance, why nonelites are so easily recruited into the nationalist enterprise. Nor does it explain the solidarity of the elites themselves. If you are one of those holding down a top job within the 50 percent allocated to your language group, why should you upset everything so that some as-yet-unfavored compatriots can take over the other 50 percent? Why side with compatriots against fellow top job-holders? Of course, not everybody does, but one of the remarkable things about the moral pressures of nationalism is that many feel they should and lots do. Where does nationalism get its moral thrust? Totally cynical explanations are powerless to illuminate this.

Last, I wonder if we should make the state focus definitional for modern nationalism as Gellner does. Granted, nationalism overwhelmingly takes this form, but not invariably. Thus French-Canadian nationalism, from the nineteenth into the twentieth century, had two forms, of which the dominant one was turned away from the state and promoted nonstate institutions, especially the Church. The more familiar state-centered mode was also there, at least since the rebellion of 1837, but it remained the less powerful strand—that is, until the turnover of 1960, after which it has taken over the whole field, with the resultant rise of independentism and the identity switch from "Canadien-français" to

"Québécois." Nevertheless, during those many decades before 1960, there were people whom everybody, including themselves, referred to as *nationalistes* who lacked the state focus. The emotional and moral sources on which they drew were different but not totally distinct from those drawn on by Quebec nationalists today. We gain nothing by excluding this phenomenon from our purview by definitional fiat.

So the ultimate sources of modern nationalism still escape us. (Perhaps they always will.) But at least we understand better some of the things at stake in modern nationalist struggles, and hence their focus, thanks to Gellner's account. Before I try my hand at defining the sources, I would like to supplement Gellner's picture of what is at stake by bringing to the fore other functional requirements of the modern state.

Modern nation-states are "imagined communities," in Benedict Anderson's celebrated phrase.[7] We might say that they have a particular kind of social imaginary—that is, socially shared ways in which social spaces are imagined. There are two important features of the modern imaginary, which I can best bring out by contrasting them in each case with what went before in European history.

First, there is the shift from hierarchical, mediated-access societies to horizontal, direct-access societies. In the earlier form, hierarchy and what I am calling mediacy of access went together. A society of ranks— "society of orders," to use Alexis de Tocqueville's phrase—like seventeenth-century France, for instance, was hierarchical in an obvious sense. But this also meant that one belonged to this society via belonging to some component of it. As a peasant, one was linked to a lord who in turn held power from the king. One was a member of a municipal corporation that had a standing in the kingdom or exercised some function in a parliament with its recognized status, and so on. By contrast, the modern notion of citizenship is direct. In however many ways I am related to the rest of society through intermediary organizations, I think of my citizenship as separate from all these. My fundamental way of belonging to the state is not dependent on or mediated by any of these other belongings. I stand, alongside all my fellow citizens, in direct relationship to the state that is the object of our common allegiance.

Of course, this doesn't necessarily change the way things get done. I know someone whose brother-in-law is a judge or an MP, and so I phone her up when I'm in a jam. We might say that what has changed is the normative picture. But underlying this, without which the new form couldn't exist for us, is a change in the way people imagine belonging. There were certainly people in seventeenth-century France and before for whom the very idea of direct access would have been foreign, impossible to clearly grasp. The educated had the model of the ancient

republic. But for many others, the only way they could understand belonging to a larger whole, like a kingdom or a universal church, was through the imbrication of more immediate, understandable units of belonging (parish, lord) into the greater entity. Modernity has involved, among other things, a revolution in our social imaginary, the relegation of these forms of mediacy to the margins, and the diffusion of images of direct access.

This has come about in a number of forms: the rise of a public sphere, in which people conceive of themselves as participating directly in a nationwide (sometimes even international) discussion; the development of market economies, in which all economic agents are seen as entering into contractual relations with others on an equal footing; and, of course, the rise of the modern citizenship state. But we can think of other ways as well in which immediacy of access takes hold of our imaginations. We see ourselves as in spaces of fashion, for instance, taking up and handing on styles. We see ourselves as part of the worldwide audience of media stars. And while these spaces are in their own sense hierarchical—they center on quasi-legendary figures—they offer all participants an access unmediated by any of their other allegiances or belongings. Something of the same kind, along with a more substantial mode of participation, is available in the various movements (social, political, religious) that are a crucial feature of modern life and link people translocally and internationally into a single collective agency.

These modes of imagined direct access are linked to—indeed, are just different facets of—modern equality and individualism. Directness of access abolishes the heterogeneity of hierarchical belonging. It makes us uniform, and that is one way of becoming equal. (Whether it is the only way is the fateful issue at stake in much of today's struggles over multiculturalism.) At the same time, the relegation of various mediations reduces their importance in our lives; the individual stands more and more free of them and hence has a growing self-consciousness as an individual. Modern individualism, as a moral idea, doesn't mean ceasing to belong at all—that's the individualism of anomie and breakdown—but imagining oneself as belonging to ever wider and more impersonal entities: the state, the movement, the community of humankind. This is the same change—seen from another angle—that I described above in terms borrowed from Craig Calhoun: the shift from "network" or "relational" identities to "categorical" ones.

The second important feature of the modern social imaginary is that it no longer sees the greater translocal entities as grounded in something other, something higher, than common action in secular time. This was not true of the premodern state. The hierarchical order of the kingdom was seen as based in the Great Chain of Being. The tribal unit was seen

as constituted as such by its law, which went back "since time out of mind" or perhaps to some founding moment that had the status of a "time of origins" in Mircea Eliade's sense. The importance in premodern revolutions, up to and including the English civil war, of the backward look, of establishing an original law, comes from this sense that the political entity is in this sense action-transcendent. It cannot simply create itself by its own action. On the contrary, it can act as an entity because it is already constituted as such, and that is why such legitimacy attaches to returning to the original constitution.

Seventeenth-century social contact theory, which sees a people as coming together out of a state of nature, obviously belongs to another order of thought. But it wasn't until the late eighteenth century that this new way of conceiving things entered the social imaginary. The American Revolution is in a sense the watershed. It was undertaken in a backward-looking spirit, in the sense that the colonists were fighting for their established rights as Englishmen. Moreover, they were fighting under their established colonial legislatures, associated in a Congress. But out of the whole process emerged the crucial fiction of "we, the people," into whose mouth the declaration of the new Constitution was placed.

Here the idea is invoked that a people or, as it was also called at the time, a "nation" can exist prior to and independently of its political constitution so that this people can give itself its own constitution by its own free action in secular time. Of course, the epoch-making action rapidly comes to be invested with images drawn from older notions of higher time. The "Nova Ordo seclorum," just like the new French revolutionary calendar, draws heavily on Judeo-Christian apocalyptic beliefs. The Constitution founding comes to be invested with something of the force of a "time of origins," a higher time, filled with agents of a superior kind, which we should ceaselessly try to reapproach. But nevertheless, a new way of conceiving things is abroad. Nations, people, can have a personality, can act together outside of any prior political ordering. One of the key premises of modern nationalism is in place, because without this the demand for self-determination of nations would make no sense. This just is the right for peoples to make their own constitution, unfettered by their historical political organization.

What is immensely suggestive about Anderson's account is that it links these two features. It shows how the rise of direct-access societies was linked to changing understandings of time and, consequently, of the possible ways of imaging social wholes. Anderson stresses how the new sense of belonging to a nation was prepared by a new way of grasping society under the category of simultaneity:[5] society as the whole consisting of the simultaneous happening of the myriad events that mark the lives of its members at that moment. These events are the fillers of this

segment of a kind of homogeneous time. This very clear, unambiguous concept of simultaneity belongs to an understanding of time as exclusively secular. As long as secular time is interwoven with various kinds of higher time, there is no guarantee that all events can be placed in unambiguous relations of simultaneity and succession. The high feast is in one way contemporaneous with my life and that of my fellow pilgrims, but in another way it is close to eternity, the time of origins, or the events it prefigures.

A purely secular time understanding allows us to imagine society "horizontally," unrelated to any "high points," in which the ordinary sequence of events touches higher time, and therefore it does not recognize any privileged persons or agencies—such as kings or priests—who stand and mediate at such alleged points. This radical horizontality is precisely what is implied in the direct-access society, where each member is "immediate to the whole." Anderson is undoubtedly right to argue that this new understanding couldn't have arisen without social developments like that of print capitalism, but he doesn't want to imply by this that the transformations of the social imaginary are sufficiently explained by these developments. Modern society also required transformations in the way we figure ourselves as societies. Crucial among these has been this ability to grasp society from a decentered view that is no one's. That is, the search for a truer and more authoritative perspective than my own doesn't lead me to center society on a king or sacred assembly, or whatever, but allows for this lateral, horizontal view, which an unsituated observer might have—society as it might be laid out in a tableau without privileged nodal points. There is a close inner link between modern direct-access societies, their self-understandings, their refraction in categorical identities, and modern synoptic modes of representation in "the Age of the World Picture": society as simultaneous happenings, social interchange as an impersonal "system," the social terrain as what is mapped, historical culture as what shows up in museums, et cetera.'

What light can these considerations about the social imaginary throw on modern nationalism? They can help illuminate what is at stake in nationalist struggles, just as Gellner's account did, an account that these considerations in a sense complement. Gellner showed the phenomenon of a state-fostered official language as a functional requirement of a modern state and economy. And in an analogous way there are functional requirements that attend the modern social imaginary.

The horizontal, direct-access society, given political form by an act of the people, forms the background to the contemporary source of

legitimate government in the will of the people. This principle is getting harder and harder to gainsay in the modern world. It comes close to being the only acceptable basis for any regime that doesn't declare itself as merely temporary or transitional, with the partial exception of so-called Islamic regimes—although this doesn't prevent it from being used to justify the most terrible tyrannies. Communist regimes were also supposedly based on popular sovereignty, and fascism was supposed to emanate from the united will of a conquering people.

Now this has certain functional requirements. Let's first of all take the case where the attempt is made to live out the principle of popular sovereignty through a representative democracy. The nature of this kind of society, as in any other free society, is that it requires a certain degree of commitment on the part of its citizens. Traditional despotisms could ask of people only that they remain passive and obey the laws. A democracy, ancient or modern, has to ask more. It requires that its members be motivated to make the necessary contributions: of treasure (in taxes), sometimes blood (in war); and it expects always some degree of participation in the process of governance. A free society has to substitute for despotic enforcement with a certain degree of self-enforcement. Where this fails, the system is in danger. For instance, democratic societies where the level of participation falls below a certain threshold cease to be legitimate in the eyes of their members. A government elected in an election with a turnout of 20 percent can't claim to have the mandate of the people. It can only claim to have gotten there by the rules, which is a much weaker defense if ever it faces a crisis.

So democracies require a relatively strong commitment on the part of their citizens. In terms of identity, citizenship has to rate as an important component of who they are. I am speaking in general, of course; in any society, there will be a wide gamut of cases, stretching from the most gung-ho and motivated to the most turned-off internal exiles. But the median point of this gamut has to fall closer to the upper than the lower limit. This membership has to be one that matters. In particular, it has to matter more than the things that can divide the citizens.

In other words, the modern democratic state needs a healthy degree of what used to be called "patriotism," a strong sense of identification with the polity, and a willingness to give of oneself for its sake. That is why these states try to inculcate patriotism and to create a strong sense of common identity even where it did not previously exist. And that is why one thrust of modern democracy has been to try to shift the balance within the identity of the modern citizen, so that being a citizen will take precedence over a host of other poles of identity, such as family, class, gender, even (perhaps especially) religion. This may be promoted in a deliberate way, on the basis of an express ideology, as in the case of

French Republicanism. Or it may be fostered in more indirect ways, as a consequence of the injunction to render other modes of description—gender, race, religion, et cetera—irrelevant in the operation of public life.[10]

But the effect is the same, and we can see that it complements the factors Gellner highlights. Parallel to the homogeneity of language and culture that the modern state economy can't help fostering is this homogenization of identity and allegiance that it must nourish for its survival. In both cases, the features that divide us, that distinguish us into subgroups and partial publics, fade, either altogether or at least in their importance and relevance.

How does this connect with nationalism? One obvious link is that nationalism can provide the fuel for patriotism. So much so that we can have trouble distinguishing them. But it is important to keep them distinct if we want to understand our history. If we think of patriotism as a strong citizen identification, then nationalism is one basis for patriotism but not the only one. We can speak of nationalism when the ground of the common political allegiance is some ethnic, linguistic, cultural, or religious identity that exists independently of the polity. If I am a nationalist, I owe allegiance to this state because it is the state of the X's, where X is my national identity, one I would bear whether or not we were lucky enough or strong enough or virtuous enough to have a state. The whole nationalist idea supposes this prepolitical identity, as I said above.

But patriotism can also have the meaning it had for the ancients. I love my fatherland, and what makes it essentially mine is its laws. Outside of these, it is denatured and no longer really mine. There is no reference to a prepolitical identity here; on the contrary, the *patria* is politically defined. Now this is important, because this was the form that patriotism took initially in the two great inaugural revolutions of the liberal age, the American and the French. Neither was initially nationalist. The nation was taken as given out of previous history or constructed, in the American case, out of an alliance based on an obvious commonality of historical predicament, and in both cases the patriot was one who sought the nation's freedom. It was later, when (the elites of) other peoples began to feel that they couldn't attain real freedom by simply revolutionizing the existing (often imperial) political structures or finding their place within a liberal empire (of Napoleon), that nationalism raised its head.

But subsequently, so much did nationalism become the rule, as a basis for patriotism, that the original prenationalist societies themselves began to understand their own patriotism in something like nationalist terms. Instead of seeing liberal institutions as uncomplicatedly universal, nationalism accredited the idea that in each society they must be tailored

to the particular genius of the people. But then even in their original countries of origin where they were at first understood universalistically, they now come to be seen as colored by particular circumstances and history.

Be that as it may, nationalism has become the most readily available motor of patriotism, so that when leaders want to unite a country and lift people out of their warring partial allegiances they appeal to a broader national identity, telling a story that makes this central to the history of their society rather than the partial identities they are trying to supersede. Thus Nehru, in his *Discovery of India*, tells a narrative of Indian identity, the basis of a pan-Indian secular nationalism that would take precedence over the potentially warring communal allegiances, Hindu and Muslim.

There is thus a sort of dialectic of state and nation. It is not just that nations strive to become states; it is also that modern states, in order to survive, strive to create national allegiances to their own measure. This is a point parallel to Gellner's correction of Kedourie above. Nationalism is not only the motor behind the homogenization of modern societies; it can also sometimes be the upshot. In order to see this, we have to keep in mind the functional requirement of patriotism.

But this still doesn't "explain" modern nationalism because lots of nationalisms arise outside of this state-building process,[11] and we still have to explain why some state-sponsored enterprises of patriotism succeed and others founder on unconquerable existent identities. (Is the Nehruvian secular Indian nationalism among the casualties?) The ultimate insight still eludes us.

It does, however, further define the form of the struggles to which nationalism gives rise and clarifies what is at stake in them in a way parallel and complementary to Gellner's account. This showed how the modern economy and bureaucratic state pushed toward a state-fostered common language and culture and thus showed that if a given minority group didn't want to assimilate and the majority was unwilling to give them a place through some regime of bilingualism, then the minority faced the unenviable position of being forever disadvantaged. Feeling the assimilative pressure on their members inseparable from this position, they ultimately risked the feared outcome of assimilation. Trouble and strife are built into such a situation.

Analogously here, we see that the modern state must push for a strong common identity. And thus if a group feels that this identity doesn't reflect it and the majority will not accommodate it by modifying the definition of common identity to include this group, then its members feel like second-class citizens and consequently experience an assimilative pressure. Trouble of some sort must follow.

What this doesn't tell us is what makes these if-clauses true when they are. What it does help us to see is that once they are true, the distressing scenarios of nationalist struggles—separatist movements, assimilation policies, tense compromises, and the like—are not just the result of gratuitous bloody-mindedness, even less the result of some regression to premodern tribal identities, but are very much the product of a situation of rivalry that is quintessentially modern in its structure and stakes.

A further word here might be helpful about how this latter kind of struggle plays itself out, based on further reflections on the functional requirements of democratic rule. The model of democratic legitimacy requires that the laws we live under in some sense result from our collective decisions. "The people" for these purposes is thought to form a collective unit of decision. But we do more than decide on issues that are already clear-cut. If that were the case, the best way to do things would be to put everything to a referendum. We also have to deliberate, clarify things, make up our minds. So "the people" also has to be conceived as a collective unit of deliberation.

Now in the meaning of the act "the people" is also seen as made up of equal and autonomous members, because to the extent that this is not the case and some are dependent on others the decision would be held to emanate from the influential part and not from the whole people.

If we put these two together, we have the idea of a process of deliberation and decision in which everybody can be heard. Of course, if we were very exigent, this would always turn out to be some approximation of principle to this norm. But if it appears that, in some systematic way, there are obstacles to certain sections of the population being heard, then the legitimacy of democratic rule in that society is under challenge.

Now there are a number of ways a case can be made that a certain segment of the population is being systematically unheard. A case of this kind was made on behalf of the working class in earlier times, could be made today with great plausibility on behalf of the nonworking marginalized poor, and is often vigorously made on behalf of women. What concerns me here is the way that a case of this kind can be made in relation to an ethnic or linguistic group.

A minority group can come to feel that their way of seeing things is different from the majority, this is generally not understood or recognized by the majority, and, consequently, the majority is not willing to alter the terms of the debate to accommodate this difference, and therefore the minority is being systematically unheard. Their voice cannot really penetrate the public debate. They are not really part of the deliberative unit.

Understanding of how this feeling could arise must emerge from our ever-deferred search for the sources of nationalism. But we can see from

here how destabilizing this type of challenge is in a modern democratic society, because it strikes at the very basis of legitimacy in this kind of society. Part of understanding modern nationalism is seeing how vulnerable our societies are to it.

That being said, can we now come to the sources of nationalism? If I could listen to the voice of prudence, I would now plead lack of space and leave this to some other occasion. But I'm going to ignore the trembling of angels and rush in anyway. Nationalism, I have wanted to say, cannot be understood as an atavistic reaction. It is a quintessentially modern phenomenon. One might think that the above discussion clears the way for a picture of it as both. What is modern would be the context of nationalistic struggles, the stakes and predispositions to struggle, given national sentiment, as these have been outlined by Gellner, supplemented by my remarks (in turn inspired by Anderson). What is primeval would be the sentiment itself, and so the two can be neatly combined.

But I think that even the sentiment is one that could only arise in modernity, and that is what I now want to explain. Why does nationalism arise? Why couldn't the Germans just be happy to be part of Napoleon's liberalizing empire, as Hegel would have liked? Why didn't the Algerians demand the full French citizenship to which they would have been entitled according to the logic of "l'Algérie, c'est la France" instead of going for independence? And so on, through an immense range of similar questions.

First, it's important to see that in a great many situations the initial refusal is that of certain elites, generally the ones who are most acquainted with the culture of the metropolis they are refusing. Later, in a successful nationalist movement, the mass of the people is somehow induced to come on board. This indicates that an account of the sources of such a movement ought to distinguish two stages.

So let me try to tackle the first phase. Why do the elites refuse metropolitan incorporation, even, perhaps especially, when they have accepted many of the values of the metropolis? Here we have to look at another facet of the unfolding process of modernity.

From one point of view, modernity is like a wave, flowing over and engulfing one traditional culture after another. If we understand by modernity, inter alia, the developments discussed above—the emergence of a market-industrial economy, of a bureaucratically organized state, of modes of popular rule—then its progress is, indeed, wavelike. The first two changes, if not the third, are in a sense irresistible. Whoever fails to take them or some good functional equivalent on will fall so far behind

in the power stakes as to be taken over and forced to undergo these changes anyway. There are good reasons in the relations of force for the onward march of modernity so defined.

But modernity as lived from the inside, as it were, is something different. The institutional changes just described always shake up and alter traditional culture. They did this in the original development in the West, and they have done this elsewhere. But outside of those cases where the original culture is quite destroyed and the people either die or are forcibly assimilated—and European colonialism has a number of such cases to its discredit—a successful transition involves a people finding resources in their traditional culture to take on the new practices. In this sense, modernity is not a single wave. It would be better to speak of alternative modernities, as the cultures that emerge in the world to carry the institutional changes turn out to differ in important ways from each other. Thus a Japanese modernity, an Indian modernity, and various modulations of Islamic modernity will probably enter alongside the gamut of Western societies, which are also far from being totally uniform.

Looking at modernity from this perspective, we can see that it—the wave of modernity—can be felt as a threat to a traditional culture. It will remain an external threat to those deeply committed against change. But there is another reaction among those who want to take on some version of the institutional changes. Unlike the conservatives, they don't want to refuse the changes. They of course want to avoid the fate of those aboriginal people who have just been engulfed and made over by the changes. What they are looking for is a creative adaptation, drawing on the cultural resources of their tradition that would enable them to take on the new practices successfully. In short, they want to do what has already been done in the West. But they see, or sense, that that cannot consist in just copying the West's adaptations. The creative adaptation using traditional resources by definition has to be different from culture to culture. Just taking over Western modernity couldn't be the answer. Or otherwise put, this answer comes too close to engulfment. They have to invent their own.

There is thus a "call to difference" felt by "modernizing" elites that corresponds to something objective in their situation. This is part of the background to nationalism. But there is more. The call to difference could be felt by anyone concerned for the well-being of the people involved. But the challenge is lived by the elites concerned overwhelmingly in a certain register, that of dignity.

Western modernity has been a conquering culture because the changes described above confer tremendous power on the societies adopting them. In the relation of conquest, there grow presumptions of

superiority and inferiority that the conqueror blithely accepts and the conquered resist. This is the challenge to dignity. To the extent that traditional elites can remain insulated from the relationship, they feel the challenge less. But those involved in modernization, whether it be in a colony or a country overshadowed and threatened, have before them constantly what they also see as a state of backwardness that they are concerned to make up for. The issue is whether they can.

Thus the urge on the part of elites to find their own path is more than a matter of concern for their compatriots. It is also a matter of their own dignity. Until they can find their own creative adaptation and take on the institutional changes while remaining themselves, the imputation of inferiority against the culture they identify with remains unrefuted. And, of course, the imputation is liberally made by members of the dominant societies. Their word tends (irrationally but understandably) to have weight just because of their success and power. They become, in a sense, important interlocutors whose recognition would count for a lot if they gave it. In the face of nonrecognition, this importance will frequently be denied, but sometimes with a vehemence that makes the denial suspect.

I am trying to identify the source of the modern nationalist turn, the refusal—at first among elites—of incorporation by the metropolitan culture, as a recognition of the need for difference but felt existentially as a challenge, not just as a matter of valuable common good to be created but also viscerally as a matter of dignity, in which one's self-worth is engaged. This is what gives nationalism its emotive power. This is what places it so frequently in the register of pride and humiliation.

So nationalism can be said to be modern because it's a response to a modern predicament. But the link is also more intimate. I said above that nationalism usually arises among "modernizing" elites. The link can be understood as more than accidental. One facet of nationalism, I have been arguing, is a response to a threat to dignity. But modernity has also transformed the conditions of dignity.

These in effect could not but change in the move from hierarchical, "mediated" societies to "horizontal," direct-access ones. The concept of honor, which was in place in the earlier forms, was intrinsically hierarchical. It supposed "preferences," in Montesquieu's terms. For me to have honor, I had to have a status that not everyone shares, as is still the case with an "honors list" of awards today. Equal direct-access societies have developed the modern notion of "dignity." This is based on the opposite supposition that all humans enjoy this equally. For instance, the term as used by Kant designates what is supposed to be the appanage of all rational agents. Philosophically, we may want to attribute this status to all, but politically, the sense of equal dignity is

really shared by people who belong to a functioning direct-access society together.[12] In this typically modern predicament, their dignity passes through their common categorical identity. My sense of my own worth can no longer be based mainly on my lineage, my clan. A goodly part of it will usually be invested in some other categorical identity.

But categorical identities can also be threatened, even humiliated. The more we are inducted into modern society, the more this is the form in which the question of dignity will pose itself for us. Nationalism is modern because it is a typically modern way of responding to the threat represented by the advancing wave of modernization. Elites have always been able to experience a dramatic loss of dignity in the face of conquering power. One way of responding is to fight back or come to terms with the conquerors out of the same traditional identity and sense of honor. Another is to force a new categorical identity to be the bearer of the sought-for dignity. It is (a subspecies of) this second reaction that we call nationalist. But it is essentially modern. The 1857 rebellion in India was in part an attempt to expunge this perennially available loss of dignity in a premodern context. In this sense, it was not a nationalist movement, as the later Congress was.

The modern context of nationalism is also what turns its search for dignity outward. No human identity is purely inwardly formed. The other always plays some role. But it can be just as a foil, a contrast, a way of defining what we're not, for better or for worse. So the aboriginals of the newly "discovered" world figured for post-Columbian Europeans. The "savage," the other of civilization, provided a way for Europeans to define themselves, both favorably (applying "civilized" to themselves in self-congratulation) and sometimes unfavorably (Europeans as corrupted in contrast to the "noble savage"). This kind of other reference requires no interaction. Indeed, the less interaction the better, or else the stereotype may be resisted.

But that other can also play a role directly, where I need his or her recognition to be confident of my identity. This has been standard for our relation to our intimates, but it wasn't that important in relation to outsiders in the premodern period. Identities were defined by reference to the other but not out of the other's reactions. Where this latter becomes so, of course, the way we interact is crucial. Perhaps we should correct this statement: because of the big part played by illusion, the way the interaction is seen by the parties is crucial. But the crucial point is that the interaction is understood to be crucial by the identity bearers themselves.

I would like to argue that identities in the modern world are more and more formed in this direct relation to others, in a space of recognition. I can't argue the general case here,[13] but I hope that this is evident

for modern nationalism. Modern nationalist politics is a species of identity politics. Indeed, the original species: national struggles are the site from which the model comes to be applied to feminism, to the struggles of cultural minorities, to the gay movement, et cetera. The work of someone like Frantz Fanon,[14] written in the context of the anticolonial struggle but whose themes have been revived in the other contexts, illustrates the connections. Strong national sentiment among elites usually arises in the first phase because an identity is threatened in its worth.

This identity is vulnerable to nonrecognition, at first on the part of the members of the dominant societies, but later there has developed a world public scene, on which peoples see themselves as standing, on which they see themselves as rated, and which rating matters to them. This world scene is dominated by a vocabulary of relative advance, even to the point of having to discover periodic neologisms in order to euphemize the distinctions. Hence what used to be called the "backward" societies began to be called "underdeveloped" after the war, and then even this came to be seen as indelicate, and so we have the present partition: developed/developing. The backdrop of modern nationalism, that there is something to be caught up with, each society in its own way, is inscribed in this common language, which in turn animates the world public sphere.

Modern nationalism thus taps into something perennial. Conquest or the threat of conquest has never been good for one's sense of worth. But the whole context in which this nationalism arises—that of successive waves of (institutional) modernization—and the resultant challenge to difference—that of the growth of categorical identities—as well as the creation of the world public sphere as a space of recognition are quintessentially modern. We are very far from atavistic reactions and primal identities.

Hence the first pass of modern nationalism, the refusal of incorporation, arises from the felt need for difference in the context of modernization, but lived in the register of dignity, of an identity potentially threatened in its worth, and in a growing space of recognition.

Let's suppose this is all true (a proposition with a very low antecedent probability); it still only accounts for the first phase. How does nationalism become generalized and galvanize whole populations? How does it spread beyond the elites?

The answer to this question will be even more unsatisfactory than the answer to the previous question. There doesn't seem to be a single mechanism. Sometimes a charismatic leadership with great imaginative power, by linking the national aspiration to a host of existing com-

plaints, can make nationalism a mass movement. This was true in the case of Gandhi during the Salt March, for instance. Often the movement spreads slowly down from the original elites to those who strive to emulate them, accede to them, and take them as their model. And when we take into account the fact that modernity itself, as we saw above, tends to generalize a transformation of the original high culture, we can understand how more and more strata of the population may come to experience their situation in the terms originally espoused by elites.

These are ways in which the mass of the people can come to share in the original nationalist aspiration and sense of vulnerable identity. But there are other ways in which nationalism can become a mass movement, in which ordinary people are recruited into it without necessarily sharing the original outlook. Sometimes active minorities, themselves actuated by nationalist fears and aspirations, can contrive to sow discord, distrust, and hatred between populations that hitherto had lived in some amity side by side. Terrorist killings can accomplish this, or atrocities committed by armed gangs, identified as from one group, against the members of the other community. Then uninvolved people can begin to mistrust their neighbors, even though these may be uninvolved as well. Each community draws together among its own members, in fear and for protection. But the result is that they begin to condone or at least not protest the action of their self-appointed "self-defense" squads, as these perhaps begin to clear out the now-untrustworthy neighbors. The scenario is all too depressingly familiar from recent developments in Croatia and Bosnia.

At the end of the day, each community is ranged against the other, perhaps even geographically separated into "ethnically cleansed" pockets, full of a hatred and fear fed on atrocity stories and often feeling betrayed and bewildered. Each community is now in the grip of a powerful nationalism, hell-bent on its own form of ethnically pure "self-determination," but for the masses the motivation may have little to do with a call to difference and a sense of threatened identity. This is a nationalism born of a sense of physical threat, of the fear of displacement, even extermination, by a hostile other. Each community has the sense that the other united first against its unsuspecting members and that its own mobilization is secondary and defensive in nature. The tragedy is that often neither is right; the split was in a sense engineered by determined and violent minorities, playing a game of provocation and counterprovocation, objectively allied in gradually unraveling ties of conviviality, even intermarriage, which may be of centuries' standing.[15]

Many of today's mass nationalisms are of this secondary and defensive variety, a response to the perceived threat of expulsion or genocide. The infernal circles of killings between Armenians and Azeris, Georgians

and Abkhazi, and so on, are of this kind. But this is not to say that such nationalisms are of an entirely different kind. Because somewhere in the causal story is usually the action of minority elites, who were actuated by the classic motivation to difference I described above. What does distinguish them, however, is that the diffusion of the nationalist movement doesn't come through more and more strata coming to share the original aspiration, through a conversion to the nationalist vision, as with Gandhi and the Salt March, but rather through the (often-manipulated) politics of division and mutual threat—not an identity threat in this case but a physical threat of exile or annihilation. I want to call this kind of mass nationalism defensive, but we have to remember that usually at its origin lies a minority nationalism of aspiration. And of course it may also happen that over time, in a third phase, a mass nationalism of defense can be gradually won over to some version of the original aspiration.

The rise of communal "nationalisms" in India illustrates these mechanisms. Before the mass agitations of the twentieth century, Hindus and Muslims often enjoyed a degree of conviviality difficult to imagine today. Both communities participated in a form of syncretism. In certain parts of the subcontinent, Hindus would attend the celebration of Moharram and Muslims would attend Dussehra feasts. Protests around the turn of the century began to come from elites in both communities, who wanted to create and propagate a purer, more consistent version of their respective religious identities.

The motivations for religious reform and purification are, of course, always plural and complex. But I would maintain that part of the motivation is the one I described above. Hindu reform, for instance, from Rammohan Roy on, was partly stimulated by the fact of domination, by admiration for the powers of discipline and organization of the dominators, and by the desire to find Hindu sources for an identity that could sustain the same reformed practices. It was an unavoidable by-product of this that popular syncretism, along with many other practices of popular Hinduism, was judged unacceptable. In Arya Samaj terms, it was "idolatry."

A similar approach, couched in the same terms, comes from the side of Muslim reform. These reform movements, which turned to a purer, often more Sharia-oriented Islam and condemned various popular practices, sometimes including various aspects of Sufism, have been a feature of the last century or so. Indeed, they began somewhat earlier if we include the Wahhabi. Again, it would be a wild oversimplification to explain them entirely as the response to a "call to difference." But the need to respond to a conquering West and the wounds of Islam's self-esteem as itself an erstwhile conquering civilization have almost certainly given a stimulus to these movements.

The move to sever syncretic conviviality, then, comes from elites concerned, at least in some important part, with the call to difference and the threat to identity. And indeed, the Arya Samaj did call for Hindus to cease participating in Moharram, and to complete the connection, members of the Arya Samaj formed part of the nucleus out of which emerged the Rashtinya Swayamsevak Sangh and later the Bharatiya Janata Party, standard-bearers of contemporary Hindu communalism.

But between pure-minded calls to renounce syncretism and the present communal violence and mistrust lies the second phase. My argument is that, unlike the pan-Indian nationalism of Gandhi, followed by Nehru, which was popularized by diffusion of the aspiration concerned, communalism made inroads into syncretic conviviality mainly through clashes and conflicts that raised ever-stronger reactions of defense. For Jinnah and those around him, the impulse to form Pakistan had a lot to do with the preservation of a modernized (and, in Jinnah's case, rather secularized) Muslim identity against the danger of being overwhelmed in a Hindu state. Their own "call to difference" risked being drowned out, they feared, by India's answer to its own call. But when the Muslim League swept the Muslim areas of India in the elections of 1941, the popular slogan was "Islam in danger!" What was being conjured up here was a threat of a more direct and aggressive kind. The ideology of Pakistan propagated itself as a defensive nationalism.

Of course, since then, in a third phase, the original positive aspiration may have propagated itself downward in Pakistani society. It is not easy to judge the extent to which this is so because defensiveness and threat still seem important mainstays of Pakistani unity.

I have been trying to plug the explanatory hole that I saw in Gellner's account and my Anderson-inspired complement to it. These told us something about the context of modern nationalist struggles, even about what can make them virtually inevitable. But the sources of nationalist aspirations escaped us. They offered us Hamlet without the prince. I have tried to explain the missing bit by invoking the context of expanding modernity and the call to difference it raises among peoples in the path of that expansion. This call, lived by elites in the register of dignity, can become the basis of a mass movement in a number of ways, including some rather sinister and destructive ones that have little to do with the call itself.

What does this tell us about the kinds of nationalism? Can we think of it as something homogeneous? Here there are lots of difficulties, and I can see my theory already in danger of unraveling because it's plain that my account places phenomena like the various modes of Islamic

"fundamentalism" in the Third World (Iran, Algeria) in the same category as nationalism. Indeed, insofar as I am trying to account for nationalism as a call to difference in face of the wave of "modernization," lived in the register of threatened dignity, and constructing a new, categorical identity as the bearer of that dignity, I could also be talking of the rise of Marxist parties in certain Third World contexts.

This doesn't by itself worry me. As Liah Greenfeld argues (and I feel my account has a lot in common with hers),[16] this may even be a plus for the account. We shouldn't make a fetish of our preliminary vocabulary of distinctions. So what if the categories that emerge from the explanation include more than what we antecedently called "nationalism"? If some common element is really illuminated, then we have gained.

Now with the very important reservation that I don't want to reduce Islamic integrism to a single mode of explanation, as we are dealing with a complex, many-sided, overdetermined, reality, I nevertheless would like to argue that its various manifestations have some features of the profile I have just outlined. The sense of operating on a world scene in the register of threatened dignity is very much present, as are the overvehement rejection of the West (or its quintessence, America, the "great Satan") and the tremendous sensitivity to criticism from this quarter, for all the protestations of hostility and indifference. Islamic societies are perhaps, if anything, more vulnerable to a threat to their self-esteem from the impact of superior power in that Islam's self-image, as indicated above, was of the definitive revelation, destined to spread outward without check. The Islamic sense of Providence, if I may use this Christian expression, can cope with the status of conquerors but tends to be bewildered by the experience of powerlessness and conquest.

Again, for all the protestations of faithfulness to the origins, this integrism is in some respects very modern. It mobilizes people in a modern fashion in horizontal, direct-access movements; it thus has no problem using the "modern" institutional apparatuses of elected legislatures, bureaucratic states, and armies. While it would reject the doctrine of popular sovereignty in favor of a species of theocracy, it has also delegitimated all the traditional ruling strata. The Iranian revolution was carried out against the Shah. Those enjoying special authority are exclusively those who "rationally" merit this, granted the nature and goals of the state—namely, the experts in God's law (not to speak of the Ayatollah Khomeini's media-oriented abuse of the Islamic judicial forms in issuing his *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie).

Indeed, it seems true of all fundamentalisms that they paradoxically are most modern when they think they are most faithful to tradition, starting with the original home of the term, in the Protestant sectarian doctrines of biblical inerrancy. This is, in fact, a doctrine only defended

in recent centuries. But more important, one can doubt that the issue would even have been clearly understood by Christians in earlier centuries. It supposes a modern conception of the literal truth in secular time that owes something to our social imaginary and our science. Christians of earlier centuries lived in a world in which secular time was interwoven with various orders of higher time, various dimensions of eternity. From within this time sense, it may be hard to explain just what is at stake in the question whether "day" in *Genesis* means "literally" the twenty-four hours between sunset and sunset, let alone convince someone that he or she should be concerned about it.

Moreover, seeing nationalism, proletarian internationalism, and religious fundamentalisms in the same register may help us to understand their interaction, that they are so often, in fact, fighting for the same space. Arab nationalism gives way to Islamic integrism,[17] just as the demise of Soviet Marxism opens the way for virulent nationalisms. The search for a categorical identity, to answer the call to difference and be the bearer of the sought-for dignity, can take many forms. It is understandable that the discrediting of some strengthens the appeal of others.

Moreover, this kind of diversity and rivalry shades into that between different definitions of nationalism. In many countries, fewer and more inclusive national identities have vied for people's allegiance: Québécois and Canadian, Slovak and Czecho-Slovak, Scots and British. Indeed, one could class the struggle between Nehruvian and "Hindutva" nationalism in India as another such rivalry rather than as a struggle between a national and a religious identity. In all the struggles invoked in this and the preceding paragraph, it is as though there were a space waiting to be filled. It is this that I am trying to cast light on.

So I'm not unduly worried that my account may lead us to bring things together that we now class under different headings. Understanding nationalism in terms of a "call to difference" allows for a great variety of different responses. The aspiration to take on certain forms of modernity on the basis of one's own cultural resources can obviously be played out in many different ways, depending on what you want to take over and what cultural resources you hope to sustain it with. The considerations Gellner adduces, as well as others, certainly explain why one thing people generally want to take over is state power; hence the near-universal validity of his definition of nationalism. But we can also see why in special circumstances a phenomenon like pre-1960 Quebec "nationalism" can arise.

But one difference is worth noting here—that between liberal nationalism like, for example, contemporary Quebec independentism on the one hand and what we now see raging in Bosnia on the other. There are some common roots, as captured in my scheme, but there are also

clear qualitative differences. The idea that these are both manifestations of the same force but differing in virulence is a serious mistake. It is not just that the second phase in Bosnia was a purely "defensive" one, in my sense. More fundamentally, nationalisms differ, as I have just said, in regard to what they want to take over.

Now in some nationalisms part of what is defined as the desirable modernity is the liberal regime of rights and equal citizenship, attributed to all members of the political unit, regardless of differences, even of ethnicity. These nationalisms have taken over—one might better say, have never lost—the aspirations to patriotism of the founding revolutions anterior to nationalism. The original "nations" these revolutions sought to liberate were held to consist of all free men living in the historically defined societies. The fact that "free men" excluded women in one way and Afro-American slaves in another, more grievous way didn't totally blunt the force of this principle. On the contrary, this force was part of the complex of factors that eventually led to the lifting of these exclusions.

The first wave of nationalisms in Europe that grew up in opposition to the Holy Alliance were of this liberal sort. They retained the original *Verfassungspatriotismus* of the revolutions; their sense of nation incorporated the constitutional principles of liberalism. Contemporary Quebec nationalism is of this kind.

Of course, liberal nationalism suffers strains. All are citizens without distinction, and yet the state has its raison d'être in a cultural nation to which not all citizens belong. There are tensions here to be managed.[18] But there is no question of sacrificing universality on the altar of the nation, for this would be a betrayal of identity.

Quite different are the modes of nationalism where what is to be taken over does not include this liberal patriotism, even in some cases, as in proto-Nazi German movements, where this patriotism is rejected as an alien element, a bit of "Zivilisation" that is contrary to the "Kultur" of the nation, or where liberal politics has never had a toehold, as in the Balkans. There one can have forms where the aspiration includes state power, economic development, even something like an abolition of traditional hierarchies in the name of popular sovereignty. But nothing stands in the way of defining the nation purely ethnically, even racially. Where this is so, the elements of modern politics taken up are no help. Rather, they aggravate things. At least traditional societies recognized some moral limits, however frequently transgressed, in the treatment of outsiders. But in the face of the sovereign national will, source of all right, nothing else can stand.

Premodern societies often incorporated different groups in a sort of hierarchy of complementarity, where each one had its niche—as Greeks,

for instance, were frequently merchants in the Ottoman Empire. This was a far cry from equal rights, but it did confer a semisecure status. But the outsider has no place in a regime of popular sovereignty where the people are ethnically defined. Moreover, under the rules of self-determination, outsiders in sufficiently large numbers can contest one's right to the territory. Add to this the sense of threat in defensive nationalism and the scene is set for ethnic cleansing.

It is clear that this type of nationalism, while having partly similar roots to the liberal one and growing and operating within the context of modernity, is nevertheless a wholly different animal, obeying a different dynamic. The account I'm offering should not only lead us to see other phenomena (for example, some "fundamentalisms") as very similar to nationalism but also help us to distinguish rather different modes within the category.

I have not addressed all sorts of other objections. But enough is enough. I have tried to present an account of nationalism on two levels, as it were: on one level, I have attempted to describe the social and state context in which national struggles are played out and by which the stakes of these struggles are defined; and on a second level, which it was more foolhardy to venture onto, I have tried to say what gives rise to nationalist aspirations and national movements. Whatever the inaccuracy of my remarks on this second level (or indeed, on the first), I am convinced that nationalism needs to be tackled in this two-pronged way, and I hope to have helped clarify some of the thorny issues that impede our vision of this absorbing, disturbing, but seemingly inescapable feature of our modern world.

NOTES

1. We might follow Ernest Gellner in defining nationalism as the "political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" *(Nations and Nationalism* [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983], p. 1). The basic idea is that a people, defined antecedently by unity of culture, language, or religion, should be allowed to give themselves their own political forms. This certainly picks out a class of movements, sentiments, political *idées-forces* in the contemporary world, namely, those related to that principle. The question I'm raising is whether they all have the same causes and are moved by the same dynamic.

2. I am drawing here on ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 39.

4. I have borrowed this terminology from Craig Calhoun. See, for instance, his "Nationalism and Ethnicity," *American Review of Sociology* **19** (1993): 230. I have drawn heavily on Calhoun's work in my characterization of "direct-access" societies below.

5. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 18. I have dwelt at length here on only one facet of Gellner's theory, the emphasis on the homogenization functionally essential to a modern economy. But the move to modern, homogenized society was driven by other things as well. The modern European bureaucratic state has been growing for a number of centuries, increasing its outreach, invading the lives of its citizens, administering its territories, far and near, by uniform principles. Not all of this was powered by economic motives (though much undoubtedly was). But the upshot essentially provides the basis from which Gellner's account takes off: this historical development has given us the homogeneous state with its uniform official language and culture, indispensable to our kind of economy as well as to our type of polity and our administrative procedures. And it is this that accounts for nationalism.

6. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

7. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991).

8. Ibid., p. 37.

9. Calhoun, "Nationalism and Ethnicity," pp. 234–35. I want to reiterate how much the discussion in this section owes to Calhoun's recent work.

10. I haven't discussed the case of nondemocratic regimes based on popular will, but these plainly push in the same direction, indeed, even further and faster. Because their emanation from the common will is essential to their legitimacy, they cannot leave their citizens alone in a condition of obedient passivity, as earlier despotic regimes were content to do. They must always mobilize the citizens into repeated expressions of unshakable, unanimous will: phony elections, demonstrations, May Day parades, and the like. This is the essence of modern "totalitarianism" in its distinction from earlier despotism.

Calhoun in "Nationalism and Ethnicity" stresses, however, how easily the search for national identity, even in democratic contexts, leads to an attempt to induce people to suppress their other (gender, religious, minority-cultural) identities in favor of a "national" one. The modern quest for patriotism is full of dangers.

11. Many are "produced," however, at an earlier phase in which a movement begins to unite disparate populations under the same banner in the name of a supposed common history. Thus many official languages today have resulted from the imposition of one dialect as the "true" language on whole peoples who earlier spoke a scattering of similar dialects. National vernaculars have almost always had to be "invented" in this sense.

Too much has perhaps been made of this point in a spirit of debunking nationalist claims. A lot of nationalist history hovers between myth and lies. But as Calhoun cogently argues, this doesn't by itself invalidate the claims that contemporaries may make in terms of their shared sense of national identity: "Ethnicity or cultural traditions are bases for nationalism when they effectively constitute historical memory, when they inculcate it as habitus, . . . not when (or because) the historical origins they claim are accurate" ("Nationalism and Ethnicity," p. 222).

12. This doesn't have to be a political society. It can be a dispersed common agency, like a religious or ethnic group.

13. See Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition,"* ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 25–73.

14. Especially Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris: Maspéro, 1975).

15. Fortunately, this tactic doesn't always succeed. There are signs that ties between Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab were in many cases strong enough to withstand the atrocities perpetrated by murderous bands of Khalistan supporters, though a self-feeding process of distrust and division was clearly the aim of these terrible acts. Again, after the massacres of partition in 1947, the communities in India seemed to draw back from the brink. Secularism was strengthened for a while. It took some time for the forces of Hindu chauvinism to make the progress they have registered recently.

16. See Liah Greenfeld, "Transcending the Nation's Worth," *Daedalus* 122.3 (Summer 1993): 47–62. A fuller account of her view is given in *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).

17. See Martin Kramer, "Arab Nationalism: Mistaken Identity," *Daedalus* 122.3 (Summer 1993): 171–206.

18. I have discussed this at greater length in "Les sources de l'identité moderne," in *Les frontières de l'identité: Modernité et postmodernisme au Quebec,* ed. Mikhaël Elbaz, Andrée Fortin, and Guy Laforest (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996), pp. 347–64.

CHAPTER 13

Self-Government Revisited

Brian Barry

The least-known of any of John Plamenatz's books is, it seems safe to say, *On Alien Rule and Self-Government*.[1] This may, indeed, be its first citation in a scholarly article. There are, I suspect, two reasons for this lack of influence or (probably) readers. The first is that it must have jarred the expectations of any of its three natural audiences. Those who came to it from Plamenatz's mature work hoping for more of the same must have found that it contained little, at any rate explicitly, on the history of political thought. Devotees of "conceptual analysis," looking for something on the lines of *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*,[2] must have been disappointed by its relative lack of concern for definitions and distinctions. And political scientists, who would in other respects have found its substantive concerns with such topics as nationality congenial, must have been put off by its total indifference to any modern empirical literature and its substitution of "conversations with Margery Perham" for more conventional source citations. The second reason is that it was overtaken by events. The argument was primarily focused on the case for self-government among peoples who were still under colonial rule, and within a few years of publication the argument had been settled, as far as Britain was concerned (and to a large extent altogether), by history.

In spite of these disadvantages, I would like to suggest that *On Alien Rule and Self-Government* is worth resuscitating. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that the present intellectual climate ought to be more propitious than the one existing when the book was originally published. Nobody can now read the political science of the period without squirming, so Plamenatz's disregard of it means that the book is free of what would otherwise have turned out to be an incubus. Nobody now thinks that conceptual analysis pursued in the absence of some definite theo-

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retical problem is worth doing. And the rise of the contextualists, such as John Pocock and Quentin Skinner, has cast into a (perhaps temporary) eclipse the approach typified by John Plamenatz, which was essentially that of a very intelligent and serious man sitting down with a text and trying to make sense of it. But for an intelligent and serious man to sit down with a substantive problem can never be anything but a good thing, however fashions may change. As far as subject matter is concerned, the question of topicality has by now entirely faded away and what is left is a contribution to an enduring question: that of the basis of the claims that are persistently made by the people in some area to be associated together in an independent state.

Plamenatz took the view, which one might think on the face of it rather commonplace, that there was quite a lot to be said for the principle of self-determination, and that national feeling was a force that should as far as possible be accommodated. In fact, however, such a line was rather heretical for a political theorist in Plamenatz's age-group. Native Englishmen tended not to regard the problem as salient. From the supposed end of the Irish Question in 1921 until its revival in the 1960s, problems of boundary-making and nationalism had little personal significance. This is not, of course, to say that the English are not chock-full of nationalism, but it takes the form of that unconscious assumption of superiority that so infuriates foreigners: Shakespeare is not easily mistaken for Fichte. So, Michael Oakeshott, the leading native English theorist of that generation, takes the existence of a "society"— with all that that entails—for granted and focuses on the question of the appropriate "arrangements" for managing such a society.

It becomes more and more striking, as the main outlines of our century begin to emerge, that an extraordinary amount of what makes it intellectually distinctive is the achievement of members of two groups: assimilated German-speaking Jews and Viennese—and, indeed, that an amazingly high proportion is owed to those in the intersection of the two sets. This is true in social and political theory as in other basic subjects. And it is hardly to be wondered at if, in the circumstances, the doctrines of nationalism and self-determination have been treated as inimical to civilized values. Self-determination reduced Vienna from the status of the cosmopolitan capital of an empire to something closer to that of a provincial town. And for assimilated Jews the rise of nationalism obviously threatened at best remarginalization after the emergence from the ghetto and at worst, under Hitler, physical destruction.

One way of meeting the situation was indeed to embrace Zionism. The rise of nationalism in others is then countered by Jewish nationalism. (This is another twentieth-century theme that can be chalked up to Vienna.) Michael Walzer, in the next generation, illustrates the way in

which dedication to the cause of Israel can give rise to a general protectiveness toward the claims of the nation-state to autonomous development. This, however, was not the route followed by the distinguished Central European refugees who dominated English-speaking political theory during the quarter century following the Second World War. Karl Popper's attack on what he tendentiously called "tribalism" (actually nationalism) in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*³ is the most comprehensive example, but I think that one could find the same basic antipathy to the use of political means for any collective ends—the same repugnance to the idea of a society as anything except the result of individual actions in pursuit of individually defined ends—in Hayek, Talmon, Kohn, and (with more shading) Berlin.

Cold war liberalism was a response not only to the postwar situation but also to the prewar one. The popularity of the dubious concept of "totalitarianism" to cover not only Stalinism, Nazism, and fascism but also (in terms such as "totalitarian tendencies") any kind of collectivistic thinking is perhaps the best indicator. In the lexicon of, say, *Encounter* in its heyday, charges of "totalitarian tendencies" could be deployed against a wide variety of targets with remarkable rhetorical effectiveness.

As far as I can tell, Plamenatz adhered to the tenets of what I have here called cold war liberalism except in one respect: he did not share the antipathy to nationalism or more generally to the idea that people might properly use political means to determine the conditions of their common life. As he wrote in *On Alien Rule and Self-Government*, he "belong[ed] by birth and affection to a 'backward' nation,"⁴ and his sympathy with the aspirations of colonial peoples in the rest of the world is evident. In this chapter I want to undertake an enquiry of a rather abstract kind that I think relates to the concerns that separated Plamenatz from his contemporaries. I want to ask how far, starting from individualist premises, we can hope to say anything definite about the appropriate criteria for political boundaries. In particular, I want to ask if there is any way of fitting in the characteristic doctrines of nationalism that can be reconciled with individualist ideas.

For the purpose of this chapter, I understand the individualist principle to be that the only way of justifying any social practice is by reference to the interests of those people who are affected by it. By a "social practice" I mean to include social institutions such as marriage, organizations such as schools or businesses, or methods of reaching collectively binding decisions such as elections and rules of legislative assemblies. The concept of interests is notoriously controversial and the individualist principle takes on a rather different coloration depending on the interpretation adopted. Conceptions of interest fall into three categories:

those that identify it with the satisfaction of preferences (perhaps only of certain kinds, e.g., for states of oneself, or only under certain conditions, e.g., perfect information about alternatives); those that identify interest with pleasure, happiness, and the like, as in Bentham's statement that "a thing is said to promote the interest, or to be *for* the interest, of an individual, when it tends to add to the total sum of his pleasures: or, what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains";[5] and, finally, those that identify interests with opportunities to act and with access to material advantages (Rawlsian primary goods are this kind of thing). I intend my definition of individualism to cover all three ways of understanding "interest." (Indeed, it is apparent that there are potentially close connections, conceptual or empirical, between them.) The individualist principle, understood in this way, may seem so hospitable as to exclude very little, but that appearance simply illustrates its contemporary predominance. It rules out appeals on behalf of God, Nature, History, Culture, the Glorious Dead, the Spirit of the Nation, or any other entity—unless that claim can somehow be reduced to terms in which only individual human interests appear.

From the present broad perspective, all three of the doctrines that are currently regarded in mainstream Anglo-American philosophy as the primary contenders—utilitarianism, rights theories, and contractarian theories—are to be seen as variants on the principle of individualism, as set out above. Utilitarianism in its classical Benthamite form is the most straightforward. It starts from the basic idea of individualism—that interests are what matter—and, indeed, Bentham's most general statement of the principle of utility is simply what I am calling the individualist principle: "By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question."[6] Bentham then provides the simplest possible rule for bringing the interests of different people into relation with one another, namely that we sum the total interest-satisfaction over all the people concerned and adopt the criterion that one arrangement is better than another if it produces a larger total.

On the surface, rights theories stand in opposition to utilitarianism; for rights, whatever their foundation (or lack thereof) are supposed to trump claims that might be made on behalf of the general welfare. The point here, however, is that the whole notion of rights is simply a variation on utilitarianism in that it accepts the definition of the ethical problem as conterminous with the problem of conflicting interests, and replaces the felicific calculus (in which the interests are simply added) with one which does not permit certain interests to be traded off against others.

Contractarian thinking is a further twist on the basic individualist principle. We arrive at it by starting again from the general formulation and stipulating that a social arrangement may be justified only by showing that it operates in the interests of each and every participant in it. This contractarian version of individualism may take a variety of forms, depending on the way in which certain key questions are answered. Is the contract taken to be actual or hypothetical? Is weight attached to the contract itself or is the contract significant only as an indication of mutual gain? Must the mutual gain be realized or is it enough for it to be anticipated? If anticipated, what are the circumstances in which the *ex ante* estimation is to be made? And, either way, what is the standard against which "mutual gain" is to be counted? My object in mentioning these puzzles within contractarian thinking is not to pose them as subjects for present discussion but once again to observe that common to all strands of contractarian thought is the individualist principle that interests are what matter, and that the content of political theorizing is exhausted by the question of how potential or actual conflicts of interest are to be resolved.

Each of the three varieties of individualism—utilitarian, rights, and contract—may be (and has been) advanced as an all-embracing theory. Alternatively, a contract framework may be used to derive one (or some mix) of the other two; or it may be claimed that one can derive (some version of) rights from (some version of) utilitarianism. It is beside my present purpose to follow up these possible lines of analysis. But I think it is worth pointing out that the enduring appeal of the three versions of the individualist principle can readily be explained if we appreciate that each of them speaks to a moral consideration of undeniable power. However we want to put them together, it seems awfully hard to deny that (in some circumstances at least) the greater aggregate gain should be preferred to the less, that the pursuit of that aggregate gain should be qualified by certain limitations on the way in which people can permissibly be treated, and that one test for the legitimacy of an arrangement is reciprocity of benefit from it.

I myself find it implausible that, even taking all three together, we exhaust the sphere of morally relevant considerations. But it is important to notice that those who share my skepticism are certainly not committed to the rejection of the individualist principle. It is perfectly reasonable to take the position that moral issues should always be conceived of in terms of individual interests, while at the same time denying that the relevant criteria for adjudicating between interests are adequately reflected in any one of the three theories just discussed or in any combination of them.

Having said something about the meaning to be attached, for the

purpose of this chapter, to the term *individualist*, let me now ask what illumination theorists within the individualist tradition have provided in their treatment of one question: the criteria appropriate for determining membership within a common state. I think that we can pick out three standard responses, all of which are, I must confess, so weak as to be a serious embarrassment to anyone sympathetic to the general individualist enterprise.

The first, which is simply a refusal to take the question seriously, is Locke's contract of association: people somehow got together to form a political society and this society then set up a particular form of government. There was, indeed, a certain truth obscurely embodied in this idea of a contract to set up a society, namely, that in some circumstances there may be general agreement on the boundaries of the polity, so that disagreement about the form it should take does not always have to entail reopening the question of boundaries. The notion of a contract of association thus functioned in Locke's theory to legitimate the assumption that any change of regime in England would leave the same boundaries. But, as a theory about the way to set about determining on the basis of some principle the boundaries of a state where there is in fact disagreement, some wanting one boundary and others some other, Locke's piece of fiction is obviously quite useless.

A second approach is to assert a right to self-determination. However, if this is put forward as a right of each individual, it hardly makes any sense, except as an alternative way of expressing the Lockean consent theory; and it breaks down in just the same way wherever there is a lack of agreement because some people want one boundary and others want another—which is, of course, the only context in which there is any problem in the first place.

It is tempting, and the temptation has not always been resisted, to reformulate the individual right as a right to take part in a plebiscite to determine the boundaries of the state that is to include one's current place of residence. But what moral significance could such a right have? Suppose that a majority of the people in an area want the boundaries of that area to be the boundaries of a state, and a minority do not— whether they want to carve a separate state out of that area, attach the whole area or some part of it to another state, or whatever—the question is what claim the majority has in that case. The issue is in effect decided by the choice of the area of the plebiscite, and the minority would presumably begin by dissenting from that. Locke's contract of association, however absurd, did at least correspond to the logic of constructing states out of individual rights. What we have here is in effect an attempt to bypass the step from individuals to a collectivity.' We can avoid the impasse by saying that the right is to be attributed not to indi-

viduals but to nations. Thus, Article 1 and Article 55 of the United Nations Charter make reference to "the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples."[8] And the Draft Covenant on Civil and Political Rights shares with the Draft Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights a common Article 1, whose first clause runs: "All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of this right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."[9] But attributing rights to collectivities is incompatible with the individualist principle. As Cobban wrote:

> it is one thing to recognize rights, and another to attribute them to a collective body such as a nation. Before allowing that there is a right of national self-determination, we should have to admit that the nation is a self, capable of determining itself. . . . Further, even if we accept the idea of a nation as a single self with a single will, can it have rights as such?[10]

The third position is that it is possible to specify in universal terms the interests that states exist to protect, and that we can deduce their appropriate boundaries from that. There are several variants. One is that, since all states ought to do the same things, it should not matter what the boundaries are. Thus, from a Lockean perspective we can say that states exist to maintain property rights (which are not created by the state—hence the prohibition on conquerors appropriating the property of their new subjects), so the laws should be the same everywhere and it ought not to matter to anyone what state his property happens to be in. Naturally, if you happen to live in a country whose government is violating the laws of nature and (say) taxing your property without your consent, you may wish that you lived in some other state; and I suppose that, if you despaired of any improvement from within, you might wish for your state to be absorbed by a better-run state. But the point is that you would be concerned with boundaries purely as a means to getting the same laws honestly administered, not because you cared who else was in the same state or because you expected differently composed states to have different policies.

Elie Kedourie's *Nationalism* argues this kind of case. He claims that, until the French Revolution declared that "the principle of sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation," nobody believed in nationality as a basis for statehood.

> The philosophy of the Enlightenment prevalent in Europe in the eighteenth century held that the universe was governed by a uniform, unvarying law of Nature. With reason man could discover and comprehend this law, and if society were ordered according to its provisions, it would attain ease and happiness. The law was universal, but

this did not mean that there were no differences between men; it meant rather that there was something common to them all which was more important than any differences. It might be said that all men are born equal, that they have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, or, alternatively, that men are under two sovereign masters, Pain and Pleasure, and that the best social arrangements are those which maximize pleasure and minimize pain: whichever way the doctrine is phrased, certain consequences can be drawn from it. The state, on this philosophical view, is a collection of individuals who live together the better to secure their own welfare, and it is the duty of rulers so to rule as to bring about—by means which can be ascertained by reason—the greatest welfare for the inhabitants of their territory. This is the social pact which unites men together, and defines the rights and duties of rulers and subjects. Such is not only the view of the *philosophes*, for which they claimed universal validity, but also the official doctrine of Enlightened Absolutism.[11]

Kedourie affirms (without offering any supporting arguments) these ideas, and thus finds it incomprehensible that "a young man of good family" like Mazzini should conspire against "a government which, as governments go, was not really intolerable: it did not levy ruinous taxation, it did not conscript soldiers, it did not maintain concentration camps, and it left its subjects pretty much to their own devices."[12] The only explanation he can offer is a psychological one: "restlessness." This kind of psychological reduction is indeed inevitable if there is no rational basis for favoring one set of boundaries over another. "Frontiers are established by power, and maintained by the constant and known readiness to defend them by arms. It is absurd to think that professors of linguistics and collectors of folklore can do the work of statesmen and soldiers."[13]

If we say that the task of the state is not only to enforce property rights but also to cope with externalities (or what are sometimes called spillovers), we can come up with a criterion for boundaries, namely that a state should cover an area such that (*a*) most of the externalities generated within that area impinge on the area, and (*b*) most of the externalities impinging on the area are generated within it. Thus, if a lake is potentially subject to pollution, there is, by this criterion, an *a priori* case in favor of the whole shore of the lake being contained within a single jurisdiction. The basic idea is still that states are in the business of protecting a standard set of interests. Boundaries, on this view, are to be determined on a technical basis, and not with any reference to the desires of the inhabitants to be associated politically with some people and not others. Such ideas are characteristic of market-oriented economists, whose only use for the state is as a remedy for "market failure," but we can find their influence in political science too, as in this passage:

> If, because of its boundaries, a political system lacks authority to secure compliance from certain actors whose behavior results in significant costs (or loss of potential benefits) to members of the system, then the boundaries of the system are smaller than the boundaries of the problem.[14]

The central image in the book, by Robert Dahl and Edward Tufte, from which this quotation is drawn, is of an individual with a set of fixed desires for his personal security and prosperity looking around for political units that will deliver them and favoring boundaries on the basis of the "capacities" of alternative units to do so. There is a glancing reference to the "problem of loyalty in a complex polity that begins to transcend the nation-state,"[15] but this is presented as a complication in the creation of political units based on technical criteria, although in other works Dahl has shown a good deal of understanding of the importance of communal identifications in politics.[16]

Starting from the same idea, that states should administer a common set of basic services and no more, Lord Acton, in his famous essay on "Nationality,"[17] drew the singular conclusion that it did not matter how states were composed—so long as they were heterogeneous.

> Private rights, which are sacrificed to the unity, are preserved by the union of nations. . . . Liberty provoked diversity, and diversity preserves liberty by supplying the means of organization. . . . This diversity in the same State is a firm barrier against the intrusion of the government beyond the political sphere which is common to all into the social department which escapes regulation and is ruled by spontaneous laws.[18]

Hence,

> If we take the establishment of liberty for the realisation of moral duties to be the end of civil society, we must conclude that those states are substantially the most perfect which, like the British and Austrian Empires, include various distinct nationalities without oppressing them.[19]

This "if" is, it need hardly be said, crucial: what Acton is pointing out here is that the best way of confining a state to the pursuit of negative liberty is to ensure that its citizens cannot put together a majority for anything more positive. As Madison said in the tenth *Federalist*, the greater the area and diversity of a political authority, the more difficult it is for it to pursue "an improper or wicked project" such as redistribution of wealth.[20] This principle has clearly worked pretty effectively in the United States and, indeed, Acton's principle came to the support of Madison's in that the ethnic diversity of later immigrants frustrated class-based organization. Today it has potential applications in Western

Europe. The attraction of the European Economic Community to some of the more clear-sighted supporters of British entry was that it would hamper the attempts of British governments to manage the economy by using selective import controls or subsidies to industries while at the same time being too divided for there to be any risk of positive community-level intervention. If you are opposed to positive state action, accept that legitimacy must in contemporary societies rest ultimately on universal suffrage, and fear that majorities cannot be persuaded to share your antistatism, the best bet is to go for a weak and heterogeneous confederation.

Unlike the contract and rights theories, this third attempt as an individualist theory of citizenship cannot simply be dismissed out of hand. Admittedly, there are objections to each formulation of it: the Lockean theory of property (recently warmed over by Nozick) is palpable nonsense; Kedourie's idea that until the French Revolution everybody believed in enlightened despotism is grotesque;[21] it is a fallacy to suppose, as Dahl does, that the only way of assuming that externalities can be taken care of is to have a single authoritative body covering all the producers and all the consumers of the externality;[22] and Acton's idea that the Austrian and British empires were not oppressive is pretty quaint. But, leaving all that on one side, there is nothing demonstrably wrong with the claim that the role of states should be confined to protecting the property and physical security of their citizens against invasions by one another or by others outside.

It may be objected, of course, that many important human desires that require the state for their fulfillment are going to be frustrated by such a narrow conception of the state's mission. But that does not make it incompatible with the individualist principle, which, it may be worth recalling, I defined as the principle "that the only way of justifying any social practice is by reference to the interests of those people who are affected by it." For the interpretation of interests that identifies them with all desires is only one conception. (Note, incidentally, that "Nothing is to count except desires" does not entail "All desires are to count." A strong and widespread wish to [say] burn heretics at the stake does not have to be accepted as an interest by someone who endorses the individualist principle.)

Anyone who is content with the view of the state that flows from conceiving of interests as being confined to protection against loss and harm may stop here. It is no part of the present project to consider what kinds of moves might be made in arguing for or against alternative conceptions of interest. For those who are still with me, however, what I propose to do in the remainder of the chapter is to ask how more full-bodied conceptions of the state articulate with individualist premises.

I shall divide up the additional criteria for common citizenship that are to be considered into three kinds: first, those that are so totally at variance with the spirit of the individualist principle as to be clearly ruled out of court by it; second, those that are equally clearly compatible with the individualist principle (given an appropriate conception of interest); and, third, those that present an interesting problem and challenge us to think again about the principle of individualism itself.

First, then, what I shall call ethnicity seems to me clearly excluded by individualist premises as a basis for political association in a state. In the several years in which I have been reading around in this area I have reached the conclusion that many apparent disagreements of substance actually reflect differences in the meaning given to words such as *ethnicity* and *nationality*. Let me therefore try to say as precisely as possible here what I intend to have understood by the term *ethnicity*.

The narrowest (and etymologically primitive) definition of an ethnic group would make it equivalent to a tribe, in the sense of "the largest social group defined primarily in terms of kinship."[23] I shall extend it to include (as the Greeks came to do) a group defined by descent without requiring (even the myth of) common descent from a single ancestor. Ethnicity is thus to be understood as a sort of extended analogue of kinship (e.g., the references in the British press to Rhodesian whites as "our kith and kin" at the time of Unilateral Declaration of Independence [UDI]). The essence is the conception of oneself as belonging to a common "stock" or "race" (either in the contemporary sense or the older sense in which people spoke of French and English "races" in Canada). Needless to say, conceptions of ethnicity have usually been tied up with phoney biology, sociology, and history, but (unless one wants to load the dice—which it appears many scholars do) there is no need to include any of these notions in the specification.

The significant point about ethnicity is negative: that it is not (generally speaking) possible to join an ethnic group by an act of will. "Men may change their clothes, their politics, their wives, their religions, their philosophies, they cannot change their grandfathers. Jews or Poles or Anglo-Saxons, in order to cease being Jews or Poles or Anglo-Saxons, would have to cease to be."[24] This definition of ethnicity in terms of descent is quite compatible with the emphasis of much recent scholarship on the mutability of ethnicity: that ethnic identities can be created, can merge into more inclusive ones, or can be differentiated. The plasticity of ethnic identities that we find in Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century and in post–Second World War Africa is not a chance for *individuals* to choose their ethnicity (or only very exceptionally).[25] Nor am I intending to deny that ethnic groups are often identified by traits such as language; but the point is that the language in question is not the one

the person actually speaks, but (as it is revealingly called) the "mother tongue."[26]

The reason why ethnicity cannot in itself be a basis for the composition of a state on individualist premises is quite simply that there is no necessary connection between descent, which is a matter of biology, and interest, which is a matter of the fulfillment of human needs and purposes. To this extent Acton was correct: "our connection with the race is merely natural and physical, whilst our duties to the political nation are ethical."[27] Saying "You're a member of the X ethnic group" cannot in itself constitute a ground for saying you should be in a state with (all of and/or nothing but) other members of the X ethnic group if, as the individualist principle holds, an arrangement can be justified only in terms of the interests of those affected by it. We can invoke God, Nature, or History if we choose but that clearly takes us outside the realm of individualism. Thus, Herder (although there is more to his ideas than this, and I shall return to him later) wrote that "a nationality is as much of a plant of nature as a family, only with more branches" and that "a kingdom consisting of a single nationality is a family, a well-regulated household; it reposes on itself, for it is founded by nature, and stands and falls by time alone."[28] This appeal to what is "natural" and the tell-tale analogy to the family are clearly in contradiction to the idea that any form of association must be referred to the test of human interests. "Individualism, political conventionalism, and rational justification were the counterpart to the family/state distinction," Gordon Schochet wrote in his study of patriarchalism.[29] All that has to be added is that, as individualism (which in my sense includes conventionalism and rational justification) has strengthened its grip, the family has been assimilated to a voluntary association.[30] James I, in *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, "insisted that, as children could not rise up against their fathers even when their acts were wicked or foolish, so subjects could not resist their rulers."[31] Clearly, the antecedent no longer holds, and the Swedes have, quite consistently, begun to think of giving children the right to shop around for alternative parents if they don't get on with their biological parents.

I went to some trouble to give a precise definition of ethnicity because I wanted to ensure that in my usage ethnicity would be distinguished from nationality. For the next stage in my argument is that nationality is a basis for the composition of states that is unambiguously compatible with the individualist principle. However, to anticipate the third stage of the argument for a moment, I shall go on to qualify this by drawing attention to some manifestations of nationalism that pose problems for the individualist principle.

The question is, then: "What is a nation?" and the answer I wish to employ is the subjective one that Renan gave in his famous lecture with that title.

> A nation is a grand solidarity constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those one is disposed to make again. It supposes a past, it renews itself especially in the present by a tangible deed: the approval, the desire, clearly expressed, to continue the communal life. The existence of a nation (pardon this metaphor!) is an everyday plebiscite; it is, like the very existence of the individual, a perpetual affirmation of life.[32]

More austerely, we may take Max Weber's definition of nationalism as "a common bond of sentiment whose adequate expression would be a state of its own, and which therefore normally tends to give birth to such a state."[33] My only reservation about calling this subjective is that subjectivity is often confused with arbitrariness. But a sentiment of common nationality is not something people just happen to have. Loyalty to a nation—a wish for it to have a state if it does not have one, a wish for it to continue to have one if it does have one, and a willingness to make sacrifices to those ends—tends to grow out of a habit of cooperation between different groups within the nation. For this gives rise to stable expectations about future group behavior, and especially to some degree of trust that a concession made today without a precise quid pro quo being specified will be reciprocated at some future time, when the occasion arises.

Scholars who have packed into the concept of the "nation-state" such things as an integrated economy, common social institutions, and a single status of citizen have often been motivated by suspect ideas about "political development," but I think we can say simply that the lack of such factors—feudal relations, an estates system, or a Furnivall-type "plural society," for example[34]—must inhibit the development of habits of cooperation, mutual trust, or fellow feeling. The same goes for such matters as common language or common culture: they are predisposing conditions but not necessary conditions. It is a commonplace that trust and cooperation are facilitated by communication—which is not only a question of language but of shared outlook. (Thus, it has been found that letting people talk together—about anything—before playing an *n*-person prisoners' dilemma game increases cooperation.[35]) We can also understand how it is that the sheer survival of a state over a long period tends to bring about a sense of common nationality among those within its territory. The experience of cooperation tends to create a preparedness to cooperate in the future. As Weber observed, nations without states often formed political units—or more precisely were formed by political units—at some time in the past.

There is a tendency in the literature, I find, to assimilate the nation to either the state or the ethnic group.[36] Reducing the number of elements to two in either way leads to strange consequences. Thus, Reinhard Bendix, in *Nation-Building and Citizenship*, appears (although I can find no explicit definitions) to regard a nation-state as a state that successfully claims sovereignty in the Bodin/Hobbes sense (see especially chapter 4). A nation-state is, it seems, one with "a minimum of long-run stability, that is, minimal agreement concerning the rules that are to govern the resolution of conflicts"; but it should be noted that this "agreement" is hardly equivalent to what I am calling a sense of nationality, for Bendix also writes just before that:

> Only the total disloyalty or ostracism of a section of the population is a genuine hazard to the underlying agreement of such a community, though coercion can make a nation-state endure even in the presence of that hazard to its foundations, as South Africa demonstrates.[37]

If South Africa constitutes a "nation-state" then indeed the idea of a "nation" has no independent content. A nation-state is simply a state in which the government is able to make its writ run within its territory. (This identification of "nation" with "state" is quite common, as in the name of the United Nations Organization, which is neither united nor made up of nations.)

Going in the other direction, Karl Popper's hysterical attacks on nationalism in *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (especially chapters 9 and 12) presuppose that the only basis of nationality is some kind of bogus claim that nations are natural:

> The attempt to find some "natural" boundaries for states, and accordingly, to look upon the state as a "natural" unit, leads to the *principle of the national state* and to the romantic fictions of nationalism, racialism, and tribalism. But this principle is not "natural," and the idea that there exist natural units like nations, or linguistic or racial groups, is entirely fictitious.[38]

The assimilation of nationality to ethnicity is also illustrated by Orlando Patterson's book, *Ethnic Chauvinism*, though he confuses the issue even further by treating ethnicity as a matter of descent-group but then identifying it with common cultural characteristics, thus finishing up with the assertion that "the idea of the nation-state is the view that a state ought to consist of a group of people who consciously share a common culture." Therefore, in terms of this definition, "Britain, the United States, Canada, and Switzerland are not nation-states. Ireland, France, and most of the other European states are nation-states; so is Japan."[39] Assuredly, "Britain was never a unified tribal or cultural entity";[40] but this is not equivalent to denying that Britain has been a

nation, except on the basis of Patterson's peculiar conception of nationality. Similarly, if America and Switzerland are not nations, what are they? They are, of course, states, and that would apparently be Patterson's answer; but surely that is not all we can say about them. To share a state with someone is after all merely to recognize a legal fact. Surely Swiss or Americans share more than that: what they share is precisely nationality.

Patterson's list of "nation-states" is also dubious. Presumably even he could not face the paradox of denying that France is a nation; but it is hardly a state inhabited by a single (even mythical) descent-group, and even on the criterion of common culture it was a nation before it could seriously be described as culturally unified:

> In 1876, a student at a Teacher's College in Limoges couldn't say more than two words about Joan of Arc; as late as 1906, only one military conscript in four could explain why July 14 was a national holiday. When the Marseillaise was written, most Marseillais barely spoke French. At the time of the Third Republic's founding, French was a foreign language for over one-quarter of the population.[41]

For the reasons already set out, one would indeed expect an increase in cultural unity to bring about a higher level of identification with all one's fellow countrymen, and a tendency to weaken loyalties to smaller units. The only point to make is that cultural unity is not *identical* with nationhood. As far as Ireland is concerned it is important to recall that Irish nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was focused on all the people of Ireland: there were Protestant as well as Catholic Irish nationalists (including Parnell and Yeats) though the mass of votes came from Catholics.[42] The effort to create an Irish nationality failed, and politics in Ireland developed along ethnic lines, producing the Ulster problem. But it is too easy to say that it was bound to fail. Again, we need, in order to talk about the phenomena, to be able to distinguish between nationality and ethnicity.

We can see how both the statist and the ethnic definition of nationality bedevil analysis by thinking about the new states in sub-Saharan Africa that inherited the boundaries originally created by the European colonial powers. These boundaries were either drawn as straight lines on a map or followed the lines of rivers. Since in Africa rivers act as a means of bringing communities together rather than separating them, both methods of boundary-creation had the same effects. They split ethnic groups between different territories and brought together in a single territory members of different ethnic groups.

What, then, would be involved in making such territorial entities into nations? According to the statist conception, all that is needed is that the

successor regime should succeed in filling the shoes of the colonial administrators by maintaining "law and order" and suppressing separatist movements. According to the ethnic conception, on the other hand, creating a nation, so far from being relatively easy, is impossible: the whole idea is an absurdity. According to Patterson, "the idea of the nation-state was . . . an astonishingly stupid one in these states."[43] Obviously, if nationality is the same as ethnicity, this is undeniable. But, rather than lunge around in this way, I suggest that it would have been better to ask whether the stupidity does not lie in Patterson's interpretation.

Patterson's alternative to the nation-state is what he calls the juridical state. This is rather ironic in someone who regards "reactionary" as a term of abuse, since he is in effect calling for a return to the *ancien régime*, under which "the state was a juristic and territorial concept," defined in terms of a ruler and the land over which he ruled, rather than as the embodiment of a political community.[44] Patterson claims that such a state could have "referential symbols": "A state's flag is such a symbol. So are symbols such as a monarch, or titular head of state, or such ritual symbols as independence day celebrations."[45] But a symbol presumably must be a symbol *of* something. Why should anybody form an attachment to an administrative apparatus with a monopoly of legitimate force within a certain territory? Symbols like this would be infused with life only if they became symbols of the nation rather than symbols of the state: what is important is not the machinery of government—but that the people should have a sense of shared political destiny with others, a preference for being united with them politically in an independent state, and preparedness to be committed to common political action.[46]

I hope that, once nationality has been distinguished from ethnicity and statehood, it is not necessary to take a lot of time to belabor the advantages, from an individualist perspective, of nation-states over states that do not satisfy the principle of nationality. First, given the definition of nationality with which I am working, it is a necessary truth that a nation-state fulfills the aspirations of those who belong to the nation embodied in the state. Second, the presence of fellow feeling obviously facilitates cooperation on common projects and makes redistribution within the polity more acceptable. (This is in effect the obverse of the Acton/Madison case in favor of heterogeneity.) Both of these points were taken account of by Bentham, who defined national patriotism as "sympathy for the feelings of a country's inhabitants, present, future, or both, taken in the aggregate," and insisted that "as devotion to the commonweal, and especially, to its improvement and reform, national patriotism can be of great service in promoting the greatest good of the greatest number."[47]

Moreover, as I have already remarked, if trust and understanding have developed between the members of a state, this makes it more possible to carry out policies that apply universalistic criteria and have the result of helping certain regions or groups more than others, because there is some expectation that other policies another time will have the effect of benefiting other groups. Trust might be defined as the willingness to wait: hence the impossibility, according to Hobbes, of covenants in a state of nature. In all kinds of different cultures, paying back gifts or services too quickly is regarded as a refusal of social relations, and in traditional Irish peasant society, where loans among neighbors were common, the first thing one did upon falling out with somebody was to pay off any outstanding loan.

If we put together the lack of sympathetic attachment to the interests of all those within the polity and the lack of trust in the willingness of others to reciprocate benefits when the need arises, we can see why policies such as those designed to help big cities get diluted in the U.S. Congress until they are so nonselective as to be virtually useless. We can also understand how rational decision-making in countries such as Belgium or (pre–civil war) Lebanon is bedeviled by the political necessity of matching each benefit for one group by an exactly equal one for the other(s)—whether it makes sense as an efficient use of resources or not.

What can be said on the other side, from a similarly broad utilitarian standpoint? Sidgwick, who labored under the moral and intellectual handicap of being a Liberal Unionist, offered several considerations in *The Elements of Politics* in favor of the "forcible suppression" of any attempt of a national group to secede "merely on the ground that the interests of the seceders would be promoted or their sentiments of nationality gratified by the change." There would have to be "some serious oppression or misgovernment of the seceders by the rest of the community,—i.e. some unjust sacrifice or grossly incompetent management of their interests, or some persistent and harsh opposition to their legitimate desires" (where presumably suppressing their national aspirations does not count).[48]

Sidgwick's arguments boil down to four. First, the state may be concerned for its security "either through increased danger of war from the addition of the seceding community to the number of possible foes, or from the mere loss of strength and prestige."[49] Second, there may be a minority within the territory that is opposed to the secession. Third, the loss of the seceding district might be specially serious, from its containing mines or other natural resources, in which the rest of the state's territory was deficient.[50] Finally, "over and above these calculations of expediency, justifying resistance to disruption, we must recognize as a powerful motive the dislike of the community from which the secession

is opposed to lose territory that has once belonged to it, and to which it has a claim recognized by foreigners."[51]

The last of these points raises in an acute form the question of whether we wish to employ a version of the individualist principle that counts all desires equally if they are of equal strength—the desire to speak and the desire to suppress another's speech, the desire to be free and the desire to oppress, and so on. In any version of the individualist principle that I should be prepared to take seriously, there would have to be some discrimination according to the worth of different desires, and I should therefore regard the desire to hold territory for no reason other than that one has a strong desire to do so as morally irrelevant.

The other three arguments have some force but would presumably be just as strong in defending the annexing of territories against the wishes of a majority of their inhabitants so long as it would increase military security, accord with the wishes of a minority, or make available raw materials. Just about every international atrocity of the past two centuries could be justified on one or other of those grounds—and usually was. Rather than accept Sidgwick's arguments, therefore, I think that we should advocate changes in the international regime that would reduce the importance of ownership of territory for military security and access to natural resources. The problem of minorities is, of course, an intractable one; but if one accepts Sidgwick's claim that a minority loyal to the larger state should have its wishes respected even if this entails overriding the wishes of the local majority, how is one to condemn Mussolini's claims on Dalmatia or Hitler's on Czechoslovakia? Only, it would seem, by sanctifying the status quo; but I can see no reason why, if every other relevant factor is the same, force used to defend the status quo is more morally legitimate than force used to change it.

Manifestly, these questions cry out for more careful treatment, but I hope that I have established what I set out to, namely, that there is a strong prima facie case on individualist premises for drawing state boundaries so that they correspond with nationality, as I have defined it. I now want, in conclusion, to take up the aspect of nationalism that seems to me to pose some problems for the individualist principle. This is cultural nationalism, the core of the romantic nationalism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

By no means all the claims that might be associated with cultural nationalism appear to me to create difficulties for individualism, and I shall begin by disposing of two that do not. First, there is nothing contrary to the individualist principle in saying that cultural similarity is a good basis for association. Anne Cohler, in her book *Rousseau and Nationalism*, treats similarity as a "nonpolitical" factor and draws all kinds of horrendous implications from such a factor's being the basis of

political association.[52] Yet there are two quite straightforward advantages in cultural similarity. First, there is a strong causal link between cultural similarity and trust. Hans Kohn quotes Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Stranger" as an illustration of a "primitive feeling."[53] But there is nothing primitive in the idea that the ability to interpret the behavior of other people depends on a mass of shared understandings.

A second reason for having political units that are as culturally homogeneous as possible is that the provision of public goods is more feasible and their funding from tax revenues more equitable the more similar the tastes of the public. Again, this is simply the same analysis as Acton's, with the opposite conclusion: Acton favored heterogeneity to avoid any collective action beyond the bare minimum of "law and order"; but if one takes the view that it is appropriate for states to provide collective benefits, especially where they are "nonexcludable" so that it would otherwise be difficult to raise the money for them, then it clearly follows that the more homogeneous the taxing unit the more scope there is for collective provision. It should, however, be said that this point bears on tax and service-provision units rather than on states, and could be met by making subordinate units correspond to areas with different cultures. Even where cultural differences do not cut along convenient geographical boundaries, it is possible to go some way toward public provision for each cultural group by having each person pay a tax (thus avoiding the "free rider" problem), but permitting each to designate whether the money is to go (say) to a Catholic or Protestant school system or television system, as in the Netherlands. Thus, the public goods argument for a culturally homogeneous state is not very strong in itself.

As far as linguistic homogeneity is concerned, we can again emphasize the relation between communication and trust, and press the view that, for democratic politics to work, the citizens must be able to communicate with one another, and must have access to the same forums of political debate. This was one of the bases of J. S. Mill's endorsement of linguistically defined frontiers, in *Considerations on Representative Government*; but Mill did not make it sufficiently clear that the rationale of linguistic homogeneity here has nothing to do with the usage of language (in the form of "mother tongue") to establish ethnic group membership, that is to say, nationality in the "objective" sense in which the sentiments of the people concerned do not count. The California Supreme Court has dealt a blow to this conception of the requirement of intercommunication by permitting the registration to vote of citizens lacking the ability to speak English, and it is quite likely that the requirement of competence in English for naturalization will come under attack in the courts in coming years. The basis for the California decision was

that there were (in the Los Angeles area, where the case was brought) a sufficient number of Spanish newspapers, magazines, and television channels to enable monoglot Spanish speakers to collect enough information to be in a position to cast an informed vote. The model underlying this decision is clearly that of the voter having fixed interests that he looks around for a means of satisfying through the political system. The idea that there is an overriding collective interest in the maintenance of a single political community among those formally entitled to take part in political affairs is lacking in such reasoning. One can hardly avoid asking oneself what is the expected longevity of a political system in which the norm of politics as a means for the pursuit of individual interests (rather than as a process in which the conception of one's interests is constantly open to modification through societal communication) has penetrated so deeply that one of the most respected courts acts on it.

The aspect of cultural nationalism that seems to me to create some problems within the individualist paradigm is the claim that the state should be used to preserve the culture of the nation as it has come down and transmit it to the next generation. There are two variants on this which, whatever their merits, do not run into conflict with the individualist principle as I define it. The first is the one that Rousseau advanced in the *Considerations on the Government of Poland. As* Judith Shklar has emphasized, "quite unlike the later nationalists Rousseau did not believe that the national self had any basis in nature."[54] But he regarded it as essential for a country like Poland to have a national identity distinct from all others, and insisted that the educational system should stress national peculiarities, even if they were quite devoid of intrinsic value.

Rousseau's advice has begun to be taken in recent years by the governments of some Third World countries, which

> have discovered that independence must be taken a stage further [than that of formal political independence] into the cultural fold and pressure must be placed on the radio and television companies (which are normally state-owned) and on the newspapers (which are state-influenced and sometimes state-owned) to indigenize their output, to play down the imported entertainment material and emphasize local news, local and regional culture, indigenous entertainment.[55]

This may be regarded as the obverse of the notion that cultural uniformity within the country makes for the kind of solidarity necessary for politics to work smoothly: the idea here is that difference from other countries also helps. It may be said that this other side is a good deal more sinister in that it seems inescapably bound up with the view that

states are to be defined as being in (actual or potential) conflict with others. The situation of Poland in the eighteenth century was perhaps desperate enough to warrant extraordinary measures to play up national peculiarities. The conflict with neighbors was only too apparently present. But it seems hard to justify the fomenting of national peculiarities for purely political reasons as anything but a response to a dire threat of national extinction. The point for our present purpose is, however, that there is no difficulty in seeing how, if the appropriate factual assumptions are supplied, cultural nationalism can be derived from individualistic rather than holistic premises, since it can be argued to be conducive to individual interests.

The other notion of cultural nationalism that is consistent with the individualist principle is that of cultural imperialism. If you believe that German culture is better than Slav or that European culture is better than that of the "natives" of India or Africa, in the sense that it is better *for people*, then you could deduce a "civilizing mission" for the bearers of the superior culture from individualist premises. This should perhaps count as another variant on the theory that it does not matter what the boundaries are so long as those within them are culturally heterogeneous: that it is a positively good thing for the culturally "more advanced" to dominate the more "backward races." Acton, indeed, believed this too, and much of the essay "Nationality" is devoted to that theme.[56] It is a common idea among Victorian liberals: we can also find it in Mill and Sidgwick, for example. Clearly, in order to make this go, from an individualist standpoint, one must have a conception of interest that detaches it from preference, since "natives" have usually had the poor taste to resist colonization. Most of us lack the certainties of the Victorians that we know what is best for alien peoples, though Americans seem to have continued to struggle with the White Man's Burden long after the European powers gave it up. Anyway, there is no need here to evaluate the theory of cultural imperialism. All we have to do is to note that, again with suitable adjuncts, it can be fitted into the individualist framework.

The version that does cause trouble is, ironically, one that is neither manipulative for ulterior political ends like Rousseau's nor arrogant like that of the cultural imperialists. This is the idea that each culturally distinct group has a legitimate interest in maintaining the integrity of that culture and passing it on intact to the next generation. Notice that this is different in a basic respect from either of the views just canvassed because it posits that people attach an intrinsic value to their own culture. On Rousseau's theory, it would be perfectly all right to assimilate to a different culture if this were politically necessary. Separate cultures are important only as the underpinnings of separate polities. And on the

cultural imperialist theory it would be positively desirable if the culture to which one was assimilating had a language capable of handling more complex discriminations and a richer literature. The view in question is, however, distinct from both of these. According to it, my culture is best for me and yours is best for you. Each of us should preserve and transmit our own culture and respect the culture of others.

Now, it is quite clear that much resistance to assimilation can be related to (whether "accounted for by" is another question) economic advantage. Cultural nationalism produces "jobs for the boys," because the criteria for becoming a schoolteacher or a civil servant change so that, instead of competing at a disadvantage in a second language, the members of the newly enfranchised language are at a comparative advantage. But it is impossible to explain the whole phenomenon in this way. Assimilation over a generation or so can be perfect, so that the disadvantage would be transitional: in Belgium, for example, part of the tension in linguistic politics arose from Dutch-speaking parents in the Brussels area choosing to send their children to schools in which French was the language of instruction so that they could obtain better jobs in a French-speaking environment. The Fleming concerns taken up collectively through political action were not for the well-being of individual Flemings, many of whom were happy to have their children assimilate to French, but for the maintenance of the Fleming identity and culture. Similarly, in Quebec, one may explain in terms of self-interest the explosion of pressure on firms to create promotion opportunities for French speakers in the 1960s and 1970s. However, the same self-interest would dictate discouragement of assimilation to French among the rest of the population, yet the current education policies are designed to produce assimilation. Thus, there is (I almost apologize for having to say it) a desire for a French-speaking province over and above the economic considerations.

The school of German nationalism stemming from Herder is the obvious place to look for the arguments. I have already cited Herder's notion of nations as natural growths, but his primary concern, as I understand it, was with the idea that "the individual can attain his highest self-development only in the life of the group as a whole."[57] Clearly, if it were true that Germans (say) were naturally (in the sense of biologically) suited to German language and German culture, it would be easy to see why it was important to stick to them. It may be that some people (perhaps including Herder) said things like this, though I suspect that we tend to read into them more differentiated ideas than they had, but anyway such an idea is too stupid to be worth attention. Even if we drop any such notion of the biological basis of particular cultures, we can of course agree that as a matter of biological necessity an individual, to

flourish, must grow up and live in *some* culture.⁵⁸ But that still leaves us with the question of why it is worth trying to protect one's own culture from being swamped by outside influences—as many people believe it is—and worth trying to ensure that subsequent generations grow up sharing its ideas, reading its literature, and so on.

One possible answer would be that in practice cultural mixing is almost always for the worse. Rousseau's attacks on "cosmopolitan" culture would obviously align him with this claim. In a contemporary version, it might be argued that what will tend to be picked up are the quickly gratifying, nondemanding, effort-saving, bland, and tasteless aspects of other cultures, at the expense of the more physically, intellectually, and morally strenuous features of the indigenous culture. This is the root of the widespread antipathy around the world to "Americanization." And the key to the invasive success of American culture is, perhaps, that it is itself the product of generations of assimilation and has thus selected out for exactly the features mentioned above: American food is notoriously lacking in sharp flavor or distinctive texture; American entertainment tends to require little cultural context to appreciate it; and even American language is designed to minimize the need for a grasp on grammar, so that its sentences are typically assembled out of preformed phrases.⁵⁹

I find this argument broadly persuasive, and thus sympathize strongly with the efforts of weaker countries to control the flow of communications across their borders—especially restricting the import of American television programs.⁶⁰ The standard American criticisms of this seem to me to miss the point that, because tastes are changed by exposure, individual "freedom to consume" cultural artifacts gives rise over time to a pervasive cultural drift within the society, which is a collective phenomenon and a legitimate subject of collective concern and regulation. Of course, to say that something is a legitimate matter for political intervention is not to underwrite any and every form of intervention, and most actual ones are open to criticism. But the point is simply that, on a broad conception of interest, individual interests are certainly at stake here.

The argument up to this point is that, whatever the existing culture is, it is probably better, not than alternative cultures, but than what would most likely result from the (inevitably partial) assimilation of this one to another. As Sir Arthur Evans said of the culture of the inhabitants of Knossos, the palace of which he had excavated, "A poor thing but Minoan."

Surely, however, this cannot be the whole story. Many people care a lot about the preservation and transmission of their culture as an end in itself. They see themselves as standing in a position of trust between

past and future generations. This notion of a culture as something continuous through time, with those currently alive as trustees, recalls to English-speaking readers Edmund Burke. But the idea is more fully developed by the German Romantic nationalists. We can find it in Herder, but it is much more fully expressed in Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, especially the eighth where he asks if the "man of noble mind" does not "wish to snatch from the jaws of death the spirit, the mind, and the moral sense" that he displayed in his own life? He invokes the German resistance to assimilation to Rome: "All those blessings which the Romans offered them meant slavery to them—they assumed as a matter of course that every man would rather die than become half a Roman, and that a true German could only live in order to be, and to remain, just a German and to bring up his children as Germans."[61] If we steer clear of the references to laws of nature and laws of divine development with which Fichte's text is strewn, we may ask whether we can make any sense of what is left from within the individualist framework.

Here again, everything has to be referred back to the crucial concept of interest. If my interest is identified with my happiness or pleasure (or any other state of myself), it must be the case that I can have no interest in what happens on earth after my death—assuming that death is the termination of consciousness. By the same token, those who are no longer alive can have no interest in what happens now. However, it seems perfectly natural to say that our interests are for states of the world rather than only for states of ourselves. If I want something to happen, I do not merely want the satisfaction of believing that it happens; and if it happens, I have got what I want even if I never have the satisfaction of hearing about it. If it is reasonable to include in interests having certain things happen (whether one knows about them or not) while one is alive, it seems strange to draw the line at one's death.[62] If interests can include states of the world after one is dead we have a possible way of justifying, on individualistic premises, a collective decision to try to pass on our own culture intact, even if we believe that it could be transformed without being damaged. (It may be questioned whether such a judgment could be made, since the criteria for damage have to come from somewhere and the obvious candidate is the existing culture, in which case all change will be bad automatically. However, I assume that it is possible to gain some degree of detachment from one's culture and to conclude that some changes impoverish it and others enrich it.)

Obviously, the move to bring cultural nationalism within the individualist fold depends on the actual desire on the part of past and present people to pass on their culture. If that desire exists (or existed), we can talk about an interest and thus get to the answer that cultural transmission satisfies individual interests. What we cannot do, however, is

say that people ought to have an interest in passing on their culture even if they do not in fact have any such interest. We could try to persuade them that their lives would take on greater significance if they were to care about the texture of their descendants' lives. But if they still do not care, we have, I take it, reached the outer bounds of individualistic political philosophy. If we want to say that they are *wrong* not to care, then we have to be prepared to say that cultures have a value of their own and that human beings are, as it were, their biological instruments. At a pinch, I could perhaps bring myself to believe this, but on the whole I am gratified to find how far one can get without having to resort to this kind of move.

What I have been saying in these last pages presupposes that it does make sense to talk about people having interests that survive them, and this is, in some people's view, an odd and paradoxical notion. Let me break it down, however, into two parts. The first is the assertion that people have interests in what happens after their deaths. For example, they may want their children to be well provided for rather than simply wanting the pleasure of believing now that their children will be well provided for. This seems to me fairly incontrovertible. If it were not true, large parts of human behavior would be simply unintelligible. The second assertion, which is what some people gag on,[63] is that when a person is dead he still has an interest in what happens. I think that Feinberg is right in supposing that, when one really thinks about it, it is actually quite hard to accept the first without accepting the second—or, to put it the other way round, the premises required to reject the second will jeopardize the first as well.

Both are required if we wish to say that the interests of past as well as present generations are involved in cultural transmission. But only the first is required if we confine ourselves to saying that the members of the present generation have an interest in what happens to their culture in the future, including the time after they are dead. Moreover, it may be argued that we can still bring in the previous generations indirectly. For we can say that the present generation has more chance of having its own current interests with respect to what happens in the future served by future generations if it itself makes a point of carrying out the wishes that previous generations had for the future while they were alive.[64]

However, I am bound to say that for me this proposal brings out the difficulty of accepting the first assertion without the second. Suppose that those now alive (the As) really care about what happens after they are dead and would like their descendants (the Ds) to regard the As' present concerns for the future as a basis for the Ds' actions then. Why in that case should the As not accept the past concerns for the present of earlier generations as a basis for the As' actions now?[65]

Thus, I do not myself see that the halfway house is a satisfactory resting-point. But I offer it in case it can be shown by some further argument to be internally consistent to accept the first assertion and deny the second.

I have in this chapter traversed a large area, and I shall not attempt to summarize. Let me conclude, then, with the observation that the individualist moral theory, in its general form, is capable of generating a wide variety of alternative conclusions about the rights and wrongs of nationalism in various forms. Ultimately, the disagreements turn on the conception of interest that one plugs into the basic doctrine and on the ways of life that one believes conduce to human interests so understood. Although my main intent here has been to explore the ways in which the argument can go, my not-so-hidden agenda has been to suggest that nationalism has been given a bum rap in recent political theory, and to try to show that the efforts of the Viennese liberals to conflate ethical individualism and antinationalism will not withstand scrutiny.

NOTES

1. John Plamenatz, *On Alien Rule and Self-Government* (London: Longman, 1960).

2. John Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).

3. K. R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).

4. Plamenatz, *On Alien Rule and Self-Government*, p. viii.

5. Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New York: Hafner, 1948), p. 3.

6. Ibid., p. 2.

7. See Henry Sidgwick, *The Elements of Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1891), pp. 621–22.

8. Robert E. Asher et al., *The United Nations and the Promotion of the General Welfare* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1957), pp. 1084, 1092. The term *nations* is already preempted as an equivalent to *states*.

9. Ibid., pp. 1112, 1123.

10. Alfred Cobban, *The Nation State and National Self-Determination* (London: Collins, Fontana Library, 1969, first pub. 1945), p. 106.

11. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960), p. 10.

12. Ibid., p. 97

13. Ibid., p. 125.

14. Robert A. Dahl and Edward R. Tufte, *Size and Democracy* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 129.

15. Ibid., "Epilogue," p. 141.

16. E.g. Robert A. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966); and *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971).

17. Lord Acton (John E. E. Dalberg-Acton), *The History of Freedom and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1909), pp. 270–300.

18. Ibid., pp. 289, 290.

19. Ibid., p. 298.

20. "The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party.... Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other.... A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any improper or wicked project, will be less likely to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it." Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist* (London: J. M. Dent [Everyman], 1911), pp. 46–47. See also Robert A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), esp. pp. 29–30.

21. "Mayor Bilandic showed us a new and surprising side of his personality last week—he is a keen student of world history.

"In an emotional lecture to a gathering of precinct captains, he demonstrated his scholarship by comparing criticism of his administration [much criticized for its inactivity in the face of a record snowfall] with the crucifixion of Christ, the Jewish Holocaust, the enslavement of American blacks, the frequent occupation of Poland, the oppression of Latin Americans and the revolution in Iran.... The fact is, history bears out what Bilandic has said. The parallels between history's most famous persecutions and the attacks on his leadership are amazingly appropriate....

"As for Poland, Bilandic was incredibly perceptive when he compared criticism of himself with the foreign oppression of Poland, which has been going on for more than 300 years.

"As most historians have pointed out, when Russia seized part of Poland in 1772, the Russian czar said: 'Now we will plow your alleys.'

"In 1914, when the Russians were driven out of Poland, Gen. Pilsudski proclaimed: 'Now we will plow our own alleys.'

"But in 1947, when the Russians took over again, they said: 'We have come here because you have not plowed your alleys. We will plow them. We will also clear the cross walks. Rock salt for everyone!'" Mike Royko, "Plowing into History," *Chicago Sun-Times* (February 18, 1979), p. 2. If Kedourie were correct, it would be impossible to explain why this is funny.

22. If there are, say, two or three states around the lake, and pollution of the lake is bad for all of them, they have a common interest in agreeing to control pollution, and there is a built-in sanction (assuming compliance can be mon-

itored) in that any state violating the agreement can expect the others to aban-
don it too. (For a sophisticated treatment, see Michael Taylor, *Anarchy and
Cooperation* [London: John Wiley & Sons, 1976], revised as *The Possibility of
Cooperation* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987].) The solution will
not work where the states are not symmetrically situated, as when several states
border a great international river such as the Rhine or the Danube. Here an
upstream state that pollutes cannot be threatened in kind by a downstream state.
However, if we are concerned only with efficiency, the well-known "Coase the-
orem" reminds us that the downstream state can always pay the upstream state
not to pollute the water. This is objectionable from the point of view of equity,
but the downstream state may instead be able to threaten to withhold some ben-
efit from the upstream state in some other matter unless it refrains from pollut-
ing the river. In any case, the question is whether considerations such as these,
even where they have a certain substance, should determine the boundaries of a
state.

23. Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Duckworth,
1971), p. 180.

24. Quoted by Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (New York:
Macmillan, 1933), pp. 249–50.

25. For nineteenth-century Europe, see Eugene Kamenka (ed.), *National-
ism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), pp. 13–14. For the post–Second
World War phenomenon of ethnic transformation, especially in sub-Saharan
Africa, see Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison, Wis.:
University of Wisconsin Press, 1976).

26. Cf. Kedourie, *Nationalism*, pp. 71–72: "a nation's language was pecu-
liar to that nation only because such a nation constituted a racial stock distinct
from other nations." (Kedourie rather characteristically equates the "racial"
theory with Nazism.)

27. Acton, *History of Freedom*, p. 292.

28. R. R. Ergang, *Herder and German Nationalism* (New York: Columbia
University Press, 1931), pp. 243, 244–45.

29. Gordon J. Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought* (New York:
Basic Books, 1975), p. 76.

30. See David Gauthier, "The Social Contract as Ideology," *Philosophy &
Public Affairs*, 6 (1977): 130–64. Although contractarian thinking is only one
form of individualism, much of Gauthier's analysis applies to individualism in
general rather than the contractarian variant in particular.

31. Schochet, *Patriarchalism*, p. 87.

32. Ernest Renan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" in Louis L. Snyder, *The
Dynamics of Nationalism* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1964), pp. 9–10.

33. Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1946),
p. 583n16.

34. For Furnivall, see Leo Kuper and M. G. Smith (eds.), *Pluralism in
Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); and M. G. Smith, *The
Plural Society in the British West Indies* (Berkeley: University of California
Press, 1974).

35. Robyn Dawes, "Experimental Analysis of Commitment to Group Ben-

efit in a Commons Dilemma Situation" (Paper presented to the American Political Science Association meetings, Sept. 1976, at Chicago). See also Anatol Rapoport, "Prisoner's Dilemma: Recollections and Observations," in *Game Theory as a Theory of Conflict Resolution*, ed. Anatol Rapoport (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1974), pp. 17–34, esp. pp. 22–23.

36. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 176.

37. Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of our Changing Social Order* (London: John Wiley & Sons, 1964), p. 22.

38. Popper, *Open Society*, vol. 1, p. 288n7.

39. Orlando Patterson, *Ethnic Chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse* (New York: Stein and Day, 1977), p. 80.

40. Ibid., p. 75.

41. Peter Gourevitch, review of Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization Of Rural France, 1870–1914*, *American Political Science Review* 72 (1978): 1140.

42. See Kohn, *Idea of Nationalism*, pp. 467–74, for the United Irishmen.

43. Patterson, *Ethnic Chauvinism*, p. 82.

44. Cobban, *Nation State*, p. 35.

45. Patterson, *Ethnic Chauvinism*, pp. 83–84.

46. See, for a sensitive discussion of what is really entailed in "nation-building" (as distinct from state-building), W. T. Bluhm, *Building an Austrian Nation: The Political Integration of a Western State* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973).

47. Carlton J. H. Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1950), p. 128.

48. Sidgwick, *Elements of Politics*, p. 217.

49. Ibid., p. 218.

50. Ibid., pp. 218–19.

51. Ibid., p. 219.

52. Anne Cohler, *Rousseau and Nationalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

53. Kohn, *Idea of Nationalism*, p. 5.

54. Judith N. Shklar, *Men and Citizens* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 161.

55. Anthony Smith, *The Geopolitics of Information: How Western Culture Dominates the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 38.

56. As well as the cultural imperialist strand, one also has to take account of the Roman Catholic strand in Acton's thought. This comes out more clearly in another essay, where he wrote: "Thus the theory of nationality, unknown to Catholic ages, is inconsistent both with political reason and with Christianity, which requires the dominion of race over race, and whose path was made straight by two universal empires. The missionary may outstrip, in his devoted zeal, the progress of trade or of arms; but the seed that he plants will not take root, unprotected by these ideas of right and duty which first came into the world with the tribes who destroyed the civilization of antiquity, and whose descendants are in our day carrying those ideas to every quarter of the world." Acton, *History of Freedom*, p. 247.

57. Ergang, *Herder*, p. 248.

58. See Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 285–305. "A culture is a way of awakening our faculties. Any culture does this to some extent. People proficient in one culture can usually make sense of another. There is no prison. We can always walk on if we want to enough. What we cannot do is something which is no loss—namely be nobody and nowhere. I do not mean that some people may not be very unlucky in their culture, either because it is generally bad, or because it suits them badly. But this is still nothing to the misfortune of having no culture at all" (p. 291).

59. See Tibor Scitovsky, *The Joyless Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

60. "The free flow of one section of the globe merely swamps the culture of others." Smith, *Geopolitics of Information*, p. 37.

61. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, trans. R. F. Jones and G. H. Turnbull (Chicago: Open Court, 1922), pp. 132, 144.

62. See Joel Feinberg, "Harm and Self-Interest" in *Law, Morality, and Society: Essays in Honour of H. L. A. Hart*, ed. P. M. S. Hacker and J. Raz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 285–308; repr. in Joel Feinberg, *Rights, Justice and the Bounds of Liberty: Essays in Social Philosophy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 45–68.

63. See e.g. Ernest Partridge, "Posthumous Interests and Posthumous Respect," *Ethics*, 91 (1981): 243–64.

64. This is Partridge's own answer.

65. An illustration of this point is provided by the case of Roger Lapham, a keen golfer who wanted to be cremated and have his ashes buried on his favorite golf course—Cypress Point, on the Monterey Peninsula. "He died in 1966, at the age of eighty-three, and Lewis, on receiving the news of his father's death, hurried out to the family home in San Francisco. Shortly after his arrival, he was informed by his brother that there had been a hitch in the plans: their mother had stated forcefully that she would not permit her husband's body to be cremated or to be buried at Cypress Point. 'Under California law at that time, a person did not control the disposition of his remains,' Lewis Lapham has recalled. 'His executors could disregard his stipulations if they wished to. When I got together with my mother, I suggested that we have a shot of sherry—that seemed a good idea. Then we began discussing things, and I said to her, "I don't think your position is reasonable. For example, I'm your heir and executor. What would you think if I were to disregard the instructions set down in your will?" "You wouldn't dare," she said. "But consider this," I went on. "That is exactly what you are going to do with someone you lived with for fifty-nine years." I suggested we have another sherry. The upshot was that my mother came round, and my father was cremated and buried on that little ridge overlooking Cypress Point, in sight of the tide rolling in on a small beach.'" Herbert Warren Wind, "The Sporting Scene: From Linksland to Augusta," *The New Yorker*, 22 June 1981, pp. 96–111, at 104.

This *could* be interpreted in "intergenerational social contract" terms, so that the widow complied with her late husband's wishes *in order to* get the son

to comply with hers. But surely the way the story runs makes it clear that the crucial move is an argument from equity: that if you really care about what happens after your own death there is no valid reason for refusing to pay the same attention to the wishes that others had for what would happen after their deaths. And this is exactly the point advanced in the text.

CHAPTER 14

The First Person Plural

Roger Scruton

Political order, I maintain, depends upon the existence of a community that identifies itself as "we." Since there is no "we" without a "they," the possibility of enmity and fragmentation is contained in the very foundation of political existence. However, this does not imply that all communities are equally threatening to their neighbors, or that there is no way of achieving by negotiation and compromise the stable frontiers and sense of belonging that former societies had reached, as a rule, through war.

A survey of recent literature on nations and nationalism—and in particular literature produced by those, whether leftish or liberal, who have cast aspersions on the national idea—suggests the following broad consensus:

1. Nations are comparatively recent phenomena, emerging perhaps with the Enlightenment, or as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, or (more plausibly) through the dissemination of the written word by what Benedict Anderson calls "print capitalism."[1]

2. Nations are not the "natural" communities implied in the various doctrines and theories of nationalism, but as much the creatures as the creators of the states that are conjoined to them. Sometimes a "nation" is created by a colonial administration, with its arbitrary division of the spoils of imperial trade; sometimes it is created by a language, or a religion; but the common language and the common religion may themselves be the result of administrative convenience, just like the nation that is supposedly enshrined in them. In Gellner's words (quoted with approval by Eric Hobsbawm): "Nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny, are a myth; nationalism, which some-

times takes preexisting cultures and turns them into nations, some-
times invents them, and often obliterates preexisting cultures: *that* is
a reality."[2]

3. Nationalism is therefore the *ideology* of the modern state: the set of
   doctrines and beliefs that sanctify this peculiar local arrangement,
   and legitimize the new forms of government and administration that
   have emerged in the modern world. Ernest Gellner even goes so far
   as to describe nationalism as a philosophy of the book: the instru-
   ment by which the new bureaucrats sought to legitimize their rule in
   post-Enlightenment Europe, by affirming an identity between the
   people and the literate intellectuals who are alone competent to gov-
   ern them. Nationalism, which attempts to form a sacred history
   from the fact of language itself, privileges writing over the spoken
   tongue, and official idiom over local dialect—since it is in the offi-
   cial idiom that the nation as a whole can live. There is no better ide-
   ology for persuading the common man that he owes his loyalty to
   educated and anonymous pen-pushers in the distant cities, rather
   than to the local aristocrat whose power has been forever dissipated
   by the industrial process.

4. Nations are "imagined communities," in Benedict Anderson's mem-
   orable phrase.[3] That is, they are communities that arise partly from
   a representation of themselves, and that include members who never
   meet, and have nothing in common besides their membership, and
   the shared destiny implied in it.

I say that those views express a broad consensus among skeptics;
but it is not only liberal and left-leaning writers who have defended
them. The theory that the nation is a creation of the modern state, and
not vice versa, was first articulated, to my knowledge, by Lord Acton;[4]
the theory of the nation as a modern invention, and of nationalism as a
functional ideology designed to legitimize postimperial power, has been
advocated by Elie Kedourie and Kenneth Minogue,[5] both conservative
thinkers. And I have defended a view of the nation as a community
founded on its own self-conception—though without the benefit of
Benedict Anderson's beautifully described examples.[6] So maybe a
received idea of nationhood is beginning to emerge among people of all
political persuasions. According to this idea, the nation is a peculiarly
modern form of community, and one whose emergence is inseparable
from the culture of the written word. Of course, the "modern" world is
an amorphous idea, and many of the features that are ascribed to
nationality can be found, embryonically at least, in the literature of
Greece and Rome. (*The Battle of Maldon* also springs to mind: What is

that, if not *national* literature?) But it is surely indisputable that when we *now* discuss the nation, and the ideas through which it is described, condemned, and defended, we refer to an arrangement that is inconceivable without the process of modern history.

Much of the recent literature has involved implied criticisms, not only of nationalism as an ideology, but also of the national idea through which the imagined community is formed, of the nation that results from it, and of the nation-state as a form of political order. We ought therefore to ask what the nation *does* for its members: what emotional, moral, social, and political benefits it supposedly confers on them, whether they need those benefits, and whether they might be supplied from another source. And if—as its critics suggest—the nation is the source of so much violence, hatred, and suspicion, we ought to enquire whether it might nevertheless exist without that violence, hatred, and suspicion, or whether they might be gradually moderated and subjected to some legal or administrative cure.

None of those issues can be explored, I believe, if we do not understand the topic to which I address myself: the "we" of membership. I have called this the first person plural, in order to emphasize its close connection to those forms of association—language, kinship, religion, and the occupation of land—through which people become conscious of the distinction between "us" and "them." When it is argued that nations are artificial communities, it should be remembered that there are two kinds of social artifact: those that are the objects of a decision—as when people join together in a partnership—and those that arise "by an invisible hand," and as the result of decisions that in no way intend them. And I suspect that, when people balk at the suggestion that the nation is *as such* an artificial community, it is because they recognize that at least some nations arise spontaneously, as England did, and that only *some* nations are the direct result of an intention to produce them. Perhaps postcolonial and postimperial nations are produced by fiat—although that would be hotly disputed, I imagine, by just about every inhabitant of the former Soviet empire. And even when there *is* a conscious decision, the nation that emerges will seldom be the entity intended, but will be shaped by the very same invisible hand that has obeyed the "cunning of reason" from time immemorial. This is obviously true of the world's greatest artificial nation: the United States of America, which is by no means the entity intended by the Founding Fathers. Interestingly, it is America, among the nations of the modern world, that has the most vivid personality, and the greatest ability to inspire love and hatred among those who encounter it. But is it the American *state* or the American *nation* that is the true object of this love and hatred, and the true bearer of personality?

The example illustrates what is principally in the mind of those who believe that nations are artifacts: namely that they result from political organization; and this political organization is distinctly modern in character, involving impersonal and secular forms of administration that do not require of their subjects anything more than their registration in the book of citizens. *What* results from the relevant political decisions may of course be quite other than the decisions intend; and the rich admixture of history and community that occurs when people are stirred together in the crucible of a modern state is surely nothing that even *could* have been intended by those whose actions were the first cause of its existence.

So understood, a nation could be contrasted with two other forms of continuity: the tribe or kinship group, and what Spengler calls the "creed-community."[7] The first is often described as "natural," meaning that it arises spontaneously, and is never the result of a decision—certainly not of a political decision. Members of a tribe are joined by marriage and kinship, and the first person plural is coextensive with the sense of kin. It might be suggested that tribes are distinguished from nations not only by the closeness of the ties between their members, but also by the fact that the members are personally known to one another. But this would be too simple, for two reasons. First, tribes can grow and take on a quasi-political structure, as their members move to foreign parts or lose touch with the ancestral community. (Consider the exemplary history of the Jews.) Secondly, the majority of members of the tribe are either dead or unborn, and yet *just as much members* as those who happen to be temporarily living. This is precisely what relations of kinship mean: that you and I are descended from a common source, and owe our membership to the fact that our common ancestor is also still a member. All tribal ceremonies in which membership is at stake—marriages, funerals, births, initiations—are also attended by the dead, who in turn are the guardians of those unborn. And the consolation of membership resides precisely in this union with absent generations, through which the fear of death is allayed and the individual granted the supreme endorsement of existing as a limb of the eternal organism.

The creed-community grows naturally from the tribe, just as religion grows naturally from tribal conceptions of membership. Through ceremonies of membership, in which the dead bear witness to our need of them, the gods enter the world. Every invocation of the dead is a transition to the supernatural; and whatever it is that people worship is located in the supernatural sphere: which is not to say that it is "outside" nature, or in any way inaccessible. On the contrary, the gods of the tribesman are as real and near to him as the spirits of his ancestors, and may be carried around in tangible form. But that too is a sign of

their supernatural character; for only what is supernatural can be *identical* with its own representation, as the god is identical with the idol, which exists in a hundred replicas. (This should be borne in mind by those who notice the close relation between the nation and the symbols [flag, anthem, sacred texts] that represent it.)

The creed-community is, however, distinct from the tribe. For here the criterion of membership has ceased to be kinship, and become worship and obedience. Now there is a new, and in a sense artificial, test of membership. Those who worship my gods, and accept the same divine prescriptions, are joined to me by this, even though we are strangers. Moreover, creed-communities extend their claims beyond the living, just as tribal societies do. The dead have acquired the privileges of the worshiper through our prayers. But the dead are present in these new ceremonies on very different terms: they no longer have the authority of the tribal ancestors; rather they are subjects of the same divine overlord, undergoing their reward or punishment in conditions of greater proximity to the ruling power. They throng together in the great unknown, just as we will, released from every earthly tie and united by faith.

Creed-communities can expand beyond the kinship relation most easily when they enjoy a sacred text, in which the truths about the deity and his demands on us are set down for all time. The existence of such a text sanctifies the language in which it is written: the language is lifted out of time and change, and becomes immemorial, like the voice of God. Hence true creed-communities resist not only changes to the ceremonies (which define the experience of membership), but also changes to the sacred text and to the language used in recording it. By this means Hebrew, Arabic, Latin, and the English of King James I have been lifted out of history and immortalized. Membership of the creed-community may often require an apprenticeship in the sacred language: certainly no priest can be allowed to ignore it. But the creed-community inevitably grants privileges to the *native* speakers of that language, and endows them with a weapon that permits them to rule the world (or at least the only bit of the world that matters—the world of the faithful).

The initial harmony between tribal and credal criteria of membership gives way to conflict, as the rival forces of family love and religious friendship exert themselves over small communities. This conflict is the motor of Islamic history, and can be witnessed all over the Middle East, where local creed-communities have grown out of the monotheistic religions in accordance with a tribal experience of membership. There is at least one such community—the Druze—in which a credal idea of membership has come to depend on a tribal criterion. Each child of a Druze is held to be a member of the sect solely by virtue of his birth, and each new member of the sect is believed to inherit the soul of a Druze that

died. The community can neither grow nor dwindle, but is an eternal communion of the unborn and the dead, each member of which is simultaneously in both conditions, while also being alive!

Rather than divert ourselves with the infinite variations on the two paradigms of tribal and credal membership, let us turn to the modern world, in which these prepolitical forms of social order enter into relation with the requirements of government. For a long time Europe existed as a kind of creed-community—but one in which sovereignty had crystallized in the hands of individual families, whose claims were either endorsed by the pope or asserted against him. But Christianity was a creed-community with a difference. From its beginning in the Roman Empire it internalized some of the ideas of imperial government; in particular, it adopted and immortalized the greatest of all Roman achievements, which was the universal system of law as a means for the resolution of conflicts and for the administration of distant provinces. Although Islam also has its law, it is explicitly a holy law, laying down the path to salvation. Moreover, it derives its authority exclusively from the past, either from the word of God as recorded in the Koran or from the exemplary acts of the prophet, as related in the Sunna. Jurisprudence is limited to the art of tracing a decision back to those authoritative sources, or to some hadith of the prophet that will fill the lacuna. The Roman law by contrast was secular, and unconcerned with the individual's religious well-being. It was an instrument for governing people regardless of their credal differences; and its decisions were not validated by tracing them to some sacred source, but by autonomous principles of judicial reasoning based on an explicit statement of the law. The law itself could change in obedience to changing circumstances; and its validity derived purely from the fact that it was commanded by the sovereign power, and enforced against every subject.

That conception of law, which we tend to associate with the Enlightenment only because it was then reasserted without the encrustation of religious doctrine that had in the interim grown around it, is perhaps the most important force in the emergence of the European forms of sovereignty. It ensured the development of law as an entity independent of the sovereign's command, and the maintenance of a universal jurisdiction through the courts of canon law. At the same time, each sovereign, through his own courts, was able to qualify and narrow the universal law, so that it slowly adapted itself to his territorial claims. Thus there arose the idea of kingdoms, not as local power centers but as territorial jurisdictions, whose monarchs were constrained by the law and appointed by it, as well as empowered to change it in their favor. Often the law was, as in England, the creation of judges: and the common law principles (including those of equity) have ensured that, wher-

ever the English law has prevailed, it is law and not the executive power that has the last word in any conflict between them.

These facts were incorporated into the European idea of a sovereign state, in which territorial jurisdiction has had at least as much importance as language and religion in shaping people's attachments. With the breakdown of the credal community in Europe, three distinct conceptions of membership exerted their forces over the popular imagination, in order to generate the new first person plural. First religion, and in particular those fine differences of doctrine and practice that distinguished Catholic from Protestant, and sect from sect. (Note that fine differences are always more important in determining membership than large differences, precisely because they permit comparisons. The man whose religion differs from mine by a tiny article, or a barely perceivable gesture, is not a believer in other gods, but a blasphemer against my gods. Unlike the man with other deities, he is automatically an object of hostility; he is the enemy within.) Secondly, language, and in particular the languages that had attained sanctity, through some authoritative translation of the sacred texts (for instance English and German), and that had been dispersed among strangers by the art of printing. Thirdly, the gravitational force of territorial jurisdictions, under which contracts could be enforced, disputes settled, marriages and institutions legalized, with uniform effect over a continuous territory.

This third form of membership is often forgotten. But it should be borne in mind by anyone who wishes to understand the foundation of the modern British nation, from the successive incorporation of jurisdictions (and also rival legal systems) under a single crown. The union with Scotland took effect by a legal process whose effects could not be avoided, once James VI of Scotland had ascended the English throne. Even if other differences—kinship and religion—remained; and even if the idiolect of Scotland was a spur to separatist intentions: the British nation (which at first called itself an "empire") was an inevitable result of the juridical process. It would be wrong to call this process political, since the new state resulted from it and did not produce it. Moreover, the autonomy of our jurisdictions gives them their own motivating power.

But there is a very different conception of membership associated with the territorial jurisdiction. The law treats the individual as a bearer of rights and duties; it recasts his relations with his neighbor in abstract terms; it shows a preference for contract over status, and for definable interests over inarticulate bonds. In short, it is a great *reformer* of membership, tending always in a contractual direction. It loosens our ties, precisely by making them judiciable and therefore articulate. This is why the law has so little effect in private life outside Europe—and less effect

in Europe the further south one goes. Disputes among Arab tribes are frequently settled privately, by individual acts of revenge; contracts are not really contracts, but solemn vows of friendship, whose breach is punished by war. Rarely is a judge's decision accepted as final, unless the parties are largely indifferent to the outcome.

Nevertheless, we must not think of jurisdiction as merely a conventional arrangement: a kind of ongoing and severable agreement, of the kind that appealed to the Social Contract thinkers of the Enlightenment. It involves a genuine "we" of membership: not as visceral as that of kinship; not as uplifting as that of worship; and not as inescapable as that of language and kinship; but a "we" all the same. For a jurisdiction gains its validity either from an immemorial past, or from a fictitious contract between people who already *belong together*. In the English case, our law comes with the authority of long usage; our ancestors speak as clearly through it as they speak through the King James Bible; and it owes its authority to the fact that those subject to it are, by that very fact, incorporated into a community beyond the living, in which the dead and the unborn are also represented.

In the American case, in which a decision was made to adopt a constitution and make a jurisdiction *ab initio*, it is nevertheless true that a first person plural was involved in the very making. This is confessed to in the document itself. "We, the people . . ." Which people? Why, *us*; we who *already belong*, whose historic tie is now to be transcribed into law. Indeed, if we think about the various liberal theories of the state, which have tried to imagine a society composed entirely of freely consenting individuals, bound solely by the contract between them, we find that we can make sense of the idea only on the assumption of some such precontractual "we." For who is to be included in the contract? And why? And what do we do with the one who opts out? The obvious answer is that the founders of the new social order already belong together: they have already "imagined" themselves as a community. They have already begun that long process of self-representation that enables them to determine who should participate in the future, and who should not. Furthermore, the social contract makes sense only if future generations are already included in it. Our purpose is to establish a society: and at once there arises that web of noncontractual obligations—the web of piety—that links parents to children and children to parents, and that ensures willy-nilly that within a generation our society will be encumbered by nonvoting members, dead and unborn, who will rely on something other than a mere contract between the living if their rights are to be respected and their love deserved. Even when there arises, as in America, an idea of "elective nationality," so that newcomers may choose to belong, *what* is chosen is precisely not a contract but

a bond of membership, whose obligations and privileges transcend anything that could be contained in a defeasible agreement. (Compare Hegel's view of marriage: it begins in contract, but a contract to surpass the realm of contract.)

Now there cannot be a society, I contend, without this nonpolitical experience of membership. For it is this that enables me to regard the interests and needs of strangers as *my* concern; that enables me to recognize the authority of decisions and laws that I must obey, even though they are not directly in my interest; that gives me a criterion to distinguish those who are entitled to the benefit of the sacrifices that my membership calls from me, from those who are interloping. Take away the experience of membership and it is every man for himself, moreover, the dead will be disenfranchised, and the unborn, of whom the dead are the metaphysical guardians, will be deprived of their inheritance. The mere "contract between the living" is a contract to squander the earth's resources for the benefit of its temporary residents. A society founded on such a principle will last for a generation at most, and its destruction will be a moral good.

Such a first person plural is of course what the various national ideas have tried to recapture, in circumstances where bonds of kinship have faded and the creed-community has been usurped by sovereign powers, whether indigenous or imperial. And before evaluating the project, it is important to distinguish two kinds of nation: those that have grown under the aegis of European jurisdictions, and those that have been thrown up by the collapse of empires. England, which gradually became Britain, is an example of the first; Nigeria an example of the second. Between these two are many intermediate cases: the Czech nation, for instance. Moreover, among those whose identity has been formed by the breakup of empires, we should distinguish a variety of cases: those that had no pre-imperial identity, other than the identities of the tribes or creed-communities that inhabited the region; those that had a pre-imperial history as nations, and perhaps even as nation-states (such as Poland); and those that gradually acquired some elements of nationhood, as a result of a decentralizing process based on linguistic, religious, or ethnic premises. Finally we should distinguish among empires, between those based purely on coercion, like the Mogul and Soviet Empires, and those in which the rule of law is the norm, such as the Hapsburg and British Empires in their final years. All those distinctions are important, since they remind us that the phenomenon that we know as the nation may not be a single phenomenon; and that the various attempts by the peoples of the modern world to realize their instinctive sense of membership in a political structure may not be attempts in a single direction.

When considering a nation like my own, I am struck immediately by a remarkable fact. Although England grew as part of the creed-community of Christendom, it has never (pilgrimages notwithstanding) experienced itself as united with that community in a true first person plural. Always the rest of Christendom has been to some extent "other." This has something to do with the nature of the British Isles (even though England is only a part of them), something to do with the habit of seafaring, something to do with the weather (as Montesquieu argued), and a lot to do with the nature of English common law. Long before the Reformation our Church defined itself as *English*; it was never wholly under the yoke of Rome; nor did the transition to Anglicanism seem unnatural to a great many of the people—horrible though it was for those priests and religious who remained loyal to their vows. In effect the religious obedience of the English people became a by-product of the national community. And this process occurred very early: it was in motion before the development of printing; it accelerated at the Reformation, and created in the pastoral England of the early eighteenth century a remarkable society in which religious affiliation followed national (and sometimes local) loyalties, rather than vice versa.

The most important forces in this process were law and territory. Island territories have boundaries defined by nature; they force upon us, through the dangerous adventure on the seas, the vivid distinction between home and abroad. Our weather and climate, and the patterns of agriculture that are required by them, produced a unique landscape that reinforced this feeling. And the experience of a settled jurisdiction, defined by territory, encouraged Englishmen to define their rights and liberties from the very beginning. The result was an experience of safety, quite different from that of the tribe, but connected with the sense that we belong in this *place*, and that our ancestors and children belong here too. Evidently the common language reinforced the feeling: but to suppose that we could have enjoyed these territorial, legal, and linguistic hereditaments, and yet refrained from becoming a nation, representing itself to itself as entitled to these things, and defining even its religion in terms of them, is to give way to fantasy. In no way can the emergence of the English nation, as a form of membership, be regarded as a product of Enlightenment universalism, or the Industrial Revolution, or the administrative needs of a modern bureaucracy. It existed before those things, and also shaped them into powerful instruments of its own.

The case may be different with the nations that are formed in *defiance* of imperial powers. But we should remember that, however flimsy the narratives that form their titles to legitimacy, they invariably summon up old and ancestral things. Even when the reference to these things is a myth, or an "invented tradition" of the kind that historians have

made familiar, it serves the purpose of affirming membership. The nation is not, even in these cases, conceived as an accidental and defeasible contract between strangers; it is a hereditary entitlement, a burden of duty, and a call to sacrifice. Unlike a contract, the bond of membership is disinterested: I am *given* to it, and it to me, by the very fact of my existence. My debt to the nation is a debt of gratitude and piety—and the fact that this point has never been better expressed than by a Roman poet should remind us that, however transient this or that form of nationhood might be, the need to which it ministers is a human universal. Benedict Anderson puts the point well: "If historians, diplomats, politicians, and social scientists are quite at ease with the idea of 'national interest,' for most ordinary people of whatever class the whole point of the nation is that it is interestless. Just for that reason, it can ask for sacrifices."[8]

When we consider the nations of Central Europe, we should bear two things in mind: first, that there really are nonpolitical relations that cause them to divide—distinctions of language, of religion, of custom, and of race (where "race" denotes a *perception*—an "intentional" rather than a "natural" kind); secondly, that they have not enjoyed, for the last fifty years, what they once enjoyed under the Hapsburg Empire, namely a territorial jurisdiction based on law, which enabled conflicts to be settled without violence. The reestablishment of a territorial jurisdiction, without which there cannot be a state in the modern sense, requires, if I am right, the simultaneous or prior affirmation of a first person plural. Without the bond of membership, obligations to strangers will not be honored, and the law will be regarded as alien. But a territorial jurisdiction requires territory, and the title to that territory cannot be based on the law that has yet to be invented. It must therefore be based on whatever narratives of membership can carry conviction: and that *is* the process whereby nations, in these circumstances, are formed.

I do not regard the United States as an exception to the view that nonpolitical experiences of membership are necessary for the flourishing of a modern state. What is remarkable about the United States, however, is its ability to welcome new members, an ability that itself derives from the narrative whereby "we the people" once laid claim to the land. This land is ours because we came here in flight from our tormenters. Let us not despise those who come here in their turn.

Even though Abraham Lincoln declared the American "nation" to be distinct from others, in being founded on a "covenant," he did not mean to discard the national idea, but on the contrary to endorse it. Modern presidents and politicians make free use of this idea, and almost all children are inducted into citizenship by means of it. The most rebellious of leftist journals in the United States calls itself *The Nation*, in

order to emphasize that the country has a *national* and not just a polit-
ical interest, and that the left is its true custodian.

America is first of all a territory, possessed through a "union" of
states. It has a common language, common habits of association, com-
mon customs, and a common Judaeo-Christian culture. It is intensely
patriotic, and—in its healthy part—determined to defend its interests
against the world. As Tocqueville observed, the process of association is
hyperactive in the United States, proliferating its "little platoons" that
add their fund of local loyalties to the larger loyalty upon which the
political order depends. (Think of the American football matches, with
their quasi-Pindaric sense that the community and its gods are here
immortalized.) There is also a strong religious dimension to the Ameri-
can idea. A strange hybrid monotheism has grown from the thousand
churches of America—Christian in form, Hebrew in content—and each
new generation is absorbed into it by the process of national loyalty.
And this loyalty has its own historical myths, its own "dreams," its own
sense of mission, its own powerful self-image, in which the American
land is the last refuge of the dispossessed, and also the birthplace of a
new and unfettered enterprise.'

I do not say that the national loyalty is shared by *all* Americans. But
whoever travels away from the universities (centers of disaffection in
any state) will discover a process of nation-building that is second to
none in the modern world. And those who stand outside the national
loyalty—who attack their country's traditions and ridicule its culture;
who scoff at its simplicity, despise its leaders, and reject its God; who,
in short, repudiate the bond of membership—who are they, in general,
if not the new clerks, who seek to write the history of nations yet again,
so as to justify their own ascendancy within it?

And this brings me to an interesting point. Although, if I am right,
the experience of membership has survived into the modern world,
and the nation, in its various forms, is the best that we have as an
expression of it, we should distinguish two forms of the first person
plural: the "we" of affirmation, and the "we" of denial. No society
can survive, I contend, or ought to survive, if it cannot generate the
"we" of affirmation: the assertion of itself as entitled to its land and
institutions, inheriting them from its ancestors and passing them on.
This affirmative "we" does not express a contract among living mem-
bers, but precisely the refusal to be limited by contract. It involves an
invocation of ancestors and progeny, as implicated in our present acts.
It is the principal way in which the community represents (or "imag-
ines") itself as enduring through time: by deriving its rights and duties
from circumstances that were never chosen, and from bonds that are
irrevocable since absent generations, who cannot consent to their rene-

gotiation, are nevertheless as much bound by them as we.

But there is a "we" of denial, which grows as the bond of membership weakens. Perhaps we do not have a right to this territory; perhaps our ancestors gained possession of it by unjust and cruel acts; perhaps there is nothing of value in the institutions that they have passed to us; perhaps law, religion, and morality as we know them are merely the masks of usurping power. Thus there grows a new kind of narrative of the nation: a "narrative in deconstruction," in which the whole story is told again as a story of crime. This is indeed what you see in such historians as Robert Hughes, whose *The Fatal Shore* was calculated to rob the Australians of the last vestige of pride in their inheritance; or in countless works of school history in Britain, which write only of the Empire, and the regime of racism and slavery on which it was supposedly founded. Frequently these counternarratives are offered (for example by Emmanuel Wallerstein and André Gunder Frank) as reprimands: and often the conclusion is drawn that we should now allocate part of our resources, or maybe the whole of them, to bettering the situation of those peoples in the Third World who, but for our exploitation, would today be heirs to that which we stole from them.

I do not wish to adjudicate between the affirmers and the deniers; but I should like to point out that the "we" of denial, so important in shaping the politics of our most modern nation-states, is also a "we" of membership—asserting relations of obligation and responsibility between the living and the dead; asking us to bear the burden of our ancestors' misdeeds, and to recognize moral bonds for which we never contracted, toward victims who were no victims of ours. The very same urge, to find our identity by immersing ourselves in a historic community stretching across all the generations, and bound by territory, language, and jurisdiction into a corporate whole, manifests itself just as much in those who scoff at the nation as it does in those who willingly accept its transcendental demands.

Nor is this surprising. For we are social beings, who can exist and behave as autonomous agents only because we are supported in our ventures by that feeling of primal safety that the bond of society brings. We can envisage no project and no satisfaction on which the eyes of others do not shine. We are joined to those others, and even when they are strangers to us, they are also part of us. It is the indispensable need for membership that brings the national idea to our minds; and there is no rational argument that will expel it, once it is there. Without it, we are homeless; and even if our attitude to home is one of sour disaffection, home is no less necessary to our sense of who we are.

But what must we do to avert the bellicose threats that grow alongside those idylls of love and gusts of *ressentiment*? If there is no "we"

without a "they," how can we avoid the rivalry that will lead to war? I will conclude with a suggestion.

Those critics of the nation who have seen in it the root of xenophobia and racism, have often disparaged the imperial powers of Europe for their indecent contempt toward the "natives" of their territories. A picture has developed—by no means wholly wrong—of European despots, smugly convinced of their ancestral right of sovereignty, cruelly trampling on people whom they regarded as their genetic inferiors. But these very same critics are frequently enthusiastic supporters of the "national liberation struggles," whereby colonial peoples attempt to affirm themselves as nations, and to achieve independence in precisely that guise. Of course, the new nations are not the same kind of thing as the old ones, as I have argued. But they answer to the same need: the need for a bond of membership that will conform to the geographical and administrative realities, that will permit the dead and the unborn to stand beside us, and that will define our territory as home.

Now you can't have it both ways. If nationhood is a boon to the people of New Guinea and Peru, it must also be a boon to those who formerly oppressed them. The only question, therefore, is how nations can live side by side with enough local loyalty and territorial privilege to define themselves, and yet with the procedures and customs that encourage them to settle their disputes through negotiation and not through war. One solution is this: the growth of a single jurisdiction, incorporating the local jurisdictions, while conceding their administrative autonomy, and upholding a strict rule of law, enforced against all wrongdoers. Such a rule of law is unlikely, perhaps even inconceivable, without a metropolitan power, which will ensure that jurisdiction will not fragment along ethnic or religious boundaries. In other words, it will tend toward empire, in one of its forms: the form that the Romans and the British imagined themselves to be administering, and that the Hapsburg dual monarchy administered in Central Europe. Those who, growing from such empires, express themselves now with the "we" of denial, denouncing the nation-states that emerged from the ruins, ought perhaps to think how we might restore those empires, so as to establish genuine rules of law, and a metropolitan sovereignty, over peoples who—thanks perhaps to the imperial legacy—have proved unable to govern themselves.[10]

NOTES

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991).

2. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

3. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

4. John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, 1st Baron, "Nationality," in *The History of Freedom and Other Essays*, ed. J. N. Figgis and R. V. Lawrence (London: Macmillan, 1907), pp. 273–74.

5. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London: Hutchinson, 1960); Kenneth Minogue, *Nationalism* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1967).

6. Roger Scruton, "In Defence of the Nation," in *The Philosopher on Dover Beach* (Manchester, U.K.: Carcanet, 1990), pp. 299–329.

7. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (2 vols.), vol. 2, on the "Magian" culture; trans. Charles Frances Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926–1928), pp. 233–61.

8. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 144.

9. The previous two paragraphs are adapted from Scruton, "In Defence of the Nation," in *The Philosopher on Dover Beach*, pp. 323–24.

10. I am very grateful to Charles Griswold for comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

CHAPTER 15

The Incoherence of Nationalism

Bhikhu Parekh

> Understand me rightly, the separation of Prussians from the rest of
> the Germans is purely artificial . . . the separation of Germans
> from the other European nations is based on Nature. Through a
> common language and through common national characteristics
> which unite the Germans, they are separate from the others.
> —A character in Fichte's *Patriotism and Its Opposite* (1807)

> I love my country too much to be a nationalist.
> —Albert Camus

> Nations are not something eternal. They have begun, they will
> end. They will be replaced, in all probability, by a European feder-
> ation. But such is not the law of the century in which we live. At
> the present time the existence of nations happens to be good, even
> necessary.
> —Ernest Renan

Having been dismissed for decades as logically incoherent and politically
pernicious, the idea of nation has undergone a major revival in contem-
porary Western political theory. Writers of conservative, liberal, and
even socialist persuasions contend that nationalism is a force for good,
and that a state lacks legitimacy and is unlikely to be democratic, and
just, unless it is embedded in and constantly nurtured by a shared sense
of nationhood. They are, of course, aware of the dangers of nationalism,
but think that the answer lies not in rejecting it but developing its more
acceptable form. For some, such as John Plamenatz and Roger Scruton,
nationalism is in itself is neither good nor bad, and everything depends
on the character of the state involved. In mature Western societies, in
which nationalism is subject to all manner of democratic checks, it is

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generally a force for good; in immature and new societies in which the state and democracy have not struck deep roots, such as the pre–Second World War Germany and Italy and many contemporary developing countries, it is a force for evil. Other writers, such as Anthony Smith and Yael Tamir, emphasize not the quality of the state involved but that of nationalism itself, and think that ethnic nationalism is bad but civic nationalism is good, or that both are bad and should be replaced by liberal nationalism. Some other writers such as David Miller and Will Kymlicka jettison the ideologically loaded language of nationalism in favor of a more innocuous language of nationality and common national or societal culture. When carefully examined, their substantive doctrines turn out to be quite similar to their more familiar nationalist cousins.

In this paper I examine why so many political theorists of diverse ideological persuasions have felt drawn to some form of nationalism. For convenience I outline and briefly comment on the views of three of them, namely Roger Scruton, David Miller, and Yael Tamir, who between them represent three different kinds of currently popular nationalism. In the final sections I show why the nationalist project is fundamentally flawed.[1]

I

For conservative nationalists ably represented by Scruton, the nation is the ultimate ontological unit of political life.[2] Individuals are not asocial abstractions of the classical liberal imagination but embedded in and constituted and constantly nurtured by their nation. They have a specific identity that is derived from and inextricably links them to other members of their national community. This is equally true of the state, which is not an artificial and conscious human creation but an organic expression of the relevant nation. It has a specific identity that is derived from the prepolitical nation, and it retains its stability and unity only so long as it remains true to the latter. 'All individuals are primarily members of their nation and only derivatively of the state. Their nationality precedes, grounds, and gives meaning and moral energy to their citizenship.

As to what is a nation and how we recognize and individuate it, Scruton thinks that it has the following six constitutive characteristics.[3] First, it has a territorial basis, an earthly home, to which it is deeply attached. Its culture and historical memories are tied up with its homeland, to which it stands in broadly the same relationship as humans do to their bodies.

Second, members of a nation share a common language, a vehicle of

their natural self-expression and a repository of their collective dreams, anxieties, aspirations, and experiences. As Scruton puts it, language is the first thing one learns from one's parents and passes on to one's children, and the most intimate bond between the successive generations that make up the nation. Conservative nationalists as a rule assign far greater value to the shared language than do their liberal and socialist counterparts.

Third, a nation shares a common culture or way of life, including customs, social practices, moral values, modes of relating to oneself and to others, rituals, festivals, myths, and so on. As participants in a shared way of life, its members share a common system of meanings and a tacit pool of understanding, both of which are indispensable for intimate and effortless social communication.

Fourth, members of a nation are united by the ties of blood, intermarriage, and kinship, and share a common descent. Conservative nationalists see the nation in the image of a family, invest it with familial emotions, and think of historical predecessors as ancestors and forefathers (but not foremothers) who deserve to be approached in a spirit of piety and reverence. Their idea of ancestors has a racial orientation, for in such countries as Australia, Canada, and the United States it includes only the white immigrants and never the original inhabitants, who are confined to the prehistory of these countries and with whom no familial bonds are established.

Fifth, members of a nation share a common history, including common collective experiences and memories of struggles, triumphs, defeats, joys, and sorrows. They have a shared understanding of who they are, and how they originated, developed, and came to constitute themselves into a single historical entity.

Finally, thanks to all these and yet irreducible to them, members of a nation have a strong sense of collective belonging. They form a cohesive and homogenous "we," "instinctively" know who do and do not belong to them, and are drawn to one and indifferent or hostile to the other. Since they feel that they belong together and are bound by the ties of mutual affections, loyalties, a sense of solidarity, and unspoken sympathies, they wish to continue to live together as a distinct community.

For many conservative nationalists, nations have a common ethnic or biological basis and belong to a single "stock," "race," or "kind." The more sophisticated among them such as Scruton appreciate that although most nations might begin this way, over time they broaden their ethnic bases, assimilate new groups, and acquire a nonethnic or nonracial character. However even they believe that nations, whatever their origins and current character, possess many of the distinctive characteristics of and bear a close resemblance to races. Like races they are

highly cohesive, naturally distinct, unchanged for generations, endowed with an instinctive "consciousness of kind," and inherit institutions, values, habits, and traits of temperament almost as individuals inherit racial features. As Scruton puts it, since nations *are* like races, it is "difficult to avoid terms like race" in describing them. Neither he nor others of his persuasion explain what they mean by race and whether it has any of the characteristics they ascribe to it.

Like other conservative nationalists Scruton argues that nations are spiritual and moral communities. They lift their members above their petty individual lives, link them up with something bigger and more enduring, give them a sense of meaning and significance, and help them cope with the contingency and tragedies of life. They also provide them with a sense of rootedness and historical continuity, and stabilize their inherently fluid lives. They create a climate of trust and dependability, provide their members with ideals and values as well as the motives for living up to these in the form of shared sentiments of affection, loyalty, and solidarity, and nurture a rich and relaxed moral life. As indispensable sources of meaning, morality, and identity, nations are sacred and deserve highest allegiance and the greatest sacrifices. Since the nation defines the bounds of loyalty, conservative nationalists insist either that we have no obligations to mankind in general or that these are considerably weaker than those to our fellow nationals.

For Scruton as for other conservative nationalists the *unity* of the state is grounded not in the collective acceptance of a common structure of authority as liberals have generally argued, but in the unity of the nation. By itself the state is too formal and abstract an institution to engage the hearts and evoke the deepest emotions and commitments of its citizens. It is able to do so only when it expresses and actualizes the nation's will to survive, assert itself, and flourish in a hostile world of nations. Although every nation aspires to be a state, it can exist without one as the examples of Poles and Jews show. But the reverse is never the case. Once the nation loses its cohesion and "will to live," the state loses its vitality and is doomed.

As for the sources of the *legitimacy* of the state, conservative nationalists are not of one mind. They locate it in the national will and interest rather than in the freely given consent of its individual citizens as liberals do. In their view the liberal theory of legitimacy fragments and atomizes the nation, and mistakenly privileges volatile individual consent and confused public opinion over the true will and interest of the nation. Liberal democracy, however, is an established fact of contemporary political life, and the liberal theory of legitimacy is its widely accepted basis. While some conservative nationalists are prepared to argue against liberal democracy and replace it with an "organic" and

authoritarian system of government, most including Scruton find this too radical and fraught with problems. They reluctantly accept the liberal-democratic theory of legitimacy but ground it in and circumscribe it by the "higher" legitimacy derived from the true will of the nation.[4]

They do this by so identifying the individual with her nation that she thinks, feels, wills, and acts as its thoroughly socialized member, using education as a primary means of cultural engineering. The purpose of education is not to develop critical faculties or encourage multicultural sympathies but to instil national values, a sense of pride in the nation's past, the spirit of piety and reverence to its institutions, the sentiment of collective solidarity, and so forth. When future citizens are thus suffused with the spirit of the nation, they can be trusted to express its true will and interests in their uncoerced acts of consent. Although Scruton accepts the liberal-democratic theory of legitimacy, he so radically alters its background conditions and content that it is virtually replaced by its organic nationalist rival.

For Scruton the integrity of the nation is the highest moral and political principle and must be preserved at all cost. The nation's myths and values should not be too closely scrutinized and subjected to "corrosive criticism." Its culture and way of life should also be similarly protected. Obviously all this involves restrictions on free speech, on individual choices, and even on disinterested academic inquiries. Scruton and other conservative nationalists see nothing wrong in this and attack liberals for turning individual freedom into a more or less absolute value. They are also anxious to protect the national way of life against subversive external cultural influences, and are particularly hostile to immigrants. Since they think it is "inherent in human nature" to wish to live with people of one's own kind, members of a nation are right to resent immigrants. Bitterly complaining about "the rape of the English race" and the "violations of rights of the English people," John Stokes, a Conservative member of the British House of Commons, observed:

> I came here only six years ago, I came to help my country, I have seen my task as that of trying to keep all that is best in England and to be able to hand on to my children, as my father handed on to me, a country to be proud of, a homogenous nation sharing the same faith, history and background. I must make it clear that I do not blame the immigrants for coming—they came largely for the money—but I blame those who encouraged and still encourage them.

His anger was particularly directed against cosmopolitan liberals whom he blamed not only for bringing in the immigrants but also for fighting for their equal rights. Since immigrants form an "alien wedge," conservative nationalists in Britain have wondered what to do about

them. They are all agreed that under no circumstances should their number be allowed to increase. Some of them would also like either to repatriate those already settled in Britain or retrospectively to alter their legal status and turn them into guest workers. Although such policies violate basic liberal principles, they are considered fully justified in the interest of the maintenance of the British nation. As John Casey, a distinguished British academic, put it:[5]

> My defence is this: the state of nationhood is the true state of man, and the danger of ignoring the sentiment of nationhood is actually the danger of the destruction of man as a political animal. Although the courses of action that would possibly be open to us to preserve the fullest sense of nationhood would be severe, perhaps callous, that alternative political philosophy which sees nothing really in the problems posed by mass immigration . . . would actually reduce human society to what Burke called "the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature."

Neither Casey nor others explain how one could be said to maintain the integrity of the nation while violating what they themselves take to be its basic values.

Other conservative nationalists such as Scruton accept the immigrants as equal citizens fully entitled to all the rights as the rest, but urge vigorous efforts to assimilate and nationalize them. They want immigrant ways of life to be dismantled by a suitable combination of education, popular pressure, and the law, and the de-ethnicized and atomized immigrants so thoroughly assimilated into the British way of life that "they become English or Scots or Welsh who just happen to have skins of a minority."[6] Some of these writers go even further. Since nationhood is based on a "consciousness of kind," common descent, and the ties of blood, they would also like to encourage interracial marriages by means of popular pressure, subtle economic and political incentives, and appropriate government policies. The policies include restricting the immigrants' right to "import" spouses from their own countries of origin and thereby creating a scarcity of marriageable partners within their communities. For nearly two decades British governments followed this policy until it was declared unacceptable by the European Court of Justice.

II

The virtues of nationhood have also been emphasized by writers on the left, some such as Brian Barry favoring a weaker and others such as David Miller advocating a stronger version of it. Distinguishing the

nation from both the ethnic group and the state, Barry argues that while the ethnic group is based on common descent, kinship, and membership by birth, and the state is an administrative apparatus enjoying a monopoly of legitimate force within a particular territory, the nation refers to a group of people bound by the ties of fellow feeling, mutual loyalty, solidarity, a sense of common belonging and a common history, and the wish to live together as a separate community. Although common language and culture facilitate nationhood, it is basically a matter of feelings and sentiments and "subjective" in nature. A nation exists if its members think and feel that it does.[7]

For Barry the nation, unlike an ethnic group, can welcome and integrate outsiders into its way of life. It may, but need not, grow out of a common ethnic background, and even when it does, the basis of its unity is nonethnic in nature. Like the state, the nation has a common history, stretches across generations, wishes to be independent, and so on. But unlike it, the nation is not an administrative apparatus. It involves participation in a common way of life based on cultural homogeneity, shared understanding, and identification with other members. Some states such as Britain, France, America, Canada, and Switzerland are nations, but those such as many developing countries are not. Barry does not say whether he considers England a nation, and if so, whether it and Britain are both nations in the same sense.

For Barry the sense of shared nationhood is vital for the creation of a stable, democratic, and just state. It gives the state a moral and emotional basis in the life of its citizens and deepens their commitment to it. It generates mutual trust and the concomitant confidence that others will reciprocate one's sacrifices. By fostering the sentiments of solidarity and mutual sympathy, it encourages devotion to the common good and a fair distribution of resources between unequal regions, classes, and individuals. Since Barry thinks that people belonging to a common nation have similar cultural tastes, he argues that it is easier for them to agree on what public goods to provide from public resources and how to distribute the latter equitably. Since they are able to understand one another and enjoy access to the same forums of public debate, their democratic institutions have a greater strength and depth. Given these and other advantages, Barry concludes that there is a "strong prima facie case . . . for drawing state boundaries so that they correspond with nationality" (this volume, p. 264).

David Miller argues broadly along the same lines as Barry, but takes a stronger view of the content and value of nationality.[8] He distinguishes the nation from both the ethnic group and the state in more or less the same way as Barry does, and argues that it has the following features, most of which are also stressed by the conservative nationalists but

defined differently and assigned different importance by Miller. First, the nation is "constituted by belief" and "exists when its members believe that it does." They might but need not share a common race or language, and if they do, these do not by themselves make them a nation. What is essential is that they should be bound by the ties of fellow feeling and solidarity and believe that they belong together. Nationality is a "pre-reflexive sense that one belongs within a certain historic group."

Second, the nation is a historical entity stretching across generations and seeing the present as a link between its past and future. Its members identify with their forebears, appropriate their deeds as their own and feel an obligation to continue their work, partly by cherishing their memories and partly by discharging their obligations to their contemporaries and descendants. It is not necessary that their view of the past should be historically accurate; what is essential is that it should be generally believed.[9]

Third, members of a nation have a strong sense of collective agency and act together as a single and homogenous group. Nationhood is not just a passive state of mind or a set of commonly shared features, but an active collective desire to shape one's destiny oneself.

Fourth, the nation is attached to a specific territory, its earthly home, which it jealously guards or vigorously seeks to acquire.

Finally, Miller argues that members of a nation share a "set of characteristics," "a distinct and common character," that both unites them and marks them off from other nations. They also share a common culture including political principles, social norms, and cultural ideals. "National divisions must be natural ones; they must correspond to real differences between peoples." It is true that members of a nation are not generally able to spell out what their distinct characteristics are, but that does not diminish the fact that they have an intuitive sense, when confronted with foreigners, of where the differences lie.[10]

Unlike conservative nationalists Miller readily acknowledges that nations are often created by force, and that their cultural unity and national character are at least partly achieved by a deliberate and systematic state policy of homogenization. In his view that does not diminish the significance of the fact that they have, by whatever means, acquired and currently enjoy a strong sense of national identity. Miller appreciates that national accounts of their origins and history contain much falsehood and mythology, but thinks that this is only to be expected in human affairs and that it is fully justified if it supports valuable social relations.[11]

Unlike Barry, for whom nationhood has largely an instrumental value, Miller assigns it considerable ontological and moral significance.

In his view it links its members with a larger social whole and gives their lives meaning and significance. It tells them who they are, where they have come from, what they have done, and where and to whom they belong, and forms an important part of their self-understanding. It enables them to see their world as something they have built and of which they can be proud. It also shapes and structures their moral world, is constitutive of their identity, and provides them with a context for making intelligent choices.

Like Barry, Miller thinks that nationhood also has a considerable instrumental value.[12] It facilitates deliberative democracy because the latter requires solidarity, mutual trust, a willingness to compromise and to look for areas of agreement, all of which are only made possible by a shared sense of nationality. Since nationhood creates fellow feeling and a sense of mutual concern, it also facilitates economic redistribution and underpins the welfare state. For Miller unless citizenship is embedded in a shared sense of nationhood, it remains morally shallow. It only leads to the ethics of "strict reciprocity" and cannot provide a motive to help the poor, the needy, and the underprivileged, for such help entails self-sacrifice, the willingness for which can only arise from "prior obligations of nationality."[13] He offers no evidence for this strange view that we are concerned about injustices only if their victims are part of our national community. In any case he is convinced that for these and related reasons, nations should become states, and states nations.

Unlike Barry, for whom nationhood is a matter of subjective feeling, Miller maintains that it needs a content in the form of a shared national identity. It is not enough that we feel British or French; we must also be agreed on what being British or French consists in. For Miller national identity consists in, among other things, a shared conception of national history, a shared set of basic public values and social norms, and broadly agreed collective goals. By sharing a "strong sense of national identity" members of a community develop and sustain the spirit of common belonging and an awareness of constituting a homogeneous and distinct "we."[14]

Although Miller is a liberal and wants the nation to be constituted along liberal lines, he realizes that the two might conflict, and then he tends to privilege nationalism. Since the national culture gives a society its distinct identity, he insists that the state cannot and ought not to be neutral with respect to it.[15] Unlike liberals who think that we should choose our identities and critically reflect on the prevailing national culture, Miller thinks that the latter constitutes an "unchosen background" that we should accept and nurture. He is also anxious that outside influences, globalization, and cosmopolitan ideologies should not be allowed to undermine its distinctive character.[16] He acknowledges that this

requires "illiberal means," which he does not specify and about whose value he seems to feel deeply ambiguous. Like Scruton he argues that the legitimacy of political institutions is derived not from individual consent but from the state's ability to "express the will of the national community," but does not say how this will is to be identified, disputes concerning it resolved, and whether and to what extent it overrides individual consent and choices. Since he cherishes liberal values and does not wish to take Scruton's organic and quasi-mystical view of the nation, he is unable to resolve the tension between liberal individualism and national collectivism, between the demands of individual autonomy and those of national culture.

Since membership of a nation is generally by descent, Miller argues that nations tend to be exclusive. Unlike the ethnic groups, their membership is not limited by birth and can in principle include outsiders. However they cannot admit them indiscriminately or in large numbers without damaging their homogeneity and cohesion. This raises the question as to whether a nation should welcome only those likely to integrate into its way of life and with whom the bulk of its members can identify. Miller does not address the question, but it is difficult to see how he can avoid using some such criterion of selection. His view raises the further question of how a nation should deal with its immigrants and cultural minorities in general. As we saw, the conservative nationalist is in no doubt that the state should subject them to a vigorous program of nationalist assimilation. Miller rejects this option not because he thinks that cultural diversity enriches social life and is a collective asset but because minorities are attached to their ways of life and dismantling these involves an unacceptable degree of moral and cultural coercion.

For Miller it is of utmost importance that the majority and minorities should be able to identify with each other and develop a shared sense of belonging based on a mutually acceptable definition of national identity. This requires movement on both sides. The prevailing conception of national identity should be thinned down, "stripped of elements" repugnant to minorities, and made as "independent of group-specific cultural values" as possible.[17] Although no conception of national identity can be culturally neutral, its biases can be reduced. Cultural minorities should undertake a similar process of self-redefinition, shedding values that are at odds with those of the wider society and so interpreting their identities and history that these bring them closer to it. All this is to be achieved by a democratic process of debate within and between the various communities.

Although well-meaning and perceptive, Miller's proposal remains unsatisfactory. He treats majority and minority identities as if they were matters of conscious intellectual construction and capable of being rede-

fined at will or toned down in a liberal spirit of give-and-take. It is not clear either how he can ask both the majority and the minorities to give up what is repugnant to the other, for if one does so, the other need not. There is also however a more basic difficulty. Miller has hitherto advocated a strong and fairly thick sense of national identity in order to provide its members with a sense of meaning, as well as to facilitate economic redistribution and deliberative democracy. He appreciates that such an identity is likely to alienate cultural minorities and immigrants and cannot underpin a multicultural society. He therefore proposes a thinned down identity consisting largely in a commitment to common goals and such values as liberal democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, and honesty in tax returns.

Clearly such a fairly thin national identity cannot perform the ontological and moral role that Miller expects of it and for whose sake he had introduced the ideas of nationhood and national identity in the first place. What is more, a community united in terms of democracy and the like is little different from other liberal societies and lacks the kind of "distinct identity" and "real differences" that Miller thinks a nation should have. Indeed it is no longer a nation in the sense in which he uses the term. Like any well-organized political community, it is united in terms of common political institutions and values and has nothing to do with a shared national character, deep emotional bonds, a strong sense of historical continuity, common myths, and so on. It appears that while Miller would like the state to be a nation, he does not think this possible or even desirable in a culturally diverse society. Since most societies today are multicultural, his overall exclusion would seem to be that nationhood is the last thing they should aim at!

III

Like Miller, Yael Tamir too advances a liberal nationalist theory of the state.[18] While he tends to privilege nationalism and comes close to being a nationalist liberal, she does the opposite. She is committed to such liberal values as individualism and universalism and advocates a form of nationalism that remains "within the boundaries of liberalism." Unlike Miller, again, who defines the nation as a historical and political community, Tamir sees it primarily as a cultural community bound together by a shared language, values, myths, and symbols and conscious of its distinct collective identity. Like other nationalists, she argues that the nation gives its members a sense of meaning, identity, and rootedness, shapes them in a particular manner, bonds them by the ties of mutual care and concern, structures their moral world, and provides a context

of choice. More like Scruton and less like Miller, she thinks that the nation creates an environment that gives its members the deep satisfaction and security of being instinctively recognized and understood by significant others, and lessens the "solitude and alienation" characteristic of modern life.[19] It also provides them with an additional motive for action in the form of a national pride and gives one's achievements a collective significance.

Since the unity of the nation rests on the integrity of its "distinct cultural foundation," Tamir thinks that it has a "right to preserve its cultural homogeneity" and to ensure that its cultural identity is not undermined.[20] Nations "naturally" wish to govern themselves and to conduct their public affairs in a manner that expresses their collective identity. Although they are "entitled to a public sphere in which they constitute the majority," they do not necessarily need their own states.[21] This is not always possible for obvious political, geographical, and demographic reasons, and is not even desirable in a world in which states need to cooperate for economic, military, environmental, and other reasons. Tamir therefore favors larger political units such as the European Union that can both guarantee maximum autonomy to their constituent nations and ensure interstate cooperation. When for some reason this is not possible, the state should itself become a multinational community, nurturing its constituent nations and uniting their members at the civic and political level in terms of shared public values. If one of the constituent nations were to be much larger or dominant as in the case of Israel, its culture would inevitably shape the character and policies of the state and the minority nations would not then be able to participate in its public life to the fullest degree. Tamir thinks that while this cannot be helped, the state could go a long way in making them feel at home if it supported their cultural autonomy and guaranteed them equal basic rights.[22] While Miller generally argues that the national identity of a multicultural society should be thinned down to accommodate its cultural minorities, Tamir seems to think that it should remain thick but suitably pluralized.

Tamir appreciates that the nation can easily become both internally oppressive and externally exclusive and chauvinistic. She guards against the first danger by insisting that its membership should be voluntarily embraced and that it should tolerate diversity and allow the right of exit. It is not clear how she proposes to ensure that the nation remain hospitable to diversity, and how this is compatible with her insistence that it should retain its cultural homogeneity and integrity. Indeed since the nation as she understands it means so much to its members, it is not clear why they should have the psychological disposition to risk its dilution by tolerating diversity and dissent. Tamir's liberal insistence that

membership of the nation should be voluntary is difficult to reconcile with her view that the nation constitutes and structures one's identity. And while she is right to stress the importance of the right of exit, the latter is likely to prove morally and emotionally too costly to be exercised by most of its members.

As for the danger of national chauvinism and exclusivity, Tamir insists that every nation has a duty to ensure that other nations too enjoy cultural autonomy and flourish. It should therefore offer them such political and economic help as they need and it can provide. It may restrict immigration from poorer countries "only if it has fulfilled its global obligation to assure equality among all nations."[23] Sometimes she thinks that all nations, and at other times that only the wealthy ones, have such an obligation. In either case she advances the immaculately universalist view that no nation has a right to exclude outsiders, and thus to remain a culturally homogenous community, unless it does or has done its best to improve the standard of living in poorer countries. She does not say how nations as opposed to individuals can be bearers of moral obligations, how we are to decide that a nation has done its best, what its best consists in, and whether any nation would qualify under such stringent and unrealistic moral conditions. Nor does she explain why the joys of instinctive recognition, the benefits of deep emotional security, and so forth that nationhood confers, and the profound obligations that these generate to one's fellow nationals, should not override such obligations as one has to outsiders.

Tamir's liberal nationalism is an ingenious attempt to avoid the limitations of both ethnic and civic nationalism, and to devise political arrangements in which the traditional dubious association between the nation and the state is broken. As she rightly argues, ethnic nationalism is exclusive, internally oppressive, and politically impractical. Civic nationalism is more open in its membership but not in its content, for it too seeks to assimilate all its citizens into the national culture and denies the cultural claims of minorities. Although Tamir's liberal nationalism is more hospitable to cultural diversity and has many other advantages as well, it does not solve the problem it was meant to solve.

Although Tamir thinks otherwise, her liberal nationalism is really a weak form of civic nationalism superimposed upon a fairly strong ethnic nationalism. Under it a society's constituent national communities, remaining virtually intact and exclusive, are the main sources of their members' identity and the central objects of their loyalty, and the wider political community holds them together in terms of such public values as they find in common. This poses two problems. First, since the wider political community does not mean much to its constituent national communities and cannot evoke their deepest loyalty, it is difficult to see

how it can contain let alone resolve their inevitable conflicts, generate enough political power to act in a coherent and effective manner, or pursue long-term goals. Second, the shared membership of a large community, be it a state or a continental unit like the European Union, involves free movement of capital, labor, and culture, common economic policies and educational standards, shared political projects, and so forth. All this cannot but erode the cultural cohesiveness and autonomy of the constituent communities and give rise to acute tensions and anxieties. Far from nurturing their cultural autonomy, the wider political unit generates forces that threaten it and additionally lacks the power to control them. One must therefore either accept the inherent logic of nationalism and allow each nation its own state or dispense with nationalism altogether. Tamir wants strongly bonded nations to be happily nestled within a hospitable and noninterfering larger unit, and that is impossible. If they are to live together within a single community, they must loosen up, allow internal differences and dissent, develop overlapping loyalties and affections, and cease to be the sole or even the dominant sources of their members' identity and values; in short, they should stop being nations as Tamir defines them and become relatively open and interactive cultural groups.

IV

In the previous sections I outlined three contemporary nationalist theories of the state and hinted at the kinds of problems each faces. I now wish to turn to their central thesis and argue that it is deeply flawed. For all three theories nationhood is of both intrinsic and instrumental value, the former because it gives the individual a sense of meaning, identity, and rootedness, the latter because it alone provides a lasting basis of political unity and stability. Liberal and socialist nationalists think that it also promotes such worthwhile goals as economic redistribution and participatory democracy. Although these assertions make important points, they are one-sided and highly exaggerated.

As mortal beings subject to the inescapable contingencies, tragedies, and frustrations of life, human beings do ask questions about the meaning and significance of life, but neither the nation nor for that matter any other human association is equipped to answer them. The nation does not solve the mystery of human existence, or offer a release from the loneliness and alienation of modern life, or answer agonized existential questions, or tell us how to cope with personal and collective tragedies and disappointments or even how to live. The fact that I belong to the Basque, Scottish, or English nation does not tell me whether my life has

a meaning, why I should continue to live rather than put an end to it, how to cope with the death of my young child or a friend in the prime of his life, whether I should give up my career and join a monastery, or whether the academic life is worthy of my undivided allegiance. For answering these and related questions, we turn to our religion, culture, and self-reflection.

The nationalist fails to see this because he equates nation with religion and culture, and attributes to it qualities that belong to the latter. Members of a nation do sometimes share a common religion but not always, and when they do, their religion remains autonomous and independent of it. When a British Christian turns to Christianity to find meaning in her life, it is not her membership of the British nation but her Christianity that is the source of such meaning as she finds in her life. What is true of religion is also true of culture. Although the nation has a cultural dimension, not every cultural community to which one might turn for guidance is a nation, and a nation may contain several cultural communities. A French Jew is certainly shaped by French culture, but for the agonized questions about the meaning and significance of his life he might turn to his Jewish culture, which has nothing to do with his membership of the French nation. Not every nation is a complete cultural community, and even when it is, its moral depth and reach are too limited and shallow to provide the kind of meaning the nationalist seeks.

The nationalist contends that national identity is a central component of one's personal identity. This is only partly true, and even the limited truth it contains is misinterpreted by the nationalist. Identity refers both to *how* one identifies or defines and distinguishes oneself, and *with whom* as a result one feels a sense of identification. It is a form of both self-definition and common belonging. For centuries Europeans identified themselves in terms of, and identified themselves with fellow members of, a shared religion, ethnicity, language, social status, place of origin, and so on, and many still continue to do so in other parts of the world. Nationhood is a nineteenth-century European phenomenon, and there is nothing ontologically or existentially necessary about it. For obvious economic, military, political, and other reasons European states have used their considerable cultural, educational, and other resources for the past two centuries to cultivate and privilege a strong sense of national identity and to orient and order their citizens' moral lives in a politically acceptable manner. It is hardly surprising that unlike their premodern counterparts, national identity has come to mean much to modern Europeans and is closely bound up with their personal identity.

Even then it has remained no more than one of their several identities. Each of them belongs to the human species, is gendered, engaged in a specific occupation, speaks a particular language, belongs to a partic-

ular religion, and comes from a particular region, and is thus a bearer of the species, sexual, occupational, linguistic, religious, regional, and other identities. Each of these identities shapes them, entails a specific mode of behavior and generates a specific form of self-understanding, and they all collectively and through a complex process of interaction create a fluid and internally differentiated overall sense of personal identity.

In different contexts different identities become relevant and even dominant. When attending a professional conference, praying in a temple, making love, or playing golf, the fact that one is British or French is largely irrelevant. One's national identity largely refers to the political community to which one belongs and feels attached, and like other identities it is activated when one is confronted with outsiders to whom one is required to identify oneself in national terms. In day-to-day life one's national identity impinges little on one's consciousness. As a bearer of multiple identities, the narrative of one's life is bound up with several larger narratives. As a Christian one is part of the story of that religion; as an academic, that of a larger narrative of the struggle for intellectual independence and free inquiry going back to Galileo, Bruno, and beyond them to Socrates; as a woman one is part of the complex history of struggle for sexual liberation; and as an Englishman, that of the history and development of a people who over time came to call themselves English.

Even such importance as national identity enjoys in the modern man's self-definition is increasingly diminishing. In European states, which were the first to foster national identity, the latter was always tied up with European identity, an important point that Linda Colley misses out in her account of the development of British identity.[24] Britain shaped its national identity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in opposition to, and gave it a content that in its view sharply distinguished it from, France. However during this period it was also busy distinguishing itself from and defining itself in opposition to its colonies. It stressed its European roots, which it shared with France and other European countries, and distinguished itself from France within the framework of a shared European or civilizational identity.

Thanks to such factors as the two world wars, the imperatives of globalization, and the need for environmental, military, and political cooperation, Britain's shared European identity has come to mean more and more to a large body of its citizens. Many of them enthusiastically welcome its membership of the European Union and the consequent dilution and even extinction of their sense of nationhood, whereas others remain implacably opposed to this. Different groups of Britons thus take diametrically opposite views of their national identity, and their

sense of nationhood is deeply fractured and in the process of contestation and renegotiation.

The same phenomenon is evident in other European countries including those that have long prided themselves on their nationhood. With the bitter memories of its Nazi past, many Germans fear their nationhood and want their country to be inextricably linked to a wider democratic community; France thinks it needs a larger and more powerful unit than the nation-state to pursue its civilizational and political interests; and many in Italy and Spain think that they can retain a modicum of political stability only by integrating their decentralized regions into a wider unit. Whatever their reasons, they all seem to have concluded that their two centuries of much-cherished nationhood are coming to an end, and that they need to develop a new kind of political association based on regional decentralization and international coordination and leaving the reconstituted nation-state to function within the space left by this. In Europe at least national identity today is less deep, less passionately held, less strident in its demands, less overarching, and less privileged over other identities than was the case only a few decades ago. This is also the case in several other parts of the world including the United States, Canada, and parts of Southeast Asia. As so often happens in history, the nationalist political theorist nostalgically champions the cause of the nation at a time when it is in the process of supersession. David Miller argues that since national sentiments already exist, we should take advantage of them to achieve worthwhile goals. The brute historical fact is that they are irretrievably weakened, and that, as I showed earlier, any attempt to rebuild them entails an unacceptable cost. What is more, if they can be used for worthwhile goals, they can be used just as easily, indeed even more easily, for dubious purposes.

The nationalist argues that the nation gives one a sense of rootedness, a secure and stable earthly home. The widely used concept of rootedness is freighted with so much metaphorical and emotional baggage that it needs to be carefully unpacked and assessed before it can be used to underpin a political theory. By its very nature the sense of rootedness and belonging is local in nature, requires a familiar local environment and a thick texture of supportive social relations, and cannot be met by such a large and impersonal entity as the nation. The fact that one is British or American does not mean that one feels at home in every part of the country or with every group of one's fellow citizens, for the nation is not a homogenous social, cultural, or physical space across which one can move effortlessly and with equal ease. One gravitates toward an area whose climate, landscape, and customs are familiar and intertwined with one's deepest memories, and toward people to whom one feels bonded by the ties of shared interests, attachments, affection, and love.

In the United States many black Americans who moved north to better their economic prospects felt alienated in their new environment and returned to the more familiar and supportive way of life of the South. In Britain George Orwell thought that "when you go into the industrial north, you are entering a strange country," and for Graham Turner too the north and the south represented "two different worlds, two differ- ent philosophies of life."[25] In Canada many British Columbians feel ill at ease in Manitoba and Newfoundland, and many Ontarians are just as at home in New York as in either. This is not to deny that one feels more at home in one's country than elsewhere and that ways of life in its dif- ferent parts share several features in common, but rather that such com- monality should not blind us to deep regional and other diversities and that other parts of the country might be just as alien as a foreign coun- try.

It is also possible and indeed an increasingly common experience to feel at home in more than one country, each gratifying a different and vital part of one's being. If one has spent some time in another country as a child, as a student, for work, or for annual holidays, as is increas- ingly becoming common, one might become attached to its way of life just as much as to one's own, and feel rooted in both. Besides, given the fact that most societies today are subject to the influences of other cul- tures, their members grow up with varying degrees of attachment to other cultural communities, and feel that while different parts of them belong to different communities, the whole of them does not feel at home in any of these alone. Again, it is common for ethnic, religious, and diasporic communities to cherish multiple attachments and loyalties and feel a sense of belonging to several countries. Many diasporic Irish, Jews, and Indians feel attached to both their countries of settlement and original homelands, and the claim by either to monopolize their alle- giance and loyalty disrupts their wholeness and renders them partially rootless. In short, rootedness cannot be defined abstractly but only in relation to one's sense of identity. And since the latter is often complex and multiple, so is the former.

Furthermore, although one feels attached to those sharing one's national community, one also feels this way about one's religious or eth- nic group, and it is not obvious that the national sense of belonging is necessarily deeper and stronger or more worthwhile than the other two. Again, an extremely conservative person who is deeply committed to traditional values often has little in common with her communist or bohemian fellow-nationals. They do, of course, share several things in common, but also differ deeply about important matters, and often develop only a weak and fragile sense of common belonging. They notice differences between themselves that the outsider does not, and

these differences are reflected in their friendships, patterns of social interaction, attachments, and loyalties.

No way of life is free from the deep divisions of class, gender, and occupation. Many working-class Englishmen have long resented the English way of life because of the place it assigns to them and the way it stereotypes and treats them, and have lived socially and even geographically self-contained lives, or remained deeply alienated, or emigrated in large numbers to such socially more open countries as Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Several English intellectuals too feel this way about their national way of life, and look with envy at and even settle in the less insular and class-ridden American or more respectful French society. Many Russian Jews, who had migrated to Israel in the hope that they would at last feel at home in a country based on their way of life, felt alienated and moved on to other countries, especially the United States. They do feel deeply committed to Israel but evidently not enough to share its way of life, and prefer to help and fight for its interests from the safe distance of another country. This is also how many overseas Indians, Irish, and Chinese feel in relation to their national homelands. The fact that they prefer to live abroad even at the risk of losing their culture rather than settle among their fellow nationals is not easily explained in nationalist terms.

What is true of a sense of rootedness and belonging is also true of the other moral and emotional needs that the nationalist emphasizes. They have different bases, point in overlapping but different directions, are satisfied differently, and sometimes conflict. To argue that they all do or must center around the nation is to oversimplify them and wholly to misunderstand their nature and dynamics. Such a view also overloads the nation morally and emotionally, and makes demands on it that it cannot meet without doing grave damage to its way of life as well as to human freedom and individuality. Since the nationalist sees the state as the guardian of the nation, he or she is of necessity compelled to invest the former with an alarming array of functions and powers and a wholly undeserved moral and spiritual status.

The liberal or socialist nationalist claims that a shared sense of nationhood conduces to redistributionist policies, democracy, mutual sympathy, trust, fellow feeling, and so forth. To be sure, his or her claim is not that it guarantees all this but rather that it is their necessary condition. The claim amounts to saying that these desirable consequences *cannot* be produced in its absence, that given its presence there is a *good* chance that they will be produced, and that strong adverse factors will not be able to negate its effects without a determined *struggle*. The nationalist claim is too complex and vague to be tested, and as difficult to criticize as it is for him or her to establish. In social life it is not easy

to disentangle the influences of various factors. And since the feeling of nationhood admits of degrees and is never total, the nationalist can always rejoin that the feeling was not strong and deep enough to produce the desired consequences. What is more, democracy, redistribution, and fellow feeling are not easy to define, measure, and demonstrate, and therefore, again, it is extremely difficult to decide how they are affected by the shared sense of nationhood. Given these and related difficulties, all that a critic can do is to offer evidence that casts at least some doubt on the nationalist claim.

There is little evidence to support the view that a strong sense of national identity generates a strong sense of fellow feeling, a willingness to make sacrifices, or even a sense of concern for one's fellow nationals. Solidarity may remain confined to symbolic collective events or to war or take the form of a diffused love of the country, and not translate into the love of one's countrymen or a regard for their well-being. Just as love of Man or mankind does not necessarily lead to love of concrete men and women in one's neighborhood or society, love of the nation does not necessarily lead and has not in practice led to love of one's fellow nationals. Governments have not hesitated to launch unnecessary and brutal wars, and generals have condemned their soldiers to unnecessary deaths, in pursuit of misguided notions of national glory. Since the nation is an abstraction and can be easily reified and uncoupled from its members, there is no moral or psychological reason why loyalty to it should generate concern for their well-being.

As both Barry and Miller define it, Britain and the United States are nations. Margaret Thatcher's period in office was the heyday of postwar British nationalism involving the Falklands war, assertion of British cultural superiority over the rest of Europe, and a nationalist educational curriculum. But it was also marked by not only an almost total neglect of the poor and the underprivileged but a considerable amount of contempt for them for failing to display the great British virtues of self-help and enterprise. This is not at all surprising, for the idea of the nation requires a moral content and entails not only common belonging and fellow feeling but also conforming to a specific view of how its members should live and what qualities of character they should develop. Common belonging and fellow feeling are therefore conditional upon one's fellow nationals' living and behaving in a certain manner, and they might legitimately be forfeited if the latter appear to the guardians of the nation to have become a national embarrassment.

Americans take enormous pride in their country and display considerable patriotism. However it is striking that neither the American government nor its privileged citizens are much troubled by the poverty and wretchedness of millions of their fellow countrymen. When the lat-

ter threaten their security or come close to them, rich Americans move to their "gated" communities to lead self-contained lives; according to a recent report as many as three million of them have done so. This hardly displays any sense of common belonging or mutual concern. Such welfare provisions as America makes for its poor are extremely limited and constantly under attack. When the Reagan and Bush administrations curtailed them yet further, there was little public outcry except from those directly affected and a few radicals who are more likely to have been guided by a strong social conscience than a sense of national solidarity. President Clinton's proposals to restore some of these provisions ran into predictable opposition from those likely to be asked to pay higher taxes and had to be dropped.

National solidarity then does not easily translate into mutual sympathy and fellow feeling. The latter require putting others' greater needs above one's own and the willingness to make requisite sacrifices. These sentiments have a different moral basis and cannot be mobilized by an appeal to the sense of solidarity. The sense of solidarity at best leads one to prefer the interests of one's fellow nationals to those of outsiders but not to *one's own* interests, and does not guarantee a social conscience or a spirit of altruism. This means that it is not enough to talk about a shared sense of national identity; one also needs to look at its nature and content and enrich it with moral concerns. If national identity is defined in individualist terms as has traditionally been the case in America or was the case in Thatcherite Britain, the resulting sense of solidarity not only leaves no space for but positively works against the spirit of sharing and mutual concern.

The liberal nationalist's claim that a strong sense of national identity facilitates redistribution is also open to objections. The Thatcher government successfully set out to create a strong sense of British national identity. But it defined its content in militarist and individualist terms with the result that most of the country felt more enthusiastic about the Falklands war and the virtues of free enterprise than about redistribution and social cooperation. By and large a shared sense of common belonging leads to redistribution only when it is energized by a strong social conscience, and then much of the credit for the redistribution should be given to the latter, the national identity playing only a limited motivational role. One might go further and argue that such redistribution as has occurred in many Western societies is largely a result neither of the strong sense of nationhood, nor of a strong social conscience, but of the organized and at times violent struggles of the working classes, women, and other marginalized groups.

India provides another counterexample to the liberal nationalist thesis. At independence the country had a weak sense of national identity,

and its leaders repeatedly reiterated Mazzini's remark that now that they had created India, they should set about creating Indians. The independence movement was largely supported by the petty bourgeoisie, the professional classes, and the upper strata of the peasantry, who between them so defined the content and the boundary of the Indian nation that the rest of the country was largely excluded. Yet independent India embarked upon an impressive program of positive discrimination in favor of the ex-untouchables and the tribal communities. Reasons for this were relatively simple. Indian leaders knew that the country could not be united and held together unless these groups were brought into the mainstream of political life. They were also guided by a feeling of guilt at the shameful treatment meted out to these groups especially by the high-caste Hindus, by the fear that the excluded groups might become disaffected and throw up socially revolutionary movements, and by the all too familiar desire to set up stable vote banks. No strong sense of national identity led to the redistributionist program; rather the latter was motivated by, among other things, a desire to give the long-oppressed groups a political stake in the stability of the country and to forge a shared national identity.

Unlike their conservative counterparts for whom there is no higher value than the nation, liberal and socialist nationalists are internationally minded, some such as Barry and Tamir strongly in favor of global justice and others such as Miller largely content to advocate equal respect for other nations. It is difficult to see how a strong sense of nationhood sits easily with a concern for global justice. The nationalist privileges the moral claims of one's fellow nationals and assigns only a limited moral weight to those of outsiders. Since no developed society, not even the United States, is without a large body of poor and under-privileged citizens, and since their claims are to take precedence, those of outsiders virtually count for nothing. Besides, since the case for redistribution is psychologically underpinned by a common sense of belonging, there can be no motive to share the community's resources with outsiders to whom one does not feel attached and with whom one does not share ties of common belonging.

This is not to deny that a strong sense of nationhood can in principle be reconciled with the claims of common humanity, but rather that the two become incompatible when the partiality toward one's fellow nationals is justified not on grounds of better knowledge, greater understanding, higher mutual expectations, and so on, but because one belongs to them, feels at home with them, and derives one's identity and meaning from them. They then acquire such a privileged moral and emotional status that the claims of the rest of humanity become morally weak and lack the power to motivate. If people are constantly told that

they should care for each other because they belong together, and if their educational, cultural, and other institutions are designed, as they must be, to reinforce this message, their moral imagination gets so emasculated and moral resources so depleted that outsiders will come to mean little to them. No liberal or socialist nationalist has so far fully appreciated the force of such moral and psychological barriers, let alone proposed ways of overcoming them. To assert that "healthy" nationalism need not be anti-internationalist is to be naive in the extreme.

A strong sense of national identity and solidarity also exacts a heavy price at other levels. Whether it is conservative or liberal, nationalism cannot avoid being hostile to outsiders wishing to enter the country as immigrants, refugees, or asylum-seekers. It is true that unlike the ethnic group, the nation can in principle admit and integrate outsiders. The important question however is why it should ever wish to admit them in the first place. Since it sets great store by a sense of belonging, social cohesion, solidarity, and so forth, it cannot avoid seeing outsiders as a disturbing presence to be excluded as far as possible. Those who welcome immigration usually do so on such grounds as that one has obligations to poorer counries, that cultural diversity is desirable, that the outsiders bring new ideas, sensibilities, tastes, and imagination, and that they deepen the self-consciousness and expand the cultural horizon of the receiving country. The nationalist cannot see things this way, and even if he appreciates the economic benefits of immigration, he cannot assign them much value compared to the advantages of social cohesion and solidarity. It is striking that even such a liberal nationalist as Miller rarely discusses immigration in a positive light, and treats it as if it were only a source of problems.

Even if a nationalist were to provide a coherent and morally acceptable theory of immigration including refugees and asylum seekers, it is difficult to see how he can avoid wanting to nationalize the immigrants. As we saw, the conservative nationalist is an uncompromising assimilationist anxious to ensure that immigrants lose all traces of difference save those that are ineliminable. He is worried neither about the damage this does to his self-esteem and cultural integrity, nor about the benefits of diversity such a policy denies his country. Although the liberal nationalist is not so narrow-minded and self-righteous, her tolerance is considerably limited. She is anxious not to weaken the ties of common belonging, and thinks that the indigenous population will not be able to identify and develop emotional bonds with immigrants unless they shed their cultural distinctiveness. She might tolerate diversity in the private realm but cannot avoid insisting on assimilation into the national culture in all other areas. However liberal she might be, a nationalist remains more or less antipathetic to strong forms of cultural diversity. Since she

cherishes and feels at ease only in a homogeneous cultural environment, the nationalist is profoundly disorientated by difference, which she finds threatening, and lacks the psychological resources to respond positively to. All forms of nationalism are underpinned by a deep streak of psychological and cultural conservatism. Even Tamir, who stresses the value of cultural diversity, quietly drops the subject when articulating her theory of nationalism.

Nationalists also make all kinds of political claims on behalf of nationhood, most of these untenable. They argue that a shared nationhood facilitates democratic participation and reduces areas of disagreement. The United States has a strong sense of nationhood but political participation is low. Canadian nationalism is rather weaker, yet the rate of participation in national elections is higher. People participate in political life for a number of reasons such as a well-developed public spirit, a strong sense of citizenship, and a deep commitment to certain issues. Shared nationhood is only one of these and not the most important. Again, Israel has a strong sense of nationhood, yet political disagreements run so deep that its citizens have not been able to agree even on a national constitution and have so far settled on a dozen Basic Acts. The Indian sense of nationhood is poorly developed, yet there is a broad agreement on such fundamental issues as positive discrimination in favor of the weaker sections of society, liberal democracy, and some form of secularism. In short, a shared sense of belonging does not imply that those involved do or will easily agree on the nature and functions of the state or basic moral and cultural values, nor does its absence signify the opposite.

Conservative and liberal nationalists talk of the nation as if it were an incontrovertible political reality. As a matter of fact, very few states fit their description of nationhood, and those that do are increasingly ceasing to be so under the impact of globalization, multiculturalism, and cultural self-assertion by such marginalized groups as women, immigrants, national minorities, and indigenous peoples. Very few of them possess the required degree of solidarity, cohesion, cultural homogeneity, and fellow feeling. None is free from the often very deep class, religious, gender, generational, and other divisions, or the diversity of moral values, lifestyles, tastes, and sensibilities. None is based on common descent either, for even in such a strong nation-state as France a third of its population was born or has married abroad. Their cultural life is inescapably eclectic and plural, and the aspiration for the kind of moral and cultural coherence that nationhood presupposes becomes increasingly unrealistic. The content and boundary of the nation as they have been hitherto defined are challenged by marginalized groups, who seek to open up the officially defined nation not only to make spaces for

themselves but also to reconstitute it along new lines. The unity of the state cannot be grounded in the unity of the nation as the nationalists maintain, for the simple reason that the "nation" today is too fragmented, plural, and fiercely contested to possess the kind and degree of unity necessary to sustain the state.

Since citizens have to live together, they need to agree on a set of minimum values, and even these are accepted by some of them reluctantly and largely because of the compulsions of the shared collective life. To stress only the shared values at the expense of the equally real and deep moral differences is to present a false picture of modern society. By and large the shared values are confined to the conduct of public affairs and include such politico-legal values as respect for person, equality before the law, the rule of law, certain basic rights, and the freedom of choice and dissent. They relate to the state and we only share them as British or American *citizens*, not as Britons or Americans. Once we step outside the orbit of the state, there is generally little consensus on shared values. Far from the state being an expression of the preexisting nation, there is often limited cohesiveness outside the state. Miller talks about shared cultural ideals and social norms. He gives no examples of the former. It is difficult to see what cultural ideals are shared by devout Catholics, Orthodox Jews, secular liberals, Thatcherite libertarians, and pragmatic conservatives in contemporary Britain. Indeed it was striking how the domination of Thatcherite ideals showed up deep cultural and moral divisions in British society; a third of its citizens embraced the ideals whole-heartedly, a third was implacably hostile, and the rest supported them selectively. Now that the Blair government is in power, a new view of British identity has gained ascendancy and the erstwhile Tories are busy ditching the old one. So far as social norms are concerned, Miller mentions queuing and honesty in tax returns. Since neither is unique to Britain, they cannot form part of its distinctive national identity. And neither is widely observed in Britain or for that matter in any other society. People may queue for a bus but not for a hospital appointment where they either use their contacts or resort to private health insurance. And as for tax returns, the Inland Revenue Department complains of losing millions in false tax returns and has to resort to hundreds of undercover detectives. Once we move to social norms relating to the family, patterns of marriage, ways of bringing up children, neighborly relations, and ideals of good citizenship, even deeper differences appear.

Both conservative and liberal nationalists talk about common political attachments, affections, and a shared view of the past. Again, there is little evidence to support their view. Many public rituals and ceremonies that deeply move some citizens evoke indifference, shame, or bit-

ter memories in others. Some Frenchmen and Britons, for example, view their imperial history with intense pride, some with a mixture of pride and shame, yet others with embarrassment and guilt. To talk of shared *history* is equally misleading. Although all citizens of a country inherit common historical events, they experience and interpet them very differently. The civil wars in England and America, the war between England and Scotland, the English conquest of Wales, and the differential impact of the industrial revolution on different sections of modern society and their conflicting historical memories of the ensuing economic and political struggles illustrate the point.

Every modern state is composed of different groups, each with its own distinct mode of structuring the past and unique historical memories. A so-called shared past is really made up of these different and overlapping pasts, and is often only their lowest common denominator. Besides in many cases the nation in its present form is of recent origin. To talk of "its" past when it did not even exist is to misrepresent history. There was England but not Britain before 1707. The battle of Agincourt is part of English but not British history, and has little meaning for the Scots. The Scots cannot even *adopt* it as part of their history as *British* people, for there was no Britain at the time. This is even more true of Asian and African countries. There was a broadly shared Indian civilization but no India before the British created a cohesive territorial and administrative unit. The so-called "Indian" history is not the history of a single historical subject but a conglomerate of the histories of "its" hitherto discrete constituent groups. A *shared* history is often an artificial construction involving an anachronistic postulation of a continuing historical agent and a dubious retrospective teleology.

V

Nationalist writers are basically concerned to explore how best to ensure the unity and stability of the modern state. Although their view that it should be constituted as a nation in the sense outlined earlier is deeply unsatisfactory, the question is important and deserves a more satisfactory answer. I suggest that the unity and stability of the state have three sources: a widely accepted structure of authority, the pursuit of the common good, and an overlapping body of moral sentiments based on the differential relations of the citizens to the state.

The modern state is historically unique in that, unlike its predecessors, its unity is located in its structure rather than anything lying outside it. It is the product of a long and painful struggle to evolve a form of political association equipped to deal with characteristically modern

problems. The bloody religious wars in which fanatical groups struggled to impose their beliefs on each other made clear that the state had to find ways of tolerating religious diversity. With the rise of the spirit of critical inquiry, people began to question the established social order and the inherited moral beliefs, and the state had to accommodate them as well. The development of commerce brought together people of different backgrounds, beliefs, and ways of life, and the state had to find space for them too.

In response to all this, modern Europe invented a new basis of legitimacy. The state itself was not to subscribe to, let alone enforce, a specific body of moral, religious, or cultural beliefs save those such as the rule of law, equality before the law, respect for human dignity, and common citizenship upon which all its members were agreed or could be persuaded to agree. Unlike the Greek polity based on the unity of *ethnos*, the Roman polity based on the unity of *cultus*, and the medieval polity based on religion or faith, the modern state is a largely formal institution. All it requires is a constitutionally prescribed structure of public authority entitled to take and enforce collectively binding decisions. In principle nothing more and nothing less is required of its members than to acknowledge the legitimacy of the prevailing structure of authority. The modern state is therefore able to tolerate religious, moral, and cultural diversity that its predecessors could not. The more mature or developed a state, the greater is its capacity to live with and develop unity out of diversity.

The second source of the unity and stability of the state has to do with its pursuit of the common good. Views about the content of the common good vary, and their conflict yields an inherently tentative consensus that is then embodied in laws and policies. However it is defined, the common good must satisfy certain basic criteria such as that it must give equal consideration to the interests of all its citizens, assure them commonly agreed basic rights, and endeavor to meet their basic material needs. When the state pursues the common good, it gives its citizens a political stake in its stability and can count on their collective pride and gratitude. If it treats some of them unequally or unfairly, or is indifferent to their well-being, or leaves them to starve or lead wretched lives, they cannot feel attached to or even develop a sense of obligation to it. Since it excludes them from its concerns and does not care about how they live, they cannot be expected to care about it either.

In addition to these two sources of the unity and stability of the state that apply to all its citizens uniformly, the third source lies in the complex, criss-crossing, and sometimes overlapping patterns of support given it by its citizens for their own different reasons. Different groups of citizens have different political biographies, relate to the state in dif-

ferent ways, and bring to it different moral attitudes and emotions aris-
ing out of their unique experiences of the state as interpreted within the
framework of their moral traditions. Some are guided by a sense of grat-
itude for what the state had done or is doing for them; some such as the
immigrants have explicitly consented to give it their allegiance and sup-
port; some others owe it their very lives and would have met a certain
death had it not given them asylum; many have lived in it for genera-
tions and are deeply attached to it; some others belong to families that
have fought for and helped shape its present structure and view the state
with legitimate pride; yet others are guided by varying combinations of
these and other considerations. Some citizens are positively hostile to the
state either out of sheer nihilism or because it has for generations
oppressed and ill-treated their group. In the former case the state can do
nothing more than coerce them into obeying its laws; in the latter it
needs to win over their loyalty by making appropriate amends.

No single reason, no single motive, no grand and overarching sense
of national identity underpins the unity of the state. The state rests not
on a single foundation but several, each with its distinct strengths and
weaknesses, each representing a different type of patriotism, and all of
them in need of careful nurturing. All citizens are expected to acknowl-
edge the authority of the legitimately constituted state, and both a sense
of civil obligation and self-interest ensure that they would want to obey
its laws. Insofar as it pursues the common good, both their sense of
moral obligation and enlightened self-interest ensure that they would
uphold and nurture it. And beyond these obligations and considerations
of self-interest lie such different emotions and attitudes as pride, loyalty,
attachment, gratitude, a conscientious habit of obedience, and love of
the community that different groups of citizens bring to the state
because of their different relations to it.

The unity of the modern state neither rests on an illusory prepoliti-
cal foundation nor can ever be taken for granted. It is necessarily com-
plex, multistranded, and multilayered, is nourished by different streams,
and needs to be sensitively and continuously forged. No modern state
can be purely procedural and rely on its legal authority alone; the
nationalist is right to stress this. However he or she is wrong to go to
the other extreme and insist that it should become a nation, for this is
neither possible nor desirable. The state can and should aim to become
a political community of the kind described above. There is a long and
varied discourse on political community going back to Aristotle and
including Aquinas, Burke, Hegel, and the pluralists, which despite all its
limitations shows how to go about theorizing political community with-
out letting it turn into a nation.

The desire to give the modern state a deeper nonpolitical foundation

is understandable but dangerous and must be resisted. Since the concept of national identity involves homogenizing and reifying the nation and presenting some of its arbitrarily selected features as constituting its essence or identity, it invariably distorts the character and history of the country concerned. One of the most striking examples of this was recently provided by Margaret Thatcher. After she was forced to resign as prime minister, she summed up her political beliefs and achievements in the following way:[26]

> I always said and believed that the British character is quite different from the character of people on the continent—quite different. There is a great sense of fairness and equity in the British people, a great sense of individuality and initiative. They don't like being pushed around. How else did these really rather small people, from the times of Elizabeth on, go out in the larger world and have such an influence upon it?
>
> I set out to destroy socialism. I feel it was at odds with the character of the people. We were the first country in the world to roll back the frontiers of socialism, then roll forward the frontiers of freedom. We reclaimed our heritage.

No scholarly exegesis is needed to see what she is saying and implying in these extraordinary remarks. First, she finds no fault with the British people. Second, she finds Continental Europeans gravely deficient in such virtues as individuality, initiative, fairness, and equity, and has little good to say about them. Third, in order to define British national identity, she contrasts it with that of other countries and sets up a rigid wall between the two. Fourth, she defines it in exclusive terms in the sense that British identity lies in what distinguishes Britain from others and not in what it might share with them. Not surprisingly, her definition of it is narrow, excludes a good deal that is great and noble in Britain, and insults Europeans. Fifth, she uses British national character to explain British history, as if the latter were nothing more than its phenomenal manifestation occurring within a historical vacuum. Sixth, since these qualities explain British history, they have themselves no history and are supposed to be somehow inherent in and natural to the British people. Seventh, Thatcher traces British history to Elizabeth the First, and treats all that went before it as a kind of prehistory. What is worse, she ends up equating English with British history. Finally, she uses her conception of British national identity to declare socialism incompatible with British character, and thus ontologically illegitimate. The discourse on national identity in her hands becomes a mischievous attempt to foreclose a whole range of political and policy options.

Margaret Thatcher's crudity reveals the limits of most forms of conservative nationalism. But it also shows that the very language of nation-

ality, nationhood, and even national identity is deeply suspect. It cannot avoid offering a homogenized, reified, and ideologically biased abridgment of a rich, complex, and fluid way of life, and setting up false contrasts and impregnable walls between political communities. As I hope to have shown, even well-intentioned liberals and socialists cannot theorize political life in that language without succumbing to its corrupting and pernicious logic.[27]

NOTES

1. For some parts of this article, I rely on my "Politics of Nationhood" in *Nationalism, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in Europe*, ed. Keebet van Benda-Beckman and Maykel Verkuyen (European Research Centre on Migration, Utrecht University, 1995). See also my "Ethnocentricity of the Nationalist Discourse," *Nations and Nationalism* 1.1 (1995). Margaret Canovan, *Nationhood and Political Theory* (Chelltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar, 1996) offers a valuable critique of the theorists I discuss from within a liberal nationalist perspective. She is deeply uneasy about some of the nationalist claims and is more a communitarian than a nationalist.

2. For a clear statement, see R. Scruton, *The Philosopher on Dover Beach* (Manchester, U.K.: Carcanet, 1990). See also M. Cowling (ed.), *Conservative Essays* (London: Cassell, 1978).

3. *The Philosopher on Dover Beach*, p. 314ff.

4. Scruton is systematically ambiguous on the subject. See ibid., p. 301f., especially p. 302.

5. "One Nation: The Politics of Race," *The Salisbury Review*, Autumn 1982.

6. A. Flew, "The Race Relations Industry," in *The Salisbury Review*, Winter 1984.

7. B. Barry, chapter 13 in this volume, especially pp. 258–60.

8. Miller has written several articles on the subject. The most important of them are "The Ethical Significance of Nationality," *Ethics*, July 1988; "In Defence of Nationality," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 1 (1993); and "Reflections on British National Identity," *New Community*, April 1995. He has also published *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

9. *On Nationality*, p. 23.

10. Ibid., p. 27.

11. Ibid., p. 36.

12. Ibid., p. 96.

13. Ibid., p. 72.

14. Ibid., p. 194.

15. Ibid., p. 195.

16. Ibid., p. 187.

17. Ibid., pp. 137 and 142.

18. Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

19. Ibid., p. 86.

20. Ibid., pp. 161 and 163.

21. Ibid., p. 150.

22. Ibid., p. 163.

23. Ibid., p. 161.

24. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992). Colley also ignores the earlier British discourse on national identity on which the writers of the period heavily drew.

25. For references, see the provocative article by P. J. Taylor, "The Meaning of the North: England's 'Foreign Country' Within?" *Political Geography*, March 1993.

26. *Newsweek*, April 1992.

27. This article grew out of a paper first presented at a faculty seminar at Harvard University. I am grateful to Stanley Hoffman, Seyla Benhabib, and Yael Tamir for their valuable comments.

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Ronald Beiner, Editor

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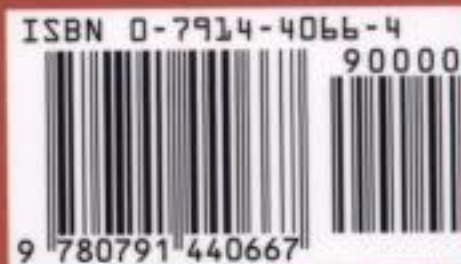
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Cover photo: Special Basque police officers remove demonstrators from in front of the Basque parliament in Vitoria, Spain (October 3, 1996). The demonstrators were demanding that imprisoned members of the Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA) group be allowed to serve their terms in Basque prisons. *Photo by David Aguilar: reproduced by permission of Archive Photos*

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