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NATIONALISM

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Chapter Six:
Imperialism, Colonialism, and the World-System of Nation-States

Imperial rule is precisely *not* the attempt to forge a unity between nation and state.[1] In the late 19th-century Austro-Hungarian Empire, for example, though some of their advisors encouraged the idea, the Hapsburgs did not attempt to integrate their dominions into a modern nation-state. That is, they did not begin to treat their subjects as more or less interchangeable members of the polity, impose linguistic uniformity, build an infrastructure rendering communication and commerce easy throughout the realm, replace narratives of conquest with those of primordial ethnic commonality, or base claims to legitimacy on the interests or will of "the people." Imperial rule, as they approached it, left local and ethnic groups largely intact. When such empires declined, these local groups continued to exist, and sometimes gained or regained significant autonomy. Only in the modern era, however, has the rhetoric of nationalism been employed to recast these local and ethnic groups as nations.

In the territories of the declining Austro-Hungarian Empire, nationalist discourse was widely invoked against the old imperial state. This reflected both prior cultural differences and—arguably more importantly—the way in which the Hapsburgs themselves had divided their dominions into administrative units.[2] But nationalism—in the sense of either identity or movement--did not spring spontaneously from either sort of precondition; it was given shape by the active intervention of cultural producers and political leaders. In the Austro-Hungarian case and in general, it is a mistake to characterize these emerging nationalist elites as "traditional leaders." On the contrary, the nationalists were largely members of subordinated ethnic or regional groups who had been educated in the imperial capital, employed in the imperial bureaucracy, or otherwise significantly involved with the imperial system. This gave them both a broader view of the situation of their "homelands" or "peoples" and access to the international discourse of nationalism. Often, slights to their pride or limits to their careers within the imperial apparatus gave them an incentive to focus more on nationalist projects. While such leaders—like the rest of us—were commonly motivated by selfish interests, these were not only political

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[1]Though their realm was certainly of imperial scale, to the extent that they were interested in promoting a unity between nation and state, the "emperors" of China are in a sense miscategorized by that Western term; they bear more resemblances to absolutist monarchs like Louis XIV than to the Holy Roman Emperor or his ancient Roman ancestors.

[2] Mann (1993); more generally, Mann (1995, pp. 49-50) has suggested, "We cannot predict which few nations successfully emerged on the basis merely of 'ethnicity'. The presence or absence of regional administration offers a much better predictor."

interests. Much of the work of creating national identity was undertaken by artists, musicians, writers, and intellectuals. These did not seek political power so much as cultural distinction—and a cultural field within which to enjoy it. Other elites were, of course, more directly interested in attaining power in newly independent national states. They found nationalist rhetoric both an effective tool for mobilization and a ready framework for claiming international recognition.[3]

Anderson has seen one of the key roots to the entire discourse of nationalism in the frustrations and solidarities of an earlier group of colonial elites (1991: ch. 4). The Hispanic colonization of Latin America produced a peculiar career pattern that resulted in early nationalist challenges to established authorities. Spanish America was divided into a variety of administrative units. The very top officials of these were customarily sent out from Spain (and might aspire to return to higher level positions at home). Under them, however, served a large body of creole officials. These were Spaniards by descent, language and (for the most part) culture. But they were locally born. They generally could not aspire to "return" to Spain. Their careers thus reached a vertical bar above which they could not go; this served to remind them of their difference--however culturally minute--from the "true" Spaniards above them. Even more importantly, their careers were laterally circumscribed. While someone sent out from Spain might move from one colony to another, the creoles could only hold positions within the colony into which they were born--Mexico, say, or Chile. This encouraged an identification with that administrative unit as a kind of homeland. So did the fact that unlike landlords (feudal or otherwise) who generally remained in one place, tied to their locality and their land, these creole colonial officials moved from place to place around the colony. The leaders among them wound up in its capital, no matter where they were born, but usually after seeing more of the country than members of other elite groups. As educated elites, these colonial officials were also especially likely to be able to participate in the print communications that eventually provided the cultural basis for national unification.

All these factors lay behind the fact that some of the earliest clearly nationalist revolutions in the world were led by people who were privileged elites, who spoke the same

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[3] Michael Hechter (1996) rightly emphasizes the incentives declining imperial rule gives political leaders to rebell, but neglects the cultural work required to turn ethnic commonalties into a strong and mobilizable sense of common national membership. He tends to take cultural groups—Serbs and Croats, say—for granted, rather than seeing the extent to which their distinctiveness and boundaries are produced or accentuated by intellectual and other cultural activists. Relatedly, Hechter treats separatist nationalists as "traditional" leaders in a misleading fashion, since they are commonly *not* the prenationalist leaders of local or ethnic groupings, but rather new elites, or offspring of old elites of middling status and power who have gained new sorts of experiences under imperial rule.

language, and who shared the same religion with those whose rule they challenged. It was not in the imperial metropole but in the colonies that people first came to conceptualize themselves as bearers of distinctive nationalities rather than simply subjects of monarchs, speakers of languages, etc. Once its development began, however, the notion of nation entered into cosmopolitan discourse, ultimately informing European thought and radical politics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and anti-colonial nationalism throughout the world.

The Hispanic case of a creole elite was relatively unusual, but it was common for nationalism to be borne by elites who at once remained privileged under colonial rule but who found their aspirations blocked. In most of the world, where new elites were created, they consisted of indigenous people who received colonial and even metropolitan educations (Brass 1991; Davidson 1992; Markakis 1987). These new elites had varying relationships with more established ones. In the British Sudan, for example, they were sharply distinct in the 19th century when charismatic traditionalist, the Mahdi, led a great rebellion. By the 20th century, however, his descendant Sadiq el-Mahdi, a future Islamist prime minister, was educated at Oxford. His family had joined with many in the middle classes in a complex mixture of colonial education and anti-colonial sentiment. Colonialism rendered traditional hereditary elites subalterns even where they retained many privileges, and it blocked the upward mobility possible on the basis of metropolitan or metropolitan-style educations and similar meritocratic recruitment mechanisms. These elites among the colonized often found their best political strategy to lie in embracing the idea of nation. This meant identifying with their countrymen of all classes, despite the frequent irony of continued pride in both traditional status and new educations. They might privately disdain the non-elite among their countrymen, but publicly they sought to represent peasants and others as a singular nation oppressed by the imperial power and deserving of self-determination. This strategy worked better to the extent that the elites forged actual ties to peasants and other non-elites, and were genuinely moved by feelings of solidarity with them. Sadiq's embrace of increasingly "fundamentalist" Islam was linked to his pursuit of such ties.

These elites did not have to invent the discourse of nationalism from scratch. As Anderson has argued, it was "modular," and could be transplanted from one setting to another. Indeed, it may be more precise to say that the discourse of nationalism was available as an international discourse, and new groups of people could take it up, could participate in it, and could in varying degree innovate with it. Thus when traditional elites who were displaced by colonial powers drew on the discourse of nationalism to frame their opposition to colonial rule,

they combined indigenous traditions and international rhetoric in ways that could be strikingly innovative and which could transform both indigenous and international ideas. It was, for example, under the influence of the rhetoric of nationalism that indigenous elites in India, China, Ghana, and Indonesia all took up the notion that legitimacy should depend on the will of those governed. This marked a change (of varying degree) in local discourses of legitimacy. At the same time, in each setting the anti-colonial elites made something different of the nationalism they drew from international discourse. They innovated, they drew in different local features, and they contended in each setting with each other on what mix of local tradition, international discourse, and innovation was right.

The metaphor of "modularity" is thus potentially misleading. It suggests that elements of an international discourse can be transplanted without basic alternation to new cultural settings. This neglects the more complex interplay between each local culture and the international discourse (as well as the lines of tension within each local cultural field).[4] It also neglects the fact that developments of anti-colonial nationalism were shaped not just by discourse, ideology, and tradition, but by power relations and social structure. Specific nationalist ideologies were (and are) developed in the context of struggles and practical activity, not altogether in the abstract. It would be a mistake to imagine that every nationalist movement invented nationalism anew, entirely out of its local cultural and political resources. Equally, though, in stressing the international dimension of nationalist discourse, we must avoid the implication that later nationalisms are simply derivative of earlier ones, rather than rooted in local conditions and experience (Chatterjee 1986). That the discursive form of nationalism is internationally available does not suggest that each use of it is necessarily derivative, with the pejorative connotation of that word, any more than each successive use of the literary form of the novel must be considered derivative.

Colonialism drove nationalism forward even while it resisted it. In most settings, the presence and power of the colonial regime stimulated the affirmation or development of a national identity as counterweight and basis for resistance. In many cases, colonial ideology also stimulated nationalism by claiming that the colonized were essentially disunited (except for the peace maintained by the colonizers) and incapable of self-organization; nationalism was both the

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[4] It would produce contorted prose to write without using the word 'culture' as though it referred to singular and relatively bounded individual cultures, but I hope readers will realize that I do not mean to suggest this. On the problems involved with the notion of simple "translation" across cultures or modularity of discursive formations, see Calhoun (1995: ch. 2).

visible evidence against this and in some cases part of the actual achievement of capacity for self-organization on a large scale.[5]

Colonial rule was itself more sharply incapacitating, in a crucial sense, once the world was organized in a system of states. Regardless of the difficulties in achieving either international efficacy or domestic self-organization, both opportunities were effectively limited to those who could mount a successful claim to state sovereignty. Whatever the actual form of government claimants anticipated, no matter how elite the anti-colonialists and how elitist their agendas for post-colonial rule, their claims to sovereignty came by definition from "below," from "the people," rather than from the rulers above. Nationalism was (and remains) the most readily available discursive form for such claims. Though it is in part imported from an international discourse, the very colonial situation leads to its indigenous reinvention and reinforcement.

A central theme of anti-colonial nationalism is the production of a citizenry. This helps to explain why so much of the early activity of nationalists is focused not directly on contesting state power but on efforts to reform culture, to undo traditional family forms and communal loyalties, and to create a "new person" combining aspects of Western individualism with distinctively indigenous cultural content. In attempting to account for the strength of imperial powers while demonstrating the continuing importance of indigenous national culture, many anti-colonial nationalisms produce or reproduce a split between spiritual and material life. The material realm is that in which the military and technical strength of foreign powers is evident. The spiritual realm is that in which the moral and cultural strengths of the subject nation can be celebrated. This resulted, in China, in the famous "Ti-Yong" dictum: Chinese studies for spiritual essence; Western studies for practical use (Chow 1960; Spence 1991). In India too,

[5]The idea that Third World, non-Western peoples were incapable of self-rule through nation-states has been widespread--together with its corollary that these "underdeveloped" countries needed some manner of tutelage for a time (Blaut 1987). This idea figured not just in the open ideologies of colonialists but in aspects of modernization theory, and even in some of the approach of Great Russians towards Asian peoples in the Soviet Union. Chatterjee (1986, 1994) discusses this dimension of colonial ideology and nationalist response in the context of Indian history. The claim of disunity seems immediately more plausible in the case of India (and various African colonies) than in China, for example. Nonetheless, even though Western imperialists in China confronted an indigenous imperial regime capable of organizing administration in far-flung provinces, the theme of indigenous disunity and incapacity for self-organization was not entirely absent. It was given force by various peasant rebellions in the nineteenth century, including that of the Taipings, and by the internal conflicts among elites during the declining years of the Qing dynasty (including especially those between Han Chinese and their Manchu rulers). In the years of the Republic and warlords after 1911, the reality of internal division and consequent weakness impressed and shaped Chinese nationalism as well as imperialist opinion. Among other things, this intersection of imperialist ideology and domestic concern may have joined with ancient fears of chaos and faith in unity to reinforce nationalist desires for a strongly unified rather than a federal China. See discussion in Duara (1988, 1992).

nationalist ideology declared the "domain of the spiritual its sovereign territory" and sought to restrict colonial interventions into this realm (Chatterjee 1994: 5).

> In fact, as Indian nationalists in the late nineteenth century argued, not only was it undesirable to imitate the West in anything other than the material aspects of life, it was even unnecessary to do so, because in the spiritual domain the East was superior to the West. What was necessary was to cultivate the material techniques of modern Western civilization while retaining and strengthening the distinctive spiritual essence of the national culture. (Chatterjee 1994: 133)

This rationale for selective Westernization continues to operate as part of the program of nationalist modernization in India and China today, despite other dramatic changes in each country. It shapes, for example, Deng Xiaoping's promotion of some capitalist economic reforms while simultaneously condemning the spiritual pollution brought by Westernization.

Indian intellectuals from the 19th century on were commonly at least as cosmopolitan as Europeans. But cosmospolitanism was problematic in the context of colonial rule in a way it wasn't for the European enlighteners. Many Indian nationalists (including Nehru) wrote in English and spoke it more comfortably than any "Indian" language; they helped, indeed, to make English an Indian language. But this involved a tension between English as the language of the colonizer and as the putative *lingua franca* that was to help constitute one nation by cutting across the linguistic divisions of the subcontinent. Moreover, at the same time that some nationalists appropriated English as an Indian language, others produced a renaissance of modern Indian languages like Bengali and Marathi; nationalism meant producing a new, modern literature in the vernacular language. This shaped the attempt to forge a unity between the language of literature and intellectuals and that of ordinary people--since groups previously separated by a linguistic hierarchy were now to be united by *national* language. Chinese intellectuals pursued a similar goal in the early 20th century—and it shaped the practices of the communist party as well.

Though much of this is distinctively a response to colonialism, Western history also involved struggles over cultural identity and the constitution of a citizenry.[6] Even Hobbes'

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[6] Chatterjee writes sometimes as though the development of the concept of "nation" in Western thought had remained more completely within the realm of specifically political discourse than it did. Thus he argues that the "suppression in modern European social theory of an independent narrative of community ... makes possible both the posing of the distinction between state and civil society and the erasure of that distinction" (1994: 283). This overgeneralizes, however, since the narrative of community has been a widespread and basic constituent of European social theory. Until the recent development of "communitarianism," however, this was one of the main

justification of the absolute sovereignty of kings, as we saw, required first a body of citizens--a nation--capable of granting the right to rule in explicit or implicit social contract. These citizens were, perforce, not only basically interchangeable as members of the nation (i.e., individuals) but engaged with each other in common projects mediated by webs of communication.

This is a crucial contrast between the empire and the nation-state, or, as Weintraub has noted, between the cosmopolitan city and the polis. The creation of a political community called for a new kind of interrelationships, and something more than a "live and let live" urbanity. In the cosmopolis or empire, since "heterogeneous multitudes were not called upon to be citizens, they could remain in apolitical coexistence, and each could do as he wished without the occasion to deliberate with his neighbors" (Weintraub 1997). In both the polis and the modern nation-state, membership in a common polity requires more than tolerance and common subjection to an external sovereign. It requires mutual communication.

Modern states developed as the primary arenas for popular political participation (and in some cases the creation of democratic institutions). Indeed, it was precisely because modern states were based on citizens not subjects that their cultural politics were so violent. Historical empires were relatively effective at enabling people of different ethnic groups to live together in peace. In and around the Ottoman capital of Istanbul, for example, Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived and traded with each other. But peace was relatively easy because the different groups were not called upon to join in common deliberations about government or public affairs; the Sultan consulted advisors of various ethnic groups, but not the ordinary people. While members of various groups might be conscripted into his armies, these were not citizen armies and there was no mass mobilization for military efforts. Likewise, while the Ottoman empire (like other empires) maintained the peace vital to long-distance trade, it did not in itself produce a real economic integration among its diverse territories. It did not transform the division of labor, for example, or generate a great deal of technical innovation. This meant that most of the different communities and peoples under Ottoman rule continued to pursue their traditional and mainly local economic activities. Metropolitan merchants traded over long distances mainly in luxury goods. Otherwise, the various countries remained more or less self-contained local economies. Even within a country like Britain, this was the case until the era of the industrial

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distinctions of *social* theory from political theory, especially in the English-language literatures. Political theory often suppressed consideration of communities other than the nation (a community of the whole), in favor of accounts relating individuals to states. Political theory lacked a strong account of social integration other than that accomplished by states; this paved the way for the recent "rediscovery" of civil society as a theme in liberal political theory (see, e.g., Cohen and Arato 1992).

revolution (including the explosion of agricultural and craft productivity that immediately preceded factory production). There was some regional division of labor based on differences in mineral endowment, agricultural potential of the land, and local craft specializations. But markets meant physical places to which local people went to trade mainly with other local people; only certain relatively specialized goods were manufactured for national consumption.

The development of institutions and arenas for sharing in popular politics ironically has often led to ideologies demanding increased homogeneity among citizens. Differences that didn't matter much when ordinary people were not empowered to make political decisions became troubling with greater democracy. Enhanced national communications media--important to democracy--also can facilitate erasure of differences among citizens. One of the crucial questions of the modern era is whether meaningful, politically efficacious public discourse can be achieved without this erasure (Fraser 1992, Eley 1992.). The differences which nationalist discourse commonly subjugates include gender and class as well as region, ancestry and other possible bases of counter-nationalist secession.

Though nationalist self-descriptions generally emphasize mass participation and cross-class unity, for example, nationalism is often an elite project structured in ways which maintain or institute patterns of domination. This is nowhere more true than in those post-colonial states where it is most vociferously denied. As Markakis remarks, "anti-colonial nationalism was not, as often depicted, a massive popular crusade driven by the desire to undo what imperialism had wrought. In fact, its constituency was socially circumscribed and its aims concrete" (Markakis, 1987: 70). Nationalism was commonly a project of groups linked to the colonial state and to vested interests in the colonial economy. Indeed, nationalism often grew earliest among those educated (or at least experienced) in imperial metropoles. Yet, since anti-colonial nationalists challenged the legitimacy of colonial rule on the grounds that it did not represent the indigenous people (as a general category, not just the elites among them), they helped pave the rhetorical foundations for more popular claims to political participation and restructuring. At the same time, the social relations elites forged outside their own ranks, and the "modernizing" educational and social reform projects they undertook among "the masses," often led precisely to a "de-massification" of ordinary people. Where colonialists claimed that their power was necessary to keep the peace and secure economic progress, indigenous elites sought to create or demonstrate the existence of an indigenous nation adequate to the modern era (Davidson 1992). In doing so, they provided ordinary people with increased means of mobilizing for their own projects in

competition with those of the initial nationalist elites. In a host of settings, for example, class-based claims could be supported by nationalists primarily when they were directed against colonial or international imperialists. They became more problematic after independence.

Claims on behalf of women have often been particularly problematic for anti-colonial nationalist groups for two reasons. First, Western colonial powers often seized on the "traditional" treatment of women as evidence of the inherently oppressive nature of the entire cultural tradition of the colonized (and thus of the virtues of colonial rule as modernization). Raising women's issues was easily made to look anti-nationalist. Second, the effort to defend the "spiritual essence" of the nation often involved emphasizing the national identity found in social life outside the realms of economy and public administration. Home, family and gender relations were particularly national (and attempts to introduce new forms of employment for women and other putative "freedoms" appeared as encroachments). Wearing of the veil in Algeria, thus, became a complex focus of colonial tensions with France. As Fanon (1965: 65, original italics) put it, "The veil was worn because tradition demanded a rigid separation of the sexes, but also because the occupier *was bent on unveiling Algeria."* The colonists presented themselves as modernizers and liberators of women by challenging the veil; many Algerians understood this not only as an attack on male privilege but as an attack on traditional culture, female modesty and virtue, and Islam itself.

> The dominant administration … described the immense possibilities of woman, unfortunately transformed by the Algerian man into an inert, demonetized, indeed, dehumanized object. The behavior of the Algerian was very firmly denounced and described as medieval and barbaric. ... Around the family life of the Algerian, the occupier piled up a whole mass of judgments, appraisals, reasons, accumulated anecdotes and edifying examples, thus attempting to confine the Algerian within a circle of guilt. (Fanon 1965: 38)

Fanon's analysis of this tension is perhaps insufficiently critical of the patriarchal dimension of the veil—including claims that Algerian women needed its "protection and reassurance"--but it sheds light on "the new dialectic of the body and the world" (1965: 59) that developed when the freedom or "protection" and "disciplining" of female bodies became a site of contestation between Algerian nationalists and French modernizers who were also colonialists.[7] As Fanon

[7] Aimée Césaire (1955) addressed similar issues within the context of the same international movement of "negritude," though with considerably less critical perspective on gender and patriarchy.

notes, women entering the liberation struggle gave up the veil almost as commonly as those entering French-dominated social life. But there was a “dynamism of the veil” that was missed by those who saw it as a pure embodiment of patriarchal tradition, who missed the ways in which it could be used for more political ends. This sheds some light on the more recent struggles over the wearing of the veil by Islamic schoolgirls in France itself. Regardless of the merits of the arguments over secularism vs. religious identities, it needs to be grasped that the state is not neutral but an agent of French nationalism, and that it addresses an issue with a history in colonialism and anti-colonial struggle. More generally, it suggests reasons beyond simple patriarchy for the tendency of nationalist movements so commonly to affirm masculinist practices rooted in traditional cultures (see also Chatterjee 1994).

Even beyond these specific contexts, nationalisms have been overwhelmingly male ideologies, not simply in the sense that men have been more nationalist than women, but rather in the way that national strength is defined so often as international potency and military power; men are treated as potential martyrs while women are mainly their mothers. It is in content--militarism and the appropriation of patriarchal traditional culture, for the most part--that nationalisms are especially sexist. In form, nationalist appeals to the equivalence of individual members of the nation offer a potential basis for women to claim greater rights (as indeed they have done within many polities, and by no means only in the West). At the same time, however, nationalist rhetoric has commonly embodied an emphasis on procreation, thinking of the nation’s future in the reproduction or growth of its population. This is one of the reasons why rape was so significantly a crime of Serbian nationalists defiling those they wished to drive from the territory they claimed in Bosnia. This heterosexism also links nationalism in many settings both to repression of homosexuality and a normalization of sex as the basis for childbearing—on behalf of the nation.

One of the ways in which nationalisms can appear as "modernizing" is that they promote an element of individualism (potentially though not necessarily linked to the notion that individuals are the bearers of rights)--even while they may repress strong individual differences. Thus Indian nationalism, for example, has attempted not only to create a historical narrative of Indian unity, but to address individuals directly as Indians rather than first and foremost as members of different linguistic or regional groups, castes, etc.[8] In China too, communist

[8]As Chatterjee (1994) shows, the term *jati* could be mobilized in such a way that it emphasized Indian or Hindu as the basic "kind" into which a person fit, rather than only the more specific and hierarchically arranged categories we

ideology has been essentially nationalist (even more than that of the *Guomindang*) in demanding the direct and unmediated allegiance of each individual and challenging the independent claims of parents over children (most notoriously in the Cultural Revolution). As noted above, contemporary Islamic nationalism, however "fundamentalist" and "traditional" in content, shares a good deal of the same discursive form. It works as a categorical identity that posits a direct connection between the individual Muslim and Umma Islam. This is part of what makes fundamentalist Islam appear as so threatening to various formally more traditional governments like the monarchies of the Gulf states. These Arab states are precisely *not* nationalist and not organized around modern ideas of citizenship. Kuwait is ruled by an Emir, as the head of a royal lineage, within a tribal kin group that comprises a minority of the inhabitants of its territory and an even smaller percentage of those involved in material production or rendering services. Both Iraq's Baathist nationalism and the broader Islamic nationalism promulgated by Iran start from the premise of universal citizenship, at least for men. Both officially empower individuals through elections (whether or not all observers consider these to be free and honest), something Kuwait emphatically does not do. Fundamentalist Islam (and cognate nationalisms) offers an ideology much closer, in this respect, to that of the French Revolution than purveyors of common stereotypes like to admit (drawing as they do on oppositions of the Western Enlightenment to both fundamentalist religion in general and the Islamic East in particular). Nationalist discourse, in each case, commonly involves a demand for conformity not just an offer of membership. It has been potentially oppressive for all those placed in subordinate positions by the ideal-typical representation of the nation.

Capitalism and Large-Scale Societal Integration

The creation of the world system of states was intimately linked to the expansion of capitalism (Wallerstein 1974-1988). The state was not only a facilitator of this expansion, it was a response to it (Anderson 1974; Kennedy 1987). Both efforts to participate in the global market and efforts to opt out in favor of autarky required strong states. States mediated activity in the

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associate with the term caste. Caste, by the way, itself appeared largely as a categorical identity, part of a classificatory scheme that located individuals discretely. India was thus not quite so radically "other" to the Western versions of categorical identities and individual as is sometimes suggested. At the same time, many Western commentators distort actual practices when they approach caste always as though it was a single scheme of classification holistically integrated at an all-India level (they bring in a nationalist consciousness without realizing it). Caste should also refer to a welter of local practices and groupings, many with greater relational foundations and less clear-cut integration into any supra-local, national scheme of classification than the stereotype suggests. (I am indebted to Lee Schlesinger for discussions on this point and the opportunity to read unpublished writings.)

global market system (and shaped the process of capital accumulation), even though from very early on this global market transcended states.

Capitalism, as Marx (1867) argued, pulls individuals out of constitutive communal bonds and declares them to be autonomous. But of course the autonomy is illusory; people find themselves subject to forces--like global markets--operating on a very large scale, and must confront these as individuals not only as members of communities. Reliance on large scale categorical identities like nation is partially a response to this. This global order, moreover, is subject to recurrent global crises, and also produces localized crises each of which may be grasped by unattractive uses of nationalist discourse and violence in the name of national purification. The horrors of Rwanda and Burundi were shaped by various international pressures including wild swings in coffee and other commodity prices; those in the former Yugoslavia bear the imprint not only of the collapse of communism but of economic crisis.

Capitalism itself depended on and continually increased the capacity for large-scale and indirect social relations. Capitalism continually drove its agents out beyond local markets, established competitive pressures around the globe, and demanded coordination of ever-growing supplies of labor and raw materials--even before the generation of increasing consumer demand became an obsession. The nation became the domestic market; other nations became international competitors or clients.[9] The globalization wrought by capitalism also encouraged dramatic labor migrations. Political and economic factors intertwined, as migrants often fled nationalist strife, and their arrival in new settings contributed to xenophobic nationalist responses.

Capitalism is the greatest engine driving the expansion of global interconnections and large-scale organization generally. But unlike state formation, its impacts on nationalism have been mainly indirect. First, capitalism played a central role in creating systems so large and complex that local communities and other associations formed out of directly interpersonal relationships could not serve most people as adequate mediations. Second, capitalism directly undermined much of local community life, kinship and other social organization based on webs of direct, interpersonal relations (not making them disappear, but reducing their capacity to serve as basic building blocks of large-scale social organization). Third, capitalism encouraged

[9]While capitalism occasioned both this kind of internal integration and this boundary maintenance, it did not in itself dictate either the national form or the definition of any particular nation. "The generalization of commercial exchange cannot explain the creation of the modern nation; if it reveals the necessity of the unification of the so-called internal market and the elimination of obstacles to the circulation of goods and capital, *it does not in any way*

individualism, dealing with people mainly as owners of private property or sellers of labor power. The idea of nation is the most important of several categorical identities that step between the putatively autonomous (but on a global scale relatively weak) individual and the supremely complex and powerful forces of global social order (or disorder).

While capitalism played a central role in sundering certain forms of social connection, it also created new ones. Above all, it created the means for maintaining very indirect social relations on a large-scale--paradigmatically through the market, but also through large administrative organizations like multinational corporations. Capitalism also facilitated and encouraged, though it does not by itself explain, the development of other forms of communication. Anderson (1991; see also Habermas 1989), for example, has called attention to the crucial role played by “print capitalism” in the development of modern nationalism. Such early businesses and business-supporting ventures as newspapers, journals and eventually novels facilitated nationalism by helping to spread nationalist ideology and shared culture. In addition, their very form and the practice of reading them, helped to reinforce a notion of social interconnection among the members of large scale categories linked by only weak and not very dense social relationships (Calhoun 1991). Thus, as Anderson notes, readers of newspapers could imagine themselves as engaging in an activity which they shared with thousands or even millions of others. Small-scale businesses, adjuncts usually to the main dramas of capitalism, played an important role in promoting nationalist discourse by providing important bases for public life: coffee houses, publishing houses, etc. Communications infrastructures have facilitated space-transcending linkages which encouraged people to give up the narrow outlooks of their native villages for an understanding of themselves as (individually) members of the nation (Deutsch 1953, 1969; Schlesinger 1987).

Because more and more of the activity on which lives and livelihoods depended was taking place at a distance from each immediate locale, attempts to conceptualize the commonalties and connections among locales were increasingly important. Connections established only through markets and the commodity form were especially prone to reification and representation in categorical terms (Marx 1867; Postone 1993). Capital hired labor, thus, rather than businesses hiring workers. Class itself was such a categorical term. Above all, people situated themselves as members of various such categories in relation to "the market,"

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explain why this unification takes place precisely at the level of the nation" (Poulantzas 1980: 105-6).

understood in reified terms as an all-encompassing environment rather than the product of human actions.

In markets, thus conceived, concrete social relations are seldom thematized. Buyers of shoes and sellers of socks do not confront each other as concrete persons engaged in direct exchange. Individuals enter the market, rather, as members of abstract categories of buyers and sellers—those with enough money to buy the best shoes, or those with so little bargaining position they must make socks at pitiful wages. They need have no particular social relations with the others in their category. Yet people are constantly addressed as members of such categories--by advertisers, for example, and indeed the producers of the media programs supported by the advertisements. Ads are targeted at potential consumers of expensive shoes; unionization campaigns at poorly paid sock-makers. As members of such categories people learn of the benefits and threats brought by changes in the market--minimum wage rates will rise; mortgage rates will fall; jobs like theirs will be lost to Japanese competition. As the last example suggests, national identities become vital categories in such representations. Indeed, although markets have never stopped at national borders and capital flows and other economic processes have long been international, everyday discourse continues to address people as members of national economies. It tells them to be grateful that "the American economy" is showing signs of recovery, or worried because the American economy is being damaged by unfair international competition. It is only through our sense of ourselves as members of various such categories--mainly fairly large-scale ones--that we are able to situate ourselves in relation to the enormous, distant, impersonal forces (economic above all) that shape our lives. Nation is the most important of these—though religious identifications (sometimes overlapping with nationalism) are also powerful (see Jurgensmeyer 1993). The cultural politics of nationalism and religious fundamentalism are among the ways in which people respond indirectly to their incorporation into relatively large polities and a global economy in which power is real but mobilized from distant and sometimes obscure centers.

Equivalence and Misrecognition

No nation-state ever existed entirely unto itself. As Tilly has shown, European states grew and intensified their administration in the context of a web of inter-state rivalries (Tilly 1975, 1990). These were played out in economic as well as military and diplomatic arenas (though the politics of dynastic kinship and inheritance did not disappear until fairly late in the process). Gradually, from the early modern era through the nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, older political organizations like empires, quasi-autonomous principalities, and free cities gave way to a more standardized system. The world was divided into formally equivalent states, each of which was sovereign. Ideally, each of these states represented a single nation, hence the term “nation-state”. By the second half of the twentieth century, it was clearly anomalous for any nation-state to remain under the explicit political tutelage of another, and where such relations existed they were commonly subjected to campaigns to undo them.[10]

Most nationalist movements have involved claims to states--either claims to create autonomous states where these do not exist or claims that the nation should govern a state currently in the hands of foreigners or other illegitimate rulers. Occasionally nationalists are prepared to settle for special recognition in the constitution of a multinational state. But the discourse of nationalism operates not only in the direction of people to state; the reciprocal claim is also common. By the nineteenth century, Europeans thought not only that every nation deserved a state, thus, but that each state should represent one nation (Kohn 1944).

One feature of this new way of conceptualizing sovereignty is the treatment of all nation-states as formally equivalent, whatever their size or power. The discourse of nationalism demands that San Marino, two dozen square miles with 24,000 citizens, be seen as formally equivalent to China or the United States. It is a full member of the United Nations. The equivalence of states is emphasized especially in arenas like the UN, not only because the discourse of nationalism predominates, but because attention is paid to the whole system of states at once. Even in interstate relations where disparities of power and scale matter substantially, however, the rhetoric of equivalence is commonly observed. New York City may be more than twice as populous as Eritrea or Norway, say, but this does not grant it comparable diplomatic status; the United States, not subsidiary polities within it (like states or cities), relates to each other country as a peer.

At the same time that formal equivalence confers a certain dignity on a nation, this is unlikely to substitute for power and stature among nations; nationalism can turn to militarism, economic insularity, and concerns for slighted honor.[11] This can of course lead to war, and to a

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[10]Perhaps the most substantial survival of such tutelage occurred in the communist world, where the Soviet Union sharply limited the actual sovereignty of East European states (not to mention constituent states of the U.S.S.R.), but maintained the pretense of their autonomy. The United States arguably maintained somewhat similar relations with the Philippines and some other countries in its "sphere of influence."

[11]Greenfeld (1992) has analyzed the prominence of a nationalism of resentment in Central and Eastern Europe. Eley (1980, esp. ch. 5) shows this pattern vividly in the German case. Arab and Islamic nationalism have likewise been motivated by a sense of the injuries perpetrated by those with strong states (Anderson, Khalidi, Muslih and

cycle of injuries, resentments and new conflicts (such as that in the Balkans). But the domestic, largely discursive, consequences of such international pursuits should not be ignored. International conflict generally, and military mobilization in particular, can help to confer (or enforce) unity on a disparate domestic population. As James Sheehan (1978: 279) writes of Germany after World War I, "military defeat brought national humiliation and called into question the very existence of the nation which many in the middle strata saw as the ultimate political value and the last hope for political cohesion." Remilitarization was a way to retrieve national unity—to save the nation domestically as well as internationally. The legitimacy and integrity of the contemporary state depended in part on the capacity to claim a strong national history. This fueled both a reconsideration of the past and new action designed to fulfill the so-far empty promise of that past.

Similarly, in both Risorgimento and especially fascist Italy, a problematic past—lagging behind European neighbors, suffering losses in colonial wars--became the focus of enormous nationalist attention, as for example heroes of wars half-successful at best were redefined as national martyrs. In this process, as Mabel Berezin has noted, "the fascist regime attempted to colonize the principle sources of Italian emotional attachment, family and religion, and submerge them in the community of the state" (Berezin 1997 and forthcoming). The Italian state encouraged pronatalist policies, for example, mobilizing ideas of romantic and familial love and images from the Virgin Mary to the spinster sacrificing herself for the nation to produce an emotionally compelling narrative of national cultural identity. It is not only in the Italian case that the production of a "strong" nationalism has taken on a strikingly gendered character, promoting ideals of manhood and claiming certain forms of private life as essential to the nation. This has been true of other fascisms, and also of a variety of nationalisms (Mosse 1985; Parker, *et al* 1995). The removal of women from public life has been a striking feature, for example, of the replacement of communism by nationalism as a legitimating ideology in much of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. A very gendered conception of the nation—and a strongly stereotyped vision of the role of women as members of the nation—figured in the French Revolution, and in such continuing imagery as "Marianne," whose body—at once sexual and potentially maternal, yet not without a militant edge--embodied the French nation (Agulhon 1981; Hunt 1992).

Simon 1991; Farah 1987, Tibi 1990, Balibar and Wallerstein 1991).

The claim to a singular match between each state and its nation, reinforced by international jealousies, humiliations and fears, has often been the basis for both repression of difference within the nation (including non-orthodox gender roles) and attempts to exclude or subjugate all "foreign" elements within the state (including the racially or ethnically distinct as well as actual immigrants; see Gilroy 1988). The language of national humiliation (or international abuse more generally) provides a discourse in which people can respond to felt problems, like impoverishment, without recognizing the extent to which their interests conflict with others of their countrymen. This misrecognition is not simply manipulated from above but built into the discourse of nationalism (on misrecognition, see Bourdieu 1990).

The existence of a world system of states, in sum, constitutes a continuing pressure for the use of nationalist discourse in the justification of claims to sovereignty. Though some analysts predict the dissolution of such states in a postmodern welter of local identities and global corporations, the states do not yet seem to have given up the ghost. It is widely argued that the ability of states to maintain sharp boundaries and to promote internal cultural homogeneity is in decline. It is not clear how such a trend would affect nationalism. On the one hand, it would undermine the extent to which states were likely to be powerful agents of nationalism, and reduce the attractions of gaining state power. On the other hand, it would reduce the capacity of states to resist subsidiary nationalisms and increase the occasions for potentially nationalist groups to form. Not least of all, even if weakened states are likely to remain the only institutional framework within which to pursue large-scale projects of democracy and self-determination. But at the same time, this world system of states is recalcitrant to new claims for statehood, whether based on integration/amalgamation or on disintegration/secession. In the nineteenth-century "Springtime of Nations," it could be assumed that the world system of states could readily provide for every nation's freedom (Kohn 1944, Sheehan 1978, Szporluk 1988). That vision did not last long, though its rhetoric of self-determination still endures, partly because it was founded on the assumption that some clear primordial or historical basis could be found which would settle decisively the question of which were the true nations. As Gellner has remarked, however, "on any reasonable calculation, the former number (of potential nations) is probably much, much larger than that of possible viable states" (1983: 2).[12] Not all potential nations pursued goals of nation-building or state

[12] It is not clear whether there are objective limits on the number of viable states, as Gellner implies. If so, they clearly have not been reached.

autonomy. Moreover, a sense of nationhood could be forged even where there was little history of ethnic unity--as in Eritrea.

The world system of nations is therefore both an incentive to nationalism and a constraint on it. It is an incentive because there is no other basis for participation in world affairs. And it is a constraint because its tacit assumption is always that the full complement of states is already represented. It therefore takes quite remarkable events to achieve international recognition for a new state. In Africa both political leaders and intellectuals routinely and rightly complain of the arbitrariness--or even insidiousness--of the boundaries drawn by European colonial powers. Ethnic groups were often split, traditional enemies thrown together, port access eliminated and trade routes ignored by Europeans dividing the continent amongst themselves, and sometimes trying to divide the natives in order to rule them better (Amin 1975, Nzongola-Ntalaja 1987). Yet postcolonial African governments and the Organization of African States have been extremely loath to recognize any secessionist regime, partly at least because they were all too aware of such possibilities at home (Davidson 1992; Lewis 1983; Mazrui and Tidy 1984; Selassie 1980). It is remarkable that Eritrea's 1992 independence marked the first successful secession from a modern African state.