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Christophe Jaffrelot  
CERI/CNRS

## Abstract

Nation is state-oriented, whereas nationalism is an ideology which may simply promote one's own identity against Others. Therefore, theories of nation-building do not explain nationalism. Other theories adopting a materialist approach do, like Gellner's model in which nationalism appears as resulting from socio-ethnic conflicts, but they ignore the inner mechanism of this ideology. Theories looking at nationalism as an export product from the West also miss this point too. In contrast, a convincing body of theories anchor nationalism in socio-cultural reform. The intelligentsia which undertakes it in order to resist the threat posed by some dominant Other – often from the West, that fascinates them -, eventually develops a nationalist attitude, because it is not willing to imitate the West but strive to restore its culture by incorporating into it prestigious features of the West through the invention of a convenient Golden Age, the cornerstone of nationalism.

This approach finds a parallel in the theories of ethnicity which do not apply the primordialist paradigm but focus on the making of group boundaries. Barth highlights the decisive role of the relationship to the Other and the little importance of cultural contents – compared to the maintenance of group boundaries – in the making of ethnic identities, in such a way that there are more affinities between his theory of ethnicity and theories of nationalism than between the latter and theories of the nation.

However, one can construct an integrated model of nationalism by organising different theories in a sequence. While the ideology-based approach comes first, the creation of a nationalist movement implies the rise of socio-economic conflicts and the massification of nationalism, a process of nation-building.

## Résumé

La nation regarde vers l'Etat tandis que le nationalisme est une idéologie qui se contente parfois de promouvoir l'identité d'un groupe en relation avec d'autres. Les théories du *nation-building* n'expliquent donc pas le nationalisme. D'autres théories matérialistes y parviennent néanmoins, comme celle de Gellner où le nationalisme est le résultat de conflits socio-ethniques, mais où les ressorts internes de l'idéologie restent dans l'ombre. Les théories présentant le nationalisme comme un produit d'exportation d'origine occidentale ne font pas mieux, à la différence de celles qui l'ancrent dans un processus de réforme socio-culturelle. L'intelligentsia, qui a engagé ce processus pour résister à un Occident qui la fascine mais qu'elle perçoit comme une menace, développe finalement une attitude nationaliste car il n'a jamais été question pour elle d'imiter l'Occident mais de réhabiliter sa culture en y incorporant des traits prestigieux de l'Occident à travers l'invention d'un Age d'Or, la pierre de touche du nationalisme.

Cette approche trouve un parfait équivalent dans les théories de l'ethnicité, non pas celles qui appliquent le paradigme primordialiste, mais celles qui se concentrent sur la création des frontières entre groupes. Barth souligne à cet égard le rôle décisif de la relation à l'autre et le peu d'importance des contenus culturels – par rapport aux frontières des groupes – dans la formation des identités ethniques, à telle enseigne que sa théorie de l'ethnicité présente plus d'affinité avec certaines théories du nationalisme que celle-ci et les théories de la nation. Toutefois, on peut construire un modèle intégré du nationalisme en organisant les différentes théories en séquence. Si les théories fondées sur le rôle de l'idéologie viennent ici en premier, la création d'un mouvement nationaliste implique l'exacerbation de conflits socio-ethniques et la massification du nationalisme, un processus de nation-building.

While, in France, nationalism has long remained the preserve of historians (Girardet, 1965; Nora, 1986) – before anthropologists<sup>1</sup> (Dumont, 1983, 1991), sociologists (Schnapper, 1991) and political scientists (Michelat and Thomas, 1966; Delannoi & Taguieff, 1991, 2001; Hermet, 1996; Birnbaum, 1997) began paying increasing attention to the issue –, American and English political scientists started early, soon after World War II. Since then, given the quickly expanding body of literature on nationalism in English, one may expect that this subject has given birth to a well-structured sub-discipline in the Anglo-Saxon political science.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly, the growing interest in nationalism among social scientists has been increasingly reflected over the last ten years in the multiplication of specialized journals and readers. Among the former, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cambridge) was born in 1995 and *National Identities* (Basingstoke) in 1999, among the latter, one may mention, for instance, *The Nationalism Reader* (New Jersey, 1995) edited by Omar Dahbour and Micheline Ishay, *Nationalism* (Oxford, 2000) edited by John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith and *Becoming National: A Reader* (Oxford, 1996), edited by Eley, Geoff, Suny and Girgor. There is now even an *Encyclopaedia of Nationalism* (Oxford, 2000), edited by Athena Leoussi and Anthony Smith. But has the *theory* of nationalism made much progress? In fact the very notion of a theory of nationalism seems to be problematic. Recently, Craig Calhoun came to the conclusion that:

Nationalism is too diverse to allow a single theory to explain it all. Much of the contents and specific orientation of various nationalisms is determined by historically distinct cultural traditions, the creative actions of leaders, and contingent situations within the international world order (Calhoun, 1997, 123).

Calhoun's views echoed those of John Hall for whom 'no single, universal theory of nationalism is possible. As the historical record is diverse, so too must be our concepts' (Hall, 1999, p. 1). What is at stake here, is the very mission of social sciences, which are supposed to use, or build, concepts applicable to different contexts and situations (on this

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<sup>1</sup> Marcel Mauss, naturally, stands as an atypical pioneer since his article "La Nation" was written in 1920 (Mauss, 1953-54).

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Birnbaum has noticed the contrast between the Anglo-Saxon scene and the French one: 'In all haste, many are those who, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world that is more sensitive to the sociology of values, have undertaken research of all sorts: the production of studies on nationalism has replaced in the concerns of many research on corporatism or the state.

Actually, French sociologists, more deeply influenced by the Durkheimian or Marxist traditions, seem to remain on the sidelines, abandoning these forms of collective action, so difficult is it to fit nationalist values into structural logics that are hardly conducive to grasping variations in *imaginaries*.' (Birnbaum, 1997, 2)

point, see also Stokes, 1978 and Waldron 1985). It is certainly high time to react to such regressive tendencies which would take us back to pre-analytical, typology-oriented forms of social sciences.

The rather pessimistic assessment of Calhoun and Hall partly results from the conceptual confusion that pervades this domain. Even though students of nationalism have made attempts at bringing order into an extremely prolific field (see A.D. Smith (1971) Richmond (1987) and Haas (1986)), this exercise has generally been undermined by a persisting incapacity to disentangle four key concepts, patriotism, nation, nationalism and ethnicity.

The notion of “patriotism” is much less heuristic than the three others. Most of the time, it is used in a morally-loaded perspective: patriotism is respectable because it refers to the defensive, heroic attitude of the nation under attack. Arjun Appadurai, in this very perspective, defines patriotism on the basis of the readiness of the citizens to die for their country (Appadurai, 1993), whereas “nationalism” precisely describes those engaged in aggressive, expansionist politics. But, asks Michael Ignatieff, “can you have patriotism without nationalism” (Ignatieff, 1999: 141)? Both are often the two sides of the same coin. In fact this dichotomy is as misleading as the one between civic, liberal nationalism on the one hand and ethnic, closed nationalism on the other hand – indeed, these two dichotomies to a great extent coincide.

The second definition of patriotism one finds in the specialized literature is closer to its etymological meaning: the word comes from “patria”, a term which refers to the “country of the father”, that is, historically the king. For many authors the notion of patriotism therefore marks the transition between the patria and the nation: it is still imbued with filial allegiance towards the king, but citizens now die for a more abstract social construct in which this sentiment is reinvested, such as those who fought in Valmy after the French Revolution. In this perspective, emphasizes C.A. Bayly, patriotism is equivalent to ‘Popular Proto-nationalism’ according to Eric Hobsbawm (Bayly, 1998, 100). For Bayly, however, this antecedent and anchorage point of nationalism that is patriotism refers more precisely to regional and community-oriented identities – he always qualifies patriotism as being plural and ‘old’: “patriotisms” are the cultural and historical material of which nationalism is made. He qualifies them on the basis of ‘the specificities of the culture in which modern nationalism embedded itself’ (*ibid.*, 109). In my own terminology, such a definition of patriotism harks back to the notion of ethnicity, on which I shall focus after examining the relation between nation and nationalism.

Too many comparative or even theoretical books insist on dealing with nation and nationalism simultaneously. However, to construct a theory of the nation and to evolve one of nationalism is not the same thing. Nations have an institutional dimension that is state-oriented – hence the notion of “nation-state” -, whereas nationalism is an ideology (an ‘ism’) which often claims the control of a nation and/or promotes one’s own (superior) identity against Others’. Its foundations, therefore, are rooted in identity politics and culture. Therefore, I hypothesize in the following pages that there are more affinities between theories of nationalism and theories of ethnicity than between theories of the nation and theories of nationalism.<sup>3</sup>

The present essay does not only intend to clarify the relations between these three terms, nation, nationalism and ethnicity, but also to propose a framework for the understanding of nationalism that would integrate some of the most influential theories of nationalism in one model.

## **MODELS OF NATION-MAKING**

The quest for models explaining the emergence of nations and nationalisms, constitutes a recent sub-discipline of political science. Until World War II, this subject had been monopolized by historians who were bent on tracing its characteristics by means of narrative and comparison or through purely descriptive typologies. From the 1950s, models making use of the tools employed by political sociology (such as statistics) found favor in the United States and Europe. In fact, political science first addressed the issue of nation-building, instead of that of nationalism, but both things were immediately bracketed together, causing an enduring confusion.

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<sup>3</sup> In fact, among the new journals on this area of interest we find also publications studying nationalism and ethnicity together, like *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* (Portland), since 1995.

## The 'Nation-building' school

### State-making and nation-making

The first variant of the 'nation-building' school considers the effects of modernization from the very start of modern history, in the 16th century, in a macro socio-economic perspective. Its main representative, Stein Rokkan, subscribed to the framework of a 'comparative macro-history of the territories of Western Europe' (Rokkan, 1987, p. 75). His study of the emergence of the first European nation-states therefore depends on an analysis of the economic, territorial and cultural variables going back to the medieval period. The order in which they are enumerated here reflects the value he assigns to the material dimension of the modernization processes. The study of these variables was supposed to enable Rokkan to reconstitute the various stages in the formation of nations and explain their characteristics. The evolution of each of these three variables could be measured on the basis of specific data such as, for instance, for the 16th-18th centuries, the density of the network of commercial towns – especially along the axis formed by the Rhine and the Rhone-, and the administrative-military strength of the monarchical centers and their linguistic and religious homogeneity (Rokkan et alii, p. 23). This method of research involved collecting the greatest possible amount of statistical evidence; Rokkan was indeed a staunch advocate of statistics collection in political science (Merritt and Rokkan, 1966).

The major contribution made by these techniques of investigation lies undoubtedly in the construction of typologies and the identification of geo-economic and geopolitical cleavages that prepared the ground for the differentiation and crystallization of the first European nation-states (Rokkan, 1975, p. 592-595). However, this work deals very little with the concept of nationalism and scarcely with that of nation. The latter, perceived as being the result of a long term process, is seen only through the medium of the state and its institutional framework.

Charles Tilly, who belonged to the same intellectual milieu as Rokkan and worked in the same perspective, is very clear about the fact that 'state-making' is really what interests him. Although he studied *nation*-states, he warned from the outset of his book that "nation" remains one of the most puzzling and tendentious items in the political lexicon' (Tilly, 1975, p. 6). His macro-history of Europe shows that state-building owes much to wars: before waging war because of nationalism, nation-states are indeed 'made by wars' simply because the cost of these wars oblige the kings to exact greater funds from their subjects and

therefore to develop a fiscal administration, in other words to territorialize their administration (Tilly, 1990). This process laid the ground for the making of nation-states, but Tilly's approach does not claim to deal with nationalism *per se*.

More than three decades after Rokkan, Michael Hechter has proposed a theory of nationalism based on the stages of state-formation. According to Hechter, 'nationalism consists of political activities that aim to make the boundaries of the nation – a culturally distinctive collectivity aspiring to self-governance – coterminous with those of the state' (Hechter, 1999, p. 7). Therefore, nationalism is a by-product of the modern state. Pre-modern states ignored it because they were mainly in the form of empires whose governance units had frontiers including 'culturally distinct groups': this system of 'indirect rule thwarts nationalism' (*ibid.*, p. 28). On the contrary, nationalism emerged when technical developments (in terms of communications, mainly) made direct rule possible. Hechter calls the first variety of nationalism that then crystallized 'state-building nationalism' because it is reflected in 'efforts at cultural homogenization' (*ibid.*, p. 56). The other types of nationalism are reactions to direct rule: 'peripheral nationalism', sustained by groups resisting 'state nationalism', according to him, is the most prevalent one, then comes 'irredentist nationalism'. Hechter's theory suffers from several pitfalls. First, it does not explain the case of states which were centralized very early on, like China, and which have not given rise to nationalisms for centuries – until they were confronted with threatening Others, a variable absent from Hechter's model. Second, there may be nationalisms which crystallize independently of the demand for self-determination, like those of diasporas which, sometimes, are not even territorialized. Third, the transition to direct rule has not systematically generated nationalisms (most of the peripheral provinces of France are illustrative of this process) and some nationalisms have developed *in spite of indirect rule*, in the federal framework for instance (because of social clashes or economic rivalries). State-making, therefore, is not the only variable to consider. In addition, Hechter totally ignores the ideological dimension of nationalism, but focuses all his attention on state-nationalism (that is, the making of the nation-state) or the political *movement* for self-determination.

### **The cybernetic variant**

Rokkan's study has in fact an equivalent in the cybernetic variant of the 'nation-building' school, whose central figure, Karl Deutsch, aspired to formulate a full-fledged model of nationalism, always giving priority to statistical data while concentrating on the



'modernization' associated with the technological revolutions of the industrial era – and no longer the 16th century.

In a pioneering piece of work done in 1953 (I refer to the 1969 reprint), Deutsch expressed his anxiety at undertaking a new study of nationalism which historians, mistakenly, according to him, classified as being a 'simple "state of mind" with no tangible causes' (Deutsch, 1969, p. 16). According to the 'functional definition of nationality' given by Deutsch, this latter 'consists in the ability to communicate effectively, and over a wider range of subjects, with members of one large groups more than with outsiders' (*ibid.*, p. 97). For Deutsch, this ability can be measured. As a result, the size of a nation and its cohesion are directly functions of the degree of advancement of this process. This can be evaluated by means of several indicators, such as the speed of urbanization, the level of the active population in the secondary and tertiary sectors, the number of newspaper readers, students, migrants, people connected by post... for all these are signs testifying to a degree of 'social mobilization', that is to say, to an integration into networks of communication that are denser than those of traditional societies. The analysis made by Deutsch is indeed built on the opposition between traditional and industrial societies, the transition from the former to the latter involving an increased 'mobilization of society'.

When examining the model presented by Deutsch, Stein Rokkan regretted that '[u]seful time series for *all these* variables are obviously very hard to come by even for a *single* country' (Rokkan, 1970, p. 67). In his view, there were not to be found in this theory any 'easily identifiable generalizations for empirical testing across a broad range of nations. Karl Deutsch's model is essentially heuristic: it suggests a priority in comparative data collection and then simply exhorts us to develop generalizations inductively through the processing of such materials' (*ibid.*, p. 51).

Besides this criticism from the inside, from a scholar sympathetic to Deutsch's approach, the first major reservation that his model gives rise to, concerns his conviction that modernization will lead to the disappearance of ethnic peculiarities and the assimilation of minority groups into the dominant group: the members of the peripheral groups which participate in social mobilization are supposed to accept the cultural modes of the dominant group, even if only to take part in the division of labor practiced in the urban areas. In a later text, Deutsch even defines the stages through which this process of national construction is likely to take place:

Open or latent resistance to political amalgamation into a common national state; minimal integration to the point of passive compliance with the orders of such an amalgamated government; deeper political integration to the point of active support for such a common state but with continuing ethnic or cultural group cohesion and diversity; and, finally, the coincidence of political amalgamation and integration with the assimilation of all groups to a common language and culture - these could be the main stages on the way from tribes to nation [...] How long might it take for tribes or other ethnic groups in a developing country to pass through some such sequences of stages? We do not know, but European history offers at least a few suggestions. (Deutsch, 1963, p. 7-8).

The criticisms that this vision brings forth are mainly of two kinds: on the one hand, the author indulges in teleological ethnocentrism by assuming that such specific ethnic groups as aboriginal tribes must follow the same process of national integration as the nation states of Europe; on the other hand, some authors have shown that, instead of favoring national integration, 'advances in communications and transportation tend also to increase the cultural awareness of the minorities by making their members more aware of the distinctions between themselves and others.' (Connor, 1972, p. 329). Walker Connor cites the example of Thailand where 'modernization', by making some tribes more conscious of their specificity, has led to numerous separatist movements which developed a truly nationalist perspective.<sup>4</sup> The proponents of 'Nation-building' have completely missed this point, not only because they have adopted a Europeanocentric and theological theory of modernization, but also because nationalism was not their object of study at all: their aim was to explain how nations take shape on the basis of technical developments. Theories of 'nation-building' are not theories of nationalism. The same remark applies to major aspects of the work by two scholars among the better known theoreticians of nationalism, Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner.

## **Nationhood is not nationalism**

### **Are 'imagined communities' nationalist?**

The work done by Benedict Anderson - based largely on processes of communication like Deutsch's - also addresses the issue of nation-building more than that of nationalism. Anderson, too, tries to spell out a general theory of nations and nationalism, two phenomena which, according to him, emerged in modern times after a revolution in the field of values laid the ground for it. This revolution, according to him, found expression in: 1) the fading out of a

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<sup>4</sup> W. Connor also applies his reasoning to some countries of Europe such as Great Britain where minorities such as the Scots may have acquired a collective consciousness only from the time when modernization reached a critical threshold, endangering and simultaneously revealing their identity.

language of religion (such as Latin) known to promote access to the Truth, 2) the weakening of the idea according to which society is by nature organized around sovereigns having a divine status, 3) the abandoning of a 'fatalistic' and non-historical concept of time in which cosmology was not distinguished from the history of man.

These cultural fissures coincide with the development of the techniques of publishing and the emergence of capitalism in editorials, which was to have a considerable impact. Novels and newspaper writing indeed involve the concept of an imagined community and a concept of time in which events get organized in accordance with a sequential, chronological logic. The reader finds himself placed in a specific period of time and within a certain society in which he observes characters playing their roles following a linear axis of time. Now, for Anderson, this is the very same situation in which man finds himself when studying his nation, which constitutes, in the same way, an abstract entity, whose criteria are the roots fixed in the past, the straining towards the future and the basic identity across time. Furthermore, the development of the press gives the feeling of belonging to an 'imagined community' by arousing the same thoughts at the same time among members of a national culture whose borders are marked out on the basis of language:

The significance of this mass ceremony (...) [the fact of reading one's newspaper] is paradoxical. It is performed in silent privacy, in the lair of the skull. Yet, each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion. Furthermore, this ceremony is incessantly repeated at daily or half-daily intervals throughout the calendar. What more vivid figure for the secular, historically-clocked, imagined community can be envisioned? (*ibid.*, p. 39).

This characterization of national sentiment as a mental fact underlying the development of the means of mass communication, can complement Deutsch's cybernetic model in which little was said about the nature and the origin of a national consciousness. But this aspect of Anderson's theory remains more relevant for explaining an important element of nation-making, the feeling of forming a community - *nationhood* -, than for our understanding of nationalism as an ideology. In fact, Anderson does not say much about the content of nationalism, except that it is rooted in the past and relies on a linear as well as abstract conception of time.

Parallel to the impact of 'print capitalism', Anderson examines that of the administrative *modus operandi* in the European colonies, and especially in the Spanish American Empire. Once again, the starting point of the demonstration lies in the state-making process: in the administrative units of this Empire, the modern state eroded intra-regional cleavages by establishing not only 'a standardized language-of-state' (something that runs

parallel to the impact of 'print-capitalism'), but also 'human interchangeability', in the sense that bureaucrats from different regions were posted, randomly, in regions they did not know before. This sequel of the ideal-typical Weberian rational state prepared the ground for the feelings of nationhood because these native administrators not only had become more alike and culturally homogeneous, but also meet in the capital where they came for bureaucratic 'pilgrimages'. Such pilgrimages were not only responsible for fostering the solidarity and common culture of those who took part in them: they created a new cultural consciousness based on unprecedented feelings of otherness:

... on this cramped pilgrimage [the native bureaucrat] found travelling-companions, who came to sense that their fellowship was based not only on that pilgrimage's particular stretch, but on the shared fatality of trans-Atlantic birth. Even if he was born within one week of his father's migration, the accident of birth in the Americas consigned him to subordination – even though in terms of language, religion, ancestry, or manners he was largely indistinguishable from the Spain-born Spaniard. There was nothing to be done about it: he was *irremediably* a creole (Anderson, 1983, pp. 58-59).

Anderson concludes that 'pilgrim creole functionaries and provincial creole printmen played the decisive historic role' (*ibid.*, p. 65) in the fragmentation of the Spanish-American Empire into 18 separate nation-states. This sudden development occurred in Latin America at a very early stage in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it was reiterated subsequently along the same pattern up to the decolonization process that Anderson calls the 'last wave'. In Indonesia, for instance, the spearhead of the nationalist movement again emerged from the intelligentsia. Education once again played a major role, not only because standardized textbooks shaped a new, 'coherent universe of experience', but also because the education system was also the crucible of a new social group: students of the tertiary education had to come to Batavia, to the Center and thus 'the twentieth century colonial school-system brought into being pilgrimages which paralleled longer-established functionary journeys', in which some of the students in question were bound to take part. They knew that 'Rome was Batavia, and that all these journeyings derived "their" sense from the capital, in effect explaining why "we" are "here" "together"' (*ibid.*, p. 111). And they were there together as *inlanders*, which 'meant that the persons referred to were both "inferior" and *belonged there*' (*ibid.*, p. 112).

Anderson's model therefore combines two dimensions which are respectively epitomized by 'print capitalism' and the pilgrimages of the intelligentsia whose members really acquire a new, national consciousness in the class-room of a centralized, uniform education system and/or as bureaucrats. Anderson, by the way, often uses formulas like 'national consciousness' or 'nation-ness' (*ibid.*, p. 123). However, he also, misleadingly, refers to the concept of nationalism to describe this new nationhood, be it in the expressions 'colonial nationalisms', 'nationalist leaders' or 'nationalist intelligentsia'. The intelligentsia has

gained a new sense of belonging to a larger community called 'nation' but this feeling does not necessarily imply any demand for the control of the state or the promotion of one's own identity against the Other. Surprisingly, Anderson does not elaborate on the impact of the superiority complex of the colonizers, in Indonesia or elsewhere, in terms of proto-nationalist resentment or indigenous cultural reforms, even though he emphasized that one of the important consequences of the exclusion of the natives by the colonial state was a collective resentment. For instance, the exclusion of the intelligentsia from the upper layers of the administration could only but have frustrated them in their aspiration for more power and laid the ground for the crystallization of nationalism.

The additions made by Anderson in the second edition of *Imagined Communities* addressed these flaws. He explains, in the preface, that after the publication of the first edition he had realized that what he 'believed to be a significantly new contribution to thinking about nationalism – changing apprehensions of time – patently lacked its necessary coordinate: changing apprehensions of space' (Anderson, 1991, pp. XIII-XIV). Hence the title of the new, tenth chapter of the second edition of the book, 'Census, Map, Museum' in which Anderson shows that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the European state attempted to control its domain by counting the people, mapping the world and recording the past. Populations were systematically classified and quantified, borders delimited countries or regions and the archaeological past was appropriated by the state which, partly to legitimize itself, takes an inventory of rehabilitated monuments which were 'logoized' as collective symbols on stamps or otherwise. This serialization process was also the key element of the state's attempt, also in the overseas colonies, to establish a 'totalizing classificatory grid'. For Anderson, this 'style of imagining' paved the way for nationalism because it 'shaped the grammar which would in due course *make possible* "Burma" and "Burmese", "Indonesia" and "Indonesians"' (*ibid.*, p. 185). Here the emphasis is mine because these two words characterize in a nutshell the main weakness of Anderson's otherwise fascinating theory: it is not his intention to explain nationalism here; the study focuses on the preconditions likely to 'make possible' a sense of national belonging. Such an approach has strong affinities with what Michel Foucault called the effects of microphysics, these invisible practices of power which eventually created the modern subject (Verdery, 1993, p. 41). It is a case of nations without nationalists, not only because the processes described by Anderson are explicitly 'unconscious' – there is no actor – but also because there is no political ideology at stake.

## Ernest Gellner, or the modernization theory as a remake

Ernest Gellner's masterpiece, *Nations and Nationalism*, as suggested by its very title, reflects the pervasive confusion between theories of the nation and theories of nationalism. In fact, the first facet of his model fits into the framework of the modernization theory *à la* Deutsch, what Gellner calls the 'Transition' from traditional societies to industrial societies. The former, described as 'agro-literate' societies, witnessed a strict division between the categories of those who were *literati* and governed, and who, by reason of their power and their literacy, had access to a 'great tradition', and the mass of those who worked on the land and who bore just a 'little tradition' (Gellner, 1983, pp. 9-12).<sup>5</sup> Over and above the horizontal divide formed by this cultural dichotomy between the élite culture and the folk culture, there were many vertical ones in rural society that were particularly strong on account of the autarchic way of life in peasant communities: customs and dialects sometimes differed from one valley to the next. This cultural heterogeneity constituted the main obstacle to the formation of a nation according to Ernest Gellner.

The emergence of the industrial society goes on to promote cultural homogenization at the end of a long process inherent in the economic logic of this society: based on an evolutive technology and the idea of progress, it involves a permanent growth of productivity; this results, for the working population, in the necessity for extreme professional mobility, hence a versatility which implies a solid generic training. Thus, 'the level of literacy and technical competence, in a standardized medium, a common conceptual currency, which is required of members of this society, if they are to be properly employable and enjoy full and effective moral citizenship, is so high that it simply *cannot* be provided by the kin or local units, such as they are. It can only be provided by something resembling a modern "national" educational system, a pyramid at whose base there are primary schools, staffed by teachers, led by the product of advanced graduate schools. Such a pyramid provides the criterion for the minimum size for a viable political unit' (Gellner, 1983, p. 34).

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<sup>5</sup> A.D. Smith has challenged this view. He has criticized Gellner for taking into consideration, from among the 'pre-modern' agrarian societies, only the 'aristocratic ethnic groups' - such as the Indian caste society - in which, in truth, the culture at the apex hardly penetrates beyond the category of the lettered and those who govern. He underlines, by way of contrast, the existence in history of 'demotic ethnic groups' in which 'a single ethnic culture permeates in varying degrees most stratas of the population, even if its base remains urban and outlying rural areas exhibit local variants of the culture.' (Smith, 1986, p. 77). This cultural homogeneity arises out of the fact that these peoples consider themselves as 'chosen' in one way or another: '...in the more demotic types of ethnies the missionary and sacred aspect is part of their defining "essence". Hence their ability to mobilize powerful sentiments of attachment and self-sacrificing action on behalf of the community. Hence, too, the often important role played by charismatic leaders and holy men who are felt to embody the unique characteristic of the whole community.' (*ibid.*, p. 83). The examples given by A.D. Smith to illustrate this type of ethnic group are notably the city-states and Amphyctions (Sumer, Phoenicia, Greece) and the tribal confederations (Turkish, Persian, Mongol).

The process of national construction thereafter progresses in accordance with the rate of the entry into the educational system of populations living more and more in outlying areas, which have understood that learning the dominant language and possessing a basic education are the prerequisites to their social ascent and their ability to defend their rights vis-à-vis the administration of the nation-state in the making. Beyond this, education confers a moral equilibrium by putting the people in step with the values of the society of which they are de facto members as 'the limits of the culture within which they were educated are also those of the world within which they can morally and professionally, breathe. A man's education is by far his most precious investment, and in effect confers his identity on him' (*ibid.*, p. 36).

Cultural homogenization thus generates a new, national consciousness that Gellner calls 'nationalism'. For him, '[n]ationalism is *not* the awakening of an old, latent, dormant, force though that is how it does indeed present itself. It is in reality the consequence of a new form of social organization, based on deeply internalized, education-dependent high cultures, each protected by its own state. It uses some of the pre-existent cultures, generally transforming them in the process, but it cannot possibly use them all. There are too many of them. A viable, higher culture, sustaining modern state cannot fall below a certain minimal size', which is that required for the maintenance of an efficient educational system (*ibid.* p. 48).

What Gellner calls 'nationalism' here, in fact, is a new form of collective consciousness, the feeling of belonging to this innovation that is the nation-state. Such a sentiment does not necessarily imply any ideological, nationalist leanings. In fact, Gellner's theory, so far, recalls that of the school of 'nation-building': once again, national integration is the main issue at stake and is seen as depending upon cultural homogenization in the context of socio-economic and state-led modernization. Hall applies a good test to the universality of Gellner's theory when he points out that 'it fails to explain the very first emergence of nationalism in eighteenth-century Britain and France' by definition since in these two countries, 'nationalist sentiments are clearly in place before the emergence of industry' (Hall, 1993, p. 5). Indeed, this is an additional indication that Gellner is not interested in nationalism as an ideology, but in nation-making and nationhood. Thus, the theories reviewed up to now are theories of nation-making, or nationness-making, rather than theories of nationalism.

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This criticism of Gellner by Smith has to be seen in the perspective of his interpretation of nationalism as having ethnic antecedents prior to the modern period (see *infra.*).

Rogers Brubaker has recently emphasized the difference between nationalism and other nation-related concepts like nationhood and nationness. Considering that 'Nationalism can and should be understood without invoking "nations" as substantial entities' (Brubaker, 1997, p. 7), he insists that nations should not be seen as reified entities inherently incarnated in nationalisms. Hence his criticism of the 'pervasive substantialist, realist cast of mind that attributes real, enduring existence to nations as collectivities...' (*ibid.*, p. 15). He brackets together Anderson and Gellner for adopting such a developmentalist approach of the nation, which suggests that it is something that grew and then 'exists' in a stabilized manner. For Brubaker, the nation is a 'category of practice', not a 'category of analysis'. The real categories of analysis are 'nationhood' or 'nationness', two notions which designate, each of them, 'a variable property of groups' and 'something that *happens*' (*ibid.*, pp. 18-19), not something that *develops*. While Brubaker dwells on these two concepts in order to contrast them with that of 'nation', he does not elaborate much on the nationalism issue. He simply emphasizes that 'the analytical task at hand [...] is to think about nationalism without nations' (*ibid.*, p. 21) and that 'Nationalism is not engendered by nations. It is produced – or better, it is induced – by *political fields* of particular kinds' (*ibid.*, p. 17). But he adds in a footnote, 'Not only political fields but economic and cultural fields too can generate nationalism' (*ibid.*). Such statements are thoroughly confusing. What remains is the need to de-link the notion of nationalism and that of nation, an excellent preliminary step for a correct understanding of nationalism as an ideology, something that most of the authors reviewed so far have missed, except Gellner to a certain extent.

## **GROUP RIVALRIES AS FERMENTS OF NATIONALISM**

### **Socio-ethnic conflicts and the emergence of nationalism**

Gellner has evolved a theory of nationalism, in addition of that of the nation that we have analyzed above. If the minimal size of a nation is defined by him as the minimal scale of an efficient educational apparatus, its maximal size is a function of the role of the "cultures" pre-existing the nation-making process – to use his own terms. Ernest Gellner explains this in *Nations and Nationalism* by calling to mind the manner in which race or religion (less



interchangeable than language), can serve as the basis for the self-transformation of an 'inferior culture' into a 'superior culture' within the framework of socio-ethnic conflicts. This second facet of Gellner's model was, however, to be found in a more sophisticated form in *Thought and change*, written twenty years earlier, and in which the analysis of the processes of cultural homogenization was, *a contrario*, less developed.

We already know that Gellner regarded material interest as being one of the motivations for entry into the educational system which gives rise to the nation; this type of incentive becomes central for explaining the maximal size of nations to the extent to which it explains secessionist nationalisms by the fact that 'sometimes, [...] it seems or *is* advantageous to set up a rival "nation" of one's own instead.' (Gellner, 1964, p. 165). Here, he considers the case of an unequal distribution of economic resources across the territory of a state. A people, 'B', originating from a deprived region, goes on to migrate towards the more developed zones where an ethnic group, 'A', anxious to conserve the monopoly of its privileged situation, exercises discrimination towards 'B', putting forward as a pretext its racial or cultural inferiority. The members of 'B' - who have migrated or remained in their region - find themselves in a problematic situation:

... their discontent can find 'national' expression: the privileged are manifestly different from themselves, even if the shared 'nationality' of the under-privileged men from B starts off from a purely negative trait, i. e. shared exclusion from privilege and from the 'nation' of the privileged. Moreover, the men from B now do have leaders: their small intellectual class probably cannot easily pass into A, and even if they can, it now has an enormous incentive not to do so; if it succeeds in detaching B-land, by the rules of the new national game, in which intellectuals are not substitutable across frontiers, it will have a virtual monopoly of the desirable posts in the newly independent B-land (*ibid.*, p. 167).

For Gellner, it is in these situations that 'culture, pigmentation, etc., become important: they provide means of exclusion for the benefit of the privileged, and a means of identification, etc., for the underprivileged [...] Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist - but it does need some pre-existing differentiating marks to work on, even if, as indicated, they are purely negative.' (*ibid.*, p. 168).

Gellner argues that 'an intelligentsia and a proletariat is required for an effective national movement' (*ibid.*, p. 169). Specifying that this proletariat may recruit its members from peasant circles, he does not spell out its status in detail while he carefully describes the intelligentsia as being 'a phenomenon essentially connected with *the* transition. [from the traditional societies to the industrial era] [...] a class which is alienated from its own society by the very fact of its education' (*ibid.*, pp.169-170). Most probably, in Gellner's model, the intelligentsia of 'B' would be responsible for shaping the nationalist ideology of this group.

But he does not give any detail about this ideology-making process: Gellner is *not* interested in ideas; he focuses on socio-economic processes which are epitomized, here, by a social group, the intelligentsia.<sup>6</sup>

The analysis of nationalism in terms of conflicts in which socio-economic and cultural or ethnic cleavages are superimposed, actually underlies a number of theories inspired by Marxism or the instrumentalist paradigm.

### **The Marxist debate**

As mentioned by Tom Nairn, 'The theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure' (Nairn, 1981, p. 329). The traditional Marxist approach to nationalism, from an international relations perspective, described this political phenomenon in terms of the struggle between imperialism and anti-imperialism. These two 'isms' reflected the action of capitalist classes or of native bourgeoisies pursuing their own economic interest under cover of a basically instrumental national ideology. This widespread version, first found in a formal manner in the writings of Lenin and the debates involving Rosa Luxemburg and Otto Bauer, has been the source that in particular nurtured Peter Worsley's work (1964) during the 1960s (for a history of the Marxist ideas about nationalism, see H. Davis (1978) and Connor (1984).

More recently, some Marxist writers, noting how wrong their predecessors had been in underestimating nationalistic phenomena by focusing too exclusively on the fate of the social classes, have undertaken to reframe the theory. Marxist authors involved in action supported the thesis of a fundamental identity between oppressed classes and nations (Blaut, 1987). Such an interpretation of nationalism is congruent to Gellner's approach since it applies the same socio-economic rationale to nationalism as class struggle does. More

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<sup>6</sup> Adopting a similar perspective, Dov Ronen connects in a relatively innovative manner the notion of ethnic conflicts to the diffusionist paradigm. He assumes that, the idea that self-determination having 'extended across the world' (Ronen, 1979, p. 17) since the French Revolution, all individuals aspire to lead their lives and pursue their interests freely. When this quest is hampered in one way or another, groups crystallize to eliminate the obstacle. The nature of the group that gets constituted in this manner and the nature of its action vary in accordance with the characteristics of the oppression felt: the French Revolution, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century nationalities movement, the struggle of the Marxist classes, anti-colonialism and the movements of minorities are all manifestations of the same phenomenon. In each case, a group consciousness emerges as a reaction to domination or to external aggression, as can be witnessed in the case of ethnic communities: 'Human beings speaking a certain language, guided by similar values, and relating to an historical past have always existed, but only when threatening neighbors or rulers, who may not speak the same language or relate to the same historical past, are perceived as "them" or "others", is an "us" born' (*ibid.*, p. 8). Like Gellner, however, Ronen does not say anything about the transformation of this 'us-feeling' into nationalism as an ideology.

generally speaking, the Marxist re-examination of the problem often ties in with the materialistic dimension of the model presented by Gellner, from whose work Nairn, Balibar and Wallerstein, moreover, quote liberally (Nairn, 1981, p. 338 and 343; Balibar and Wallerstein, 1988, p. 69), particularly for his analysis of unequal economic development in a given territory.

However, their analysis remains excessively simplifying and not so different from the old, orthodox ones. For Nairn, who focuses on nationalist movements in Great Britain, the capitalist 'world political economy' being responsible for '*uneven development*' (Nairn, 1981, p. 335) between countries as well as within the Center of the international system, it was necessary to defuse the protest and the coming together of peripheral groups: nationalism, therefore, acquired 'a functionality in modern development' since 'the "solution" lies in the crudity, the emotionalism, the vulgar populism, the highly colored romanticism of most nationalist ideology' (Nairn, 1981, p. 354). The argument developed by Balibar and Wallerstein runs parallel to Nairn's:

National units get constituted from the starting point of the global structure of the world economy, depending on the role that they played at a given period, while starting with the center. Better: they get constituted pitted against each other as instruments competing for the domination of the center over the periphery. This first clarification is a basic one because it substitutes a 'historical capitalism' in which the early phenomena of imperialism and the association of wars with colonization play a decisive role, for the 'ideal' capitalism of Marx and particularly of Marxist economists (Balibar and Wallenstein, 1988, p. 121).

This unfortunately little-developed input of Marxist writers drawing their inspiration from Gellner as well as from Braudel, in the rest of the book remains somewhat tinged with reductionism to such an extent that nationalism is often seen only as the ideological tool of dominant states, meant to consolidate the unity of their population (*ibid.*, p. 129) and to fortify their control over it (*ibid.*, p. 111). Nations are eventually described as strategic productions of dominant states which find themselves organized within a world order: 'Inequalities which are significant and clear without for all that being immutable are precisely the kind of processes which lead to ideologies capable of justifying a worthy position in the hierarchy, as also of questioning a poor one. It is these ideologies that are considered nationalistic' (*ibid.*).

By dint of reducing ideology to the rank of a simple justification for domination on a macro-social level, we arrive at debatable formulas that have not been sufficiently argued out. This is how racism is analyzed as 'the magic formula promoting the realization of capitalist (...) objectives' (*ibid.*, p. 48) in the form of the maintenance of an under-paid work force and social peace to the extent to which it enjoins the idea of an inferiority of the races from which workers are recruited.

The reflections of writers who look at ethnic conflicts in relation to power, sometimes in an instrumentalist perspective, often prove to be more stimulating.

### **Power conflicts, instrumentalism and nationalism**

Another conflict-related theory of nationalism highlights the role of political oppositions in the genesis of this 'ism'. It is best represented by the masterly synthesis of the historian John Breuilly, whose chronological framework takes us back - as does that of Stein Rokkan - to the 16th century, when truly structured states emerged. The birth of the first nations of Western Europe is in fact analyzed by Breuilly as resulting mainly from the superimposition of the political and religious oppositions of the Protestant countries of the North towards the monarchies of the South (Breuilly, 1982, p. 46-47). Similarly, the movement for national unity in Italy, Germany and Poland in the 19th century is described as stemming from the political opposition of the elite classes forced to part with their prerogatives or deprived of power by 'multinational states' (*ibid.*, p. 88-89). The same reasoning is applied to the nationalities movement of Central Europe, born at the time when the Hapsburg Empire was changing from a feudal structure to a centralized form (*ibid.*, p. 112-113). Anti-colonial nationalisms also, in their own way, constitute an 'attempt to capture State power' (*ibid.*, p. 137). The author summarizes as follows his general line of argument:

...nationalism should be understood as a form of politics and [...] that form of politics makes sense only in terms of the particular political context and objectives of nationalism. Central to an understanding of that context and those objectives is the modern state. The modern state both shapes nationalist politics and provides that politics with its major objective, namely possession of the state (*ibid.*, p. 352).

From this perspective, the nationalist ideology is almost nothing more than a dressing, the mask of the political aspirations of those who support it. Breuilly finds three functions particularly assigned to it: the coordination of the different sections (social, economic, religious, etc.) of political opposition, the mobilization of fringe groups often emanating from the 'people' and the legitimization of nationalist views with relation to an international environment dominated by the ideals of universalistic liberalism (*ibid.*, p. 324 and p. 366-367).

This model of nationalism is undoubtedly, after that of Gellner, the most complete of those that are listed among the conflict-related theories. Its weakness, in contrast to the large

majority of the latter theories, lies in the marginal role that it attributes to socio-economic considerations. While laying stress on the conflicts between the elite classes from an even more overtly instrumentalist point of view, Paul Brass, for his part, tries to integrate the socio-economic with the political dimensions of the problem. Brass is a clear proponent of the instrumentalist approach which 'emphasizes the uses to which cultural symbols are put by élites seeking instrumental advantage for themselves or the groups they claim to represent' (Brass, 1979, p. 69). He argues that in any multi-ethnic state, nationalist conflicts are exacerbated from different angles: 1) the control over the state - and over its resources - give rise to competition between ethnic élites, 2) the State discriminates inevitably between the ethnic groups comprised within its borders and 3) it endangers the existence of the élites of the peripheral ethnic groups by its will to centralize; the ethnic élites stay away from power go on to create nationalist movements to sustain their struggle for power:

Clearly, both types of conflicts – for control at the center and for control over local territories and communities – take on an added significance when élites in competition are from different ethnic groups and/or use different languages. The ability to mobilize large numbers of people around symbols and values with a high emotional potential is a major, though unstable, resource that can be brought into the fray against the controllers of bureaucratic apparatuses, instruments of violence and land (Brass, 1985, p. 28).

It is during this process of mobilization of the masses by the élite by means of cultural symbols that nationalist identities get formed; this formation process is, moreover, an on-going process since the changing circumstances in which the strategy of the elite unfurls involve adaptation to new demands and to new alliances. This malleability of national identities has naturally become a subject of debate, as we shall see while examining the views of the primordialists.

The theories reviewed in this section pay more attention to nationalism than those reviewed in the previous one, which focused mainly on the nation-state. Yet, they do not make much room for ideas, precisely because they still share with theories of the nation a strong emphasis on material processes. Indeed, they stress the role of élite conflicts and inter-élite competition for capturing the state and/or economic resources in the crystallization of nationalism. Such an approach is clearly reductionist and misleading. Connor has shown, in a very systematic analysis, that nationalist movements can appear independently of any economic discrimination: have not the Catalans in Spain, the Flemish in Belgium, the Sikhs in India, the Croatians and the Slovenes in former Yugoslavia enjoyed from this point of view, a privileged situation (1984, p. 4)? He underlines in addition that wherever there is no ethnic cleavage, economic inequalities between communities such as that of Maine and other American states do not give rise to conflicts as would have been expected. Finally, ethnic conflicts do not die out once economic differences have been leveled out: that is the lesson

to be learnt from the Flemish and Slovak separatist movements which persist despite the successful effort made by the authorities in favor of these regions.

If conflict-related theories of nationalism overemphasize material processes, I would argue that they are nevertheless exploring a most promising hypothesis when they postulate that nationalism results from rivalries and competition. Their mistake, simply, consists in focusing on such rivalries and competition in the sole realms of politics and economics. In fact, the dimension of cultural and even psychological domination and competition play a major role in the development of nationalism. This 'ism' has usually been constructed as an ideology by the intelligentsia precisely because of these influences.

## **NATIONALISM AS AN IDEOLOGICAL RESPONSE**

Nationalism has hardly appeared to us, till now, as possessing the traits of an ideological force - when it did don this characteristic, it was, at best, as the result of, or the justification for, 'material' processes. It is high time to turn to the ideology-centered theories. They can be divided into two categories: those that analyze nationalism as a construction in reaction of some cultural domination and those that see in it a phenomenon of intellectual diffusionism. Their basic common point lies in a rehabilitation of ideas<sup>7</sup> either as the product of ideological reinterpretations or - in the case of the diffusionists - as agents of history. But the diffusionists are much less convincing, especially when they indulge in functionalist developments.

### **Diffusionism and functionalism**

Historians are certainly the social scientists who most often expound a diffusionist approach to nationalism. Hans Kohn thus retraces the spread of nationalism throughout the world in this perspective: born in the 17th century in England, the 'English ideas of personal

liberty and national organization became known abroad through the intermediary of French thinkers, and were absorbed and transformed into the general consciousness of the 18<sup>th</sup> century' (Kohn, 1955, p. 19). The French Revolution drew inspiration from it before its heir, Napoleon, served again as a relay: 'What these [European] peoples – Germans, Italians, Spaniards, Russians -, did not learn from the French Revolution – the spirit of 1789 hardly touched them – they learned from Napoleon: nationalism, not as a vehicle of individual liberty but as adoration of collective power' (*ibid.*, p. 29). The colonies were the last stage of this diffusion of nationalism: 'Asia judged herself by this new ideal, she absorbed it, learned and was transformed under its guidance' (Kohn, 1929, p. 90).

This pure diffusionist concept does not say why the imitation of the learners concerns nationalism rather than any other ideology born in Europe, nor whether it is a conscious undertaking, or how such an alien influence destroys and rebuilds allegiance to a political community. The obvious mistake of the diffusionists lies in their assumption that societies receiving 'influences' from the outside can absorb them as if they were a *tabula rasa*. Now, it is well-known that no element of ideological discourse available on the international market can be transplanted to new societal context without fundamental changes and without responding to deep incentives.

In order to offset these inadequacies, some historians, and some political scientists in their wake, have tried to make the diffusionist postulate revolve around a functionalist paradigm. But functionalism is also intellectually fallacious. Its main flaws reside in the fact that it takes 'the expression of a societal need as a reason for the existence of institutions that seek to look after it' (Hall, 1993, p. 4). In this perspective, for the diffusionists-cum-functionalists, each wave of expansion of nationalism corresponds to circumstances of restructuring of societies, which gives rise to a 'need for belonging', nationalism being a response to this. Boyd Shafer applies this reasoning to the post-revolutionary phase of the years 1789-1815 (Shafer, 1964, p. 131) and to the crisis of the inter-war period:

Th[e] old rural and agricultural society, while disintegrating, dragged along with it during its fall, its loyalties and its traditions. When men found themselves plunged into the urban and industrial life, they were deprived of their earlier status without finding security (...) Nation and nationalism supplied new gods, new hopes, a means to achieve a good life, at a time of instability, a time when (perhaps more than at any other time) men felt oppressed and ill-adapted to their environment (*ibid.*, p. 162-3).

Once again, the problem we face here concerns the confusion between 'nation' and 'nationalism'. Nations are presented as a response to the instinctive 'need to belong' of man – a proposition we shall discuss below – and nationalism is not discussed as an ideology at

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<sup>7</sup> For an overview of nationalism in the history of ideas, see O. Dahbour and M. R. Ishay, 1995.

all. This is precisely what Elie Kedourie does, while still combining functionalism and diffusionism. The founding values of nationalism, self-determination (rights and duties of the individual) being the foremost, were, in his view, introduced by Kant and then personified for the first time in a nationalist movement through the German Youth group which drew its inspiration from Fichte. The German Youth movement took hold of this ideology because the younger generation was subjected to a recasting of values and social structures at the origin of a search for psychological security. Kedourie's theory of nationalism is primarily functionalist: nationalism developed on the foundation of Kantian ideas because it met the 'need to belong' of a specific community. The writer establishes, at this stage, a general law according to which the destruction of traditional social structures engenders 'an atomized society which seeks in nationalism a substitute for the old order, now irrevocably lost' (Kedourie, 1971, p. 112). This pattern is functionalist insofar as the writer says that the nation 'satisfies a need', 'that of belonging to a community both coherent and stable' (*ibid.*, p. 101). Its diffusionist dimension is to be found in the idea that people living overseas import the nationalist ideology from the West to compensate their subjection, with colonization, to the impact of the Modern State: 'European administrative methods in particular, centralized, impersonal, uniform, undiscriminating in their incidence, had a leveling and pulverizing effect on the traditional hierarchies and loyalties, traditional ties of dependence which, however capricious and oppressive in their general effects, did yet have about them a warm and personal quality which made power seem approachable and comprehensible to the humblest and most insignificant man' (Kedourie, 1970, p. 23).

The agents of the introduction of nationalism are those who appear the most exposed to cultural splits: the members of the intelligentsia who hold their marginal position as a result of the acquisition of 'modern' knowledge in an 'outdated' society which they can hardly fit into, all the more so as few professional outlets are offered to them. However, even in the extreme case of an intelligentsia that is alienated and a prey to deep psychological disturbance, Kedourie seems to set too much store by the power of the 'need to belong', for we may well wonder why this need makes itself felt on the nation rather than on a more familiar entity.<sup>8</sup> And once again what is at stake is more the nation as a collective body than nationalism as an ideology, though Kedourie deliberately refers to the diffusion of ideas.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The work of Hroch displays similar weaknesses. He argues that 'nationalism is a substitute for factors of integration in a disintegrating society. When society fails, the nation appears as the ultimate guarantee' (quoted by Guibernau, whose functionalism is even more mechanistic: 'Nationalism, she argues, appears as a reaction to two intrinsic constituents of modernity that are closely linked to globalization: radical doubt and fragmentation [...] In a world of doubt and fragmentation, tradition acquires new importance' (Guibernau, 1996, p. 133).

<sup>9</sup> Another stumbling block is the tendency towards teleological reasoning among all historians or theoreticians subscribing to this approach. Louis Snyder lays greater stress on the need for security as being at the origin of the 'need to belong' (Snyder, 1976, p. 163), but always couples together diffusionist and other functionalist



In contrast to these mechanistic concepts, political scientists well-versed in the study of social phenomena look at the diffusion of ideas into the framework of receiver societies. It is consequently a matter of analyzing how this impact sets into motion a process of ideological creation through the recasting of sometimes very well stated and rich indigenous cultures. This perspective proves to be particularly convincing also because it can incorporate elements of the conflict-based theories.

### **Nationalism and socio-cultural reform**

The theory of nationalism presenting this phenomenon as the result from socio-cultural reform fills the gaps left by the two groups of theories of nationalism we have reviewed so far. Those based on socio-economic and political conflicts opened a promising perspective but did not pay enough attention to symbols and ideas; those based on diffusionist and functionalist premises paid attention to ideas but explained their export from the West and import elsewhere in the world in an overly simplistic and mechanical manner. The theory now under review is more relevant because it assumes that, while nationalism comes from outside, it is not imported but shaped by the intelligentsia of societies submitted to some domination, not only economic and political but primarily cultural and symbolic. Nationalism, therefore, stems from competition, but on the immaterial, psychological ground first, and must be seen as an indigenous creation.

This approach was first encapsulated in a full-fledged model by Anthony Smith in the early 1970s. At the base of his theory lies the impact of the modern concept of the 'Scientific State' which is defined by the will to 'homogenize the population within its boundaries for administrative purposes' (Smith, 1971, p. 231). The future intelligentsia receiving a Western education in the framework of the Scientific State and after a traditional socialization process, finds itself in an ambivalent situation. Three attitudes are possible in the face of this psychological difficulty:

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reasonings: 'Nationalism came to the peoples of Africa and Asia through a combination of what the anthropologists call parallelism and diffusion in culture. On the one hand, the new nationalism arose parallel to European developments as a psychological need. In this sense it was an independent phenomenon. On the other hand, many of its forms, techniques and symbols were diffused from London, Paris, Rome, and New York along routes travelled by African and Asian students' (*ibid.*, p. 113). Other historians adopt a purely functionalist reasoning, describing nationalism as 'a substitute for, or supplement to, historic, supranatural religion' (Hayes, 1960, p. 176).

- The reaction of the traditionalists, the foremost of these being the priestly hierarchy and the traditional aristocracies or ruling classes faced with a threat to their functions, will consist in rejecting the science of the modern State (*ibid.*, p. 241). This option is expressed through a militancy hostile to Western innovations in the name of holy tradition.

- The attitude of the 'assimilationists' is equally clear-cut: the Scientific State having 'rendered the Gods powerless', allegiance has to be transferred to this source of authority that is pragmatic and effective in material terms (*ibid.*, p. 242). Science gives a new meaning to life. This attitude goes hand in hand with a new universalist vision of the world.

- The reformist assumes, in contrast to the other currents of the intelligentsia, the duality of the sources of authority with which he is confronted, but seeks to reconcile them. He succeeds in doing so thanks to a 'providential deism': god guides man towards his salvation through work. The advent of this new era is, however, found conditioned by a reform of religion (*ibid.*, p. 246). That is why the reformists endeavor to seek the essence of their religion to discover the criteria of reform and eliminate all that, in the past, was not at the basis of their religion. In their quest, they proceed to a return to the sources of their tradition, described by Smith by the word 'historicism', which turns them into 'revivalists'. The transformation of the reformist into a revivalist occurs when he 'discovers' or rather invents 'an idealized past age, into which he reads all his aspirations for a future which will embody prized and "unique" communal virtues.' (*ibid.*, p. 248). This inflexion is no longer spiritual in nature but, in fact, marks the start of a secularization of the reformist current insofar as it gives rise to comparisons 'between ages of the history of the community and between the tradition of "my" community at various times, and that of other communities. The periods of religious greatness are increasingly measured by the secular criterion of worldly success' (*ibid.*, p. 249).

The position of the 'assimilationists' evolves in such a way as to converge with the reformists turned 'revivalists'. Impelled at first by the "messianic" belief in the advent of a cosmopolitan world, free of oppression and injustice, because of the triumph of reason and science' (*ibid.*, p. 252), the 'assimilationist' is disappointed when he becomes aware of the fact that the vocation of the Scientific State was to institutionalize the national entities in the form of the nation-state. A.D. Smith deduces the emergence of nationalism from the fusion of the 'reformist-revivalist' and 'assimilationist' inputs. It is therefore a model of ideological construction in which the external influence only sets in motion a process of cultural recasting whose motive force is the reformist-revivalist current.

The aspect of Smith's theory which remains underdeveloped is the relation to the Other, the architect (or the introducer) of the Scientific State. This is a key element because

all the indigenous reactions mentioned by Smith, including 'reformism', the most important one, stem from this initial impact. Actually, his account of reformism and revivalism is disappointing. For him the former is simply motivated by the anxiety to adapt tradition to the spirit of the time and the latter an attempt 'to re-establish roots and continuity, as well as authenticity and dignity, among a population that is being formed into a nation, and thereby to act as a guide and model for national destiny'.<sup>10</sup> We need to know more, not only about the roots of reformism and revivalism, but also about their modalities.

### **Reform and *ressentiment***

The theory of nationalism developed by John Plamenatz is most relevant in this regard. Plamenatz distinguishes Western nationalism from the 'oriental' type, but he does not denote by this latter term a homogeneous geographical area; he rather refers to countries of Slavic, African and Asian civilizations whose common point is that they do not possess enough cultural resources to put up a resistance to Western domination in the imperial or colonial form. For Plamenatz this domination was first and foremost a cultural phenomenon which appeared to these countries as a challenge that threatened to undermine their structure:

Drawn gradually, as a result of the diffusion among them of western ideas and practices, into a civilization alien to them, they have had to re-equip themselves culturally, to transform themselves. In their efforts to assert themselves as equals in a civilization not of their own making, they have had to, as it were, to make themselves anew, to create national identities for themselves (Plamenatz, 1973, p. 30).

Plamenatz retraces this process from the starting point of the case of the Slaves dominated by the Germans. In the case of the Czechs, the cultural reform which defines 'Oriental nationalism' took place following a typical pattern; as some German intellectuals displayed an interest in the folklore and languages of these populations, they exhumed rich cultural material which Czech philologists were the first to get hold of. On these bases, they formulated a literary language to replace the earlier dialects. Theirs was a dual objective, being as much the protection of the traditional culture as the creation of instruments that 'would enable them to acquire western ideas and practices' (*ibid.*, p. 31). Because, to 'retain their nationality and their separate cultural identity, they had in many ways to imitate the foreigners with whom they refused to identify themselves' (*ibid.*). The locals were all the more

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<sup>10</sup> In fact, this is Smith's assessment of 'the golden age', that he considers to be 'an important, and probably an essential, component of nationalism' (Smith, 1997, p. 59).

incited to carry out this mutation as industrialization and urbanization opened up new perspectives of employment accessible particularly to natives having gained the required qualifications and language.

On the basis of this case-study, Plamenatz suggests a more general conclusion about the nationalist ideologies which have developed in reaction to the domination of Others, often from the West: it is 'both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates'. This profound, creative ambivalence relies on a twofold rejection: 'rejection of the alien intruder and dominator who is nevertheless to be surpassed by its own standards, and rejection of ancestral ways which are seen as obstacles to progress and yet also cherished as marks of identity' (*ibid.*, p. 34). This creative tension, which is certainly at work in cases other than the Czechs, is also well in evidence in other theories of nationalism.

The first part of Plamenatz's argument, the trauma provoked by the aggression of a threatening Other is a key element of Isaiah Berlin's reading of nationalism. In such circumstances, he says, 'The response, as often as not, is pathological exaggeration of one's real or imaginary virtues, and resentment and hostility towards the proud, the happy, the successful' (Berlin, p. 246). For Berlin, this type of twofold reaction is best illustrated by the German response to the French domination in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century-early 19<sup>th</sup> century:

The French dominated the western world, politically, culturally, militarily. The humiliated and defeated Germans, particularly the traditional, religious, economically backward East Prussians, bullied by French officials imported by Frederick the Great, responded, like the bent twig of the poet Schiller's theory, by lashing back and refusing to accept their alleged inferiority. They discovered in themselves qualities far superior to those of their tormentors. They contrasted their own deep, inner life of the spirit, their own profound humility, their selfless pursuit of true values – simple, noble, sublime – with the rich, worldly, successful, superficial, smooth, heartless, morally empty French. This mood rose to fever pitch during the national resistance to Napoleon, and was indeed the original exemplar of the reaction of many a backward, exploited, or at any rate patronized society, which, resentful of the apparent inferiority of its status, reacted by turning to real or imaginary triumphs and glories in its past, or enviable attributes of its own national or cultural character. Those who cannot boast of great political, military or economic achievements, or a magnificent tradition of art or thought, seek comfort and strength in the notion of the free and creative life of the spirit within them, uncorrupted by the vices of power or sophistication (Berlin, p. 246).

As Berlin emphasizes, such a scenario was to repeat itself elsewhere in central Europe, Russia, Asia and Africa. Indeed, Liah Greenfeld applies a similar, but more sophisticated model to France, Russia and Germany. Greenfeld's masterpiece, in a way, also suffers from the classic confusion between 'nationalism' and 'national consciousness'. She assumes that nationalism is a phenomenon resulting from the modernization of the European societies of orders and of its contradictions in the context of growing demands for social mobility from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. More precisely, Greenfeld contends that the 'inventors of nationalism were members of the new English aristocracy. Commoners by birth,

they found the traditional image of society, in which upward mobility was an anomaly, uncongenial and substituted for it the idea of a homogeneously elite people – the *nation*' (*ibid.*, p. 487). This interpretation is more akin to a theory of the nation than to a theory of nationalism. However, it results from the postulate that nationalism is 'related to preoccupation with status', an assumption which indeed gives rise to a very stimulating theory of nationalism.

Greenfeld argues, as already mentioned above, that nationalism was born in England in 16<sup>th</sup> century in the garb of an 'individualistic civic nationalism' that was to spread in British colonies, including the United States (Greenfeld, p. 14) and that, further East, nationalism subsequently developed in reaction to those from the West (or even the west). The key element in this model is a 'psychological factor', *ressentiment*, a notion that Greenfeld borrows from Max Scheler who had himself taken it from Nietzsche. *Ressentiment* can be defined as a 'psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility of satisfying these feelings' (*ibid.*, p. 15).

Greenfeld applies this model to France first, whereas she could have mentioned similarly tense relations to threatening Others in the case of England – her first case study - where nationalism partly resulted in the very beginning from the notion of a Protestant people under attack from Europe's Catholic monarchies (Colley, 1992, p. 18). In France, such a feeling developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century after the country 'ceded to England the position of leadership it had held in the seventeenth century' (Greenfeld, p. 177). Hence the motto embraced by the élite: 'regeneration'. Such a reaction led the Philosophers to demand the introduction of 'liberal reforms [in order to] make France a nation similar to the English' (*ibid.*, p. 178), a stand calling to mind that of Smith's reformists. The Philosophers were led to change their mind too in the course of time, not because of the attraction of revivalism, but because their plan turned out to be more difficult than they thought: France did not succeed in becoming the equal of England. Hence an increasingly powerful *ressentiment*: 'Anglophilia gradually gave way to Anglophobia' (*ibid.* p. 178) and French nationalism developed: 'France conceived of itself as a liberal nation' (*ibid.*) like England but pretended to be more liberal than its master. The French Philosophers, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau were therefore in a position to assert a new, national dignity.

The case of Germany has already been remarkably documented by the above quotation of Isaiah Berlin. The only analytical additions that Greenfeld offers concern the distinction she makes between the French reaction to English superiority and the German reaction to French superiority. In the first case, there was a transvaluation of values (France

tried to appear as more liberal than the liberal nation that was England and this competition was the core element of its nationalism). In the second case, the German '*ressentiment* did not result in a transvaluation of values. The values which were to form the core of German nationalism were already present and firmly embedded in the collective mind' (*ibid.*, p. 374). Greenfeld argues that the existing, pietist legacy of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the romantic mentality which rejected the French values like those of the *Aufklärung* provided German nationalism with its own set of values.

On the contrary, Russian nationalism, according to Greenfeld, could not find enough resources on its own. The Russian elite, which had been exposed to French influence because of Peter the Great's modernization projects, reacted to it, to begin with, with 'an undiluted admiration' (*ibid.*, p. 223). But the 'recognition of the superiority of the West gave rise to increasingly complicated attitudes which eventually built up into *ressentiment*' (*ibid.*, p. 228), simply because educated Russians – the emerging intelligentsia – 'were deeply troubled by the discrepancy between Russia and its model' (*ibid.*, p. 233). For Greenfeld there were three ways to overcome this feeling: to imitate the West, to 'define the West as an inappropriate model for Russia' (*ibid.*, p. 254) and transcend *ressentiment* in nationalism. This typology of attitude is perfectly parallel to the categories of Smith's model (that Greenfeld does not mention): the assimilationists, the traditionalists and the reformists turned revivalists. But here the reformists could not become revivalists because the 'Russians had left their pre-Western existence and would not go back to it' (*ibid.*, pp. 254-255). The only argument the Russian nationalists could invoke in their competition with the West was the superiority of their spirit, something immaterial nobody could cross-check and something also noticed by Isaiah Berlin in the rather similar case of German nationalism:

Russia was still measured by the same standards as the West (for it defined Western values as universal), but it was much better than the West. For every vice, it had a virtue, and for what appeared as a virtue in the West, it had a virtue in reality, and if it was impossible to see these virtues in the apparent world of institutions and cultural and economic achievements, this was because the apparent world was the world of appearances and shadows, while the virtues shined in the world of the really real – the realm of spirit (*ibid.*, p. 255).

The most significant consequence of this *ressentiment*-led nationalism lays in the dependence that it generated vis-à-vis the 'model'. Since Russia had severed its links with its cultural roots, it was not in a position to establish its nationalism on the basis of a solid Golden Age, like Germany. Every aspect of Russia's nationalism, every Russian 'virtue' derived from the confrontation with the West. In fact, 'There simply would be no sense in being a nation if the West did not exist' (*ibid.*, p. 254). Certainly, Russian nationalism provided the ground for individual and collective self-esteem but, '[u]nfortunately, the West remained the significant other for Russia and was still an absolutely necessary condition for

the successful formation and sustenance of national pride; the paramount motivation within the framework of thus-defined national identity was still winning its approbation. Again and again, eager to prove its worth, Russia was forced to confront the West on its own ground, only to return, humiliated, to the world of inner glory, where it licked its wounds and thought of revenge. The very same drama was constantly reenacted' (*ibid.*, p. 261).

### **Nationalism as a 'derivative discourse'**

This congenial incapacity of nationalism to emancipate itself from the very forces against which it has been constructed has been a cause for concern for all the intellectuals of the post-colonial nations who became suspicious about their newly acquired freedom. This kind of problematic led Partha Chatterjee, who emphasizes the 'need of an explicitly critical study of the *ideology* of nationalism',<sup>11</sup> to analyze nationalism partly as a 'derivative discourse' (Chatterjee, 1986a). For Chatterjee, this relative failure to create identities independent from the dominant categories of the West stems from the very aim of the nationalists, to establish a free nation-state in the concert of nations: 'Can nationalist thought produce a discourse of order while daring to negate the very foundations of a system of knowledge that has conquered the world?' (*ibid.*, p. 42). The answer is an emphatic 'no': nationalism is a 'different discourse, yet one that is dominated by other' (*ibid.*), as evident from the fact that all the anti-colonial nationalist movements, in the end, have engendered an inherently repressive 'state-representing-the-nation' (*ibid.*, p. 168) which found its place in the world as shaped by Western capitalism and rationalism. This is the 'moment of arrival' for all nationalist movement according to Chatterjee. But let's return to the 'moment of departure' in order to relate his theory with Greenfeld's.

To begin with, like any scientific state, Chatterjee's colonial state asserts the superiority of the West and 'an essential cultural difference between East and West' (*ibid.*, p. 50). 'Nationalist thought at its moment of departure formulates the following characteristic answer: it asserts that the superiority of the West lies in the materiality of its culture, exemplified by its science, technology and love of progress. But the East is superior in the

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<sup>11</sup> Elaborating on this basis, he adds: 'Both sociological determinism and functionalism have sought to interpret nationalist ideology by emptying it of all content – as far as nationalist politics is concerned, their assumption is that "thinkers did not really make much difference". Our position, however, is that it is the content of nationalist ideology, its claims about what is possible and what is legitimate, which gives specific shape to its politics' (Chatterjee, 1986a, p. 40).

spiritual aspect of culture' (*ibid.*, p. 51). Such a reply is possible when the cultural equipment of the society in question is sufficiently rich to give birth to an 'invented tradition' of Golden Age(s) – like in Germany but not in Russia according to Greenfeld. Even so, nationalism can be nothing other than a 'derivative discourse'. First, it depends on the categories of western Orientalism: 'nationalist thought accepts and adopts the same essentialist conception based on the distinction between "the East" and "the West", the same typology created by a transcendent studying subject, and hence the same "objectifying" procedures of knowledge constructed in the post-Enlightenment age of Western science' (Chatterjee, 1986b, p. 121). At the same time, Chatterjee points out that the nationalist discourse is not purely 'derivative': it 'is selective about what it takes from Western rational thought' (*ibid.*, p. 122). He gives several examples of this selectivity but he does not do it in a systematic way. Plamenatz and Greenfeld are more helpful when they suggest that the Other has to be imitated to be surpassed by its own standards, while, at the same time, the Eastern nationalist refuses to betray his culture and society. *Nationalism is precisely invented, as an ideology – and then a political movement –, by an intelligentsia suffering from the West's socio-cultural domination, to enable its members to find in a reinterpreted tradition the Western standards, or equivalents to them.*<sup>12</sup> This is also an explanation of the route that followed the reformist turned revivalist in Smith's model: by interpreting the ancestral tradition in accordance with the cultural canons of the invader – here is the criterion of the selective process mentioned by Chatterjee –, the reformists could adapt it to new, modern functions of the Scientific state *and raise its prestige*, bringing it on a parity with the dominant culture, while at the same time preserving the essence of this tradition.

India provides us with many examples of this nationalist strategy of stigmatization and emulation of the threatening Others – who were the British missionaries and bureaucrats. As a reaction to their propaganda challenging Hindu institutions as basic as idol worship ('idolatry') and the ('inhuman') caste system, some Brahmins from the intelligentsia, who were initially fascinated by British superiority, undertook a reform of their tradition. To defuse the attractiveness of the missionaries' proselytism and the British agents' egalitarian discourse, they invented a Golden Age in which, according to the first reformists turned revivalists, Hinduism was monotheist – even more than Christianity that incorporates 'three gods', the Trinity!<sup>13</sup> – and egalitarian because the caste system at that time, allegedly relied on meritocratic values (Jaffrelot, 1996, chapter 1). Such a discourse amounted to importing

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<sup>12</sup> 'West' and 'western', in this definition, have a metonymic character. They refer to the value system invented by the British and French elite and the expansionist civilization to which it gave birth.

<sup>13</sup> Such an attempt at outbidding one's rival recalls Greenfeld's analysis of the French Philosophers' anglomania turned into anglophobia. Montesquieu, she quotes, pretended that the English 'enjoy[ed] only a half-liberty' (Greenfeld, p. 179).



some prestigious features of the dominant Other (monotheism, individual merit) which were useful to culturally re-equip the society to modernize, but while claiming to derive them from a Vedic religion of the origins, that Orientalists had already undertaken to exhume (just like the German philologists had done in the Czech case). This reformism was strategic since it aimed at modernizing a traditional society and at rehabilitating the Hindu self-esteem through the invention of a Vedic, monotheistic, Golden Age that held the individual in respect, was democratic, etc. Its ancient character moreover allegedly set it up as a matrix for the other Aryan civilizations, as testified by the status of Sanskrit, the mother of Indo-European languages. This construction of an ethnic nationalism with strong Hindu connotations accompanied that of an Indian nationalist variant closer to the 'assimilationist' current and finally of a universalist type.

This strategy of emulation and stigmatization of the dominant Other recalls Greenfeld's theory based on *ressentiment*. More generally speaking, it fits in René Girard's intuition that 'Human relationships are basically relationships of imitation and competition' (Interview in *Le Monde*, 'What is going on today is a mimetic rivalry on a global scale', *Le Monde*, 6 November 2001, p. 20) and more explicitly in Michel Foucault's views. Foucault, indeed, presents 'resistance' as a phenomenon situated within the power which provokes it, and not outside this power: '[...] I believe that resistance is an aspect of this strategic relationship that involves power. Actually, resistance always draws on the situation it is combatting' (Foucault, 1984).

In fact, the theory of nationalism stemming from these developments can be interpreted in the same terms as any ideology-building process. It echoes the enlightening definition of ideology that Fallers gives in an article devoted to Ugandan nationalism: for him ideology is 'that part of culture which is actively concerned with the establishment and defense of patterns of belief and value' (Fallers, 1961, p. 677-678). The profound ambivalence of the whole process is evident from the association of these two terms: 'establishment and defense'. The construction of a nationalist ideology aims at creating something new to cope with the cultural threats posed by the dominant Other, but it is also a defense of the existing culture that needs to be reinvented, precisely to meet this challenge. The nationalist ideology, therefore, like any ideology, is a 'symbolic strategy' (Geertz, 1973, p. 230). For Geertz, precisely, ideology is 'a response to strain', '*cultural* as well as social and psychological strain' (*ibid.*, 219). For instance, the nationalist 'constructs arguments for tradition only when its credentials have been questioned. To the degree that such appeals are successful they bring, not a return to naive traditionalism, but ideological

retraditionalization' (*ibid.* fn.). Geertz substantiates the point made by Plamenatz about the need for cultural re-equipment when he concludes:

It is a confluence of sociopsychological strain and the absence of cultural resources by means of which to make sense of the strain, each exacerbating the other, that sets the stage for the rise of systematic (political, moral, or economic) ideologies.

And it is, in turn, the attempt of ideologies to render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful, to so construe them as to make it possible to act purposefully within them, that accounts both for the ideologies' highly figurative nature and for the intensity with which, once accepted, they are held (*ibid.*, p. 220).

This theory spelt out in terms of cultural reform is not incompatible with the one, previously reviewed, which emphasizes the role of conflicts. Quite on the contrary, we are now in a position to suggest an integrated model of nationalism combining both perspectives. At the base of this model lies the reform of one's own culture in response to the threat posed by outsiders; this reform is in fact undertaken in imitation of this dominant Other but under cover of a return to the source which generally involves the invention of a 'Golden Age'. This detour through a reinterpreted history makes it possible to modernize and vindicate the endangered identity vis-à-vis the Other and to regain one's self-esteem, which opens the nationalist perspective. This ideology-building process is fostered, at a second stage, by socio-economic and political conflicts responding to motivations arising out of interest. The same social group, the native intelligentsia, often plays a key role in both phases. This social category, which is made up, basically, of professionals, teachers, lawyers and administrators, will develop and propagate all the more willingly the nationalist message as its social ascent within the state bureaucracy is blocked - often by an élite belonging to another community.

This integrated theory of nationalism is especially relevant in the case of the ethnic kind of nationalism, where the culture which is at stake – during the reform/revival process – is rooted in cultural traditions. Unsurprisingly, the author we have reviewed first in the previous section, A.D. Smith, has insisted on the 'ethnic origins of nations' (Smith, 1986). The risk, here, is to over emphasize continuities and underestimate the qualitative change that the shift from ethnicity to nationalism inevitably represents. One can obviate this risk by relying on theories of ethnicity which do not indulge in primordialism but, in fact, run parallel to the theories of nationalism we have just reviewed.

## THEORIES OF ETHNICITY

Mixing together nationalism and ethnicity can be as confusing as bracketing together theories of nations and nationalism. However, the recent development of ethnic studies has tried to clarify the terms of this debate: over the last ten years, readers (see, for instance, Hutchinson and Smith, 1996 and Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 1995), textbooks and conceptual papers have multiplied and help us to disentangle both notions, nationalism and ethnicity. The first discriminatory criterion which they generally put forward is the relationship to territory. For Hechter, for instance, territory 'is sufficient to distinguish nations from ethnic groups' because the former are 'territorially concentrated ethnic groups' whereas the latter 'are spatially dispersed in a given state' (Hechter, 1999, p. 15). Such a proposition is rather unconvincing, since there are also ethnic groups which are territorially concentrated and do not transform themselves into nations (like the Pathans in Pakistan).

The relation to the state might be a more important variable. Eriksen points out that 'a nationalist holds that political boundaries should be coterminous with cultural boundaries whereas many ethnic groups do not demand command over a state' (Eriksen, p. 6-7). When they do, they have developed a nationalist ideology: ethnicity therefore represents 'a step in the process of nation-formation' (Connor, 1994, p. 102). Max Weber had already suggested such an interpretation when he pointed out that the concept of the ethnic group 'corresponds' to that of the nation but that 'the sentiment of ethnic solidarity does not by itself make a "nation"' (Max Weber, 1978 [1922], pp. 389-395). Connor tries to further clarify this distinction by arguing that 'While an ethnic group *may* [...] be other-defined, the nation *must* be self-defined' (Connor, 1994, p. 103), which means that it has developed a nationalist ideology.

The way most of the authors mentioned above present ethnicity as a *stage* in the development of nationalism is a good antidote to primordialism but it tends to incorporate ethnicity within the theory of nationalism as a mere building-block of the latter or of the nation-building process. Yet, there are powerful theories of ethnicity which, on their own, are likely to help us put the theories of nationalism in perspective.

## The flaws of primordialism

The first studies of the political dimensions of ethnicity adopted an approach known as 'primordialism'. Edward Shils was the first to outline this theoretical position (Shils, 1957), finally formalized by Clifford Geertz (Geertz, 1963). Geertz's study arose from the contradiction between the features of a modern society (material progress, social reforms, civic culture, etc.) and the resilience of what he calls the 'primordial bonds' (Geertz, 1963, p. 109): bonds of blood, race, language, region, religion, custom. In this perspective, he diagnosed the irreducible character of these cultural and physical 'givens', particularly in the case of the new states emerging from the decolonization process:

Though it can be moderated, this tension between primordial sentiments and civil politics probably cannot be entirely dissolved. The power of the 'givens' of place, tongue, blood, looks, and way-of-life to shape an individual's notion of who, at bottom, he is and with whom, indissolubly, he belongs is rooted in the non-rational foundations of personality (*ibid.*, p. 128).

Geertz's primordialism, which stands in stark contrast with his very subtle interpretation of the ideology-building process, has been questioned for its a-historical, essentialist bias. Eller and Coughlan have argued pertinently that, not only primordial ties could not be taken for granted as a priori coercive forces, but that ethnicity could not be rooted only in the emotional dimension of such primordial bonds because 'emotion is not necessarily or ordinarily primordial but has a clear and analyzable sociogenesis' (Eller and Coughlan, p. 201). The instrumentalists have been especially critical of the primordialist stand. For them, as we now know, the ethnic groups are constructions resulting from material processes. According to Gellner, 'Men do not become nationalists from sentiment or sentimentality, atavistic or not, well-based or myth-founded: they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognized' (Gellner, 1964, p. 160). The instrumentalists' position suffers from a major weakness, however, since they tend to explain the mobilization of the masses by the nationalist élites – especially during separatist campaigns – on the basis of the manipulation of emotional symbols, which clearly refer to primordial ties (religion, language, etc.).

Interestingly, proponents of primordialism have themselves criticized Geertz' position in order to refine it from the inside. Pierre Van Den Berghe, reproached 'classical' primordialism for being content with 'asserting the fundamental nature of ethnic sentiment without suggesting any explanation of why that should be the case (Van Den Berghe, 1981, p. 17). Adopting an 'evolutionist perspective', he seeks to demonstrate that man tends to favor one's own ethnic group, seen as an extension of one's own family, in order to improve

one's own aptitude and capabilities – this is why the ideology of ethnicity promotes endogamic behaviors. Van Den Berghe, therefore, pretends that one can combine both paradigms, primordialism and instrumentalism:

The propensity to favor kin and fellows is deeply rooted in our genes, but our genetic programs are highly flexible, and our specific behaviors are adaptive responses to a wide set of environmental circumstances. Ethnicity is *both* primordial and situational (*ibid.*, p. 261).

There is no incompatibility between, on the one hand, blind adherence to one's ethnic group, right or wrong, and, on the other hand, the calculating manipulation of ethnicity and the weighting of ethnicity against other types of sociability, for individual gain. Indeed, nepotism itself is a fitness-maximizing game, albeit an unconscious one (*ibid.*, p. 256).

The idea that there is no incompatibility between atavistic ethnic feelings and the manipulation of the traits of ethnic identity, which would be open to change because of a 'fitness-maximizing choice [...] homologous to that of classical microeconomics' (*ibid.*, p. 255) is all the less convincing as, in the field of genetics, this calculation appears as being more or less unconscious or 'non rational'.

The sociobiological approach of ethnicity has been promoted by several social scientists in the 1990s, including James Kellas who came to the conclusion that people 'distrust and dislike foreigners, and prefer "their own kind"' because '[w]e are born with genetic characteristics and instincts, and we cannot escape from them, although they can be cultivated in several directions' (Kellas, 1994, pp. 8-9). This stand is obviously flawed by the fact that ethnic affiliations are not fixed. Van Den Berghe himself admits that two groups may merge to defend their interests more effectively. This example is supposed to illustrate the strategic dimension of his model, but how can one conciliate the atavistic attachment to one's own ethnic group and ... its dissolution for tactical reasons?

## **The making of ethnic boundaries**

The primordialists are wrong, not only because they consider that ethnicity is defined by a set of 'givens', but also because they assume that this definition is durable. Frederik Barth has shown, quite on the contrary, that ethnic groups are constructs whose identities changed continuously: 'The human material organized within an ethnic group is not immutable' (Barth, 1969, p. 21), he says. Barth, therefore, is interested in the 'processes that seem to be involved in generating and maintaining ethnic groups' (*ibid.* 10). Adopting an interactionist viewpoint, he postulates that ethnic groups organize 'interaction between people'. Two considerations derive from this: first, the most important dimension of ethnicity

is 'the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses' (*ibid.*, p. 14). Second, the key element in the definition of this boundary is the relationship to the Other.

Barth suggests that what 'make ethnic distinctions *emerge* in an area' has much to do with the fact that each ethnic group can be 'associated with a separate range of value standards' (*ibid.*, p. 18). The cultural content of this social unit may change, but its boundaries, as defined by these value standards, need to remain enforced in order to differentiate a 'we' from a 'they'. Therefore, to write the history of an ethnic group, for instance, will not consist in reconstituting its culture because most of the cultural elements will have changed over time, but in identifying the boundaries – the criteria of belongingness – that the group will have maintained and reinvented to distinguish itself from the others. This interactionist approach of ethnicity, as Barth himself points out, has 'modern variants' in the garb of revivalist movements. Indeed, this model shares many common features with the ideology-based theory of nationalism presented above, in which the relationship to (so-called threatening) Others played a major role.

### **Ethnicity and mythomoteurs**

John Armstrong's theory of ethnicity may also have affinities with our ideology-based theory of nationalism. Drawing part of his inspiration from the work of Barth, Armstrong assumes that 'groups tend to define themselves not by reference to their own characteristics but by exclusion, that is, by comparison to "strangers"' (Armstrong, 1982, p. 5).

On this basis, Armstrong makes it a point to search, through a multitude of examples from European and Middle-Eastern history, for the modalities of emergence and of recomposition of ethnic identities, which, in his view, constitute phenomena that are 'recurrent' (*ibid.*, p. 4) over time. In fact, Armstrong studies ethnicity in ancient history, and follows its career till the modern time. These processes of reactivation or of modification of the Barthian 'boundary' borrow first from a large range of symbolic factors: the awareness of belonging to a single ethnic group has been deeply rooted since ancient times in the collective belief in 'mythomoteurs' bearing overtones of a sacred nature, given their religious connotations. These could be the feeling of constituting a 'Chosen people' because of some Divine election, of possessing a language that is particularly pure and ancient or because of

the collective nostalgia over a nomadic Golden Age. Every civilization serves in this way as a vehicle for some myths more or less likely to promote the affirmation of an ethnic and then nationalist consciousness – hence the title of Armstrong’s book, *Nations before nationalism*. Socio-political factors, again encompassing values and ‘imaginaires’, such as the idea that the Islamic, Mongol and Byzantine empires represented the replicas of a cosmic order, thus confers a political reality on civilizational divides: ‘Over a long period of time, the legitimizing power of individual mythic structures tends to be enhanced by fusion with other myths in a mythomoteur defining identity in relation to a specific polity’ (*ibid.*, p.9). This mythomoteur ‘arouses intense affects by stressing individual’s solidarity against an alien force, that is, by enhancing the salience of boundary perceptions’ (*ibid.*).

Armstrong continues to refer to Barth’s views here, but, in fact, he emphasizes a new dimension, namely the cultural identity – based on myths and mythomoteurs – of the ethnic group, as if at least this aspect remained unchanged over time. This additional development suggests one more affinity between theories of ethnicity and theories of nationalism: in fact, Armstrong’s approach helps us to put A.D. Smith’s in perspective by showing that myths were used by ethnic groups to establish and maintain their boundaries *before* the advent of the Scientific state and the subsequent invention of nationalist identities based on invented myths of the Golden Age. The weak point in Armstrong’s work here lies in the fact that he does not distinguish the age of ethnic groups from that of nationalism, as if this ideology drew directly from the previous myths. Now, Armstrong could have gone one step further to argue that his ethnic mythomoteurs were *ideological* constructions, as modern nationalisms were to be.

### **Ethnic ideology before nationalism**

The idea that ethnicity relied on ideological constructions before the ideology of nationalism flourished in the modern era (that is that ideology in identity matters pre-dated the modern era) is supported by the discourse about the formation of European ‘nations’ in the Middle Ages. Seeking the origins of the Hungarian ‘nation’ in medieval texts, J. Szücs underlines the primacy of ideology in the formation of nationalism and the diachronic break in the passage from an ‘ethnic group consciousness’ to a national consciousness (Szücs, 1986, p. 53), but he argues that this ideological passage occurred very early in Hungarian literature. The author did indeed find a *Gesta Hungarorum* written between 1282 and 1285

by a cleric of the Court of Ladislav IV, in which he observes a process of ideological construction of nationalism. It is a reconstitution of the - fictional - affiliation of the Hungarians with the glorious Huns. This effort of historicization is illustrative of the European “national historiography” which appeared, according to Szücs, in the middle of the 12th century, when the grip of Christianity - which till then made it imperative for history to start with the establishment of the Church - was loosening:

In the whole of Europe, writers vie with each other to search for a people with an already great ancestral dignity, if possible, in Antiquity, and whom they could make the forerunners of their own people (persons or nation) thanks to the means of ‘science’, of historical, logical or etymological combinations and by taking the support of oral traditions whose value had then been upheld (*ibid.*, p. 55-56).

In Hungary, this historicist quest proved to be determined by social strategic considerations. In the *Gesta Hungarorum*, we observe that the pattern of the structuring of the ancient society of the Huns, which is described as being dominated by a single nobility (*communitas*) is nothing other than ‘the corporation which governs itself’ (*ibid.*, p. 61), that is to say the model of social organization to which the lesser Hungarian nobility of the 18th century aspired, and whose spokesperson the author of this text thus proved to be. The latter hence conveyed ‘in the colorful framework of an epic narration, the expression of a political demand which appeared in Hungary in 1280: the king should include within the provincial assemblies the totality of the nobles present, enabling them to exercise the power and prerogatives of courts of law, and conversely, the *communitas* of the nobility, described in his work for the first time, should declare itself ready to strengthen the power of the king against the powers inclined towards a “loosening”’ (*ibid.*, p. 62).

This approach based on pre-nationalist, ethnic discourse has affinities with our theory of nationalism: in both cases, similarly placed social groups are responsible for shaping new political ideologies legitimizing their claim for power.

### **Ethnic groups as interest groups**

Some theories of ethnicity have also strong affinities with the conflict-based theory of nationalism reviewed above, given the fact that they emphasize even more than Szücs the role of conflicts between social groups. The ethnic group, here, appears as an ‘interest group’, in the terms of Glazer and Moynihan (1975, p. 7), who played a pioneering role in articulating this theory. They diagnose that modernization has eroded the cultural differences



between different ethnic groups, '[b]ut since each group had a different history, these groups were differentially distributed in the various social positions of society. As a result, the ethnic group *could* become a focus of mobilization for the pursuit of group or individual interests' (*ibid.*, p. 8). Presenting socio-economic demands under cover of standing up in defense of an ethnic group conferred a certain legitimacy on requests made to the State; the latter, in turn, particularly since its growing intervention in society assigned to it the function of redistribution, encouraged this practice which enabled it to define the limits of the "assistance" it was giving to an ethnic group.

Daniel Bell elaborates on this approach in the same perspective. He emphasizes that '[s]ometimes class becomes congruent with ethnicity' and that 'ethnicity has become more salient because it can combine an interest with an affective tie' (Bell, p. 170). Like Glazer and Moynihan, Bell highlights the role of the state: 'The politicization of the decisions that affect the communal lives of persons makes the need for group organization more necessary, and ethnic grouping becomes a ready means of demanding group rights or providing defense against other groups' (*ibid.* pp. 170-171). This interpretation of ethnicity recalls that of nationalism based on socio-economic interests and competition between groups for acceding to material resources.

Donald Horowitz pays much more attention to group *conflicts* but adopts a similar perspective.<sup>14</sup> He does not only emphasize the impact of such conflicts in the socio-economic domain, but also from the point of view of symbols. He points out that groups' self-esteem may be badly affected by lack of consideration for its language, for instance. Competition for the recognition of an official status for a language, therefore, may be the root-cause for violent group conflicts (Horowitz, 1985, p. 216-224).

This review of the theories of ethnicity shows that these theories often run parallel to those of nationalism, be they based on conflicts or ideology. Theories of nationalism definitely have more in common with theories of ethnicity than with theories of the nation.

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<sup>14</sup> See, also, the model developed by Gurr and Harff (1994), which is very disappointing, however.

## The case of Africa

While no one should underestimate the strength of nationalism in Africa, especially in the anti-colonial phase (Bénot), this continent probably offers the most interesting laboratory for the study of the ethnic phenomenon, not only because it is especially prevalent on the political scene (Coulon, 1997, 37) but also because it is very recent (Ranger, 1999, 13) – however, new case studies emerged in the recent years, including in Europe, with Bosnia. Ranger, who equates ethnicity with tribalism in the African context, defines it as ‘the self-conscious existence of a fairly large group of people who share the same language, operate with the same political, judicial and religious ideas, and hold the same myths of political origin’ (*ibid.*) The main argument of most students of ethnicity in Africa can be summarized in a short statement: it is a construction. First, because its so-called primordial givens are constructions themselves. There is almost nothing ‘natural’ with kinship, for instance: the relations between husband and wife, father and son, brothers of different age, everything is the product of ‘historically produced social agreements’ (*ibid.*). Second, the criteria defining ethnicities – language, religion, etc. – were constantly shifting in the past: groups’ frontiers were fuzzy, with overlapping and undetermined areas. One could be of the same religion but from a different region; of the same linguistic group but from a different clan, and this lability lent a degree of fluidity to social life.

The advent of ethnicity implied that multifaceted identity receded in the background in such a way that the obligations pertaining to this identity overrode all the others. As a result, a reification process developed and eventually simplified and rigidified social life. Ethnicity, therefore, is an historical process as Chrétien and Prunier have argued (Chrétien and Prunier, 1989).

This process has been often explained by the impact of the colonial period. For Amselle, ethnic groups were invented by the colonial powers and ethnographers who worked more or less with this administration (Amselle, 1990). Certainly, the evolutionist – even Darwinian – mentality of the colonial officials and ethnographers favored their recourse to ‘tribes’ as the relevant category for classifying Africans (Coulon, 1997, 42). The colonial state’s obsession with order also played a role: the administration needed to put into categories societies it was not at all familiar with, simply to be able to rule them.

But these pressures from the outside do not explain the ethnic phenomenon – except if one adopts a purely dependentist approach of colonial societies (Bayart, 1989: 41).

Ethnicity crystallized because group leaders were actively concerned with appropriating the collective identities designed by the colonial officials and ethnographers. After ten years, Ranger has admitted that though these identities were 'invented traditions', they gained some substance because groups – which were to become 'ethnic' – found them convenient (Ranger, 1983, 1993). Why? First, because the newly created ethnic groups offered relevant frameworks for organization and modernization in terms of self-help or emancipation from the traditional authorities, in the spirit of what John Lonsdale has called 'moral ethnicity' (Lonsdale, 1992). Second – and this pertains to the other facet of ethnicity for Lonsdale, 'political tribalism' –, ethnic groups provided the basis for mobilization in pursuit of collective interests. Here, the colonial state and the ethnic group interact very closely. The former created new, reified categories; the latter adopted them, entering these moulds that endowed them with some sort of official identity. Such recognition was useful because it gave access to state resources. After the colonial state disorganized the economy – trade routes as well as the production process, sometimes –, new opportunities were created within the state apparatus. Some groups carved out new niches for themselves whereas others were left behind. This was partly due to government policy (because such and such a group was supposed to be more docile or more hard working, for instance) and partly due to random distribution. But in such a context those who lagged behind, in terms of employment, education, etc., could activate the ethnic chord to mobilize larger crowds and pressure the state to claim their due. Von Oppen therefore came to the conclusion that ethnicity is an ideology of competition (Von Oppen, 1994).

But is such a situation characteristic of the colonial context alone? Of course not: in any configuration of power excluding at least one group, the latter may resort to any available identity to defend its interest. Ethnicity may be the most relevant one because it enables discreet and scattered entities to coalesce and solidify (in fact, here resides the emancipatory potential of ethnicity as shown by Mamdani (1995)). For Ranger, it is therefore possible for ethnicity 'to emerge wherever there are relations of inequality and exchange accompanied by intellectual assumptions of cultural and somatic classification' (Ranger, 1999).

In Africa as elsewhere, therefore, ethnicity is a social construct which constitutes first and foremost a resource for acting in the context of social competition (Poutignat & Streiff-Feinart, 1995: 182). This conclusion runs parallel to those we have drawn from our study of the theories of nationalism since, once again, we are led to focus on the relation to the other – always marked by competition – and the invention of ideologies. Ethnicity is in itself an ideological invention based on the shaping of some Golden Age. Ethnic movements also

runs parallel to nationalist movements because they are activated by leaders who manipulate ideas and symbols in order to mobilize 'their' group (a group in the making) and to put pressure on the state in order to gain some advantage for their group.

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Theories of nationalism are usually divided into two broad categories: those presenting this 'ism' as a product of modernization based on allegedly malleable identities, and those interpreting it as a continuation of pre-existing ethnic characteristics. This *summa divisio* between 'modernists' and 'perennialists' is often repeated by scholars analyzing theories of ethnicity (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996, p. 8). It can be refined by distinguishing between three set of theories: (1) those which consider nation and nationalism as 'givens' (the primordialists and socio-biologists); (2) those which analyze them as constructions, either as by-products of the modernization processes (ranging from social mobilization to state-building) or consequences of the instrumentalist strategies implemented by élites in conflicts (for the control of the state or the creation of a new state) and; (3) those which rehabilitate the role of ideas and culture and look at nationalism as an ideology, be it propagated (in the diffusionist perspective) or shaped by indigenous intelligentsias on the basis of the existing ethnic material. This typology has a great heuristic power. It enables us to reject the first approach because of its simplistic views; it also invites us to integrate the two others in a logical as well as chronological order. To begin with, the intelligentsia builds a nationalist ideology in order to resist the domination posed by some dominant Other (often coming from the West) as suggested by Smith, Greenfeld, Berlin and Plamenatz. After some time, the self-reform process based on a degree of admiration for the modern West inevitably gets transformed into revivalism or pure *ressentiment*, either because emulating the West is an unattainable task, or because the intelligentsia is not willing to imitate the West and repudiate its culture but to restore its culture by incorporating into it the prestigious features of the West through the making of a convenient Golden Age. Nationalism, therefore, is an ideology based on a strategy of stigmatization and emulation of a dominant Other. Interestingly, this approach has been spelled out in a very sophisticated way by a specialist of Africa, Lloyd Fallers. Fallers convincingly explains that in the African post-colonial nations,

the term 'ideology' [is used] to refer to that part of culture which is actively and explicitly concerned with the establishment and defense of patterns of value and belief. Ideology is thus the apologetic part of culture. If we look at it in this way, those whose task is to create cultures for the new nations – the ideologists of nationalism – have two major sources to draw upon: on the one hand, traditional African cultures and, on the other, the many and diverse elements of value and belief which may be imported from modern Europe, Asia and America. The task is a difficult one and fraught with dilemmas: how to create in Africans a sense of self-esteem without encouraging tribalism; how to be 'modern' without being 'western'; how to change rapidly without losing a sense of continuity and cultural 'wholeness' (Fallers, 677-678).

Fallers here is clearly using the same categories we use in our model based on a strategy of stigmatizing and emulating a threatening Other (threatening because he challenges one's self-esteem). It shows that this theory of nationalism can apply to a terrain – Africa – where ethnicity developed along the same lines; once again, both ideologies ran along the same lines.

While this initial moment is best analyzed through theories of nationalism related to the ideology-making process, it covers only one phase, that of crystallization of ideas and sentiments. But nationalism exists only when it assumes the dimensions of a popular movement.<sup>15</sup> The identification of the *phases* of nationalism is central to Miroslav Hroch's approach of nationalism: during the first one, that he calls 'cultural', intellectuals and other elite groups develop a special interest in their history and language (in our model, this is the moment when reformists turned revivalists invent a national golden age); during the second phase the same groups form pressure groups for political demands such as a degree of home rule and in the third phase, they develop mass movements (Hroch, 1985). This transition to politics and then *mass politics* is better explained by the conflict-based theories of nationalism: the ideologically-minded intelligentsia will opt for nationalist politics when locked in conflicts with others (either dominant or peers) for the control of economic resources or the state – if not for the establishment of a new state as argued by Gellner. Then, they will base their political claims on the new nationalist ideology. And in the third phase of mass politics, they will resort to the main symbols of this ideology to mobilize followers who will help them achieve their aims. The most immediately relevant theory, here, is the instrumentalist one, but those of the nation-building school, and more especially its cybernetic variant, are useful as well. They show how the modernization process (ranging from the development of communications to the establishment of a state apparatus, including a 'national' education system) made previously isolated, heterogeneous communities available for being appealed by nationalism and integrating in a nationalist movement. As Anderson mentioned, this modernization process made nations 'possible'.

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<sup>15</sup> Hence Walker Connor's note of caution: 'A key problem faced by scholars when dating the emergence of nations is that national consciousness is a mass, not an elite phenomenon, and the masses, until quite recently isolated in rural pockets and being semi or totally illiterate, were quite mute with regard to their sense of group identity(ies)' (Connor, 1994, p. 223).

This integrated pattern of the different theories reviewed above into a new model explicitly reflects the distinction between theories of nationalism and theories of the nation: to explain the first and the second phases of the nationalist movements, one does not need to hark back to the theories of Rokkan, Deutsch or Anderson, which claim to deal with nationalism but in which what is actually at stake is *national consciousness* – ideology does not play a key role in any of these models. It does not mean that they are not useful, but given our purpose – the search for a theory of nationalism - they could only intervene very late in the day. There might be a continuum between nationalism and national consciousness but they are different – and the former has psychological roots.

While theories of the nation masquerading as theories of nationalism have not been very helpful in this attempt, theories of ethnicity, which are also, sometimes wrongly, looked at as theories of nationalism or, on the contrary, ignored, have proved to complement our understanding of nationalism. In fact, the ideology-based theories of nationalism find almost perfect parallels in the theories of ethnicity which focus on the making of group boundaries in the Barthian perspective. Barth reconfirms the decisive role of the relationship to the Other and the little importance of cultural legacies – compared to the maintenance of group boundaries – in the making of ethnic identities. Another inter-theories dialogue can also be established between the work of Armstrong and the theories of nationalism emphasizing the centrality of myth making (like the national Golden Age). Last but not least, theories of nationalism based on socio-economic and political group conflicts can also benefit from parallel models studying ethnic issues. The analysis by Glazer, Moynihan, Bell and Horowitz of ethnic groups as interest groups entertaining rivalries in relation to the state or simply between themselves, runs parallel to the theories of Gellner, Breuilly, Brass and Ronen, to mention only a few. Students of nationalism can obviously learn more from theories of ethnicity than from theories of the nation.

Scholars, today, are questioning the relevance of the nation-state. Some even claim that we live in a post-national, globalized world dominated by new forms of cosmopolitanism. Such reasonings are mainly based on the prospects of the European Union (Habermas, 2001) and on the impact of migrations (Appadurai, 1993). We cannot enter into these debates which, in fact, make the search for a theory of nationalism pointless. But I would like to end by mentioning those which, reflecting the increasing role of migrations, try to accommodate them in the nation-state framework by resorting to a new formula: multiculturalism. To what extent is nationalism compatible with multiculturalism in societies like the United States?

B. Parekh warns that 'defining national identity in a multicultural society is an exceedingly difficult enterprise' (Parekh, 1999, 73) because most of the time a dominant group tends to identify itself with the country and to appropriate its identity. Among the preconditions for such an enterprise to succeed, one stands as especially crucial: 'the definition of national identity should not only include all citizens, but also accept them as equally valued and legitimate members of the community' (*ibid.*, 71). In other words, the countries relying on some *jus soli* and delinking ethnicity from citizenship could be eligible to the harmonious combination of nationalism and multiculturalism.

According to Michael Walzer, the formula the United States has found for defusing the latent conflict between these two 'isms' has consisted in creating 'hyphenated Americans' (Walzer, 1990): American nationalism has been defined as a purely political identity anchored in the allegiance to the Constitution, the (optional) observance of symbols – like the salute to the flag, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, etc. - and an emotional patriotism assuming that every citizen is prepared to die for his country. Parallel to this political nationalism, one can retain a cultural, ethnic identity – be it Hispanic, Asian or whatever. This multicultural configuration allows people to keep their language to a large extent and follow their religion freely.

Nationalism and multiculturalism are all the more compatible since most of the time, argues Daniel Sabbagh on the basis of Kymlicka's work, "'multiculturalist" policies [...] are actually designed to facilitate the *integration* of immigrants into mainstream, *national* institutions upon renegotiated terms' (Sabbagh, forthcoming, Kymlicka, 1997, 59-63). This approach has been successful, by and large, except, perhaps, in Canada where the integration of the Quebecers remains clearly unachieved, but the Americanization of their way of life may make their culture less different from those of the English-speaking Canadians. It might well be the case that not only nationalism accommodates different cultures to defuse centrifugal forces, but the cultural diversity, in the process, may recede in the background. In California, already, the Hispanics ask for English-medium education, instead of Spanish-medium education.

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