## ◆ Abstract

The article reviews briefly the theory of nationalism, and introduces (yet another) definition of nations and nationalism. Starting from this definition of nationalism as a world order with specific characteristics, oppositions such as core and periphery, globalism/nationalism, and realism/idealism are formally rejected. Nationalism is considered as a purely global structure. Within this, it is suggested, the number of states tends to fall to an equilibrium number which is itself falling, this number of states being the current best approximation to a single world state. Within nationalism variants are associated with different equilibrium numbers: these variants compete. Together, as the nationalist structure, they formally exclude other world orders. Such a structure appears to have the function of blocking change, and it is tentatively suggested that it derives directly from an innate human conservatism. The article attempts to show how characteristics of classic nationalism, and more recent identity politics, are part of nationalist structures. They involve either the exclusion of other forms of state, or of other orders of states, or the intensification of identity as it exists.

## ◆ Introduction

**1.1**  If a world order of states is so arranged that similarity within each state is maximized, and the number of states is minimized, then that world order is a nationalist world order, and its components are nation states. This definition does not start from the characteristics of a nation, as many definitions of nationalism do. It starts instead from the world order, considering the nation only in a very abstract sense. Implicitly this definition is also a functionalist theory of nationalism, and this is expanded later in this article. The article closes with a more speculative section on how identity politics could replace nationalism, but continue its function.

**1.2**  That nations have a function, and what it is, is nowhere more clearly expressed than in President Clinton's First Inaugural speech:

> When our founders boldly declared America's independence to the world and our purposes to the Almighty, they knew that America, to endure, would have to change. Not change for change's sake, but change to preserve America's ideals - life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. Though we march to the music of our time, our mission is timeless.

**1.3**  A world of nation states is a world of states built to maintain past ideals, where change is limited to that necessary for their survival, a world structured against 'change for the sake of change'. Structuralism, functionalism, and voluntarism are currently taboo in the social sciences. Yet, I think it strange to reject the clear explanations of the purpose of nationalism, so often given by nationalists and national leaders. In practice it is often an abdication of moral judgement on the actions of nationalists.

**1.4**  Before considering the relation of structure and function of nations, a brief indication of the range of theories of nationalism. Any comprehensive review of theories of nationalism could only be of book length (for instance Smith, 1983). The *Oxford Reader on Nationalism* (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994) collects examples of the main theories.

**1.5**  At least nine academic disciplines develop theories of nationalism and nation states:

- political geography
- international relations
- political science
- cultural anthropology
- social psychology
- political philosophy (normative theory)
- international law and Staatsrecht
- sociology
- history

**1.6** It is not surprising that authors in one discipline are unfamiliar with theory in another, or that there is overlap and duplication. Peter Alter (1985: p. 169) remarks that the literature can scarcely be overseen. In this fragmentation among disciplines, a plurality of theories is at least possible. In turn, plurality of theories should give more space for innovative theories - more than in a single recent paradigmatic discipline. (This reverses the standard assumption, that periods of revolution in science are the periods of innovation in science. Given fragmentation of disciplines, there might be more innovation in 'normal science' than through paradigm change.) However, in this respect nationalism theory is a disappointment. Plurality of disciplines has not produced an equivalent plurality of theory. Some common approaches recur across disciplines. Examples of such common features are the tendency, to approach nationalism on a country-by-country basis, and to date it as a phenomenon of modernity.

**1.7** In any case, it is possible to give some simple (non-inclusive) categorization of theories of nationalism:

- normative theory of nationalism in political philosophy, for instance in Walzer (1983).
- theories of nationalism as political extremism. These use a definition of nationalism common in the media: as equivalent to jingoism, ethnic hatred, expansionism, militarism, or aggressive separatism, contrasted with constitutionalism, liberalism or patriotism (see Connor, 1994: pp. 196 - 209). This approach is related to 'shopping list' definitions of the extreme right (Mudde, 1996: pp. 228 - 9).
- modernization theories of nationalism: these form the bulk of social science theory of nationalism
- primordialist theories, disputing the modern origin of nations
- civilization theories of nationalism, often implying an ultimate global community. Freud's (1932) comparison of peoples with primitive organisms is a core version of such a theory of nations.
- historicist theories, which take the existence of nations as given, and consider their development (or obstacles to that development).
- social-integrative theories, especially 'substitute religion' theories
- state formation theories, residually explaining nationalism, usually as a product of centralizing policy to uniformity
- global system or global order theories, which do not usually consider internal characteristics of nation states. Theory of state formation through war combines this with the last category (for instance, Rasler and Thompson, 1989).

**1.8** This is only one categorization, and indicative only. James Goodman (1996), for instance, categorizes theories of nationalism into five approaches: ethno-national, modernization, state-centred, class-centred, and 'uneven development' theories.

Little material is available online but a collection of further resources has been collected by the author and can be accessed from here. Links are ordered on the basis of scale, not of categories of theory, and the list is mainly illustrative.

**1.9** Four authors have dominated academic consideration of nationalism in the last 10 years:

- Ernest Gellner (*Nations and Nationalism,* 1983).
- Eric Hobsbawm (*The Invention of Tradition,* 1983, co-edited with Terence Ranger, and later *Nations and Nationalism since 1780,* 1992).
- Benedict Anderson (*Imagined Communities,* 1983).
- Anthony D. Smith (*The Ethnic Origins of Nations,* 1986)

**1.10** The first three are in the category modernization theories, A. D. Smith is the main 'primordialist'. Gellner's academic field was the philosophy of sociology, Anderson taught international relations, Hobsbawm is a social historian, and Smith a sociologist (notes in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994).

**1.11** Gellner's work is the most consistently theoretical: it proposes a model of the transformation to nation states derived from economic factors:

> So the economy needs both the new type of central culture and the central state; the culture needs the state; and the state probably needs the homogeneous branding of its flock ... (Gellner, 1983: p. 140)

**1.12** Anderson does not propose a derivation of this kind, but his central thesis is that communication and media did facilitate the emergence of nations as imagined communities. For Anderson, only face- to-face contact can sustain community: nations are in some sense an illusion. Both of these views date nationalism as definitively modern. A. D. Smith's central thesis is that pre-modern equivalents of nations existed - indirectly invalidating the modernization theories. Hobsbawm's article on invented tradition appeared earlier, but can be read as a refutation of the pre-modern origin of national tradition. Hobsbawm gives examples of how such tradition, even the sustaining myth of nations, can be borrowed, added to, or simply invented. (A similar work by Bernard Lewis (1977), did not apparently have the same impact.)

**1.13** The so-called resurgence of nationalism in Eastern Europe after 1989 brought these works to media attention, as well as academic status. (At one time I could chose between six different courses on them, at one university.) All of them are also very readable, with much interesting illustration from the history of nations. No more recent work has made the same impact, and the fixation on the themes of these authors may have limited theoretical perspectives.

**1.14** Any attempt to compress these works into one paragraph is inadequate. However, one thing is clear: the authors have not engaged in any wide speculation about hypothetical worlds of entirely non-national states. Nations are explained in these theories, not the absence of non-nations. Insofar as possible alternatives are considered, these are possible continuations of the mediaeval European order.

### ◆ Universalist Particularism

**2.1** Most nationalism theory pays little attention to nationalism as a world order. This is surprising, since nationalists themselves so often treat it as such. Some definitions of nationalism are entirely particularistic: Elwert (1989: p. 37) says that nationalists only want a nation for themselves, not others. This is untrue: nationalists have often wanted other nations. The classic example is Mazzini, who founded or inspired not only Young Italy, but Young Germany, Switzerland, Poland, Bohemia and Argentina among others (Mack Smith, 1994: pp. 11-12). Mazzini's vision was global: he saw the peoples as nothing less then the units of humanity's army:

> L'Umanità è un grande esercito che move alla conquista di terre incognite, contro nemici potenti e avveduti. I Popoli sono i diversi corpi, le divisioni di quello esercito. (Mazzini (1860) [1953]: p. 89)

**2.2** This is a metaphor, but it should emphasize the extreme universalism of nationalism. Armies are not known for maximizing autonomy or individual will. Any listing of the ethical claims of nationalism (the subject of a separate article) will show that nationalism can not de derived, from Enlightenment ideas of self-determination. That was the basic thesis of Elie Kedourie's influential *Nationalism* (1960, revised 1992).

**2.3** Peter Taylor (1989: p. 175) summarizes the world as seen by nationalists, at three levels (approximately the global, national and individual).

- The world is, for them, a mosaic of nations which find harmony when all are free nation states.
- Nations themselves are natural units with a cultural homogeneity based on common ancestry or history, each requiring its own sovereign state on its own inalienable territory.
- Individuals all belong to a nation, which requires their first loyalty, and in which they find freedom.

**2.4** This standard nationalist thought says more about nationalism than the immediate goals of any one nationalist group. For both of these things - world view and activism - the word 'nationalism' is used. This may be confusing, but it is also misleading to split nationalism into 'international relations' and 'internal politics', and then include secessionism in the second category. Basque separatists in Northern Spain and South-western France want a nation state, and are labelled nationalists: the governments of France and Spain, who have already got a nation state, are not. There is undeniably a secessionist nationalism, with claims against a larger state, such as those of the ETA. However, the definition at the start of this article is intended to emphasize the global effect of such movements, and their historical equivalence to the founders of the states they oppose. The term nationalism is used here, deliberately, to describe both aspects of the phenomenon.

**2.5**  Nationalism is not a particularism. It is a universalism, a consistent vision or ideology. Autonomy, secession, war and conquest can be compatible with a universal shared goal. Apparently amending his earlier view of nationalism, Peter Taylor (1995: p. 10) described one world as 'the nemesis of interterritoriality'. However, a world of nations can still be one world, if it is one nationalist world. The definition of nationalism used here is intended to emphasize this universal, 'world order', aspect of nationalism. Since nations, united nations.

**2.6**  The definition implies that nationalism is a substitute for a world state. If cultural homogeneity cannot be achieved, because co-ordination over distance is not perfect, then a strategy of co-operating local similarities is the best option. The number of cultures on earth will be the outcome of this strategy. Later, as states form on the basis of pre-existing ethnic or cultural groups, the number of states will also derive from this strategy. If there are too few states, and each too large, they may become internally diverse. If there are too many, they will differ too much among themselves. It is therefore not possible to project the long term fall in the number of states to the point at which only one is left, as Robert Carneiro did (1976; see Chase- Dunn, 1990). The trend to fewer political units seemed clear enough to Carneiro, to project a date for world government: 2300 AD. If however, the nationalist world order is considered as a global structure, and not seen as competing states, then there is no certainty of reaching a single world state. If there is already such a global order, globalization does not imply the reduction of its components to one. Instead, there is an optimum number of nation states at any one time, within such a nationalist world order. That optimum is determined by limits of communications, transport, and the degree of political and social organization. This number is falling, but constraints of distance may never be eroded enough to reduce it to one. The optimum number may in fact exceed the number of states that now exist. The many separatist movements, the success of small states, and the fact that there are many more languages than states, all indicate a world with many more than 185 states: perhaps closer to 1000.

**2.7**  That implies a change in the nature of the component states. The classic 19th century European nation state, the basis of most definitions of nationalism, would best fit a world of between 200 and 500 states. It is a universalism: but there are competing universalisms, variants within nationalism. This is very clear in Europe, where these variants are used as programmes for the whole continent. Most are serious, some are what might be called geopolitical kitsch (Heineken, 1992; Pedersen, 1992). Classic nationalists speak of Europe des patries, ethno-nationalists of Europe des ethnies (Heraud, 1993), regionalists of Europe of the regions (Borrбs-Alomar, 1994). Only in Europe are the alternatives formulated so explicitly, but these universalist structures are implicitly global. They are ways of dividing the world: alternatives to classic nationalism. In other words, use of similar terms at a global scale can be expected: a world of the regions, a world of the peoples, and so on.

**2.8**  There is what might be called world- nationalism, associated with a single global state. Its explicit form is world federalism, and plans to the UN into a sort of world government. This centuries-old tradition (see ter Meulen, 1917; van der Linden, 1987) is represented by the work of Richard Falk (1987; 1992) and many others (Marien, 1995: pp. 297 - 301). It is paralleled by the philosophical tradition of cosmopolitanism (see Toulmin, 1990), and by a belief in globalization. (Marien's 1995 article covers a very wide range of global visions, from New Age to neo-liberal.) Then there is inter-culturalism - the division of the world into 5 to 50 cultures or civilizations, once used in organicist versions by historians (Demandt, 1978: pp. 96 - 101), and recently revived by Samuel Huntington (1993). At the same scale are the pan- nationalist movements, all of them failures until now (Snyder, 1984: p. 254). Then there is classic (inter-) nationalism, the basis of the existing world order. Next to that is ethno-nationalism (Connor, 1994; Heraud, 1993; Tiryakian, 1985; Watson, 1990). Although there is no clear distinction between some 'nations' and 'peoples', the scale of the inter-ethnic world is very different, with up to 10,000 'peoples'. It is this variant which has the clearest demands at present, classically stated in the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations (CWIS, 1994). At a similar scale is a historic-cultural-linguistic regionalism, well organized in Europe (see Kohr, 1986; Labasse, 1991). These regions are often seen as units of a future federal Europe, combining regionalism with a weak pan-nationalism. Finally although it rarely generates separatism, there is an inter-localism: it sees the small community, the village or neighbourhood, as the only authentic unit of social organization.

**2.9**  In all these variants, the possible states share four functional characteristics (described later), and there is a global order of such states. I would emphasize that this article is not intended to explain all aspects of nationalism, but to consider why states do not deviate from this model.

### ◆ Core, Periphery, Hegemony

**3.1**  In universal structures (functional or not) there is logically no core or periphery - at least, not in the sense of most world system models. However, competition between universalisms can create this appearance.

Some separatist movements, for instance, defy the expected logic of core and periphery: the Lega Nord, or Catalonian separatism. Mansvelt Beck (1991) explains this as an 'inverted core- periphery relationship'. This kind of explanation can be avoided on the assumption that there is no real separatism at all. Catalonian regionalism is regionalism, a model for the whole world, not just Spain: Basque nationalism is a manifestation of global ethno- nationalism, and so on. The variants of nationalism are superimposed universalisms. An ETA attack on a Spanish army barracks is, seen in this way, a clash of universalisms.

**3.2** To this extent, nationalist movements cannot logically be analyzed in terms of social movement theories. (This is an example of the formal consequences of adopting the universalist definition used in this article). Nor can electoral support for 'nationalist parties' be analyzed. In Britain, the Scottish National Party supports a nation state, but then so do the Labour Party and the Conservative Party. Support for nationalism in UK elections is consistently around 99 percent. Again, separatist sentiment is labelled nationalist, but unionist sentiment is not. In this way, SNP support enters a different category for electoral analysis: but this is a purely taxonomic effect.

**3.3** In a similar way, a rise in the number of states may generate the illusion of power, struggle and resistance. This may be the case, even if there is no difference of scale. All units (potential states) might be comparable, as with Czechoslovakia, Czechia, and Slovakia. These are all classic European nation states. However, seen from Slovakia, Czechoslovakia stands for hegemonic culture, an imposed universalism, oppression and 'power'. Earlier, the Slavic nationalists who inspired the Czechoslovak state, had opposed the dominance of German-language culture in Central Europe. Earlier still, German romantic nationalists had opposed the dominance of French Enlightenment rationalist culture. All secessionist movements are anti-hegemonic and anti-universalist, until independence day. After that they become another's hegemonic universalism, another's 'state'. And, indeed, Slovakia has been criticized, for its treatment of the Hungarian minority.

**3.4** Logically, in a perfect order of nations, there is no dominance or 'power': everyone co-operates a nationalist in sustaining the structure. This may however involve changing the number of states, creating the illusion of conflict. People volunteer for military service: that is said to prove they are willing to die for their country. It is equally logical to say they die for the functioning of the world order. That, emphasized, in a perfect order of nations.

**3.5** This is an abstraction, true. Nevertheless, it is not such an abstraction that is has no real effect. Conflicts do involve common reinforcement, including reinforcement of national structure. Secession, especially, forces both sides further into their own identity. Identity makes counter- identity (see Barth, 1969), as with Slovak and Czech. It is probably true that Czecho-Slovakia is more nationalist since it split: it is certainly true of Yugoslavia. In this way the action of individuals in one nation can intensify global identity, affecting the number of nations in the process. So it is logically possible that there is no national oppression, nor national liberation. The 'struggle' is to intensify nationalism, the world order. Inside it, to oppress or be oppressed as a nation serves the same function. In practice, an oppressed group will say it is a nation fighting a state: the state will say it is a nation fighting terrorists.

### ◆ Global/National, Order/Chaos

**4.1** Another opposition recurrent in theory on nations is that between the national and the global (see Arnason, 1990). The nation state and national culture are being eroded by global communication - it is often said. It is said that Internet will dissolve nations. Much the same thing was said about satellite television, air travel, radio, the telegraph, and railways. Nation states are still here. Yet few people are sceptical about 'globalization' (Cox, 1992; Smith, 1990), and in a sense there is no reason to be. There is no erosion of the national by the global, but only because there is nothing to erode. Nationalism is 100% global: a world order cannot logically be further globalized.

**4.2** The components of an order do not stand in opposition to it: certainly not in the sense implied by the term 'globalization'. The implicit assumption is that nations are particular entities, necessarily at a sub-global level. In other worlds, the whole idea starts from the assumption that there is no universal nationalism. If I claim the people on the pitch at a football match walked there by chance, and I see them playing football, then I could say they are being 'football- ized'. In fact they went there as a group, for that purpose.

**4.3** The question is why there is such enthusiasm for the concept of globalization. First, it is in the nature of nationalism itself. The world of nations is an imperfect substitute for a homogenous world state: it is logical for nationalists to hope it is approaching. Secondly, the enthusiasm is in any case matched by the anti-universalist ideas mentioned above. There are books and conferences on the coming global

state, but equally on the rise of regions. It seems possible to combine two scales of thought, for instance in cultural pan-syncretism (see Nederveen Pieterse, 1993) or sub-state federation (Bengoetxea, 1993). Thirdly, this is only one example of a pattern: for each of the level of scale of nationalism, there are possible upward and downward transitions. Shifts from the ethno-regional to the global, for instance, or from pan-nationalism to linguistic regionalism.

**4.4**   Only three of these possibilities are active at present:

- globalism, more normative than descriptive
- anti-hegemonic criticism of existing national states and their cultures, without any territorial effect as yet. In reaction there is some new defence of the nation state, especially in response to multiculturalism and identity politics. This applies most in high-immigration western industrialized countries, where it is a major issue. (The U.S.A. especially: see Schlesinger, 1992.) In any case, more recent interest in fusion, hybridity, and 'crossing boundaries' favours pan- nationalism. Separatist identity politics seems on the way out.
- ethno-nationalism, and in Europe regionalism at the same subnational scale - which enjoys some support within the EU (van der Knaap, 1994).

This last is by far the most active shift. The next ten years are unlikely to see a world government, and the US is unlikely to break up (and does not need Arthur Schlesinger to save it): but it might see an independent Vlaanderen or Catalunya, or the definitive break-up of Afghanistan.

**4.5**   The world order of nations is therefore characterized by both secession and fusion, but it is not being 'torn apart'. It is a structure being rebuilt to function better. All these shifts in scale merely substitute one universalism for another, all variants of one world order. There is no dramatic fragmentation, and no paradigmatic shift to one world community. No shift is needed.

**4.6**   It also follows, from the definitions used here, that a world of nation states cannot be chaotic or anarchic. The academic discipline of international relations is influenced by the idea of a slow progress toward the imposition of some kind of order on warring, aggressive states, the tradition of, for instance, Hedley Bull (1977, 1984). This tradition concedes some 'order in the system'. However, logically there cannot be anything else but order. A world order is by definition not disorder: international relations are by definition 'idealist' in International Relations terms, and a national state cannot be a Machtsstaat. So called realism models a world of aggressively competitive states - sometimes identified with mediaeval Europe. From this a recognition of commonalities may emerge, and states may co-operate, bringing order and peace. Those who consider this inherent or inevitable are usually classified as idealist.

**4.7**   But war is not disorder: Carneiro's model, the simplest possible, demonstrates that states disappear through 'competitive exclusion' until there is one left: there are many wars, but it is an ordered, linear process (see Cioffi-Revilla, 1991). The realist/idealist dispute ignores the type of state involved. The question is not why there are so many wars between nations, but why there are so few wars between non-nations. Not why there is ethnic cleansing, but why there is so little non-ethnic cleansing. Not what is international relations, but why there are only inter-national relations. Any attempt to imagine a fundamentally non-national world, should make clear how stable the world of nations is. Nation states can apparently fight each other, without risk of emergence of new state forms in the alleged 'chaos'.

### ◆ Other Worlds

**5.1**   It may seem that all this imposes a simplistic order on a complex world. However it is nationalists who want to impose a simple structure, and they have been remarkably successful. Of course the world order is not perfect, and states do have autonomous interests. These may be of the kind graphically attributed to them in pre-war Geopolitik (Schmidt, 1929), or less obsessively in recent geopolitical atlases. Nations do sometimes act as entities 'seeking access to the sea', or 'control of river basins', or resources, or historical territories. The Schmidt-Haack Atlas maps tens of different types of claim, and some were later used by Germany. However, if all nation states consistently acted like this, there would be constant all-state war.

**5.2**   There is also the possibility that a state will turn against the world order, a real renegade state. Usually this term merely indicates a state disliked by western policy makers: see Dror (1971) on 'crazy states'. A real renegade state would have to stop being a nation state: no-one speaks of 'crazy nations'. More probable is that nationalism as a universal order conflicts with other universalisms; other world orders of one or more states, or perhaps a stateless world. The definition of nationalism used here, defines it as a monolith with great historical continuity. It should then react to competing monoliths, as a unit. The Greek

polis is often cited as the prototype of nations, indeed of all political community. It was also a unit within an order of similar states. That Hellenic order may have had a proto-national identity itself. However, as an order of city states, it was in intermittent conflict with Asian empires. The present order of nation states covers the globe, however, so that any competing world will be found within it.

5.3 There is at present one clear example of a competing world order: theocratic religious universalism, of the kind promoted (in Britain) by the Muslim Unity Organization. It advocates a world caliphate, khilafa. It is not accidental that this group operates from Britain: the existing Islamic nation states would be the first to disappear on the road to the caliphate. However small such groups are, they have a coherent and radical alternative not just to 'the West', but to the whole existing world:

> ...there is a long and still vibrant tradition of Muslim agitation against nationalism and the nation state. The most recent manifestation of this agitation has had Shi'i inspiration, but there are no significant differences between Sunni and Shi'a on this question, or between Arab and non-Arab Muslims. Feeling that Islam's decline is due chiefly to the adoption of Western ideas and culture, all express pessimism and suggest a radical restructuring of the world order. (Piscatori, 1986: p. 145)

5.4 A complete alternative world order is unlikely to control any territory within the world order it rejects. It is however not adequate to consider such universalist Islamic movements as 'social movements' within existing nation states. They cannot be accommodated within the 'public domain' of these states, as suggested by John Rex (1996) in a previous article in Sociological Research Online. This has nothing to do with their immigrant or ethnic status: a Catholic theocracy would not fit into a liberal democratic nation state either.

## ◆ Blocking

6.1 As long as there are nations, there will be no caliphate; it is neither a people, nor a region, nor a nation, nor a culture. Structurally, nationalism excludes other entities from state status. Nationalism is a blocking world order: it excludes other worlds. It is difficult to imagine all these possible worlds from inside the world of nations, and that is part of its success. Any attempt to imagine them will lead to apparent absurdity.

6.2 What nationalism blocks, above all, is change. The definition of nationalism as tending to total homogeneity implies stability also. The order blocks, but not without direction. It may well be, in itself, empty: it does not define, for instance, what language will be spoken in the third nation east of the Rhine. That does not stop it having a purpose. If the world order of nations (as defined here) is superimposed on a world, it will block change in time, and exclude the alternative worlds that are possible at any point in time. That is an ethical choice, and the ethics of nations are outside the scope of this article, as noted.

6.3 If nationalism is chosen, someone chose it. No one person invented nationalism: the most logical 'someone' is, exactly as Mazzini suggested, humanity. There is some theory which links the nation to the psyche: the most obvious areas of interest are self-determination (Ronen, 1979) and personal identity, sense of self (Bloom, 1990). I suggest the structure of nationalism derives from an innate human conservatism. This is no more absurd than saying that structures of reservoirs and water supply derive from an innate human need for water. It does not imply that all persons at all times are absolutely conservative. (Nor does it contradict biology: change causes stress.)

6.4 How can the world order of nations answer such an innate aversion to change? First, in that it gives a monopoly of state formation - and so of sovereignty - to nations. Not that all states correspond exactly to one nation: again, the point is how few states correspond to non-national entities. They do exist as historical curiosities: the Vatican, and the autonomous Agio Oros (Athos) in Greece. Some nationalists have a horror of a state without a nation: see Heraud's comment on the Vatican as a product of History, 'qui est violence' (1993: p. 11). If national divisions were not dominant, there should be more of these counter-examples. Secondly, the nation itself is past-based. Trans-generationality is a key characteristic of nations, and found in many definitions of nation. Writing on the subjective experience of cultural identity, A. D. Smith (1990: p. 179) names three components of shared experience: a sense of transgenerational continuity, shared memories, and a sense of common destiny. Collapsing the three into one gives the purpose of a nation: it exists to project the past (as collectively remembered) into the future, as little changed as possible. Nationalists almost do not ignore the future:

> Nations are thus projects for the future and have the right to self-determination in order to organise their future. (Bengoetxea, 1993: p.95)

**6.5** However in a national world order, nations are the only entities with self-determination and territory, and they are past- constituted. Just as with the world order, the nation is empty but not directionless: superimpose a nation on a heritage, and it will preserve it. In fact it will make the past into a 'heritage', one of the metaphors of possession common in nationalism. It is logical in nations, that the past should increase its share of economy, society and culture (see Horne, 1984; Lowenthal, 1985), that territory undergoes 'heritage-ization' (Walsh, 1992: pp. 138 - 147), that memory is cultural (see Assman, 1988) and that its preservation is a task of the state. Despite Lowenthal's title, the past is not treated as an apart entity, but rather divided up to correspond to existing nations. The world is thus occupied by states projecting parallel pasts into the future: there is no non-memory space, no space which is not of the past.

**6.6** Thirdly, the nations are in principle eternal, and so the nation state, and so the world order. (Dependent territories and mandates can have a formal time limit, but this relates to a transfer of power. Mandate territories become independent nation states, or join an existing neighbour.) The idea of setting up a state for a limited time for a specific purpose is alien to nationalism. The exceptions which show it is possible - for example extraterritorial mining concessions - are curiosities in a world of nations. The projection of the past will continue.

**6.7** Fourth, and most specifically, no state has ever been established for the primary purpose of change. This logical possibility is not limited by available technology or culture - it could have been done 1000 years ago.

**6.8** Returning to the definition: there logically exists a general class of orders of states where the boundaries are not drawn so as to maximise change. In other words, a class of change-limiting orders, in effect change-minimizing orders. The order of nations is probably the most effective of these. Formally, it is an order of coterminous states covering the entire land surface, formed by transgenerational identity communities, claiming a monopoly of state formation, and eternal legitimacy. All the scale variants of nationalism conform to this definition.

**6.9** These four functional characteristics of the nationalist world order emphasize how different it is from other possible orders, and how it has excluded them for a long time. In effect it has become superimposed on the world, by choice. It would be inaccurate to say it arrived at one instant. No-one can give a definitive date for when nationalism began: Marcu (1976: pp. 3 - 15) quotes 41 different views on the issue. Instead, a structure has been elaborated and intensified, and the beginnings of other structures have been abandoned. Compare the five possible futures of thirteenth century Europe suggested by Tilly (1975: p. 26), or the different routes to the national identity suggested by Armstrong (1982: pp. 283 - 300). The intensification has increased in the last 200 years, as nations become more national.

**6.10** It is a property of nationalism that intensifying the national identity intensifies the world order. Most theory of nationalism attributes this process to the state, at most to the interaction of state and civil society:

> Après avoir ajusté à leur échelle propre l'armée, la justice, la religion et l'administration, ils en viennent à nationaliser le marché (impôts, douanes, lois et règlements, poids et mesures, etc.) à nationaliser l'école (langue officielle, programmes, examens, etc.) et, de proche en proche, à nationaliser encore la conscription, les services publics, certaines entreprieses au moins (chemins de fer, postes, ports etc.) ... l'Etat tend à façonner toute la societé civile, laquelle tend, en retour, a soumettre l'Etat à ses finalités propres... (Fossaert, 1994: p. 195)

> *After having adjusted the army, the courts, religion and administration to national scale, they start to national-ise the market (taxes, customs, laws and regulations, weights and measures), to national-ise the schools (official language, educational programmes, exams), and then to nationalise in turn, conscription, public service, some business enterprises (railways, post, ports) ... The State forms civil society, which in turn begins to use the State for its own goals...* (Fossaert, 1994: p. 195)

**6.11** The logic of nationalism however, is that this is a process of convergence driven from below, that the national identity is exactly what A. D. Smith (1990: p. 179) says it is not: an average. The state is merely an instrument. Too large a state and the convergence will be ineffective, too small and the averages will differ too much - and so back to the starting definition. Neither secession nor conquest disturb this process in the long run: the new nations will have their own 'nationalization', their own convergence. In other words, even at the level of the individual state, attitudes to change can determine the degree of national uniformity. Secession, in effect, punishes the state for allowing too much difference in the population. This is not an abstraction: many nationalists explicitly value homogeneous communities.

**6.12** In any case, daily reality in most nations is not secession, but less spectacular processes of emancipation. Nations are not perfect: they include minorities (or majorities) which do not conform to the national ideal, but have no other national identity. Repeatedly, such groups chose to integrate into the nation, rather than allow non-national secession. They pressure the state for inclusion, and often try to adjust the national identity, through cultural politics. Once again, there is no political-geographic inevitability in this: if people can secede as a nation they can secede as something else. They chose not to, with some historical exceptions. Again, the remarkable feature of the world order of nations is not the number of secessionist movements, but the fact that all of them represent a people, or a nation.

**6.13** A good example of the intensity of this choice is the campaign of gay and lesbian groups - especially in the U.S.A. - against the military ban on service, for 'the right to die for my country'. It seems absurd to demand to be killed in an army which discriminates against you. The emotions here can only be nationalist, U.S.A. nationalist: a sort of desperate desire to be part of an identity, to conform, to belong, not to be different. This is an example of genuine anger directed against the state, for failing to homogenize the nation. The logically possible alternatives do not occur. Despite the influence of religion in the U.S.A., there is no comparable demand for the 'right to die for my church', let alone any other organization. There is also no serious secessionist movement of gays and/or lesbians despite decades of social organization. When Cardinal Archbishop Quarracino of Buenos Aires proposed (in August 1994) a 'separate country for homosexuals', he had to publicly apologise, saying it was a joke. He did not know, probably, of Queer Nation (Bérubé, 1991; Chee, 1991), nor that it makes no territorial demands, despite its name.

**6.14** Many processes, then, which may seem separate or contradictory, can be described in a structure of nationalism, starting from its formal definition as a specific world order. Integration through formalism is a characteristic of conspiracy theories: does all this imply a vast conspiracy involving almost all humans over centuries? Not necessarily: it is possible to generate complex structures from simple rules. The most general rule for a nationalist world as a blocking world order would be approximately: 'if there is change, intensify identity'. A second rule might be to intensify identity preferably by fusion or accretion, and only if that failed, by secession. However, it is not necessary to imply a hidden formal grammar of nationalism. People do not need one: they can reflect on what is happening, and produce open doctrines of complex action - as did Mazzini, and other nationalist ideologists.

### ◆ Identity Politics and Territory

**7.1** National identity links the individual to the world order. It has also been a central theme in universities over the last 15 - 20 years. Especially so, in English-speaking countries where a liberal political tradition is confronted by ethnic diversity (Rex, 1996). Some of that academic activity has an obvious link to nationalism, ethnic studies for example. More generally, there is an interest in what might be called structures of cultural identity, which may have a spatial or territorial counterpart.

**7.2** In the US the work of bell hooks, for instance, shows a transition from marginality as a 'site of deprivation' to a 'site of resistance' to a 'site one stays in' (hooks, 1990: p. 341), which is almost a summary of secessionist nationalism. In this way nationalist models, even of classic Mazzinian nationalism, may be adopted for identity politics. (That is, without necessarily breaking up existing nation states.) This continuity from 19th century nationalism to recent identity politics has yet to be researched. Even before the First World War, the Austro-Marxist Bauer (1907) anticipated the model of a multicultural state, now common in political speech in western Europe. Already in 1944, Louis Adamic described the United States as 'A Nation of Nations', and President Kennedy echoed the idea in the sixties (Kennedy, 1964). In contrast to Benedict Anderson's view (1992) that multiculturalism is transitional, there is no reason why a nation state can not be a Vielvölkerstaat, with diversity as a national value. The ultimate logic would be to make each nation itself a microcosm of the world order: united nations of united nations.

**7.3** It seems possible that use of identity can be further intensified, possibly to the point that a non-territorial structure of transgenerational identity replaces classic nationalism. For an example of the new politics, see the post-structuralist critique of Transgender Nation by Newitz (1993), and other texts at the same site. The new world order could be 'syncretic', a term from the study of religion (see Colpe, 1987). It could be a world order of gender pluralism, trans- diaspora cultures, trans-trans hybrids, and other new combinations of the existing - suppressing change by the volume of diversity.

**7.4** More probable is, that the parallels between the new politics and the old, will reinforce classic nationalism. Take this (random) example: a comment on bell hooks from a recent paper on spaces of citizenship:

In hooks's case these 'homes' entailed her grandparent's house and then the black neighbourhoods containing this house and also her own, and the implication is that these houses and neighbourhoods were rather more to her than 'just' sites of belonging, they were also sites where black people could escape from the antagonism, anger and attacks which arose when they trespassed on white space (however legitimate in legal terms their presence in this white space would actually be). In other words, hooks indicates something of how black people can never be citizens confidently occupying the spaces of white society, but hints too at how they may find ways of trying to foster alternative locales in which some sense of being a citizen - this time of a distinctively black world - is made possible. (Painter & Philo, 1995: pp. 116 - 7)

**7.5** Change some names and this becomes much less friendly:

In Tudjman's case these 'homes' entailed his grandparent's house and then the Croat neighbourhoods containing this house and also his own, and the implication is that these houses and neighbourhoods were rather more to him than 'just' sites of belonging, they were also sites where Croat people could escape from the antagonism, anger and attacks which arose when they trespassed on Yugoslav space (however legitimate in legal terms their presence in this Yugoslav space would actually be). In other words, Tudjman indicates something of how Croat people can never be citizens confidently occupying the spaces of Yugoslav society, but hints too at how they may find ways of trying to foster alternative locales in which some sense of being a citizen - this time of a distinctively Croat world - is made possible.

**7.6** And of course it was made possible.

**7.7** There is no need to reinvent nationalism, for nations have not disappeared, but some people seem determined to reinvent it anyway. The structure of nationalism is being altered, but its singularity and purpose are not. It remains one structure, one world order excluding other worlds. The man who more than anyone, was the founding father of modern nationalism, Johann Gottlieb Herder, wrote in 1774:

Ist nicht das Gute auf der Erde ausgestreut? Weil eine Gestalt der Menschheit und ein Erdstrich es nicht fassen konnte, wards geteilt in tausend Gestalten, wandelt - ein ewiger Proteus! - durch alle Weltteile und Jahrhunderte hin...(Herder, 1990/1774: p. 36)

**7.8** Nationalism is a Proteus, but it changes only to prevent change. Rewriting Herder in the negative gives the judgement of nationalism: Only that which is already strewn about the Earth, is good.

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