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# INTRODUCTION

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# 1

## THE STUDY OF NATIONALISM

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### INTRODUCTION

'Nationalism is an infantile sickness. It is the measles of the human race' – this was the verdict attributed to Albert Einstein on the force that had so profound an impact on the Europe of his middle years (Dukas and Hoffman, 1979: 38). This judgement of a theoretical physicist briefly turned political commentator was, if anything, milder than the assessments of later analysts of nationalism, many of whom would have used the metaphor of a much more deadly disease than measles. One distinguished scholar alleged that it has 'created new conflict, exacerbated tensions, and brought catastrophe to numberless people innocent of all politics' (Kedourie, 1993: 134). Others have pointed to its potential for generating hatred, civil unrest, violence, war and political instability (Kellas, 1998: 11–12; Poole, 1999: 9; Joireman, 2003: 1). There is, however, agreement on its huge importance in contemporary societies, with Greenfeld (1992: 3) seeing nationalism 'at the basis' of the world in which we live, Hechter (2000: 3) taking the view that 'nationalism and its close cousin, ethnicity, currently are the most potent political forces in the world', Puri (2004: 3) seeing the crisis of September 11, 2001, in the USA as revealing the force of nationalism in various ways (in particular, through the vigour of the American popular response), and Roshwald (2006: 1) drawing attention to its pervasiveness in the post-Cold War world.

As a political force, nationalism is very broad in its reach, and hard to pin down. It is conventionally seen as finding expression in an extraordinarily wide range of phenomena – war in Afghanistan, rebellion in Chechnya, unrest in Ukraine, instability in Belgium, and many other expressions of dissent at the polling booth or in the streets (for other examples, see Hearn, 2006: 1–3). Together, these examples illustrate the complexity and elusiveness of nationalism, whose very ubiquity makes studying it a huge challenge. It appears to have no borders: we can see nationalism almost everywhere, and the word is used in a bewildering variety of ways, and to convey sharply conflicting judgements. For some it is one of the most progressive forces in history, while for others it is a dangerous stage just short of authoritarianism; for some it liberates people, for others it enslaves them – in short, for some it is a sacred force, and for others a curse.



Analyzing nationalism may not be easy, but it is nevertheless important. The object of this book is to offer an approach to this complex but vibrant topic. In doing so, it aims to strike a balance between two very widely adopted perspectives. The first is the empirical analysis of particular forms of nationalism (to which may be added a small number of comparative studies based on similar cases). The second is the theoretical discussion of nationalism as a distinctive political phenomenon, a discussion which often remains at the level of the general and abstract, using limited illustrative material. Finding a middle ground between these approaches is not easy, but the present chapter indicates how this will be attempted.

There is one important respect in which the study of nationalism diverges from many other subfields of the social sciences: it lacks an agreed terminology. Since there is no escaping this problem, it is addressed in the first main section of this chapter. But there are other respects in which the study of nationalism resembles other subfields: it is possible to make the same kind of distinction between normative and analytical approaches as is made in the study of, say, democracy. One set of questions is evaluative: whether the phenomenon under study is in general a 'positive' feature of political life, and whether it is more or less appropriate in particular configurations of circumstances – a set of essentially prescriptive issues. The second addresses the actual nature of this phenomenon: in which circumstances it occurs, what its characteristics are, what its consequences are, and so on – a range of questions implying description and explanation. This book focuses on the second set of questions, but it is rarely possible in social analysis to make a hard-and-fast distinction between analysis and evaluation. In any case, even if we were to succeed in doing so, we would still find that the distinction is ignored in large bodies of research – perhaps for very good reasons. This chapter therefore continues in the second section by outlining briefly the big literature that assesses or passes judgement on nationalism as a force in modern politics, before going on in the third section to outline the manner in which the book will address the core matters of description and explanation that are its central concern.

## MATTERS OF DEFINITION

The exceptional difficulty of establishing an agreed terminology in nationalism studies has long been recognized. It is now almost a century since the author of an article on nationalism suggested, in effect, that an international assembly of scholars was needed – 'a sort of Nicene Council on the terminology used in connection with the social sciences' (Handman, 1921: 104n). More than 30 years later, Louis Snyder, one of the founding fathers of nationalism studies, concluded that the term 'nationalism' had baffled several generations of scholars, who had 'not been able to achieve unanimity of definition' (Snyder, 1954: 4). Since then, efforts on the part of various bodies and individuals to plot a path forward have had little impact on everyday usage by scholars. Examples of such worthwhile efforts include the compilation by Unesco of a glossary in the area of 'ethnic questions' (Unesco, 1977), a similar initiative by the Research Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis of the International Social Science Council (Riggs, 1985), and parallel efforts by a long-standing student of nationalism, Thomas Spira (1999). The words of one specialist in the 1920s have,



unfortunately, been echoed many times since then: scholars recognize there is a problem but have been unable to come up with a solution, and many of them ‘set out by alluding to the embarrassment occasioned by the use of different terms such as “nationality” and “nationalism” in the same sense, and end up by confounding the terms themselves’ (Joseph, 1929: 18).

This confusion over terminology explains why so many texts dealing with nationalism begin with a long discussion of matters of definition. The tradition had already been established in the late nineteenth century, when Julius Neumann (1888: 1–31) engaged on a study of this issue in Germany. But the older literature in other languages displays a similar preoccupation. Thus, we find extended discussions of terminology in Hungarian (Elekes, 1940), Finnish (Kemiläinen, 1964), Czech (Kořalka, 1969) and Russian (Bromley, 1974). In English, the word ‘ethnic’ poses a similar challenge (McKay and Lewins, 1978), and Walker Connor (1978) gave his celebrated article documenting this confusion the paradoxical title ‘a nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group, is a ...’.

As well as difficulties within languages, various problems exist between them. Conventional translations may in reality have different meanings in two languages (Polakovič, 1985), and it has long been acknowledged that ‘nation’ in English, the same term in French, *Nation* in German, *nación* in Spanish and *nazione* in Italian all have slightly different meanings (Royal Institute for International Affairs, 1939: xvi–xx). The reality here is that ‘nation’ as understood in English cannot be precisely translated into the languages of central and eastern Europe. As one of the dominant figures in European nationalism studies observed, ‘I have no problems speaking about a Flemish nation in Czech or German, but I understand that English speakers have difficulties doing so’ (Hroch, 2010: 883). This discussion of definition continues in the more recent literature in English (see for example, Kellas, 1998: 2–6; Puri, 2004: 22–37; Hearn, 2006: 3–5), and a full volume in French addresses terminology in this area (Rémi-Giraud and Rétat, 1996). This rest of this section therefore explores the manner in which these terms are used in the existing literature, and continues with an indication of how they will be employed elsewhere in this book.

### **Terminological confusion**

Since the central concern of this book hinges on the relationship between state and nation, it is obviously vital to arrive at a relatively clear understanding of what these terms mean. But the problem does not end there. Other terms in this same area, ranging from ‘ethnic’ to ‘nationalism’ itself, are also lacking in an agreed meaning. A set of terms that illustrate the variety of approaches to definition is reported in Table 1.1. The reader will notice that there is an alarming continuum here that illustrates the great difficulties that impede progress in this area: the definitions overlap, especially on the boundaries between the five sections into which the table is divided. Thus, the first definition of ‘nation’ (by Friedrich) overlaps with the opening definition of ‘state’, and this overlap continues between the other categories.

**State.** Of the terms that are central in the study of nationalism, ‘state’ presents fewest difficulties. One classical definition is presented in Table 1.1. For Max Weber – though





**Table 1.1** Issues of definition: examples

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STATE

A compulsory political organisation with continuous operations will be called a **'state'** insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the maintenance of its order (Weber, 1968 [1922]: 54).

NATION

[A **nation** is] any cohesive group possessing 'independence' within the confines of the international order as provided by the United Nations, which provides a constituency for a government effectively ruling such a group and receiving from that group the acclamation which legitimizes the government as part of the world order (Friedrich, 1966: 27–32).

A **nation** [is] a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members (A. D. Smith, 1991: 14).

A **nation** is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological makeup manifested in a common culture (Stalin, 1953 [1913]: 306).

A **nation** is a body of men inhabiting a definite territory, who normally are drawn from different races, but possess a common stock of thoughts and feelings acquired and transmitted during the course of a common history; who on the whole and in the main, though more in the past than in the present, include in that stock a common religious belief; who generally and as a rule use a common language as a vehicle for their thoughts and feelings; and who, besides common thoughts and feelings, also cherish a common will, and accordingly form, or tend to form, a separate state for the expression of that will (Barker, 1927).

NATIONALITY

A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a **nationality**, if they are united among themselves by common sympathies, which do not exist between them and any others – which make them cooperate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves, exclusively (Mill, 1861: 287).

ETHNIC GROUP

**Ethnic groups** are fundamental units of social organization which consist of members who define themselves, or are defined, by a sense of common historical origins that may also include religious beliefs, a similar language, or a shared culture (Stone and Piya, 2007).

An **ethnic group** is ... a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood (Schermerhorn, 1970: 12).

We shall call '**ethnic groups**' those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical types or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonisation and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists (Weber, 1968 [1922]: 389).

RACE

We can define a **race** ... as a human group defined by itself or others as distinct by virtue of perceived characteristics that are held to be inherent. A race is a group of human beings socially defined on the basis of physical characteristics (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 24).

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his definition at first sight seems oblique and unnecessarily complex – the state can only be territorially defined, and those within its borders are governed by an agency which exists continuously over time. While these characteristics apply to many different types of administrative district, the crucial defining characteristic is the last one: the governing agency ‘successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the maintenance of its order’, a feature that might otherwise be described as the possession of sovereignty. As Weber further put it,

The primary formal characteristics of the modern state are as follows: it possesses an administrative and legal order subject to change by legislation, to which the organised activities of the administrative staff, which are also controlled by regulations, are oriented. This system of order claims binding authority, not only over the members of the state, the citizens, most of whom have obtained membership by birth, but also to a very large extent over all action taking place in the area of its jurisdiction. It is thus a compulsory organisation with a territorial basis. Furthermore, the use of force is regarded as legitimate only so far as it is either permitted by the state or prescribed by it. ... The claim of the modern state to monopolise the use of force is as essential to it as its character of compulsory jurisdiction and of continuous operation (Weber, 1968 [1922]: 56).

This feature – the capacity ultimately to ensure that its writ runs, if necessary by force – clearly sets the governing agency of a state apart from other such agencies. It also makes it relatively easy to operationalize this term: we can ask of a particular territory whether it constitutes a ‘state’ in Weber’s sense, and in most cases come up with a clear answer: ‘no’ in the case of Yorkshire, Wales or the European Union (at least, at present); ‘yes’ in the case of the United Kingdom, Norway or Russia. The value of the definition is illustrated by the extent to which it matches conventional usage, at least in Europe. The decision by the international community in 1992 to recognize Bosnia as one of its members rested precisely on an assessment that its government was able, more or less, to exercise jurisdiction over its territory, just as in the mid-nineteenth century it took civil wars in Switzerland (1847) and the USA (1861–65) to determine that these territories were indeed ‘states’ in the sense that Weber meant: it was established beyond doubt that when the centre clashed with the component units its will would prevail. The extent to which – by contrast to the term ‘nation’ – there is agreement on the term ‘state’ will be clear from the many studies in the area which begin by explicitly taking Weber’s definition as a starting point (see for example, Pierson, 2004: 5–9; Hay and Lister, 2006: 4–13).

But the American example draws attention to a major dilemma. The ‘states’ that make up the USA do not match Weber’s definition. Each may have its own police, and even its own military in the shape of the National Guard. However, as the term is used here, American ‘states’ are in fact substate entities, lacking the crucial feature of sovereignty: they may not secede, and do not have the military capacity to rival that which exists at federal level (even the National Guard has an important federal function, in its reserve military role). Because of the ubiquity of this terminology in North America, the term ‘state’ has acquired a much

more general meaning, except among specialists: it refers to one of the territorial components of the US federation, one possessing its own institutions of government, but lacking sovereignty. We need, therefore, to be mindful of the confusion generated by this use of a term that in Europe has a decidedly stronger meaning.

This much less demanding use of the term 'state' has important consequences. If the United 'States' are the entities which have come together as the USA, how is the whole American collectivity to be named? In American usage, there is an agreed term: 'nation'. The word is thus used in precisely the sense in which Weber used 'state' – and in addition to its application to the USA, American political scientists commonly use it to refer to states all over the world. This has extended to general political usage, so that, for example, the terms 'United Nations' and 'League of Nations' refer in fact to organizations of states. Some researchers have tried to resolve this by moving towards a more general conception of statehood, using the term 'governance unit' (defined as the territorial unit responsible for providing the bulk of social order and other collective goods; Hechter, 2000: 9–10), but this term is not widely used. Philip Roeder (2007: 12), similarly, tries to sidestep the distinction between the central state and its component parts (where they exist) by labelling the former 'common-state' and the latter 'segment-state'.

**Nation.** Since the word 'nation' has commonly been used to describe an entity identical to the state, it is not surprising that we can easily find definitions of nation that reflect this usage. The first such definition in Table 1.1, by Carl Friedrich, reflects precisely this usage (an ironic one, since Friedrich was a German scholar who moved to the USA early in his academic career, but would have also been profoundly familiar with Weber's understanding of the term 'state'). We will find other such definitions of 'nation' by American scholars in particular. As one scholar summed up the position, 'in prevailing usage in English and other languages, a "nation" is either synonymous with a state and its inhabitants or else it denotes a human group bound together by common solidarity – a group whose members place loyalty to the group as a whole over any conflicting loyalties' (Rustow, 1968: 7). Through a process of semantic change, the meaning of 'nation' seems to have been transformed over the centuries, from divisions within the medieval university to groups within modern society (Greenfeld, 1992: 8–9).

Yet, especially in Europe and among those who specialize in the study of nationalism, there is strong pressure to reserve the term 'nation' for another type of collectivity – one that is much more difficult to describe and define. The remaining definitions in this part of Table 1.1 illustrate three different approaches, and are selected from a much wider number of definitions. For Anthony Smith, there must be a shared culture, historical consciousness and common name, but there is also a more 'objective' dimension: the possession of common legal rights and duties. The next definition, by Joseph Stalin, presents itself as 'objective', with its emphasis on the possession of a common language and other structural characteristics, but there is also a subjective component: the emphasis on a common 'psychological makeup'. The last definition, by Ernest Barker, is social psychological in its emphasis on a 'common will' as a defining characteristic, though it also stresses the dependence of



this feature on quasi-objective factors, such as language and religion. It will be noticed that Barker's definition is very similar to Mill's definition of a related term, 'nationality': this, too, rests on the notion of an entity united by the collective desire for self-determination. Both of these are close to the classic definition by Ernest Renan, who defined a nation as 'a living soul, a spiritual principle' that depended on two features: 'the possession of a rich heritage of memories' and 'the desire to live together, the will to preserve worthily the undivided inheritance which has been handed down' (Renan, 1896: 80).

Though differing in content, all of these definitions apart from Friedrich's are hard to operationalize. By contrast to the relative clarity of Weber's definition of 'state', it is very difficult to give a straightforward answer to the question of whether a particular population group constitutes a 'nation' in the sense of any of these three definitions. In some cases, such as the Czechs, the Norwegians and the French, the answer will be 'yes'; in others, such as the Belgians, the Canadians, the British and the English, we may find it difficult (for varying reasons) to give a clear-cut answer. Yet there are circumstances where an answer *must* be found. Implementing the principle of 'national self-determination' obviously depends on defining the boundaries of the nation. In communist-run countries (of which only a few survived after 1989), 'nationalities policy' generally rested on Stalin's definition of 'nation'. In the Soviet Union, each person's ethnic nationality was recorded on his or her 'internal passport', essentially an identity document (Simonsen, 2005). The discrediting of Stalin in 1956 (when, three years after his death, Communist leader Khrushchev denounced his harsh, despotic rule) did not lead to the displacement of the old communist policy on the national question. Instead, it continued to determine policy on granting certain institutional privileges to designated 'nations' in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, as will be seen in Chapter 10. Moving to the present, China operates on similar principles; by 1990 it had formally recognized 55 national minorities (Hoddie, 1998: 124).

**Other terms.** 'Nation' and 'nationality' are not the only problematic terms in the vocabulary of nationalism. Many scholars use the terms 'nation' and 'ethnic group' interchangeably, but Table 1.1 suggests that – while definitions of 'ethnic group' overlap with those of 'nation' in certain of their features – the latter is usually perceived in more political terms. The two words which occupy so prominent a place in the literature derive from the Latin *natio* (deriving from *nascio*, to be born) and the Greek *ethnos* (a 'nation'), but over time they have acquired rather different connotations. Indeed, Weber's definition of 'ethnic group' refers to possible similarities in physical characteristics, taking us close to the concept of 'race'. To what extent is an ethnic group distinct from a 'race', or racial grouping? As the definition of race offered here shows, there is some overlap in the subjective domain: a race is defined not just by its physical distinctiveness, but also by people's consciousness of this.

Soviet scholars recognized a hierarchy of social organizational forms in this area (Connor, 1984b: 217–39). This began at the top with *nation* (using the word in the sense described by Stalin; the Russians and Georgians are examples), and this was followed by *nationality* (a less mature version of the nation; the Abkhazians were an example), *ethnic group* (a small-scale group, less developed than the nationality, for example the Aleuts of Siberia) and *ethnographic*

*group* (similar to ethnic group, but in the process of being absorbed by another nation or nationality, as in the case of the Latgalians who were absorbed by the Latvians). The term *national group* was reserved to refer to a fragment of an external nation or nationality, such as the Koreans of the Soviet Union (Fedoseyev et al., 1977: 17–50). This classification was not of mere academic interest: nations were entitled to the status of union republic, or constitutive member of the Soviet Union, while ethnographic groups were not entitled to any autonomy, with groups of intermediate status entitled to appropriate intermediate levels of autonomy (see Chapter 10). Communist-run Yugoslavia made a similar distinction between nations (such as the Serbs, Croats or Slovenes, each of which had a republic) and nationalities or national minorities (such as the Albanians and Hungarians who were given autonomous status within Serbia; see Ramet, 1984: 58–63).

So far, we have considered a set of collective nouns that refer to groups of people (Table 1.1 confines itself to such terms). We now need to consider the corresponding set of abstract nouns – terms largely derived from the ones just mentioned, such as ‘nationalism’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘ethnocentrism’ or ‘racism’. Three of these terms (the three ‘-isms’) refer to forms of attachment to nations, ethnic groups and races respectively, but have rather different connotations. ‘Ethnocentrism’ refers to a particular type of excessively positive evaluation of one’s own ethnic group; ‘racism’, by contrast, normally refers to a form of negative evaluation of those who are seen as belonging to ‘other races’. The full connotations of each could be explored more extensively, but for our present purposes we shall confine ourselves to the third ‘-ism’, nationalism. Here, perhaps not surprisingly, we find definitions ranging widely. Usage by one author alone illustrates the diversity of the phenomenon: he variously describes nationalism as ‘an attempt to make the boundaries of the state and those of the nation coincide’, ‘a political movement which seeks to attain and defend an objective we may call national integrity’, ‘a collective grievance against a foreign oppressor’, and ‘a set of ideas’ that are more rhetorical than theoretical (Minogue, 1967: 12, 25, 104, 153). But we find many other definitions of ‘nationalism’, a central topic of this book to which we must therefore return below.

‘Ethnicity’ refers to the phenomenon of the division into or relations between ethnic groups, but it may also refer simply to the question of affiliation to a particular ethnic group, as in the survey question ‘what is your ethnicity?’<sup>1</sup> ‘Nationality’ may be seen as having a meaning parallel to ‘ethnicity’ in this second sense, as in the question ‘what is your nationality?’. But there are two serious difficulties here. First, as well as being an abstract noun in this sense, ‘nationality’ is also a collective noun, with a meaning similar to ‘nation’, as defined by Mill (see Table 1.1). Second, in its other sense, the meaning of the question ‘what is your nationality?’ is ambiguous. It is more likely to be interpreted as ‘of what state

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1 In English-speaking countries, questions on ethnicity in the population census vary in approach. For example, the US census of 2010 asks two such questions: ‘Is person X of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?’ and ‘What is person X’s race?’ (2010.census.gov/2010census/how/interactive-form.php); the English and Welsh census of 2011 asked two similar questions: ‘What is your ethnic group?’ and ‘How would you describe your national identity?’ (UK Cabinet Office, 2008: 49–51). Similar difficulties are encountered elsewhere; for a detailed discussion of the issues, and in particular their implications for Australia, see Trewin (2000).

are you a citizen?’ than as ‘of what nation are you a member?’ This arises from the fact that in English, as in French, the noun ‘state’ has no accepted adjective; instead, ‘national’ is used (Minogue, 1967: 10), thereby being rendered indistinguishable from the adjective ‘national’ derived from ‘nation’. In many other languages, however, it is much easier to differentiate between membership of a state (citizenship or political nationality) and membership of a nation (‘ethnic nationality’). The distinction between *grazhdanstvo* and *natsionalnost*’ in Russian is an example, a distinction to be found also in other central and east European languages.

### **A prescriptive approach**

One superficially appealing solution to the problem of terminological ambiguity would be to coin entirely new words. A distinguished Russian expert recommended dropping the term ‘nation’ altogether, since it was insufficiently distinct from both ‘state’ and ‘ethnic group’ (Tishkov, 2000). Efforts have indeed been made to do precisely this: for example, Smith (1971: 187–91) used the word ‘ethnic’, and van den Berghe (1981a: 22) introduced a similar term, ‘ethny’. Such terms never managed to achieve wide usage among scholars, however, and thus have tended to add to the terminological morass rather than helping the position. Neologisms are not always welcome; use of a similar term, ‘*ethnie*’, in French has been described as ‘a remedy worse than the disease’ (Polakovič, 1985: 114). It is probable that the only successful effort to create a new terminology has been Walker Connor’s (1994b) coining of the terms ‘ethnonational’ and ‘ethnonationalism’, which he designed to resolve the difficulties with ‘national’ and ‘nationalism’ already mentioned.

It is not likely that we will be able to abstract any generally agreed definition of the terms discussed above. But approaches to definition need not be ‘lexical’— that is, they need not simply try to generalize about conventional usage. For a long time epistemologists have tried to identify an alternative ‘prescriptive’ or ‘stipulative’ approach – a (possibly arbitrary) statement that is intended to equate a particular term with a precisely described concept (Abelson, 1967). This approach is adopted here; it rests on a simple statement regarding how a particular term is going to be used, without making any claim as to the level of acceptance of this definition (though obviously the more widely acceptable, the better). In this book, it is proposed we define five key terms as follows.

**State.** A state is a self-governing territorial entity with a central decision-making agency which possesses a monopoly of the legitimate use of force in ensuring compliance with its decisions on the part of all persons within its borders.

**Racial group.** A racial group is a large collectivity whose members share certain phenotypical characteristics which they or others see as defining a social boundary between members and non-members of the group.

**Ethnic group.** An ethnic group is a large collectivity whose members are linked by certain cultural characteristics – including the sense of sharing a common past – which they and others see as defining a social boundary between members and non-members of the group.

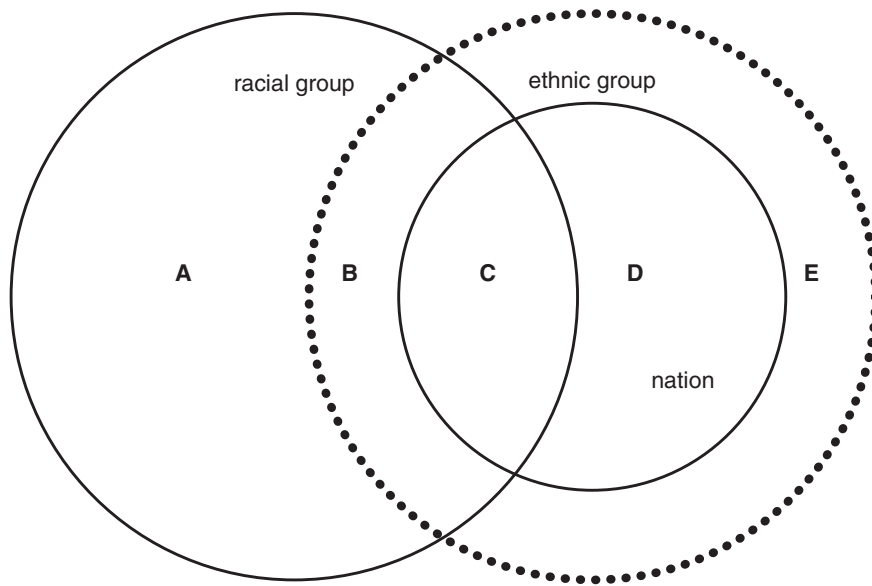
**Nation.** A nation is an ethnic group whose members are mobilized in the pursuit of political self-determination for that group.

**Nationalism.** Nationalism is either (a) a form of political mobilization that is directed at rectifying a perceived absence of fit between the boundaries of the nation and the boundaries of the state; or (b) the ideology that justifies this.

The terms ‘nation’ and ‘ethnic group’ as defined above are not intended to refer to objective social realities: there is considerable variation in the extent to which individuals identify with such groups and, quite apart from other identities, individuals may have complex allegiances at different geographical levels. These definitions, in other words, do not preclude the existence of multilevel, nested identities. None of these definitions is original, or unproblematic; nor do they cover all of the difficult terms to which attention has been drawn. They build upon and abstract from existing definitions – but, as with the definitions on which they are based, they do not offer any clear-cut criteria that may be used to place collectivities within or beyond the boundaries of a particular definition. How large, for instance, must a collectivity be? What is meant by ‘cultural characteristics’? How intense must a particular form of political mobilization be? What does ‘self-determination’ mean? These questions are not answered by the above definitions; however, these do at least give an indication of how the terms are used in this book, which is necessary as a starting point for the discussion that follows.

The relationship between three of these collective terms is illustrated in Figure 1.1, where the circles refer to terms (not sets of individuals): the grey circle refers to ‘racial group’, the dotted one to ‘ethnic group’, and the black one to ‘nation’. Area A illustrates a racial group with a low level of group consciousness, thereby falling short of being an ethnic group. In area B, however, the ethnic dimension is present: members of the group are conscious of a shared past. Area E illustrates ethnic groups which do not define themselves in respect of racial group. Finally, areas C and D illustrate the case of ethnic groups which are politically conscious as such, with their identity linked respectively to racial and non-racial features.

Two important matters follow on from this discussion. The first is that definitions often imply classifications, or can at least be used to provide the basis of such classifications, and the analysis of nationalism relies heavily on such typologies. But there is no agreement on how nationalism should be classified (for a range of typologies, see Maxwell, 2010: 867–8). Even a cursory overview of the literature will show that some older typologies are essentially historical, distinguishing evolutionary phases (see for example, Hayes, 1931; Wright, 1942). Others are geographical, identifying ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ forms (see for example, Kohn, 1944: 329–33, 574–5; Gellner, 1983: 88–97). More commonly, though, they are thematic, with separation and integration as the two main themes (see for example, Snyder, 1954; Seton-Watson, 1965; Kellas, 1998: 92–5; Hechter, 2000: 15–17), and Gutiérrez (2006: 341) makes a distinction between state- and nation-building forms. Anthony Smith (1971: 211–29) provides the most elaborate classification of all, identifying many different subtypes. This issue will be revisited in Chapter 8 (where another classification will be presented) and Chapter 9 (where the ‘east–west’ dichotomy will be discussed).



**Figure 1.1** Relationship between the terms 'nation', 'ethnic group' and 'racial group'

*Note:* The circles refer to concepts, not to groups of people.

The second matter is that terms such as 'nation' have been defined here (and are used in this book) with a level of precision which may well be misleading, given the complexity of the phenomenon and the extent to which a scholarly consensus is lacking. Similar caution needs to be exercised in interpreting the word 'identity', a term devoid of conceptual clarity and hugely challenging to operationalize (Malešević, 2006: 13–57). The word 'nation' is used here in an apparently precise sense, but Rogers Brubaker's warning (1996: 13–22) about the danger of slipping into an assumption that this is a concrete, durable phenomenon rather than an amorphous, fluid one needs to be borne in mind continually. There are three concrete difficulties.

First, at any one time, an individual may identify to varying degrees with several groups of which he or she is a member. In the nineteenth century, for example, many people in what is now Slovakia felt to varying degrees Slovak, Czechoslovak, Slav or Hungarian (Maxwell, 2005: 386). In other instances, they identified with no group at all, as in the case of the *tutejszy* in the early twentieth century in what is now Belarus (see Pershai, 2008). Alternatively, they may identify simultaneously with their ethnic group and with a subethnic group, as in the case of the Mordvins in Russia, who are made up of two 'subethnic communities', the Erzia and the Moksha (Iurchenkov, 2001), or the Albanians, who are similarly divided between Ghegs and Tosks.

Second, an individual's patterns of identity may change over time, whether as a consequence of a large-scale boundary shift or because of an incremental boundary modification (Wimmer, 2008). Thus, among many other examples, the Danish identification of the population of southern Sweden was gradually eroded by the eighteenth century (Østergård,

1996 [1992]), and the British identity of the southern Protestant minority in Ireland seems to have been similarly undermined in the twentieth century (Coakley, 1998).

Third, whatever an individual's 'real' identity pattern, this may be distorted in the process of its measurement. It has been argued that 'almost all the official censuses of the pre-1914 empires and post-1919 states exaggerated the demographic dominance of the establishment and minimised the representation of national minorities' (Pearson, 1983: 17), and there are also some more recent examples, as in Kazakhstan (Dave, 2004). But census takers also forced choices on residents, helping to eliminate intermediate groups in Europe (Teleki and Rónai, 1937: 28), to create new minorities in Asia (Anderson, 1998: 318–23; 1997), and to oversimplify the status of such groups as the Métis in Canada (Andersen, 2008: 360). States may also seek to redefine the identity of minorities extending across the border from another state, as in the case of Yugoslavia's short-lived efforts to relabel ethnic Albanians as *Šiptari* rather than *Albanci* (Babuna, 2004: 305–6) and the Soviet Union's similar efforts to differentiate Karelians and Moldovans, respectively, from Finland and Romania.

## MATTERS OF EVALUATION

As will be clear, the study of nationalism cannot confine itself to the level of description and explanation. Literature in the area is full of implicit and explicit value judgements. As we have seen, some of these are sweeping as well as explicit. One leading political theorist has described nationalism as 'the starkest political shame of the twentieth century, the deepest, most intractable and yet most unanticipated blot on the political history of the world since the year 1900' (Dunn, 1999 [1979]: 27). It is thus worth exploring the nature of this evaluative perspective before going back to the central issue of this book: the study of nationalism as a political and social phenomenon rather than as an ideology.<sup>2</sup>

What are the normative issues that arise in the study of nationalism? In a general sense, the philosophical analysis of nationalism spans all of the major areas that are covered in this book: the relationship between nationalism and culture, the processes by which nations come into existence, the political demands of nationalist leaders, and the relationship between nations and states (for a useful overview, see Gilbert, 1998). But the debate in this area has tended to cluster around two narrower but overlapping areas. The first has to do with the 'right of self-determination': is this something to which nations are entitled? The second concerns the position of nations or groups which are either denied or do not demand self-determination: to what rights should national minorities be entitled? These are discussed in the two subsections that follow. It is not possible to engage in a further discussion here of the other big normative questions addressed by scholars of nationalism, or certain more specific issues that are less frequently addressed, such as the acceptability of the set of methods that are commonly used in the nation-building process (Norman, 1999: 59–60).

<sup>2</sup> For a stimulating presentation of the normative debate, in the form of an imaginary dialogue between Herder, Fichte, Mazzini, Mill, Renan, Hitler and Stalin, see Heater (1998). Several excellent collections of texts by leading theorists also cover major topics of the debate; see Couture, Nielsen and Seymour (1996) and Beiner (1999).

### **The right of self-determination**

One of the most characteristic of all demands of nationalists has been the call for a reorganization of states so that they coincide with the boundaries of nations. Nationalists themselves typically express this demand, however, not as a universal principle, but rather as one which applies to their own perceived nation – even if it is presented as a particular application of a wider principle. Thus, the philosopher widely seen as the father of German nationalism, Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), argued that

Those who speak the same language ... belong together and are by nature one and an inseparable whole. Such a whole, if it wishes to absorb and mingle with itself any other people of different descent and language, cannot do so without itself becoming confused, in the beginning at any rate, and violently disturbing the even progress of its culture (Fichte, 1922 [1808]: 223–4).

Fichte was concerned in particular with the disunity of his own people, the Germans, but the general implications of his position are clear. As summarized by a leading theorist who was strongly critical of nationalism, ‘the doctrine holds that humanity is naturally divided into nations, that nations are known by certain characteristics which can be ascertained, and that the only legitimate type of government is national self-government’ (Kedourie, 1993: 1). It is worth considering in turn the further development of this form of *traditional nationalism*; the position opposed to this which might be labelled *anti-nationalism*; and a more recent attempt to present a modified version of the original principle, *liberal nationalism*.

**Traditional nationalism.** While it is easy to find articulations of the view that a particular nation should be entitled to self-determination, it is much more difficult to find expressions of this as a universal principle – the argument that each nation should have its own state. While the German philosopher Fichte has already been quoted, his views may be seen as a development of those held by his fellow-German, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). In Herder’s deterministic perspective, language communities were authentic, self-contained groups, which deserved autonomous cultural and political expression. Much later, this point was made more forcefully by nineteenth-century nationalists in respect of their own peoples. For the Hungarian nationalist leader Lajos Kossuth (1802–94), the disappearance of the nations of classical antiquity was a call to defend his own fatherland lest it suffer a similar fate (Kossuth, 1852: 9–16). In the view of his Italian counterpart Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–72), ‘nations are the individuals of humanity’, and should be so defended (Mazzini, 1887: 241).

This position was also expressed in a much more subtle and more qualified way by John Stuart Mill (1806–73), who defended the right of nations to decide their own future, if necessary by establishing a state of their own. As Mill put it, ‘where the sentiment of nationality exists in any force, there is a *prima facie* case for uniting all the members of the nationality under the same government, and a government to themselves apart’ (Mill, 1861: 289). This ‘principle of national self-determination’ found its most famous practical expression in one of the so-called ‘fourteen points’ enunciated by US President Woodrow Wilson in an address to the US Congress on 8 January 1918, which set the agenda for separatist



nationalism in postwar Europe (Manela, 2007: 215–25). Notwithstanding inconsistencies in this position and the scarcity of philosophical justifications for it, the principle has continued ever since to attract strong support among nationalist activists.

The flaws in traditional nationalist ideology are obvious. To start with, even if the principle of national self-determination makes sense in theory, it may be extraordinarily difficult to implement it in practice (Cobban, 1969: 57–97). The root problem lies in identifying which communities possess the right to self-determination on the grounds that they are ‘nations’. As Sir Ivor Jennings warned in the mid-twentieth century,

Nearly forty years ago a Professor of Political Science who was also President of the United States, President Wilson, enunciated a doctrine which was ridiculous, but which was widely accepted as a sensible proposition, the doctrine of self-determination. On the surface it seemed reasonable: let the people decide. It was in fact ridiculous because the people cannot decide until somebody decides who are the people (Jennings, 1956: 55–6).

In other words, we commonly lack the basic evidence as to whether or not a particular group of people indeed constitutes a nation, and it may be by no means clear as to how their ‘will’ should be tested in, say, a plebiscite; before such a vote, the territory within which the votes will be counted needs to be specified, and this is itself a political decision likely to affect the outcome of the plebiscite. Furthermore, even if a nation and its membership can be clearly identified, it does not follow that they will exclusively inhabit a coherent territory that may realistically become a state. Indeed, as the post-1918 reconfiguration of the map of Europe showed, the problem of intermingling of ‘nations’ was so great that clear boundaries between them may rarely be drawn, and attempts to consult ‘the people’ by plebiscite have had an extraordinarily varied history (Qvortrup, 2012).

**Anti-nationalism.** There are more profound objections to the ‘principle of nationality’ than the impracticality of redrawing state borders. For some critics, the more appropriate response to the existence of separate nations is to link them freely within the boundaries of the state so that each will enrich the overall culture. This was the view associated with Mill’s critic, Lord Acton (1834–1902), who in 1862 argued that:

The coexistence of several nations under the same state is ... one of the chief instruments of civilisation; and, as such, it is in the natural and providential order, and indicates a state of greater advancement than the national unity which is the ideal of modern liberalism. The combination of different nations in one state is as necessary a condition of civilised life as the combination of men in society. Inferior races are raised by living in political union with races intellectually superior. Exhausted and decaying nations are revived by the contact of a younger vitality. Nations in which the elements of organisation and the capacity for government have been lost ... are restored and educated anew under the discipline of a stronger and less corrupted race (Acton, 1907 [1862]: 290).





Though the anti-nationalist position underwent a reversal in the early and mid-twentieth century, when the principle of national self-determination and the force of anti-colonialism were in their heyday, profound philosophical objections have continued to be directed at nationalism. Dunn (1999) has already been cited in this respect. Kedourie (1993: 134) argued that nationalism 'has created new conflicts, exacerbated tensions, and brought catastrophe to numberless people innocent of all politics'. Another critic detected a dreadful trend within nationalism, which 'begins as Sleeping Beauty and ends as Frankenstein's monster' (Minogue, 1967: 7). The key objection of these critics has to do with the absence of any general argument that could justify the nationalist position. Thus, for example, Minogue (1967: 153) dismissed nationalism as a set of ideas which in practice amounted 'less to a theory than to a rhetoric, a form of self-expression by which a certain kind of political excitement can be communicated from an elite to the masses'. For Kedourie (1993: 87), nationalist ideology oversimplifies a complex world, displaying 'a contempt of things as they are, of the world as it is', so that it 'ultimately becomes a rejection of life, and a love of death'.

It is easy to see why, whatever the validity of their arguments, some critics of the old principle of national self-determination may be accused of being self-serving and defensive of vested interests. Those hostile to traditional nationalist ideology would themselves commonly represent the interests of established nations, or may be seen as doing so. It is, then, entirely to be expected that English or French intellectuals would criticize nationalism – they are open to the accusation that they are simply defending the hegemony of their own nation, whose right to rule minority national groups within the state it controls they implicitly accept.

**Liberal nationalism.** More recently, the upsurge in nationalism in the late twentieth century has prompted philosophers and political theorists to seek to transform traditional nationalist arguments by creating a new theory of 'liberal nationalism', though they have typically done this without necessarily acknowledging the extent to which their own positions implicitly accept the logic of nationhood (Canovan, 1996: 5–15). Carefully articulated versions of such a theory have been presented by Neil MacCormick (1999), a Scottish nationalist politician and professor of public law, and Yael Tamir (1993), an Israeli Labour politician and professor of political philosophy. This position aims to steer a middle course between the conservatism and potential for oppression of ideologies that decry nationalism and the impracticality and potential for injustice that are implicit in traditional nationalist ideology by proposing a vision of national self-determination that also protects individual rights. The challenge offered to Canada by Quebec nationalism has also extended to Canadian political theorists and philosophers, who have produced an impressive volume of output that seeks to define a philosophical position for setting political choices in context, and in charting a 'liberal nationalist' course in this respect (discussed in another context below; see also Buchanan, 1991; Miller, 1995; Kymlicka, 2001; Moore, 2001).

### ***The rights of national minorities***

Whether or not the secession of smaller nations from the states within which they find themselves located is justifiable, there will always be circumstances in which states

will be dominated by a particular nation while containing minorities from one or more others. This raises particular issues of coexistence in the context of the modern state, which places such great value on national unity (Wimmer, 2002: 3–4). These circumstances obviously give rise to debates that overlap with those that arise over the principle of national self-determination: once again, the collective rights of nations are at issue (even if we are now leaving aside consideration of the separatist option). As before, we may identify two polar positions, though contemporary political theorists in reality fall somewhere between the two: the view may be taken that full protection of the *individual rights* of the members of minority groups is adequate (indeed, even the existence of such groups may be denied), or minorities may be seen as being entitled to particular forms of *group rights*.

**Individual rights.** A strong regime of protecting individual rights may be reassuring to minorities, but it is not incompatible with policies of assimilation. Elements of this perspective may have already been identified in the thinking of John Stuart Mill. As we have seen, Mill was prepared to concede the principle of self-determination to viable nations, but others faced a future of collective disappearance:

When the nationality which succeeds in overpowering the other, is both the most numerous and the most improved; and especially if the subdued nationality is small, and has no hope of reasserting its independence; then, if it is governed with any tolerable justice, and if the members of the more powerful nationality are not made odious by being invested with exclusive privileges, the smaller nationality is gradually reconciled to its position, and becomes amalgamated with the larger. No Bas-Breton, nor even any Alsatian, has the smallest wish at the present day to be separated from France. If all Irishmen have not yet arrived at the same disposition towards England, it is partly because they are sufficiently numerous to be capable of constituting a respectable nationality by themselves; but principally because, until of late years, they had been so atrociously governed (Mill, 1861: 295).

There is a certain consistency in this position, which still rests on the notion of conformity between the borders of nations and the borders of states. This conformity, in Mill's view, could be brought about either by adjusting the borders of states or by changing the borders of nations, and the implication of his position was that more developed nations would follow the former course and less developed cultural groups the latter.

But it is a short step to less attractive forms of nationalism, when minorities are deliberately converted to the culture of the majority. As the German nationalist historian Heinrich von Treitschke (1834–96) put it,

When several nations are united under one state, the simplest relationship is that the one which wields the authority should also be the superior in civilisation. Matters can then develop comparatively peacefully, and when the

blending is complete it is felt to have been inevitable, although it can never be accomplished without endless misery for the subjugated race. The most remarkable fusion took place after this fashion in the colonies of North-East Germany. It was the murder of a people; that cannot be denied, but after the amalgamation was complete it became a blessing. What could the Prussians<sup>3</sup> have contributed to history? The Germans were so infinitely their superiors that to be Germanised was for them as great a good fortune as it was for the Wends (von Treitschke, 1916 [1897]: I: 282–3).

Treitschke extended this logic to groups such as the Jews which, in his view, could not be assimilated (von Treitschke, 1916 [1897]: I: 302). His role as an intellectual ancestor of the more politically explicit Nazi ideology, and its attempts to ‘purify’ the German nation, is clear.

The outcome need not be this brutal. States can preside over and promote cultural assimilation of minorities while at the same time extending to them an impressive package of individual rights. This was the formula ushered in by the French revolution, where loyalty to the state takes precedence over loyalty to cultural groups within the state – a perspective that may be traced back to the eighteenth-century philosopher from Geneva, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78). His theory of the state as comprising a ‘social contract’ between its members rested on the notion of the individual as the primary political actor, and formed a basis for later models of society as comprising a set of individuals whose relations to the central authorities are not mediated by any other group. The French revolution thus sought explicitly to replace the notion of government by corporate bodies (including different gradations of nobility and clergy, as well as the privileged burghers and others of the ‘third estate’) with the notion of government by ‘the people’. This progressive development and its impact on the spread of individual freedom have been seen by many as representing fulfilment of the ultimate goal of democracy, sidelining the rights of groups who were defined not just in traditional socio-legal terms (such as the nobility), but also in cultural terms (such as national minorities). Advocating of policies of ‘ethnic blindness’ even in multinational societies thus forms one distinctive response to the issue of minority rights (van den Berghe, 1981b). A range of conflict reduction techniques may also be adopted in these circumstances in order to reconcile individual rights with cultural diversity and promote political stability (for an evaluation, see Horowitz, 2000: 563–680).

**Group rights.** At the opposite extreme is a set of thinkers for whom a full institutional recognition of all significant minorities is important. As discussed in Chapter 10, this

<sup>3</sup> This is not a reference to the (Germanic) population of the Kingdom of Prussia but to the Old Prussians of Baltic origin, who spoke a Baltic language akin to Latvian and Lithuanian but who had been almost entirely assimilated into German culture by the eighteenth century. The Wends referred to in this extract were a Slavic population that had also substantially assimilated into German culture, but of which a fragment survives around Bautzen and Cottbus in eastern Germany, where they are more commonly known as Sorbs.

may take a number of forms. It may confine itself substantially to the cultural level (with provisions for full linguistic rights for all groups within the public sphere), or it may have a significant political institutional dimension (with provision for political power-sharing between groups of a consociational kind, or devolution of power to these groups, whether on a territorial or a non-territorial basis). Whatever legal expression it takes, though, this approach rests on the assumption that, alongside individual citizens, cultural or national groups are key political actors; society is seen 'both as a community of citizens and a community of communities' (Parekh, 2000: 340).

As already mentioned, recent challenges faced by Canada (confronted with demands of very different types from Quebec, aboriginal peoples and newer immigrant minorities) have given a major impetus to the philosophical study of nationalism and minority rights. One outcome has been the emergence of a distinctive and sophisticated attempt to define a balance between group rights and individual rights. Noting that these may clash (for example, introducing a regime of linguistic autonomy in one area, where a minority language has primary official status, may have implications for the rights of individuals who speak other languages), theorists have developed a new position that allows for a conditional concession of group rights. Thus, for example, Charles Taylor (1994), Will Kymlicka (1995, 2001) and James Tully (1995) have sought to reconcile the kinds of rights demanded by minority groups with what they describe as 'liberal' values.<sup>4</sup>

The issues already discussed (the rights of minorities, extending to the right to self-determination) cover only part – albeit a central part – of the philosophical debate about nationalism. Even within this area, we have glossed over further questions that may arise in respect of minority rights. For example, should all minorities be entitled to rights on the same basis, or should a distinction be made between immigrant minorities and aboriginal peoples? Theorists may well argue that the case for making concessions to immigrant groups (who are present in the state because of a prior decision on their part) is weaker than the case in respect of aboriginal peoples (who did not choose the invasion of their territories by outside peoples, with the resulting suffering and dispossession; see Kymlicka, 1995: 116–20; Poole, 1996). In this book, however, we try to confine ourselves to the empirical aspects of such questions, even though facts commonly have striking implications for values.

## MATTERS OF ANALYSIS

Nationalism, as we have seen, is an enormous topic. But does it have core features that may be subject to rigorous examination without requiring us to be experts in the history of the world? This book rests on the assumption that it does. It is possible to begin with an even simpler assumption: that nationalism has to do with the relationship between two central phenomena that will be examined in greater detail later, *nation* and *state*. In fact, this

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'liberal' is used in a very distinctive way in political theory to refer to law-based protection of individuals in a context of political tolerance – very different from its use in southern Europe as a label for a political ideology that is based on defence of the individual against intrusion by church and state (with a consequent right-wing, anti-state programme).

book consists precisely of an examination of this complex relationship. Its goal is an ambitious one: to steer a course between the many studies of nationalism that focus on specific geographical contexts or historical periods on one side, and purely theoretical studies of nationalism on the other. It should be stressed that, although the book's scope is intended to be global, both the type of illustrative data presented and the set of theoretical perspectives discussed tend to focus particularly on one continent, Europe. While their relevance for our understanding of nationalism outside this small area is limited, it nevertheless seems likely that many of the themes will have a resonance in other continents, even if the significance of, say, the African or Asian experience requires a radical revision of the framework presented here. The remainder of this section outlines the approach being taken here and introduces the existing literature in the area.

### **Outline of this book**

The rest of the book is divided into two parts. The first looks at the raw materials out of which nations and nationalism emerge. The second examines the process by which this emergence takes place and explores its political consequences. The last chapter draws together the threads that have been explored in the earlier chapters, provides a synthesis of the arguments presented there, and engages in some speculation about the future of this powerful and remarkable political force.

**Nation and society.** Part 1 examines a range of factors that have an impact on national identity. Of these, one of the most difficult is the first. Anyone studying nationalism will quickly discover that many people feel that national identity is 'in the blood' – that it is an inherited characteristic. Chapter 2 explores this myth by looking at the significance of race (and in particular of the manipulation of concepts of race) in identity formation. But 'race' is not the only characteristic that is handed on to us: this chapter also explores the curiously neglected topic of gender and its implications for nationalism. Sex-based differences are of fundamental importance, in that men and women have traditionally been assigned distinctive roles in the nationalist project, and nationalist ideology is full of gendered imagery.

We then go on to look at one of the most widely discussed factors of all of those associated with nationalism. The importance of language for nation formation is widely acknowledged, and early writing on the subject sometimes even equated the nation with a language community. The reasons why this might be the case, and the more general relationship between language and nation, are discussed in Chapter 3.

Especially in the past, though, and in much of the contemporary non-western world, another force has offered itself as a major challenge to language as a force exerting an influence on nationalism: religion. The importance of religion for political mobilization in the Middle East is obvious, and it has sometimes been articulated in the context of a 'war of civilizations' involving the Western Christian and the Muslim worlds, among others (Huntington, 1993, 1996). However, it is easy to find examples of deep divisions within



both of these religious groups, from Ireland to Iraq, that have an important bearing on nationalism. Chapter 4 looks at the role religion plays in the creation and reinforcement of national identity – one that is very different from that of language.

Language and religion may well have a big impact on national identity, but they are not simply objective sources of influence. Each may, in its own turn, be subject to influence by nationalist-type forces. Nationalist elites do not simply respond to linguistic and religious realities; they may try to influence them, by shaping the nature and extent of a particular language and the content and geographical reach of religious belief. This is even more true of the next set of influences on nationalism, considered in Chapter 5: historical consciousness. In many ways, this is a defining characteristic of national identity. It is easy to imagine – and to cite many examples of – a nation which does not have a common, distinct language, or a single, unique religion. But it is much harder to find examples of nations which do not possess a shared belief in a common past, even if this is in large measure a creation of nationalist elites rather than an objective background feature.

Nationalist leaders do not seek only to shape people's perceptions of the past. They also see contemporary culture as reflecting national glory, and they typically encourage this association. For this reason, we commonly find a close relationship between nationalism and popular culture (including folklore, folk music and vernacular literature), but 'high' culture (including classical music and the visual arts) may play an important role too. In particular, though, sport is commonly associated with nationalism. These issues are considered in Chapter 6.

**Nationalist mobilization.** Part 1 offers a largely static picture of the nationalist phenomenon, simply reporting and illustrating relationships between national identity and a range of background factors. But nationalism is far from being a static phenomenon, and its dynamic character is explored in Part 2 of the book, which looks at nationalism as a process. The first sparks in a nationalist revolution are frequently ignited not by cultural renewal (as expressed, for example, in recognition that a particular language community shares a distinctive cultural heritage) but by socioeconomic grievance (such as a perception that one's community – perhaps defined in relation to language – suffers discrimination of a more material kind). The relationship between nationalism and other universal sources of division (such as class and region) that do not of themselves carry any particular nationalist implications is discussed in Chapter 7. This chapter considers in particular not just the overt consequences of these phenomena for nationalism, but also the consequences of socioeconomic dislocation and political displacement in the context of rapid social change.

Chapter 8 draws together more systematically the threads already discussed, looking at the manner in which nationalist movements have conventionally been organized. Here the organizing principle mixes historical with thematic criteria: an effort is made to generalize about the broad span of nationalist movements, from those driving to unify territories in the name of the national principle to those seeking independence in its name, or pursuing other agendas. This generalization builds on material presented in the earlier chapters, and charts a range of different pathways associated with the nationalist process.



Chapter 9 addresses what is in many ways the most demanding and the most difficult question of all: how do nationalist movements arise, and what sustains them? A large literature has been generated in this area, and this chapter seeks to explore the main lines of argument. Rather than concluding that any single approach works, however, the chapter suggests that it is too early to choose between the variety of interpretations that are currently on offer, many of which, in any case, seek only to account for a specific type or phase of nationalism. In this area, as in so many others in the social sciences, there is (at least as yet) no consensus on matters of explanation.

Having looked in some detail at the manner in which elites try to lead nationalist movements in one direction or another, it is important to consider the questions raised by nationalist mobilization from another perspective. Not all nationalist movements succeed in establishing states for their target nations, and some may not even wish to do so. But all of them pose a challenge for existing state authorities. The last main chapter of the book therefore considers the options open to the state in dealing with nationalist demands – and especially with demands from national minorities. Chapter 10 examines the broad range of options open to the state, from the most barbaric and repressive to the most generous and accommodating, and discusses these within the context of a relatively unchanged state structure.

**Central themes.** In varying degrees, three themes recur in the chapters that follow, and constitute central arguments of this book. While these are in certain respects commonplace, it is worth highlighting them here, since they also clash with many of the current perspectives on nationalism.

- First, nationalism can almost always be looked at from *two perspectives, not one*: those of the politically dominant group which controls the state, and of the counter-group which wishes to reshape the state in line with its own vision for the nation. It has been argued that nation-state and empire may be seen as alternative expressions of power, in that each has a ‘state-bearing’ people (Kumar, 2010); and this extends in a modified way to the substate region. From the perspective of ‘enlightened’ state-builders, opposition comes from ‘reactionary’ or ‘rebellious’ nationalists; each group and its supporters project themselves in a positive light and their opponents in a negative light; and each may be located at, above, or below the level of the established state.
- Second, nationalism in principle involves three major sets of actors, not two: it involves *a triangular rather than a bilateral relationship*, with three potentially conflicting sets of actors (a centralizing metropolitan area, a separatist periphery, and another geographically peripheral group facing in several directions). This triangular model (an ideal type, of course) need not always be present, but it constitutes a surprisingly fruitful framework for the analysis of many different types of nationalism.
- Third, it is possible to create a model of *nationalist mobilization as extending over four phases* (cultural exploration, elite politicization, mass mobilization and national consolidation). This template is an ideal type of limited application, and several of the phases will be absent in very many nationalist movements, but it offers a sufficiently rewarding structure to illuminate the path of nationalist mobilization in many cases.

### **Bibliographical orientation**

A book of this kind can do little more than scratch the surface of a phenomenon as complex as nationalism. But this is a very old area of study; already in the late nineteenth century it was attracting the attention of scholars. The chapters that follow offer extensive reference to the big literature that has appeared. Yet attention should also be drawn to a number of general studies that offer useful introductions to the subject (in general, the most recent edition of multi-edition works is cited below). A large volume of additional material is available on the internet.

The English language literature for much of the time lacked the kind of short introductory texts on nationalism that existed in other languages, such as French, where Paul Sabourin's *Les nationalismes européens* (1996), Raoul Girardet's *Nationalismes et nation* (1996), Patrick Cabanel's *La question nationale au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (1997) and Astrid von Busekist's *Nations et nationalisme: XIX<sup>e</sup> et XX<sup>e</sup> siècles* (1998) combine elegant organization with impressive brevity, while also managing to cover the terrain comprehensively. This gap in English language writing has since been rectified by the publication of several useful texts of this kind: for example, Timothy Baycroft's *Nationalism in Europe, 1789–1945* (1998), David Brown's *Contemporary nationalism* (2000), Steven Grosby's *Nationalism: a very short introduction* (2005), Richard Bosworth's *Nationalism* (2007), and Ireneusz Karolewski and Andrzej Suszycki's *The nation and nationalism in Europe: an introduction* (2011). Another very useful historical introduction originally published in German was later made available in English – Peter Alter's *Nationalism* (1994) – while the views of distinguished historians are elaborated in Hugh Seton-Watson's *States and nations* (1977), John Breuilly's *Nationalism and the state* (1993), Eric Hobsbawm's *Nations and nationalism since 1780* (1992), John Hutchinson's *Nations as zones of conflict* (2005) and Paul Lawrence's *Nationalism: history and theory* (2005). The perspectives of the philosopher, the political scientist and the sociologist are illustrated respectively in three highly influential studies – Ernest Gellner's *Nations and nationalism* (2006b), Benedict Anderson's *Imagined communities* (2006) and Rogers Brubaker's *Nationalism reframed* (1996).

Classifying literature in this area by the disciplinary background of its authors is of strictly limited value, since nationalism spans disciplines, but it is useful in giving an indication of the starting point of a particular study. Thus, for example, further sociological perspectives are available in Craig Calhoun's *Nationalism* (1997), David McCrone's *Sociology of nationalism* (1998), Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman's *Nationalism* (2002) and Jonathan Hearn's *Rethinking nationalism* (2006). Political science perspectives will be found in James Kellas's *Politics of nationalism and ethnicity* (1998), Walker Connor's *Ethnonationalism* (1994b), John Hutchinson's *Modern nationalism* (1994) and Montserrat Guibernau's *Nationalisms* (1996). Although its title might initially suggest that it addresses a different topic, Donald Horowitz's *Ethnic groups in conflict* (2000) provides a rich and detailed overview of nationalism in the modern state. The various works of Anthony Smith, such as *Theories of nationalism* (1983) and *Nationalism and modernism* (1998), supply an important theoretical perspective, as do Graham Day and Andrew Thompson's *Theorising nationalism* (2004) and Umut Özkırımlı's *Theories of nationalism* (2010).

In addition to these full-length books, a flavour of the phenomenon of nationalism will be found in a number of collections of essays or classic writings in the area. An early



compilation of short extracts of this kind is to be found in Louis Snyder's *The dynamics of nationalism* (1964). Later, several collections of a smaller number of more substantial pieces have appeared, including John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith's collection of readings entitled simply *Nationalism* (1994), and the same editors' similar collection entitled *Ethnicity* (1996); Omar Dahbour and Micheline Ishay's *Nationalism reader* (1995); Stuart Woolf's *Nationalism in Europe* (1996); Geoff Eley and Ronald Suny's *Becoming national* (1996); Montserrat Guibernau and John Rex's *Ethnicity reader* (1997); and Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman's *Nations and nationalism* (2005). There are also some much larger collections of basic literature, such as a reprint of 83 key articles in a five-volume collection by Hutchinson and Smith, *Nationalism* (2000), and of 65 articles in a four-volume collection by Rajat Ganguly, *Ethnic conflict* (2009).

Attention should also be drawn to a number of reference works. These include encyclopedias or dictionaries, of which no fewer than three are entitled *Encyclopaedia of nationalism*: those of Louis Snyder (1990), Alexander Motyl (2001) and Athena Leoussi (2001). In a similarly general mould is Gerard Delanty and Krishan Kumar's *Sage handbook of nations and nationalism* (2006). There are also several valuable reference works with a more specific focus, such as Raymond Pearson's *Longman companion to European nationalism* (1994) and Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff's *Routledge handbook of ethnic conflict* (2011).

Finally, several journals specialize in this area. One of the oldest was *Nation und Staat* (which began publication in Leipzig in 1927), but this, not surprisingly, fell victim to the excesses of Nazi Germany and ceased publication in 1944. Indeed, this episode discredited the study of nationalism and national minorities, especially in Germany, but a multilingual journal presenting itself as successor to *Nation und Staat* began publication in Vienna in 1961: *Europa Ethnica* (the journal of the Federal Union of European Nationalities). An American organization with a more academic focus, the Association for the Study of Nationalities, launched a new journal in 1972 – the *Nationalities Papers* – which has a particular focus on central and eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; later, it adopted a second journal, *Ethnopolitics* (formerly *Global Review of Ethnopolitics*; 2001–). The British-based Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism has published its own journal, *Nations and Nationalism*, since 1995, and in 2001 launched a new periodical that publishes short articles and news, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*. Other journals in the area include the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (1971–), *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* (1973–2005), *Ethnicity* (1974–81), *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (1978–), *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* (1995–), *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* (1995–), *National Identities* (1999–), *Asian Ethnicity* (2000–) and *Ethnicities* (2001–).

## CONCLUSION

The study of nationalism (as with other areas of the social sciences) is, then, very different from the study of, say, astronomy (or other areas of the natural sciences). Natural scientists, unlike their colleagues within many fields of the social sciences, are agreed on basic terminology: it is both easier to define a 'planet' and to recognize one when we see it than

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it is a 'nation'. For related reasons, natural scientists are then able to agree on descriptive typologies and classification systems, and on procedures for measurement: solar systems may be identified and described with a precision that is lacking when we turn to forms of nationalism. Consequently, natural scientists may realistically seek to generate and test laws about their objects of study; in the analysis of nationalism, the most we can hope for is the formulation of generalizations whose truth is a matter of probability, not certainty. For natural scientists, too, the question of ethics has to do with *how* a particular phenomenon is studied in certain sensitive areas, not with the moral qualities of that phenomenon itself: unlike nationalism, planetary orbits are neither 'good' nor 'bad'.