

EUI Working Paper SPS No. 96/6

Nation-Building after World War Two:
Postcolonialism, Postcommunism,
and Postfascism Compared

CRISTIAN JOPPKE

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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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CHRISTIAN JOPPKE

WP 320
EUR

BADIA FIESOLANA, SAN DOMENICO (FI)

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Printed in Italy in March 1996
European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I - 50016 San Domenico (FI)
Italy

This article compares processes of nation-building at three historical junctures in the postwar period: postcolonialism, postcommunism, and postfascism. The comparison is organized around three analytical dimensions of nation-building: modular adoption, state-making, and primordialization. The purpose is to apply recent conceptual developments in the study of nations and nationalism to selected historical fields, and to sensitize to the plurality and contextual boundedness of nation-building processes.

May 1995

Nation-Building After World War II:
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The current flood of studies about nations and nationalism, which has almost established itself as a new cross-disciplinary field with its own theoretical map and organizational infrastructure, may be divided into two opposite tendencies. One body of work deals with the stipulated obsolescence and disintegration of the modern nation-state as sovereign political actor and locus of identity. Another body of work investigates the historical origins and modular adoption of the modern nation-state system as the universal grid to constitute and link bounded political communities across the globe. The riddle of simultaneous nation-building and nation-destroying has a geographical solution. The virus of nation-destroying, perhaps more intellectual fad than political reality, is located in the developed North-West, where regionalism, migration, and globalization have indeed siphoned off the traditional authority and homogeneity of the nation-state. Nation-building, by contrast, is situated in the Southern and Eastern peripheries, where the legacies of colonialism and communism have both retarded and fuelled the impetus to build sovereign nation-states out of the ashes of empire.

Processes of nation-building, which are the focus of this article, can be analyzed from three separate angles.¹ The first is the angle of borrowing and modular adoption. "The European nation-state", so Anthony Giddens (1985:265), "provided a model that other states have followed." Once invented, the nation became "modular", which Benedict Anderson (1983:4) defined as "capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations." Once invented, there is no alternative to the nation as the structuring principle and identification of sovereign, bounded political collectivities. "Nationalism" may be understood as the movement that transplants the nation-model into a socio-territorial space where it has not yet been in place, and in this sense

nationalism is inherently a catching-up and modernizing device of relatively backward societies.² The modularly adopted nation has a paradoxical relationship to its original: a copy, after all, which owes its existence to the original, and shares its double principle of external sovereignty and internal equality; but a copy that draws its boundaries in contradistinction to already existing nations, to which it becomes tied in a tricky syndrome of emulation and real or imagined inferiority and "ressentiment" (Greenfeld, 1992). Late-comer nationalisms can be liberal, and do just that: take the West as a model and "catch up" with it.³ But most likely, they will be illiberal and resentment-laden, reject the West and stress instead indigenous ("folk") qualities. In this regard, Eastern European has shown the way for postcolonial nationalism.

An analysis of nation-building as modulation must concentrate on the concrete causes and forces of borrowing, and the modifications that the nation-model undergoes as it becomes transplanted into different, particularly non-Western, parts of the world.

From a second angle, nation-building is inherently intertwined with processes of state-making or state-consolidation. That nations are or aspire to be states, and, in turn, that states are owned by a titular nation or as "nationalizing states" (Brubaker, 1995a) seek to create a homogeneous national basis, is--for good or bad--the fundamental principle of the modern nation-state system. With regard to the first part of this equation--that nations must be states, Max Weber (1976:244) distinguished nations from mere ethnic groups through the "specific sort of pathos that a linguistic, religious, culturally or historically defined group attaches to the idea of an own state." Ethnic groups, in turn, are distinguished from nations not through size or historicity but through their "renunciation of power" (ibid., 243).⁴ In this light, Walker Connor's (1994) definitional attempt to separate nations from states via "ethnonationalism" is misleading, because the flip-side of secession from an existing state is the desire to erect a new state that is "owned" by the seceding nation. Both nations and ethnic groups are self-defined "communities of descent" (Weber, 1976:242). But only nations are "terminal communities" that "when the chips are down, effectively (command) men's loyalty" (R.Emerson), and thus aspire to be

states.⁵

U The second part of the equation--that states must be nations--refers to the only source of legitimacy of modern states: popular sovereignty. Non-national states have historically been dynastic states or empires, which derived their legitimacy from religious sources or mere tradition. Since the French and American revolutions, such states have lost their legitimacy. As modern political philosophy from Rousseau to Mill has stipulated, nations are the shell of democracy; they provide the requisite degree of trust and homogeneity without which democratic states could not function. A non-national state that still incorporates the democratic principle of popular sovereignty would be a world-state. A world-state is a theoretical possibility, but so far meets the practical obstacles of linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious divisions. The durability of the principle that states must be nations has been powerfully confirmed by the fact that the only state that claimed not to be a nation-state--the Soviet Union, the world's last empire--has since ceased to exist. The nation-based state is always more claim than reality. In this regard, a nominal definition of nation state as "territorial political unit...whose borders (coincide) with the territorial distribution of a national group" (Walker Connor, 1994:96), which would lead one to conclude that less than ten percent of existing states qualify as "nation states", is misleading. Such a nominal definition of nation state not only confounds the distinction between ethnic group and nation; more importantly, it obscures that in the modern world only the nation-based state is a legitimate state.

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An analysis of nation-building as state-making must be attentive to its various empirical configurations. In the history of European nation-building, one can distinguish between a "from state to nation" and a "from nation to state" path (Smith, 1986). The first, which can also be called the Western path, is exemplified by France: a dynastic center (or "lateral ethnic"[A.Smith]) incorporates the periphery via military, educational, or infrastructural penetration and inclusion (see E. Weber, 1976). The second path, the "latecomer" or Eastern path, is exemplified by Germany: an elite-constructed yet linguistically or ethnically conceived nation (or "demotic

ethnie"[A.Smith]) seeks to acquire its own state. In the two waves of postwar nation-building: postcolonial and postcommunist, we can observe a similar distinction. At the risk of simplification, the postcolonial path (especially in sub-Saharan Africa) leads "from state to nation": artificially construed states seek to "fill in" nations. By contrast, the postcommunist path (especially in Eastern Europe) leads "from nation to state": historical nations (or elites that claim their existence) seek representation in a state they consider their own, and not a replica of "Moscow Centre" (Jowitt, 1992:ch.5).

Next to modular adoption and state-making, there is a third angle from which processes of nation-building can be analysed: nation-building as primordialization.

"Primordialization" refers to the processes that define the content of nationness. Strictly speaking, "nation-building" is a contradiction in terms. The notion of nation, whose etymological root is the Latin *nasci* (to be born), conveys the ascriptive inclusion of the individual into a primordial "community of descent" (M.Weber), whose beginnings are lost in the mist of time. The notion of building, by contrast, conveys the opposite sense of construction and inclusion by consent. On the level of discourse, the binary opposition of primordialism and construction refers to different idioms of speaking about and conceiving the nation: a nationalist idiom, which is necessarily one of misrecognition and methodical forgetting;⁶ and a scholarly-analytical idiom, which exposes the nationalist idiom as one of misconception, and seeks to identify the contingencies, elite strategies, and the very modernness in the process of nation-building.⁷ Eager to escape the nationalist fallacy, the best recent literature about nations and nationalism is self-consciously "constructivist", stressing the elements of fluidity, elite-manipulation, and institutional conditioning.⁸

But on a substantive level, one must recognize that the tension between primordialism and construction is inherent in the nation-building process itself. Max Weber has caught this tension, when he characterized nations primordially as "communities of descent" (and subgroup of "ethnic associations"), while stressing that nations were also fundamentally self-defined (i.e., constructed), and conceptually belonging in "the sphere of values" (Weber, 1976:528). The division of the current

scholarship on nations and nationalism into (always attributed) "primordialists" and (self-styled) "modernists" or "constructivists" is flawed (see Smith, 1984): nations are primordial and constructed at the same time, in the sense that their "constructedness" is systematically obscured.⁹ Transforming the distinction between primordialism and construction into one between ethnic and civic aspects of nationhood, Anthony Smith (1986:149) recognized that "all nations bear the impress of both territorial and ethnic principles and components, and represent an uneasy confluence of a more recent 'civic' and a more ancient 'genealogical' model of social and cultural organization". Radical constructivists, eager to demystify the nation as a "social operator" (K.Verdery) in the constitution of groups or as a "field of struggle" for competing groups, dodge the content of this operator (as distinguished from class, gender, or race) and the boundaries within which the stipulated struggle over the meaning of nation occurs. Katherine Verdery (1993:45), for instance, finishes her eloquent plea for a "constructivist", "relational", and "contextual" approach in the study of nations and nationalism with a casually thrown-out definition of nationness as "being born into something as a natural condition"--which should be the beginning, not end, of analysis.

Analyzing nation-building as primordialization requires simultaneous emphasis on the boundedness of struggles over the meaning of nation by relatively inert "myth-symbol complexes" (A.Smith, 1986), and on the contingencies, interests, and actors that occur or move within this field of struggle--much like Max Weber had conceived the religious field as determined by an interplay of "ideas" and "interests", in which religious world-views had laid, like "switchmen", the tracks along which the dynamics of interests moves.

The distinction between primordialism and construction is particularly important for understanding the development of nations over time. The question of the origins of nations (as nation-building) is to be distinguished from the maintenance of nations, or the rebuilding of nations that have undergone radical discontinuities or breaks of development (like some European nations after fascism). It is in such

moments of a radical break in national development that the tension between primordial constraint and the need for (re)construction is most visible.

In the following, I will compare three waves of nation-building after WWII--postcolonialism, postcommunism, and postfascism--along the three angles of modular adoption, state-making, and primordialization. The latter are vantage points or perspectives from which the same story of nation-building can be retold, and in each of which this story appears in a slightly different light. But as we will see, not in each case are these perspectives equally relevant. Modular adoption, for instance, is of prime importance for the case of postcolonialism, while it does not matter at all in postfascism. Accordingly, the following comparison will make pragmatic use of the concepts presented here, giving priority to the unfolding of the historical cases. The ultimate purpose is to sensitize for the radical differences in the nation-building problematiques at three key historical junctures of the past half-century.



Postcolonialism

The history of colonial empires may be retold as an irony: nations that had shed traditional imperial rule refashioned themselves as empire only to be destroyed by the force of (anticolonial) nationalism, which sought to transform the colonial periphery into sovereign nations of their own. From the perspective of modular adoption, postcolonial nation-building is a peculiar enterprise.¹⁰ On the one hand, the concept of nation as collective self-determination was carried by the colonizers themselves into the non-Western periphery, and thus was the obvious weapon to be turned against them by the colonized. On the other hand, the colonial situation pits "alien people" (Emerson) against one another,¹¹ in the form of a radically discontinuous and incommensurable "first encounter" (Greenblatt, 1991:ch.1), which is characterized by the total lack of common culture, history, or physical characteristics. The colonial situation transcends the concrete collectivities that are part of it (such as, for instance, the British and the Kikuyu in eastern Africa), and posits the broader, "civilizational" confrontation between the developed West and what became known in the Cold War

era as the "Third World".¹² Accordingly, anticolonial "nationalism" has been only one, highly contested, and today even insignificant, form of political mobilization. The "Panaficanism" of the 1960s, steered by American black power activists, has been the first attempt to mobilize the transnational "black/white" civilizational gap underlying colonial rule. And today's religious fundamentalism may be understood as the last round of anticolonial "liberation", in which even the Western secular idea of nation is abandoned in favour of radically indigenous ideas of political community.

In contrast to communist rule, colonial rule has been intrinsically self-terminating. Because it has been carried by nations, that is, political communities subscribing to the principle of popular sovereignty and self-determination, colonial rule has been inherently difficult to legitimize. As epitomized by R.Kipling's famous "White Man's Burden",¹³ there have been two separate modes of legitimating colonial rule: via racialism, which posits blacks as a biologically inferior race ("half-devils", says Kipling),¹⁴ and via a claimed civilizing mission, which posits blacks as pedagogical objects ("half-children", says Kipling). Racialism, a less than prankish moral and scientific doctrine in the age of empire, was delegitimized after World War II, which had been won against a country that had carried racist doctrine to the murderous extreme. The civilizing mission stipulates colonial rule as justified only if it allowed the subject people to reach a higher stage of civilization, in which self-government was possible. Accordingly, it envisages the transformation from colonial into self-rule. This is not to deny that the modalities of self-terminating colonial rule were greatly influenced by the approach taken by the respective colonial power--such as pluralist Britain which never considered its colonies part of the mother country and thus easily conceded their independence, as against assimilationist France, which considered its colonies "La France d' outre mer" and fought a bloody war against their independence (see Hodkin, 1957:ch.1).

Colonial nation-building can be differentiated in three phases: first, the phase of anticolonial nationalism, in which the concept of national self-determination was "pirated" from the colonial power; second, the phase of nation-building proper, in

which the consolidation of the new postcolonial states was threatened by "primordial" ethnic divisions at the substate level; and, finally, a second wave of anticolonial discontent, in which anti-Western fundamentalist movements reject the very idea of the secular nation-state. Let me briefly comment on each phase in turn.

Elie Kedourie (1970:22) has defined nationalism in Africa and Asia as "reaction against European domination"--and not because it was alien, but because it was European. Whereas nationalism in Europe was based on a strong infrastructure of literacy, markets, and developed communication, anticolonial nationalism was carried by a small and isolated, Western-educated native intelligentsia.¹⁵ While often card-carrying alumni of Cambridge University or the London School of Economics, this intelligentsia's "educational and administrative pilgrimages" (B.Anderson, 1983:140) tended to end in the colonial capital. Thus it came to conceive of the artificial boundaries of colonial states as encompassing sovereign 'nations'.¹⁶ This intelligentsia's dilemma of simultaneous attraction to and repulsion by the West is well expressed by Mouloud Feraoun, an Algerian writer: "When I say I am French, I give myself a label which all Frenchmen deny me; I express myself in French, I have been formed by French education. I know as much as an average Frenchman. But, good God, what am I?" (quoted in Kedourie, 1970:136). There are, in fact, two alternative ways of answering the question of identity, which are also two alternative ways of conceiving of the postcolonial nation: "going native" and searching for an essentialist, precolonial quality like *negritude* that may serve as the basis of an ethnically conceived nation;¹⁷ or finding and vindicating an identity in the struggle against those by whom the native has been rebuffed, and thus laying the basis for a politically conceived, civic nation.

Frantz Fanon, the quintessential Third-World nationalist, saw clearly that the ethnic, or better: tribal, diversity of Africa commanded a civic definition of the nation-to-be, whose identity was to be forged in the united struggle against the colonial power. Fanon, the Caribbean-born, Sorbonne-educated psychiatrist who joined the Algerian independence struggle in the early 1960s, epitomizes the paradox


of Third-World nationalists who think with the West against the West. Moreover, Fanon realized the inadequacy of the modularly adopted Western nation-model in the colonial context, and thus anticipated the second wave of "post-national" anticolonial discontent. The title of his most famous work, *Wretched of the Earth* (1963), is revealing. While the collectivity to be liberated from colonial rule is presented as "the nation", no reference is made to which nation is to be liberated--thus acknowledging the transnational quality of the colonial situation, in which the "West" is pitched against the non-Western periphery, both separated by a gap of civilizations.¹⁸ Accordingly, the "colonial world" is conceived as a "world divided into compartments", a "Manichean world" of white settlers on the one hand, and coloured natives on the other, without any common cultural, economic, or social traits. Moreover, both worlds are in a zero-sum relationship: the settler's town is rich because the native's town is poor.¹⁹ This lays the track for independence, which is conceived as a process of total substitution, "the replacing of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men" (p.35). Fanon's wildly poetic vision of liberation as a violent cleansing act, according to which the new society could only spring "out of the rotting corpse of the settler" (p.93), is also perfectly functional: violence is conceived as nation-builder. Fanon realized that due to the absence of a nation-grounding infrastructure and of a viable ethnic core the nation had to be forged via actu: "national solidarity is in the first place expressed by the increasing blows struck at the enemy" (p.133).

At the same time, Fanon used the notion of nation as a mere metaphor for the subject of liberation, more for lack of a better term than in programmatic intent. "The European game has finally ended; we must find something different" (p.312), Fanon famously postulated. It remains for today's religious fundamentalists to realize Fanon's postulate, even if in a profoundly un-Fanonian way. If Sartre found that "the Third World finds itself and speaks to itself through his (Fanon's) voice",²⁰ this denies the deeply European roots of this progenitor of the first round of colonial emancipation, who conceived of decolonization as the millenarian quest for a "new man", European enlightenment-style.

After independence, Third-World nationalist leaders saw themselves in charge of states that were not nations. Particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, which was hurriedly divided up in the infamous "scramble for Africa" between the European imperial powers in the 1880s, state borders were often entirely artificial, irrespective of the ethnic groups they comprised. While lack of an ethnic core was less severe in Asia, which had more historical quasi-nations with established political identities (such as Burma or Vietnam), the problem was everywhere to "fill in" ready-made states with national content. This poses the interesting question why postcolonial states had to be nations. The national imperative resulted from the triple force of path-dependence, the external norm of nation-stateness, and the domestic need for state-consolidation. To begin with, 'nationalism', often mixed with Marxist revolutionary doctrine, had been the major discursive device to reach independence.²¹ Not unlike the making of young Italy, upon the making of "Kenya" the next "path-dependent" step was to make "Kenyans". But more importantly still was the international norm of nation-stateness, which Crawford Young (1976:ch.3) likened to a "cast-iron grid superimposed upon the culturally diverse populace of the Third World". If a political unit wants to have a seat in the United Nations (sic) Organization, apply for subsidies from the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, and vies for equal status and respect in the world of diplomacy and international relations, it must speak as an identifiable "one", replete with name, flag, currency, and the like. The nation-state system simply constitutes an "epistemology of political reality" (ibid., 73) that no political unit can escape.²² Finally, nation-building is a requirement of domestic state consolidation. To represent a nation is the only source of legitimizing states in the modern world. In addition, the relative economic and social backwardness of postcolonial societies commands an active role of the state. In this regard, classic modernization theory prescribed "nation-building" as a chief instrument of development. Nation-building as development means the extension of an active sense of membership to the entire populace, the secure acceptance of state authority, the redistribution of resources to further the equality of members, and the extension of effective state operation to the periphery.

Why the effusive "nation-building" scenario of modernization theory came to nil is the subject of a famous essay by Clifford Geertz (1963). Geertz realized that, given the ethnic heterogeneity of Africa and South-East Asia, only a civic nation-model, based on territory and political creed rather than religion, language, or ethnicity, stood a chance. As also Fanon saw, a chance to build civic nationness has been the independence struggle. However, the supraethnic unity of the independence struggle was always limited to a small activist elite, and never reached deep into society. Moreover, even in Europe civic nations are rare and unlikely things, largely limited to countries with indigenous nation-building processes (Britain, France), and contingent on a developed civil society, a literate high culture, and the enlightenment tradition. Accordingly, the need for an "integrative revolution" in the new states was everywhere undermined by the strength of "primordial attachments", which Geertz defined as "naturally given" (not chosen) allegiances based on assumed blood ties, race, language, region, religion, and custom. Modernization theory had assumed that primordial allegiances would disappear as a result of urbanization, industrialization, and modern communication. Geertz argued, a contrario, that modernization strengthens, rather than weakens, primordial ties. He adduced two causes for this outcome. First, the increasing density and frequency of interpersonal and intergroup contact that comes with the building of a modern infrastructure makes people aware of their differences, rather than similarities, and sharpens their sense of particular identity. Second, whereas colonial states stood outside society, the new (democratic) states were located amidst their society, and represented a valuable asset and stake of conflict. Because of the low division of labour and the lack of competing functional or professional principles of group formation, and the corresponding strength of kinship as main societal organizing principle, the language of ethnicity and primordialism offered itself as the obvious, readily available mobilizing force in the struggle for power: this was the only game in town. In the new states--this is Geertz's sour message--democracy fuelled ethnic conflict, which in turn thwarted the project of nation-building as domestic state consolidation.

While a mighty rebuke of the naive hopes of modernization theory, and



certainly closer to the dire reality of postcolonial states, Geertz's account of aborted nation-building in the new states suffers from two shortcomings: first, a reified notion of primordialism, which denies the constructedness of even primordial allegiances; second, an overly abstract notion of civic integration, which denies the ethnic, primordial component without which no nation could exist. With regard to the first, the colonial state has itself contributed to the making and strengthening of ethnic groups, whose divisions then undermined the project of nation-building. In the colonialism literature this is often referred to as the result of a conscious "divide et impera" strategy of the colonial powers. But geography plus the trivial needs of everyday administration, which forced the colonial powers to rely on 'native' cadres drawn from the vicinity of the colonial center, are probably closer to the truth. By fusing territory, increasing communication, and (unequally) distributing privileges, the colonial institutions and policies created ethnic identities and likenesses. Malays in Malaysia, Ibo in Nigeria, or Kikuyu in Kenya are literally products of the colonial state's functional and territorial integration of local society (Horowitz, 1985:66f). Moreover, by selectively binding certain groups into its administrative and military apparatus, but not others, the colonial state produced the division between "advanced" and "backward" groups. This division often stemmed from the trivial fact of relative geographical distance to the colonial centers, but, once established, perpetuated itself as a group marker and stake of ethnic discord in the postindependence states. Take the example of Kenya. While an ethnically neutral state and not "owned" by a particular group, leading political and administrative positions were reserved to Kikuyus, who had both been key colonial cadres, particularly in the process of Britain's voluntary accession to independence, and carriers of the ("Mau-Mau") independence movement (see Young, 1976:125-135). This in turn fuelled the resentment of excluded groups, such as Luo or Masai, and thus kept the ethnic conflict spiral turning.

With regard to the stipulated need for an "integrative revolution", one could argue, with Anthony Smith, that the real problem is not so much the alleged strength of primordial attachments as the lack of a viable ethnic core around which a nation could be built. From this perspective, the question is not to exclude primordialism,

but to find the right balance between ethnic and civic elements. The problem of a lacking ethnic core is epitomized by the case of Nigeria. The three largest ethnic groups in "Nigeria" (which, like "Kenya" does not refer to a nation-bearing group), the Ibo, Yoruba, and Hausa, account for only two third of the total population. These groups are characterized by the "lack of any shared historical mythology and memory" (Smith, 1986b:258). What then shall be the basis of "Nigerianness"? Smith offers three alternative models of nation-building without a viable ethnic core: "immigrant", "autonomist", and "federalist". In the immigrant model, a creole ethnies redefines itself as a political community with relatively open boundaries. In the postcolonial states, however, this model does not apply, because of the lack of an ethnies with a claim to primacy, and because of the territorial basis of ethnicity. The autonomist model is centered around dual identities which are contextually invoked: Catalan and Spanish, Corsican and French, Scottish and British. If one can be both Scottish and British, why not be both Ibo and Nigerian? However, in the case of Britain, it took a century of successful war-making (against catholic France) and the world's most resourceful economy to make "Britons" out of Welsh, Scots, and English; Britain happened because it payed off to become British (see Colley, 1992).²³ Such tangible incentives are evidently lacking in most Third World states.²⁴ The "federal-nation" model, finally, would promote all ethnies to national status, not unlike the former Yugoslavia. Writing in the mid-1980s, A. Smith sees "real hope" in this solution. But how should it work in, say, Kamerun, that "miniature Africa" (Alter, 1985:155), divided into 200 tribes, 124 languages and dialects, and four major religions?²⁵ While none of these models seem to work in the new states, the message is that ethnicity, or "primordialism", cannot be simply done away with, as Geertz seemed to assume, but has to be weaved into the nations-to-be.

Ethnic division, in conjunction with continued underdevelopment, explains the propensity of Third World states to be authoritarian or controlled by the military. Donald Horowitz (1994) found that such states go through "cyclical processes of inclusion and exclusion". Initially a multiethnic ("anticolonial") party-coalition prevails over the colonial power. In phase two, ethnic leaders contend for domination of the

new regime, and withdraw from the multiethnic party-coalition as they lose. In turn, the multiethnic-turned-minority party outlaws the opposition, and declares a single-party state (often under the mantle of continued "inclusion" rhetoric). Finally, the opposition rallies against the regime as a revamped "multiparty movement". This has been the dominant story of sub-Saharan "tribal" Africa, such as in Zambia, Kenya, Cameroon, Uganda, Chad, Ivory Coast, Guinea. Even if the rudiments of a multi-party system could establish themselves against the odds, democracy is still undermined by the fixity of group- and party-boundaries and the lack of cross-cutting cleavages. As Horowitz (1985:ch.8) has demonstrated, the democratic process itself fuels (rather than moderates) ethnic conflict. In ethnic party systems, one principal issue axis (around ethnicity) tends to preempt or crowd out all others. Competition does not take place between, but within ethnically-based parties, which increases the likelihood of "tough" and "radical" ethnic stances. The logic of nonethnic party competition is centrist, consisting of a competition for floating voters. By contrast, ethnic party systems are fleeing the center, because the boundaries of party support stop at the boundaries of ethnic groups, whose leaders try to outbid one another with radical solutions. Elections, finally, are like censuses, which raises electoral turnouts, and with it the level of ethnic mobilization and conflict.

Considering the centrifugal force of ethnicity in the artificially created African new states, their external stability is puzzling: there have been almost no successful secessions and irredentas. To begin with the latter, irredentism--the attempt by a state to redeem perceived fellow national groups in neighbouring states--is virtually absent in Africa, precisely because of the nonexistence of nationally homogenous homeland states to raise or support irredentist claims. More surprising is the lack of successful secessions. With the exception of Bangladesh, whose split from Pakistan was helped by geography plus Indian troops, the postcolonial world has seen no successful secessions. Why? A major reason for this is the "formidable power of the state system" (Young, 1976:501), which does not support secessionist challenges. While the Third-World dominated United Nations Organization has emphatically supported the process of decolonialization, it has not tolerated the second generation of "tribal"

movements that threatened to tear apart the fragile postindependence states. Even the Organization of African Unity, a good deal more sensitive to such rhetoric, has taken a conservative stance on secessionist claims—as the Nigerian Ibos had to experience in their failed attempt to set up the separate state of "Biafra" as putative Ibo homeland. Once a state has been set up, a vested interest and cadre in its continuation is created as well, both domestically and internationally, the new state's lack of a "national" basis notwithstanding.²⁶

The most dramatic contemporary expression of the failure of Third-World nation-building is the rise of religious fundamentalism. Particularly in North Africa, the Middle East, and parts of South-East Asia, a politically mobilized Islam has emerged as a radical alternative to the secular nation-state. Islamic fundamentalism, which advocates a theocratic state based on the religious law of the shari'a, may be understood as a second round of anticolonial movement. In its perspective, even the postindependence state, based on the secular idea of the nation, appears as Western "neocolonialist" imposition. As an Islamic cleric said with regard to Egypt: "Western colonialism has gone, but we still have not completed our independence. We will not be free until Egypt becomes a Muslim state" (quoted in Juergensmeyer, 1993:1). As we saw in the case of Frantz Fanon, the modular adoption of the Western nation-model by the first generation of anticolonialists was paradoxical in that it occurred with the West against the West. The second generation of Islamic anticolonialism is perfectly consequential in trying to resolve this contradiction by throwing out the Western nation-model itself, and resorting to the Islam as an indigenous, non-Western alternative.²⁷ In this regard, Islamic fundamentalism fulfills Fanon's program to put to an end the "European game" and "find something different" (Fanon, 1963:312).

What is the concrete nature of the Islamic alternative? Most importantly, the Islam does not acknowledge the distinction between church and state, which is Christendom's distinct contribution to Western political modernization. Christendom stipulates to "render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to God the things which are God's" (Lewis, 1988:2), and thus leaves room for the development of a

secular state unmitigated by religious control. For Islam there is only one authority, the one of God as revealed by his prophet, Mohammed, and put down--once and for all--in the rules of the Shari'a, which are indiscriminately binding in all spheres of life, "public" and "private" (to use an inadequate, "Western" distinction). Thus there is no space for the development of a secular, political realm of authority separated from the religious. It has often been noted that the rise of modern European nationalism went along with the decline of religion since the protestant reformation, and that "national" identifications took over some of the primordial, cathectic, and loyalty-commanding functions that had been previously fulfilled by public religion.²⁸ In the world of Islam, which Gellner (1992:6) characterized as "secularization-resistant", a parallel development did not occur, so that the religious community remained the fixpoint of an individual's "highest" loyalty.

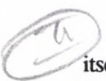
I The Islam is inimical to the concept of nation in two regards. First, in the concept of nation sovereignty is invested in the people. According to Islam, only God is sovereign; "popular" sovereignty would amount to blasphemy. Second, the concept of nation is bounded and particularistic: nations exist only in a plurality of nations. By contrast, Islam stipulates the transnational, universal community of Muslims, the umma, which is to be created by the proselytizing crusade of the jihad (holy war) (see Lewis, 1988:ch.4). Characteristically, Khomeiny--leader of the first modern state based on the principles of Islam--has declared "nations" as the work of Western "imperialists" whose intent was to fragment the umma, and the new Iranian constitution stipulates the "advent of a unified world community" (quoted in Riesebrodt, 1993:142). While, not unlike the declaredly postnational Soviet Union, Islamic Iran thus presented itself as the starting-point of a world-wide revolution, it still had to reckon with the established state-system, and thus adopted crypto-nationalistic features--also not unlike the former Soviet Union. After all, the new state continued to call itself "Iran", conceiving itself as quasi-national homeland of the green revolution, like once the Soviet Union had seen itself as homeland of the red revolution. The "national" distinctiveness of Islamic Iran is further increased by its non-Arabic language particularism and Shi'ite creed, which sets it apart from the

overwhelming majority of Sunni Muslims. The grid of the existing state-system plus the fact of cultural particularism thus stand in the way of realizing a radical Islamic alternative to the nation-state.

While the feasibility of an Islamic alternative to the modern nation-state system may be questioned, it still must be recognized that Islamic fundamentalism responds to a deep economic, social, and political crisis of the postcolonial world. Most importantly, the nation-state has only "nominally" exerted itself in an environment foreign to its ideas of secular authority and cultural homogeneity (Tibi, 1993). If there was a native idiom capable of mobilizing the rural masses and articulating their grievances in postindependence states, it has been the language of Islam. A good example is Algeria, home of the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS), one of the most militant and powerful fundamentalist movements in the Third World (see Kepel, 1995; Tibi, 1993:ch.7). After achieving independence in 1962, the new FLN-regime quickly degenerated into an autocratic and corrupt one-party state, based on patronage and clientalism, in which the former independence fighters, the Moujahedin, ossified into a new nomenclatura. A misguided industrialization program wasted the entire profit from recently discovered oil and gas resources. Failed industrialization and regime ossification provided a fatefully flawed environment for a dramatic demographic explosion that has seized the entire Third World since the 1960s. Between 1962 and 1992, the population of Algeria increased by three-fold, from 9 million to 27 million. Fifty percent of Algerians today are younger than twenty years, about three-fourth of whom are without employment. From the hords of alienated youth, particularly those with some education and rural-urban "border-crossers", FIS draws its militant shock-troops.²⁹ These young, second-generation militants have no direct experience of colonialism, and they are quick to denounce the postindependence state as "neo-colonialist" stooge of "Western imperialism". Because the regime has wrapped itself in nationalist cum socialist rhetoric, the Islam represents the only language untainted by the old regime, and capable of mobilizing the rural "masses". In addition, rapidly proliferating, non-state-licensed "wild" mosques provided the only platform to articulate oppositional views in a non-democratic state, which made them the natural

centers of resistance. Their popularity was further increased by delivering some of the medical, educational, or recreational services that are otherwise the prerogative of the modern state.

Next to the political and social crisis, there are two additional factors that favour the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in North Africa and the Near East. First, fundamentalism entered the void that arose with the demise of Panarab nationalism (see Kramer, 1993). Since the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in 1924, a language-based Arab nationalism had been the major political ideology and unifying creed in the region, and it was explicitly directed against Islamic universalism that had been associated with Turkish rule. The defeat against Israel in the 6-Day-War of June 1967 also was a huge blow against secular Arab nationalism--hadn't Israel won because they stood to their Jewish religion, and hadn't the Muslims lost because they had put their back on the Islam (see Tibi, 1993:46f)? Long before the Iranian revolution, the Arab defeat against Israel was the beginning of a politically mobilized Islam. The symbolic replacement of Arab nationalism by Islamic fundamentalism occurred during the Gulf War, when the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, whose Ba'th Party had previously been the voice of Arab nationalism, declared the war against the West as a "Holy War" that had to be won "with the full force of the faith against the unfaith" (quoted in Tibi, 1993:29). Characteristically, his invasion of Kuwait could not diminish his standing as Third World hero, because Islamic law does not acknowledge political boundaries, not to mention the "artificial" ones that resulted from colonialism.

 A third conditioning factor of Islamic fundamentalism is the crisis of the West itself. The siren songs of "Orientalism" in the ivory towers of Western academia and the "postmodern" questioning of the epistemological and moral universalism of the West, which goes under the name of "multiculturalism", has not been unheard by the "bearded Ph.D.'s" of Algier, Kairo, or Teheran, some of whom carry University of London degrees no less than the first generation of "nationalist" third world liberators.³⁰ The West's self-relativization and uncertainty about itself makes it less attractive as a model to be emulated elsewhere. But in the end, in its very "anti-

Western" fixation, also Islamic fundamentalism remains under the spell of the ghost it had set out to exorcize. Rather than being simply a "renaissance of religion" (Juergensmeyer) or "radical traditionalism" (Riesebrodt), Islamic fundamentalism is best characterized as a "completely new, contemporary synthesis between religion and politics..., which stems from the confrontation of the Islam with modernity" (Tibi, 1993:215). While they reject the culture of the West, fundamentalists make ample use of its technology--airplanes, fax machines, and portable phones. Moreover, the doctrine of fundamentalists, far from being a straight return to the holy script, fuses the prophet's words with "ideology" of unmistakably Western origins, such as Marxism (see Arjomand, 1994:674). Finally, the state system has divided the fundamentalist movement into Turkish, Iranian, and Arab branches, each vying for dominance, thus turning fundamentalism into a new crypto-nationalism. In all appearance, the "European game" (Fanon) has not ended yet.

Postcommunism

Whereas the story of postcolonialism was one of nation-building proper, and, more particularly, of the elusive implantation of the nation-model into a part of the world in which it had not been in place before, the story of postcommunism is about the vindication and recovery of already established nationhood against a regime whose purpose had been to wipe it out. The metaphor of empire, which has often been used to describe the Soviet regime, and which suggests a similarity between colonialism and communism, must therefore be qualified. To begin with, the notion of Soviet empire is deeply ironic: it conveys that communism, which had refashioned itself under Lenin as a critique of "imperialism", had itself adopted imperialist features. Was the Soviet Union "empire"? If we define empire loosely as "one state (controlling) the effective political sovereignty of another political society",³¹ certainly yes, and like both traditional dynastic land empires and more recent, nation-based colonial sea empires the Soviet Union eventually collapsed over the "nationalist" assertiveness of its subject people. However, important differences stand out. First, previous empires were only loosely structured, and they left their subject societies intact; the contact between

center and periphery was limited to the exigencies of resource extraction. Communism, by contrast, has been the attempt to radically reshape and transform society according to an utopian master-plan. If the reality of colonialism was often hypertrophied port cities in conjunction with a largely unchartered and untouched "tribal" interior, communism's ambition was to seize the hinterland and build steel towns from nothingness, inhabited by a new breed of Homo Sovieticus. Second, empires are either themselves national in the core, like the British Empire, or ideologically indifferent to nationalism, like the Habsburg Empire. Communism, by contrast, is inherently a critique of nationalism, stipulating a transnational community of associated producers, and it has been intrinsically the attempt to destroy competing national allegiances. Colonialism has been an unwitting proliferator of the nation-model; communism was a program for its destruction. If the idea of independence from London could be "pirated" from the colonial power itself, and thus was essentially born in and achieved with London, the idea of independence from Moscow was based on exogenous sources and it had to be won outside of and against Moscow. Communism was not, like colonialism, self-terminating; it was terminated by forces other than itself, most notably nationalism.

The postcolonial problematique was to fill in artificially conceived state boundaries with nations where there were none, which was compounded by the problem of importing a Western model into a non-Western part of the world. One, yet not the only, postcommunist problematique is the reverse: to redraw state boundaries so that they encompass historical nations. Communism in Eastern Europe was imposed on societies that were already structured along national lines. But the concept of nation was still an importation from the West that had undergone important transformations as it was adopted in the East (see Sugar, 1969). Because nation-building in postcommunism is as much conditioned by the legacy of communism as by the legacy of precommunist nationhood, it is important to realize the peculiar nature of Eastern European nationalism. In fact, before the devolution of empire directed scholarly attention to nation-building in the Third World, much of the earlier literature on nations and nationalism was about the difference between a more "benign" Western

and a "nastier" Eastern European nationalism.³²

Eastern European nationalism is a 19th century invention that reached the East through the "German bridge" (Sugar, 1969:10). German nationalism was the first "nationalism" proper, the catching-up ideology of a relatively backward society that was not free of inward-looking "ressentiment" toward the model to be imitated, the developed West. Moreover, Germany pioneered the ethnicity-centered, state-seeking path of nation-building that came to be copied in the East. But important differences exist. German liberal *rissorgimento* nationalism was an upgrading of smaller into larger units, and it occurred on the basis of a developed high culture and urban intelligentsia (*Bildungsbuergetum*) that was steeped in the enlightenment tradition. Eastern European nationalism, which developed against the supranational Habsburg, Ottoman, and Romanov empires, had the opposite thrust to "fragment a few large units into many smaller ones" (Rothschild, 1974:3). Moreover, nationalism was imposed on societies whose major social category was the peasant, and which had been largely untouched by the winds of urbanization, popular literacy and the enlightenment; nationalism was imposed on societies, finally, that due to centuries of outpost settlements and migrations were ethnically highly fragmented, the commercial and administrative sectors often filled by Diaspora Jews, Germans, or Hungarians whose linguistic idioms and cultural ways differed from the Slav peasant masses. Under these conditions, Eastern European nationalism radicalized the ethnic features of the German model into an exclusive, messianic, and profoundly illiberal creed that has turned the region into a hothouse of ethnonational conflicts ever since.³³ The Wilsonian nation-state solution for post-imperial Eastern Europe left the area with a plethora of irredentist disputes and revisionist pressures that were not even fully articulated when the Soviet empire came to freeze them for half a century. One must yet appreciate the paradox that creedal "internationalism" came to be imposed on an area with nationalist contentions like no other in Europe and beyond.

The relationship between communism and nationalism is bewilderingly complex and polyvalent, appearing in vastly different constellations across time and

Pole. of comm. + nat.

place. In Eastern Europe and Russia, one may distinguish between at least three different relationships: communism and nationalism as adversaries, allies, or substitutes. With regard to the first, it must be recognized that the communist take-over after WW II has generated a new type of nationalism in Eastern Europe.

Temporarily at least, the lateral ethnic claims within or between the Eastern European states were forcibly muted, while a new civic nationalism emerged that was directed against the quasi-colonial rule by a foreign power, the Soviet Union. From the perspective of civic nationalism, the problem of a suppressed Hungarian dispora in Romania or Slovakia, or of a smaller and less developed Slovakia insufficiently represented in the Czechoslovak federation, did not matter; the wholesale abolition of national self-determination by an internationalist party regime did matter. The dramatic upheavals against communism in Eastern Europe were nationalist upheavals: East Germany in 1953, Hungary and Poland in 1956, Poland in 1980/1, and the area-wide "springtime of nations" in 1989 (Garton Ash, 1990).³⁴ These civic nationalisms, which are a distinct response to communism, often went along with emphatic affirmations of "Europe" as a Western, civilizational project, at least among tiny circles of dissident intellectuals (see Rupnik, 1989). Such civic nationalisms thus revived a schism between Western-oriented modernizers and inward-looking Slavophiles that had characterized Eastern European "latecomer" nationalism from the start, and that now forms a major political cleavage line in the postcommunist period.

Where communism had been established indigenously, as the result of intra-state revolutions, the relationship with nationalism was not oppositional, but one of alliance or even amalgamation. Here one must recognize that, under Leninist premises, Marxist communism was transformed from a theory advocating the withering-away of the state in highly developed countries into a program to modernize a backward society under a strong state. In this perspective, both communism and nationalism are catching-up ideologies in relatively backward societies (see Szporluk, 1988). Where the communist alternative prevailed, as in post-Tsarist Russia, it had to adopt crypto-nationalist features. Indigenous one-country communism is a "variant of nationalism" (ibid., 225). Not unlike the statist encagement of the universalist Islam,

the amalgamation of communism and nationalism is a function of the international state system, over whose particularistic logic of names, flags, and anthems transnational aspirations have either come to nil or taken the shape of "imperial" incorporation. As in the case of Russia, two forms of the nationalization of communism must be kept separate: communism as quasi-nationalism, with communist founding-myths, commemorations, and canonized loyalties unwittingly adopting quasi-nationalist features in a world of territorially bounded states; and the resumption of precommunist ethnic markers for the purpose of regime-stabilization, such as the ethnic "Russification" under Stalin. In Eastern Europe, the high proportion of communists in the partisan movements against the occupation by Nazi Germany has been used as national indigenizers of postwar communist regimes, most notably in Yugoslavia. Since "patriotic" communists had liberated their countries from the yoke of Nazi rule, they were the legitimate and nationally genuine rulers of post-Nazi societies. "Antifascism" was a potent amalgamation of communism and nationalism in Eastern Europe, where it helped obscure the exogenous sources of communism. Despite such amalgamations and alliances between communism and nationalism, it must be stressed that communists were no nation-builders. Characteristically, the Soviet Union bears no nationality reference in its name. It was a self-conceived "fatherland of all workers", a world state-to-be based on the expectation that with the spreading of the socialist revolution other nations would join as component republics--an expectation only incompletely and forcibly realized in the imperial subjugation of Eastern Europe.

A third, closely related, constellation between communism and nationalism is that of substitutive follow-up ideology. A precursor of this is the invocation of national ideology in late communist society, where the utopian communist impulse had exhausted itself in empty ritual, and where against the threat of Soviet intervention a kind of "community of destiny" between nationalist communist rulers and their subject people had established itself.³⁵ But more dramatic examples of ideological substitution are the perplexing conversions of former apparatchiks into fiery nationalists in the post-communist transition, such as Krawtschuk in the Ukraine or

Milosevic in Serbia, but also (under more democratic guises) Jeltsin in Russia. Such conversions are the result of shrewd elite manipulation, and attempts to shore up power and privilege in the transition process. As Veljko Vujacic (1995) has shown, such miraculous conversions are enabled by structural similarities between extreme nationalism and communism, most notably their joint quality of collectivistic "combat" ideologies.

These varying relationships between communism and nationalism, understood as ideologies and principles of group formation, are based on a set of communalities and differences. With regard to *communalities*, both communism and nationalism stipulate equal status communities, integrated less by internal differentiation and organized interest conflict than by hypostasized us-versus-them dualisms and outer-directed "combat" tasks. For militant communists and extreme nationalists there is always an enemy to be defeated, such as the "bourgeois class enemy" or "international jewry". Moreover, both communism and nationalism are millenarian: they bind, and subdue, the individual to a "greater" cause, be it a future of bliss or the retrieval of a golden age, respectively. Finally, as Szporluk (1988) has elaborated, both communism and nationalism are modernizing ideologies in backward societies, and offer an answer to the problem of underdevelopment. From this angle, it is a matter of contingency why nationalism prevailed in 19th century Germany, while communism prevailed in early 20th century Russia. With regard to *differences*, communism and nationalism are mutually exclusive and competing cognitive grids and systems of allegiances. One sees the world vertically divided into classes; the other sees it horizontally divided into nations. If Karl Marx famously said that "workers have no country", Friedrich List would reply that "between the individual and humanity stands the nation". Secondly, communism differs from nationalism on the time-dimension. Communism stipulates a radical break between past and present, and it seeks to mobilize the future--witness the monotonous elite rhetoric of "plan fulfillment" and unrelenting "struggle". By contrast, nationalism draws a continuity between past and present, and it seeks to mobilize the past--its typical rhetoric being a genealogical search for roots, such as the "we were here first" in territorial disputes (see Horowitz, 1985:202-204). Finally, in

cognitive terms, communism is universalistic. The classes it seeks to mobilize are ultimately to be abolished in a literally human and universal society without any distinctions of state, nation, or class. By contrast, nationalism is particularistic. As De Maistre brushed off the universalistic creed of the French revolution, he had never seen "man" but only French, British, or Belgians. Nations, unlike classes, are here to stay, they are to be "awakened" instead of abolished, and their boundedness and durability makes them amenable to today's "identity politics" (whereas class is typically "interest politics"). With an eye on the historical outcome, Roman Szporluk (1988:163f) comprises the competing grids of communism and nationalism into a catchy formula: "After Marx had formulated what he thought was the question of the age--communism or capitalism?--the nationalists responded with several answers: 'Poland!', 'Ireland!', 'Serbia!', 'India!'"

Postcommunist nation-building in Eastern Europe is partially a resumption of the precommunist problematique of adjusting states to ethnically conceived nations, which expresses itself in a welter of bottom-up irredentisms and secessions of aspiring nations and top-down "nationalizing" measures of states claimed to be "owned" by a particular nation. "The national conflicts tearing the continent apart in the 1990s", writes Eric Hobsbawm (1994:31), "were the old chickens of Versailles once again coming home to roost." But it is equally important to see that, contrary to popular wisdom, communism did not only repress, but also institutionalize nationalism, and this in an exclusively ethnic sense. Prime examples are the multinational states of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The breakup of both states followed along the ethnofederal lines firmly institutionalized and sanctioned by the communist regimes. These are also powerful examples that federalism, while designed to contain ethnic aspirations, may actually sustain or even increase them. In both Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, communism came to meet nationalism through the Third-World, "anti-imperialist" road of defending the right of self-determination of small nations. The Soviet nationality regime, which included the formal right of secession by its component republics, presented itself as a democratic answer to the Tsarist "prisonhouse of nations"; communist Yugoslavia, which granted the formally equal

status of republic to the minority nations of Croatia, Slovenia, and Macedonia, among others, was based on the logic to contain "Serbian chauvinism", that is, the dominance of the majority nation that had plagued the interwar state.

While both Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union were multi-national states, there is an important difference. The Soviet Union is the product of communism, and never was conceived as a nation-in-the-making. Yugoslavia predates communism, and had been initially conceived as a South-Slav nation-to-be. So one is a self-consciously post- or non-national state, while the other is a failed nation-building project, the "Great Britain" of the Balkans that could not be. But the institutionalization of sub-state nationality was similar in both cases. Take the Soviet nationality regime. While driven by Lenin's sympathy for "anti-imperialist" minority nationalisms, its purpose was still to neutralize national allegiances by giving them a firm institutional anchor-- "nationalist in form, socialist in content", as Stalin's famous formula went. There were two principal forms of institutionalizing sub-state nationality: first, ethnoterritorial federalism, which conceived the Soviet Union as a federation of fifteen Union Republics, with the formal right to secede; and, secondly, personal nationality, which was an ascriptive legal category transmitted by descent.³⁶ More the congregate outcome of ad hoc policies than grand design, this dual arrangement's neutralizing purpose was evident in the regime's massive deportations and relocations, which were to prevent a congruence of territorial and ethnic boundaries. But against its intention, the Soviet nationality regime strengthened national allegiances. More importantly still, it fed an exclusively ethnic understanding of nationality. The republics were labelled according to their dominant nationality; this titular nation "owned" the respective republic, rather than vice versa, the territorial republics constituting the nation. The ethnic sense of nationhood was further strengthened by "nativization" policies that cultivated national intelligentsias and cadres, and offered preferential treatment for "titular" nationals. The break-up of the Soviet Union occurred along the lines of ethno-territorial republics, in an ironic put to use of their formal right to secede.

The Soviet nationality regime transmitted to the successor states deeply

structured "expectations of belonging" (Brubaker, 1994a), which reinforced the precommunist legacy of ethnic nationalism. This poses a problem for the one-quarter of former Soviet subjects who in 1989 lived outside their home republics, most importantly twenty-five million Russians. As the dominant nation, Russians enjoyed special cultural autonomy rights throughout the Union, the whole of which they could legitimately consider "their" space. This left them especially vulnerable after the Union's demise. At the same time, the tacit fusion of Russia and the Soviet state left the Russian Republic curiously under-institutionalized, without an own party apparatus or own cultural institutions, and further weakened by intra-republican privileges and autonomy concessions to a host of minority nationalities. One of the more paradoxical outcomes of the Soviet nationality regime is the strengthening of peripheral nations, and the parallel weakening of a sense of Russian nationness.³⁷ This helps explain why the fearfully expected irredentas by, or reverse cleansing campaigns against, diaspora Russians have so far not come about.

Also the disintegration of Yugoslavia occurred along ethnoterritorial lines firmly institutionalized under the old regime. But the status of the dominant nation, Serbia, was different. In formal regard, the Yugoslav communists copied the Soviet model of ethno-federalism, only extending it equally to Serbia, which was granted its own party, state, and cultural institutions.³⁸ However, the hidden purpose of such "equalizing" measures was to contain Serbia's dominance within the Yugoslav state. In contrast to the largely Russian Bolsheviks, the Yugoslav communist movement was heavily based on minority nationalities. During the interwar years, communists had fiercely opposed the "Greater Serbian" monarchy. Tito, as nationally minded Serbians were keen to point out, after all was a Croat. The abolishment of monarchy and royal army (the "chetniks") in the postwar communist state removed two central markers of Serbian nationhood. The connection between "Greater Serbia" and "Yugoslavia" was broken. Equalizing Serbia in the communist nationality regime thus really meant to keep it down. To be sure, Serbs were overrepresented in the central party and state apparatus, and the absence of a conscious "nativization" policy secured them a relative dominance even in the other republics, such as Croatia. But the federalist spin of the

postwar state, which was epitomized by the Croat-supported new Constitution of 1974, was a point of recurrent frustration for the Serbs. More dramatically than in the Russian case, Serbian nation and state boundaries did not overlap: two million (or about twenty-five percent of) Serbs lived outside their homeland state, clustered in contiguous historical diasporas of great importance for the development of Serbian national consciousness, such as the Krajina and the former military frontier of the Habsburg empire; at the same time, Serbia was hollowed out by the existence of two autonomous provinces on its territory, the Kosovo and Vojvodina, the first of which happened to be the medieval heartland of Serbia. In this regard, Serbia had a special interest in a central Yugoslav state, and every weakening of it, not to mention secessionist drives, would be guarded with very nervous eyes.³⁹

The comparison of Russia and Serbia illuminates the importance of "primordial" myths and memories in postcommunist nation-building. Radically constructivist approaches, such as Brubaker's (1994a, 1995b), have rightly pointed out the conditioning of postcommunist nationality struggles by the institutional set-up of the old regime, on the one hand, and the contingent interactions of "nation"-stance taking groups and elites, on the other. But they fail to identify the substantive markers and boundaries of nationality struggles. The communist nationality regimes may have sustained, or even created, the nation-invoking elites that then turned against the former; but these elites had to operate with relatively inert nation-defining myths and symbols that are emphatically not of their making and that constrain their choices.⁴⁰ If extreme nationalism could take hold in post-communist Serbia, but not in Russia, this also reflects different substantive markers of nationness in both cases. Russia has always been the creator of empire; Serbia has always been its victim. In Russia, where nation- and empire-building closely overlapped, a sense of ethnic nationness is only weakly developed. Conditioned by the huge distance between an autocratic state and an impotent peasant society, Russia lacks the experience of grassroots nation-building that characterized other Slav nations. A weak sense of ethnic nationness, the historical lack of a diasporic "national question", and the generally despised official cryptonationalism of the Stalin-to-Brezhnev era, have in fact provided a (temporary) opening

for Yeltsin's New Russia to define the nation along Western democratic lines (Vujacic, 1995).

By contrast, Serbia's extreme nationalism, while deliberately inflamed by cynical communist turncoats, feeds upon a deeply ingrained myth of victimization. In the center of Serbian national identity is a defeat: the defeat of the Serbian Christian army against the Ottomans in the Battle of Kosovo of 1389, which created a powerful myth of "Christian martyrdom at the hands of Moslem aliens" (ibid., 59) that remains alive today. Through the lense of victimization, aggressive nationalism is really an act of defense. Characteristically, the core document of emergent Serbian nationalism in the 1980s, the infamous Memorandum of the Academy of Sciences of 1986, conjures up the "genocide" against Serbs being committed in their mythologized homeland, the Kosovo, by restive Alban separatists (Banac, 1992:150). One year later, Milosevic underwent his miraculous conversion from pale communist apparatchik to fiery nationalist in the Kosovo Polje, where he jumped to the rescue of pro-Serbian demonstrators aggrieved by ethnically Albanian security forces: "From now on, no one has the right to beat you" (in Vujacic, 1995:270). In 1990, the ethnic streamlining that accompanied the Croatian drive toward independence incited genocidal fears among the nationally conscious Krajina Serbs, whose collective memory of fascist Ustasha atrocities was never far from the surface. The drive to ethnic war was conditioned by the triple factors of deeply engrained ethnic memories, communist elite manipulation, and a vicious spiral of self-fulfilling prophecies in which each actor seeks to anticipate the violence that he has projected on the opponent. As a Serbian irregular expressed the gruesome consequence of imagined victimization: "What the hell are we supposed to do with those Croats? Stand there and wait for them to cut our throats?" (in Ignatieff, 1994:35).

The legacy of communism for postcommunist nation-building is the strengthening of the ethnic tilt of Eastern European nationalism, while having destroyed the resource of trust that might smoothen ethnonationalist rivalry. In this regard, communism has added its distinct flavour to the "old Versailles chicken",

Hobsbawm's mocking term for the area's notorious nationality rifts. It is deeply ironic that a declaredly "internationalist" doctrine reinforced the inward-looking, resentment-laden thrust of Eastern European nationalism, while the dissident opponents of communism were implicitly internationalist in their pleas for a "return to Europe". Take the example of Ceausescu's Romania. In this most extreme case of "national communism"-- the positive put to use of national ideology by a communist regime, Ceausescu would rally against "Western imperialism" and the "European obliteration of the national soul", while dissidents would in turn indict the "Africanization" of an increasingly autochthonous communist regime. Katherine Verdery (1991) has succinctly elaborated the conflict between modernist Western and indigenous Eastern images of Romanian nationness, and their dissident and communist party protagonists, respectively. Eastern "Dacianists" depicted Romanians as straight descendants of the ancient indigenous "Dacians", which allegedly didn't mingle much with recurrent waves of Latin-Western colonialization. Western "Latinists", by contrast, saw Romanians as lineal descendants of the legions of Roman Emperor Trajan, that is, a creation of the West. The strange battles between both camps, which took place in the 1980s in the intellectual fields of literary criticism, history, and philosophy, are only seemingly obscure. They represent the universal dilemma of late-comer nations to go the Eastern, resentment-laden, or the Western, modernist way. Most interestingly, communists took the Eastern way--for instance, through decreeing an indigenist "protochronist" reading of the Romanian literary canon or peppering-up a local peasant revolt as alleged anticipation of the French revolution. While a total bankruptcy of the universalistic pretensions of communism, regime Dacianism was functional in at least two regards. First, it backed up ideologically the economic strategy of import substitution and autarchy, through which the regime sought to escape the stranglehold of Western creditors.⁴¹ Second, the Dacian "we were here first" seemed the perfect answer to Hungarian minority claims in Transylvania, that would in fact spark the violent regime turnover of 1989.

Attempting to finish the job left incomplete at Versailles, and reinforced by the ethnic thrust of the communist experience, postcommunist states are everywhere

"nationalizing states" (Brubaker, 1995a). Their preoccupation is to make state boundaries congruent with the boundaries of historical, ethnically conceived nations. This has meant the breakup of three multinational states—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union, and subjection of a host of national minorities to the pressures of assimilation. In the fragile postcommunist states, political elites are tempted to play the national card: conjure up the warmth of indigenous national community against extraneous, "Western" modernization. Populist nationalism, the strongest political idiom throughout Eastern Europe today, is badly suited to respect national minority claims. But then, the fears are real. Wouldn't the granting of cultural autonomy to the 560,000 ethnic Hungarians in the south of fledgling Slovakia imply their next demand for territorial autonomy, and ultimately lead to the secessionist incorporation of south Slovakia into Hungary, thus reinstating the Magyarian hegemony that had kept Slovakia dependent throughout centuries?⁴² Similar fears of "national extinction" are driving the restrictive citizenship policies of Latvia and Estonia, which have denied citizenship rights to ethnic Russians. The situation in these two small Baltic states is "right vs. right" (Brubaker, 1992:287ff): the right of small nations to shield themselves from ethnodemographic erosion and to redress the unwanted colonization by a great power versus the right of long-established immigrant groups to obtain equal membership status on the territory where they live and work. To reconcile the claims of nation-building with the claims of minority rights is indeed Eastern Europe's "great civic imperative of the day" (ibid., 289). But to accomplish this task, Eastern Europe has one resource at its disposal that postcolonial states did not: Europe.

(C)

Postfascism

If "postcommunism" was about the recovery of nationhood against a regime inimical to it, "postfascism" is about the rebuilding of nations whose affiliation with a hyper-nationalist (if not "racist") regime had ended in total military defeat and moral delegitimation. Because communism meets nations from the outside, both in its ideology and actual take-over, it can be easily externalized and poses no great

legitimacy problems for the nations that could get rid of it--not even Russia is likely to undergo a German-style "mastering of the past". By contrast, fascism is essentially exalted, aggressive nationhood, and it has been installed domestically not against but in the name of nations.⁴³ This does pose great legitimacy problems for postfascist nations. These were nations both defeated and tainted by their lapse into barbarism, and they had to justify their readmission into the concert of "civilized" nations by the admission of guilt and moral conversion. Accordingly, the central problem of (re)building nations after fascism is one of incorporating a negative past into the collective memory, and of radical identity change. This indicates that, in contrast to postcolonialism and postcommunism, postfascist nation-(re)building has little spatial connotations, such as ethnic center-periphery tensions; instead, it has the almost exclusively temporal connotations of already existing nations consciously remaking themselves in contradistinction to a negative past. This is an altogether novel enterprise whose "constructivist" thrust goes against the grain of the "primordial", historically accumulated content of nationness, and it had to become caught in a unique set of dilemmas and paradoxes, such as the doctrinary "post-nationalism" of postfascist Germany.

The radical break entailed by fascism reveals nations as fragile symbolic constructions, kept together by a set of collective memories that are subject to change and reinterpretation. In order to understand the peculiar nature of negative commemoration, which is the lot of postfascist nations, one must first realize the general relationship between identity, memory, and history. To say that nations have an "identity" is another way of saying that nations are "self-defined" collectivities. In contrast to "objective" classes or kinship groups, nations exist only if they exist also for the individuals that constitute them; a Hegelian distinction between nation *an sich* and nation *fuer sich* is impossible (even though this is the stock-in-trade of nationalist doctrine). The stuff out of which identities are made are memories. Identity and memory are interdependent: identity, as sameness over time and place, is sustained by remembering; what is remembered is defined by assumed identity (Gillis, 1994:3). Memories are a specific way of knowing the past, distinct from (professional) history

or (material) relics (see Lowenthal, 1985:ch.5). First, memories are representations, no fixed things, and they usually take a linguistic, narrative form. Second, memories are episodic⁴⁴ and selective. If individuals or collectivities would remember everything, they would be, like Borges's *Funes, the Memorious*, "like a garbage disposal" (quoted *ibid.*, 205). Every memory is necessarily a forgetting of things not remembered; only through forgetting can individuals and groups classify and impose order on a chaotic reality. Such selections may be driven by convenience, as hinted at in Ernest Renan's famous suggestion that "part of being a nation is getting one's history wrong". Third, memories are amenable to be revised in light of new experiences and knowledge. Because they constitute identities, the "prime function of memory is not to preserve the past but to adapt it so as to enrich and manipulate the present" (*ibid.*, 210). Fourth, memories are contested. One must always ask who and what is remembered, and whose interest does such remembrance serve. If nations are fields of struggle, one stake of conflict is which memories are to be selected and ritually enacted, and in which particular form such enactment is to occur.

Memories of break-situations like losses, new beginnings, or a radical change of situation are often materialized in ritual commemorations. This materialization can be temporally in memorial times (like anniversaries and national holidays), or spatially in memorial sites or relics (like statues and military cemeteries). Interestingly, while all nations have official memorial times, not all have officially designated memorial sites. The advantage of time is that it affects everybody equally and automatically, whereas space is concentrated, requires the special effort of movement in order to be experienced, and thus is limited in its effect. As one can extrapolate from Durkheim's study of religious rites, commemorations are located in the realm of the non-profane, and their function is to strengthen the solidarity between the members of the nation. Accordingly, the content of commemoration tends to be positive--military victories, but also heroic losses, or successful revolutions. As Eric Hobsbawm (1983) has shown in his analysis of "invented tradition", state-enacted, national commemoration is a surprisingly late development, and it reflects the interests of late 19th century elites to contain the risks of mass electoral democracy--the ritually enacted "nation" as an

antidote to the revolutionary virus of "class".

If the function of positive commemoration is to strengthen social solidarity or to consolidate the state, the peculiarity of negative commemoration comes into view.⁴⁵ This is an altogether new, difficult, and contested phenomenon, which did not exist before the demise of fascism. This may reflect the severity of the civilisatory break entailed by fascism, after which naive celebrations of the nation no longer come easy. But it also reflects the monitoring of defeated nations by the winners, upon whose consent the loser's recovery of legitimate nationhood depends. In addition, negative commemoration is monitored domestically by intellectual elites who, in most postfascist nations at least, are no longer the interpreters and "awakeners" but the critical controllers of the nation.

Memory and commemoration is to be kept strictly apart from history (see Rouso, 1991:2-4). Both are equally representational and selective. But history is cognitive and oriented to truth, while memory is practical and linked to moral justification and legitimation. If historical knowledge is in principle durable, universal, and secular, memory is always in flux, plural, and couched in a sacral key. History and memory have not always been separate. For instance, traditional 19th century history served explicitly political purposes, and was a chief instrument of instituting the nation—through celebrating the revolution in France, or legitimating the Prussian-based, *kleindeutsch* unification of Germany in 1871. While professional history is no longer an instrument of nation-building, the knowledge that it produces must affect the memories that are at the core of a nation's identity. Because they often refer to the same events and processes, memory is liable to be changed in the light of new historical knowledge. In short, memory is separate from, but not immune to history. A key conflict in postfascist nations is about insulating sacral memory from profane secular history, or, in turn, of using "revisionist" historical knowledge to exorcize negative memories that are seen as barriers for a positive, "normalized" national identity.⁴⁶

The problem of negative commemoration and identity change exists, of course, only for the perpetrator, not the victim of fascism. Therefore, a strategy of postwar states has been to depict themselves as victims, or even as active opponents of fascism. This is the origin of the myth of "antifascist resistance", which is the universal founding myth of European postwar states (except one, West Germany). As Tony Judt (1992:84) has elaborated, the resistance-myth was a "fundamentally false" basis of identity. It draws a stark line between past and present, a "before" and "after" liberation, where in reality there was much continuity--the despised French Vichy regime, for instance, laid the legal and institutional foundations for the 4th Republic, and an early amnesty helped carry over much of its personnel into the new republic. But most importantly, the resistance myth draws a stark line between "victims" and "perpetrators", where in reality there was much active collaboration, indigenous antisemitism, and local hostility to the risk-spreading resistance movements among the putative "victims" of German occupation. Denouncing the resistance myth as "false", of course, is an example of using history to criticize memory. It should not lead one to ignore the positive function of the resistance myth. What De Gaulle famously called "a bluff that came off" helped provide stability and consensus in postwar societies, and it allowed "antifascist" communists to be creedal and patriotic at the same time, and thus to be integrated in the task of postwar reconstruction. So universally despised was fascism after its defeat, and so alluring the profit from having it opposed all along, that even perpetrators refashioned themselves as retroactive victims or opponents. Japan was helped in this by the nuclear extinction of Hiroshima and an inconsequential American occupation policy, which allowed it to depict itself as the victim of the nuclear bomb and white colonialism (see Buruma, 1994). Italy used the local *resistenza* to the short German occupation of Northern Italy from 1943 to 1945 to conveniently forget three decades of indigenous fascist rule; as the national holiday of the "Day of Liberation" on 25 April expresses, postfascist Italy was founded on the image of "antifascist resistance" (see Ginsborg, 1990:ch.2).

But even two successor states to the defeated German Reich, Austria and communist East Germany, sought to shed the troublesome role of perpetrator, and

depicted themselves instead as victims and opponents of Nazism, respectively. As Rainer Lepsius (1989) has shown in a suggestive analysis, the three successor states to Nazi Germany seized different strategies of incorporating the Nazi past as negative reference point for the task of reconstruction. Austria "externalized" Nazism by depicting itself as the victim of forced annexation (*Anschluss*) by Nazi Germany. East Germany opted for the "universalization" of Nazism, according to which Nazism was the result of monopoly capitalism; since it was communist, East Germany was definitionally exculpated and could depict itself as the offshoot of antifascist resistance. West Germany, finally, was the only successor state to "internalize" the Nazi past. West Germany depicted itself as the legal successor (*Rechtsnachfolger*) of the destroyed German Reich, and thus was the only state to shoulder the responsibilities and obligations arising out of the dismal German past. These different strategies entailed different pre-war reference points, mandates for repairing history, and substitutes for delegitimized nationalism. Austria rebuilt itself in contradistinction to a culture of political polarization and the authoritarian *Staendestaat* of the past, stressing consensus and corporatism as the basis of a robust state identity. Austria's postwar problematique was not unlike those of postcolonial states: to fill in an artificial state, which was willed by the victorious Allies, with a nation—a task that was aided by the separate "Austrian" semantics. East Germany saw itself as the retroactive fulfillment of the failed socialist revolution of 1918/19. History was definitionally repaired by East Germany's socialist basis, and the only mandate left was to shield itself from the revisionist claims of the Western class enemy. "German" the GDR could not be, because this had to entail invidious comparisons with the more prosperous West. The GDR was peculiarly nationless, a deficiency only inconclusively fixed in the bizarre "socialist nation" formula passed out in the mid-1970s, and ultimately the cause of the state's undoing.⁴⁷ West Germany, finally, took the destruction of the Weimar Republic as its pre-war reference point. From this it deduced the mandate of "strong democracy" (*wehrhafte Demokratie*) that was institutionally and mentally shielded from attacks by political extremism. Because the legal and national continuity with prewar Germany was not denied, Nazism could not be definitionally eradicated. Instead, Nazism was internalized as a "permanent

warning" that had to be guarded against by unremitting reform and education. In institutional terms, West Germany was a vicarious nation-state, with national unification inscribed as Constitutional mandate. Culturally, however, it was post-national. The logic of Western integration was to put liberty before unity, which retrospectively must be seen as Germany's decisive break with its past. In lieu of the nation, identification was sought in the idea of Europe, which was enthusiastically shared by all political camps. "Patriotism" thinned down to constitutional commitment, as in Dolf Sternberger's notion of *Verfassungspatriotismus*. Until the breakdown of East Germany and the ongoing immigration debate would prove otherwise, West Germany seemed to have crossed out its ethnicity and remodelled itself as a post-national political community.

The dilemma for postfascist states was to be both continuous and discontinuous with the past (see Joppke, 1995b:221-223). A radical break with the past was required, because it was universally despised and had to be tilted for the recovery of legitimate nationhood. Without a basic continuity with the past, however, the subject of guilt and remembrance was lost, and exculpation would follow. East and West Germany opted for diametrically opposed mixes of break and continuity, which entailed radically opposite dilemmas and paradoxes. East Germany opted for the radical break, as expressed in its "antifascist" founding formula. The 8th of May, the day of German capitulation, was "liberation" day up front, and the alleged communist-led self-liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp symbolized East Germany's adoption of the resistance myth. "Antifascism" entailed the moral tabooization of opposition to communism, which was by definition a crypto-fascist reversal of the radical break that separated past and present. Automatic exculpation resulted in an astonishing complacency with regard to actual symbolic continuities. Since the state was founded by the communist opponents of fascism, it did not matter that the train system continued to operate as "Deutsche Reichsbahn", or that the People's Army's field-grey uniform, steel helmets, and goose-stepping had to remind one as a grotesque copy of Nazi Germany's Wehrmacht.

By contrast, West Germany's option for legal continuity had the opposite result: a permanent suspicion by radical opposition movements that the Nazi past was not really over, while this was the only postfascist state that signed unambiguously responsible for the past and obliged itself to a recurrent exercise of critical self-examination that became known as "mastering the past" (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*). Contrary to the standard lamento, raised time and again by critical intellectuals, that (West) Germans had "repressed" their past, they had rather been obsessed by it—in fact, the very existence of this lamento disproves its claim. As Ian Buruma (1994:8) put it in his insightful comparison of memories of war in Germany and Japan, "German memory was like a massive tongue seeking out, over and over, a sore tooth." Of course, this preoccupation with the past did not come immediately, but was the result of generational change. Only the attack of the student movement of 1968 on the "restorative" spirit of a society preoccupied with economic success and reticent about its dismal past started the "mastering of the past" in earnest, and it has since become institutionalized in education, culture, and political elite identity. West Germany was thus characterized by a disjunction between institutional and cultural incorporations of the past. Institutional redemption was offered from the beginning: reparations to Israel, the so-called "restitutive laws" that, however incompletely, financially compensated the victims of the Nazi regime, and the general recognition that the Federal Republic was liable for the results of Nazism. Cultural redemption, by contrast, did not immediately follow. Unlike the "antifascist" GDR, West Germany did not dispose of a founding myth. There was no official reading of the 8th of May, and it settled down in popular memory as a day of ambiguity, which mixed relief about the end of war and Nazi terror with the depression about total moral and military defeat. "Liberation", after all, had not come through indigenous resistance, but military defeat. Nazism and the inconvenient modalities of its end were an indigestible experience, too monolithic and contradictory to be put to immediate political use. So it was better put to rest, which resulted in postwar West Germany's proverbial "amnesia" and "unability to mourn." "We have no political origin, no ideal, no historical identity, no vision of the future, only a desire for privacy, economic well-being, and security," Karl Jaspers (1966:179) diagnosed West

Germany's political non-identity shortly before it was shaken up by the student upheaval of 1968. In retrospect, such amnesia and depoliticization may have been functional in laying the habitual grounds for a liberal society without grand narrative and pedagogical pretension. Most importantly, the uninhibited pursuit of merely private interests "took the seed of resentment out of defeat" (Buruma, 1994:56), without which all official rhetoric of "never again" and repentance would come to nil. Amnesia was the price to be paid for leaving the process of conversion and identity change to society, instead of imposing it--in good German tradition--from above.

West Germany's initial amnesia begot the "neurotic fear of amnesia" (ibid., 203) among the postwar generations who took their parent generation to task for their complicity with and later forgetfulness about the Nazi past (see Bude, 1992:ch.6). The cultural redemption that followed belatedly upon West Germany's early institutional redemption became afflicted by own sets of ambiguities and paradoxes. A first set refers to the act of negative commemoration itself, whose logic is both to exculpate and to reiterate the ethno-racial division between "perpetrators" and "victims". A second set of ambiguities refers to the habitual and cultural expressions of a successfully "mastered" past and a consistently "negative" identity, which may have become obsolete with the recovery of national unity: pacifism, post-nationalism, and a soft eye on communism. With regard to the first, Theodor Adorno had remarked in a famous radio talk in 1959 that "coming to terms with the past" really meant "to get rid of the past" (quoted in Luedtke, 1993:550). That was a decade before the student movement would put to an end West German society's amnesia. But doesn't obsessive, ritually enacted remembering amount to the same "riddance" of the past, only more subtly? The modalities of the 50th anniversary of the German capitulation in 1945 are a good example. This anniversary brought a striking novelty: the 8th of May was now officially declared a "Day of Liberation". On the one hand, this expressed Germany's successful self-examination and identity change, and there was no dodging of its chief responsibility for starting the war and creating a system of racial extermination without parallel in history. Any other reading of the 8th of May, say, as a "Day of Defeat", would be absurd. But then, if the Germans were

"liberated", weren't also they victims of Nazism, rather than its accomplices, until the very end? "We really did it quite well," summarized Peter Bender the German handling of this "difficult commemoration."⁴⁸ While few would disagree, Germany seems to be caught in the predicament that doing it "too well" may have the same exculpating effect as not doing it at all. A second, even more mischievous effect of negative commemoration has been pointed out by Dan Diner (1995). Jewish Germans have forever been perplexed to be addressed in Holocaust commemoration speeches by "German" politicians as "dear Jewish citizens (*Mitbuerger*)". The act of commemoration unwittingly reiterates the racial exclusion of the Jews from the German Volk, which had been instigated by the Nazis; the "Jews" are once again not "Germans".

The habitual and cultural expression of negative identity has been a syndrome of pacifism, post-nationalism, and romanticized communism. Pacifism has not been the prerogative of the Greens and the peace movement, but has influenced political elites as well, as in a foreign policy of strict military non-intervention. In the interest of "peace", late-communist Eastern Europe was advised to curtail its ambition for "freedom"--this was the logic of detente, which had more supporters in Germany than elsewhere (see Joppke, 1995a:73-78). The Gulf War exposed the contradiction of strict pacifism: abstention from the conflict meant Germany's self-isolation from the Western alliance, and a numbing inactivity with regard to Iraq's military threats to Israel, the state of the Holocaust survivors. Post-nationalism is a related habitus whose paradoxes are increasingly obvious. From Karl Jaspers on, German intellectuals have crusaded against the "idea of the nation-state", overlooking that the nation-state was still reality, and the universal political unit in the modern world at that. Pacifism and post-nationalism culminated in a reverse, negative nationalism, in which guilt about the past threatened to give way to a new self-aggrandizing consciousness of moral mission.⁴⁹ A soft eye on communism is the final ambiguous element of negative identity, which has been exposed as such after the demise of Eastern European communism. The "antifascist" taboo of comparing communism and fascism has been longer and more stubbornly kept in Germany than elsewhere; in its anxiety not to

diminish the Holocaust, this was the country where the Gulag Archipelago failed to make an impression, and where intellectuals initially mistook communism's last hour as the opportunity for a fresh start.

The role of the Nazi past in German collective memory and identity is currently being contested: should identity continue to be centered on the negative past, particularly on the singularity of the Holocaust, or is such negative fixation a barrier for a "healthy" national consciousness? The debate about the "normalization" of German national identity has been led in various degrees of intensity since Chancellor Kohl and US President Reagan's awkward joint visit at the Bitburg military cemetery in 1985, which signalled a desire in conservative political circles to put the Nazi past finally to rest.⁵⁰ But framing the debate about "normalization" in the normative terms of "should" or "should not" is misleading, because its root cause is not so much political campaigning, but the distancing and secularizing effect of history, both professional and real. Take the so-called Historians' Struggle, which had been launched by Juergen Habermas's attack on "apologetic" tendencies in recent German historiography. It may be interpreted as the attempt to shield the quasi-sacral Holocaust memory from relativizing historical comparisons.⁵¹ Historization threatens the negative memory of the Holocaust not so much in actually revising knowledge as in profanizing what is to be held in a sacral key: as Primo Levi put it "to understand is almost to justify".⁵² Not only professional history, but real history as well threatens to "relativize" the negative memory of the past. Two third of contemporary Germans were born after WW II, and a friendly observer has found the very young ones "unblocked by guilt" (Buruma, 1994:309). The receding of negative memory from lived to appropriated cannot but have relativizing, and in this sense: "normalizing", effects. The normative debate about "normalization" is mistaken, because normalization is already, and inevitably, happening.

A history of Germany's negative memory has yet to be written, but a comparison with the French Vichy Syndrome reveals striking similarities (see Rouso, 1991). As in the German case, in France a phase of early amnesia, which was framed

by a gruesome *epuration* and a generous amnesty for collaborators, was followed by the "return of the repressed" in the late 1960s, when a new postwar generation stirred up the silences of their parent generation. In a third (and current) phase of "obsession", the negative memory of the Vichy regime has become self-sustaining through recurrent anniversaries, political elite conflict, and the professional interest of historians. Despite these similar trajectories of both negative memories, it is important to realize that historical revisionism works in opposite directions in both cases. Vichy revisionism has shaken up and denormalized France's postwar identity, which was grounded in the complacent myth of resistance; Vichy revisionism has revealed domestic complicity with fascism, which can no longer be externalized as the sole product of German occupation. Historical revisionism in Germany works in the opposite direction, towards "normalization". As the fateful interlocking between communism and fascism in the European Civil War is increasingly scrutinized by historiography, German exceptionalism is bound to lose some of its sharp edges. If French taboo-breaking meant disturbing news about complicity with Nazism, German taboo-breaking means addressing the Allied area-bombardments of German cities and the expellations by the Red Army in the eastern territories. The flood in 1994-5 of the most saddening half-centennials in modern European history did no longer exclude a commemoration of the destruction of Dresden.⁵³ To be sure, such "normalization" occurs within the boundaries of dominant negative memory.⁵⁴ This points at the asymmetry of the French and German negative memory syndromes. Vichy is "the other side" of France that has moved into the fore a bit, relativizing but not replacing the resistance myth. Nazism and the Holocaust have been the defining events for postwar Germany, and they are bound to move into the back a bit, with no resistance myth available, however, to challenge the dominance of negative memory.⁵⁵

While Germany seems to have mastered the postfascist challenge of remaking itself in contradistinction to a negative past, it still could not escape the inertia of primordial nationness. The logic of unification and the current immigration debate attest to the subterraneous prolongation of the German tradition of ethnic nationhood. Ethnic nationhood, while notionally delegitimized because of its "voelkisch" aberration

under Nazism, was in fact powerfully reinforced by the results of the war, with the division of Germany, the expellations of ethnic Germans from the eastern territories, and the encagement of huge German diasporas by communist regimes. The cultural post-nationalism of the Bonn Republic was always counterpointed by the constitutional mandate to achieve the "unity and freedom of Germany".⁵⁶ The Bonn Republic was a vicarious nation-state, the national homeland state of all ethnic Germans east of the Elbe. The externalization of national discourse to the communist diasporas has allowed the clearance of the domestic scene from "national" symbolism and rhetoric, while tacitly prolonging the ethnic legacy in a double twist of "postnational" dethematization and anticommunist "liberty" rhetoric. As a result, postfascist Germany is characterized by the paradox of a more or less successfully mastered past, but the maintenance of a quasi-voelkisch citizenship law that continues to define national membership through blood-affiliation. The immigration debate attests to the weight of primordial nationness despite the generally recognized and agreed-upon need for (re)construction and change. By the same token, with the completion of the nation-state and the absence of revisionist territorial claims the rationale for ethnic nationhood has disappeared as well. The defenders of a citizenship law based on blood-affiliation (*ius sanguinis*), and thus of an ethnically defined Volk, are fighting a rearguard battle. Even the conservative government coalition has recently proposed the introduction of conditional *ius soli* for third-generation immigrants. If this tendency prevails, the German nation is about to redefine itself from an ethnic to a civic one—a unique case of a nation fundamentally refashioning itself in response to external constraints and internal learning.

Conclusion

The three historical turning-points underlying this comparison of nation-building after WWII are significant in their own terms. The end of fascism and communism, which in retrospect must be seen as totalitarian twins rather than the opponents they claimed to be, marks the end of the great European war of ideologies; a war that was fought by or on behalf of totally mobilized societies over competing total solutions to what

was the central question of much of 20th century European politics: the social question.⁵⁷ The end of colonialism marks the end of the hegemony of the West, introducing a new cleavage line along civilizational and racial difference. Under the name of multiculturalism, anticolonial discourse--that is, the questioning of the universalism and rationalism of the West--has even been carried into the metropolises and academic ivory towers of the West, where it has established itself as almost the new dominant discourse.⁵⁸

But in each of these three key-breaks of the past half-century, processes of the building or rebuilding of nations have been central as well. Fascism, understood here as hyper-nationalism, forced developed nations to radically reconsider their identities, and to grapple with the burden of negative memories. European communism, which had set out to destroy the nation, actually embodied its opponent in various ways, and thus created the cause of its own undoing. Colonialism, finally, came to an end over the piracy of the Western nation-model by native elites; but its implantation was complicated, or even aborted, by a variety of causes ultimately rooted in the problem of civilizational difference. Each historical juncture thus generated a distinct nation-(re)building trajectory. The end of fascism has weakened the "national" idea, and launched a trend towards post-nationalism--this was, after all, the moment when the idea of European Unity was born. The end of communism, by contrast, has been associated with the rebirth of the nation, although with a distinctively ethnic accent--the strengthening of Eastern European ethnic nationalism is the paradoxical legacy of communism. The end of colonialism, finally, culminated in an attack on the Western concept of secular nationhood by anti-Western fundamentalisms, which, however, could not quite escape the colonial dilemma of using the West against the West.

The three categories organizing the historical comparison: nation-building as modular adoption, state-making, and primordialization, were not equally relevant in each case. Modular adoption mattered strictly only in the case of postcolonialism, while the postcommunist and postfascist cases concerned the recovery and rebuilding of already existing nations. State-making allowed a crisp comparison between the

state-to-nation path of postcolonial and the nation-to-state path of postcommunist societies. In the former, nations were invoked to consolidate artificial states, while in the latter historical nations were involved in the destruction of old and the construction of new states. Characteristically, the postcolonial era saw almost no redrawing of state boundaries, while the opposite has been the case in the postcommunist era. State-making mattered less in the case of postfascism, even though one could argue that the recovery of state sovereignty of defeated nations depended upon their radical change of identity. In this regard, the refashioning of postfascist nations is *also* a function of the international state--system, an imposition by the winner upon the loser of war. Primordialization, finally, which referred to struggles over the content of nationness, had widely different meanings in each case. In postcolonialism, primordial attachments were an obstacle to nation-building, not in that they existed at all (as Geertz had assumed), but in that there were too many of them, no single one strong enough to be elevated to a nation-marker. In postcommunism, primordial myths and memories constrained elite choices in the nationality struggles of the successor states. As narrowly constructivist approaches overlook, precommunist legacies matter. The different trajectories of extreme Serbian and weak Russian nationalism, for instance, reflect different nation-defining myths and memories, such as a deep sense of victimization in Serbia, and the lack thereof in Russia. Postfascism, finally, poses the fundamentally new challenge of reconstruction and identity change. As we saw in the German case, this may entail the paradoxical attempt to shed primordial nationness altogether. To "opt out" of the nation, however, is impossible. In fact, in the reunification of Germany and the ongoing immigration debate the weight of primordial nationness has powerfully--and to many dubiously--reasserted itself.

If there is a lesson to be drawn from these comparisons it may well be that processes of nation-building are ineradicably plural and contextually bounded. In the end, every attempt at conceptual generalization is frustrated by the inexhaustible variety and contingency of history. However, to stop at this point would entail the end of social science. The conceptual descriptions presented here suggest a middle-ground between purely conceptual and purely historical forms of reasoning, and this may be

the level most adequate for the study of nations and nationalism.

ENDNOTES

1. This list is not exhaustive, but derived from what I consider some of the most recurrent and salient issues and debates in recent scholarship on nations and nationalism. A further important angle would be elite-society interactions, that is, the actual grounding of national identifications in larger societal groups. Such a non-elite centered view of nation-building has only recently gained ground, and, characteristically, almost exclusively with regard to "classic" European nations (most importantly: E. Weber, 1976; Sahlins, 1988; Colley, 1992). Comparable studies do not exist about the more recent nation-building episodes considered here. However, whenever appropriate, and whenever adequate knowledge exists, elite-society interactions will be integrated into the following case comparisons.
2. The linkage of nationalism and uneven modernization is a central theme from Gerschenkron (1952) and Hoselitz (1964) to Gellner (1964) and Hechter (1975).
3. This is the nationalism of Friedrich List, as celebrated in the brilliant anti-communist polemic by Szporluk (1988).
4. This is why, following Weber, Poles in Upper Silesia, White Russians, or Baltic Germans are "ethnic associations" but not nations.
5. Quoted in Young (1976:70).
6. As Gellner (1983:124) said, nationalists speak in the idiom of the past, while they are building the future. Also Hobsbawm's notion of "invented tradition" seeks to expose nationalist deception.
7. See Brubaker's (1994b) attack on the "realist ontology of nation", and his attempt to "decouple categories of analysis from categories of practice".
8. Examples are Verdery (1993), Borneman (1992), and Brubaker (1994a).
9. Bourdieu's (1991) analysis of the reifying effect of name-giving and categorization could be fruitfully applied to the case of nations.
10. As Timothy Mitchell suggests in his *Colonizing Egypt* (1991:ch.1), the idea of copying or borrowing, which is based on a distinction between representation and reality, is itself intrinsically Western.
11. See Rupert Emerson's (1968:1) definition of modern colonialism as "rule over peoples of different race inhabiting lands separated by salt water from the imperial center."

12. J.S.Furnivall (1948) recognized that colonial relations were characterized by "two contrary principles of social life:...the eastern system, resting on religion, personal authority and customary obligations, and the western system, resting on reason, impersonal law and individual life" (p.3).

13. "Take up the White Man's burden
Send forth the best ye breed
Go, bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild
Your new-caught, sullen peoples
Half-devil and half-child"
(Rudyard Kipling, *White Man's Burden*, 1899).

14. This is the basis of post-Fanonian analyses of colonialism as characterized by a "rule of colonial difference" (Chatterjee, 1993:16-18) or "a world divided absolutely into two" (Mitchell, 1991:167).

15. Gandhi, Sukarno, Nkrumah, and Kenyatta were educated in England, Senghor in France. It is no exaggeration to say, with Kenneth Minogue (1967:108), that "the development of African nationalism took place primarily in Europe." Ghana's independence, for instance, was prepared in London, in form of Kwame Nkrumah's nationalist group The Circle, which was modeled both on the secret societies of Young Italy and the Leninist vanguard party (ibid.).

16. This corresponds to Gellner's (1983:58-62) explanation of nationalism as a result of the limited mobility of native ethnic elites.

17. See also Kenyatta's defense of female circumcision, or the wildly romantic "Goddess of Kali" cult, as discussed by Kedourie (1970).

18. Following Georges Balandier, Rupert Emerson (1968:1) characterized the "colonial situation" in this way: "domination of an alien minority, asserting racial and cultural superiority, over a materially inferior native majority; contact between a machine-oriented civilization with Christian origins, a powerful economy, and a rapid rhythm of life and a non-Christian civilization that lacks machines and is marked by a backward economy and a slow rhythm of life; and the imposition of the first civilization upon the second."

19. This Third-World application of Marx's motif of exploitation also underlies Wallerstein's world system theory, in which capitalist "core" states exploit "peripheral" states, and Edward Said's theory of Orientalism, according to which the West needs an inferior East to find a (superior) identity for itself.

20. In the introduction to *Wretched of the Earth*, p.10.

21. The prominent role of Marxist rhetoric in anticolonial nationalism has two reasons. First, the colonial powers were "capitalist". In the Cold War divide, "socialism" offered itself as a language for the anti-Western thrust of anticolonial mobilization. Second, Marxism-turned-Leninism provided a blueprint for rapid, state-driven modernization, which corresponded to the needs of postcolonial society. See Mayall (1990:113f).
22. The international norm of nation-stateness, one of whose implications is the principle of the sovereign equality of states, has in fact been of advantage to Third World states, which have achieved a compound influence in international organizations incommensurate with their domestic weakness (see Krasner, 1985:ch.3).
23. A similar point is made by Peter Sahlins (1988), who argues that it had first to pay off for the Catalans in the French/Spanish border region of the Cerdanya before they would consider themselves *also* French or Spanish.
24. The stress on rapid economic development and social modernization in the new states reflects an awareness that nation-building was contingent upon economic benefits--which, of course, did not materialize (see Mayall, 1990:116f).
25. Federalism is nevertheless the political model recommended to third-world societies by leading area experts, such as Horowitz (1985) and Young (1976).
26. See Jackson and Rosberg (1982), who refer the survival of "Africa's weak states" to their backing by the international state system.
27. This anti-national thrust is missed by Juergensmeyer's (1993) notion of religious nationalism. Said Arjomand (1994) has rightly pointed out that fundamentalists are "statists" but not "nationalists": they try to seize the state to implement their non-national programmatic.
28. See Smith (1986:ch.8), Anderson (1983:ch.2), and--most emphatically--Cruise O'Brian (1988).
29. The useful notion of border-crosser is introduced by Riesebrodt (1993:184-190). Gilles Kepel (1995) characterized the young leaders of Islamic fundamentalism as a new "counter-elite" of "bearded Ph.D.'s", whose career aspirations have come to nil over unemployment and blocked mobility. They find ample support in the huge class of the "young disinherited" without education or jobs in the peripheral "bidonvilles".
30. For instance, Abbasi Madani, one of the two leaders of the Algerian FIS, has studied education in London in the 1970s, and he is said to have been influenced by the pragmatism of John Dewey (Tibi, 1993:212).
31. Michael Doyle, quoted in Laitin (1991:142).
32. Three classic statements are Kohn (1961), Schieder (1964), and Plamenatz (1973).

33. This is not to deny important internal variations of Eastern European nationalism, such as the "bourgeois", almost-Western nationalism of the Czechs and Slovenes, the "aristocratic" nationalism of Szlachta Poles and Magyar Hungarians, the "popular", Ottoman millet-conditioned nationalism of Serbs and Bulgarians, or the "bureaucratic", Third-World-reminding nationalism of Turks, Greeks, and Romanians (Sugar, 1969:44-54).

34. The Prague Spring of 1968 is ambiguous in this regard. This was the last "revisionist" attempt to reform communism, along with its internationalist pretensions, on its own ground. Its defeat turned the oppositional intelligentsia, not only in Czechoslovakia, toward anti-communist dissidence and civic nationalism (see Joppke, 1994).

35. Note that the military coup by General Jaruzelski in Poland, anticipating the end of it all, was justified no longer in "socialist" terms, but in "patriotic" terms as forestalling Soviet military intervention.

36. There existed over hundred personal nationalities, which were official passport entries.

37. This is also one of the results of Katia Makarova's (1995) remarkable study of "Uzbek-Russian interaction" in Central Asia.

38. A second difference is the set up of a republic without a titular nationality, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

39. A contemporary Serb nationalist in the Kosovo put it this way: "Why does Serbia have the greatest interest in Yugoslavia? Because Serbs live across the whole Yugoslav space. So, if you want all Serbs to live in one country, that can be only in Yugoslavia" (quoted in Vujacic, 1995:333).

40. The importance of "origins" and "national memory" is stressed in Veljko Vujacic's (1995) excellent comparison of communism and nationalism in Russia and Serbia.

41. The connection between economic autarchy and indigenous nationalism is especially clear in Ceausescu's so-called July Theses of 1971: "A not very becoming practice has developed, comrades, to look only at what is being done abroad, to resort for everything to imports. This betrays also a certain concept of considering everything that is foreign to be better, a certain prostration before what is foreign, and especially before (the West). Time has come for (resorting first) to (our) own forces and only afterwards to appeal to import. There are books printed in tens of thousands of copies and which make an apology of the bourgeois way of-life, while good Romanian books cannot be printed because of lack of paper" (in Verdery, 1991:98).

42. Berthold Kohler, "Der slowakische Albtraum," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 10 May 1995, p.14.

43. Note, however, that the racist discourse of National Socialism goes beyond traditional nationalist discourse, and may even have its origin in entirely different ideologies of class (see Anderson, 1983:149).

44. "We relive our past not in their continuous sequence, day by day, but in a memory focused upon the coolness or sunshine of some morning or afternoon. Between these isolated scenes lie vast stretches of oblivion" (M.Proust, cited in Lowenthal, 1985:206).

45. An exemplary study of "negative commemoration" is Wagner-Pacifici and Schwarz (1991).

46. A prime example is the West German Historians' Struggle (see Maier, 1988).

47. See Joppke (1995:39-46). The revival of the entire German national history (i.e., one not limited to its "progressive" strands) in the late GDR was possible because of the detentist entrenchment of the German division and of a separate socialist state; so safe felt the GDR elites, but also so desperate were they to find a substitute for exhausted ideology, that they grasped the straw of national history.

48. Peter Bender, "Was wird der Tag kuenftig bedeuten?", *Die Zeit*, 12 May 1995, p.12. See Gunter Hofmann's observation that the "remembering of the end of the war occurred in almost gruesome perfection" ("Eine Woche in Deutschland," *Die Zeit*, 12 May 1995, p.4).

49. In his readable polemic against the culture of detente, Arnulf Baring (1988) characterized this habitus as "our new megalomania".

50. As the fabled Bavarian right-wing politician, Franz-Josef Strauss, expressed the sentiment of the so-called *Tendenzwende*: "It's high time that we emerged from the shadow of the 3rd Reich...and become a normal nation again" (quoted in Eley, 1988:182).

51. Ernst Nolte's attempt to explain the Holocaust as "asiatic deed", a sort of anticipated defense against Bolshevism, obviously does not stand the historical test, and in the way of its presentation is grossly exculpating. But his real taboo-breaking was to try to explain what cannot be explained, and to relativize memory through history. Nolte's provocative interpretation of Nazism as reactive to communism has since been taken up by Furet (1995:195) and implicitly by Pipes (1993:ch.5).

52. Quoted in Buruma (1994:246). The former president of the Bundestag, Phillip Jenninger, had to experience the fine distinction between history and memory, when his "historizing" speech on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the *Reichskristallnacht* ended in a public scandal, and he was forced to resign.

53. That this relaxation of taboos will not lead to a new amnesia seems guaranteed by the logic of countervailing anniversaries: the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Dresden was shortly preceded by that of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration

camp. The International Herald Tribune of 26 January 1995 included two articles appearing on the same page, one entitled "Dresden Confronts a Fatal Anniversary," and the other "German Church Admits to Holocaust Guilt."

54. The noisy right-wing initiative "8 May 1945--Against Forgetting", which sought to commemorate the war end as the beginning of the "terror of expellation and repression in the east", has failed to enlist broad support, and public pressure forced it to cancel a planned "memorial event" in Munich. See their advertisement "8.Mai 1945--Gegen das Vergessen", in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 5 May 1995, p.3.

55. Note, however, that recently there has been a flood of books and discussions about the German resistance circle around Graf Stauffenberg. This points to the need in the unified country, a nation-state again, for a more positive identity.

56. The preamble to the Basic Law stipulates: "The entire German people remains asked to fulfill the unity and freedom of Germany in free self-determination".

57. Consider the socialist past of major fascist leaders and intellectuals--Mussolini, Sorel, Michels. The German term "national socialism" is revealing. It is no surprise that this term was outlawed in communist regimes, including the East German, preferring instead the anonymous "fascism". See the good discussion in Pipes (1993:ch.5), but also Vujacic (1995:ch.1), which is an intelligent resurrection of the totalitarianism paradigm.

58. A geopolitical expression of the end of colonialism is Huntington's "clash of civilizations" (1993), in which the West faces a hostile Rest.

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