

Armstrong, John, **Nations Before Nationalism**. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1982, pp. vii, 410.

Armstrong considers the question of the premodern roots of nations. Far from a primordialist tract of the sociobiological or psychological variety, this is a historical exploration of pre-1789 “nationalism.” The book deals principally with Europe and the Islamic Mediterranean. It suggests that one can trace the rise of nations to both religious and secular sources. In political terms, both the Greek polis and Roman patria provided a template for the territorialization of identity. Medieval cities also played a part in instituting ethnic boundaries and developing ethnic myths. In the Middle Ages, the rise of a Christian and classical-inspired sedentary feudal order stilled the nomadic impulses of the conquering barbarian *Stamme*. These warrior bands became a settled European nobility which developed ancestral ties to particular locales. Urbanization and dynastic expansion brought disparate linguistic communities into contact. Territorialized culture difference abetted the formation of ethnic groups during the Middle Ages.

Religion was perhaps most important. Incursions of self-styled defenders of the faith along the Islamic-Christian border gave birth to myths of ancestry or “mythomoteurs” among border peoples such as the Castilians, Poles, Lithuanians, Turks, and Tatars. Particular lifestyle imagos and myths of election thereby crystallized in the premodern period. Sacred languages or scripts helped groups to survive and religious institutions and intellectuals incubated particularist identities. These were most strongly articulated by local, lower-level clerics and religious structures. The pastoral lifestyle imagery in Christianity was more conducive to nation-formation than the nomadic ideal of Islam. Finally, linguistic differences were generally contingent, tending to follow rather than lead political and religious developments. Overall, this is an impressive work with a vast sweep that sheds important light on the premodern origins of nations. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Breton, Raymond, “**From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism. English Canada and Quebec.**” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1988), pp. 83-102.

This article is interesting in two respects. First, it is one of the first accounts to employ the term “civic” as opposed to territorial or political nationalism. The concept of civic nationalism receives continued treatment throughout the piece. Secondly, although its focus is intranational, it develops a thesis of ethnic-civic dynamism. Specifically, it posits that the nationalisms of developed societies such as English Canada and Quebec tend to shift from ethnic to civic modes under the impact of a variety of material, political and cultural forces.

The article first considers English Canada, whose Britannic ethnic nationalism was rooted in notions of Anglo-Saxon ethnicity and Protestantism. This was manifested in exclusionary immigration policies and discursive practices prior to the mid-1960s. Nonetheless, the utilitarian demands of nation-building led to non-British immigration. Although most eagerly learned the English language, the demographic result of this process was to dissociate linguistic nationhood from ethnicity. Another force for “civic” change was a growing sense of Canadian distinctiveness from its British colonial past. Overall, the new political conception of nationhood provided a future-oriented outlook which eased English-Canada’s acceptance of a more civic, legal-rational conception of itself.

In Quebec, the same dynamic operated, albeit somewhat later. The so-called “Quiet Revolution” of the 1960s secularized the traditional conception of French-Canadian ethnicity, locating a new Quebec nationalism premised on a forward-looking, territorial, linguistic-

economic project. This process, notes Breton, has generated considerable disquiet among ethnic French-Canadians as demographic trends signal the

decline of the French-Canadian proportion of Quebec's population. Similar anxiety is noticeable in English Canada, notes Breton, suggesting that the ethnic-to-civic process has not yet acquired the status of a *fait accompli*. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Brown, David, **Contemporary Nationalism. Civic, Ethnocultural and Multicultural Politics**. London, Routledge, 2000, pp. viii, 198.

This revisionist approach to ethnic nationalism questions the "ethnic is bad, civic is good" normative framework. Brown locates exclusivity and violence in many civic nationalist movements, like that of contemporary Indonesia or Jacobin France. Indeed, he views most postcolonial nationalisms as both civic and illiberal. Conversely, ethnic, or "ethnocultural," nationalisms, such as those of modern Scotland or Quebec, can respect difference and be peaceable. The critical question is not so much the ethnic-civic one as whether the leading nationalist strata are the beneficiaries or victims of social change. Brown qualifies the arguments of Greenfeld, Kohn, and others regarding the *ressentiment* of subject or peripheral nationalist elites. He adopts Greenfeld's formulation of status-inconsistency among traditional elites and adds the insight of mass-society theorists regarding geosocial dislocation among the masses to provide the twin engines of anomie. Yet he draws a line between these processes and the ethnic-civic distinction. The latter is unrelated to anomie, and appears instead as an accident of history.

Brown contends that the key question is whether nationalist elites and masses are self-confident or feel threatened by modernity. Secondly, their framing of national Others is determinative. If framed negatively, this can spur a violent or illiberal reaction. Brown next considers four cases where ethnic and civic modes interact: Spain's Basque Country, Singapore, Ghana, and Australia. Generally speaking, dominant ethnic groups in a nation-state employ a dual strategy of ethnic nationalism, which reassures the ethnic majority, and an inclusive or multicultural state rhetoric of unity. Minorities are reassured by inclusive state rhetoric and a more substantive promise of economic development or wealth redistribution. When the latter fails to materialize, as in Ghana during 1960-1982, a crisis can develop. Ethnic and civic strands of nationhood come apart and the result can be ethnic conflict. Likewise, an attempt to empty the state of ethnic content, as in Australia, can lead to its delegitimation in the eyes of many in the majority group. Once again, a disentwining of ethnocultural and civic or multicultural strands occurs, leading to conflict. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Connor, Walker, **Ethnonationalism. the Quest for Understanding**. Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. vii, 234.

A collection of nine articles which Connor wrote on the theme of ethnic nationalism between 1966 and 1991 is noteworthy in several respects. It advances a powerful scholarly argument, as early as the late 1960s and early 1970s, that "ethnic nationalism" was in the ascendancy in all regions of the world. Writing against the grain of then-predominant modernization paradigms, whether of the Marxist, Parsonian, or Rational Choice variety, Connor catalogues a host of instances that demonstrate that ethnonationalism is actually *strengthened* by modernization. Cultural contact may lead to a reduction in objective culture difference, notes Connor, but this often leads to an enhanced consciousness of identity. Indeed, Connor traces the evolution of group consciousness through ethnicity (unconsciousness) to nationhood (self-awareness).

The latter, he notes, is intimately tied to the subjective belief in common descent. The nation forms a “superfamily,” the largest kinship group and hence the strongest claimant to peoples’s ontological loyalty. He attempts to rigorously define key terms such as ethnic group, nation, and state, which he claims are often employed in a confused fashion by scholars. Finally, in one of his few modernist guises, Connor advances his theory that nation-formation is a process. In effect, nations can be said to have emerged only when a significant portion of the population in a territory has identified with it. Typically, he argues, this condition is only met long after “nationalist” movements take place and he evinces skepticism about claims that many nations existed before the late nineteenth century. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Greenfeld, Liah, **Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity**. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. vii, 572.

This is an impressive work of comparative social and intellectual history whose principal source is the writings of contemporary intellectuals. It elegantly links the theoretical work of Kohn, Gellner, and Smith, among others. In its approach it is generally modernist, although it locates the origins of nationalism in the sixteenth century. Greenfeld contends that the semantics of nationalism altered as it successively spread from its English source to the United States, France, Russia, and Germany. Sixteenth-century England was the first location in which “nation,” a term previously restricted to elite strata, came to be applied to the wider middle class and political community. Although France and the United States also partook of this reformist civic nationalism, their nationalist revolutions developed partly in response to developments in England.

In Germany and Russia, relative latecomers to nationalism, the response to developments in these Western societies was highly distinct. Due to their relative political, social, and economic backwardness, German and Russian nationalism took an ethnic, rather than civic, form. Partly under the influence of the nascent Romantic movement, and spurred by a sense of inferiority, German and Russian intellectuals adopted a stance of *ressentiment*. Coined by Friedrich Nietzsche, this psychological state refers to a sentiment of hatred and envy that cannot be satisfied. This condition, remarks Greenfeld, gripped early nineteenth-century German and late-eighteenth-century Russian nationalist intellectuals who reacted against the source of the ideas they borrowed. The roots of *ressentiment* lay in the disruption to the traditional status order wrought by the new Enlightenment ideas from the West, including that of civic nationalism. The anomic response of the insecure Russian nobility and detached German romantic intellectuals was to “transvalue” previously despised qualities such as agrarian simplicity, Asiatic barbarism, and peasant traditionalism into virtues. In reaction to the West, German and Russian nationalism turned to the East, to the irrationality of folk and wild nature, to peasant simplicity and traditions, and to myths of pagan or Asiatic descent. Thus was forged the new ethnic nationalism which would prove so attractive in other parts of the world. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Hroch, Miroslav, **Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe**. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. vii, 220.

This Czech scholar’s work helps to flesh out the contours of ethnic nationalism. This is a work that attempts to get beyond the normativity connected with much nationalism scholarship since

Kohn. The existence of sociological “nations” before the modern era forms the backdrop to this activity. Such “nations” developed during a long period, often--as in Eastern Europe--beginning in the Middle Ages. The centerpiece of Hroch’s work is his A-B-C chronological schema of nationalism. Nationalism is held to proceed along a path from cultural revival (A) to political agitation by a body of nationalist associates (B) and thence to phase C, when this agitation captures the popular imagination in the form of a mass movement. Nationalism “A” consists of a populist revival of folk culture or what are deemed to be “forgotten” traditions of the “people.” This intellectual ferment then gives way to political agitation by committed activists on behalf of the “national” idea. This began as early as 1800 in some locations, although in others this did not occur for several generations. Nationalist agitation catches fire as a mass movement only in some cases. This transpires either because of a disintegration of the existing political order (i.e., the Ottoman or Habsburg Empires), or because of linguistic-cultural differences between elites and, usually peasant, masses. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Hutchinson, John, **The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism**. London, Unwin Hyman, 1987, pp. viii, 343.

Hutchinson expands upon aspects of Smith’s (1981) and Hroch’s (1985) work to propound a dynamic theory of cultural nationalism. In Hutchinson’s view, the moral regeneration provided by Smith’s romantic educator-intellectuals is not a one-off process, but a continual source of nationalist effervescence. Cultural nationalism often precedes political nationalism, as noted by Smith and Hroch, but ethnocultural ferment continues after state formation. The legal, bureaucratic, and instrumental imperatives of state-building thereby generate anomic pressures which occasion ethnic revivals geared toward regeneration. Using the Irish example, Hutchinson illustrates how the activities of the British modernizing state led to cycles of cultural nationalism. These in turn attained larger sociopolitical force as they passed through the stages of *crystallization* and *sociopolitical articulation*. Following Smith, Hutchinson sees cultural nationalism as a forward-looking strategy that unites traditionalists and modernizers under one historicist banner.

In Ireland, three cultural nationalist revivals have taken place since the eighteenth century. Hutchinson focuses on the Gaelic Revival of the late nineteenth century, specifically the activities of the Gaelic League under the tutelage of Hyde and MacNeill. This organization sought to embrace Gaelic history, language, and culture as a means of bridging the feud between religious and secular nationalists. “Authentic” Gaelic values and modes of political organization were invoked as an antidote to British systems. These intellectual currents influenced a rising Catholic intelligentsia. Owing to their increasing education level and blocked mobility within the British-dominated civil service and professions in Ireland, this rising stratum was highly receptive to the message of Gaelic League intellectuals. Although scornful of the oligarchic, instrumental nature of Irish political nationalism, the radicalized intelligentsia, in seeking a place in the social order, decided to join hands with political nationalists. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Kohn, Hans, **The Idea of Nationalism**. New York, Macmillan, 1945, pp. vii, 735.

Kohn’s first attempt at a general theory of nationalism embraces a normative sub-narrative of World War II era anti-nationalism, but provides a rich analysis. He presents a history of political organization, beginning in Israel and ancient Greece, continuing through Rome and medieval

Western Europe, into the modern era. He principally outlines an intellectual and political history of European nationalism over the *longue durée*. The work is significant for its pioneering distinction between “Western” and “Eastern” nationalisms which crystallized the prophetic, but looser ideas of Friedrich Meinecke (1907) into a useful conceptual dichotomy. The former, “Western” type is held to denote nationalisms of a “political” variety, while the latter refers to nationalisms of the “ethnographic” sort.

Kohn sketches many of the lineaments of ethnic nationalism with which we are now familiar. This includes the emphasis on culture as opposed to political reform. It encompasses a focus on the “backward” nations of Central or Eastern Europe and Asia, in opposition to the West, or advanced nations. Kohn surmises that the Renaissance and Reformation affected the West more profoundly than Germany or Eastern Europe, where social structures remained more strongly rooted in the feudal past. Hence the former’s nationalism differs profoundly from that of the latter. The book puts forth the theory of alienated romantic intellectuals as the first agents of ethnic nationalism, with their anti-Enlightenment reaction against the West. The discussion is rounded out by consideration of the importance of the “natural,” “kinship,” and “folk” -based discourse of ethnic nationalists. This is in opposition to the middle class-led liberal, rational cosmopolitanism which underlay Western nationalism. The book concludes that nationalism was but a passing stage of integration. Once inseparable from liberal democracy, it is viewed as increasingly expendable as the liberal quest proceeds into cosmopolitan territory. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Smith, Anthony D., **The Ethnic Origins of Nations**. Oxford, Blackwell, 1986, pp. viii, 312. Maps.

Arguably the most impressive of Smith’s works, this book greatly expands upon Armstrong’s accomplishment and engages themes first outlined in the Ethnic Revival. In doing so, Smith draws together the literature on the premodern origins of nations with that on modern nationalism. What is the connection? Smith begins by defining ethnic communities, which he claims have existed in various parts of the world since antiquity. He next embarks upon a path-breaking exploration of the factors which cause ethnies to persist or disappear over time. Smith considers two types of premodern ethnic community, the lateral-aristocratic and the demotic. The former arises as a result of top-down incorporation by a dynastic polity, whereas the latter forms through more broadly vernacular processes of mobilization. Within the “demotic” model, Smith distinguishes four sub-species. These include the “city-state amphictyonies” of the classical world, where broader “ethnic” loyalties coexist with city-state identity. “Frontier ethnies,” such as the Swiss, located in border zones of conflict and trade, “tribal confederations” such as the Irish, and “diasporas and sects” such as the Druze or Armenians comprise the remaining categories.

The book proceeds to integrate this historical literature with the sociological concerns of modernity. Here Smith elucidates his notion of the “triple revolution” of rational bureaucracy, linguistic-cultural standardization and industrial capitalism which transforms many loosely-bonded ethnies into modern nations. Connections are forged between premodern myths and memories and the modern romantic ethnonationalist intellectuals who revive, embroider, or invent them. The topography of this mytho-symbolic structure is rigorously mapped, with a discussion of the structure of ethnic myths and the role of geographic “poetic spaces” and temporal “golden ages.” Attentive readers will find that Smith occasionally intersperses a subtle

normative plea into the text. We are asked to consider the immense human creativity embodied by ethnic and nationalist intellectuals as well as the exceptional utility of ethnic and nation in satisfying mankind's quest for meaning, belonging, and immortality. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England

Smith, Anthony D., **The Ethnic Revival**. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. ix, 240.

In this first book-length exposition of Smith's ideas concerning the role of pre-modern ethnic antecedents in the formation and perpetuation of the nation, Smith contends, against the current of Marxist-modernist theory, that nations are legitimized by both legal-rational *and* mystical-emotive concepts. Smith's comparative-historical approach demonstrates that nationalism frequently relies upon both sources of legitimacy. The principal actors in this drama are educator-intellectuals in civil society, and the professional intelligentsia, who tend to apply the concepts of the intellectuals in the differentiated realms of modern society. Often motivated by the ideals of the Romantic movement, the intellectuals are forgers of an ethnic-nationalist third way between religious traditionalism and scientific modernity.

Three paths to "ethnic historicism" present themselves in the form of three intellectual archetypes. Neo-traditionalists attempt to salvage the native cultural traditions while embracing Western technology. Assimilationists are cosmopolitans who feel rejected by the metropole and hence seek to imbue their respective cultural communities with the hallmarks of Western modernity. Finally, reformists combine elements of both positions, but use modern methods to unearth a more pristine conception of the community that is in some sense pre-traditional and historically imagined. The scientific-technical intelligentsia, which often suffers blocked mobility into the state bureaucracy due to educational overproduction, the resistance of *ancien regime* bureaucrats and ethnic discrimination, becomes radicalized and receptive to the nationalist ideas of the intellectuals. The ethnic historicism of the intellectuals becomes attractive as a means of reconciling the traditional, i.e., religious and secular-rational conceptions of society, as the new intelligentsia seeks out an identity which employs Old Order historicism in a secular mode. Ethnic nationalism and the subsequent nation-building project, which involves building bridges with other strata such as the commercial bourgeoisie, is a "solution" which helps to reintegrate the intelligentsia into the social order from which it has become detached. All told, this book represents a major expansion upon Kohn's themes, and ploughs a considerable expanse of new scholarly territory. **Eric Kaufmann**, University of Southampton, England