Review: What is Nationalism and Why Should We Study it?
Author(s): Ernst B. Haas
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What is nationalism and why should we study it? Ernst B. Haas


Nationalism and modernization

Most essays on nationalism begin with the lament that the concept is as fuzzy as the states of mind it is supposed to describe are diverse. Studies of nationalism pose the proverbial elephant problem: the animal's appearance seems to differ depending on where it is touched by a group of blind persons. Our authors are no exception to this rule. For Dudley Seers nationalism refers to certain types of economic policy, while for Benedict Anderson the term connotes manufactured linguistic identity. Anthony Smith considers nationalism to be a particular ideology of solidarity based on preindustrial roots. Ernest Gellner treats the phenomenon as a distinctly industrial principle of social evolution and social organization.

No single term should be made to bear so heavy a burden. As Arthur N. Waldron noted in a review paralleling my effort:

I gratefully acknowledge the helpful comments received from Robert H. Jackson, Kenneth Jowitt, Peter Katzenstein, Ian Lustick, and Wayne Sandholtz.
A disproportion definitely exists between the way in which nationalism is used to explain history and politics, and the explanatory capacity of the concept as outlined by its theorists. The intellectual foundations provided by the latter simply will not support the explanatory structures that have been placed on them. Nationalism in general is a powerful and comprehensible idea. Yet, while it defines general situations, it is not very useful in explicating specific events. In cases where such events have in the past been explained by invoking nationalism, we will have to search for another analysis.1

He is quite right, unless we are careful to specify which aspects of "specific events" we are interested in explicating with the help of the concept and which "general situations" the concept is supposed to capture. No concept can cover everything. As of now, the elephant lumbers around without doing much useful work.

The study of nationalism has very permeable boundaries. It overlaps so heavily with the study of modernization, of modern political ideologies, of economic and social history, and of political anthropology as to suggest redundancy. Why study nations and nationalism at all? For me there is no self-evident answer. The description of historical patterns requires no special focus, no theory, apart from and beyond the theories already embedded in the relevant disciplines. A special focus is justified only if the purpose of the inquiry somehow differs from what we already know.

Nationalism and political rationalization

My purpose in studying nationalism is to explore its role as a type of "rationalization" which helps or hinders domestic and international harmony. This purpose enables me to sidestep the conceptual confusion common to most of the authors under review and to attempt the task that Waldron outlines. Like most concepts we use in the social sciences, nation and nationalism are cognitive artifacts we invent to mark off an intellectual universe. My definitions, which will follow later, have no more innate validity than anyone else's; they are justified only by my basic purpose. My

1. Arthur N. Waldron, "'Theories of Nationalism and Historical Explanation,'" World Politics 37 (April 1985), p. 427. I agree with Waldron's core argument that the vague invocation of "nationalism" in explaining events in the non-European world is unsatisfactory, because the "adjective 'nationalist' has been attached to people, movements, and sentiments in a way that is taken (usually without explanation) as distinguishing each of them meaningfully from some other variety." Indeed, as he says, struggle comes first, and then nationalism, and to understand why there is a struggle we must understand its political source (p. 433). That, however, is not what interests me. I am concerned with a single general situation—patterns of rationalization in the post-Enlightenment world—and many specific events, i.e., the behavior of self-identified groups in coping with that world. Nationalism is one (and only one) way in which such groups do identify themselves. No more general claim is suggested.
demarcation begins with a rough description of what I take nationalism to mean. A statement on the meaning of rationalization follows. The two are then conjoined in an attempt to inquire into the relationship between harmony at the national, as opposed to the international, levels.

Nationalism is the convergence of territorial and political loyalty irrespective of competing foci of affiliation, such as kinship, profession, religion, economic interest, race, or even language. Nationalism is "modern" because it stresses the individual's search for identity with strangers in an impersonal world, a world no longer animated by corporate identities. All nationalisms imply a principle of identity based on impersonal ties, remote ties, vicarious ties—all of which are mediated by a set of common symbols embedded in a certain pattern of communication. Successful nationalism also implies a minimum of social harmony, an acceptance of the values that the symbols communicate sufficient to maintain social peace and peaceful social change. Legitimate authority under conditions of mass politics is tied up with successful nationalism; when the national identity is in doubt, one prop supporting legitimacy is knocked away.

Nationalism is also a civil religion, often in conflict with but occasionally drawing strength from real religions. That civil religion contains a set of core values that, whether for objectivist or subjectivist reasons, come to be accepted by the population of a state; they become the definers of selfhood. In successful nations they remain in that role until challenged by the next source of tension; no civil religion is graven in stone. As long as the core values provide the framework for social action, people know what to expect of their fellows, understand and respect authority, are secure in their views of the scheme of collective life. Such a society is temporarily rationalized despite its size, impersonality, and vicarious nature of impersonal ties. As Weber taught us, rationalization need not be the bureaucratic kind (though it usually is); but it must be in a formula that fits the conditions of a commercialized and industrialized society. The kind of identity we seek to understand is an issue only since the onset of the industrial revolution. 2

The crispest formula for summing up the relevant conception of rationalization would run like this: rationalization refers to modes of behavior that rest on a materialist ontology, a procedural epistemology, and an empirical

2. The concept of rationalization, of course, is adapted from Max Weber. The best discussion of Weber's often confusing and contradictory treatment of the concept is Stephen Kalberg, "Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Processes in History," American Journal of Sociology 85 (March 1980). Kalberg is especially helpful in showing the relationship Weber established between his four types of rationality (theoretical, practical, formal, substantive) and the four types of social action (traditional, affectual, value-rational, means-end rational) (p. 1161). Strictly speaking, we are concerned with the types of social action. What matters for nationalism is that it combines, in its various types, all four types of social action in various volatile mixtures that call into question the final victory of any rationalization formula. I am indebted to Kenneth Jowitt for the crisp definition of the combined value rational/end-means rational formula of social action.
methodology. Magical and prescientific views of the nature of things are banished; causal connections among phenomena are sought, not assumed; ends-means chains are subject to verification by standardized methods. Anderson and Gellner opt for much the same idea in distinguishing the modern world of nationalism from the past. Weber’s premodern rationalization formulas and the associated forms of social action remain relevant even though only the “formal-rational” type is given the pivotal role. Nation building, infusing a sense of national identity, depends, in my argument, on the victory of the legal-rational form over its potential competitors. The fact that this victory may, in practice, never be complete gives us the stuff of studies of nationalism.

Our task is the exploration of how and why a vicarious principle of transpersonal identification can give shape and order to a society under stress. The underlying idea is that nationalism can hold a society together while people are being buffeted by the strains of modernization. Rationalization by way of nationalism, of course, can take two forms: people under stress can seek to resolve it by identifying with the existing state, but they can also look for help by seceding from it. Each course is predicated on principles of rational choice. The desire to live in an ordered society with predictable rules that sustain one’s demands calls for reciprocal actions on the part of one’s fellow citizens. Whether one identifies with the existing state or not, the choice implies the deliberate search for links of interest and value with others similarly situated. The “bargaining” involved in the search evokes the specification of core values of order and predictability for the collectivity. Each “bargain” is based on the expectation that benefits will come, but not necessarily at the same time for everybody. Some actor may well have to delay gratification in the short run in order to gain acceptance for a set of rules, which will produce other benefits for the one who makes the concessions at a later time. Eventually, of course, that person’s or party’s preferences also have to be met.

A rationalized society is a society that orders itself on the basis of reciprocal exchange relations among its members. Its members accept a common norm of basic fairness. They practice contingency, that is, they expect that good behavior is rewarded with good, and bad with bad. In addition, these features depend on the further expectation that rewards can be delayed, though not indefinitely, and that truly equivalent concessions in social bargaining are not necessary.\(^3\) The bargains refer to the rearrangement of wealth, status, and power which characterizes the modern world. A society is rationalized if it manages to practice internal bargaining that results in these rearrangements without blowing itself apart; it practices reciprocity

when it resolves internal strain by continuous adaptation. Nationalism refers
to the *particular* legitimating principle that makes such adaptation possible,
the perhaps unique principle each modern society seeks to agree on for its
members while also marking itself off from other societies. The formal-
rational variant of this construct is by no means the only possible one, but it
may well be the most successful type.4

Now comes the paradox. Is a world made up of rationalized societies—of
successful nation-states—an inherently bellicose world? Since the various
national selfhoods are arrived at by mutual exclusivity and outright hostility,
the answer would seem to be yes. Is national rationalization therefore inco-
herent with international harmony? Is it impossible to conceive of an inter-
nationally rationalized society? The paradox can be resolved only if we
break open the box labeled "nation" and inquire about the various beliefs
that make up the civil religion at various points in its history. If we discover
some evidence of an evolutionary pattern, the paradox can be laid to rest. In
short, a dominant concern with internal and international harmony (or its
absence), under modern conditions, justifies a scholarly concern with
nationalism despite its permeable intellectual boundaries.

Spotting such an evolutionary pattern is not easy. What time horizon
should one adopt, a hundred years or twenty? One might surmise, as the
literature of "social turbulence" suggests, that a breakpoint for the success-
ful nation-state is reached when no additional internal deals can be struck.
Domestic legal-rational formulas for further adaptation which satisfy impor-
tant groups may no longer be possible when a certain threshold of interna-
tional technological and economic interdependence is crossed, though we
cannot specify the threshold. At that point we may be entitled to speak of the
obsolescence of nationalism and the nation-state.

It is this reasoning that leads me to the study of nationalism: to discover
how rationalization may come about in times of rapid social change and to
explore the limits of nationalism as a successful rationalizer.

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4. In Weber's work the "formal rational" type is usually juxtaposed to other types
of rationalization which feature tradition and religion as core features of legitimate authority. One
(overly simplified) way of reading Weber is to treat "rational" principles of social order as flatly
opposed to religious ones. Does it follow that religion is totally incompatible with rationalization
that relies on nationalism? Terrance G. Carroll examined four ideal-typical nation-states (lib-
eral, Marxist, social democratic, and conservative) in order to determine whether each is able to
practice the kind of adaptation I discuss, if its population is strongly identified with one of the
major traditional religions. He concludes that nations strongly identified with liberal and/or
Marxist values cannot at the same time practice adaptation while traditional religions hold
sway. He confirms the strong version of Weber's thesis. However, he also confirms the weak
version by showing that modernization can be compatible with Shi'a Islam and Catholicism.
Sunni Islam offers more difficulties, Hinduism is neutral, while Buddhism is held to be incompat-
ible with modernization. Carroll, "Secularization and States of Modernity," *World Politics*
36 (April 1984).
Embedded conventions in discussions of nationalism

My purpose in studying nationalism is not everybody’s. The study of nationalism has been so elephantine because students acknowledge no common purpose. Instead, they have been divided by a number of underlying conceptual dichotomies. These also characterize the four books under review. As long as these dichotomies monopolize scholarly attention, the elephant problem will remain with us. Before commenting on the books themselves, I summarize the unresolved debate.

First, there is the nagging question of whether nations, the beliefs that inspire their citizens, the policies that derive from the beliefs, are good or bad. In the 19th century liberals advocated nationalism as progressive and Marxists decried it as reactionary; in our era the roles are reversed up to a point. Liberals still denounce Gaullists for being nationalistic; but Marxists, while agreeing with this judgment, laud the nationalism of Latin American opponents of dependency and of African freedom fighters. Yet they denounce the nationalism of Mussolini, Hitler, and Tojo, of the Argentine military juntas, of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. Why is one expression of social solidarity bad and another good? The quality of the historical process is judged in terms of the outcomes it produced or is expected to produce. The issue, therefore, is not nationalism as such, but capitalism as opposed to socialism, democracy, and popular participation as opposed to authoritarian rule.

Ideology confuses the issue, not only in the sense that the ideological preferences of students define the phenomenon of nationalism, but because scholars do not agree whether the phenomenon refers to the beliefs of a movement or a party, or whether it is the property of an entire “people” (whoever that may be). For one set of scholars, Anthony Smith among them, nationalism is an ideology that competes with liberalism, socialism, fascism; it is the property of movements in conflict with other movements. For another group, however, nationalism sidesteps or subsumes other ideologies by focusing on what a given unit—a “people” or a “people claiming a state”—believes of itself in distinction to other units. Anderson goes to great lengths to show how Marxists can be good nationalists once they transcend rigid class analysis. Scholars favoring nationalism-as-ideology then go on to comment on particular policies rather than social processes, as does Seers.

But confusion is by no means banished if we opt for the nationalism-as-group-identity formula. We must then confront the deep division among those who find an “objective” basis for this identity, as opposed to those who see identity in self-conscious acts of individual identification, the “subjective” basis of nationhood. The objectivist school defines a nation (in Stalin’s famous formulation) as “a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological makeup, manifested in
a community of culture.'" Unless a given people possesses all these virtues, it cannot legitimately be considered a nation. Ernest Renan, on the other hand, coined his famous "daily plebiscite" as the definer of the subjectivist approach. People choose to identify with a given unit moved by incentives and disincentives; exit, voice, and loyalty, as Albert Hirschman says, define the options, an approach also favored by Gellner.

Most writers on nationalism like to work with an objectivist formula of some kind. For some it provides a handle for distinguishing the good nations from the bad. For others, however, a preference for structural theorizing over cognitive and voluntaristic constructs accounts for the choice. A structuralist likes to explain a "nationalist" policy response as a reaction to deeply embedded stimuli located in the international economic division of labor; voluntarists prefer to find their explanations in domestic upheavals. Whatever the reason, the choice of formula entails further controversy.

Suppose we opt for nation-as-group identity. How did this we-feeling originate? The literature is divided in its answer among those who urge some primordial ties—usually labeled culture if the writer is skeptical about the entire catalog of objectivist criteria—and others who are fascinated with the artificiality of this feeling. The second school stresses the manipulative policies used by states to inculcate it, the importance of markets and communication channels in facilitating it, and the sheer accidents that resulted in a given region winding up in one nation rather than another. The distinction has additional implications. Arnold Toynbee remarked that "that havoc which the application of the western institution of 'national states' has worked in [Africa and Asia] where it is an exotic import is incomparably greater than the damage that the same institution has done in Britain, France, and the other west European countries in which it has been, not an artificially introduced innovation, but a spontaneous growth." "Early" (i.e., West European liberal) nationalism is natural; "late" nationalism is artificial in addition to being tainted by authoritarianism. Primordial-cultural features legitimate the early Western nations; the absence of such features denies the rest of the world the same legitimacy.

The wide acceptance of these dichotomies has taken its toll in explanatory rigor and normative prediction. Concern over which entities are or should become nations has resulted in a scholarly emphasis on nation building (sometimes confused with state building) at the expense of treatments of nation maintenance. The literature takes for granted that old and successful nationalisms provide the proper explanatory model. Newer entities that are not yet successful nations are studied in terms of their ability to live up to the model; and since they lack the objective qualities urged by some, their success is held to be in doubt.

Commitment to this dichotomy compels the student to deal with the present exclusively in terms of the past. It neglects the search for novel modes of manipulation by elites that might bring about nationhood despite the absence
of the historically validated conditions. In addition, it stacks the energies of scholars in the direction of explaining the rise of nationhood but not its decline. Fortunately, the growth of "micronationalisms" in Europe during the 1970s has once more riveted the attention of some scholars on the fragility of erstwhile successful nations. This phenomenon forces us to study what went "wrong" with French and British nationalism to make possible the growth of movements challenging its finality. Studies of the policies, attitudes, and processes that maintain a nation become salient.

All this means that the outcome of the daily plebiscite remains in doubt. Various claimants to nationalist legitimacy, whether for the entire population of the state or for some region within it, continue to compete. Nationalists struggle against cosmopolitan visions as well. And there is good reason to suppose that these struggles overlap with the ordinary ideological competition of socialists against liberals, secularists against the religiously committed, authoritarians against populists.

**Four authors in search of a single theme**

How do our four authors respond to the prevalence of these dichotomies? Do they make efforts to transcend them and to recognize the eternally problematic nature of identity formation? In many ways they do. All four authors are out to demystify the concept, to demonstrate that claims to "authentic" nationhood are untenable, that there are no "true" or "legitimate" nations. That is a step forward. At least it makes possible the integration of nationalism with studies of modernization and with changes in intercultural and international relations, even if none of our authors carry this integration very far. Finally, all four authors concede that nationalism may well be a rational response to certain social upheavals and frustrations, not a throwback to barbarism. This insight makes it possible to treat the phenomenon as a species of rationalization. Gellner does this explicitly, Anderson somewhat hesitantly. Seers would see his work in the same spirit. But Smith would stand the argument on its head and equate nationalism with failed rationalization.

That is the good news. The bad news, however, is that our authors fail to make any serious effort to acknowledge or use, leave alone integrate, the plethora of existing work on the subject. They write, each from his own perspective, as if no previous work had been done on the dynamics of social solidarity and fragmentation. One cannot help wondering, since all four authors are British, whether a smattering of nationalism kept them from using previous theories and empirical studies largely of American provenance, or at least methodological inspiration.
The most glaring omission is the neglect of Karl Deutsch. Anderson, Seers, and Smith could have enriched their treatments if they had acknowledged Deutsch's treatment of the relationship between sentiments of identity and massive socio-economic change. Gellner's neglect of Deutsch is even more serious because Gellner's impressive theory is based on the same cybernetic assumptions as Deutsch's and makes copious use of the Deutschian mobilization-assimilation balance/imbalance without ever using the label. Smith failed to take advantage of the exhaustive studies of nationalist ideologies which contrasted the Western "liberal" variant with Eastern not so liberal ones. Anderson's treatment of Third World nationalism ignores the seminal work of Rupert Emerson and others on the same subject. All the authors disdain the use of statistical series elaborated by others in order to map historical sequences and patterns. None makes use of the elaborate and quite satisfactory comparative and historical studies of nationalist thought.


The puzzle over what nationalism "really is" can be illustrated with the confusion that permeates Smith's *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*. It is impossible to tell whether nationalism refers to an "ideal," the actual modal beliefs of a "movement," a typical historical pattern of development, or an inescapable state of affairs, because the author uses all these meanings interchangeably. He says that nationalism is "a doctrine of the history and destiny of the 'nation', an entity opposed to other important modern collectivities like the 'sect', 'state', 'race', or 'class'" (p. 13; italics mine).

Smith's notion of the "real" nationalism—as contrasted with other doctrines that merely look like it—is an amalgam of the writings of Herder, Burke, Jefferson, and Rousseau: nationalism is a doctrine of fraternal ethnic solidarity, according to Smith. He extracts this meaning from the writings of ideologists; he is less concerned with what nations and nationalist movements actually do. The task Smith sets himself is the exploration of the compatibility of nationalism (as an ideal, a modal belief system, a historical pattern?) with the major political ideologies of the modern era. He devotes separate chapters to religious reformism, fascism, communism, pan-Africanism, the contemporary ethnic movements in Europe, "beaureaucratism," and internationalism.

Religious reformism, fascism, and communism and the modern bureaucratic welfare state make use of nationalist themes, but they are in fact inconsistent with the real thing and actually abuse it. Populist-participatory religious protest movements are otherworldly, escapist, and chiliastic; they appeal to sects. Fascism overlaps with nationalism, but its typical clientele is not the same as the nationalist public. Fascism stresses race, nationalism the ethnic community. Fascism venerates the hero and the use of force, nationalism remains neutral on this subject. Communism, of course, is at bottom cosmopolitan and appeals to classes, not nations, though pragmatic Communists will bend the rules occasionally to advance the revolution by exploiting primordial ethnic feelings among the comrades. Nationalism, by contrast, is revolutionary and harks back to ethnic traditions. The Western bureaucratic state, finally, abuses nationalism by pretending to speak for the entire people even though its citizens resent its impersonality, coldness, elitism, and excessive rationality.

Because most people seem to prefer the emotional reassurance of irrationality, Smith considers the current movements for cultural and political autonomy in Scotland, Wales, Brittany, Spain, and Corsica (among others) to be authentic expressions of nationalism. So are pan-Africanism and negritude. To the benighted liberals and Communists who still think that the modern world's increasing interdependence implies the demise of nationalism, Smith has this to say:

The very attempt to eradicate nationalism actually helps to entrench it further, and to provoke its periodic resurgence, and it would appear
more sensible and appropriate to try to live with it, taming its excesses through mutual recognitions and legitimations. . . . More importantly, nationalism's persistence and appeal must be derived from the conjunction of the three sets of forces that shaped it originally: long-standing ethnic traditions, the birth of new secular ideals, and the peculiar characteristics of modernization and its social concomitants. (p. 196)

The very international system today guarantees and legitimates nations. External and internal forces reinforce each other, ensuring that nationalism remains alive and well.

Smith wants to separate authentic nationalisms from those that are phony. He comes close to wanting to discover some mystical Ur-template that reemerges in time of peril, like the Emperor Barbarossa, to shake other and more ephemeral ideologies into line. He fails to ask himself about the origin of these alleged primordial traditions. Nor does he inquire why some survive and others fade away. He avoids the fact that modernization is not just an evil that the authentic nationalist combats in order to escape from formal-legal rationality, that the very origin of nationalist thought is also associated powerfully with the demand for such a rationality and retains this quality in many places. Nor does Smith recognize that the appeals of nationalism have demonstrably faded in other places. Nationalism is Janus-faced: it is used to advocate as well as to obstruct modernity. Solely for this reason one should not separate nationalism from other ideologies. Instead one should study these ideologies in order to discover which type of nationalism infuses them. 10

The best thing about Anderson's Imagined Communities is the title.

In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them; yet in the minds of each lives the image of the communion . . . . In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact . . . are imagined. . . . The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them . . . has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. (pp. 15–16; emphasis in original)

10. In a review of Smith's earlier work, Theories of Nationalism (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), Gale Stokes argues that although Smith succeeded in erecting the most complete and sophisticated typology of nationalist ideologies, he falls short of exploiting this success by stating a theory. Stokes, as I do too, finds Gellner's Thought and Change (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963) to be closer to theory. Stokes is still concerned with identifying the features or attributes that characterize the "true" nation and that distinguish nationalism from other political ideologies, a task I deliberately foreswear. See "The Undeveloped Theory of Nationalism," World Politics 21 (October 1978).
Bravo for this eloquent reminder that size, vicarious communication by way of shared symbols, and exclusiveness mark the nation off from other political constructs.

The author’s purpose in writing the book is important for understanding the argument. He wishes to instruct his fellow Marxists by telling them that nationalism is not inconsistent with revolutionary commitment, is not a bourgeois anachronism, and ought therefore to be taken seriously as an omnipresent historical phenomenon with an uncertain half-life. His task is to explain how revolutionary Marxist states (China, Kampuchea, Vietnam) can fight old-fashioned imperialist wars against each other. This, to be sure, may not be news for non-Marxists.

The argument goes as follows. The possibility of imagining the nation arises only when three ancient cultural traits weaken: a particular script-language loses its monopoly on conveying the truth, monarchs lose the status of semidivinities, and conceptions of time cease to confound cosmology and history. The one development most responsible for the breakup of cultures based on these ideas was movable type in the hands of private-enterprise publishers seeking a mass market for their wares among people not versed in the universal sacred language. Anderson continues with a conventional account of the independence movements of the late 18th century in the western hemisphere, linking incipient nationalism to discrimination against colonials by the metropolitan country, yet making little use of the neat proposition about language and “print-capitalism.” But language remains the core ingredient of the argument he makes for Eastern Europe. Here, by the middle of the 19th century, “marginalized vernacular-based coalitions of the educated” (p. 78), looking westward, found a “model” to be emulated. The design of the nation-state was there to be seen and copied. Rulers responded to the pressure by converting vernacular languages into official languages, the sole legitimate medium of public discourse in multi-ethnic states. While this pleased some coalitions and alienated others, it had the effect of extending the scope of the political community by encouraging hitherto inert groups to participate politically, if only to protest. At this point two paths could be taken: the further development of the model into a democratic-populist one, or an alternate that Anderson labels “official nationalism,” invented in Russia and England and widely copied everywhere since. Official nationalism deliberately selects key themes of nationhood and foists these on the population by appropriate policies of education, recruitment, reward, and punishment, always making use of the official language. Linked with notions of racism and appropriate economic incentives, official nationalism becomes the imperialism practiced by Europe after 1870. (Yes, dear reader, I am confused too. Anderson’s argument is not a restatement of the thesis about the “good” and “early” West European variety of nationalism as against the “bad” and “late” East European variety, the argument made by Hans Kohn, Arnold Toynbee, and Elie Kedourie. The West Euro-
pean variety is "bad" too. In what sense could it have provided a preferable model?) When the intellectuals of Asia and Africa came into their own in the 20th century they mostly chose official nationalism, especially the Marxist revolutionaries. Each newly independent intelligentsia, determined to build its own state, follows similar policies, including imperialism. The future is evoked but not clarified by Anderson; he implies that nationalism will be around as long as the state remains with us, but he hedges his arguments.

*Imagined Communities* does not claim to offer a theory. It is more evocative than systematic. It relies more on highly subjective interpretations of nationalist poetry than on statistics of social mobilization. Some of the vignettes of Southeast Asian nationalists and their thoughts are marvelous, as are tidbits of information on language policy. But the ensemble does not add up to a coherent argument. Next to nothing is said about nationalism in the countries that provided the first models—France, America, Britain, Germany. Only the imitators are treated, and Anderson fails to explain why certain features of the exemplar nations were chosen and not others. Pointing out historical continuities is a legitimate task, though it provides no special warrant for focusing on nationalism.

The late Dudley Seers, as behooves the leader of the major bridgehead of the dependentistas in Europe, the Sussex Institute for Development Studies, equates nationalism with self-reliant development, delinked from the world's core. In *The Political Economy of Nationalism*, an ephemeral little tract, he recants his former commitments to orthodox Marxism and Keynesianism and atones for decades of—he thinks misguided—work as a development economist for the United Nations. Nationalism, true to the creed of the Cepalistas (he worked closely with Raúl Prebisch and Osvaldo Sunkel), is development planning that seeks autonomy for the state from the world economy and caters to egalitarian-populist demands. Marxism and Keynesianism, in his words.

"Both fail to take due account of non-material motives, especially nationalism—the urge to promote the presumed interests of a group with cultural coherence, probably showing at least a degree of linguistic and ethnic homogeneity, and usually inhabiting a political unit, or nation-state (though sometimes applied to a group of the same kind submerged within one or more nation-states).

Until the 1960s, I too took little account of nationalism. As an economist, I naturally concentrated on material motives: people worked to earn money, and the level of our income determined how we spent it. Moreover, like many of those educated in the Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition, I saw nationalism as fundamentally irrational. Fortunately, with the spread of international contacts, of media such as newspapers and television, and of education there was a growing realisation of "interdependence", which would be complete when all foreigners sensibly learned some English. (pp. 9–10)"
Now, he believes, talk of interdependence is merely code for the global hegemony of the superpowers. Internationalism, he argues, is another word for American domination, latterly mediated by the legitimacy of monetarist economic doctrine as well as by political and military intervention. The argument is too familiar to require further elaboration.

How can the nationalist liberate himself if he is saddled with "a small population, serious ethnic divisions, location close to a superpower, few natural resources, a culturally subverted bureaucracy, high consumer expectations, and a narrow technological base?" (p. 91). Here Seers talks hard sense that departs from the orthodoxy of dependency thinking. Nationalist leaders can diversify their trade contacts and exploit the geopolitical needs of the superpowers. Dom Mintoff’s Malta is his exemplar. The International Monetary Fund is not only the executive committee of international capitalism: its staff can be argued with and persuaded in many circumstances, because the old canons of Bretton Woods are in disarray. Across-the-board planning is a waste of time. So are national accounts that are based on Keynesian assumptions. Patriotic appeals can be used to persuade the populace to put up with hard times. Appeals to patriotism should take the place of irresponsible and incompatible promises made by nationalist leaders to their diverse followers (Allende’s Chile is his exemplar of what not to do). And—heresy of heresies—hard-headed fiscal policies are absolutely necessary!

Nationalism for Seers then really means "as much autarky as you can get away with." He means not only economic but also cultural and linguistic autarky. Since cosmopolitanism in taste and attitude means being a lackey of a superpower—and entails lack of economic development—a self-reliant culture is also likely to be an economically successful one. He seriously weakens the punch of this argument by constantly stressing the seductive wiles of cosmopolitanism.

So much for the Third World. What about Europe and Britain? He advocates "extended nationalism." In fact, the tripartite division of the world is no longer accurate, he says, with the waning of the neocolonial consensus in Western Europe which, until recently, had succeeded in perpetuating the defunct empires by other means. A new legitimate protectionist consensus is forming; the European Community should become a geschlossener Handelsstaat; British Labor should Europeanize its legitimate protectionist impulses. Other culturally cognate clusters of countries should follow suit. The world should be made up of more or less closed economic blocs, each following its own extended nationalist holy grail.

In contrast to our other authors, Gellner in Nations and Nationalism offers a full-fledged theory of nationalism, embedded in a theory of the universal tendency toward industrialism. Nationalism and the nation-state provide the sole legitimate form of political organization within the global trend toward industrial societies. “Nationalism is primarily a political princi-
ple, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind’’ (p. 11; emphasis in original). Again: “nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state . . . should not separate the power-holders from the rest” (p. 1).

The theory uses three variables: (1) the distribution of political power in a society (access limited to genetically defined or quasi-hereditary status groups versus upward mobility); (2) easy access to a “high culture” of literate and sophisticated communication via a system of public education versus vertically segmented social groups each attached to a local “low culture”; (3) ethnic homogeneity as opposed to ethnic heterogeneity, as defined by language. The combination in which these variables occur in any given society will determine what kind of national identification—if any—will come to prevail. Agrarian societies are innocent of nationalism; the push and pull comes only when the trend toward industrialism manifests itself. The difference between agrarian and industrial societies is both cybernetic and semantic. Agrarian societies are prerational because they feature “the co-existence within them of multiple, not properly united, but hierarchically related subworlds, and the existence of special privileged facts, sacralized and exempt from ordinary treatment.” In industrial societies, “all facts are located within a single contiguous logical space . . . statements reporting them can be conjoined and generally related to each other . . . one single language describes the world and is internally unitary. . . . there are no special, privileged, insulated facts or realms, protected from contamination or contradiction by others, and living in insulated independent local spaces of their own” (p. 21). The difference between the two is also expressed in the contrast between beliefs that not only claim to be “true” but that also provide the sole criteria for judging all “truth” (i.e., dogmatic universalist religion), and beliefs that admit the contingent nature of truth claims, the possibility that truth is not revealed for all time but unfolds gradually in conformity with relativistic cognitive criteria (i.e., the post-Enlightenment scientific tradition). Nationalism is typical of the transition to the rational tradition. It expresses the societal thrust toward homogeneous perception and homogeneous social organization and behavior. It can be triggered by religious reformism that strives for coherence and universality, though it will eventually come into conflict with religion. Nationalists may make use of prerational symbols, but they will reject them as soon as they take power. Nationalism is not the resurgence of submerged primordial longings for ethnic community. Nationalism is a consequence of the “objective need” for industrial rationality.
This point is crucial. Gellner rejects theories of nationalism that stress either the objective or the subjective schools of thought because he considers them complementary rather than contradictory. Modernization causes the longings and adjustments that produce nations, not the objective criteria of cultural identity or assertions of personal will. Not every potential nation becomes a real one because most people deal with their longings and frustrations by simply assimilating with others initially unlike them, individual determination to "pass" and prior cultural affinities permitting.

The theory can be summarized schematically. The scheme is mine, not Gellner's.

Situation 1. Agrarian society is nonrational and nonnational because its social structure is characterized by discontinuous communication patterns and heterogeneous symbolic content. A few specialized hereditary status groups, organized horizontally, profess a common high-literate culture and rule over a vertically organized illiterate and isolated peasantry attached to various low cultures.

Situation 2. An exogenous force (foreign conquest, a new religion, a sudden increase in the availability of capital, a technological change) triggers industrialization/modernization. Peasants are "mobilized" by moving into armies, factories, cities; they acquire a taste for middle-class amenities. They aspire to some of the perquisites of the high culture but fail to achieve anything like political and economic equality during the early stage of industrialization.

Situation 3. The newly mobilized but unassimilated begin to act out their frustration. Conditions permitting, they succeed eventually in acquiring the linguistic and numeric skills needed to pass into the high culture, thereby losing whatever cultural factors distinguished them earlier from the ruling groups, after succeeding in their demands for greater educational and political participation. A successful and reasonably contented nation is born. The pattern follows the "state first, nation second" sequence of West European experience.

Situation 4. Things are much as in the preceding case. Educational access improves, the lower orders succeed in gaining access to political power, the society as a whole is characterized by much cultural homogeneity. However, the people live in many small states, which though similar in terms of the main variables, nevertheless because of their smallness and weakness are unable to represent the culture to the rest of the world; dispersion into many states fails to give the culture a symbolic roof. A nationalist sentiment exists which expresses itself in the form of national unification by force. This is the German and Italian case, "nation first, state second."

Situation 5. The newly mobilized but unassimilated begin to act out their frustration. But preexisting cultural and power conditions prevent easy assimilation. Culturally differentiated but mobilized people are excluded from the benefits of industrialism. They respond by rejecting the high culture of
the rulers and creating a rival high culture by drawing on their own low culture. This takes the form of a nationalism challenging the beliefs of the rulers, secession, or the displacement of rulers now seen as alien. This is the "nation first, state second" pattern familiar from the modern history of Eastern Europe.

Situation 6. In certain cases (Gellner mentions the Islamic world and Africa) things do not work out that crisply. What if the frustrated, mobilized, but unassimilated are unable to opt for the high culture of the rulers because they reject portions of it on culturally and religiously conditioned grounds, and yet they cannot go back to their prior low cultures either? What if the cultural heterogeneity is so great that portions of the alien high culture appear necessary as a means to hold the society together, as in Africa? In such a situation the nationalisms that develop are not rational because they cannot come to terms with the homogenization of truth-finding norms that prevail in industrial society. Religious-cultural absolutism and rational relativism, because they are compelled to coexist, cannot resolve the conflict.

Situation 7. In some otherwise rationalized societies in which the logic of situation 3 has largely prevailed, certain groups remain whose members cannot assimilate because their cultural distance from the majority is too great and the majority would not permit them to assimilate even if the minority wished it. Such situations represent flawed nations that are in for a lot of trouble.

What does all this portend? Gellner, in a turgid chapter on typologies of nationalism, concludes that only three "typical" nationalist situations matter when his three-variable model is put to work. Situations 5, 6, and 7, because they throw into doubt the universal tendency toward rationalization, are the salient ones for Gellner. He denies that there are fundamental differences between late and early modernizers—nation-builders, that the West European pattern is unique and all the others different. But his very model suggests the opposite. He explores smooth as well as discontinuous rationalization via nationalism but comes to the ambivalent conclusion that while nationalism everywhere ought to become weaker and even disappear, maybe it won't after all because of the continued viability of pseudo high cultures which are only dressed up low cultures. Perhaps he should not have dismissed "primordial" cultural self-definitions so completely before making the sweeping argument that all nations are artifacts of modernity, owing nothing to their agrarian origins and everything to the imperative of assimilation.

Having summarized Gellner's argument, I now wish to comment on it. First, however, I want to make clear that I am in agreement with his approach; though I want to extend the examination to the further question of the quality of international relations implied by the coexistence of various kinds of nationalism. Gellner is on the right track; but the theory (sometimes he calls it a model, sometimes a scheme) is more a hint than a persuasive or
complete set of propositions. He may be forgiven (with the rest of us) for the inability of the theory to predict much; he should not be so easily absolved for his failure to provide coherent explanations of the past.

The theory lacks clarity at crucial points. Gellner leaves us in doubt as to whether there are one, one-and-a-half, or two separate models of national development. He distinguishes between a late and an early stage of industrialization, and also a “very late” stage. It is not at all clear how the models relate to the stages. Part of the trouble lies in his resolute refusal to quantify any of his statements about rates of change. Hence we cannot be sure who and what is identified with each stage. Nor is it clear which model can be applied to which country.

Further, I cannot tell whether the same model explains all seven situations or whether situation 6 is a special case not covered by the same model. If so, the exception covers all of Africa and the Middle East. Japan and Latin America are hardly mentioned; China not often enough. Is there no nationalism to be found there or is it irrelevant with respect to rationalization? Situation 4 strikes me as extrinsic to the model because “culture” is here given a different meaning than in the remaining situations. In situation 4 it means intercultural comparison (Germans against Frenchmen or Englishmen), not conflict among cultural symbols within the same society. More serious still, the theory cannot explain why, after a country goes through the experience of situation 2, it should tilt toward situation 3, as opposed to 4 or 5, except in terms of unique historical circumstances. The retrodiction is episodic rather than systematic.

The theory is also incomplete. It works best for the “nation first, state second” pattern; it explains the secession of the mobilized but unassimilated. Gellner loses interest in situations in which the mobilized are assimilated but by being engulfed in a single high culture come to identify with a polity that is aggressively exclusive and demanding. Why is French, British, and American nationalism (leave alone Japanese or Russian) no longer interesting after everybody becomes a happy nationalist? In short, Gellner neglects the phenomenon of successful symbol manipulation in rationalized societies. Although fascinated with communication patterns during the early stages of mobilization and industrialization, he shows little interest in how the same process can be used to explain the persistence of national sentiment in the later stage.

The situations captured by the seven situations require more nuance. The situations imply that there are degrees of rationalization, as Gellner freely admits. If so, the degrees ought to be described and explained. To do so, however, requires attention to doctrines and ideologies, the various and competing symbolic means the mobilized use to come to terms with their new condition. Gellner pays attention to this only when he discusses Islam. He insists in a chapter devoted to ideology that it is all “false consciousness” (despite the anti-Marxist thrust of the book), not worthy of serious study or
attention because ideologies are merely the silly justifications nationalist troublemakers dream up to justify their existence. It is apparently this conviction that enables him to ignore the later nationalism of the West European states and of Japan. It justifies his ignoring the substantial ideological debate in these countries as to the identity, purpose, and character of the nation. The debate in turn implies serious internal disagreement about that very identity and suggests the absence of the kind of coherent national myth that situation 3 implies.

His muddling of models and stages casts the argument as a gestalt rather than as sequential macrohistory. On the other hand, Gellner adds a number of features that Deutsch neglects. He does a wonderful job of describing how religion can define identity; he shows how religious identities shade into cultural ones and how ethnic identities acquire religious form. The typology of nationalism is a laudable effort to show the differences between historical processes, a step Deutsch did not take. Finally, Gellner avoids the identification of language with ethnicity which tends to give Deutsch’s version a monocausal character that was not really necessary for making credible the core construct of the mobilization-assimilation balance.

How can we build on the work of Deutsch and Gellner? We must take as central their anchoring of nationalism in the larger study of how people’s perceived identities change during the process of modernization, how people become carriers of high cultures extending beyond their purely personal experiences. Like Deutsch and Gellner, we must reject romantic notions of Urvölker whose unchanging nature reasserts itself from time to time. We must accept their insistence that nationalism, though manufactured and invented in the form of doctrines, ideologies, and policies, is a rational way of organizing impersonal societies after mass social mobilization gets underway. Hence the identification of nationalism with this or that economic policy can be ignored, as can the insistence on the domination of class over nation as an organizing concept. And specific nationalist ideologies can be studied as potential rationalizing agents instead of being taken at face value or merely debunked. But this task remains to be done. I now sketch an approach for doing it.

**How to study nationalism**

The enterprise of nation building and nation maintenance is far from final and complete. How then can we talk about the achievement of domestic and international harmony? The students of “early nationalism” could confidently engage in the enterprise of retrodiction because they were not yet compelled to face up to the intellectual challenge of ethnic stirrings in Western Europe; nor did they feel obliged to comment on the glimmers of national obsolescence implicit in the movement for European unification. I
wish to exploit the competing ideologies of nationalism as clues to patterns of domestic and international rationalization, and I must pay attention to past and future uncertainties. Yet, prediction is not feasible. My aim cannot be higher than Otis Dudley Duncan's:

As ingredients of our forecasts we will, with increasing methodological sophistication, continue to prepare projections, trend extrapolations, model simulations and developmental constructs so as to provide as broad an array as may be useful of the logically possible pathways to hypothetical futures. . . . There will be no pretense that we can gradually move forward to the perfection of methods of anticipating what will actually occur, for such perfectability [sic] is not logically possible, aesthetically appealing or morally inspiring. What we may hope to improve, if not perfect, is our sense of responsibility for making known the implications of our knowledge.11

The thoughts offered here are hypotheses about possible relationships between rationalization and nationalism, not predictions. The research necessary for demonstrating such relationships in the past is not yet completed. Were it complete it still would not suffice to predict the future, either in terms of the domestic tranquility of new and old nations, or forecasting the shape of future international orders. The results of that research will, at best, open up reasonable speculation about possible futures and about pasts that were far from inevitable.

I shall offer definitions of the core terms nation, nationalism, nation-state, nationalist ideology, and national myth. I shall then develop a typology of nationalist ideologies, followed by a discussion of indicators and measures for observing the existence of a successfully rationalized nation-state. To conclude I shall discuss how the various types of nationalism can be used to anticipate domestic and international harmony.

Definitions12

A nation is a socially mobilized body of individuals, believing themselves to be united by some set of characteristics that differentiate them (in their own minds) from outsiders, striving to create or maintain their own state. These individuals have a collective consciousness because of their sentiment of difference, or even uniqueness, which is fostered by the group’s sharing

11. "Social Forecasting: The State of the Art," as quoted with approval by Lloyd Fallers, Social Anthropology, p. 134. Fallers offers contrasting studies of nation building in Turkey and Uganda in order to isolate the patterns of syncretism that emerged when traditional values collided with Western ones. He illustrates nicely the discipline required to avoid retrodiction that merely tells the history of the country and to escape the hubris of predicting the future.

12. For a more fully articulated but similar set of definitions linked to propositions consistent with my general argument, see E. K. Francis, Interethnic Relations (New York: Elsevier, 1976), pp. 381–405.
of core symbols. A nation ceases to exist when, among other things, these symbols are recognized as not truly differentiating the group from outsiders. A nation is an "imagined community" because these symbols are shared vicariously with fellow-nationals over long distances, thus producing expectations of complementary and predictable behavior from fellow-nationals. A government is not considered legitimate unless it is thought to represent such a group. A nation is a group of people who wish to practice self-determination. Nationalism is a belief held by a group of people that they ought to constitute a nation, or that they already are one. It is a doctrine of social solidarity based on the characteristics and symbols of nationhood. A nation-state is a political entity whose inhabitants consider themselves a single nation and wish to remain one.

I call attention to the fact that this set of definitions rests on the prior notion of social mobilization. Nation and nationalism imply a situation in which popular awareness of, and some degree of popular participation in, politics prevail. I emphasize that many of the 160-odd states currently in existence are not nation-states.

National sentiment is a belief among intellectuals and other literate groups that they constitute a nation and ought to practice self-determination at some time in the future, even though the condition of even partial social mobilization has not yet been attained. The concept is necessary because we have to recognize sentiments of solidarity—perhaps potential solidarity would be more accurate—in situations of literary self-consciousness, as in Elizabethan England, the early risorgimento, in Russia under Alexander II, or in Brazil in the 1820s.

Such an elite sentiment must be sharply distinguished from nationalist ideologies. A nationalist ideology is a body of arguments and ideas about a nation advocated by a group of writers and accepted by a specific political movement. Nationalist ideologies embody political programs. They arise only after social mobilization has gone on long enough to have resulted in the availability of mass publics attentive to the message. They refer to the specifically "nationalist" content of whatever ideologies are in political competition. Hence they provide an additional dimension for talking about the content of liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and fascism. There were no nationalist ideologies prior to the late 18th century.

Typically, nationalist ideologies make assertions about key contentious aspects of the solidarity being urged. Since they challenge, advocate, or seek to come to terms with the impact of modernity, all nationalist ideologies must be concerned with the validity of the core values of the traditional culture. Revolutionary ideologies seek to get rid of traditional values; syncretist ideologies seek to amend or retain them, differing on the extent of intercultural borrowing which ought to be fostered. Ideologies make assertions about the nation's claim to historical uniqueness, to the territory that the nation-state ought to occupy, and to the kinds of relations that should
prevail between one's nation and others. Nationalist ideologies also contain constitutional and institutional programs on how the nation ought to be governed. Finally, these ideologies advance ideas on the historical mission of the nation, ranging from quiet self-perfection to conquest or the restoration of some golden age.

Continuing strife among rival ideologies claiming different missions and different institutions for their nation is proof of unsuccessful rationalization. Such strife provides evidence that the socially mobilized are split, that they cannot agree on the characteristics that make them different from other nations. They cannot reach agreement on the unique institutions that ought to govern their state. The society does not seem able to come to terms with the strains of modernization. A certain ideology may succeed in capturing the state for a limited period and then enact its program. But if a rival ideology takes over soon thereafter and scraps the policies of its predecessors, we are entitled to wonder whether a more pervasive nationalism ever really characterized the entire population, whether an accepted core body of values ever existed.

I reserve the term national myth for the situation in which the clamor among ideologies has been transcended to the extent of resulting in a core of ideas and claims about selfhood commonly accepted by all the socially mobilized. Put differently, the national myth represents those ideas, values, and symbols that most citizens accept despite their being divided into competing ideological groups. The myth represents the overlap among ideologies. It is possible, of course, that the bearers of a specific ideology capture the state and eventually succeed in imposing their beliefs on everybody. Their ideology then becomes the myth. Something like this happened in France after 1870, in Russia after 1917, in Japan after 1945. It is also possible that no single ideology ever wins finally and that the myth is made up of items on which rival ideologies have compromised, as in the United States after 1865 or in Belgium since 1970. In either event, evidence that a national myth prevails is also evidence of successful rationalization.

My definitions seek to sidestep the conceptual and historical dichotomies that plague the study of nationalism. Armed with these terms we do not have to worry about the objective as opposed to the subjective basis of nationhood, authentic as opposed to illegitimate nationalisms, the virtues of the older types and the vices of the latecomers. The terms ought to cover every situation and provide a value-neutral way of comparing them. Whether we approve or disapprove of the historical results is really a question of whether we are in agreement with the particular form of rationalization that came about; it need not be a judgment on nationalism as a describable phenomenon.

Finally, my definitions are capable of being operationalized through systematic observation. Paul Valéry may have been quite right when he wrote that
History is the most dangerous product evolved from the chemistry of the intellect. Its properties are well known. It causes dreams, it intoxicates whole peoples, gives them false memories, quickens their reflexes, keeps their old wounds open, torments them in their repose, leads them into delusions either of grandeur or persecution, and makes nations bitter, arrogant, insufferable and vain.\(^\text{13}\)

However, we need not stop with his observation. We can determine just how arrogant and how vain a given nation may be, compared with itself and with others at various points in their histories. Moreover, we can determine why the arrogance prevails by comparing the competing ideologies and by discovering which beliefs emerged as the nation’s myth. Not even nationalists act on the basis of pure will or intuitive romantic insight. They are constrained, like every actor in a collective setting, by the rules of satisfying, by the need to calculate the opportunity costs of making alliances or stressing this or that theme, by the imperative of recognizing relations of strategic interdependence with other actors. Even the formulation of a nationalist ideology involves rational choice.

**Nationalist ideologies compared: a typology**

An incomplete reading of modern history suggests the existence of seven manifestations of nationalist ideologies, four revolutionary and three syncretist in emphasis. Despite their differences, all seven have certain characteristics in common that distinguish them from premodern ideologies. All are populistic; they all derive their appeal from the claim that “the people” of a certain territory (not a class, or status group) have an innate right to self-determination. All are progressive because they reject all or some of the historical past; they believe in the efficacy of human intervention to change history for the better. And all are rational because they diagnose a challenge and prescribe a response; they embody distinct notions of cause and effect, ends and means; matching means to ends is not usually random, emotional, passionate, willful, or romantic.

But the differences between the two main types also must be stressed. Revolutionary ideologies insist on drastic institutional change. Certain types of social groups are to be removed. Relations among remaining and new groups must become totally different. The old elite must go and a new elite, compatible with populism and progress, must take its place. Syncretist ideologies are unwilling to be this drastic. They do not represent a sharp break with the past, only some compromise with it. They often reject the values of modernity, though they seek the incorporation of its techniques and some of its institutions.

Revolutionary ideologies therefore tend to be more internally coherent than syncretist ones. They embody a sharper sense of technical rationality. They are willing to trade off values quite ruthlessly, whereas their syncretist rivals are often hesitant and inconsistent in their choices. All nationalist ideologies stress the short run over the long term. None appreciates that over the long haul any set of major institutional changes triggers unforeseen and possibly unwanted consequences, inconsistent with the values being urged. But syncretist ideologies are much more likely to suffer from the uncertainties of the long run. Revolutionary ideologies are consistent in urging inclusive popular participation, whether voluntaristic or manipulated. Syncretists tend to fudge the issue of participation, alternating between voluntary modes and manipulation, between elections and repression, between individual rights and the obligation to submerge oneself in the nationalist struggle.

Following Carlton Hayes and Hans Kohn, I divide the revolutionary ideologies of nationalism into "liberal" and "integral" variants. Each, in turn, must be subdivided. Liberals break down into "Jacobins" and "Whigs," integralists into "Marxists" and "fascists."

Jacobin liberals reject traditional values and institutions completely and wish to replace them; Whigs also reject them but look for replacements more cautiously. Both believe that liberal societies have many international affinities and ought to borrow from one another. Jacobins derive the nation's claim to historical distinctiveness from alleged ethnic and linguistic homogeneity; thus they profit from whatever processes of homogenization and centralization may have been triggered by earlier regimes, as did Robespierre, Danton, Cavour, and the 1848 Frankfurt Parliament. Whigs prefer the legitimacy of historical continuity to ethnic homogeneity, as did J. S. Mill and Nehru. Both types agree that the area occupied by whatever group is defined as "the nation" is the proper territory of its state. Both also agree that relations among liberal nations ought to be peaceful. Toward nonliberal political entities, however, Jacobins and Whigs are willing to use force to make others progress toward liberalism, to aid in their liberation, and to colonize them for their own good. Jacobins are somewhat more aggressive in their proselytizing zeal, as shown by Woodrow Wilson and Thomas Jefferson. All liberal nationalists advocate representative democracy, natural rights, and the free participation of all citizens in government. Jacobins believe that the historical mission of the nation is not merely continuous self-perfection but also the global diffusion of the creed. Whigs prefer to confine matters to continuous self-perfection.

There has been an elective affinity, to say the least, between liberal nationalism and late 19th-century imperialism, with American intervention in Mexico and the Caribbean, and with Allied meddling in the Russian civil war after 1917. The power of the creed was obvious in the occupation of Germany and Japan after 1945, as well as in the construction and conduct of
NATO. It is far from obvious that liberal nationalism also has an elective affinity for a peaceful world order, despite the presence of some themes that might lead one to suspect it.

When we examine the integralist family of ideologies, such suspicions vanish fast. Fascists and Marxists also reject the old order and its values, though fascists sometimes pretend to retain some of its symbols, as in Hitler's playing with pre-Christian themes, Mussolini's appeals to Roman grandeur, and Kita Ikki's to Shinto ideas. Borrowing from other integralist societies is praiseworthy. What group of people is to be selected as "the nation"? Marxists opt for the particular class, or coalition of classes, that resists imperialism in a specified territory. Fascists use a racial criterion or arguments about historical continuity or both. Both ideologies advocate a totalitarian mode of government by a vanguard of the elect which incarnates the nation as a collectivity. Both assume that the nation must struggle for survival because it is constantly threatened by attack from hostile external forces. Fascists glorify war and self-assertion as part of the nation's mission. Marxists accept war as inevitable as long as imperialism continues to live, but they glorify only wars of national liberation. For the fascist, the mission of the nation is to assure its own survival; for the Marxist it is the ushering in of a classless society. The idea of a harmonious international order is alien to fascists and Marxists, except on minor issues in the short run. As long as the contrast between liberal and integral nationalism remains as stark as the historic ideologies suggest, the idea of a rationalized world seems far-fetched. But then, the successors of Stalin, Mao, Hitler, and Prince Konoye seem to have sensed that ideological purity is not always rational.

The three kinds of syncretists disagree on how much of the revolutionary ideologies ought to be accepted in their countries. "Synthetic syncretists"—Mohandas Gandhi, Léopold Senghor, K'ang Yu-wei, Mazzini, the German romantics—consider many modern values as desirable, provided they can be mixed appropriately with traditional values to be retained. However, such ideologies feel that not all traditional values are worthy of retention, particularly those closely associated with a diffuse agrarian order. Synthetics want to borrow values, along with institutions and techniques, from the early modernizers. Their claim to nationhood for their own countries rests on historical longevity. They demand only the existing state for the nation's home. They seek peaceful and cooperative relations with others, after the survival of their nation seems assured. Democracy may or may not be the featured form of government; various forms of authoritarian rule by the elite that understands the proper mixture of values is more common. The historical mission of the nation is to bring about its own survival and protection, which implies heavy borrowing from nonindigenous cultural sources in order to succeed. Among the successful synthetic syncretists we could list some of the Meiji reformers, modern South Korea, and perhaps the postindependence regimes in Ivory Coast and Senegal.
### TABLE 1. Attributes of revolutionary nationalist ideologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacobin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. What should be done about the core values of the traditional culture?</td>
<td>reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>outright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What ought to be borrowed from other cultures?</td>
<td>borrowing is good; liberals ought to borrow from each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What is the nation's claim to historical distinctiveness?</td>
<td>ethnic and linguistic homogeneity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What territory is properly the nation's?</td>
<td>whatever area is occupied by the group defined in 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How should the nation relate to other nations?</td>
<td>spread liberalism by example and by war if appropriate;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>foster peaceful relations among all liberal nations; fight other nations or colonize them in order to advance liberalism globally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What is the proper institutional structure for the nation?</td>
<td>representative democracy natural rights for individual citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What is the historical mission of the nation?</td>
<td>continuous self-perfection and the global diffusion of the creed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples**: French Revolution, Jefferson, Wilson, Cavour, German liberals, Mill, Nehru, Stalin, Tito, Ho, Mao, Mussolini, Hitler, Eastern Europe in the 1930s, Kita Ikki
TABLE 2. Attributes of syncretist nationalist ideologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Synthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. What should be done about the core values of the traditional culture?</td>
<td>many modern values are good and usable; mix with good traditional values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What ought to be borrowed from other cultures?</td>
<td>values as well as techniques and institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What is the nation's claim to historical distinctiveness?</td>
<td>historical longevity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What territory is properly the nation's?</td>
<td>usually, but not always, the existing state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How should the nation relate to other nations?</td>
<td>cooperatively and peacefully, after survival is assured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What is the proper institutional structure for the nation?</td>
<td>variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What is the historical mission of the nation?</td>
<td>assure its own survival and self-perfection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Gandhi, Senghor, K'ang, Yu-wei, Mazzini, Afghani, Lutfi, German Romantics</td>
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"Traditional syncretists" distrust nonindigenous values and have no intention of introducing them. They remain deeply attached to religious systems that penetrate the local culture—Confucianism, Islam, Hinduism, Catholicism. However, such people are quite willing to take over nonindigenous techniques, such as technology, scientific education, literacy, and modern armies. More important, they are willing to adapt indigenous institutions to the extent necessary to incorporate these techniques, for example, through the introduction of conscription, compulsory public education, and even aspects of industrialism. Traditional syncretists persuade themselves—usually mistakenly—that they can borrow techniques and institutions with-
out also accepting the values that go with them. Their claim to national distinctiveness rests on an argument for historical cultural superiority over their rivals which often takes a racial form, as in the work of Charles Maurras, some of the late Chinese Confucianists, and of Rabindranath Tagore. They claim as the nation’s realm the territory of the existing state, but they are ambivalent about the nation’s relations with other countries because of their strong fear that they may not survive. Assuring that survival is the nation’s main mission, which implies an indigenous cultural renaissance along with the introduction of nonindigenous institutions and techniques. The mode of governance preferred by traditional syncretists is corporatism designed to contain and channel popular participation while legitimating the leadership of traditional groups, as clearly expressed by one of the earliest “latecomers,” Prussia’s Baron von Stein.

“Restorative syncretists” reject foreign values and institutions; they merely want the foreigner’s techniques—his armies and factories. In fact, they take the position that the values actually professed by their own government are already dangerously corrupt and must be replaced by pure and authentic indigenous values. They are “restorers” because they wish to get rid of foreign moral and institutional accretions and bring back the purity of an earlier golden age. They rely on religious revelation and scriptural authority—the vedic texts for Tilak, the Koran for Khomeini and Hassan al-Banna, the Christian Bible for the Slavophiles. Who is the nation? The people to whom the revelation was made, irrespective of where they might live. How should the nation behave toward others? It must be eternally vigilant, trust nobody, and be ready at all times to defend its spiritual treasure. Restorers, by virtue of their stance, must expect war and violence. Their chief mission is to restore the lost golden age, which they attempt to do by instituting a theocratic dictatorship. They can no more envisage a harmonious world order than can the integralists.

The history of most nations is a story of competition among these seven ideologies. Can they be transcended to give us a consensual national myth that would water down and slough off some of the contrasting themes? Or, as in the case of some of the integralist and liberal experiences, is the national myth the same thing as a victorious ideology? In order to investigate these possibilities, and their implications for a rationalized world order, I must first show how to “measure” a national myth.

**Indicators and measurement**

The neglect of systematic indicators of national integration and disintegration is one of the main failings of the works reviewed. There seems to be little excuse for this as far as the quantitative measurement of degrees and types of social mobilization are concerned. Concepts and data are plentiful. The best studies of nation building, such as Eugen Weber’s *Peasants into
Frenchmen, use them to great advantage and do not hesitate to mix them with qualitative observations. Where systematic public opinion data on popular expectations of the nation-state exist, of course, the political consequences of social mobilization can be directly assessed. When we do not have such data we are forced to use qualitative observations on a systematic comparative basis.

What kinds of questions could we ask of a society in order to make a judgment of its degree of rationalization under the umbrella of a nationalist myth? We want to know whether such beliefs, despite the prevalence of divergent attitudes, are sufficiently consensual to enable the state to function to everyone’s basic satisfaction. Moreover, we want to know whether this happy state of affairs obtains despite linguistic, ethnic, religious, class, and status cleavages. The following questions are appropriate indicators:

Is there a formula for political succession that is regularly observed without engendering coups and civil wars?

Are the core values communicated by the public media and the school system generally accepted? Is there evidence of major movements or events challenging these values?

Is the economic policy pursued by the state perceived as equitable irrespective of regional, linguistic, ethnic, or religious cleavages?

Is the cultural (especially linguistic) policy pursued by the state perceived as equitable?

Is there a foreign-policy consensus despite the existence of competing parties and changes of government? (N.B. This need not mean that policy remains unchanged; it means that changes in policy do not engender strife that covaries with other social cleavages.)

Two key indicators are implied by this list, one quantitative, the other qualitative. What is the incidence of civil strife, since strikes, riots, coups, conspiracies, and full-scale civil war are the most visible evidence of dissatisfaction? Is the language policy pursued by the state a source of satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

Civil strife is a very tricky indicator because we cannot assume that every strike, every riot, every assassination of a political figure provides evidence of deep-seated and widespread dissatisfaction. These events have varying diagnostic significance, depending on the extent of social mobilization, the degree to which the state penetrates the society, the nature of the urban-rural, high culture–low culture split. Following Ted Gurr and Muriel McClelland, we must distinguish between “turmoil,” “conspiracies,” and “internal war” as providing a scale of violent events.14 Turmoil, in general,

is not a valid indicator of dissatisfaction with the nation-state. It may suggest alienation that finds expression in rival nationalist ideologies, but we cannot be sure that the demands put forward do not remain within the confines of a shared myth. We must be certain that the riots and strikes are motivated by a set of symbols challenging the official ones before we can interpret this form of civil strife.

What about the incidence of conspiracies (terrorism, mutinies, coups) directed against the government? These are not always valid indicators of a desire to make or unmake a nation. I distinguish between conditions that obtain when a nation is yet to be built and challenges to an existing nation-state, the condition of nation maintenance.

Let us assume a situation of incomplete social mobilization in a state ruled autocratically by a narrowly based elite, though there is no doubt that a state exists and is recognized to exist. Conspiracies then constitute evidence of a desire to create a nation-state if one segment of the elite seems to impose its vision of the nation on other segments of the elite. Conspiracies also constitute such evidence if the conspiring elite wishes to make a nation out of a target population distributed among several states. Conspiracies, however, are not a valid indicator of such a desire when they merely serve as a method for displacing one set of caciques when another, as in most of Latin America’s “national” period during the 19th century. For instance, the endemic conspiracies of Santa Anna’s Mexico are not evidence of nationalism, but the conspiracies of the reformers of the 1850s probably are.

Now let us assume a situation in which social mobilization is far advanced and an effective state exists as well, which, until the point at which a marked increase in conspiracies occurs, had enjoyed legitimate authority. The increase in conspiracies is valid evidence of a nationalist desire to split off from that state or to take it over, if the conspirators advance a nationalist ideology different from the previously prevailing myth, as in the case of Nazi Germany or Lenin’s Russia. An increase in conspiracies is also a valid indicator when the conspirators represent groups who feel left out of the benefits bestowed by the state and its national myth, usually because the conspirators are “different” for reasons of religion, ethnic, linguistic, or status characteristics. Examples are India since 1947, Northern Ireland, and Biafra.

Internal war, under conditions of complete social mobilization, always proves the failure of a national myth and the prevalence of competing nationalist ideologies. Under conditions of incomplete social mobilization, however, this is not necessarily the case. Internal war here may just be the “normal” way of resolving interelite conflict for spoils and prove nothing one way or the other about nationalism.

Language policy is a very sensitive indicator of satisfaction with the nation-state, provided we keep in mind two very different situations, recognized multilingual states (Switzerland, Belgium, India) that make no pre-
tense about having a single official language used in all public business and imposed by the public school system, and states in which several languages are (or have been) used vernacularly, though a single one is imposed as the official mode of communication. In the first case, one would have to know about the extent of bilingualism among the elite and about people's willingness to function in skilled professions in a language other than their native one. Multilingual polities are based on various subtle compromises; the willingness to forgo a single official language does not necessarily come about without strife. The character of these compromises provides the indicators for observing the fashioning of the national myth.\textsuperscript{15}

The more common case involves the imposition of a single language to take the place of a number of vernaculars that may or may not belong to the same language group as the official one. How can people be persuaded to abandon their native vernaculars in favor of modern Hebrew, Bahasa, and Swahili? What incentives are given to those who learn the language? How are dissenters punished? What makes the work of official language academies authoritative? As recently as 1863, one-third of French elementary school children could not effectively communicate in standard French. We may wonder about the situation in the Soviet Union now. Yet there is no evidence of disaffection from the national myth. In short, the manner in which a single language is imposed on people provides clues about the threshold beyond which the imposition of a language is perceived as a violation of national self-determination. It is a mistake to think of any language policy simply as imposition by the brute force of the centralizing state. Speakers of minority languages may have excellent reasons for complying with the pressure merely to maximize their career opportunities; they may have equally rational grounds for opposing the pressure. Everything depends on the policy and economic context in which the process occurs. Rational choice criteria, not presumed attachment to primordial cultural values, explain outcomes.\textsuperscript{16}

Definitions and indicators are tools to enable us to say something about the relationship between nationalism and the rationalization of societies in the throes of modernization. They are also tools that should throw some

\textsuperscript{15} On Switzerland see Carol L. Schmid, \textit{Conflict and Consensus in Switzerland} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); this book contains ample quantitative evidence on language and nationalist symbols. On Belgium see Arend Lijphart, ed., \textit{Conflict and Coexistence in Belgium} (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1981). Kenneth Jowitt shows how these variables manifest themselves in quite different forms in "market" as opposed to "ordered" societies, in which interpersonal competition is legitimated in terms of its contribution to the organic unity of the entire society (as in Leninist polities). See his \textit{The Leninist Response to National Dependency} (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1978).

\textsuperscript{16} For a convincing demonstration that game-theoretic formulations can illustrate the outcomes of encounters between language centralizers and speakers of minority languages see David D. Laitin, "Political Linguistics and Catalonia after Franco" (Paper read at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New Orleans, August 1985).
light on the conditions under which the pattern breaks down, when rationalization at the level of the nation-state seems no longer to work, and the search for alternative political constructs begins.

This task has not yet been tackled. All I can do here is to offer a research agenda raisonné. Three questions arise: (1) What are the typical processes of rationalization of an industrializing society, in terms of the growth of a national myth? (2) Must successful domestic rationalization occur at the expense of international harmony? (3) Under what conditions does the failure of domestic rationalization lead to nonnational formulas of governance?

**National myths and successful rationalization**

I take rationalization to be "successful" if a national myth comes into existence, if conspiracies and internal war do not challenge that myth, if a consensual language situation is legitimated by the myth, and if the myth provides a coherent secular alternative to earlier fragmented and incoherent patterns of belief and conduct. The myth must contain the nonreligious assertions that are designed to give certainty and direction to the believer's mind and of which Anderson and Gellner write. It may contain the patriotic appeals that Seers considers vital for the implementation of self-reliant development policies. Successful rationalization, to use Gellner's formulation again, implies the substitution of a single common high culture for the previous flourishing of many fragmented low cultures in the target population. Alternatively, the rational new culture is a unified amalgam of low- and high-culture themes.

How might such a transformation be explained? We must go back to the characteristics of the people involved in the modernization process. The mobilized (elite and mass) may differ from one another in whether they are easily assimilated into the high culture or whether they are differentiated from it. On what basis can the mobilized-unassimilated differ from the mobilized-assimilated? What variables may appear to derail the whole process? We must consider the timing of the events that mobilize people and render them dissatisfied, the various dimensions of cleavage that may divide the assimilated from the unassimilated (such as race, social status, religion, language, ethnicity), the spatial distribution of the target population, and the ideologies that motivate the actors.

**Timing.** Timing of state intervention in the process of social mobilization can make an enormous difference in the outcome. If social mobilization is not yet far advanced and if the state has appreciable control over the levers of symbol creation and resource extraction, then rationalization can be achieved by relaxing the criteria of access to high-culture educational facilities and status symbols, thus admitting the unassimilated to near equality. The elite, in effect, successfully co-opts the newly mobilized before they can formulate a counterideology.
Co-optation is most readily practiced when the state "builds" the nation, when an effective state animated by an elite possessed of a nationalist ideology follows the policies that result in the gradual incorporation of the un-mobilized into society. It is easier when the target population is not divided by obvious cleavages, especially ethnic cleavages. And it is facilitated by the use of ideologies that can act as dramatic motivators. Co-optation is likely to fail, however, when the target population is not homogeneous, when national sentiment precedes the existence of a powerful state, when there is sharp competition among nationalist ideologies. Contrary to Anderson's and Smith's arguments, under the proper timing conditions, "official nationalism" can be a very effective rationalizing agent. Its failure in Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East is attributable not to its "official" character but to the absence of the additional facilitating conditions. The failure of any formula for rationalizing a society is almost guaranteed when social mobilization is compressed into a single generation and when there is neither a strong state nor a pervasive nationalist sentiment, as in most of Africa.

Dimensions of cleavage. It would be lovely if we could demonstrate that a unique combination of variables differentiating the mobilized-unassimilated from each other and from the mobilized-assimilated could be associated with the emergence of a national myth. We are unlikely to find such a combination, despite the continuing efforts of some students of nationalism to single out ethnicity and language as that unique combination. No single dimension or combination of dimensions of differentiation can be shown to be necessary, sufficient, or necessary and sufficient, to explain the formation of all nations. Dimensions of salience differ with the timing of the process of social mobilization and with the spatial distribution of the populations involved. In states and societies whose populations do not differ markedly on ethnic grounds, the mobilized-unassimilated have to differ from the assimilated on more than one dimension in order to have the incentive to formulate a nationalist ideology. Simply speaking a different language or being of a different religion from the assimilated is not a strong enough incentive to demand a nation of one's own. However, in ethnically homogeneous states and societies, the mobilized-unassimilated need to differ only on the dimension of social status to have an incentive for demanding a nation-state.

Spatial distribution. The spatial distribution of the populations involved interacts with the timing pattern. Rationalization is impeded if ethnically diverse populations live intermingled or in close proximity to each other and if the processes of social mobilization are such that the symbolic and extractive resources of the state are taxed beyond its capability to adapt. This happens when several mobilized/unassimilated ethnic groups make simultaneous claims for greater equality and participation. Their geographical situation makes them compete against one another and against the dominant
groups. This was one factor impeding the attempted rationalization of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires; it hinders rationalization in Africa now.

**Nationalist ideologies as motivators.** It seems likely that the content of particular nationalist ideologies would make a difference with respect to eventual rationalization. The difficulty is again the factor of time. For ten- or twenty-year periods, one might suppose, any of our seven ideologies would be effective motivators to adjust to a new kind of life. But what happens if the continued process of social mobilization, when linked to the kinds of frustrations associated with ethnic or religious cleavages or competitively located groups of the aroused, undermines the logic of the erstwhile successful ideology and gives rise to a new round of differentiation? We know that this has happened on many occasions—in Belgium, Japan, and Turkey, to name but a few.

I hypothesize that in situations of ethnic spatial dispersion, where the mobilizing elite inherits a weak state, the only ideology capable of truly motivating people toward a new life is integralism. The Marxist variant has historically proved to be the more effective one. We cannot test the half-life of fascism since no fascist regime has survived long enough to complete the process of rationalization, though Franco's Spain may, inadvertently, come close. If, under the circumstances stipulated, rationalization is attempted through reliance on a liberal or a syncretist-synthetic ideology, the chances are that the newly mobilized but still unassimilated groups will seek their salvation in secession, not in loyalty to the new dispensation.

I hypothesize further that liberal ideologies can serve as effective rationalizing agents only in societies possessing a strong state prior to the onset of massive social mobilization, endowed with a population that has become largely monolingual by the time of full industrialization, and possessing the resources for satisfying mass demands.

What about syncretist ideologies? The compromises between secular and sacred values which they all attempt saps their power to rationalize. They tend to founder because they do not know how to distinguish the public from the private in religion. Secular nationalist ideologies make this distinction successfully: religion may flourish as an organized pursuit without being conjoined with the public realm, though it may also go into decline. The syncretist formulas are unwilling to make this distinction, insisting that religious values and institutions retain public relevance. At the same time, however, these formulas, by allowing the introduction of some secular values and institutions, tend to undermine themselves and to set the scene for violent social conflict. Restorative syncretism, by seeking to confine the impact of the modern to technology and the military, may be able to buy time. The efficacy of the formula, of course, depends fatally on the timing factor. I hypothesize that syncretist formulas may channel the process of
modernization for a while; but the forces they unleash will successfully challenge these ideologies and produce either a liberal or an integral national myth.

_Must successful rationalization result in international strife?_

Suppose these hypotheses were accurate. What do they predict for the relations among successful nation-states? Ignoring structural constraints on foreign-policy choice, the implications of the hypotheses for the quality of international politics are not pleasant. Nationalist myths contain claims on other nations, even after national self-determination is achieved. The integralist myths suggest strife, insecurity, constant struggle. The Jacobin variant of the liberal myth legitimates the imperialism of the virtuous, even if it stops short of accepting the inevitability of international strife. Synthetic syncretism is peaceful, but the other two varieties of syncretism are at least ambivalent with respect to relations with other nations. Seers reminds us that even in the area of international economic relations, all the types of nationalism contain the seed for peaceful as well as bellicose international contact.

The conventional wisdom has it that Rousseau was right: domestic happiness can be bought only at the price of international unhappiness. Matters are even worse if we consider that unsuccessful domestic rationalization, as in the later years of the Habsburg, Ch’ing, Romanov, and Ottoman empires, _also_ engenders international disharmony. The argument should not be overstated. True, the post-Enlightenment period has been one of active international discord. At the same time, that period has also been one of unprecedented increases in economic and social welfare in the face of the steepest population increases in the history of homo sapiens. Nor can it be convincingly argued that the prosperity of the richest has been bought at the price of the impoverishment of the poorest. In short, the possibility of demonstrating a link between types of nationalism, patterns of domestic rationalization, and the incidence of international strife should not be seen as the equivalent of a doomsday forecast. Even if it were true that the higher standards of welfare of the post-Enlightenment world are a result of the competitive prowess of the successful nation-states—thus implying the prevalence of a basically warlike world order anchored in mutually antagonistic mercantilisms—the international anarchy was not entirely nefarious. Rousseau was not wrong, but he overstated his case by exaggerating the extent of international unhappiness.

Nevertheless, the hypothesis suggested by this line of inquiry is not a cheerful one. It presages the continuation of conflict-prone international relations as long as the national myths now extant or being born reflect the seven ideologies. Whether as successes or failures as rationalizers, the seven ideologies spell a troubled world order even if Seers’s predilection for sturdy region-states were to become real.
Can failed domestic rationalization lead to international rationalization?

I now stand Rousseau on his head: can we imagine that domestic unhappiness will lead to international happiness? Since this has not happened yet, we are engaged in a gedankenexperiment. 17

Suppose that hitherto successfully rationalized nation-states encounter difficulties related to technology, welfare commitments, and international economic interdependence. Suppose further that the same difficulties be-devil efforts of states who have not yet fashioned successful nations. Print capitalism may have fostered national integration. But managed capitalism and state socialism may not succeed in maintaining the integration if all of the following conundra must be faced: excess industrial capacity, uncertainties about investment in high-technology industries, how to split up the resources of the sea, deal with international debt, and protect the biosphere from pollution, while also remaining committed to higher standards of personal welfare for their citizens. Can the simultaneous pressure of domestic turmoil and international interdependence lead to political constructs that are quite different from what we know and that therefore imply a different kind of world order?

I hypothesize that because of these pressures previously accepted national myths deteriorate. Previously mobilized people are no longer successfully assimilated or co-opted. Just as in a previous age they sought a new identity in nationalism once the old identities ceased being useful rationalizers, the newly disoriented must search for an alternative to nationalism. Just as their predecessors could select items from the menu of nationalist ideologies, the newly disoriented have choices: autarky, regionalism, international regimes, mininationalism via secession, or a new global identity based on class or religion.

Autarky. Not all countries suffer equally from the cross-pressures of postindustrialism. Some may have resources sufficient to enable them to meet these challenges with a minimum of domestic disruption and little dependence on other countries, particularly if the volume of welfare demands can be reduced. The pressures will undermine the national myth only to the extent that domestic remedies are unavailing. By no means is every manifestation of international interdependence likely to subvert nationalism. Large countries with integral myths are most likely to withstand the search for alternative orders.

17. I have discussed the argument that follows more fully in The Obsolescence of Regional Theory (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1975); “Why Collaborate?” World Politics 32 (April 1980); and “Words Can Hurt You: or, Who Said What to Whom about Regimes,” International Organization 34 (Spring 1982).
Global identities. Candidates for this choice include a transnational commitment to the creation of a global classless society (Marxism) and the acceptance of a global religious creed stressing either service to others (Christianity) or the transcendence of politics (Hinduism, Buddhism). Smith is absolutely correct in showing that each of these can be institutionally, normatively, and conceptually an alternative to nationalism. However, in the practice of modern politics, none of them has in fact been immune to nationalism. The reconversion of believers into the purer forms of these identities demands not only a rejection of national myths but a consistent rededication to the original cosmopolitan content of these creeds. Although the possibility cannot be precluded, credibility remains low. The current prevalence of traditional and restorative syncretisms works against this solution. The innate secularism of the four revolutionary ideologies can hardly be said to favor a turn toward transcendence or compassionate service. The content of Marxist integralism, especially in its antidependency guise, is no more consistent with such a choice.

Regionalism. The desire for the regional integration of previously successful nation-states, particularly in Europe, clearly owes something to the deterioration of earlier national myths. However, not even the most successful integration schemes have yet resulted in a regional identity. Such an identity would not constitute an abandonment of nationalism but the substitution of a larger nation for several smaller ones. Alternatively, regional arrangements that function effectively without leading to the merger of sovereignties are hard to distinguish from international regimes.

Mininationalisms. Contemporary effusions of long dormant ethnic identities in Western Europe do challenge the finality of the familiar nation-states and certainly question the former myths. But I cannot convince myself that they constitute solutions to the cross-pressures of postindustrialism. Autonomous Wales, Brittany, or Euskadi are no more likely to deal successfully with the turbulence of the welfare state than are the governments from which they wish to secede. Rational choice postulates (as well as recent events) convince me that we are dealing with a temporary phenomenon, not a serious alternative to the existing nation-states.

International regimes. Such entities are already quite familiar. Without concerning ourselves now with their origins, I simply hypothesize that the widespread demand for managed national economies sustaining high levels of welfare cannot be met in the context of sovereign nation-states. Meeting the demands calls for new regimes, and the reconstruction of existing ones, with the consequences of further undermining the autonomy of the nation-state as it seeks to cope with domestic sources of eroding legitimacy. However, countries animated by liberal and synthetic myths are most likely to
feel this pressure. Furthermore, widespread demands for managed national economies striving for rapid industrialization (implying some redistribution of wealth from North to South), also cannot be met in the context of the sovereign nation-state. Meeting these demands also calls for the creation of various kinds of international economic regimes. Integralist as well as various syncretist myths feel the logic of this pressure. Finally, everybody desires the benefits of technological innovations. Conversely, the unwanted consequences of such innovations can be avoided only through acts of international collaboration and administration. Maximizing benefits while minimizing costs calls for the creation of nonnational practices and institutions that may tend to undermine further the rationalization formula of the nation-state.

Note that the logic of these hypotheses does not predict world government, or regional integration, or a stronger United Nations as the likely outcome. If the nation-state loses its prominent position as the font of effective social harmony, the alternative may be all or none of these possibilities. Alternative rationalization formulas may imply decentralization as well as centralization, or both at once (though for different demands and issues). All that can be affirmed with confidence is that none of this is likely to happen until the logic of the mobilization-assimilation balance has run its course, until happiness relying on the nation-state has everywhere been tried, until social mobilization is complete in all countries. Whether we like nationalism or not, it seems to be a necessary stage through which political man has to pass. Even if there were no other reasons for studying nationalism, that conclusion alone justifies the quest.