

# State-Making and Nation-Building

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In the modern world only one form of political unit is recognized and permitted. This is the form we call the 'nation-state'. It is easy enough to discover. Nation-states have frontiers, capitals, flags, anthems, passports, currencies, military parades, national museums, embassies and usually a seat at the United Nations. They also have one government for the territory of the nation-state, a single education system, a single economy and occupational system, and usually one set of legal rights for all citizens, though there are exceptions. (In some federal systems, there may be citizenship rights for all members of the nation-state, but also communal rights for members of particular communities.)<sup>1</sup> They also subscribe, tacitly or openly, quietly or vociferously, to a single ideology which legitimates the whole enterprise – nationalism. Indeed, the whole system of states is built on its assumptions, even if its practice does not often conform to nationalist precepts.<sup>2</sup> We even call it the 'international' system.

At the same time, as has often been pointed out, there are actually very few genuine 'nation-states' today. If we mean by the term 'nation-state'

1 For example, in Catalonia and even more in Yugoslavia, see C. Bridges, 'Some causes of political change in modern Yugoslavia', in M. Esman, ed., *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1977.

2 There is, of course, a vast literature on nationalist ideology. Apart from the classic works of C. Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism*, New York, Smith, 1931, L. Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1954, and H. Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, New York, Macmillan-Collier, 2nd edn, 1967, the more recent work of A. Orridge, 'A sequence of nationalism', in L. Tivey, ed., *The Nation-State*, Oxford, Martin Robertson, 1980, B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London, Verso Books, 1983, and J. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1982, all pay attention to the varieties of nationalist legitimations of the state.

that the boundaries of the state's territories and those of a homogenous ethnic community are coextensive, and that all the inhabitants of a state possess an identical culture, then we will not be able to muster more than about 10 per cent of existing states as candidates for the title of 'nation-state'. Leaving aside tiny minorities, we may perhaps be able to include a few more, apart from states like Portugal, Greece, Poland and Somalia; Holland, Denmark and the two Germanies have small minorities, but are by now otherwise homogeneous, if we leave aside the immigrant workers. In other states – Sweden, Norway and Finland, for example – the Lapp and Karelian minorities do not, perhaps cannot, impair the cultural unity of the state.<sup>3</sup> Yet, this leaves a very considerable number, perhaps over half, with serious ethnic divisions which may spill over into antagonism, and another large group, perhaps a quarter of the total, in which a dominant culture-community must accommodate the demands of 'peripheral' *ethnie*, as in Britain, France and Canada, Romania and Bulgaria.<sup>4</sup> In the 50 per cent with serious cultural cleavages, it has not always been possible to contain the competing demands or meet the claims of rival communities. In India, Sri Lanka, Burma, the Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Cyprus, Spain, Yugoslavia, Corsica (France), Ireland, Chad, Nigeria, Camerons, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Sudan and Ethiopia, these divisions have at one time or another since 1914 erupted into overt violence and even warfare.<sup>5</sup>

There is something of a paradox here. In theory, we require our societies to assume a single shape. In practice, we are content with a formal declaration of intent, while our societies assume all manner of

3 For a classic statement of the argument, see W. Connor, 'Nation-building or nation-destroying?', *World Politics*, vol. 24, 1972, and in Europe, W. Connor, 'Ethno-nationalism in the First World', in Esman, *Ethnic Conflict*. On the Lapp, Karelian and other very small ethnic minorities, see the brief discussions in G. Ashworth, ed., *World Minorities*, vol. I, 1977; vol. II, 1978; vol. III, 1980: *World Minorities in the Eighties*, Sunbury, Middx, Quartermaine House.

4 In Canada, apart from Quebecois, Indians, Eskimo, Ukrainians, Poles and many others; in Romania, the large Hungarian *ethnie* in Transylvania, in Bulgaria, the considerable Turkish minority intent on preserving their identity, see Ashworth, *World Minorities*; J. Krejci, 'Ethnic problems in Europe', in M. Archer and S. Giner, eds, *Contemporary Europe: Social Structures and Cultural Patterns*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978; and J. Krejci and V. Velimsky, *Ethnic and Political Nations in Europe*, London, Croom Helm, 1981.

5 There has been, to my knowledge, no comparative study of Third World separatisms and ethnic antagonisms, but I have found useful C. Anderson, F. von der Mehden and C. Young, *Issues of Political Development*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1967; T. Sathyamurthy, *Nationalism in the Contemporary World*, London, Frances Pinter, 1983; and V. Olorunsola, ed., *The Politics of Cultural Subnationalism in Africa*, New York, New York, 1972; cf. also R. Hall, *Ethnic Autonomy: Comparative Dynamics*, New York, Pergamon Press, 1979, for some case studies.

shapes. It is, of course, easy to write the whole business off as a case of Western myopia: we have equated the 'nation' and the 'state', because that is the form they took in the two historically influential societies – England and France – at the very moment when nationalism burst forth. In other words, Eastern Europe and the Third World have all been trying to imitate a rather singular model, whose ethnic homogeneity, like its parliamentary institutions, simply cannot be transplanted. They have been pursuing a Western mirage. To say that the only real state was a 'nation-state', and that the only realized nation was a 'nation-state', has not only thrown the geopolitical map into turmoil, it has entailed a fruitless and destructive quest for something unattainable outside a few blessed regions of the earth. And even in the West, the much-sought marriage of state and *ethnie* has not turned out to be all that happy and enduring.<sup>6</sup>

And yet, there is no question of turning back and re-erecting those rambling, polyethnic empires of which some anti-nationalists dream. It may be that the fault is all with nationalism, and that the problems only arise when ethnic homogeneity and cultural coextensiveness become desirable goals in themselves. The fact remains, and it is a central one to the whole of the modern era since the French Revolution, that the majority of educated and politically aware men and women are committed to 'nationalism' even if only tacitly, through exclusion and self-differentiation. They are no longer really aware of any other viable mode of culture and political existence. The assumptions of 'nationalism' have shaped their political horizons as much as those of 'development' have furnished their economic agenda. It may be that some of those assumptions were actually present even before nationalism made them explicit; but there is certainly no possibility of returning to a pre-nationalist era.

That being so, the practical question becomes one of reconciling, in the light of nationalist premisses, the often conflicting demands of state and nation. And the intellectual question becomes one of explaining the often intricate relationships between state and nation which the misleading omnibus term 'nation-state' is liable to obscure. This means in turn that we need to distinguish between 'state-making' and 'nation-building', and question those theories that claim that nations created states or the reverse; and ask ourselves whether, as I shall argue, they are formed most enduringly and fruitfully around some third unit of solidarity and community.

<sup>6</sup> Indeed, our very terminology is Anglo-French (and Latin); see on this G. Zernatto, 'Nation: the history of a word', *Review of Politics*, vol. 6, 1944, and B. Akzin, *State and Nation*, London, Hutchinson, 1964, as well as the detailed study of terminology and

## 'Nation-Building' and Nation-Inventing'

The first move away from an exclusively Western and nationalist standpoint was taken in the early 1950s by the communications theorists. Their central idea was that of 'nation-building'. Unlike the nationalists, they did not hold that the nation was 'there' waiting to be discovered by a generation of nationalist Prince Charmings. The 'nation' had to be 'built', bit by bit. But the blueprint for the building remained firmly of Western origin. The goal was, after all, the 'national participant society' of the democratic Western states. And the manner of the building processes was also Western: social mobilization, linguistic assimilation and the use of the mass media and mass education. For Lerner the key was 'empathy': the formation of psychologically mobile personalities who had broken with tradition and were able to imagine, and desire, the new kind of participant society. For Karl Deutsch, cultural assimilation, as measured by language absorption, was the process *par excellence* that ensured the building of national units. While social mobilization uprooted peasants and artisans and propelled them into the larger towns, it was the standardization and inclusion of linguistic assimilation that turned this mobile but disunited mass into an educated 'public', who in turn would be bound to one another by the very density and homogeneity of the messages they received. But what neither Deutsch nor Lerner make clear is who sends these messages, in what they consist, to whom they are directed, or why they are sent at all. In other words, what is so patently missing in this approach is any real role for the state and state elites. Their presence is simply assumed throughout.<sup>7</sup>

There is a reason for this silence about the role of the state and its elites. Communications theorists were reacting to both the nationalist and anti-nationalist accounts of nation-forming. Common to both these

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concepts by A. Kemilainen, *Nationalism; Problems concerning the Word, Concept and Classification*, Yvaskyla, Kustantajat Publishers, 1964. For the recent European disharmony, cf. P. Mayo, *The Roots of Identity*, London, Allen Lane, 1974.

<sup>7</sup> D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, New York, Free Press, 1958, and K. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, 2nd edn, New York, MIT Press, 1966, are the main texts; but the collection of essays in K. Deutsch and W. Foltz, eds, *Nation-Building*, New York, Atherton, 1963, and the more recent expansion of his theories in K. Deutsch, *Nationalism and its Alternatives*, New York, Knopf, 1969, are fruitful. For appraisals, see Connor, 'Nation-building or nation-destroying'; A. D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, London, Duckworth; New York, Harper and Row, 1971; 2nd edn, New York, Duckworth and Holmes & Meier, 1983, chapter 5; and idem, *State and Nation in the Third World*, Brighton, Harvester, 1983, chapter 1.

accounts was an interventionist and voluntarist view of history, that is, one which attributed to the deliberate actions of human beings the chances of building nations. For 'modernization' theorists (of which communications theory was one variant) such human intervention is largely superfluous; the processes of social development will in any case work themselves out and bring to fruition the potential for evolution that lies within. Hence the role of the state is simply to act as a handmaid of history, whose goal is a world of large-scale nation-states or regions.<sup>8</sup>

This is, in many ways, still the orthodoxy about both state-making and nation-building. It is clearly one that is profoundly Western and fundamentally endogenist. The socio-demographic processes which it charts lie within the 'society' concerned. The analyst is simply concerned to draw the lineaments of the new type of society out of the old, and to describe the ways in which this profound qualitative transition is accomplished by analysing such data as urbanization and literacy rates, indices of linguistic assimilation, the impact of the mass media, the rates of social mobility and the patterns of transport, mass education and voting.

Such data are, of course, useful. They tell us something about the manner and speed of the formation of national units – provided, of course, we have a clear idea of what we mean by a 'nation' in the first place. But they tell us nothing about the forces that impel people to seek to belong to 'nations' rather than any other type of unit. And, if one looks for a moment outside the West, this question becomes more than just academic. In the West, perhaps, one might concede that 'nations' grew up accidentally in the bosom of their respective states. But in the Third World, there are very few nations as yet; and the state is having to work hard at just keeping its various ethnic groups together, let alone 'build' a nation. And yet, 'nation-building' describes succinctly what Third World elites are trying to do. If anything, 'nation-building' is *the* basic Third World ideology and project, rather than a tool of analysis.

This is very much the conclusion which Marxists and others have reached. The question then becomes one of discovering the forces that make such a quest for nationhood universal in the Third World. For some, like Worsley and Amin, Third World nationalism is really a form of anti-colonialism, and presumably therefore a temporary one. The

8 On modernization theory generally, see S. Eisenstadt, *Modernisation: Protest and Change*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1965; and *Tradition, Change and Modernity*, New York, John Wiley, 1973; R. Nisbet, *Social Change and History*, Oxford, London, New York, Oxford University Press, 1969; A. D. Smith, *The Concept of Social Change*, London and Boston, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973; and A. Hoogvelt, *The Sociology of Developing Societies*, London, Macmillan, 1978; excessive endogenism and conceptual vagueness are the main targets.

small native bourgeoisies and intelligentsia have seized the apparatus of the colonial state, not only to use it for the tasks of 'development', but also to forge nations out of the many ethnic and regional communities which the colonial state has bequeathed them.<sup>9</sup> In this view, the state is first a target and then a base for revolutionary nationalism and the dominant classes who espouse it. Indeed, as Warren argues, Third World state elites drawn from the petite bourgeoisie have adopted a model of 'dependency' that fits well their basically nationalist ideals and goals. The 'distortions of development' are as real on the psychological plane (in the form of collective *atimia*) as they are on the economic level.<sup>10</sup>

But perhaps the most trenchant critique of communications theory comes from one who has adopted the basic framework of 'modernization'. Ernest Gellner argues that it is nationalism that invents nations 'where they do not exist', and that the reason for nationalism's ubiquity lies in the uneven development of modernization and industrialization. He agrees with Deutsch that social mobilization uproots traditional structures and that these are replaced by the forces of cultural assimilation, and notably language, in the expanding towns. He even agrees with Lerner about the need for a literate, participant society in an industrial age. Indeed, such a large-scale participant society in which everyone has become a literate and numerate citizen demands a mass, public, standardized and compulsory education system; and that in turn requires something the size of a state to sustain it. So one form of nationalism becomes loyalty to a linguistic homogeneous state.<sup>11</sup>

But there is another kind of nationalism. In the later stages of industrialization, when social communication is at its most intense, new

9 P. Worsley, *The Third World*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964 and S. Amin, *Class and Nation*, London, Heinemann, 1981; cf. also the more recent account in Sathyamurthy, *Nationalism in the Contemporary World*, in which 'nationalism' becomes subsumed in the struggle for 'national liberation' and anti-colonialism generally.

10 B. Warren, *Imperialism, Pioneer of Capitalism*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1980, chapter 7 claims that 'dependency theories' express the nationalist aspirations of Third World petite bourgeoisies and intelligentsia; cf. also P. O'Brien, 'A critique of Latin American theories of dependence', in I. Oxaal, T. Barnett and D. Booth, eds, *Beyond the Sociology of Development*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, and on the concept of *atimia* (negative status in the international status order), J. Netti and R. Robertson, *International Systems and the Modernisation of Societies*, London, Faber, 1968.

11 Gellner's early statement is in E. Gellner, *Thought and Change*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964, chapter 7; an amended statement appeared in E. Gellner 'Scale and nation', *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, vol. 3, 1973, and a greatly expanded theory in E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983. There are important differences between the earlier and later statements, some of which are noted in A. D. Smith, 'Ethnic persistence and national transformation', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 35, 1984.

cleavages may appear. These are produced by the acute competition for scarce resources and facilities in the expanding towns, especially between the old-established denizens and the later arrivals. The trouble is that such conflicts may not only revolve around class issues. They may involve cultural differences. The two which cause most division are genetic and religio-cultural differences. Both are salient and both refuse to blur in the new linguistic state. Like ancient but hidden chasms, they open up in the fierce urban competition of late industrialization. And, if unchecked, they are likely to result in two new nationalisms on either side of the cultural divide, and hence two new nation-states. So the second, secessionist kind of nationalism is the result of the failure of industrialism to integrate everyone around a single culture, and it is responsible for all the new mini-states that have sprung up lately.<sup>12</sup>

But, again, we may ask: where does the state figure in all this? Its role seems to be that of a necessary adjunct and support, and in no way an initiator or even catalyst. The same is true of the recent 'centre-periphery' models of Hechter and Nairn, which are so influential today. In Hechter's analysis, the state, it is true, once possessed an initiating role: the British state, for example, in Tudor times incorporated Wales and later Ireland, and was enlarged by the union with Scotland in 1707. And today's renascent ethnic nationalisms in the Celtic fringe are again directed at the centralism of the bureaucratic state. But closer inspection reveals that, at least today, the 'state' is simply the form and agent of another larger force, an unevenly developing capitalist industrialism, which has turned the peripheral backlands into dependent economies and cultures and which, by its very embrace, keeps ethnic 'sectionalism' alive.<sup>13</sup> The state has a more important role in Nairn's account. Because the British state has remained 'patrician', Britain has not been able to take full advantage of industrial capitalism, and has therefore encouraged its expanding bourgeoisie since 1800 to seek foreign markets. Nationalism, therefore, began overseas, in the peripheral colonies seized by the British and French bourgeoisies. It began as a response by

12 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, reviews these in chapter 6, but has difficulty over the roles of religion and ethnicity, the first admitted, the second more tacit. It is not clear whether he means to deny an important role to ethnicity in premodern eras, or indeed whether he thinks there is a real difference between *ethnie* and nations, an unexplored theme in his oeuvre.

13 M. Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: the Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, and his amended version, prompted by criticisms based on the differences between Scotland and Wales/Ireland, in M. Hechter and M. Levi, 'The comparative analysis of ethno-regional movements', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 2, 1979; for some criticisms and studies of the Scottish case, cf. K. Webb, *The Growth of Nationalism in Scotland*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1977, and J. Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.

elites in the colonies to capitalist imperialism. Since these elites had no other resources to fall back on, they appealed to the only thing they had: their masses, whom they 'invited into history'. Nationalism is therefore always populist, and it remains so, when it is exported back to Europe in the wake of decolonization to become 'neo-nationalism'.<sup>14</sup>

Again, however, the much-vaunted 'autonomy of the state' soon becomes obscured by the commanding autonomy of an unevenly developing capitalism and its bourgeois agents. This may be more faithful to the spirit of Marx, but it hardly tells us why the state has become so pivotal today, and how its role is related to the widespread appeal of nationalism. Or is this role another mask, this appeal another mirage? If nations can be 'invented', cannot states be 'made' and unmade, by other and more 'real' forces at work beneath the façade of history?

### 'State-Making' and Inter-State Systems

The underlying problem with all the above accounts is that the state has been seen simply as a place or arena in which other 'real' forces and processes are locked in combat. But the state is really far more than an arena. It does involve territory, but it cannot be simply reduced to a location. Its spatial quality is integral to its functions and agencies. Generically, the 'state' comprises a set of differentiated, autonomous and public institutions, which are territorially centralized and claim jurisdiction over a given territory, including the monopoly over coercion and extraction. In the past, it is questionable to what extent 'the state' was able to realize its claims beyond the immediate vicinity of the capital (if there was a stable capital); some of the great empires were really no more than loose coalitions of superordinate and subordinate realms, each with its own ruler and local institutions, usually in some form of tributary relationship with an overall monarch. Certainly, this was true of the early Mesopotamian and Chinese empires; and we find the pattern re-emerging whenever the dynasty is weakened and economic disaster undermines the delicate balance of bureaucratic controls over food production and communications.

What are the main functions of any centralized state? First and foremost, defence of the territory from external incursions, physical and cultural; hence some control over demographic movements (colonies,

14 T. Nairn, *The Break-up of Britain*, London, New Left Books, 1977, esp. chapters 2, 5 and 9; for general appraisals, cf. E. Hobsbawm, 'Some reflections on "The Break-up of Britain"', *New Left Review*, vol. 105, 1977, and A. D. Smith, *The Ethnic Revival*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, chapter 2, which also examines Hechter's model of 'internal colonialism'.

migrants, etc.) and new religious movements originating from beyond the state's domain. Second, conflict regulation within: the state as arbiter seeks to contain disruptive conflicts, especially between elites, but also between peasants and the towns over prices of crops and food. The *kudurrus* found in the fields of southern Iraq, and dating back to Kassite times, attests a conflict management role of determining boundaries of individual farms and fields through imperial grants, as does the succession of Sumerian and Babylonian law-codes, designed to ensure a unified order in and through which social interests could be pursued.<sup>15</sup> Third comes the imposition of a territorial order over and above the more usual (certainly in earlier times) kinship order. This involves the marshalling of manpower and resources according to territorial administrative divisions, and the inculcation, often through war over particular territories, of a sense of political community based upon shared and defended space. Of course, a polyethnic and often unwieldy polity like an empire may be hampered in this direction; but even large-scale empires like the Han under Wu-ti (140–87 BC) sought to homogenize originally culturally diverse populations (in this case, under Han Chinese auspices).<sup>16</sup> A fourth function is that of information control and transmission. Here, of course, the state usually has to fall back upon specialist literate classes, which in early times were usually priests and scribes. But the latter were early also attached to the bureaucracy, as in Pharonic Egypt of the New Kingdom, and were even trained by special government educational establishments.<sup>17</sup> Finally, there is a 'cosmic' function: the ruler as head of state also embodies (either as a promise, or in his very person) the essential link with sacred order beyond, from which all power, all fertility, all control over the elements, is deemed to flow. In his person, and in the smooth functioning of his government, pre-modern societies find the necessary assur-

15 On the *kudurrus* and law-codes in Sumer and Babylon, see G. Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964, pp. 224–5, and L. Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1964, pp. 123, 159, 286–7; state regulation, rather than any despotism founded on ecological necessity in river-valleys, as postulated by K. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957, provided one of the main bases, along with defence from marauding desert tribes like the Amurru, for imperial unifications from Sargon of Akkad to Nebuchadnezzar. On all this, cf. M. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: vol. I. From the Beginning to 1760 AD*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, for an excellent analysis.

16 For early China, see W. Eberhard, *A History of China*, 4th rev. edn, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977, chapters 2–6, and J. Meskill, *An Introduction to Chinese Civilisation*, Lexington, Mass., D. C. Heath, 1973, chapters 1–3; Wu-ti and other emperors also sought to keep out the Hsiung-nu at times.

17 On ancient bureaucracies, including New Kingdom Egypt, see W. Beyer, 'The civil service in the ancient world', *Public Administration Review*, vol. 19, 1959; and for Sumerian city-states, S. Kramer, *The Sumerians*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1963.

ance of an ultimate harmony with the cosmos, and hence of the minimum prosperity needed to assure food production and survival.<sup>18</sup> Whether, in these early days, states and rulers looked beyond this to what we might term economic development and redistribution is a moot point; there are some indications of an early concern with such redistribution, usually to prevent revolution or civil chaos, and perhaps we should add this to the generic functions of the state.<sup>19</sup>

When we come to the 'modern' or 'rational' state of early modern Europe and later, the scope and effectiveness of the state in performing these functions is immeasurably increased, but it is doubtful whether any really new functions are shouldered. If anything, one function, that of providing a link with the cosmos, is reduced, if not eliminated; or it would seem so. Instead, the other functions are subdivided and given wholly new meanings. Immigration controls become stricter, along with the growth of compact defensible territories, passport controls, currency controls and the like. Conflict regulation has turned into a vast array of law-codes, by-laws and regulations for dealing with every aspect, not just of 'law and order' concerns, but of relations between citizens and between the citizen and the bureaucracy. In the process, the numbers, scope, powers and efficacy of the bureaucratic agencies have multiplied. Similarly, control of information has spawned the rise of state systems of mass education, state-sponsored journalism and mass media, and state-controlled agencies of surveillance and information technology. The 'state as recorder and transmitter' has reduced the clergy and church in many societies to a side-show, as professional experts perform the earlier scribal functions in undreamt-of ways. And, quite clearly, the modern state has taken on a new welfare or developmental function as a central facet of its very *raison d'être*.<sup>20</sup>

Given this development from what Mann has called the 'despotic

18 The classic statement for the ancient Near East is H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1948; but cf. also R. David, *The Ancient Egyptians*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, for the position of the Pharaoh in Egyptian religion and society.

19 M. Mann, chapter 4 in this volume, argues for this function, citing C. Renfrew, *The Emergence of Civilisation: the Cyclades and the Aegean in the Third Millennium B.C.*, London, Methuen, 1972, and, critically, E. Service, *Origins of the State and Civilization*, New York, Norton, 1975, for this early period. It certainly operated on a small scale in the temple-states of early Sumer (H. Frankfort, *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East*, New York, Anchor Books, 1954), but was far more difficult to organize over large-scale empires, as the rest of Mann's argument suggests.

20 On all this, see H. Jacoby, *The Bureaucratization of the World*, tr. E. Kanes, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 4th rev edn, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, and of course M. Weber, eds, H. Gerth and C. Mills, *From Max Weber; Essays on Sociology*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1947; for an analysis of aspects of nineteenth-century European bureaucracies, cf. M. Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe, 1815-1914*, London, Longman, 1972.

power' of pre-modern states and empires, to the 'infrastructural power' of the modern state, we may now ask: how does the emergence of the modern 'rational' type of state with its infrastructural powers, affect the growth of nations? Can we not explain the ubiquity of nationalism as a response to, or expression of, this new type of state power?

This is very much the approach adopted by Breuilly and Tilly and his associates, when they search for the forces behind 'nation-building' in the context of Western 'state-making'. Broadly speaking, Tilly adopts a 'dualist' standpoint: there was an original, indigenous process of state-making, and nation-building, in Western Europe, and a derived, designed and externally imposed process outside. Had we asked in 1500 whether the modern state, as defined above, would have won out in the West over other political rivals like the city-state, feudal principality, theocracy or empire, we would have been thrown back on particular European contingencies for an answer. The fact that this peculiar modern form of rational and infrastructural state won out and became the norm across Europe (and later the world) was the result of several contingent factors like Western Europe's isolated geopolitical position at the time (unlike south-eastern Europe which fell within the orbit of – Ottoman – invasions); its relative cultural homogeneity (Christendom); its wealth through cities and trade; its social divisions of class (landed oligarchs versus peasants) rather than corporate kin groups (as in Africa); a decentralized political structure – and the perceived military and social superiority of the modern, centralized state, once it appeared (for example, in the Italian campaigns of the early Renaissance French kings from Charles VIII onwards).<sup>21</sup>

These were all factors that favoured the growth of modern states at the expense of their political rivals. But what turned a probability into a certainty was, first, the external environment, and second, the policies and will of certain elites. By the external environment, Tilly is referring to the inter-state system, both in its economic sense of a nexus of core capitalist states engaged in trade wars, and a system of absolutist states engaged in military warfare and diplomatic rivalries in Europe, especially since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.<sup>22</sup> By elites Tilly

21 C. Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975, Introduction. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, also starts from the growing separation of state and society in the sixteenth century, and posits the nationalist outlook (or 'argument') as a means of bridging the gulf and reintegrating society and state through solidarity and citizenship. This is certainly one source of nationalism's appeal (if not of its origins); but it also seems to presuppose an identity in 'society' which may be lacking or weakly felt, as polyethnic societies show, and nationalism therefore performs other functions for 'society' and 'culture' over and above the purely political realm.

22 Tilly, *The Formation of National States*, here leans on the analysis in I. Wallerstein,

means certain absolute monarchs and their chief ministers and generals, who succeeded, often in the face of determined opposition, in crushing rival centres of power within and staving off external interference, to create compact, solidary and fairly homogenous states able to take advantage of the technological revolutions that spread across the continent from the eighteenth century onwards. It was their policies and qualities of will and administrative skills that ensured the victory of the modern European state.

These same two sets of factors, the inter-state system and the policies and skills of certain elites, also shaped the state systems of the Third World. Only here, there was an extra element of design and imposition – by aliens. After each round of wars, and each treaty, more and more areas of the globe were divided up into ‘compact states’ by a few major European states – at the very moment when imperial greed could be sustained by a growing sense of national mission at home, and a growing acceptance of the efficacy and naturalness of the inter-state system abroad. There really did seem to be no alternative to the modern state. No other type of polity appeared to ‘work’ as well, in the sense of performing those reinterpreted and vastly expanded functions of state which were now, more than ever, felt to be its institutional preserve. Hence, the growth of popular conceptions of the modern state and what it was supposed to do accompanied and assisted the division of the globe into (colonial) ‘replica’ states.<sup>23</sup> Modern states could be, should be, and were, ‘made’.

What about nations? After all, in Europe the presumption became one of national congruence. In the West, every state had its own nation, or so it seemed. So should not every nation have its own state? For the earliest nationalists, Herder and Rousseau, nations could get along quite well without their own states, so long as they kept fast to their cultures and lifestyles (preferably simple and agrarian, as in Corsica). But from Fichte onwards, a possessive theory of nationalism took root: to be a real nation you had to possess your own state (and, in Hegel’s book, to have *had* your own state at some time).<sup>24</sup> But: if in Eastern Europe, the nation

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*The Modern World System*, New York, Academic Press, 1974; cf. also Tivey, *The Nation-State*. On the military aspects, see M. Howard, *War in European History*, London, Oxford University Press, 1976.

23 Tilly *The Formation of National States*, conclusion; Smith, *State and Nation*; and R. Montagne, ‘The “modern state” in Africa and Asia’, *The Cambridge Journal*, vol. 5, 1952. On this nationalist imperialism, cf. J. Gallagher and R. Robinson, *Africa and the Victorians*, New York, St Martin’s Press, 1963, and G. Lichtheim, *Imperialism*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1971.

24 On Rousseau, see A. Cohler, *Rousseau and Nationalism*, New York, Basic Books; on Herder, see F. Barnard, *Herder’s Social and Political Thought*, Oxford, Clarendon Press,

was seeking for its own state, then what becomes of the theory that it is states that creates nations? And, more serious, what happens to those states that are unfortunate enough not to possess nations of their own? Can *they* create nations? In a world of invented states and state-making, can states that have no prior national content nevertheless fabricate nations?

This would certainly appear to be the result of the 'political action' school of state and nation formation. And it fits nicely with the recent emphasis upon the 'invented' quality of traditions and institutions – and of nations.<sup>25</sup> One could even combine the insights of the Gellner and Nairn traditions with those of Breuilly and Tilly's school: nationalism 'invents nations' and state elites create them. If the state elites are also nationalists, as so many of them are in today's Third World, then nationalism can be said to be creating nations by first making viable states which will form the matrix of the nations-to-be.

### Patterns of Nation-Formation

At first sight, this is an attractive and convincing picture. Political mobilization and state-making, nation-building and -invention, all introduce an activist, dynamic element lacking in earlier accounts of state- and nation-formation, and appear to accord with the findings of much modern historiography of early modern Europe and the Third World.<sup>26</sup> In contrast, earlier accounts, most of them tinged with nationalist assumptions, appear wooden, deterministic and even mystical. The nation itself becomes a construct, and nationalism a mode of representation of history, a history that itself is being continually reinterpreted in the light of the constructs of 'nationalism'. The effect of this approach is to highlight the 'mythic' quality of the idea of the nation, and

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1965. On early nationalism in general, see Kemilainen *Nationalism*, and S. Baron, *Modern Nationalism and Religion*, New York, Meridian Books, 1960; also H. Kohn, *Prelude to Nation-States: the French and German Experience, 1789–1815*, Princeton, Van Nostrand, 1967.

25 As the studies of national traditions in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, eds, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, demonstrate, though they also reveal that 'invention' can only take place within definite limits and requires rich materials from which to select and reinterpret.

26 Notably in Breuilly himself, but also the work of T. Ranger, 'White presence and power in Africa', *Journal of African History*, vol. 20, 1979, introduction and passim: A. Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968, and D. Beales, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1971, on sub-Saharan Africa, India and Italy, respectively.

the selective, distorting nature of the lens of nationalism as it seeks to reinterpret 'history' in the light of present collective needs.<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, these 'activist' and 'political' portraits of state-making and nation-building are not without problems. Two of these are particularly germane to our problem of the relationship between states and nation-building. The first is that, quite simply, there are more patterns of nation-formation than can be contained in the activist approach. The second is that a major problem, overlooked in these approaches, is the prior formation of ethnic communities which, in varying degrees, influence and condition the success of attempts to 'make states and build nations'. The two problems, of course, are not unrelated.

Let me start with the diversity of nation-forming patterns. We already saw that Gellner posited a distinction between early-industrializing integrative nationalisms based on mobility within a linguistic unit, and late-industrializing secessionist nationalisms based on 'counter-entropic traits' like colour and literate religion; i.e. those which refused to 'blur' in the assimilative pressures of industrial culture. Similarly, Tilly pointed to the historian's distinction, taken up in greater detail by Seton-Watson, between the 'old, continuous nations' of Europe and the new, designed or imposed nations of Asia and Africa.<sup>28</sup> In fact, we can isolate four main historical patterns or 'routes' of state-and-nation-formation:

- 1 *The Western*: where state and nation emerge *pari passu*, with dynastic and territorial states being built up around a definite ethnic core, to which other ethnic and regional groups and communities are successively attached by alliance, marriage, coercion and administrative intervention;
- 2 *The immigrant*: where small part-*ethnie* are beneficiaries of a state of their own, with or without a struggle, and they then seek to absorb and assimilate waves of new immigrants from different cultures into what becomes increasingly a territorial nation and a political community, as in America, Argentina and Australia;
- 3 *The ethnic*: where *ethnie* exists in varying degrees of completeness

27 On this 'lens', and for the museological concept of 're-presentation of history', see D. Horne, *The Great Museum*, London and Sydney, Pluto Press, 1984, which, despite its light-hearted emphasis on the ironies of European tourism, reveals the ideological intent of the way in which the European historical and artistic heritage is presented and understood.

28 H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, London, Methuen, 1977, chapter 2; they include France, Britain, Holland, Spain, Sweden, Russia, and to some extent Poland and Hungary; cf. also Krejci and Velimsky, *Ethnic and Political Nations*. Seton-Watson would include many of the East European nations among the contrived and deliberate creations.

