

The original puzzle

Despite the widespread expectation that modernity might lead to the decline of the nation-state, nationalism persists in its role as a ‘quasi religion’ (Smith J. E. 1994). Most states that emerged during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries were established on the basis of the classical nineteenth century nation-state – and most of these states derived crucial legitimisation by drawing on the force of this model. The First World War helped contribute to this development – especially in Eastern and Central Europe, where new countries gained independence on a national basis. One can also readily observe the nation-state’s continued dominance in the wake of communist rule (in the states of the ex-USSR, ex-Yugoslavia, and ex-Czechoslovakia).

More recently, however – and in spite of the nationalist and ethnic wars that have so recently devastated the European continent, Africa, the Middle East, and South-east Asia (indeed, most parts of the inhabited world) – new states have been established following the nation-state model, and nationalism remains a major driving force in world affairs (Smith A. D. 2001). Even a cursory consideration of the states recognised by the international community in the first decade of the twenty-first century reveals the narrative of the nation-state’s enduring power and the degree of legitimacy it still confers upon political actors. In 2006, Montenegro gained independence from Serbia on the basis of an ethnic rationale. In much the same manner, Timor-Leste (known as East Timor), which recovered independence from Indonesia by force at the end of the 1990s, appeared on track to be a new nation-state until what has been presented as an ethnic conflict broke out in 2006. In addition, South Sudan declared independence in 2011, on the grounds of ethnic and religious dissimilarities between its population and that of North Sudan. Finally, other states emerged at the beginning of the twenty-first century on the same ethnic or nation-based argumentation, but without being granted formal recognition by the international community. The most striking case of this is no doubt Kosovo, which declared national independence in 2008, but has not been recognised by countries such as Spain or Romania, which are somewhat apprehensive when it comes to ethnic minorities. This type of situation can also be observed in various post-Soviet de facto states, such as Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh, where ethnic/national issues appear to be at stake.

This reality – along with growing regionalist demands and particularism – has

been at the root of our extended inquiry into the following contradiction: recently established states tend to continue implementing and giving legitimacy to the nation-state model despite the fact that it has time and again revealed problematic for the national minorities living in those countries (Lecours and Moreno 2010). Indeed, the affirmation of the nation-state model, whether merely at the rhetorical level (i.e. in the political discourses of the elites) or at a policy level (in matters of education, budget allocation, cultural rights, and so on), has important consequences in terms of the relationship between the state and the citizens of these minorities. In the most extreme cases, individuals belonging to national minorities have been denied full citizenship in their new states. In other cases, minorities have been excluded or discriminated against in the name of an alleged necessity to defend the emerging nation-state and its identity.

While this volume focuses on this tension – between the continued defence of a particular national identity and the incorporation of national minorities within the borders of the state territory – it does *not* delve into the roots of the nation-state's continued legitimacy nor into causes of the apparent paradox between nationalism and modernity (an issue that has already been explored at length elsewhere; see, among others, Badie 1995 and Dieckhoff 2000). Instead, we propose to explore the various dynamics generated by the implementation of the nation-state model – a model often considered outdated and unworthy of analysis – by states that gained independence during the last century. More specifically, this volume is concerned with the *consequent processes* engendered by the adoption of such a state model in terms of the minority-majority relationship, minority integration and, more generally, citizenship. It aims to explore the implications of this self-chosen model of national identification as it relates to state-building processes, identity construction, national minorities' rights and inclusion, minorities' mobilisation and expression, citizenship and inter-group relations.

The specific approach of the volume

While nationalism has received more and more attention from political scientists since the fall of communism, a huge part of this literature is devoted to explaining and classifying theories of nationalism (for example Dahbour and Ishay 1995; Hutchinson and Smith A. D. 1994; McCrone 1998; Ozkirimli 2000). Confronted by this proliferation of theories, authors such as Hall (1993) argue that the focus should instead be on the creation of typologies.

Besides, recent national minority studies have mostly approached nationalism either from a political theory point of view or from the perspectives of social mobilisations, secessionism (Gurr 2011; Hale 2008) and violence (Laitin 2007). In the latter studies, the concepts of ethnicity, ethnic mobilisation and violence have often been mobilised to refer to actors generally considered as primordial entities defined by their ethnic characteristics. Under this perspective, processes such as identity construction and the dynamics between state national practices and discourses have been left out of the analytical framework.

Hence, despite a large amount of research on nationalism on the one hand, and

national minorities on the other, few volumes have tackled the specific relationship between new nation-states and national minorities and made the link between nationalism studies and national minorities. While several works have been published on case studies, such as Israel (Ghanem 2000; Kaufman 2010; Peled 1992; Smooha 1989), post-Soviet or post-Communist states (Beissinger 2002; Brubaker 1996; Bunce 2005; Commercio 2010; Hale 2008; Motyl 2001), this issue has rarely been discussed through the lenses that eschew single regional studies. This is precisely what our volume intends to offer, by reflecting on various cases worldwide, from Ukraine to Israel, Turkey or Malaysia.

More substantially, the various case studies and comparative analyses included in this volume have been developed in an original perspective that permits us to draw unique and insightful theoretical conclusions. In order to analyse the relationship between new nation-states and national minorities, the authors of this volume draw on various common concepts and categories derived from Brubaker's triadic nexus model and its critiques.

Instead of describing nations as substantial entities, collectivities or communities, Brubaker presents them as conceptual variables (Brubaker 1996: 16) – theorising a single relational nexus as a triad, linking national minorities, the newly-nationalising states in which they live, and the external national 'homelands' to which they belong (or can be construed as belonging) via an ethno-cultural affinity, though not by legal citizenship (1996: 4). In this manner, the three terms are linked, but they are not fixed or taken as given; each constitutes arenas of struggle that can be seen as a number of differentiated and competitive positions or stances, adopted by different organisations, parties, movements, or individual political entrepreneurs (1996: 61).

Consequently, and to follow Brubaker (1996: 60), a national minority may be seen as a family of related yet mutually-competing stances, which can be characterised by:

- a public claim to membership within an ethno-cultural nation different from the numerically- or politically-dominant ethno-cultural nation;
- the demand for state recognition of this distinct ethno-cultural nationality; and
- the assertion, on the basis of this ethno-cultural nationality, of certain collective or political rights.

A nationalising state may be seen as a family of related yet competing stances, characterised by the tendency to see the state as an 'unrealised' nation-state, and the concomitant disposition to remedy this perceived defect – something that leads to nationalising practices, policies or events on behalf of what is seen as 'the state' (1996: 63). External national homelands may be seen as a family of related yet competing stances surrounding an axiom of shared nationhood across the boundaries of state and citizenship, united by the idea that this shared nationhood makes the state responsible not only for its own citizens, but also for its ethnic co-nationals living in other states and who possess other citizenships (1996: 66–7).

The triadic relation between these three terms is thus as *between relational fields*, characterised by the close interdependence of relations within and between fields, by the responsive and interactive character of the triadic relational interplay between the fields, and by the mediated character of this responsive interplay. Taking a responsive, interactive stance may be mediated by representations of stances in an external field – representations that may be shaped, in turn, by stances already provisionally held (1996: 67–9).

Drawing on the concept of the triadic nexus, Smith has argued that a fourth term should be taken into consideration, since international organisations have so strongly influenced the relationships between national minorities, nationalising states, and external national homelands – as has been seen in the case of Estonia (Smith D. 2002; see also Coppieter *et al.* 2004 and Johns 2003). By contrast, however, in a study on Russian national minorities in Latvia and Kyrgyzstan, Commercio argues that the role minorities' external homelands play may be overstated and that other factors (e.g. local economic conditions) have a greater impact on minority perceptions than one external homeland's foreign policy practices (Commercio 2010: 19). The most vocal critique of Brubaker's triadic nexus comes from Kuzio (2001), who argues that one of Brubaker's three terms – the nationalising state – should be equated with nation building, and cannot be selectively applied only to former communist countries, mainly Ukraine and Kazakhstan (Arel 1995; Wilson 1997; Cummings 1998; Kubicek 1999; Lieven 1999) with Russia excepted (Smith G. *et al.* 1998; see Kuzio 2001: 139–42). Indeed, Kuzio (2001: 136) argues that if we agree that all civic states have ethno-cultural cores, then they are all *de facto* nationalising, since historical myths, state languages, anniversaries, symbols and flags are never neutral.

While taking these critiques into account and discussing them, the authors of the chapters of this volume, including Brubaker, take into consideration the extent to which the nationalising processes in the states that have emerged from the start of the twentieth century give the impression of *déjà vu* (Frandsen 2001: 302). Further, they explore ways in which nationalising states and policies can be analysed in cases across the globe.

Hence, this volume offers a series of studies that share a common conceptual framework and that pursue the same general objective: addressing the interaction between newly-established nationalising states and national minorities. The authors' focus on this interaction represents the linchpin of the volume and expresses its general motivation. In doing so, this volume aims to present new analytical tools and empirical examples to better understand the different processes brought about by the impact of nationalising patterns upon minorities, and the impact national minorities have had upon such patterns.

Outline of the volume

To address these issues in an in-depth manner, this volume integrates a series of chapters, focusing on specific dimensions of the general research question. More precisely, the volume is structured along three research axes and parts:

- The first part tackles how national identity is constructed in new nation-states. It considers the different ways in which these new states may constitute arenas of struggle between competing groups and discourses that try to impose their narrative on the state identity.
- The second part of this volume is dedicated to the analysis of the impact of the nationalising state on national minorities living in those states. The chapters assess the consequences of nationalising discourses and practices carried out by state elites.
- The last part of this volume explores the position of national minorities.

The investigation is conducted along two dimensions:

- (1) how national minorities perceive themselves, and their identity, in a nationalising state; and
- (2) what kinds of mobilisation this self-perception engenders.

In Chapter One, Rogers Brubaker begins by addressing different manifestations of the nationalising state. He looks back at the conclusions of his previous work discussing the nationalising state and suggests using this concept with significant caution. In particular, he holds that the notion of a ‘nationalising state’ should not be looked upon as a theory, or as a device for classifying states as nationalising or non-nationalising. Rather, he holds that it should be viewed as an analytical prism that allows us to better grasp nationalising discourses, policies and processes – one that should be used:

in conjunction with other political, economic, social structural and cultural modes of analysis in specifying the material and symbolic interests at stake, the forms of social closure in operation and the patterns of state consolidation, economic transformation and cultural reorganisation that are under way.

In Chapter Two, Julien Danero Iglesias offers a study of the different discourses articulated by elites in the Republic of Moldova. Working within the framework of an electoral competition, he reveals how these political elites have repeatedly mobilised the concept of ‘nation’ in a way that seems devoid of specific content and in a manner that serves their particular interests. Drawing on Breuilly’s definition of nationalism, this chapter shows how, in this case, the concept of nation serves above all as a tool for mobilising voters and *not* as something greater. In employing the term or idea of ‘nation’, the most important thing for these actors seems to be obtaining power.

Working from a different theoretical perspective, Doris Wydra examines, in Chapter Three, how nationalising narratives in Ukraine have been transformed

into political narratives. She argues that Ukraine has been a battlefield of competing identity narratives. Indeed, she suggests how its main national minority (Russians), by virtue of its political and linguistic power, does not constitute a typical minority and therefore presents a constant challenge to the nation-building project of Ukraine's political elite.

The second part of the volume focuses on the impact nationalising practices have on minorities and minority rights. In Chapter Four, Magdalena Dembinska looks at political arrangements that favour the political integration of minorities in nationalising states, with a special focus on Belarusians and Germans in Poland after 1989. She suggests that the mere presence of ethnic parties in democratic institutions is not a sufficient indicator of integration, and that 'real' integration takes place when ethnic parties become regional parties that are open to members of other groups.

Hanna Vasilevich, in Chapter Five, gives further insights on the situation of national minorities, in two nationalising states: Poles and Belarusians in Lithuania, and Hungarians in Slovakia. Her main interest concerns the impact international organisations (especially the EU) and external national homelands (Poland, Belarus, Hungary) have had on the status of these minorities, on the articulation of their political claims, and on inter-ethnic relations. Drawing on Brubaker's 'triadic nexus', this chapter evaluates Brubaker's scheme and provides empirical discussion.

The relations between nationalising states and minorities in two Asian countries, specifically Malaysia and Indonesia, are at the centre of Karolina Prasad's contribution. In particular, in Chapter Six, Prasad examines the role that ethnic minorities (the Chinese in Indonesia, and the Chinese and Indians in Malaysia) have played in their nations' democratisation processes, against the background of their distinctive positions in the two countries (i.e. a long record of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, and the more tolerated and politically-active Chinese and Indian presence in Malaysia).

Sharon Weinblum, in Chapter Seven, is also interested in the relationship between democracy and nationalising states. In her chapter on Israel, she presents an analysis of political discourses in the Israeli parliament in order to assess the concrete significance of the claim that Israel is both Jewish and democratic. Her empirical findings indicate that the demands of the Palestinian/Arab minority have been perceived by the dominant political elite, from centre-left to right, as a threat to the state and its core nation. The author labels this a 'differentialist nationalising discourse', and claims that, under such circumstances, the only possibility for the Palestinian minority to be integrated in the polity rests on the legitimisation of the so far marginal pluralist discourse accommodating the Jewish and democratic dimensions of the state.

Coming back to the borders of Europe, Chapter Eight explores the evolution of minority rights' protection in post-Ottoman Turkey and in the long-standing nation-state, Greece, with a special focus on the situation of the Turkish/Muslim minority in Greece and the Greek minority in Turkey after the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. Using an approach informed by historical institutionalism, Fulya

Memisoglu shows how path-dependent patterns have resulted in policies of ‘negative reciprocity’ that have threatened the very existence of these minorities in the two countries in question.

In the final part of this volume, the authors focus on minorities’ responses to nationalising practices and discourses. In Chapter Nine, Christina Zuber argues that, before engaging in a discussion of the mobilisation of national minorities in nationalising states, we should first determine whose mobilisation we are talking about. In this manner, she proposes an exploration of the ontological assumptions inherent in the study of minority mobilisation. By doing so, she rightly criticises the essentialist approach that pervades most studies on ethnic mobilisation, as an approach that too quickly – indeed, ‘without further argument’, as she puts it – assumes that national minorities are collective entities. Zuber demonstrates greater sympathy for constructionist-leaning approaches, but still suggests that employing such ontologies may lead ‘to an overestimation of the capacity of ethnic entrepreneurs to strategically manipulate flexible – qua constructed – identity categories’. In light of this, she suggests that a third approach, called ‘naturalised constructivism’, may be better. This approach treats ethnic groups as if they were a natural given, while acknowledging that they are social constructs. It is suggested that proceeding in this manner, which is also championed by authors such as Brubaker, Gil-White and Mallon, better enables researchers to understand minority mobilisation in nationalising states.

In Chapter Ten, Julian Bernauer explores the different ways in which members of the Russian minority have responded to nationalising processes in Ukraine, depending on their population share in a given district. His analysis of ‘strategic voting’ (i.e. voting for a party other than the most preferred one) in the 1998 parliamentary elections shows that the Russian voters used this strategy more often in electoral districts in which their population share was very low (below 15 per cent). This contradicts the author’s initial expectation that strategic voting would be less readily observed among ethnic minority voters, who tend to stick with their ethnic parties even when it means ‘wasting’ their votes. The author further argues that, in places with salient ethnic cleavages, pure majoritarian systems do not lead to moderation and that, in the context of Ukraine, the move to full PR after the 2002 election ‘likely reduces the probability of ethnic conflict’.

While Bernauer’s focus centres on the electoral behaviour of ethnic minority voters, Chapter Eleven deals with the behaviour of ethnic *parties*. Edina Szöcsik and Daniel Bochsler examine the processes of fission and fusion that can be observed in minority ethnic parties, as a consequence of their participation in government. By considering developments visible in the political organisations of the Hungarian minorities in Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia, as well as those of Bosniaks in Serbia, Szöcsik and Bochsler suggest that government participation weakens the political unity of ethnic minorities, on the grounds that it often causes internal splits or sharpens competition between existing rival organisations.

The final chapter of the volume draws general conclusions from the different case studies. Antoine Roger first asks the question of the status of comparisons. How can we be sure that cases are comparable? Do the various cases enable us to

formulate universal rules of causality? Advocating a re-examination of the epistemological bases of comparison, Roger proposes to substitute positivism with critical realism. Secondly, the author looks again at the causal mechanisms identified by Brubaker (instruments of public action, academic inputs, external inputs and everyday practices) and shows that multiple combinations between them help understand the prominence given to ethnicity and nationality in specific contexts. The author concludes with an invitation to pursue further comparative studies in this field.

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