After Independence: Making and Protecting the Nation in Postcolonial and Postcommunist States
Lowell W. Barrington, Editor
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Preface & Acknowledgments

An independent state is often thought of as the ultimate goal of nationalists. As a result, much of the existing work on nationalism has centered on its role in the creation of new states. While acknowledging the importance of that aspect of nationalism, this volume instead seeks answers to two less obvious questions: What happens to nationalism and nationalists when they have achieved their ultimate goal? What happens to nationalism after independence?

These are the central questions that the chapters in this book answer by examining several different cases of postindependence nationalism. Following my introductory chapter, Joshua Forrest provides an overview of the development of nationalism in states that gained their independence during the wave of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s. Modifying the discussion of causal factors presented in my introduction, he proposes numerous factors to consider when seeking to understand nationalism in the postcolonial cases. His discussion also highlights some of the arguments presented in the subsequent postcolonial case studies, as he points to two general tracks of postindependence nationalism—those states that have pursued (at least marginally successfully) civic nation-building and those that have fractured along ethnic lines.

The first of these tracks is discussed in Diane Mauzy's overview of the development of national identity and nationalism in Malaya and Malaysia. She outlines the development of a more civic approach to national identity (the "Vision 2020" policy), following the initial heavy emphasis on ethnic identity in the years immediately preceding and following independence. Her chapter highlights the ebbs and flows of postindependence nationalist ideas and movements. While civic national identity may be the stated goal, the journey toward its development has been neither quick nor consistent.

In the first of two chapters on Africa, John Clark examines the case of

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Rwanda. In his chapter he proposes a "dual-nationalism" framework for understanding Rwanda, challenging the conventional thinking by many scholars of the country. While arguing that Rwanda is far from representative of the African postcolonial experience, Clark does point to lessons from the case for our understanding of the importance of elite action (instrumentalist triggering) in the emergence of ethnonationalist conflict.

The final postcolonial case covered in the book,[1] and the focus of Peter Schraeder's chapter, is Somalia. Schraeder tracks the decline of Somali nationalism, explaining the attempts at an overarching pan-Somali identity and why they were ultimately unsuccessful. He argues that scholars failed to realize that the relative ethnic homogeneity of Somali was no guarantee of successful postindependence nation-building. Among the lessons he discusses from the Somali case is the importance of "turning points," moments at which elites can no longer continue to pursue an inclusive nationalist project, as well as the enduring nature, and importance, of clan-based identities in seemingly homogeneous states.

The next section of the book focuses on postcommunist nationalisms, specifically those of the Eurasian region of the former Soviet Union. In addition to providing an overview of the arguments of the postcommunist case study chapters, Ian Bremmer's chapter focuses on a factor not at the center of the chapters that follow: Russia. Rather than providing an overview of Russian nationalism, as many others have done, Bremmer highlights the way in which nationalist approaches in the postcommunist states shaped relations with Russia as well as how the need for close relations with Russia limited the nationalist options of the post-Soviet ruling elites.

In Terry Clark's chapter on Lithuania, he demonstrates how the development of Lithuanian national identity—and its view of the nation as one of "innocent sufferers"—led both to an emphasis on ethnic identity as well as a tolerance for the "ethnic other." It also made possible, encouraged by the defeat of nationalist parties in the 1992 elections and the desire "to rejoin Europe," the transformation of Lithuanian nationalism into a multifaceted movement with a heavy emphasis on civic nation-building. Among the lessons from Lithuania that Clark highlights is the importance of external factors in shaping postindependence nationalism. Similar to its neighbors of Estonia and Latvia to the north, the pursuit of European integration (EU, NATO membership) has constrained nationalist elites in Lithuania and pushed them in a more inclusive direction.

Taras Kuzio's chapter on Ukraine challenges the way in which scholars

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have traditionally used the term *nationalism* (especially with the modifiers *civic* and *ethnic*). He pushes scholars not to equate nationalism with "ethnic nationalism," even in Eastern Europe, where scholars have generally emphasized ethnic answers to the national membership question. In addition, he highlights the way in which the nationalist movement in pursuit of independence must not be confused with postindependence nationalism.

In the first of two chapters on the volatile region of the Transcaucasus, Razmik Panossian tracks the decline of nationalism in postindependence Armenia, arguing that the country has entered a period of "postnationalist" and "normal" politics. According to Panossian, while nationalist symbols continue to be used in political campaigns, nationalist politics (policymaking based on national identity concerns) has taken a backseat to more pragmatic policy concerns.

In the final case study chapter, Stephen Jones discusses the case of Georgia. While providing a detailed overview of the violence of the postindependence period, Jones is careful to separate the issues of violence and nationalism. He even cautions scholars not to assume that violence between ethnic groups can automatically be labeled *ethnic violence.* Jones believes that a civic nationalist approach is unlikely in Georgia, but he argues that this is largely due to the structural issues and conditions that contribute to the conflicts and subsequent incompatibilities.

In the conclusion to this volume, Ronald Suny revisits the concepts of nation and nationalism, arguing for a "radical middle" position between primordialism and constructivism, and between views that the nation is situational and that it is persistent. He also proposes a refined typology of postindependence nationalism, overlapping heavily, but not completely, with that proposed in my introductory chapter. He then walks through the arguments of all the case study chapters, emphasizing certain points and challenging others. He is, for example, not completely convinced of Armenia's transition to a period of "postnationalist politics." He concludes his chapter, and the book, with a call for scholars not to ignore the past when looking ahead to the future of nationalism in particular cases.

Indeed, the nationalist past of a given state can take its "revenge" on the present and future.[2] But, as the authors of this book point out in numerous ways, nationalism after independence is influenced by many causal factors, not the least of which is the role of intellectual, social, and political elites. The form that it will take is not predetermined—either prior to or at the time of independence. There are many possible roads that newly indepen-

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dent states can take: ethnic nationalist, civic nationalist, or barely nationalist at all. The authors of this book have taken us a long way toward understanding these various roads, though more work clearly remains to be done.

The work on this book would not have been possible without the support and effort of many people. The authors not only provided me with excellent material but also were more than accommodating to my tinkerings with their chapters. The reviewers of the manuscript gave the authors helpful advice about ways in which to improve the text; the book is better for their thoughtful comments. At Marquette University, I received a great deal of support from department chairs Chris Wolfe, Rich Friman, and Duane Swank, assistance from Leah Manney and Josephine Morstatter, and especially crucial service from several research assistants who helped with this project: William Muck, Brandon Wilkening, John Lyle, and Anne Mozena.

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L.B., December 2005

NOTES

1. Ronald Suny's provocative labeling of the post-Soviet states as *postcolonial* in his concluding chapter notwithstanding.

2. See the concluding sentence of Suny's chapter in this volume, the idea borrowed from the title of his 1993 book. See Ronald G. Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).