

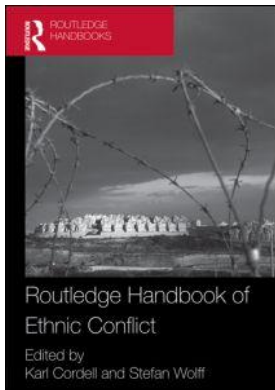
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Part I

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2 Origins of ‘nations’

Contested beginnings, contested futures

Jennifer Jackson-Preece

Any discussion of ‘nations’ and nationalism is immediately confronted by the continued controversy that surrounds the main terms of the debate. The ‘nation’ is a fundamentally contested concept. Although academics, policy-makers, and nationalist leaders make recourse to the language of nationalism on a daily basis, the precise meaning of the term defies an easy explanation.

Is the ‘nation’ simply a byword for political communities that have acquired recognition as independent sovereign states? Or should it also extend to sub-state cultural communities variously described in the literature as ‘stateless nations’ or ‘national minorities’? A universally agreed definition of the concept ‘nation’ does not exist in large part because the politics of nationalism is one of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, whosoever sets the terms of the debate also sets the criteria for national membership and belonging – a power few nationalists are prepared to relinquish. And while the various academic definitions of ‘nation’ on offer may share certain key characteristics having to do with a shared identity, territory, and history the precise emphasis given to these core ‘national’ ingredients shifts, often considerably, from one commentator to another. Indeed, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s first High Commissioner for National Minorities, Max van der Stoel, when asked to define the communities falling under his remit, famously resorted to the expedient view that ‘I know one when I see one!’ (Stoel 1994).

Underscoring this semantic confusion is a further and in many respects even more significant debate on the origins of ‘nations’. Not only are we not sure precisely what a ‘nation’ is, we are equally unsure of where and when it came from. Are ‘nations’ an invention of modernity? Or are they primordial communities that extend deep into the pre-modern period? And what, if any, bearing does this debate on origin have on current political controversies surrounding ‘nations’ and nationalism? It is precisely these issues that this chapter seeks to explore.

‘Nations’ and modernity

Theorists such as Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Elie Kedourie who espouse a modernist position on the origins of ‘nations’, irrespective of their many other disagreements, view the ‘nation’ as a relatively recent invention intended to answer that most vexing of modern political conundrums ‘where does sovereignty lie?’ (Hinsley 1966: 157). For modernists, the emergence of ‘nations’ is fundamentally linked to the transformation of social, economic and especially political life that first began in Europe during the eighteenth century and especially the nineteenth and eventually spread

around the globe through European overseas empires and subsequent decolonisation. What is often referred to as the ‘great transformation’ (Polanyi 1957) ultimately gave rise to consolidated territories with capitalist economies, a linguistically unified public, and a popularly sovereign government. It is at this point in the history of political ideas that the concept of the ‘nation’ achieves political salience. Who are the people in whom sovereignty ultimately resides? The people are the nation and the state exists as the expression of the national will. As Article 3 of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen so eloquently put it:

The principle of all sovereignty rests essentially in the nation. No body and no individual may exercise authority which does not emanate from the nation expressly.

From this point onwards, the discourse of modernity was infused with a national rhetoric: ‘national economies’, the ‘national interest’, ‘national self-determination’ and, above all, the ‘nation-state’ thus became the ultimate expressions of modern political life, so much so in fact that even one of the most highly regarded critics of the modernist position, Anthony Smith, conceded that ‘the basic features of the modern world require nations and nationalism’ (Smith 1995).

The pervasiveness of ‘nations’ and ‘nationalism’ in the modern world is nowhere more readily apparent than in the modern political map. Whereas the pre-modern map of Europe was a complicated and confusing intermingling and overlapping of many juridical territories – empires, dynasties, principalities, ecclesiastical feudatories, etc. – the modern map discloses a clearly defined juridical patchwork of equally sovereign nation-states (Jackson 2000: 157). But this juridical uniformity and territorial neatness did not come without a price, the modern world of nation-states was also accompanied by an unprecedented attempt to limit the number of claimants for independent statehood (Mayall 1990: 35). The initial redistribution of territory from empires to nation-states was viewed as a ‘one-off affair’ despite the fact that many putative nation-states were anything but homogeneous national communities, and numerous territorially ‘trapped’ sub-state national communities continued to aspire towards sovereignty (Jackson-Preece, 1998). Out of this fundamental discrepancy in the modern landscape emerges the problem of ethno-national conflict.

Obviously, the ‘great transformation’ was a complex historical process involving a wide array of interrelated changes in society, economy and polity. For this reason, it is only to be expected that the causal interpretation of these factors varies significantly from one ‘modernist’ nationalism theorist to another. A brief comparison of the explanations put forward by three of the most widely cited modernist thinkers on nationalism illustrates both the commonalities and differences which characterise modernist perspectives on the origin of ‘nations’.

Elie Kedourie saw the ‘great transformation’ as a fundamentally top-down intellectual revolution. In his account, it was a new way of thinking about political life as disclosed in German idealist philosophy and the European Romantic movement that is ultimately responsible for this transformation. Thus, Kedourie famously characterised nationalism as a ‘doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century’ which purports to:

supply a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organisation of a society of states.

(Kedourie 1960: 9)

Few nationalism thinkers would dispute the content of Kedourie's definition of nationalism, although many would reject his prioritising of ideas.

In contrast to Kedourie, Ernest Gellner adopted a materialist view of the origin of 'nations' (Gellner 1983). For Gellner, the transition from agrarian to industrial society was the key to explaining the emergence of 'nations' and its concomitant ideology of nationalism. Industrial society is crucially dependent upon the effective organisation of the mass population which in turn creates a mass, literate society. As people left their traditional rural communities for work in the big industrial cities, they increasingly needed to speak and ultimately also to read and to write in a common language. In Gellner's view, this bottom-up transformation was reinforced by a top-down imperative: employers, generals and ultimately the political rulers needed to be able to communicate with the newly industrialised masses in order to effectively control them. According to Gellner, these material changes set the crucial historical context for the political salience of 'nations' and the ideology of nationalism.

Finally, Benedict Anderson in his constructivist account offers a middle way between the materialist Gellner and the idealist Kedourie. Anderson credits the rise of a mass vernacular print media and its effect on the emergence of a unified 'national' identity as the key component of the 'great transformation' (Anderson 1983). According to Anderson, the role of a vernacular media was crucial to the rise of nations because it created the context through which individuals imagined themselves members of mass, national communities beyond their immediate locale. The 'great transformation' was often a painful process of dislocation for the individuals caught up in it. Those peasants who became industrial workers lost their traditional way of life with its close association to village, church, extended family and inherited custom. Relocated to the more anonymous landscape of the large industrial city they became expendable 'cogs in the wheel' of the industrial machine. A new sentimental attachment to the 'nation' provided a communal association to replace the familiar agrarian life left behind. Hence where once the seasons and the divine were glorified in song and celebrated in communal festival now the 'nation' became the focal point of music, artistic representation and public commemoration. Without this public reimagining the 'nation' could not have achieved its role as the basic organising idea of modernity.

'Nations' before modernity

Those nationalism theorists such as Adrian Hastings, Walker Connor and Anthony Smith who are sympathetic to what is often referred to as the 'primordial position' see the 'nation' as a social category of a much longer durée. They reject the core modernist assumption that nations emerge from the 'great transformation'. As Anthony Smith made clear in his famous 'Warwick debate' with Ernest Gellner:

Modern political nationalisms cannot be understood without reference to these earlier ethnic ties and memories, and, in some cases, to pre-modern ethnic identities and communities. I do not wish to assert that every modern nation must be founded

on some antecedent ethnic ties, let alone a definite ethnic community; but many such nations have been and are based on these ties, including the first nations in the West – France, England, Castile, Holland, Sweden – and they acted as models and Pioneers of the idea of the ‘nation’ for others. And when we dig deeper, we shall find an ethnic component in many national communities since – whether the nation was formed slowly or was the outcome of a more concerted project of ‘nation-building’.

(Smith 1995)

The ‘primordialist position’ on the origin of ‘nations’ may be traced back to those same German Romantic philosophers such as Fichte and Herder that Elie Kedourie cited as ‘inventors’ of the modern discourse on nationalism. In their writings the emphasis is not on modernity as the necessary precursor for an ‘invented’ national community but instead on ancient and inherited social practices, above all language, as the source of authentic ‘national’ community.

These primordialist arguments give a whole new dimension to the modern ideology of nationalism. If the only genuine communities were associations of original language speakers, then linguistic affinity and vernacular speech were not simply a means to an end (the proper functioning of industrial economy, society, and politics) but an end in itself (the basis of popular sovereignty). Similarly, whereas modernist theories of nationalism postulate a decisive break between the pre-modern agrarian past and the modern, industrial present, primordialist theories emphasise the importance of continuity over change. Indeed, the political project of nationalism becomes as much a rejuvenation of past customs and practices as a creation of new motifs and usages. As Kedourie explains in his analysis of German Romantic thought:

it is incumbent on a nation worthy of the name to revive, develop and extend what is taken to be its original speech, even though it might be found only in remote villages, or had not been used for centuries, even though its resources are inadequate and its literature poor – for only such an original language will allow a nation to realise itself and attain its freedom.

(Kedourie 1960: 67)

In this way, the nationalist discourse is said to emerge from the pre-modern past – primordialists thus subscribe to variations of what James Mayall refers to as a ‘Sleeping Beauty thesis’ according to which ‘nations’ have always existed but need to be reawakened into modern political consciousness (Mayall 1996: 10). Contemporary scholars who are sympathetic to the primordialist position accept that the ideology of nationalism as an adjunct to the doctrine of popular sovereignty is a modern development, but they challenge the modernist claim that the emergence of the ideology precedes the formation of the ‘nation’ qua identity and community.

For example, Adrian Hastings (1997) disputes the common modernist assumption that the social category of the ‘nation’ may be traced back only so far as the American and French revolutions of the late eighteenth century.

If nationalism became theoretically central to Western political thinking in the nineteenth century, it existed as a powerful reality in some places long before that.

(Hastings 1997: 2)

Indeed, Hastings claims that England, which he identifies as a prototype of both the 'nation' and the 'nation-state', clearly manifests itself long before the 'great transformation'.

an English nation-state survived [the Norman Conquest of] 1066, grew fairly steadily in the strength of its national consciousness through the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but emerged still more vociferously with its vernacular literary renaissance and the pressures of the Hundred Years War [1337–1453] by the end of the fourteenth.

(Hastings 1997: 5)

What, then, in Hastings's view gives rise to a 'nation' if not modernisation? He believes a 'nation' arises where a particular ethnic group perceives itself existentially threatened either by an external attack or by the state system of which it has hitherto formed a part (Hastings 1997).

Perhaps even more intriguingly, Walker Connor rejects the whole idea of dating 'nations' and the origins debate which follows on from it.

Failure to appreciate that national identity is predicated upon sentient history undergirds a current vogue in the literature on national identity to bifurcate contributors in terms of (1) 'primordialists' and (2) 'social constructivists'/'instrumentalists'/'modernists'.

(Connor 2004: 11)

Connor claims that when a 'nation' came into being is irrelevant because it fails to appreciate the emotive essence of the idea itself. While he accepts that in strictly factual or chronological terms a 'nation' may indeed be a 'modernist' invention, he believes that in the minds of its members the 'nation' nevertheless remains 'eternal', 'beyond time' and 'timeless', and, ultimately, it is not facts but perceptions of facts that shape attitudes and behavior' (Connor 2004: 11).

But even if we accept the primordialist contention that nations do indeed have a much longer *durée* than modernist accounts suggest, we are still left with the need to explain the much more recent advent of national ideologies. The ethno-symbolism approach favoured by Anthony Smith (1991, 1998, 2004) purports to offer a solution to this intriguing puzzle. According to Smith, the enduring features of national identities are myths and memories. Writers and artists are the bridge between the 'primordial' and 'modern' 'nations' precisely because they are able to refashion these ancient and inherited ethnic traditions into a contemporary national identity. This explains why national politics and policies often have symbolic goals such as access to education and broadcasting in the national language, the preservation of ancient and sacred sights such as the (Serbian Orthodox) Decani monastery in (majority Moslem) Kosovo, the right to wear religious symbols like headscarves and turbans in public places and so on. According to Smith:

materialist, rationalist and modernist theories tend to have little to say about these issues, especially the vital component of collective memories.

(Smith 1995)

Contested beginnings, contested futures

The debate on origins may at first glance appear to be of only theoretical interest – a subject for academic debate perhaps but one lacking in contemporary political significance. Such an impression is deeply misleading, for the way in which one defines a ‘nation’, be it modernist or primordialist, has a direct consequence on political controversies surrounding the basis for independent political community and membership within it – which communities may claim sovereignty, how territories and peoples may be transferred or acquired, how succession is regulated when larger communities break up into smaller communities or when several communities combine into one (Wight 1977: 153).

If the ‘nation’ is an invented social category linked to the process of modernisation, then nationalism is fundamentally concerned with economic transition and democratisation. Which group of people become incorporated into an emergent ‘nation’ is determined by contemporary economic and political circumstances and not by cultural or linguistic ties emanating from the distant past. Accordingly, modernising nationalists are concerned not so much with redrawing the political map as with infusing new meaning into existing juridical territories.

Alternatively, however, if the ‘nation’ is a primordial community defined by ancient and inherited cultural traits, then nationalism is fundamentally concerned with a cultural politics of authenticity. Only bona fide members of the same pre-existing cultural community are capable of forming a genuine, primordial ‘nation’. Primordial nationalists are thus intent upon identifying ‘historic nations’ and bringing about a congruence between the organic cultural landscape and the contemporary political map.

The fundamental programmatic differences between modernising and primordial nationalists is clearly revealed in their divergent responses to linguistic and ethnic diversity. For modernising nationalists, both language and ethnicity is a means to an end (the modern nation-state); for primordialists language and ethnicity are ends in themselves because they disclose an intrinsic organic national community.

Modernising nationalists view vernacular language policy as a key component of the creation and consolidation of capitalist economies and democratic institutions. From this perspective, language policy is utilitarian – which vernacular language becomes the national language of economy and politics is determined by expediency, usually because it has the largest number of speakers or is the already established language of law and commerce.

The central importance of a common, public language as a precondition for democratic government is a recurring theme in modernist thought from the late eighteenth century onwards. The best known proponent of this view is John Stuart Mill whose oft quoted essay *On Representative Government* contends that

among a people without fellow feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion necessary to the working of representative government cannot exist.

(Mill 1973: 361)

Political stability in a democratic system of governance is thus often equated – indeed, considered dependent upon – linguistic homogeneity. The obvious implication of this perspective is that linguistic minorities ought properly to be assimilated into the official,

public language to ensure equal and effective political participation and the proper working of representative institutions. Linguistic diversity may, at best, be confined to the home but it should have no place in the public life of a democracy.

A similar emphasis on linguistic assimilation as a key component of the creation and consolidation of civic institutions is a recurring theme in the state-building discourse from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (Jackson Preece 2005: 107–10). We see evidence of this rationale in the administration of mandated and trust territories, in the new or enlarged states of Central and Eastern Europe between the two world wars, in the decolonised states of Asia and Africa after 1945, and in the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe after 1989. In all of these cases, the logic underscoring policies of linguistic assimilation directed at minorities is strikingly similar to that outlined by Mill and Durham. The 1995 State Language Law of Slovakia is a typical example. It identifies the Slovak language as the

expression of sovereignty of the Slovak Republic and the general means of communication for its citizens, which guarantees them freedom and equality in dignity and rights in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

(Daftary and Gal 2003: 47)

In sum, according to the modernists' perspective, the 'nation' is presumed to be one and the public language of the state and its civic representative institutions is intended to embody this unity of political purpose.

Primordial nationalists look upon language as a marker of intrinsic national community. Here the stress is not on the utility of a common language for the proper functioning of economic and political institutions as in Mill, but rather on the cultural significance of language as the natural and indeed essential medium through which each individual and, by extension, each community understand the world and their place in it. From this perspective, every language is a particular way of thinking. What is understood in one language can never be perceived in exactly the same way in another language; the essence of genuine, culturally specific meaning simply cannot be translated. Following on from this, true community is only possible amongst native speakers of the same original language since it is only in such linguistic circumstances that complete understanding and mutual sympathy can exist.

These linguistic arguments – which like Kedourie we can trace back to German romantic writers such as Herder and Fichte – gave a new dimension to the idea of popular sovereignty (Jackson Preece 2005: 110–12). If the only genuine communities were associations of original language speakers, then linguistic affinity was not simply a means to an end (the proper functioning of representative government) but an end in itself (the basis of popular sovereignty). Instead of being an expression of representative government, language was the basis of statehood. The nineteenth-century quest for statehood thus became as much a philological as a political endeavour. Throughout the Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires in Central and Eastern Europe a nascent nationalism was expressed and developed through literary efforts: Adamantios Korais (1748–1833) helped invent modern Greek through his translation of the classics; Josef Jungmann (1773–1847) wrote a Czech grammar and history of Czech literature; Stephen Katona (1732–1811) wrote a history of Hungary; Dositej Obradovic (1740–1811) published in contemporary Serbian as distinct from old Slavonic; to name only a few examples (Kohn 1960: 527–76). As Kedourie explains:

it is incumbent on a nation worthy of the name to revive, develop and extend what is taken to be its original speech, even though it might be found only in remote villages, or had not been used for centuries, even though its resources are inadequate and its literature poor – for only such an original language will allow a nation to realise itself and attain its freedom.

(Kedourie 1960: 67)

Consequently, linguistic diversity is problematic not in terms of institutional accountability or stability (as in the discourse of civic language) but because it confuses and potentially corrupts original language communities. Foreign accretions and borrowings obscure original meanings and in so doing threaten to weaken the mutual understanding and sympathy which is the special preserve of genuine community; accordingly such foreign intrusions must be ‘cleansed’ to preserve the purity of thought and concomitant identity. By the same token, in circumstances where one original speech community is assimilated into another, the former can have no experience of genuine individuality or community. In Fichte’s words, such an assimilated language community is merely the ‘echo of a voice already silent ... they are, considered as a people, outside the original people, and to the latter they are strangers and foreigners’ (Kedourie 1960: 68).

From this perspective, the only appropriate response to linguistic diversity is the creation of separate and indeed homogeneous political communities on the basis of linguistic affinity. Secession or irredentism thus become the obvious political objective of linguistic minorities. Meanwhile, the majority language community can tolerate or assimilate such minorities only at their own peril since either programme could potentially dilute the purity of their own linguistic usage. Such a conclusion, of course, unavoidably leaves those minorities who are incapable of forming their own independent language communities vulnerable to policies of assimilation or segregation or expulsion or worse.

A similarly contrasting approach may be discerned in modernist and primordialist approaches to ethnicity (Jackson Preece 2005: 149–57). For modernising nationalists, national identity is primarily defined through a shared political and economic experience. Thus cultural programmes are generally understood in terms of civic virtues and not the defence of ethnic purity per se. Modernising nationalists tend to relegate ethnicity to the private sphere. Minority ethnic identities may be tolerated within the home where distinct languages, traditions, myths and memories may be preserved provided these do not conflict with nor in any way undermine the prevailing civic culture. Obviously, such private identities do not receive public recognition from the civic nation-state. Instead, public institutions actively support the civic national culture and language within public life to the exclusion of all others. And where necessary in defence of this civic culture, assimilationist or paternal policies may be directed towards nonconformist ethnic groups.

In contrast, primordial nationalists are much more overtly concerned with ethnic politics. In this perspective, you will recall that national membership is determined by purportedly ‘natural’ and thus innate characteristics which by definition cannot be changed by assimilation or tutelage. The individual no longer determines his or her nation: instead, the nation determines the individual. Thus although the freedom of minorities to express and develop their distinct ethnic identities may be limited in either civic or ethnic nation-states, the later are arguably far more hostile towards ethnic

minorities and thus potentially more destructive not only of ethnic minority identities but in extreme circumstances even their physical survival.

Once the ethnic bond is accepted as the *raison d'être* of the state, ethnic diversity becomes a threat to popular sovereignty. When the right to rule is justified on the basis of an ethnic affinity between the population of a state and its government then the existence of ethnic minorities challenges the authority of those in power. In order to preserve its territorial integrity and domestic stability, the ethnic nation-state tends to act as if it is a homogeneous ethnic community. If (as is often the case) such a state is not in fact ethnically homogeneous, then it must 'endeavour to make the facts correspond to the ideal', regardless of the rights and liberties of those among its citizens who do not belong to the majority ethnic group (Cobban 1970: 109). At the same time, the reverse is also true: every ethnic nation or fraction thereof which is not an independent state must strive to become one. National survival is thus dependent upon the survival of the ethnic within its historic homeland.

Already in the 1848 movement for German unification one can discern the various dilemmas which arise in the context of building states on the basis of ethnic criteria. German unification was meaningless without a clear understanding as to which territories ought to be included in it. The answer adopted at the Frankfurt Assembly revealed an ethnic imperative: territories with predominantly German populations or German rulers would be included. This might at first glance seem a perfectly reasonable basis for admission – until, that is, one begins to ponder the anomalies. Switzerland had a significant German-speaking population and historic ties to the German-ruled Holy Roman Empire but was nevertheless excluded from the list. Schleswig and Holstein had a significant Danish population, and war over these provinces was only averted in 1848 by British and Russian intervention; such a war did eventually occur in 1864 and resulted in the loss of Danish territory to Prussia. Alsace could not be included without a war with France in 1870–71. Bohemia was a part of the German-ruled Hapsburg Empire, but the majority of its population spoke Czech, and a Czech nationalism as distinct from the German was already developing there (indeed, the Czech intellectuals led by the historian Palacky famously turned down an invitation to send a representative to the Frankfurt Assembly) (Seton-Watson 1977: 95). Ultimately, of course, the status of the German-speaking minority in the Sudetenland was used to justify the transfer of Czechoslovakian territory to Germany in 1938, and in 1939 Bohemia and Moravia were occupied by the Nazis and an independent, pro-Axis Slovak puppet state was created.

The assumption underlying all of these responses is that political stability in an ethnic nation-state cannot tolerate ethnic diversity as such divisions will undermine the integrity of the overarching political order by calling into question the myth of common descent upon which it rests. In other words, this perspective views ethnicity in zero-sum terms such that coexistence between ethnic groups within the same jurisdiction is not an option. Although bleak, such an outlook nevertheless reflects a normative position: the well-being of individuals and their respective political communities is herein understood as dependent upon the fulfilment of ethnicity, which in turn is seen to embody the 'natural order' in its purest form.

Those who were unsuccessful in the great race to capture their own nation-state in which their culture and language would reign supreme were then confronted with the unenviable choice of either assimilating into the majority (assuming this choice existed, which was not always the case) or accepting a permanent position as minority with the attendant risk of discrimination and persecution. Barring these alternatives, the only

other option available was to engage in a politics of secession or irredentism intended to overcome, once and for all, the unpalatable minority position. But such revolutionary nationalists must then overcome the opposition of the international society which remains fundamentally biased in favour of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of existing states.

Conclusion

The national discourse is a core component of contemporary political life, so much so in fact that ours is a world of ‘nation-states’, ‘national sovereignty’ and ‘national identities’. Yet, despite the clearly defined lines on the modern political map, ours is also a world of ethno-cultural diversity, within as well as between states. ‘National’ identities are malleable rather than fixed and they can and do conflict. Thus, perhaps, it is only to be expected that the ‘nation’ is a fundamentally contested concept that defies easy definition or explanation. We may think we ‘know one when we see one’ but others are likely to disagree with our perceptions not only for academic but crucially also for political reasons.

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that academic controversies on the origin of ‘nations’ are intricately entangled in current political controversies on the future of ‘nations’. To ask the question ‘What is a nation?’ unavoidably also requires reflection on the underlying issue ‘When is a nation?’ and when we locate and define a ‘nation’s origins’ we are, in effect, also mapping, often literally, its current political claims and aspirations. What is the ‘Serbian nation’? Was it born at the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 or in Slobodan Milošević’s speech at Kosovo Polje in 1989? A primordialist origin potentially presages a political claim for a ‘Greater Serbia’ including all or part of the territory of a now ambiguously independent Kosovo. A modernist origin links the rise of Serbian nationalism to the end of Yugoslav communism and may be more compatible with existing international norms on sovereignty, self-determination and the recognition of states. Either way, however, past and present controversies become inextricably intertwined. If Milan Kundera is right, and the ‘struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting’ (Kundera 1996: 4), then what nationalist leaders are fighting for is ‘access to the laboratories where photographs are retouched, and biographies and histories rewritten’ (Kundera 1996: 21–22).

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