

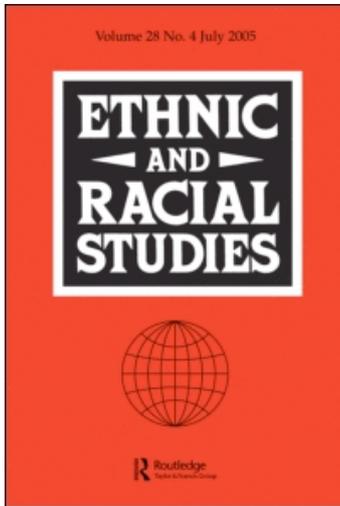
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citizen. Which brings us to another of Steinberg's targets, Everett Hughes, whose ASA Presidential Address in 1963 openly acknowledged the discipline's failure to analyse the dynamics of American race relations adequately. Steinberg makes much of the juxtaposition of the March on Washington, and King's passionate plea for his 'dream' of racial equality, taking place at exactly the same time as Hughes's address, which is then faulted for failing to predict the new upsurge in the civil rights struggle. One could level the same criticism against Hughes's fellow sociologist, W. E. B. DuBois, who also happened to die at this historic moment.

Among Steinberg's many other personal targets – from Lester Ward and Albion Small to Nathan Glazer and William Julius Wilson – is Gunnar Myrdal. The attack on the Swedish economist raises some interesting issues. Myrdal's *American Dilemma* is compared unfavourably to Oliver Cromwell Cox's *Caste, Class and Race*. For example, the one-sided failings of Myrdal's idealistic interpretation of post-war US race relations were not only dismissed by Cox's Marxist-inspired analysis but also by the decidedly non-Marxian sociologist Robert K. Merton in his classic paper, 'Discrimination and the American creed'. The mainstream sociology profession – and Merton was nothing if not mainstream – was not simply blind to the structural nature of racial oppression or to the need to take firm legal measures to bring about racial justice. Steinberg also makes no mention of Cox's later work, *Race Relations: Elements and Social Dynamics* (Wayne State University Press, 1976) that actually sounds more Parsonian than Marxist in its analysis of American racial divisions. Another interesting contradiction in Steinberg's approach is the manner in which he castigates Myrdal for failing to include a policy agenda at the end of the *American Dilemma*, but then has the chutzpah to do exactly the same at the end of this book (p.146). Earlier, in a different context, he had mentioned approvingly the role of evangelical Protestants as models for 'committed intellectuals' (p. 35), but one has to wonder whether the author is equally sanguine about the evangelical influence over American politics – and, by extension, race relations – since the arrival of George W. Bush in the White House.

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Mitchell Young, Eric Zuelow and Andreas Sturm (eds), **NATIONALISM IN A GLOBAL ERA: THE PERSISTENCE OF NATIONS**, London: Routledge, 2007, 247 pp., \$140.00 (hb).

The claim that nations and nationalism have persisted beyond what some expected will generate little disagreement. More fruitful debate ensues regarding how and why they persist. For the contributors to this edited volume, adherents to Anthony Smith's ethno-symbolist view, nations persist because they are deeply rooted in culture, history, language and ethnicity. In this way, the book offers a counter-point to the popular modernist approach that conceptualizes nations as more recent constructions, shaped by elites in the specific social and economic context of modernity.

The volume's contributors include renowned scholars of nationalism, such as Anthony Smith, along with many newer voices presenting empirical analysis of diverse regions of the world. The book is divided into three parts. Part one reviews theoretical approaches to nations and nationalism. Part two explores the role of memory in the persistence of nations. Part three acknowledges contemporary challenges to nations, but emphasizes their remarkable capability at adapting to a myriad of challenges – including globalization. The short introductory chapter does an impressive job of situating this volume within the vast scholarship on nations and nationalism. Missing is a concluding chapter that ties together the book's theoretical premise with the array of empirical material presented in parts two and three.

The three theoretical chapters in part one present little that is fundamentally new, but do offer cogent and updated synopses of the main themes and theoretical tensions in the field. Anthony Smith's chapter handles with precision the definitional dilemma surrounding nations. Edward Tiryakian reviews three questions that commonly guide the literature: 'What is a nation?'; 'What is national identity?'; 'When is the nation?'. To these, he adds a fourth, 'When is the nation no longer?', designed to engage prognoses that nations will decline in the face of contemporary globalization, immigration and multiculturalism. By his own admission, the brief discussion of the Roman Republic, South Africa and Yugoslavia opens up vital queries but offers no easy lessons as to what accounts for the viability, or lack thereof, of nations.

Part two furthers the ethno-symbolist argument with analyses of how historical memory, manifest in the form of museums, national celebrations and religious symbols, perpetuates nations. Case studies of national commemoration days in Western Europe, the mausoleum of Atatürk in Turkey, public monuments in Thailand, religious symbols in Poland and tourism in Ireland provide rich empirical material for explaining the persistence of these nations.

Part three is devoted to analyses of how nations confront and endure various challenges. Mark Jubulis uses the case of the Baltic nations to reject modernist views that the USSR invented nations where none previously existed. Instead, he argues, long-standing and deeply rooted Baltic nationalisms pre-dated and out-last the USSR. Mitchell Young uses linguistic nationalism in the newly independent Croatia to illustrate how globalization does not necessarily weaken the power and appeal of nations, and may facilitate their fortification. Stefanie Nanes' chapter attributes the resilience of Jordanian national identity to the effective cooptation of myths, memories, values and symbols.

Like many books in the field, this one provokes frustration in its perpetuation of a false dichotomy of nations as ancient or modern, primordial or constructed. The dogmatism of the modernist view is often exaggerated, setting up a straw argument that can be easily knocked down. In fact, the most sophisticated treatments of nations as modern formations never suggested that their construction occurred out of thin air. Neither Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner nor Eric Hobsbawm did or would deny the power of memories, myths and symbols; nor, as suggested in the introduction, did they argue that intelligentsias formed nations *ex nihilo* (p. 3). Similarly, the eulogizing of the nation-state has not been as definitive or widespread as some of the authors in this volume suggest. Just as the views this volume seeks to counter are typically more nuanced than is implied, the best contributions to this volume are those that reconcile the persistence of nations with their fluidity and flexibility – as does Smith himself (p. 23), Eric Zuelow in his chapter on collective re-imagining in Ireland and Nanes in her chapter on Jordan.

Ultimately, determining whether national identities are *manifested in* collective rituals, as Gabriella Elgenius argues in chapter 5, or *created by* those repeated and formalized acts, may be akin to answering which came first: the chicken or the egg. The debate, nevertheless, will likely persist, as will nations. Given the predominance of the modernist perspective, this volume offers a counterbalance and adds empirical material that is valuable in its own right.

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