

interdisciplinary project in which a group of women who had survived torture in their country of origin and had come to Canada as refugees, broke the culture of silence'. Hajdukowski-Ahmed's last sentence sums up the exile experiences of this book most fittingly: 'We only need to "listen" with all our senses'.

The choice, focus, depth and interdisciplinarity shown by the chapters in this collection provide a broad yet concise impression of what it means to be in exile. As well, the book invites further questions: for example, most contribu-

tions depict the exile experience as in some ways a positive challenge, an opportunity for personality development. This theme is not openly taken up, but the fact that such matters arise from the contributions makes each chapter an original and highly recommended reading experience.

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Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism

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Nationalism is one of the most burning and controversial topics today and is, unsurprisingly, the subject of many publications. While monographs and articles can of course be of great value, there is given the controversial nature of nationalism a particular place for edited collections of papers, as they can conveniently present a range of views within a single volume. The current book effectively presents varied opinions without being too diverse: a *leitmotiv* is provided by the work of the political scientist, Walker Connor. Despite collecting 14 papers by 13 authors, the editor not only achieves unity in diversity (in terms of the ideas presented) but also, through a user-friendly quadripartite structure, easy movement from theoretical background, through case studies, to wider implications. The book is well produced, but certain passages – presumably written in English by speakers of other languages – would have benefited from the attentions of a translator.

One of the most controversial topics in the study of nationalism is the age of the phenomena involved; how old are nations and, hence, nationalisms, the movements

to defend and promote them? Social scientists tend to assume that the nationalist in the street is a primordialist, one who assumes that nations and nationalisms are ancient in an often ill-defined sense – a view propounded, for example, by John Major when he famously stated that England was 1000 years old. In contrast, there is near unanimity among academic scholars of nationalism that the phenomena, at least in a shape recognisably similar to their present form, are modern – about 200–300 years old at most, although it is undeniable that entities bearing the same names as modern nations may go back a great deal longer. Here, however, the unanimity ends; while most regard the phenomena as modern, there is widespread disagreement about the age of the collective identities that underpin nations. Some, like Ernest Gellner (see the discussion in the first chapter of Conversi's book), regard all aspects of the phenomena as essentially modern, while others, to whom the term 'ethnoscymbolists' is often applied, stress the long history of the relevant collective identities. Anthony Smith and Joshua Fishman, both making a contribution to this book, can be regarded as ethnoscymbolists, as can Walker Connor. What is interesting about Connor, and what allows his work to be such a fruitful starting point for the volume, is his stress upon the very recent nature of nations and nationalism in a recognisably current form, alongside a stress on

the crucial role in these phenomena of precursor identities, particularly ethnic identities. This perspective provides an important corrective to the trend among 'modernists' to suggest that the role of the state is vital to nationalism, as both state and nation can be seen as modern phenomena. Connor stresses that states and nations can in principle be largely independent entities, and this is borne out by the intense nationalism in many contemporary Central and Eastern European nations, where there is little or no history of states dominated by the nations in question. Connor also casts doubt on the importance of the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalisms, prominent in much current literature, seeing all nationalisms as having a strong ethnic component, and likely over time to become more ethnic in character, an insight supported by recent growths in ethnic sentiment in such supposedly classic civic nations as France and Switzerland.

Conversi's book starts with two introductory chapters – his own, outlining some of the most salient points in Connor's thinking, and Connor's 'Nationalism and Political Illegitimacy'. We then move to Part 1 ('Modernity and Emotions'), in which three authors give their perspectives on the importance to contemporary nations of the prenational, the ethnic and the emotional – Anthony Smith on 'Dating the Nation', Donald Horowitz on 'The Primordialists' and Joshua Fishman on 'The Primordialist Constructivist Debate Today'. All three contribute crucial insights to the debate, but I would single out Horowitz's insistence that the primordialists cannot simply be dismissed as 'wrong', but must be taken seriously. I think that Fishman rather overstates the significance of language in ethnic and national identity; certainly, it is usually very important, but human groups vary greatly in the place they accord to language.

Part 2 provides a highly welcome link between theory and phenomena in the world, with case studies on the Basque Country, South Africa and Canada. William Douglass tackles the difficult case of the strong racist element in at least

some incarnations of Basque nationalism; John Stone (on South Africa) provides a timely lesson in why facts cannot and should not be adapted to fit a prevalent theory; and John Edwards (on Canada) shows a nationalism – that of the French Canadians – moving from a more civic to a more ethnic type, bearing out Connor's thesis of the primacy of the ethnic component in national movements.

Part 3 ('Applied Connorian Perspectives') moves from nation-based case studies to the applicability of Connor's views to widespread problems. Brendan O'Leary's essay ('Federations and the Management of Nations') is an excellent examination of the possibilities for establishing viable state structures where the (relatively) monoethnic nation-state is not an option. William Safran's 'Ethnic Conflict and Third-Party Mediation' seems to me to invite the bleak conclusion that third parties almost always fail to understand adequately the complexities of other people's ethnic and national identities. John Coakley's 'Religion and Nationalism in the First World' is a timely reminder that the religious component of identities has been highly significant in shaping the character of contemporary nations.

Part 4 ('Wider Implications') directs attention to matters not hitherto clearly addressed in the volume: the territorial component of national identity (in Robert Kaiser's 'Homeland Making and the Territorialization of National Identity') and the utilitarian functions of identities (Thomas Spira's 'Ethnicity and Nationality'). This latter chapter seems to make the unhelpful equation of ethnicity with 'minority ethnicity', but this is not clear; alone among the contributions to the volume, this one suffers from some lack of clarity and poor expression.

The volume ends with a bibliography of Connor's work (1967–2001), but before reaching this we can enjoy Conversi's excellent 'Resisting Primordialism and other isms: In Lieu of Conclusions'. Here he reaffirms what is perhaps the core insight of the book: in order to understand nationalism, primordialism must (following Connor) be taken seriously,

but this does not mean that serious scholars of primordialism must become primordialists themselves – a charge that has been unjustly levelled at Connor. That primordialism be taken seriously is chillingly re-argued on the paper's penultimate page; current trends in what Conversi labels 'free-market fundamentalism' may actually be leading to an 'incremental [rise] in nationalism and xenophobia', and even some technological innovations (such as the mobile phone) may be 'reinforcing ethnic exclusivism, family ties and parental control'.

Daniele Conversi is to be warmly congratulated on producing this edited volume, and for allowing the contributors to debate with each other, as it were, around the theme of the primordial roots of the modern phenomena of nations and nationalism. The book raises many questions, suggests some highly relevant answers, and points the way to fruitful new research on this vital dimensions of social and political life.

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