

Notes for an Historical Sociology of the Uneven and Combined Development of Nationalism
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Concepts like “nation,” “society,” and “culture” name bits and threaten to turn names into things. Only by understanding these names as bundles of relationships, and by placing them back into the field from which they were abstracted, can we hope to avoid misleading inferences and increase our share of understanding.

Eric R. Wolf 1997: 3.

Most recent developments in the theory of nationalism have been characterized by the departure from the socio-historical question of the articulation of nationalism and capitalism. Nationalism is studied in abstraction from the historically specific social relations which made it possible. Meanwhile, several theoretical developments in related fields of sociological investigation provide an important ground to reassess this central theme of historical sociology. After a prolific decade of writings on socio-historical dimensions of nationalism during the 1980s, a shift to *relational* and *situational* approaches of “identity” in sociology and to a-temporal discussions of nationalism in political philosophy characterized many contributions of the 1990s. In some circles, there seems to be a disciplinary consensus that attempts to articulate the relation between nationalism and capitalism were plagued by a reductionist materialist ontology or a monocausal explanatory strategy. During the same period, theoretical developments in comparative nationalisms have questioned the sustainability of the term “nation” as a category of analysis (Brubaker 1996, 2002). Meanwhile, in the neighbouring field of international relations, traditional conceptions of *sovereignty* were challenged by new interpretations of the relation between the development of capitalist social-property relations and modern sovereignty. These converged to unveil the shivering foundations of “the myth of 1648” as the act of birth of modern sovereignty (Rosenberg 1994, 1996; Teschke 2001, 2002, 2003; Lacher 2003). Moreover, these theoretical developments stress the uneven and combined development of modern and capitalist international relations.¹ So far, however, even the sharpest theorizations of the uneven and combined development of the international have left untouched the question of the historicity of modern nationalism (Vanaik 2004). Taken together, however, I argue that they

¹ On the theory of combined and uneven development see the insights of L. Trotsky, T. Veblen (1939), A. Gerschenkron (1962) and recent formulations by Rosenberg and Teschke.

provide a ground to explore the socio-historical interrelations between nationalism, capitalism and the international.

In the current theoretical context, an historical sociology of the relations between capitalism and nationalism faces some challenges. A consequence of the recent movement of sociology toward relational and situational strategies is that theoretical attempts to capture the significance of social transformations *sur la longue durée* have been marginalized. Thus a first challenge is to reinsert the relevance of these recent theoretical developments in a socio-historical horizon. Moreover, it is sometime argued that modern theoretical attempts to capture “identity” failed because they did not account for its fluidity and contingency. Therefore it is argued that studies *sur la longue durée* cannot account for the subtlety of relational and situational aspects of “identity.” These arguments provide a challenge to be overcome by a historical sociology of nationalism. They stress issues of conceptual precisions and theoretical articulations which need to be taken seriously.

This paper addresses the theoretical underpinnings of this *problématique*. It acknowledges that recent developments in the relational and situational sociology of nationalism and ethnicity increase our awareness of the risks of reifying nationalist and racist political discourses. However, they do not invalidate the task of theorizing the socio-historical trends in which these relational and situational dynamics are socially embedded. These dynamics can be isolated for analytical purposes. However they cannot be ontologically detached from historically constituted social relations of power. Substantiating these claims, I argue that the theory of social-property relations and the theory of uneven and combined development provide a benchmark to reassess the historical sociology of nationalism. First, I present a rapid overview of my point of departure: Robert Brenner, Justin Rosenberg and Benno Teschke’s contributions to historical sociology of social property relations, capitalism and international relations. Then I move on to the historical sociology of nationalism by revisiting the antinomies of Ernst Gellner’s modernisation theory of nationalism. After stressing the limitations of this theory, I move on to Rogers Brubaker relational sociology of nationalism. After having stress Brubaker’s distinction between *categories of analysis* and *categories of practice*, I reassess the need to articulate the discursive mobilization of “nations” to an historical sociology of absolutist and capitalist social property relations. Finally, I argue that to move beyond the debilitating strategies of constructing ideal-types of endogenous nationalist developments, an international historical sociology must stress

the uneven and combined texture of nationalist developments. Only then does nationalism emerge as a specifically modern process inherited both from absolutist social contradictions and capitalist social relations and mediated through uneven and combined national, international and global historical processes.

Social-Property Relations and Uneven and Combined Development

The theory of social-property relations is associated with the work of historian Robert Brenner on the transition from feudalism to capitalism (Brenner 1990b; 1991; 1995a; 1995b; 1996). Ellen M. Wood and George C. Comninel developed the theoretical foundations laid out by Brenner empirically and theoretically. Since the 1990s, Justin Rosenberg, Benno Teschke, Hannes Lacher and Colin Mooers developed Wood and/or Brenner's arguments to revisit different dimensions of social theory and comparative historical sociology: the transition to capitalism; bourgeois revolution; modern international relations and globalisation.

In his work on the social origins of agrarian capitalism in pre-industrial Europe, Brenner emphasizes the role of balance of class forces and social-property relations in the development of different paths of social developments in pre-capitalist and capitalist Europe. Brenner sees specific setting of social-property relations and balance of class forces has bringing about different rules and strategies of social reproduction whose relational interactions lead to different trajectories of social developments. Different social-property relations, he emphasizes, do not evolve systematically or linearly one into another. *Contra* Althusser, they are not a *structure* from which another structural outcome can be derived by conceptual necessity. A given social-property regime, capitalist or pre-capitalist, is characterized by specific social contradictions, but the historical outcome of these contradictions is a matter of regionally and “nationally” specific balance of class power.

Brenner challenges the commercial model of the transition to capitalism. According to this model, the take off of modern economic growth was made possible by the growth of commerce, which brought about capitalist strategies of social reproduction and an increase division of labour (i.e. Braudel 1979; Wallerstein 1974-1988). This model, stresses Wood, takes for granted that the development of capitalism is the necessary outcome of a *teleological* process, which waited for several obstacles to be removed to bloom. Therefore, what needs to be explained, the emergence of capitalism, is already presupposed in the assumption of a proto-capitalist embryo

(see also: Comninel 2000b: 472; Teschke 2003: 129-150, 2005: 10; Rosenberg 1994: 40; Wood 1984, 2002).

According to Wood, what distinguishes capital as a social relation is that it is the first social-property regime, which can potentially, operated entirely through the mediation of the market and where entering in relation with the market becomes an imperative, rather than an opportunity. While former relations of domination linked *necessarily* the economic moment of surplus extraction and the political moment of domination, capital does not. Absolutism was characterized by a geopolitical order where a zero-sum logic of commercial monopolies was guaranteed by militarized trading routes (Anderson 1979; Brenner 1995b: 289; Comninel 1990; 2000a: 21; Mooers 1991; Parker 1996; Rosenberg 1994: 135; Teschke 2002: 9, 2003: chapter 5 and 6; Wood 1991: chapter 2; see also Tilly 1985).

Pre-capitalist patterns of social-property relations in Europe guaranteed the full property of their means of subsistence to peasants, and they guaranteed the lords the possession of the extra-economic power to extract surplus from their tenants. Prior to capitalism, markets did not create an impetus to produce more efficiently and to increase competitiveness (Rosenberg 1996: 40). Capitalism marked a rupture with these social-property regimes with important consequences on the global reframing of relations of power. Capitalism, clarifies Teschke, is a distinct social form:

Capitalism is a social relation between persons in which all “factors of production,” including labour-power, have become commoditised and where production of goods for exchange has become market-dependent and market-regulated. On this basis, capitalism does not mean simply production for the market, but competitive reproduction in the market based on a social-property regime in which property less direct producers are forced to sell their labour-power to property-owners. This separation of direct producers from their means of reproduction and their subjection to the capital relation entails the compulsion of reproduction in the market by selling labour-power in return for wages. This social system is uniquely dynamic, driven by competition, exploitation and accumulation (Teschke 2005: 11).

That transformation, not a summation of elements heading toward the increase of the predictability of exchanges on the market (Weber), brought about, for the first time in history, rules of reproduction of the ruling class, which forced it to adopt strategies guided by self-interested economic rationality and a necessity to permanently revolutionize the process of production. This caused the take-off of modern economic growth.

Modern International Relations

In *The Empire of Civil Society*, Justin Rosenberg reconstructed the relation between different social relations of production and geopolitical strategies of reproduction of power. He critiqued

the neorealist and neo-Weberian reification of the separation of the economic and the political in international relations theory. He questioned the traditional interpretation of the Treaties of Westphalia and Utrecht and argues that their political context remained captive of pre-modern strategies of political accumulation having little to do with modern anonymous and impersonal strategies of balance of power. Hence, argued Rosenberg, note of these Treaties brought about the modernity of international relations, but the development of capitalism toward the end of the nineteenth century.

Since then, Rosenberg has consistently argued that the a-historical theory of balance of power must be abandoned in favour of Trotsky's theory of uneven and combined development (1996; 2005; 2006). The first task of such a theory would be to explore the consequences of the fact that "the development of backward societies took place under the pressure of an already existing world market, dominated by more advanced capitalists powers (1996: 7)." It should also move beyond the stagiest conception of the teleological development of modes of production by exploring the consequences of "backwardness" and uneven development on global processes. This peculiar dynamic should lead one to abandon a unitary conception of the sovereign state as the central unit of analysis of international relations, Rosenberg notes: "we cannot begin with a logical model of homogeneous states: the variety of political forms is simply too great. We would have to begin instead with a historical analysis which reconstructs the uneven and combined development of capitalism which has produced such a variegated world of states (1996: 8)."

Moving beyond the structuralism of *The Empire of Civil Society*, Benno Teschke introduced the theory of social-property relations in international relations theory to offer an account of pre-1648 geopolitics that comes to term with the mainstream theorization of medieval geopolitics and 1648 (1998; 2002; 2003). He reconstructs through a diachronic and synchronic comparative strategy the historically specific relations between social-property regimes and their attendant strategies of reproduction that governed different geopolitical dynamics. Adopting an explanatory strategy that lay attention to periods of transition, he grounds the qualitative shift to the first modern and capitalist state in England between the Revolution of 1688 and 1713. Meanwhile, the emergence of English capitalism imposed slowly its geopolitical pressures and dynamics on the continental absolutist states. It co-existed with pre-capitalist states and

geopolitical dynamics slowly forcing them to stretch or adapt their capacities of geopolitical accumulation to sustain the competitive pressures of the capitalist state. Teschke's explanatory strategy seeks to reconstruct the national, international and global historical processes through which the specific capitalist property relations that emerged in England slowly imposed their rhythm on other states. The capitalist state enforces the separation of the economic power of exploitation and the political power of domination. This does not imply that the state is entirely autonomous. It implies that the state is autonomous enough to enforce the legal separation (Lacher 2005: 41). Teschke and Lacher have both argued that the system of territorial states was a remnant of European absolutism and that there is no conceptual reason why the expansion of capital would not sooner or later bring about the formation of a global state (Lacher 2005: 45-46; Teschke 2003: 262-268). The modern state system inherited a territorial dynamic from the absolutist era, but nothing guarantees its survival.

So far, advocates of the theory of social-property relations have paid little attention to the relations between the transformations of social-property regimes and the emergence of nationalism as a social process paradoxically associated with modern property relations.² In my view, this *lacuna* does not reflect a conceptual impossibility. Yet, in order to capture the meaning of the historical development of nationalism, the theory of social-property needs to develop unexplored dimensions: dynamics of social closures; variations in representations of *groupness* and the social origins of hegemonic representations of friends of foes.

The Historical Sociology of Nationalism

In this section, my argument will proceed in three steps. 1) First, as an entry point to the theory of nationalism, I will present Ernest Gellner's modernization model of the development of nationalism. I use the model to stress a functionalist bias which need to be address if one is to develop a historical sociology of nationalism. 2) Then, I move to recent developments in the theory of nationalism: Rogers Brubaker's relational and situational theory of nationalism. I emphasize the need to assimilate this literature to articulate a theory of hegemonic nationalist representations. 3) In the final section, I present a summary illustration of the development of nationalism through the lens of the theory of social-property relations and uneven and combined development. I discuss the socio-historical consequences of absolutism and capitalism and stress their importance for recasting nationalism.

² In a recent article, Adam-David Morton argues that the theory of social-property relations tends to neglect cultural forms (Morton 2005).

Ernst Gellner and the Modernisation Model

It is impossible to disentangle the field of theories of nationalism from the pivotal role played by Ernst Gellner in forging its *habitus* (Gellner 1964; 1983; 1997). As Anthony Smith puts it, the philosopher-anthropologist and self-declared “life-long anti-Communist and anti-Marxist” (Gellner 1996: 4) forged what was for a long time “the only one theory in the field (Smith 2001: 62).” Gellner’s initial impulse was to formulate a critique of Elie Kedourie’s theory of nationalism. I do not intent to address his theory at length here.³ Yet, his theorization of the transition from agrarian to industrial societies has been so influent in forging the ways in which one questions the emergence of nationalism that his argument must be recast to capture its theoretical antinomies.

Gellner’s social theory and theory of nationalism proceed from the merger of different sociological traditions. He formulated a theory of modernisation characterized as “deterministic” (Smith 2001: 65) or “immoderately materialist” (Anderson 1992: 205) by some of his critiques. He borrowed from Weber and Durkheim an emphasis on the modern division of labour and the parallel development of perpetual growth and instrumental rationality. To the extent that he takes the international into account, he adopted a realist posture. In the section 7 of *Nationalism*, Gellner distinguished four zones of distinct national developments. However, he did not articulate theoretically the historical interconnectedness between these different geographical eras (Gellner 1997: 50-59). More precisely, he does not bring the international back in to theorize the systematic unevenness of nationalist developments. With respect to historical materialism, he could hardly have been more oppose to it. He was a materialist, but he left classes’ subjective motives outside of his framework. He was careful to use the notion of industrial society, not capitalism or capitalist social relations. Along the lines of Parsons, he rejected historical materialism, not functionalism, structuralism and determinism.

In *Nations and Nationalism*, his theorization of the relations between modes of subsistence and cultural patterns was straightforward: culture is determined by the mode of subsistence. There is room for variations between modes of subsistence and cultural manifestations, but the general opposition between agrarian and industrial societies captures the essential. Here, nationalism stems from the homogenisation of culture made possible by the massive development of public education, which in turn is a “functional prerequisites” of industrialisation (Gellner 1983: 34-35).

³ For an evaluation of his theory see (Hall ed. 1988).

The institution of modern public education *had to lead* to nationalism.⁴ Gellner presented his model as an alternative to Marxism. Yet, unlike other economic anthropologists (Polanyi 1957; Wolf 1997), he left the question of the transition to “industrialisation” unanswered: “to sort out the causal threads of so complex a process, we should need not one, but very many re-runs, and these will never be available to us (Gellner 1983: 19).”

Nationalism, Gellner argued, is not a cultural pattern compatible with agricultural societies. In those societies, “the main function [of culture] is to reinforce, underwrite, and render visible and authoritative, the hierarchical status system of the social order (1997: 20).” Thus nationalism results from the division of labour of industrial societies, which brings about the need for a highly standardized education system, which creates a highly homogenous educated group of operators of symbols sharing a common semantic. Nationalist symbols transmitted through standardized public education foster a common culture transcending the gaps between workers, public administrators and the industry. In sum, industrialization creates homogeneity, while agriculture does not. Nationalism, therefore, is neither a romantic reaction to modernization, nor imposed from above, it is inherent to industrial societies. Its emergence was “prepared” by the “bureaucratic centralization by the Enlightened Despots of the Eighteenth century” and it provided a principle of legitimacy to the industrializing world (Gellner 1997: 23; 25). The functional need of the division of labour is its driving force. Neither agencies, nor social relations, have a central explanatory power here.

Gellner’s paths breaking theory of nationalism has limitations. (i.) It did not explain what happened to the social relations of power that prevented the formation of homogeneous horizontal cultures during the preceding millennia. (ii.) It lacked a theory of the transition from agrarian “societies” to industrialisation or capitalism. (iii.) Gellner seems to have been /his unwillingness to incorporate agencies and social struggles in his model. If nationalism is, as he puts it, “a theory of political legitimacy,” it needs to be made legitimate for people and exactly how this plays out is not entirely clear. (iv.) His large fresco of world history focuses on the big sketch, it did not provide a milder grain to study nationalist, ethnic and racist social practices

⁴ “We do not properly understand the range of options available in industrial society, and perhaps we never shall; but we understand some of its essential concomitants. The kind of cultural homogeneity is one of them, and we had better make our peace with it. It is not the case, as Elie Kedourie claims, that nationalism imposes homogeneity; it is rather that a homogeneity imposed by *objective, inescapable imperative* eventually appears on the surface in the form of nationalism (Gellner 1983: 39 *emphasis added*).”

(Smith 2001: 67). These elements: social changes, agencies, the role of social relations would need to be accounted for by an historical sociology of capitalism and nationalism.

Against the structuralist credo, recent developments in the theories of nationalism have been on the mobilization of “ethnic,” “racial” and “national” identity markers by different agencies - political entrepreneurs, states, elites or classes pursuing their specific interests. A shift occurred from agency-less modernisation theories toward agency-based mobilization theories.

Toward Nations as Categories of Practice

During the 1980s and 1990s, debates between primordialist and modernist theories of nationalism and between essentialist and constructivist theories of the *nation* have inflated scepticism in the literature on nationalism (Anderson 1991; Breuilly 1994; Brubaker 1996; Chatterjee 1993; Fredrickson 1997; Gellner 1997; Habermas 2000; Hall (ed.) 1988; Hobsbawm 1999; Hobsbawm and T. Ranger 1992; Hroch 1985; Nairn 1977, 1997). Part of the sceptic build-up stems from uneasy attempts to define the concept of “nation.” The multiplication of empirical analyses and theoretical arguments challenging the models of the early 1980s revealed the uneasiness to find a conceptual strategy to grasp what seems to be constantly escaping theoretical models: a workable definition of the *nation*. Along with the dissemination of poststructuralism in the humanities, a growing interest emerged in the field of comparative nationalisms for meso and micro processes of “identity” formation. Insights from the poststructuralist toolbox entered the field of comparative ethnicity and nationalism at a moment when they were most wanted.⁵ With the end of the Cold War, a shifting topography of “racial” politics in the US, the breakdown of Yugoslavia, the genocide in Rwanda, the formation of regional blocks, and the spectre of a new deployment of anglobalization, there were flourishing markets for political and academic investors in “identity.” This trend was reinforced by the social context in which evolved the American academia. As Brubaker and Cooper puts it: “The proliferation of identitarian claim-making was facilitated by the comparative institutional weakness of leftist politics in the United States and by the concomitant weakness of class-based idioms of social and political analysis (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 3).” Coming under the fire of analyses of non-European nationalisms; confronted to widening axes of variations of paths of national, sub-national and subaltern identities; and, facing divergent voices, narratives and perceptions of nationhood, macro studies of nationalism were eclipsed by meso and micro

⁵ For a critical survey of the concept of identity in the social sciences see Brubaker and Cooper 2000.

studies. The field look for a cognitive shift to deal with the malleable character of “nationalism” and its empty shell: the nation. Scholars, who emphasize the fluid, relational, situational and sometime colonial aspects of identity formation, presented the quest for a workable analytical concept of nation an even more difficult and problematic project (Butler 1999; Mohanty 1991; Chaterjee 1993; Hall 1997, 1992, 1990; Murray (ed.) 1997; Said 1979, 1993). This literature revealed the convolute relation between organic intellectuals and the intellectual practices summoning identity markers.

Meanwhile, another theoretical strategy stems from the influence of the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. Throughout an analysis of agencies (political entrepreneurs) in relational contexts, sociologist Rogers Brubaker provided a distinction with important theoretical consequences. Brubaker suggested that terms like *nation* should be considered *category of practice* not *category of analysis* (Brubaker 1996; Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 4; see also Wacquant 1997; Bourdieu 1980). Suddenly, the distillation of a pristine concept of nation appeared a vain enterprise and the quest for the abyssal project of deconstructive introspection also appeared limited.⁶ According to Brubaker, scholars in the field have taken too long for granted that the categories of *race*, *nation* and *ethnicity* were categories of *analysis* corresponding to clearly identifiable and bounded groups in-the-world. In doing so, the scholarly literature contribute both to the creation of an *ethnic bias* in the field and to the reification of these categories. They are constitutive of peculiar ethnically framed cognitive schemes, which sociologists should look *at*, not look *through* (Brubaker et al 2004). These categories are constitutive of the rhetorical and political constructions mobilized by political entrepreneurs: *la langue politique*. They perform something in-the-world (Brubaker 2002: 166). It is the axis of variation of the relational and situational contexts of social mobilization of these cognitive and practical schemes that need to be captured by social scientists (Brubaker 1996: 1-22; 2000: 5-6; 2002). The casuistic quest of defining what is, and what is not, a *nation*, is a social, cognitive and political practice. Yet, attempts to deconstruct these notions, to extirpate their content and to show the relativity of their social meaning are no less performative. There is no view from Sirius here.

⁶ Brubaker and Cooper sums up this issue: “If identity is everywhere, it is nowhere. If it is fluid, how can we understand the ways in which self-understandings may harden, congeal, and crystallize? If it is constructed, how can we understand the sometimes coercive force of external identifications? If it is multiple, how do we understand the terrible singularity that is often striven for – and sometimes realized – by politicians seeking to transform mere categories into unitary and exclusive groups? How can we understand the power and pathos of identity politics? (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 1)

Nations as Socially Embedded Categories of Practice

The distinction between *categories of analyses* and *categories of practices* provides a ground to cease the essentialist search for a pristine concept of nation. It provides a reflexive standpoint from which new questions and theoretical strategies can be formulated. It is also a standpoint from which one can return to the socio-historical landscapes deserted by deconstructionist nomads and undercover libertarians.

The categories of *nation*, *race* and *ethnicity* are not mobilized in a social and historical void. Nationalist narratives are framed from meaningful and powerful symbols (Smith 2001: 82).⁷ They are embedded in social practices and cultural codes, which can be turned into powerful levers in nationalist and racist representations of the world. What are the implications of saying that they are socially embedded? It implies that they are constitutive *of* and constitute *through* fundamental processes of social life. Here, moving on from the level of narratives to the rules of social reproduction in which they are embedded, another axis of questions emerges. How is the practice of performing representations of the *nation* related to other social processes? What is specific about the modern era that makes it an arena where *the nation* is omnipresent in processes of categorization? How do these representations participate, intentionally or not, to social reproduction of social power? Which pattern(s) of social-property relations favours a grammar of geopolitical relations which tends to reinforce these social representations?

The field of historical sociology host a repertory of authors dealing with issues of ideological representations (Eagleton 1991). Against economicism, Gramsci's point was precisely that processes of state formation take place on an ideological landscape – the civil society - where classes, social forces and institutions contribute to shape common sense (Gramsci 1966). Nationalist grammars, from the Republican model of Colonial France to the auto-proclaim “totalitarian” state of fascist Italy are shaped by the narratives of social forces and state's institutions imposing their representation of the *nation*. Masking the unevenness of these representations is an act and a strategy of political power. Some institutions are specialized precisely in this business. The crucial one is the state. This was clearly notified in Bourdieu's view that the state is:

the ensemble of fields that are the site of struggles in which what is at stake is – to build on Max Weber's famed formulation – the monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence, i.e. the power to

⁷ As historian Patrick Geary stress: “it would be absurd to suggest that, because these communities are in some sense ‘imagined,’ they should be dismissed or trivialized, or to imply that ‘somehow imagined’ is synonymous either with ‘imaginary’ or ‘insignificant’ (Geary 2002: 16).”

constitute and to impose a universal and universally applicable within a given “nation,” that is within the boundaries of a given territory, a common set of coercive norms (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 112).

One important point, however, is that the arena itself, the imagined community of the nation, is one of category constantly reshaped by these struggles to impose “a universal and a universally applicable.” It is impossible to disentangle these struggles from the context of evolving social relations related to the reproduction of classes power through the state. This occurs through institutional practices mediated by the state: institutionalising censuses, implementing linguistic policies, adopting educational curriculum (especially an official national history), constructing memorial sites, engineering demographic policies, celebrating national rituals, sponsoring national sports, sending people on the moon, going to war with friends and allies, policing citizenship and nationhood, regulating labour policies and conditions of access of labour to the public sector, defining friends and foes, etc. These fields of state activities mediate social relations nationally, internationally and globally. Yet, it is also important to reassess the historicity of the nationalism. How is nationalism, as a historically specific social practice, related to the Modern era and to absolutist or capitalist social-property relations?

Social-property Relations, the International and Nationalism

In the remaining of this paper, I will argue two things. (i.) Social representations of different forms of social closures, including *the nation*, are constitutive *of* and constituted *through* specific historical settings of social-property relations. They provide a dynamic understanding of the ways in which rules of reproduction of social power delineate, or constrained, social representations of the policy – of friends and foes. Of particular relevance here are the cultural consequences of the separation of the economic and the political in capitalism. (ii.) The theory of uneven and combined development provides a framework to apprehend contradictory processes of internationalisation of nationalist social representations. During the modern era, both absolutism and capitalism brought about elements, which led to the emergence and the diffusion of nationalism as the vehicle of representation of imagined communities.

What is the relation between social-property relations and grammars of exclusion? The former cannot be structurally derived from the later. However, one can reconstruct axes of variation of exclusionary social practices from patterns of social-property relations (rules of reproduction of power and the types of crisis they lead to). The theory of social-property relations offers a theory of social power revealing variations in forms of social closure *sur la longue durée*. This

argument does not entail that each setting of social-property relations generates an inventory of unique mechanisms of exclusion. Some categories of inclusion and exclusion cut across different social-property relations. Yet, social-property relations provide a parsimonious pattern to account for the historical variations of grammars of exclusion and the transformation, marginalisation and disappearance of some patterns.⁸ This claim will be substantiated below.

The international also needs to be addressed by the historical sociology of nationalism. This dimension has traditionally felled in the cracks between the field of IR and the field of theory of nationalism. The first has traditionally been in the business of studying states rather than nations; the second has been in the business of studying endogenous, rather than endo-exogenous social processes. As a result, beyond the neorealist circular argument that national-states evolved in a system of sovereign states reinforcing each others' self-representation as national-states, there has been few satisfying attempts to integrate the *international* in the comparative analysis of nationalism. As anthropologist Eric R. Wolf puts it: "the habit of treating named entities such as Iroquois, Greece, Persia, or the United States as fixed entities opposed to one another by stable internal architecture and external boundaries interferes with our ability to understand their mutual encounter and confrontation (Wolf 1997: 7)."

One of the consequences of this lack of theorization has been the formulation of ideal-types of endogenous nationalist developments where the interconnectedness of nationalism on a global scale is unproblematic. Thus the comparative study of the emergence of nationalism suffers from a parallel weakness from the one identified by Teschke with respect to the study of capitalism and bourgeois revolution:

this theoretical fixation on exclusively national dynamics and its concomitant invocation of comparative history fundamentally fails to problematize the fact that these plural roads towards capitalism do not run in parallel and mutual isolation, neither chronologically, nor socio-politically, nor geographically. In fact, they constantly, to stretch the metaphor, "cross each other" in the wider force field of the international (Teschke 2005: 7).

The missing dimension in the comparative history of social-property regime is a theoretical account that comes to terms with the "geopolitically mediated development of Europe as a whole – a perspective that is fully alive to the constitutive role of the international in historical development (Teschke 2005: 4)." The theoretical consequence of privileging *the nation* as a category of analysis is that an a-temporal frame of international state *competition*, rather than the

⁸ *Contra* the structuralist and modernist alternatives which rely on the oppositions between: tradition and modernity; *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*; the centre and the periphery.

uneven development of geopolitically mediated *social contradictions* is given priority as the theorizing the *international* (Rosenberg 1996; Teschke 2006). This formal reification of the international can't articulate the historical processes through which specific forms of social contradictions led to a form of inter-state competition predicate upon an uneven and combined process of reconfiguration of inter-*nationalist* politics. In the remaining section, I will sketch the broad lines of an international historical sociology of nationalism derived from a theory of uneven and combined development anchored in the theory of social-property relations.

Pre-Nationalist Grammars of Inclusion and Exclusion

Feudal and seigneurial social-property relations subordinated the peasantry whose destiny was to work and to live in humility and servility and a seigneurial class composed of a secular and an ecclesiastic arm (Huizinga 1958: 49-51; Le Goff 1982 : 202; see also Comninel 2000a). In the context of the intra-ruling class competition, the ecclesiastics had an important advantage over the knights: they manipulate both Latin and local vernacular languages. Latin was a powerful symbol echoing the sacred character of the community (Anderson 1991: 14). In *Les trois ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme*, George Duby characterizes the feudal imaginary as evolving around the idea of a consistency and homogeneity between heaven and earth. Order was synonymous with the division of charges in society. The priests (*oratores*) and the knights (*bellicores*), whose relations were far from harmonious, were both extracting surplus from organized peasant communities. They also despised and sought to contain the social power of the merchants. Feudalism entailed *triplicity*, a hierarchy among *oratores*, *bellatores* and *populis*, and *ternarity*, the belief in the reciprocity of the links within this hierarchy (Duby 1996: 516-518). The knights and the clergy reproduced their social power through the extraction of peasants' surplus and various forms of taxations. As Polanyi and Gellner stressed the cement of feudalism (of *agrarian society* in Gellner's words) entailed a naturalization of the role of each classes. This prevent neither peasants' mutinies and uprisings, nor large-scale banditry. However, to the exception of some revolutionary movements, peasants' uprisings demanded the relaxing of feudal dues, more independence for peasants' communities, in sum, a more "equal participation in the unequal order."⁹ These demands were often channelled through a nostalgic representation of primitive Christianity in reaction to the official Church's corruption.

⁹ During the peak of *La Fronde* for instance many insurgents did not contest the unequal nature of the three orders system, but they did criticize the fact that some orders were not contributing their share to the social harmony.

As Gellner stressed, pre-capitalistic relations of solidarity among members of the ruling class did not assert that: “homogeneity of culture is the political bond, that mastery of a given high culture is the pre-condition of political, economic and social citizenship (Gellner 1997: 29).” Pre-capitalist dynasts, princes and lords were integrated in chains and representations of solidarity based essentially on blood and lineage (Febvre 1996: 101). These were the social categories through which the reproduction of power derived from strategies of political accumulation based on vassalage, dynastic marriages and territorial expansion was reproduced. As a rule, the Hapsburgs of Spain and the Austrian Hapsburgs had a tradition of intermarriage (Bogdan 2005). This did not prevent tensions between the Spanish and the Austrian branches of the hierarchy, but they were along the lines of pre-capitalist and pre-nationalist rules of reproduction, the geopolitics of *political accumulation*. They were neither *reflecting* feudal property relations, nor partly autonomous ideologies; both were institutionally dependant.

Ecclesiastic and aristocratic representations of friends and foes were contentious. The Church’s attempt to pacify Christendom was often powerless in front of the feudal grammar of political accumulation and its emphasis on lineage solidarity, personal *vendetta* and collective revenge (*faide*) (see Teschke 2003 : 59-60). Even prior to the Reformation, the Christian Ecclesia did not prevent Crusaders from slaughtering other Christian. Following the Gregorian Reform, the Crusades, the Inquisition(s), the Councils of Lateran and the Church’s councils contributed to the articulation of Roman Christian interior/exterior policy. In the Council of Lateran normative regime, Christendom had common threats: Muslims, heretics, lepers, witches and Jews. Yet, the Church’s disciplinary power was observed with different level of enthusiasm in different regions. As the case of the implementation of the Spanish Inquisition reveals (1478-1480), the willingness to implement the disciplinary rules formulated by the Church’s councils and the papacy interfered with the rules of reproduction of local seigneurial classes. The Church’s council’s normative regime did not prevented occasional alliances with the Moors or the Muslims against a Christian neighbour. During the so-called War of Reconquista, the kingdoms of Castila and Aragon settled their dynastic conflicts with Portugal and the Navarre before inflicting the final blow to the Caliphate of Grenada (Reston 2005).

Medieval governance evolved along the kaleidoscopic lines of strategies of political accumulation. Anderson stresses that pre-nationalist patterns of governance did not prevent rulers from foreign origins (Anderson 1991: 20-21). Nationalist patterns of governance tend to

do the opposite. Michael Mann notes that “sixty million Europeans had been ruled by a foreign power before 1914, compared to only 20-25 million afterwards (Mann 1999: 33).” People of a common lineage or members of a guild had a sense of solidarity, or sameness, against foreign occupation and foreign blood. Their social reproduction was embedded in a social closure reproduced through dynastic and customary norms. Yet, this solidarity was against competitors who endangered the political distribution of landed property, monopolistic access to commercial routes, customary regulations, or the moral economy. It was not against a member of another *nation* who violated the integrity of a sovereign nation. Exclusion resulting from lineage or guild solidarity could be reinforced by language and religion (Bartlett 1993: 236-242; Fredrickson 2002: 24), but the national integrity of the equal members of a political unity was not considered threaten (Geary 2002: 19-21). To this extent, the accentuation of these identity markers was a mechanism of exclusion closer from racism than nationalism.

Pre-capitalist imagined communities had a common characteristic. The view that members of different orders belong to a horizontal chain of solidarity, or the same national stock, was absent. The institutionalization of unequal status was integrated to an organic conception of the cosmos following rules of reciprocity and redistribution cementing inter-class social contradictions (Duby 1996: 515-540). At best they were equal as God’s creation. Yet, precisely, God wanted them unequal. As Gellner highlighted, this representation of the world was incompatible with nationalism.

The Uneven Development of Nationalism

While Hobsbawm (1999) and Gellner (1983) insisted on rooting nationalism in modernity, advocates of primordialist theories of nationalism have hunted the pre-modern origins of national cohesion. Escaping this opposition, Ellen M. Wood (1991) contends that the classical ideal-types opposing the French and the German nationalism were neither the results of modernity *Sui generis* nor of pre-modern institutions, but of relentless social contradictions between modern and pre-modern classes and institutions which entered a crisis of social reproduction during the period of the absolutist state. Wood’s argument is not a median option, but a theoretical alternative. Instead of starting from the opposition between *modernity* and *tradition*, or agrarian and industrial societies, to question the emergence of nationalism *in general*, she starts from the analysis of social contradictions and the forms of crises they lead to. Rather than endorsing a holistic understanding of modernity as an organic unity, which tends to blur the unevenness of

“European” history, her theoretical alternative starts from a comparative history of states’ formation emphasizing social-property regimes. The analysis of these contradictions bring our attention to the systematically combinatory nature of the emergence of nationalism. The later is an amalgam constantly reshaped by actors whose social power is embedded in specific property regimes and who are adapting their strategies of reproduction to shifting social and geopolitical contexts. Thus nationalism *as a rule* stems from combined and contradictory social property relations.

Benedict Anderson argues that modern nations are “imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which the Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm (Anderson 1991: 7).” The term predated the political thought of the Enlightenment, but it did acquire a new meaning in this context. It is precisely the contradictions of these larger social and socio-linguistic contexts that are interesting here. The semantic content of the categories was debated among actors with antagonistic views of how the social crisis should be resolved, and antagonistic views of what the reorganization of social power entailed.¹⁰ In capitalist England and absolutist France and Prussia, the category was mobilized between factions who had different views of who should benefit from the privileges granted to offices holders, educated civil servants, and militarized landowners (in Prussia).

England’s specific transformation of social-property relations prevented Stuart absolutism and evolved into the formation of the first capitalist state (Brenner 2003; Mooers 1991; Comninel 2000a). One of the comparative advantages of this new social-property regime was the efficiency of its financial systems: the landowners levied a tax upon themselves (Mooers 1991: 156-162; Teschke 2003: 253-262). These transformations and the abstraction of a public sphere from the private social conditions of reproduction favoured the emergence of an imagined horizontal comradeship of male adult property owners. The capitalist landed aristocracy gave a *national* form to its social interests. Unlike in France, where the notions of *sovereignty* and *nation* were highly debated by contentious social forces, in England the class of agrarian property owners *were* the sovereign nation in Parliament (Wood 1985). Thereafter, in England, more than everywhere on the continent the agrarian property owners associated the state with the socially abstract form of the nation and they had a common interest in the empire. The Acts of Union of 1707 gave birth to the unitary state of Great Britain and created the condition of possibility for

¹⁰ Even after the French Revolution the idea that sovereignty could be *popular* (embodied by the people and not only by a minority of male holders of property titles) remained an idea held by radicals (Maier 1994).

the slow emergence of ‘Britishness’ (Wellings 2002: 96). The key qualitative change in this context is highlighted by Teschke:

At the end of the seventeenth century, British sovereignty lay no longer with the king but with Parliament. Britain’s new attitude towards Europe was based on the decoupling of foreign policy from dynastic interests, brought about by Parliament’s right – gained in the 1701 Act of Settlement – to limit, co-articulate, and even determine British foreign policy. After these constitutional changes, British foreign policy was no longer conducted exclusively on the basis of dynastic interests as formulated in *Kabinettpolitik*, but increasingly on the basis of the ‘national’ interest’ as formulated by the propertied class in Parliament (2003: 256-257).

The pre-industrial capitalist English state already had a social basis to pursue a *national* imperial foreign policy (Wellings 2002: 97). Here, national and imperial discourses reinforced each other’s. Moreover, English capitalism slowly shaped a distinct social and international order where strategies of reproduction of power of the ruling class tended to adopt a private form. Wellings and Thorne stress the formation of patterns of exclusion transcending the domestic and colonial divide:

Whilst the politics and practice of racial ideology could be very different in the imperial centre and at the frontier, they were nevertheless engaged in a self-supporting relationship. Frontier warfare throughout the empire helped to create a racial boundary for notions of ‘Britishness’. Furthermore, this experience of racial warfare and ‘race’ also fed into debates about social control of the lower classes in Britain itself (Wellings 2002: 105; see also Thorne 1997).

Not only domestic labour, but the Irish were also racialized, while their relative productive value compare to Englishmen was an object of inquiry of the rising political economy rationalizing the colonisation of Ireland (Allen 1994-1997; Ellis 1998; Jacobson 1999). Thus creating the seed of a long lasting *national* resistance movement. The internationalization of the English property regime and its revolutionary productive capacities exerted a constant pressure on the amalgam of dynastic hierarchies, absolutist social formations and other political organisations completing the eclectic fresco that was continental Europe. It had profound implications on processes of states formation, geopolitical dynamics and the relation between the national, the international and the global (Lacher 2003). An increasing number of domestic actors came to identify themselves, and reproduced their power through, the imperial *national* form corresponding to the category of Britishness. While other national forms were shaped partly in reaction to the colonial expansion of this national form. Nationalism therefore is not only embedded in a specific transformation of social property relations, but its internationalisation is also characterizes by *unevenness*.

After the end of the embargo created by the French Revolution and Napoleon's defeat, the superior productivity of the English property regime created a geopolitical pressure on France

and the continent forcing them to adopt new property relations (Comninel 2000b: 472). There, capitalism slowly and unevenly brought down the last pillars of extra-economic power of the agrarian nobility toward the end of the 19th century. In parallel with the expansion of capitalist social-property relations, the state administrative, juridical and cultural apparatus became channels of social and national integration. While nobility titles were turned into commodities, the cultural *habitus* in which the reproduction of power of the nobility was embedded perpetuated itself in the codes of distinction of the French metropolitan *noblesse d'État* (Bourdieu 1989). In France, the long-term result was a national representation that entailed the suppression of the enduring internal (feudal) divisions. Even though the process of state centralization in France preceded the pressures of English capitalism, it developed a particular nationalist trajectory influenced by its backwardness vis-à-vis England. It was the destiny of these states to develop national representations negatively alienated to each other. In the French context, the category *nation* understood as a “deep, horizontal, comradeship” (Anderson 1991: 7) was only made possible by the disappearance of the feudal representations of the three orders. From *La Fronde* to the Revolution, French absolutism was thwarted by an intra-ruling-class competition for offices of taxation in a context of upward reorganization of the state. The ideology of the three orders was eroded by the diminution of the power of the clergy and by the fact that the morality of *noblesse de robe* was questioned by the *noblesse d'épée*. The credibility of the Catholic clergy was also derided by the Huguenots (see also Geary 2002: 20-21).

The category *nation* became central to the political discourse of *les Nationaux*, the members of the Third Estate, who decided not to wait for the First and Second Estates to recognize them as equal and constituted themselves as *l'Assemblée Nationale* (Comninel 2000b: 477). Central to the political conception of the French revolutionaries was the idea that the “nation” was an indivisible whole, and therefore the privileges defended by a tradition of Huguenots and aristocrats had to be abolished (Comninel 1990). The *Nationaux* could not resort to the cosmology of the three orders to fight against the defence of their privileges by the Aristocrats. In fighting in the name of the “nation” they sought to achieve specific political aims and overcome the social contradictions underpinning the absolutist state.¹¹ Comninel sums up what distinguishes this path from the English one: “If the reconfiguration of the English state as a result of capitalism involved a growing subordination of specifically royal prerogative to

¹¹ Jean Bodin had a different view of what should be the repartition of power of the absolutist period, but his concept of sovereignty also aimed to overcome the contradictions of the French state.

representatives of the propertied class, the liberalism of the French bourgeoisie was instead characterized by direct opposition to the political privileges of the aristocracy (Comninel 2000b: 479).” “Radical Jacobin demands for a representative republic, public education and effective national administration, meanwhile, were directly traceable to pre-capitalist interests of the lesser bourgeoisie in securing meritocratic access to the growing public sector – law and state office being the most characteristics bourgeois careers (Comninel 2000b: 479).” Here again nationalism and liberalism evolved in parallel. Their interaction systematically distorted each other’s. While nationalism territorialize the universal ethic of liberalism (and made it synonymous of empire in some British circles), liberalism tended to represent the nation as an imagined community of equals before the law and masked the emerging profound social contradictions specific to capitalist social-property relations. Both depict a representation of the community empty of social contradictions and both draw a clear line between those who belong to the nation and those who don’t. Uday S. Mehta identifies the core of the tension between the theory and the practice of liberalism in this pattern:

Liberal exclusion works by modulating the distance between the interstices of human capacity and the conditions of their political effectivity. It is the content between these interstices that settles the boundaries between who is included and who is not. Ironically culture in the greatest sense gets mobilized to compensate for the deficiencies of birth – deficiencies whose very existence allows for the qualification of the inclusionary vision associated with the naturalistic assumptions. (...) The distinction between the universal capacities and the conditions for their realization points to a space in which the liberal theorist can, as it were, raise the ante for political inclusion (Mehta 1997: 62).

Indeed, the history of liberalism, of the assertion of the universality of human capability, evolved in an obscure parallel with a series of social institutions delineating the practical contours of this universality: paternalism, civilizationism, racism and nationalism.¹²

In the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Restauration, French expansionism and the occupation of the German states had a major impact on the transformation of the German’s states social-property relations (Clapham 1955). These transformations included an administrative reform of the states, a partial abolition of the guild system and the extension of civic rights to Jews. The development of German nationalism, its emphasis on cultural resistance and its alienated relation to French modernism cannot be understood in abstraction from this context (Geary 2002: 24). Some German liberals embraced the wave of antisemitism that emerged in reaction to the Napoleonic expansion of Jewish rights. Complaining about the extension of civil

¹² Michael Mann develops this argument systematically in *The Dark Side of Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

rights to Jews, Fichte, a German liberal argued, that “To give civic rights to Jews, I see no measure but cutting off all their heads, and replacing them by heads in which there is not a single Jewish idea left. To protect us from them, again, I see no other means but to conquer their Promised Land for them in order to send them there (Fichte cited in Adorno 1994: 196).” The middle class of small traders and merchants did not favour the removal of the guilds’ restrictions on commercial activity. Many held that the guilds were moral communities that prevented competition and whose independence had to be preserved.

The development of German nationalism had less to do with an obscure metaphysical German *spirit* than with concrete relations of competition between the German states; competition among the head of state, the agrarian nobility and the industrialists; and, between landowners and peasants. German Princes could only embrace *völkisch* nationalism halfway. They understood, especially after 1848, that *völkisch* comradeship could threaten the basis of their social power.

The State and the Junkers were in direct competition over peasant’s surplus:

In Prussia, by contrast, the Junkers were not – despite the mythology which surrounds them – an omnipotent force in Prussian society. The most obvious index of this was the fact that an absolutist state did exist and did compete with the nobility over the distribution of peasants surplus. By protecting the peasantry and building up its own domains, the state had succeeded in securing for itself a high degree of independence, and thereby, weakening the extra-economic powers of the *Junkers* (Moors 1991: 127).

While Bismarck and the representatives of the German historical school saw in state led reforms the best way to undercut the labour movement, Max Weber, who had espouse the conception of the market of the marginalist revolution, was opposed both the role played by the state in the economy and to the individualistic economic orientation of the capitalist Junkers. Thus, while he embraced the market, he could not accept its consequences, the development of an individualism undermining the interest of the *nation* (Clark 1991). While Sombart was led to adopt a problematic association of Judaism and capitalism, Weber perceived the expulsion of the Poles from eastern Prussia as the solution to the ongoing difficulties.

The Junkers’ power depended on decentralized political authority. This enabled them to consolidate their power *vis-à-vis* each other and the state. They tend to resist any step taken toward unification that would have diminished their power of taxation to the benefit of the central authority. In the free cities, middle class artisans and guilds often partook in ideological opposition to state centralization. Paradoxically, “What support there was for a politicization of Herder’s cultural ideals came neither from the mainstream of German intellectual world, nor

from the Prussian king but from the British, who sought to generate popular opposition to the French in the East that would continue to pressure Napoleon (Geary 2002: 24).”

The Napoleonic invasions had lead Freherr vom Stein and Frederick Wilhelm III to implement elementary public education so that the German peoples could retained cultural autonomy from the French (Geary 2002: 23). Illiteracy almost reached the zero point in Germany in the 1830s, while in France, half the men remained illiterate throughout the 1860s, a third in England and in Spain and Italy 75 per cent (Craig 1978: 159). But education was not necessarily a stepping stone to upward social mobility. This is what the generation of students exposed to the ideas of the *Aufklärung* learned and resented at the beginning of the 19th century. For this segment of the middle class, there was little reason to praise the advance of reason and progress (Craig 1978: 31; Greenfeld 1993: 293-302; Volkov 1978). Moreover, the education system’s division into the *Gymnasium*, the *Realgymnasium*, and the *Oberrealschule* encouraged a reproduction of class divisions, not social mobility (Ringer 1990: 21). It reinforced the academics’ sense of being blessed with the mission of preserving, rather than creating and summoning, German *Kultur* from the *civilisation française* and from English pragmatism (Ringer 1990: 85-90).

The attempt to achieve the unification of the German states through constitutional processes was defeated in 1848. Conservative forces quickly reorganized. The power of the parliaments was limited and the failure of popular protests impact upon the reorganization of class relations. The German middle class took part in the struggle against public education after 1848 and it resisted the extension of the franchise (Ringer 1990: 28). The reproduction of the academics’ social power was intimately linked to their monopolistic access to higher education (Nathans 2004: 39). The educated middle class and the *avant-garde* of *Völkisch* nationalism were preoccupied by “the dilution of the education of the elites” as a result of the education of the masses. Nietzsche and Paul De La Garde saw in popular education a threat “against the natural order in the kingdom of the intellect (Craig 1978: 188).” Other, such as Julius Langbehn, praised the survival of a racially pure elite against “moral degeneration (Nathans 2004: 84).” The fear of revolution from bellow fostered the influence of social Darwinism, biological criminology and predatory geopolitics (Burleigh and Wipperman: 1998: 32-33; Craig 1978: 187).

In 1871, the centralization and unification of the German states was imposed from above. Reich’s Chancellor von Bismarck stood at the head of a state whose newly established constitution formally united four kingdoms, six grand duchies, five duchies, seven principalities,

three free cities and one *Reichsland* (Alsace-Lorraine). The territories annexed by Prussia were subjected to policies of Prussianization. Inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine and Schleswig were asked to choose between adopting Prussian citizenship and leaving. Sixty-four percent of the 41 million “German” inhabitants were still living in towns of fewer than 2,000 people, including 512,000 Jews, most of which were citizens. Roughly 10 million more Germanophones were spread out in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russia (Nathans 2004: 2).

Prior to unification, the confederation lacked a significant centralized system of taxation. With half the population of the German states, Prussia was a demographic and economic heavyweight compared to the other territories. Yet, the German Empire, like the Holy Roman Empire before it, lacked the power of direct taxation, and land taxation remained a prerogative of the inferior jurisdictions. Unification reversed these trends. It did not create national harmony, however. The south, in particular, maintained an antagonistic relationship with centralized Prussian power.

Even after 1871, the German Empire was fractured. According to Heilbrunner,

The hatred between the Catholics and Protestants in certain parts of Germany was greater than that of Jews, and in certain spheres discrimination against women was also greater than that toward Jews. At the beginning of the twentieth century there were still some who called socialist workers 'forces of destruction' (*Umsturzpartei*), which had to be fought to the end as the greatest enemies of the German social order. Moreover, the hatred of the southern Germans for the Prussians, of the bourgeoisie for the lower classes and vice versa, of the inhabitants of the Rhineland for those of East Prussia, of the conservative parties for the socialists, and the deep hatred directed toward the Polish, Danish and French minorities, together with hatred of Jews – all this was characteristic of the 'restless Reich' from the time it was founded to the beginning of the twentieth century (Heilbrunner 2000: 565).

Competitive regional, religious and social dynamics continued to influence competitive power relations in Germany long after unification.

Bismarck had risen to power in Prussia in 1862. In the spirit of *Junkers'* tradition, he was anti-parliamentarian, Protestant, and firmly opposed the organization of labour (Craig 1983: 89). He favoured continental expansion over overseas expeditions. His policies in Alsace-Lorraine and Posen were anti-Catholic, and he regarded Catholics and Socialists as *enemies of the Reich* (Craig 1978: 69-77; Evans 2001: 26; Nathans 2004: chapter 5). After 1873, his immigration policy reflected this orientation. He opposed the naturalization of politically or socially suspicious foreigners. The coalition he formed with the *National Liberal Party* promoted a *Kulturkampf* against Catholics suspected of working for foreign powers (Craig 1983: 93). This alliance he used to weaken Catholic power in the south, in Posen and in Alsace-Lorraine.¹³ In the drive to coerced

¹³ For a comparative analysis of the conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Germany, see Smith 1995. Again, Germany was not the only place where the religious cleavage between Catholics and Protestants was used to

assimilation of the 1870s, the use of minority languages: Danish, Polish and French, were suppressed and foreign labour strictly regulated (Evans 2001: 30).

Francophobia, anti-utilitarianism, anti-cosmopolitanism and antisemitism fostered *völkisch* and Pan-Germanic nationalists under Bismarck and Kaiser Wilhelm I. It was this conservative common sense that informed the historical writings of Heinrich Treitschke.¹⁴ In *German History*, the real, “rooted” Germans were considered as a freed apart from the false and artificial ones (Mosse 1998: 43). Allusions to noble blood, racial struggle, and eternal war among nations were some of the frequent overtones that coloured his rhetoric (Burleigh and Wippermann 1998: 27). Through the lens of the *völkisch* nationalism that developed during the 19th century, the *Volk* came to be understood as a metaphysical entity, with the potential of escaping a corrupted, inauthentic and materialist present and achieving a purer comradeship inspired by the spiritual values of the past. *Völkisch* nationalism appealed to peasants; its symbolic universe “recognized” their heroic fight against the Roman legions (Mosse 1998: 12). Most of all, however, it owed its success to its pretension of overcoming the divisions in German society. This made it very appealing to different classes. During the peak of German industrialisation (1850-1918), Socialists, geopolitician, economists, philologists, biologists and others all partake in the diffusion of a representation of the *Volk*. Even within the German SPD, the nationalist wing of followers of Lassale was so powerful that it forced the Party to back up the war effort in 1914. This social democratic decision to support the war was a decisive indicator that nationalism, militarism and statism had become interconnected social forces in the 20th century.

During the *Ages of Empires*, militarism became a medium of horizontal social integration evolving alongside with liberalism (Keegan 1990; see also Cooper and Stoler (ed.) 1997). The universal liberal ethic was not only territorialized and nationalized during this period. It was intertwined with the chauvinistic forms of militarism of the end of the 19th century that applauded the military build up leading to 1914, thus leading Max Weber proclaimed: ““Whatever the outcome, this war is great and wonderful”” (Weber cited in Anderson 1992: 194). The emergence of an industrialized militarism during the nineteenth century suggests profound historical ambiguities, chiefly the simultaneous development of authoritarian reflexes and of a philosophy of emancipation. While the philosopher Emmanuel Kant argued that “Aufklärung ist der Ausgang

maintained the institutional privation of rights. In England, Catholics and Jews enjoyed only limited rights between 1700 and 1829.

¹⁴ H. von Treitschke, *German History in the Nineteenth Century*, (ed.) G. Craig, (Chicago: 1975).

des Menschen aus seiner selbstverschuldeten Unmündigkeit,"¹⁵ thus putting the values of autonomy, individuality and a defiant conception of practical rationality on the altar of the Enlightened Age, it is ironic that during the next century modern societies developed an institution - the universal military service - whose well-functioning lay on precisely the negation of these values. Militaristic notions of the citizen-soldier-patriot that developed during the second half of the 19th century, first in France and Germany, before being adopted elsewhere, demanded homogeneity, the negation of individuality, an exaltation of infantile obedience, an unreflexive nationalism and a romantic conception of war. Despite their impulse to maximize efficiency, strategic rationality and bureaucratic planning, modern armies could not have been more opposed to the Kantian notion of practical autonomy. A second paradox of modern militarism is that what was arguably the first revolutionary army, the French revolutionary troops, embarked on a military campaign that would bring about a remarkable resentment against the Enlightenment on the soil of the German states (Geary 2002: 23).

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English, French and German nationalisms were forged by specific social contradictions mediated by contested and evolving representations of the nation or *volk*. No matter how important were these domestic social contradictions, these nationalist grammars did not evolved in isolation. They influenced each other through geopolitics, warfare and territorial occupation. The superiority of England's social property regime created an enormous pressure on the continental pre-capitalist states and the measures taken to catch up with England contributed to shape their nationalist representations. Accordingly, domestic social contradictions and internationally mediated competition lead to different receptions of liberal values and specific combinations of these values with nationalist representations. The received view that cultural forms of nationalism were more inclined toward racism than civic nationalism fails to capture the unevenness of the relation between nationalism, capitalism and liberalism. From the era of slavery to contemporary regulations on immigration, the Republican model of the *people* in the United States has always evolved in parallel with the drastic denial of citizenship to racialized portion of the population. During the 19th century, the most distinct forms of nationalism emerging in Europe foster an imperial agenda which export hybrid forms of nationalism, liberalism and capitalism. Even

¹⁵ Kant, What is the Aufklärung?, "Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage s man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere aude! "Have courage to use your own reason!"- that is the motto of enlightenment."

though the colonies eventually emancipated themselves from the metropolis, they remained captive of the national form forged through the occupiers, which were combined with indigenous components. Thus creating hybrid national form articulated to an ever expanding regime of capitalist social property relations which tends toward the global.

The inter-state competition inherited from the territoriality of absolutist Europe created the conditions of possibility for national-states to become the principal entity of international relations. From their emergence, capitalist social-property relations had a twisted destiny with the development of a national form which, through the liberal abstraction of the public sphere from the private sphere of social reproduction tended to reify a competing world of *internationalist* relations. Attempts to grasp the historical meaning of nationalism in abstraction from the historical process of uneven and combined development of capitalist international relations ultimately fail to grasp what is precisely at stake in this development: the unevenness of combinations of nationalist developments fosters by the subjective expressions of social contradictions. National, international and global strategies of reproduction have been mediated geopolitically ever since the emergence of capitalism.

The theoretical development of relational and situational sociology of nationalism are sharp tools to capture the complexity of nationalist individual and collective narratives in the beginning of the 21st century. Yet, the international historical sociology of nationalism contributes to contextualize the social relations which brought about the conditions of possibility of such narratives and their complex relations with the transformations of social power in the modern world. The lesson of such an international historical sociology is to stress that the uneven relation of nationalism and liberalism, far from being in opposition, evolved through successive combinations of patterns of exclusion and inclusion. These combinations result from the actions of forces performing *the nation* and they mediate social and geopolitical contradictions which would not have been possible without the world shaking consequences of the deployment of capitalist property relations.

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