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## Religion and nationalism

*Understanding the consequences of a complex relationship*

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**ABSTRACT** This article offers a first attempt to understand the relationship between religion and nationalism. It first addresses the absence of a discussion of religion in the literature on nationalism. Some of the most prominent authors, including Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm, have all largely neglected the role of religion in their discussions of the rise of nationalism by focussing on economic factors. A proper understanding of the development of nationalism should incorporate the direct and indirect influences of religion. Second, this article lays out an initial classification of the different ways in which religion and nationalism interact. I identify a number of degrees of influence which religion has on nationalism. In the first case, religious nationalism, religion and nationalism are inseparable. In other national movements, religion plays a less dominant role, merely assisting the more prominent nationalist movement as a cohesive element. This article concludes with an explanation of the importance of this relationship. Ultimately, the type of religious nationalism affects what type of nation state develops. The stronger the religious influence on the national movement, the greater the likelihood that discrimination and human rights violations will occur.

**KEYWORDS** anti-religious perspective ● identity ● pious ● religious nationalism

### INTRODUCTION

On a quiet Tuesday afternoon at the end of June, a group of young boys were throwing stones at some girls as they walked home from school. Unfortunately, this was not a typical, playful act of youthful immaturity; the young boys were Protestants and the girls were leaving a Roman Catholic school located in a Protestant neighborhood in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

This led to riots and fighting in which rival Catholic and Protestant mobs threw bombs, stones and bottles at each other and at the police (*International Herald Tribune*, 22 June 2001: 4).<sup>1</sup> This is not, of course, the first time that there have been clashes in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants. A question much debated is whether the tensions in Northern Ireland are religious or nationalist in orientation. While the initial difference between the two groups is one of religion, nationalism also lies at the heart of these problems. Protestants in Northern Ireland identify with and want to remain a part of Great Britain, while Catholics would like to see the entire island joined together under the flag of the Republic of Ireland.

The situation in Northern Ireland demonstrates how easily religion and nationalism can be intertwined and connected in a political movement (van der Veer and Lehmann, 1999: Ch. 1). In many contemporary and historical conflicts, it is often difficult to separate the two. Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslavia and Kashmir also have elements of both religion and nationalism at work in their conflicts. These facts raise a variety of questions. Why are these two belief systems often aligned in search of a common goal? Why does religion affect and influence some, but not all, nationalist movements? What explains the extent of religious influence on a national movement?

There are various aspects of religion that are shared by nationalism. Both share an imagined community and rely on the importance of symbols (flags, crosses, and so on) to provide shared meaning for members (Anderson, 1983: 6). Both are often concerned with territory. Both offer a belief system to members to assist them as they navigate through a complex world. In addition, religion and nationalism develop a common identity for their members to relate to.

Despite these similarities, the relationship between religion and nationalism, especially in discussions of the origins of nationalism, has been neglected by some of the most prominent scholars. Authors such as Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm, for example, have been largely silent on the interplay between religion and nationalism, instead focussing on economic conditions in the 18th century. Many authors fail to adequately address the role that religion played, directly or indirectly, in this process.<sup>2</sup> This article addresses this deficiency by beginning to explore the role that religion plays in nationalist movements throughout the world.

This relationship is especially relevant in contemporary times. Since the world is seeing a resurgence of religion and since most of the national movements in the 20th century have had a strong religious element, it is important to know whether or not this is a positive development for the international community.

The goal of this article is to offer a systematic understanding of religion's role and impact in some historic and contemporary nationalist movements. This article develops two arguments: first, the economic arguments

developed to explain the rise of nationalism in Western Europe are incomplete; the development of nationalism in some countries (Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands) had primarily religious, not economic, origins; second, the intensity and influence of religion on different national movements have varied and produced different outcomes. Therefore, understanding the strength of religion within a national movement is helpful to understanding what type of state or political institutions will follow.

The next section provides a discussion of the similarities between religion and nationalism. These similarities offer an initial explanation as to why religion has influenced and affected various nationalist movements. The article then analyzes the neglect of the role played by religion in much of the literature on the origins of nationalism. The next section sets out a characterization of the various ways in which religion interacts with nationalism. The final section explains why an understanding of the different interactions between religion and nationalism is important. The article concludes that the stronger the degree of religious influence on a national movement, the greater the probability that there will be violence, discrimination, intolerance and exclusionary policies in the nation state.

## RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

### *Religion*

It is widely acknowledged that religion has been a very powerful force for good and evil throughout history. In the name of an eternal being, pious men and women have carried out inquisitions, crusades and wars.<sup>3</sup> Religion has also promoted the best and most admirable aspects of humans. In places like Poland, it has helped to unify and liberate those oppressed for years under communism. Under the guidance and direction of religion, individuals have created communities, developed charitable institutions, provided humanitarian assistance to many in times of crisis and helped broker peace agreements.

In attempting to define religion, we begin with the belief in the sacred. In addition, a creed and code of conduct are established as the guiding principles that all members should adhere to.<sup>4</sup> Religion as a creed, a cult, a code of conduct and a confessional community often creates individuals who act on its behalf. Religion's belief in a supernatural being and a moral code offer the individual a worldview, a place in the universe and a relatively comprehensive organization of an individual's life based on that worldview (Alston, 1964). And therein lies the importance of religion in a true believer's life. Religion provides an identity, as well as direction and guidance to pious individuals.<sup>5</sup> It is important because it gives individuals a

range of options to frame and revise one's life plan (Kymlicka, 1995). Religion is often a consuming worldview that provides choices, answers and meaning to some individuals' lives. But religion is not alone in offering individuals a worldview and providing structure to daily life. Nationalism also has the potential to provide individuals with a frame of reference by which they can navigate through an often confusing and complex world.

### **Nationalism**

The study of nationalism is an intriguing, yet elusive subject. Nationalism typically refers to the animating spirit of a community of people with an aspiration to be politically self-determining (Miller, 1995).<sup>6</sup> Nationalism as a concept intrigues the student of international relations because of its repeated occurrence over the last 200 years and its prominence since the Second World War. Frequently national groups such as the Czechs, Basques, Irish and Palestinians have called for their own independent states. In some cases, these demands have been heard, in others they have been rejected.

Nationalism addresses a fundamental human need – having a secure and established identity. Humans need something with which to identify and need to connect with some part of the world. One's identity could come from ties to a community, religion, gender, nation or sexual orientation. Identity, in whichever form, provides individuals with a sense of belonging in a community and assists in the development of self-esteem (Barber, 1995; Friedman, 1999: 31–4).<sup>7</sup> Nationalism offers its members a sense of identity that can be as important as religion.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the large number of national movements and the repeated calls for a nation state over the last three centuries, various aspects of nationalism and the nation have perplexed scholars. Scholars have long searched for an acceptable definition of nationalism. In addition, they have yet to agree upon the origins of nationalism (what causes nationalism), the intensity of nationalist sentiment (what makes nationalism stronger or weaker among different groups) and the success of nationalist desires (when groups successfully obtain an independent state to govern). John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith share the view of the complex and unsettled nature of nationalist discourse:

There is little agreement about the role of ethnic, as opposed to political, components of the nation; or about the balance between 'subjective' elements like will and memory, and the more objective elements like territory and language, or about the nature of the role of ethnicity in national identity. (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 4)

In short, while there is a significant amount of literature on this topic, scholars have yet to offer definitive answers to many important questions.

Some of the most prominent authors, including Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm, have all discussed the rise of nationalism. These authors are offered as examples of a dominant pattern in the nationalism literature. All three have largely neglected the role of religion in the development of the nation.<sup>9</sup> The next section analyzes each author's views on the origins of nationalism and their views on the role of religion. The emphasis on Gellner stems from his prominence in, and influence on, the nationalism literature over the last two decades.

## THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM

Gellner's seminal work *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) offers an evolutionary description of the origins of nationalism, focussing on economic and technological developments as well as on the importance of language in the creation of some of the nation states of Europe. Gellner offers a widely, although not universally, accepted definition of nationalism. According to Gellner, 'nationalism is the political principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent'; or, alternatively stated, each cultural group should have its own political unit (Gellner, 1983: 1; Hobsbawm, 1990; Ward, 1959).<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, political legitimacy is derived from a cultural group's ability to exercise political power over a specific territory. Difficulties arise when this principle is not respected:

But there is one particular form of the violation of the nationalist principle to which nationalist sentiment is quite particularly sensitive: if the rulers of the political unit belong to a nation other than that of the majority ruled, this, for nationalists, constitutes a quite outstandingly intolerable breach of political propriety. (Gellner, 1983: 1)

Nations, for Gellner, are defined in terms of perception and culture. For two people to be of the same nation, the two must share a common culture – a system of ideas, signs, associations and ways of behaving – and they must *recognize* each other as belonging to the same nation (1983: 7).

Gellner's understanding of the development of nationalism revolves around economics and the development of a common language. According to Gellner, at a certain point in industrialized life, a shared culture – meaning a shared language and shared education – became a statewide necessity. The society that developed in 17th- and 18th-century Europe had moved from an agrarian to an industrialized society. Industrial society, with its advances in technology, requires a literate population that is able to communicate in a common language. Gellner explains:

The paradigm of work is no longer ploughing, reaping, thrashing. . . . It generally involves exchanging communication with other people, or

manipulating the controls of a machine. . . . Most jobs, if not actually involving work with people, involve the control of buttons or switches or levers which need to be *understood*; and are explicable, once again, in some standard idiom intelligible to all comers. For the first time in human history, explicit and reasonable precise communication becomes generally, pervasively used and important. (1983: 32–3; emphasis in original)

The need for a literate population fuels the development of an education system. Universal education, in a given territory, becomes an essential element of society and assists in the society's economic growth. The development of an education system ensures the development of a single language, which in turn records a collective culture. Literacy and the establishment of a permanent and standardized method of communicating and recording interactions allow for the storage and transmission of a culture (1983: 8). At that time, the state became the only body capable of maintaining a central education system over a vast territory:

The level of literacy and technical competence, in a standardized medium, a common conceptual currency, which is required of members of this society if they are to be properly employable and enjoy full and effective moral citizenship, is so high that it simply cannot be provided by the kin or local units, such as they are. It can only be provided by something resembling a modern 'national' educational system. (1983: 34)

Thus the development of universal education, a common language and culture came together at roughly the same time and were coordinated and controlled by the state.

In sum, the economy – specifically an industrialized economy – drove the development of nationalism in Europe. This occurred when a people shared a common language and culture. The rise of the nation state was due to the fact that economics, culture and politics were now more intertwined than ever before.

In *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (1990), Eric Hobsbawm offers a similar explanation for the rise of nationalism in Europe: 'Nations exist as a function of or in the context of a particular stage of technological and economic development' (1990: 10). For him, 'the division of humanity into autonomous nationalisms was essentially economic' (1990: 28). Hobsbawm also argues for the perceptual aspect of nationalism, the importance of the *consciousness* of belonging to a lasting political and cultural group (1990: 37). He shares Gellner's view of the importance of an official language, for both the elite and the masses, developed via public education and administrative units (1990: 62).<sup>11</sup>

For another prominent scholar of nationalism Benedict Anderson, the nation is an 'imagined community'. Nationalism is not the awakening of a historical self-consciousness, but rather the invention and creation of a nation where it did not exist previously. For Anderson, the origins of

nationalism are similar to those previously discussed. The spread of print capitalism (technological advance) in a common language coincided with the development of the bureaucratic state. This combination assisted the development of an imagined community and set the stage for the birth of the nation state (1983: 46). This occurred because, as literacy increased, people now had the ability to read about their nation in books and newspapers. This also made it easier to gather public support and unify the people.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Religion and the origins of nationalism***

In their respective discussions of nationalism and its origins, these authors fail to adequately address the role that religion played in the national movements of the 18th and 19th centuries and in contemporary national movements. All three focus primarily on economic factors. Economic factors are relevant to the discussion of nationalism, but focussing solely on these paints an incomplete picture.<sup>13</sup> Thus, a fuller understanding of the development of nationalism will need to incorporate the direct and indirect influences of religion.

Gellner largely ignores the role of religion in his discussion. Although culture plays an important role in the formation of nationalism and the nation state, his understanding of culture does not incorporate a religious element. Gellner leaves the definition of culture vague throughout most of his essay.<sup>14</sup> He does eventually offer his understanding of culture as ‘the distinctive style of conduct and communication of a given community’ (Gellner, 1983: 92). This vague statement about culture, while not excluding the role of religion, obviously does not explicitly address the impact of religion. Gellner’s most specific reference to the role played by religion in the national movements in Europe is his passing comment concerning the Protestant Reformation:

The role of Protestantism in helping to bring about the industrial world is an enormous, complex and contentious topic; and there is not much point in doing more than cursorily alluding to it here. But in parts of the globe in which both industrialism and nationalism came later and under external impact, the full relationship of Protestant-type attitudes and nationalism is yet to be properly explored. (1983: 41)

While Hobsbawm refers to religion more than Gellner, he is at times dismissive of the influence of religion on the origins of nationalism, as in the following passage:

Neither (religion or ethnicity) can be legitimately identified with the modern nationalism that passes as their lineal extension, because they had or have no *necessary* relation with the unit of territorial political organization which is a

crucial criterion of what we understand as a 'nation' today. (Hobsbawm, 1990: 47; emphasis in original)

While Hobsbawm acknowledges religion's ability to create loyalties and bonds within a community, he nevertheless resists associating religion with the origins of nationalism.

Of the three authors, Anderson appears most sympathetic to the influence of religion. He acknowledges that the community identity required by nationalism has had some religious elements and that the imagined communities of old were once 'sacred imagined communities' bound by religious belief. However, he seems unwilling to go further when he states: 'It would be short-sighted, however, to think of the imagined communities of nations as simply growing out of and replacing religious communities' (Anderson, 1983: 22). Ultimately, Anderson (like Gellner and Hobsbawm) focusses on and stresses economic factors.

While many scholars have neglected the role of religion, Anthony D. Smith is an exception to this general trend. The role of religion and its impact on national movements have been emphasized in different degrees throughout the course of his extensive publishing record. In Smith's earlier works, he suggests that religion is an essential aspect of the nation (Smith, 1981: 64). In some of his more recent works, the role of religion within a national movement is not such a significant characteristic. For example, in 'Chosen Peoples: Why Ethnic Groups Survive' (1999), Smith discusses conflicts among ethnic groups including Sikhs, Tamils, Tibetans, Indians and Pakistanis without stressing the religious elements of these conflicts. In some of his other writings, he notes the religious dimensions of Polish, Irish and Israeli nationalism (1999: Ch. 3). He has also acknowledged that the nation has a cultural component which usually incorporates either language or religion or both. Although Smith has varied the centrality of religion to national movements, I think it is safe to say that religion, although not systematically analysed, is one of a few important elements of nationalism for Smith.

In sum, while Anderson, Gellner and Hobsbawm all discuss the development of nationalism, they and others marginalize the role that religion plays and has played in various nationalist movements. Their neglect of religion stems from their modernist approach to nationalism,<sup>15</sup> which is portrayed as a modern phenomenon. As already noted, Anderson, Hobsbawm and Gellner's explanation of the rise of nationalism is due to the development of modern industrial economies. Nationalism is also connected to a more egalitarian society in which individuals have direct access to political processes. Hence nationalism coincides with the development of some of the democracies of Europe. This differs from the hierarchically organized societies prior to the 17th and 18th centuries wherein the monarchy or church made the final decisions with regard to a territory. Thus, the



development of nationalism is only possible in the modern era (Taylor, 1997).

The implication of a modern understanding of nationalism is that nationalism is secular. Modern societies are thought to be those societies that, inter alia, progressed past religion or at least past the influence of religion on political institutions. Religion in the secular democracies became a private affair to be kept away from the public square. If nationalism is associated with modernity and modernity is inherently thought to be secular, this explains why there have been few analyses of the effect of religion on nationalism.

### ***Religion as a significant factor in national movements***

Irish nationalism demonstrates that religion can play as significant a role in national movements as economics. One can either view Irish nationalism as one continuous movement originating in the 12th century or as a series of movements, each with varying goals and objectives. For the purposes of this discussion, I will consider the struggle for independence a series of national movements and I will begin with the 17th century. By this time, religious and political allegiance coincided. Irish Catholics, united by their religion, felt they were oppressed as a nation (O'Brien, 1994: 11).

In the 19th century, the Irish saw the development of national movements in various parts of Europe. More important to their national aspirations was the war of independence in America. The Irish hoped to emulate the Americans and gain autonomy from the British. Despite a common enemy, Irish nationalism was significantly different from its American predecessor. Irish calls for independence were motivated by economic *and* religious reasons. The colonists in America were primarily concerned with taxation policies.

The 'Penal Laws', enacted in the first quarter of the 18th century, caused great hardship for the Catholic population in Ireland. Catholics were prohibited from running for office, purchasing land, practicing law and developing an education system. The Penal Laws and the 1801 Act of the Union condemned the Catholics of Ireland to backwardness. In response to these discriminatory practices and the economic hardships that resulted, some tried to obtain independence for Ireland. In 1803, Daniel O'Connell developed the Catholic Association. This group sought freedom for the Irish through the repeal of the Act of the Union and of payments to the Anglican Church, as well as religious freedom for Catholics. The British decision to outlaw the Catholic Association did little to quell its popularity. This popularity did not, however, lead to a successful national movement because the potato famine in the 1840s killed over 1 million people (Tanner, 2001: 241).

Ultimately the Irish did not enjoy full independence until 1949.<sup>16</sup> Their

national aspirations were motivated throughout the centuries primarily by religious discrimination. The thirst for independence developed due to the persecution of Catholics by British Protestants. There were without doubt economic consequences, but the primary factor in Irish nationalism was based on religion. These two groups were differentiated according to their religious traditions and had as a consequence the economic deprivation of Irish Catholics. This example suggests that while economics were an aspect of Irish nationalism, economic arguments do not explain the origins of this national movement, as Gellner and others would have us believe.<sup>17</sup> Additional examples discussed below offer further evidence supporting the importance of religion to national movements.

## UNDERSTANDING AND CLASSIFYING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

Religion can influence nationalist movements to varying degrees. Table 1 offers a categorization of the different types of interaction between religion and nationalism.<sup>18</sup>

**Table 1** Religious influence on national movements

<i>Country/political movement</i>	<i>Secular/anti-religious nationalism</i>	<i>Instrumental pious nationalism</i>	<i>Religious nationalism</i>
<i>France (1789–99)</i>	X		
<i>Germany (late 19th century)</i>	X		
<i>Great Britain (17th and 18th centuries)</i>			XX
<i>India (1979–present)</i>			XX
<i>Iran (1979–present)</i>			XX
<i>Iraq (1980–present)</i>		X	
<i>Ireland (17th–20th centuries)</i>			XX
<i>Italy (late 19th century)</i>	X		
<i>Northern Ireland (1921–present)</i>			XX
<i>Poland (20th century)</i>			XX
<i>Russia (1989–present)</i>		X	
<i>Sri Lanka (1973–present)</i>			X
<i>Turkey (1923–present)</i>	XX		

Key: Degrees of influence: XX – very influential; X – influential

## **Religious nationalism**

At various points in history we have witnessed the congruence of religion and nationalism in various areas of the globe. In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, English and later British nationalism were dependent upon Protestantism. The partition of India and Pakistan in the middle of the 20th century was motivated by religious nationalism. The development of the Israeli nation, the violent conflicts in Sri Lanka between the Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus, the war in the former Yugoslavia, as well as the violence in Chechnya are all examples of religious nationalism. In all of these instances we see people not only demanding their own nation and sovereignty, but asserting that their nation is religiously based. They want political autonomy *and* recognition of their religion. These examples show the importance of religious nationalism in the ongoing developments in modern global politics.

Religious nationalism is the fusion of nationalism and religion such that they are inseparable. Nationalism, as noted earlier, typically refers to the animating spirit of a community of people with an aspiration to be politically self-determining. This incorporates the general belief that a group of individuals with a common heritage should be identified with and have control over their own political unit. This need not lead to an independent sovereign state. Political autonomy for a region or area within a state is sometimes an acceptable substitute for statehood.

Religious nationalism builds on this conceptual understanding. It is a community of religious people or the political movement of a group of people heavily influenced by religious beliefs who aspire to be politically self-determining. In many cases, they desire some type of self-government for the national group and that their own independent political unit (state, region, and so on) be influenced or governed according to religious beliefs.

In religious national movements, the influence of religious beliefs, ideas, symbols and leaders is essential to the development and success of the national movement in a particular territory. In these cases, religion is so important to the nationalist movement that it adopts religious language and modes of religious communication, builds on the religious identity of a community, cloaks itself in the religion and relies on the assistance of religious leaders and institutions to promote its cause. Furthermore, when a religious national movement is successful in obtaining some form of political autonomy, often the religious beliefs will be institutionalized in laws or procedures governing the region.

Religious nationalism tends to occur in a number of instances. First, it often occurs when the population of a territory is religiously homogeneous. The possession of or connection to a particular territory is crucial to all national claims (Connor, 1994: 146; Oommen, 1997: 184–8). Having a religious community concentrated in a particular location, as opposed to

being dispersed and fragmented over a vast territory, is important in the development of religious nationalism. Thus it was easy for the Polish leaders of the solidarity movement to unify the population around religion because 90 percent of Poland is Catholic (see: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2875.htm>). This was also true of Irish resistance to the British throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Conversely, it is more difficult for religiously intermixed or dispersed groups to develop a religious national movement.<sup>19</sup>

Second, a religious group's territory may offer an additional impetus for religious nationalism. Religious nationalism can also be a salient factor when a religious group claims that a particular territory is not only the group's ancestral homeland, but also that that land is sacred (Oommen, 1997: Ch. 9). For people of the Jewish faith, Israel and especially Jerusalem are sacred lands given to them by God. Proposals to share or relinquish control of them to Palestinians, many of whom are Muslim, go against their faith and God's will (Smith, 1999: 155). The four counties of Ireland, Munster, Ulster, Leinster and Connaught, are similarly referred to as the sacred space where Saint Patrick christened the Irish into their faith (O'Brien, 1994).

Third, in places where the population is not constituted by one religious group, the threat to a group's identity from a different religion can spur the development of religious nationalism. Human beings need an established identity which is often derived from communal ties and fraternal feelings. These psychological needs are further increased when individuals feel threatened. Hostility, often encouraged and inflamed by politicians, creates a defensive reaction from other religious national groups. Slobodan Milosevic, in speeches in the 1990s, aroused Orthodox Serbs and frightened Albanian Kosovars. Furthermore, perceived or actual discrimination or persecution against a religious group that is territorially concentrated can also promote a religious national identity. Thus, Irish Catholic identity was strengthened when they felt discriminated against in housing, education and work in Northern Ireland in the 1970s.

Fourth, when a religious group is situated in a territory that is surrounded by a different religious denomination, the perceived or actual threat from their neighbors can foster religious nationalism and can aid in mobilizing a group along religious national lines. In places such as India and Israel (Hindu and Jewish nations surrounded by Islamic territories) and in Sri Lanka (Buddhists surrounded by Hindu territories), we see religious nations that feel threatened by those around them.

Finally, cases of religious nationalism arise in conjunction with liberation movements. We have seen repeated instances of Islamic national liberation movements. The Palestinians, Chechens, Filipino Moros and Kashmiris are examples of this. These groups feel that they are oppressed by their rulers

who are ethnically and religiously distinct. All these groups have sought local autonomy or independence (see Fuller, 2002).

Great Britain offers us another example of the strong connection between religion and nationalism, demonstrating how nationalism was influenced and affected by religion in Europe and suggesting that Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm were wrong to ignore religion in their respective discussions of the origins of nationalism. I now turn to a discussion of the development of British nationalism and its religious, not economic, origins.

### **Great Britain**

I draw on Linda Colley's book *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (1992) to discuss the development of British nationalism. Great Britain's national identity was forged above all by war. Time and time again, war with France (Seven Year's War 1756–63; Napoleonic Wars 1793–1815) brought Britons, whether they were from Wales, Scotland or England, into confrontation with an obviously hostile 'other' and encouraged them to define themselves collectively against it. They defined themselves as Protestants struggling for survival against Catholic France (Colley, 1992: 5; McLeod, 1999).

Great Britain was created in 1707 when the Parliament of Westminster passed the Act of the Union linking Scotland to England and Wales. From that moment on, this document proclaimed that there would be one united kingdom with one legislature and one Protestant ruler. The Act of the Union established that all British monarchs would belong to the Church of England. Besides the monarchy, men and women came to define themselves as British mainly in relation to what they were not; they were fundamentally different from the Catholic French. Thus it was not so much consensus or homogeneity at home as much as the cohesion of British nationalism that was reinforced by the consciousness of and strong repulsion for their neighbors. Rebellions in Catholic Ireland at the end of the 18th century further cemented British identity (Waltz, 1954: 81).<sup>20</sup>

Protestantism was the dominant component of British life and the foundation on which the state was explicitly based. From the late 17th century until 1829, British Catholics were not allowed to vote or hold office. For much of the 18th century, they were subject to punitive taxation, forbidden to possess weapons and discriminated against in terms of access to education, property rights and freedom to worship. In other words, they were treated as unBritish and denied the right to participate fully in the British nation (Colley, 1992: 19).

## *Iran*

For over 35 years, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi ruled over Iran. Beginning in the early 1940s, Pahlavi attempted to reform Iranian society along western lines. He established a civil service and national bank modeled on the European style. He replaced traditional and Islamic courts with civil courts, again along western lines (Roskin, 2001: 113). His policies were often repressive. He was also viewed as beholden to the West, especially since the US restored the Shah in 1953 with its financial and political assistance. Furthermore, frequent meetings with Presidents Nixon and Carter enhanced the view of a close relationship with Washington (2001: 115). By the 1970s, the Shah's programs promoting modernization and secularization were largely ineffective and alienating large portions of the population (Esposito and Voll, 1996: 58). In addition, large portions of the oil profits were going directly to the Shah or to the military and were not reaching the vast majority of Iranians.

Shii Islam, directed by clerics, became the most viable vehicle for mass mobilization. Led by Ayatollah Khomeini, it emphasized the importance of religious national identity, political participation, a return to Persian culture and a certain view of social justice. In addition, it rejected the westernization of the country, corruption, authoritarianism and the maldistribution of wealth (1996: 52, 60). Thus, Khomeini emphasized religious, social, economic and national themes in his mobilization of the Iranian public.

The grassroots religious national movement that developed demanded respect for religious national identity and the removal of foreign and corrupt influences on the government. The movement, seen in the form of street demonstrations, was ultimately successful and, in February 1979, the Pahlavi dynasty crumbled. In March of that year, a referendum was held which changed Iran's government from a monarchy to an Islamic republic. At the end of that year, a new constitution was drafted which was also ratified by a popular referendum (1996: 62).

Evidence that the Islamic Revolution of 1979 was not purely religious in orientation is demonstrated by Khomeini's message – the religious nature of Persianness (Roskin, 2001: 125). Khomeini's message was not to convert all to Islam, but rather that Iranian Muslims needed to defend themselves against the corruption and imperialism of the West (Halliday, 2000: 137). He often attacked liberals, writers, lawyers and the press for being influenced by the West and introducing alien elements into Iran's traditions (2000: 167). Further evidence is found in Iran today, where holidays are of both a Muslim and Persian nature. Khomeini did not eliminate Persian holidays and traditions. For example, Now Ruz (New Year) is a traditional Persian holiday that is still celebrated. Other holidays, celebrating the martyr Hussein, are derived from Islam. The war with Iraq (1980–88) also

re-emphasized religious nationalism, as Iraqis are predominantly Sunni Muslims while Iranians are Shiite Muslims.

The British and Iranian examples show how, in cases of religious nationalism, the two phenomena are intertwined. In other national movements, religion is not nearly as essential to the movement. In cases of instrumental pious nationalism, religion is a less dominant aspect of the national movement. The next section addresses instrumental pious nationalism and uses Russia as an example.

### ***Instrumental pious nationalism***

Religion does not always occupy such an influential or central position in a nationalist movement. In such cases, the nationalist movement is the primary movement, but religion comes into play as a supporting element that can unite a population; these are cases of 'instrumental pious nationalism'. Often with instrumental pious nationalism, religion is a useful resource to national leaders. Since religion is a powerful source of identity and one that can unify a group and create loyalty to the national movement, national leaders try to draw on religion to create a cohesive public body. In many cases, since people feel smaller loyalties more intensely, religion can increase an individual's loyalty to the nation (Strikwerda, 1997). Long-standing religious institutions can assist newly-formed governments to consolidate political stability. Historically dominant religions have access to a large portion of the population. The ability to reach out to citizens and, in some instances, to influence their choices is an asset to newly-formed and developing political systems. Religion in these cases can serve as a source of legitimacy to national leaders who are developing new political institutions.

An additional instance when instrumental pious nationalism may develop is when religion is used by national leaders in developed states to bolster their legitimacy in times of crisis. Often political leaders attempt to use religious and national sentiments and attachments to rally the population and shore up support when the political, economic, military or social institutions are failing to provide for the needs of the people. Hussein in Iraq has at various times tried to drum up support by encouraging Muslims to defend the Iraqi homeland. As recently as 11 September 2002, his vice president was quoted in *The New York Times* as stating that 'Iraq has a religious right to defend itself'. Milosevic also motivated Orthodox Serbs to defend what they saw as their historic homeland, Kosovo, by appealing to religious national sentiments (Barber, 1995: 17). In both cases, the economic and military institutions were failing to provide for the needs of Serbs and Iraqis. Thus, when the national leadership is suffering from a crisis of legitimacy, the call to defend the population's religious national identity is often invoked.

By focussing on the motivation of national leaders and the extent to which religion is institutionalized in the political system, we can distinguish between religious nationalism and instrumental pious nationalism. In cases of the latter, leaders such as Hussein and Milosevic have little interest in religion; they simply use the dominant religion to develop and unify a national movement or to hold on to or acquire power. In these cases, religion is mostly a means to an end. In cases of religious nationalism, such as in Iran, the leaders are attached to and promoters of the dominant religions. Religion is not simply the easiest path to achieve or maintain power.

The extent to which religious laws and beliefs are implemented in laws and governing institutions is another way to separate religious nationalism from instrumental pious nationalism. In Ireland, Great Britain and Iran, inter alia, numerous religious beliefs have been introduced and codified in constitutions and various laws. This shows how once the religious national movement achieved statehood, the movement's leaders and adherents made policy changes that reflected the dominant religion. In cases of instrumental pious nationalism, this has not been the case. In these instances, the national leaders do not seek to establish a religiously defined nation state. Often after achieving or cementing power, the national leaders simply ignore the dominant religious tradition or downplay its continuing significance. Milosevic did not attempt to promote Orthodox religious beliefs in the former Yugoslavia, nor has Hussein implemented or respected the tenets of Islamic law. Russia provides another example of this phenomenon.

### **Russia**

Many leaders throughout Russia's political terrain have attempted to use the Russian Orthodox church and its faithful as a way to build Russian nationalism. Since 75 percent of the population is Orthodox, religion is seen as a way to mobilize and build support in the development of the Russian nation that has emerged in the early 1990s (Boyle and Sheen, 1997: 373). The first leader to attempt to develop nationalism with the help of religion was Gorbachev. Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika offered believers the freedom to express their views. In doing so, Gorbachev sought support from the population for the radical changes he initiated. In addition to permitting more religious freedom in the public sphere, Gorbachev often met with religious leaders, as he did on 29 April 1988 when he met with Patriarch Pimen, the head of the Russian Orthodox church, and members of the Holy Synod. He did so in the hope of establishing a link with the faithful of his country (Ramet, 1997, 1998).

Yeltsin followed in Gorbachev's footsteps when he assumed power in the newly-created or recreated Russia. He also attempted to use the Russian



Orthodox church's position in Russian society to solidify the nation. He regularly attended televised Easter services and has been pictured with Patriarch Aleksii numerous times. This was a significant change for a man who never displayed or referred to his religious nature prior to assuming power. While Yeltsin, in an amendment to the 1990 Law on Freedom of Conscience, required foreign religious organizations (Catholics, Baptists, and so on) to receive state accreditation, he has not instituted the sweeping changes sought by the Russian Orthodox church.

A comparison with Poland is illuminating. After communism, the Polish government signed a concordat with the Catholic church. In doing so, it elevated the Catholic church above all other religious traditions. Furthermore, the Polish government promoted Catholic teachings in various aspects of society. For instance, abortion became illegal and Catholic instruction became part of the curricula of state schools and was subsidized by the state (Ramet, 1997, 1998). This shows how some leaders, when attempting to forge national unity, will use religion as a means to solidify a national group's identity, as was the case in Russia. In these cases of instrumental pious nationalism, the national leaders, once in power, do little to promote religion. In contrast, in cases of religious nationalism where the religious identity is essential to the national movement, the leaders will implement social and political changes after achieving power, as was demonstrated in Poland.

### ***Secular nationalism***

Not all national movements promote religious themes. Some are largely devoid of religious sentiment and overtones. These 'secular nationalist movements' often ignore religion or reject a specific religious tradition. In the 1920s, Atatürk was determined to develop a nation state built on western and secular values in Turkey (Halliday, 2000: Ch. 10). Similarly, in developing the notion of an Italian nation, Mazzini attempted to promote a secular nation in the 1870s. Both Italy and Turkey were predominantly Catholic and Muslim respectively. Despite this, the leaders of their national movements did not want the developing nations to be based on religion and, hence, both stressed the secular nature of their national movement. The nationalism that evolved in France in the 18th century is also an example of this, where the decline of the Catholic church, due to the Enlightenment, led to the development of a secular French nationalism and the idea of the French nation. The remainder of this section explains the impact of the Enlightenment on the prominence of the Catholic church in Europe. The diminishing prominence of the Catholic church affected the development of the secular nationalism that arose in France.

By the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe, we see the decline in prestige, power and influence of religion and specifically the Catholic church. The

scientific breakthroughs of these centuries arose from human curiosity and the desire to understand the natural world (Gilpin, 1987: 17). In the 18th century, the Enlightenment<sup>21</sup> had a debilitating effect on religion, especially in Western Europe. Many Enlightenment thinkers, such as Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau and Hume, attempted to understand the principles governing nature and believed that the universe could be understood through the use of reason alone. Enlightenment thinkers often presented a secular worldview and offered rational explanations based on an empirical approach to the natural world. No longer were the bible, clergy or sacred texts needed to explain why certain events occurred or existed in the universe.

In addition, they rejected initiatives and arguments based solely on authority. This rejection of authority and the belief that humans, through the development of their rational faculties, could understand the natural world heavily impacted upon the Catholic church. Newton and his Enlightenment followers challenged the Catholic church's dominance of intellectual life and offered the masses an alternative to religion and religious interpretation.

The devolution of prestige and the influence of religion in general, but especially of the Catholic church, provided the opening for nationalism, a new, modern form of religion to take hold in France. The origins of nationalism and the creation of the nation state are typically traced back to France. Many view the French Revolution as the historical mark of the beginnings of nationalism (Keitner, 2000; Kohn, 1967).<sup>22</sup> The development of French nationalism was secular and partially a rejection of the Catholic church.

There are, without doubt, a number of factors that are relevant to the origins of the French Revolution and, in turn, the creation of the French nation. The uprisings that began in 1789 were due to a variety of elements, including economic stagnation and mismanagement, the perceived inability of Louis XVI to govern and manage effectively, the general resentment of noble privileges, as well as the intellectual climate of inquiry and the rejection of authority as related to the proper purposes of government (Price, 1993). These grievances were assisted by the creation and dissemination of linguistic uniformity. The French language became an essential tool for forging unity, solidifying identity and voicing dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs (Keitner, 2000: 18).

An additional element in the French Revolution was the Catholic church. France was, in the 18th century (as it still is today), a largely Catholic country and one in which the church was influential. Generally, the Catholic church supported the monarch and the enhancement of royal power because the former wanted a secure social order that it could influence. The Catholic church established its influence through the coronation of the monarch at Rheims and by insisting that the monarch's authority,

rights and responsibilities were God's will.<sup>23</sup> An additional reason why the church supported the monarch was due to the financial benefits, including the reconstruction of the cathedrals in Paris, Rheims, Chartres and Laon.

The rejection of, and dissatisfaction with, the monarch by the masses, merchants and professional classes also had implications for the Catholic church, which was viewed with suspicion and disdain for its relationship with an increasingly isolated monarchy. In addition, it should not be forgotten that the views of Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire and Montesquieu had discredited the church and religious doctrine in general. Hence, a significant aspect of the French Revolution and coinciding French nationalism was a secular and anti-religious perspective.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF RELIGION'S INFLUENCE ON NATIONALISM**

Having laid out a classification of religion and nationalism, I now want to address why this is important. Ultimately, the extent to which religion influences a nationalist movement is relevant to what type of nation state and political system will follow. In many cases, there have been generally negative outcomes, including authoritarian governments, violence and discrimination from the strongest form of interdependence between religion and nationalism. As previously noted, British national identity based on Protestantism discriminated against Catholics in Great Britain and in Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries. Additional examples of discrimination and violence due to religious nationalism are evident in contemporary times as well.

Since the 1970s, we have seen violent confrontations in Northern Ireland between Protestants and Catholics, as witnessed in the example given in the opening pages of this article. In addition, there have been over 3000 deaths related to the conflict in Northern Ireland in the last 25 years (Boyle and Sheen, 1997: 322). Beyond the atrocities, such as the massacres at Darkley gospel hall, Miltown cemetery and 'bloody Sunday', large-scale discrimination against Catholics in terms of access to affordable housing and education existed in Northern Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s.

There have been similar difficulties in India. In the last decade we have seen the development of a stronger bond between religion and nationalism in this populous nation. At the time of independence and thereafter, Nehru and Gandhi developed a secular and inclusive nationalism. Nehru believed that rightwing Hindu nationalism was a greater threat than communism in the 1950s (Gurr, 2000: 268). Although Nehru and others wanted to keep India a secular nation in the image of Western Europe, increasing Hindu

nationalist movements, represented by the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), have become the dominant force in this country.

There are a few Hindu nationalist organizations that have become increasingly active and powerful in India: the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), an organization of religious leaders, and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a militant youth organization. VHP and RSS are aligned with the BJP. The trio is often referred to as the Sangh Parivar. Sangh Parivar stresses Hindutva, the Hindu character of India. Hindutva equates religious identity with national identity such that to be Indian is to be Hindu. The Sangh leadership actively uses religious discourse and Hindu gods in the development of the national movement (van der Veer, 1994: Ch. 1).

The equating of religious and national identity in India has alienated Christians and Muslims in the country and has led to violent outbreaks on various occasions. In the 1980s and 1990s, northern and western parts of India saw riots between Hindus and Muslims escalate into large-scale violence (1994: 5). One recent example of this religious nationalist mobilization is Ayodhya. The Babri mosque in Ayodhya has been the center of controversy since the early 1980s. Hindu militants believe that the mosque was built on the spot of a Hindu temple that celebrated the birth of the god Rama and demanded access to the site. VHP sought to transform the temple/mosque issue into the larger Hindutva. They claimed that the state should reflect the wishes of the Hindu Indian majority. Corresponding to the demands of the Hindu majority was the identification of the alien and foreign Indian Muslims. The rise of Islamic activities in the Middle East and Asia, the religious nationalist demands for independence in Kashmir and the fact that India is surrounded by Muslim nations (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia and Afghanistan) only furthered the development of Hindutva and escalated the controversy over the mosque. The issue became violent when, on 6 December 1992, a rally organized by the VHP and BJP demolished the Babri mosque. After the mosque was destroyed, riots and violence followed in which over 2000 people were killed and 5000 injured (Gurr, 2000: 270). Violence between Hindus and Muslims in India was recently repeated in Gujarat in 2002.

The exclusionary nature of religious nationalism often leads to violent conflict between religious groups. Often, in the development of the religious national identity, an 'alien other' is created or identified. This other is, by the nature of religious nationalism, excluded. Thus, while religious nationalism promotes and develops a sense of community and belonging, it often has an exclusionary element that breeds intolerance and hatred. This tends to create internal moralities that give preference to the needs and interests of those inside the religious national community. One consequence of this preferencing is the common indifference or hostility to those outside the religious national community (Glover, 1999: Ch. 5).<sup>24</sup>

Those individuals not affiliated with the religious national movement feel excluded, unable to participate equally and as though their religious identity is unvalued since, at a minimum, it is unrecognized and, at worst, it is discriminated against. Often religious national movements set up boundaries excluding those unrelated to the majority national group. Thus, those outside the majority become conscious of their outsider status. This is evident from programs that give a preference to members of the religion with ties to the national movement. The discrimination and, at times, the denial of freedom of religion of minority groups become the source of much of the problems that eventually develop.

In addition, we notice that as cases of instrumental pious nationalism move closer to the inseparable bonds of religious nationalism, we again see the increasing potential for conflict. For example, as Sri Lanka has moved more towards the identification of Buddhism with Sinhalese nationalism, the conflict has become more violent. This is demonstrated by changes in the last 25 years. After independence, Sri Lanka developed a secular nation state. However, the situation changed in the 1970s. In 1973, a new constitution was drafted which again made Sinhalese the official language and stressed the nation's Buddhist heritage; riots followed in 1977. In 1978, the Constitution was again revised and again legitimized the role of Buddhism. Article 8 provides Buddhism with the foremost place in Sri Lankan society and gives the state the responsibility of protecting and fostering the religion. To protect the special status of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, a Ministry of Buddhism was created. One of its duties includes the distribution of funds for the building and restoration of Buddhist structures (Boyle and Sheen, 1997: 248). Since this time, the religious national divide has increased between Hindus, Tamils and Sinhalese Buddhists, and the violence has escalated (Fox, 2000).

The extent to which religion influences nationalist movements is relevant to what type of nation state and political system will follow. In most places with a religious national movement, the result has been a non-democratic state, with the exception of Poland. Religious nationalism appears to be an obstacle to democracy and may ultimately hinder the consolidation process in most cases because there is no room for compromise and little belief in democratic dispositions or beliefs (Lipset, 1959: 94). Democracy, in its various stages, requires compromise because, with limited resources, everyone cannot get everything they want. However, if religious national movements view the political as a struggle between divine truth and sin, there may be little room for compromise. For example, in Israel we see that the various Orthodox and Jewish parties such as the National Religious Party (NRP), and Agudat Israel are unwilling to compromise on the return of land to the Palestinians because they view it as contrary to God's will (Haynes, 1998: Ch. 7). In this respect, the marriage of religion and nationalism often makes compromise more difficult and, as a consequence, may

make peaceful relations between groups harder to achieve and democracies more intolerant.<sup>25</sup>

An additional reason why an understanding of the influence of religion on national movements is crucial is on account of the limitations a religious tradition can impose on national leaders. If the majority of people within a national movement are committed to an idea or policy or are against a potential policy due to their religious beliefs, this places a constraint on the leadership of the national movement (Fox, 2001: 63); an example of this is found in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yasser Arafat is aware of the spiritual attachment of many Muslim Palestinians to the city of Jerusalem and the Al-Haram Al Sharif compound. He would therefore have a very difficult time in relinquishing the rights of Palestinians to this sacred area during peace negotiations.

Finally, we need to understand religiously influenced national movements due to the resurgence of religion, especially in the Third World. Barber (1995) and Friedman (1999) convincingly argue that one consequence of globalization has been the revitalization of local identities, and, in many cases, these have been religious identities. If this pattern persists and is combined with the corruption and poverty evident in many Third World countries (Algeria, Sudan, Somalia), new religiously inspired national movements may develop and fragment the already unstable global South.

## CONCLUSION

As Anderson correctly notes, 'the reality is quite plain: the "end of the era of nationalism", so long prophesized, is not remotely in sight. Indeed nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time' (Anderson, 1983: 3). Undoubtedly, the nation state has become the cornerstone of international relations. But it is equally true to say that religion has not withered away and is reappearing in issues of moral and political contestation (Fox, 2001: 58; Haynes, 1998). Thus, in order to properly understand the strength of nationalism, we must, in some instances, also understand the interaction between nationalism and religion.

In various national movements, there has been a religious element. Whether there is a strong connection between religion and nationalism, as was the case in Great Britain in the 17th and 18th centuries and in Ireland and India in the 20th century, or whether the national movement develops partially in opposition to a religious tradition, as was the case in France in the 18th century, the impact of religion should not be neglected. In some nationalist movements, religion has played an influential role and has

determined the language and context used by nationalist leaders; in other cases, religion has simply been employed as a cohesive element to unify distinct groups of people. What this suggests is that scholars such as Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm, to name a few, were wrong to focus solely on economic justifications in their explanations of the origins of nationalism. It further suggests that it would be a mistake to dismiss the impact and influence of religion in contemporary national movements.

This article provides a framework for understanding the interplay between religion and nationalism in historical and contemporary movements. I have demonstrated, first, that the role of religion, directly or indirectly, is often important in understanding the origins of nationalism; and, second, that religious nationalism frequently leads to discrimination, violence, human rights violations and intolerant polities.

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### **Notes**

- 1 This situation was initially remedied at the end of November when the children walked, without harassment, to their school (*New York Times*, 27 November 2001: A6). Unfortunately problems again developed in early 2002.
- 2 Religion, as a fundamental aspect of nationalism and not merely a part of culture, has been largely overlooked not only in the literature on nationalism, but also in international relations and political theory. A few noteworthy exceptions are Appleby (2000), Fox (2001) and Sahliyeh (1990).
- 3 In reality, 'there is virtually no evil that one can name that has not been done in the name of religion' (Carter, 1993: 83).
- 4 More completely, religion is:

The human response to a reality perceived as sacred. . . . Religion embraces a creed, a cult, a code of conduct, and a confessional community. A creed defines the standard beliefs and values concerning the ultimate origin, meaning, and purpose of life. It develops from myths – symbol-laden narratives of sacred encounters – and finds official expression in doctrines and dogmas. Cult encompasses the prayers, devotions, spiritual disciplines, and patterns of communal worship that give richly suggestive ritual expression to the creed. A code of conduct defines the explicit moral norms governing the behavior of those who belong to the confessional community. (Appleby, 2000: 8–9)

- 5 This is not to suggest that religion is meaningful to every individual. I simply want to suggest that religion plays an essential role in the identity of many individuals.
- 6 Miller goes on to elaborate five essential characteristics of a nation: 'A

community that is, 1. Constituted by shared belief and mutual commitment, 2. Extended in history, 3. Active in character, 4. Connected to a particular territory, and 5. Marked off from other communities by a distinct public culture' (1995: 19–27). This, according to Miller, distinguishes nationalism from other forms of personal identity.

- 7 A similar argument is offered by Benjamin Barber:

Human beings are so psychologically needy, so dependent on community, so full of yearning for a blood brotherhood commercial consumption disallows, so inclined to sisterhood that the requisites of personhood cannot tolerate that McWorld has no choice but to service, even to package and market Jihad. (1995: 155)

- 8 Identification with a nation does not imply that allegiance to the nation is the sole allegiance: 'It has been increasingly true in recent centuries, that most people feel a loyalty to the state that overrides their loyalty to almost any other group' (Waltz, 1954: 177). Modern nationalism admits of exceptions, but, in contemporary times, most have felt a loyalty to the nation that was similar to the loyalty felt towards the church centuries ago.
- 9 The only scholarly work done on religious nationalism as a distinct form of nationalism is Mark Juergensmeyer's *Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (1993) and Peter van der Veer's *Religious Nationalism* (1994). Both Juergensmeyer and van der Veer, however, discuss only South Asia in their work, ignoring the rise of nationalism in Western Europe. Furthermore, neither offers a theoretical analysis of religious nationalism; both simply describe instances of religious nationalism without offering a general theoretical synthesis.
- 10 Hobsbawm shares this understanding with Gellner: 'I use the term "nationalism" in the same sense of Gellner – "primarily a principle which holds that the political and national units should be congruent"' (1990: 9). This definition is not substantially different from Miller's definition cited earlier, as both suggest that a group of people with a common heritage should be identified with their own independent political unit (see also Ward, 1959: Ch. 1).
- 11 Hobsbawm acknowledges that language was one way – though not the only way – to distinguish between cultural communities. It is worth noting that he was a Marxist and that this influenced his views on nationalism.
- 12 'But everywhere, in fact, as literacy increased, it became easier to arouse public support, with the masses discovering a new glory in the print elevation of languages they had humbly spoken all along' (Anderson, 1983: 80).
- 13 It is worth noting that other prominent scholars have also been critical of the approach to nationalism offered by Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm. Walker Connor's *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* argues that many ethnonational demands are political rather than economic in nature (1994: 85). T.K. Oommen also criticizes some of the arguments put forth by Gellner. He is specifically concerned with Gellner and Anderson's stress on language as an essential aspect of nationalism (see Oommen, 1997: 25–6).
- 14 Gellner acknowledges this when he says 'Culture, an elusive concept, was deliberately left undefined' (1983: 43).
- 15 Smith further explains the modernist and postmodernist approaches to nationalism in Smith (1992, 1996: 6–8).



- 16 In 1921, Southern Ireland became a British dominion. Ten years later, Great Britain granted independence to Ireland and other Commonwealth states such as Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. It was not until 1949 that Ireland obtained full independence by leaving the Commonwealth.
- 17 Nothing in my argument suggests that economic factors do not play a role in national movements. Many religious national groups, such as Catholics in Northern Ireland, Muslims in India and Kashmir, Tamils in Sri Lanka and Chechens in Russia, are significantly disadvantaged economically compared to Protestants in Northern Ireland, Hindus in India, Buddhists in Sri Lanka and Orthodox Christians in Russia. While allowing for economic factors to be significant, I want to emphasize the neglected impact of religion.
- 18 It should be noted that there will always be gray areas that lie inbetween the ideal types. My goal is to present an initial schema that holds in most cases in order to understand this relationship.
- 19 It has been argued by Hobsbawm and Oommen that the link between religion and nationalism is untenable because of the territorial aspect of nationalism. Hobsbawm (1990: 11) rejects the link between religion and nationalism. Oommen offers a similar argument when he says that many religions promote a universal church or community that surpasses territorial boundaries (1994: 457, 1997: 80). For this reason, Oommen thinks that religious nationalism is an inherently unsuccessful project. Undeniably, many religions attempt to spread their beliefs throughout the world. This fact does not prohibit the linking of religion and nationalism in a specific territory due to present circumstances. Perception of discrimination or oppression stemming from religious differences can lead to the development of religious nationalism. Propaganda by politicians seeking power can also promote religious nationalism. Oommen himself notes this (1997: 66). Thus, while there may be some conceptual tensions between religion and nationalism, this has not stopped religious nationalism from developing in historical and contemporary times (see Smith, 1986: 123).
- 20 This is not surprising, as some authors have noted that the best way of preserving a state and protecting it against rebellion and civil war is to keep the subjects in amity with one another and to find an enemy against whom they can make a common cause.
- 21 The term 'Enlightenment' refers to a series of changes in European thought. Determining specific dates for the beginning and end of the Enlightenment is difficult. For the purposes of my discussion, I will work with the broad understanding that the Enlightenment began sometime in the 17th century and carried over into the 18th century.
- 22 It is interesting to note that while Gellner discusses the origins of nationalism, he only gives a few passing references to the French Revolution and French nationalism.
- 23 For example, in 1766, Louis XV declared that 'Public Order in its entirety emanates from me, and that the rights and interests of the nation, which some would make a body separate from the monarch, are necessarily joined with mine, and rest entirely in my hands' (Price, 1993: 82–3). The church reaffirmed this in local communities, arguing that the King was the Lord's anointed one.
- 24 We also see this in Israel, as the Declaration of Independence which proclaimed the state of Israel in 1948, stated: 'Jewish state in Eretz-Israel which should be open to every Jew.' This sends a message to Arabs, Christians and others that

they are not true members of the nation. For a discussion of moral identity and groups, see Glover (1999: Ch. 5).

- 25 Dahl makes a similar point: 'Adherents of a particular culture often view their political demands as matters of principle, deep religious or quasi-religious conviction, cultural preservation, or group survival. As a consequence they consider their demands too crucial to allow for compromise. They are non-negotiable' (1998: 150).

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