

**The Discourse of the Nation:  
Space, Time, and Identity in Theories of the Nation**

by


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ABSTRACT

This essay investigates the meta-theoretical limitations of theories of the nation. Beginning with Benedict Anderson's attempt to critically engage liberal and Marxist accounts of the nation by situating the 'origin and spread of the nation' within a problematic of political identity, the essay traces Anderson's unacknowledged precursors to Max Weber. Weber's concern is with the 'fate' of political identity in modernity, where the triumph of politics as spatial order is deemed complete. In Weber, state sovereignty frames a narrative of the nation as the container of political identity in a resolution of universality and particularity from which critical thought and practice must take their bearings. Weber's discourse mirrors the meta-theoretical resolutions of the narrative of the nation it relates, thus posing the paradox that the condition of possibility of writing the nation is the nation. However, he is unable to offer a critical response to this paradox, because the identity of modernity which locates the nation in his discourse supposes an erasure of his own encounter with Nietzsche. Constrained to the perspective of interiority demanded by identity problematics, the nihilism which threatens his discourse is deferred onto Nietzsche. Subsequent theories of the nation will repeat this deferral, which disables critical theory's capacity to countenance difference. The possibilities of exploring alternative modernities, which attempt to preserve temporality outside the tragic ethics of Weber's fateful nation, are thereby disavowed, as dialogue is reduced in Weberian discourse to monologue: only the Same returns.

  
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An undiscussable problem in all theses of this sort is the relations one has with thought, and with the thinkers through whom it is exercised, and in whom it is embodied. For thought is *rare* and, I will insist, as yet uncommodified. One feels, at this level of achievement in the examination system of meritorious advancement, the hesitant approach of an invitation into what Jean-Luc Nancy called "an inoperative community", a 'non-site' whose relations with institutions problematize our heavily coded usage of terms such as 'tradition' and 'transmission'. Indeed, one must resist the comforting double of thought the standard image of tradition presents: the anonymous murmur of discourse Michel Foucault longed to join in the painful absence of the living body of his teacher, Jean Hyppolite. But if our image of sovereign thought thus demands a long practice of mastery as a true capacity for receptivity - what in other forms of life is called service, whom or what do we serve? Who or what bears this invitation? What is the role of this strange community in sustaining thought? In these obscure questions, which are nonetheless vital, I have been most fortunate to share the thoughts of Kevin Frost. This essay is a personal reminder that thought works 'in between' the thinkers through whom it is exercised, however awkward and clumsy - the particular grace of youth - we thinkers may be.

## Dedication

This essay is dedicated to my teachers, Rob Walker and Warren Magnusson, without whom this essay would never have begun, let alone been completed.

And to the memory of Erik John Thomson, who lived youth with a wisdom and serenity which proves the truth of Nietzsche's dictum: "Maturity is the seriousness of a child at play".

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"What was God doing before He created Heaven and Earth? He was preparing a Hell for those who inquire into such high matters."

Attributed to St. Augustine<sup>1</sup>

### Act I: The Discourse of the Nation

#### Introduction

The subject of this essay is the nation. More precisely, this essay is concerned with a meta-theoretical critique of the ways in which theories of the nation reproduce an image of the nation as a *subject* - a new resolution of particular problems of *sovereignty*, what one might call the 'political unconscious' of modern forms of *identity*. While the essay remains at the level of meta-theory, the concerns motivating it are quite practical. It grew out of an effort to think the *difference* of the ways in which politics is thought and practiced in a number of places at the margins of what is generally termed "Western modernity".

#### Political Theory and Ressentiment

When one approaches polities on these margins to confront the question of the nation, armed only with the tools of political theory, one quickly realizes that these tools are at best blunt instruments with which to distinguish the dynamics at play in such encounters. In particular, they are of little avail to the theorist who attempts to confront the *ressentiment* which periodically swells as a response to contact with the prickly problem of same/different, self/other. For the theorist is compelled by the discourse of political theory to engage such encounters on the margins as an *observer* attempting to discern whether 'they' are becoming the Same as the center of modernity - 'the West' - or whether there are signs of successful negotiation with this dynamic which might

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<sup>1</sup> See Friedman, 1975, p.170.

retain some semblance of difference. Signs of Sameness act to confirm the 'Western' identity of the theorist over against the actual *interactions* of encounters, where identity is in fact 'always already' a *reactive* stance. One may in a position of benevolent advisor to the problems modernity encodes in 'them': after all, 'we' have been through this before. Or, the theorist may feel the duty of warning 'them' of the dangers inherent in the arrival of "the tidal wave of modernity" upon 'their' shores. In either case, one is compelled to acknowledge that 'our' modernity is something *real*, a tangible, visible process at work not only in the polities which sustain it, but in the inquiring self as well.

And this is where *ressentiment* begins to expand: from the notion that 'they' are not in fact different, as one imagined before embarking, the self constituted by the illusions of 'Western' modernity's reality reacts to its failure to escape the 'iron cage' of Sameness it had initially sought to escape in flight. But what of the urge to insist that difference too remains a vital current of 'the West', that a recessive yet continuous tradition of attempts to achieve liberation might sustain critical encounters with 'other traditions' at the borders of the modern nation? Here too, one looks for the Same in the name of difference, the searching self all the more comforted and confirmed in its identity as bearer of common cause with 'their' struggles against modernity's deformations. 'Their' plight serves to confirm the correctness of this tradition's self-understanding 'here', and once again, 'we' (for the political theorist seldom thinks alone, it appears) are comforted by the benevolent encouragement 'our' experience of struggle lends to 'their' new-found problems.

This is in fact the key point: 'we' are confirmed in 'our' identity by the *universality* of 'our' political problematics. 'They' are doomed to repeat the dynamics these problematics engender, well documented in the tradition of political theory. And yet, these problematics of self/other, same/different, 'here'/'there' are clearly secondary resolutions which begin from the resolutions that enable *identity* to appear as the political problematic in the first place. This problematic is in fact a *deferral* of prior problematics, which are nonetheless *immanent* to encounters. Indeed, the notion, reinforced at every turn, that 'our' modernity constitutes the horizon of the real, renders the actual, immanent problematics at play in encounters *invisible*. 'They' become the solution to 'our' problems, as both confirmation of the Sameness of modernity *and* of

difference. It is this logic which governs theories of the nation, and this deferral of the politics of problematics, which this essay attempts to both expose and, in its own small way, begin to dismantle.

### Alternative Modernities/Deferred Problematics

The strong claim made here, that theories of the nation suppose a self-identity to 'modernity' as the frame of analyses of the nation which is a *deferral* of politics, explains the valorization of *alternative modernities* offered. Alternative modernities do not comprise 'subjective' responses to supposedly 'objective' processes, nor do they appeal to a *pluralism* of realities against the supposed *universalism* of 'Western' modernity. Universal/plural are key categories through which the resolutions of same/different, self/other operate in theories of the nation, which suppose a *spatial resolution* of ontological relations of being and becoming, which devolve into subject/object, tradition/modernity, here/there problematics. Alternative modernities does not call for a re-alignment of 'East-West' dialogues and exchange; in fact, what is contended is that alternative modernities do not compose the 'truth' or 'essence' of particular political spaces. It is not that 'they' understand 'themselves' more adequately than 'we' comprehend 'them', nor is it claimed that 'their' political discourses offer hitherto unglimped insights into who and what 'we' are, though both of these positions do have an initial appeal. Rather, the modes of critical thought needed to make visible immanent problematics takes the form of a 'radical empiricism' - a political attentiveness as a form of practice - which affirms the *multiplicity* of problematics-encounters. Alternative modernities, like problematics themselves, are always to be *constructed*, and do not pre-exist the encounters in which they are enveloped.

Theories of the nation render this practical multiplicity invisible through their assumption of meta-theoretical resolutions of space, time, and number, which give rise to (false) debates over pluralism and universality. A derivative conception of *mimesis*, of model and copy, governs observations on political space 'here' and 'there'; model-copy logic attempts to account for 'coherence' - for how political identities are maintained in space and over time. But this bad

problematic of identity succeeds only by failing to take notice of other conceptions of mimesis which generate alternative modernities in 'other' times and places. These other times and places do not fit the comforting narrative of modernity's past-present-future, nor its presumed expansion across the flat, homogenous space of geo-political or secular-cultural maps. For example, to some who study North-East Asia, 'China's' history confounds 'Western' categories of objective and relative, subject/object, as explanatory tools of 'Chinese nationalism' in its early phases.<sup>2</sup> When one turns to places like 'Korea', which have long inhabited the larger world of 'Chinese' political cosmology, one finds, in the concept of *Sadaejjuui* (the doctrine of "Serve the great"),<sup>3</sup> a conception of 'emulation' in a world of proximity to exemplary centers which does not depend upon the inside/outside logic which sustains model-copy analyses and practices. Yet the main point is not the better explanatory power of "nativist" models of reality over exogenous ones. In this instance, an immanent problematic of *authority* is confronted in the thought of *Sadaejjuui* which is simply deferred in the model-copy logic of theories of the nation. It is the perhaps naïve hope expressed in this essay that dialogue might productively begin 'across' cultures on the terrain of such immanent problematics, where thought is again possible.

As matters stand at present, however, this thought is hardly intelligible. Too many discursive constraints render the difference of 'Korean experience' the Same as 'our' dilemmas and all-too familiar narratives of fate. Indeed, thinking such differences is one thing, articulating them another. Reprising the problems stated above, when thought turns to writing, the extant literature on the nation, not excluding its most self-reflective theoretical efforts, appear clearly unhelpful. There, only a dialectic of political identity as same/other is countenanced, where the expressed political problematic is one of negotiating the forces which impel identities toward homogenization. One also finds an *ethics* to accompany this dialectic (also recast as Enlightenment/despair), which the critical theorist is invited to adopt as a bulwark against the *nihilism* which, one is warned, often follows serious speculation on these matters. While the question of nihilism is complex and will be treated in more detail later in this Introduction, it becomes immediately clear that this resort to

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<sup>2</sup> See Duara, 1991, esp. pp.67-73.

<sup>3</sup> See Robinson, 1986, pp.38-43.

ethics will not do if one wants to make intelligible other politics and other worlds than those dreamed of in this philosophy. The reference for the agonistic ethics of self/other, same/different, one/many dialectics is clearly seen to be the self-image of "the West", whose poles of thought oscillate between Athens and Jerusalem. Yet this grand 'civilizational' thought is in itself little help with the details. Theories of the nation play crucially upon the *visibility* of the world to the self constituted 'here'. Appearances are surely against difference. As a result, once one begins to investigate the constraints of theories of the nation, one is lead to the conclusion that only a *total critique* of its reproductive powers - its "viral" logic - offers any possibility of beginning studies in difference. What is called here "radical empiricism" is well understood as a declaration of war.

### The Prisoners' Dilemma

So powerful is the collective force of this mode of discourse - one looks in vain through standard theories of the nation for serious dissent from its profound logic - that perhaps only a nihilist can resist it. Whatever the case, the familiar appeal to ethics to resolve dogmatic dialectics alerts one to the probability that theories of the nation, whatever they may claim to the contrary, are not really about the dilemmas of political identity - of sameness and difference; they are, if anything, a cry for help, a more or less impassioned plea for rescue from the limits of thought as they know it. How else to explain the force with which these theories proclaim their fate as tragic theorists? How else to perceive the loud attention they draw to the features of the iron cage they have constructed around themselves? Is not the unison of voices enough to make clear that these theorists *suffer* from identity problematics and their shrunken imaginations? All suffering is one, and prison makes of its inhabitants more effectively homogenized selves even than do schools. But responses to captivity vary: theories of the nation are not *identical* in the ways they negotiate their fate. Nonetheless, these prisoners are dependent upon one another, even as each imagines solitude after his of her own fashion, often against the survival strategies of fellow prisoners.

There is a well-known problem with which theorists of war and 'international relations' test the reasoning capacity of their students. What follows is a twist on this exercise, where the

individualist, instrumental logic of "the prisoner's dilemma" is situated within the discursive practices of political and social theory:

Imagine a prison, where theorists of various persuasions occupy a vast cell, sharing the same space, apparently with no hope of parole. Inevitably, these prisoners attempt to account for how they arrived at this destination, and of what life was before the iron cage enclosed them. They repeat stories, often merely to themselves, of how the prison came into being around them - for none can recall actually leaving home; the only certainty is that every day upon waking, the cold walls of the prison greet them. Some, who call themselves Marxists after the discovery of notebooks of plans for mass rebellion against the prison left in an empty cell, speak of redemption, if only the memory of failed liberation is sustained. They offer the hope of making common cause with the wretched prisoners who serve as their guards much of the day, cleaning the cells and feeding them, leaving this group free to contemplate their condition. After all, they proclaim, it is the structure of the prison itself which divides us from them! Some are obtaining favors from the guards, others hoard their surplus, saving a crust of bread to wield over us in exchange for better sleeping arrangements, or to cause us to part with a valued article. They sow divisiveness, where only a collective effort offers the promise of escape. One of those singled out for derisive treatment by the Marxists because of his comfortable living arrangements in the cell, Ernest Gellner, scoffs at their optimism. He too has a memory to sustain, but, proud as he is at his cleverness in securing a top bunk (once inhabited by John Locke, whose crime, it is alleged, was petty theft), he sees nothing particularly unjust about the system of exchanges. He counters with a tale which stresses the virtues developed in the prison, of how it trains minds for the necessary tasks one must perform if one is to thrive in its confines.

A third party stands somewhat aloof from this exchange. To them, both the Marxists and Gellner (whose arrogance does not invite company, though the first group has on occasion threatened to expel two of its members, Tom Nairn and Eric Hobsbawm, into Gellner's orbit) blame their fate on the structure of the prison. But how did we get here, if not through some fault of our own, they ask? This thought has a profound and rapid effect on the others. Hitherto, everyone had told comforting tales of the past as different from the present - 'life on the outside', as

they put it, must still maintain at least some of the features it had before the prison appeared. But everyone is also dimly aware that the stories they told of life before the prison always contained an account of how they had gotten to where they were. Something seems implicit in life outside to produce this present, where the boundaries of the prison are infinite, yet keenly felt to be concrete. Now the issue cannot be avoided: you claim, says the third party, that this prison has an outside, that there must be life beyond it, but how do you know this? Your own tales of liberation always justify the appearance of the prison, as if the prison were, from the beginning, we ourselves. Aren't these stories just means of accommodating yourselves to your condition? None of you really wants to escape, after all. This prison has made you what you are, but you don't even realize it. Why not investigate its structure, to understand its strange architecture, that we might begin to think differently about it, and about ourselves? For example, from time to time we hear muffled voices on the other side of the walls, and sounds of banging, snoring, and shuffling of feet such as we ourselves make. What does this mean? Are these merely the echoes of our own activities, or are there others beyond our confines? If so, are they prisoners or free men? If prisoners, we should not be hasty to presume their manner of living to be the same as ours. Perhaps, if we can communicate with them, they have something to teach us about how to survive this existence.

The others feel chastened by this counter-attack, and resolve to do as the third party counsels. They feel that their survival strategy, which had kept a nihilism of despair at bay through the promise of redemption, is now shown to be itself a kind of nihilism: there is no way to think beyond the dilemma this third party poses. Condemned to a stasis, which for them means only a descent into fascism, unable to act, the others retreat to safe quarters, while publically they agree to explore the structure surrounding them. Certainly, they feel somewhat embarrassed at having assumed, each in their own way, that the condition they experience is the same for all. Slowly, however, it dawns on them that to survive, they need each other. At first, each on their own, scattered as they are, they devise an ethical logic based on the structure of the prison to accommodate their unavoidable co-existence. An inspiration strikes them: once we quarrelled among ourselves, and could not respect the differences among us. Now we have an ethics to enable us to survive. If those beyond the wall are truly not ourselves, perhaps we are now ready to learn from them.

This happy thought motivates the prisoners to action. They spread out from their enclaves to investigate the walls surrounding them. But one of them, a certain Derrida, pauses in mid-stride as he crosses the vast open space of the floor. A sudden inspiration has struck him: this structure is infinite; therefore, we can never reach its edges. Wait, he cries, perhaps we should contemplate this! Most of the others ignore his words, leaving Derrida to contemplate his vision: an infinite structure, at once everywhere and nowhere. The more he pursues this logic, the more absurd seems the notion of a closed structure. There must be an outside, he exclaims, for this structure to be at all! But more: this structure is maintained not because it is solid, but precisely because it is not!

At this point, most of the others have returned, having failed to find a limit to the prison's walls. Wearily, they sit around Derrida, who, at least in some eyes, has begun to take on the aura of a prophet. This structure cannot be escaped, he proclaims, but not for the reasons you have thought. It does indeed have an outside, but, and here an astute student of Machiavelli chuckles, you can't get there from here. At this point, several in the audience roll their eyes; a few make moves in an effort to rise and continue their search. Gellner, who the others realize has not actually left his high bunk all along, gazes down on the spectacle with jaundiced boredom. But everyone stops abruptly, taking in their breath at Derrida's next words: the problem is with geometry itself, not with the particular structure of this prison. Geometry is our prison! We think we know the presence of the prison, indeed our own presence, to be defined by the structure around us. We have even constructed an ethics to confront our fate; after all, we have to survive; in this we are all agreed. But can any of you tell me the shape of our misfortune? What is this space which encloses us, even as we enclose it in our ethics of inside and outside?

There is murmuring among the crowd, but no voices rise out of it. The Machiavellian bides his time; now is not the moment for response. Derrida understands the reason for this silence: no one has glimpsed the unrepresentable. It is after all, infinite, and we are finite beings. Representation is our mode of knowledge, yet even an infinity of representations does not refer to an origin. There is no prison, save for our desire for there to be one to explain our misfortune, to console our confusion. If, Derrida continues, there is no prison, yet the possibility of saying this depends on there being a prison, I propose that we cease our search for empirical investigation and

mathematical models, and orient ourselves to this paradox. Our ethics of responsibility presumed the *presence* of others - each is an other to himself - but representations are all there is. Do we not require an ethics which admits this, an ethics whose agonism knows the tension between infinite and finite, the presentable and the unrepresentable?

There is silence for a time. Then suddenly, and with a violence that surprised even himself, a Marxist roars to his feet. Are you telling us that the stone floor we feel beneath us is a desire? Are you saying that we have been fed here for so long on a few tricks of language - or whatever you mean by "discourse" - and not by this bread our comrades serve us every day? You sit here thinking while we are out struggling against the forces which bind us to this prison, and all you can offer in return are parlour games? 'There is a structure because there is no structure'? Ridiculous! So saying, the Marxist stomps off to a corner, or, at any rate, in the direction of where he imagines a corner to be. Many others follow him, but many also fall into small knots of people at the fringes of Derrida's circle. The Machiavellian can be seen quietly speaking with some, but his voice is difficult to discern above the din which now arises.

Now among the Marxists who have followed their disgruntled comrade are some who are unsettled by the scene they have just witnessed. They take note of the fact that very few of the young have taken their side and joined them. They would perhaps like to pose some questions to the more thoughtful among these "post-structuralists", as the circle around Derrida is now called. But the pressures to collective engagement are great: already Marxists are devising counter-attacks on this neighbouring camp as they spread outward toward the infinite boundary of the prison. And still the muted voices from the outside can be heard, more numerous than before, more agitated. And more sounds of incessant to-ing and fro-ing, closer now, it seems. Could these really be issuing from outsiders? No one seems more certain than before; their own activity and the clamour of their camps make discrimination impossible. Likely they *are* the faint echo of ourselves, most think. Besides, even if they are the traces of others, their activities mirror ours. They are in the same predicament as we are, in any case! The thought gains confidence, and an intuition takes shape: we can resolve this issue if we acknowledge that they are others, but their very difference is the product of our fate, we who have constructed the inside of this prison.

This resolution appears to satisfy everyone. A few remain silent, but do not dissent. The Marxists are once again content: even if this Derrida is onto something, our responsibility is to unmake this prison, the space which encloses us, and dooms others to a repetition of our condition. Even the Derrideans can accept this thought, having exhausted the logic which struck their leader, and being unable, for the most part, to sustain the level of thought Derrida's quasi-divine inspiration enabled. Even Derrida has taken up prose, apparently retreating into the private hell of literature, perhaps as penance for his hubris. The separate camps begin to move again toward the center, at different speeds, feeling once again an identity and purpose flow through the diaspora spread across the space of the prison. Some had wandered so far away that it would be a long time, if ever, before they return. Along the way, several of the Marxists are struck by a wonderful thought: we have forgotten something! The empty cell where we found the notebooks of our teacher, where is it? If this prison is infinite, it must be here. Yet this cell was finite. How is this possible unless somehow moving across space conditions time in some way! Perhaps there are many alternate spaces, and many other temporalities, which would flourish were it not for the reified image of the prison we hold! We were right to hold to our memory of struggle against the prison, for this history apprehends the truth: we had thought that the prison was a spatial construct in three dimensions; now we understand that it exists in four, and that the fourth dimension is time! The problem, therefore, is not geometry, as Derrida said, but our apprehension of it. One of the group, Benedict Anderson, goes so far as to claim that these apprehensions of time and space have made the prisoners into the community they are, regardless of the apparent differences among them.

These thoughts rejuvenate the Marxists for a time, until they encounter the rest of their fellow prisoners. They explain their thought, and many find encouragement in the notion that, if time and space form pluralities, each can continue their disciplinary work as before. For most retain a mistrust of the grand synthesis offered by the Marxists, who proclaim themselves guardians of the History of the prison. If time is really multiple, the others reason, what is to guarantee that my local work is not actually central, while theirs remains a current of local, passing significance? And so some devote their new-found energies to tracing the symbol of the phallus in old texts scattered about the cell; others write histories of geometry, and one even attempts a "history of the

present", investigating the effects of different forms of confinement, whose evidence he locates in an infinite archive below the prison's floor. This is not what we had in mind! exclaim several of the Marxists, notably Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson. Someone has to be in charge here. Our efforts have to be co-ordinated, or all is truly lost. Maintaining History is a collective effort, and you have all forgotten what motivates us: our suffering in this prison. And so, once again, the little community (for this is how they now think of themselves) is bound in a quandary. The very community whose historical task it is to sustain History tends to stasis. Suddenly, the Derrideans are back on the offensive. This dilemma, they proclaim, is a result of your essentialism. You want a singular identity for us, and from this follows your dilemma. The problem of stasis and progression follows your problem of identity: affirm the multiplicity of identities! Have you already forgotten the voices we hear from the outside? Do we not exist in the *difference* between those voices and those which echo inside the space of our consciousness?

At the word 'difference', the community falls silent again. It has worshipped at an alter to Difference, Mother Goddess of Identity, for some time. No one dares deny this authority, lest they deny themselves the comforts of the community. But now an odd thing happens. A voice comes from above, brimming with assertion. The community looks to its source, and is surprised to find that it comes from Gellner's high perch. Yet the voice is not his. In fact, Gellner has vanished, replaced by one William Connolly, known only for his monologues on the virtues of St. Augustine's *Confessions*. He was last seen close to the mysterious Machiavellian, whose voice had the strange effect that, whatever he said - and he actually had a lot to say, people only heard "The problem of the prison is sovereignty", and quickly went away to write this down. Connolly too had heard this message, has listened to the Derrideans and Marxists, and now he is prepared to reveal his message to the prison community.

It is true, declaims Connolly, that there is a paradox to the mode of being of our community, but it is the paradox of freedom itself. Earlier, we told ourselves stories of home, of life before and after the prison, to comfort ourselves and console our suffering. But is it not the prison itself which creates this yearning? Ignore the meaning-demands this prison makes. Resist the false comforts of home! We are free beings, who cannot accept our fate. Affirm that we are forever

homeless, as our consciousness tells us. Live in time, not space, and you will understand that this present we cling to is not present at all, but always already past or about to be. Yet the future is imminent; it simply never arrives. What we call liberation is our striving toward the outside, the infinite, whose warmth we will never dwell in, but whose shadow we are. Affirm homelessness as your fate and you shall be rewarded with the kingdom of democracy you desire.

This is quite appealing news to the community, which feels the pull of congregationalism as Connolly speaks. Augustine studies flourish, the prison is declared a minor problem, a disposable fetter on the elemental forces of freedom, and the body of the community affirmed. This resolution truly appears satisfying to all, Marxists and Derrideans alike, inclusive as it is of their concerns. But not all are pleased. In fact, the Machiavellian finds nothing humorous in this situation. Still, he remains silent. Then, quite unexpectedly, out of the gloom to his left (or is the right? accounts vary), a trail of smoke emerges. Gilles Deleuze snuffs out a cigarette, coughs for a bit, and begins to speak. His face appears as a transformation of masks, and he stammers as he struggles to insist: We are a pack, not a community, you imbecile. Your St. Augustine was a slave, as you are. You all speak of the outside, of homelessness, yet you know only the exterior, stuck as you are in your reactive consciousness and its pale representations. This temporality you speak of, this is nothing but death, not life. You speak of fate, but none of you takes the question of death seriously. Do you think your body is your own? Your Goddess has already stolen it from you, fools. Your petty ethics of republican agonism is a feeble attempt to gain enough grace for its return. You suffer, indeed, but you suffer from life, yet you think this suffering licences your resentment against the prison, as if you can only exist as long as it does. You are grateful for the crumbs sent to you by your master, the prison. Like domesticated animals, you have even forgotten how to hunt. A pack knows how to take care of itself, even as each is alone and must fend for himself. Be individuals! There is an Outside farther away than any exteriority, and an inside deeper than any interiority. It is Death, at once infinitely closer and farther away than your little deaths ("*petit mort*": a few inward smiles at Deleuze' joke on the repressed eroticism of the community). Can any of you inhabit *that* land? You believe that you exist because the prison exists. What you suffer from, my friends, is *interiority*. Declare war on interiority, fight death with death, nihilism with nihilism. Always be excessive; it is the true middle way...

Deleuze carries on in this vein for some time. Though fascinated, the crowd (for they are becoming a crowd once more) listen vaguely, becoming more drowsy with each passing hour. Only a few are still awake when Deleuze rises, announcing his departure. Only the Machiavellian knows where he is going - to the Outside. A trail of cigarette smoke, changing shape in chaotic patterns of continuous variation, and then he is gone. The Machiavellian falls into a dreamless sleep, for the first time in a long while. When the community awakens, it is already noon - the hour of the shortest shadow. At first, this strikes few as odd, until they realize that the prison is gone! The presence of the walls is no longer felt. Instead, a flat, featureless plane stretches in every direction, a smooth space with no horizon, where distance has no referents. At last they are free, their minds uncluttered by echoes of voices. Now one knows how long they have slept, but Deleuze is nowhere to be seen. The community is joyful, attributing their miraculous escape to their vigilance and good will, their great capacity for *service* to their Goddess. So much the worse for that arrogant, chain-smoking Deleuze, they laugh. It was clear from the beginning that he was never one of us! He is probably still wandering through the prison, trying to reach his so-called 'Outside'!

Nonetheless, a current of uncertainty begins to flow through the air of celebration. For it is apparent that the former prisoners have awoken on the very spot on which they had fallen asleep. Despite their obsession with the mobility of those on the prison's exterior, they themselves have not moved at all. Some even begin to doubt the authority of their perceptions, and the narratives consciousness constructs out of them. Was the prison merely a dream from which we have awoken? Or are we still dreaming now, and the prison has merely undergone a transformation in our sleep? Most, in their restless desire to become active, dismiss these questions as residual effects of a mysticism some had embraced earlier in the prison. But looking around, the Machiavellian knows that this is not the realm of perpetual peace animating the enlightened ethics of the community in prison. Now, facing these selves flushed with the innocence of virtue, he feels the time is right to speak...

[It should be noted that this account is based on texts left behind in the prison, discovered by the author during a routine search for combustible objects. (Indeed, the author too is a prisoner.) It seems that each prisoner wrote an account of their ordeal. Though they continually argued

amongst themselves, they were agreed that the name of their community, such as it was, should be "the nation". The present account is a testament to their *humanity*, compiled in the belief that, though they did not understand its significance, they felt the truth that all suffering is one.]

### Meta-theory and Discourse

As the tale related above attempts to illustrate, the rhetorical differences established among theories of the nation are in large part determined by the assumptions each makes concerning issues of space, time, and number, from which limiting problematics of identity, interiority, and coherence follow. So agreed are theorists of the nation that these problematics compose the limits of critical thought on their 'object' that it becomes clear that resolutions of these issues exerts an extremely powerful, if little noticed, constraint on critical thought. In fact, this essay makes the strong claim that *the disjunctive unity of theories of the nation can be apprehended only at the 'level' of meta-theory.*

This claim may well give rise to resistance: "meta-theory" involves a high level of abstraction from the usual terms of political analysis, particularly those of the reflexive self-understandings recovered from evidence of available discourse in a specific time and place; in short, from the kind of interpretive reconstructions promoted by methodologists as diverse as Quentin Skinner and Michel de Certeau. Indeed, analyses of emplaced political consciousness and 'everyday life' have come into widespread use as a result of (at least) three complimentary problems. One is the sense that, as an 'academic' discourse whose race/class/gender issues are far from resolved, the vocabulary of political theory is to greater or lesser extent an obstacle to an investigation of its own exclusions. Without over-psychologizing, one could call this self-critical move the 'guilt' edge of a double-edged sword. Another problem marks 'the cutting edge' of this critical weapon: the spatio-temporal specificity of political theory's discourse. The more anthropological sensibility at work here feels itself uneasy at the prospect of re-describing 'other civilizations' - whether framed in a narrative of past or co-present - in light of the self-descriptions of 'our' experience. Further, there is the sword itself, wielded as critical tool. Its name is History.

Critical thought has long resisted attempts to reify or de-historicize the specificity of historical moments. Attention to temporal difference has become a standard response to attempts to abstract from 'situated time'. In light of these concerns, the appeal to the high abstraction of meta-theory thus requires some justification here.

The meta-theoretical critique of theories of the nation undertaken here invokes questions of space, time, and number (the one and the many), for a simple reason: nothing seems more obvious or less analysed in political theory generally than the *immanent* resolutions - the regulative conditions - of space, time, and number. This alone warrants the attention of the aspiring critical theorist. But when one turns to theories of the nation, one finds a growing interest in thematising issues of space and time. Indeed, since the publication of Benedict Anderson's 1983 text, *Imagined Communities*, the 'anthropological' concerns of situated identities has met with an equal passion for the spatio-temporal resolutions which condition these identities. This concern has the happy consequence (for the writer of this essay, if not for its readers) of licencing a critique of this growing body of literature on the nation at precisely this meta-theoretical level. But this also serves as a caution to the reader: do not expect anthropology here. This essay remains at the level of meta-theory, and sustains a critical engagement with the spatio-temporal resolutions it maintains have hitherto governed *all* attempts to theorize the nation. The reason for this is again straightforward: the recourse to 'interiority', 'suffering', 'fate', and 'everyday life' found in the literature *already supposes meta-theoretical resolutions which disable critical thought into questions of the nation*. In particular, 'everyday life' performs a *discursive role* in theories of the nation: it defines the terrain of the apolitical problematic of *identity*. A central purpose of this essay is to expose the problematic of identity as apolitical; the tools used to perform this critical operation are those of meta-theory.

Thus, the reader can expect a reversal of perspectives here: theories of the nation are not criticized for being too abstract; on the contrary, they are not abstract enough. As outlined below, *in their discursive interaction*, theories of the nation fail to reach the 'plane' on which their *immanent problematics* can be worked with. This question of immanence too requires explanation. Above, theories of the nation since Anderson were characterized as tending to a unified analysis of 'high theory' and politics from 'below', where the former provides the conditions of possibility of

the latter. This formulation reveals the residual Kantianism of writing on the nation: a *dualism* between the 'structural' constraints of identities and their historical becomings. Despite the emphasis placed on space, time, and number in this essay as a way in to critical exegesis, such neo-Kantian resolutions are precisely what are being questioned.

This dualism is in fact at the heart of the apoliticism of theories of the nation. At the most abstract level, the claim is more or less explicitly made by theorists that modernity is constituted through a resolution of universality and particularity in the State, enabled by the State's monopoly of spatio-temporal resolutions. Specifically, the nation as political identity is 'contained' by the reduction of time to categories of space effected in the State. The critique of *this* resolution orients theorists of the nation toward particular solutions. These solutions take similar forms, which will be examined in due course; the point here is the relation of problems and solutions themselves: theories of the nation are conspicuous for their tendency to treat problematics as *external* to their own discourse, *against* which solutions are posited as an inexorable consequence of problems thus isolated. What this dyad of problem-solution elides is precisely the immanent problematics which cannot be thought within the dualistic form of interrogation theories of the nation promote. What is called political analysis in this essay is a practice of *working with these problematics*.

Two points need to be emphasized here: first, the issues of space, time, and number pursued in this essay are treated neither as 'primary' in relation to the 'elements' through which the nation is constructed as an object in discourses of the nation; rather, their immanence to problematics is stressed. Second, the identity problematics which propel these discourses have as their central premiss the meta-theoretical resolutions of sovereignty. However, one can protest that a particular theory, say, Tom Nairn's, is concerned with the historical record of Marxist thought on the nation as it struggles with concrete conditions in a particular place, Scotland of the late 1970s. Is the question of sovereignty not secondary, at best, to the questions raised in Nairn's analysis? To which one must respond: the very questions Nairn's discourse elicits are determined by the *rhetorical differences* established between neo-Marxist, Nietzschean, and liberal theories of the nation. Close reading of these oppositional discourses reveals their shared assumptions: it is not that, in this instance, neo-Marxist and liberal discourses are identical; rather, their very differences

elide their repetition of bad problematics. Indeed, one can go further, and claim that these rhetorical oppositions, *strengthened by the elements which compose both the nation as discursive object and the theories themselves*, enable these repetitions. Thus, if these two points are thought together, four 'planes' of analysis are revealed. These planes of analysis form the critical mode of 'deconstruction' pursued in this essay. The following formulation expresses the relations among the meta-theoretical resolutions of sovereignty and the elements, dualisms, rhetorical oppositions, and problematics governing theories of the nation: *writing the identity of the nation as the triumph of space over time as a resolution of universal and particular through a repetition of elements, dualisms, and rhetorical oppositions effaces immanent political problematics, in favor of quasi-transcendental, apolitical ones.*

It follows, then, that meta-theoretical critique offers no solutions to problems, only better problems. This is not a claim to the value of "theoretical practice", a kind of mimicry of 'everyday practice' at the intellectual level. The image of thought as a working out of solutions to problems 'given' by the authority of tradition, historical practice, or autonomous reason, is simply a poor pedagogy. *Political* problematics are, again, immanent to thought and practice; moreover, these problematics are *not* given: problems are precisely what have to be *constructed*, a question of both thought and practice. The construction of political problematics constitutes the *fourth* plane of analysis undertaken here. Thought has a specificity which no dialectic of theory-practice avoids reducing to the familiar oppositions of idealism and materialism. Rather, what one could call a *radical dualism* operates here: thought and practice obtain relations of *difference*. This essay is an exercise of thought which compliments an attempt to make intelligible a radical empiricism: in question is a *total critique* of the resolutions of theories of the nation, whose dualisms promote a pluralism whose only fruit is sameness.

The critique of the one-many logic of theories of the nation is motivated by a concern with difference; specifically, the ways in which the very problematic of identity erases difference. In theories of the nation, the tale is told of a universal becoming-Same: this is the dilemma of modernity, which, it is claimed, is unavoidable, 'our' fate. For these theorists, modernity is spatialization spread everywhere; one cannot escape its logic, but only negotiate it. In this narrative

of the fate of political identity, the nation plays a crucial role in producing the self-identical space of the State. For the nation is also the bearer of temporality: whether as 'histories', 'traditions', or 'social movements', the nation as the site of the State's organization of everyday life is *essentially ambiguous*. On the one hand, the nation is shaped by the spatial resolutions of State sovereignty; on the other, it contains the substratum of lived identities, which include long memories of failed attempts at liberation. Between fate and destiny, the nation is articulated as the intersection of political practices, an *agonistic* entity whose dynamics orient perspectives as diverse as liberal-institutional (Ernest Gellner), structuralist-Marxist (Nicos Poulantzas), post-Marxist (Benedict Anderson), and postmodern (William Connolly). What a radical critique of the meta-theoretical resolutions of these perspectives reveals is how their very *differences produce repetitions* of this agonistic identity. A tragic ethics is the solution offered by each to the dilemmas of the nation as a form of political identity. Moreover, this is the case whether one applauds the over-all tendency to the world become-one scripted in these theories or bemoans it: Gellner the arch-modernist shares this logic with Connolly, the consummate postmodernist.

This issue of the discursive qualities of repetition is fundamental to the thesis advanced here. For these theories of the nation arrive at the same point - a tragic identity politics - through the determined nature of debates among them. A politics of *forgetting* is at work here, which permits perspectives which *appear* different, occupied as they are with various strands of political thought, to repeat fundamental positions. The reader is urged to follow these repetitions as the argument moves from chapter to chapter, from text to text. Again, what is not argued is that, say, Gellner's argument is the same as, or *analogous* to, Fredric Jameson's; a far stronger claim is being made: Jameson's argument is both possible and persuasive to the extent that its attempts to differ from accounts like Gellner's *rhetorically submerge the immanent problematics which sustain both*. However, built in to these narratives of the nation is a particular conception of repetition itself: repetition is constrained to the logic of identity, to the becoming-Same of identities. As argued in this essay, repetition as the 'return of the Same' supposes the very reduction of time to space these theorists seek to escape through their tragic ethics. And this point can be generalized to compliment the earlier formulation of the relations between sovereignty and the four planes of analysis: the 'elements' of theories of the nation, which include repetition, but also memory,

representation, narrative, mobility, and others, *reproduce the 'object', the nation, which they are employed to critically analyse.*

### Paradoxes of Critical Theory

In this form of repetition is found the main contention of this essay: theories of the nation reproduce the discursive constraints of the nation 'itself'. If the nation is written in these discourses as the identity-container which enables homogenization of political identity - the spectre of a universal field of self-identical spaces, identical in their particularity - to become the hallmark of modernity, the meta-theoretical resolutions of these discourses themselves suppose this triumph of spatialization in homogeneity. Once again, the solution to this critical *paradox* - some call it "co-opted critique", others "bourgeois theory" - is to invoke an agonistic politics: a tragic ethics which claims a monopoly on the valorization of *difference* in a world gone mad with the virus of similitude. As in the tale of the prisoners' dilemma, the 'body' of thought on the nation constitutes itself as a mirror of the world it attempts to critically describe.

The form of this critical dilemma might be re-cast in Kantian terms as the following: *the condition of possibility of writing the nation is the nation.* But this formulation is misleading. It implies either that *representations* of objects 'for' a subject are the conditions of possibility of knowledge of those objects, in which case, the statement appears trivial: there is no knowledge without representation. Or, in a more critical vein, which seeks to question the unitary 'subject' binding objects and representations, it implies that critical theory must account for 'the reality of appearances' in the present and envelop this subject-object dualism in a larger dimension. To move from the first to the second reading suggests, crudely, a move from transcendence to immanence: where the first perspective deduces the *limits* of thought - its legitimate 'domain' - from its spatio-temporal 'schema', the second attempts to *include* the spatial representations given in a *reified* present by invoking temporality as the trajectory of their immanent transformations. On this characterization, the second reading would appear to be the more critical, since it envelops the first: if all there is are representations 'given' by what it means to be a subject confronting an object,

then it would seem that the present can only be apprehended, never transformed. The three spatial dimensions of human subjectivity require a fourth, time, which gives a 'unified field theory' of the transformations which explain the presence of representations. Which of these two readings of the paradox of writing the nation is defended in this essay?

For the sake of convenience, let us designate the first reading "liberal" and the second "Marxist". This may seem contradictory; after all, these designations hardly reflect the rather complex histories which have shaped these discourses, nor do they acknowledge the shifting debates within the currents of thought each identifies. In a thesis whose explicit claim is that theories of the nation remain insensitive to difference, homogenization and essentialism would appear inappropriate gestures, to say the least. However, the reader should bear in mind that we are speaking here about *discourses*, which, at a minimum means that what we are investigating are the practical effects of texts: again, the discursive effects of the differences among theories of the nation produces repetitions which indeed admit of a relatively small set of features. Moreover, these designations serve a heuristic purpose, complicating the differences claimed for them in the literature on the nation. The purpose of this complication is to develop an alternative formulation of the problem of immanence and transcendence which remains invisible in the claims made concerning the 'fate' of critical thought in the literature on the nation. A 'minor deconstruction' of the Kantian problematic of writing the nation reveals the multiple, yet mutually interacting, implications of this alternative formulation.

An initial deconstructive observation takes note of the complementarity between liberal and Marxist conceptions of self: both are written from the perspective of *interiority*, in two senses. Liberal accounts typically *assume* the space of consciousness as an inside/outside, *epistemological* relation of self and world, particular and universal. As meta-theoretical resolution, interiority licences analysis of the nation as the key mediating term between self and State in a logic of *analogy*. Time is reduced to a narrative of the processes which enable an *implicit spatial order to 'become' an explicit one*: the agonistic ethics of Gellner's liberalism follow from the deductions made from this 'concretization' of spatial resolutions. In this narrative, the nation serves as the key mediating space where particular and universal identities get resolved. While certain Marxist

theories of the nation, like those of Nairn and Eric Hobsbawm, share Gellner's structuralist lack of attention to subjectivity, others, thinking in the wake of the virtual collapse of structuralist Marxism - Perry Anderson, Terry Eagleton, and Fredric Jameson, to name a few - place the question of subjectivity squarely at the center of their problematics. In this move, Benedict Anderson is of considerable importance, since his text signals a challenge to Marxist and neo-Marxist thought to confront the problem of subjectivity. But, and this is the second usage of interiority, *everything becomes re-written in terms of the perspective of interiority, as if this were the only mode of subjectivity which can be countenanced*. Where Gellner cynically appeals to a universal logic of 'interests' and 'power-as-possession' - the metaphysics of *presence and absence* governing the perspective of interiority, Marxists of whatever prefixed persuasion (humanist-, structuralist-, neo-, or post-) supplement or substitute this perspective with that of interiority's 'needs'. These needs - a metaphysics of *lack* - are prescribed by the perspective interiority adopts toward *suffering*. This is a compensatory logic which gives rise to *meaning-demands* which the State fulfills - however unsatisfactorily - through the nation as the transformative space of everyday life, the paradigmatic realm of interiority's perspective on suffering.

This is Benedict Anderson's thesis, an argument whose conclusion repeats the tragic ethics governing other theories of the nation. The difference between the thesis of Anderson and that of Gellner is merely that the former is rather more explicit about the form of subjectivity the latter takes for granted. Moreover, because it thematizes subjectivity, Anderson's thesis *appears* as something new, a critical point of departure for subsequent theoretical work on the nation. It licenses arguments like William Connolly's, which assumes the perspective of interiority as the horizon of political identity even as it claims to have disposed of the problem of sovereignty at the 'level' of the State. Where previously theories like Gellner's presumed the State as the 'container' of political identity, 'postmodernists' such as Connolly suppose that *the new container is the nation*, now 'deterritorialized' from the 'modernist' resolutions of the State. However, this valorization of interiority is hardly an advance; in fact, it is a step backward for critical thought in an important sense.

The critique of State sovereignty developed by others before Connolly (notably by R.B.J.

Walker) supposes an intense interrogation of meta-theoretical resolutions at all 'levels' (including the claims of 'levels of analysis' discourses themselves). What this mode of questioning reveals is the complex inter-dependence of resolutions effected through the State, the nation, and the self. By abstracting the critique of State sovereignty from the over-all analysis, Connolly claims to produce an agonistic ethics, based entirely on the perspective of interiority, which is *the* valorization of difference, a way forward from the paralyzing Sameness of modernity. However, interiority is clearly not the realm of difference: *all* theories of the nation have supposed interiority as their horizon of thought. Connolly has in fact merely rehearsed the path already traced from Ernest Gellner to Benedict Anderson, yet making a virtue out of the apolitical problematics the latter had left as difficulties to be seriously confronted.

While Anderson is tentative concerning the positive implications of his argument, Connolly shares with Gellner an aggressive formulation of the limits of critical thought and practice concerning the nation. Worse, this is done in the name of *difference*, a claim which silences attempts to protest that Connolly's tragic ethics are merely one more version of an imperialism in thought: 'postmodernism' simply replaces 'modernism' as the assumed discourse of all political identity, valorizing an illusory self-identity to 'Western' political theory as the universal limit of critical thinking. The "paradox of politics" Connolly asserts is the starting-point for critical thought assumes the agonism of Athens and the virtue of the Republic; it is simply aligned with the 'paradox of time' found in Augustine's meditations on identity. The ways in which this parochial discourse can appear as a critical advance in thought on the nation is a central concern of this essay.

Thus do theories of the nation fail to move their critiques toward *political problematics*. The paradox of critically writing the nation is resolved in theories of the nation, whether structured in terms of immanence or transcendence, as an invocation of an agonistic ethics. This is not only because both forms of discourse assume interiority as their organizing perspective; both offer a *static, spatialized account of the present*. In this context, it is no advance to 'add' time to the three dimensions of space; as discussed in this essay, this resort to temporality only confirms the 'real presence' of space as the primary scene of the fixing of identities as an *ontological* claim. This

shift, undertaken in the 'postmodern' approach to the nation promoted by William Connolly, also rehearses the well-worn identity problematics which have gone before, licensing yet another claim to resolve universal and particular in a tragic ethics of responsibility. Thus, a shift from epistemological to ontological orientations does not break with the apoliticism of Gellner's liberalism.

Thus, to answer the question as to which approach this essay takes to the problem of reproducing the self-identity of the nation while attempting to critically theorize 'it', what is stressed here is the *false alternative* posed by neo-Kantian dualisms. The 'immanence' of time claimed in theories which focus on subjectivity consider temporality from within the perspective of interiority as a way beyond the 'static' discourse of structuralism. This 'immanence' shares with its more 'transcendental' twin the meta-theoretical resolutions which allow interiority to appear as a problem in the first place. Rather than beginning from such apolitical problems, as theories of the nation do, this essay attempts to construct another conception of immanence, one born out of a questioning of just these resolutions. 'Behind' the resolutions of space, time, and number are found problematics which have to be faced, yet have been endlessly deferred in theories of the nation thus far.

### **Problems of Nihilism**

One of the main problems encountered in theories of the nation is that of nihilism. When one confronts these theories in their mutual interaction as discourse, one finds three forms of nihilism crucially at work. First, theories of the nation make explicit claims concerning the essential ambiguity of the nation: one 'face' of the nation points to possible liberation, the other toward the atavistic urges of *fascism*. A narrative is constructed which aligns fascism with *stasis*, which both legitimizes claims to the imperative of maintaining History as a form of 'virtual' progress and warns of the dangers inherent in following certain currents of thought toward their "inevitable" conclusions. The dualism stasis/progress is reinforced by rhetorical oppositions of rational/irrational, Enlightenment/Romanticism, and modernity/tradition, which works to disavow

serious consiration of texts and currents of thought placed squarely within the second terms of these oppositions. One should take note of the parallelism between these rhetorical oppositions and the claim that 'stasis' is the problem to be avoided: the 'paradox' of co-opted critique which theories of the nation try to resolve by appeals to tragic ethics and agonistic fatalism is founded on precisely this false problem. Again, the neo-Kantian dualisms of theories of the nation seek solutions to the problem of critically analyzing the nation without textually reproducing it through an appeal to the "inevitability" of political theorizing in a tragic mode. The inevitability of tragic ethics as the only way of negotiating political identity is mirrored by the structure of the discourse in which this claim is made. Ironically, such 'stasis' is the problem of those who attempt to escape it.

This point leads to the second sense of nihilism found in theories of the nation. As a singular discourse composed of a plurality of theoretical expressions, the logic of political theory leads to the very nihilism it claims to ward off. The three planes of elements, dualisms, and rhetorical oppositions, as well as the meta-theoretical resolutions which sustain them, found in theories of the nation rehearse the discourse of Max Weber, whose texts have rearely been considered for their contributions to a critical theory of the nation. Yet it has often been observed that Weber's thought offers little protection from the dangers of fascism and an extreme pessimism which easily devolves into a nihilism of despair. This observation does perform a key role in justifying theories of the nation in redoubling efforts to protect against the sympathy Weber apparently held for Friedrich Nietzsche's thought. The Nietzschean counter-lineage of critical theory is accused of the nihilism into which Weber's thought in fact leads. As theories of the nation take little note of the role the nation plays in Weber's thought, they reproduce his account of it without noticing either the complex relations which exist between Nietzsche and Weber, and thereby valorize the very oppositions Weber encodes in his own failed attempts to evade nihilism. As a result, a large part of this essay is devoted to an analysis of both Weber's and Nietzsche's thought, in order to bring to light these hitherto unnoticed dynamics.

The encounter between Weber and Nietzsche is discursively framed in theories of the nation as an encounter between rationalism and irrationalism; however, this is an opposition Weber's account encodes. If one pursues the logic of Nietzsche's thought, one finds that it is

Nietzsche who points out the nihilistic destiny of oppositional thought in general, and of this opposition in particular. Such oppositions work through the meta-theoretical resolutions of sovereignty: the reduction of time to categories of space as a resolution of universal and particular. Of critical importance is the spatialization of time: Weber shares with Augustine and subsequent political theory - not excepting theories of the nation - the assumption that this reduction forms the limits of subjectivity, thought, and the body. But a metaphysics of *presence* is at work in this logic. Written from the perspective of interiority, which assumes this reduction, the discourse of the nation writes of the dilemmas of modernity as if the suffering experience by interiority is a demand for life, a better life, when in actuality this demand is for *death*. Out the aporias of spatialized time come the paradoxes of the non-presence of the present in consciousness-as-interiority. Consciousness only finds presence at the limit, in death, and as thinkers inspired by Nietzsche such as Gilles Deleuze argue, this nihilistic demand for death governs the ways in which the world is composed as elements of narrative memory for interiority. This narrative the discourse of the nation faithfully reproduces in its own structure: once again, theories of the nation have not confronted immanent problematics - such as death, which further disables their ability to face the problem of 'co-opted critique'.

If the third sense of nihilism is this demand for presence in death, as interiority must demand, the fourth sense is that of what Nietzsche calls *active nihilism*. Here is the most difficult thought to grasp, perhaps, but also the most important. Active nihilism itself has several senses. It suggests a total critique of the meta-theoretical assumptions and discursive oppositions governing theories of the nation. It also insists that 'co-opted' critique is not the tragic limit of critical thought it is generally felt to be. These two points are closely related: *affirming* the nihilism of thought in the present - its inability to think beyond the paradox of co-opted critique - and pushing it as far as it will go, is an *irruptive* event in thought. Rather than attempting to find small openings in the 'iron cage' of a thoroughly spatialized modernity, this active nihilism causes modernity 'itself' to change appearance: active nihilism is the thought that modernity - and the 'we' who claim it as 'our' fatal identity - is not what it says it is. This is the thought of alternative modernities.

But this is not a question of representation, as postmodernism's neo-Kantianism presumes

it to be: it is a question of practice, since alternative modernities are multiplications of worlds, worlds yet to be created in encounters on the plane of immanent encounters. Immanence has, in the first place, nothing to do with representation; one should not confuse pluralism with multiplicities of a different type. In the second place, as immanent product of encounters, alternative modernities are not 'there' waiting to find expression in the liberal relativism of postmodernism's "politics of difference". Indeed, active nihilism is a form of war against the nihilistic demand for a 'we' - an identity - which will be sustained in the agonism of modernity's tragic ethics of responsibility, or in postmodernism's tragic ethics of the future's endless deferral. *The problem is fundamentally this demand for identity*; or, better, the conditions which enable this demand to recur endlessly as 'our' fate. Active nihilism really is out to destroy identity, but precisely so that other forms of subjectivity may appear. This is what is meant by "radical empiricism" in this essay; it also accounts for the radical dualism offered in difference from the neo-Kantian dualism of the discourse of the nation. Pushing apart identity enables problematics which have to faced 'here and now' to be worked with, rather than to be deferred into the realm of ethics, as the discourse of the nation does.

Once the demand for identity is abandoned in the 'extreme' thought of active nihilism, beginnings are again possible in critical theory, since the paradox of 'co-opted critique' becomes a problematic to work with and not, as in the discourse of the nation, an orientation whose apparent fixity licences ethical responses. To make this claim clearer, it is necessary to trace theories of the nation through their discursive 'matrix', in order to reach the plane of encounter between Weber and Nietzsche. There should be no misunderstanding of this procedure, however; theorists of the nation are not accused of failing to take account of Weber's "influence", however warranted criticism of superficial readings of his texts is justified. In the realm of discourse, "influence" is a governing concept whose assumptions concerning textual production and subjectivity are treated with deep suspicion. To reiterate an earlier point, theories of the nation form a multiplicity with its own 'monism' - Weberian discourse. The very pluralism of these theories composes their unity. This form of textual multiplicity is countered with an evocation of the form of multiplicity proper to Nietzschean counter-discourse: a multiplicity which does *not* attempt to resolve the problem of the one and the many, any more than it operates through a reduction of time to space.

There is a problem of the 'Outside' of Nietzschean counter-discourse, however; its multiplicity would seem to determine the space of possible encounters in advance as the space of the Greek Republic, though hardly in its familiar forms. The question of immanent problematics which this counter-discourse promotes can be applied to 'Nietzsche' as well. As the following chapter outline indicates, this issue is raised in some detail in the Conclusions. Nonetheless, what is of more immediate concern here is a valorization of the critical possibilities of the 'Outside' - the *unthought* in thought - of Weberian discourse on the nation: an Outside whose proper name is 'Nietzsche'. While a Weberian can approach a situated polity such as 'Korea' armed only with a model-copy theory of political identity, perhaps a Nietzschean retains a larger capacity for *awareness* of the dynamics at play in such an encounter.

### Synopsis

Beginning with a critical analysis of Benedict Anderson's thesis on the dynamics of "nation-ness" as *the* social form dominating specifically *modern* discourses of political identity, a thesis whose central image - the nation as "imagined community" - has reached the standard of common-place in popular literature,<sup>4</sup> this essay traces the inadequacy of Anderson's 'post-Marxist' thesis to a *forgetting* of the discursive conditions of possibility of Max Weber's work. Indeed, failure to consider the dynamics of Weber's *encounter* with Friedrich Nietzsche has destined subsequent theories of the nation to either weak or strong versions of Weber's account of the nation. Thus, the central contention of this essay is that *critical analyses of the nation cannot be had so long as they remain trapped within the discursive constraints of Weberian discourse.*

The key elements of Weber's discourse involve meta-theoretical issues of space, time, and identity, assumptions from which limiting problematics and contentions follow in more recent attempts - liberal, Marxist, and 'postmodernist' - to critically theorize the nation. Weberian discourse works through a spatializing perspective which attempts to resolve universality and

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the term's highly simplified use in Michael Ignatieff's recent best-selling political travelogue (Ignatieff, 1993).

particularity through a reduction of time to space. The political problem which follows this reduction is an attempt to account for 'coherence', for how identities are produced in homogenous space and time. Coherence problematics attempt to build a 'grammar' of the nation through the 'elements' which they posit as composing the rules of this grammar. In this way, *discourses of the nation reproduce the discursive 'object' - the nation - that they attempt to critically analyse*. Weberian discourses read the formation of the nation as the irreversible triumph of politics as spatial order, for which the only critical response legitimated is a 'tragic' identity politics. Weberian discourses do indeed thematize to more or less explicit extent transformations of space and time, enacted through the elements which produce the nation as the space of political identity, but these transformations are encoded in accounts whose form and content assume the spatialization of time, the very reduction claimed to be a condition of possibility of the nation.

The method of this essay is a discursive analysis, which subjects theories of the nation to critique on four 'planes', which Weberian discourses are unable to comprehend in their mutual interaction. Despite the large range of issues raised and theories examined in this essay, the unity of the argument is founded on the claim that the reduction of time to space as a resolution of universal and particular, which enables the appearance of 'coherence' as a politicized problem, produces a 'nest' of epistemological, ontological, and rhetorical dualisms as well as the elements of the nation through which they pass.

#### **Four Plan(e)s of the Nation**

From the perspective of the first 'plane', Weberian discourse on the nation itself produces its object, the nation, as a reproduction of a process of construction carried out in 'real' time and space through elements 'found' there. The very attempt to offer a descriptive account of the 'elements' composing 'the nation' ironically constitutes a specifically *discursive practice* at the very moment its grammar is proclaimed as the explanatory structure of the oft-remarked difficulty of *defining* the nation adequately at all. From a general acknowledgement of the difficulties inherent in stretching the thin skin of language over the tight boundaries of the nation as a singular concept

comes the largely unacknowledged substitution of the nation-as-discourse, a practice whose very opposition between 'language' and 'reality' disavows its discursive status. This 'grammar' is figured through the trope of the nation's "Janus head": the nation is constructed in Weberian discourse as an *essentially ambiguous* concept.

In the grammar of the nation produced through the discursive constraints of politics as spatial order, certain elements are central to the discursive construction of 'national identity': imagination, suffering, sacrifice, theodicy, tragedy, death, fate, fatality, meaning, narrative, law, the State, sovereignty, labour, pedagogy, mimesis, representation, memory, struggle, everyday life, mobility, intellectuals, literacy, literary production, language. As in Michel Foucault's discourse analysis, the critical approach taken in this essay does not treat these 'objects' as pre-given; the point is that they undergo transformations as we pass through various texts on the nation, with their differing stress on certain bifurcations and rhetorical moves: these transformations are charted throughout the essay as they illuminate both the 'reactive' repetitions of Weberian discourse (the ways in which their construction is constrained by the spatial logic of coherence) and the 'active' thought which animates Nietzschean counter-discourses. Again, the method of the essay attempts to account for four 'planes' of analysis, a demonstration which cannot be made all at once; moreover, repetition of elements reveals the failure of thought on the nation to say much of anything different; in the current state of theories of the nation, there is only a choice between the weak Weberianism of Ernest Gellner and the strong version of Weber found in Benedict Anderson.

On the second plane of construction, the discursive constraints of Weberian thought on the nation also operate through the reproduction of a number of crucial bifurcations, reified as constitutive *dualisms*: consciousness/body, presence/absence, totality/particularity, man/citizen, finitude/infinity, visibility/invisibility, form/content, interiority/exteriority, history/structure, being/becoming, power/powerlessness, rationality/irrationality, individual/collective, contingency/necessity, reality/possibility, thought/change, theory/practice. Asking the question of how national identities are produced leads to key failures which stem from the contradictions produced through these bifurcations, themselves derivative of the conception of politics as spatial order.

The third plane of analysis is that of textuality: theories of the nation form discursive networks of rhetorical oppositions, exclusions, and erasures which work to solidify their 'coherence' and seductiveness. The central trope here is the image of the nation's "Janus-face": the nation is conceived as an essentially ambiguous product, whose lines of force critical theory has the task of clearly distinguishing. In one direction lies the past, tradition, Romanticism, irrationality, mysticism, contemplation; in the other, progressive politics, the future, rationality, modernity, activism. The crucial result of attempts to respond to the dilemmas of this conception of the nation is that it disallows serious consideration of a Nietzschean counter-discourse. The Nietzschean counter-lineage of Bataille, Blanchot, Foucault, and Deleuze is read by theorists of the Weberian lineage of thought on the nation as unable to respond adequately to the structure of the nation's ambiguity, because it remains trapped within the "morbid" diagnosis of the nation.

### Chapter Outline

The rhetorical constraints of theories of the nation are constructed in the following way in this essay: Chapter one examines Benedict Anderson's attempt to go beyond the limits of Marxist and liberal theories (Nairn, Hobsbawm, and Gellner) which attempt to provide an account of the rational imperatives governing the formation of the nation. Anderson's critique insists on accounting for the formation of national identity omitted in these accounts. Rather than assuming the reified presence of the nation, as Nairn does, or the rational imperatives of the infrastructure, as Gellner does, Anderson traces the necessary, universal transformation of the spatio-temporal matrix of identity into the reified presence of the nation. Out of the theodicy of identity in everyday life comes the Nation; its universal presence today provokes the claim that the necessary critical response is theory in a tragic mode.

As Chapter two shows, however, Anderson repeats the limitations of Gellner's discourse. Moreover, attempting to respond to Gellner's hyper-rationalism elides both Anderson's and Gellner's debt to Weber, who had already attempted the analysis Anderson presents as something new. Weber has been read as tied to an irrationalism for which Gellner is seen as over-

compensating, thus the corrective that Anderson appears to offer. Chapter three traces the elements of Weber's discourse, arguing that they fully anticipate Anderson's later argument. What is crucial in Weber, however, is not just the presentation of the grammar of the nation underlying both Anderson and Gellner; Weber's discourse is forged out of a critical encounter with Nietzsche, in which Nietzsche's 'different' politics is read as aligned with the morbid face of the nation: tradition, irrationality, Romanticism. Weber re-works Nietzsche to align his thought with the imperatives of modernity, where the nation becomes the key focus of political identity. Chapter four returns to Weber, arguing that his writing on the nation is entirely consistent with the inverted Nietzscheanism of his thought as a whole, a consistent working out of the consequences of the elements and grammar found later in Anderson and Gellner. Moreover, the critical failure of Weber to read the meta-theoretical problematics of space, time, and identity are responsible for the opening of Weber's thought to fascism, precisely the direction in which Nietzsche's thought is claimed to lead.

As Chapter five argues, the problematics of Nietzschean discourses are those which attempt to escape the dilemmas of 'coherence', identity, and politics as spatial order. Deleuze and Foucault, in particular, are read for their attempts to take Nietzsche seriously, to push a Nietzschean politics to its limits, and to discover what forces in the present it may be aligned with. Nietzschean counter-discourse is not opposed to the Weberian lineage; in the different politics of Nietzsche, the elements which construct the discursive object of the nation are disassembled, the dualisms of Weberian discourse subtracted, rather than reconciled, and the rhetorical tropes of identity abandoned in favor of an analysis in terms of techniques and exercises of power. Though Nietzscheans have little to say about the nation, we are never closer to a critical analysis of the nation than when the elements, grammar, and rhetoric of Weberian theories of the nation are disarticulated in Nietzsche's counter-discourse.

Chapter five introduces the key meta-theoretical differences between Weberian and Nietzschean discourse, particularly Nietzsche's attempt to develop an alternative to the resolutions of sovereignty. Chapter six continues this account, with special emphasis on the difference between Augustine's account of space and time from the perspective of interiority, and the critical reflections of Nietzsche, Bergson, Deleuze, and Blanchot. Here, the meta-theoretical terrain of

immanent problematics is explored. In particular, the problems of the Outside, figures of mobility, the other, thought and the body, death, and nihilism are re-worked to challenge the 'coherence' of theories of the nation. Deleuze's post-Nietzscheanism is also contrasted with that of Foucault, and the latter shown to share with Weber an ultimately internalist account of modernity as an essentially 'Western' affair. This chapter anticipates the Conclusions to the essay, since Connolly's 'postmodernism' appears there as an ahistorical, parochial attempt to ascribe an essential location to politics in the marriage of Augustine and the Republic.

Chapter seven traces the irony of this alignment of Nietzschean discourse and regressive politics in Marxist theories of the nation. Nairn is a key figure here, since he takes not Weber but Gellner as his critical point of departure, contending that a revitalized Marxist theory must face nationalism as Marxism's "great historical failure". This rhetorical move is crucial, since those Marxist theorists who reject it (like Anderson) still attempt to redress one 'failure' in terms of another: Nairn's rhetoric of failure in fact attempts to account for another: fascism. Marxist theorists attempt to provide an adequate understanding of fascism, which has eluded Marxism, through an analysis of the nation in terms of the problem of identity. This is where Poulantzas is situated, but his discourse is also central for another reason. Poulantzas not only fully anticipates Anderson's argument, he attempts to go beyond its limitations by taking Nietzschean counter-discourse seriously. What this reveals, however, is that the more seriously he takes Nietzsche, the less he is able to maintain a Marxist analysis, which privileges class struggle, the masses, and history. This is no less true of analyses which attempt to situate the nation in the 'world political economy', as in Balibar and Wallerstein. The elements of the grammar of the nation produced in Marxist discourses lead to liberalism, as in 'radical democracy' theses, or proto-fascism, as in Debray. Again, Marxist theories of the nation reveal themselves as trapped within the rhetorical oppositions they ascribe to liberalism and Nietzschean Romanticism.

Chapter seven takes off from the discursive constraints of Marxist analyses of nation to argue that Marxist attempts to go beyond the limitations of rationalist accounts of the nation do so by attempting to elide another of Marxism's "great historical failures": socialist realism. The argument returns to Anderson's focus on literary production as a key mediating instance of nation-

building in theory and practice. Here the figure of Lukacs is central, for Anderson reproduces the Weberian constraints of Lukacs' theory of the novel. Marxists like Eagleton and Jameson attempt to move beyond Lukacs, but always in the name of history, the 'real', narrative, and the masses, against the rampant 'textualism', 'anarchism', and 'irrationalism' of Nietzscheans like Foucault and Deleuze. Again, critical thought on the nation is framed in terms of a diagnosis of the morbidity or health of the nation's Janus-head, a rhetorical move that erases serious consideration of Nietzschean counter-discourse as a form of critical thought which escapes the discursive constraints of 'coherence', identity, and politics as spatial order. The failure of Marxist thought to move beyond the limiting problematics thus produced licences in turn certain postmodern responses, of which Connolly's is symptomatic.

The Conclusions to this essay pick up the discursive thread of postmodernism's response to Marxist theories of political identity: Connolly's attempt to reconcile modernism's sense of 'political responsibility' with postmodernism's emphasis on mobility and homelessness as the condition of political identity simply restates the dead-end of liberal thought found in Weberian discourses on the nation. This is also true of Anne Norton's attempt to employ Lacan and Victor Turner in a postmodern analysis of the nation as a problem of liminal political identity, an analysis which reveals the liberalism of Anderson's earlier focus on the elements of imagination and liminality. Together Connolly and Norton open the essay onto a consideration of post-Marxist responses to Anderson, and the theme of the stranger in Kristeva's theory of the nation. This entails a critique of attempts to read Anderson's theory of the nation as the point of departure for the application of themes dear to recent literary theory. Post-Marxist thought on the nation thus starts from Weber, rather than Nietzsche; as a result, it can only offer (as in 'major' deconstruction and Chatterjee's post-colonialism) the endless analysis of difference from the identity of the nation produced in Weberian discourse. In these analyses, the nation becomes the focal point for the intersection of a range of approaches, as if the nation provides the mediating synthesis among psychoanalysis, literary theory, anthropology, cultural studies, and so on. What is forgotten is the Nietzschean counter-analysis, which offers a different analysis of the meta-theoretical suppositions of post-Marxist thought, one which neither deconstructs nor reconstructs the nation along the lines of the 'difference' between identities. The liberal constraints of attempts to begin with the problem

of the one and the many, and to reconcile them in difference, is revealed in Kristeva's theory of the nation. The theme of the stranger is the site of the contrast between liberal approaches, such as Bauman's, and Nietzschean sociologies, as in Baudrillard. Baudrillard is central both because of his debt to Deleuze and Artaud, in particular, but also because both he and Virilio raise questions of virtuality, transpolitics, the 'proper use of difference', and speed, and allow the argument to complete its construction of a post-Nietzschean 'different politics': the fourth plane of analysis attempted in this essay.

Thus, there are several movements taking place in the argument: the adventures of the elements of the nation in various discourses, the movement of the bifurcations which enable these elements to appear as nodes through which the formative process of the nation must pass in these discourses, and the method of the essay itself: the movement from a critique of the nation as a 'badly analysed composite' which generates false problems (the bifurcations of Weberian discourse), a critique of the nation as a confusion of inadequate ideas, which produce bad ontology (the elements of the nation as 'objects' from which the nation is constructed), and a critique of the nation as a confusion of active and reactive forces (the rhetorical constraints of 'strong' and 'weak' Weberianism). These three 'planes' of critique are brought together in the Nietzschean diagnosis of forces in the active thought of multiplicity, which does not oppose the Weberian constraints of politics as spatial order, but seeks the 'lines of flight' which escape the coherence of its discourse. The method of analysis followed here follows Deleuze (but is, as the essay argues, compatible with key aspects of Foucault's discourse analysis): the first plane corresponds to Deleuze's Bergsonism, the second to his Spinozism, the third to Deleuze's critical Nietzscheanism, three perspectives which are a multiplicity with one sense. The fourth plane is constructed in the Conclusions as the politics of possible *encounters* between the 'outside' of Weberian discourse - Nietzschean counter-discourse - and critical thinking which issues from the position of 'post-coloniality'. The latter sections of the Conclusions attempt to outline some of the salient features of the political problematics to be considered in this encounter, problems *immanent* to Weberian discourse, yet invisible to its discursive 'coherence'.

"When individuals come unstuck from their native land, they are called migrants. When nations do the same thing (Bangladesh), the act is called secession. What is the best thing about migrant peoples and seceded nations? I think it is their hopefulness. Look into the eyes of such folk in old photographs. Hope blazes undimmed through the fading sepia tints. And what's the worst thing? It is the emptiness of one's luggage. I'm speaking of invisible suitcases, not the physical, perhaps cardboard variety containing a few meaning-drained mementoes: we have become unstuck from more than land. We have floated upwards from history, from memory, from Time."

Salman Rushdie, *Shame*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

This essay concerns attempts to offer a critical theory of the nation, critical in the sense that the discourse produced by theory does not reproduce the discourse -the limits, the conditions of production and reproduction, the 'self-understanding'- of its 'object', the nation. Theories of the nation, whether liberal, Marxist, or 'postmodern', fail to make this critical break, and it is the purpose of this essay to demonstrate that this failure is a result of their shared, but unacknowledged, debt to Max Weber's discourse of political identity. The key elements of Weber's discourse involve meta-theoretical assumptions about space, time, and identity, assumptions from which limiting problematics and contentions follow in more recent attempts to critically theorize the nation. The very terms of Weberian discourse on the nation work to *erase the possibility of critical perspectives on the nation*. Thus, the central contention of this essay is that *critical theories of the nation cannot be had so long as writing on the nation and nationalism remains within the discursive limits imposed by Weberian problematics*.

This chapter examines Benedict Anderson's theory of the nation and nationalism for the extent to which it offers a revitalized, critical theory of the nation, against the deficiencies of conventional scholarship on the subject. Anderson's claim is that it does so, but a careful reading of his argument reveals that his attempt to account for the nation and nationalism as *a problem of identity* founders on a conception of *politics as spatial order*. What Anderson produces is a

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<sup>1</sup> Rushdie, 1984, pp.86-7.

'grammar' of the nation whose elements are *functional* to the production of homogenous, bounded spaces of political 'meaning' and identity. Transformations of conceptions of *space* and *time* are central to his account, but these transformations are determined in an account which assumes *the spatialization of time*, the very reduction which Anderson claims is a condition of possibility of the nation. Moreover, the elements which derive from this reduction are encoded as *necessary* to the production of 'national identities'; critical theorizing on the nation is thus limited to reflection upon the 'fate' of identity-practices given the *universal presence* of the nation-form in modernity.

Anderson's discourse of the nation claims critical status for the problematic of *identity*, yet reproduces the discursive constraints of the liberal and neo-Marxist theories he attempts to challenge, as Chapters two and seven of this essay argue. Crucially, careful attention to the logic of Anderson's discourse shows it to be a re-statement of Weber's discourse, a rehearsal which appears as critical and original largely because *it responds to theories which rule out serious consideration of the place of the nation in Weber's thought*. This erasure is effected by an image of the nation as "Janus-faced", an *essentially ambiguous* phenomenon whose *rational* and *irrational* aspects are to be distinguished by critical theory. In this image of the nation, the meta-theoretical assumptions which enable a bifurcation of 'rational' and 'irrational' are assumed rather than questioned; *the conception of politics as spatial order which enables this opposition also governs Anderson's attempt to treat the nation as a problem of how identities 'cohere' in space and time*. Moreover, this is the limiting problematic of Weber's discourse, a problematic which sees no escape from the spatio-temporal matrix of 'coherence', save in an appeal to *tragedy* as the inevitable mode of critical theorizing in modernity. Further, what provides the theoretical means for escaping the dilemmas of Weberian discourse on the nation is the *Nietzschean counter-lineage* of Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, Georges Bataille, and Maurice Blanchot; this lineage, however, is itself submerged in Weber's discourse. Chapter three of this essay traces the erasure of Nietzsche's problematic of *power* in Weber's problematic of *identity*; there, the meta-theoretical critique offered by this counter-lineage, which appears mainly in footnoted counter-formulations to Anderson's argument in Chapter one, is examined in detail.

### The Challenge of Imagined Communities

The initial impetus for a 'return' to a consideration of Weber is a reading of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* which asks what is 'new' in the theory of the nation and nationalism found in the text. First published in 1983, *Imagined Communities* sets out to address an apparent incongruence in socio-political theory: while "nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time... plausible theory about it is conspicuously meagre".<sup>2</sup> This criticism extends to both liberal<sup>3</sup> and Marxist theories of the nation and nationalism: according to Anderson, nationalism represents less Marxism's "great historical failure"<sup>4</sup> than a central anomaly, a crucial elision in critical theory.<sup>5</sup>

The distinction between theory which is structured in terms of a redress of 'failure' and theory which explores the problematic effaced by this very structure is central to Anderson's argument. Not only does the framework offered by Tom Nairn and Eric Hobsbawm, for example, fail to account for the historical phenomenon of war among 'actually existing socialist' countries defended in national, rather than Marxist terms;<sup>6</sup> such discourses exclude the perspective needed to avert an indefinite return of the now *universal* "imagined community" of the nation:<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> B. Anderson, 1983, pp.12-3.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson cites Hugh Seton-Watson, "author of far the best and most comprehensive English-language text on nationalism", (B. Anderson, 1983, p.13) as representative of the liberal tradition's frustration over the question of the nation and nationalism. Seton-Watson is praised for placing the history of language at the center of his argument, but criticized for "the way he employs it", (*ibid.*, p.69, n.10) as well as for his good liberal tendency to impute the machinations and manipulations of "official nationalism" only to Czarist Russia and the Soviet state. (*ibid.*, p.82, n.5) Anderson's critique of another major liberal theorist, Ernest Gellner, is discussed below.

<sup>4</sup> See Nairn, 1981, pp.329-31.

<sup>5</sup> B. Anderson, 1983, pp.13-14. According to Anderson, the 'anomalous' status of Marxist discourse on the nation and nationalism can be traced to its 'founding fathers', Marx and Engels. As stressed above, however, Anderson's claims to the limitations of theories of the nation extend beyond a doctrinal debate from within one theoretical approach: neither liberals nor Marxists have succeeded in offering a satisfactory account of the phenomenon.

<sup>6</sup> B. Anderson, 1983, pp.11-12; 145-6.

<sup>7</sup> Anderson argues that, "...Since the end of the eighteenth century nationalism has undergone a process of modulation and adaptation... The 'imagined community' has, as a result, spread out to every conceivable contemporary society". B. Anderson, 1983, p.143.

"...China, Vietnam, and Cambodia are not in the least unique. This is why there are small grounds for hope that the precedents they have set for inter-socialist wars will not be followed, or that the imagined community of the socialist nation will soon be remaindered. But nothing can be usefully done to limit or prevent such wars unless we abandon fictions like 'Marxists as such are not nationalists,' or 'nationalism is the pathology of modern developmental history,' and, instead, do our slow best to learn the real, and imagined, experience of the past."<sup>8</sup>

In place of the rhetoric of denial and pathological illness,<sup>9</sup> Anderson contends that a critical perspective on the nation must consider "'the sense of nationhood as one looks outward from within'"<sup>10</sup>:

"...it is doubtful whether either social change or transformed consciousness, in themselves, do much to explain the *attachment* that peoples feel for the inventions of their imaginations - or, to revive a question raised at the beginning of this text - why peoples are ready to die for these inventions".<sup>11</sup>

Both liberal and Marxist theories fail to account for why the particular form of the nation and nation-ness becomes the universal discourse of political community, and the necessary language of political legitimacy. At issue in part are the twin tendencies of reductionism and idealism, as the quotation above suggests.<sup>12</sup> Anderson insists, then, that a critical theory of 'nation-ness' focus on the meaning-creating forces which enable and sustain a particular form of *identity*, a form which has, moreover, become universal. As an historically specific form of "cultural artifact", nation-ness - the experience of belonging to and identifying oneself through the discourse of the nation - is the product of forces which produce a particular kind of "imagined community". It is to the character of this imagined community, and to Anderson's account of the forces which produce and reproduce

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<sup>8</sup> B. Anderson, 1983, pp.146-7. The first 'fiction' Anderson cites is from Hobsbawm, 1977, p.10; the second can be found in Nairn, 1981, p.359, a reprint of an article written in 1975.

<sup>9</sup> See B. Anderson, 1983, pp.14-15. Anderson suggests that the absence of 'grand thinkers' and thoughts on the nation results in a certain "condescension", of which Nairn's formulation is symptomatic.

<sup>10</sup> Philip Schlesinger, in Tomlinson, p.80.

<sup>11</sup> B. Anderson, 1983, p.129.

<sup>12</sup> See also B. Anderson, 1991, p.80.

it over time, that the discussion now turns.<sup>13</sup>

The image of an imagined community is offered to counter the tendency to reify "the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N...and then to classify 'it' as *an* ideology".<sup>14</sup> Better, argues Anderson, to align nation-ness with 'kinship' and 'religion', as it were, 'anthropologically'. The result is that an imagined political community is *imagined* because, beyond the face-to-face of primordial village contact, all nations' members "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion".<sup>15</sup> But to stress this imagined communion is not to agree with Ernest Gellner's 1964 equation of 'imagination' with 'falsification': Gellner contends that nations are invented "where they do not exist".<sup>16</sup> Gellner's formulation implies an opposition of 'false' to 'true' communities; Anderson's point, however, is that "Communitites are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined".<sup>17</sup> Attention to the changing character of these styles of imagining emphasizes the active, *creative* process of political identity formation, however *reactive* the result - the nation - will turn out to be.

A second feature of the imagined community of the nation is that it is "inherently limited":

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<sup>13</sup> But not before noting that the second edition of the text corrects some perceived errors of translation, incomplete arguments, and "serious theoretical flaws in the first edition". (B. Anderson, 1991, pp.xii-xv.) One such flaw concerns the role of the colonial state in the formation of early 'Third World' nationalisms; the other marks a lacuna: the emphasis on "changing apprehensions of time - patently lacked its necessary coordinate: changing apprehensions of space". To address these faults the second edition adds two appendices, which in fact function to clarify, rather than to correct, the original text, as is argued below. The remainder of the text is unchanged, since Anderson feels that, despite the proliferation of theory on the subject, "the idiosyncratic method and preoccupations of *Imagined Communities* seem...still on the margins of the newer scholarship on nationalism". (*ibid.*, p.xii) For these reasons, and for the sake of convenience, further references to the text will cite the second edition.

<sup>14</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.5.

<sup>15</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.6.

<sup>16</sup> Gellner (1964) in *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.* Anderson repeatedly stresses that the nation cannot be accounted for by *imputing* identifications like 'social class' to individuals and groups who themselves lack this category of identity. As will be discussed below, the possibility of conceiving identity in such sociological terms is precisely what is enabled by the discourse of the nation, according to Anderson.

unlike the universalist dreams of say, Christian empires, the nation is understood to be inevitably *one particular among others of the same kind*.<sup>18</sup> Further, the nation is imagined as *sovereign*: out of the breakdown of "the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm" under the twin pressures of the Enlightenment and Revolution, freedom and legitimacy become *territorialized* in the form of the sovereign state.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the nation "is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship".<sup>20</sup> Anderson claims, crucially, that this 'fraternity' is organized through a discourse of *sacrifice*. Willingness to die for "the shrunken imaginings of recent history"<sup>21</sup> is "the central problem posed by nationalism":<sup>22</sup> sacrifice is the key organizing element in Anderson's narrative of the ways in which the imagined community of the nation produces itself as a *homogenous, bounded space of particular identity in a field of identical spaces*.

The theme of sacrifice raises the issues of *death* and *fatality*, and suggests that the cultural origins of the nation and nation-ness lie in their relations with religious imaginings. Little concerned as they are with death and immortality, neither liberalism nor Marxism have been well prepared, in the main, to face these issues.<sup>23</sup> Religious 'world-views' have had the great virtue, whatever their other faults, of providing answers to questions of human fatality and suffering, questions which "all evolutionary/progressive styles of thought, not excluding Marxism", have ignored, in part due to their "almost Hericlitean hostility to any idea of continuity".<sup>24</sup> Anderson thus frames the problematic of the nation from within that of *theodicy*: Enlightenment and rational secularism do not

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<sup>18</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.7.

<sup>19</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.7.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.10-11, esp. n.3.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

remove suffering, the problem of fatality, or the demand for continuity in the midst of shared mortality; these only create a void left by the decline they help bring about in the power of religious belief.

"Disintegration of paradise: nothing makes fatality more arbitrary. Absurdity of salvation: nothing makes another style of continuity more necessary. What was then required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning... few things were (are) better suited to this end than the idea of the nation. If nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical', the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, glide into a limitless future. It is the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny."<sup>25</sup>

In the alchemy of *chance* and *destiny* in the nation, the move from a disintegration of *sacral* communities to the rise of *secular* ones is not a matter of the supersession of the former by the latter: Anderson's claim is, on the contrary, that the thematic of theodicy, and the religious systems which sustained it, provides a key context within which such transformations are to be understood.<sup>26</sup>

### Sacrificial Identities

The main features of such religious communities are these: they are conceived as "cosmically central, through the medium of a sacred language linked to a superterrestrial order of power";<sup>27</sup> membership in such communities, which are potentially unlimited in extent, is open to anyone able to learn this language; the place of the 'human realm' in this cosmic order is mediated by a bilingual intelligensia.<sup>28</sup> The "unselfconscious coherence" of these forms of imagined communities began to decay after the late Middle Ages for a number of reasons, of which Anderson cites two: "the effect of explorations of the non-European world" and "a gradual demotion of the

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<sup>25</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.11-12.

<sup>26</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.12. Anderson does not use the term 'theodicy', yet the elements of identity formation recounted above indicate its appropriateness to his theme.

<sup>27</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.13.

<sup>28</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.13-16. Anderson cautions against viewing these 'literati' as "a kind of theological technocracy" (p.15), a tendency to which Ernest Gellner, as Chapter two of this essay argues, is particularly prone.

sacred language itself", a process of which the fate of Latin as a 'truth-language' is exemplary.<sup>29</sup>

The resulting pluralization and "territorialization" of religiously imagined communities corresponds to the fate of their politically imagined counterparts, the sacral monarchies of dynastic realms.<sup>30</sup> Closely related to the thematic of theodicy in in this 'fatal' transformation is a change in the mode of *apprehension of time*, which Anderson claims "more than anything else, made it possible to 'think' the nation".<sup>31</sup> Within sacred communities the literate clerisy mediate the "cosmic-universal and the mundane-particular" for the illiterate masses through a plentitude of *particular* visual and aural representations. In these various representations communities visualize their links to the divine; in all this, the notion of 'periodization', of history "as an endless chain of cause and effect or of radical separations between past and present"<sup>32</sup> is unimaginable. Unimagined also is "the prospect of a long future for a young and vigorous human race".<sup>33</sup> Cosmology and history are united; as in Walter Benjamin's "Messianic time", past and future co-exist in an "instantaneous present".<sup>34</sup> The unquestioned authority of sacred truth-languages and their guardian clerisy, a hierarchical, centripetal form of kinship and legitimacy, and a notion of temporality as a unity of cosmology and history, together had the effect of grounding

"human lives firmly in the very nature of things, giving certain meaning to the everyday fatalities of existence (above all death, loss, and servitude) and offering, in various ways, redemption from them".<sup>35</sup>

What is central in this formulation is the assertion that the transformations Anderson narrates take place in the realm of the *everyday*. The 'elements' upon which theodicy works -

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<sup>29</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.16,18.

<sup>30</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.19-22.

<sup>31</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.22.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Marc Bloch, in *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.23-4.

<sup>35</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.36.

everyday conceptions of death, fatality, and suffering - are organized in the great sacral communities through a vertical ordering of cosmic and terrestrial space and time; the processes which produce the nation mark the 'horizontal' extension of this realm, a 'flattening' of this verticality in the homogenous space of the State. In Anderson's account, the battlefield of identity and meaning-creation is the everyday theodicy of suffering, a battle won by the nation's resolution of fatality and meaning in the notion of *sacrifice*. To his question of what 'style' of imagined community fills the 'void' left behind by the decay of sacral communities, the answer will be that form which claims what could be called *the monopoly of the legitimate means (and ends) of sacrifice*, the nation.

### Fatal Analogies

The formulation above of this stage of Anderson's narrative stresses both space and time as key organizing concepts; Anderson himself, however, emphasizes only the latter. His contention is that the notion of time which pervades in modernity is what Benjamin calls 'homogenous, empty time', "in which simultaneity is, as it were, transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfilment, but by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar".<sup>36</sup> In this version of temporality, the rise of the novel and newspaper are of central importance, for both produce an image of characters and events connected through their location in *particular 'societies'*.<sup>37</sup> These 'sociological entities', bounded in homogenous, clearly demarcated spaces (where every particular detail *represents* the social landscape in which it, and by implication the reader, is embedded<sup>38</sup>) move in an *analogously* homogenous time. Moreover, the sociological and historical communities made imaginable by the novel and newspaper are crucially related to the possibility of the imagined community of the nation. Crucially, the novel, newspaper, and nation are also related by *analogy* in Anderson's narrative:

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<sup>36</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.24; Benjamin, 1969, pp.261-2.

<sup>37</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.25.

<sup>38</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.29-36.

"The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which is also conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history."<sup>39</sup>

The emphasis on the organizing role of the novel and newspaper in this 'reification' of time, social space, and identity underscores the importance of the inter-relation between printing and capitalism in producing the conditions under which the nation could come to be seen as the form of imagined community most suited to filling the void in the everyday theodicy of suffering and fatality, as well as in the legitimacy of rule, left by the dissolution of older forms of imagining:

"No surprise then that the search was on, so to speak, for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism..."<sup>40</sup>

However, if the relationship between the nation and the novel remains at the level of *analogy* in the text, so too is 'capitalism' unspecified: Anderson avoids a reductionist account of the origin and spread of the nation in part through formulations such as the following: "the essential thing is the *interplay* between fatality, technology, and capitalism".<sup>41</sup> In this 'fatal' interplay the

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<sup>39</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.26.

<sup>40</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.36. Anderson warns against temptations to "theomorphize" print: print 'in itself' does not enable the imaginings of which Anderson is concerned; 'print-capitalism' stands behind the 'reification of the word' Anderson traces. (See p.44, esp. n.21.) Nonetheless, Anderson's account does not contest arguments such as Walter Ong's, whose Romantic opposition between 'orality' and 'literacy' is compatible with a stress on the commodification of 'the book'. (See Couturier, 1991, pp.47-51.) Ong stresses both the reification of the word and of the book; as in Anderson, the effects of textuality are most strongly felt at the level of "human consciousness". (Ong, 1982, pp.78-9.) Moreover, Ong, like Anderson, stresses the connection between *fatality* and writing, it's capacity for re-articulation in a variety of social contexts:

"[T]he deadness of the text, its removal from the living human lifeworld, its rigid visual fixity, assures its endurance and its potential for being resurrected into limitless living contexts by a potentially infinite number of living readers". (Ong, 1982, p.81.)

Anderson's point is that the reach of print is inherently limited by fatality as well as expanded, and the contexts confined to particular conjunctions, but failure to specify 'capitalism', and the analogical structure of his account, leave the technological determinism and Idealism of Ong's account largely intact.

<sup>41</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.43. This formulation is offered in order to distance the analysis from the self-understanding of those nationalists who would insist on the "primordial fatality of *particular* languages and their association with *particular* territorial units". (*ibid.*) Nonetheless, aside from

mechanical reproduction of print, the saturation of the small market for Latin books in Europe, the aggressive promotion of vernacular texts by Reformation Protestants, the "slow, geographically uneven spread of particular vernaculars as instruments of administrative centralization by certain would-be absolutist monarchs",<sup>42</sup> and "the fatality of human linguistic diversity"<sup>43</sup> produce, once again, an imagined community *analogous* to that found in the novel and newspaper.

### Reified Identities

*Fatality* is essential to Anderson's argument: like the individual, capitalism is incapable of conquering death and the inevitable plurality of languages.<sup>44</sup> Until the rise of print-capitalism, however, this linguistic diversity made little difference. Exploitation of potential vernacular markets is enabled by the 'arbitrary nature of the sign', a disarticulation of the 'sacral' unity of word, thing, and truth, which means that "these varied ideolects were capable of being assembled, within definite limits, into print-languages far fewer in number".<sup>45</sup> The assemblage of particular oral vernaculars in print-languages has three crucial effects in Anderson's account. "First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars".<sup>46</sup> Readers (and, one assumes, writers)

"gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that *only those* hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally

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illustrations of this particular point, the forces and character of the 'capitalism' invoked remain undetermined in Anderson's account.

<sup>42</sup> B. Anderson, p.40.

<sup>43</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.43.

<sup>44</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.43; "Language is not an instrument of exclusion: in principle, anyone can learn any language. On the contrary, it is fundamentally inclusive, limited only by the fatality of Babel: no one lives long enough to learn *all* languages. Print-language is what invents nationalism, not *a* particular language per se." (p.134)

<sup>45</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.43.

<sup>46</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, 44.

imagined community".<sup>47</sup>

Second, and closely related, "print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language".<sup>48</sup> Print-capitalism, whose features are best exemplified in the rise of the novel and newspaper, *make visible a universal field of particular* solid, stable, bounded sociological *spaces* moving through *linear time*, whose *inside* and *outside* mark the limits of political identity and belonging. This reification of space, time, and identity is what Anderson contends is the *universal* 'reactive' result of the active, creative process of imagining political identity.

The third of the effects Anderson claims for the rise of print-capitalism must also be stressed: the creation of a hierarchy of languages of power among the 'national' vernaculars assembled, whose "determinate reach" need by no means coincide with the political boundaries of particular nation-states.<sup>49</sup> The lack of isomorphism between "print-languages, national consciousness, and nation-states" is explained by Anderson through two key notions: the *modular* nature of the reified imagined community, and the meaning-creating experience of *mobility*.<sup>50</sup>

The first of these notions, modelling, is the more important to Anderson's argument. The reified imagined communities of print-capitalism "once 'there'...could become formal models to be imitated, and, where expedient, consciously exploited in a Machiavellian spirit".<sup>51</sup> The fact that these 'modular experiences', and the form of community which enables them, are 'there' for the pirating is key to Anderson's doubts concerning explanations of the power of the nation and nation-ness simply in terms of 'social class' or socio-technical change. It is the *presence* of such reified models, available for use by a variety of social 'actors' (by no means only the middle-class

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<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.45-6.

<sup>50</sup> B. Anderson, pp.45-6, 53.

<sup>51</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.45.

intelligencia<sup>52</sup>), which accounts for the uneasy alliance between, for instance, 'revolutionary-socialism' and nationalism.<sup>53</sup> What has come to be known, through print, as 'The French Revolution', a 'thing' both "ineradicable from human memory" and "learnable-from",<sup>54</sup> is exemplary for the process Anderson diagnoses.

Anderson contends that, contrary to the opinions of many on the origins of the nation, 'the French experience' is not the *ur*-model of the nation.<sup>55</sup> The earliest 'national' political communities are to be found in the anomalous creole states of the Western Hemisphere, unusual because language was not an issue in their early formation, nor was the political baptism of the 'lower classes' into political life.<sup>56</sup> Nor do the spread of Enlightenment thought and increasing metropolitan control in the Spanish Americas explain

"why entities like Chile, Venezuela, and Mexico turned out to be emotionally plausible and politically viable, nor why San Martin should decree that certain aborigines be identified by the neological 'Peruvians'. Nor, ultimately, do they account for the real sacrifices made... on the part of comfortable classes".<sup>57</sup>

What does account for these features are in part the 'secular pilgrimages' made by creole functionaries in the administrative units of the periphery. Here again, the contrast between sacred and secular organizes Anderson's argument: as in the case of the 'magical' particularity of sacred representations, the 'high centers' of sacral cultures were

"experienced and 'realized' (in the stagecraft sense) by the constant flow of pilgrims moving towards them from remote and *otherwise unrelated* localities... In a pre-print age,

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<sup>52</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.80. Anderson's challenge here is aimed at Tom Nairn.

<sup>53</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.155-6. Anderson here extends Nairn's observations on the modular fate of the modern state to revolution and nationalism. (see Nairn, pp.17-18.)

<sup>54</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.156; also, p.80.

<sup>55</sup> This is the standard account, assumed by liberals and Marxists alike, from Hans Kohn (1944) to Eric Hobsbawm (1992).

<sup>56</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.47-9.

<sup>57</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.51-2.

the reality of the imagined religious community depended on countless ceaseless travels".<sup>58</sup>

In this world of sacred centers, death marks the limit of one's journeying. In the secular version of pilgrimage, however, talent determines one's course, as absolutist functionaries become part of an *interchangeable* flow of men and documents toward a summit, rather than a center. Where in the first case a religiously-demarcated identity results, absolutist functionaries in the metropole share "a single language of state".<sup>59</sup> In neither case is the identity shared *territorialized*; that is, grounded in homogenous, clearly demarcated political territory 'on the ground'. In the Western Empire, however, the journey of the creole functionary is limited by neither mortality nor talent, but by the fatality of birth: "the highest administrative centre to which he could be assigned, was the capital of the imperial administrative unit in which he found himself".<sup>60</sup> Co-belonging on these limited journeys was thus founded on birth, a fatality which the arrival of the newspaper could fashion into the fatality of nation-ness.<sup>61</sup>

### Reified Narratives

The reification of space, time, and identity in the nation becomes, through secular 'pilgrimages' and print-capitalism, a 'model' for aspirations to fill the void in meaning and legitimacy left by the decay of older imaginings. Early nineteenth century European nation-formation, the "official nationalisms" of fading dynasties and imperialism,<sup>62</sup> the 'late' nationalism of colonial and post-colonial states, are all explained in these terms by Anderson.<sup>63</sup> However, the

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<sup>58</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.53-4.

<sup>59</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.54-6.

<sup>60</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.57.

<sup>61</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.61-5.

<sup>62</sup> These formations foster a "secondary, reactive modelling" (p.87) which is parasitic upon a "genuine, popular nationalist enthusiasm" (p.114; also, pp.86-7). Anderson here flirts with the 'false/genuine' opposition he had earlier criticized in Gellner.

<sup>63</sup> These are recounted in B. Anderson, 1991, Chapters 5,6, and 7 respectively. While the second edition alters the source of modelling of colonized and post-colonial states, emphasizing the model of the metropolitan colonial state rather than that of the local colonial one (see pp.xiii, 163),

terms in which these various 'imaginings' occur obscures an explanatory gap in the narrative. If the 'New World' nation is the first modular form of its type, Anderson's narrative moves laterally 'outside' Europe to describe it, then returns to Europe to recount the story of the nation 'at the center'. The spatializing move of narrating the origin of the nation as ex-centric to Europe in this way is the ground of Anderson's internalist account of nation-forming in Europe: chapter five of the text begins with the claim that New World nationalism provides a 'model' for the European nation, but the remainder of the chapter argues through the *analogous* modular experience provided by the writing of the 'French Revolution'. Nowhere in Anderson's narrative is the 'interplay' *between* imagined communities taken into account. On the contrary, the *function* of the forces of fatality, language, and print-capitalism 'within' particular spaces remains *identical*, 'explained' by *analogy*. This is what makes it possible to abstract the features of Anderson's imagined communities from their historical and geographical specifics, and to isolate the 'elements' of his account of the forces which produce his grammar of the nation. A number of these elements remain to be recounted here.

As noted earlier, Anderson stresses the role of a changing apprehension of time in the formation of the nation and nation-ness. In this, the invention of 'history' is crucial: past, present, and future are clearly demarcated 'regions' that the homogenous, bounded space of the nation inhabits. The journey along this limitless, linear passageway provides the substitute theodicy of suffering and fatality which can demand sacrifices from the individual.<sup>64</sup> In the *ambiguity* of identity caused by the very solidity of the boundaries of the nation in time and space - the nation looks both backward to an immemorial past and ahead to an unbounded future; revolutionary nations place themselves both ahead of and behind those against which they have revolted<sup>65</sup> - nation-ness offers a

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options for the colonized remain limited to 'imitation', a point discussed below.

<sup>64</sup> c.f. B. Anderson, 1991, p.144. Dying for an imagined community to which one feels 'naturally tied' through a bond of interestless love is a 'pure' act that cannot be replaced by the demand to sacrifice for mere material gain or intellectual conviction:

"Ironically enough, it may be that to the extent that Marxist interpretations of history are felt (rather than intellected) as representations of ineluctable necessity, they also acquire an aura of purity and disinterestedness." (*ibid.*)

<sup>65</sup> See B. Anderson, 1991, p.156.

"connectedness-in-disconnectedness".

"Nothing connects us more affectively to the dead than language... If nationalness has about it an aura of fatality, it is nonetheless a fatality embedded in *history*... Seen as both a *historical* fatality and as a community imagined through language, the nation represents itself as simultaneously open and closed."<sup>66</sup>

Chapter 11, "Memory and Forgetting", added to the second edition of the text, clarifies this formulation by observing that 'biographies' of nations, like novels and newspapers, are *narratives*, which make visible a continuity along homogenous, empty time.<sup>67</sup> These biographies are analogous to those of individuals; moreover, as in the paradoxical formula of Renan, continuity requires remembering the very events which mark a discontinuity one is "obliged already to have forgotten":<sup>68</sup>

"As with persons, so it is with nations. Awareness of being imbedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications, yet of 'forgetting' the experience of this continuity - product of the ruptures of the late eighteenth century - engenders the need for a narrative of 'identity'."<sup>69</sup>

But where the biography of persons has a beginning and an end, nations lack the former; if the latter can be narrated, it appears in distinctly modern form as 'genocide'.<sup>70</sup>

Though this essential ambiguity is largely figured as temporal in Anderson's account, spatial ambiguity is also crucial: *like* the interchangeability of absolutist functionaries, the representative plurality of sociological detail in realist novels and the 'God's-eye' perspective of the reader, the reproducibility of the 'book', and the substitution of events in the calendrical frame of

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<sup>66</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.145-6.

<sup>67</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.188,204.

<sup>68</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.199-201; see also Ernest Renan, "What is a nation?", in Bhabha, ed., p.11.

<sup>69</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.205.

<sup>70</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.205, n.35.

the newspaper,<sup>71</sup> the census, map, and museum function on the premise of infinite reproducibility.<sup>72</sup> Serialization, whose temporal counterpart is the notion that communities co-exist synchronically as 'old' and 'new',<sup>73</sup> creates "a landscape of perfect visibility".<sup>74</sup> The effect of a "totalizing classificatory grid" enacted through the imperial census, map, and museum is to determine, through the establishment of reified, quantified, and calculable identities, what belongs 'here' and what 'there'.<sup>75</sup> De-sacralized sites become empty signs whose availability for infinite reproduction signify the 'presence' of the nationally imagined community, just as monumental archeology enshrines the newly imagined state as "the guardian of a generalized, but also local, Tradition".<sup>76</sup>

### Spatial Visions of Time

The *ambiguity* of the nation which concerns Anderson lies in the response of those so imagined by imperial and colonial states: like the revolutionaries who seat themselves in the palaces of toppled dynasties,<sup>77</sup> the newly nationally imagined regimes of Asia, not excluding post-colonial states, inherit the stable, solid borders of empty, homogenous *space and time* defined by the colonial imaginings of maps, and 'filled' with the empty, reified particulars of censuses and museums. These representative particulars become the 'national symbols' which sustain the real *presence* of the imagined community of political resistance, freedom, and autonomy at the level of

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<sup>71</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.33.

<sup>72</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.163-84. The census, map, and museum are discussed in Chapter 10 of the second edition, for reasons discussed earlier (see note 12 above); their main features are, however, quite compatible with those already attributed to the elements of spatio-temporal transformation in the first edition.

<sup>73</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.187-8.

<sup>74</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.184-5.

<sup>75</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.165,184.

<sup>76</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.181-4.

<sup>77</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.160-1.

the everyday.<sup>78</sup> In this sense, the nation is "truly Janus-headed", politically *necessarily* both regressive and 'progressive'.<sup>79</sup>

As the formulation above tries to make clear, however, necessary ambiguity at the level of 'imagined' identity supposes the 'real' presence of an inside and outside marked by 'solid boundaries' at the meta-theoretical level of *both* space and time. If, as mentioned above, Anderson foregrounds time in his account, this chapter has attempted to show that even in the first edition of the text Anderson had already made his argument in spatial terms: time 'becomes' reduced to a category of space ('homogenous, empty, serial'); time as 'History' is no less populated by reified identities than is territorialized space. The additions to the second edition of *Imagined Communities* provide more illustrations of this assumed reduction of time to a particular spatial discourse. This process is assumed, rather than argued, in both versions of text because Anderson never moves beyond a overt logic of *analogies*: reification of political space is 'like' what happens to apprehensions of time; the sociological, historicist 'grammar' of the novel is an "analogue" of the 'grammar' of the nation.<sup>80</sup> This analogical reasoning accounts in part for the seductive appeal of the argument; its "serious theoretical flaw", however, is not a failure to adequately countenance changing apprehensions of space, but that, on the contrary, *from the beginning, 'political identity' is thought in spatial terms.*<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.171-85.

<sup>79</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.159. The image is Nairn's; see "the Modern Janus", in Nairn, 1981, esp.p.347: "All nationalism is both healthy and morbid".

<sup>80</sup> Anderson uses the trope of grammar in the second edition, p.163.

<sup>81</sup> Moreover, the space assumed by Anderson's account of the effects of *realist* novels is an *urban* one: *mobility* is thereby consigned to positivistic treatment, as 'pilgrims' move from the fluid, synchronous time of the country to the flat, calendrical space of the city. How different is the account given by Paul Virilio, whose meditations on speed and politics have inspired Nietzscheans like Deleuze:

"The new city with its riches, its unheard-of technical facilities, its universities and museums, its stores and permanent holidays, its comforts, its knowledge and security, seemed an ideal spot for the tiring journey to end, the ultimate landing dock for the mass's migrations and hopes after a perilous crossing - so much so that until recently we confused urban and urbane for a place of social and cultural exchanges what was only a highway or railway exchanger. We took the crossroad for the path of socialism".

This is true of Anderson's analysis of the effects of 'print-capitalism' upon the sociological imagination: the *linear narrative* of the novel defines a *social space*, the fixed *presence* of which assumes a spatialized conception of *consciousness* left curiously unexamined in the account. Between the analogous space of the novel and nation, the *reader* of the novel and newspaper floats invisibly in Anderson's text. In a theory which centers on transformations in consciousness and identity, the effects of 'textuality' on the structure of the self is a serious omission. One is left to presume that the self-as-literate-national citizen is conceived as a spatialized identity analogous to those of the novel and nation, a conclusion warranted by both the problematic of how identities 'cohere' in homogenous time and space which governs Anderson's discourse and by his account of the spatializing effects of print-capital itself. The thematic of the *interiorization* of the self in consciousness through the effects of *rationalization*, in part effected through transformations in print-capitalism, will be an important aspect of Weber's theoretical account of the nation; Anderson *assumes* the conception of the self which Weber sees as a central *problem* of analysis.<sup>82</sup> As Ian Watt argues, the emphasis on *particulars* found in the "philosophical realism" of Descartes, Locke, and Hobbes enables this interiorization of self, which is significantly expressed in the realist novels of Daniel Defoe, himself heavily influenced by *Puritanism*.<sup>83</sup> Weber's account of the production of the

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(Virilio, 1986 [1977], p.7.)

<sup>82</sup> A spatialized conception of consciousness is the explicit result of Walter Ong's argument, which, as noted earlier, is quite close to the sketchier account Anderson offers. In the spatial fixity of language produced by the technology of print, (Ong, 1982, pp.117-28.) the transition from a primarily *aural* to a *visual* mode of intersubjectivity, the "*interiorization of the world*" is a crucial result:

"By removing words from the world of sound where they had first had their origin in active human interchange and relegating them definitively to visual surface, and by otherwise exploiting visual space for the management of knowledge, print encouraged human beings to think of their own interior conscious and unconscious resources as more and more thing-like, impersonal and religiously neutral. Print encouraged the mind to sense that its possessions were held in some sort of inert mental space". (pp.131-2.)

In the homogenous space of consciousness, 'things' are ordered in just the way Anderson describes them in the homogenous space of the novel and nation. Francis Yates, who draws heavily on Ong, develops the notion of the spatialization of consciousness, which she traces as far as the origins of *modern scientific method* in Francis Bacon, Descartes, and Leibnitz, pointing out not only its Euclidean parameters, but its spatialized sense of *memory* as well, a notion of considerable importance for Anderson's account of 'national memory'. (Yates, 1966, esp. pp.368-89.)

<sup>83</sup> See Watt, 1964, pp.9-34,75-92.

interiorized ascetic self may depend upon a spatialized conception of identity, as Chapter three of this essay argues; it has the advantage, however, of at least making this conception visible in his argument, something Anderson fails to do.

Moreover, the context in which the social drama of the nation and novel is played out in *Imagined Communities* assumes that the 'becoming-explicit' of spatial boundaries, a transition which marks the presence of the nation, takes place within a conception of *politics as spatial order*.

Consider the spatial contrast made between 'sovereignty' in 'older' imagined communities of dynastic realms and in 'modern' political systems:

"Kingship organizes everything around a high centre. Its legitimacy derives from divinity, not from populations, who, after all, are subjects, not citizens. In the modern conception, state sovereignty is fully, flatly, and evenly operative over each square centimeter of a legally demarcated territory. But in the older imagining, where states were defined by centres, borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another."<sup>84</sup>

If legitimacy is here understood to centrally concern an historical shift from 'subjects' to 'citizens', the distinction appears to rest on spatial ground; moreover, changing apprehensions of time are both an index of this spatial distinction, and *are themselves understood spatially*. The 'older' conception of time (a conception "wholly alien to our own"<sup>85</sup>) is figured in Anderson's account as co-presence: past, present, and future are all 'here' in the *particular visibility* of sacred images. The conception which supercedes it views time as a 'container' into which *representations* of what is invisible, not 'here', are poured. These reified, spatialized representations thus *make visible*, place 'here', what is absent. Again, in Anderson's account time 'becomes' a category of space, but the spatial logic of

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<sup>84</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.19. See also p.86, where 'official nationalisms' are described "as a means...for stretching the short, tight, skin of the nation over the gigantic body of the empire". On the impact of colonial maps on the 'grammar' of Thai politics, the second edition adds the observation that

"Between 1900 and 1915, the traditional words *krung* and *muang* largely disappeared, because they imagined dominion in terms of sacred capitals and visible, discontinuous population centres. In their place came *prathet*, 'country,' which imagined it in the invisible terms of bounded, territorial space".

<sup>85</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.24.

presence and absence which governs the contrast between modes of temporal apprehension and visibility produces an argument wherein 'becoming' is a movement from time understood 'there' to time understood 'here'. This 'God's-eye' view of becoming is a perspective (that of historicism) which assumes *the spatialization of time*.<sup>86</sup>

This perspective mirrors that offered the reader of the realist novel, the modern newspaper, and the recent colonial map. In fact, Anderson's own narrative of the nation and nation-ness reproduces the 'grammar' of these cultural artifacts precisely. Far from providing a critical perspective on this grammar, *Imagined Communities* assumes the very sociological and historicist discourse he detects in the cultural artifacts he examines.<sup>87</sup> Like their reified, representative

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<sup>86</sup> c.f. Fabian, 1983, pp.40-1. Fabian criticizes anthropology's tendency to spatialize time in accounts which, like Anderson's, purport to be sensitive to 'cultural difference' in conceptions of time. These theories are *functionalist*:

"Time was encapsulated in given social systems. This made possible or, at any rate, reflected an ethnographic praxis which asserted the importance of studying Time within cultures, while it virtually *exorcised Time from the study of relations between cultures*. 'Theories of Time' held by various cultures could now be studied with 'timeless' theory and method."

As argued below, despite his attempt to avoid reductionism, Anderson's problematic of identity-formation does not escape the charge of functionalism. Further, his spatial location of apprehensions of time elides precisely this question of time 'between' cultures; it also enables his 'God's-eye' narrative.

Questions about relations between space, time, and visibility have been raised in, among a growing list of texts, Fabian, 1983, esp. Chapter 4; Yates, 1966; Deleuze, 1988, esp. Chapters I,II, and III; Derrida, 1978, Chapter 4; and Rorty, 1979, esp. Chapters III, IV, and V.

<sup>87</sup> Partha Chatterjee observes that both Anderson and Ernest Gellner confine their analyses to sociological determinism:

"Both describe the characteristics of the new cultural homogeneity which is sought to be imposed on the emerging nation... [Anderson] confines his discussion to the 'modular' character of 20th century nationalisms, without noticing the twists and turns, the suppressed possibilities, the contradictions still unresolved... Like religion and kinship, nationalism is an anthropological fact, and there is nothing else to it". (Chatterjee, 1986, pp.20-1.)

Homi Bhabha has also criticized Anderson's historicism, arguing that, in the 'movement' from sacred to secular discourse, Anderson's contrast depends on historicizing the process whereby the sign 'becomes' arbitrary in the latter. "However, the differential time of the arbitrary sign is neither synchronous nor serial." (Bhabha, "DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the nation", in Bhabha, ed., 1990, pp.308-9.)

particulars, *the nation is a particular, homogenized space which is present in a 'universal' spatial order of identical particulars*. Like the novel, newspaper, and map, Anderson's narrative *makes visible* the universal presence of this reified particular. If temporality is 'imagined' as History in the nation,<sup>88</sup> Anderson's narrative reproduces its logic, despite his attempt to avoid simplistic historicism. The spatial assumptions of the narrative allow a move from particularity which stands for a universality 'above' it, to a horizontal universality into which identical particulars are firmly attached in a spatial grid.<sup>89</sup>

### Tragic Boundaries of Identity

Moreover, despite his repeated emphasis on the contingent factors which enable this form of imagined community to arise,<sup>90</sup> once *present* the 'model' of the nation becomes the *necessary*, 'ineradicable' referent for political imagining.<sup>91</sup> What begins with an insistence on the creative, active forces of imagining traces their inevitable 'becoming-reactive'. The crucial point here is that Anderson forces the 'imagination' of collective existence into an unavoidable 'coherence': a universal order of bounded spaces marks the limit of creative practice. Partha Chatterjee objects to the 'Western' bias inherent in this narrative:

"If nationalists in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain 'modular' forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we, in the post-colonial world, shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity... Even our imaginations must remain forever colonised".<sup>92</sup>

What this critique signals is that the discourse of the nation proposed by Anderson erases forces which might escape the problematic of coherence, and therefore *excludes the possibility that*

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<sup>88</sup> c.f. B. Anderson, 1991, pp.197-9.

<sup>89</sup> c.f. Walker, 1991, pp.446-57. The structure of Anderson's spatial narrative reproduces the terms of the dominant reading of a contested history of state sovereignty, recounted by Walker.

<sup>90</sup> See, for instance, B. Anderson, 1991, p.42.

<sup>91</sup> c.f. Tomlinson, pp.82-3.

<sup>92</sup> Chatterjee, 1991, p.521.

*modernity might not be what 'we', heirs of the forces which have produced it, think it is.*

Anderson's 'grammar' of the nation thus appears as an education in a contemporary version of 'the white man's burden'.<sup>93</sup>

If Anderson's discourse is governed by meta-theoretical assumptions concerning space and time, it is also the case that the 'elements' of his grammar of the nation are constrained by the problematic of *identity*, a limiting problematic which forces these elements to the very conclusion rightly rejected by theorists like Chatterjee. For instance, in the shift from make-shift, creative practice to modular result, *consciousness* is a central element. The 'presence' of the reified 'model' of the nation out of partly contingent conditions enables conscious imitation and manipulation. This quasi-Hegelian argument - once the spatial boundaries are 'there', consciousness owlishly looks 'back' on them from 'outside'<sup>94</sup> - is governed by the question of *coherence*, of how 'things' hold together. Anderson's appeal to movement and mobility, for example, is limited to Victor Turner's 'tragic' theory of 'liminality' as an *irreversible* movement from one homogenized identity to

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<sup>93</sup> Claude Levi-Strauss' harsh assessment of Jean-Paul Sartre's dialectical vision of history is in this sense a legitimate comment on Anderson's theory as well:

"A good deal of ego-centricity and naïvety is necessary to believe that man has taken refuge in a single one of the historical or geographical modes of his existence...". (Levi-Strauss, 1972, p.249.)

Alas, Chatterjee's own project seeks the forces which might escape the constraints of Anderson's tale of an 'inevitable becoming-Same' in a re-ordering of 'imagination' and 'concretization': anti-colonial nationalists first imagine a 'sovereign' zone of resistance, a 'national culture', which is the basis of practical, political resistance. (Chatterjee, 1991, pp.521-2.) Problems arise in this second phase, where the *politically* derivative discourse of nationalism takes over. (Chatterjee, 1986, pp.168-70.) Nationalism becomes state ideology, captured by the forces of Capital and Enlightenment Reason, and unable to resolve their contradictions. While the history of nationalism may not be over (Chatterjee, 1986, pp.161-2.), the forces which evade capture by the state remain invisible in Chatterjee's Gramscian formulation of this re-ordering (see Chatterjee, 1986, pp.36-52.). Chapter four of this essay discusses this constraining aspect of Gramscian discourse.

<sup>94</sup> c.f. Hegel, 1981, pp.12-13. That Hegel's thought is deeply spatial in this sense vitiates much of the emphasis he, and his sympathetic readers, place on temporal change. Fabian, for example, who criticizes the spatialization of time found in historicist and functionalist anthropology, still defends Hegel's 'dialectical' conception of time. See Fabian, 1991, pp.202-4.

another.<sup>95</sup> By limiting mobility to the secular journeys of state functionaries, Anderson not only forces his account to conclude with the final capture of its meaning-creating force by the nation; he also *confines mobility to its functionality for the production of coherence and identity*. Erased from the argument is a consideration of other forms of mobility - exile, migration, 'nomadism' - which may escape the forces of coherence. As Maurice Blanchot remarks,

"Exodus, exile indicate a positive relation with exteriority, that whose demand leads us not to be satisfied with that which belongs to us (is proper to us) - that is to say, our power to assimilate everything, to refer everything to the 'I'".<sup>96</sup>

The God's eye view of 'human suffering' offered by Anderson's historical narrative adopts, in

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<sup>95</sup> c.f. B. Anderson, 1991, p.53. See also Turner, 1980, esp. pp.164-8, where the meaning-creating forces of imitation in a necessarily narrativized, performative enactment mark the universal *limits* of identity-practice. This 'social drama' is written in terms of Aristotle's view of *tragedy*: "the imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude... having a beginning, a middle, and an end". (p.153.) This 'tragic' logic, which Anderson follows, shares key assumptions with the theory of 'mimetic violence' worked out by Rene Girard, despite differences in the relative weight given to 'social' and 'psychological' forces. (See Bell, 1992, pp.172-5; Turner, 1985, pp.215-16; Girard, 1989, esp. chapter 2, "The Sacrificial Crisis".) Mimesis and 'social mobility' are limited to a *reactive* function in this scheme; as Steven Shaviro points out, the logic of sacrifice here employed imposes an identity-structure on the community "in which the destructive impulses - instead of leading to self-transformation and revolutionary ferment - are mobilized against multiplicity and change". (Shaviro, 1990, p.68.) Nietzsche's response to the discursive constraints of this tragic logic are discussed in Chapter 3 of this essay.

On Homi Bhabha's rejection of 'liminality' as an irreversible movement, which assumes a view of politics as spatial order, see Papastergiadis, 1991, pp.513-17, 518, n.23.

<sup>96</sup> Blanchot, in Shaviro, 1990, p.182. As Salman Rushdie, another writer of non-realist novels, observes, "To be a migrant is, perhaps, to be the only species of human being free of the shackles of nationalism (to say nothing of its ugly sister, patriotism). It is a burdensome freedom". (Rushdie, 1991, p.124.)

As Chapter five of this essay argues, the 'postmodern' turn toward a 'celebration' of homelessness in liminality, exile, migration, and nomadism does not break with the meta-theoretical constraints of an identity-problematic governed by a conception of politics as spatial order. Into what identity-container, however, is one to place the following Bedouin proverb?

"I against my brother  
I and my brother against our cousin  
I, my brother and our cousin against the neighbours  
All of us against the foreigner"

(In Chatwin, 1988, p.202.)

Paul Carter's terms, the perspective of imperialism: its form is an *imitation* of the 'eyes' and 'ears' of the powerless, the excluded, the forgotten.<sup>97</sup> As imitation, it has a good conscience, but its critical claim is staked precisely on its ability to erase the forces that escape 'identity' and coherence.

Anderson's text thus doubly constrains 'creation' to the logic of *imitation*. On the one hand, 'creation' in the process of nation-forming is reduced to flattery of its modular forms; on the other, Anderson's narrative attempts to imitate the 'perspective' of the 'human subjects' who labour to produce them. This double reduction of creation to imitation has fatal consequences for the critical claims of Anderson's text. Most importantly, if in Anderson's account the nation becomes everywhere a reactive identity and 'creation' is reduced to imitation, a similar fate befalls the theodicy of suffering, the very everyday problematic that Anderson contends legitimizes the nation as *the* secular political identity which 'captures' the fatal logic of sacrifice from the decay of sacred imagined communities. In Anderson's narrative, this theodicy - the nation as the collective identity which establishes a sense of belonging among its 'members' by providing compensatory answers to questions of fatality - *becomes tragedy*. On Benjamin's tragic image of the backward-looking 'Angel of History', powerless to make whole the wreckage of the past (Anderson's reified cultural artifacts) against the 'irresistible' force of History,<sup>98</sup> Anderson closes his argument with this objection: "But the Angel is immortal, and our faces are turned to the obscurity ahead".<sup>99</sup> The reified imagined community of the nation has made theodicy a reactive process of belonging, an

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<sup>97</sup> See Carter, 1987, pp.346-8.

<sup>98</sup> An image borrowed by Nairn as well: see Nairn, 1981, pp.359-63. Since the image is a central one for these theorists, it is reproduced here:

"His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress." (Benjamin, 1969, pp.257-8.)

<sup>99</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.162. This sentence marks the end of the first edition; as noted earlier, the second edition adds two 'discrete appendices'.

imagined community in which Anderson has no desire to reside. Yet if the homogenous, empty time and space of the nation are universally present, where does one turn to identify the forces of Benjamin's 'Messianic' historical materialism?<sup>100</sup>

### Tragic Sacrifices

Anderson provides no clear answer to this question, though his account appears to demand one; he does, however, suggest that the role played by *sacrifice* provides a clue as to where one might usefully begin to look. In his chapter on patriotism and racism, Anderson rejects Nairn's rhetorical logic, which places nationalism in a necessary trajectory toward the 'irrational' forces of racism and fascism.<sup>101</sup> If the nation is born in language, not blood, the "often profoundly self-sacrificing love"<sup>102</sup> it inspires derives from its organization of mortality and fatality into language through which, "encountered at mother's knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed".<sup>103</sup> This everyday theodicy, enabled and sustained by a 'pedagogy' of institutional practices which require, like the singing of national anthems, continual performative realization in the everyday, provides the conditions under which the nation so *completely captures* the willingness to sacrifice. Such 'patriotic' speech-acts provide an instance of Benjamin's Messianic "instantaneous simultaneity", a co-presence of past, present, and future.<sup>104</sup> The everyday suffering and finitude of the self becomes, through its 'fatal' belonging to the nation,

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<sup>100</sup> c.f. Benjamin, 1969, pp.262-3.

<sup>101</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, pp.148-9; also, Nairn, 1981, pp.346-8.

<sup>102</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.141.

<sup>103</sup> B. Anderson, 1991, p.154.

<sup>104</sup> Anderson's argument here, which shifts from the pedagogical 'meanwhile' of realist narrative ('pedagogic', because it 'teaches' the existence of the people-as-nation) to the performative 'unisonance' of primordial contemporaneity, attempts to historicize two temporalities in the time of the emergence of the realist novel, a move Bhabha rejects. A pedagogic practice which places the nation in a serial 'present' cannot be reconciled with a performative practice of instantaneous simultaneity in a straight-forward narrative account without "naturalizing" the ambivalent spatio-temporal borders of the nation. If for Anderson the reified boundaries of the nation produce ambivalent identities, Bhabha's point is that these borders themselves are 'always already' ambivalent. (See Bhabha, "DisseniNation", pp.309-10.)

the public '*virtue*' of the citizen.<sup>105</sup> Sacrificial love thus represents the positive face of the nation's Janus-head, an 'active' force captured by the reactive identity of the nation. Implied in Anderson's criticism of the inability of liberalism and Marxism to inspire such love is a demand for an identity-practice which can '*measure up*' to the forces deployed so effectively by the nation to provide a theodicy of everyday suffering and fatality. As Anderson's conclusion suggests, however, this practice must work 'today' in a *tragic mode*. The argument is thus tragic in a *double sense*: not only is it written from the perspective of Victor Turner's 'tragic' social drama (see note 95, above); the creative forces able to revalue the positive face of the nation - its notion of patriotic sacrifice - against the reactive identity of the nation are as yet unseen in Anderson's account.

However, by framing his problem in terms of a demand for a 'reevaluation' of the theodicy of suffering as a creative, positive force in a tragic identity-practice, Anderson confines the nation to its *functionality* for questions of meaning and belonging. Moreover, this is the case largely because he also unwittingly repeats Renan's formulation of forgetting and identity. The reader of Anderson's text is 'obliged already to have forgotten' that the theodicy of suffering, which organizes the whole narrative, *erases the distinction between 'noble' and 'base' conceptions of suffering, and assumes victory by the latter*.<sup>106</sup> This erasure, as Chapter three of this essay

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<sup>105</sup> Anderson closes his chapter on "Patriotism and Racism" with yet another analogy, this time to 'explain' the appearance of fatality in the sacrificial love of one's 'national language': "What the eye is to the lover - that particular, ordinary eye he or she is born with - language - whatever language history has made his or her mother-tongue - is to the patriot". (B. Anderson, 1991, p.154.) When one asks, however, what that eye is to the lover, presumably the answer is a 'natural' medium through which the subject confirms his or her identity. As argued earlier in this chapter, this 'story of the eye', which makes visible subjects and objects within a spatial order, reduces 'imagination' to what is made possible by the constraints of this spatial order. If Anderson's account thus limits its own imagination to that of realist novels in this way, how different is Georges Bataille's 'fiction', which explores these themes without the constraints of either a subject/object dichotomy or mimetic imagination. (See Bataille, 1982, esp. Roland Barthes' comments in "The Metaphor of the Eye", pp.119-27.)

<sup>106</sup> As Bataille will insist, a 'noble' conception of sacrifice seeks to identify forces which escape the coherence of identity-formation; where Anderson's narrative culminates in the total capture of sacrifice in the reified identity of the nation, Bataille traces the multiple threads of a different politics: "This sacrifice *which we consummate* is distinguished from others in this way: the one who performs the sacrifice is himself touched by the blow which he strikes, he succumbs and loses himself with his victim". (Bataille, in Shaviro, 1990, p.81.) This 'active' sacrifice neither confirms the solidity of the spatial borders of the nation, nor affirms the 'tragic' ambiguity of the inside/outside they create: "Transgression does not transgress the law, but carries the law away with it". (*ibid.*)

discusses, is a crucial move made earlier by Weber against Nietzschean attempts to resist reading the nation as a question of *coherence*, of how identity is possible in political space and time.

### The Logic of Coherence

Asking this question, as both Anderson's narrative and the suffering selves of his account do, assumes the very conception of politics as spatial order that his text concludes is produced 'everywhere' by the triumph of the nation. Asking how 'things' hold together assumes the availability of homogenous, bounded spaces in which the forces of identity act. Anderson's *whole story* is told from the perspective of identity-producing forces which result in the concretization of this spatial order. But if the results of this 'creative' imagining are a distinctly uncreative reification, the text offers no answer to the question of what might wrest the positive force of sacrifice from its capture by the nation. The *tragic* conclusion Anderson arrives at is thus determined from the start by the problematic of identity, which is governed by a discourse of politics as spatial order. In this tragic mode, which appears as an inevitable and necessary conclusion of critical reflection, the possibility of critique which does not reproduce the discursive constraints of the nation is erased.<sup>107</sup>

In a comment that could serve as the epigram for this essay as whole, Steven Shaviro observes, apropos the privileging of spatial order in the problematic of identity, that

"Philosophers, theorists, and critics are always trying to 'save the appearances', to account for how things hold together, as if they wouldn't hold together were not reason

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Moreover, Anderson 'territorializes' the force of sacrifice in platonic, patriotic love. Not only does this formulation erase the *erotic* dimension of political identity; it rationalizes a determined identity of sacrifice and love. (See Bataille, 1988, p.142.)

<sup>107</sup> Valorizing tragedy as the mode in which critical rationality appears as the most responsible form of critical thought, as Anderson does, thus assumes the 'reactive' perspective of the very homogenous identity-forms he attempts to critically engage. c.f. Bataille, 1985, pp.146-7:

"The inability of *homogenous* society to find in itself a reason for being and acting is what makes it dependent upon imperative forces, just as the sadistic hostility of sovereigns toward the impoverished population is what allies them with any formation seeking to maintain the latter in a state of oppression".

there to hold them together. Or else, in an opposite but symmetrical movement, we invoke negativity and critical rationality, as if change would never take place were not reason there to impel and direct it... The problem is not how to save the appearances, but how to escape from them; and not how to establish a rational, critical basis for change, but how to free the forces of change or of the event from the conceptualizations that constrain it. Let us ask, not how the coherence of the world is possible, but whether anything can interrupt or escape from this coherence."<sup>108</sup>

Anderson's own version of critical rationality is governed by the problematic of coherence, which assumes a sociological, historicist, and necessary 'becoming' of politics as a *concretization* of spatial order. He reproduces the constraints of this order in a narrative which attempts to make visible the forces - print-capitalism and secular state pilgrimages - that produce the reified presence of the nation out of the breakdown of sacred imagined communities. It is the fate of creative practice to be forced to work 'today' against this universal presence in a tragic mode. The theodicy of everyday life, in which the nation is functional to the security and meaning demands of consciousness, must be revalued as tragedy, but in a universal order of particulars identical in their particularity, the forces of revaluation cannot be identified. In the 'grammar' of the nation thus produced in Anderson's narrative, the forces which might escape its coherence are erased: imagination, sacrifice, mobility, and modelling are all written in terms of how identity is produced. Moreover, the resort to analogical reasoning evades questions of the relationship between supposedly homogenous selves, nation, and state.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Shaviro, 1990, pp.8-9.

<sup>109</sup> The first of these terms, the self, is strangely absent from Anderson's account. Collectivities have 'imagined' identities analogous to the sociological spaces of the novel and newspaper, but what of the reader of these pedagogic discourses? One can only assume that for Anderson, the 'consciousness' of the individual is structured 'like' the homogenous space of the novel, newspaper, and nation. Missing from the account, however, is any discussion of how texts supposedly form identities, a question to which Chapter six of this essay returns.

Despite the many analogies relied on by Anderson, Adam Lerner is mistaken in claiming that Anderson treats the nation as if it is "a great deal like a religion". (Lerner, 1991, p.408.) In attempting to steer a middle course between this position and what he takes to be Bhabha's (the nation is "radically unsituated" [Lerner, 1991, p.409.]), Lerner's own formulation of the nation as a modern version of the 'sacred' is beside the point. Not only does it share Anderson's functionalist approach; the difference between Anderson and Bhabha is not between analogy with religion and analogy with 'nothing', but between a view of politics as identity in spatial order and a perspective which seeks to keep open the borders closed by the constraints of the problematic of coherence. (Bhabha, "DissemiNation", p.300) Bhabha's refusal to ground ambivalence in the spatio-temporal borders of sociology and historicism also questions attempts (like Anderson's) to impose a 'grammar' of the nation:

### Conclusions: Avatars of Identity

These, then, are the main features of Anderson's account, the 'elements' of his grammar of the nation and nationalism. They are posed as a critical alternative to liberal and Marxist theories which tend to oppose a 'false', 'irrational' nation to a 'genuine', 'rational' political identity through reductionist accounts of historical fatality and necessity. As this chapter has attempted to show, *Imagined Communities* founders on meta-theoretical issues of space, time, and identity; Chapters two and four argue that both Marxist and liberal accounts of the nation share Anderson's failure to critically question these issues. In the movement of this argument, Max Weber's account of the nation is the key mediating discourse. The discursive constraints of both Gellnerian and Marxist theories of the nation work to *misconstrue Weber's discourse on the nation*. As a result, not only do they *reproduce its limitations*; the 'grammar' of the nation produced by liberals and Marxists makes Anderson's discourse *appear to be a productive theoretical opening onto the question of the nation and nationalism*. What this essay contests, then, is a *double erasure*: by erasing serious consideration of Weber's problematic, theories of the nation and nationalism are doomed to repeat its limitations; moreover, Weberian discourse itself erases critical perspectives on these limitations, perspectives which work through forces that might escape the 'iron cage' of coherence.

There have been two main lines of response to Anderson's text. One has been a lively production of 'post-Marxist' reflections, largely inspired by issues raised in literary theory; the other has been virtual silence from the 'orthodox' Left. Chapter seven and the Conclusions deal in

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"In some ways it is the historical certainty and settled nature of ['nationalism'] against which I am attempting to write of the western nation as an obscure and ubiquitous form of living the *locality* of culture. This locality is more *around* temporality than *about* historicity: a form of living that is more complex than 'community'; more symbolic than 'society'; more connotative than 'country'; less patriotic than *patrie*; more rhetorical than the reason of state; more mythological than ideology; less homogenous than hegemony; less centered than the citizen; more collective than 'the subject'; more psychic than civility; more hybrid in the articulation of cultural differences and identifications - gender, race or class - than can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of social antagonism". (Bhabha, "DissemiNation", pp.291-2.)

detail with these responses; both, it is argued, stem from a failure to recognise that Anderson's discourse is an up-dated version of Weber's. If one asks what is 'new' in *Imagined Communities*, the response must be: not much. As Chapters three and four of this essay attempt to show, Weber had already formulated the problematic and 'elements' of the grammar of the nation deployed by Anderson. Moreover, Weber's discourse is enabled precisely by an erasure of the critical force of Nietzsche's challenge to 'coherence': the problematic of identity in a universal spatial order.

If Anderson's account is governed by coherence, by how identity is possible in homogenous space and time, it should be noted that one does not have to return immediately to Weber to find precedents for several key 'elements' of this account. While Anderson cites Victor Turner's anthropological problematic of identity-formation in the 'meaning-creating', liminal journeys of state functionaries, he does not acknowledge his debt to the shared logic of the 'mimetic sacrifice' of the 'scapegoat' that underpins it. Neither does he consider the limitations of Raymond Williams' earlier attempt, identical in its essentials to his own account of the production of reified public space, to trace the development of the notion of an 'English public' to the rise of the novel and newspaper.<sup>110</sup> Williams' critical analysis founders in two key areas which are instructive for an assessment of Anderson's project. First, there is considerable ambiguity over whether or not the novel is a form amenable to creative revaluation against its 'bourgeois' origins and development. Like Anderson, Williams is caught in the trap of his own construction of the problem: alternative

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<sup>110</sup> See esp. Williams, 1975, pp.101-12; also, Williams, 1985, Part I, where the criticism of the effect of 'newspaper-culture' is shown to derive initially from a 'conservative' discourse of organicism, a thematic later taken up by socialist critics. Centrally at issue is the reification of 'culture' as both product of print-capitalism and first line of defence by its critics. (c.f. Williams, 1976, pp.76-81). As Terry Eagleton points out, Williams' focus is also on the ways in which naturalistic literary forms "inevitably enforce upon us a sense of the unalterable solidity of this social world". (Eagleton, 1983, p.187.) Eagleton is here discussing Williams' critique of theater, but a similar assessment of how literature 'makes visible' a social and historical reality can be found in his analysis of other literary forms, eg. throughout Williams, 1984.

On the 'homologous' connection between Tradition, imagination, print-language, and 'national literature', which stresses, like Anderson, the performative, embodied dimension of consciousness, see Williams, 1978, pp.45-54, 139. 'Homology' ("correspondence in origin and development", p.105) differs from analysis by analogy (correspondence in appearance and function); both, however, attempt to account for 'coherence'.

identity-practices share the ground, so to speak, of the reified practices they attempt to criticize.<sup>111</sup>

The response to this impasse has been, as argued above, an appeal to the necessity of social theorizing in a tragic mode. Second, and closely related, is a view of the problem from the 'inside', the deeply problematic perspective of 'experience': neither Anderson nor Williams offers a clear account of human subjectivity in their analyses.<sup>112</sup> The historicist, or 'humanist', suppositions of this perspective constrain the possibilities of critique to the logic of coherence.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> If literature is an "inescapably social" practice, "a whole way of seeing that is communicable to others, and a dramatisation of values that becomes an action" (Williams, 1984, p.59.) at its best, the grounds for this positive appraisal are unclear. See Williams, 1978, where, on the one hand, it is claimed that

"...all or nearly all initiatives and contributions, even when they take on manifestly alternative or oppositional forms, are in practice tied to the hegemonic: that the dominant culture, so to say, at once produces and limits its own forms of counter-culture". (p.114.)

On the other hand, the "finite but significant openness" (*ibid.*) that does exist in specific cases must be exploited through "conscious alignment", despite the fact that "what can be done and attempted is necessarily subject to existing or discoverable real relations". (p.204.)

<sup>112</sup> Anderson's failure to do so has been noted above; on Williams, see John Higgins, "Raymond Williams and the Problem of Ideology", in Arac, 1986, p.119; for a more critical account of Williams and of the concept of 'experience', see Bruce Robbins, "Feeling Global: John Berger and Experience", in the same volume, pp.148-9. In a criticism with particular applicability to Anderson's attempt to 'read off' the reified space of the nation from that of the novel, Robbins notes that Williams finally accepts the comments of his interviewers in *Politics and Letters* to the effect that "There is a deep disjunction between the literary text from which an experience can be reconstituted and the total historical process at the time". (p.149.) Out of this disjunction comes the (im)possibility of revaluing the 'positive face' of the nation, including that of Anderson's 'sacrificial patriotism', as well as to Williams' commitment to 'genuine working-class culture'.

It should also be noted that Anderson cites with approval the exchange between Williams and Sebastiano Timpanaro on the value of what Higgins calls a 'biological Freudianism' for a reconstituted cultural materialism, though he declines to elaborate on its place in the 'tragic cosmology' he suggests as an alternative to 'national theodicy'. (See Higgins, p.119; Williams, 1982, pp.106-22; Timpanaro, 1980, esp. pp.51-4; Anderson, 1991, pp.10-11, n.3.)

<sup>113</sup> By 'historicism' is meant a linear view of time reduced to homogenous spaces, if not to narratives of 'progression' or 'decline', as liberals and conservatives, respectively, tend to read it. Williams' problematic of 'dominant, residual, and emergent' works within a social whole, regardless of how complex the resulting 'social space' becomes. Incorporation of the emergent into the dominant always occurs, however 'uneven' the 'development' is. This is a formulation of considerable importance for an assessment of Gellner's and Nairn's conception of the nation as the product of just this sort of uneven development. (See Williams, 1978, pp.121-7, esp. p.124. Also, Bhabha, "DissemiNation", p.299-300, where Williams' notion of differential temporalities is dislodged from its historicism, leading to Bhabha's questioning of the spatio-temporal suppositions of 'social solidity'.)

If historicism makes 'history' the ground of meaning, the foundation of critique, and a 'transcendental' bulwark (narrative) against infinite regress (otherwise known as 'textuality'),<sup>114</sup> its double is humanism, which grounds narratives of history by reference to a *unitary subject*. This subject, unaccounted for in Anderson's text, is the experiencing self endowed with a purely reactive psychology: one who demands recognition of, and compensation for, his or her suffering as its 'creative' act. Anderson's text does not offer a critical discourse, then, because it supposes the coherence of a self, just as it supposes the coherence of words and things - their 'visibility' and presence - in a narrative of politics as an order of homogenous spaces. This discourse defines a lineage of thought on the nation through Weber, Gellner, Nairn, Hobsbawm, and Anderson. One of the main ironies this essay attempts to expose is the ways in which this discourse of coherence reads the Nietzschean counter-lineage of Georges Bataille, Maurice Blanchot, Gilles Deleuze, and Michel Foucault as caught in an 'iron cage' of 'relativism' and 'irrationalism', and thus unable to escape the forces that produce nationalism. In fact, it is *Anderson's discourse which is caught in an 'iron cage' of coherence, to which tragedy is its only response*. Foucault's critical discourse, by contrast, is point by point opposed to this logic of coherence:

"Discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject, but, on the contrary, a totality, in which the dispersion of the subject and his discontinuity with himself may be determined. It is a space of exteriority in which a network of distinct sites is deployed... It [is] neither by 'words' nor by 'things' that the regulation of the objects proper to a discursive formation should be defined... it is neither by recourse to a transcendental subject nor by recourse to a psychological subjectivity that the regulation of its enunciations should be defined."<sup>115</sup>

Foucault's account of discourse is opposed to the supposition that critique accounts for the reification of 'identities' in the reification of words and things, as if the 'visibility' of subjects, their narratives and the furniture of their 'social world', were simply isomorphic.<sup>116</sup> Coherence, how

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<sup>114</sup> c.f. Culler, 1982, pp.128-30; Geoff Bennington, "Demanding History", in Attridge, *et al.*, eds., 1988, pp.20-4.

<sup>115</sup> Foucault, 1978, p.55.

<sup>116</sup> In Anderson, this isomorphism is recounted as the 'articulation' of self and social world in the homogenous space of the nation-state, an identity-practice whose theory is celebrated by Stuart Hall, among others, as a 'new' conception of "politics as a hegemonic project". (Hall, "Minimal Selves", in ICA, 1987, pp.45-6.) As Chapter five of this essay argues, 'minimal articulation' is the identity-practice often recommended by 'postmodern' theories of the nation; at least one

things hold together, is a bad problem, an ultimately *apolitical question*. It is not the question of identity that enables critical thought; it is a questioning of the spatio-temporal assumptions which enable *exercises of power* that make recognition of the forces that escape coherence possible.<sup>117</sup> It must be stressed, however, that Foucault's discourse analysis does not view the production of subjectivities, meaning, and imitation as mere chimeras of thought; rather, none of these constitutes the force of the transformations of which they are the products; moreover, the interpretive analysis Anderson undertakes misses this crucial level of production:

"Because statements are rare, they are collected in unifying totalities, and the meanings to be found in them are multiplied... To interpret is a way of reacting to enunciative poverty, and to compensate for it by a multiplication of meaning; a way of speaking on the basis of that poverty, and yet despise it. But to analyze a discursive formation is to seek that law of poverty, it is to weigh it up, and to determine its specific form."<sup>118</sup>

If, in the 'transition' from sacred to secular imagined communities the nation does not simply 'fill the God-sized hole left by His departure'<sup>119</sup>, Anderson nonetheless falls prey to the humanist illusion of replacing God with the human subject. The 'death of God' is an event with a

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commentator has not hesitated to label Anderson himself a 'postmodernist'. (See Shields, 1991, p.58.)

<sup>117</sup> Gilles Deleuze' reading of Foucault argues that "the task of archeology is double: it must *open up* words, phrases and propositions, *open up* qualities, things and objects". (Deleuze, 1988, p.53.) In this archeology of discursive practices (which are not, as in structuralism, 'strangers to time' [Foucault, 1978, pp.74-5.]) the visibility of the seeable and the readability of the sayable are *irreducible* 'regimes' of action and reaction, spontaneity and receptivity which, far from 'producing' a reified homogenous space, disperse its heterogeneity. What 'mediates' this disjunction is not 'imagination' - Kant's solution, and Anderson's as well - but the 'non-site' of *practices of power*. (Deleuze, 1988, pp.47-69; 71-4.)

Though Foucault's analysis of power is discussed at several points in this essay in more detail, it is necessary here to emphasize that Foucault insists "there is no relationship of power without the means of escape or possible flight". (Foucault, "The Subject and Power", in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p.225.)

<sup>118</sup> Foucault, 1978, p.120.

<sup>119</sup> As it does for Adam Lerner; see n.105 above, and Lerner, 1991, p.407.

meaning for the identity of collective subjects.<sup>120</sup> But, like his treatment of the novel and newspaper, Anderson's attempt to narrate the nation through the identity-problematic of theodicy has precursors. Clifford Geertz, in particular, had already attempted to analyze the rise of the nation through the theodicy problematic of belonging posited by E.E. Evans-Pritchard,<sup>121</sup> where the 'Janus-face' of the nation is determined by problems of meaning for human subjects facing the decline and secular rationalization of religiously imagined communities.<sup>122</sup> As Paul Ricoeur observes, Geertz' identity-problematic argues not for the replacement of the sacred by the secular, but the threat to meaning, belonging, and identity caused by this decline. This form of analysis both refuses a base-superstructure opposition and acknowledges that the nation cuts across class lines.<sup>123</sup> Ricoeur accepts this problematic, but adds, like Anderson, that out of the decline in the authority of religious rituals caused by awareness of their particularity and relativity, comes the secular integration of identities in space and time through the specifically modern form of ideology. Out of the struggles for identity experienced by new states in the context of a 'crisis' of industrial society comes the tragedy of modernity: of how to 'develop' a modern nation-state while defending against the very destructive forces unleashed by modernity itself.<sup>124</sup> Like Anderson, Geertz and Ricoeur stress continuity, even as they locate political collectivities in historical time: the political rationality of 'imagined communities' has the function of connecting past, present, and future.<sup>125</sup> Ricoeur contends that the integrative function of this 'rationality' points to the continuing relevance of Weber's category of *traditional authority*, even if Weber himself allegedly limits this category to

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<sup>120</sup> Henry Miller's alternative formulation is an apt appraisal of Anderson's humanism: "The gods will go away one day, as mysteriously as they came, leaving behind them a shell in human form, enough to fool the believers". (In Nancy, 1991, p.146.)

<sup>121</sup> See Geertz, 1973, pp.172-3.

<sup>122</sup> Geertz, 1973, pp.251-9. (These pages span the conclusion to one essay and the introduction to another.)

<sup>123</sup> Ricoeur, 1986, pp.258,264.

<sup>124</sup> Ricoeur, 1986, pp.258-62.

<sup>125</sup> Ricoeur, 1986, p.210.

the 'means' it provides for the 'order' of the bureaucratic legal state.<sup>126</sup>

To be sure, neither Geertz nor Ricoeur makes Anderson's case for the nation specifically in terms of the reifications produced through the 'interplay' of print-capitalism, language, and fatality. Nonetheless, the thematic of 'base' theodicy is actively employed in Geertz' argument, with similar 'tragic' effect; Ricoeur's reflections on time and narrativity (discussed in the Conclusions) share this perspective on the nation, and its results.<sup>127</sup> This perspective is governed by the spatial logic of coherence: as Michael Shapiro points out, Geertz' interpretive 'recovery' of 'other' symbolic social systems is motivated, like Anderson's mimetic narrative, by a desire for a better self-understanding. 'They' make visible 'our' invisible incoherencies. What Foucault's analysis questions, by contrast, are the discursive constraints which produce the desire for better conversations with ourselves in the first place.<sup>128</sup>

Finally, while Ricoeur locates the identity-problematic both he and Geertz share close to Weber, neither Ricoeur nor Geertz (nor Anderson) connects their own reflections on the nation and nationalism with those of Weber. Similarly, in his critique of the 'modernist fatalism' of Marshall Berman, John Tomlinson invokes Weber as a paradigmatic figure of the discourse of *modernity*, but leaves aside Weber's conception of the nation.<sup>129</sup> Following Philip Schlesinger, Tomlinson acknowledges that Anderson's 'national identities' share the abstract boundaries of this discourse. National identity becomes a synonym for the 'experience' of identity in modernity.<sup>130</sup> Schlesinger's formulation has the virtue of refusing to reduce, as Anthony Giddens does, 'national identity' to 'nationalism', a move which reifies the latter as a psychological quantity (a 'sentiment') whose ebb

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<sup>126</sup> Ricoeur, 1986, pp.208-11. Ricoeur's contention is somewhat odd: as Chapter three of this essay discusses, Weber's own concern is with the continuing relevance of *charismatic domination*, a significant difference from Ricoeur's version of his argument.

<sup>127</sup> In effect, one could say that Geertz plus Ricoeur equals Anderson. Given Anderson's background in anthropology, this line of descent is perhaps unsurprising.

<sup>128</sup> Shapiro, 1988, pp.15-19; Shapiro, 1992, pp.43-4.

<sup>129</sup> Tomlinson, 1992, pp.147-50.

<sup>130</sup> Tomlinson, 1992, pp.81-6.

and flow can be charted by the political analyst.<sup>131</sup> But Tomlinson ultimately prefers Giddens' stress on the 'loss of meaning' in the public sphere, which is then 'filled' by nationalist sentiment, to Anderson's focus on everyday life. However, as argued above, Anderson is centrally concerned with the possibilities for 'revaluing' public life. The real difference between Anderson and Giddens does not lie in the primary location of nationalist sentiment, as Tomlinson goes on to argue. This argument assumes that the salient distinction in modernity is the division of social space into public and private realms.<sup>132</sup> However, if Anderson reifies the *space* of national identity, he does not reify its 'content' as 'sentiment', as Giddens does. More important than this difference, however, is the fact that Anderson and Giddens share, precisely, the perspective of the effects of 'the culture of modernity' on identity.

Thus, while Tomlinson locates Anderson's and Giddens' theories of the nation within the problematic of modernity formulated by Weber, his own commitment to questions of identity does not allow any critical distance from its discursive constraints.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, like Geertz and Ricoeur, he does not link this view of modernity to Weber's thought on the nation. It is as if 'modernity' were a problematic one could detach from Weber and 'apply' to 'other' issues, like those of nationalism. In this, Tomlinson is hardly alone: as the next chapter of this essay argues, failure to seriously consider Weber's thought on the nation dooms commentators and critics alike to repeat its limitations.

Further, as Chapter three attempts to show, Anderson's effort to forge a theory of the

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<sup>131</sup> Tomlinson, 1992, pp.85-6. See also Giddens, 1981, esp. pp.182-96, where the main features of Anderson's national identities are anticipated but further constrained by a distinction between *nationalism* as a psychological phenomenon and the *nation-state* as an institutional one, "the dominant 'power container'". (p.193.) Though Giddens locates much of his analysis in a critical Weberianism, he firmly rejects what he takes to be Weber's problematic of the nation: an ahistorical view of 'eternal struggle' between nation-states. (p.198.)

<sup>132</sup> Tomlinson, 1992, pp.86-90.

<sup>133</sup> Tomlinson attempts to offer an image of cultural convergence which does not reduce cultural creation to imitation, as Anderson does, nor to fabrication, as Hobsbawm does (see Tomlinson, 1992, pp.90-4); yet the dynamic sense of 'tradition' he would like to valorize in this process still conceives of the spatio-temporal dynamics of 'cultural hybridity' as functional to the production of 'national identities'. Once again, the spatial logic of 'coherence' is unquestioned.

nation which places literature in a central position for the development of the type of identities conditional for the emergence of nationalism repeats the meta-theoretical constraints of Weber's discourse. Moreover, despite his unacknowledged debt to Ong, Williams, Geertz, and Ricoeur, the analysis of reification as a concretization of political identity in a universal spatial order Anderson offers is closest in its logic to that of Georg Lukacs' early *Theory of the Novel*, a text whose argument Weber approved.<sup>134</sup> The limitations of Lukacsian discourse are discussed in Chapter seven of this essay, where the limitations of Marxist thought on aesthetic theory, critical to a number of attempts, including Anderson's, to move beyond the pitfalls of conventional thought on the nation are discussed. If, in other words, Anderson attempts to go beyond the rationalist reductionism of Nairn and Gellner by refusing the rhetorical construction of nationalism as Marxism's "great historical failure", he does so by invoking another of Marxism's failures, *literary theory*. A chain of 'failures' in fact constitutes the rhetorical position of neo-Marxism on the nation and nationalism. The 'failure' to account for the triumph of nationalism is written by Nairn as a means to approach the 'failure' of Marxism to account for *fascism*: both nationalism and fascism are said to constitute the 'irrational' face of historical development, against which only critical rationalism can 'tragically' contend. For those versions of neo-Marxism which reject the rationalist reductionism of this account, the problem of *identity* and *subjectivity* must be added, as in Anderson, provided that the analysis does not 'degenerate' into the 'textualism', 'anarchism', or 'irrationalism' of those who follow Nietzsche. In this, neo-Marxism follows Weber, whose own attempt to take Nietzsche seriously forces his argument into the discursive constraints of 'coherence', of political identity as spatial order, a space in which Nietzsche can only appear as another mask of the nation's Janus-face. What begins this discursive chain of events, however, is Gellner's theory of nationalism; it is to Gellner that the discussion now turns.

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<sup>134</sup> See Lukacs' self-critical "Preface" to the text (written in 1962), in Lukacs, 1971, p.15.

"Seeing that which had previously been invisible becomes an activity that renews the exoticism of territorial conquests of the past. But seeing that which is not really seen becomes an activity that exists for itself. This activity is not *exotic* but *endotic*, because it renews the very conditions of perception, which is necessary to physical reality... What is false, then, is not only the accelerated perspective, the anamorphosis; it is depth itself, the physical and geophysical distance in time... With this invention of a day defined by technological speed, in direct opposition to astronomical time, the primary question becomes less one of relations to history than one of relations to *time*, and to the regimes of temporality that issue forth from advanced technologies. In this environment, in which all appearances are against us, the metamorphoses of acceleration contribute to the deformation of ancient reference points, such as physical standards and other architectural archetypes. Basically, reality encounters the fate of modernity: it has always already happened."

Paul Virilio, *Lost Dimension*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

This chapter discusses the relations between Ernest Gellner's theory of the nation and Max Weber's work. It is argued here that the discursive limits of Gellner's theory enable those who follow Gellner to *erase the critical confrontation between Weber and Nietzsche that takes place in Weber's writing on the nation*. This erasure is crucial because Weber's discourse itself writes out of consideration the very perspective, Nietzsche's, which calls into question the conception of politics as spatial order that governs the theories of the nation discussed in Chapter one. A *double erasure* is thus challenged here: Gellner's discourse excludes serious consideration of Weber's writing on the nation, which itself eliminates the critical force of Nietzsche's thought. Critical theorizing is thus placed at a double remove from the forces in thought that escape the spatial logic of 'coherence', the logic that limits Benedict Anderson to the inevitable tragedy of identity-practices.

Critical responses to Gellner's theory of the nation tend to a second, equally crucial, result: they 'reinscribe' the spatio-temporal constraints of Weber's discourse, even as they claim to depart from Weber's putative argument. This is the case with Anderson's attempt to move beyond both Gellner's opposition between genuine and false communities and his decidedly 'uncreative' reading of the nation as the inevitable reflex response of industrial society's unevenly developing

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<sup>1</sup> Virilio, 1991, pp.83-4.

social division of labour. In attempting this move, Anderson merely *repeats* the grammar of Weber's discourse on the nation, as Chapter three will argue. What permits this repetition of Weber to appear as something 'new' is a failure to consider the spatial logic of Weber's discourse, a logic *repeated in Gellner's theory* but rendered invisible by the discursive constraints of Gellner's grammar of the nation.

Gellner's theory of the nation and nationalism has been enormously influential, perhaps the high point of liberal reflection on the subject.<sup>2</sup> Even on the Left, at least in Britain, Marxist theorists have taken Gellner as their point of critical departure. Tom Nairn, for example, considers Gellner's 1964 text, *Thought and Change*, "the most important and influential recent study in English".<sup>3</sup> In 1992, Eric Hobsbawm acknowledged a considerable debt to Gellner, even as he entertained scepticism about the value of Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.<sup>4</sup> In the same year, Benedict Anderson's brother Perry called Gellner's body of work on the nation "the boldest and most original theory of nationalism to date".<sup>5</sup> This work consists not only of *Thought and Change*, but also of *Nations and Nationalism*, first published in 1983, the same year as *Imagined Communities*.<sup>6</sup>

If the arguments of Gellner and Benedict Anderson in 1983 are compared, however, the grammar of the nation they present is remarkably similar. Not only are the elements which determine the form of the nation similar; the meta-theoretical assumptions of space, time, and identity underpinning their narratives are the same. The difference between them lies in the relative weight given to 'culture' and to questions of the role of subjectivity: while Anderson organizes his

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<sup>2</sup> Anthony D. Smith is a liberal theorist of the nation of some sophistication, but, as argued in Chapter one, quite derivative of Gellner.

<sup>3</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.96, n.6. This comment was first published in 1977; that thirteen years in the past could still be considered 'recent' suggests both the power of Gellner's theory and the poverty of writing on the nation at the time.

<sup>4</sup> Hobsbawm, 1992, pp.9-11.

<sup>5</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.204.

<sup>6</sup> See Gellner, 1992.

account through the fate of meaning-creating forces of theodicy and sacrifice, Gellner traces the fate of *reason* as it is determined by the imperatives of the social division of labour. Where Anderson concludes with the tragedy of the universal presence of a reified 'community' whose spatio-temporal boundaries are made oppressively visible by the fatal interplay of print-capitalism, language, and death, Gellner concludes with the tragedy of reason itself. In Gellner's narrative, the very process which produces the nation as universal presence works by rendering visible and 'concrete' the spatio-temporal boundaries of Enlightenment reason. The 'spatio-temporal matrix' encoded in both accounts *turns out to be the same*. Thus, the difference between an analysis written in terms of 'identity' and 'meaning' and one which focuses on 'infrastructure' turns out to be less than appears on the surface. The bearers of the reified boundaries of Anderson's nation are literate intellectuals (and, 'behind' them, shadowy print-capitalists) and mass consumers of the novels, newspapers, museums they produce; the only intellectual response which 'measures up' to the theodicy of belonging that provides the legitimacy of the nation is a tragic one. For Gellner, these same literate intellectuals are, as bearers of Enlightenment reason, both agents of the nation and helpless witnesses to its effects. Gellner's response to this impasse in critical rationality is, once again, to invoke the necessity of theorizing in a tragic mode.

Like Anderson, Gellner arrives at his tragic conclusions by organizing his account in terms of coherence, of how 'things hold together'. If Anderson attempts to tell the story of how politics 'becomes' reified as a spatial order of identical particulars - the universal presence of the nation - asking the question of coherence assumes a spatial account of politics from the beginning. Gellner also assumes this spatial vision, but there is very little 'becoming' in his account: the move is rather from an *implicit* order of homogenous political spaces to an *explicit* one. In short, one gains little in terms of critical thought by following Anderson and emphasizing 'culture', 'meaning', and 'history' over 'infrastructure' and 'autonomous reason'. To understand how it is possible to think otherwise, however, it is necessary to consider in more detail the discursive constraints of Gellner's grammar of the nation.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> To take but one example of an attempt to treat Anderson's theory of the nation as something 'new', see Armstrong and Tennenhouse, 1992. The authors actually commend Anderson for his 'original' move of "translating time into space", arguing that this opens up possibilities for including, among other things, gender into the mix of elements that produce 'national identities'. (see pp.20-6, 141-3.) As literary theorists, it is perhaps unsurprising that, in a text on nationalism,

### Occupied Territories: Gellner's National Question

The focus of this discussion is Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism*, a text which continues, in the main, the argument of the earlier *Thought and Change*, as Perry Anderson observes. However, Anderson does not register one significant departure Gellner makes from his 1964 text: in place of a stress upon the 'fabrications' and 'falsity' of nationalism,<sup>8</sup> Gellner emphasizes the move from implicit to explicit spatial order in the increasing 'rationalization' of the social division of labour. The second emphasis does not, however, simply replace the first; in Gellner's "neo-episodic" adventure, which continues from 1964,<sup>9</sup> the function of 'intellectuals' can suddenly take form at a certain point in history, just as the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of societies past and present must be studied 'in their own terms'. As Gellner's argument unfolds, however, it becomes clear that these historical 'discontinuities' are framed by a narrative in which time has been reduced to a category of space.

In this narrative, *Nations and Nationalism* defines nationalism as "a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent".<sup>10</sup> Violations of this principle are most significantly concerned with the 'national' character of political leadership, a fact which defines nationalism as "a theory of political legitimacy".<sup>11</sup> The realization of a complete congruence between state and nation, on the one hand, and between the ethnic make-up of rulers and ruled, on the other, is *necessarily impossible for every aspiring nation*, since the number of 'potential nations' is manifestly much greater than that of "possible viable states".<sup>12</sup> According to

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the authors do not mention Gellner; nor, in an argument for the centrality of Puritanism in the origins of 'personal life', is Max Weber once considered. Chapter five of this essay suggests that failure to consider the Weberian lineage of theorists like Gellner and Anderson tends to licence just this sort of response from the halls of Literature departments.

<sup>8</sup> See Gellner, 1964, pp.169-70.

<sup>9</sup> See Gellner, 1964, esp. pp.18-20.

<sup>10</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.1.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.2.

Gellner, to understand the necessity of this practical problem, one must be clear about what states and nations are.

He defines the state in 'Weberian' terms; that is, it is a product of an historical division of labour which determines it as "the specialization and concentration of order maintenance".<sup>13</sup> The state assumes priority over the nation in both historical and structural terms:

"The existence of politically centralized units, and of a moral political climate in which such centralized units are taken for granted and are treated as normative, is a necessary though by no means sufficient condition of nationalism."<sup>14</sup>

This implies a potentially radical point which receives little attention in the remainder of the account: the 'nation' depends on the taken-for-grantedness of the modern sovereign state.

Rather than investigate this 'fatal' nexus between the 'principles' of sovereignty and nationalism, the historical and structural lines of Gellner's argument for state priority quickly converge, as *universal history is read as the universal structure of the state*. Three 'stages' of history are posited: the pre-agrarian, agrarian, and the industrial. These correspond quite neatly to the rise of the state *from complete absence to universal presence*.<sup>15</sup> The possibility of a (Marxist) 'return' to absence - "the withering away of the state" - is discounted by Gellner on functional grounds: the state is the necessary 'container' of industrial society.<sup>16</sup> As Gellner sees it, the explanatory problem is that, while the state is a 'condition of possibility' of the nation, not all states generate "the problem of nationalism".<sup>17</sup> He contends that to understand this problem, one must consider the historical contingency of both modern state and nation, contrary to the common current perception that belonging to a nation is a "universal and normative" necessity.

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<sup>13</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.4.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.5.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* Or, as Gellner puts it, the 'nation/culture' of industrial society needs "its own political shell, the state".

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

What, for Gellner, is this apparently necessary, yet historically contingent idea of the nation? He defines it provisionally as mutual recognition of participation in a shared culture. This definition is problematic, however, not least because of the notorious difficulty of defining 'culture'; Gellner thus opts for a practical approach which "look[s] at what culture *does*".<sup>18</sup> In a brief account of the second of his stages, agrarian society, Gellner stresses the emergence and spread of literacy and its bearers, the clerisy. Literate specialists enable a number of crucial socio-cultural distinctions: between "the great and little traditions (or cults)",<sup>19</sup> and most important, among specialized groups themselves, as well as between them and the majority. The majority, composed of "inward-turned", small peasant communities, differentiate themselves by virtue of stable, face-to-face, contextual modes of communication. Differentiation is key in this milieu: homogeneity, even when in the interests of the clerisy, is simply unattainable as a universal condition. In agro-literate society "almost everything...militates against the definition of political units in terms of cultural boundaries".<sup>20</sup>

At this stage, the 'high culture' of the clerisy cannot become universal. The 'power-holders' are loyal to a stratum which is at once 'sub-national' and 'trans-political'. Agro-literate orders are unable to prevent this particularist loyalty (in Gellner's rather brutal terms: "successful gelding"). However, a thoroughly *mobile* clerisy, unhinged from specialist loyalties, *does become universal in 'industrial society'*. Its 'high culture' also becomes (near) universal, giving a society its particular sense of identity, and requiring the state for its maintainance. This development, claims Gellner, is "the secret of nationalism".<sup>21</sup>

How industrial society came about cannot be accounted for with certainty, Gellner argues, yet its workings, once established, can be described. Max Weber's account of *modern rationality* provides Gellner with his key point of entry. Though unclear and unsatisfactory in his definitions,

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<sup>18</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.7.

<sup>19</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.8.

<sup>20</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.11.

<sup>21</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.16-18.

Weber does offer the possibility of constructing an adequate model of industrial society.<sup>22</sup> Consistency and efficiency (dispassionate means-ends calculation), elements of the very soul of the bureaucrat and the entrepreneur, are underwritten by a new (Enlightenment) universality in reason: "a single logical space" describable in one unitary language becomes "a universal conceptual currency". This turn to *a homogenous, self-identical discursive space* erases both the 'pre-modern' multiplicity of "hierarchically related sub-worlds" and the privileged particularity of their knowledge.<sup>23</sup>

This erasure is effected by a move complementary to the Enlightenment imperative to 'only connect': the urge to "prise apart" the particularized visions of pre-modern society.<sup>24</sup> Enlightenment thus consists of a double movement: to universalize, or to connect everything in one common conceptual currency, and to disconnect those particular unities which contain all the 'pre-judgements' of the discontinuous social groups sustaining them. Moreover, as it is in the world of ideas, so it is in the world of 'men': unity and homogeneity in the conceptual sphere "is the analogue of the anonymous and equal collectivities of men in a mass society".<sup>25</sup> A crucial corollary of the Enlightenment vision follows: if the world is open to infinite exploration, it presents no limits to knowledge; Hume's demonstration that causality inheres not in things but in 'men' becomes the perfect alibi for the entrepreneur, and the infinite, open space of 'the world' becomes "morally inert".<sup>26</sup> The same (industrial) society that has produced the vision of an endless, unitary space for knowledge has also invented its structural analogue, the idea of continuous, perpetual progress, and its 'personal' analogue, the entrepreneur.

Like Benedict Anderson, Gellner argues that this 'fateful' analogy between the

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<sup>22</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.20. Gellner is forthright in commending analyses undertaken in terms of 'industrial', rather than 'capitalist' society. With typically blunt irony, he attributes this turn away from 'capitalism' as the object of study to the rise of socialist societies themselves. (p.19.)

<sup>23</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.20-1.

<sup>24</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.22.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.23.

homogenous, spatialized visibility of the imagination, social world, and self marks the limits of the world 'we' inhabit. This condition, insists Gellner, is modernity; moreover, appreciation of this condition is necessary to an adequate understanding of nationalism. Absence of inherent causality in the conceptual realm has its analogue in the practical realm: modernity is characterized by a division of labour in which change in social roles is "constant and continuous". This complex and ever-changing division of labour is a requirement of industrial society (here Gellner invokes Adam Smith), and its need for *mobile, interchangeable, homogenized* individuals produces a certain 'egalitarianism' unavailable to earlier societies.<sup>27</sup> This egalitarian effect can be seen in the apparent paradox of a modern society more specialized in roles than any previous social order, yet sustained by the least specialized education system hitherto developed. Gellner explains this in terms of the need for a "universal, standardized, and generic" *education* system as the most significant 'mode of reproduction' of industrial society.<sup>28</sup>

In effect, modern industrial society resolves the tension which had existed between a literate clerisy reproducing itself educationally and claiming to speak for the whole of society by "turning this potentially universal class into an effectively universal one".<sup>29</sup> Not only is this universalization a response to the imperatives of social reproduction in industrial society; it also follows from the transformation in the content of work from manual to informational. This change, like the appearance of a universal discursive currency in Enlightenment philosophy and science, results in a *single, homogenous, explicit, and precise form of communication*. Gellner claims that the potential for this universalization has 'always' been present in certain forms of reason (he cites mathematical reason as the key example); the functional requirements of industrial society actualize this potential.<sup>30</sup> The limits of 'culture' are now the limits of education, and the state becomes the set of institutions which enforces "the monopoly of legitimate education".<sup>31</sup> A 'viable state' is thus

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<sup>27</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.24-5.

<sup>28</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.27-9.

<sup>29</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.32.

<sup>30</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.32-3.

<sup>31</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.34.

determined as the minimum 'unit' that can provide the educational reproduction of its citizens.<sup>32</sup>

This last contention marks a significant difference between Gellner's account and Anderson's: where Anderson is centrally concerned with the critical potential of the break between 'political subjection' and 'citizenship', Gellner's argument shifts silently from 'men' to 'citizens'. But the similarities in their theories far outweigh the differences. For Gellner, out of this need for a homogenous, explicit, and universal education, with its attendant 'language of instruction', the nation is born. So too is the interchangeable individual, 'analogue' of Enlightenment discourse, who partakes of this education for communication in situations of unprecedented mobility and association with others, and where the only shared context is the very language learned in the education system itself.<sup>33</sup> In industrial society, 'culture' is no longer the trappings of a social order whose sources of legitimacy lie elsewhere: culture is for 'us' "the necessary medium...within which alone the members of the society can breathe and survive and produce".<sup>34</sup>

If the particularities of 'men' and things become homogenized and interchangeable in this pedagogic mode of communication, 'contained' within the boundaries of states whose legitimacy rests on their capacity to reproduce this homogenous discourse, Gellner's account differs little from that of Anderson. The state may be a monopoly of legitimate education for Gellner, rather than of sacrifice, but its function as monopoly is the same. The nation may be a response to the imperatives of the social division of labour, rather than to the imperatives of theodicy, but its function as necessary response and the form it takes as a response remain the same in both arguments. The texts of, say, David Hume and Adam Smith, rather than realist novels and newspapers, may enable readers to visualize 'national space', but the visibility of interchangeable particulars moving in homogenous space through limitless time defines the limits of political imagination for both Gellner and Anderson.

### Ressentiment and the Cunning of Reason

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<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.35.

<sup>34</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.37-8.

For Gellner, the imperatives of industrial society demand that the state be joined to culture. If the principle of nationalism is to make the same demand, Gellner thus argues for its rational necessity. This is not to demonstrate, however, the immutable truth of any particular nationalism: the principle itself *is* necessary, though for structural reasons specific to the demands of industrial society.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, definitions of the nation in terms of shared culture can only follow from a recognition of legitimacy in terms of the nationalist principle.<sup>36</sup> Violation of cultural boundaries *follows*, rather than constitutes, the identification of 'men' with 'their' culture. Gellner's account of culture is written in entirely internalist terms: it assumes that the transition from particularity in agrarian society to universality in industrial society takes place 'within' a 'given society'. Problems come only later, when a given culture-polity seeks, in Gellner's spatial terms, to expand itself to cover the area it claims as its culture.<sup>37</sup> The spatializing, internalist thrust of Gellner's narrative drives Anderson's narration of the nation as well.

Gellner's internalist account owes much of its persuasiveness to a conflation of three terms: modernity, modernism, and modernization. Throughout the text, these terms are employed as if they were simply interchangeable to describe the result (as ethos, ideology, and historical process, respectively) of what is primary: the structure of the social division of labour. Gellner's conflation discounts the possibility that each of these terms might involve different sets of problematics. In the fact, the problematic which dominates this conflation is that of 'modernization'; as John Tomlinson, among others, has pointed out, modernization theses are notoriously internalist accounts of 'development'.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Gellner's spatial account of the 'homogenous' state is further bolstered by his claim that *power* is irreversibly centralized in 'modern' society. Even in agrarian society, power is portrayed as a zero-sum game; what is held 'here' must be wrested from 'there'. What 'modernization' entails is the *consolidation and concretization of boundaries already implicit in this notion of power*. Homogenization of self, 'culture', and state require firm spatial

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<sup>35</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.56.

<sup>36</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.55.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> See Tomlinson, 1992, p.143.

boundaries between 'inside' (the realm of the Same) and 'outside' (that of the Other). The story of this process of homogenization is written as a rendering *explicit* of these implicit boundaries. This story is also the story of the 'spatio-temporal matrix' of Enlightenment reason, as Gellner tells it: the story of modern reason *is* the story of its rendering-explicit through the imperatives of industrial society. In this conflation of narrative lines, Gellner's account of homogenization thus appears *rational*, and in this lies much of its seductive appeal.<sup>39</sup>

Gellner's emphasis on homogeneity does not assume that nationalism 'itself' is the force that homogenizes, as Elie Kedourie does: "it is rather that a homogeneity imposed by objective, inescapable imperative eventually appears on the surface in the form of nationalism".<sup>40</sup> Where Kedourie is forced to take sides on the question of the health or morbidity of nationalism (he chooses the latter),<sup>41</sup> Gellner's focus on the 'infrastructure' both avoids this pitfall and offers an opening to those, like Nairn and Hobsbawm, who see the nation as an *inherently ambiguous* formation, whose 'rational face' must be recognized, and who attempt to offer a critical analysis of nationalism as ideology: the illusion of shared identity which masks structural inequality. If Gellner's stress on infrastructure is the point of departure for Nairn and Hobsbawm, his account of the "uneven development" of structural homogeneity and its crucial effects for the rise of nationalism also share the logic of Anderson's argument.

If the nationalist stress on homogeneity expresses an illusion of structural homogeneity, so too does the nationalist myth of a defence of 'authentic' folk culture. Nationalism, as Gellner's account of the priestly origins of modern culture insists, is "the imposition of high culture on

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<sup>39</sup> One is tempted to say that for Gellner, despite his evident hostility to dialectics, "What is rational is national, and what is national is rational".

<sup>40</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.39.

<sup>41</sup> In a recent text, Kedourie contends that the "ideology" of nationalism, taken from Western Europe, has articulated homogeneity among certain Middle Eastern societies as a radical "transvaluation of values which nationalist doctrines required, and nationalist struggles imposed". (Kedourie, 1992, p.287. See also, pp.35-48, on the alchemical transformation of the Islamic *millet* into a 'nation' in the late Ottoman Empire, a process of "radical and revolutionary change in self-view" largely unexplained in the text, save as a product of 'Western ideas and influence'.)

society".<sup>42</sup> To illustrate this, he offers the story of "Ruritania" and the development of "Ruritanian" national consciousness. Like Anderson, Gellner emphasizes that this is not a conscious movement; they know not what they do. As an agrarian state dominated by the "Empire of Megalomania", within which industrialization is distinctly uneven, Ruritanian 'culture' is at first invisible, taken for granted. Awareness of belonging to a shared culture develops, as it does in Anderson's tale, with *labour migration* and the prospect of *bureacratic posts*, where the intellectual stratum has a better chance of advancement in a newly independent Ruritanian republic. This republic, whose identity has been forged through the labours of philologists, folklorists, poets, and the like at a time of social (though not yet 'national') resentment against the centralized Empire, becomes a 'homeland': a source of comfort and resistance which can be clearly articulated and defended.<sup>43</sup> Again, the presence of this 'homeland' is attributed primarily to the social infrastructure, rather than to the psychology of theodicy, but the elements of the account and their results are identical.

In the breakdown of barriers to communication in a given polity Gellner locates what he calls "social entropy": industrial society introduces "systematic randomness" into earlier forms of 'patterned' social existence. *This*, he argues, is the movement of successful nationalisms: the imposition of homogenized discourse within which 'men' and things are interchangeable, visible (like the reified figures of Andersons novels, newspapers, and maps) as universals in their very particularity.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, like Anderson, Gellner does not align racism with nationalism: if individual characteristics such as race mark an individual for a particular place in the social whole, and these characteristics remain attributes of particular identities, this indicates the presence of "counter-entropic" forces at work in industrial society.<sup>45</sup> If the crucial fact of industrial society for the 'fate' of nationalism is its "differential timing",<sup>46</sup> which provides the conditions of 'necessity' for development of the archetypal Ruritanian national consciousness, overcoming the entropy-

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<sup>42</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.57.

<sup>43</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.61-2.

<sup>44</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.63.

<sup>45</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.64-5.

<sup>46</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.52.

resistance of Empire is an early 'stage' in this process. The next stage involves identifying "a genuine prior barrier to mobility and equality which will, having inhibited easy identification, engender a new frontier".<sup>47</sup>

Where Ruritanian-type nationalism first strives to overcome barriers to communication, the later stage involves those barriers that remain: 'colour', for example. In Gellner's account, race is reduced to a 'variable' which may or may not be seized upon by "counter-entropic" forces in industrial society; if it is, it may in turn be seized upon by the entropy-friendly forces of nationalism as a locus of resentment.<sup>48</sup> This is the scene of colonialism, and of its *ambiguous supercession*. The result of de-colonization, particularly in Africa, has been, on the one hand, a range of attempts to foster a 'national' high culture in the context of old colonial boundaries and languages-of-state; on the other, there are attempts, like that of the Somalis, to meld 'tribal' loyalties with 'national culture'.<sup>49</sup> This ambiguity, and the reasons for it, are mirrored in Anderson's account: 'nation-building' is necessarily a process of reproducing, in the essentials of its form and function, a particular homogenous political space identical in its particularity to every other in a universal field of homogenous spaces. For Gellner, for instance, 'tribal culture' does not and *cannot* succeed *as such*: modern industrial infrastructures can make extended use only of the products of homogenous culture; therefore, the particularity of tribalism survives only to the extent that it does not become such a culture. Should "structure-mediated tribalism" succeed, it would become something else, namely, nationalism.<sup>50</sup>

This line of reasoning is elaborated into an eight-fold typology of "nationalism-engendering and nationalism-thwarting social situations"<sup>51</sup>. Permutations of the 'elements' of the nation demonstrate the necessity of nationalist success in some cases and the inevitability of failure

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<sup>47</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.75.

<sup>48</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.73-4.

<sup>49</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.82-6.

<sup>50</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.86-7.

<sup>51</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.94.

in (most) others. The coherence and persuasiveness of this typology depends upon two assumptions, one of which is overt and has already been mentioned: the 'inevitability' of centralized power in modern society. The second is unacknowledged, but implied by the account given of Gellner's theory in this chapter: all permutations take place within an assumed spatial order. In industrial society this is the homogenous space of the state, *analogous* to the centered, rational self of Gellner's anthropology. This self persists throughout the stages of social development, as does the assumption of politics as spatial order. This is clearly illustrated, for example, by Gellner's "ethnographic maps" of pre- and post- nationalist orders,<sup>52</sup> which are, in their purely spatial representations, exact duplicates of Anderson's depiction of 'older' sacred centers and 'modern' secularized sovereign territories. As in Anderson's logic, so in Gellner's: the *abstract space* of Euclidean mathematics is *implicit* in human thought; Enlightenment 'maturity' renders it *explicit and self-conscious*.

Despite his attempt to distinguish himself from nationalist apologists by emphasizing the historical contingency of the homogenous, bounded space of the state, Gellner assumes its presence even as he describes its absence in the 'agrarian age'. Despite his disavowal of economic determinism,<sup>53</sup> the fatality of the modern is written into the script from the beginning. Once 'there' (present in ideas and in the structured social order), the specifically modern analogue between homogenous, self-identical individual, state, and culture is inescapable. Nations will persist, in spite of 'modifications' impelled by a division of labour which increasingly lays stress upon 'modes of information' rather than on modes of production. Gellner distinguishes his argument from that of Karl Deutsch, whose analysis of nationalism in terms of communication assumes that the 'message' (the idea of the nation) waits in the wings, as it were, for communication to advance to the point where it can be widely disseminated.<sup>54</sup> Gellner favors a more 'McLuhanite' formulation, arguing that as 'the medium is the message', it does not matter who says what about nationalism: everything depends on "whether the conditions of life are such as to make the idea seem compelling, rather

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<sup>52</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.139-40. See also Walker, 1993, p.130.

<sup>53</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.115.

<sup>54</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.126-7.

than...absurd".<sup>55</sup> Yet even this small concession to contingency gets lost in Gellner's repeated emphasis on the necessity of the principle of nationalism, and its continued relevance.<sup>56</sup>

Moreover, while the 'content' of the nation may not pre-exist the form of discourse in which it is expressed, this form itself, its spatio-temporal matrix, is 'there' from the start of Gellner's narrative. The self-identical, more or less autonomous 'unit' of "order maintenance", the state, may be set in history, but it is a story whose outcome is determined from the outset by the stage upon which it is set. The stage is empty as the curtain rises upon the agrarian age: initially, the state is absent, but the spots where they will later stand are clearly demarcated. Enter (from stage right) the industrial age, and the stage is filled with jostling states. All that 'we', the audience, can do is watch and perhaps applaud, perhaps jeer, yet another encore as the curtain rises on the 'information age'. We have had no choice but to witness this spectacle, and we cannot leave. Worse, we are not even sure how we arrived at this theatre in the first place, but it all seems somehow familiar. Most seriously, perhaps, we cannot question the very 'staging' of the story itself. The drama (tragic or absurd, it depends, perhaps, upon where one is seated in the theatre) unfolds, and, as in all good bourgeois theater, we *identify* ourselves with it. The seduction of Gellner's analogical 'fit' between self, state, and nation/culture lies in the way each describes a homogenous, centered space *bounded by the very contours of the spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment reason.*

### The Tragic Fate of Reason

Gellner's account of the role of reason is the key to his argument. Though on his account a specific product of the Enlightenment, rationality is a beneficent currency to be defended against its counterfeit, 'irrationality'. Gellner takes pains, for example, to argue, contra Kedourie, that Kant's version of reason and self-determination is not in league with any nationalist self-understanding.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, the notion that 'cultures' are self-contained and impervious to universal reason is a species

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<sup>55</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.126.

<sup>56</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.121-2.

<sup>57</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.133-4.

of *irrationalism* ('relativism') that leads to a "virulent nationalism".<sup>58</sup> Modern rationality, a prime condition of possibility of nationalism, also defines the limits of critical thought on the nation; however, it reproduces the discursive limits of the nation 'itself'. Once 'present', the 'fateful' analogies described above leave no room for either alternative practices or understandings.

For Gellner, the story of 'modernity' is the story of becoming-Same in the form of the nation: no one escapes its dynamics, or its dilemmas. In a discussion of John Plamenatz' 'Eastern nationalism', Gellner draws the following conclusion:

"A modern type of society cannot be implemented without the satisfaction of something pretty close to the nationalist imperative, which follows from the new style of division of labour. The hunger for industrial affluence, once its benefits and availability are known and once the previous social order has in any case been disrupted, is virtually impossible. The conclusion to which this series of steps leads us cannot be avoided. With luck, understanding and determination, the price can be mitigated; but its payment cannot be altogether avoided".<sup>59</sup>

Demands for 'national homogeneity' may be politically or economically motivated;<sup>60</sup> whatever the case, either a 'group' assimilates to a more powerful, more successful national culture, or it attempts to create one of its own. "The tidal wave of modernization sweeps the world";<sup>61</sup> after the deluge, the only dry land that remains is the 'national' state. Remaining problems are therefore two: that generated by the difference between those who have already reached a safe plateau and those who are scrambling for their shares of the peaks ('there are not enough viable states to go around'); and that caused by the necessity of protecting against further seismic disturbances (the problem of 'legitimate order maintenance' in the 'information age').

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<sup>58</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.119-20.

<sup>59</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.101. See also, John Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism", in Kamenka, ed., 1976, p.34: 'Eastern nationalism' is "both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates, and is apt to be illiberal... But to pass judgements on it without qualification is misleading. In practice there is no alternative to extensive imitation". Gellner exploits the virtues of this "simple model" to offer an image of a third type of nationalism between two: "diaspora nationalism".

<sup>60</sup> See Gellner, 1992, pp.108-9.

<sup>61</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.112.

Gellner's cynical liberalism is revealed here, since he conceives of relations between individual and state, rulers and ruled, throughout universal history in terms of 'legitimacy' and of a psychology of 'interests': the success of the state in industrial society is measured by the extent to which it can maintain legitimacy by 'buying off' the interests of its members.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the problem of nationalism as 'fateful convergence' of polity and culture is *'our'* problem, according to Gellner. One may view the spread of Western European-style industrialism and Enlightenment as salutary or tragic, but it does not change the fact, Gellner insists, of its universal presence today.

One implication of this is clear: the intellectuals whose 'Enlightened' activities gave voice to nationalism and who are now *the most mobile* of cosmopolitans<sup>63</sup> are also in possession of the only tool to comprehend the phenomenon, namely, Enlightenment rationality. Yet Gellner concludes *Nations and Nationalism* with an observation on the "profound irony" in Max Weber's account of modernity as a product of a serious commitment to vocation, where now no such commitment is possible.<sup>64</sup> One could say that for Gellner, the 'tragedy' of modernity is similar: where once reason was the hope of progress, 'today' no such optimism is possible; what reason (and only reason) can offer is a clear and sober assessment of what must be. Nationalism is far from having defeated "the Cunning of Reason", as John Dunn believes:<sup>65</sup> the rational imperatives of industrial society which produce the 'age of nationalism' compel everyone today to read, and sign, 'their' 'social contract'. The present may be more of a "rubber cage"<sup>66</sup> than the iron one surrounding Weber, but whatever its base material, it is a cage nonetheless. If, as is evident from Gellner's argument, the 'vocation' of the intellectual is the pursuit of reason, yet reason itself shows how tenuous is the modern individual's adherence to a 'calling' of any sort, then one might suppose that, however "self-complacent" Geller may appear to critics like Partha Chatterjee,<sup>67</sup> his argument

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<sup>62</sup> See Gellner, 1992, p.22.

<sup>63</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.118.

<sup>64</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.142.

<sup>65</sup> See J. Dunn, 1983, p.55.

<sup>66</sup> See Gellner, 1987, pp.153-4.

<sup>67</sup> See Chatterjee, 1986, p.5.

invites a less complacent critique. Indeed, the reading offered in this chapter suggests that Gellner's version of the 'Janus-face' of nationalism is quite powerful, and not easily avoided, least of all when one looks at the contemporary socio-cultural literature on the nation and nationalism, as this essay does.

Gellner's version of modern tragedy might be put another way. Throughout the text, he emphasizes that the content of nationalist thought is largely a matter of indifference to the serious student of the subject. Nationalism is a pervasive species of "false consciousness"<sup>68</sup> which is opposed, at least by implication, to the 'true' consciousness of the Gellnerian intellectual. Only the rational intellectual is endowed with the self-consciousness capable of comprehending the social order as it 'really is'. In fact, for Gellner, *only* the modern intellectual *measures up* to the type of rootless self demanded by the rigorous rootlessness of Enlightenment reason. (As is often the case with Gellner, this point is made at the expense of 'Marxism'; after all, it was Marx who, at least in certain versions of his argument, places hope for a better world on the coming to self-consciousness of the proletariat as a class.) Unlike, say, Karl Mannheim (who is, like Gellner, justly accused of reductionism), however, Gellner implies no optimism in his account of the place of intellectuals in modern society. Again, modern reason is both a product of, and witness to, *necessity*. It is at best a lucid witness to modern 'fatality', and in this is found the 'tragic dimension' of Gellner's thought.

In Gellner's image of the dilemmas of the rational intellectual, *a sociological conception of mobility* is made functional to the production of the 'fateful' homogeneity which constitutes nationalism:

"Egalitarianism springs from the inherent mobility, imposed by means-ends rationality, by the free choice of means and their frequent replacement, on the occupational structure; nationalism reflects the fact that this mobility occurs only within a homogenous, literate, education-transmitted culture, which must needs be homogenous in any one area, and politically protected by, a centre committed to that culture".<sup>69</sup>

This conception of mobility will be repeated by Benedict Anderson, however far he attempts to go

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<sup>68</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.124.

<sup>69</sup> Gellner, 1988, p.263.

beyond the reductionism of Gellner's account. Commenting on *Thought and Change*, Anthony Smith notes both the assumption of an integrative function of language in the text (a function found also in Anderson), and an argument for the functionality of mobility for forging "new cultural ties" through language by its dislocation of the integrative function of 'traditional' role structures.<sup>70</sup> However, Smith's attempt to argue that there is more continuity between 'ancient' ethnicity and modern nationality than Gellner can acknowledge simply moves him into the terrain of identity-formation Anderson will occupy two years after *The Ethnic Revival* was published.<sup>71</sup> Though Smith's response to *Imagined Communities* rightly questions its failure to offer an adequate explanatory account of the nation through its over-emphasis on the literary production of 'imagined identities',<sup>72</sup> he shares Anderson's formulation of the nation as a product of the concretization of politics as spatial order, "the 'grid' of 'state-nations'", as he puts it.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, 'ethnicity' itself is a slippery base upon which to build Smith's account of transformations in identity-politics: he conceives it as a fundamentally *psychological* phenomenon, "a type of community, with a specific sense of solidarity and honour, and a set of shared symbols and values".<sup>74</sup> 'Sentiment' becomes 'ideology' in the transformation from ancient ethnicity to modern nationalism: Smith's argument

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<sup>70</sup> Smith, 1981, pp.48-9, where the disruptive effects of language are stressed, against Gellner, and pp.52-3, which point out how Gellner's thesis is more or less directly opposed to nationalists' self-understandings of the relation between mobility and the nation. Nationalists are more likely to look favorably on Karl Deutsch's emphasis on "the correlation between mobilisation and cultural assimilation", even if they focus on the role of the "over-centralized state" in promoting mobility as a nation-thwarting force, rather than on the process view of 'modernisation' promoted by Deutsch. (See also, in this context, Smith, 1991, pp.353-4.)

<sup>71</sup> Smith contends, like Anderson, that transformations in older conceptions of communal identity, not the erasure of the infrastructural supports which produced them, is a more satisfactory account of the nation and nationalism:

"[W]hile that antiquity does not allow us to treat nationalism, or ethnicity, as something 'natural', it does compel us to frame our enquiry differently, to understand nations as a recent type of political formation utilising an ethnic base and transforming the style, and content of much older, and often dormant, ethnic ties". (Smith, 1981, p.85.)

<sup>72</sup> Smith, 1991, pp.359-65.

<sup>73</sup> Smith, 1981, pp.136-8; Smith, 1991, p.364: "At the heart of this new order, as Anderson emphasises, is a new conception of linear time and, we may add, clearly demarcated space". As argued in Chapter one, however, 'adding' spatial transformations to Anderson's 1983 argument is redundant: *spatial categories determine the account from the beginning*.

<sup>74</sup> Smith, 1981, p.65.

returns critical thought on the nation to the objections to conventional theories Anderson's focus on space, time, and identity raise. If Anderson fails to specify the nation in his account, Smith fails to offer an account of the originary presence of ethnicity. Despite their criticisms of Gellner's argument, both the neo-Marxist Anderson and the liberal Smith fail to question the meta-theoretical assumptions of that argument, a failure which dooms both to Gellner's 'tragic' mode of theorizing.<sup>75</sup>

### Liberalism and Nationalism in Gellner and Weber

Thus, like Anderson, Gellner's discourse of politics as spatial order forces critical thought into a tragic mode. The meta-theoretical assumptions of this discourse enable tragedy to appear as a critical, detached mode of theorizing, but it also shares these assumptions with the 'objects' it attempts to critically capture. If the nation expresses the rendering-explicit of the spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment reason, that very form of reason would appear to be a suspect 'tool' for a critical analysis of this 'process' of concretization. The tragic dimension of Gellner's argument should not, however, be overstated: as Perry Anderson observes, Gellner's defence of liberal institutions as necessary managers of social mobility is particularly "sanguine".<sup>76</sup> Anderson does detect a note of uncertainty in Gellner's oeuvre, but the threat comes from the potential for management of the unconscious,<sup>77</sup> not from the uncertain role of the rational intellectual. The latter emphasis, however, is the argument of *Nations and Nationalism*; moreover, it is a thematic which brings the Weberian lineage of Gellner's discourse more clearly into focus than Perry Anderson's comparison of Gellner and Weber does.

Anderson elaborates a number of similarities and differences between Weber and Gellner. But he ignores the major ones: the shared account of a process of universal homogenization; the resignation of one (Gellner) to the type of self thrown up by the process he describes, and the

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<sup>75</sup> Smith, for example, concludes that the fundamental conflict in modernity remains that between the 'scientific' State and 'ethnic community', a conflict whose resolution is unlikely. (Smith, 1981, pp.195-7.)

<sup>76</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.203.

<sup>77</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.206.

passionate search by the other (Weber) for a self which could meet 'the demands of the day'.<sup>78</sup> These elisions are crucial, since Marxist theories of the nation tend to argue that universal homogenization is 'our condition'; 'our fate', however, is to try to find a way forward, beyond this condition. In addition, the way 'forward' is reserved for a collectivity of selves aligned to some version of a rational comprehension of history. The temptation for critical readers of Gellner like Perry Anderson (and, as has been argued here, his brother Benedict) is to accept Gellner's version of the nation as the 'inevitable' product of history, itself read as a rational process, but to 'add' an account of the homogenized self and its subjectivity to the story, *without questioning the discursive constraints of the story itself*.

Gellner's narrative invites such attempts at addition by not offering a detailed account of the rise of the modern self. In *Nations and Nationalism* he merely notes its 'analogous' relation to the modern culture-polity, the state. This self is simply a necessary product of an equally necessary 'permanent revolution' in the social division of labour. Like rationality, which is both an historical product and supra-historical tool of enquiry, the abstract, bounded space of the self/nation/state is both product of rational historical 'development' and implicit ground of this process itself. This analogical reasoning, and the spatializing discourse through which it is articulated, is mirrored in Benedict Anderson's attempt to consider the nation from the 'inside' of 'human subjectivity'. Writing the nation and narrating subjectivity in terms of *identity* does not escape the meta-theoretical assumptions of Gellner's argument: Gellner's discourse is also organized through the question of *coherence*, of how things 'hold together' in a spatial order.

The conception of politics as 'contained' within a spatial order is assumed throughout Gellner's account of the Three Ages of Man: in addition to an ahistorical notion of power and interests, the force of the account turns on an opposition between *complete absence* and *universal presence*. This opposition, moreover, is a spatial one; specifically, *it assumes the spatial coordinates of Enlightenment rationality*. The fixing of *inside* and *outside* made explicit in the Enlightenment are implicit from the beginning: if the 'national' state is universally present 'here' - today - it has to be absent elsewhere; this 'elsewhere' must be placed 'back there', in the past. The

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<sup>78</sup> See P. Anderson, 1992, pp.197-202.

story is filled out by the spread of this 'unit' from its putative European origins to its global triumph. This story is important for its refusal of the comforting platitudes of much "International Relations" theory, which asserts either the eternal presence of the state, or announces its imminent absence.<sup>79</sup> Gellner's emphasis on the historical specificity of the modern state is vitiated, however, by the spatial assumptions which 'prepare the ground' for this state's emergence. It is also compromised, like Benedict Anderson's narrative, by a unilinear conception of temporality, where *'history' becomes a mode of temporality reduced to a category of space*. In the universal spatial order of particular homogenous 'units', *universal and particular* are elegantly resolved, adding further to the seductive 'coherence' of the account. Thus, 'coherence' is a problematic of spatial order, the resolution of universal and particular, the opposition of presence and absence, the 'fatal' attraction of reason and history, and tragedy as the critical posture of intellectual critique. Shifting focus from the imperatives of reason to those of subjectivity - Anderson's move - does not question the discursive constraints of this problematic.

Perry Anderson claims, however, that a focus on subjectivity counters Gellner's sociological reductionism. What is lost in the act of reading off the nation, state, and self from the rational imperatives of the social division of labour is "the overpowering dimension of *meaning* that modern nationalism has always involved: that is, not its functionality for industry, but its fulfillment of identity".<sup>80</sup> Gellner's response to complaints about this elision of 'meaning' is to argue, in 'Weberian' terms, that the universal process of modernization has done the eliding. What once sustained meaning is assimilated or erased by this process; both Weber and Gellner are trenchant critics of ersatz 'meanings' manufactured in the course of this universal development. Anderson claims that the difference between Weber and Gellner in this regard is that, where Weber perceives this 'crisis' of meaning in ethical and 'existential' terms, Gellner views it as an epistemological

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<sup>79</sup> Among his most recent critiques of the discursive construction of this complimentary opposition as the "tradition" of International Relations theory, a discourse which assumes the presence of *sovereignty* as a resolution of the oppositions generated by a conception of politics as spatial order, see Walker, 1993. esp. pp.161-79; Ashley and Walker, 1990, esp. pp.381-6. Gellner assumes the resolutions of sovereignty from the beginning; Benedict Anderson makes it a condition, rather than a pre-condition, for the nation, but its 'becoming-present' is encoded in the spatial assumptions of his account as well.

<sup>80</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.205.

problem for which a solution *is* available: "*real* meaning has already been restored. Science provides the grid of all our effective beliefs..."<sup>81</sup> But Anderson had earlier argued, in the same essay, that Weber *too* has discovered a source of renewed meaning: *the nation*. The difference between Weber and Gellner turns out to be not so much the diagnosis of the crisis as the nature of the prescription.

If Anderson criticizes Gellner's 'self-satisfied' faith in 'normal science' (a faith which the uncertain role of Gellner's rational intellectual casts into doubt), he does so on the grounds that Gellner's theory fails to account for the *irrational* pole of nationalism:

"What it completely skirts is the really spectacular manifestations of twentieth-century nationalism - not the independence of Czechoslovakia or Morocco, but World War and Nazism".<sup>82</sup>

It is the "spell" of this 'irrationality' which invites an analysis of the nation and nationalism in terms of 'meaning', according to Anderson.<sup>83</sup> But this problem, of how to account for the irrationality of the nation without slipping into Gellner's economic functionalism and "immoderate materialism",<sup>84</sup> reduces Weber's problematic of identity to an apology for the irrational profile of the nation's *Janus-face*. Weber's analysis is alleged to lack Gellner's "clarity of outlook";<sup>85</sup> worse, it relies on "decisionism", whose "irrationalist cast is obvious enough".<sup>86</sup> Anderson claims that this decisionism is the source of an antinomy between liberalism and nationalism in Weber's thought, but that his commitment is always ultimately to the latter. Moreover, it is the connection between *meaning and fate* that attempts to resolve this antinomy: war and 'national honour', which dwell in the realms of fate, are presented as one pole of Weber's thought; choice and a defence of liberal institutions the

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<sup>81</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, pp.198-200.

<sup>82</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.204.

<sup>83</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.205.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.* This expression is perhaps a polite way of saying "reductionism" to those on the Left, like Nairn and Hobsbawm, who follow the main lines of Gellner's theory.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.189.

other.<sup>87</sup> What Anderson fails to register in this portrayal is the opposition between the 'inside' of the state as the terrain of choice and the 'outside' as the realm of fate. In fact, Weber's discourse is conducted through the very assumption of politics as spatial order that governs Gellner's theory, as the following chapter of this essay argues. Furthermore, if Weber's appeal to "*tragic fate*" impels his commitment to the nation,<sup>88</sup> the argument that Gellner's theory operates through the same logic passes unnoticed in Anderson's account.

Indeed, Gellner's argument appears to be a weak version of Weber's account of the dilemmas inherent in attempting to live an ethical life through the categories of a modernity whose dynamics entail the destruction of the possibility of ethical life itself. If Gellner's text is thus caught between "Enlightenment and Despair",<sup>89</sup> its thesis attempts to contain this oscillation: enlightenment and despair are both products of rational necessity. The modern intellectual who apprehends this necessity understands despair not as failure, but as *fate*. This modernity and these dynamics assume a spatializing logic of coherence, which resolves universality and particularity in a field of homogenous spaces 'horizontally' fixed in a Euclidean grid, and 'vertically' articulated through a 'great chain' of analogies. But if Gellner's discourse is in crucial respects a re-statement of Weber, aligning Weber's own discourse with the 'irrational' aspects of the nation elided in Gellner's account *permits the 'addition' of 'identity' to appear as the necessary strategy for a rejuvenated critical theory of the nation*. This, as Chapter one has argued, is Benedict Anderson's 'response' to Gellner and to the Marxist theorists who follow him. It is also Perry Anderson's key rhetorical move. He traces the discursive shift which occurs in Europe in this century from an emphasis on 'national character' to analyses organized in terms of 'national identity'.<sup>90</sup> The former assumes, from Hume to Otto Bauer, a notion of a (potentially) shared national culture whose traits could be isolated and comprehensively described. The notion of national identity springs from the waning of the social conditions which sustained national character; the result is an emphasis on the ways in

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<sup>87</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.196.

<sup>88</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, pp.194-6,205-6.

<sup>89</sup> This expression is borrowed from Geoffrey Hawthorn's book of the same title; see Hawthorn, 1987.

<sup>90</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, pp.261-70.

which the symbolic plane, memory, alterity, selectivity, and reflexive consciousness sustain a quasi-ontological identity, which is now in 'crisis'.<sup>91</sup> Significantly, *Anderson limits the 'modern' problematic of the nation to this discourse of identity*. If theorists and commentators come to quite different conclusions regarding the permanence or twilight of national identity, Anderson's face is firmly turned to the "obscurity ahead":

"The differing diagnoses of these writers point to a central ambiguity of capitalist rationalization and its discontents, which only events can resolve. If the preoccupations of national identity are a product of the material erosion of much of what was once thought to be national character, will the further progress of a cosmopolitan modernity dissolve or intensify these?"<sup>92</sup>

While Anderson takes a backward glance at Weber, it is largely to reassure himself of the whereabouts of his adversary, as if the 'irrational face' of the Janus-face of the nation looks back to Weber. For not only is Weber's theoretical argument irrationalist; in Anderson's account, Weber simply opts for the nation as an act of 'will'. The nation flies far beyond the range of his theoretical analysis:

"...It is striking how unconscious he was, sociologically, of his own solution to the disenchantment he feared... The most powerful political force of his day, and central passion of his public activity, is all but absent from his theoretical sight".<sup>93</sup>

### Conclusions: Re-Reading Weber

This disavowal of the place of the nation in Weber's theoretical discourse, which 'after all' leads to an *irrationalism* which is read as Gellner's chief elision, makes invisible the problematic of identity and the nation found in a careful re-reading of Weber. Looking at Weber through his relation with Nietzsche's, rather than Gellner's, discourse makes clearer not only the centrality of the nation in Weber's theoretical discourse, but also the connections between Weber's theoretical

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<sup>91</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, pp.286-70.

<sup>92</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.278.

<sup>93</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, p.197.

concerns and his political commitments, connections Anderson negates. Most importantly, shifting the discursive frame from Gellner to Nietzsche 'makes visible' the constraints of the theoretical 'debate' between Gellner and Benedict Anderson. From this perspective, both Gellner *and* Benedict Anderson re-produce the key features of Weber's discourse on the nation. As Chapter three of this essay argues, *Anderson's theory of the nation rehearses, in every major detail, Weber's argument.* Ironically, the focus on subjectivity, 'meaning', and belonging that both Andersons offer as the critical corrective to Gellnerian discourse simply repeats the discursive constraints of Weber's earlier argument. Reading the problem of a critical theory of the nation in terms of the opposition rational/irrational ('the Janus-face of the nation') *avoids consideration of the meta-theoretical assumptions which make this opposition possible*, assumptions given 'paradigmatic' formulation in Weber's discourse.

Moreover, Weber's work itself is forged through a crucial *mis-reading* of Nietzsche's argument. However close to Nietzsche Weber appears in some recent studies of their relations, the tendency to rely on a conventional reading of Nietzsche for this comparison elides the key difference between them: Nietzsche's discourse is constructed around the problem of *identifying the forces that might escape the constraints of 'coherence'*.<sup>94</sup> What goes unnoticed in comparisons of Nietzsche and Weber is that *Weber also erases this difference*; this erasure is critical for an understanding of the place of the nation in his discourse. Misreading Nietzsche is what *enables* Weber to forge a discourse of politics as spatial order in which the elements of Benedict Anderson's grammar of the nation are fully anticipated: the problem of 'identity' and meaning-creation as a problem of theodicy; the refusal to read the transition from sacred to secular social orders as a simple replacement of the former by the latter; the functionality of fatality, language, print-capitalism, and mobility for making visible the homogenous space of the nation; the analogous relations between self, nation, and state as both product of an inevitable concretization of spatial boundaries and the logic of the analysis itself; the final capture within the firm, spatial boundaries

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<sup>94</sup> Perry Anderson reinforces this conventional reading of Nietzsche by aligning Weber's 'irrationalism' with Nietzsche's "fabulously...speculative instinctual psychology" (P. Anderson, 1992, p.167.), which results in a paradoxical metaphysics of decisionism and *amor fati*. (pp.193,196.) In this, the possibility of a Nietzschean critique of the opposition rational/irrational that Anderson encodes as the boundary between critical and uncritical theories of the nation and nationalism is erased.

of the state of the 'active' force of sacrifice; and the attempt to revalue this force by an appeal to the necessity of theorizing in a tragic mode.

If, as the following chapter of this essay contends, these are the elements of Weber's discourse, they have largely escaped the notice of Weber's critical commentators. Gellner, for instance, acknowledges the importance of Weber's thesis on 'the Protestant Ethic' for his own argument, however "speculative and inconclusive" Weber's attempt to link this ethic with "the genesis of the capitalist spirit" is.<sup>95</sup> If Gellner substitutes reductionism and determinism for 'speculation' and 'inconclusiveness', his own reading of Weber's argument limits it to a 'proto-theory' of the nation:

"The stress of the Reformation on literacy and scripturalism, its onslaught on a monopolistic priesthood (or, as Weber clearly saw, its universalization rather than abolition of priesthood), its individualism and links with mobile urban populations, all make it a kind of harbinger of social features and attitudes which, according to our model, produce the nationalist age".<sup>96</sup>

Weber's insights into 'the Protestant Ethic' are thus reduced to elements which Gellner recombines to fit the confines of his own theory of the nation. Once again, Weber's problematic of 'meaning' and identity is ruled out of serious consideration by Gellner's discourse, which itself gives little attention to the question of subjectivity. It should also be noted that Gellner's debt is to Emile Durkheim as well as to Weber, and that this debt accounts for his temptation to read a 'Weberian' process of universal rationalization and modernization as equivalent to the triumph of the 'secular' over the 'sacred'. It will be seen, however, that this story of the erasure of the value of the sacred, rejected by Benedict Anderson, is rejected by Weber as well: Weber's problematic traces, like Anderson's, the 'fate' of theodicy in modernity, not the 'inevitable' triumph of secularization.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Gellner, 1992, p.19; see also, p.91.

<sup>96</sup> Gellner, 1992, pp.40-1; see also, Gellner, 1988, pp.100-12.

<sup>97</sup> Steven Collins has noted noted Gellner's approval of Durkheim's neo-Kantianism: critique which employs universal, ahistorical categories is amended in Durkheim's work by an emphasis on their relativity to a particular 'society' at a given period of time. This relativism is sharply curtailed, however, by an equal emphasis on the *necessity* of these categories. As Gellner puts it,

"Durkheim's main problem, as he saw it, was not to explain religion but to explain conceptual thought, and above all the *necessity*, the compulsive nature of certain of our

The relative weight given 'the self' in Weber and in Gellner reflects a difference in situation: where Gellner strives to defend the vitality of a liberalism and a liberal self grown weary in his 'affluent West', Weber writes at a time and place when the triumph of liberalism is far from certain. In this context, the question of the type of self able to meet the challenge of this uncertainty becomes crucial to Weber's enterprise. Weber's response is to endorse a 'hegemonic' status for German nationalism, a position which, as Perry Anderson claims, appears hardly consistent with his equally passionate defence of liberal institutions 'inside' the state. Yet how, if not through Anderson's rhetorically motivated appeal to Nietzschean 'irrationalism', is this apparent inconsistency to be understood?

The answer to this question does lie in a consideration of Weber's relations with Nietzsche, but these relations have not yet been adequately comprehended by their commentators. Wolfgang Mommsen, for example, argues that Weber's position on liberalism and nationalism should not be dismissed by figuring both Nietzsche and Weber as writers in league with the forces of irrationalism, but ought to be understood as antinomies which reflect a Nietzschean determination to *press the implications of any position to its furthest consequences*.<sup>98</sup> However, while this formulation does capture an important element of their shared logic, it does not answer the question of why *these particular positions* are subjected to such 'unflinching intellectual honesty'. Mommsen correctly argues that this logic extends to a Nietzschean 'transvaluation of values' at work in Weber:

"Progressively, as part of his endeavor to formulate a definitive conception of parliamentary-democratic domination which would correspond to the times, he felt the need to discard or rather reformulate in the process generally accepted liberal conceptions... Positions which had originally coexisted in an unclear relationship started

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general concepts..." (Gellner, in Collins, 1986, p.47.)

Gellner's own take on this dual emphasis finds expression in his contention that the spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment reason appears at a certain time and place; its rendering-explicit is necessary, and erases the plausibility of 'older' forms of spatial and temporal reference. (See also, Gellner's comments on Durkheim and Weber in Gellner, 1988, pp.110-112, where he offers a "generic" conception of Reformations, tracing the final triumph of *one* version of it, to evade the tension between Durkheim's question of why *all* 'men' are rational and Weber's problem of "why *some* men are more rational than others".)

<sup>98</sup> Mommsen, 1989, pp.24-5.

progressively to diverge until, finally, they took on an antinomial structure".<sup>99</sup>

This account is compatible with Weber's stress on 'rationalization' as a unifying/dividing force, a 'fateful' force to which his own political argument seeks to *measure up*, but it does not yet answer the question of why an aggressive nationalism and liberal-democratic institutionalism are antinomies so fatally at play in Weber.

Mommsen seems to sense as much, since he goes on to list a number of possible explanations for just this choice in Weber. First, he claims that it is plausible to assert that Weber

"saw the inauguration of German imperialism primarily as a means to achieve a fundamental liberalization of German society. As it were, Weber propagated the imperial idea in order to fight the conservatives with their own weapons".<sup>100</sup>

Since "a rational imperialist policy implied an option for the industrial state",<sup>101</sup> Weber's 'tactical' support for German national unity 'within' and vigorous national competition 'without' can be read as an attempt to resolve the antinomy and to break the 'hegemony' of the Prussian aristocracy.<sup>102</sup> The difficulty with this reading, as Mommsen points out, is that German nationalism is no mere expedient for Weber. Thus, Mommsen re-introduces the antinomy, arguing that Weber is being consistent in claiming that such 'fundamental value positions' do not admit of reconciliation. Having just said this, however, Mommsen goes on to state that a "common fundamental premise" underlies the apparent antinomy:<sup>103</sup> the "freedom and dynamism" of a re-valued liberalism, reduced in Weber's time to necessary props - "truisms or empty formulas" - is the only antidote to the relentless onslaught of formal, bureaucratic rationalization.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Mommsen, 1989, p.27.

<sup>100</sup> Mommsen, 1989, p.28.

<sup>101</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Mommsen, 1989, p.29.

<sup>104</sup> Mommsen, 1989, p.30.

Much of Mommsen's valuable text is occupied with this oscillation between antinomy and resolution in Weber's argument; while it highlights many key features of Weber's discourse, it struggles in its attempt to make sense of Weber's politics. The limitations of Mommsen's text are the limits of its focus: a careful consideration of Weber's problem of the self, such as that provided by Harvey Goldman's meditation on the 'calling' in Weber and Thomas Mann, is a necessary supplement to Mommsen's discussion of Weber's politics. In the same way, Goldman's account of the self in Weber requires the broader setting of the question of culture; this is provided in Lawrence Scaff. However, Scaff's cultural analysis lacks the crucial focus on political theory provided by Wilhelm Hennis. But while Hennis situates Weber's thought firmly within the concerns of political theory, his conventional reading of Nietzsche once again returns the analysis of Weber undertaken in this essay back to the questions raised by Mommsen's text. Thus, while the Weber scholars mentioned above provide important breakthroughs for a re-reading of Weber, none provides the framework for a satisfactory account of the relations between Weber's conceptions of self, culture, and politics; more crucially for this essay, none can 'make sense' of Weber's conception of the nation. Chapter three of this essay contends, however, that by placing Weber's discourse in the context of its relations with the reading of Nietzsche largely inspired by the 'counter-lineage' of Bataille, Blanchot, Foucault, and Deleuze, both the 'coherence' of Weber's notion of the nation and the devastating constraints of Weberian discourse for a critical theory of the nation and nationalism become clearer.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> The procedure of this essay is not to reject recent scholarship on Weber, but to place it in line with re-examinations of Nietzsche's texts. What *is* rejected, however, is the attempt to claim Weber as a founding father of a "value-free social science". In this, one must agree with the judgement of Geoffrey Hawthorn on the 'use and abuse' of Weber, particularly in American 'social science':

"It is particularly ironic that especially in the country which after his visit there in 1904 he praised for its forthright and critical individualism, he has since been taken to be a pragmatic sociologist. No-one stands in sharper contrast to the intellectual sterility and moral fatuity of much modern sociology". (Hawthorn, 1987, p.163.)

For comments on the reception of Weber in recent sociology, see Sica, 1993, Scaff, 1993, and Goldman, 1993 - contributions to a symposium on Weber in the journal *Theory and Society*.

"It is hard surviving you, having to say from now on: As he rightly said even then...  
 Because our aims cloaked themselves in mist, you spoke diffusely. As soon as we see through the mists, we shall make you sound more to the point.  
 On the strength of your imprecise certainty you laugh and say: Freshly condensed mists will replace the transparent ones. No doubt about it.  
 So our longing for transparencies makes for cloaked progress.  
 While the cocks are still crowing and the pastor is doing his best, you say: Protest against the progressive powers is foreseen by the progressive powers.  
 What about your protest?  
 That, too. But my death was not on their program. The powers would have liked to keep me in their service. Surviving myself: I.  
 We must therefore become powerful in order to keep going as negative mists, long-lined poems, and short-lived poets. That would be very simple and hard to see through.  
 At this point, you say, the cocks laugh while, gathered around your grave, we make our faces."

Günter Grass, *Headbirths or The Germans Are Dying Out*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The previous chapter has argued that failure to consider meta-theoretical questions of space, time, and identity in Gellner's theory of the nation and nationalism has doomed critical theorists like Benedict Anderson to reproduce the discursive constraints encoded by these assumptions. This chapter contends that while appearing to offer an advance over the limitations of Gellner's theory, discourses like Anderson's simply repeat the 'grammar' of Weber's earlier argument, whose logic is rendered all but invisible by Gellner's discourse. The place of the nation in Weber's theoretical work is discounted by attempts to comprehend the the nation in terms of its dual face, one 'rational', the other 'irrational'. The result is that, to the extent that Weber is considered alongside Nietzsche, both are read in line with the comfort they give to the irrational side of the nation, whose emblematic expression is fascism. But, as this chapter argues, *not only does Weber give serious, if brief, theoretical consideration to the nation, the results of this consideration are consistent with the fundamental problem he poses.*

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<sup>1</sup> Grass, 1982, pp.123-4.

This problem, of how to respond to the tragic universalization of an 'iron cage' of 'reactive', meaning-drained identities 'contained' within the firm boundaries of a concretization of politics as spatial order, *derives from a mis-reading of Nietzsche*. In its most important problematics, the logic of Weber's discourse is Nietzschean. But Weber's sociological inclinations reverse the signs of Nietzsche's argument concerning what constitutes a creative, 'active' response to the distinctly uncreative homogenization Weber rejects, and what does not. Nietzsche's argument, which attempts to trace the 'active' forces that escape the problematic of coherence and the spatio-temporal assumptions which enable it, becomes the opposite in Weber: Weber's whole analysis is written from the perspective of a search for the creative potential of the very forces which have produced the 'coherence' of politics as spatial order. For Weber, a 'Nietzschean' reevaluation of these forces is possible, however difficult; moreover, *the nation is the crucial site of this reevaluation*. For Nietzsche, by contrast, writing from the perspective of 'coherence', of how identities are produced in a universalized spatial order, *erases* the dynamics at play which have the potential for this 'active', creative reevaluation. Starting from the 'iron cage' of coherence, Weber is doomed, like Gellner and Anderson, to invoke the necessity of theorizing the nation and nationalism in a tragic mode.

### The Protestant Ethic

As noted in Chapter two, Weber anticipates, in every major detail, Benedict Anderson's discourse of the nation as an 'imagined community'. The elements of Weber's grammar of the nation center, as Anderson's do, around the issue of *theodicy*: the meaning-creating, identity-forming forces of suffering, fatality, and sacrifice organize the perspective of Weber's *whole account*. Like Anderson, Weber traces the 'fate' of the dynamics of a self-identity which is 'fatally' bound up with the concretization of politics as spatial order. If, for Anderson, the reified boundaries of this spatial order erase the spatio-temporal dynamics of 'older' imagined communities, he seeks to revalue the 'active' force of 'patriotic' sacrifice in a *tragic identity-practice which can 'measure up' to the complete triumph of this spatial order 'today'*. Weber seeks the same reevaluation, for the same reasons. Moreover, for both Weber and Anderson, the key terrain upon which the forces that produce the nation converge is *'the everyday'*. In attempting to

provide an account of the relations between 'the Protestant ethic' and the dynamics of 'capitalism', Weber focuses his attention on the realm of the everyday: only the type of self produced through the dynamics of this ethic measure up to the transformative forces of modernity, which act most decisively on 'traditional' everyday practices and conceptions. It is to Weber's account of the Protestant ethic that this discussion now turns.

The "Introduction" to *The Protestant Ethic*, added years after the main text was written, announces that Weber's purpose is in part to account for the

"fact...that in Western civilization, and in Western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which (as we like to think) lie in a line of development having *universal* significance and value".<sup>2</sup>

He goes on to list fields of the 'unique' achievements of 'European' history: empirical science, historical scholarship, music, architecture, the Press and periodicals, the trained and specialized official, "absolute" dependence on an organization of such officials, the state, and capitalism.<sup>3</sup> By 'capitalism' is not meant the "impulse to acquisition": this is simply universal. But it is "identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever *renewed* profit, by means of continuous, rational, capitalistic enterprise".<sup>4</sup> Means and ends are balanced in this rational, formally peaceful activity of adventitious exchange. However, this too has existed elsewhere and at other times; what distinguishes modern capitalism in 'the Occident' is not in the first place a quantitative difference (more continuous trade, for example) but a *qualitative* one: "the rational capitalistic organization of (formally) free labour".<sup>5</sup>

'Free labour' is decisive, since it is the basis for what is fundamental, according to Weber: exact calculation. As it will turn out, the possibility of rational bookkeeping is of crucial *psychological* significance for Weber's reading of the nation; for the moment, what is of significance for this account is the similarity between Weber's stress on rational, means-ends

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<sup>2</sup> Weber, 1958, p.13.

<sup>3</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.13-17.

<sup>4</sup> Weber, 1958, p.17.

<sup>5</sup> Weber, 1958, p.21.

calculation and the spatial separation of "corporate and personal property" (business and household),<sup>6</sup> and Gellner's emphasis on the key role of Enlightenment rationality's spatio-temporal matrix. Indeed, Weber, like Gellner, appears to frame this matrix in a spatial logic of *presence and absence*: why the West, and not China or India as the scene of the forces that produce this unique form which has such universal significance today?<sup>7</sup>

But, whatever the appearances, Weber differs from Gellner in not giving an answer in terms of an interplay between the imperatives of the social division of labour and 'capitalistic interests': if rational structures of law and administration have achieved a 'formal perfection' unique to the West and vital to the full development of capitalism, these structures were not 'created by' these interests, however "helpful" they might have been. Weber insists that it will be necessary, therefore, to look for the presence of "quite different forces" in the West, absent elsewhere, to answer the question posed above.<sup>8</sup>

These quite different forces center, as Harvey Goldman argues, around the appearance of a new type of self which develops in the "culture of the calling" (*Berufskultur*) of Calvinism: an ethos of rational service to the demands of this-worldly activity.<sup>9</sup> What is crucial to Weber's account of the resulting 'spirit of capitalism' is that it not be reduced (as it is in Gellner) to a process of *adaptation*, its mere functionality for the 'needs' of a capitalistic economy. The complete domination of 'reactive' adaptation is, however, the case today:

"The capitalistic economy of the present day is an immense cosmos into which the individual is born, and which presents itself to him, at least as an individual, as an unalterable order of things in which he must live...

Thus the capitalism of to-day, which has come to dominate economic life, educates and selects the economic subjects which it needs through a process of economic survival of the fittest... But...in order that a manner of life so well adapted to the peculiarities of capitalism could be selected at all, i.e. should come to dominate others, it had to originate

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<sup>6</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.22-3.

<sup>7</sup> Weber, 1958, p.25.

<sup>8</sup> Weber, 1958, p.25.

<sup>9</sup> Goldman, 1991, pp.23-5.

somewhere..."<sup>10</sup>

Theories that explain capitalism's rise to dominance in terms of adaptation (and this includes "the more naïve historical materialism"<sup>11</sup>) thus lack both an historical sense and a conception of *religiously-formed identities as productive, creative forces*. If 'today' capitalism

"no longer needs the support of any religious forces, and feels the attempts of religion to influence economic life, in so far as they can still be felt at all, to be as much an unjustified interference as its regulation by the State...these are phenomena of a time in which modern capitalism has become dominant and has become emancipated from its old supports".<sup>12</sup>

In following the logic of this 'emancipation', Weber will therefore insist that 'the spirit of capitalism' and the modern form of capitalistic enterprise "generally stand in some sort of adequate relationship to each other, but not in one of necessary interdependence".<sup>13</sup> What is required to account for both this adequation and the emancipation of modern capitalism from its religious supports is what Lawrence Scaff calls Weber's "network causality" of *relational concepts*, each of which derives its force and sense from its interaction with others. This conception of causality attempts to avoid both the pitfalls of evolutionary arguments by positing the 'heuristic' model of 'ideal types', and the simple determinism of a hierarchical logic of base and superstructure.<sup>14</sup> The spirit of capitalism and capitalistic forms of enterprise must be held apart for Weber not only because the presence of one at a given time or place does not presuppose the presence of the other;<sup>15</sup> *their lines of force must be distinguished, if the effects of their interaction are to be adequately understood*.

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<sup>10</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.54-5.

<sup>11</sup> Weber, 1958, p.55.

<sup>12</sup> Weber, 1958, p.72.

<sup>13</sup> Weber, 1958, p.64.

<sup>14</sup> Scaff, 1989, pp.41-9.

<sup>15</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.65 ff.

Distinguishing the "lines of force" of relational concepts is crucial to Weber's account.

What is new in Luther's Reformation is

"the valuation of the fulfilment of duty in worldly affairs as the highest form which the moral activity of the individual could assume. This it was which gave every-day worldly activity a religious sense, and which first created the conception of the calling in this sense".<sup>16</sup>

Lutheranism acts most crucially on the everyday world; it is a creative force which puts its stamp on this realm. Ultimately for Luther it is the will of God which commends this revaluation of this-worldly activity, against monastic asceticism.<sup>17</sup> But the idea of Providence reveals Luther's ties to both traditionalism and mysticism. This is a key limitation for Weber, since *hostility to the 'irrationality' of traditionalism is crucial to the development of the capitalist spirit*.<sup>18</sup> One must, therefore, look beyond Luther to find the forces which organize and compel a consistently rationalized conception of self and world.

This search for a creative, 'active' organization of forces is necessary because on the one hand, "the consequences of the conception of the calling in the religious sense for worldly conduct were susceptible to quite different interpretations";<sup>19</sup> on the other, "similar ethical maxims may be correlated with very different dogmatic foundations".<sup>20</sup> As a result, Weber seeks a 'psychological' *ideal type* forged through

"the influence of those psychological sanctions which, originating in religious belief and the practice of religion, gave a direction to practical conduct and held the individual to it".<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Weber, 1958, p.80.

<sup>17</sup> Weber, 1858, pp.80-1.

<sup>18</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.58-69.

<sup>19</sup> Weber, 1958, p.83.

<sup>20</sup> Weber, 1958, p.97.

<sup>21</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.97-8.

Weber's search is for a conception of self and world which pushes rationalization to its most complete conclusions, and compels submission to its logic through its organization of 'psychological' forces.

One consequence of this approach is to reject the notion that rationalization itself explains the 'spirit of capitalism', contrary to the argument of Werner Sombart<sup>22</sup> (and Ernest Gellner). Weber rejects this thesis "simply because of the fact that the history of rationalism shows a development which by no means follows parallel lines in the various departments of life".<sup>23</sup> The *homogenization of temporalities* common to modern forms of historicism is implicitly opposed here. Such homogenization cannot answer Weber's question, viz., "How could activity, which was at best ethically tolerated, turn into a calling in the sense of Benjamin Franklin?"<sup>24</sup> In the case of the 'type' of the modern entrepreneur, the ethos of rational service to the demands of this-worldly activity amounts to an ethical duty to realize profit: to act in accordance with the rationality of capital accumulation as a duty.<sup>25</sup>

In this conception of self and world, *fataality* plays a crucial role. Weber's argument, like Benedict Anderson's, turns on the creative, meaning-giving psychological forces of identity, as seen from the 'inside' of fatality, death and sacrifice. In Weber's account, the revaluation of accumulation in the ethic of the calling is undertaken most completely by "the economy of forces"<sup>26</sup> of Calvinism, which converge on the question of predestination. For Weber, two 'paths' to the concepts of predestination can be identified. First,

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<sup>22</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.75-6.

<sup>23</sup> Weber, 1958, p.77.

<sup>24</sup> Weber, 1958, p.74.

<sup>25</sup> On the difference between accumulation as a morally neutral activity in a Renaissance-type such as a Jacob Frugger or an Anthony of Florence, and Franklin's 'revaluation', see Weber, 1958, pp.73-4,82; see also Goldman, 1991, p.25.

<sup>26</sup> Weber, 1958, p.109.

"the religious sense of grace is combined, in the most active and passionate of those great worshippers which Christianity has produced since Augustine, with the feeling of certainty that that grace is the sole product of an objective power, and not in the least to be attributed to personal worth".<sup>27</sup>

Crucially, this conception allows for release from the pressures of sin. The second path is that taken by Calvin and Calvinism. Here, predestination is central through "the logical consistency of his thought; therefore its importance increases with every increase in the logical consistency of that religious thought".<sup>28</sup> Grace is neither revocable nor the product of religious experience, as it is for Luther. For Calvin, this world can only have meaning to the extent that it is a "means to the glory and majesty of God": predestination is the unalterable decree of an absolutely transcendent God whose purposes remain hidden.<sup>29</sup>

The psychological consequences of this conception are decisive: the "magnificent consistency" of Calvin's notion of the self and world results in "a feeling of unprecedented inner loneliness of the single individual".<sup>30</sup> Eternal salvation is henceforth guaranteed by neither Church nor sacrament (a key difference, Weber observes, from Catholicism). Calvinism's organization of forces thus *measures up* to the rejection of 'traditionalism' by the forces of capitalism: "The elimination of magic from the world...came here to its logical conclusion".<sup>31</sup>

Elimination of traditionalism has further consequences: lack of means to attain God's grace results in a hostility toward "sensuous culture of all kinds", as well as in the "disillusioned and pessimistically inclined individualism" of certain "national characters".<sup>32</sup> Most important, however, is that Calvinist rejection of Lutheran conceptions of private confession has the opposite effect to the earlier line of thought on predestination: "the means to a periodic discharge of the

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<sup>27</sup> Weber, 1958, p.101.

<sup>28</sup> Weber, 1958, p.102.

<sup>29</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.103-4.

<sup>30</sup> Weber, 1958, p.104.

<sup>31</sup> Weber, 1958, p.105.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

emotional sense of sin was done away with".<sup>33</sup> Salvation thus becomes a matter of "deep spiritual isolation", and this has decisive effects on conceptions of *death*. Bunyan, for example, reveals an "anxious fear of death" which is concerned, above all, with his own salvation. Weber contrasts this Calvinist fear of death and the uncertainty of salvation with "that spirit of proud worldliness" praised by Machiavelli in his discussion of "those Florentine citizens who...had held 'Love of their native city higher than the fear for the salvation of their souls'".<sup>34</sup> Weber's invocation of an 'active' sense of *sacrifice* in the classical *virtu* of the *citizen* will be reprised in his lecture on "Politics as a Vocation", discussed below. The centrality of this conception of self for Weber's response to the 'tragic' dilemma of modernity will echo forward in Benedict Anderson's argument, as Chapter one of this essay has discussed.

For Weber, the crucial difference between 'classical' civic virtue and Puritan ethics revolves around the compensatory logic of *theodicy*. Even where death was feared in the Renaissance, it led to the 'self-humiliation' of an Alfonso of Liguori; the Puritan's anxious fear of death leads, by contrast, to "a restless and systematic struggle with life".<sup>35</sup> Weber explains this difference by reference to an apparent paradox: Calvinism as a superior form of *social* organization isolates the individual to an unheard-of extent. But this is the form "brotherly love" itself must take given the logic of Calvinist faith; this-worldly activity undertaken solely in the glory of God is "hence shared by labour in a calling which serves the mundane life of the community".<sup>36</sup> The isolated individual finds 'meaning' in rationalized *labour* in a *community*. This service has "a peculiarly objective and impersonal character, that of service in the interest of the rational organization of our social environment".<sup>37</sup> The result of this 'impersonal', rationalized service is "the complete elimination of the theodicy problem and of all those questions about the meaning of

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<sup>33</sup> Weber, 1958, p.106.

<sup>34</sup> Weber, 1958, p.107.

<sup>35</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.107-8.

<sup>36</sup> Weber, 1958, p.108.

<sup>37</sup> Weber, 1958, p.109.

the world and life"<sup>38</sup> which have stamped the history of so much religious thought.

Calvinism's elimination of the theodicy problem marks it as a particularly 'active', creative organization of forces. In an age "to which the after-life was not only more important, but in many ways more certain, than all the interests of life in this world"<sup>39</sup> the rise to dominance of the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, which stresses the unknowability of election, is testament to this. The explanation for its effectiveness is given in terms of both rational labour in the mundane world and a new form of social community which gives *meaning* to individual fatality. The Puritan response to Calvin's exhortation to 'trust in Christ' produces an "intense worldly activity...disperses doubts and gives the certainty of grace".<sup>40</sup> What this demands is a "systematic self-control which at every moment stands before the inexorable alternative, chosen or damned".<sup>41</sup> Certainty of salvation in this conception is obtained only by *a consistent, systematic rationalization of self and world*.<sup>42</sup> This rationalization also has its effects upon the formation of *self-consciousness*. "The conscientious Puritan continually supervised his own state of grace"<sup>43</sup> using the "account-books" of "sin, temptation, and progress made" to 'feel one's own pulse with their aid'.<sup>44</sup>

Most importantly, this consistent, continuous rationalization of self and world is an "extradordinarily powerful" psychological sanction<sup>45</sup> which is *universal* in its reach. The 'spiritual

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.109-10.

<sup>40</sup> Weber, 1958, p.112.

<sup>41</sup> Weber, 1958, p.115.

<sup>42</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.117-18; Goldman, 1991, p.42.

<sup>43</sup> Weber, 1958, p.124.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* Weber's account allows one to place the Puritan conception of self-consciousness in a line leading to Giddens' notion of "the reflexive monitoring of action". This conception of *agency* underwrites both Giddens' and Tomlinson's theories of the nation. (See Giddens, 1979, pp.55-9; Tomlinson, 1992, pp.86-9.)

<sup>45</sup> Weber, 1958, p.128.

aristocracy' of monks is replaced by that of "the predestined saints of God within the world".<sup>46</sup> The demand that one make of oneself a "personality", "able to lead an alert, intelligent life: the most urgent task the destruction of spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment",<sup>47</sup> is hereafter *a demand made on all, not merely on the few*. Rationalized labour as a 'calling' justifies not only the activity of the rational (as opposed to the speculative, adventurous) entrepreneur; it also enjoins the *labourer* (as in the argument of the Puritan Baxter) to seek regular work as an ethical demand.<sup>48</sup>

The ascetic-rationalized self thus meets an ascetic-rationalized social world. As Weber puts it, "The emphasis on the ascetic importance of a fixed calling provided an ethical justification of the modern specialized division of labour".<sup>49</sup> The active 'individualism' of a homogenized self meets an increasingly homogenized world<sup>50</sup> as a creative, superior force. But what remains of this 'active' organization of forces 'today'? Puritanism, like the monasticism it has displaced, struggles continuously with "the secularizing influence of wealth". This problem is quite paradoxical for Puritanism, given its impetus to acquisition as an ethical duty: the more rationally consistent the ascetic urge, the more secularized it becomes.<sup>51</sup> Today "the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs".<sup>52</sup> The very rationalized worldly order called forth through the 'active', creative forces of Puritan asceticism have reduced these forces to a 'reactive' role: "The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so".<sup>53</sup> The creative organization of *fatalita* in the rationalized conception of self and world forged by Puritanism

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<sup>46</sup> Weber, 1958, p.121.

<sup>47</sup> Weber, 1958, p.119.

<sup>48</sup> Weber, 1958, p.161. Weber notes the effectiveness of the notion that "the unequal distribution of goods of this world" is ordained by Providence, for the demands made on both 'bourgeoisie' and 'labourers'. (pp.177-8.)

<sup>49</sup> Weber, 1958, p.163.

<sup>50</sup> Weber, 1958, p.169.

<sup>51</sup> Weber, 1958, pp.174-5.

<sup>52</sup> Weber, 1958, p.182.

<sup>53</sup> Weber, 1958, p.181.

succumbs to the *fate of its own logic*. "Fate decrees" that the rationalized care of the self becomes an "iron cage" of care of the external goods of the worldly order.<sup>54</sup>

Weber's response to this fatality is of decisive importance for an understanding of his conception of the nation, as well as for his defence of liberal institutions. But if the logic of Weber's argument is to be traced, it must be placed in the context of its relations with Nietzsche, if misunderstandings are to be avoided. Weber's account is concerned with identifying the 'active', creative *forces* of the Puritan conception of self and world, and the receptivity of other forces - labour, the everyday realm, fatality - for being 'acted' by this organization of forces. If the Puritan's culture of the calling and capitalism are treated in their 'purest form' by Weber, this is not only because 'historical reality' permits no "drawing [of] sharp boundaries";<sup>55</sup> a certain level of abstraction is required (ideal types) to *make visible this interaction of creative and receptive forces at work*. This Nietzschean dimension of Weber's argument, however, is missed by commentators like Harvey Goldman, who concludes that Weber's clearly negative judgement on 'the highest development' of modern culture<sup>56</sup> leads him to seek a recovery of the character-forming capacity of Puritan asceticism, a "need to return to the 'individualism' of life in the calling as a response to the collapse of a shared, or 'collective' sense of meaning in life".<sup>57</sup> What this conclusion misses is the logic of Weber's account of how Puritanism's creative organization of self and world *becomes* 'reactive' in modernity. If 'adaptation' governs life completely today, Weber traces its triumph through the very secularization impelled by the logic of this religious conception. It would therefore

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Weber, 1958, p.98.

<sup>56</sup> c.f. Weber, 1958, p.182: "'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart'; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved."

<sup>57</sup> Goldman, 1991, p.49. The Nietzschean dimension of Weber's conception of 'types' is also missed by many of his critics. If Weber's diagnosis of forces is ignored, it becomes possible to oppose his account of, say, Benjamin Franklin as a type to the 'real' historical biography of Puritanism. This criticism, which is a step backward from readings of Weber's *problem of identity* offered by Goldman, Scaff, and Hennis, among others, has most recently been attempted by Lehmann and Roth, eds., 1993. In fact, there is nothing new in the reductive historicism of this critique: Michael Walzer had already attacked Weber along these lines in 1965. (See Walzer, 1976, pp.304-10.) Walzer's argument is repeated by Paul Piccone, who claims that his own reading points up the superiority of 'neo-Marxist alternatives' to Weber's disregard for 'real history'. (Piccone, 1989, pp.102-6.)

be hasty to say, as Goldman does, that "the calling in Weber's later prescriptive work is a secular revival and appropriation" of the Puritan ethic,<sup>58</sup> for secularism in *The Protestant Ethic* marks precisely the fate of the 'becoming-reactive' of Puritanism's creative forces.

### The Problem of Theodicy

Weber's account of 'the Protestant ethic' is organized through the 'inside' of the meaning-creating forces of fatality, salvation, and labour in the rational service of a community of homogenized individuals, which is completely opposed to all *traditionalism* and which makes its demands *universal*. This community organizes itself through a resolution of the problem of *theodicy*; the conception of the *tragedy* of modernity invoked by Weber follows the logic of the effects of theodicy on conceptions of self and world. In asking the question of how the unique organization of self and world found in Puritanism as a 'type' is *possible*, Weber is asking a Nietzschean question. As Gilles Deleuze argues, the question of how the ascetic ideal is possible runs through *The Genealogy of Morals*, a text Weber knew well.<sup>59</sup> In his work on the sociology of religion, Weber recognizes the importance of Nietzsche's "brilliant essay" for his own investigation, but argues that the thematic of 'resentment' found there has generally "nothing whatsoever to do" with ethical rationalization.<sup>60</sup> The "evaluation of *suffering*", on the other hand, is central to this process. But this shift in concerns does not entail a rejection of Nietzsche's argument: "If properly understood, this change carries a certain justification for the theory first worked out by Nietzsche".<sup>61</sup>

The theme of suffering is central to Weber's conception of identity as it is formed in the Puritan conception of self and world. It rests, however, on a Nietzschean conception of *the*

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> See Scaff, 1989, pp.131-2; Deleuze, 1983, pp.143-5. The Kantian refrains of this question should not be overlooked: both Weber and Nietzsche are treated as 'neo-Kantians' in this chapter, but it is their differences, and not their similarities, which are its main focus.

<sup>60</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.270-1.

<sup>61</sup> Weber, 1974, p.271.

*difference between 'noble' and 'base' conceptions of theodicy.* It was once the case, Weber argues, that the suffering man was excluded from cultic festivals, since the gods did not enjoy the sight of them. But this did not satisfy the fortunate: "Beyond this, he needs to know that he has a *right* to his good fortune". Religion provides the legitimation of the *stronger* through "the theodicy of good fortune for those who are fortunate". This 'active', 'noble' conception of theodicy is "easily understood", though its effects are often neglected; the same cannot be said for its opposite, the "religious glorification" of suffering.<sup>62</sup>

This "negative theodicy", while initially concerned with the 'revaluation' of suffering as a form of magical asceticism on an individual level, became the basis for religious communities which were centrally concerned with the individual salvation of the masses: "The material and ideal interests of magicians and priests could thereby actually and increasingly enter the service of specifically *plebian* motives".<sup>63</sup> The 'savior' also holds out the promise of collective salvation, and a "(relatively) rationalized view of the world". This view is not initially ethical, tied as it was at first to ritual. This changes with the development of *law* and of "ethical divinities who punish and reward".<sup>64</sup> Not only is 'sin' no longer a merely magical offence in the time of the prophet; his failure to satisfy the less fortunate masses has the result that

"a secondary salvation religion of the masses has regularly developed beneath the official doctrine. The rational conception of the world is contained in germ within the myth of the redeemer. A rational theodicy of misfortune has, therefore, as a rule, been a development of this conception of the world. At the same time, this rational view of the world has often furnished suffering as such with a 'plus' sign, which was originally quite foreign to it".<sup>65</sup>

The revaluation of suffering in this *base* conception of suffering is *the source of the rationalization of self and world which is carried to the furthest point by the forces of Puritanism.* Moreover, this concern with the self must be clearly distinguished from the *noble* conception of

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<sup>62</sup> Weber, 1974, p.271. All references in this paragraph are to this page.

<sup>63</sup> Weber, 1974, p.273.

<sup>64</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.273-4.

<sup>65</sup> Weber, 1974, p.274.

self. The 'plebian' revaluation of suffering caused, as ethical reflection became increasingly rationalized, an intensification of the problem of theodicy. But this is not the case with 'nobles': the "master strata have been less 'devout' in the sense of religious salvation... [T]heir sense of dignity feeds on their actual or alleged being".<sup>66</sup> "Socially repressed strata", on the other hand, *require* their worth to be "guaranteed or constituted by an *ethical imperative*, or by their own functional *achievements*".<sup>67</sup> It is the weak, not the strong, who need the ethical duty of a rational theodicy to secure their identities. It is the slaves, not the masters, who are thus led by "the rational interest in material and ideal compensations"<sup>68</sup> to follow prophets and priests. However, 'which one' is a slave and which a master, is not a question that can be reduced to the determination of class interests.<sup>69</sup>

The distinction Weber draws between 'noble' and 'base' conceptions of the self and suffering parallel Nietzsche's. Moreover, the element of 'creativity' Weber attributes to the forging of the Puritan conception of homogenous, 'interiorized' self and rationalized 'external' world out of the slave's demand for a rational theodicy is also present in Nietzsche:

"While every noble morality develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says No to what is 'outside,' what is 'different,' what is 'not itself'; and *this* No is its creative deed. This inversion of the value-positing eye - this *need* to direct one's view outward instead of back to oneself - is of the essence of *ressentiment*: in order to exist, slave morality always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all - its action is fundamentally reaction".<sup>70</sup>

The last line of this quotation is of crucial importance for a reading of Weber's argument, as it is for an understanding of Weber's misreading of Nietzsche. For Weber, as for Nietzsche, the

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<sup>66</sup> Weber, 1974, p.276.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Weber, 1974, p.277.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Nietzsche, GM, pp.36-7.

organization of forces found in the ascetic ideal is 'reactive'. Reactive does not equal passive: in the difference between active and reactive forces (those which dominate in their 'noble' difference and those which 'slavishly' obey), reactive forces exercise their force "in securing means and ends, in serving the conditions of life and the functions and tasks of conservation, adaptation, and utility".<sup>71</sup> In other words, reactive forces express the logic of Weber's 'rational theodicy of suffering' which culminates in the Puritan conception of self and world. Weber's invocation of the transformative power of means-ends rationality is written from the perspective of reactive forces. As Deleuze comments, "[W]e oppose mechanical means to final ends in the theory of life; but these two interpretations are only valid for reactive forces themselves".<sup>72</sup> Moreover, Weber insists that this 'slave revolt' enables a 'new self' to emerge on the terrain of the everyday, *the realm dominated above all by 'noble' traditionalism*.<sup>73</sup> In Nietzschean terms, this *triumph of reactive forces* succeeds by "separat[ing] active force from what it can do". But these reactive forces do not become active; on the contrary, active forces *become reactive*.<sup>74</sup> This is also Weber's logic: out of the triumph of Puritanism over 'noble' traditionalism, modernity becomes the complete triumph of the "iron cage" of reactive identity: one can only 'adapt' to the imperatives of modern capitalist social order. The crucial difference between Weber and Nietzsche, however, is that *Weber tells the whole story of the becoming-reactive of the self and world in modernity from the perspective of reactive forces themselves*.

### Meaning, Becoming, Interiority, Coherence

The consequences of Weber's 'perspectivism' must be dealt with in his own terms, if the logic of active/reactive introduced above is to become clear. But equally important is Nietzsche's logic of the 'noble' self, a conception which *traces the 'lines of force' that escape coherence and the logic of politics as spatial order*. In Nietzsche's 'noble' perspectivism, space is not ordered, as

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<sup>71</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "Active and Reactive", in Allison, ed., 1977, p.81.

<sup>72</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.41.

<sup>73</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.296-7.

<sup>74</sup> Deleuze, "Active and Reactive", pp.93-4.

it is in Weber's account, in terms of 'inside' and 'outside'; nor is time reduced to a category of space: *becoming* is thought in Nietzsche without the pathos of a *goal*. For Nietzsche, as the quotation above shows, "means and ends", "inside and outside", are co-ordinates of reactive thought. For Weber as well, mechanical causality in rationalization, where it completes the desacralization of the world, stands in tension with teleological accounts of this world "as a divinely ordered cosmos in some way oriented towards an ethical meaning".<sup>75</sup> Weber's response to this tension is not to choose one conception, mechanical causality or teleological ethical goal, over the other; as will be argued, he attempts to revalue identity as a *tragic* practice which can 'measure up' to the inevitability of this tension. But the tension itself derives from a conception of *the 'becoming' of political identity toward a universality of spatial order*. Once again, Weber's account is written from the 'inside/outside' of the *meaning-creating forces of the negative theodicy of suffering*. The story is told, as it is by Benedict Anderson, from the perspective of the forces which "make visible" and hold together spatialized identities.

For Weber, the Puritan conception of the self and world is a "vanishing mediator".<sup>76</sup> today, modern capitalism no longer requires its support. 'The ascetic ideal', which gives 'man' and life meaning results in the "nullity" of modern culture. The third essay of *The Genealogy of Morals* ends with what appears to be the same argument:

"Apart from the ascetic ideal, man, the human *animal*, had no meaning so far... he did not know how to justify, to account for, to affirm himself; he *suffered* from the problem of his meaning...

The meaninglessness of suffering, *not* suffering itself, was the curse that lay over mankind so far - *and the ascetic ideal offered man meaning!*... - man was saved thereby, he possessed a meaning... - he could now *will* something; no matter at first to what end, why, with what he willed: *the will itself was saved*...

- all this means - let us dare grasp it - *a will to nothingness*, an inversion of life, a

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<sup>75</sup> Weber, in Fredric Jameson, "The Vanishing Mediator; or, Max Weber as Storyteller", in Jameson, 1988, pp.10-11.

<sup>76</sup> The phrase is Fredric Jameson's. See Note 75, this chapter. See also, Zizek, 1991, pp.182-8, where Jameson's attempt to appropriate Weber's thesis on the determining effects of Protestantism in the rise of modern capitalism for a Marxist historicism is criticized as a misguided reading of Hegelian dialectical thought.

rebellion against the most fundamental presuppositions of life; but it is and remains a will!"<sup>77</sup>

For Nietzsche, this nihilism has its 'uses' and its value:

"After Christian truthfulness has drawn one inference after another, it must end by drawing its *most striking inference*, its inference *against* itself; this will happen, however, when it poses the question "*what is the meaning of all will to truth?*.. We stand on the threshold of *this* event."<sup>78</sup>

The significance of this 'threshold' is in one sense the same for both Nietzsche and Weber: the ascetic ideal reveals the 'affinity' of reactive forces for nihilism.<sup>79</sup> The training of reactive forces which so interests Nietzsche is present in Weber's account of the rise of the rational Puritan self and its community. But this training is conceived by Nietzsche to be a process of becoming without a goal, whereas for Weber, the goal is a *revalued identity*, a "strong self", able to meet "the demands of the day". By contrast, Nietzsche argues that,

"The task of breeding an animal with the right to make promises evidently embraces and presupposes as a preparatory task that one first *makes* men to a certain degree necessary, uniform, like among like, regular, and consequently calculable".<sup>80</sup>

The result of this "tremendous process" is "the sovereign individual", "the man who has his own independent, protracted will and the *right to make promises*".<sup>81</sup> It is the task of asceticism to forge the kind of *memory* this self requires.<sup>82</sup> 'Homogenization' of selves is a 'means' to the 'noble' self who has mastered 'his' reactive forces. Reactive forces, nicely enumerated in Weber's account of

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<sup>77</sup> Nietzsche, GM, pp.162-3. 'The will' in Nietzsche is neither a psychological or anthropological 'concept'; nor is it a classically metaphysical one. In Michel Haar's words, it is "a term that cannot be reduced to an identity... neither a unity nor a primary term. it is plurality and complexity itself, and it is derived..." Michel Haar, "Nietzsche and Metaphysical Language", in Allison, ed, 1977, pp.8-9.

<sup>78</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.161.

<sup>79</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1983, p.145.

<sup>80</sup> Nietzsche, GM, pp.58-9.

<sup>81</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.59.

<sup>82</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.61.

rationalization, are not the whole story for Nietzsche; if they are 'our fatality'<sup>83</sup> they express the fatality of the 'reactive man' whose culture is a means to the supramoral, 'innocent', 'irresponsible' self.<sup>84</sup>

This conception of culture as a means does not posit 'the sovereign individual' as a 'goal', however: "innocence" here is the "innocence of becoming". "Atheism and a kind of *second innocence* belong together."<sup>85</sup> As Deleuze argues, becoming-'x' does not mean "imitating this entity or even transforming oneself into it", 'it' being "molar subjects, objects, or form that we know from the outside and recognize from experience, training, or by habit".<sup>86</sup> It is this conception of *imitation*, however, which governs Anderson's argument concerning the 'inevitable' rehearsal of 'modular' national identities, determined as it is by a logic of politics as spatial order and the question of how identities 'cohere'. Emphasis on activity as so many forces for the training of the self, shared with Weber, thus has *two aspects* for Nietzsche. One is a reactive 'activity' which produces the 'fictions' of a homogenized world of being, of fixed subjects and objects, a world in which becoming can only be understood as a form of mimesis, a becoming-Same. Here, becoming has a goal: the 'innocence' of the ascetic priest. Moreover, *mimesis is a weapon of the 'slave'*:

"This transition [to the 'bad conscience' of the ascetic priest] is provided by those numerous slave populations who, whether through compulsion or through servility and mimicry, adapted themselves to their masters' cult of the gods: this inheritance overflows from them in all directions".<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> c.f. Nietzsche, GM, p.44.

<sup>84</sup> C.f. Deleuze, 1983, p.137.

<sup>85</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.91.

<sup>86</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp.274-5.

<sup>87</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.90. c.f. Ibn Khaldun, the 'historian of nomadism', whose conception of "group feeling" echos the dynamics of Nietzsche's 'noble' self, and whose notion of imitation traces it to a 'slavish' view of power:

"...[T]he soul always sees perfection in the person who is superior to it and to whom it is subservient. It considers him perfect, either because it is impressed by the respect it has for for him, or because it erroneously assumes that its subservience to him is not due to the nature of defeat but to the perfection of the victor. If that erroneous assumption fixes itself in the soul, it becomes a firm belief. The soul, then, adopts all the manners of the

The other is the thread which traces the potential for the appearance of the active self, who sets the reactive forces of homogenization into continuous variation, following a "line of flight" that escapes homogenization and its capture by the spatial logic of 'coherence'. It is this second thread that will be broken by Weber, and this will account for his defence of the 'fatality' of the nation and of liberal institutions.

Nietzsche's distinction between lines of force depends upon a difference in the organization of reactive forces themselves, *a difference Weber conflates*. This can most clearly be seen in Nietzsche's critique of *interiority*, the perspective of the production of homogenous identity Weber adopts. For Nietzsche, the triumph of reactive forces itself has *two aspects*, only *one* of which has the capacity to be revalued actively. The first has such a capacity: it is an organization of forces which escape coherence, and which *can be acted*. The second is the organization of reactive forces which 'fictively separates' active forces from what they can do, and thus *appear to act*: this is Weber's perspective of the negative theodicy of suffering. But this organization *cannot* be revalued; it leads only to the 'nihilism' of a spatialized order of homogenous identities.

For Nietzsche, *interiority* develops in the "bad conscience" of the ascetic ideal. The relationship responsibility-debt once trained the self to master reactive forces:

"From the historical point of view, law represents on earth...the struggle *against* reactive feelings, the war conducted against them on the part of the active and aggressive powers who employed some of their strength to impose measure and bounds upon the excesses of

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victor and assimilates itself to him. This, then, is imitation.

Or, the soul may possibly think that the superiority of the victor is not the result of his group feeling or great fortitude, but of his customs and manners. This would also be an erroneous concept of superiority, and (the consequences) would be the same as in the former case.

Therefore, the vanquished can always be observed to assimilate themselves to the victor in the use and style of dress, mounts, and weapons; indeed, in everything". (Ibn Khaldun, 1974, p.116.)

the reactive pathos and compel it to come to terms".<sup>88</sup>

This emphasis on the affinity of reactive forces for being acted through the law is shared by Weber: the "formal rationality" of the self of the calling, unique to the Occident, meets the formal rationality of Occidental law, where legal authority "is based upon an *impersonal* bond to the generally defined and functional 'duty of office'".<sup>89</sup>

However, there is a crucial difference between Nietzsche's conception of interiority and Weber's. For Weber, the interiority of the 'new self' produced in the universalized ideal of the ascetic priest is an organization of forces which *can be revalued*; moreover, *only this revaluation is possible*: the ascetic ideal completely triumphs over the 'noble', 'traditional' conception of the self. For example, Weber attributes the formation of a "genuine religious rationalism" which has this-worldly effects to the decisive roles played by intellectuals and "an organized hierarchy of organized religion". In addition, civic strata impose "a practical rationalism". The result of this meeting of practical and religious rationalism, however, is the same as that which occurs when the demand for a "meaningful cosmos" is met through a contemplative 'flight from the world': the unavoidable *irrationalization* of religion that accompanies increasing rationalization of theodicy.<sup>90</sup>

As Goldman points out, Weber's "Sociology of Religion" clarifies his earlier position on the Calvinist conception of grace. Calvinism does not eliminate magical means: faith provides "a kind of surrogate for magical powers", "a means of psychological magic, to the life of the believer".<sup>91</sup> The 'traditional' force of magical means is pressed into service of a rationalized self which, by *universalizing* the 'charismatic' force of older conceptions of the self, *completely transforms* the everyday realm once dominated by traditionalism. A "new self" emerges in the interiority of rationalized self-consciousness, whose ascetic ideal provides formative powers through the strengthening of self-denial:

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<sup>88</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.75.

<sup>89</sup> Weber, 1974, p.299.

<sup>90</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.280-4.

<sup>91</sup> Weber, in Goldman, 1991, p.50.

"a special strength to pursue one's goals against resistance and to win obedience to one's will, otherwise known only among 'charismatic' leaders; and a capacity and disposition for systematic rational action".<sup>92</sup>

But this new self, which carries its systematic rationalization *to the furthest point* and makes its demands on *all*, is the work, not of civic or hieratic religious organizations, but of "religious virtuosos", who are everywhere opposed by an officialdom which seeks to impose its own 'democracy' of grace and ethical sufficiency.<sup>93</sup>

Nietzsche also recognizes the tremendous power of the ascetic ideal to force every other power to submit to its 'interpretation', to believe in its own superiority.<sup>94</sup> But where, Nietzsche asks, is "another goal" to be found to oppose it? Modern science, for example, is only the "latest and noblest form" of the ascetic ideal.<sup>95</sup> The answer comes in Nietzsche's diagnosis of forces: one must distinguish between those reactive organizations of forces which can be revalued, and those which cannot. The perspective which enables this, however, is one which traces the dynamics of forces which escape 'coherence': writing from the perspective of the 'base' theodicy of suffering, as Weber does, can only make visible *the triumph of reactive forces which cannot be revalued*. Nietzsche, for example, offers an hypothesis on the origin of the bad conscience:

"that change which occurred when he found himself finally enclosed within the walls of society and peace... All instincts which do not discharge themselves outwardly *turn inward* - this is what I call the *internalization* of man: thus it was that man first developed what was later called his 'soul'".<sup>96</sup>

These forces turned inward mean that 'man' suffers from himself, but this suffering self is 'forming', its "instinct for freedom made forcibly latent".<sup>97</sup> However, it is also the origin of the bad

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<sup>92</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.296-7.

<sup>93</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.288-9.

<sup>94</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.146.

<sup>95</sup> Nietzsche, GM, pp.146-7.

<sup>96</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.84.

<sup>97</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.87.

conscience. Nietzsche is at pains to stress that this *interiority has two aspects*: one is the "terrible egoism that has the look of bronze";<sup>98</sup> the other is found in the bad conscience of the ascetic priest, where active forces are 'fictively separated' from what they can do.<sup>99</sup>

For Nietzsche, the ascetic priest is the figure the triumph of reactive forces which *appear to act*: "he involves us in association, he awakens in us 'the desire to see the community prosper'".<sup>100</sup> The ascetic priest makes the discharge of guilt and payment of debt, which once worked for man's liberation from 'coherence', an infinite, unpayable debt towards "God", "society", and "the State".<sup>101</sup> Weber, by contrast, writes his *whole account* from the perspective of the forces which produce this 'type': a 'noble' responsibility for debt, which constituted the 'inside' and 'outside' of the community, is revalued by the congregation of the prophet as an ethical rationalization of suffering, increasingly "sublimated into an ethic of absolute ends".<sup>102</sup> Weber's chief error is to argue that, on the one hand, the 'noble' perspective is completely *erased* by the revaluation of the 'slave's' negative theodicy of suffering; on the other, that *this revaluation itself can be the basis for a revalued conception of identity in a tragic conception of modernity*. But the conception of identity which invites 'tragic' revaluation is conceived as a *result*: what remains for Weber at the end of this "tremendous process" of rationalization through the interaction of forces of capitalism and the 'ascetic ideal' is a conception of politics as spatial order, the final triumph of 'coherence'. In this 'base' conception, all spaces are homogenous, reversible, and the tragedy of the modern self can only be played out 'reactively', in their interstices. Here, 'becoming' can only be a co-ordinate of this spatial order.

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<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> On the 'fictive' aspect of this separation, see Deleuze, 1983, pp.122-5. As in Nietzsche's account of interiorization, forces which can no longer 'exercise' 'their' force are turned back against themselves: this is the triumph of reactive forces. But the homogenization that results from this elision of the *difference* between active and reactive forces produces a *fiction*: the 'subject' of identity.

<sup>100</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.142.

<sup>101</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.141. See also, Nietzsche, GM, pp.91,136.

<sup>102</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.329-30.

### Death, War, Sacrificial Community

That Weber writes the whole story of the triumph of reactive forces (the 'slave' notion of identity) which 'separate' active forces (the 'noble' conception of self) from what they can do is further seen from the role of death - the limit case of individual identity - and war - the limit case of collective identity - in his account of the "fate" of identity in modernity. In this account, the reduction of politics to spatial order is completed; moreover, the 'elements' which produce this reduction are figured in the logic that Benedict Anderson will reproduce in his account of the nation.

Weber argues that communities driven by a rationalized ethics of salvation come into *irresolvable conflict* with the various "orders" of the world - political, economic, esthetic, erotic, intellectual. This is the more so as *interiorization proceeds apace rationalization*: the individual is

"then pressed towards making conscious the *internal and lawful autonomy* of the individual spheres; thereby letting them drift into those tensions which remain hidden to the originally naïve relation to the external world".<sup>103</sup>

In Weber's account, the 'tensions' of the modern world are both produced through, and most strongly felt by, the type of self made visible in 'the ascetic ideal'. However, the borders which solidify the 'spheres' of these tensions are produced not only through the boundaries of the homogenous self; *the State* plays an 'active' role as well.

The bureaucratic state's impersonal forces are no longer amenable to the "substantive moralization" of religious ethics: its calculus of power is a formal rationality irresolvably at odds with "an ethic of brotherliness".<sup>104</sup> *Politics as the sphere of organized violence is the crucial site of this conflict*. Through *war*, identities are produced which answer the 'slave' demand for meaning in the negative theodicy of suffering:

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<sup>103</sup> Weber, 1974, p.328.

<sup>104</sup> Weber, 1974, p.334.

"War creates a pathos and a sentiment of community... an unconditionally devoted and sacrificial community among the combatants".<sup>105</sup>

Moreover, *death* for the warrior becomes meaningful in a way that is lost to the 'ordinary citizen' in modernity. As "the values of culture increasingly unfold and are sublimated to immeasurable heights", "ordinary death" loses its meaning, becoming increasingly *an arbitrary fate*:

"In war, and in this massiveness *only* in war, the individual can *believe* that he knows he is dying 'for' something... Only those who perish 'in their callings' are in the same situation as the soldier who faces death on the battlefield".<sup>106</sup>

The connection made here between the meaningfulness of death in war and death in the service of the calling is decisive for Weber. But it is crucial to his attempt to revalue the positive force of sacrificial identity in *the idea of the nation that the theodicy of the calling itself produces the meaninglessness of fatality in modernity*.

Weber argues that Protestantism forges its theodicy of identity through its complicity with the modern State. The Puritan's vocation of the calling resolves conflict with the political 'sphere' by demanding that God's commandments be carried out "by the means of this world, namely, violence - for the world is subject to violence and ethical barbarism".<sup>107</sup> As "Politics as a Vocation" states, "Protestantism...absolutely legitimated the state as a divine institution and hence violence as a means".<sup>108</sup> But this resolution does not eliminate all conflict with the orders of the world unless, finally, the ethic of brotherliness is abandoned. Rationalization erases 'noble', traditional conceptions of life and death, bound as they are to unreflective obedience to "the natural cycles of life"; the paradox is that the very products of this rationalization advance the very meaninglessness of death.

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<sup>105</sup> Weber, 1974, p.335. See also, p.222, where Weber notes that only the bureaucratic army produces the highest development of military discipline and training.

<sup>106</sup> Weber, 1974, p.335.

<sup>107</sup> Weber, 1974, p.336.

<sup>108</sup> Weber, 1974, p.124.

In "Science as a Vocation", Weber invokes the experience of life of a 'strong self' - Abraham, a 'traditionalist' peasant - against that of the modern self, to the great disadvantage of the latter. In his 'noble' "fullness of being", Abraham could die "'old and satiated with life' because he stood within the organic cycle of life".<sup>109</sup> The 'slave' conception of identity has erased this possibility, however; intellectualization in the rationalization of self and world has meant "above all" disenchantment. A conception of infinite 'progress' in knowledge means not only that (as in Gellner) knowledge now circulates in homogenous, reversible time and space;<sup>110</sup> it also means that death for "civilized man" has become meaningless, hence "civilized life itself is meaningless".<sup>111</sup> This meaninglessness can be seen in attempts to live '*within*' one of the spheres of life whose tensions determine the fate of identity in modernity. In the intellectual sphere, for example,

"all 'culture' appears as man's emancipation from the organically prescribed cycle of natural life. For this very reason, culture's every step forward seems condemned to lead to an ever more devastating senselessness... The advancement of cultural values appears the more meaningless the more it is made a holy task, a 'calling'".<sup>112</sup>

For Weber, not only does civilized life become meaningless the more 'intellectual culture' develops, leading German youth to seek meaning and authenticity in the spheres of the 'irrational';<sup>113</sup> *everyday life* too becomes a 'heavy burden':

"What is hard for modern man, and especially for the younger generation, is to measure up to *workaday* existence. The ubiquitous chase for 'experience' stems from this weakness; for it is weakness not to be able to countenance the stern seriousness of our fateful times".<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Weber, 1974, p.140.

<sup>110</sup> Weber, 1974, p.139.

<sup>111</sup> Weber, 1974, p.140.

<sup>112</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.356-7. This argument appears in "Religious Rejections of Life and Their Directions".

<sup>113</sup> Weber, 1974, p.143.

<sup>114</sup> Weber, 1974, p.149.

The realm of the everyday, once governed above all by traditionalism, has been completely revalued by the 'slave' conception of self and world; this 'weakness' of the modern self is its revenge. "The grandiose moral fervor of Christian ethics" has 'blinded us' to the effects of its monotheism on the revaluation of 'noble' polytheism as an 'impersonal', rationalized struggle of the gods in the various orders of life which dominates completely today:

"We live as did the ancients when their world was not yet disenchanted of its gods and demons, only we live in a different sense. As Hellenic man at times sacrificed to Aphrodite and at other times to Apollo, and, above all, as everybody sacrificed to the gods of the city, so do we still nowadays, only the bearing of man has been disenchanted and denuded of its mystical but inwardly genuine plasticity. Fate, and certainly not 'science', holds sway over these gods and their struggles... The grandiose rationalism of an ethical and methodical conduct of life which flows from every religious prophecy has dethroned polytheism in favor of 'the one thing that is needful'... Today the routines of everyday life challenge religion. Many old gods ascend from their graves; they are disenchanted and take the form of impersonal forces. They strive to gain control over our lives and again they resume their eternal struggle with one another".<sup>115</sup>

The 'fateful' triumph of the firm borders between various spheres of life established by the 'return' of a reactive, 'impersonal' polytheism forces a choice among these homogenous spheres.<sup>116</sup> The most the individual can hope to do in this era of 'demystified' polytheism is to "understand what the godhead is for one order or another".<sup>117</sup> In the sphere of politics, only one who acts in full knowledge of these 'gods or demons', who takes seriously both "an ethic of ultimate ends and an ethic of responsibility...can have the 'calling for politics'".<sup>118</sup> The requisites of such a calling are three, according to Weber: "passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion".<sup>119</sup> The third is ultimately decisive: a "pathos of distance" is required for the self who would measure up to the demands of the day. As Weber argues (directly against the Junkers), "Germany is a nation of plebians";<sup>120</sup> if "'genuine and cultured values'" are to be developed in Germany, democratization

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<sup>115</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.148-9.

<sup>116</sup> Weber, 1974, p.152.

<sup>117</sup> Weber, 1974, p.148.

<sup>118</sup> Weber, 1974, p.127.

<sup>119</sup> Weber, 1974, p.115.

<sup>120</sup> Weber, 1974, p.392.

must be accompanied by an "attitude of personal distance and reserve". But, because the forces of capitalism and the modern conception of self make *universal* demands today, Weber rejects Nietzsche's 'pathos of distance' from the "far too many". Indeed, "perhaps the necessity of maintaining one's inner dignity in the midst of a democratic world can serve as a test of the genuineness of dignity".<sup>121</sup> In Weber's account, *the erasure of the 'noble' conception of self means that it no longer measures up to the forces at work in modernity.*

The 'active' polytheism of militaristic antiquity has been made reactive by monotheism; the dilemmas produced by this revaluation are inescapable. Indeed, 'escape' for Weber amounts to *a repetition of current boundaries*: hope for certainty and salvation in a 'beyond' such as Socialist Revolution demands scarcely differs from its Christian incarnations.<sup>122</sup> 'Purposive rationalization' in revolutionary politics simply perpetuates the processes one attempt to resist.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, as the modern world is divided into 'autonomous' "life-spheres", so must the modern self, to be a 'strong self', learn to live *in the interstices between them*. A 'man' who lives in and through the modern 'culture' of progress is, as Nietzsche insists, weak, and not strong.<sup>124</sup> Weber locates the concept of 'personality' that he attempts to revalue, not in the identity of the self produced by the notion of the calling, but *in the creative tensions it produces*. For Weber, a revalued life in the 'calling of politics' seeks to maintain the creative tensions of the *structured dualisms* which constitute the 'conditions of possibility' for the strong self: *the 'battlefield of politics' meets the 'battlefield of the self'*.<sup>125</sup>

Where these 'battlefields' meet is on the terrain of the State. Essential to the revaluation of

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<sup>121</sup> Weber, 1974, p.393.

<sup>122</sup> c.f. Weber, 1974, p.337, on the "inevitable" complicity of religious organization with "power interests". See also Weber's letter to Robert Michels, in Scaff, 1989, p.97, where Weber argues that 'socialism' does not escape the dilemmas of modernity.

<sup>123</sup> c.f. Scaff, 1989, p.180. In "Politics as a Vocation" Weber makes this point in terms Benedict Anderson will repeat: "the Soviets have had to accept again absolutely *all* the things that Bolshevism had been fighting as bourgeois class institutions". (Weber, 1974, p.100.)

<sup>124</sup> c.f. Hennis, 1988, p.174.

<sup>125</sup> c.f. Goldman, 1991, p.151.

the 'weak self' of modernity is a revaluation of *sacrifice* in the "culture community of the state".<sup>126</sup> "Politics as a Vocation" will repeat Weber's earlier invocation of Machiavelli's praise for "those citizens who deemed the greatness of their native city higher than the salvation of their souls".<sup>127</sup> *It is this sacrificial force which Weber will argue is the basis for a revaluation of identity in modernity.* This revaluation of Machiavellian 'autonomy in sacrifice' will be revalued in the form of *the nation*.<sup>128</sup> But the perspective which leads to the 'fate' of this *tragic revaluation* is that of coherence, the 'slave's' negative theodicy of suffering. The possibility of a revalued self in modernity is defined by the *oppositions* written into Weber's account of the rise to dominance of the self of the 'ascetic ideal'. Weber's account sees death as *meaningful in itself*, a sacrificial act which gives coherence and identity to both the individual and the community.<sup>129</sup> Death as a meaning-

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<sup>126</sup> Weber, 1974, p.355.

<sup>127</sup> Weber, 1974, p.126.

<sup>128</sup> c.f. Walker, 1993a, p.145. Anthony Giddens claims that Weber's invocation of Machiavelli here is mistaken:

"Machiavelli's case for the establishing of a strong political unit in central Italy...is defended wholly in terms of sovereignty, and does not invoke any idea of the Italian nation". (Giddens, 1981, p.186.)

Unfortunately for Giddens, Weber proves to be the more astute political theorist: as Walker elsewhere argues,

"It was only after Machiavelli that the principle of state sovereignty came to be framed within the context of the Euclidean-Galilean principle of absolute space rather than the complex overlapping jurisdictions of the medieval era". (Walker, 1993b, pp.45-6.)

Giddens not only offers an ahistorical rendition of sovereignty; he also misses *the Nietzschean dimension* of Weber's argument, which attempts to revalue Machiavelli's concern for 'autonomy' and 'particularity' in an age where, precisely, the spatial 'grid' of political borders is permanently in place.

<sup>129</sup> On the sacrificial 'essence' of Luther's Christianity as a reactive force, see Nietzsche, BGE, pp.60-1. In Foucault's Nietzschean problematic, death is not 'meaning-giving' to a *subject*: as "event", the domain of death is "the anonymous flow of speech; it is that of which we speak as always past or about to happen and yet it occurs at the extreme point of singularity". (Foucault, 1986, pp.173-5.) This 'anonymous flow of speech' is *discourse*. (See Foucault, 1984b, pp.108-9.) The 'singularity' of which Foucault writes, like the "rarity of statements" his discourse analysis traces, eschews reference to the comforts of 'interpretation', 'commentary', and hermeneutics as a recovery of meaning, in order to escape the spatial order of 'coherence'. Everything takes place on the surface, in an 'active' conception of space:

"We are analysing statements, not as being in the place of other statements that have fallen below the line of possible emergence, but as being always in their own place. They are put back into a space that is entirely deployed and involves no reduplication. There is no sub-

giving force proceeds by opposition: on one side, the infinite, the universal, meaning; on the other, the finite, the particular, meaninglessness.<sup>130</sup> Both sides are reconciled in an event that remains abstract; both sets of oppositions resolve themselves in the identity-giving organization of the state as a sacrificial community.

### Conclusions: Becoming and State-History

Weber's argument concerning the potential of death and fatality for positive revaluation as a tragic identity-practice turns on his reading of the *complete capture* of the meaning-creating force of sacrifice by the state. But the state itself is conceived as a *homogenous space whose borders define both the limits of collective/individual identity and the resolutions of universal-particular, finite-infinite required by the 'slave' demand for meaning*. As Rob Walker points out, Weber's initial definition of the state in "Politics as a Vocation" is an historical one: the state has *become* "the *monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory*".<sup>131</sup> Territory is specified as a characteristic of the state, but the emphasis on the 'becoming' of a monopoly of violence 'within' a bounded space is quickly replaced by a discussion which supposes that legitimate violence 'within' is the starting point for all politics 'today'.<sup>132</sup> This assumed spatial separation of 'within' and 'without' treats politics as the *same* activity regardless of 'where' it occurs; and this is enabled by the assumption of territory as a field of homogenous, reversible spaces.<sup>133</sup> This

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text. And therefore no plethora. The enunciative domain is identical with its own surface. Each statement occupies in it a place that belongs to it alone". (Foucault, 1973, p.119.)

The domain of objects produced on this surface allows Foucault his "happy positivism": "discourse understood like this does not reveal the universality of a meaning, but brings to light the action of imposed scarcity, with a fundamental power of affirmation". (Foucault, 1984b, p.133.)

<sup>130</sup> On the Renaissance origins of this formulation of a resolution of finite and infinite, universal and particular in a conception of individual and cosmos as a spatial conception of interiorized self and external world, see Cassirer, 1979, Chapter Four.

<sup>131</sup> Weber, 1974, p.78; Walker, 1993a, p.141.

<sup>132</sup> Walker, 1993a, p.141.

<sup>133</sup> Walker, 1993a, p.142.

conception of politics as spatial order, defined by the inside/outside of the state, is in Nietzschean terms a *completely reactive* perspective, which traces the 'separation' of active forces from what they can do. Most significant here is the paradox Weber presents of an argument which follows the 'becoming' of relations between the 'war machine' and the state to its *terminus* - a conception in which all becoming is eliminated. This paradox is resolved in Weber by recourse to tragedy, but from the beginning of his account, his diagnosis of the 'play' of forces in history is written from the perspective of the 'slave' demand for identity. The whole account is written in terms of 'coherence': the *borders* established by the rise to dominance of the 'interiority' of the ascetic self - between self and other, rational and irrational, finite and infinite, universal and particular, the inside and outside of the state, and among 'spheres of life', are all *functional* to the initial demand for a resolution of the 'negative theodicy of suffering'. From the beginning, nothing escapes the forces of 'coherence', which assumes a spatial 'grid' upon which the 'tragic fate' of political identity is played out, hence the sense of "*deja vu*" Walker detects in those parts of Weber's text that do "depend on a sense of historical transformation".<sup>134</sup>

From Nietzsche's perspective, however, arguing for the final capture of the forces of fatality by the state transforms the *difference* between those forces that produce *both* the bad conscience of the ascetic priest and the possibility of escape from its 'coherence' into an *opposition* between 'noble' and 'base' conceptions of self and world. For Nietzsche, the appearance of the 'masters' who form the conditions of possibility for the development of the bad conscience "did not represent an organic adaptation to new conditions".<sup>135</sup> The 'exteriority' of this 'noble' conception of self cannot be contained within the bounds of an historical account written in terms of 'coherence': Deleuze, for example, criticizes Pierre Clastres for precisely the error Weber makes: he posits an opposition between, on the one hand, the 'self-sufficient, primitive counter-state' with its war machine, and on the other, the State. An 'evolutionary' account of the "sudden mutation" of the

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<sup>134</sup> Walker, 1993a. p.143.

<sup>135</sup> Nietzsche, GM, p.86: "They come like fate, without reason, consideration, or pretext; they appear as lightning appears, too terrible, too sudden, too convincing, too 'different' even to be hated". (This is an apt expression of how Christian and Islamic 'state-societies' first experienced the 'war machine' of Chingis Khan, particularly in Russia. See Chambers, 1979, esp. pp.31-38,105-6.)

former into the latter results.<sup>136</sup> The forces of exteriority are thus reduced to their functionality for the triumph of interiority and its spatialized conceptions of self and world. For a Nietzschean conception of 'becoming' as a force which keeps open the possibility of positive revaluation, however, it is necessary to insist that

"It is not in terms of independence, but of coexistence and competition *in a perpetual field of interaction*, that we must conceive of exteriority and interiority, war machines of metamorphosis and State apparatuses of identity, bands and kingdoms, megamachines and empires".<sup>137</sup>

'Becoming' should not be confused with 'history': *history* is written, as Anderson, Gellner, and Weber demonstrate, as State-history, a perspective in which the forces available for positive revaluation are rendered invisible: "The triumph of reactive forces is not an accident in history but the principle and meaning of 'universal history'".<sup>138</sup>

The consequences of this reading of becoming as the final triumph of the forces of interiority are traced in the following two chapters. Chapter five elaborates the deferral of the *politics of problematics* performed in Weberian discourse - not least of which is the problem of *nihilism*, while Chapter four examines the specificity of Weber's theoretical account of the nation. While this chapter has traced the 'planes' of Andersonian theory to Weber's encounter with Nietzsche, it remains to complete the image of the nation constructed in Weber's discourse, an image repeated in subsequent theories, yet conditioned by the very forgetting of this encounter.

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<sup>136</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp.357-9.

<sup>137</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp.360-1.

<sup>138</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.139.

"'Since', continued Saul, 'there is no salvation in the Law, it is vital that we do not give anyone the impression that there is. People find it much easier to *do* something than to *be* something, and if they think they can enter the Kingdom by being circumcised and eating the right kind of food, that's all they'll do.'

Jacob said testily, 'The outward act signifies a spiritual state. There is nothing wrong with it.'

'Yes there is', said Saul. 'The Law is a trap. It fools people into thinking it's their salvation, and it never can be. The Law is a labyrinth no human being can ever find his way through.' He fixed Jacob with a cold stare. 'People spend their whole lives wrestling with it, and have nothing but a handful of ashes at the end.'

'The Law God gave to our fathers', exploded Jacob. 'the Law by which this nation has been guided and nurtured - '

'Sometimes it seems to me that the Law was not given by God at all, but by some malign spirit who wanted to mock us', said Saul...

'If salvation is by love, the Law is irrelevant', said Saul. 'And if it is irrelevant it is a threat. And it is a deadly threat. It dispenses, not life, but death.'

Anita Mason, *The Illusionist*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

As argued in Chapter three, Weber attempts to revalue the force of sacrifice in the fatality of the interiorized individual and in the homogenous space of the State as the basis for his conception of the 'strong self' able to meet 'the demands of the day'. This potentially 'active' force is captured within the firm boundaries of the State; as a result, its 'culture community' becomes an essential 'mediator' between individual and collective identity: the strong self will be a *national citizen*. But everything depends on Weber's reading of the State as the 'container' of collectivities,<sup>2</sup> whose borders mark a resolution of universal/particular, finite/infinite, understood as oppositions. If Gellner's argument slides silently from 'men' to 'citizens', his 'tragic' vision also assumes this resolution, which provides the co-ordinates of his argument. But while Weber does thematize the relation of men and citizens, he does so within the same conception of politics as spatial order that Gellner will repeat. If Gellner's 'cosmopolitan' intellectual alone measures up to the dynamics of a

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<sup>1</sup> Mason, 1983, p.233.

<sup>2</sup> c.f. Walker, 1993a, pp.142ff.

post-industrial age, an era where liberalism is threatened not by forces which challenge its foundation 'within' a particular polity but by its own success, Weber struggles to identify the qualities of a self which constitutes "the grounds on which some sort of universality - effective legitimations of domination, in his terms - may be established within the particular state".<sup>3</sup>

### The Question of Labour

What organizes Weber's account of effective legitimations of domination is *charismatic domination*, "the root idea of a *calling* in its highest expression", which enters into definitive relations with the modern State: "the modern state is a compulsory association which organizes domination".<sup>4</sup> Charismatic domination<sup>5</sup> is opposed to both 'traditional' and 'legal' varieties: "genuine charisma" resists *routinization* in the 'noble' conception of theodicy; yet this very routinization "transforms it...into a suitable source for the legitimate acquisition of sovereign power by the successors of the charismatic hero".<sup>6</sup> It is this transformation which marks Weber's attempt to revalue charismatic domination as a potentially 'active' organization of forces under the conditions of its final capture by the State in modernity. Tracing its 'fate' through its 'capture' by traditionalism, patriarchy, and bureaucratic organization, *Weber attempts to revalue the charisma of the calling by entering it into relations with the forces of patriotic sacrifice and the 'tensions' produced by rationalization of self and world to forge the modern State's particular universality: the space of the nation*. As with Benedict Anderson after him, Weber struggles to found a *singular ethics of modernity*, taking a *reactive perspective* on the nation as the condition of possibility of 'writing' the nation's modernity.

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<sup>3</sup> Walker, 1993a, p.143.

<sup>4</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.78ff.

<sup>5</sup> Sheldon Wolin will insist on the strong sense of 'domination'(as opposed to milder translations, such as 'authority') here: *Herrschaft* as domination connects it to the more "universal plane" of politics as the terrain of *violence*. (Sheldon S. Wolin, "Max Weber: Legitimation, Method, and the Politics of Theory", in Connolly, ed., 1984, p.69.)

<sup>6</sup> Weber, 1974, p.262. c.f. The attitude of charismatic domination "is revolutionary and transvalues everything; it makes a sovereign break with all traditional or rational norms: 'It is written, but I say unto you'". (p.250.)

These tensions and the forces which produce them constitute an 'active' organization of reactive forces in Weber's 'inverted Nietzschean' conception of the nation: the task of breeding a 'strong self' in Weber's politics works upon the 'interests' which have been reduced in modernity to their utility for slavish adaptation. These interests, however, are understood from the perspective of the slave's negative theodicy of suffering from the very beginning of Weber's account:

"It is understood that, in reality, obedience is determined by highly robust motives of fear and hope - fear of the vengeance of magical powers or of the power-holder, hope for reward in this world or in the beyond - and besides all this, by interests of the most varied sort".<sup>7</sup>

What effects the 'routinization' of charisma in 'traditional' conceptions of self and world - the 'noble' theodicy of suffering - is primarily the complex of interests organized through "*economic factors*";<sup>8</sup> it is to the realm of the economic that the discussion now turns.

The elements of the nation's formation Weber adduces will be repeated by Anderson; in particular, sacrifice, everyday life, fatality, and mobility function identically in Weber's and Anderson's grammar of the nation. In his search for a revaluation of the 'iron cage' of politics as spatial order as the background against which the strong self might emerge, the question of the valuation of *work* in the ascetic ideal of Puritanism and that of *labour* in a comparative historico-political analysis are essential. *The 'workaday' world of everyday life*, the realm 'above all' of traditionism, is the crucial *site* of the transformations effected by the rationalization of self and world. The realm of labour thus becomes the key location of Weber's attempt to diagnose those forces amenable to positive revaluation: only those forces which 'measure up' to the power and scope of these transformations are capable of producing the 'active' organization of the strong self Weber seeks.

The question of labour moves toward the specific resolution of 'men' and 'citizens' found

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<sup>7</sup> Weber, 1974, p.79.

<sup>8</sup> Weber, 1974, p.262.

in "the polemical posture" of Weber's *Nationalökonomie*, his "national economics".<sup>9</sup> The revaluation of work in modernity is a function of the power of the ascetic conception of vocation for the formation of an interiorized self: "Only he who is devoted *solely* to the work at hand has 'personality'".<sup>10</sup> "An inner devotion to the task"<sup>11</sup> is Weber's formulation of the 'individual' force which measures up to the need for a positive revaluation of collective identity. 'Economics' is a '*science of collective identity*' for Weber:

"However much one may refer to the effects and the effectiveness of eternally unchanging natural laws, there will always be found in the domain of economic affairs the presence of man - as an individual and as a fragment of state and nation - as the living bearer of all economic activity, and alongside material conditions and relationships personal elements must have their effect."<sup>12</sup>

As Hennis comments, "The economy was considered as the 'most fundamental', most 'worldly' factor of a man's life - in its vitality, its power, or, to use the old word, its 'virtue'".<sup>13</sup>

This passage illustrates how 'men' are always already 'citizens' in Weber. But this conception itself rests on the spatial assumptions of a historical, comparative argument which seeks, as Gellner does, the origins of the 'uniqueness' of the modern Western self in the presence and absence of certain elements 'within' homogenous, reversible spaces, the objects of both Weber's account of the rise of the Puritan notion of self and of his 'national economics'. This line of argument has led Bryan Turner to charge both Weber and Gellner with "orientalism", of fortifying a reified view of self by setting it in opposition to a reified 'other'.<sup>14</sup> Scaff, however, defends Weber's comparative analysis, arguing that critics like Turner are themselves guilty of a certain orientalism, as they homogenize and simplify what is in Weber a subtle and complex notion of

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<sup>9</sup> c.f. Hennis, 1988, pp.130-1.

<sup>10</sup> Weber, 1974, p.137.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Weber, in Hennis, 1988, p.140.

<sup>13</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.140.

<sup>14</sup> Turner, 1978, pp.44-5,83.

structural causality.<sup>15</sup>

*Labour* is a decisive element for this comparative analysis. What links 'here' and 'there', 'then' and 'now' in Weber's account is 'the agrarian question': Hennis notes that in the early Weber, rural labour is treated as a 'life order', "the social and economic ensemble 'within which the working population finds itself', determining 'fate and general situation'".<sup>16</sup> As Scaff argues, a key 'relational concept' in Weber's early work is *Arbeitsverfassung*, which, following Scaff, might be rendered as 'the constitution of labour as a way of life' - a constellation of "material conditions, social structure, legal principles, and even psychological or ethical motivations".<sup>17</sup> One cannot, therefore, follow Rogers Brubaker when he argues that, unlike the other orders of life, politics and economics are most consistently treated by Weber as 'objective' realms *about* which individuals come to have 'subjective' value-judgements.<sup>18</sup> As Hennis argues, *all* relations, whether within the orders of the life-world or between them, are relations of *struggle*.<sup>19</sup> Weber's 'value-neutrality' is better placed, therefore, in the *political* context of Nietzsche's diagnosis of forces, even if the illness detected and the cure prescribed differ in vital respects.<sup>20</sup> Hennis argues that Weber's "economics is a science of man concerned above all with the *quality* of men, who are reared under

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<sup>15</sup> Scaff, 1989, pp.34-5. The contradiction Scaff identifies in Turner's critique may be an inherent feature of the 'orientalism thesis' itself. See, for example, Robert Irwin, 1981, pp.107-11, where a similar critique of Edward Said is made in a review of his text, *Orientalism*.

<sup>16</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.74.

<sup>17</sup> Scaff, 1989, pp.44-5.

<sup>18</sup> Brubaker, 1984, pp.62-7.

<sup>19</sup> A conception which moves Weber very far from the conventional liberal view of 'peaceful competition'. Hennis, 1988, pp.159,176-7.

<sup>20</sup> Sheldon Wolin argues for a reading of Weber's methodological essays in the context of his political writing and his crucial concern with the fate of charismatic domination in modernity; he does not, however, connect this with Weber's relations with Nietzsche's thought. (Wolin, "Legitimation", pp.73-84.) Weber's diagnosis of *oppositional forces* differs, however, from Foucault's discursive analysis of *multiplicities*:

"[M]y discourse... is trying to deploy a dispersion that can never be reduced to a single system of differences... its task is to *make* differences: to constitute them as objects, to analyse them, and to define their concept... it is continually making *differentiations*, it is a *diagnosis*." (Foucault, 1978, pp.205-6.)

the influence of economic and social conditions of existence".<sup>21</sup> *The quality of forces, in Nietzsche's terms, 'active' and 'reactive', in 'men' and in the conditions in which they exist, are Weber's object of inquiry.*

### 'Orientalism' and the Nation

But while Weber's account of the labour of these forces escapes the charge of a straightforward 'orientalism', it does not escape the spatialized conception of 'identity' which underlies it. According to Scaff, 'the Orient' is not a simple negation of 'the Occident', since traces of "personality" are found 'there'; but neither is it predicated on an identity of, for instance, ancient Roman, modern Elbian, and Asian problematics. What can be seen, however, in the case of ancient economies and patriarchal nineteenth century Germany is a "process of 'internal dissolution'"; major civilizations 'outside' Europe are characterized, in contrast, by a relative *absence* of this dynamic.<sup>22</sup> The spatial drift of this argument is apparent: presence and absence are opposed in terms of internal and external territoriality. The spatial reference is even more 'concrete' in the following observation, made by Weber to explain the causes of this 'absence elsewhere':

"The failure of economic rationalism and a rational approach to life in general to emerge in Asia is...primarily the result of the continental character of the social structure, as determined by geography".<sup>23</sup>

However, Weber offers more than an explanation in terms of 'geo-determinism'; the analysis he puts forward directly links his conception of the everyday realm of labour with the space of *the nation*. Moreover, he does so in terms Benedict Anderson will repeat. Weber's argument is that limits to trade in Asia led to economic 'stability' through the granting of prebends,

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<sup>21</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.125.

<sup>22</sup> Scaff, 1989, pp.63-4.

<sup>23</sup> Weber, 1980, p.202. The precedent for this type of argument is Montesquieu; Weber is thus in some sense an heir to a 'tradition' of European self-justification as the seat of 'change' and 'enlightenment' in the face of 'Oriental despotism'. On this aspect of Montesquieu, see P. Anderson, 1980, pp.463-6.

yet the resulting "seclusion" *does not engender 'a feeling of nationality'*, since "the Asian communities lacked - and fundamentally so - any community of language".<sup>24</sup>

Weber's argument is thus that the 'everyday world' of labour marks the crucial intersection of forces which can be revalued at the individual level and at the level of collectivities to produce the 'strong self'. All of this assumes, however, that the seeds of reaction in the traditional, noble self have become *explicit* ('the routinization of charisma'), as have the firm boundaries of both the homogenous self and the State.<sup>25</sup> In the meaning-creating forces of the 'vocation' of the ascetic self and the 'community of sacrifice' of the State, Weber finds the potential for an organization of self and collective that can meet the demand for meaning and identity under specifically modern conditions. In the tragic identity-practice Weber conceives, *the 'battlefield' where the self meets politics is the everyday life of the nation*, just as it will be for Benedict Anderson many years later.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Weber, 1980, p.203.

<sup>25</sup> This argument concerning the 'becoming-explicit' of the spatial boundaries of a homogenous self and the State are repeated by Gellner and Anderson in their narrations of the rise of the nation. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari also speak of the "becoming-concrete" of the State in modern capitalism, but this refers to its operation as a "regulator of decoded flows as such, insofar as they are caught up in the axiomatic of capital". (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p.252.) Becoming-concrete means becoming *immanent* to processes which produce the appearance of the 'interiorized' self of the ascetic ideal. (pp.221-2) As in Nietzsche, the appearance of homogenous self and social world is not the whole story: if capitalism's capacity to add axioms to continue functioning marks it as "the *relative* limit of every society", (pp.246,253) it only succeeds by limiting the 'active' force of the 'outside' - what they term "schizophrenia", the organization of forces that produce what Nietzsche calls "the dangerous individual".

<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that Weber was far from assuming the State as the only 'container' of political identity; as Warren Magnusson has cogently argued, Weber also took seriously the question of *urbanization* and *the city* as 'relatively autonomous' modes of life, and suitable 'objects' for theoretical analysis. (See Magnusson, 1995.) Magnusson's work is particularly suggestive for its effort to prise open the state-centered discourses of political theory and international relations to make 'city politics' visible as a set of practices irreducible to the hierarchies of geo-political scale. This is indeed crucial for an understanding of the discursive practices of nation-ness: '*urban-ness*' is generally acknowledged as a key component of national *movements*, yet remains one more predicate of a 'national subject' - be it class, gender, race, or culture -based in the literature. (On this, see Magnusson, "The Reification of Political Community", in Walker and Mendlovitz, 1990, pp.45-60.) Unfortunately, despite the unity of argument Weber displays throughout his texts, to my knowledge he never problematizes the 'space-time' of the city in his reflections on the nation.

### 'Active' and 'Reactive' National Types

As "the broadest 'life-order' upon which the 'personality' could claim to leave its mark"<sup>27</sup> in modernity, the nation revalues the force of work become 'reactive' in the image of 'specialists without spirit'. The 'virtue' of work in the calling meets the '*virtu*' of the good citizen in the nation. Yet the nation is not a "supreme value" for Weber;<sup>28</sup> the Nietzschean diagnosis of forces is not abandoned in Weber's appeal to the potentially 'active' organization of identity in the nation. But it is an inversion of Nietzsche's perspective, which results in a misreading of his evaluation of the qualities of forces, which dooms Weber's argument to remain trapped within the spatial co-ordinates of 'coherence'. If Nietzsche rejects the nation as the ground of his 'different politics', he also remains suspicious of the linkage between the value of labour and the compensations of 'security'. *Daybreak* heaps scorn upon "the unwearied talk of 'the blessing of work'".<sup>29</sup> Far from enabling a reevaluation of forces which escape coherence, it reveals, like the praise of "useful impersonal actions", a "fear of everything individual". The ideal of useful, impersonal labour, which attempts to compel 'our factory slaves' to choose between two forms of political servitude - to the State or to 'parties of disruption' - is a mechanism for control of "dangerous forces":

"Thus a society in which there is continual hard work will have more security: and security is now worshipped as the supreme divinity. - And now! Horror! Precisely the 'worker' has become *dangerous*! The place is swarming with 'dangerous individuals'! And behind them the danger of dangers - *the individual*!"<sup>30</sup>

For Nietzsche, the 'active' organization of forces which might escape the spatial co-ordinates of coherence pass through neither the ascetic conception of vocation nor the homogenous space of the state. Only the 'slave' feels the need to demand the 'security' and meaning of the nation to be a 'strong self'.

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<sup>27</sup> Hennis, 1988, n.64, pp.247-8.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> D, p.105.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

This difference between Nietzsche's and Weber's evaluation of forces explains not only how both come to virtually opposite conclusions regarding the value of the nation and the 'fate' of politics in modernity; it also *explains the logic of Weber's argument*. Weber does not simply 'opt for the nation', as Perry Anderson suggests (a critique which then lends itself to sociological 'explanation': Weber, for all his greatness and originality, is still a 'child of his times'). As Hennis argues, the unity of Weber's work is most clearly established through his relations with Nietzsche's thought.<sup>31</sup> But the terms upon which Hennis establishes this relationship are those of a *conventional reading of Nietzsche* which unfortunately does not avail itself of recent scholarship on his texts. Hennis, for instance, notes Weber's characterization of the triumph of modern capitalism as a time of "masterless slavery": the universal spread of 'formally free labour' which follows in the "train of the massive scale of exchange" means that "the relation of employer to employee could no longer be thought in ethical terms".<sup>32</sup> Hennis cites only the first part of section 206 of *Daybreak*, quoted more fully earlier in this essay, as evidence of the Nietzschean sources of Weber's argument, forgetting Nietzsche's exhortion to 'the workers' to become 'mobile' to escape slavery to *the State* as well as to 'socialist revolution'. Nietzsche's 'different' politics, which are based on the evaluation of forces, are thereby rendered invisible; indeed, Hennis argues that Nietzsche "sought escape in music and poetry", that his was a flight from "politics itself", as if politics could only be what Weber claims it is.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, while Hennis locates Weber in the 'tradition' of political theory from Machiavelli to de Tocqueville, which sets itself the problem of founding the *virtu* of the self in the polis, he invokes this tradition as a "corrective" to a reading of Weber in 'exclusively Nietzschean terms'.<sup>34</sup>

However, as has been argued throughout the previous chapter, Weber's analysis of the dilemmas of modernity are intelligible within the terms of his inversion of Nietzsche's evaluation of forces. For Weber, the problematic of *virtu* is central to his diagnosis of and prescription for these

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<sup>31</sup> Hennis, 1988, esp. pp.185-9.

<sup>32</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.156.

<sup>33</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.159.

<sup>34</sup> Hennis, 1988, pp.196-7.

dilemmas, as Rob Walker has argued.<sup>35</sup> As Walker also contends, however, Weber's search is for the forces in this conception of political identity which can be *revalued*, in Nietzschean fashion, now that the 'noble', patriotic self of Machiavelli's time is no longer available.<sup>36</sup> If modernity is a time of 'masterless slavery' for Weber, this diagnosis can be interpreted in terms of a Nietzschean evaluation of the production of an interiorized self and homogenous space of the 'external' world in the ascetic ideal.<sup>37</sup> The difference, again, between Nietzsche's and Weber's evaluation is that for Nietzsche, this production is not the whole story; if, for both, the ascetic conception of self and world is a 'reactive' organization of forces (Weber will use the Nietzschean terminology of 'qualities' and 'forces' in this analysis), for Nietzsche, this organization cannot be the basis for an 'active' reevaluation. Writing from the perspective of the slave theodicy of suffering only makes visible those forces which 'appear to act' by 'separating' forces which escape the spatial order of homogenous *identity* from what they can do. Weber's error, therefore, is to attempt a reevaluation of the forces of work in the ascetic conception of 'vocation' and in the sacrificial patriotism of the 'good citizen', *as if* the slavish demand for identity is the only voice audible in modernity; *as if* the only space available to meet this demand is defined by the inside/outside of the homogenous space of the interiorized self and that of the State. Moreover, this error results in Weber's appeal to *the nation* as the terrain upon which the *boundaries* of this self and social world can be transformed from an 'iron cage' into an 'active', tragic relation of individual and collective identity. It is to Weber's conception of the nation, therefore, that the discussion now turns.

### Weber's Conception of the Nation

The place of the nation in Weber's attempt to resolve individual and collective identity 'actively' within the spatial order of the State can be seen somewhat allusively in his lectures on

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<sup>35</sup> Walker, 1993a, p.148.

<sup>36</sup> Walker, 1993a, pp.143,147-50.

<sup>37</sup> c.f. Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p.254: "The bourgeois sets the example, he absorbs surplus value for ends that, taken as a whole, have nothing to do with his own enjoyment: more utterly enslaved than the lowest of slaves, he is the first servant of the ravenous machine, the beast of the reproduction of capital, internalization of the infinite debt. 'I too am a slave' - these are the new words spoken by the master."

politics and science, and all too clearly in the 1895 Inaugural lecture in Freiburg. The former have already been discussed in this chapter; the consistency of argument between them and the more patently polemical, nationalist "Freiburg Lecture" will become clear in the following section. This section concerns Weber's conceptual treatment of the nation, a treatment again in accord with the logic of his thought as a whole. Though quite brief, consisting of nine translated pages, whose formulations often claim the status of outlines for further research,<sup>38</sup> Weber's theoretical treatment of the nation is consistent with the 'inverted Nietzscheanism' of his diagnosis of modernity. Moreover, where the Weberian roots of Gellner's theory of the nation have already been traced, and the elements of Benedict Anderson's discourse have been found in Weber's appeal to the problematic of revaluing the 'slave's' demand for a theodicy of suffering in the tragic identity practice of 'patriotic sacrifice', these nine pages contain the essentials of Anderson's specifics regarding the nation 'itself'.

Where Gellner is little concerned with the 'subjective' side of the nation, Weber, like Anderson after him, reads the nation from the 'inside' of the problematic of identity and meaning. It is crucial to remember, however, that Weber's perspective is just that: a perspective on the relation of forces in the organization of identity, which neither opposes nor places in hierarchy 'subjective and objective realms'. The key question for Weber will therefore be, *What forces can the nation be aligned with such that it will become the ground of a positive revaluation of self and social world?*

The central organizing contention in Weber's conceptual treatment of the nation is that it is a 'sacrificial' community which provides meaning and identity to both the individual self and the collective. Here, Weber's assumption that the meaning-creating forces of death and war have been captured once and for all by *the State* is decisive. His section on "The Economic Foundations of 'Imperialism'" concludes with an observation on how 'the masses' have the least to lose in choosing war over 'pacifist interests' in the age of "the universal revival of 'imperialist' capitalism". The masses have, after all, nothing to lose by their lives. They are, as a result, most easily susceptible to "emotional influence"; which is to say, the masses can be most easily persuaded to demand

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<sup>38</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.171-9.

war.<sup>39</sup> But, Weber argues, this demand cannot be reduced to economic causes: "The fervor of this emotional influence does not, in the main, have an economic origin. It is based upon sentiments of prestige..."<sup>40</sup> This *sentiment*, most clearly felt among those whose hand is most firmly on the wheel of the common lot, *manifests itself variously*. It "may fuse with a specific belief in responsibility toward succeeding generations", which then endows "the great power structures" as such with responsibility for carrying out this 'duty' toward the future.<sup>41</sup> Then, there are the complex of varied types of interests bound up in the '*intellectually privileged*', who see themselves as the bearers of a *common, specific 'culture'*, and who transform the "naked prestige of 'power'...into other special forms of prestige and especially into the idea of the 'nation'".<sup>42</sup>

The notion of a stable 'space' of collective identity linking past, present, and future; the appeal to a particular, horizontal homogeneity in shared identity: these are two key features of Anderson's account of the nation. Moreover, Weber defines what this 'idea of the nation' is in terms Anderson will repeat. For instance, Weber insists that it cannot be adequately understood in terms of "empirical qualities", nor in terms of political ones, such as citizenship ("membership in a given polity"); neither can the nation be defined in terms of the presence of cultural qualities like common language. In practice, what the nation signifies is

"that one may exact from certain groups of men a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups. Thus the concept belongs in the sphere of values".<sup>43</sup>

Placing the nation here renders it amenable to a diagnosis of *qualities*, the relation of forces it manifests. However, it also raises the question of what forces it can enter into relation with. If the nation expresses the locus of collective identity as a meaning-giving response to the

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<sup>39</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.169-71.

<sup>40</sup> Weber, 1974, p.171.

<sup>41</sup> Weber, 1974, p.172.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

problem of fatality in terms of sacrifice (as in Anderson, one the masses are most ready to die for), Weber notes the difficulty in determining both the "delimitation" of such a community and "what concerted action should result from such a solidarity".<sup>44</sup> Considered 'subjectively', the nation raises the question, "What conclusions are a group of people willing to draw from the 'national sentiment' found among them?".<sup>45</sup>

Given both that "the reasons for the belief that one represents a nation vary greatly, just as does the empirical conduct that actually results from affiliation or lack of it with a nation",<sup>46</sup> and that the sources of this sentiment of sacrificial community cannot simply be read off the 'autonomous laws' of the different 'orders of life', Weber attempts to isolate the force of this 'sentiment' as it traverses economics, politics, and culture within the processes which lead to the universality of modernity. Although the mere presence of a common language does not guarantee the presence of a strong sentiment of 'nation-ness', for example, 'the masses' do tend to regard common language as proof of eligibility for access to the 'prestige' of nation-ness. This prestige, which sustains both memory and a duty to the future, may be linked to religion or ethnicity, as it happens. "Yet above all, national solidarity may be linked to memories of a common destiny with other nations..."<sup>47</sup> Though not based on 'common blood',<sup>48</sup> some sense of *homogeneity* seems requisite: "[T]he idea of the 'nation' is apt to include the notions of common descent and of an essential, though frequently indefinite, homogeneity".<sup>49</sup> Still, the presence of these notions are insufficient guarantors of the sentiment of nation-ness. Furthermore, not only do assessments of the presence of nation-ness change over time, but this sentiment is also found in varying strength both 'within' and across the range of "social strata". However, in Weber's appraisal, the demand for

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Weber, 1974, p.175.

<sup>46</sup> Weber, 1974, pp.174-5.

<sup>47</sup> Weber, 1974, p.173.

<sup>48</sup> Weber insists that "the mystic effects of a community of blood" be entirely discounted, (Weber, 1974, p.177.) a point to be remembered when his "Freiburg lecture" is discussed in the following section.

<sup>49</sup> Weber, 1974, p.177.

nation-ness appears to be gaining in strength. To cite Weber's key example, "certain leading strata of the class movement of the modern proletariat" consider "indifference" to and "relinquishment" of this sentiment "an accomplishment". As Weber notes, "On the whole, their success is rather diminishing at the present time".<sup>50</sup> Weber thus suggests what will be for Anderson decisive in his attempt to rethink the nation: Marxism does not escape its reach. If, therefore, the practical question of the direction in which this sentiment might be moved is to be answered, Weber insists that its organization within the masses must be carefully examined, since this is the terrain where it bears the greatest capacity to affect, and to be affected.

Weber contends that to understand the modern form of the nation, the 'linkage' between *the State's resolution* of the negative theodicy of suffering and the *shared identity* created among the masses through the prestige of common vernaculars must be considered. In the creation of such a culture community, intellectuals play a crucial role.<sup>51</sup> The nation may be a medieval legal concept born out of the breakdown of "the universality of the papacy" brought about through "the interests of intellectuals"; "At that time, however, the linkage to national language *per se* was lacking; this linkage...is specifically modern".<sup>52</sup> The reason for this modern linkage anticipates both Nairn and Anderson: "democratization of state, society and culture" increases the importance of language specifically at the level of the masses, and in two ways. First, "for the masses, a common language plays a more decisive economic part than it does for the propertied strata of feudal or bourgeois stamp".<sup>53</sup> Second, and closely related, "language...and the literature based upon it, is the first and for the time being the only cultural value at all accessible to the masses who ascend toward participation in culture".<sup>54</sup> But this emphasis on the role of literature does not define the nation as a 'culture community' in the sense of creating an 'autonomous sphere' of shared cultural values: "newspapers, which certainly do not assemble what is most sublime in literary culture, cement the

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<sup>50</sup> Weber, 1974, p.174. n.b. This text was written between 1910 and 1914.

<sup>51</sup> Weber, 1974, p.176.

<sup>52</sup> Weber, 1974, p.179.

<sup>53</sup> Weber, 1974, p.178.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

masses most strongly".<sup>55</sup> In other words, the *identity-creating function of print-capitalism*, not the creation of a 'culture-sphere' is stressed in Weber's account of the nation. Like Anderson, Weber notes the role of "quite considerable pecuniary and capitalist interests", which are 'today' beyond the control of "reasons of state", in the production of this common 'culture'.<sup>56</sup> The appeal to the function of literature and newspapers in answering the question of how 'national identity' is possible is Anderson's argument; it is already found in Weber.

Moreover, the availability of the homogenous space of the nation for resolving questions of fatality and suffering is theorized by Weber long before it is offered by Anderson as a 'corrective' to Gellnerian and Marxist reductionism. The nation, defined as a community of sacrifice in both Weber and Anderson, reads identity in the nation as the product of *the inevitable 'becoming-explicit' of the spatial order of the State*. For Weber, as for Anderson and Gellner, the nation is defined by its relation to the inside/outside of the State:

"A nation is a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own".<sup>57</sup>

Thus, the nation expresses the force of the demand for *autonomy*; this demand, however, is determined and delimited by the boundaries of the State. But like Anderson, Weber argues that

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Weber, 1974, p.179. Weber's discussion of the cementing-function of newspapers does not exhaust his reflections upon the functionality of vernacular print-literature for a homogenous national space. He also presents, as an hypothesis, the role of *women*, who "contributed significantly to the formation of national sentiment linked to language" (p.178.): the *erotics* of literature, expressed most clearly in the courtly lyric, had a considerable role in the displacement of Latin, and has "sublimated national languages into literary ones" (*ibid.*). Weber also mentions, but does not elaborate upon, the effects of "the broadening administrative tasks of state and church" (p.179.). The second emphasis is found in explicit form in Anderson; as noted in Chapter one, Anderson also assumes an *erotics* of language, a 'reactive' conception of sacrifice and love forged through language 'learned at mother's knee'. Doubtless Anderson would reject Weber's Nietzschean notion of 'the feminization of literature'; his own theory, however, passes silently over the *erotics* it presumes.

<sup>57</sup> Weber, 1974, p.176.

what gives this demand its particular *force* is the resolution the State, and through it the nation, provides to questions of *fatality*:

"[I]n spite of the greatest internal antagonisms... [t]he state is valued as the agency that guarantees security, and this is above all the case in times of extreme danger, when sentiments of national solidarity flare up, at least intermittently".<sup>58</sup>

This emphasis on the flux of intensity of the 'sentiment' of nationalism will be repeated by Giddens, as noted in Chapter one. But it is also the case that Weber's appeal to the State as the 'container' of national identity moves beyond the fairly straight-forward psychology of this position: *by creating a space of homogeneity and universality 'within' the State*, the nation is identified as a locus of identity which 'measures up' to the universalizing thrust of the forces which have produced modernity. Only these forces can be revalued positively, according to Weber. Thus, *the nation, like the concept of labour in a vocation and 'patriotic' sacrifice*, are identity-practices which can be revalued 'actively' to foster the identity of the 'strong self'. Faced, like Anderson, with the universal presence of the fixed boundaries of homogenous self and state, Weber can only attempt this revaluation, if at all, in a 'tragic' conception of identity sustained by these boundaries themselves.

Weber's conception of the nation as the space of political identity which can enter into revalued relations with an 'active' notion of both labour and patriotic sacrifice is thus a *reaction* to the universal presence of the fixed boundaries of the State. In this idea of the nation, Weber's demand for a universality of legitimate domination meets the demand for a strong self, 'he' who has 'personality' and who may "be allowed to put his hand on the wheel of history".<sup>59</sup> The nation as *destiny* revalues the *fate* of the 'eternal struggle' of the gods faced by the self in modernity. This reading of the nation adopts the perspective of the negative theodicy of suffering, just as his analysis of the forces which have produced a 'reactive' modernity has done. Therefore, if Weber finds the answer to his search for an organization of forces which measures up to the transformative

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<sup>58</sup> Weber, 1974, p.177.

<sup>59</sup> Weber, 1974, p.115.

powers of capitalism and the ascetic ideal of identity in the idea of the nation, he clearly attempts to discern that within the 'slave's' problematic of identity which has not become completely reactive. Though a misreading of Nietzsche's diagnosis of forces, Weber's argument is thoroughly Nietzschean.

In Weber's attempt to define the nation as the 'battlefield' where the self meets politics, the question of *labour* is crucial. The sentiment of solidarity 'in the face of other groups', which defines the nation as a *universality* within the *particularity* of the homogenous space defined by the inside/outside of the State, is fueled by the 'uneven development' of *modernization* which traverses these spaces.<sup>60</sup> The transformation of conceptions of self take place most thoroughly at the level of the 'workaday world'; only the rationalized conception of *self* found in the ascetic notion of labour in a vocation measures up to the force of this transformation, which leaves the 'noble', traditional conception of self and cosmos behind. In the same way, conceptions of *collective identity* are contained within a spatial account of the presence and absence of different dynamics of the organization of labour in Weber's comparative historical analysis. The stage is thus set for the appearance of the State, which finally captures the meaning-giving forces of fatality and sacrifice, as the 'container' which resolves individual and collective identity in the nation.

In 'Euripidean' fashion, Weber's tragic conception of individual and collective identity emerges from the background of the tensions created by the firm boundaries described by this conception of politics as spatial order. Weber's theoretical treatment of the nation as a question of how identity is 'held together' is not only consistent with this tragic politics; it follows the same logic and identifies the same forces as does his diagnosis of the dilemmas of modernity found throughout the other works discussed in chapter three. Moreover, when one turns to the more overtly nationalist and polemical of his texts, to the "Inaugural Lecture" in particular, one again finds the 'inverted Nietzscheanism' of his overall argument at work. Once again, labour will be the key terrain upon which his attempt to revalue the forces that have produced the dilemmas of identity in modernity is undertaken.

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<sup>60</sup> Walker, 1993a, p.145.

### Weber's National Politics

Weber's explicitly 'national politics' are developed in the context of his early work on '*the agrarian question*' as it manifested itself on the large estates of East Elbia.<sup>61</sup> It is this context of the 'uneven development'<sup>62</sup> of Wilhelmine economics and politics that Weber's "Inaugural Lecture" at Freiburg<sup>63</sup> must be placed. Before proceeding to the content of this lecture, therefore, some of the guiding themes of this context are briefly examined.

Crucial to debates over the form of politics in the modernization of 'Germany' at this time is the question of constructing a form of *universality* based on the notion of 'legitimacy' 'within' the boundaries of the State. Geoff Eley has observed that the legitimization of the SPD in 1890 changed the nature of 'German' politics in significant ways:

"The new technology of mass communications dramatised the fact that Wilhelmine politics were in fact becoming the scene of a battle for *consent*, to implant the popular legitimacy of bourgeois values in their specifically *German* form".<sup>64</sup>

'Post-Bismarkian' politics were shaped largely by the success of this battle; in the East, however, this new politics could hardly gain a foothold. Weber's perception of the reasons for this failure are instructive, since they are entirely in line with his argument concerning the need to identify those forces which transform 'traditional' conceptions of labour. Weber argues that a solution to the traditional *problem* of labour must be found which *measures up to the transformative dynamics that have produced the need to determine collective identity as a 'particular universality'*.

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<sup>61</sup> Kieth Tribe provides an account of the socio-political background of this problem, and of Weber's place in debates over it: see Kieth Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture - German Politics: Max Weber 1892-7", in Tribe, ed., 1989, esp. pp.90-114.

<sup>62</sup> See Weber's 1892 comments, quoted in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.107.

<sup>63</sup> This lecture appears as chapter 7 in Tribe, ed., 1989, under the title, "The National State and Economic Policy", pp.188-209, hereafter referred to as Weber, [1895].

<sup>64</sup> Geoff Eley, in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.91.

Thus for Weber, the political battle Eley identifies is fought in the East primarily on the terrain of the *traditional problem of labour*:

"The root of all difficulties lies in the way in which the need for agricultural labour, especially on the part of the large estates which here predominate, is distributed throughout the year".<sup>65</sup>

In addition, Weber writes here from the perspective of the *inside* of identity: he insists on the decisive importance of 'subjective' factors in dealing with this "age-old" problem of labour.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the question of *mobility* is crucial to the 'objective' aspects of 'the constitution of labour as a way of life' which accompany this internal perspective. On the one hand, there is the *Instmann*, tied to the Junker estates, who leads a 'traditional' economic life, according to Weber. On the other, there is a "tendency" to a "rational-capitalistic" displacement of this traditional practice, and its conception of self.<sup>67</sup> The resulting "free labourer" tends to 'take flight'; 'he' migrates, leaving a void to be filled by "homeless rural proletariat and slavish nomads alongside Polish dwarf peasants and depopulated latifundia".<sup>68</sup> The reasons for this flight are 'psychological': uncertainty of the future, attitudes toward the prospects for sound 'household management' and 'self improvement', a desire to be free of the landowners.<sup>69</sup> In short, 'becoming-mobile' is the rural labourer's response to the desire for the *security and autonomy* which neither the 'traditional' nor the 'rational-capitalistic' form of the organization of labour allows. The parallel with Nietzsche's exhortation to 'our factory slaves' to take flight is striking; no less apparent, however, is the reversal of perspective from which Weber argues. Once again, everything is written through the 'slave' conception of security and autonomy: everything is written from the perspective of how a stable, enduring conception of identity which can answer these demands is possible. The answer Weber gives is that of the

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<sup>65</sup> Weber [1894], in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.101.

<sup>66</sup> Weber [1892], in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.106.

<sup>67</sup> Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.108.

<sup>68</sup> Weber [1892], in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.108. (Weber here means 'dwarf' in the sense of small land holdings.)

<sup>69</sup> Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", pp.104,114.

'German national state'. Nietzsche's sense of 'becoming-mobile' as a form of escape from the forces of 'coherence' is invoked by Weber to *revalue those very forces*: the migration which concerns Weber here is that of Polish labourers; for Weber, this movement is a *national* problem, which the "Inaugural lecture" will counter by an invocation of the 'active' flight of German labourers.

This reversal of Nietzsche's perspective is clear from Weber's confidence that, however unclear the solution to this problem of labour may be, State intervention is both necessary and effective.<sup>70</sup> The 'rural labour question' is in reality a 'problem of state':

"The question of the conditions of the foundations of social organization - can the state rely on it in the long run to solve the political tasks which exist in the East. In my opinion the answer is *no*".<sup>71</sup>

Moreover, with the arrival of Polish migrants the question becomes a *national* one: "internal colonization" of the East by German peasants would possibly solve the problem of "fluctuations in the world market"; this would secure, not primarily the German economy, but 'the German nation', according to Weber.<sup>72</sup>

What is of decisive importance here is Weber's argument to the effect that both the traditional form of labour and the rational-capitalistic form of "masterless slavery" cannot succeed in the East; neither contains the potential for a 'constitution of labour as a way of life' necessary to secure the nation's future.<sup>73</sup> For this reason, Weber urges the State to take up the task of 'breeding' a self through a re-organization of this constitution of labour which can forge a 'national' identity. The "Inaugural Lecture" makes clear that Weber does not view the nation as a "higher goal" of the State: in his words, the national state is "the temporal power-organization of the nation"; 'reasons

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<sup>70</sup> Weber [1892], in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.108.

<sup>71</sup> Weber, 1893, in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.112.

<sup>72</sup> Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", pp.114-5.

<sup>73</sup> Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.111.

of state' dictate economic policy.<sup>74</sup> Nonetheless, the idea of the nation is crucial not only to the state's effectiveness, but also to its very survival. Far better, then, to "fetter" these rootless souls "to the soil of their fatherland"<sup>75</sup> than to leave them to the rusted fetters of the Junkers, or, what is worse, to be forever haunted by their departed spirit.

The "Inaugural Lecture" makes clear that Weber takes such a long view of the effects of the social organization of identity: economics can only be a *national* economics, given the form that the universality of 'struggle' now takes: "an *eternal struggle* for the maintenance and improvement by careful cultivation of our national character"<sup>76</sup> against the background of 'international' struggle in the "world-wide economic community". Germany arrives late on the scene of a "great political epoch"; the task at hand is to become "the precursors of an even greater epoch".<sup>77</sup> But if the 'leadership role' of the Junkers is now being taken over by the urban bourgeoisie, it is clear to Weber that considerable "education" is required to forge it into a "mature" force able to guide the German nation toward its "destiny".<sup>78</sup> As in Weber's theoretical sketch of the nation, this *destiny* is determined by the capacity to sustain memory: "We wish to make ourselves the forefathers of a race of the future with our labour and our mode of existence".<sup>79</sup> However, even 'now' the bourgeoisie is "withering"; the workers are not ready to replace them, and so only a "social

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<sup>74</sup> Weber [1895], pp.198-9. c.f. Foucault remarks on the historical specificity of the notion of 'reason of state' employed as a universal concept by Weber in Michel Foucault, "The Political Technology of Individuals", in Martin, *et al.*, eds., 1988, esp. pp.148-52. What is of particular importance here is how it differs from both St. Thomas' conception of rational government as the link between natural life and heavenly bliss, and Machiavelli's concern with "what reinforces the link between prince and state": (p.150.) "[R]eason of state refers neither to the wisdom of God nor to the strategies of the prince. It refers to the state, its nature, its rationality". (*ibid.*) "It is conceived as a set of forces and strengths that could be increased or weakened according to the politics followed by the governments". (p.151.) "[T]he individual becomes pertinent for the state insofar as he can do something for the strength of the state". (p.152.)

<sup>75</sup> Weber [1894], in Tribe, "Prussian Agriculture", p.115.

<sup>76</sup> Weber [1895], p.198.

<sup>77</sup> Weber [1895], p.208.

<sup>78</sup> Weber [1895], pp.204-6.

<sup>79</sup> Weber [1895], p.197.

*unification of the nation* can forge the 'maturity' of "the *ruling and rising classes*".<sup>80</sup>

Weber's perspective of evaluative responsibility follows from his conception of political economy as an activity concerned "above all else" with 'the *quality of human beings under specific conditions*'. As a 'science', political economy is concerned with 'world-wide' conditions; when political economy makes value-judgements of the sort demanded here, its domain ceases to be 'international', and becomes *necessarily 'national'*.<sup>81</sup> Weber insists that the evaluative aspect of economics contains within it a 'new standard of evaluation' - itself a value-judgement - which consists of adopting neither a perspective on economic development from 'above' or 'below', nor the perspective of "the victor in the economic struggle for power". Evaluation consists rather in diagnosing "political maturity",<sup>82</sup> the identification of forces of individual and collective identity which can be positively revalued. As in "Politics as a Vocation", the forces of political maturity are identified as those which eschew the illusions of a search for 'human happiness' (a "weak eudaemonism") and instead take a "sober" view - a 'democratic pathos of distance' - of the "great power-political tasks" before the nation.<sup>83</sup>

If, therefore, a 'vocation' for political leadership is to be shaped through "political education",<sup>84</sup> the use this training makes of the 'national sentiment of sacrificial community' is vital. *The terrain of this education is the nation, as it is defined by the inside/outside of the boundaries of the state.* This sentiment of sacrifice is a question of political leadership which cannot be reduced to class interests: even among 'the English', for whom this force is 'normally latent',

"[I]n great moments, in the case of war, their souls too become conscious of the significance of national power. Then it emerges that the national state rests on deep and

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<sup>80</sup> Weber [1895], p.207.

<sup>81</sup> Weber [1895], p.197.

<sup>82</sup> Weber [1895], pp.200-2. Weber insists that, "Economic power and the vocation for political leadership do not always coincide". (pp.201-2.)

<sup>83</sup> Weber [1895], pp.206-7.

<sup>84</sup> Weber [1895], p.205.

elemental psychological foundations within the broad economically subordinate strata as well, that it is by no means a mere 'superstructure'..."<sup>85</sup>

What organizes the nation as a force of 'political maturity' is that its limits are defined by the boundaries of the State; 'within' those limits,

"A nation is favored by destiny if the naive identification of the interests of one's own class with the general interest also corresponds to the interests of national power".<sup>86</sup>

It is the "*sole* political justification" of political leadership to be "the repositories" of this sacrificial force, which organizes 'interests' in a unity of individual and collective identity in the homogenous space of the nation, in "normal times".<sup>87</sup>

### Liberalism and Nationalism

The means for this education in political maturity are those of liberal institutions, which alone can establish the universality of 'legitimate domination' required to measure up to the forces of political transformation 'today'; the "Inaugural Lecture" will add to this the notion that this 'dangerous', hardly conventional liberalism<sup>88</sup> is in a reciprocal relationship with the education of the bourgeoisie in Statist power-politics. Thus, the 'eternal struggle' of the self in the various 'orders of life' meets the eternal struggle of the State on the world-stage in the idea of the German nation: the 'destiny' of the collective identity of the nation is forged from the tragic fate of both the interiorized individual and the homogenous space of the State. In this resolution of individual and collective, universal and particular, in the inside/outside of the State, one might say that for the neo-Kantian Weber, "Nationalism without liberalism is blind; liberalism without nationalism is empty".

Thus, from a Nietzschean problematic of diagnosing the forces within a 'reactive'

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<sup>85</sup> Weber [1895], p.202.

<sup>86</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> c.f. Hennis, 1988, pp.180-3.

modernity given over to the imperative to 'merely adapt', Weber attempts to revalue a conception of identity that will 'meet the demands of the day'; in this, he comes to the opposite conclusions to Nietzsche regarding the possibilities of politics, beginning as he does from the perspective of the negative theodicy of suffering, a conception of self and world which supposes the inevitable 'becoming-explicit' of politics as spatial order. That Weber adopts this 'slave' perspective in the "Inaugural Lecture" is clear not only from his appeal to the eternal *presence* of the nation as the space of political identity along the 'homogenous, empty time' of history; it is also apparent from the stated intentions of his lecture. Weber begins by stating that his intention is

"to use a *single example* to make clear the role played by racial differences of a physical and psychological nature, as between nationalities, in the economic struggle for existence".<sup>89</sup>

That example, of the differences between German and Polish labourers in this 'struggle', begs mention of Weber's aversion to the 'mystic community of blood' as an explanation of national cohesion. One might also consider here what Deleuze says of Nietzsche:

"Race only ever intervenes as an element in a *cross-breeding*, as a factor in a *complex* which is physiological but also psychological, political, historical and social. Such a complex is exactly what Nietzsche calls a type".<sup>90</sup>

Nietzsche's 'type' differs from Weber's, however, in that it is not *sociological*: a type in Nietzsche is not adduced in order to account for how particular identities are possible. Weber's concern, on the contrary, is with exactly this question: as the preceding discussion has argued, his lecture attempts to identify those forces of 'interest' within the German nation which can be organized into a form of collective identity that answers the demand for security and meaning in fatality. Moreover, this identity is 'built up' from the tensions encoded in the borders of politics as spatial order.

Weber's example is taken from West Prussia, a province which marks both the border of

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<sup>89</sup> Weber [1895], p.188.

<sup>90</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.127.

two 'nations' and a sharp internal boundary in terms of "the conditions of economic and social existence".<sup>91</sup> Both Poles and Germans act on a variety of 'interests', but what is distinctive in the first place is that the Poles tend to gather at the lowest social and economic level. The cause of this is a difference in "ability to adapt" to socio-economic conditions. The shifting 'national border' which results is caused by a shifting economic border.<sup>92</sup> But this shift ("economic extrusion") is in turn the result of *the 'quality of men' in each nationality*: the Slavic race as a whole expects a lower standard of living. German day-labourers, on the other hand, have a 'longing for freedom' which makes them unable to "adjust themselves to the *social* conditions of life in their homeland".<sup>93</sup> Material interests do not determine the exodus of Germans from 'their homeland'; interests are articulated with an 'active' force ('longing for freedom') which urges them to 'become-mobile' to escape the 'reactive' conditions of the East. Polish peasants, however, move into the space vacated by this migration because they possess only a minimum even of adaptive force, which is enough to satisfy them.<sup>94</sup>

Thus, argues Weber, "a process of selection" appears to be unfolding in the province:

"The small Polish peasant in East Germany is a type far removed from the bustling peasant owner of a dwarf property... he gains not *despite* but *on account of* the low level of his physical and intellectual habits of life".<sup>95</sup>

But, and this is an essential 'Nietzschean' dimension of his argument, *the 'weak' are being selected over the 'strong'*. (Recall *The Genealogy of Morals*: "The sick represent the greatest danger for the healthy."<sup>96</sup>) And, Weber insists, one must not believe that this result is not often produced by 'the

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<sup>91</sup> Weber [1895], p.188.

<sup>92</sup> Weber [1895], p.190.

<sup>93</sup> Weber [1895], p.193.

<sup>94</sup> Weber [1895], pp.193-4.

<sup>95</sup> Weber [1895], p.194.

<sup>96</sup> GM, p.121.

tendencies of development'.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, it is the task of mature political leadership, bred 'within' the state by the tragic tensions of liberal institutions and the sacrificial force of the State's eternal struggle without, to forge a particular universality in *the idea of the nation* which will measure up to the 'active' potential of the qualities of the German as a type.

### Conclusions: National Identity and Nihilism

Weber's defence of liberal institutions and an aggressive nationalism thus follow from the 'Nietzschean' dimension of his argument; his political conclusions are entirely consistent with the logic of his work as a whole. Moreover, his conclusions result from an inversion of Nietzsche's perspective which views the 'dilemmas of modernity' as the result of the fate of the 'base' conceptions of self and world found in the negative theodicy of suffering. This base conception embodies a demand for meaning; Weber writes from the perspective of the forces which produce answers to this question, as does Benedict Anderson after him: the homogenous space of the nation and the interiorized self of the ascetic ideal are 'contained' within the solid boundaries of the State. Contrary to the claims of Perry Anderson, writing from the 'inside' of the problem of 'coherence', of how identities are made visible, does not escape the reduction of politics to spatial order found in Gellner's more sociologically reductionist appeal to the inevitability of theorizing in a tragic mode.

Neither does Weber's Nietzscheanism account for the 'irrationality' of his politics, as Anderson insists. Rather, it is Weber's inversion of Nietzsche's perspective which again accounts for the affinity of his argument for nihilism. *It is the very problematic of 'coherence', founded on a conception of politics as spatial order, which faces the 'tragedy' of an inevitable complicity with nihilism.* Weber's account of political identity as a function of the spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment rationality, which *attempts to account for the bifurcation rational/irrational from the point of view of reason itself*, can just as easily lead to the *machtpolitik* of the "Inaugural Lecture" as it can to Gellner's liberal paradise, poisoned by its own success. Perry Anderson's attempt to limit theorizing on the nation to a problem of accounting for the 'irrationality' of nationalism from the perspective of identity and 'meaning' erases this discursive effect, laying the blame for

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<sup>97</sup> Weber [1895], pp.194-5.

'irrationality' on the very perspective which attempts to escape this tragic effect: that of Nietzsche.

The "Inaugural Lecture" cannot be usefully read as a 'stage' in a linear series (historicism) which would include certain texts by Carl Schmitt and, say, Goebbels; nonetheless, it can be made to resonate with them in disturbing ways.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, it is often claimed that Weber's 'disturbing' defence of the charismatic hero, a 'strong self' able to 'hold himself together' amidst the warring of the gods, is an echo of Nietzsche's 'Overman'. Hennis, for instance, makes this claim, arguing that Weber shares both his sense of 'heroic pathos' and the conception of life as 'struggle' with Nietzsche.<sup>99</sup> But from a Nietzschean perspective, Weber's is a 'reactive' pathos, born out of a misguided attempt to revalue the very forces of the ascetic ideal, *whose only fruit is nihilism*. Further, as Deleuze contends, 'struggle' does not create values for Nietzsche; "At least, the only values it creates are those of the triumphant slave".<sup>100</sup> Nietzsche sees neither himself nor the 'Overman' as *heroic*: "We should not think of Nietzsche's overman as a raising of the stakes: he differs in nature from man, from the ego".<sup>101</sup> The Overman is a 'new way of thinking', a new sensibility, a new form of life which has nothing to do with 'the highest form of man' as a goal, and everything to do with the affirmation of life (an affirmation which produces two negations: 'no' is

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<sup>98</sup> See Mommsen, 1989, esp. pp.101-5,190-2. The first reference is to the relation between Robert Michels' conversion to Italian fascism, the second to Schmidt.

c.f. Adolf Hitler's outburst upon hearing the news of General Paulus' decision to surrender at Stalingrad:

"What is life? Life is the Nation. The individual must die anyway. Beyond the life of the individual is the Nation. But how can anyone be afraid of this moment of death, with which he can free himself from this misery, if his duty doesn't chain him to this Vale of Tears?" (Hitler, in Shirer, 1981, p.933.)

It must also be stressed that the valorization of sacrifice common to Weber and Anderson is politically ambiguous; both Roger Griffin and Elie Kedourie have commented on the demagogic uses and abuses of the notion of 'national sacrifice'. (See Griffin, 1993, p.162; Kedourie, 1992, esp. pp.296-301.) The limitations of Kedourie's theory of the nation have been discussed in Chapter two; like Nairn's neo-Marxist reading of the nation, Griffin's analysis attempts to diagnose the "irrational pathology" of nationalism, in which he locates the thematic of sacrifice.

<sup>99</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.159.

<sup>100</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.82.

<sup>101</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.163; see also, pp.82,208 n.10.

said to reactive forces of ego and to striving through struggle) 'discovered' in the sense Nietzsche gives to tragedy. The following chapter elaborates some of the dynamics of the 'different' politics of the Nietzschean counter-lineage to Weberian discourse, arguing that it is this counter-lineage, disavowed in theories of the nation, which most critically raises the problems - not least of which is *nihilism* - silenced and deferred in post-Weberian thought.

"Heisenberg may have slept here."

- bumper sticker seen in Germany<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

This chapter rehearses the meta-theoretical assumptions of both Weberian discourse and Nietzschean counter-discourse, particularly as they are worked out in the thought of Gilles Deleuze. The difference between these discursive lineages can be most clearly seen in Deleuze's 'minor' deconstruction of Augustine's spatialized concept of time, a critique from which the *political* problem of nihilism emerges as both a rejection of the reactive nihilism of Weberian discourse, and an *immanent* problem to 'our' thought and practices. This critique is elaborated in some detail, since it makes clear the 'coherence' of Weberian discourse on the nation across the three 'planes' of analysis outlined in the Introduction to this essay: the 'grammar' of a discourse which reifies 'objects' of theory as a continuity of the seeable and sayable, narrated from the perspective of interiority; the 'nest of dualisms' through which this narrative passes; and the rhetorical deferral of political problems to the outside - to the counter-discourse of Nietzsche. These three planes 'cohere' in a circular logic: they produce a 'body' of literature on the nation which reproduces the meta-theoretical limits of the nation as it is produced in their logic. From this follows a tragic ethics of learning to live with this circularity as 'the paradox of politics': 'our' fate.

However, as this chapter argues, this tragic *solution* to the problem of the nation as the 'fate' of political identity in modernity both defers its own nihilism and disavows what this essay has called the 'fourth plane': that of the *practical* problematics to be constructed in *encounters* with the Outside Weberian discourse presumes, yet cannot acknowledge. The implications of this thought of the Outside will be developed in the Conclusions to this essay; this chapter first discusses its dynamics in the Nietzschean counter-lineage of Blanchot, Foucault, and Deleuze.

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<sup>1</sup> Kaku, 1994, p.116.

Elaboration of this fourth plane is crucial, since other critiques of Weberian discourse flourish, specifically, those loosely termed 'postmodernist/poststructuralist'. While these critiques do indeed challenge vital aspects of the resolution of time, space, and number in the *sovereignty* of the nation/state/self asserted in Weberian discourse, these critiques remain 'reactive' in crucial respects. Moreover, much 'postmodernist' thought owes its force to a critique of Marxist thought on the nation. However, as Chapter six contends, Marxist theories of the nation do not break with the meta-theoretical resolutions governing Weberian thought. The ironic result of encounters between Marxist and postmodernist thought on the nation is that the latter reproduce key features of Weberian discourse. Thus, it is not sufficient to trace Benedict Anderson back to Weber, nor to begin with the 'failures' of Marxist thought on the nation, and to licence a 'post-Andersonian' 'politics of difference'. In the thought of the Outside animating Deleuze's radical empiricism, productive beginnings to critical thought on the nation will not be found in a politics of identity/difference; as the Conclusions argue, they are to be made out of *encounters with the Outside of Nietzschean counter-discourse* - the 'non-site' of *alternative modernities*.

### **Mobility and Multiplicity**

The State-history governing Weberian discourse on the nation reads the inside/outside of the State as *a resolution of universal and particular*. 'Inside' the particular State, a universality is attainable which is reduplicated in the identical particularity of a universal field of States. *This particular universality is forged by the resolution of individual and collective identity in the nation*. History is the story of the final capture by the State of the forces which attempt to escape its 'spatio-temporal matrix'. So goes the argument, from Weber through Gellner to Anderson. But this story, and the discursive constraints of 'coherence' which support it, erases the Nietzschean perspective of forces which attempt to escape the tragedy of this coherence. The 'active space' of a 'field of perpetual interaction' of the war-machine and the State is not organized in terms of the problematic universal/particular, but rather in terms of the 'dangerous' thought of *multiplicity*, a 'dramatization' of problems, and a problem of dramatization. In short, an 'other theater' of politics, which attempts to escape the 'iron cage' of Weberian discourse, its fusion of the three planes of analysis examined in this essay into a theater of *representation*, upon whose stage only a 'tragic'

rehearsal of well-worn scenes can be played out.

'Multiplicity' is Gilles Deleuze's term for the 'different' thought he traces in his re-reading of the history of philosophy; it is a common feature of the Nietzschean counter-lineage which is reduced to 'irrationalism' in Weberian discourses on the nation. Its purpose in this essay is to pose an alternative to the 'tragedy' of politics as spatial order which dominates theories of the nation: the 'space' of multiplicity is concerned, not with the problem of accounting for how identities are 'held together', nor with establishing firm limits for critical rationality, but with the *political* questions of techniques and exercises of *problematics*.

'Multiplicity' is discovered by Deleuze in his study of Henri Bergson's ontology; as Michael Hardt suggests, it receives its political force in Deleuze from his reading of Spinoza and Nietzsche.<sup>2</sup> The main target of Deleuze's affirmation of multiplicity as a *substantive*, rather than a mere predicate of being, is Hegel. Nietzsche's critical neo-Kantianism is read *against the dialectic of universal and particular found in Hegel*. However, Kant too is a 'proximate enemy' of Nietzsche: Kant also fails to break with the problematic of universal and particular and the question of the self's 'coherence'. *This failure, moreover, is Weber's as well*; Nietzsche's critical neo-Kantianism must be distinguished from that of Weber, who, as argued above, remains trapped within the discursive constraints of an ascetically rationalized, interiorized self and political order of homogenous, bounded spaces.<sup>3</sup> For Nietzsche, Kant's immanent critique remains tied to servility before reason; Nietzsche replaces the transcendental ground of the legislative function of reason with the plasticity of a "genetic and geneological principle" of 'will to power',<sup>4</sup> which *creates values as a 'gift' from 'outside', from the space of multiplicity*, and whose field of application is never wider than that of the forces which it determines, and by which it is determined:

"[P]ower is something inexpressible in the will (something mobile, variable, plastic); power is in the will as 'the bestowing virtue', through power the will itself bestows sense

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<sup>2</sup> Hardt, 1993, pp.22,25.

<sup>3</sup> Weber's debt to Kant is discussed in Chapter six.

<sup>4</sup> c.f. Nietzsche, BGE, pp.134-6.

and value. We should not ask whether...the will to power is unitary or multiple... The will to power is plastic, inseparable from each case in which it is determined; just as the eternal return is being, but being which is affirmed of becoming, the will to power is unitary, but unity which is affirmed of multiplicity. The monism of the will to power is inseparable from a pluralist typology".<sup>5</sup>

Multiplicity is an 'active' pluralism, which exists in a relation of *difference* from the 'reactive' pluralism of Weber's 'ideal types': *perpetual interaction*, not dialectical opposition or the tragic dualism of its failed resolution.<sup>6</sup> Multiplicity is the space of the *outside*, which reveals the interiority of the subject and the homogenous space of the State as so many markers of *the triumph of the slave's resentment*. Nietzsche's Zarathustra expresses this well. Consider the following passages from "On the New Idol":

"The state is the coldest of cold monsters. Coldly it lies, too; and this lie creeps from its mouth: 'I, the state, am the people'.

It is a lie! It was creators who created peoples and hung a faith and a love over them: thus they served life.

It is destroyers who set snares for the many and call it the state: they hang a sword and a hundred desires over them...

I call it the state where everyone, good and bad, is a poison-drinker: the state where everyone, good and bad, loses himself: the state where universal slow suicide is called - life...

Only there, where the state ceases, does the man who is not superfluous begin: does the song of the necessary man, the unique and irreplaceable melody, begin".<sup>7</sup>

And this, from "Of Old and New Law Tables":

O my brothers, your nobility shall not gaze backward, but *outward!* You shall be fugitives from all fatherlands and fore-fatherlands!

You shall love your *children's land*: let this love be your new nobility - the undiscovered land in the furthest sea!..

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<sup>5</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.86. On Nietzsche's departure from Kant, see pp.89-94.

<sup>6</sup> c.f Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.34: "There is no question...of establishing a dualist opposition between the two types of multiplicities, molecular machines and molar machines; that would be no better than the dualism between the One and the multiple".

Foucault will distinguish his discourse analysis from the Weberian project of constructing 'ideal types' in terms compatible with Deleuze' construction of Nietzsche's argument. (See Foucault, "Questions of Method [Interview]", in Burchell, *et al.*, eds., 1991, pp.80-1.)

<sup>7</sup> Nietzsche, Z, pp.75-7.

You shall *make amends* to your children for being the children of your fathers: *thus* you shall redeem all that is past!..<sup>8</sup>

This last passage introduces a theme of decisive importance for an understanding of Nietzsche's 'different' politics: not only is the spatial matrix of the State and ascetic self transformed by a 'noble' affirmation of will to power;<sup>9</sup> the *temporal* aspect of the slave's resentment is transformed as well. The Eternal Return affirms the being of becoming in repetition *against the 'reactive' conception of time as a fixed narrative of past, present and future found in the ascetic ideal:*

"...[I]t is all my art and aim, to compose into one and bring together what is fragment and riddle and dreadful chance...

To redeem the past and to transform every 'It was' into an 'I wanted it thus!' - that alone do I call redemption!..

Willing liberates: but what is it that fastens in fetters even the liberator?

'It was': that is what the will's teeth-gnashing and most lonely affliction is called. Powerless against that which has been done, the will is an angry spectator of all things past...

This, yes, this alone is *revenge* itself: the will's antipathy towards time and time's 'It was'...

*The spirit of revenge*: my friends, that, up to now, has been mankind's chief concern; and where there was suffering, there was always supposed to be punishment.

'Punishment' is what revenge calls itself: it feigns a good conscience for itself with a lie.

And because there is suffering in the willer himself, since he cannot will backwards - therefore willing itself and all life was supposed to be - punishment!"<sup>10</sup>

Nietzsche will go on in this section to trace this spirit of revenge in metaphoric characterizations of Hegel, Kant, and Schopenhauer. To the *historicism* which *fixes the boundaries* between past, present, and future and offers only the weakness of revenge - *suffering seen from the perspective of interiority* - against them in the form of the interiorized, ascetic self, Nietzsche offers the 'noble' affirmation of becoming as power exercised from the outside as a 'gift' of *excess*, of

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<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche, Z, p.221.

<sup>9</sup> See Nietzsche, Z, "Of the Spirit of Gravity", pp.210-13.

<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche, Z, pp.161-2.

*superabundance*.<sup>11</sup> It is this 'plane' of the outside as multiplicity that the perspective of the slave in Weberian discourses on the nation cannot reach. Above the "passing clouds" of Hegelian mediation and the dualisms of Kant, Nietzsche invokes the clear sky, and the excessive power of the sun, in an ecstatic vision of Zarathustra's task before 'man':

"Truly, I showed them new stars, together with new nights - and over cloud and day and night I spread out laughter like a coloured canopy...

as poet, reader of riddles, and redeemer of chance, I taught them to create the future, and to redeem by creating - all that *was past*.

To redeem the past of mankind and to transform every 'It was', until the will says: 'But I willed it thus! So shall I will it -'

this did I call redemption, this alone did I teach them to call redemption.

Now I await *my* redemption - that I may go to them for the last time.

For I want to go to man once more: I want to go under *among* them, I want to give them, dying, my richest gift!

From the sun that goes down, that superabundant star, I learned this: then, from inexhaustible riches it pours out gold into the sea -

so that the poorest fisherman rows with *golden* oars! For once I saw this, and did not tire of weeping to see it..."<sup>12</sup>

In the "nomadic thought" of the Nietzschean counter-lineage of Deleuze, Foucault, Blanchot, and Bataille, the Weberian lineage traced in this essay reveals its complicity with the Hegelian urge to reduce *mobility* - an 'active' sense of becoming - to its functionality for the concretization of a *spatialized conception of time*.<sup>13</sup> Against this reduction, Deleuze finds in Bergson's distinction between space and time, duration and matter, the possibility of conceiving a movement from quantity to quality as a *displacement* of the Hegelian opposition between 'real determination' and 'indetermination' through Spinoza's conceptions of immanence, the singularity and univocity of being, and *internal difference* rather than opposition:

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<sup>11</sup> c.f. Nietzsche, Z, "Of the Bestowing Virtue", pp.99-104. Georges Bataille is the thinker of Nietzschean excess and sacrifice: see esp. Bataille, 1985, pp.192-4 (formulated against Levinas' attempt to link Nietzsche's thought to racial doctrines).

<sup>12</sup> Nietzsche, Z, p.216.

<sup>13</sup> Foucault will prefer the term 'transformations' to that of 'becoming', but becoming here means its historicist version, which homogenizes and reduces the individuation of discourses. The criteria of Foucault's pluralism, by contrast, treats the "episteme of a given period" as a "space of dispersion". (Michel Foucault, "Politics and the Study of Discourse", in Burchell, *et al.*, eds., 1991, pp.54-6.)

"Duration is the domain in which we can find the primary ontological movement because duration, which is composed of differences in nature, is able to differ qualitatively with itself. Space, or matter, which contains only differences of degree, is the domain of modal movement because space cannot differ with itself, but rather repeats".<sup>14</sup>

Spatial perspectives are those which, confined to differences of degree, produce *the infinite reduplication of identical particulars*; all movement is a becoming-Same, in an abstract argument that fails to register "the specificity and singularity of real being".<sup>15</sup> In the same way, Foucault's analysis of discourse refuses the spatial co-ordinates of the problematic of the 'subject' and its meaning-demands, *the very 'spatio-temporal matrix' which governs 'Weberian' discourses of the nation*. Foucault's 'thought of the Outside' and his analysis of techniques of power share the Nietzschean perspective of the forces that escape 'coherence' with Deleuze' political ontology.<sup>16</sup>

Simplifying, but not distorting the large range of Deleuze' work, one can say that in the Spinozist conceptions of *causality immanent to its effects and being as positivity and affirmation*, Deleuze finds a linkage between Bergson's and Nietzsche's shared concern with *the qualitative aspect of being as the becoming of difference*.<sup>17</sup> This perspective works through an affirmation of

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<sup>14</sup> Hardt, 1993, pp.14-15. Derrida will contend that Bergson's views on the reduction of time to categories of space marks a simple *reversal* of Hegel's argument (Derrida, 1982, p.37). Hardt acknowledges that Deleuze' reading of Bergson leaves itself open to an Hegelian charge of indetermination, but claims that his encounter with Spinoza *shifts the ground of debate: Spinozan immanence and expression, the singularity of being, both "is and is not determination"*. (Hardt, 1993, pp.67-71.)

<sup>15</sup> Hardt, 1993, p.12. See also Deleuze, 1991b, esp.pp.44-83; Deleuze, 1991a, pp.73-89.

<sup>16</sup> See Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", in Foucault, 1986, pp.182-96.

<sup>17</sup> See Deleuze, "Active and Reactive", in Allison, ed., 1977, p.86. Nietzsche's thought of the Eternal Return is a process of *selection*: repetition is the being of what becomes, but what returns is not 'the Same', but *difference*:

"The Eternal Return is thus the answer to the problem of *passage*... It is not being that recurs, but, rather, that recurrence itself constitutes being insofar as it affirms becoming and passing. It is not some one thing that recurs, but that recurrence is itself affirmed by the passage of diversity or multiplicity".

On Nietzsche's relations with Spinoza's thought in terms of the quality of forces, see Deleuze, "Active and Reactive", pp.94-6; Deleuze, 1983, pp.39-44. Hardt wisely cautions against too quickly assimilating the various perspectives Deleuze brings to his treatments of different thinkers; (Hardt, 1993, pp.22-5.) nonetheless, the careful path he traces from ontology to politics in his study

multiplicity in 'the will to power'. Like the abstract oppositions of Weber's discourse produced through his 'slave' conception of identity, by contrast, the movement from the One to the multiple in Hegel's *Science of Logic* is abstract, an external movement that cannot produce a concrete determination, despite its claims;<sup>18</sup> Hegel's 'labour of the negative', posed against the *positive movement of being* in Spinoza,<sup>19</sup> reduces movement to its function for a reconciliation of oppositions:

"It is not surprising that the dialectic proceeds by opposition, development of the opposition or contradiction and solution of the contradiction. It is unaware of the real element from which forces, their qualities and their relations derive; it only knows the inverted image of this element which is reflected in abstractly considered symptoms".<sup>20</sup>

Nietzsche both praises Spinoza's conception of *the body* as a multiplicity of qualities of forces,<sup>21</sup> and contrasts it with Hegel's systemization of the 'German soul', which can reveal *only symptoms*.<sup>22</sup> It is a Nietzschean perspective of multiplicity which shows the production of oppositions, homogeneity and spatial order as so many *appearances*, which explain nothing in themselves. Weber's discourse owes more to Kant than to Hegel, but both fail to offer a critical perspective on the spatio-temporal matrix which produces the 'tragedy' of politics as spatial order. *It is thus not the Weberian lineage of thought on the nation, but the Nietzschean counter-lineage which offers the potential for a critical perspective on the triumph of homogeneity, the State, and the interiorized self in modernity.*

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of Deleuze reveals a fundamental congruence of problematics: that of keeping 'active' the forces which escape the spatial order of 'coherence'.

<sup>18</sup> Hardt, 1993, pp.11-13.

<sup>19</sup> See Hardt, 1993, pp.3-4; see also Negri, 1991, esp. pp.47,56,132-3.

<sup>20</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.157.

<sup>21</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1983, pp.39-40; Nietzsche, Z, "Of the Despisers of the Body":

"The body is a great intelligence, a multiplicity with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a herdsman.

Your little intelligence, my brother, which you call 'spirit', is also an instrument of your body, a little instrument and toy of your great intelligence". (pp.61-2.)

<sup>22</sup> Nietzsche, BGE, pp.177-80.

### Thought and Bodies

Hegel's abstract, external dialectic of One and Multiple produces a "*false movement*"<sup>23</sup> which nonetheless claims the opposite: Hegel denounces Spinoza's "oriental conception of *emanation*", which understands "becoming only as a progressive loss",<sup>24</sup> a characterization of Spinozan *eternalism* which will be repeated by later 'postmodern Marxists' such as Fredric Jameson as a defence of *historicism* against the 'failures' of 'structuralist' Marxism (in particular, of Louis Althusser).<sup>25</sup> As the following chapter argues, the discursive constraints of debates between historicism and structuralism limit Marxist thought on the nation to a repetition of the meta-theoretical resolutions of Weber's discourse. Here, Hegel's characterization of Spinozism as "oriental" is a telling phrase, since Hegel's own philosophy of history is profoundly 'orientalist' in its claim to locate 'becoming' 'here', in the content of Spirit's "consciousness of freedom" *actualized* in the Protestant Germanic State, but *absent* from the "*Despotism*" of 'the Orient'.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, it is Hegel's claim that his philosophy is an *immanent critique which alone gives an adequate account of space and time, infinity and finitude, unity and difference*.<sup>27</sup> Hegel's thought presents a *theodicy of struggle*<sup>28</sup> which claims to present the limits of *creative thought* as a *philosophy of identity*, bounded by the *necessity of actualizing itself through the boundaries of the*

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<sup>23</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.44.

<sup>24</sup> Hegel, in Hardt, 1993, p.19.

<sup>25</sup> See Fredric Jameson, "Marxism and Historicism", in Jameson, 1988, pp.172-7.

<sup>26</sup> See Hegel, 1988 [1840], esp. pp.60-98. Hegel discusses the 'unity and difference' of Spinozism, the Stoics, Chinese and Indian culture on pp.73-5, noting that both the Chinese and Indian "nations, it must be said, are entirely lacking in the essential consciousness of the concept of personal freedom" (p.74), a result of the Despotism of the One they are alleged to share with Spinoza and the Stoics. See also Hegel, 1981 [1821], pp.220-3.

<sup>27</sup> On this point, see Rosen, 1984, pp.77-86; and Hegel, 1988, p.75: "World history in general is thus the unfolding of Spirit in *time*, as nature is the unfolding of the Idea in *space*".

<sup>28</sup> On Hegel's view of his philosophy as a theodicy, see C. Taylor, 1979, pp.95-6; Hegel, 1988, pp.39-56.

'National State'.<sup>29</sup> As noted in Chapter one, the 'labour of the negative' that animates Hegel's 'State philosophy' constitutes a sort of imperialism of thought. Deleuze must, therefore, revalue the thought of those, like Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Bergson, who attempts to think 'outside' the resolutions of universal and particular which govern Hegel's attempt to *subsume* them under the *immanent Reason of Spirit*.<sup>30</sup>

Latter-day Hegelians have claimed that Deleuze's attempt to 'escape' Hegel is doomed to failure, thereby repeating Hegel's claim that nothing escapes his 'system'.<sup>31</sup> Yet, as Michael Hardt argues, Deleuze does not operate on the same 'ground' as Hegel: 'active' nihilism is not the partial critique of Hegel, which seeks preservation in negation, but a *total critique*: 'active nihilism'.

Weber's perspective writes the 'elements' of identity-formation from the point of view of their functionality for the 'becoming-*explicit*' of the *implicit* spatial co-ordinates of the 'base'

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<sup>29</sup> See Hegel, 1981 [1821], pp.155-6:

"The state is absolutely rational inasmuch as it is the actuality of the substantial will which it possesses in the particular self-consciousness once that self-consciousness has been raised to consciousness of its universality. This substantial unity is an absolute unmoved end in itself, in which freedom comes into its supreme right. On the other hand this final end has supreme right against the individual, whose supreme duty is to be a member of the state".

The unity of objective and subjective freedom in the State is its 'concrete rationality': "This Idea is the absolutely eternal and necessary being of mind". (p.156) See also, p.208-16, which recounts the unity of particularity and universality of a field of *sovereign States*, in part actualized through the state's 'final capture' of *sacrifice*.

<sup>30</sup> See Hegel, 1988, pp.58-9:

"Spirit is only what it makes of itself, and it makes itself into what it already is implicitly... The transition that is involved in the actualization of spirit is mediated by consciousness and will. To begin with, human consciousness and will are immersed in their unmediated natural life; their aim and object, at first, is the natural determination as such. But this natural determination comes to be infinitely demanding, strong and rich, because it is animated by Spirit. Thus Spirit, within its own self, stands in opposition to itself. It must overcome itself as its own truly hostile hindrance. The process of development, so quiescent in the world of nature, is for Spirit a hard and endless struggle against itself. What the Spirit wants is to arrive at the concept of itself; but it itself hides this concept from itself - and it is even proud and filled with joy in this self-estrangement".

<sup>31</sup> This is Judith Butler's claim, for example, in defence of her 'postmodern' ethics, which seeks to preserve the 'labour of the negative'. See Hardt, 1993, pp.52,115.

demand for a homogenous self and its 'container', the State. Death, war, sacrifice, imitation, and fate are understood *purely reactively* in Weber's account, as they are in Benedict Anderson's narrative. If 'history' does not appear in "Politics as a Vocation" (as it does in Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism*) as a co-ordinate of Enlightenment rationality's spatializing imperative (the spread of universal values, the quest for "perpetual peace" and admission of the 'inevitable' violence of 'balance of power' both within states and between them), Weber nonetheless construes 'becoming' in terms of its functionality for the final capture of exteriority by the spatial boundaries of the interiorized self and State. While Weber's problematic is informed by Nietzsche,<sup>32</sup> the conclusions he will draw regarding politics and the nation result from a misreading of Nietzsche's argument. Weber's demand for a 'strong self' able to revalue, in the collective identity of the German nation, the reactive forces of modernity and the tensions they produce, is based on an inversion of Nietzsche's conception of the 'play' of forces involved in the processes of this modernity. As a result, *Weber comes to the opposite conclusions to Nietzsche regarding the evaluation of the nation, and the conception of politics which supports it.*

### Nietzsche's 'Different' Politics

It is often said that Nietzsche's politics are the politics of princes, of 'great men' and a 'Machiavellian' calculus of power; that he cares little for the plight of workers and 'social justice'. For instance, Section 189 of *Daybreak*, "On Grand Politics", argues that,

"However much utility and vanity, those of individuals as of peoples, may play a part in *grand politics*: the strongest tide which carries them forward is the *need for the feeling of power*... There comes again and again the hour when the masses are *ready* to stake their life, their goods, their conscience, their virtue so as to acquire that higher enjoyment and as a victorious, capriciously tyrannical nation to rule over other nations (or to think it rules). Then the impulse to squander, sacrifice, hope, trust, to be over-daring and to fantasise spring up in such abundance that the ambitious or prudently calculating prince

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<sup>32</sup> c.f. Hennis, 1988, esp. pp.160-1, where Weber is placed firmly in the context of Nietzsche's thought. As argued in Chapter four, however, Hennis relies on a conventional reading of Nietzsche. The results are that the 'diagnosis of forces' common to both is largely elided, and Hennis is unable to establish a consistent argument for the similarities and differences between their arguments.

can let loose a war and cloak his crimes in the good conscience of his people..."<sup>33</sup>

But this 'grand politics' is only one aspect of the dynamics at play in Nietzsche's argument. The 'capture' of the 'will to power' of the masses by the prince is hardly condoned here; more importantly, Nietzsche does not view this capture as as a contest between *two opposed identities*. Nietzsche's point is not that the 'authentic' desires of the masses are perverted and their language of identity re-written by a dominant power. This is rather the argument of certain strands of Marxism, which, as Chapter six contends, have exercised considerable influence on theories of the nation and nationalism.

Rather than opposition, Nietzsche traces the *difference* between an analysis written in terms of coherence and one which follows the forces which escape coherence under the sign of a 'different' politics. In this conception of politics, 'identity' is not the organizing problematic; *mobility* is. As noted in Chapter one of this essay, Benedict Anderson reduces mobility to its functionality for a spatialized panorama of urban sociology. Lost in this perspective is the conceptual/perceptual tools to speak of *becoming* and its dynamics: speed, acceleration, *intensive* magnitudes, 'an arrow without a target', as Nietzsche says.<sup>34</sup> Like the 'nomadic' war machine, which resists final capture by the resolution of universal and particular in the inside/outside of the State, the workers of Europe are exhorted to 'become mobile' in order to escape the constraints of the very dilemmas Weber argues limit the possibility of revalued identities to 'national politics'. Moreover, mobility becomes a crucial element of Weber's argument, as it will be for Benedict

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<sup>33</sup> Nietzsche, D, pp.189-90.

<sup>34</sup> In this context, see the refreshing attempt by Meagan Morris to offer a feminist reading of Australian 'nation-building' which is not confined to a politics of representation. As she focuses on the politics of 'place' (here, Henry Parkes Motel), Morris observes,

"The trouble with a *motel* as a site of analysis is not the familiar gap between a text (a particular motel-in-place) and reading practices (the multiplicity of its uses). Nor is it the pertinence of talking in this way about a bit of the built environment, or a segment of everyday life. The trouble is that, whatever they may say, motels in fact *demolish* sense-regimes of place, locale, and 'history'. They memorialize only movement, speed, and perpetual circulation".

(Meagan Morris, "At Henry Parkes Hotel", in Frow and Morris, eds., 1993, p.243.)

Anderson. In both, however, Nietzsche's active sense of mobility, as a positive relation to *multiplicity and exteriority*, is read reactively as one more element in the consolidation of the inevitable triumph of politics as spatial order.

Nietzsche's hatred of 'national politics' is quite consistent through his work. *The Genealogy of Morals* speaks of the current condition of German culture in tones identical to those of the earlier *Daybreak*:

"That *no* kind of swindle fails to succeed in Germany today is connected with the undeniable and palpable stagnation of the German spirit; and the cause of that I seek in a too exclusive diet of newspapers, politics, beer, and Wagnerian music, together with the presuppositions of such a diet: first, national constriction and vanity, the strong but narrow principle "*Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,*" and then the *paralysis agitans* of 'modern ideas'."<sup>35</sup>

This argument finds echos in Weber's judgement of the Germany as a nation of 'plebians'; but there is a crucial distinction between Nietzsche's and Weber's evaluation of the response required. Nietzsche is opposed, not to 'social justice', but to *sociologies of justice*, written as they are from the point of view of coherence ('How does the ruling class hold society together and maintain its domination?'). For Nietzsche, this is a bad question because it understands everything from the perspective of *being*, the perspective of *reactive nihilism*, and allows no room for becoming.<sup>36</sup> The grand politics of order and revolution equally 'territorialize' the play of forces; Weber's appeal to the necessity of a tragic identity-practice, which emerges *against the background of this territorialization*, also has this effect, written as it is from the point of view of the final capture of the forces which might escape coherence by the spatial order of the State.

That Nietzsche conceives of the possibility of revaluing the forces of modernity against the problematic of coherence is revealed in this passage from *Daybreak*, which argues that 'becoming-mobile' and developing a positive relation with exteriority is the only means 'the workers' have of

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<sup>35</sup> GM, pp.158-9; c.f. D, pp.190-1.

<sup>36</sup> c.f. Maurice Blanchot, "The Limits of Experience: Nihilism", in Allison, ed., 1977, esp. p.126: In his interpretation of Nietzsche's 'eternal return', Blanchot observes that "Until now we thought Nihilism was tied to nothingness. How rash that was. Nihilism is tied to being."

escaping the dilemmas Weber also identifies as determining their 'fate':

"[On 'our factory slaves'] To the devil with the belief that higher payment could lift from them the *essence* of their miserable condition - I mean their impersonal enslavement! To the devil with the idea of being persuaded that an enhancement of this impersonality within the mechanical operation of a new society could transform the disgrace of slavery into a virtue!.. Are you accomplices in the current folly of nations - the folly of wanting above all to produce as much as possible and to become as rich as possible? What you ought to do, rather, is to hold up to them the counter-reckoning: how great a sum of *inner* value is thrown away in pursuit of this external goal! But where is your inner value if you no longer know what it is to breathe freely? if you no longer possess the slightest power over yourselves?..if you no longer believe in philosophy that wears rags, in the free-heartedness of him without needs? if voluntary poverty and freedom from profession and marriage, which would very well suit the more spiritual among you, have become to you things to laugh at?.. In contrast to all this, everyone ought to say to himself: 'better to go abroad, to seek to become *master* in new and savage regions of the world and above all master over myself; to keep moving from place to place for just as long as any sign of slavery seems to threaten me; to shun neither adventure nor war and, if the worst should come to the worst, to be prepared for death... This would be the right attitude of mind: the workers of Europe ought henceforth to declare themselves *as a class* a human impossibility and not, as usually happens, only a somewhat harsh and inappropriate social arrangement; they ought to inaugurate within the European beehive an age of great swarming-out such as has never been seen before, and through this free act of emigration in the grand manner to protest against the machine, against capital, and against the choice now threatening them of being *compelled* to become either the slave of the state or the slave of a party of disruption."<sup>37</sup>

The 'different' politics found here trace a 'line of flight' from homogeneity and interiority, not under the sign of 'irrationalism' or Romanticism of adventure, but as *a continuous variation of the organization of reactive forces*, a continuous process of becoming which does not posit a new identity for 'man' as its final goal. War and death do not impart "meaning" to the self; as in the celebrated "death of God", an 'event' like a battle or death "needs silence and time to discover finally the forces which give it an essence...a sense that it did not contain in itself".<sup>38</sup> Moreover, *homogenization does occur; reactive forces do triumph, but this triumph is not the whole story for Nietzsche, as it is for Weber.* "Becoming-mobile", which is not a 'territorial' argument directed at this or that social self, but rather a relationship of the *intensities* of forces, is the only escape from a "compulsion" to choose between slavery to the State or to a 'socialist sect'. Deleuze draws a vital

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<sup>37</sup> D, pp.126-7.

<sup>38</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.156. See also Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", in Foucault, 1986, pp.172-6, where Deleuze' 'different grammar' of the event, which takes place in "the (multiple) eternity of the (displaced) present", escapes the constraints of attempts by neo-positivism, phenomenology, and the philosophy of history to *conceptualize* the 'event'.

distinction between 'the nomad' and those others, like migrants, who do move 'territorially': nomads set the forces of territoriality into continuous variation, as an 'active' form of 'escape':

"It is common knowledge that nomads fare miserably under our kinds of regime: we will go to any lengths to settle them, and they barely have enough to subsist on. Nietzsche lived like such a nomad, reduced to a shadow, moving from furnished room to furnished room. But the nomad is not necessarily one who moves: some voyages take place *in situ*, are trips in intensity. Even historically, nomads are not necessarily those who move around like migrants. On the contrary, they do not move; nomads, they nevertheless stay in the same place and continually evade the codes of settled people."<sup>39</sup>

### Weber and Nietzsche on Tragedy

Weber, like Nietzsche, argues against this compulsion to adapt to 'external' imperatives; like Nietzsche, he seeks to identify the forces in modernity capable of 'active' revaluation. But unlike Nietzsche, Weber finds these forces in the very 'iron cage' of politics as spatial order he seeks to escape: his search for a 'strong self' presumes that this triumph of spatial order has occurred once and for all; the strong self, if its appearance be possible at all, will emerge from the background of the tensions produced by this 'reactive' modernity. The key here is the State as a 'culture community' of sacrifice: the conception of the *citizen* found in political history furnishes the basis for Weber's attempt at positive revaluation of the forces of sacrifice 'captured' by the boundaries of the State. This conception of the citizen must itself be revalued, however; in this, *the idea of 'the nation' is central*. To the 'elements' of Weber's account of the formation of 'identity' in modernity - death, war, sacrifice, and fate - *mobility, struggle, and labour* will be added in those texts of Weber's which deal directly with his 'national politics'. These are 'tragic' politics, however; the negative theodicy of suffering which provides the perspective of Weber's problematic is revalued as *tragedy* in his 'solution' to the crisis of modern identity. But, like his misreading of Nietzsche's diagnosis of forces, Weber's appeal to tragedy is an inversion of the Nietzschean conception of tragedy as a relationship of self and world which escapes the constraints of 'coherence'. Contrasting Weber and Nietzsche on the question of the 'inevitability' of theorizing in

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<sup>39</sup> Deleuze, "Nomad Thought", in Allison, ed., 1977, p.149.

a tragic mode clarifies the discursive constraints of Weberian problematics of the nation and nationalism, such as those found in Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner.

As argued earlier, Weber contends that the 'reactive' polytheism of the present is a result of monotheism's triumph over the 'noble' polytheism of an earlier age. As such, he rejects Christianity's concern with 'mankind as such': in politics, one must always reckon with 'man' and 'citizens', an ethic of ultimate ends and an ethic of responsibility; one struggles with the gods who rule in them. Indeed, for Weber, 'humanity' and the politically located 'individual' are not in opposition: "His interest was in the fate of human collectivities, 'humankinds', which were represented in major solitary 'types' and not various individuals".<sup>40</sup> This emerges most clearly in the following remarks, where Weber invokes the idea of the nation:

"Insofar as it is in our power, we want to configure external relations not so that human beings feel satisfied, but so that in view of the necessity of the unavoidable struggle for existence the best in them will be brought out, the physical and spiritual characteristics that we want the nation to preserve".<sup>41</sup>

Recalling Weber's conception of the State as the homogenous space of a 'culture community', it can be seen that the force of the 'tensions' inherent in the 'polytheistic' modern world are revalued by Weber, not in the 'secularization' of the ascetic ideal, but in *the resolution of universal and particular which occurs in the concept of the 'national citizen'*.

Due to the triumph of rationalization in the ascetic ideal over the 'noble', 'traditional' conception of self and world, the sacrificial selves of Machiavelli's patriotic Florentines are no longer available to Weber, except as a memory to invoke against modern 'weakness'. But it is possible to trace revalue their conception of sacrifice against its 'becoming-reactive' in modernity, according to Weber. This he does by linking rationalization, in its early incarnations, to good citizenship: in Plato's polis, rationalization realized the significance of the *concept* a "great tool" both for scientific knowledge and "for knowing and teaching how to act rightly in life and, above

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<sup>40</sup> Hennis, 1988, p.178.

<sup>41</sup> Weber, in Scaff, 1989, p.71.

all, how to act as a citizen of the state".<sup>42</sup> This knowledge, however, can no longer be relied upon, particularly since Nietzsche has severed the relations among the good, the true, and the beautiful which "the concept" unified.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, Weber insists on the necessity of a rationalized 'ethic of responsibility' for the strong self of politics, one who 'feels the pulse' of the nation in 'his' own being. For Weber, the intimate relations between rationalization and good citizenship have not become completely reactive; they still admit the possibility of *positive revaluation*. However, as John Gunnell, and more recently, Adi Ophir have argued, 'classical' political theory as it is traced from Plato and Aristotle's polis is informed by *a reduction of time to categories of space*.<sup>44</sup>

An ethic of responsibility takes seriously the absence of theodicy in modernity as a solution to the problem of how good can produce evil.<sup>45</sup> Having lopped off the head of theodicy, Weber is left with tragedy as the 'mode of being' of his strong self.<sup>46</sup> But Weber also invokes a tragic conception of politics as the scene of necessarily violent struggles. If Weber's invocation of the uniquely meaning-creating force of sacrifice in modern state war is recalled, the connections between his revalued self and collectivity become clear. *Rationalization enters into relations with both the formation of the homogenous, interiorized self and the homogenous space of the State which can be revalued 'actively' in modernity in the concept of the 'national citizen'*. The crucial adjective in this conception of an 'active' organization of individual and collective identity reflects

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<sup>42</sup> Weber, 1974, p.141.

<sup>43</sup> Weber, 1874, pp.147-8.

<sup>44</sup> See Gunnell, 1987 [1968], esp. pp.232-59; Ophir, 1991, esp. pp.43-47,160-7. In addition, see Derrida's account of time in Aristotle (and Hegel), in Derrida, "*Ousia and Grammē*: Note on a Note from *Being and Time*", in Derrida, 1982, esp. pp.35-67; on Plato, see also Derrida, 1981, esp. pp.183-194. These texts raise the key bifurcations and meta-theoretical resolutions examined in this essay, whose adventures are traced throughout the history of political philosophy.

<sup>45</sup> Weber, 1974, p.121.

<sup>46</sup> Friedrich Tenbruck has argued that the thematic unity of Weber's work is established through the question, "What is rationality?" The result of this questioning is a tragic conception of the self in the manner of an Aeschylus or a Euripides. This perspective on the unity of Weber's work is compatible with the argument of this essay; Tenbruck, however, omits the crucial Nietzschean dimension of Weber's thought. (See Friedrich Tenbruck, "The Problem of Thematic Unity in the Works of Max Weber", in Tribe, ed., 1989, pp.75-7.)

Weber's diagnosis of the 'fate' of political identity in modernity; it is examined closely in the following sections of this chapter. The remainder of this section is concerned with the effects of Weber's appeal to tragedy as the necessary mode of critical thought in modernity.

Weber's 'tragic' solution to the dilemmas of identity in modernity rests upon the perspective of politics as spatial order in the 'negative theodicy of suffering'. Everything is written from the point of view of how 'meaning' for the suffering self is possible; the answer is given in terms of the resolution of universal and particular forged through the rationalization of the State, its 'becoming-explicit' as the inside/outside of the limits of identity. But, just as this perspective misreads the dynamics of Nietzsche's play of forces, so Weber's tragic vision must be distinguished from that of Nietzsche, who announces the possibility of a "rebirth of tragedy" in the self who has ears for the dissonant sounds of Dionysian music.<sup>47</sup> 'Dionysian tragedy' is counter-posed to Euripidean tragedy in Nietzsche; what is most significant for the purposes of the discussion in this chapter is that *Weber's conception of tragedy faithfully reproduces Euripides' 'sociological' notion of tragedy*, an inversion of Nietzsche's argument which has considerable repercussions for later theories of the nation and nationalism.

Weber's notion of tragedy lops the head off of slave theodicy, whereas Nietzsche seeks to maintain the 'active' relations found in classical Greek tragedy, before their 'reactive' revaluation by Euripides, and with him, Socratic rationalism. For Euripides, "'To be beautiful everything must be intelligible', as the counterpart to the Socratic dictum, 'Knowledge is virtue'".<sup>48</sup> Weber believes that he is following the Nietzschean critique of this Socratic formula, but his own appeal to the complete triumph of the slave conception of the rationalized self and world its theodicy demands forces Weber to accept a *sociologized* conception of identity as the 'inevitable' response to failure of the 'noble' conception of self and suffering to measure up to the transformative powers dominating the rise of modernity. A 'noble' conception of suffering, however, is just what

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<sup>47</sup> c.f. Nietzsche, BT, pp.141-3. This Nietzschean theme of the 'musical man' recurs often in Weber. Hennis notes that Weber invokes it, for example, to show how he lives well without following a "supreme value". (Hennis, 1988, p.165.)

<sup>48</sup> Nietzsche, BT, pp.83-4.

Nietzsche's argument appeals to: previous Dionysian tragedy produced ritual celebrations of suffering, which Euripides cannot understand or accept. *Individuation* was "the sole and inescapable cause of suffering" for early tragedy;<sup>49</sup> Dionysus as a '*unity of becoming*' of all things meant that

"the heroes of tragedy were so many masks of Dionysus... It was always fundamentally the god himself who experienced the elation and agony of individuation and was 'torn to pieces'".<sup>50</sup>

Kieth May observes that Euripides abandons this Dionysian unity, at considerable cost:

"Without an overwhelming recognition of the primary oneness of things, the things that we see before us lose their reality. A character in a tragedy, for instance, is real not in virtue of his or her distinctness, but because that distinctness emerges from a blurred background. For all their surface peculiarity and angularity, characters must flow away into darkness, not stand against the darkness".<sup>51</sup>

For Weber, as for Euripides, the 'identity' of characters (Weber's 'strong self', for example) emerges *against* the background of their causes. Moreover, by separating the 'characters' from their backgrounds, Euripides makes three important revaluations of Dionysus' 'noble' tragedy. First, he makes the spectator's (and the author's) *identification* with the characters possible.<sup>52</sup> This, it will be recalled, is a key effect of both Anderson's and Gellner's 'social drama' of the nation. Second, Euripides removes the element of *mystery* from drama: tragic fates give way to dramas in which causes - often social - are known. An "enlightened tragedy" results, where nothing is left unexplained. As May observes, "The balance of power between human beings and Necessity"<sup>53</sup> is thereby changed. Euripides, like Weber, still believes in the gods, but these gods are used to 'illuminate' problems, to name a cause, not to emphasize "the ['noble'] tragic assumption

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<sup>49</sup> May, 1990, pp.19-20.

<sup>50</sup> May, 1990, p.72.

<sup>51</sup> May, 1990, p.74.

<sup>52</sup> May, 1990, pp.77ff.

<sup>53</sup> May, 1990, p.86.

that reality lies outside culture".<sup>54</sup> Third, the separation of the human and the 'natural' world in Euripides causes him to mistake artifice in the former for the real itself. Euripides and Socrates espouse a 'reactive' view of artifice as *imitation*, an inevitable 'becoming-Same': "they produced our human comedy of *involuntary* artifice".<sup>55</sup> In this view of artistic production, there is no room for what Deleuze calls "the simulacrum", a conception of artifice that does not pass through the Platonic 'concept'.

As discussed in Chapters one and two of this essay, both Anderson and Gellner reduce artifice to imitation in this way: the nation is an originary presence which can only be imitated; their narratives trace the dilemmas of an inevitable 'becoming-Same'. For Gellner, the presence of the same social division of labour in different political spaces results in a convergence of 'culture' in the nation-form; given the shape of the container - the State - it matters relatively little what is poured into it. For a Marxist theorist like Tom Nairn, "Nationalisms do 'resist' the impact [of imperialism], true, and with some success - but only to be transformed themselves, as they adopt the forces which attacked them".<sup>56</sup> For Benedict Anderson, the nation is in part a product of the 'mimetic violence' of sacrifice found, through Victor Turner, in Rene Girard. Significantly, Girard acknowledges the centrality of Euripidean norms of tragedy for his conception of the role of sacrifice in resolving questions of identity.<sup>57</sup> As 'modular' identity, Anderson's conception of the nation reduces artifice and creativity to a 'reactive' relation of model and copy.

Constraining creativity to a relation of model and copy in the Platonic *concept* is what Deleuze' Nietzschean notion of the simulacrum opposes.<sup>58</sup> Yet Weber attempts his 'Euripidean' reevaluation of identity by tracing the forces which necessarily *do pass through the concept*. Platonic

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<sup>54</sup> May, 1990, p.84.

<sup>55</sup> May, 1990, pp.74-5.

<sup>56</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.342.

<sup>57</sup> See Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, 1990, pp.16-17.

<sup>58</sup> Deleuze argues that Nietzsche seeks to "reverse Platonism" by revaluing the activities of the Sophists, a process already at work in Plato's texts, despite what Plato *claims* to be doing. (Deleuze, 1990, pp.253-7.)

resistance to the simulacrum - its presentation of becoming as excess, as difference - is what Nietzsche reverses by means of the 'noble' self, a Dionysian tragedy of masks, and an *affirmation of the unity of becoming as difference, as multiplicity*,<sup>59</sup> against the spatial resolution of universal and particular found in the 'base' conception of identity as 'coherence'. In the Platonic conception, by contrast, identity is the end-point because all difference is thought from the perspective of an originary identity.

The sense of *deja vu* one feels in reading Weber's historical account of the State echos this disavowal of the 'active' force of difference and multiplicity. But for Weber, where 'the strong self' might emerge from the tensions created by the spatial oppositions of meaning and fate, the life-orders of the world, and the inside-outside of the State, Nietzsche's tragedy is that of a 'joyful affirmation' of chance, the unity of multiplicity, and a 'ritual celebration of suffering'; in short, a 'noble will' to create which does not oppose the human and the natural, meaning and Fate.<sup>60</sup> Although Weber's 'Euripidean' version of tragedy abandons, like Anderson, the resolutions of theodicy, it does not thereby escape the 'coherence' of those resolutions. From a Nietzschean perspective, it constitutes a closure of the open-ended, differential relations which produce what one could call the 'active space' of the forces which escape the 'all-too-coherent' problematic of Weberian discourse.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1990, pp.258-63. In Nietzsche's 'joyful tragedy', affirmation is inseparable from 'a certain laughter', to which one might contrast the stern countenance of Weber:

"You look up when you desire to be exalted. And I look down because I am exalted.  
Who among you can at the same time laugh and be exalted?  
He who climbs the highest mountains laughs at all tragedies, real or imaginary".  
(Nietzsche, Z, p.68.)

<sup>60</sup> Deleuze, 1983, pp.33-6; Nietzsche, TI, pp.110-11.

<sup>61</sup> c.f. The open-ended, differential *ethos-daimon* relation celebrated in 'classical' tragedy is discussed in Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, 1990, pp.36-8. See also Nietzsche, GS, Sec.361, "On the Problem of the Actor", p.316, where Nietzsche describes the qualities of "the dangerous concept of the 'artist'":

"Falseness with a good conscience; the delight in simulation exploding as a power that pushes aside one's so-called 'character,' flooding it and at times extinguishing it; the inner craving for a role and mask, for *appearance*; an excess of the capacity for all kinds of adaptation that can no longer be satisfied in the service of the most immediate and narrowest utility..."

Nietzsche's 'different grammar' of *power*, the diagnosis of forces, leads to a 'tragic' politics which attempts to escape the Weberian 'grammar of identity' that leads to a sociologized notion of tragedy. Nietzsche's argument does not limit creativity to a process of 'adaptation' to the reified spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment reason, as Gellner does; nor does it attempt a positive reevaluation of 'self-identity' from the 'reactive' organization of forces which have produced this matrix, as both Weber and Anderson do. Nietzsche's argument is that such attempts to 'live tragically' in the interstices of politics as spatial order assume the complete triumph of the very 'coherence' from which escape is sought. His 'different politics', by contrast, does not see the triumph of homogenization, interiority, and the fixed boundaries of the State as the whole story; his discourse allows the possibility of recognizing 'other' practices which make of modernity something other than what 'we', the alleged heirs of its originary moments, think it is.<sup>62</sup>

### Dramatizations of Political Spaces

The argument now returns to a consideration of Gilles Deleuze, perhaps the leading Nietzschean thinker, for a consideration of the 'conditions of possibility' of *both* the Weberian and Nietzschean lineages of thought. The terms of these conditions will be constructed on the plane of *civilizations*, a question of the political *problematics* of a de-territorialized 'West' - the silences, exclusions, and positivities it envelops. The main purpose of this section is a summary of the

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This excessive capacity is not understood sociologically: the 'type' of the artist is found in 'the lower classes' where 'mimicry' is an art of evading capture by the forces which compel adaptation; but it is also found in 'higher classes' in the diplomat; in 'the Jew', in 'woman'. (p.317.) On the latter, see Sarah Kofman, "Baubo: Theological Perversion and Fetishism", in Gillespie and Strong, eds., 1991, esp. pp.191-9. Nietzsche's invocation of the 'superficiality of woman' is not a misogyny. On the contrary, Nietzsche

"distinguishes different types of women, just as he distinguishes different types of men. From a geneological point of view, an affirmative woman is closer to an affirmative man than a degenerate woman. And some women are more affirmative than are some men". (p.193.)

<sup>62</sup> Thus, Michael Brint is completely mistaken in arguing that the unity of "the Western political tradition" is founded upon its "anti-tragic" stance, and that the prescription for a healthy 'politics of difference' is the good liberal's "respect for our ethical differences", (Brint, 1991, pp.1-8.) as if a good deal of this 'Western tradition' were not already organized in a tragic logic, of which the ethical pluralism of his liberal conscience is a fairly typical by-product.

difference between strands of the Weberian lineage of thought on the nation, and certain lines of critical thought attempted through the Nietzschean counter-lineage. Although the vast range of Deleuze' texts and the very directions of his arguments do not lend themselves to easy summary, their implications for critical thought on the nation are of considerable importance. The central aim of this section is to elaborate Deleuze' position in order to pursue three themes in the remainder of the essay: first, a Deleuzian politics of problematics raises questions silenced and deferred in theories of the nation, whether avowedly liberal, Marxist, or 'postmodernist', a silence which is the key condition of possibility of the 'coherence' of Weberian discourse as a *monologue*, which monopolizes discourse on the nation as a bad problem: that of *political identity*. Second, the difference between the strands of the Nietzschean counter-lineage must be stressed as an indication of both the difficulty of escaping the 'coherence' of Weberian discourse, and of the *internal* relations between Weberian and Nietzschean discourses. For example, Foucault's attempt to develop a political ethics assumes the *inside* of 'Western' political theory as its horizon, which is open to critique from the perspective of 'coloniality' and its problematics. Third, Deleuze' 'minor' deconstruction raises the question of the extent to which 'post-colonial' critique takes its bearings from the 'major' deconstruction of post-structuralists like Derrida, a question to which the Conclusions to this essay return.

The key move Deleuze attempts to make in his re-reading of 'Western' philosophy is a re-valuation of *empiricism*, and it is this which makes his thought of particular importance for the question of beginnings announced in the Introduction to this essay. The problem of what empiricism can be is intimately tied to Deleuze' construction of *concepts*, of acts of thought not limited to spatio-temporal resolutions of the One and the Many, an effort which carries his texts beyond the monology of Weberian discourse toward questions of what philosophers *do*. Though Deleuze, like other Nietzscheans, has little to say about the nation, this probing of *the immanence of problems to thought and practice* has important repercussions for political theory, not least of which is the relations possible to 'traditions' of thought; in short, to what a lineage is: practices of *transmission and translation*.

Deleuze' empiricism creates concepts such as intensity, the Outside, multiplicity, and

speed, in order to escape, with Nietzsche, bad problems of interiority and coherence. Indeed, the critique of false problems, of badly posed questions, has been a central feature of empiricism from at least the time of Locke.<sup>63</sup> But Deleuze radicalizes this critique to make it resonate with *political problematics*: the task of philosophy is not, as Hume said, to simply consign speculative thought to the fire, but to *construct concepts*, as Hume did:

"The same pedagogical status of the concept can be found everywhere: a *multiplicity*, an absolute surface or volume, self-referents, made up of a certain number of inseparable intensive variations according to an order of neighbourhood, and traversed by a point in a state of survey. The concept is the contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come... The concept is obviously knowledge - but knowledge of itself, and what it knows is *the pure event, which must not be confused with the state of affairs in which it is embodied. The task of philosophy is always to extract an event from things and beings, to set up the new event from from things and beings, always to give them a new event: space, time, matter, thought, the possible as events*".<sup>64</sup>

This process of "extraction" is what Deleuze means by "awareness": a radical reading of Nietzsche's exhortion to "become what one is", an ethics of the Event which is already politics.<sup>65</sup> So long as the 'image' of thought is contained by "the state of affairs in which it is embodied", bad problems are posed: everything is reduced to the reactive perspective of interiority and consciousness.

Deleuze' empiricism is not that familiar to readers of Locke: it is not the proposition that all knowledge issues from experience, for the task is to create a "superior empiricism, capable of

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<sup>63</sup> See, for example, Locke, 1959, Vol.1, Book II, Chaps.xiii-xiv, pp.218-56, where Locke seeks to employ Newtonian mechanics to questions of space and duration, in order to silence discourse on 'false problems' arising out of the mis-use of language to formulate problems. On the more contemporary version of this critique found in logical positivism, see Keat and Urry, 1978, pp.224-5; Russell, 1985 [1946] pp.783-9.

<sup>64</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, pp.32-3 [emphasis added]. On Hume and problems, see Deleuze, 1991c, pp.106-7.

<sup>65</sup> See Deleuze, 1990a, p.149: "Either ethics makes no sense at all, or this is what it means and has nothing else to say: not to be unworthy to what happens to us". This is *not* an ethics of resignation, of passivity; on the contrary, it is a creative act of joy, *through suffering*, and not in resentment of it, as Weberian discourse would have it. Nor is this a prescription for hyper-activism: "to become the offspring of one's events and not of one's actions, for the action is itself produced by the offspring of events" (*ibid.*,p.150).

stating problems and of going beyond experience toward concrete conditions".<sup>66</sup> Rather, it is the concept of *internal difference*, of the *exteriority of relations* found in empiricists like Hume, which inspires Deleuze from his earliest texts. Against Hegel's complaint that "sense certainty" is the poorest form of knowledge, and Kant's attempt to subsume the empirical under the concept as a hypothetical representation, Deleuze contends that a *positive multiplicity is the condition of all possible conceptual thought, and not the reverse*.<sup>67</sup> This positive multiplicity produces difference *internal to itself*, not the difference *between* 'things', a positive, not negative, difference.<sup>68</sup> (The latter position is Saussure's, and constrains much of later structuralism and post-structuralism to a *reaction* to the reduction of time to space as a resolution of universal and particular.)

Positive difference is non-numerical and *intensive* before it is extensive; constraining difference to number and extensity - the reduction of time to categories of space - leads to *false problems*. According to Deleuze' reading of Bergson, these readings of difference as *quantitative* rather than *qualitative* cannot reach real experience. Bergson's 'intuition' is a strict *method* of problematizing, such that a fictive dualism is first posited - the conditions, not of experience in general, as in Kant, but in real experience - then overcome in a *return* - a "virtual image of the point of departure".<sup>69</sup> The illusions of false problems, which give us reified oppositions through which we only *react* are *necessary* ones, but this does not mean they cannot be worked with. Bergson's solution is to offer the image of *virtual multiplicities* which imply *duration as a single Time*.<sup>70</sup> Dualisms are posited as *fictions*: experience indeed gives us only composites - of concepts

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<sup>66</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.30. On 'traditional' versions of empiricism, and Deleuze' departure from them, see Constantin V. Boundas, "Translator's Introduction: Deleuze, Empiricism, and the Struggle for Subjectivity", in Deleuze, 1991c, pp.6-9; Baugh, 1993, pp.19-20.

<sup>67</sup> See Baugh, 1993, pp.16-18.

<sup>68</sup> See Hardt, 1993, p.61.

<sup>69</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, pp.15-35.

<sup>70</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, pp.82-3. See also, *ibid.*, pp.42-3:

"[Duration] does not divide up without changing in kind, it changes in kind in the process of dividing up: this is why it is a nonnumerical multiplicity, where we can speak of 'indivisibles' at each stage of the division. There is *other* without there being *several*; number exists only potentially. In other words, the subjective, or duration, is the *virtual*...

no larger than the real experience embodied in them - but these dualisms can be worked through, since duration, becoming, *is* subjectivity, so long as duration is not reduced to psychology, as it is in philosophies of interiority.<sup>71</sup>

The Whole in Bergson does not proceed by *analogy*, any more than does Spinoza's conception of the singularity of being.<sup>72</sup> Deleuze reserves some of his harshest criticism for philosophies, like those of Kant and Hegel, which reduce thought to *representation* through analogy and judgement.<sup>73</sup> Confining thought to analogy and representation is a *base conception of being and becoming*: being, however, is *noble*, as Nietzsche argues, where *repetition* is thought on the basis of *difference*, not, as in Weberian discourse, as a repetition of the Same:

"Only the extreme, the excessive, returns; that which passes into something else and becomes identical. That is why the eternal return is said only of the theatrical world of the metamorphoses and masks of the Will to power, of the pure intensities of that Will which are like mobile individuating factors unwilling to allow themselves to be contained within the fictitious limits of this or that individual, this or that Self".<sup>74</sup>

A non-sociological theater - Dionysian tragedy - celebrates the powers of the false by tracking the forces of the Outside - the Whole as becoming - with which each fictive self enters into relations:

"What cinema must grasp is not the identity of a character, whether real *or* fictional,

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[I]t is the virtual insofar as it is actualized, it is inseparable from the movement of its actualization... A multiplicity of this kind has, essentially, the three properties of continuity, heterogeneity, and simplicity".

And this is Bergson's objection to Einstein's concept of relativity. Because it confuses actual multiplicity and virtual multiplicity, Einstein's relativity is a generalized pluralism which is yet another reduction of time to space. (*ibid.*, pp.84-5.)

<sup>71</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.48: "It is only to the extent that movement is grasped as belonging to things as much as to consciousness that it ceases to be confused with psychological duration..." "[P]sychology is now only an opening onto ontology..." (p.76)

<sup>72</sup> c.f. Hardt, 1993, pp.64,

<sup>73</sup> See Deleuze, 1994, pp.33-5,37-9,137-8. In this text, Deleuze gives a precise summary of the chain of reasoning found in Weberian discourse on the nation: "[D]ifference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition or a perceived similitude". (p.138)

<sup>74</sup> Deleuze, 1994, p.41.

through his objective and subjective aspects. It is the becoming of the real character when he himself starts to 'make fiction', when he enters into 'the flagrant offence of making up legends' and so contributes to the invention of his people".<sup>75</sup>

### Representing Death

The account will return to the politics of this theater and to the notion of 'the invention of the people'. What first needs to be clarified is the relation of *thought to the body* implied by the non-psychological conception of subjectivity animating Deleuze's texts. From his first major text on Hume, Deleuze has been concerned with the problem of subjectivity, of how the mind becomes a subject.<sup>76</sup> The answer is through an analysis of difference, and of the role of the *imagination* in an ontology of difference. Recall Benedict Anderson's argument: the nation is an imagined community, a *representation*, created out of *resentment* against finitude, suffering, and lack, an *analogy* between the individual and the collective. This, as we have seen, is a perspective based upon the reduction of time to space as a resolution of universal and particular. It reads everything from the standpoint of the *presence* of interiority, which only occurs at the limit, in *death*. Conceiving the Whole as given - the 'God's eye perspective' of Anderson's thesis - results from a confusion of time and space, for which mechanism and finalism are two illusory views. Mechanism "assumes that everything is calculable in terms of a state; the latter, that everything is determinable in terms of a program".<sup>77</sup> Refusing to view time as a 'fourth dimension' of space means, however, that "There is an efficacy, a positivity of time, that is identical to a 'hesitation' of things and, in this way, to creation in the world".<sup>78</sup> If one is to think from within finalism at all, according to Deleuze-Bergson, it is not in terms of the oppositions presence-absence, one-many, but rather in terms of the couplet actual-virtual - between which there is not a relation of resemblance - in the 'dangerous' thought of multiplicity:

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<sup>75</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.150.

<sup>76</sup> See Deleuze, 1991c, pp.22-4.

<sup>77</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.104.

<sup>78</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.105.

"[I]t is right to compare the living being to the whole of the universe, but it is wrong to interpret this comparison as if it expressed a kind of analogy between two closed totalities (macrocosm and microcosm). The finality of the living being exists only insofar as it is essentially open onto a totality that is itself open..."<sup>79</sup>

Now we are in a position to approach the crux of Deleuze' challenge to the identitarian ethics of Weberian discourse. If the latter reads everything from the slave's resentment of finitude, negation, the illusions of consciousness, and the spatialized milieu of interiority, Deleuze begins from the *infinite*, affirmation, the masks of difference, and the *speed* of intensive magnitudes. In this, a 'thing', no less than a 'person', is defined by the transformations through which it passes: as an Event.<sup>80</sup> 'Behind' the world of extension, as its *immanent* condition of actuality, is a world of difference: "The world of extended things, in extended space and time, is the result of the dilation of intensive quanta of energy, captured in the process of slowing down and becoming cooler. And this process is 'always already' reversible through new irruptions of intensity".<sup>81</sup> While this does not mean either that the world is essentially chaos and spontaneity, or that there is "a 'wild' or 'pre-linguistic experience' for Deleuze",<sup>82</sup> it does reject the discursive practice of constructing the nation-as-object out of the *visible* elements 'present' to consciousness found in theories of the nation from Weber to Anderson. This circular procedure results in nihilism, a reactive ethics of tragic virtue, and a deferral of politics. The tragic ethics of responsibility - to face up to the universal presence of the nation in 'modernity' - takes the oppositions reified by the spatialization of time as both its starting-point and its 'fate'. For Nietzscheans like Deleuze, however, the *virtue* of the suffering self supposed by such discourses of interiority represent a capitulation to the forces of

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<sup>79</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.105. On the opposition macrocosm-microcosm formulated in the humanism of the Italian Renaissance, and still powerfully affecting the discourse of interiority, see Cassirer, 1979, pp.73-122.

<sup>80</sup> c.f. Deleuze, in Constantin V. Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", in Deleuze, 1993b, p.10:

"Rather than signifying that a certain number of predicates are excluded from a thing in virtue of the identity of the corresponding concept, the disjunction now signifies that each thing is opened up to an infinity of predicates through which it passes, on the condition that it lose its identity as concept and as self".

<sup>81</sup> Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.11.

<sup>82</sup> Baugh, 1993, p.24. This characterization of Deleuze mars Manuel de Landa's entire study of war, which claims to 'apply' the texts of Deleuze and Guattari to emergent strategies and technologies. See de Landa, 1991, esp. pp.6-10,18-30.

reaction. *Nihilism is indeed a problem for 'us', but it is precisely so insofar as the necessary illusions of interiority and consciousness threaten the becoming-otherwise of other forms of subjectivity, and not the reverse.* As Constantin Boundas argues, Nietzsche's 'physics' of Will to Power is characterized in terms resonant with Bergson's notion of qualitative difference as a question, not of the Cartesian co-ordinates of extended things, but of intensive magnitudes. Crucially, this is the aspect of Nietzsche's thought which is condemned by Weberian discourse as nihilistic, but which is itself dependent upon as a *deferral* of its own nihilism:

"This reading of Nietzsche permits minoritarian deconstruction to designate the will to power as the intensity which 'essences' beings, and to claim that this inwardly differentiated intensity is *the Otherness that nihilism, in its reactive fixation in extension and extended beings, strives to assimilate*".<sup>83</sup>

This *theft of the body* by discourses of interiority operates by a ruse wherein Nietzschean counter-discourse is falsely accused of denying the 'subject' altogether. But it must be stressed that, "When the traditional subject of interiority is bracketed, subjectivity is not lost": "subjectivity, for Deleuze, is essentially a political dimension, to the extent that it folds and unfolds in an ever-renewed contact with the 'Outside'; thanks to this contact, subjectivity is able to resist standardization and harnessing".<sup>84</sup> The relation of matter - the world of extension - is not placed under the conditions of thought, nor is thought conceived on the model of Newtonian physics.<sup>85</sup> On the contrary, "It is Deleuze's great achievement to have rendered the richness of concrete being both rational and thinkable without conflating being with thought".<sup>86</sup> Deleuze' notion of subjectivity is a *politics of bodies*, without, for all that, supposing a reduction of thought to matter:

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<sup>83</sup> Constantin V. Boundas, "Minoritarian Deconstruction in the Rhetoric of Nihilism", in Darby, *et al.*, eds., 1989, p.84 [my emphasis].

<sup>84</sup> Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.14.

<sup>85</sup> In this sense, Locke's empiricism is the perfect foil to that of Deleuze. Locke offers just this physics of thought, where consciousness is conceived in its self-transparency as one self-identical space among a universal perceptual field of spaces, the presence or absence of 'objects' within them the motor of movement. Bergson's critique is directed against this reduction of the real to such "sensory-motor schema". c.f. Locke, 1959, Vol.1, Book II; Deleuze, 1991b, esp. pp.5-24,45-55.

<sup>86</sup> Baugh, 1993, p.26.

"There can only be a simultaneous genesis of matter and intelligence... Intelligence is contracted in matter at the same time as matter is expanded in duration: both find the form that is common to them, their equilibrium, in extensity, even if intelligence in its turn pushes this form to a degree of expansion that matter and extensity would never have attained by themselves - that of a pure space".<sup>87</sup>

Deleuze will insist, in his reading of Hume, that empiricism - with its principles of difference and externality - accounts for how subjectivity goes beyond the given. Subjectivity is "*first of all...inside the mind*, the effect of principles transcending and affecting the mind."<sup>88</sup> The *imagination* is thus conditioned by the *passions* first of all. The imagination depends upon the Event: "a multiplicity of dispersed singularities".<sup>89</sup> Spinoza too holds this principle of a non-hierarchical relation of thought and bodies as a question of *power*: "the power to effect and the power to be affected, production and sensibility".<sup>90</sup> The line from Humean passions to Spinoza and to Nietzsche's "pathos" of power - "which does not involve a body 'suffering' from passions; on the contrary, pathos involves the affects which mark the activity of the body, the creation that is joy"<sup>91</sup> - is intimately connected with Bergson's critique of time reduced to space as a resolution of the (false) problem of the One and the Many.<sup>92</sup> Thus, the imagination is reduced to neither

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<sup>87</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, pp.88-9.

<sup>88</sup> Deleuze, 1991c, p.24.

<sup>89</sup> Baugh, 1993, pp.18-19; c.f. Deleuze, 1991c, where Kant's critique of Hume is discussed (pp.111-21) as a reversal of an opposition of passive and active subjects which Hume rejects:

"What we must bring to light first of all is that the subject, being the effect of principles within the mind, is but the mind being *activated*. We do not, then, have to ask whether for Hume the subject is active or passive, for this is a false alternative... To the extent that principles sink their effect into the depths of the mind, the subject, which is this very effect, becomes more and more active and less and less passive... This confirms the idea that *subjectivity is in fact a process*, and that an inventory must be made of the diverse moments of this process" (pp.112-13, [my emphasis]).

<sup>90</sup> Hardt, 1993, p.72.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Consider, for example, Hardt's account of Spinoza's sense of the difference between the "sad" and "joyful" passions (Hardt, 1993, pp.91-104): the body's power to be affected is first of all dominated by *passive affections*, and these are of two kinds: joyful passive affections, where a body's power is increased by its composability with other bodies, and the opposite, resulting from incomposable encounters. This physics of bodies suggests that we seek joyful affections and avoid

physicalism, as in Locke's empiricism, nor to cognitive knowledge, as in Althusser, whose conception of *ideology* Poulantzas follows closely. As Bruce Baugh explains, "Because the actuality of an instance is not included within the concept, the relation between actualities is not internal and conceptual, or dialectical, but external and contingent".<sup>93</sup> The relations between thought and the body in 'events' - Deleuze's empiricism - does not follow the lines of cleavage formed in the "epistemological break" between science and ideology relied on by Althusser and Poulantzas.<sup>94</sup> This is significant, since the following chapter contends that Poulantzas not only anticipates Anderson's theory of the nation, but also attempts to take seriously the Nietzschean counter-discourse submerged in Weberian thought on the nation, yet cannot succeed, largely due to the ambiguities of his theory of *ideology*.<sup>95</sup>

What is the relation between thought and bodies? Becoming. Following Artaud, thought requires a "recognition of powerlessness" in thought, a "'theft of thoughts' of which thought is a

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sad ones, but this is not a complete picture, for "joyful passions are always the result of an external cause" (p.98), for which an *affirmation* of what is common to bodies in an encounter, an affirmation which is an *internal cause*, and which gives rise to joyful passions, is required. "[I]t involves enveloping or comprehending the cause within the encounter itself" (p.99). In this, Spinoza offers an image of practice which places mind and body in a non-hierarchical relation: "When our mind forms an idea of the common relationship shared between this body and our body (a common notion), the joyful affection ceases to be passive and becomes active" (*ibid.*).

<sup>93</sup> Baugh, 1993, p.18.

<sup>94</sup> The concept of the epistemological break follows the work of Gaston Bachelard. See Larrain, 1980, pp.196-8.

<sup>95</sup> See Hardt, 1993, pp.77-9: Althusser's 'theoreticism' is an over-statement of a subjectivist position, but it does challenge Deleuze (and other Spinozans such as Antonio Negri) at the level of practice, since the reproductive role that Deleuze assigns to the imagination appears as the other pole of the 'specular' view of knowledge. Hardt goes on to show, however, how Deleuzian practice is founded on a radical notion of repetition, not of simple reproduction, to which it can be added that, for Deleuze, 'knowledge' is not opposed to 'imagination', nor is it to be read through *representations*; these are only secondary. c.f. Deleuze on Kant, in Deleuze, 1990b, esp. pp.16-18,47-9 on the role of the imagination in *The Critique of Judgement* as confounding the categories of judgement to which the first two Critiques had confined it. Althusser repeats his early notion of 'theoretical practice' in Althusser, 1990, pp.46-52. For a position utterly at odds with those of both Deleuze and Althusser, see Kearney, 1988, esp. pp.361-97. Kearney claims to trace the steady decline in the role of the imagination in 'Western' philosophy, offering a neo-Romantic ethico-poetic *narrativization* of identity. While not wishing to align Benedict Anderson's theory of national identity with arguments as simplistic as Kearney's, his is at least one direction in which Anderson's reflections lead.

constant agent and victim".<sup>96</sup> Interiority gives us the illusion of thinking the Whole as actual, while thought as exteriority - 'noble' thought - confronts disjunctive multiplicities - always "a voice in another voice"<sup>97</sup> - "on the one hand the presence of an unthinkable in thought, which would be both its source and barrier; on the other hand the presence to infinity of another thinker in the thinker, who shatters every monologue of the thinking self".<sup>98</sup> Beyond the sensory-motor schema of interiority is the problem of nihilism, from thought to the problem of belief: "to believe, not in a different world, but in a link between man and the world, in love or life, to believe in this as in the impossible, the unthinkable, which none the less cannot but be thought".<sup>99</sup> This description, so faithful to the Nietzschean overtones of Weber's tragic ethics, nonetheless rejects its passive, reactive stance toward the problem of nihilism. For a problem cannot be sufficiently grasped from the perspective of interiority; what it lacks is a relation to the Outside: "this outside of the problem is not reducible to the exteriority of the physical world any more than to the psychological interiority of a thinking ego... Thought finds itself taken over by the exteriority of a 'belief', outside any interiority of a mode of knowledge".<sup>100</sup> And this is the great error of Weberian discourse, which reads everything from the standpoint of the *finitude* of interiority: Death is the Outside, the 'fold', as Deleuze reads Foucault. The 'fold' of knowledge or truth, the 'will to knowledge' diagnosed by Nietzsche is not the final word on subjectivity, as post-Weberians would have us believe. Weber was well aware that there is another fold, this time the fold of the outside itself, constituting "what Blanchot called an 'interiority of expectation' from which the subject, in different ways, hopes for immortality, eternity, salvation, freedom or death or detachment".<sup>101</sup> Weber's mistake, however, is in believing that this fold of interiority is *active* in itself, and he writes the 'fate' of modernity from the standpoint of its 'final triumph'.

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<sup>96</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.166.

<sup>97</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.167.

<sup>98</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.168.

<sup>99</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.170.

<sup>100</sup> Deleuze, 199b, pp.174-5.

<sup>101</sup> Deleuze, 1988, p.104.

Deleuze' problem is not how to live with the 'tragic' dualisms of this fold of subjectivity, but how to pursue the lines of flight of its conditions of (real) possibility:

"An Outside, more distant than any exterior, is 'twisted', 'folded' and 'doubled' by an Inside that is deeper than any interior, and alone creates the possibility of the derived relation between the interior and the exterior".<sup>102</sup>

Unlike the Hegelian overtones of Weberian discourse's obsession with the meaning-giving power of death, its constitution of the *limits* of interiority and exteriority, death for Deleuze is *becoming*, the "dark precursor", 'difference-in-itself', from which identity and resemblance are only *effects*, necessary illusions.<sup>103</sup> Following Blanchot, *two* aspects of death must be distinguished, of which Weberian discourse recognises only the first:

"One is personal, concerning the I or the Ego, something which I can confront in a struggle or meet at a limit, or in any case encounter in a present which causes everything to pass. The other is strangely impersonal, with no relation to 'me', neither present nor past but always coming, the source of an incessant multiple adventure in a persistent question".<sup>104</sup>

That Death is indeed the Outside for Deleuze is clear:

"Death is...the last form of the problematic, the source of problems and questions, the sign of their persistence over and above every response, the 'Where?' and 'When?' which designate this (non)-being where every affirmation is nourished... Despite appearances, this death always comes from without, even at the moment when it constitutes the most personal possibility, and from the past, even at the moment when it is most present. The other death, however, the other face or aspect of death, refers to the state of free differences when they are no longer subject to the form imposed upon them by an I or an ego, when they assume a shape which excludes *my* own coherence no less than that of any identity whatsoever".<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Deleuze, 1988, p.110.

<sup>103</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1994, pp.119-24. Contrast this with Alexandre Kojève's reading of death as dialectical negation in Hegel. (Kojève, 1989, esp. pp.245-59; see also, P. Anderson, 1992, pp.309-31.)

<sup>104</sup> Deleuze, 1994, p.112.

<sup>105</sup> Deleuze, 1994, pp.112-13. As earlier pointed out, this formulation is a rejection of the Freudian hypothesis of the 'death instinct', which only addresses the first aspect of death (c.f. *ibid.*, p.113).

The 'doubling' of death in Deleuze's reading of the Outside has its counter-part in the doubling of the self in an 'active' conception of 'the Other'. As an *irruptive* critique of the Same found in Weberian discourse on the nation, these 'lines of flight' will trace the doubling of *nihilism* found in the liberalism of the latter discourse.

### Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to chart the difference between Weberian and Nietzschean discourse in terms of the latter's critique of the former's meta-theoretical resolutions. It has tried to dispel the notion that Nietzsche's thought lends comfort to those who profess to defend 'reason' against the nihilistic urges of 'irrationality'. The difference between Weber's sociologized conception of tragedy and Nietzsche's vision of the political import of *simulacra* has also been stressed. Further, the *identity* politics produced in Weber's discourse leads to a reactive nihilism which Nietzschean thought pushes to its limits, a transformative practice that leads to the 'unthought' of the Outside, a terrain on which theories of the nation have been unable to travel. The perspective of interiority which governs Weberian discourse on the nation fails to comprehend the dynamics that enable its narrow view of the world outside. The following chapter traces the key consequences of this narrow vision, and attempts to discern other voices in its thunderous monologue.

"This was one of my favorite times being by the river. Cause time is material. I liked the shapes of the leafless branches of winter that only appeared when you were right next to them and meanwhile the tree trunks, trees blown over and cut down by the storm last year, took on other shapes, always metamorphosing depending on the changing distances between them and you. Dreams emerged as we walked. The river began to appear the mirror it would be when there was no more light in time.

Time too can totally go away. I know we are really nothing; that's why I like this night."

Kathy Acker, *In Memoriam to Identity*<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The conception of *temporality* that is supposed in the conception of death outlined in the previous chapter follows Bergson's critique of the spatialization of time; it is *the* critique from which the whole of Deleuze's alternative politics derives: Weberian discourse 'suffers' from *reactive* nihilism because it cannot follow this critique. This critique follows from a radical reading of St. Augustine's meditations on time: the *direct presentation of time* given force in Bergson and Nietzsche derives from "St Augustine's fine formulation: there is *a present of the future, a present of the present and a present of the past*, all implicated in the event, rolled up in the event, and thus simultaneous and inexplicable. From affect to time: a time is revealed inside the event..."<sup>2</sup> And this reading of Augustine has radical implications for the relation of time and *movement*, since *time is no longer subordinated to movement*, and the past no longer confused with *memory*, the recollection-images 'contained' in the brain - "the mind's presence-room", as Locke calls it.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary,

"Memory is not in us; it is we who move in a Being-Memory, a world-memory... [T]he past appears as the most general form of an already-there, a pre-existence in general,

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<sup>1</sup> Acker, 1990, p.166.

<sup>2</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.100; see also *ibid.*, p.141, where we are reminded that an affect is "immanent evaluation, instead of judgement as transcendent value": affirmation, not resentment. Augustine's theory of time, memory, and forgetting is found in his *Confessions*, written in the years 397-8. (See Augustine, 1961, Books X and XI, pp.207-80.)

<sup>3</sup> c.f. Locke, 1959, Vol.I, p.149.

which our recollections presuppose... From this point of view the present itself exists only as an infinitely contracted past which is constituted as the extreme form of an already-there. The present would not pass on without this condition. It would not pass on if it was not the most contracted degree of the past".<sup>4</sup>

This is not to be read as a kind of 'conservatism'; if the present is only a special case of the past, the direct presentation of time opens us onto the Outside as the future, not as temporal succession, but precisely as *becoming*. But this is only the case if Nietzsche's notion of repetition as excess - the 'powers of the false' diagnosed in the eternal return<sup>5</sup> - supplements Bergson's 'Cosmic Memory', as the latter tends to freeze past and present and "to disempower the intuition of irreducible multiplicity" found in Bergson's texts.<sup>6</sup>

### Two Readings of Augustine: Active and Reactive

What must be stressed in this is that Deleuze' use of Augustine is a 'minor' deconstruction' of Augustine's *spatial conception of time*: Book X of the *Confessions* seeks the *presence of God beyond memory* - "which is like a great field or a spacious palace, a storehouse for countless images..."<sup>7</sup>, which, as a faculty of the soul, identical to the mind yet divided from the body<sup>8</sup> - presents a paradox for Augustine that Book XI will try to resolve. Augustine discovers that the problem of the passage of (mundane) time is a question of *the measurement of quantities of duration*, for which the mind produces *representations* of "the movement of bodies".<sup>9</sup> Thus, a spatial conception of presence and absence in the interiority of the mind, time as a function of

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<sup>4</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.98. For the details of this argument, see Deleuze, 1991a, esp. pp.51-72.

<sup>5</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1991b, pp.131-7, where important pages are devoted to distinguishing between *truthful narration* - the form of argument undertaken by Weberian discourse - and Nietzschean *falsifying narration*, a non-sociological 'theater', where the unity of the 'character' is shattered in favor of the *indiscernibility* of the simulacrum and the copy, an irreducible multiplicity which is a 'reversal of Platonism' that Plato already undertakes, against Weber's reading of the 'good conscience' of the Platonic *concept*.

<sup>6</sup> c.f. Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.7.

<sup>7</sup> Augustine, 1961, p.214.

<sup>8</sup> Augustine, 1961, pp.220-3. See also Gunnell, 1987, pp.241-4.

<sup>9</sup> Augustine, 1961, pp.274-7.

movement, accounts for mundane experience. And this is precisely the direction of both Weber's and Benedict Anderson's account of the interiority of 'national space' and the interiority of the suffering self: the forces which produce both 'populate' the *memory* of nation and self to produce the universal presence of the reified nation/self across a homogenous field of time and space.

But Augustine's conception of time is meant to account for the capacity of the soul to seek the presence of the *eternal*; it is the mediation of the mundane world and God's realm. A strict *dualism* of the temporal and the eternal follows his meditations on the non-presence of the present to itself - the movement of time. From the perspective of the measurement of time, Presence rushes through time, *from future to present to past*.<sup>10</sup> What Augustine calls the mind's faculty of *attention* - the present - rushes time forward, contracting the future and expanding the past, "until the whole of my expectation is absorbed".<sup>11</sup> From the perspective of interiority, *self-presence is always already memory, all thought the final thought*. The truth of any action, indeed, of "of a man's whole life, of which all his actions are parts... [and] of the whole history of mankind, of which each man's life is a part"<sup>12</sup> is that found once it is realized that the *being* of interiority is beyond time and *becoming*, "the havoc of change".<sup>13</sup> It is at *the limit*, the border of the temporal and the eternal, that Presence is achieved in this spatial conception of time. The union of the One (God) and the Many ('men') occurs through the soul's contemplation of God's formless realm beyond the "inferior world" of time, bodies, and becoming, as a *solution to the suffering interiority knows as a consequence of its immersion in spatialized time*:

"[The Heaven of Heavens] being always in [God's] presence and clinging to you with all its love, it has no future to anticipate and no past to remember, and thus it persists without change and does not diverge into past and future time. How happy must this creature be, if such it is, constantly intent upon your beatitude, forever possessed by you, forever bathed in your light!.. In this there is a lesson for the soul, which travels far upon its earthly pilgrimage... [W]hat else is its life but you?"<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Augustine, 1961, p.269.

<sup>11</sup> Augustine, 1961, p.278.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Augustine, 1961, p.279.

<sup>14</sup> Augustine, 1961, Book XII, pp.287-8.

Augustine attempts to resolve the problem of interiority's suffering through the mediation of the Church, an option no longer available to Weber and to those who follow him. Yet he also presents a clear image of the meta-theoretical assumptions of interiority and suffering which animate Weberian discourse on the nation, a conception *secularized* in an historicist account of the transition from a *theodicy* of suffering to a *tragic ethics* based entirely on the final victory of interiority over the 'noble' self of exteriority.<sup>15</sup> Despite the considerable history separating the turn of the fifth century from that of the twenty-first, Augustine's text resonates with the *modernism* of his conception of mundane time, space, and number, an image of interiority whose *secular* counterpart is perhaps most clearly discerned in the *liberalism* of Locke.<sup>16</sup> It is perhaps this which allows 'postmodern' theorists of political identity like William Connolly to follow Paul Ricoeur in 'returning' to Augustine to locate the source of 'the paradox of politics' in the latter's theory of time and his incipient 'politics of difference', posed against the Roman Empire, in order to produce a blending of the 'seriousness' of modernism with the critique of homogenous 'identity' found in postmodernism. While this move is discussed in more detail in the Conclusions to this essay,<sup>17</sup> it is already apparent that, from a Nietzschean perspective, simply dropping 'God' from the equation does nothing to move beyond the perspective of interiority which animates Augustine's argument. As discussed earlier in this chapter, 'the death of God' in Nietzsche does not herald a new era in secular politics; indeed, later Nietzscheans like Deleuze will refuse the comforting opposition

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<sup>15</sup> c.f. Weber's relegation of the figure of the prophet to the irrational, traditional conception of the forces most 'active' in producing modernity, and Augustine's account of how prediction works. According to Augustine, it is the very 'fact' that past, present, and future are divided from one another that the future can be predicted, a most 'modern' argument, which Bergson will condemn as the false problem of 'the possible'. See Augustine, 1961, p.268; Deleuze, 1991a, pp.96-8.

<sup>16</sup> c.f. Locke on memory and personal identity in Locke, 1959, Vol.I, pp.439-70; Vol.II, pp.167-75. For a brief account of changing conceptions of spatio-temporal dynamics between Augustine and Locke, see Gunnell, 1987, pp.243-52. While Gunnell emphasises the difference between early attempts to harmonize political space with 'the nature of man', and Locke's virtually free-floating consciousness, where personal identity is a function of whatever ideas are preserved in memory, the assumed space of individual and collective in Locke is quite clearly that of Newtonian mechanics and its social support - the bourgeois conception of property relations in an emerging capitalist 'order'.

<sup>17</sup> c.f. Artaud, who challenges Augustine's attack on the theater of the 'pagan Gods' of Rome (Artaud, 1958, pp.25-7), while the 'postmodernists' discussed in the Conclusions defend the Saint's faith.

between 'secular' and 'sacred' as a by-product of the historicism which writes the tale of of interiority as the final triumph of the former over the latter.<sup>18</sup>

### 'Minor' Deconstruction and Nihilism

In its desire for being, the interiority governing Weberian discourse defers its nihilism onto its outside, the Dionysian theater of Nietzschean counter-discourse: if death, finitude, and fatality give meaning to the self of interiority, this is diagnosed by Nietzscheans as a ruse by which the body is stolen - the problem of 'what a body can do' deferred - in the reactive desire for presence produced in the interiority of consciousness. Against the reactive nihilism of interiority, Nietzscheans like Deleuze and Foucault pose active nihilism, which, following Blanchot's meditations on death, lead to engagements with an 'inhuman' Outside. Foucault characterizes the objections to his 'method' of discourse analysis, which

"deprives us of our continuities. It dissipates that temporal identity in which we are pleased to look at ourselves when we wish to exorcise the discontinuities of history; it breaks the thread of transcendental teleologies; and where anthropological thought once questioned man's being or subjectivity, it now bursts open the other, and the outside. In this sense, the diagnosis does not establish the fact of our identity by the play of distinctions. It establishes that we are difference, that our reason is the difference of discourses, our history the difference of times, our selves the difference of masks. That difference, far from being the forgotten and recovered origin, is this dispersion that we are and make".<sup>19</sup>

Does this not mean, asks Foucault's imaginary questioner, that "in speaking I am not banishing my death, but actually establishing it; or rather that I am abolishing all interiority in that exterior that is so indifferent to my life, and so *neutral*, that it makes no distinction between my life and my

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<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Deleuze' attempt to take Bergson's 'mysticism' seriously (Deleuze, 1991a, p.112); also, his reading of Hume of religion (Deleuze, 1991c, pp.73-7). Boudas points out that while religion gives 'fanciful causes', *all the ideas of the imagination are 'fictions': "the illegitimate beliefs in the World, the Self and God appear as the horizon of all possible beliefs, or as the lowest degree of belief"* (Deleuze, in Boudas, "Translator's Introduction", p.19). Hardt thus misses an important aspect of Deleuze' properly *philosophical* argument.

<sup>19</sup> Foucault, 1977, p.131.

death?"<sup>20</sup> The answer to this question lies in *active nihilism*:

"To be worthy of what is happening to us, Deleuze concludes, means to will what is always both different and the same in each moment of our lives, to raise the banal and the mundane into the remarkable and singular, the wound into a wound that heals, war against war, death against death".<sup>21</sup>

Death against death: the impossibility of dying - this is Blanchot's formulation and profound meditation on the *image*, the event, death, and nothingness. An empiricism of the Outside, a 'cruel theater'.<sup>22</sup> Nietzsche's vision of the Eternal Return is precisely "the most extreme form of nihilism", as he calls it, where "nothing ends; all begins again, the other is still the same, midnight is only a covered-over noon, and the highest noon is the abyss of light from which we can never escape - even through death and that glorious suicide Nietzsche recommends".<sup>23</sup> The Nietzschean

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<sup>20</sup> Foucault, 1977, p.210. See also, J. Miller, 1993, pp.160-1, where these two quotations are somewhat misleadingly assimilated.

<sup>21</sup> Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.9.

<sup>22</sup> c.f. Jacques Derrida, "La parole soufflée", in Derrida, 1978, pp.176-95, on the theft of the body in Artaud. See also Blanchot, "The Two Versions of Imaginary", in Blanchot, 1989, pp.262-3:

"The event really takes place - and yet does it 'really' take place? The occurrence commands us, as we would command the image. That is, it releases us, from it and from ourselves. It keeps us outside; it makes of this outside a presence where 'I' does not recognize 'itself'. This movement implies infinite degrees... [T]he image can certainly help us to grasp the thing ideally, and in this perspective it is the life-giving negation of the thing; but at the level to which its particular weight drags us, it also threatens constantly to relegate us, not to the absent thing, but to absence as presence, to the neutral double of the object in which all belonging to the world is dissipated... Here *meaning* does not escape into another meaning, but into the *other* of all meaning. Because of ambiguity nothing has meaning, but everything *seems* infinitely meaningful. Meaning is no longer anything but semblance; semblance makes meaning infinitely rich. It makes this infinitude of meaning have no need of development - it makes meaning immediate, which is to say incapable of being developed, only immediately void".

See also, Foucault's comments on 'the proper space of death' in Deleuze's conception of the 'event', in Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum", in Foucault, 1986, pp.169-75.

<sup>23</sup> Blanchot, "The limits of Experience: Nihilism", p.126. c.f. Maurice Blanchot, "The Work and Death's Space", in Blanchot, 1989, pp.146-50, on 'death against death' in Rilke, which, far from leading to passive nihilism, "implies an immense responsibility toward things and is possible only through their mediation..." (p.150).

insight - that nihilism tells of the impossibility of nihilism, as Blanchot puts it - is cause for *laughter* rather than for the stern seriousness of Weber. For what is laughable is precisely *the vicious 'circle' of becoming*.<sup>24</sup> But more than this, nihilism is laughable because construction of a 'plane of immanence' on the 'Body without Organs'<sup>25</sup> *always fails*. This is the laughter of the Dionysian, or of Bataille: it 'means' precisely not taking the *negative* seriously, but rather using it as a 'resource', as Derrida remarks.<sup>26</sup> However, like the thought of the Eternal Return, the *practical problematics* of constructing a body without organs is *dangerous*:

"It is not so much that [the Body without Organs] preexists or comes ready-made, although in certain respects it is preexistent. At any rate, you make one, you can't desire without making one. And it awaits you; it is an inevitable exercise or experimentation, already accomplished the moment you undertake it, unaccomplished as long as you don't. This is not reassuring, because you can botch it. Or it can be terrifying, and lead you to your death. It is nondesire as well as desire. It is not at all a notion or a concept but a practice, a set of practices. You never reach the Body without Organs, you can't reach it, you are forever attaining it, it is a limit".<sup>27</sup>

This inevitable failure arises not because it is too difficult to maintain 'active' thought, to remain worthy of what happens to us - this is rather Freud's hypothesis in *Civilization and Its Discontents*. On the contrary, illusions arise like a fog from the plane itself; they are necessary to

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<sup>24</sup> c.f. Pierre Klossowski, "Nietzsche's Experience of the Eternal Return", in Allison, ed., 1977, pp.112-20. That this 'circle' is de-centered, ex-centric, is stressed by Deleuze. See Deleuze, 1990a, pp.298-301.

<sup>25</sup> This is a term borrowed from Antonin Artaud. Deleuze and Guattari say this about the Body without Organs (BwO):

"A BwO is made in such a way that it can be occupied, populated only by intensities. Only intensities pass and circulate. Still, the BwO is not a scene, a place, or even a support upon which something comes to pass. It has nothing to do with phantasy, there is nothing to interpret. The BwO causes intensities to pass; it produces and distributes them in a *spatium* that is itself intensive, lacking extension. It is not space, nor is it in space; *it is matter that occupies space to a given degree - to the degree corresponding to the intensities produced*" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.153 [my emphasis]).

<sup>26</sup> See Jacques Derrida, "From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve", in Derrida, 1978, p.258.

<sup>27</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp.149-50.

thought.<sup>28</sup>

"That so many fogs arise is explained in two ways. Firstly, because thought cannot stop itself from interpreting immanence as immanent to something, the great Object of contemplation, the Subject of reflection, or the Other subject of communication: then transcendence is inevitably reintroduced. And if this cannot be avoided it is because it seems that each plane of immanence can only claim to be unique, to be *the* plane, by reconstituting the chaos it had to ward off: the choice is between transcendence and chaos."<sup>29</sup>

Here, an ambiguity seems to arise. Nietzsche's Eternal Return is a *selective thought*: what returns is not the Same, identity, but difference, *pure immanence*. But what the 'modern image of thought' teaches is rather that thought "stammers" in a "set of ambiguous signs, which become diagrammatic features or infinite movements and which take on a value by right",<sup>30</sup> as in Kleist and Artaud, as it carries on this constant struggle against illusions. *There is no escape from the 'vicious circle' of becoming*. But this countenances neither 'fatalism' nor the *virtue* of the suffering self as tragic ethics: the '*sovereignty*' of thought lies in its 'unpower', the *subtraction* of the unique, a *laying aside* of virtue, the next step beyond affirmation of 'active' virtue. Affirmation of the 'unthought in thought' as a *political project* of constructing new planes of immanence thus requires *going beyond Nietzsche's Master-Slave dyad*.<sup>31</sup> A non-representational theater charts continuous variations of

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<sup>28</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.49. c.f. Nietzsche's "four great errors", in Nietzsche, TI, pp.47-54. Also, recall the quotation from Günter Grass which serves as the epigram to Chapter three of this essay, which raises the very important issue of what *relations* obtain among thinkers, and thoughts, a problem the Conclusions discuss.

<sup>29</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.51; see also, Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp.268-9.

<sup>30</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.55. In the context of Deleuze' reflections on 'nomads', it is interesting to note that in his pioneering text on nationalism, Hans Kohn claims the Sanskrit "barbara" (cognate with "barbarian" through Greek) meant "stammering", "non-Aryan". See Kohn, 1969, p.7.)

<sup>31</sup> Subtracting virtue from practice marks the sense in which Deleuze is a 'post-Nietzschean'. c.f. Petra Perry asserts that Deleuze has gone beyond Nietzsche in his work with Felix Guattari. However, her evidence is quite curious: the fact that Deleuze continues to cite Nietzsche in many significant parts of his texts 'proves' that he has moved beyond him! Moreover, her scant citations of places where the argument does appear to 'contradict' Nietzsche do not stand up to attentive reading. See Perry, 1993, esp. pp.175,189-90.

language, a 'becoming-minor' which is *not* a matter of mastering the role of slave.<sup>32</sup>

### The Politics of Becoming

Becoming-minor is not a matter of *representing* 'minorities', the 'poor', the 'oppressed', the suffering, as if these were psycho-social *identities* framed through the very reduction of time to space reproduced in 'their' defence as 'objects' to be represented.<sup>33</sup> This does not mean that all liberal struggles for representation and rights are *refused*; on the contrary, such refusal leads to cults of marginality of which Deleuze remains suspicious because of their majoritarian overcoding.<sup>34</sup> The difference between 'major' and 'minor' language is between "different experiences of the body":<sup>35</sup> one reduced to the Cartesian co-ordinates imposed by interiority, the other raised to intensive states of becoming. Minority has two senses, which must be distinguished: that of a "factual condition", where a 'group' is defined by its subordination to a majoritarian standard; second, as "a becoming in which everyone is engaged", a mobile series of *alliances*.<sup>36</sup> Categories of critique such as 'domination' are therefore unhelpful, since they stem from an analysis of language as a *grammar*, a unified system that assumes a "political model by which language is homogenized, centralized, standardized, becoming a language of power, a major or dominant language".<sup>37</sup> A grammar in this sense is just what is produced in Benedict Anderson's

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<sup>32</sup> Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", pp.213-14. On subtracting the unique from writing, see Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.6:

"The multiple *must be made*, not by always adding a higher dimension, but...with the number of dimensions one already has available - always  $n-1$  (the only way the one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted). Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted: write at  $n-1$  dimensions. A system of this kind could be called a rhizome".

<sup>33</sup> c.f. Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, p.139.

<sup>34</sup> See Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", p.221; Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, p.139; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp.276-7.

<sup>35</sup> Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.16.

<sup>36</sup> Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", p.221.

<sup>37</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.101.

theory of the nation; it attempts to account for the 'coherence' of the political space of the nation/state/self. Contrary to the tree-structure of Noam Chomsky's linguistics, with its imperative to dichotomize according to the grammar of a universal structure, "there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages. There is no ideal speaker-listener, any more than there is a homogenous linguistic community".<sup>38</sup> It is thus useless to appeal to a 'mother-tongue' as the ground of imagined identities, as Anderson does: this "most Oedipal of reterritorializations"<sup>39</sup> ignores the becoming-minor of all 'major' languages. To follow the line of flight which makes you "a foreigner in your own tongue"<sup>40</sup> is to enter into relations with the Outside, the non-site of *speed and intensities*.<sup>41</sup>

'Speed' is not a quantitative variation in extension, but a qualitative variation in *intension*. Just as nomads are not necessarily those who move, an 'event' like 'the French Revolution' does not form, first of all, the 'national identity' of 'the masses', as it is figured in Weberian discourse on the nation. What, if anything, is 'contained' in this event is not interiority, but relations of speed - the Outside:

"[M]ass movements under the *ancien regime*, wandering in search of the monarch/State, prefigure the new organization of traffic flows that we arbitrarily call the 'French Revolution,' which is nothing other than the rational organization of a social abduction. The 'mass uprising' of 1793 is *the removal of the masses*.

The discourse propagated by revolutionary propaganda is like the bourgeois citadel's old religious discourse. It distances and dissuades the mobile masses; it designates a new revolutionary State as not being here in the city, in the streets, but over there, far away, in the excessiveness of a universal and timeless raid. 'Embrace,' cries Gregoire, 'the expansion of the centuries as that of the regions ... avoid a much-heeded prejudice that would circumscribe the Republic in a very restricted territory!' (November 27, 1792) - while the bourgeoisie immediately gives itself new properties and estates, and threatens with death all who would question the right to private property (March 18, 1793). What it offers *as territories to its 'conscripts' are the roads of Europe*. 'Where the feet are, there is the fatherland' (*ubi pedes, ibi patria*), Roman law had already decreed.

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<sup>38</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.7. c.f. the distinction between 'order-words' and 'passport-words' discussed in Boudas, "Editor's Introduction", pp.17-18.

<sup>39</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1991, p.24.

<sup>40</sup> Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", p.213.

<sup>41</sup> c.f. Deleuze and Guattari, 1991, pp.22-3.

With the French Revolution, *all the highways become national!*"<sup>42</sup>

And this is crucial: the 'inside' is a fold of the Outside: this is the 'unthought' in thought, which follows "individuations totally different from those of the well-formed subjects that receive them".<sup>43</sup>

Following such lines of flight pursues the *becoming-minor of all major languages*; in this 'the people' do not first form a molar subject (race/sex/class), an enduring substratum upon which forces of domination and identity-formation act. Again, this is the position of Weberian discourse, which will be repeated by Poulantzas. In fact, "the people exist only in the condition of minority, which is why they are always missing";<sup>44</sup> minority is the *becoming* of "those of whom History does not take account", the *Untimely*, in Nietzsche's sense.<sup>45</sup> Rather than a Brechtian theater of possible solutions, or the representation of conflicts, it is a matter of "subtracting, taking away everything that comprises an element of power, in language and in gestures, in representation and in the represented".<sup>46</sup> This is the politics of *awareness* - radical empiricism, a relation of thought to immanent problems referred to in the Introduction to this essay. Its 'ground', if this word is appropriate, is *confusion*, the zero-intensity of thought - the construction of 'Bodies without Organs' - approached through a *total critique* of interiority and its meta-theoretical resolutions: active nihilism.

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<sup>42</sup> Virilio, 1986, pp.19-20.

<sup>43</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.253. c.f. Deleuze on Foucault's difference from the phenomenology of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, in Deleuze, 1988, pp.108-23:

"To think is to fold, to double the outside with a co-extensive inside... and this carnal or vital topology, far from showing up in space, frees a sense of time that fits the past into the inside, brings about the future in the outside, and brings the two into confrontation at the limit of the living present" (pp.118-19).

What this Outside - becoming - reveals in the 'double capture' of the seeable and sayable is the impossibility of the 'intentionality of Being' as "the same world that speaks itself in language and sees itself in light" (p.111). This phenomenological assimilation is deeply at work in *Imagined Communities*, as argued in Chapter one of this essay.

<sup>44</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, p.220.

<sup>45</sup> Carmelo Bene, in Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", p.220; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.296.

<sup>46</sup> Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", p.211.

### Figures of Mobility

This zero-intensity of thought composes planes of immanence in *encounters*, 'between' thought, but also between what Deleuze and Guattari call 'conceptual personae' and 'psychosocial types' in texts, as well as between conceptual personae 'themselves'.<sup>47</sup> Conceptual personae are irreducible to the psycho-social types - "the stranger, the exile, the migrant, the transient, the native, the homcomer".<sup>48</sup> The latter have a precise 'function': to reveal the *relative* movement of "the formation of territories, the vectors of deterritorialization, and the process of reterritorialization".<sup>49</sup> But this is an insufficient account of what philosophical thought *actually does*: it ignores the *absolute* movement of thought, for which the 'thought-events' of conceptual personae, the creations of thought on a plane of immanence, are required, if indeed the problem 'today' is not to learn to live tragically in the *one world/many worlds* of Weberian discourse, but to *multiply worlds*.<sup>50</sup>

"It is not that the person who does not believe in God would gain the upper hand, since he would still belong to the old plane as negative movement. But, on the new plane, it is possible that the problem now concerns the one who believes in the world, and not even in the existence of the world but in its possibilities of movements and intensities, so as once again to give birth to new modes of existence... It may be that believing in this world, in this life, is our most difficult task, or the task of a mode of existence still to be discovered on our plane of immanence today. This is the empiricist conversion..."<sup>51</sup>

'Conceptual personae' are the most recent incarnation of the masks of Dionysian theater in Deleuze' thought. However, it is just this aspect of his argument which comes in for the harshest criticism, even by sympathetic commentators. These critiques are united in their disdain for his apparent confusion of 'nomads' as 'ideal types' and 'real' migrants and exiles. Nonetheless, what

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<sup>47</sup> See Deleuze, "Preface to the English Language Edition", in Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, pp.vii-x.

<sup>48</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.67.

<sup>49</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.68.

<sup>50</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, pp.69-74.

<sup>51</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, pp.74-5.

this critique amounts to is a demand for a sociological tragedy of the type assumed in Weberian discourse, a *positivistic* treatment of the avatars of identity as the *liminal*. Chapter one of this essay has traced this line of thought in Benedict Anderson's text, through the anthropology of Victor Turner, a student of Rene Girard's Euripidean theory of sacrifice and identity. This lineage is continued in Anne Norton's reflections on political identity, as she applies Turner's anthropology to questions of marginality in the formation of 'national identities'.<sup>52</sup> As it reappears in 'postmodern' and 'post-Marxist' thought on the nation, this line of critique defers the question of *becoming* as different from the false image of movement given in its spatialized representation of time.

For example, Michael Hardt, an otherwise able and sympathetic commentator on Deleuze, takes him to task for his 'failure' to provide a theory of *agency*. This demand is made specifically against the 'limitations' of Deleuze' appropriation of Nietzsche, since the Eternal Return is only a "temporal synthesis" which "fails to arrive at a conception of a spatial or social synthesis".<sup>53</sup> This complaint licences Hardt's reading of Deleuze as a Spinozan; that is, as a thinker of modes of (social) organization at the level of practical ethics: a "radical democracy" as the mode of organization which increases the possibility for joyful encounters of compossible bodies, in Spinoza's sense.<sup>54</sup> Hardt's complaint, that there is too much that is "inhuman" in Deleuze' Nietzsche and not enough "personalist" agency, fails to consider Deleuze' distinction, posed above, between relative and absolute movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. In his desire to exalt a Spinozan defence of liberalism, Hardt has read Deleuze' very early comments on modes of organization as taking place through the dynamics of *relative* movements, misreading the thought of the Outside in his texts.<sup>55</sup> Hardt errs in *opposing* the (false) multiplicity of order 'given' in spatial exteriority to the 'genuine' multiplicity of organization created in "duration", Deleuze' radical

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<sup>52</sup> See Norton, 1988, esp. pp.53-74.

<sup>53</sup> Hardt, 1993, p.54.

<sup>54</sup> Hardt, 1993, pp.117-20.

<sup>55</sup> For an account of these remarks by Deleuze, see Hardt, 1993, pp.13-15. It is likely that Hardt's reading of Deleuze is coloured by his own relationship to the political thought of his mentor, Antonio Negri, and his theorization of the "autonomist" movement in northern Italy. See Hardt's revealing remarks on this thematic in Hardt, 1993, pp.45-7.

reading of Bergson. But, as we have seen, duration is a multiplicity with a single sense, the 'whole of the past' that is *to be created, following Nietzsche*. It is necessary to go beyond "the duality of homogenous quantity and heterogenous quality, and to pass from one to the other in a continuous movement".<sup>56</sup> In this thought,

"space will no longer simply be a form of exteriority, a sort of screen that denatures duration, an impurity that comes to disturb the pure, a relative that is opposed to the absolute: Space itself will need to be based in things, in relations between things and between durations, to belong itself to the absolute, to have its own 'purity'".<sup>57</sup>

It is ironic that Hardt avows liberal democracy as the only form of organization capable of freeing the forces of infinite compossibility, given both Deleuze' reservations about the *monism* of Spinoza and the fact that he rejects the *dualism* between an ethics based on the order of homogenous spaces and organization based on heterogeneity. If there is 'agency' in Deleuze, it is the 'fold', the lines of flight followed in becoming.<sup>58</sup> It is rather this dualism which animates the resentment of Weberian ethics, which leads to its reactive nihilism: the universality of homogenous spaces licences the search for 'marginal' identities at the limits of these particular spaces, as if the resolutions of identity produced 'in' homogenous space and time are the standards - the majoritarian facts - which must guide critical thought and practice. By contrast, in the 'active' nihilism of Deleuze, these spatial resolutions are *effects of 'minor' becomings*: a 'different' politics of problems is produced beyond the solutions offered by the 'politics of difference'.

### Other Politics

Minor becomings acknowledge relations with the Outside: the 'pure' space and 'pure' time which supposes a very different notion of the Other from that presumed in Weberian discourse. In Deleuze' reading of Michel Tournier's strange version of the Robinson Crusoe story, a study of the Other emerges where the Other is not *origin or cause*, by either its presence or absence, but is

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<sup>56</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.74 [my emphasis].

<sup>57</sup> Deleuze, 1991a, p.49.

<sup>58</sup> On Deleuze' reference to Leibnizian 'monadology' as a corrective to Spinoza's monism, see Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", pp.9-10; Deleuze, 1993a, pp.44-5,106-120.

instead the 'perverse' adventures of the *effects* of the Other. Defoe's psycho-social figures becomes Tournier's conceptual personae.<sup>59</sup> Beyond Tournier's continually varying island world without the Other, the Other "assures the margins and transitions in the world. He is the sweetness of contiguities and resemblances".<sup>60</sup> 'He' guarantees the background from which things appear, and makes possible desire. Thus, the Other is neither a particular object, nor another subject, but the an *a priori* "structure of the perceptual field, without which the entire field could not function as it does".<sup>61</sup> The Other is *the structure of a possible world*, so long as it is understood that as absolute structure, the expressed possible world, the Other is a virtuality which "does not exist (actually) outside of that which expresses it".<sup>62</sup> Therefore, "it is not the ego but the Other as structure which renders perception possible".<sup>63</sup> But if the Other structures space and "the distribution of categories", absence of the Other and its sudden appearance establishes a temporal relation, an opening of consciousness onto the *past* of which 'I' am, since the appearance of another possible world shatters the presence of my own.

The consequences of this reading of the effects of the absence of the Other for Weberian discourse are these: the Other, understood as psycho-social figure of mobility and marginality, actually guarantees the spatio-temporal resolution it is meant to criticize. Also, examining the role of the Other reveals that subject and object are *not co-present*: "If the Other is a possible world, I am a past world. The mistake of theories of knowledge is that they postulate the contemporaneity of subject and object, whereas one is constituted only through the annihilation of the other".<sup>64</sup> If we recall Benedict Anderson's theory of the novel and newspaper, there the presence of consciousness as interiority is produced co-present with the 'objects' spatialized in textual narratives. This

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<sup>59</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, pp.303-4. Recall the role of Puritan novels like Defoe's in setting the majoritarian standard for the type of sociological realism engaged in by Benedict Anderson.

<sup>60</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, p.305.

<sup>61</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, p.307.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, p.309.

<sup>64</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, p.310.

sociological account is not only wrong in itself; it misses the dynamic of the Other as an opening to *becoming*, not by its presence, but by its (virtual) absence. Without the structure of the Other, consciousness and things are one: "consciousness ceases to be a light cast upon objects in order to become a pure phosphorescence of things in themselves".<sup>65</sup> An eye internal to things, as Bataille writes, not the God's eye perspective of Anderson's narrative.

This dynamic reveals the "innocence of becoming"; for "it is the Other who has imprisoned the elements within the limits of bodies and, further still, within the limits of the earth".<sup>66</sup> The Other as absolute structure, "the encompassed possible", is required by thought to think the Outside, not as abstract concept, but as *empiricism*; not to determine the structure of all possible thought, but as a *multiplication of worlds*. Against the positivism of 'grammars' of mobility produced in discourses like Anderson's, Deleuze will trace a genealogy of 'anti-grammar' through the Stoics and Leibnitz to free thought and bodies from imprisonment in Cartesian co-ordinates of conceptual categories of space, time and movement:

"Predication is not attribution. The predicate is the 'execution of travel,' an act of movement, a change, and not the state of travel. The predicate is *the proposition itself*. And I can no more reduce 'I travel' to 'I am a traveling being' than I can reduce 'I think' to 'I am a thinking being.' Thought is not a constant attribute, but a predicate passing endlessly from one thought to another".<sup>67</sup>

It is thus the failure to move beyond the relative movements of figures of mobility - exiles, marginals, migrants - that licences critiques of Deleuze for not providing an 'adequate' anthropology of 'real' nomads.<sup>68</sup> Rather, Deleuze's insights accord with Jean Baudrillard's meditations on the fate of the Other, provided we resist the *historicism* implicit in Baudrillard's account. In the 'reactive' pathos of postmodernity, becoming-otherwise is fetishised as only the return of the Same:

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<sup>65</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, p.311.

<sup>66</sup> Deleuze, 1990a, p.312.

<sup>67</sup> Deleuze, 1993a, p.53.

<sup>68</sup> See, for example, C. Smith, 1993, where this complaint sustains his critique of Deleuze.

"Alienation is no more: the Other as gaze, the Other as mirror, the Other as opacity - are all gone. Henceforward it is the transparency of others that represents absolute danger. Without the Other as mirror, as reflecting surface, consciousness of self is threatened with irradiation in the void.

The utopia of the end of alienation has likewise disappeared. The subject has not succeeded in negating himself as subject, within the framework of a totalization of the world. A determinate negation of the subject no longer exists: all that remains is a lack of determinacy as to the position of the subject and the position of the other. Abandoned to this indeterminacy, the subject is neither the one nor the other - he is merely the Same. Division has been replaced by mere propagation. And whereas the other may always conceal a second other, the Same never conceals anything but itself. This is our clone-ideal today: a subject purged of the other, deprived of its divided character and doomed to meta-stasis, to pure repetition.

No longer the hell of other people [Rimbaud's modernism], but the hell of the Same".<sup>69</sup>

Baudrillard traces this 'clone-ideal' to 'the proper use of difference' found in postmodern thought. By its very success, the 'politics of difference' has banished otherness: by its *universality* 'today', difference has relegated otherness to a spectral non-entity, rendering the subject no less transparent and spectral.<sup>70</sup> In its *liberal* desire to 'balance' difference, difference is in fact "fetishized" in a new form of utopianism whose most prolific fruit is *racism*:

"This is a racism which, for lack of any biological underpinning, seizes on the very slightest variations in the order of signs; a racism which quickly takes on a viral and automatic character, and perpetuates itself while revelling in a generalized semiotics. And this racism can never be countered by any humanism of difference, for the simple reason that it is itself the virus of difference".<sup>71</sup>

Baudrillard's argument here departs from that of Deleuze: the former appears now as an *anti-utopian*, a critic of the universality afforded a liberal politics of difference. But this argument from the 'problem' of universality is Weber's dilemma, not that of Nietzscheans like Deleuze. But it has the merit of attempting to resist the politics of *representation* found in postmodernism, which reveals its racism in statements such as the following:

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<sup>69</sup> Baudrillard, 1993, p.122.

<sup>70</sup> Baudrillard, 1993, p.125.

<sup>71</sup> Baudrillard, 1993, p.130.

"The current post-structuralist/postmodern challenges to the coherent, autonomous subject have to be put on hold in feminist and post-colonial discourses, for both must work first to assert and affirm a denied or alienated subjectivity: those radical postmodern challenges are in many ways the luxury of the dominant order which can afford to challenge that which it securely possesses".<sup>72</sup>

Not only is the 'postmodern challenge' highly suspect in itself; apparently, there are 'stages' of subjectivity that cannot be escaped, a sort of modernization theory of subjectivity of which Gellner might approve. The ideal is equality of representation: *the liberalism of the politics of difference* Baudrillard so strongly attacks. Moreover, Homi Bhabha questions the *historicism* of formulations like Hutcheon's for its *disavowal* of "a colonial *contramodernity* at work in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century matrices of Western modernity", a question that returns in the following chapter in a discussion of late Marxism's turn to literary theory.<sup>73</sup>

### Daimon Politics

The problem of identity in a conception of politics as spatial order marks the discursive limits of Weberian theories of the nation. This problematic produces a conception of the self which rests on neo-Kantian grounds, a conception of self and world opposed at every point to Nietzsche's politics of the 'will to power'. Weberian discourse can only read this 'different' politics as the tragedy of the triumph of politics as spatial order itself: as the following chapter of this essay argues, neo-Marxist thought on the nation, whether inspired by the 'weak' Weberianism of Gellner or the 'strong' Weberianism of the search for alternative identity-practices (à la Benedict Anderson), constrains the Nietzschean counter-lineage to its complicity with the 'irrational' forces of the nation's Janus-face. In this, neo-Marxism reveals its failure to break with the limiting problematic of identity found in Weber's neo-Kantianism; this failure, however, is written as a *tragic struggle* with the 'essential ambiguity' of the nation, the only safeguard against the temptation to

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<sup>72</sup> Linda Hutcheon, in Suvendrini Perera, "Representation Wars: Malaysia, *Embassy*, and Australia's *Corps Diplomatique*", in Frow and Morris, eds., 1993, p.36.

<sup>73</sup> Homi Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency", in Bhabha, 1994, p.173.

Nietzschean irrationalism. Neo-Marxism, whatever its internal differences, opts for Weber's problematic of identity, thereby erasing the critical urge of Nietzsche's critique of space, time and identity in neo-Kantian discourse. Thus, where Michel Foucault's Nietzschean counter-discourse attempts to 'revalue' Kant's critical questioning of 'an ontology of the present' as an *ethos* of modernity, the task of which is "to transform the critique conducted in the form of necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression",<sup>74</sup> Jürgen Habermas contends that this position represents the decisionism of a self-contradictory conception of Enlightenment which, in its "anti-modernism", discounts his key notion that "the project of modernity has not yet been fulfilled".<sup>75</sup> Habermas' characterization of the Nietzschean counter-lineage as an 'aestheticism' of political identity licences his own project of establishing the grounds for the formation of individual and collective identity in terms which, despite his criticisms of Weber, assume the very 'spatio-temporal' matrix of the problem of 'coherence' rejected by Nietzsche.<sup>76</sup> Despite the quite different theoretical and practical positions of neo-Marxism, its discourse will adopt the Habermasian strategy of valorizing the enduring relevance of the problem

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<sup>74</sup> Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?", in Foucault, 1984a, p.45.

<sup>75</sup> Habermas, 1981, pp.12-13; Jürgen Habermas, "The Entry in Postmodernity: Nietzsche as a Turning Point", in Docherty, ed., 1993, pp. 52-60, where Habermas traces this 'irrational anti-modernism' to Nietzsche, through Heidegger and Bataille. However, Foucault's analysis differs in crucial respects from Heidegger's phenomenology, as Deleuze points out. (Deleuze, 1988, pp.58-60.) See also, Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, "What is Maturity? Habermas and Foucault on 'What is Enlightenment?'" , in Hoy, ed., 1986, pp.113-21. Dreyfus and Rabinow point out that Habermas' own critique rests on interpretive strategies he claims constitute the 'irrationalism' of "young conservatives" like Foucault. They err, however, in conceding too much to Habermas' conventional neo-Kantianism: as argued earlier in this essay, Foucault's discursive analysis attempts to escape, rather than rehearse, the 'inevitability of interpretation'.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Ingram, 1987, p.108:

"Membership in an ethnic, national, or religious group refers to an extension that has no objectively measurable location but specifies rather a place within a social order. Similarly, one's history involves events that occur within the *narrative time* of a personal biography. Habermas concludes that this way of specifying personal identity also 'permits the spatiotemporal classification of a person in a life-context whose *social* space and *historical* time are symbolically structured... A person fulfills the conditions and criteria of identity on the basis of which he is in a position to ascribe to himself the corresponding predicates'".

Habermas' recent critique of Weber is discussed in Ingram, 1987, esp. pp.51-4; the neo-Kantian assumptions of Habermas' conception of communicative rationality, which underlie the reflections on personal identity above, are criticized in Dallmayr, 1981, pp.281-4,290-3.

of 'coherence' by disavowing the 'irresponsibility' and 'irrationalism' of Nietzschean thought.

The Kantian refrains of Weberian thought on identity are made clear from a Nietzschean perspective. As Foucault has argued, the 'conditions of regulation' of the Kantian conception of the self are "the 'quasi-transcendentals' of Life, labour, and Language".<sup>77</sup> Not only do these produce the 'visibility' of new objects of knowledge; they establish

"the historicity of economics...the finitude of existence...and the fulfilment of an end to History - whether in the form of an indefinite deceleration or in that of a radical reversal".<sup>78</sup>

The "*anthropological finitude*" thus produced re-orders finitude and infinity, space and time, in a new form, a "man-form", which corresponds to the elements of finitude and spatial order.<sup>79</sup> reproduced in Weberian discourses on the nation. Deleuze reads Foucault as sharing Nietzsche's problem: the Overman marks the possibility of thinking the question of what new forms *from the 'Outside'*, which reproduce neither the 'god-form' nor the man-form, the forces which compose 'man' might now enter into.<sup>80</sup> The thought of the 'Outside' in Foucault is posed to escape the constraints of Euclidian space still found in phenomenology. It is not the *subjectivity* of such spatialized identities that is at issue, but *power*: "power-being introduces us into a different element, an unformable and unformed Outside which gives rise to forces and their changing combinations".<sup>81</sup> If subjectivities are produced through both the irreducibility of the seeable and the sayable and the relations of forces organized in 'the will to power' in specific historical formations, they constitute not narratives of fate, but *practical problematics*.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Foucault, 1973, p.250.

<sup>78</sup> Foucault, 1973, p.262.

<sup>79</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1988, pp.126-32; Foucault, 1973, pp.274,279.

<sup>80</sup> Deleuze, 1988, pp.130-1.

<sup>81</sup> Deleuze, 1988, pp.109-15.

<sup>82</sup> Deleuze, 1988, pp.114-16; see also Foucault, in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, pp.231-2:

"I am not looking for an alternative; you can't find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people... I would like to do

While Foucault's thought has often been compared to Weber's, the fore-going account has suggested that the relationship, which Foucault does not deny,<sup>83</sup> may be established upon the 'non-site' of the Outside: death. It is worth recalling Foucault's admiration for the "heroic" *modernism* of Charles Baudelaire.<sup>84</sup> To be sure, this is the ironic stance of the *flâneur*, or the transfigurative gaze of painters like Constantin Guys, an *attentiveness* to the liberatory possibilities of the present as it is. But it is also necessary to recall Baudelaire's Pascalian ruminations on modern *suffering*:

"This life is a hospital bed in which each man is possessed by a desire to change beds. One would prefer to suffer by the stove. Another believes he would recover if he sat by the window.

I think I would be happy in that place I happen not to be, and this question of moving house is the subject of a perpetual dialogue I have with my soul".<sup>85</sup>

Two things are striking about this passage: one is the 'uncanny' *doubling* of the self experienced in the homogenous space-time of modernity, where 'belonging' - the Same - is a matter of *affirming* the non-presence of self and world in any particular space or 'instant'. The other is the marked *individualism* of the passage. Certainly, Foucault's late turn toward ethics - the care of the self - exhibits this individualism, not as a question of a *resolution of particular and universal* identity, but as a question of possible forms of community with which the 'specific' intellectual might have (always problematizing) relations.<sup>86</sup> These possible relations are governed by the relations of self with self at any moment, but for Foucault the doubling of the self in modernity is, as James Miller contends, a form of *daimon* politics.<sup>87</sup> Recalling Weber's injunction to understand the gods that rule

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a genealogy of problems, of *problématiques*. My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism."

<sup>83</sup> See Raulet, 1983, pp.200-203.

<sup>84</sup> See Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?", in Foucault, 1984a, pp.39-42.

<sup>85</sup> Charles Baudelaire, "Any Where Out of this World!", in Chatwin, 1987, p.261.

<sup>86</sup> See Rajchman, 1991, esp. pp.99-109.

<sup>87</sup> See J. Miller, 1993, esp. pp.123-164.

over one's life, Foucault turns to Blanchot's meditations on the double aspect of *death* and a Nietzsche-inspired search for the daimon - the Same - at the heart of one's personal labyrinth in order to *resolve the suffering* of which Baudelaire writes. While Miller's thesis on Foucault is somewhat marred by its reliance on a Freudian-inspired 'death drive', it is nonetheless persuasive in conveying this daimon politics as a consistent thematic and *solution* in Foucault's life and thought. It is this sense of a resolution to the problem of death and suffering produced in the discourse of modernity which both connects Foucault to Weber and differentiates him from other 'post-Nietzscheans' like Deleuze.<sup>88</sup> (Foucault will remind us that, after all, there is no such thing as "a single Nietzscheanism".<sup>89</sup>) But if Foucault's individualism differs from that of Deleuze (despite Deleuze's attempt to attribute much of his own 'thought of the Outside' to Foucault), this can be traced to their different characterizations of the discursive milieu 'in' which the self is produced. *Foucault sets as his problem the production of the modern self of resentment in the spatial resolutions of universal and particular, from which his 'becoming-otherwise' takes its bearings; for Deleuze, this spatialization is not the starting point for critique, since it reaffirms the spatialized milieu of suffering from which it attempts to escape.* Deleuze and Guattari explain the difference between their own conception and Foucault's more static 'social space' this way: "'for him...a social field is run through by strategies; for us it flees from all its edges'".<sup>90</sup>

Foucault's attempt to escape the boundaries of a spatialized modernity in a tragic affirmative daimon politics illuminates a crucial point: *it supposes an 'inside' to the self-identity of the 'West' as the site of modernity, forgetting the the West's Outside - the 'other scene' of coloniality and post-coloniality.* Homi Bhabha makes this argument quite forcefully: "The Eurocentricity of Foucault's theory of cultural difference is revealed in his insistent spatializing of

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<sup>88</sup> However, it also distinguishes Foucault from the more conventional liberalism of neo-Weberians like Michael Walzer, whose reading of Weber was discussed in Chapter three of this essay. (See Constable, 1991.)

<sup>89</sup> Foucault, in Raulet, 1983, p.203.

<sup>90</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, in Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.14. This quotation is cited as being from *What is Philosophy?*, presumably in the original French. I have been unable to locate this passage in the English translation.

the time of modernity",<sup>91</sup> which takes its bearings from the originary moment of the French Revolution as the limits of modernity and its "uncannily self-constituting self". This move, common to the theories of the nation discussed in this essay, forgets the *disruptive* "time-lag" between the modern and the archaic which is the 'condition of regularity' of modernity as the self-identity of 'the West'.<sup>92</sup> Foucault explicitly disavows the possibility that the 'scene' of this time-lag might be the "colonizing situation"; however, Bhabha is quick to deny that this exclusion can be remedied by a politics of *inclusiveness* such as is envisioned in the notion of the generalized Other found in postmodernism:

"Are we demanding that Foucault should reinstate colonialism as the missing moment in the dialectic of modernity? Do we want him to 'complete' the argument by appropriating ours? Definitely not. I suggest that the postcolonial perspective is subversively working in his text in that moment of contingency that allows the contiguity of his argument - thought following thought - to progress. Then, suddenly, at the point of its closure, a curious indeterminacy enters the chain of discourse. This becomes the space for a new discursive temporality, another place of enunciation that will not allow the argument to expand into an unproblematic generality".<sup>93</sup>

Bhabha's argument here appears to be an exemplary instance of Deleuze's practice of 'minor' deconstruction. The Conclusions to this essay explore some implications of this apparent collusion, but the direction of the argument is now clear: *the Outside of Nietzsche's 'active' nihilism is to be found in encounters with the 'non-site' of coloniality*. The question will remain, In what ways do these 'outsides' - Nietzschean counter-discourse as the Outside of Weberian discourse, coloniality and post-coloniality as the Outside of this Nietzschean counter-lineage - determine both their mutual potential and their limitations as critical perspectives on the nation?

### Nihilism and the Rhetoric of Homelessness

Writing the self from the 'inside' of its identity-demands produces the *presence* of an homogenous, clearly bounded, interiorized self whose unity is forged from the very tensions

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<sup>91</sup> Bhabha, 1994, p.243.

<sup>92</sup> See Bhabha, 1994, pp.194-6,244-5.

<sup>93</sup> Bhabha, 1994, pp.195-6.

created by the triumph of political identity as spatial order, a conception of subjectivity that does not go beyond the *analogies* of identity encoded in the problematic of a resolution of universality and particularity. The oppositions encoded by the rationalization of the self and world (their 'reification', in Benedict Anderson's Lukacsian formulation) mark the 'becoming-explicit' of this spatial order, against which the critical impulse of Weber's, Gellner's and Anderson's discourses can only *react*. The result is a shared attempt to revalue theory as an activity which necessarily occurs in a tragic mode, a conception of tragedy which makes invisible Nietzschean attempts to escape the coherence of politics as spatial order.

As Deleuze observes, the theme of a 'unity of self' which secures its presence in a divided world is "Kant's dream".<sup>94</sup> For Weber, the dream is neo-Kantian, because he cannot follow Kant in identifying reason as the 'first principle' that unifies the self. Kant, accepting a heavy influence from Pietism<sup>95</sup> and drawing on the Scottish Enlightenment, describes the 'personality' as a "transcendence of the natural self".<sup>96</sup> The intelligible world of reason is the source of personality as a category of freedom: responsibility (accountability) and duty are its this-worldly compensations for the loss of a "taste for life". For Kant, the idea of the moral law - "the personality itself" - unifies the self and makes it capable of responsibility and recognition of others unified in a like manner.<sup>97</sup>

Kant's appeal to a transcendence of the 'natural self' is written by Weber as the triumph of the interiorized self of the ascetic ideal over Nietzsche's 'noble' self, which rests on vestiges of this 'natural' conception of self and world. Two revaluations thus occur in Weber: that of the 'becoming-reactive' of the Kantian rational self, and that of the evaluation of reactive forces which themselves either lack or possess the capacity to be revalued. For these revaluations Weber draws on a counter-tradition of *Bildung*, which exists alongside Kant's 'rational' version of personality. This emphasizes, with von-Humboldt, the self-cultivation of the 'whole self' (how much is heard of

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<sup>94</sup> Deleuze, 1983, p.93.

<sup>95</sup> c.f. Cassirer, 1981, pp.15-18.

<sup>96</sup> Goldman, 1991, p.121.

<sup>97</sup> Goldman, 1991, pp.122-5.

this today): the formation of an 'inner law' to govern the self. Goldman, moreover, notes the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment on Humboldt's concern with the developing division of labour and attendant specializations in this conception of self. Thus, Humboldt emphasizes particularity, especially the cultivation of the particular self through its exercise of 'will' on specific worldly objectives. This emphasis, however, does not negate the imperative for the self to cultivate itself inwardly, and hence to foster a certain 'distance from the world'.<sup>98</sup>

It is Goethe who makes unambiguous the connection between specialized work in a 'community' as the cultivation of the self. The "beautiful soul" that results is a response to "the demands of the day", not to Kantian categorical imperatives.<sup>99</sup> Goethe argues for the necessity of specialization: the personality develops when ascetic duty in a particular task is affirmed. However, the individual self cannot achieve the unity and harmony Humboldt envisions; only the social community can.<sup>100</sup> Weber's problematic of the self can thus be located in the tensions between universal and particular left unresolved in both Humboldt and Goethe. However, Goethe's conception of *theodicy*, revalued in his thought as tragedy, should not be confused with Nietzsche's argument, however much it does resemble Weber's. Walter Kaufmann makes this error when he cites *Faust* in support of Nietzsche's account of the 'affirmative will' detected in the ascetic priest.<sup>101</sup> As this chapter has argued, Nietzsche's conception of tragedy is posed *against* the problematics generated by the homogenous, interiorized self of neo-Kantian philosophy. However 'dangerous' Weber's liberalism, his neo-Kantian 'personality' assumes this liberal conception of self, a conception shared with Gellner and Anderson after him.

In this liberal discourse, *self-consciousness* is a central organizer of both the unity of this self and its claim to *autonomy*. In both Gellner and Anderson, the 'visibility' of consciousness to a 'subject' is *analogous* to the visibility of the social world forged in the presence of the nation.

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<sup>98</sup> Goldman, 1991, pp.126-7.

<sup>99</sup> Goethe, in Goldman, 1991, p.129.

<sup>100</sup> Goldman, 1991, p.130.

<sup>101</sup> See Kaufmann, in Nietzsche, GM, p.121, n.1: "Mephistopheles calls himself 'The spirit that negates' and 'part of the force that would / Do evil evermore, and yet creates the good'".

Weber also focuses on the creative role of self-consciousness in the ascetic self, which thoroughly rationalizes an originally 'naïve' relation to the world. Moreover, Goldman observes that Weber draws on Windleband's recovery of *Augustine's stress on self-consciousness and constancy of purpose in action, bolstered by 'permanence of will'*, to underwrite the unity of his 'strong self'.<sup>102</sup> The curious renaissance of Augustine in some recent attempts to rethink the nation as a problem of political identity is discussed in the Conclusions of this essay; the complicity of Augustinian notions of the self with the 'Weberian dilemma' of how to respond to the 'becoming-explicit' of politics as spatial order is clear.

For Nietzsche, consciousness is *not* a possible ground for a 'different' politics. Consciousness, "the weakest and most fallible organ", is all that those who can no longer "discharge themselves outwardly", those who count the bad conscience of the ascetic priest as a blessing, have to rely on.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, Nietzsche's 'sovereign individual' does not base active, creative practice on the "herd instinct", which requires consciousness as a means of 'survival', of adaptation. Consciousness, in fact, erases the sense of individuality as *singularity* which Nietzsche attempts to keep 'active':

"All our actions are altogether incomparably personal, unique, and infinitely individual; there is no doubt of that. But as soon as we translate them into consciousness *they no longer seem to be*".<sup>104</sup>

What is raised to consciousness gives the appearance of individuality while actually only registering the common, the 'average', the Same. Further, Nietzsche will abandon attempts to provide a 'grammar' - "the metaphysics of the people" - of the relations of self and world in terms of the subject/object oppositions assumed by this liberal conception of identity.<sup>105</sup> Such a 'grammar' is still a fiction: the fiction of the unity of the 'external' world and of the 'subject' who confronts it as an

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<sup>102</sup> Goldman, 1991, pp.133-4.

<sup>103</sup> Nietzsche, GM, pp.84-5.

<sup>104</sup> Nietzsche, GS, p.299.

<sup>105</sup> Nietzsche, GS, p.300.

'autonomous' being, shorn of *an active sense of becoming*.<sup>106</sup> Yet a grammar of the nation, based on the spatial oppositions generated through this conception of self, is precisely what Weber, Gellner, and Anderson attempt to offer.

By contrast, Nietzsche insists that the liberal conception of identity can only recognize the 'self-Same' in the 'other'; all 'difference' is effaced, all becoming is a 'becoming-Same':

"To put up with men, to keep open house in one's heart - this is liberal, but no more than liberal. One knows hearts which are capable of *noble* hospitality, which have curtained windows and closed shutters: they keep their best rooms empty. Why do they do so? - Because they await guests with whom one does *not* have to 'put up'".<sup>107</sup>

In the liberal house of consciousness, every room is evenly lit, everything visible, every space within reversible. Moreover, the *stranger* is admitted because 'he' is not 'different'; one loves one's neighbour because of a *lack* of strength to be different. This weakness results in the hypocrisy of liberal conceptions of accepting diversity:

"The meaning of the usages of hospitality is the paralysing of enmity in the stranger. Where the stranger is no longer felt to be first and foremost an enemy, hospitality decreases; it flourishes as long as its evil presupposition flourishes".<sup>108</sup>

Weber's liberalism is not the liberalism of 'peaceful competition'; nonetheless, it is based on a

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<sup>106</sup> c.f. Nietzsche, BGE, pp.23-4.

<sup>107</sup> Nietzsche, TI, p.82. c.f. Robert Young's account of Emmanuel Levinas ethical critique of History:

"History is the realm of violence and war; it constitutes another form by which the other is appropriated into the same. For the other to remain other it must not derive its meaning from History but must instead have a separate time which differs from historical time". (Young, 1990, p.15.)

One of Levinas' targets here is Hegel's ontology of History; his critique is particularly apposite to the arguments of Anderson and Weber, which pose the problem of the nation in terms of its becoming-visible as the *presence* of a 'fully-populated' identity-space:

"Western philosophy coincides with the disclosure of the other where the other, in manifesting itself as a being, loses its alterity. From its infancy philosophy has been struck with a horror of the other that remains other..." (Levinas, in Young, 1990, p.12)

<sup>108</sup> Nietzsche, D, p.158. c.f. Baudrillard, 1993, pp.140-5.

perspective which offers no escape from the becoming-Same of political identity in a universal order of homogenous spaces. 'Struggle' cannot make visible the forces of a positive revaluation required to escape from this 'coherence': nihilism is its result. The 'Weberian dilemma' therefore has two senses. The dilemma of how to live and what to do in such a world, and the dilemma that the 'tragic' response to these questions offers no guarantees: *nihilism waits in the cellar of the liberal home.*

In the Weberian lineage of theorists of the nation, the 'stranger' is written from the perspective of the 'inside' of this liberal abode, be it Gellner's 'rubber cage', the cold confines of Weber's 'iron cage', or the warmer site of Anderson's discourse, where identities are formed 'at mother's knee'. The problematic of 'the stranger', the migrant, the exile - all those figures of *mobility* which are understood from the perspective of their *functionality for identity* in Weber, Gellner, and Anderson - largely inspired by trends in literary theory, are confined to the bad problem of 'coherence'. 'Postmodern' attempts to theorize the nation as a question of 'the other', liminality, or the 'homelessness' of identity reinforce, rather than repudiate, the discursive limits of Weberian discourse.

Tropes of "home and homelessness" govern much of the discourses of philosophy and literary theory in 'the West', from Heidegger's pronouncement of 'language as the house of being', Leibnitz' image of the world as "a building with two floors", Bachelard's exploration of the ways in which "all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home", to Lukacs' 'transcendental homelessness', Nietzsche's invitation to 'we who are homeless', and William Connolly's diagnosis of 'homesickness' in philosophy.<sup>109</sup> This is no less true of Deleuze, who, in the last of the texts written with Felix Guattari, follows his reading of Nietzsche's invitation to 'become-nomad' as an *absolute* deterritorialization onto the Outside with a consideration of the "stranger" as a conceptual persona in the specificity of philosophical thought:

"Philosophy is inseparable from a Homeland to which the a priori, the innate, or the

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<sup>109</sup> References, in order of appearance, are: J. Miller, 1993, p.133; Boundas, "Editor's Introduction", p.9; Bachelard, 1969, p.5; Bernstein, 1984, p.116; Nietzsche, GS, pp.338-40; Connolly, 1989, pp.135-8.

memory equally attest. But why is this fatherland unknown, lost, or forgotten, turning the thinker into an Exile? What will restore an equivalent of territory, valid as home? What will be philosophical refrains? What is thought's relationship with the earth? Socrates the Athenian, who does not like to travel, is guided by Parmenides of Elea when he is young, who is replaced by the Stranger when he is old, as if Platonism needed at least two conceptual personae. What sort of stranger is there in the philosopher, with his look of returning from the land of the dead?"<sup>110</sup>

One may object that, even if something profound is being stated here, it refers to philosophy, and not to the 'actual' construction of the stranger as a key figure in the resolution of universality and particularity in modernity. But this is a false distinction, not least because we have been investigating the 'uses' of the Other in various *texts* on the nation, their functionality for quite specific *theoretical* problematics.

The stranger as psycho-social figure of liminal identity has informed theories of the nation since at least Hans Kohn.<sup>111</sup> It has been reprised in attempts to apply George Simmel's reflections on liminal figures as a resolution of particular and universal identity. This is Zygmunt Bauman's project, for example;<sup>112</sup> it also underlies Julia Kristeva's attempt to locate 'the stranger within ourselves' to defend the (French) nation as a virtuous form of political identity in a 'transitional' and 'transitive' mode.<sup>113</sup> Kristeva's attempt to unify psychoanalysis and political theory simply rehearses the well-worn arguments of liberals like Michael Walzer, whose notion of particular "polycentric" nations as "variations on a theme" of "one civilization" has informed other attempts to theorize the nation after *Imagined Communities*.<sup>114</sup> Liah Greenfield's 1992 text on nationalism and modernity reverses the order of argument found in Weberian discourse, claiming that "the idea of 'the nation'...forms *the constitutive aspect of modernity*", citing Weber's 'action theory' for

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<sup>110</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, pp.68-9.

<sup>111</sup> See Kohn, 1969, pp.5-6, where Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Stranger" is quoted.

<sup>112</sup> See Bauman, 1989, pp.7-32; Bauman, 1991, esp. pp.53-101, where it is asserted that "Nationalism is a religion of friendship", (p.64) a political identity created out of the 'need' for territorially demarcated 'nations' to create a "horizontal comradeship" (Anderson) at the expense of the stranger.

<sup>113</sup> See Kristeva, 1993, pp.38-47.

<sup>114</sup> Walzer's liberalism is endorsed in Yael Tamir's *Liberal Nationalism* (1993). See Tamir, 1993, pp.90-116.

methodological support,<sup>115</sup> yet without citing Weber, Anderson, Gellner, Hobsbawm, or Nairn on the nation in the text. Perhaps not surprisingly, the result is a fairly simplistic version of Gellner's thesis, with the priority of the actions of 'intellectuals' and the infrastructure reversed.<sup>116</sup> All of these attempts to humanize difference and to valorize the 'labour of the negative' have no place for the 'inhuman' world of the Outside, which, in Baudrillard's conception of Dionysian theater, introduces "the question of hospitality" as 'fatality', an *excess*, rather than a reduction, of otherness:

"In this predestined world of the Other, everything comes from elsewhere - happy or unhappy events, illnesses, even thoughts themselves. All imperatives flow from the non-human - from gods, beasts, spirits, magic. This is a universe of fatality, not of psychology. According to Julia Kristeva we become estranged from ourselves by internalizing the other, and this estrangement from ourselves takes the form - among others - of the unconscious. But in the world of fatality the unconscious does not exist. There is no universal form of the unconscious, as psychoanalysis claims, and the only alternative to unconscious repression is fatality - the imputation of everything to a completely non-human agency, an agency which is external to the human and delivers us from it".<sup>117</sup>

Baudrillard overplays an opposition between the 'fatal' human world of the proper use of difference become universal 'here' and the 'radical exoticism' of "other cultures", which leads to the rejection of a 'human realm'. By contrast, Deleuze' emphasis on the 'active' nihilism of subjectivity, the impossibility of escape from the vicious circle of becoming, retains an interest in this human realm, a difference tracable to the residual Weberianism of Baudrillard's problematic, as noted above. Nonetheless, both share an aversion to the becoming-Same of all difference in the 'politics of difference'.

### Conclusions: Sovereignty and Excess

Chapter four ended with the resonance of Weber's 'liberal nationalism' with Carl Schmitt as further evidence of its 'reactive' nihilism. Having gone through the difference between Deleuze'

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<sup>115</sup> See Greenfield, 1992, pp.18-20.

<sup>116</sup> See Greenfield, pp.488-91.

<sup>117</sup> Baudrillard, 1993, p.141.

Nietzsche-inspired theater of non-representation and postmodernism's liberal avowal of a politics of identity - the "inevitability of representation" - in this chapter, it is time to reconsider Schmitt's heirs. For Schmitt's theory of the sovereign as "he who decides on the state of exception"<sup>118</sup> might appear to resonate more strongly in Deleuze than in, say, Kristeva. As Samuel Weber explains, the decision is itself sovereign, a "pure act" which both interrupts and confirms the law or norm: "the state thus has the first and last word in Schmitt's theory of sovereignty".<sup>119</sup> Again, this is the movement of *relative* de- and re-territorialization, on Deleuze's reading. Indeed, Schmitt's conception of sovereignty is historical as well as abstract, defining concepts of the state as "secularized theological concepts" on both grounds.<sup>120</sup> Like Anderson, who follows Max Weber, Schmitt's argument turns on an *analogy* between politics and theology which emphasises identity rather than difference.<sup>121</sup> Crucially, Schmitt's emphasis on the 'idea' as a "borderline concept" enables a properly philosophical method opposed to the generality of concepts, allowing the empirical to be more profoundly revealed, according to Walter Benjamin.<sup>122</sup> Again, however, this 'extremism' in method has its political correlate in the confirmation of the self-identity of the state, and remains confined to a focus on the constitution of relative liminality.<sup>123</sup> This position is thus far closer to that of Benedict Anderson and other theorists of political identity than it is to Deleuze's post-Nietzscheanism.

This chapter has considered the discursive moves by which the problem of nihilism has been deferred in Weberian discourse on the nation. It has also challenged the liberalism of postmodern theories of the nation, a process continued in the Conclusions. The following chapter first considers the extent to which neo-Marxist thought on the nation, *by its very failure to escape*

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<sup>118</sup> Carl Schmitt, in S. Weber, 1992, p.9.

<sup>119</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Schmitt, in S. Weber, 1992, p.11.

<sup>121</sup> S. Weber, 1992, pp.11-12.

<sup>122</sup> S. Weber, 1992, p.7.

<sup>123</sup> S. Weber, 1992, p.7. Walter Benjamin is not Carl Schmitt, however, as Weber goes on to argue (pp.17-18).

*the discursive constraints of 'coherence' problematics, Nairn's deferral of fascism onto the morbid face of the nation, and Lukacs' legacy of literary production, licence the 'postmodern' responses which claim critical status for their reflections on political identity in the nation.*

"The feeling induced by kitch must be a kind the multitudes can share. Kitch may not, therefore, depend on an unusual situation; it must derive from the basic images people have engraved in their memories: the ungrateful daughter, the neglected father, children running on the grass, the motherland betrayed, first love...

The brotherhood of man on earth will be possible only on a base of kitch.

Kitch has its source in the categorical agreement with being.

But what is the basis of being? God? Mankind? Struggle? Love? Man? Woman?

Since opinions vary, there are various kitches: Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Communist, Fascist, democratic, feminist, European, American, national, international.

Since the days of the French Revolution, one half of Europe has been referred to as the left, the other half as the right. Yet to define one or the other by means of the theoretical principles it professes is all but impossible. And no wonder: political movements rest not so much on rational attitudes as on the fantasies, images, words, and archetypes that come together to make up this or that *political kitch*. The fantasy of the Grand March that Franz was so intoxicated by is the political kitch joining leftists of all times and tendencies. The Grand March is the splendid march on the way to brotherhood, equality, justice, happiness; it goes on and on, obstacles notwithstanding, for obstacles there must be if the march is to be the Grand March."

Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*<sup>1</sup>

"...That life is meaningless is not a proposition that need be inconsistent with Marxism, whose affirmation is the quite different one that History is meaningful, however absurd organic life may happen to be. The real issue is not the propositions of existentialism, but rather their charge of affect: in future societies people will still grow old and die, but the Pascalian wager of Marxism lies elsewhere, namely in the idea that death in a fragmented and individualized society is far more frightening and anxiety-laden than in a genuine community, in which dying is something that happens to the group more intensely than it happens to the individual. The hypothesis is that time will be no less structurally empty, or to use a current version, presence will be no less of a structural and ontological illusion, in a future communal life, but rather that this particular 'fundamental revelation of the nothingness of existence' will have lost its sharpness and pain and be of less consequence."

Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kundera, 1984, pp.251,256-7.

<sup>2</sup> Jameson, 1985, p.261.

## Introduction

This chapter examines Marxist theories of the nation; in particular, Nicos Poulantzas' attempt to thematize meta-theoretical issues of space and time is recounted in some detail. Not only does Poulantzas fully anticipate *Imagined Communities*, he attempts to go beyond Anderson's historicism by incorporating critical elements of the Nietzschean counter-lineage. Poulantzas is not discussed by Anderson; his critical focus is the more Gellnerian thesis common to Nairn and Hobsbawm. Anderson's choice of engagement is highly significant insofar as Nairn, in particular, employs a rhetoric of "failure" to enclose Marxism's 'national question' in a deferred problematic: Marxism's 'failure' to account for the problem of fascism is explained in general terms as the presence of the *irrational* in modernity. The opposition rational/irrational governs Nairn's and Hobsbawm's attempt to theorize the nation, yet, as Chapters three and four have contended, this opposition owes its force to *Weber's discourse*. The inability of structuralist Marxism to offer a convincing 'global' account of the nation has led to a 'return' to aspects of historicist Marxism, reinforced by readings of contemporary literary theory. In the recent work of Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson, this 'literary turn' rehearses the rational-real/irrational-discursive opposition shared by Weber and *Lukacs*. It will be remembered that Anderson's imagined communities are governed by a Lukacsian conception of the novel; 'postmodern' critiques of this conception licence many of the attempts to theorize the nation in the wake of Anderson's text. However, as the previous chapter has argued, postmodern theories *forget* the Weberian refrains of both Marxist accounts of the nation *and* their own. What results is an 'intra-discursive' debate which excludes, once again, the Nietzschean counter-lineage of thought.

### Marxism and the 'National Question'

As discussed in Chapter one, Benedict Anderson explicitly constructs his discourse on the nation in opposition to the limitations of Gellner's, Nairn's, and Hobsbawm's theories, but ends up by reproducing both the meta-theoretical assumptions of the 'object' in question - the nation - and the limiting problematic of identity and coherence as a corrective to the under-emphasis on 'meaning' and 'subjectivity' in these theories. As later chapters have argued, starting from a

critique of Gellner's reductionism from the perspective of *interiority* effects a *double discursive erasure*: of the repetition of Weber's discourse on the nation in Anderson's text, and of the erasure of the problematic encounter between Weber and Nietzsche. Attempting to account for the 'irrational' pole of the nation's modernity leads to a tragic politics based on the diagnosis of *the nation's 'essential ambiguity'* as a political identity, a move which produces a monologic lineage of thought through silent repetition as the limit of critical theorizing on the nation, and aligns the Nietzschean counter-lineage with this 'dangerous irrationalism' as a crucial condition of its 'coherence' as a critical discourse.

Both Tom Nairn and Eric Hobsbawm follow the main lines of Gellner's argument, departing from his account only on the question of whether nationalism is better viewed 'from above' - the apparently comfortable seats of (bourgeois) intellectuals - or 'from below' - those of the mass of "ordinary persons who are the objects of [the former's] action and propaganda".<sup>3</sup> As Chapter two indicates, while Hobsbawm acknowledges his debt to Gellner, he remains unconvinced of the superiority of Anderson's attempt to recast the nation as an "imagined community". In his brief response to Anderson, Hobsbawm questions the explanatory power of this notion, wondering "why, having lost real communities, people should wish to imagine this particular type of replacement".<sup>4</sup> This is a rather odd remark for two reasons. First, one may certainly disagree with the argument of *Imagined Communities*, but it takes a fair bit of bad faith not to acknowledge that this question animates the greater portion of Anderson's text. Moreover (and this may explain the absence of a serious engagement with Anderson's argument), Anderson does not pose the question in quite the same terms as Hobsbawm. The opposition between 'real' and 'imagined' community employed by Hobsbawm is precisely that underlying Gellner's 1964 text, *Thought and Change*; it is rejected by Anderson at the outset of his argument. Ironically, by 1983 Gellner no longer employs it, preferring instead to argue through a more subtle, but still deeply problematic, movement from 'implicit' to 'explicit' spatial order. Hobsbawm does admit the value of Anderson's treatment of linguistic factors in fomenting 'national cohesion', but contends that the text betrays a linguistic

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<sup>3</sup> Hobsbawm, 1992, p.11.

<sup>4</sup> Hobsbawm, 1992, p.46.

determinism which extends the political force of language beyond its "real" historical emergence.<sup>5</sup>

The real/imagined opposition governing Hobsbawm's argument shares with Anderson an emphasis on the *modernity of tradition*: the Weberian dilemma confronting a present whose modernity is predicated on the 'loss of meaning' of what went before, and from which escape into tradition as identity can only be a repetition of current boundaries of 'cultural identity'.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Tom Nairn accepts Gellner's doubts concerning the value of nationalists' self-conceptions, arguing, with Gellner, for the necessity of situating 'national histories' within a broader framework of historical processes,<sup>7</sup> but further contends that Gellner's name for this process, 'industrialization', lacks specificity. More precisely, it fails to take proper account of *the dynamics of social class* and its power relative to nationality. This point is crucial for Nairn, since his primary concern is with "Marxism's great historical failure" on the question of nationalism, a 'failure' both theoretical and practical. The defence of Marxism offered is that this failure was "inevitable" given the real location of Marxism in history, and cannot be wished away by either textualists or revisionists.<sup>8</sup> A child of the Enlightenment and nineteenth-century reality Marxism, no more - but no less - than any other attempt to respond to the rise of the nation could escape the historical possibilities of the day.<sup>9</sup> Much of the value and pathos of Nairn's book derive from his passionate search for signs that the time is ripe, in the theoretical and practical realms, for a successful historical materialist account of Scottish nationalism.<sup>10</sup> The appeal to history as a developmental totality and the quasi-Hegelian appeal to self-consciousness as a retrospective, 'God's-eye' perspective represent less of a break with Gellner's position than Nairn supposes, just as they establish a common thread between Nairn and Anderson. The "we" who "enjoy the modest advantage of having lived [in the 'era between the

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<sup>5</sup> Hobsbawm, 1992, pp.59-63.

<sup>6</sup> On this point, see Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1989, esp. Hobsbawm's "Introduction: Inventing Traditions", pp.1-14; Tomlinson, 1992, pp.91-3.

<sup>7</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.93.

<sup>8</sup> Nairn, 1981, pp.329-31.

<sup>9</sup> "Historical development had not at that time produced certain things necessary for such a 'theory'. The time was not ripe for it, or for them." Nairn, 1981, p.331 (see also p.351).

<sup>10</sup> See Nairn, 1981, esp. Chapter Two, "Scotland and Europe", and the "Postscript 1981".

French and Industrial Revolutions and the present']"<sup>11</sup> may be unidentified, but all signs point to the politically engaged historical materialist intellectual.

Gellner's emphasis on the rational self-consciousness of the intellectual apprehending a rational socio-historical totality is here echoed by Nairn. Moreover, the key features of the 'thing itself' - nationalism - remain the same. After declaring that the 'contradiction' of capitalism is that, "even as it spread remorselessly over the world to unify human society for the first time, [it] *also* engendered a perilous and convulsive fragmentation of that society",<sup>12</sup> Nairn goes on to insist upon the *necessity* of both this dialectic and its ambiguous product, the nation. Nationalism, therefore, has nothing to do with the particularities of a social group, and everything to do with the 'necessity' of this total process.<sup>13</sup> This account, which sees the contradiction of universal history producing particulars (nation-states as wish or fulfillment) *identical in their particularity*, reprises the Weberian dilemma identified in Anderson's and Gellner's theses. Further, like Gellner, but unlike Weber and Anderson, Nairn reduces the 'irrational' elements of the nation to infrastructural necessity, arguing that, however much the rational face of the nation needs to be recognised, its irrational face cannot be ignored.<sup>14</sup>

In fact, Nairn's stress on the *irrational* pole of the nation results from the crucial bifurcation which enables several key *discursive* moves, moves that both form the rhetorical claims of Marxist theory generally to critical status on the nation, and disallow serious consideration of the problematics engaged by the Nietzschean counter-lineage of thought. This emphasis provides the ground for Nairn's attempt to confront Marxism's *other* 'great historical failure', namely, *fascism*: "Seen in sufficient historical depth, fascism tells us far more about nationalism than any other

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<sup>11</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.332.

<sup>12</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.341.

<sup>13</sup> Nairn, 1981, pp.334-5. Nairn distinguishes "*nationalism*", which does involve particularity, from "*nationalism*", which does not.

<sup>14</sup> Nairn, 1981, pp.344-8.

episode".<sup>15</sup> The irrational face of nationalism derives in part from its "intimate link" with Romanticism, a genealogy which mirrors Gellner's,<sup>16</sup> a narrative reduction which *reduces those who question the initial bifurcation to complicity with fascism and political reaction*. It also allows Nairn to admit that the triumph of nation over class - a victory consolidated in August, 1914 - must be taken seriously by an historical materialism sufficiently mature to discard the myth of nationalism as 'mere epiphenomenon' in the dogma of "class struggle".<sup>17</sup> Here lies the importance of the rational face of nationalism: if all nationalism is "both healthy and morbid",<sup>18</sup> it behoves the theorist to nurture good health. To do this one must first recognise the symptoms of illness: these are not to be found in the realm of nationalist ideology or enthusiasm, but rather in "the supposed class character of the society in question, or its supposed role in the unfolding of international relations".<sup>19</sup> The proper object of historical materialism can only be the "world political economy".<sup>20</sup> The functionality of the nation for this universal process must be understood: the irrationality of nationalism is itself rational. Moreover, if 'ill health' of the body politic proceeds from the past, 'good health' lies in the future: the very process which has thrown up the spatio-temporal matrix of modern rationality has 'inscribed' it on the ground, as it were; somehow, this process, with the aid of this form of rationality, may one day supercede it. Ashis Nandy has related the political consequences of this neo-colonial temporality in an Indian context, citing Ghandi's rejection of the export of such historicism to India's struggles for independence.<sup>21</sup>

The temporal aspect of this matrix appears in Nairn's appeal to 'history' as a developmental process whose outlines become clearer as it unfolds. Unlike Gellner, he does not posit 'stages', but the insistence on time-bound 'conditions of possibility' of self-consciousness does

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<sup>15</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.347.

<sup>16</sup> Nairn, 1981, pp.103-4.

<sup>17</sup> Nairn, 1981, pp.350-2.

<sup>18</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.347.

<sup>19</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.348.

<sup>20</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.352.

<sup>21</sup> See Nandy, 1983, esp. pp.55-63.

not evade the dilemmas of *historicism*. As with the temporal, so too with the spatial: Nairn's reflections on 'Scotland' reveal a Weberian concern with the *presence and absence* of nationalism *within* a clearly demarcated socio-political space. His question is, given that Scotland was such a space prior to the last quarter of the nineteenth century - the heyday of popular nationalism in Europe<sup>22</sup> - and host to the 'Scottish Enlightenment',<sup>23</sup> "why, in circumstances such as these, was nationalism to be conspicuous only by its absence in Scotland?"<sup>24</sup> The answer, for Nairn, is that the "real precipitating factors" were absent.<sup>25</sup> From the assumption of politics as spatial order, critical rationality surveys the play of presence and absence across a universal field of homogenous spaces: the absence of these 'real' factors is the clue to their identity as a general feature of 'economic development', whose presence elsewhere can then be detected.

Nairn's search for an historical materialist theory of the nation and nationalism takes place beyond the 'idealism/materialism' debate within classical Marxism: nationalism is a material force in the world political economy, a factor irreducible to the ideological effect of a putatively 'prior' class struggle. This position is not new, however; Otto Bauer had argued as much in 1917. His thesis, utterly rejected by Kautsky, among others, was that Socialism is entirely compatible with an '*authentic nationalism*'.<sup>26</sup> However, Nairn rejects the distinction Austro-Marxism makes between 'independence' at the 'level' of culture and 'interdependence' in economics and 'external affairs', preferring Lenin's early pragmatic support for nationalist movements up to the "seizure of state power". From that point, internationalism would check the 'counter-revolutionary' tendencies of the nationalists.<sup>27</sup> The emphasis on the seizure of state-centered power assumes the fixed presence of a spatial grid of politics; the stress on 'history' as overcoming solidifies the moment of this presence as a threshold to be crossed. The spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment reason as a resolution of

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<sup>22</sup> See Hobsbawm, 1975, pp.103-13.

<sup>23</sup> c.f. B. Anderson, 1983, pp.84-5.

<sup>24</sup> Nairn, 1981, p.107.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> P. Anderson, 1992, pp.263-4.

<sup>27</sup> Nairn, 1981, pp.84-6.

universal and particular are fully in place in Nairn's argument as both ground of the problem - the "Janus-face of the nation" - and of the solution - critical rationality in an 'international' frame.

### History and the Masses: Poulantzas on the Nation

Nairn's attempt to establish a firm ground for critical thought on the nation reinscribes the meta-theoretical resolutions common to Weber, Gellner, and Anderson. Anderson's focus on space, time, and identity enable this lineage to be discerned, even if his text fails to problematize specific meta-theoretical resolutions; in particular, the full implications of a critical analysis of *State sovereignty*. However, unlike Weber, Gellner, and Anderson, Nairn does not thematize the relations between the State-form and the nation, assuming their congruence from the beginning. Such an attempt has been made, however, though it has also been virtually forgotten in theoretical commentaries on the nation and nationalism. This attempt is found in Nicos Poulantzas' 1978 text, *State Power Socialism*.<sup>28</sup> Poulantzas is significant for several reasons: first, though Anderson, along with nearly all other commentators on the nation, does not mention Poulantzas, he anticipates Anderson's attempt to foreground meta-theoretical issues; in fact, Anderson's 'anthropological' attempt to write a 'liminal tragedy' of identity politics into a grand narrative of 'national theodicy' is a step *backwards* from the serious question of Poulantzas' effort to take, as it were, both Nietzsche and Weber seriously for a Marxist analysis of the nation. For, however critical he appears of Foucault and Deleuze, Poulantzas makes extensive use of aspects of their thought in his analysis. His failure to produce a critical theory of the nation is instructive, therefore, not simply because he anticipates Anderson: Poulantzas illustrates the challenges posed by the Nietzschean counter-lineage to the line of Weberian thought on the nation in ways obscured by Anderson's 'post-Marxist' discourse. *Forgetting Poulantzas thus moves the theoretical 'body' of literature on the nation further away from a serious sense of the problematics which enable it.*

Poulantzas is a forceful critic of the *historicism* which animates thought on the nation from Weber to Anderson; he also attacks the tendency to *reductionism* and *determinism* found in texts such as Nairn's. Both of these critiques are mounted from the 'level' of meta-theoretical questions

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<sup>28</sup> See Poulantzas, 1980.

of space and time, the very questions Benedict Anderson claims offers a 'new' perspective on the 'origin and spread' of the nation. Poulantzas locates this meta-theoretical critique within *relations of power at the level of struggles*, a problematization of 'theories of power', much in debt to Foucault, which also draws heavily on Deleuze' radical reading of Spinoza's concept of *immanence* - the question of 'what a body can do'. Poulantzas' meta-theoretical critique attempts to answer the question of the relations between *the specificity of State and nation*. Like Weber and Anderson, Poulantzas recognises that the State cannot be assumed simply as the 'container' of political identity in the nation-form; unlike them, however, Poulantzas also resists the notion that the nation-state has *become* such a container in modernity. This conclusion about the *fate of modernity* follows from writing the history of the nation from the *oppositional* perspective of the 'inside' of - in Nietzschean terms - the slave conception of identity. Poulantzas' attempt to found a critical theory of the nation on *difference*, rather than on notions of opposition. The latter suppose the meta-theoretical resolutions of *identity*, whereas thinking through difference makes problematic the 'body politics' of Weberian thought on the nation. As the Conclusion to this essay contends, 'postmodern' and 'post-Marxist' commentaries on the nation, accepting the critique of 'structuralism' to which Poulantzas is open, produce their own 'politics of difference' as a repetition of the elements of Weber's discourse, forgetting the *problems* with which theorists like Poulantzas struggle.

Poulantzas begins from the strong claim that "there is no Marxist theory of the nation": the nation is *excessive* with regard to classical Marxist theory, particularly to its location of the state.<sup>29</sup> The specificity of the nation cannot be based on claims that,

"the State itself works to constitute the modern nation in its economic dimension by homogenizing, under the aegis of commodity capital, the space of the circulation of commodities and capital. Indeed, this is supposed to be the essence of its activity in forging national unity... The modern nation itself, at least in its economic dimension, is supposed to rest essentially upon the homogenization of the 'people-nation' as the space in which these competing individuals or commodity-traders constantly move".<sup>30</sup>

Neither can arguments for the generalization of commodity-exchange, with its claims for the need

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<sup>29</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.93-5.

<sup>30</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.95-6.

for 'internal' unification of the market, explain "*why such unification is located at the level of the nation*".<sup>31</sup> But, "what makes possible the emergence of a specific space whose contours designate and inside and an outside?"<sup>32</sup> It is only by questioning the spatio-temporal matrices inscribed through relations of struggle at the level of *production* through a conception of immanent causality that enables a critical perspective on the nation.

"[I]t is struggles which make up the primary field of power relations and which invariably have priority over the State... To be sure, the relations of production still play the determining role. But the primacy of struggles goes beyond the sphere of the relations of production, since there can here be no question of an economic structure that founds struggles in its turn: quite simply, these relations of production are already relations of struggle and power."<sup>33</sup>

The State is neither a passive site of power-struggles emanating from 'elsewhere', nor, as in Weber, "the original site and primary field of the constitution of power relations":<sup>34</sup> the current of thought from Hegel to Weber which treats the State as an "intrinsic entity", a Subject which "enjoys an absolute autonomy that refers to its will as the supposedly rationalizing instance of civil society".<sup>35</sup> From this perspective, Anderson's 'imagined community', as just such an homogenization, leads to either economism, or to its mirror-opposite, Statism. Both positions share a bourgeois perspective on the spatio-temporal matrices materially instituted under capitalist relations of production.

For Poulantzas, "the determining role of relations of production...cannot be grasped according to a mechanical causality"; that is, by the "linear, chronological causality" of historicism.<sup>36</sup> One must distinguish, as Marx did, between "logical priority and historical-chronological precedence": "There can be no history of struggles in which the State appears at a

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<sup>31</sup> Poulantzas, p.96.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.* See also, p.52.

<sup>33</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.45.

<sup>34</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.45.

<sup>35</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.129.

<sup>36</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.41.

certain moment as the result and fruit: such history is inconceivable without the State".<sup>37</sup> Again, what is in question are the spatio-temporal resolutions which enable perspectives such as historicism to emerge. For "the elements that come into play in the constitution of the nation are of quite novel significance": "territory, language and historical tradition" are 'elements' whose *identity*, which always refers to a *Subject*, cannot be assumed in critically describing the problems engendered by specifically capitalist relations of production.<sup>38</sup> "Real history" is "a process without a subject, the process of the class struggle".<sup>39</sup> Moreover, space, no less than time, lacks an inherent configuration which might ground critique.<sup>40</sup> Nor is this appraisal of space and time an account of the history of thought or 'ideas' (or, as Anderson puts it, "modes of apprehension"):

"transformations of the spatio-temporal matrices refer to the *materiality* of the social division of labour, the structure of the State, and of the practices and techniques of capitalist economic, political and ideological power...

[T]he capitalist State has the peculiarity of reserving social space and time for itself: it intervenes in the erection of these matrices by tending to *monopolize* those procedures of space-time organization which are established through it as networks of domination and power. *The modern nation appears as a product of the State, since its constitutive elements (economic unity, territory, tradition) are modified through the State's direct activity in the material organization of space and time. The modern nation further tends to coincide with the State, since it is actually incorporated by the State and acquires flesh and blood in the state apparatuses: it becomes the anchorage of state power in society and maps out its contours. The capitalist State is functional to the nation*".<sup>41</sup>

Central to his claims concerning the State's monopolization of space-time in the nation is the State's unifying/dividing function, its continuous (re)constitution of atomized 'individuals' and simultaneous *representation* of "the unity of a body (people-nation) that is split into formally

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<sup>37</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.40-1. As he explains, "This is not to say that no social reality has ever existed in the absence of, or chronologically prior to, the State and class division, but that within the frame of a class-divided society with a State, such a reality cannot be imagined if abstraction is made of the State". (p.39)

<sup>38</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.97.

<sup>39</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.114.

<sup>40</sup> "[I]t is not enough to recapitulate the *historical sequence* of the forms of appropriation of social space... We are not dealing with different modes of organization, appropriation and consumption of a 'space' that possesses an intrinsic nature, nor with different trajectories of one and the same space." Poulantzas, 1980, pp.99-100. (My emphasis.)

<sup>41</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.98-9. (My emphasis.)

equivalent monads".<sup>42</sup> Individualization as a 'body politics' is the site of the State's institutional materiality as monopoly of expression of the divided social body. Here, the immanent causality of capitalist relations of production determines the spatio-temporal matrices of the body of the nation-self in ways which anticipate Anderson's account:

"this framework consists in the organization of a continuous, homogenous, cracked and fragmented space-time such as lies at the heart of Taylorism: a cross-ruled, segmented and cellular space in which each fragment (individual) has its place, and in which each emplacement, while corresponding to a fragment (individual), must present itself as homogenous and uniform; and a linear, serial, repetitive and cumulative time, in which the various moments are integrated with one another, and which is itself oriented toward a finished product... In short, the individual, who is much more than a product of the juridical-political ideology engendered by commodity relations, appears here as the focal point, identical with the human body itself, at which a number of practices within the social division of labour are materially crystalized".<sup>43</sup>

The 'body politics' Poulantzas discerns refers to neither a 'concrete' nor 'biological individual':<sup>44</sup> 'reification' of the body must be resisted by critical analysis no less than reification of the State or History. Nonetheless, Poulantzas can only succeed in doing so by referring the unifying/dividing activities of the State to the spatio-temporal resolutions of capitalist relations of production, claiming a Weberian thesis on *the State's constitutive monopoly of legitimate physical violence in law*:<sup>45</sup> the 'final capture' of spatio-temporal 'power-grids' by the State:

"Modern law...embodies space-time as the material frame of reference of the labour process: a serial, cumulative, continuous and homogenous space-time. This law institutes individuals as juridico-political subjects-persons by representing their unity in the people-nation".<sup>46</sup>

This monopoly function marks both the limits of his debt to Foucault, and *the limits of Poulantzas' attempt to establish a critical Marxist theory of the nation*. To hold to Weber's monopoly discourse while refusing to reify its presence in the State is Poulantzas' uncertain task.

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<sup>42</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.63.

<sup>43</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.64-5.

<sup>44</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.67.

<sup>45</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.80.

<sup>46</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.86-7.

### The Space of the Nation

The details of Poulantzas' account of the nation anticipate Anderson's argument quite closely. Significantly, Poulantzas notes that 'everyday fatality', the reference-point for both Weber's and Anderson's account of identity-formation through the nation, "converge[s] with the state monopoly of legitimate public terror": this monopoly remains the limit which determines the form of power, its "determining element", in a mutually conditioning relay with relations of struggle.<sup>47</sup> Modern Law is a system of axiomatics which constitutes the "framework wherein agents who are dispossessed of their means of production are given *formal cohesion*; it thus also sketches out the contours of a state space relatively separate from the relations of production".<sup>48</sup> 'The relative autonomy of the State' is thus described by the *identity/difference of agents* 'sketched out' in the *abstract, impersonal space* of Law: far from presenting a mask of identity behind which lie 'real differences', modern Law "helps to establish and consecrate individual and class differences within its very structure, while at the same time setting itself up as a cohesive and organizing system of their *unity-homogenization*".<sup>49</sup> Central to this spatial configuration is *sovereignty*:

"The center of legitimacy shifts away from the sacred towards legality. Law itself, which is now the embodiment of the people-nation, becomes the fundamental category of state sovereignty; and juridical-political ideology supplants religious ideology as the predominant form... The function of legitimacy shifts towards the impersonal and abstract instance of law, at the very time that the agents 'loosen' and 'free' themselves from their territorial bonds".<sup>50</sup>

Like Anderson, Poulantzas stresses the '*coherence*' function of the space of the modern nation-state: modern law fulfills "the key function of every dominant ideology: namely, that of cementing together the social formation under the aegis of the dominant class".<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.81-2.

<sup>48</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.86.

<sup>49</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.87.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.88.

The 'condition of possibility' of this cementing function is for Poulantzas, as it is for Anderson, the breakdown of religious symbolizing authority, which sustained territorial-personal ties.<sup>52</sup> Unlike Anderson, however, Poulantzas attempts to specify relations between sovereignty, Law, discourse, and *capitalist relations of production*. Like Gellner, he insists on the importance of a division of *manual and intellectual labour*, though as only one element in the process whereby the State 'maps out' a new social space. Enlightenment philosophy as *State science* is key here: it plays the role, along with *publishing and the press*, of organizing the bourgeois revolution in its "original form" as an ideological revolution, reproduced by State apparatuses such as the school and the family.<sup>53</sup> The role of a *State discourse of knowledge/power* thus describes the *space of the State as a 'national' space*. Here, the contrast between pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of sovereignty is instructive:

"The pre-capitalist States knew a discourse of revelation which was founded on the (real or supposed) utterances of the Prince and which expressed anew the inscription of the sovereign person in the body of society. It was a mythical discourse in the strict sense of the term - one which tended to fill through narration the gap between the beginnings of sovereign power and the origins of the world. By contrast, the capitalist State does not base its legitimacy on its origins: it permits of repeated legitimations on the basis of the sovereignty of the people-nation".<sup>54</sup>

Two quite different modes of *repetition* are in operation; as a discourse "with no inherent unity of its own", the discourse of the capitalist State is "one of action - a discourse of strategy and tactics" which "must be *heard and understood*, even if not in a uniform manner":

"[The State] serves as the frame of reference within which the various segments of reasoning and their supporting apparatuses find homogenous ground for their differential functioning... Thus, the capitalist State instals a uniform *national language* and eliminates all other languages".<sup>55</sup>

*Writing* reveals its links with the State in this formation of a 'national space':

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<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*: "The rule of capitalist law is grounded on the absence of other signifiers around it".

<sup>53</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.57,60-1.

<sup>54</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.58.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

"the anonymous writing of the capitalist State does not repeat a discourse, but plots a certain path, recording the bureaucratic sites and mechanisms and representing the hierarchically centralized space of the State. It both locates and creates linear and reversible spacings in the consecutive and segmented chain of bureaucratization".<sup>56</sup>

The *reproduction* of national space in *representations* inscribing *mobility* as a function of the *concretization of this space* is also Anderson's argument, as it was Weber's earlier. Law functions to limit legitimacy and knowledge to the 'inside' of this space: its unifying/individuating function is "the truth of subjects".<sup>57</sup>

*Territoriality* thus undergoes considerable changes in the movement from Antiquity to Modernity. Pre-capitalist political space is "*continuous, homogenous, symmetrical, reversible and open*": the *polis* is "concentric, but having no real outside, it is also open". Centered in the geometric space of Euclid and Pythagoras, every movement is a *repetition of the center*, "replicas of the sovereign's body... which unifies space and installs public man within private man: it is a body with no place and no frontiers".<sup>58</sup> The 'Barbarians' do not constitute an exterior, but rather a "non-site", "the definitive end of all possible space". Feudalism and the Middle Ages are governed by the same space, though the absolute reverse of territory is no longer the non-space of the Barbarian, but that of "Unbelievers or Infidels". Jerusalem, not Rome or Athens, might be the center of a tremendous movement of people, but the continuous, homogenous space describes a synthesis wherein delimitations are "constantly intersecting and overlapping" and "people do not change their position": "between the fiefs, large villages and towns, on the one hand, and Jerusalem and its diverse earthly incarnations on the other, between the Fall and Salvation, there is no break, fissure or distance".<sup>59</sup> The social division of labour under capitalism is completely different, based as it is on segmentations, gaps, breaks, and closures. Crucially, Poulantzas emphasizes that, "Although this space also becomes homogenous in the end, it does so only through a second-degree and problematic homogenization":

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<sup>56</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.59.

<sup>57</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.89.

<sup>58</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.101.

<sup>59</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.103.

"In this modern space, people change position *ad infinitum* by traversing separations in which each place is defined by its distance from others; they spread out in this space by assimilating and homogenizing new segments in the act of shifting their frontiers".<sup>60</sup>

What is crucial, however, is the fixing of "*insides and outsides*" enabled by the spatio-temporal matrix of capitalist relations of production and instantiated by *the State's monopoly of political space-time*:

"The individualization of the body-politic - as an ensemble of identical monads separated from the state - rests on the state framework that is inscribed in the spatial matrix implied by the labour process. Modern individuals are the components of the modern nation-State: the people-nation of the capitalist State is the content of a space whose frontiers are the pertinent contours of the material bases of power".<sup>61</sup>

How this new territoriality becomes a specifically 'national' space is determined by the fate of *tradition and language*. Bearing in mind that, "Frontiers and national territory do not exist prior to the unification of that which they structure"; in other words, there is a relation of *immanence* between spatio-temporal matrices and their concretization, "the uneven development of capitalism" determines the *expansion* of "capital, markets and territory" through the very demarcation of the 'inside' of a national territory, beyond whose frontiers lies "an irreversible, clearly demarcated space which yet has no end or final horizon".<sup>62</sup> The 'condition of possibility' of imperialism is thus the nation, whose space constitutes the threshold of a simultaneous movement of *infinite expansion and homogenization*, the very movement posited by Gellner in his reading of the spatio-temporal matrix of Enlightenment Reason.

The breaks of borders mark the simultaneous homogenization of differences in the modern nation-State: here too, the contrast between the space-time of pre-capitalism and capitalism is decisive for an understanding of the formation of the modern nation. The *temporal* side of different matrices mirrors the *spatial* account given by Poulantzas: Antiquity and the Middle Ages share "*continuous, homogenous, reversible and repetitive*" times, without "universal measure" (a point

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<sup>60</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.103-4.

<sup>61</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.104.

<sup>62</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.106.

made also by Gellner). Either "at the mercy of chance (Antiquity) or of the presence of eternity (Medieval Christianity)", time *lacks events, and is essentially of the present*; as in Anderson, the Middle Ages mark the rule of "a present time: beginning and end, *before and after* are fully *co-present* in the constant essence of the Divine", and *history is represented as commemoration in chronical*.<sup>63</sup> Territory and historicity become mutually articulated only in the milieu of the capitalist spatio-temporal matrix. The temporal matrix of capitalism unifies by means of a standard measure - the time of the production line - which, like the role of the State in providing the frontiers for internationalization of capital, *encodes the differences* between the various temporalities - "workers' time and bourgeois time, the time of the economic, the social, and the political" - in a *single temporal matrix* that is "serial, segmented, irreversible and cumulative".<sup>64</sup> Moreover, the State plays the essential role in the *unification* of this fractured, differential time: *tradition* is no longer the co-presence of past, present, and future, the commemorative repetition of origins, becoming instead the material of *acceleration or deceleration* along a *progressive temporality with a 'goal' determined for the nation by the State*. The State's *monopoly of 'national tradition'* functions as the *memory and destiny* of the people-nation, a function Anderson does not fail to repeat.<sup>65</sup>

The modern 'fact' of State monopoly of historicity, territoriality, tradition, and language has several key consequences for Poulantzas. First, "The modern demands for national autonomy and a national State are equivalent, within capitalist historicity, to demands for a national history";<sup>66</sup> further, however open the many roads to arrival, "only a *national transition to socialism* is possible".<sup>67</sup> Third, neither the State nor a 'model' of the transition to socialism can be reified; the struggle for the State engaged by *the masses* takes place neither 'within' the State nor from a position of 'pure exteriority':

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<sup>63</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.108-9.

<sup>64</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.110.

<sup>65</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.112-13.

<sup>66</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.114.

<sup>67</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.118-19.

"In the democratic road to socialism, the long process of taking power essentially consists in the spreading, development, reinforcement, co-ordination and direction of those diffuse centers of resistance which the masses always possess within the state networks, in such a way that they become the real centers of power on the strategic terrain of the State".<sup>68</sup>

These political consequences follow from a diagnosis of the *necessity of the nation as the spatio-temporal resolution of political identity in the modern State*:

"[T]he modern nation makes possible the intersection of these matrices and thus serves as their point of junction; the capitalist State marks out the frontiers when it constitutes what is within (the people-nation) by homogenizing the before and after of the content of this enclosure. National unity or the modern unity thereby becomes *historicity of a territory and territorialization of a history* - in short, a territorial national tradition concretized in the nation-State; the markings of a territory become indicators of history that are written into the State".<sup>69</sup>

State monopoly of this process of unifying/dividing produces the modern phenomena of totalitarianism and genocide (a development noted by Anderson as well), but the decisive question for Poulantzas remains one of articulating the necessity of the nation as the result, not of 'subjective' *imagined identities*, but of *class struggle*, a 'process without a subject'. As "the outcome of a *relationship* of forces between the 'modern' social classes...the nation is a *stake* for the various classes".<sup>70</sup> Crucial here is the *differential* relation between the spatio-temporal matrices of the 'bourgeoisie' and 'working class' *determined as different* by the matrix of the *dominant mode of production*, which does *not* pre-exist its 'concretization' in the nation-State form.<sup>71</sup> This is Poulantzas' solution to the *problem of the 'reality of appearances'* (as neo-Hegelian Marxism has formulated it).<sup>72</sup> Under the internationalization of capital, the nation achieves specific forms of the

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<sup>68</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.258.

<sup>69</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.114.

<sup>70</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.115.

<sup>71</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.115-16.

<sup>72</sup> See Fredric Jameson, "Architecture and the Critique of Ideology", in Jameson, 1988, pp.46-8, and "Marxism and Historicism" (in the same volume), pp.148-77, where Jameson defends Marxism as an "absolute historicism" which, though it claims to break with the (structuralist) 'failures' of Althusserianism, reproduces Poulantzas' emphasis on the determination of the *unavoidable dilemmas of Identity/Difference* by a *singular mode of production* which 'contains' its 'absent cause': History as the 'virtual reality' of the Masses. Jameson's limiting problematic will be treated in more detail below.

reproduction of the bourgeoisie through the mediation of the class State: "the modern nation, the national State and the bourgeoisie are all constituted on, and have their mutual relations determined by, one and the same terrain".<sup>73</sup> This 'terrain' produces both a *different* spatio-temporal matrix in which the two 'fundamental classes' struggle, as well as the conditions of the space *between* them: the materiality of the State. The political task is thus for the working-class to wrest "its own history" from the deformations of bourgeois dominance,<sup>74</sup> a position little different from Nairn's.

### **Ideology, History, and the Masses**

Poulantzas' contention that classes (and class fractions?) 'live' different matrices of space and time through the ideological role of the State as "a materiality consubstantial with its own structure: namely, the materiality of the techniques for exercising power which shape even the corporality of the subjects over whom this power is exercised"<sup>75</sup> constitutes the main limitation of his attempt to critically theorize the nation. It is the difficulty for a Marxist analysis of dealing with the 'Weberian dilemma' of facing up to *the State's monopoly of legitimate violence, encoded by its monopoly of political space and time*, which animates Poulantzas' appropriation of Nietzscheans like Foucault and Deleuze. Yet, the more seriously he takes 'Nietzsche', the less convincing his appeal to Marxism as a way beyond this dilemma. Three related concepts, 'ideology', 'history', and 'the masses' highlight this problem, and lead to the following sections on 'postmodern' and 'postmarxist' attempts to build upon the 'failures' of structuralist Marxism to theorize the nation more adequately than liberal humanism has done. Like Nairn, Poulantzas appeals to History to sort out "the genuinely working-class aspect of national ideology":

"the relations of production and social division of labour make of the working class...the 'bearer' of positivity and of the historical future. Already under capitalism, its practices bear what appear as the 'seeds' of other social relations, other spatial and temporal matrices, another nation; and history always moves forward on the side of the working

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<sup>73</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.117.

<sup>74</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.118-19.

<sup>75</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.70.

class".<sup>76</sup>

This stress on the emancipatory possibilities of "the divided body of the state" does not rest on a view of nationalism as 'false consciousness', a negative, 'repressive' theory of ideology. Nor does it contend that bourgeois spatiality and temporality are 'bad', while their working-class counterparts are 'good': both are sustained by their inter-relatedness, their differential relations.<sup>77</sup> However, it is difficult to avoid reading Poulantzas as licencing such unself-critical 'politics of difference', especially given his appeal to History as the inevitable ally of the working class in a framework where *temporality* in 'structural causality' is subordinated to the *space of the State as the monopoly of resolutions of universality and particularity*. This is the key point to be made about Poulantzas' account of the nation. *The 'Weberian' space of the State is what 'grounds' appeals to both a postmodern politics of difference and postmarxist theses on the viability of radical democracy: a liberal discourse of the nation still governs attempts to move beyond the limitations of historicism and structuralism.*

Poulantzas' debt to Nietzsche is paid in the form of his attempt to 'actively' revalue capitalism's spatio-temporal matrix *without passing through its reification*, a passage taken by both Nairn and Anderson. But the ambiguous appeal to History, and the claim that the nation is at once a concretization of a reactive spatio-temporal matrix *and* the basis for a "genuine" working-class national movement, do not move Poulantzas' argument beyond the limitations of Weber's reading of Nietzsche. Although Poulantzas rejects Weber's attempt to conceive of an 'active' politics based on the inside/outside of the capitalist *State*, he does argue that the spatio-temporal matrix of 'capitalist relations of production' renders itself explicit, concrete, an argument whose Weberian roots have already been traced in Ernest Gellner. Like Weber, and unlike Gellner, Poulantzas

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<sup>76</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.116.

<sup>77</sup> On the contrary, just this opposition sustains an academic growth-industry in Sociology: the literature of 'theories of resistance' abandons Poulantzas' caution to read texts like Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday life* for its claim that 'strategies' (identical in form to Poulantzas' bourgeois matrix) are indeed bad, and that 'tactics' - which apparently escape the iron cage of strategies - are good (see de Certeau, 1988, esp. chapter 3). This opposition provides the ghetto- and globe-trotting elite with a road map of political correctness, a sort of Lonely Planet Guide to Otherness.

claims that revaluation of this matrix is possible, but only on the basis of *a priority of differential matrices at the structural level over the 'homogeneity' of a single matrix at the level of subjectification*. This is a priority which class analysis appears inevitably to demand at some point; in Poulantzas, its conceptual status is both tentative and inconsistent.

Like the ambiguous appeal to history contained in his argument, Poulantzas' use of the concept of ideology is inconsistent, representing less of a break with historicism than he claims.<sup>78</sup> The argument that the ideological role of the State has an *immanent relation* with material structures<sup>79</sup> replaces Gellner's 'historicist' emphasis on a development from implicit to explicit spatial order with a structuralist version of the same process. To argue that spatio-temporal conditions of possibility are immanent to the apparatuses that produce and reproduce them eludes the charge of historicism at the cost of considerable ambiguity over the precise relations among the various 'levels' and 'regions' operative through this "structural causality".<sup>80</sup> This version of causality also makes it difficult to speak of temporality at all, a problem Poulantzas' scattered references to "History" as a positive force does not dispel. The ambiguity in his argument stems not only from the difficulty of speaking against historicism about history; it is also contained in his theory of ideology and in the closely related notion of a class subject. Poulantzas follows Gramsci in understanding ideology as a 'cement', which holds together a social totality.<sup>81</sup> This *coherence function* is familiar enough: Terry Eagleton has pointed out that it is a sociological conception of ideology which has more in common with the historicist notion of ideology as the 'world-view' of a class subject than Poulantzas would like to admit. Both are 'essentialist' theories, attributing a

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<sup>78</sup> Hostility to 'historicism' in all its guises is constant theme in Poulantzas' work. See, for example, Stuart Hall, *et al.*, "Politics and ideology: Gramsci", in CCCS, 1983, esp. p.70, and Eagleton, 1991, pp.121-3, on the limitations of Poulantzas' attempt to read Gramsci as a straightforward historicist. In fact, Poulantzas traces 'errors' in Marxist theories of the State to a very general "eschatological and prophetic dogmatism" (Poulantzas, 1980, p.21). The point is important, since Poulantzas shares a number of arguments with Gramsci, as the texts cited above argue.

<sup>79</sup> The State is in this sense "a material condensation of forces" (Poulantzas, 1980, p.152).

<sup>80</sup> See Simon Clarke, "Marxism, Sociology and Poulantzas' Theory of the State", in Clarke, ed., 1991, esp. pp.86-91.

<sup>81</sup> See Poulantzas, 1980, p.28.

single, universal nature to ideology.<sup>82</sup> How this coherence function squares with Poulantzas' emphasis on the relational aspect of ideology, its lack of inherent unity, is unclear. On a single page of the text, three 'objects' of ideology are fused: ideology cements the social formation; it cements the processes of individuation; it also cements the unity of social agents.<sup>83</sup> Like Nairn, Poulantzas argues that nationalism cannot be explained in terms of 'false consciousness', a 'repressive', or 'negative' theory of ideology.<sup>84</sup> Both emphasize the functionality of nationalism for the achievement of 'bourgeois hegemony'; the stress on 'the divided body of the State' as a production of ideology's *coherence function* is what allows both theorists to appeal to "the genuine working-class aspect of ideology", *an emphasis found earlier in Weber's conception of 'active' and 'reactive' nationalism*. Indeed, Poulantzas' 'structural causality' has not clearly moved beyond the *analogical* relations governing Gellner's reading of individual and collective identity, a point made forcefully by Jorge Larrain.<sup>85</sup>

The ambiguity of the unifying/individualizing role of ideology is mirrored in Poulantzas' deployment of 'class struggle' as both the effect of an 'ensemble of structures'<sup>86</sup> and an effectivity in its own right within the 'framework' of given spatio-temporal matrices 'implied' by the relations of production. Central to the ambiguities here is the notion of 'struggle' - a conception of power Poulantzas adopts from Foucault, but which he attempts to preserve for a Marxist analysis: from the ubiquity of power and struggle Poulantzas will insist on the *qualified* character of power. Struggle is always *class* struggle. A relational theory of power has the virtue of avoiding reification of the 'subjects' and 'objects' of power: power is not simply 'something held' by the dominant class; as a result, the State is not the final location of power, an object itself to be wrest from

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<sup>82</sup> Eagleton, 1991, p.222.

<sup>83</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.88.

<sup>84</sup> c.f. Nairn, 1980, p.354; Poulantzas, 1980, p.120. Poulantzas claims that Althusser, from whom he draws considerable inspiration, is limited by just this sort of theory of ideology (p.30).

<sup>85</sup> See Larrain, 1983, p.184, where the 'historicist' problematic of *homologies in 'expressive causality'* -the problematic of Raymond Williams discussed in Chapter one of this essay - is left intact in the 'structuralist' challenge of theorists like Poulantzas.

<sup>86</sup> c.f. John Clarke, *et al.*, "Misrecognising Ideology: Ideology in Political Power and Social Classes", CCCS, 1983, p.114.

rivals. The 'possessive theory of power' refused here has as its conditions of possibility the very (capitalist) spatio-temporal matrix to be criticized.<sup>87</sup> However, Poulantzas' appropriation of Foucault contains considerable ambiguity. At times he appears to argue that struggle is all there is:

"the primacy of struggles over the State goes beyond the sphere of the relations of production, there can be no question of an economic structure that founds struggles in its turn: quite simply, these relations of production are already relations of struggle and power".<sup>88</sup>

Understanding the determining role of relations of production requires conceiving of these relations as themselves struggles, a conception central to Poulantzas' attempt to avoid the pitfalls of both economism and its twin, statism.<sup>89</sup>

Poulantzas attempts a Marxist analysis of class struggle founded on *difference* rather than on *opposition*, as in 'historicism', but to do this, the 'class' character of struggles must be imported into the argument. While he contends that Foucault's 'theory' of power leaves no room for resistance, he also refuses to reduce all struggle to class struggle; nonetheless, struggles ultimately owe their specificity to the form taken by the State and class struggle in capitalism.<sup>90</sup> What makes struggle *class* struggle, however, is the 'fact' of exploitation and surplus-value extraction in the capitalist social division of labour, a division which "assigns places" - individuating as it unifies through the active role played by the State.<sup>91</sup> So power is not 'merely' a differential relation of unequal forces; it always has "a precise basis". In capitalism, this basis is "fundamentally, though

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<sup>87</sup> Foucault argues that this possessive theory of power is modelled on a 'bourgeois-legalist' conception of the commodity: "power is taken to be a right, which one is able to possess like a commodity, and which one can alienate, either wholly or partly". (Foucault, 1980, p.88) This conception of power is found throughout Gellner, Weber and Nairn. Charles Taylor has attempted a critique of Foucault on the grounds that he abandons just this legalist theory of power (see Charles Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth", in Hoy, ed., 1986, pp.83-93).

<sup>88</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.45.

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.148-9.

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*

not exclusively, determined by exploitation".<sup>92</sup> Poulantzas' problem, then, is to avoid what he considers the 'iron cage' of Foucault's conception of power, where all resistance is *internal* to power ('co-opted' critique is its only possible form), and an 'essentialist' conception, where critique is possible only from a position *external* to power relations. These two poles of thought on power are ultimately the same for Poulantzas, since the latter pole can only confirm the power of that to which it imagines itself exterior, and is in this another form of 'co-opted critique'.<sup>93</sup> It is possible to conceive of effective resistance *within* power relations, according to Poulantzas, but to do this means giving due weight to Weber's emphasis on the State's monopoly of legitimate violence, while at the same time, ideology critique must undo the conceptual opposition between coercion and consent, introducing all of the ambiguities of Poulantzas' theory of ideology.<sup>94</sup> In these two moves, the problematic shifts back to that of *coherence*.

Poulantzas' attempt to move beyond the limitations of Weberian discourse on the nation does not succeed; nonetheless, it is instructive to consider his effort, well before the publication of *Imagined Communities*, to treat the nation as a problem of political identity *at the 'level' of meta-theoretical issues of space and time*. Anderson adds nothing of significance to Poulantzas' account, save for the wider range of historical 'cases' discussed. Indeed, much of the appeal of Anderson's text lies in its lack of specificity concerning precise relations between "print-capitalism" and the 'identity-formations' of the nation, a beguiling vagueness which has served as an opening to 'postmodern' thought on the nation. And while this opening is not without value, precisely for the ways in which it indicates the common assumptions of Anderson and postmodern analyses, it takes place in part through a *forgetting* of the problems animating Poulantzas' text. The 'collapse' of the Althusserian problematic with which Poulantzas is associated (or, its reduction to the status of 'influence'<sup>95</sup>), to say nothing of a recent host of dramatic social, economic, and political changes, has rendered it notoriously difficult to speak coherently, let alone convincingly, of global dynamics

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<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, p.152.

<sup>94</sup> Poulantzas, 1980, pp.77-81.

<sup>95</sup> See, for example, Kaplan and Sprinker, eds., 1993.

from within a Marxist perspective. Crucially, those broadly Marxist texts which have more recently attempted a critical analysis of the nation at the level of "the world economy" do so *from within the limits prescribed by Weber's discourse*, a dilemma with which Poulantzas had already struggled.

### The Nation and the 'World Economy'

Poulantzas follows Weber in arguing that 'science' concerns itself with *the 'world economy'*, a "process without a subject", while the 'subjective side' (what Weber calls 'the quality of men') is situated within a 'national' context. Where Nairn, like Gellner, appears content with an analogical relation between 'individual' and 'collective', Poulantzas follows Weber in suggesting that a 'new overcoming of self' may result from 'struggle' at the level of the intersection between state and nation. And while Weber is limited by a reactive conception of sacrifice which endures historical transformation, Poulantzas maintains that, despite the formative effects of a Foucauldian 'bio-power' on the modern nation, *the 'popular masses' somehow form an enduring substratum which constitutes the locus of an active revaluation of the capitalist spatio-temporal matrix*. The space which frames this 'mass' substratum is the 'world economy', an emphasis Poulantzas shares with Tom Nairn. Both appeal to Immanuel Wallerstein's analysis of a single world economy, which produces "a multiplicity of political systems", with approval.<sup>96</sup> Though neither develops this perspective in detail, a collection of essays by Balibar and Wallerstein published in 1991 provides a sophisticated instance of the difficulties involved in working through this perspective.

Balibar and Wallerstein engage in a debate throughout the text, with Balibar criticizing Wallerstein's tendency to read the 'world economy' as a monolithic structure of a universal division of labour, where the 'system of states' is a functional requirement of the maintenance of this structure.<sup>97</sup> Readers of Ernest Gellner will be familiar with the outlines of this position. However, Balibar's critique amounts to more of a qualification of Wallerstein's conclusions than a rejection of

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<sup>96</sup> See Nairn, 1981, pp.310-12.

<sup>97</sup> See Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991 [hereafter, B&W], pp.3-7, 89-90. See also Immanuel Wallerstein, "Civilizations and Modes of Production: Conflicts and Convergences", in Walker, ed., 1984, pp.60-9.

his (deeply flawed) premises. For instance, Balibar argues that the division of labour cannot account for the "society effect": the division of labour is not what founds "relatively stable 'collectivities'" - it is what would destroy them, were it not for material social forces which limit its destructive potential.<sup>98</sup> Everything turns on the question of how 'unity' - albeit "conflictual unity" - is achieved by these forces: the history of social formations is "a history of the *reactions* of the complex of 'non-economic' social relations, which are the binding agent of a historical collection of individuals, to the de-structuring with which the expansion of the value-form threatens them".<sup>99</sup> In Balibar's analysis, these 'reactions' produce both the *ambivalence* of the nation, as well as class struggle as an attempt "to destroy the mechanism which is tending to destroy the conditions of social existence", since appeals are invariably made to a "lost unity" always open to "'recuperation' by various forces of domination".<sup>100</sup>

Balibar's stress on ambivalence is not identical to Nairn's; in particular, the question of the complex 'articulation' of nationalism and *racism* does not lend itself to simple treatment in terms of 'good' and 'bad' nationalism.<sup>101</sup> The "cycle of historical reciprocity of nationalism and racism...is the temporal figure of the progressive domination of the system of nation-states over other social formations".<sup>102</sup> 'Theories and strategies of nationalism' are thus always caught up in "a contradiction between universality and particularism": what is therefore required are analyses which focus not on the 'struggle' carried out 'within' this contradiction, but on "the historical constitution of the forces in struggle and the forms of struggle".<sup>103</sup> This mode of questioning the *coherence* of political identity at the level of the nation closely resembles Poulantzas. Moreover, Balibar reproduces many of the key features of Benedict Anderson's argument in his own account of the 'capture' of social forces by the 'state-system' to produce 'new social unities'. What is at

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<sup>98</sup> B&W, pp.7-8.

<sup>99</sup> B&W, p.8.

<sup>100</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> B&W, pp.46-50.

<sup>102</sup> B&W, p.53.

<sup>103</sup> B&W, pp.54-5.

stake in this process is, for Balibar (and Poulantzas before him), "to make the people produce itself continually as national community".<sup>104</sup>

Like Weber, Balibar conceives of this 'capture' of social forces by the (modern) state-system as a *final* capture in which 'the people' are both producers and produced in the contradiction of universal and particular. The question Balibar's analysis attempts to answer, then, is when and why the 'threshold of irreversibility' was crossed - "an event which, on the one hand, caused the configuration of a *system* of states to emerge and, on the other, imposed the progressive diffusion of the nation form to almost all human societies over two centuries of violent conflict".<sup>105</sup> Arguing from the perspective of this threshold of irreversibility allows Balibar some latitude in conceiving of the 'nation-state' as one among many forms of social formation in the history of capitalism; it also admits the possibility that it may not be the last.<sup>106</sup> But his analysis clearly depends upon the *presence* of the spatialized 'grid' of the state-system, the 'embodiment' of the political contradiction between universality and particularity. In the production and reproduction of 'the people' as national community, gender, race, and language are worked by 'Ideological State Apparatuses' to produce a "fictive ethnicity" based on the contradiction of universal and particular. However, as Deleuze has suggested, *thresholds* operate upon lines more 'molecular' than 'molar', whose consequences do "*not necessarily coincide with a segment of more visible lines*".<sup>107</sup> Indeed, the "binary machines" constituting Deleuze' molar line are purely reactive; as in the case of Weber, Balibar limits his account to a consideration of lines of movement defined by their reactivity, as if they formed the absolute horizon of political identity.

To take a key example from Balibar, language is an 'open' particularism, while race is a 'closed' universalism, a diagnosis familiar from Anderson's text. Their articulation produces both

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<sup>104</sup> B&W, p.93.

<sup>105</sup> B&W, p.88.

<sup>106</sup> B&W, pp.89-92.

<sup>107</sup> Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, p.124.

"the racialization of language and the verbalization of race".<sup>108</sup> If, therefore, the nation-state is becoming something else in particular places - the attempt to 'build' a European Community, for example - what must be resisted is *the domination of one particular representation* of ethnicity, itself a conflictual resolution of this contradiction between universal and particular. 'Resistance' here amounts to a plea for expanded communication on the basis on presumably 'universal' interests (the 'fate of the Earth' being central here):

"Every 'people', which is the product of a national process of ethnicization, is forced today to find its own means of going beyond exclusivism or identitarian ideology in the world of transnational communications and global relations of force. Or rather: every individual is compelled to find in the transformation of 'his' or 'her' people the means to leave it, in order to communicate with the individuals of other peoples with which he or she shares the same interests and to some extent, the same future".<sup>109</sup>

It is difficult not to suspect that this vision of inclusive communication, centered on the question of 'the future of Europe', is conceived largely as a means to forge a 'new unity' of Europe, one able to meet the challenges presented by 'continental blocs' in 'the new world (dis-)order'. This concern has been echoed by more conventional commentators on the nation, such as Roger Griffin.<sup>110</sup> It is also the subject of a recent (1991) semi-popular text by Jacques Attali, *Millennium*, a text which (unintentionally) subverts the One-Many logic of Balibar's liberal cosmopolitanism.

### Millennial Liberalism

Attali's text presents a curious reading experience. The first part argues that "the coming world order" is already announced by *temporal acceleration*; whether 'Europe', 'the Pacific Rim', or 'America' will rise to the top in "the struggle for supremacy" depends on the ability of each to respond to this acceleration and its effects. Chapter II argues strongly for the need for a 'healthy America' to counter-balance the power of Japan while Europe constructs its new unity. By contrast,

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<sup>108</sup> B&W, pp.102-4.

<sup>109</sup> B&W, p.105.

<sup>110</sup> See Griffin, 1993, pp.164-6.

the second part of the text abandons this internalist, balance of territorialized powers perspective for that of the whole: the question becomes one of the future of 'man' and of possible relations with the Earth, as well as of the fate of de-territorialized 'winners' and 'losers' in this struggle. The text's conclusion suggests that the author intends Part II to be read as a corrective to possible excesses arising from the first perspective; however, this is not the only way in which the text can be read. In fact, what is most striking about *Millennium* is the way in which two perspectives are 'thought' together, as if practice were a matter of giving each equal weight, yet they are quite clearly *mutually contradictory*. Attali's text states, clearly and forcefully, the two poles of liberal thought on the fate of political identity in (post)modernity. The liberal dilemmas of fostering an 'order' of particulars while demanding 'justice' from some universalist perspective cannot be overcome by declaring *the borders between particular and universal henceforth open*. At its most radical, *Millennium* exposes this (post)modern liberalism as *incoherent*.<sup>111</sup>

The critical perspective urged by Balibar is certainly important; it resonates with earlier analyses by Rob Walker, which stress the need to engage meta-theoretical issues in ways that refuse the pitfalls of both theory/practice and idealism/ materialism debates.<sup>112</sup> However, Balibar's work does not push the questioning of meta-theoretical assumptions far enough: the analysis is still written from the perspective of the forces which produce 'coherence'. The political question then becomes one of revaluing these forces as 'active', in order to escape this coherence, a position broadly derived, once again, from Max Weber. As Chapter five has argued, the problems of 'domination' and 'homogeneity' *assume* a prior resolution of universal and particular in the 'sovereign' space of the State. As such, they constitute limiting problematics, a difficulty endemic

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<sup>111</sup> See Comaroff and Stern, 1994, for an example of identitarian attempts to make sense of the 'dialectic' of universality and particularity seen from the perspective of globalisation:

"[N]ational consciousness and cultural identity are still very much alive. If anything, the politics of particularism, of local difference within global uniformity, has been revitalized with (literally) a vengeance". (p.37)

<sup>112</sup> See esp. Walker, 1988, pp.58-80.

to Marxist forms of critique no less than to those of liberalism.<sup>113</sup> In Balibar's case, it is *class struggle* which serves as the focal point of this resolution: a "universal antagonism", class struggle takes on a variety of forms.

In addition, a certain 'tragic' diagnosis of forces attends Balibar's conclusions. The "supranational nationalisms" of an emerging 'Europe', the 'Third World', and others between will not achieve the level of 'totalization' found in the nation-state form, argues Balibar, yet they inspire little confidence as potentially 'active', open-ended political identities. In fact, they produce a reactive organization of forces which reproduces an opposition between universality and particularity, yet socialism offers little ground for critical optimism: "the socialist ideology of class and class struggle, which did develop in constant confrontation with nationalism, has ended up by copying it, by a kind of historical mimicry".<sup>114</sup> The limiting problematic of *representation* fixes the question of mimicry in a *tragic politics*: class struggle must negotiate the paradox of becoming "visible in the representation of the social" without falling prey to the forces of mimicry which dominate it. What Weber reads as the tragic fate of modernity, Balibar reads as its inescapable paradox.<sup>115</sup>

Thus, to an even greater extent than Poulantzas, Balibar is uncertain of the future of 'class struggle' as an 'active' organization of forces able to move beyond the iron cage of the Weberian dilemma. For Balibar, nationalism may not lead in a straight line to fascism; nonetheless, once the historical 'threshold' of the nation-state has been crossed, nationalism and racism are articulated through the 'grid' inscribed across this threshold: a contradictory resolution of universal and particular against which struggle can only *react*. A transgression of the limits imposed by forces

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<sup>113</sup> R.N. Berki has pointed out the failure of Marxist thought to undo the opposition universal/particular, a failure with crucial consequences for a Marxist theory of the nation and nationalism. See R.N. Berki, "On Marxian Thought and the Problem of International Relations", in Walker, ed., 1984, pp.217-40. It is important to note, however, that the intellectual tradition Berki constructs in order to make his critique orientalistizes 'The Western Tradition' by tracing its essential forms, in Hegelian manner, to an interplay between "Hellenic and Judeo-Christian components". (Walker, 1993, pp.121-2).

<sup>114</sup> B&W, p.182.

<sup>115</sup> c.f. Walker, 1993, p.118.

reproducing this grid, a 'going beyond' that only confirms the solidity of the borders it crosses: the paradox of the 'co-opted critique' announced as the fate of critical theorizing.

Revaluation of reactive identities cannot, then, be based on formulations such as 'only a national transition to socialism is possible'. From the Nietzschean perspective of a Deleuze, the critical task of "becoming otherwise" is a *multiplication of modernities*, not the stoic acceptance of its fatal identity. It is as necessary to remain aware of the limitations of social movements, for instance, which attempt to recover and revalue 'working-class' and 'pre-colonial' histories as it is to valorize their critical potential.<sup>116</sup> Rather than take the 'inevitable' complicity of limitations and liberations as the tragic ground of critical theorizing, a Nietzschean line of questioning attacks the conception of *sovereign autonomy* which privileges the space of interiority. In the case of Balibar, Wallerstein's view of sovereignty, which forces him to conclude that, from the position of 'internal autonomy', only the 'world economy' would be a social unit, is reformulated to distinguish this "economic unity" from the plurality of "social units" which Wallerstein reduces to a function of this 'prior autonomy'.<sup>117</sup> However, Balibar's own reformulation does not break with the assumptions Wallerstein shares with classical liberals such as Adam Smith.<sup>118</sup> The argument that 'the state-system' captures and 're-territorializes' forces set loose by capitalism is Smith's argument, long before Marxism. As Michael Shapiro has argued,

"Smith's view of wealth participated in a more general departure from the legalistic obligation of the citizen to the sovereign and moved toward an interest in an aggregate effect, the problem of producing and maintaining conditions for the well-being -health, wealth, longevity- of the 'population' ...Smith helped to shift the problematic of sovereignty...to a concern with a different flow, with the management activity of the sovereign with respect to the flows of exchanges within the social domain".<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> A point missed by Camilleri and Falk in their otherwise perceptive account of 'new social movements' and nationalism. See Camilleri and Falk, 1992, pp.222-5, a text which shares Balibar's critique of Wallerstein (pp.78-83). Compare these analyses with that of Walker, 1988, where it is nowhere conceded that the limitations and liberatory potential of social movements constitute the paradox of modern political thought (see esp. pp.163-70).

<sup>117</sup> B&W, pp.6-7.

<sup>118</sup> c.f. Walker, 1993, p.94.

<sup>119</sup> Shapiro, 1991, p.454.

'Economics' here is concerned with flows which traverse the borders of the state; 'politics' is concerned with restoring 'order' to and channeling these flows: for Balibar, this process, 'dialectically' conceived, sets the conditions for his theory of the nation and nationalism. A structural history such as that proposed by Balibar cannot overcome the limitations of his essentially liberal position. An emphasis on structure is already a wager on *the priority of being over becoming*: 'structure' is the identity of that which endures; 'history' is a succession of variations of this structure, a series of differences measured against the identity of structure.<sup>120</sup>

### Marxism and National Socialism: Debray

The rhetorical moves enabled by this bifurcation of being and becoming are reproduced throughout the literature on the nation: Nairn's Janus-headed image of the nation remains the central trope of critical theory, offering an ethical orientation to the task of the intellectual already fully formulated by Weber. Once again, the main rhetorical opposition lies between 'rational' and 'irrational', or, in attacks on Nietzschean versions of the 'poststructuralist turn', between the *discursive* and the *pre-discursive*. This is the opposition Terry Eagleton constructs in his version of the attempt to ward off challenges from the Nietzschean counter-lineage. 'Discourse theory', he contends, is an ideological response to a political problem: the waning fortunes of revolutionary thought and the rise to dominance of reformism. According to Eagleton, only preservation of the concept of the non-discursive 'real' - recklessly abandoned by Foucault, Derrida, and their epigones - can save a position like Poulantzas' from sliding toward "irresponsible relativism and idealism".<sup>121</sup> This line of argument is familiar enough in the discursive economy of theories of the nation. The intimate connections claimed between 'irrationality', Romanticism, nationalism, and ultimately, *fascism*. Eagleton is therefore at pains to dissociate 'Marxism' from the excesses of Romantic enthusiasts, either by stressing their irrationality, or by claiming that what insights they may possess were already known by certain members of his exclusive 'tradition' of 'radical political

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<sup>120</sup> c.f. Walker, 1993, pp.113-4.

<sup>121</sup> Eagleton, 1991, pp.218-220.

thought'.<sup>122</sup> In other words, while Eagleton attempts to salvage history and the non-discursive 'real' for a tradition of transformed critical rationality, he employs *rhetorical*, which is to say, *discursive*, tactics in order to do it.

Nonetheless, the fateful slide from Stalin's dream of "Socialism in one country" to the nightmare of Hitler's "National Socialism" feared by Nairn, Hobsbawm, and Eagleton is a theme not simply to be dismissed on the grounds that it is governed by a discursive opposition between Enlightenment rationality and Romantic irrationalism. This discursive opposition is important enough, but, as with Weber's resonance with Carl Schmitt, *the reactive nihilism of fascism is a danger for those arguments which privilege interiority, being, and the demands of consciousness*. Nowhere is the 'congruence' of nihilism and a desire for the being of interiority more pronounced in texts on nationalism than in Régis Debray's "Marxism and the National Question".

Debray attempts to confront the 'failure' of Marxists to face the uncomfortable 'fact' that the nation cuts across various modes of production. Where the universalism of a socialist mode of production is imagined to erase the particularities of culture and nation, Debray insists on the 'permanence' of the nation: "what the nation expresses, that of which the nation is made, is an invariable".<sup>123</sup> The form of the nation indeed varies historically, but what the nation expresses is the idea of the *polis*: "a natural organization proper to *homo sapiens*, one through which life is rendered untouchable, or sacred. This sacred character constitutes the real national question".<sup>124</sup>

While Debray takes nationalists at their word concerning the sacred nature of their territories, he also applies the laws of thermodynamics to human society, though he makes the

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<sup>122</sup> See, for example, the comments on Bakhtin/Voloshinov in Eagleton, 1991, pp.43, 195-7; also, John Frow's account of Eagleton's use of Walter Benjamin for this purpose (Frow, 1988, pp.41-2). As Frow points out, Eagleton's hostility toward ambivalence is itself ambivalent: it leads him to acknowledge, then reject, the value of Nietzsche, particularly where the question of historical continuity and Benjamin's active sense of 'tradition' are concerned.

<sup>123</sup> Debray, 1977, p.26.

<sup>124</sup> *ibid.*

opposite argument to Ernest Gellner: the nation is an entropy-resistant entity.<sup>125</sup> Entropy here means disintegration in time and space, so, in addition to replacing one universality (the mode of production) with another (the natural essence of the nation), Debray argues tautologically that the eternal nature of the nation guarantees its permanence. The struggle against time is effected through an assignment of a fixed origin to the nation which allows *repetition* in ceremony, memory, and commemoration, to defeat the "irreversibility of time".<sup>126</sup> However, Gellner has already pointed out the historical specificity of this notion of time's one-way 'flow', as Poulantzas has noted the specificity of these different forms of repetition. Not even Poulantzas would object here to an historicist's charge of blatant anachronism against Debray.

As for space, once again Debray naturalizes and eternalizes the nation as an "enclosure of space". The myths of the Ark and of the Temple are for Debray not (merely) ideology: "the myth-presence is an indication of something real".<sup>127</sup> But, again, what is 'real' is eternal. Moreover, like the Nazi justification of *Lebensraum* and the very real extermination of 'otherness', Debray argues that the exclusivity of the nation is both natural and necessary: "It is as invariant as the need for a closed formation, for an enclosure rendering the collectivity *organic*, an organism with walls, boundaries. Hence a delimitation between what is *inside* and what is *outside*".<sup>128</sup> The theorists discussed in this essay agree on this: that while walls have been built and cities enclosed for the greater part of history, the conditions of possibility of defining an homogenous 'us' by negation of an homogenous 'them' are temporally and spatially specific.<sup>129</sup> A poignant illustration of this is provided by Fouad Ajami, who quotes Toru Kawajiri on the dilemmas of nativism:

"What is a nativist? He is a man who sticks to the perception of the world lost. To him the whole world should be in the Arab world, instead of the Arab world in the whole world.

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<sup>125</sup> Debray, 1977, p.27.

<sup>126</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Debray, 1977, p.28.

<sup>129</sup> While the 'orientalism' thesis of Said is ambivalent on this point (as discussed in Chapter one of this essay), see Hartog, 1988, for an account of how Herodotus represented the non-Greek (primarily Scythians) without thereby 'orientalizing them'.

To him the Arab world must be the self-completed world. It is a great pain to every people who had once lived in a self-completed world to admit that their world is nothing other than a small part of the whole world...

The opening of Japan to the outside world was done in 1868. I have never lived in Japan when Japan was the whole world to the Japanese. But I am sharing this nativist's sorrow. This sorrow was conveyed from father to son, then to grandson".<sup>130</sup>

Kawajiri argues that it is precisely when boundaries between inside and outside are drawn and a collectivity becomes merely one among others of the same sort - *incipit natio* - that much of what is 'whole' and meaning-providing is *lost*. Ajami adds that this process is unlikely to reverse itself, and the memory of utopia lost never satisfied. Kawajiri's testimony is a vivid reminder of the dilemmas of a Weberian view of political identity as an uncertain struggle against universal homogenization. But it is an even more important reminder of the *effectivity* of this view, and of the dangers attending its vacuous erasure by Debray's fantasy of the 'eternal presence of the nation'.

This fantasy, if it does not quite weigh like a nightmare on the brain of living Marxists, at least causes some fitful dreams. For part of the charge levelled against Marxism by Debray concerns its 'failure' to adequately theorize *nature* and its place in historical materialism - a charge repeated by Benedict Anderson in his sympathetic comments on Timpanaro. For Debray, the "primary determinants of social existence are the family and the nation": its link with one's birthplace, generation, nature make the nation "the most materialist of ideas".<sup>131</sup> This argument could be dismissed as simply another invocation of "Blood and Soil", and doubtless this tendency is at work in Debray's text. His whole case builds toward making of France a worthy opponent to 'German hegemony' in Europe.<sup>132</sup> But the link with Anderson's attempt to think through the interiority of everyday consciousness emphasises how easily the Weberian sociology of everyday life in the nation becomes proto-fascist.

If, for Debray, the nation is the most materialist of ideas, it is because it partakes of the

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<sup>130</sup> Ajami, 1984, p.200.

<sup>131</sup> Debray, 1977, p.29.

<sup>132</sup> Debray, 1977, p.41.

realm of *necessity*. Conceptions of the 'spiritual essence' of the nation and socialist planning committees both appeal to an Idealist voluntarism which ignores this to their peril; hence, the inability of Marxism to 'master' the nation.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, necessity must be understood in a non-historicist way: like Poulantzas, Debray insists on the rejection of unified, teleological versions of history, since these narratives elide particularities in their tales of a steady march toward universality. What is observed 'today', however, is a 'dialectic' between growing universalism of economic conditions and growing particularism in 'cultural identities', according to Debray.<sup>134</sup> This most Hegelian of dialectics, however, is the problem: Debray has no difficulty treating this dialectic as entirely fortuitous, even though it takes place under particular conditions of capitalism, from whose productions one would have expected some critical distance. In any case, if this resolution of one/many is accepted at all, Gellner's emphasis on the way in which particularities are moulded in identical form and content is both more convincing and implicitly more critical than Debray's superficial logic. The insistence on necessity in this dialectic is underscored by an appeal to 'anthropological law': the archaic affinities of the nation precede "horizontal class divisions"; therefore, the nation imprints itself more deeply and permanently than class on individual and social organization. Hence, "each time national instinct conflicts with internationalist conscience, the former has a much greater mass force".<sup>135</sup> Thus, given that "the masses make history",<sup>136</sup> and their national character is "genetically" imprinted on them, the emphasis on charting prospects for radical change must fall on the particularity pole of Debray's Hegelian dialectic.

### The Nation's Two Bodies

The resort to Idealist dialectics to justify the integrity of nationalist particularity as a materialist force is problematic enough. Even more troubling is the emphasis on the *sacred* character of the nation. Unlike Benedict Anderson, and Weber before him, Debray ignores the

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<sup>133</sup> Debray, 1977, pp.29-30.

<sup>134</sup> Debray, 1997, pp.30-1.

<sup>135</sup> Debray, 1977, p.35.

<sup>136</sup> Debray, 1977, p.37.

'dialectic of Enlightenment and Despair', which finds the coherence of identity politics in the *breakdown* of sacred authority: Debray invites France to 'recover' its national heritage "for its own ends", an appeal to the *continuity* of the nation's sacred character. These ends are, as in Nairn, Poulantzas, and Balibar, the transformation of the nation into an effective, and not merely nominal, internationalism. Arguing for the 'recovery' of working-class national histories may thus just as easily affirm neo-fascism as it fosters socialism.

Despite his disavowal of "eternalist, spiritual-substance" versions of the nation,<sup>137</sup> Debray's attempt to argue for a conception of the nation as both sacred and material ends up repeating Ernst Kantorowitz' classic thesis of "the king's two bodies". Kantorowitz contends that the notion of the sovereign as possessing two bodies - "his sublime, immaterial, sacred body and his terrestrial body subjected to the cycle of generation and corruption"<sup>138</sup> - has a specificity which eludes Debray: it arises out of Medieval Continental practice and thought on ecclesiastical forms.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, as Claude Lefort argues, the interplay between these two mutually complicit representations of the sovereign *transforms both*. One cannot simply speak of the 'religious' dimension on the one hand, and of the 'political' on the other, as Debray does.<sup>140</sup> Finally, Debray's appeal to the masses as the motor of history forgets Poulantzas' distinction between *the constitution of sovereignty* in ancient and modern social formations. This distinction denies the easy continuity Debray asserts in the function of the sacred across time and space. Nonetheless, Poulantzas' appeal to the masses contains no safeguards against its abuse by a Debray; the question of sovereignty is posed, then forgotten, in Poulantzas' argument.

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<sup>137</sup> Debray, 1977, p.29.

<sup>138</sup> Žižek, 1991, p.254.

<sup>139</sup> Kantor, 1991, p.114.

<sup>140</sup> Lefort, 1988, pp.249-50.

### Lukacsian Realism and the Rhetoric of Nihilism

Thus, Debray provides plenty of evidence for claims to the continuing importance of an historicist problematic for a critical understanding of the nation and nationalism. For example, a Terry Eagleton would doubtless seize upon Norman Kantor's gleeful account of Kantorowitz' and other 'Romanticist' intellectuals' relations with the Nazi party and fascism as evidence of just where Debray's argument leads.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, the affinities of this position with the 'failures' of structuralist Marxism often leads to the conclusion that only a tenacious grasp of reason and history can halt the slide into political reaction.<sup>142</sup> Yet, as argued earlier, Eagleton's critique of 'Romanticism' performs a *discursive* role while maintaining a rhetorical opposition between 'rational' and 'irrational', 'the real' and 'discursive'.

These oppositions have been forcefully entrenched in the texts of Lukacs, despite the shifts in position Lukacs makes over his career. Moreover, he shares with Erich Auerbach (whom Benedict Anderson cites with approval for his work on *mimesis, consciousness, and narrative*<sup>143</sup>) the judgement that non-linear narrative and dispersed modes of consciousness signal both an abrogation of 'High Modernism's' faith in reason and a herald of the 'Decline of the West'. Auerbach contends that "'a method which dissolves reality into multiple and multivalent reflections of consciousness' is 'a symptom of the confusion and helplessness...a mirror of the decline of our world'".<sup>144</sup> The privileging of literary *realism* in both Auerbach and Lukacs, which Anderson will follow, allows both a grand view of *totality*: the God's-eye perspective of Anderson's vision of the nation-as-object for consciousness, populated by the identical particulars of urban scenes in novels and newspapers.

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<sup>141</sup> See Cantor, 1991, pp.82-117.

<sup>142</sup> A conclusion reached by Jorge Larrain in his discussion of Maurice Godelier's Althusserian anthropology. See Larrain, 1980, pp.150-4; Larrain, 1983, pp.94-103.

<sup>143</sup> See B. Anderson, 1983, pp.29,67.

<sup>144</sup> Auerbach, in La Capra, 1987, p.135. La Capra discusses the similarities between Lukacs and Auerbach on pp.133-6.

In addition, Lukacs reproduces Augustine's spatialized view of narrative, where narrative repetition guarantees the certainty of both *historicity* and the *self-presence* of an 'I' who experiences it, the condition of possibility of *collective* subjectivity as a remembering of *epic* forms of narrative dislocated by the anti-narrative structures of capitalism.<sup>145</sup> The contrast between the epic and the novel, common to Lukacs and Auerbach,<sup>146</sup> is echoed by Anderson in his account of the breakdown of 'sacred' imagined communities and the rise of 'secular' forms of collective identity. Lukacs' discussion of literary forms valorizes *representation* as the privileged mode through which History becomes 'meaningful' for the individual and collective subject; as in Anderson's discourse, this position leaves the question of the literary *production* of 'the real' aside: determinism, even a certain fatalism, is the result. Indeed, the following remarks on Lukacs could be equally ascribed to Benedict Anderson's theory:

"The demand for 'realistic construction' and for closed forms is a demand for the *mimetic representation* of that '*self-movement of reality*' which occurs independently of author and public.' History moves toward a pre-determined goal, and this goal is the realization of an 'objective rationality': the process is rational, and the writer must reflect this rationality in the harmonious nature of his form".<sup>147</sup>

The last sentence in this quotation is a succinct description of the circularity of Lukacsian 'realism', echoed by Anderson in his theory of the nation. *It is in the discursive oppositions enabled by the meta-theoretical resolutions of such Weberian problematics that the 'reactive' reading of the 'paradox of politics' - the nation is the condition of possibility of writing the nation - is encouraged.* That Anderson's discourse of the nation owes a considerable, yet unacknowledged, debt to Lukacs is significant in itself; of more importance is the way in which Marxist literary criticism has clung to the discursive oppositions Lukacs encodes even as it attempts to go beyond the pitfalls of notions like 'expressive causality' criticized by Althusser and Poulantzas, among others, and the derivative imputation of 'class consciousness'.

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<sup>145</sup> See Bernstein, 1984, pp.263-7.

<sup>146</sup> Bernstein, 1984, pp.49-61.

<sup>147</sup> Frow, 1986, p.13. The internal quotation is from Helga Gallas.

Recent Marxist critics like Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson have attempted to apply post-Lukacsian reflections on literary criticism to the question of the nation, yet both reproduce the meta-theoretical resolutions of space, time, universal and particular, which underlie Lukacs' Weberian discourse. Eagleton has undergone a metamorphosis of sorts across his texts: once a harsh critic of 'humanism', his more recent work combines, like Jameson's, an attempt to take 'post-structuralism' seriously as a critical tool, while maintaining the 'political engagement' of humanism as a bulwark against the former's 'nihilism'.<sup>148</sup> However, as John Frow points out, there is far less of a 'break' with humanism's problematics in Eagleton's work than he claims, governed as it is by oppositions of 'aesthetic' and 'non-aesthetic', 'literary' and 'non-literary'.<sup>149</sup> In his more recent work, Eagleton claims to discern in Adorno's 'negative dialectics' a politically engaged form of deconstruction predicated on the non-identity of concept and thing as a politics of hope - the "pledge of reconciliation even in our most paranoid present-day identifications".<sup>150</sup> As Eagleton makes clear, however, Adorno is read for the idea of difference as *lack* and *negation*, which gives totality as the condition of possibility of deconstructing totality, a conception far removed from the positive, affirmative notion of *internal difference* offered by Deleuze's 'minor' deconstruction.<sup>151</sup>

The "irony" of totality's auto-negation inspires Eagleton's thoughts on nationalism, where the 'paradox of politics' is again invoked, here borrowed from Raymond Williams: to be rid of the nation, like class, is first to possess it fully, a social task which plays tragically with the irony of desire as lack.<sup>152</sup> Eagleton thus invokes Kristeva's notion of the 'stranger within ourselves':

"Where human subjects politically begin, in all their sensuous specificity, is with certain needs and desires. Yet need and desire are also what render us nonidentical with ourselves, opening us up to some broader social dimension; and what is posed within this dimension is the question of what *general* conditions would be necessary for our particular

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<sup>148</sup> For an example of Eagleton's attempt to critically engage both Lukacsian and Althusserian problematics, see Eagleton, 1978, esp. pp.32-36,82-4. For his views on the 'academism' and 'defeatism' of "deconstruction", see Eagleton, 1983, pp.143-50.

<sup>149</sup> Frow, 1986, pp.28-50, which also traces the Lukacsian over-tones of Jameson's Marxism.

<sup>150</sup> Eagleton, 1990b, pp.43-4.

<sup>151</sup> See Eagleton, 1990b, pp.44-7.

<sup>152</sup> Eagleton, "Nationalism: Irony and Commitment", in Eagleton, 1990a, pp.23-6,36-8.

needs and desires to be fulfilled. Mediated through the general in this way, particular demands cease to be self-identical and return to themselves transformed by a discourse of the other".<sup>153</sup>

Jameson's position is substantially similar to Eagleton's, despite the latter's reservations about Jameson's particular version of historicism.<sup>154</sup> In Jameson's work on the nation, the meta-theoretical resolutions common to Weberian discourse are more or less explicitly stated, however contradictory they may be. In examining the question of the nation in the framework of a 'dialectic' between modernism and imperialism, Jameson looks for (and finds, in Ireland)

"a national situation which reproduces the appearance of First World social reality and social relationships - perhaps through the coincidence of its language with the imperial language - but whose underlying structure is in fact much closer to that of the Third World or of colonized daily life... a radically different kind of space, a space no longer central, as in English life, but marked as marginal and ex-centric..."<sup>155</sup>

Applied to 'Third World' literature, this search for 'marginal social spaces' imposes both an *homogenization* of 'the Other' as the *negation* of 'the West' and an *opposition* between modernism's triumph of spatial order and its 'escape' elsewhere.<sup>156</sup> Jameson's search for a singular form of authentic *narration* of "national *allegory*" in 'the Third World' seeks to form an identification of the 'positive face' of postmodernism, "the cultural logic of late capitalism". Rey Chow has forcefully objected to this reduction of 'Chinese culture' to the 'stages' of 'Western' literary forms, as one instance, in order to fulfil Jameson's need to negotiate the ambiguities of identity and history in 'postmodernity'.<sup>157</sup> Chow also criticizes the export of Lyotard's rejection of 'meta-narratives' (a rejection Jameson rather ambiguously endorses) to 'China'; in the complex forms of self-understanding already part of Chinese literary history, Jameson's thoroughly Lukacsian appeal to

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<sup>153</sup> *ibid.*, p.38.

<sup>154</sup> See Eagleton, 1985, pp.60-7.

<sup>155</sup> Fredric Jameson, "Modernism and Imperialism", in Eagleton, 1990a, p.60.

<sup>156</sup> See Young, 1990, pp.113-15. Young follows Aijaz Ahmad's critique of Jameson here.

<sup>157</sup> See Rey Chow, "Rereading Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: a response to the 'postmodern' condition", in Docherty, ed., 1993, pp.471-2.

the 'political unconscious' as the repository of suppressed narratives is "highly irrelevant".<sup>158</sup>

Jameson's pronouncement that the 'narrative function' is a "central instance of the human mind"<sup>159</sup>

"is possible only in terms of a 'monolingual' world-view, which may at first appear opposite to what Lyotard proposes, namely, that the postmodern world is made up of *different* 'language-games'. But the diversity of language-games is tolerable apparently only because something more fundamental called 'Language' (in the Derridean sense), which is now redefined as 'narrative', is what exists primordially between individuals and the world or the 'unpresentable'. We seem to have come back once again to a certain *fatalistic inevitability*, presented here as a 'natural' presence - a 'function'".<sup>160</sup>

Chow introduces here a theme which will be taken up in the Conclusions to this essay, namely, the differences between the 'minor' deconstruction of Deleuze and Derridean 'major' deconstruction. But enough is contained in this quotation to reveal the broad outlines of the argument: the latter *homogenizes* difference against the background of identity, in an endless 'play' of non-correspondence which Marxists like Eagleton and Jameson can only 'politicize' by referring to the very same meta-theoretical resolutions found in Lukacs' 'humanism'.

Indeed, Jameson will insist that his project of "global cognitive mapping" as a 'solution' to the problem of agency involve inclusion of his reading of Lacan's Symbolic: a 'healthy' signifying chain of temporality - an Augustinian unification of past, present, and future - must be restored to the lost 'subject of History', lest 'schizophrenia' triumph.<sup>161</sup> This thoroughly spatialized 'cognitive map' has another name in Jameson: "class consciousness".<sup>162</sup> As Doreen Massey points out, Jameson's position supposes an opposition between space and time which de-politicizes the former: the "chaotic depthlessness" of postmodern space requires a "sublime" act of cognitive mapping as an alignment with the "Grand Narrative" of History for its critical 'thrust'.<sup>163</sup> However, it is not

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<sup>158</sup> Chow, "Rereading Mandarin Ducks", p.483.

<sup>159</sup> Jameson, in *ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> Chow, "Rereading Mandarin Ducks", pp.483-4. [My emphasis.]

<sup>161</sup> See Jameson, 1991, pp.26-8,48-54.

<sup>162</sup> Jameson, 1989, pp.44-5.

<sup>163</sup> Massey, pp.67-80.

enough to counter Jameson's somewhat quixotic appeal to History as confirmation of the critical potential of postmodern Spatiality with a pluralist appeal to time as a 'fourth dimension' of space, as Massey does.<sup>164</sup> As Bergson argues, this pluralism is still a numerical multiplicity, still written in terms of a reduction of time to space, as Chapter six has discussed.

### Conclusions: Marxism and the Weberian Dilemma

Attempts by the Marxist theorists discussed in this chapter to offer a critical theory of the nation have foundered on their inability to question the meta-theoretical suppositions of their discourse, a discourse whose rhetorical differences tend to defer the question of the extent to which it remains trapped within the constraints of the Weberian dilemma of thought on the nation. Moreover, it is just these rhetorical oppositions - rational/irrational, real/imaginary, discursive/non-discursive, combined with a repeated appeal to History, Ideology, and the enduring substratum of 'the masses' - which Marxist thought on the nation appears forced to cling to in order to define itself as critical. What this elides, again, is the critical potential of an exploration of the encounter between Weber and Nietzsche; instead, Weber and Nietzsche are assimilated in a desire to account for the 'failures' of Marxist theory (and practice) in the wake of fascism, for which revisionist theories of the nation are required. Yet, as Chapter one has argued, no real advance is made by Anderson's disavowal of the rhetoric of failure; in fact, appeals to literary theory in this context only tend to reproduce those aspects of Lukcsian theory shared with Weber.

One crucial result of these forgettings is the 'imperialism' of recent Marxist attempts to incorporate a 'politics of difference' into theories of the nation. From the reduction of difference to identity found in Weberian resolutions of space, time, and number to the reduction of the Other to the Same in 'postmodernism': what is at stake in this double reduction is the closure of the 'fourth plane' - the potential for critical encounters 'between' the Outside of Deleuze and the 'non-site' of post-coloniality. It is to this terrain of critical thought that the Conclusions to this essay now turn.

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<sup>164</sup> See Massey, pp.78-83.

"The pimps, and the little hookers...

I puzzle at the local economy, the commerce, the apologetic arrangements of the ignored, of the cooled city. And this I get plenty of opportunity to do - to puzzle at it, I mean. I puzzle a lot, if the truth be known. In fact I've had to conclude that I am generally rather slow on the uptake. Possibly even subnormal, or mildly autistic. It may very well be that I'm not playing with a full deck. The cards won't add up for me; the world won't start making sense. It's certainly the case that I appear to be hitched up with Tod like this, but he's not to know I'm here. And I'm lonely... Tod Friendly, Stocky, emollient Tod Friendly, moves around at large in the city's substructures, the shelters, the centers, the halfway houses, the flops. He isn't one of the entrenched busybodies or Little Annie Fixits who, for pressing personal reasons, somehow need to police these mysterious institutions, where *abuse* is the buzzword. He comes and goes. He suggests and directs and recommends. He's one of grief's middlemen. For life here is junkie, is hooker, is single-parent, is no fixed abode."<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

This essay began with an invocation of its central contention: the nation is the 'condition of possibility' of writing the nation. It has been argued that examination of theories of the nation from the perspective of their meta-theoretical resolutions reveals only an apparent diversity of thought; in fact, theories of the nation are governed by the constraints of Weberian problematics, which produce not only repetitions of Weber's discursive objects, dualisms, rhetorical oppositions, and bad problems, but also the nihilism that lies in wait as Weber's 'fatal' trajectory. Moreover, the paradox cited above is written by theorists of the nation as a *tragic virtue*, a bulwark against a nihilism *deferred* onto 'Nietzsche', whose encounter with Weber forms the key discursive 'moment' of theories of the nation as a monologue 'inside' an originary modernity.

However, the essay has tried to show that this deferral is effected from *within* the terms of Weberian discourse, written through the spatializing urge of interiority. Disavowed in this perspective is access to the 'plane' of the Outside, where the 'elements' of the nation's grammar appear in Weberian discourse as so many 'organs' in a fatal body: interiority knows the body only as co-presence in the 'event' of Death, an event unthinkable in interiority's terms. Critical thought

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<sup>1</sup> Amis, 1991, pp.38-9.

on the nation is thus doomed to a tragic *solution* to the bad problem of presence as tragedy, a resolution not escaped by appeals to quasi-Hegelian theories of 'the politics of difference', whatever its claims to move beyond identity politics. Indeed, a forgetting of Weber's work on the nation, to say nothing of his encounter with Nietzsche, seems to have determined the course of theories of the nation in significant ways. Crucially, it has marked Benedict Anderson's 1983 text as something new, a departure from the reductionism of Gellner and Nairn, encouraging positive new beginnings for 'inter-disciplinary' explorations of social constructions of subjectivity, just the sort of activity in which Weber was actively engaged. Yet without serious reflection on Weber, not excepting the role liberalism plays in his construction of the nation as the fate of political identity in a singular 'modernity', the determined nature of Anderson's 'intervention' remains invisible. This is particularly true of Anderson's attempt to challenge Marxist thought on the nation; it is entirely plausible to read the ambiguities of Anderson's formulations concerning 'capitalism' as attempts to open, rather than to settle, the notorious difficulty of 'thinking' class and nation. However this may be, it is also clear that Marxist theories of the nation remain within the meta-theoretical constraints of Weberian discourse, a limiting problematic that rhetorical charges of 'irrationalism', 'apoliticism', and 'nihilism' levelled at Nietzschean counter-discourse only serve to reinforce. Marxism is not well served by Anderson's elision of his enormous debt to Weber in its efforts at self-reflection and criticism. The same may be said of Gellner's efforts to rescue a hyper-rational liberalism from perceived irrelevance as, again, tragic virtue, as it can be said of postmodernism's demands for 'the proper use of difference'.

The limiting perspective of Weberian discourse presents a series of problems, pitched at a number of 'planes'. It has been argued here that these problems appear in their critical potential through the questioning of Weber's resolutions of meta-theoretical issues of space, time, universal and particular, and the host of dualisms that issue from these resolutions undertaken in the Nietzschean counter-lineage disavowed by Weberian discourse on the nation. In the post-Nietzschean thought of Deleuze, in particular, one finds tools for raising the problems silenced and deferred to the status of immanent problematics: not the paralysing ethics of Weberianism, in which thought only *repeats* the Same, but *practical problematics* which treat the dualisms of Weber as so many elements with which to work: 'a little fresh air', as Nietzsche put it.

From Deleuze' perspective, nihilism is indeed 'our' problem, but not because 'our' originary modernity casts a dark shadow of 'irrationality' behind it; to the contrary, it is precisely insofar as the perspective of interiority governs modes of thought that 'active' nihilism - a politics of becoming - cannot be thought. The priority of being over becoming, their opposition, in fact, determines an unworkable stance toward the fatal resolutions of interiority. Deleuze does not reverse the priority; his 'minor' deconstruction indicates how spatialized 'bodies' are not what they appear to be. Continuous variation along 'lines of flight' is not Romanticist escape; ironically, those theorists like Jameson, who identify the 'problem' as space - for which the 'solution' is, predictably, time - offer a Romantic image of escape as 'escape from', where the 'object' of critique is thereby *homogenized* and, to borrow a Lukacsian term, *reified*. Weber too homogenizes political space and time, but refuses the comforts of the promise of escape; hence the tragic ethics many will later repeat.

But for Deleuze, this is a solution to a bad problem: everything is written from the perspective of interiority, which seeks a solution to its problem of *suffering*. This is not to deny that such suffering exists; rather, it is to claim that beginning from this perspective leads only to the 'reactive' nihilism of Weber's tragic ethics. From the perspective of 'active' nihilism, however, interiority 'itself' is already suffering: interiority already suffers from life, its inability to find presence elsewhere than in death, a problem for which the interiority of consciousness *substitutes* 'fatal' bodies for bodies of becoming. A *total critique* of the resolutions governing the discourse of interiority marks the first moment of 'active' nihilism; the second appears in the realization that *interiority too is locked into the 'vicious circle' of becoming*. The inevitable failure of constructions of 'planes of immanence' is not cause for despair, however; knowing the cause of suffering is profoundly enabling, to be met with 'a certain laughter, a certain dance'.

### Beginnings

What enables this *affirmative* 'negation' of the resolutions of *sovereignty* - which yields interiority's image of analogously linked homogenous spaces of self/nation/state - are the openings

onto the 'Outside' created in 'lines of flight'. These openings read the 'paradox' of the nation as condition of possibility of writing the nation as a 'tragic' paradox for interiority, whose opposition of *presence and absence* demands a *location* for political critique. The tragic 'body' of the self/nation/state fulfills this demand, but again, its location is death, the bad nihilism whose 'ground' is the homogenous space of 'modernity' become universal.

However, this paradox becomes workable once this demand for location is abandoned: a *multiplicity* of immanent problematics emerges from the very critique of the meta-theoretical problems of Weberian discourse. This multiplicity is the thought of the "event" and a different empiricism: to the question posed in the Introduction - of how critical *beginnings* might be undertaken in empirical studies of the nation - the answers will lie in the immanent problematics enveloping such practices, problems which can be faced in their *political* dimensions only through total critique of the meta-theoretical resolutions governing the *monologue* of discourse on the nation. It has been argued here that critical beginnings face the double questioning of the Outside of Weberian discourse - the Nietzschean counter-lineage - and the Outside of the 'difference' between Weber/Nietzsche - the non-site of post-coloniality. It is a sense that the discursive constraints of the monologue of Weberian thought on the nation are *intolerable* which pushes this questioning to this double Outside, where the problem of *dialogue* becomes politicized. This is not the dialogic ethics of postmodernism, with its liberal conception of the Other, endlessly reproducing the Same as the condition of possibility of difference, but a politics of becoming where everything happens 'in between': between thinkers, between thought and unthought, along folds of the Outside. As Deleuze describes his relations with Guattari, "[B]efore Being there is politics. We don't work, we negotiate"<sup>2</sup> along lines of flight, a *multiplication of worlds*. If the question of the nation is intimately tied to the self-identity of 'modernity' in Weberian discourse, Deleuze traces, not the difference of its *dominant identity*, its 'difference from', but its *internal difference*: there is no identity, save that thrown up by becoming. What this conception of 'active' difference permits is a serious consideration of *alternative modernities*. Modernity is already *multiple* in the political thought of the Outside and its events.

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<sup>2</sup> Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, p.17.

This thought of modernity as multiplicity is not the pluralism of postmodernism's identity politics, but the possibility of negotiating 'between' the Outside of Weberian discourse and the Outside of the Nietzschean counter-lineage, *in order to expose the 'undiscussable' problems posed in their encounter*, the immanent problematics which escape the 'coherence' of Weberian thought on the nation. The final section of these Conclusions outline some of the immanent problems this encounter reveals. It must be stressed, however, that the arguments presented in this paper have the form of an exercise in *theoretical* critique. Reflection on the meta-theoretical constraints of Weberian discourse reveals the problem of theory to be one of 'new' beginnings, of saying anything which is not simply re-captured by the 'coherence' of Weberian discourse. Nonetheless, this critique must begin somewhere in order to pose the problem of beginning. Other beginnings are indeed possible, and there is no privilege accorded to the problem of interiority as bad nihilism offered here: as an exercise in theoretical critique, this essay attempts one cut into the morbid body of literature on the nation in the hope that the lines of problems exposed might resonate with other problems revealed through other points of entry.

### Anderson Revisited

So, then, where to begin? Chapter one of this essay began with a critical account of Anderson's thesis on the nation as 'imagined community', an important text for the ways in which it makes visible not only questions of space, time, and number, but also for the ways in which 'the paradox of the nation' gets resolved *as a paradox*, for which a tragic ethics of identity politics is pre-determined as the inevitable *solution*. Commentators on Anderson's text have missed this effect, though recent critics such as Homi Bhabha and Partha Chatterjee, writing from post-colonial positions, have pointed out key aspects of the limitations of his discourse, as discussed in Chapter one. The critical reception of *Imagined Communities* is indicative of the resounding silence surrounding the question of Weber's discourse in the theoretical literature on the nation. Early reviews of the text confined themselves to relatively minor questions concerning Anderson's discussion of historical specifics regarding this or that 'nation'; one also looks in vain in for a review of the text in leading Marxist journals like *New Left Review*. From relative non-response in

the years immediately after its initial publication, however, the term "imagined communities" has become a commonplace, almost an assumed point of departure, for discussions of the nation. No less a literary figure than Salman Rushdie cites Anderson with approval, naming his recent reflections from exile *Imaginary Homelands*,<sup>3</sup> and the term has made it into popular journalism with considerable success, as the popularity of Michael Ignatieff's *Blood and Belonging* attests.<sup>4</sup>

The diffusion of this term is indicative of the 'inter-disciplinary' profusion the discursive space of imagined communities has encouraged. If, for reasons described earlier, Anderson's text appears as a sort of 'anomaly' in Marxist theory, it has led to a lively growth industry of 'post-Marxist' reflections on the nation as a question of (fractured) political identities. For instance, Anderson has inspired Vincente Rafael's 1990 reflections on photography, intellectuals, and Phillipine 'national identity'.<sup>5</sup> On a larger scale, collections edited by Homi Bhabha and Andrew Parker display a considerable range of disciplinary approaches, where Anderson's text is acknowledged as a significant opening.<sup>6</sup> *Millennium* also devoted a special issue (Winter 1991) to questions of the nation in the discourse of "international relations", which includes Chatterjee's initial critique of the text's sociologism and determinism, which licence its disavowal of different politics of the nation 'outside' the West. In addition, two articles attempt to question one of Anderson's key 'elements' of the nation's grammar, *sacrifice*, but both tend to remain content with pointing out the relative *exclusion* of 'women' from Anderson's account, rather than questioning the discursive genealogy of his 'reactive' usage of sacrifice.<sup>7</sup> All of these 'applications' of Anderson's

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<sup>3</sup> See Rushdie, 1992; The essay "In God We Trust" discusses his debt to both Anderson and Nairn (see pp.381-92).

<sup>4</sup> c.f. Chapter one, n.2.

<sup>5</sup> See Rafael, 1990.

<sup>6</sup> See Bhabha, ed., 1990, and Parker, *et al.*, eds, 1992.

<sup>7</sup> See Kandiyoti, 1991; Elshtain, 1991. Of the two articles, Elshtain's comes far closer to a critical genealogy of this 'element': Max Weber is invoked, (p.400) and the discursive resolutions of sovereignty criticised for the ways in which nation-home-feminine are naturalised in its discourse. But Elshtain's appeal to a "loosening" of the bounds of sovereignty, while avoiding an 'essentialism' of gendered identity, invokes a modernist 'ethic of responsibility' which sounds all too Weberian, posed as it is *against* 'the dissolution of the self' (presumably) located in Nietzschean counter-discourse. (See pp.402-6.)

image of the nation, however critical in certain regards, tend to the conclusion that where sovereignty - understood as the resolution of a *modernist* politics of identity 'situated' in homogenous space and time - is challenged as a resolution of *universal and particular*, and unhinged from the nation, *the nation becomes, in the non-identical space of 'postmodernity', the new container of political identity.*

### Augustine and the Virtue of Limits

From the perspective of discourse analysis, 'inclusion' of identities 'left out' of Weberian theories is an insufficient form of critique. As Bhabha, Deleuze, and Baudrillard have pointed out, this 'postmodern' urge to include is another form of a reduction of difference to identity, a profoundly liberal politics for which difference is always measured as difference from the Same. In the discourse of the nation Anderson repeats, the key meta-theoretical resolution licencing this identity politics is the spatialization of time, which provides interiority with its logic of suffering, difference, mobility, and fatality. Moreover, it provides interiority with its *ethics*, common to theories of the nation from Weber to Gellner, Anderson, Nairn, Jameson, and Eagleton. A key instance of this meta-theoretical resolution is found in Augustine, and Chapter six has traced the different readings given his problematic, from which it is contended that a key aspect of the 'reactive' nihilism of Weberian discourse results. Recently, a number of texts have argued for a return to Augustine for yet another statement of the tragic ethics Weber espoused some time ago as a contribution to a 'new' postmodern ethics of responsibility. This return is instructive, since it reveals the extent to which a forgetting of Weber licences repetitions of his monologic discourse.

As argued in Chapter one, Anderson shares many key features of his thesis on the nation with Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur's thought is deeply informed by what he calls "the paradox of politics": "that the greatest evil adheres to the greatest rationality, that there is political alienation *because* polity is relatively autonomous",<sup>8</sup> a conception of the nature of politics he traces to Greece. William Connolly invokes this 'paradox' in his account of the nation as a reflection on the liberal problem of legitimacy, a Weberian reflection on the dilemmas of

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<sup>8</sup> Paul Ricoeur, "The Political Paradox", in Connolly, ed., 1984, p.251.

"this temporal gap between act and consent and between the intentions of an act and the effects it engenders; and the temporal gap contains an element of arbitrariness not eliminable from political life".<sup>9</sup>

Connolly argues, like Weber before him, that the 'inevitable alienation' of a politics of place resulting from this paradox can be *re-valued*: not despair at 'homelessness', but a "Nietzschean" celebration of it as the ground of a postmodern ethics of responsibility which promises, not the 'iron cage' of Foucault's allegedly co-opted notion of 'resistance', but the liberatory possibilities of a future whose *presence* will necessarily never be fully realized.<sup>10</sup> This Weberian revaluation explicitly disarticulates the potential of 'democratic politics' from *the territoriality of state sovereignty*:

"The upshot will be to support a more cosmopolitan democratic imagination that disaggregates standard conceptions of democracy and distributes political identifications and democratic energies across disparate spaces. This alternative imaginary, of course, itself expresses a yearning, one in which the present is judged from the vantage point of a fictive future that will never *be* in any finished state but could, perhaps, perpetually *become* more active below, through and above the level of the state... Today pluralisation of identifications and allegiances within the state needs to be matched by a pluralisation that exceeds it".<sup>11</sup>

From Ricoeur's reflections on *narrative* as an Augustinian practice of creating the 'coherence' of the self as an *inclusive* practice of recognition of 'others' through the very non-presence of past-present-future,<sup>12</sup> Connolly derives his ethics of democratic responsibility. This ethic is inspired by a rejection of what Connolly takes to be the "nostalgia" or "homesickness" of

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<sup>9</sup> Connolly, 1991b, p.465.

<sup>10</sup> See Connolly, 1991b, p.466; on Foucault and Nietzsche, see Connolly, 1991a, pp.184-97; also, Connolly, "The Dilemma of Legitimacy", in Connolly, 1984, pp.241-5; also, see Connolly, 1989, pp.137-75, for his reading of the virtues of Nietzsche's trope of 'homelessness'.

<sup>11</sup> Connolly, 1991b, pp.464,480.

<sup>12</sup> c.f. Rhiannon Goldthorpe, "Ricoeur, Proust and the Aporias of Time", in Wood, ed., 1991, p.99. See also Ricoeur, 1980, esp. pp.174-90. Here Ricoeur engages Heidegger, whose meditations on 'being-toward-death' are refused by Ricoeur on the grounds that narrative invokes the *public* time of Hannah Arendt's *polis*: narrative *repetition* "imposes the priority of the communal form of destiny on the private form of fate" (p.188).

Marx,<sup>13</sup> but also by Augustine's ethics of responsibility, once the *monotheism* which over-codes it is called into question.<sup>14</sup> Connolly's pluralism sounds very much like Weber's, though he is an able critic of neo-Weberians like Walzer.<sup>15</sup> Connolly is sensitive to the priority of identity over difference governing thought from Augustine to the present, yet this only licences a *tragic* conception of the "paradox of ethicality" he poses - identity is required for any ethics at all, but identity is also violence and exclusion.<sup>16</sup> He is also aware of the historicity of articulations of it,<sup>17</sup> but only insofar as there are changing apprehensions of this paradox over time, and only where a pluralist identity politics takes seriously its spatio-temporal conditions of possibility. These conditions are, once again, the spatialization of time naturalized as the *essence* of political life, however 'de-territorialized' (in the *relative* sense) 'late-modernity' has determined identities.

### Problems 'Outside' the Nation

Connolly's postmodern ethics begins from what Deleuze would call a reactive reading of the non-presence of the present, a liberal conception of self-other which does not radically break with key components of Weberian discourse. Indeed, Connolly-Ricoeur trace politics back to *Athens*, like Weber, as if this site defines the limits of what politics can be. Moreover, the 'dialectic of Enlightenment' they share with Hegel - once the head is lopped off Hegel's theodicy - oscillates between this 'center' and *Jerusalem*, the primary source of the *disenchantment* Weber chronicles. This axis, Greece-reason/Jerusalem-disenchantment, limits Weberian conceptions of 'modernity' to the self-understanding of the West. But if post-Nietzscheans like Deleuze radically challenge the meta-theoretical resolutions encoded on this axis, what relation does Deleuze' thought have to that other non-site of critique, post-coloniality? If Bhabha is correct in tracing Foucault's individualism to his disavowal of the colonial 'scene', what of Deleuze?

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<sup>13</sup> Connolly, 1989, pp.116-36.

<sup>14</sup> See Connolly, 1991a, "A Letter to Augustine", pp.123-57.

<sup>15</sup> See Connolly, 1991b, pp.468-73.

<sup>16</sup> Connolly, 1991a, pp.9-15.

<sup>17</sup> Connolly, 1991b, p.466.

Here remarks can only be made in passing, as suggestions for further research; 'civilizational' thematics are large and weighty enough without bearing the burden of dis-articulating the 'coherence' of the discourse of the nation. But it is worth recalling some features of Deleuze' 'minor' deconstruction and its insistence on politicising problematics, in order to suggest some of the immanent problematics which attend possible encounters 'between' post-Nietzschean thought and post-colonial critics. Deleuze' 'minoritarian' deconstruction consists in reading the internal difference of philosophical texts. Thus, a Nietzschean 'reversal of Platonism' does not differ from a Master text; there is no 'political unconscious' in his textual strategy which endlessly differs from the identity of its 'conscious' reading. It is not what Plato says, but what he *does*, that interests Deleuze. But this strategy might be used to read Deleuze, as well.

Deleuze and Guattari's last text (Guattari died in 1992) begins from the problem of *age*: the question of what one has been doing all one's life engaged in philosophy. From this perspective emerges the problem of the *friend* as central to the question of thought's relation to thought, of a *community* of thinking. But in Heideggerian fashion, they trace this problem back to *Greece*, the 'home' of philosophy, even if Greece turns out to be a 'home' in the absolute sense they reserve for the 'Outside'.<sup>18</sup> Philosophy begins with the Greeks because "the city, unlike the empire or state, invents the agon as the rule of a society of 'friends,' of the community of free men as rivals (citizens)".<sup>19</sup> The "Platonic theater" of conceptual personae is wholly occupied with the problem of discerning the 'true' rival from the simulacrum, a question of *indiscernability* which defines Deleuze' conception of Dionysian theater as a play of masks, *becoming* in continuous variation. This is highly significant: Deleuze' 'nomadology' and 'monadology' derive from a deconstruction of the citizen-friend of the polis, where *mobile alliances* - the ethos of packs, bands, nomads - serve as 'models' of thought. However critical this 'thought' of mobility is for challenging the meta-theoretical resolutions of Weberian discourse, it has one crucial effect. The 'absolute' movement of the nomad as 'friend of thought' is explicitly posed throughout the texts of Deleuze and Guattari as 'outside' both *State and Empire*. The nomad moves 'between' State and Empire, yet this disjunctive

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<sup>18</sup> See Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, pp.29-30,43-60.

<sup>19</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.9.

series - State/nomad/Empire - *disavows any other forms of political community*. In the key instance for this essay, it specifically disavows consideration of the *politics of lineages*. To take one example, Buddhist thought and practice has developed a long tradition of lineage-based politics, yet one wonders where this tradition and practice would find its 'becoming' as alternative modernity, how Deleuze could take this lineage-practice seriously as '*Outside*', as 'active' thought.<sup>20</sup>

However: what else has Deleuze been *doing* in his 'minor' deconstruction than attempting to 'think' the problem of *transmission*, of maintaining 'active' thought across a tradition, of constructing precisely a counter-lineage of *difference and immanence* to counter the nihilism he correctly perceives in the identity politics of interiority? The undiscussable problem revealed here is not only the familiar closure of the possibilities of critical thought in the polis; what the thought of lineages carries along with it is the immanent problem of *authority*, a problem Deleuze has solved in advance through his invocation of the free 'man'-citizen become absolutely de-territorialized. Does this then mean that Deleuze is, after all, caught in the bad cycle of repetitions of Weberian discourse? Have you, reader, survived to this point only to be told that there is nothing new under the sun? Not at all. Authority is an *immanent* problem no less than are questions of space, time, and number: a problematic not amenable to solutions, but to the possibilities of thought 'itself', a problematic for which the invocation of Buddhism reveals the key problem of *encounters* in its import. It is, after all, a Deleuzian perspective which permits these problems to become problematised, even politicised, in the first place. This is particularly true when one turns to post-coloniality and its claims to a critical critique of the discursive monologue of the nation.

It has been noted at a number of points in this essay that Homi Bhabha shares many of the critical perspectives the Nietzschean counter-lineage employs. Examples could be multiplied: Bhabha's notion of 'mimicry', the 'hybrid', and his reflections on tropes of home accord with much that has been discussed here. But Bhabha is also well aware that little is achieved by *identifying* critical currents: one could point to the similarities between Nietzsche's critique of spatialized time,

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<sup>20</sup> c.f. Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, pp.3,43, where it is contended that only the Greeks had conceptual personae, the thought of immanence, while "other civilizations had sages", who thought in Figures of transcendence, always with reference to the Despot.

for instance, and, say, Ashis Nandy's reading of Gandhi's 'non-modernism', which sees the present as a "special case of the past", always open to re-creation.<sup>21</sup> Bhabha will insist, rather, on the specificity and difference of the post-colonial 'scene'. However, Bhabha will also insist on the centrality of *the politics of representation* in his attempts to forge critical alliances out of a complex reading strategy which owes much to the 'major' deconstruction of Derrida.<sup>22</sup> Deleuze's form of deconstruction is not Derrida's: Slavoj Žižek has even suggested that there is a residual Hegelianism in Derrida's conception of difference, insofar as it confirms the identity of that from which difference always begins its endless labour.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, while Gayatri Spivak attacks the rather jejune endorsement Deleuze and Foucault give to 'Maoist justice' for its ethnocentrism, her own solution to the dilemmas of identity/difference - 'strategic essentialism' - is a confirmation of major deconstruction's tendency to read the problem as Identity, for which the ever-vigilant critic valorises difference. Thus, it is from the perspective of an identitarian possessive theory of language that the 'subaltern' is determined as unable to speak.<sup>24</sup> As Béla Egyed points out, Derrida's reading of Nietzsche and nihilism contends that a Deleuzian distancing from nihilism is "impossible", "because all such distancing is already caught up in nihilism".<sup>25</sup> But this is a re-statement of the Weberian dilemma, a critique which takes the *reactive* nihilism of interiority as its critical starting-point. Indeed, this leads Derrida to a *tragic* ethics of the Weberian type:

"Each day, one must change, find a way, attempt to calculate without rules a way between the incalculable and the calculable. What I call negotiation does not simply negotiate the negotiable, it negotiates *tragically* because it is terrible and fatal (but would be at least as much so otherwise), it negotiates the nonnegotiable".<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See Nandy, 1983, pp.57-61.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Bhabha, 1994, pp.22-3.

<sup>23</sup> Žižek, 1991, pp.86-9.

<sup>24</sup> See Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", esp. pp.271-91. As Spivak insists, the task is not to represent 'others', "but to learn to represent (*darstellen*) ourselves" (pp.288-9).

<sup>25</sup> Béla Egyed, "Tracing Nihilism: Heidegger to Nietzsche to Derrida", in Darby, *et al.*, eds., 1989, p.10.

<sup>26</sup> Jacques Derrida, "Interview with Derrida", in Kaplan and Sprinker, eds., 1993, p.228.

Bhabha is not accused here of following 'Western' thought at the expense of 'native' modes of critique; his own insistence on post-coloniality as a non-site does not invite such simplistic territorializations. Nonetheless, an encounter between Deleuzian critique and its 'Outside' would surely raise the problems of *authority and nihilism* 'here' at the borders of thought on the nation.

## Act II: Inside/Outside the Body of the Nation

### The Plane of Problems

"The dearest nation of all is one that will survive no longer than you and I, a common movement at the mercy of death and time: the ad hoc adventure.

-Resolutions of the Gross Suckling Conference"

Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow*<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Pynchon, 1975, p.706. This quotation, which could stand as an epigram for the politics of the Nietzschean counter-lineage traced in this essay, introduces *youth* as a *question* in the discursive practices of the nation. Alone among *theorists* of the nation (to my knowledge), Benedict Anderson highlights this question, though he typically restricts it to sociological categories (Anderson, 1983, pp.108-9). However, this problem, which is beyond the scope of this essay, offers an example of a problematic intelligible across the 'fourth plane' of analysis as a site of an encounter among alternative modernities. In this context, it is worthwhile keeping in mind the 'minor' voice of Milan Kundera, as he attempts to articulate, as he dislocates, the "infantocracy" of 'European' modernity:

"The basic event of [*The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*] is the story of totalitarianism, which deprives people of memory and thus retools them into a nation of children. All totalitarianisms do this. And perhaps our entire technical age does this, with its cult of the future, its cult of youth and childhood, its indifference to the past and mistrust of thought." (Kundera, 1982, pp.235-6.)

See also, Kundera, 1986, p.121:

"Freedom does not begin when parents are rejected or buried; freedom dies when parents are born.

He is free who is unaware of his origin.

He is free who is born of an egg dropped in the woods.

He is free who is spat out from the sky and touches the earth without a pang of gratitude."

Previous sections of these Conclusions have focused mainly on the first three 'planes' of critique applied to Weberian discourse on the nation; another cut into the monologue of political identity formulated by Weber would intersect the fourth 'plane' of analysis: that of *political problematics*, of what, in the idiom of 'deconstruction', must remain unmasked in order for the discourse of the nation to be performed. In the sociological theater of Weberian discourse (where only the Same lurks behind every mask of difference), the nation as discourse fills the space of the State through its monopoly of *solutions* to questions of death, meaning, sacrifice, and destiny. But the questions it asks impose the bad problems of coherence and identity, the very problematic announced by Weber as that for which a *tragic ethics* is the only response which measures up to the demands of the nation's universal presence in modernity. As a solution to a bad problem, this tragic ethics is a *deferral* of politics; in the literature on the nation, it has come to be tacitly accepted as the leading edge of critical thought on the nation.

More specifically, the revival of Weber's thesis has taken place largely through the impact of a single text: Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983). But the history of 'Weber' in the literature on the nation is not a straightforward one. In the first place, Anderson does not mention Weber, let alone acknowledge his enormous debt to his precursor. However, this is less surprising when one examines the discursive economy in which 'Weber' has circulated, particularly in neo-Marxist writing on the nation. In this, Weber's arguments have been forced in two trajectories: toward the *reductionism* of later theorists of the nation, as in Ernest Gellner; and toward *fascism*. Both stem from the oppositions this discursive economy encodes, ironically, in the manner of Weber: chiefly, the opposition between 'rational' and 'irrational' thought. Thus, Weber's encounter with 'Nietzsche' as a tremendous *problem* is forgotten, re-written instead as a *reaction* to Weber's supposed solutions: what is rejected in Weber is precisely the supposed 'irrationalism' of Nietzsche's "influence", for which Anderson's focus on subjectivity - the valorization of the perspective of interiority - is read as the necessary corrective. But, as this essay argues, *Weber's discourse is already governed by interiority; moreover, this very perspective is enabled by the same meta-theoretical resolutions of space, time, universal and particular governing Anderson's discourse.*

Repeating Weber's resolutions while forgetting the problematics which animate his texts becomes the key discursive move underpinning attempts to theorize the nation. However, it is only by 'recovering', or better, re-inventing, these problematics, by unearthing the Nietzschean counter-discourse buried beneath the resolutions of Weberian discourse that dialogue 'across' *multiple modernities* can begin, not from a plea for an *opening* of the paradox that the condition of possibility of writing the nation is the nation, but from a shift of perspective which might treat this paradox as a *problem through which critical dialogue becomes again possible*.<sup>28</sup> It is for this reason that what is called here the Nietzschean counter-lineage of Deleuze and Foucault, in particular, is discussed in some detail, as another perspective on the dynamics of the nation, one which refuses the Weberian account of the self-identity of modernity as the frame of political possibility. Thus, in the spirit of Benedict Anderson's "perhaps simpleminded observations"<sup>29</sup> on the everyday sociology of death and suffering, the following sections attempt to suggest some of the problematics silenced and deferred in the identity-problematics of Weberian discourse on the nation.

### Rehearsal for an Other Theater: Weber and the Nation

This essay has attempted a *meta-theoretical critique of theories of the nation and nationalism*, specifically the discursive means through which a 'body' of literature produces and 'stages' the nation as a 'body politic' of a particular sort, what could be called a 'body of consciousness', a body which is, at the limit, a body of *death*: the future-present tense of the *imaginary presence* of consciousness to itself. From this perspective, a central problem of the nation as it is constructed in theoretical texts is primarily that of *nihilism*. However, his problem is mis-recognized or, better, *deferred* in the literature, a deferral which constitutes one of its key

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<sup>28</sup> This is Deleuze' sense of problems: not the ground or limits of solutions, a perspective governed by the *negativity* of interiority and its demand for transcendence, but as *immanence* - the powers of the false: "the (non)-being of the question which cannot be reduced to the non-being of the negative. There are no ultimate or original responses or solutions, there are only problems-questions, in the guise of a mask behind every mask and a displacement behind every place." (Deleuze, 1994, p.107. See also, *ibid.*, p.110: "The ego is a mask for other masks, a disguise under other disguises.") This play of masks, a Nietzschean theater of *exteriority*, is posed against the sociological theater of identity presented by Weberian discourse throughout this essay.

<sup>29</sup> Anderson, 1983, p.19.

*rhetorical* moments. Indeed, a central claim of this essay is that *the monolithic 'body' of literature on the nation achieves its fatal unity only through a projection of the problem of nihilism onto its 'outside'*. This monolithic body is that of 'Weberian discourse', of the discursive limits established in Max Weber's texts on the nation.

Weber's texts have received little critical attention for their contribution to a *theory* of the nation; nonetheless, this essay attempts to demonstrate the 'paradigmatic' form of Weber's thought on the nation: later theorists of the nation have laboured to produce more or less sophisticated *repetitions* of the discursive limits of his thought. As discussed earlier, four planes need to be examined concerning these repetitions: 'objects produced internally within a given text/theory; bifurcations reified as dualisms; encounters with critical thought deferred/silenced; the politics of constructing problematics. The nation is given solidity in Weber's texts as *the* resolution of political identity in modernity; but this resolution is achieved through a critical encounter with 'Nietzsche'. In Weber, Nietzsche becomes the figure of both *problematics* to be taken seriously and a *counter-point* to a *national resolution of these problematics*. Nietzschean thought is presented in Weber, as it is in his unacknowledged followers, as a herald of nihilism, against which the concept of the nation is offered as the 'fate' of political identity in 'our time'. Yet, as this essay contends, it is *Weber's discourse on the nation which contains nihilism as its 'higher truth'*, a problem with devastating consequences for later theories of the nation.

Theories of the nation take *the interiority of consciousness* - and the consciousness of interiority - as their starting point, asking how the 'coherence' of self and world are possible. This, the essay argues, is a bad question, a false problem, which elides the 'real' problems for which the writing of the nation is a powerful, but increasingly unlivable, solution. Moreover, the badly posed problems governing the discourse of the nation in political theory *elide the dynamics of problem-formation and their reproduction*, reinscribing both a singular conception of the nation and a singular discourse 'about' it as the limit of critical theorizing on a political 'object'. At the meta-theoretical level at which this essay operates, the nation is constructed as an object out of the *same* 'elements' governing the discourse itself. Reading texts on the nation from Max Weber to Ernest Gellner to Benedict Anderson to William Connolly and beyond, one is struck by a sense of *deja vu*:

not only do their problematics and solutions echo one another; the limits these constraints impose are echoed in *the narrative of the nation* each repeats: the possibility of critical thought on the nation is given by the meta-theoretical conditions through which the nation as political object *appears* in these discourses. These texts constitute a discourse of the Same, *a lineage* of thought on the nation which, again, one can only *repeat* as the condition of acceptance into the fraternity of critical theory. From the deferred problem of nihilism, *the self-realization of the nation as the 'fate' of political identity in modernity* becomes the ruse through which interiority demands *being*, a demand which is itself the essence of nihilism. As Maurice Blanchot remarks, "Until now we thought Nihilism was tied to nothingness. How rash that was: Nihilism is tied to being".<sup>30</sup> This essay began, then, from a sense that the constraints of *repetition* governing both the nation as theoretical object and discourses about it are *intolerable*.

### Imagined Sovereignties

Interiority begins its analysis of political identity from the false problem of *coherence*, as if the dynamics of individual and collective identity were a matter of articulation and arrangement of 'elements' *within the assumed space of the State*. 'Coherence' assumes, at worst, resolutions at the meta-theoretical level - of space, time, identity, and number - which are themselves spatially and temporally specific, as if they constitute the (ever-receding) horizon of political identity. The name given to this resolution in this essay is *sovereignty*. At best, texts that claim to move on from the resolutions of sovereignty at the level of *the State* 'deconstruct' the body of the nation only to valorize a micro-politics of difference, a politics which, while not content with the construction of coherence, takes its *spatializing urge* as its own critical starting-point. The desire for a body is expressed through this spatial perspective *as a desire for presence*, by which consciousness attempts a resolution of particular and universal identity: in the narratives of interiority, a tale of the singular becoming-universal of the nation is told. However, *becoming* is precisely what theories of the nation cannot discuss: temporality is already a spatial mode in their monolithic discourse.

The problem of coherence in theories of the nation assumes a specific conception of

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<sup>30</sup> Maurice Blanchot, "The Limits of Experience: Nihilism", in Allison, ed., 1977, p.126.

politics: the reduction of time to space as a resolution of universal and particular in the 'concept' of sovereignty (re)marks the meta-theoretical conditions of possibility of politics as a problem of *identity*: as Homi Bhabha asks, "[W]hat do I belong to in this present? In what terms do I identify with the 'we', the intersubjective realm of society?"<sup>31</sup> But, as Bhabha points out, this everyday, interrogative *performative discursive practice* of the nation fits rather uneasily with the spatialized narrative of modernity's *pedagogic discursive practice*, an 'uncanny' slippage which constitutes a 'Third Space' in the writing of the nation: the positionality of 'postcoloniality'. Three themes central to the claims of this essay are introduced in Bhabha's diagnosis of the double contradiction between pedagogy and performance and between the inside/outside of Europe as the originary boundary of the nation's modernity: first, that of the nation and nationalism as a set of *discursive practices*; second, a *genealogy* of the problematic - the identity/difference of modernity - through which theory narrates the nation; third, the question of *alternative modernities*: the problem of creating, not an 'opening', but 'lines of flight', in the discursive space of the nation which enables thought and dialogue 'across cultures' to be other than the 'fatal' repetitions of spatialized temporality found in the literature 'on' the nation thus far. To take the problem of becoming seriously as a *practical, political problem* is to consider that modernity is not what 'we', the supposedly Enlightened heirs of its originary moments, think it is. Nor is this a position which valorizes 'other' modes of thought *about* 'our' modernity: the meta-theoretical critique of interiority undertaken as a practice of becoming-otherwise is a matter of *multiplying* worlds, not of determining an essence to the One, or of grounding the rights of the Many.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Homi Bhabha, "Conclusion: 'Race', Time and the Revision of Modernity", in Bhabha, 1994, p.245.

<sup>32</sup> c.f. Deleuze, 1994, p.69: "It is not enough to multiply perspectives in order to establish perspectivism. To every perspective or point of view there must correspond an autonomous work with its own self-sufficient sense: what matters is the divergence of series, the decentering of circles, 'monstrosity'".

### Problematic Beginnings

Each of these themes is intimately related to questions of *dialogue* and to *writing*: to what one is doing in attempting to write a *theoretical critique* of the body of literature on the nation. For behind the specific meta-theoretical contentions of this essay is a problem, one of the *beginnings* of empirical studies which, while taking the proper name of a 'nation' as its initial 'object', refuses either to reify its presence in a spatio-temporal 'grid' of identity and coherence, or to simply valorize the marginal forces which play at the putative borders of such a grid. Yet if both of these options constrain critical thought and practice to weak or strong versions of Weber's discourse, it is vital to examine the ways in which they effect this repetition. How much must be unlearned before 'thought is again possible'! It is by constructing the Outside of Weberian discourse, the space of its encounter with 'Nietzsche', that offers an opportunity to begin: not (to paraphrase Brecht) from the bad old problems, but from the real new ones.

The first of these limiting discursive moves is given paradigmatic expression in the texts of liberals like Ernest Gellner and Marxists such as Tom Nairn, the second in a growing bibliography of 'postmodernist' and 'poststructuralist' writing - including Bhabha's, texts which take critiques of liberalism and Marxism as their starting point. In either case, the political 'scene' of the text produced, however centered or displaced, stages a *tragic negotiation* of identity/difference, at worst 'within', at best 'around', the resolutions of universal and particular through the reduction of time to categories of space constructed in the discursive practices of the nation. Identity politics takes a *reactive* stance toward the meta-theoretical conditions of its possibility, eliding the possibility of conceiving of an *active* relation to the dualisms governing practices of individual and collective in modernity. The former stance is given paradigmatic expression in Weber, the latter in readings of Nietzsche, particularly that of Deleuze. In short, the central contention of this essay can be re-stated thus: *the condition of possibility of writing the nation and nationalism is the nation, a dilemma whose limiting constraints are revealed through the repetition of meta-theoretical resolutions of space, time, identity, and number as they appear in and across theoretical texts on the nation. The circularity of this discursive practice determines its claim to provide the "inevitable" limits of critical theorizing the 'problem' of the nation.*

The central contention concerning these limiting problematics is this: *theories of the nation are unable to respond to the dilemma posed above in terms of critical problematics*: their meta-theoretical constraints disavow the possibility of constructing a 'plane' where constitutive problematics deferred, silenced, forgotten can be seen and heard. The construction of this, the fourth plane of analysis examined in this essay, constitutes the critical 'terrain' upon which dialogue may be again begun as an interrogation of *problematics*, a questioning disavowed in the spatial imaginings of Weberian discourse. Theories of the nation, written as they are from the perspective of the spatialized narratives of consciousness, coherence, and identity, are 'oriented' toward a *solution* from the beginning: *the identity/difference of the 'fatal body' of the nation*. The questions this essay asks are the following: *what are the problems for which the nation comes to be repeated as the solution? What part does the discursive construction of the nation play in permitting political theory to determine its identity in modernity as a monologue?*

The meta-theoretical resolutions of State sovereignty assumed in the discourse on the nation are intimately bound to questions of finitude, death, and fate: as it constructs the body of the nation through the resolutions of State sovereignty, *theories of the nation reveal both the subordination of their image of thought to the State and the constitutive complicity of State sovereignty and 'the sovereignty of death'*. On the first point, the complicity of thought and the State, Gilles Deleuze's remarks on 'the state of philosophy' can be applied to political theory:

"[T]hought borrows its properly philosophical image from the state as beautiful, substantial, or subjective interiority. It invents a properly spiritual State, as an absolute state, which is by no means a dream, since it operates effectively in the mind. Hence the importance of notions such as universality, method, question and answer, judgement or recognition, of just correct, always having correct thoughts... Philosophy is shot through with the project of becoming the official language of a Pure State. The exercise of thought thus conforms to the goals of the real State, to the dominant meanings and to the requirements of the established order".<sup>33</sup>

This essay contends that the 'Pure State' which forms the horizon of theorizing on the nation reveals itself as the *solution* to the bad problem of *the self-presence of consciousness*: the *being* of the body of interiority as the sovereign space of *death*. This demand for presence is thoroughly

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<sup>33</sup> Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, p.13.

*political*: the meta-theoretical resolutions effected through the concept of *State sovereignty* produce a critical reason which 'cunningly' construes these resolutions as a demand for life, even 'everyday life', while representing (in both senses) only death, nothing but death. By a structuring of *analogies* between the 'fate' of the self, nation, and State, the discourse of the nation is (re)written as *tragedy*, its politics a *struggle for individual and collective representations of identities forged out of the 'tragic' play of forces which have formed the nation 'itself'*. Thus does interiority *seduce* the forces of becoming: what could be more appealing than a resolution of all oppositions as a function of the *virtue* of the suffering self? In the universalized spatial order of modernity, where *time* has been reduced to the vanishing point of individual and collective *fatality*, all that political virtue requires for its maintenance is the *repetition of recognition of the co-presence of such suffering selves*. From the 'humanist' conception of interiority and its *ethical project* to postmodernism's ethics of *difference*, identity politics assumes a spatialized milieu of *dialogue and exchange*.<sup>34</sup> One sees little difference, in this sense, between Jean-Paul Sartre's humanism, where, as Robert Young puts it, "the dialectic, as a unity of method and movement, of subject and object, knower and known, *requires the writing subject who must effectively hold them together*";<sup>35</sup> Jürgen Habermas' "ideal speech situation";<sup>36</sup> and

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<sup>34</sup> This is Jean Baudrillard's much-maligned argument, which owes a considerable debt to other French 'post-Nietzscheans', particularly Deleuze. See Baudrillard, 1990, esp. Part III, and Baudrillard, 1993, esp. pp. 113-14:

"Everyone may dream...of a perfect duplicate, or perfect multiple copies, of his own being; but the strength of such copies lies precisely in their dream quality, and is lost as soon as any attempt is made to force dream into reality. The same is true of the (primal) scene of seduction, which is effective only so long as it is a phantasy, something re-remembered - so long as it is never real. Ours

is the only period ever to have sought to exorcize this phantasy (along with others) - that is, to turn it into flesh and blood, to transform the operation of the double from a subtle interplay involving death and the Other into the bland eternity of the Same".

And this, from *ibid.*, pp. 121-2:

"Inasmuch as the individual no longer confronts the other, he finds himself face to face with himself... Our society is entirely dedicated to neutralizing otherness, to destroying the other as a natural point of reference in a vast flood of aseptic communication and interaction, of illusory exchange and contact. By dint of communication, our society develops an allergy to itself. By becoming transparent in its genetic, biological and cybernetic being, the body even develops an allergy to its own shadow..."

<sup>35</sup> R. Young, 1990, p. 38 (my emphasis).

<sup>36</sup> See Dallmayr, 1981, pp. 198-207.

Bernard McGrane's postmodern injuncture to "speak *to* the Other...not giving orders but engaging in dialogue - that I can acknowledge him as subject, comparable to what I am myself".<sup>37</sup>

As Deleuze argues, critical rationality is governed by a model of *communication and representation* which is tied to the State as already a *solution* to the question of dialogue:<sup>38</sup> the dialogic space of State sovereignty underwrites a forgetting of *the politics of problematics*.<sup>39</sup> In different, yet closely related, ways theories of the nation assume a particular *location* of politics, *after ethics*, as if, once the 'healthy' and 'morbid' strains of the nation are identified, one would know how to 'orient' oneself and one's alliances to the present, however uncertain and tragic its agonistic politics. Or, in a more critical mode, which questions the *monologic* assumptions concerning subjectivity and intersubjectivity contained in the first position, it is as if, once this monologic element has been identified, *dialogic ethics* as the endless difference of the identity of the nation/self in the monologue of 'the West', 'coloniality', or 'imperialism' provides the stage - a sort of 'community theater' - upon which a *politics of representation* is acted out.

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<sup>37</sup> McGrane, 1989, p.127.

<sup>38</sup> On the 'reactive' aspect of representation, its service as prop for interiority and *being*, see Deleuze, 1994, esp. pp.42-52. See also, Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.28:

"The best one can say about discussions is that they take things no farther, since the participants never talk about the same thing. Of what concern is it to philosophy that someone has such a view, and thinks this or that, if the problems at stake are not stated? And when they are stated, it is no longer a matter of discussing but rather one of *creating concepts for the undiscussible problem posed*". [My emphasis]

<sup>39</sup> See Deleuze, 1994, pp.157-67:

"We are led to believe that problems are ready-made, and that they disappear in the responses or the solution. We are led to believe that the activity of thinking, along with truth and falsehood in relation to that activity, begins only with the search for solutions... According to this infantile prejudice, the master sets a problem, our task is to solve it, and the result is accredited true or false by a powerful authority. It is also a social prejudice with the visible interest of maintaining us in an infantile state, which calls upon us to solve problems that come from elsewhere..." (p.158)

### One Politics or Many?

A specific resolution of space, time, number and identity thus 'sets the stage' for a determined politics of monology/dialogue in theories of the nation: writing the nation becomes a *reproductive practice*, where critical theorizing constructs its 'object' - the nation - from the single perspective of interiority in a *singular discourse* - 'Weberian discourse'. As the essay has tried to illustrate, *the discourse of the nation is constituted by a repetition of the meta-theoretical assumptions of Max Weber's discourse, a repetition which both constitutes a lineage of thought on the nation, and elides its own encounter with the counter-lineage of Nietzschean thought*. The story of the nation is a narrative of a universal becoming-Same, the 'elements' and 'grammar' of which repeat those claimed to be diagnosed in the space-time of the nation; dialogue is centered around the dilemmas of being-different in this spatialized milieu. The meta-theoretical resolutions of theories of the nation thus produce a constraining model of the possibilities of dialogue, a limiting problematic that repeats the very conditions of possibility of the nation which dialogic ethics seeks to critically engage. If, however, the 'non-site' of postcoloniality - to name a key *moment* in the constitution of the 'body' of theoretical literature on the nation - provides the contested territory where dialogue is perhaps most urgently posed as a challenge to the monologue of the modern nation, it is all the more pressing to push the question of *beginnings* to a plane on which the problems elided by theoretical debates on the nation might be constructed *politically*, as a question of *techniques and practices of problematizations at the 'level' of the constitution of bodies*. This is the element of *positive critique* supposed in the essay: critical inquiry into the meta-theoretical resolution of theories of the nation reveals a *politics of problematics that bears an open-ended relation to the politics of bodies*.

Again, what such critical inquiry reveals is that theories of the nation are governed by a bad problem - of how 'coherence' is possible - which is written from the perspective of interiority and consciousness - of political identity in space and time. This perspective limits politics to a derivative discourse *after ethics*; that is, after the resolutions of identity in the dynamics of *self/other, individual/collective* which suppose the spatialization of time, the very reduction which produces the problem of 'coherence' and the *nihilism* that lies in wait as its fatal trajectory. Critical inquiry into theories of the nation reveals the *politics of nihilism* forgotten in the triumph of a 'reactive' nihilism of

consciousness: construction of planes of problematics works through an 'active' nihilism - called 'confusion' in this essay - which is disavowed in the 'body' of literature on the nation, *yet whose erasure is a condition of its 'coherence'*. The nation as condition of possibility of writing on the nation is a 'reactive' body; highlighting its confrontation with a politics of 'active' nihilism reveals not the endless tragedy of a politics of identity/difference, but rather the significance of the present as a moment of potentially productive, but always dangerous, *confusion*. Confusion is not the opposite of coherence; confusion has its own clarity: at the zero-intensity of thought, the realization of the dead-end of interiority, beginnings are again possible. This essay suggests that it is in this context that dialogue across cultures may be again begun. To return to the question of 'postcoloniality', Bhabha is encouraging in his assertion that,

"The encounters and negotiations of differential meanings and values within 'colonial' textuality, its governmental discourses and cultural practices, have anticipated, *avant la lettre*, many of the problematics of signification and judgement that have become current in contemporary theory - aporia, ambivalence, indeterminacy, the question of discursive closure, the threat to agency, the status of intentionality, the challenge to 'totalizing' concepts, to name but a few".<sup>40</sup>

But, and this is where the limits of poststructuralism reproduce the limits of the nation, Bhabha's conviction is an index, not of the degree to which postcolonial discourse escapes the constraints of 'Western' discourse on the nation, but of *the relative clarity of its confusion*. *Confusion* presents the possibility of resisting the construction of the body of self/nation/world as a 'fatal' body in favour of constructing new planes of immanence of problematics, a *becoming* rendered possible by the breakdown of the certainties of consciousness constrained to the spatial resolutions of interiority. Crucial as this formulation is, it should not be interpreted as proclaiming either the *nihilism* of a dissolution of self or the *eternalism* of a unity of self and cosmos: post-Nietzschean *practice* consists in a double move, whereby interiority is first shown to be illusory; second, the dualities constituting interiority's meta-theoretical conditions of possibility become not the 'inevitable' ground of individual and collective self-realization, but *practical elements* to work with: a radical empiricism.<sup>41</sup> As Gilles

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<sup>40</sup> Homi Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency", in Bhabha, 1994, p.173.

<sup>41</sup> Deleuze' empiricism is well summarized in Baugh, 1993.

Deleuze explains,

"It is very much a question of *awareness*, although it has nothing to do with a psychoanalytic consciousness, nor with a Marxist or even a Brechtian political consciousness. Consciousness, awareness, is a great capacity, but it is not made for solutions or for interpretations. It is when consciousness has abandoned solutions and interpretations that it conquers its light, its gestures, its sounds, and its decisive transformations".<sup>42</sup>

If theories of the nation stage a theater of *representation* as the inevitable scene of a tragic politics of identity/difference, they do so by a forgetting of the problems for which such presentations provide a solution. By contrast, taking confusion and its clarity seriously means resisting the construction of interiority's fatal body in favour of *becomings of 'active' bodies*. 'In favor of' does not mean that confusion is a solution, a better orientation for thought which might be the ground of a 'new' politics of difference. Confusion is not a 'solution'; it is a forgotten perspective of problems for which the discourse of the nation has assumed solutions, an index of *the Sameness of the conception of politics which is endlessly reproduced as 'our' tragic fate*. The discourse on the nation reveals this Sameness with particular force and clarity. It is, therefore, in the *difference* between the theater of representation and 'the theater of cruelty' constructed by theorists like Deleuze that a *political* genealogy of problems might constitute productive beginnings, provided the *conditions of possibility* - however immanent to practice - of Deleuze's own reading of Nietzsche are considered a central aspect of the *problematics* his texts raise. And this is where the fourth plane of problematics might be constructed: in an encounter between the alternative Western modernity of Nietzscheans like Deleuze and Foucault and the 'Outside' uneasily inhabited by 'post-colonial' thinkers of the non-West like Bhabha.

The 'Other theater' of non-representation constructed in the questioning of the meta-theoretical resolutions of discourses on the nation leads to four crucial points, which will be covered in the following sections. First, the problem of *the nation's modernity*: again, modernity is *not* what 'we', the alleged heirs of its originary moments, think it is. The staging of modernity as the inevitable 'becoming' of a universal order of repetitions of homogenous spaces *already assumes the resolutions*

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<sup>42</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "One Manifesto Less", in Deleuze, 1993b, p.222 [my emphasis].

*of sovereignty, the perspective of the interiority of consciousness and identity.* What is forgotten in this set of resolutions is the *specificity of the problematics* which frame the nation in modernity. In the 'active' space of becoming, what is made visible is the *nihilism* of modernity 'seen' from the spatialized perspective of interiority:

"The modern fact is that we no longer believe in this world. We do not even believe in the events which happen to us, love, death, as if they only half concerned us. It is not we who make cinema; it is the world which looks to us like a bad film... Only belief in the world can reconnect man to what he sees and hears. The cinema must film, not the world, but belief in this world, our only link... What is certain is that believing is no longer believing in another world, or in a transformed world. It is only, it is simply believing in the body. It is giving discourse to the body, and, for this purpose, reaching the body before discourses, before words, before things are named: the 'first name', and even before the first name".<sup>43</sup>

This account of a central problematic of the staging of the world in contemporary cinema foregrounds the relations between the spatial resolutions of State sovereignty and nihilism. Deleuze' contention, that 'modernity' supposes, as it silences, the problem of nihilism corresponds to Theodor Adorno's observation, some years ago, that "Nationalism no longer quite believes in itself".<sup>44</sup> However, it must be stressed that for Deleuze, this does not licence explanations of 'national practices' to a psychology of phantasy and 'the narcissism of minor differences'. But before outlining Deleuze' Nietzschean argument further, an important objection must be considered: should one attempt to speak in this way concerning 'life', 'consciousness', 'affirmation', and 'becoming', one risks being heard as another repetition of Romanticism, the very discourse theories of the nation build shelters against. What licences theories of the nation as critical is precisely a morbid diagnosis of a fatal complicity between Romanticism and *fascism*, against which the healthy potential of the body of the nation must be preserved. However, the discursive rhetoric of this 'inevitable complicity' *contains* the forces which escape 'coherence' as a problem. 'Giving discourse to the body' means taking seriously the *politics of confusion* produced in the 'Other theater' of the *Nietzschean counter-lineage* of Antonin Artaud, Georges Bataille, Maurice Blanchot, Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze, a lineage which

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<sup>43</sup> Deleuze, 1991b, pp.171-3. c.f. Nietzsche's demon, who announces the Eternal Return thus: "The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!" (GS, p.273) But, and this is where Deleuze moves beyond the radical dualism of Nietzsche's Master-Slave, it is not difficult to imagine oneself as this nullity, this "speck of dust".

<sup>44</sup> Adorno, in Ignatieff, 1993, pp.244-5.

bears a relation of difference to the lineage of theories of the nation. *The monologic lineage of thought on the nation achieves its unity at the cost of forgetting the politics of difference between these lineages themselves*; thus, the nation appears as the 'highest moment' of critical reflection on the 'fate' of political identity in modernity - a repetition, again, of the conditions of possibility of the appearance of the nation as a coherent body in the 'Weberian lineage'. Identity/difference supposes a *tragic politics of life which is written from the perspective of death: the temporal presence of consciousness to itself*.

### **Invasion of the Body Snatchers**

It is just this theft of the body by death that the Nietzschean counter-lineage diagnoses as conditioned by the resolutions of sovereignty, resolutions which reduce 'becoming' to the being-present of a fatal interiority. For instance, Artaud's 'theater of cruelty', as non-Romantic affirmation of "life before birth and after death"<sup>45</sup> is an attempt to wrest life from the God of interiority, who replaces life with the body of death, a crucial displacement enacted in the discourse of the nation:

"We are not yet born,  
we are not yet of this world,  
there is no world yet,  
things have not been created,  
the *raison d'être* not yet found,

the only question is that of having a body,  
of having with oneself enough body to tear one's strength loose from  
other beings who have stolen it.

I speak for myself.  
I am answerable to no one in the organization.

Get back down in your grave god you lowdown corpse.

There remains to be solved the question of the composition of the  
human body, of the localizations of its organs  
and of its elements..."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Jacques Derrida, "The Theater of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation", in Derrida, 1978, p.233.

<sup>46</sup> Antonin Artaud, "I Hate and Renounce as a Coward...", in Artaud, 1965, pp.226-7.

Second, it might be objected that there are many who have no choice but to believe in modernity, and that they are those who suffer its injustices, its exclusions, its oppressions. Indeed, are not at least some attempts at theorizing the nation written to give voice to this suffering, precisely against those who offer only their own nihilism as an alibi for forgetting their position in the cycle of suffering and oppression? To which it is necessary to reply, the compassion for suffering which animates your discourse is noble, but your insight into suffering is betrayed by the perspective of interiority with which you begin. *Interiority is already suffering*. The resolutions of sovereignty are already oriented toward death, as the interiority of consciousness is bounded by the *the non-presence of the temporal present to itself*; interiority is oriented toward the *presence* of consciousness in death, its limit. What governs the spatialized conception of time is expressed as a *monotheism* which desires presence in life, yet finds it only at the limit, in death, a conception well-expressed in *The Bhagavad-Gita*:

"The nature of the relative world is mutability. The nature of the individual man is consciousness of ego. I alone am God who presides over actions, here in the body.

At the hour of death, when a man leaves his body, he must depart with his consciousness absorbed in me. Then he will be united with me. Be certain of that. *Whatever a man remembers at the last, when he is leaving the body, will be realized by him in the hereafter; because that will be what his mind has most constantly dwelt on, during his life*".<sup>47</sup>

From the perspective of interiority theories of the nation *narrate* the *becoming* of bodies - self/nation/world - always as subordinate to a *desire for being*, but being which is against life, which *resents* life, and which desires presence at the cost of making bodies turn against life. The spatio-temporal resolutions of this narration of resentment privilege the construction of interiority - *memory* is here one of its key 'elements' - as a 'progress' in which suffering is figured as entirely internal to this construction. Once again, critical theories of the nation cannot achieve what they attempt: the perspective of interiority is a ruse by which compassion for suffering is turned against life and becoming, in the service of being and death.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *The Song of God: Bhagavad-Gita*, 1972 [my emphasis].

<sup>48</sup> c.f. Nietzsche, GS, pp.328-31.

The desire for presence which animates the interiority of consciousness supposes the spatialization of time, a resolution 'postmodern' theorists of the nation like William Connolly, who follows Paul Ricoeur, rediscover in Augustine of Hippo. It is as if, once the problem of State sovereignty is critically detached from its resolution of *universal and particular*, critical rationality can proceed with a positive task of outlining a liberatory politics, forgetting the spatio-temporal reduction which conditions the appearance of universal-particular as a *political* problem in the first place. The result is the implicit claim that, where 'modernism' marks the triumph of the State as the 'container' of political identity, *the nation becomes, in 'postmodernity', the new container*. What follows is an 'interdisciplinary' profusion of commentary on the nation which, while claiming to offer an opening for dialogue in the space of a 'politics of difference' or 'radical democracy', *simply repeats both the meta-theoretical assumptions and the 'national grammar' of Weberian discourse*. A singular politics of difference may valorize a multiplicity of representations, so long as politics is confined to its 'inevitable' location, after ethics, a resolution which presupposes a prior politics which is the limit of Weber's *liberalism*. It is this *repetition* of Weber's liberal discourse which a critical exploration of meta-theoretical resolutions seeks to locate at the 'level' of the problematic encounter between Weber and Nietzsche. Just as theories of the nation construct their object through a particular conception of repetition, which yields a narrative of the inevitability of a universal becoming-Same of political identity in the nation, these theories take place in a discursive milieu where one can only repeat a Weberian perspective on the Nietzsche-Weber encounter: again, the nation is the condition of possibility of writing the nation. However, in the difference between the 'reactive' nihilism of Weber and the 'active' nihilism of Nietzsche, the *politics of being and becoming* emerges as a question, a problem forgotten in the discursive monologue of theories of the nation.

### **Conclusions: Alternative Modernities**

The 'reactive' politics of being is a strong politics - it has powerful effects - but it fails to question its own conditions of possibility. In it, 'becoming' is reduced to the demands of being - of interiority, coherence, and identity, *a false view of movement*, for which figures of mobility and the Outside - 'the migrant', 'the stranger' - and tropes of 'homelessness' serve as vehicles. A Nietzschean politics of becoming is not offered as a 'better politics'; again, it is a question of what is at stake in

taking seriously the constitutive problematics - a *multiplicity* of problems - which enable the discourse of the nation to offer an endless monologue of identity/difference as the limit of critical theorizing. Dialogue 'across' cultures may be possible only if the self-identity of political theory as a 'Western' enterprise - whether traced back to Athens, Jerusalem, or (as in poststructuralism) somewhere on the road between - is questioned precisely *as* a monologue - a bad repetition. The 'inside' of 'our' conception of politics is constituted as a singular politics by a reversal wherein the Outside is characterized as that which does not change and has no movement; 'Inside', change becomes 'our' preserve, and a tragic politics of the inevitable becoming-Same of movement becomes 'our fate'. 'Responsible' political theory demands facing up to the dilemmas of this fatality. What the encounter between Nietzsche and Weber in the discourse of the nation reveals is the determined nature of this politics, the political resolutions it presupposes.

Further, if one speaks of desire here, it is not to invoke the interior force of a subject, its 'drive', nor to relate it to "lack or law; a natural or spontaneous reality; pleasure or, above all, the festival".<sup>49</sup> In Deleuze' construction of a counter-lineage of *immanence*, "*desire only exists when assembled or machined*".<sup>50</sup> 'Desire' is a *collective assemblage* always to be constructed on a plane of immanence; therefore, when one speaks of "awareness" as a 'condition of possibility' of a politics of reading/writing theory as *problematization*, it must be understood as neither 'individual' nor 'spiritual', as neither pre-existing nor as passive contemplation. In short, "awareness" should not be understood as "awareness of..."; awareness is a politics of *becoming* without a goal, a practice of constructing problems.

Nor is it a question here of *choosing* between the avatars of God and those of atheism, of immanence over transcendence, of bodies over Mind, of some incoherent "post-postmodernity" over modernity, a Nietzschean philosophy of 'Life' and exteriority over death-bed philosophies of interiority; least of all is it a matter of choosing 'confusion' over 'coherence', in order to answer questions of identity. It is, rather, a matter of raising to a plane of problematics the *encounters* which

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<sup>49</sup> See Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, pp.95-103 (quotation from p.103).

<sup>50</sup> Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, p.96 (Deleuze' emphasis).

enable modernity to become 'itself' a question, *for which the nation comes to be written as the problematic solution*. Doubtless there are a multiplicity of encounters, and different problems 'structuring' what has been said about them. Theories of the nation privilege some encounters, presume some others, and forget still more. More crucially, *theories of the nation presume a particular notion of 'encounter' itself*, lodged in psycho-social *figures* of dialogic exchange: the migrant, the stranger, the exile, the postcolonial - variations on the identity/difference of 'the liminal'. In addition, theories of the nation forge their critical claims *intertextually*, as encounters in which the spatio-temporal meeting-ground is given in advance as the very space upon which the nation is constructed.

The procedure of this essay has been to examine the encounter of two lineages, that of 'Nietzsche' and that of 'Weber' in the discourse on the nation, in order to produce a plane of problematics 'beyond' the relative horizon of a spatial politics of identity/difference. It is a Nietzschean perspective which enables political questions to be asked, yet *it is the encounter between Nietzsche and Weber which the discourse of the nation forgets as a key condition of its possibility*. And 'behind' this encounter, many others: between Enlightenment and its Other, between Athens and Jerusalem, between Athens-Jerusalem and the Outside, encounters whose *repetition* is written in the discourse on the nation as the structure of its coherence, and the genesis of its fate.

Finally, the examination of meta-theoretical issues in theories of the nation and nationalism takes the form of an *immanent critique*: textually, the essay begins with an account of the argument contained in Benedict Anderson's 1983 text, *Imagined Communities*, and in the second edition, published in 1991. There are three reasons for beginning with this text. First, Anderson thematizes space, time, and identity as central issues in a critical account of the "origin and spread" of the nation. His text contains (in both senses) a paradigmatic treatment of the meta-theoretical resolutions of sovereignty. Attempting to avoid the twin pitfalls of reductionism and reification, Anderson moves his analysis toward the 'thinness' of discursive analysis. Second, he produces a 'grammar' of the nation whose rules are explicitly governed by particular conceptions of suffering, fatality, and fate, offering a tragic conception of politics as the inevitable form critical rationality must take in the present. This grammar is composed of 'elements' - figures of mobility, memory, representation, reproduction,

narration, to name a few - which attempt to account for the relations between the interiority of the self and the inside/outside of the nation's boundaries as a question of 'coherence'. Third, Anderson's text appears in the literature on the nation as something new, a creative opening which provides the theoretical space for a considerable proliferation of 'postmodernist' and 'poststructuralist' commentary. As an attempt to critically engage liberal and Marxist theories of the nation - most strongly stated in texts of Ernest Gellner and Tom Nairn - *Imagined Communities* privileges an historical narrative of the interiority of consciousness as a mode of critical rationality which evades the allegedly fascist trajectory of Romanticist discourses at the unacceptable cost of acquiescing to its own nihilistic destiny.

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