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Communal Heavens: Identity and Meaning in the Network Society

The capital is established near Zhong Mountain;
The palaces and thresholds are brilliant and shining;
The forests and gardens are fragrant and flourishing;
Epidendrums and cassia complement each other in beauty.
The forbidden palace is magnificent;
Buildings and pavilions a hundred stories high.
Halls and gates are beautiful and lustrous;
Bells and chimes sound musically.
The towers reach up to the sky;
Upon altars sacrificial animals are burned.
Cleansed and purified,
We fast and bathe.
We are respectful and devout in worship,
Dignified and serene in prayer.
Supplicating with fervor,
Each seeks happiness and joy.
The uncivilized and border people offer tribute,
And all the barbarians are submissive.
No matter how vast the territory,
All will be eventually under our rule.

Hong Xiuquan

Such were the words of the "Imperially Written Tale of a Thousand Words," composed by Hong Xiuquan, the guide and prophet of the Taiping Rebellion, after establishing his heavenly kingdom in Nanjing in 1853.[1]

1 Cited by Spence (1996: 190–1).

The insurgency of Taiping Tao (Way of Great Peace) aimed at creating a communal, neo-Christian fundamentalist kingdom in China. The kingdom was organized, for more than a decade, in conformity with the revelation of the Bible that, by his own account, Hong Xiuquan received from his elder brother, Jesus Christ, after being initiated into Christianity by evangelical missionaries. Between 1845 and 1864, Hong's prayers, teachings, and armies shook up China, and the world, as they interfered with the growing foreign control of the Middle Kingdom. The Taiping Kingdom perished, as it lived, in blood and fire, taking the lives of 20 million Chinese. It longed to establish an earthly paradise by fighting the demons that had taken over China, so that "all people may live together in perpetual joy, until at last they are raised to Heaven to greet their Father."[2] It was a time of crisis for state bureaucracies and moral traditions, of globalization of trade, of profitable drug traffic, of rapid industrialization spreading in the world, of religious missions, of impoverished peasants, of the shaking of families and communities, of local bandits and international armies, of the diffusion of printing and mass illiteracy, a time of uncertainty and hopelessness, of identity crisis. It was another time. Or was it?

The Construction of Identity

Identity is people's source of meaning and experience. As Calhoun writes:

> We know of no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinctions between self and other, we and they, are not made . . . Self-knowledge – always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery – is never altogether separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others.[3]

By identity, as it refers to social actors, I understand the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning. For a given individual, or for a collective actor, there may be a plurality of identities. Yet, such a plurality is a source of stress and contradiction in both self-representation and social action. This is because identity must be distinguished from what, traditionally, sociologists have called roles, and role-sets. Roles (for example, to be a worker, a mother, a neighbor, a socialist militant, a union member, a basketball player, a churchgoer, and a smoker, at the

2   Spence (1996: 172).
3   Calhoun (1994: 9–10).

same time) are defined by norms structured by the institutions and organizations of society. Their relative weight in influencing people's behavior depends upon negotiations and arrangements between individuals and these institutions and organizations. Identities are sources of meaning for the actors themselves, and by themselves, constructed through a process of individuation.[4]

Although, as I will argue below, identities can also be originated from dominant institutions, they become identities only when and if social actors internalize them, and construct their meaning around this internalization. To be sure, some self-definitions can also coincide with social roles, for instance when to be a father is the most important self-definition from the point of view of the actor. Yet, identities are stronger sources of meaning than roles because of the process of self-construction and individuation that they involve. In simple terms, identities organize the meaning, while roles organize the functions. I define *meaning* as the symbolic identification by a social actor of the purpose of her/his action. I also propose the idea that, *in the network society*, for reasons that I will develop below, for most social actors, meaning is organized around a primary identity (that is an identity that frames the others), which is self-sustaining across time and space. While this approach is close to Erikson's formulation of identity, my focus here will be primarily on collective, rather than on individual, identity. However, individualism (different from individual identity) may also be a form of "collective identity," as analyzed in Lasch's "culture of narcissism."[5]

It is easy to agree on the fact that, from a sociological perspective, all identities are constructed. The real issue is how, from what, by whom, and for what. The construction of identities uses building materials from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework. I propose, as a hypothesis, that, in general terms, who constructs collective identity, and for what, largely determines the symbolic content of this identity, and its meaning for those identifying with it or placing themselves outside of it. Since the social construction of identity always takes place in a context marked by power relationships, I propose a distinction between three forms and origins of identity building:

4   Giddens (1991).
5   Lasch (1980).

- *Legitimizing identity*: introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination *vis à vis* social actors, a theme that is at the heart of Sennett's theory of authority and domination,[6] but also fits with various theories of nationalism.[7]
- *Resistance identity*: generated by those actors who are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society, as Calhoun proposes when explaining the emergence of identity politics.[8]
- *Project identity*: when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure. This is the case, for instance, when feminism moves out of the trenches of resistance of women's identity and women's rights, to challenge patriarchalism, thus the patriarchal family, and thus the entire structure of production, reproduction, sexuality, and personality on which societies have been historically based.

Naturally, identities that start as resistance may induce projects, and may also, along the course of history, become dominant in the institutions of society, thus becoming legitimizing identities to rationalize their domination. Indeed, the dynamics of identities along this sequence shows that, from the point of view of social theory, no identity can be an essence, and no identity has, *per se*, progressive or regressive value outside its historical context. A different, and very important matter, is the benefits of each identity for the people who belong.

In my view, each type of identity-building process leads to a different outcome in constituting society. *Legitimizing identity generates a civil society*; that is, a set of organizations and institutions, as well as a series of structured and organized social actors, which reproduce, albeit sometimes in a conflictive manner, the identity that rationalizes the sources of structural domination. This statement may come as a surprise to some readers, since civil society generally suggests a positive connotation of democratic social change. However, this is in fact the original conception of civil society, as formulated by Gramsci, the intellectual father of this ambiguous concept. Indeed, in Gramsci's

6   Sennett (1980).
7   Anderson (1983); Gellner (1983).
8   Calhoun (1994: 17).

conception, civil society is formed by a series of "apparatuses," such as the Church(es), unions, parties, cooperatives, civic associations, and so on, which, on the one hand, prolong the dynamics of the state, but, on the other hand, are deeply rooted among people.[9] It is precisely this dual character of civil society that makes it a privileged terrain of political change by making it possible to seize the state without launching a direct, violent assault. The conquest of the state by the forces of change (let's say the forces of socialism, in Gramsci's ideology) present in civil society is made possible exactly because of the continuity between civil society's institutions and the power apparatuses of the state, organized around a similar identity (citizenship, democracy, the politicization of social change, the confinement of power to the state and its ramifications, and the like). Where Gramsci and de Tocqueville see democracy and civility, Foucault and Sennett, and before them Horkheimer and Marcuse, see internalized domination and legitimation of an over-imposed, undifferentiated, normalizing identity.

The second type of identity-building, *identity for resistance*, leads to the formation of *communes*, or *communities*, in Etzioni's formulation.[10] This may be the most important type of identity-building in our society. It constructs forms of collective resistance against otherwise unbearable oppression, usually on the basis of identities that were, apparently, clearly defined by history, geography, or biology, making it easier to essentialize the boundaries of resistance. For instance, ethnically based nationalism, as Scheff proposes, often "arises out of a sense of alienation, on the one hand, and resentment against unfair exclusion, whether political, economic or social."[11] Religious fundamentalism, territorial communities, nationalist self-affirmation, or even the pride of self-denigration, inverting the terms of oppressive discourse (as in the "queer culture" of some tendencies in the gay movement), are all expressions of what I name *the exclusion of the excluders by the excluded*. That is, the building of defensive identity in the terms of dominant institutions/ideologies, reversing the value judgment while reinforcing the boundary. In such a case, the issue arises of the reciprocal communicability between these excluded/exclusionary identities. The answer to this question, which can only be empirical and historical, determines whether societies remain as societies or else fragment into a constellation of tribes, sometimes euphemistically renamed communities.

  9   Buci-Glucksman (1978).
 10   Etzioni (1993).
 11   Scheff (1994: 281).

The third process of constructing identity, that is *project identity*, produces *subjects*, as defined by Alain Touraine:

> I name subject the desire of being an individual, of creating a personal history, of giving meaning to the whole realm of experiences of individual life . . . The transformation of individuals into subjects results from the necessary combination of two affirmations: that of individuals against communities, and that of individuals against the market.[12]

Subjects are not individuals, even if they are made by and in individuals. They are the collective social actor through which individuals reach holistic meaning in their experience.[13] In this case, the building of identity is a project of a different life, perhaps on the basis of an oppressed identity, but expanding toward the transformation of society as the prolongation of this project of identity, as in the above-mentioned example of a post-patriarchal society, liberating women, men, and children, through the realization of women's identity. Or, in a very different perspective, the final reconciliation of all human beings as believers, brothers and sisters, under the guidance of God's law, be it Allah or Jesus, as a result of the religious conversion of godless, anti-family, materialist societies, otherwise unable to fufill human needs and God's design.

How, and by whom, different types of identities are constructed, and with what outcomes, cannot be addressed in general, abstract terms: it is a matter of social context. Identity politics, as Zaretsky writes, "must be situated historically."[14] Thus, our discussion must refer to a specific context, the rise of the network society. The dynamics of identity in this context can be better understood by contrasting it with Giddens's characterization of identity in "late modernity," a historical period which, I believe, is an era reaching its end – by which I do not mean to suggest that we are in some way reaching the "end of history" as posited in some postmodern vagaries. In a powerful theorization, whose main lines I share, Giddens states that "self-identity is not a distinctive trait possessed by the individual. It is the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her/his biography." Indeed, "to be a human being is to know . . . both what one is doing and why one is doing it . . . In the context of post-traditional order, the self becomes a reflexive project."[15]

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12   Touraine (1995a: 29–30); my translation.
13   Touraine (1992).
14   Zaretsky (1994: 198).
15   Giddens (1991: 53, 35, 32).

How does "late modernity" impact this reflexive project? In Giddens's terms,

> one of the distinctive features of modernity is an increasing interconnection between the two extremes of extensionality and intentionality: globalising influences on the one hand and personal dispositions on the other...The more tradition loses its hold, and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options...Reflexively organized life-planning... becomes a central feature of the structuring of self-identity."[16]

While agreeing with Giddens's theoretical characterization of identity-building in the period of "late modernity," I argue, on the basis of analyses presented in volume I of this trilogy, that the rise of the network society calls into question the processes of the construction of identity during that period, thus inducing new forms of social change. This is because the network society is based on the systemic disjunction between the local and the global for most individuals and social groups. And, I will add, by the separation in different time–space frames between power and experience (volume I, chapters 6 and 7). Therefore, reflexive life-planning becomes impossible, except for the elite inhabiting the timeless space of flows of global networks and their ancillary locales. And the building of intimacy on the basis of trust requires a redefinition of identity fully autonomous *vis à vis* the networking logic of dominant institutions and organizations.

Under such new conditions, civil societies shrink and disarticulate because there is no longer continuity between the logic of power-making in the global network and the logic of association and representation in specific societies and cultures. The search for meaning takes place then in the reconstruction of defensive identities around communal principles. Most of social action becomes organized in the opposition between unidentified flows and secluded identities. As for the emergence of project identities, it still happens, or may happen, depending on societies. But, I propose the hypothesis that the constitution of subjects, at the heart of the process of social change, takes a different route to the one we knew during modernity, and late modernity: namely, *subjects, if and when constructed, are not built any longer on the basis of civil societies, which are in the process of disintegration, but as prolongation of communal resistance*. While in modernity (early or late) project identity was constituted from civil society (as in the case of socialism on the basis of the labor

16   Giddens (1991: 1, 5).

movement), in the network society, project identity, if it develops at all, grows from communal resistance. This is the actual meaning of the new primacy of identity politics in the network society. The analysis of processes, conditions, and outcomes of the transformation of communal resistance into transformative subjects is the precise realm for a theory of social change in the information age.

Having reached a tentative formulation of my hypotheses, it would be against the methodological principles of this book to go any further down the path of abstract theorizing that could quickly divert into bibliographical commentary. I shall try to suggest the precise implications of my analysis by focusing on a number of key processes in the construction of collective identity selected by their particular relevance to the process of social change in the network society. I will start with *religious fundamentalism*, both in its Islamic and Christian versions, although this does not imply that other religions (for example, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism) are less important or less prone to fundamentalism. I shall continue with *nationalism*, considering, after some overview of the issue, two very different, but significant processes: the role of nationalism in the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and in post-Soviet republics; and the formation and re-emergence of Catalan nationalism. I will then turn to *ethnic identity*, focusing on contemporary African American identity. And I will end by considering, briefly, *territorial identity*, on the basis of my observation of urban movements and local communities around the world. In conclusion, I shall try a succinct synthesis of major lines of inquiry that will emerge from examining various contemporary processes of the (re)construction of identity on the basis of communal resistance.

God's Heavens: Religious Fundamentalism and Cultural Identity

It is an attribute of society, and I would dare to say of human nature if such an entity were to exist, to find solace and refuge in religion. The fear of death, the pain of life, need God, and faith in God, whichever of God's manifestations, for people just to go on. Indeed, outside us God would become homeless.

Religious fundamentalism is something else. And I contend that this "something else" is a most important source of constructing identity in the network society for reasons that will become clearer, I hope, in the following pages. As for its actual content, experiences, opinions, history, and theories are so diverse as to defy synthesis. Fortunately, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences undertook, in the late

1980s, a major comparative project aimed at observing fundamental-isms in various social and institutional contexts.[17] Thus, we know that "fundamentalists are always reactive, reactionary,"[18] and that:

> fundamentalists are selective. They may well consider that they are adopting the whole of the pure past, but their energies go into employing those features which will best reinforce their identity, keep their move-ment together, build defenses around its boundaries, and keep others at a distance . . . Fundamentalists fight under God – in the case of theistic religion – or under the signs of some transcendent reference.[19]

To be more precise, I believe, to be consistent with the collection of essays gathered in the "Fundamentalism Observed" Project, in defin-ing *fundamentalism*, in my own understanding, as *the construction of collective identity under the identification of individual behavior and society's institutions to the norms derived from God's law, interpreted by a definite authority that intermediates between God and humanity.* Thus, as Marty writes, "It is impossible for fundamentalists to argue or settle anything with people who do not share their commitment to an authority, whether it be an inerrant Bible, an infallible Pope, the *Shari'a* codes in Islam, or the implications of *halacha* in Judaism."[20]

Religious fundamentalism has, of course, existed throughout the whole of human history, but it appears to be surprisingly strong and influential as a source of identity in this new millennium. Why so? My analyses of Islamic fundamentalism, and of Christian fundamental-ism, in this section, will try to propose some clues to understand one of the most defining trends in the making of our historical epoch.[21]

Umma *versus* Jahiliya*: Islamic fundamentalism*

The only way to accede to modernity is by our own path, that which has been traced for us by our religion, our history and our civilization.
Rached Gannouchi[22]

The 1970s, the birthdate of the information technology revolution in Silicon Valley, and the starting-point of global capitalist restructuring, had a different meaning for the Muslim world: it marked the begin-

17   Marty and Appleby (1991).
18   Marty (1988: 20).
19   Marty and Appleby (1991: ix–x).
20   Marty (1988: 22).
21   See also Misztal and Shupe (1992a).
22   Rached Gannouchi, interview with *Jeune Afrique*, July 1990. Gannouchi is a leading intellectual in the Tunisian Islamist movement.

ning of the fourteenth century of the *Hegira*, a period of Islamic revival, purification, and strengthening, as at the onset of each new century. Indeed, in the next two decades an authentic cultural/religious revolution spread throughout Muslim lands, sometimes victorious, as in Iran, sometimes subdued, as in Egypt, sometimes triggering civil war, as in Algeria, sometimes formally acknowledged in the institutions of the state, as in the Sudan or Bangladesh, most times establishing an uneasy coexistence with a formally Islamic nation-state, fully integrated in global capitalism, as in Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, or Morocco. Overall, the cultural identity and political fate of almost a billion people were being fought for in the mosques and in the wards of Muslim cities, crowded by accelerated urbanization, and disintegrated by failed modernization. Islamic fundamentalism, as a reconstructed identity, and as a political project, is at the center of a most decisive process, largely conditioning the world's future.[23]

But, what is Islamic fundamentalism? Islam, in Arabic, means state of submission, and a Muslim is one who has submitted to Allah. Thus, according to the definition of fundamentalism I presented above, it would appear that all Islam is fundamentalist: societies, and their state institutions, must be organized around uncontested religious principles. However, a number of distinguished scholars[24] argue that, while the primacy of religious principles as formulated in the Qur'ān is common to all of Islam, Islamic societies and institutions are also based on multivocal interpretation. Furthermore, in most traditional Islamic societies, the pre-eminence of religious principles over political authority was purely formal. Indeed, the *shari'a* (divine law, formed by the Qur'ān and the Hadiths) relates in classic Arabic language to the verb *shara'a*, to walk toward a source. Thus, for most Muslims, *shari'a* is not an invariable, rigid command, but a guide to walk toward God, with the adaptations required by each historical and social context.[25] In contrast to this openness of Islam, Islamic fundamentalism implies the fusion of *shari'a* with *fiqh*, or interpretation and application by jurists and authorities, under the absolute domination of *shari'a*. Naturally, the actual meaning depends on the process of interpretation, and on who interprets. Thus, there is a wide range of variation between conservative fundamentalism, such as the one represented by the House of Saud, and radical fundamentalism, as elaborated in the writings of al-Mawdudi or Sayyid Qtub in the 1950s and 1960s.[26]

23   Hiro (1989); Balta (1991); Sisk (1992); Choueri (1993); Juergensmeyer (1993); Dekmejian (1995).
24   See, for example, Bassam Tibi (1988, 1992a); al-Azmeh (1993); Farhad Khosrokhavar (1995), among others.
25   Garaudy (1990).
26   Carre (1984); Choueri (1993).

There are also considerable differences between the Shia tradition, the one inspiring Khomeini, and the Sunni tradition, which constitutes the faith for about 85 percent of Muslims, including revolutionary movements such as Algeria's *Front Islamique de Salvation* (FIS), or Egypt's *Takfir wal-Hijrah*. Yet, in the vision of writers who constitute Islamist thought from the end of the nineteenth century, such as Persia's Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, and into the twentieth century, such as Egypt's Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qtub, India's Ali al-Nadawi, or Pakistan's Sayyid Abul al-Mawdudi, the history of Islam is reconstructed to show the perennial submission of state to religion.[27] For a Muslim, the fundamental attachment is not to the *watan* (homeland), but to the *umma*, or community of believers, all made equal in their submission to Allah. This universal confraternity supersedes the institutions of the nation-state, which is seen as a source of division among believers.[28] In the writing of Sayyid Qtub, probably the most influential writer on Islamic fundamentalism among radical Islamists:

> the ties of ideology and faith are stronger than the ties of fervent patriotic feelings that relate to a region or a territory. Thus false differentiation between Muslims on a territorial basis is nothing but an expression of the campaigns against the Orient, and an expression of the Zionist imperialism that must be exterminated . . . the homeland is not the land but the group of believers or the whole Islamic "umma."[29]

For the *umma* to live, and expand, until embracing the whole of humanity, it has to accomplish a godly task: to undertake, anew, the fight against *Jahiliya* (the state of ignorance of God, or of lack of observance of God's teachings), into which societies have fallen again. To regenerate humanity, Islamization must proceed first in the Muslim societies that have secularized and departed from the strict obedience of God's law, then in the entire world. This process must start with a spiritual rebirth based on *al-sirat al-mustaqin* (straight path), modeled after the community organized by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Yet, to overcome impious forces, it may be necessary to proceed through *jihad* (struggle on behalf of Islam) against the infidels, which may include, in extreme cases, the resort to holy war. In the Shia tradition, martyrdom, re-enacting Imam Ali's sacrifice in 681, is indeed at the heart of religious purity. But the whole of Islam shares

27   Hiro (1989); al-Azmeh (1993); Choueri (1993); Dekmejian (1995).
28   Oumlil (1992).
29   Qtub (n.d./1970s)

the praise for the necessary sacrifices implied by the call of God (*al-da'wah*). As stated by Hassan al-Banna, the founder and leader of Muslim Brotherhood, assassinated in 1949: "The Qur'ān is our constitution, the Prophet is our Guide; death for the glory of Allah is our greatest ambition."[30] The ultimate goal of all human actions must be the establishment of God's law over the whole of humankind, thus ending the current opposition between *Dar al-Islam* (the Muslim world), and *Dar al-Harb* (the non-Muslim world).

In this cultural/religious/political framework, Islamic identity is constructed on the basis of a double deconstruction: by the social actors, and by the institutions of society. Social actors must deconstruct themselves as subjects, be it as individuals, as members of an ethnic group, or as citizens of a nation. In addition, women must submit to their guardian men, as they are encouraged to fulfill themselves primarily in the framework of the family: "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means."[31] As Bassam Tibi writes, "Habermas' principle of subjectivity is a heresy for Islamic fundamentalists."[32] Only in the *umma* can the individual be fully himself/herself, as part of the confraternity of believers, a basic equalizing mechanism that provides mutual support, solidarity, and shared meaning. On the other hand, the nation-state itself must negate its identity: *al-dawla islamiiyya* (the Islamic state), based on the *shari'a*, takes precedence over the nation-state (*al-dawla qawmiyya)*. This proposition is particularly effective in the Middle East, a region where, according to Tibi, "the nation-state is alien and is virtually imposed on its parts . . . The political culture of secular nationalism is not only a novelty in the Middle East, but also remains on the surface of involved societies."[33] Indeed, as Lawrence writes, "Islam is not merely a religion. It is a religion and more. It encompasses both the spiritual and the political, the private and the political domain . . . Nationalism becomes the most despised front edge of secularism because it demands the state act as an obedience-context . . . in true Islam, according to Qtub, 'Nationalism is belief, homeland is *dar al-islam*, the rules are God, and the constitution is the Qur'ān.'"[34]

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30   Cited by Hiro (1989: 63).
31   Qur'ān, surāh IV, v. 34 (trans. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 1988). See Hiro (1989: 202); Delcroix (1995); Gerami (1996).
32   Tibi (1992b: 8).
33   Tibi (1992b: 5).
34   Lawrence (1989: 216).

However, and this is essential, Islamic fundamentalism is not a traditionalist movement. For all the efforts of exegesis to root Islamic identity in history and the holy texts, Islamists proceeded, for the sake of social resistance and political insurgency, with a reconstruction of cultural identity that is in fact hypermodern.[35] As al-Azmeh writes: "The politicization of the sacred, the sacralization of politics, and the transformation of Islamic pseudo-legal institutes into 'social devotions', are all means of realizing the politics of the authentic ego, a politics of identity, and therefore the means for the very formation, indeed the invention, of this identity."[36]

But, if Islamism (although rooted in the writings of nineteenth-century Islamic reformers and revivalists, such as al-Afghani) is essentially a contemporary identity, why now? Why has it exploded in the past two decades, after being repeatedly subdued by nationalism in the post-colonial period, as exemplified by the repression of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt and Syria (including the execution of Qtub in 1966), the rise of Sukarno in Indonesia or of the *Front de Libération Nationale* in Algeria?[37]

For Tibi, "the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East is inter-related with the exposure of this part of the world of Islam, which perceives itself as a collective entity, to the processes of globalization, to nationalism and the nation-state as globalized principles of organization."[38] Indeed, the explosion of Islamic movements seems to be related to both the disruption of traditional societies (including the undermining of the power of traditional clergy), and to the failure of the nation-state, created by nationalist movements, to accomplish modernization, develop the economy, and/or to distribute the benefits of economic growth among the population at large. Thus, Islamic identity is (re)constructed by fundamentalists in opposition to capitalism, to socialism, and to nationalism, Arab or otherwise, which are, in their view, all failing ideologies of the post-colonial order.

A case in point is, of course, Iran.[39] The Shah's White Revolution, launched in 1963, was a most ambitious attempt to modernize the economy and society, with the support of the United States, and with the deliberate project of linking up with new global capitalism in the making. So doing, it undermined the basic structures of traditional society, from agriculture to the calendar. Indeed, a major conflict

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35   Gole (1995).
36   Al-Azmeh (1993: 31).
37   Piscatori (1986); Moen and Gustafson (1992); Tibi (1992a); Burgat and Dowell (1993); Juergensmeyer (1993); Dekmejian (1995).
38   Tibi (1992b: 7).
39   Hiro (1989); Bakhash (1990); Esposito (1990); Khosrokhavar (1995).

between the Shah and the *ulemas* concerned control over time, when, on April 24, 1976, the Shah changed the Islamic calendar to the pre-Islamic Achemenian dynasty calendar. When Khomeini landed in Tehran on February 1, 1979, to lead the revolution, he returned as the representative of Imam Nacoste, Lord of Time (*wali al-zaman*) to assert the pre-eminence of religious principles. The Islamic revolution opposed simultaneously the institution of monarchy (Khomeini: "Islam is fundamentally opposed to the whole notion of monarchy");[40] the nation-state (article 10 of the new Iranian Constitution: "All Muslims form a single nation"); and modernization as an expression of Westernization (article 43 of the Iranian Constitution asserts the "prohibition of extravagance and wastefulness in all matters related to the economy, including consumption, investment, production, distribution, and services"). The power of the *ulemas*, the main targets of the Shah's institutional reforms, became enshrined as the intermediary between the *shari'a* and society. The radicalization of the Islamic regime, after Iraq's attack in 1980 and the atrocious war that followed, led to the purification of society, and the setting up of special religious judges to repress impious acts, such as "adultery, homosexuality, gambling, hypocrisy, sympathy for atheists and hypocrites, and treason."[41] There followed thousands of imprisonments, flagellations, and executions, on different grounds. The cycle of terror, particularly aimed at leftist critics and Marxist guerrillas, closed the circle of fundamentalist logic in Iran.

What are the social bases of fundamentalism? In Iran, where other revolutionary forces participated in the long, hard-fought mobilizations to topple the Pahlavis' bloody dictatorship, the leaders were the clerics, and mosques were the sites of revolutionary committees that organized popular insurgency. As for the social actors, the strength of the movement was in Tehran and other large cities, particularly among the students, intellectuals, bazaar merchants, and artisans. When the movement came onto the streets, it was joined by the masses of recent rural immigrants that populated Tehran's sprawling shanty towns in the 1970s, after the modernization of agriculture expelled them from their villages.

Islamists in Algeria and Tunisia seem to present a similar social profile, according to some scattered data: support for the FIS originated in a heterogeneous group of educated intellectuals, university teachers, and low-level civil servants, joined by small merchants and artisans. However, these movements, which took place in the 1980s,

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40   Hiro (1989: 161).
41   Official documents reported in the press, quoted by Hiro (1989: 190).

also had their social roots in rural exodus. Thus, a survey in Tunisia found that 48 percent of fathers of militants were illiterate, as they migrated to the cities in the 1970s, from impoverished rural areas. The militants themselves were young: in Tunisia, the average age of 72 militants sentenced in a major trial in 1987 was 32 years.[42] In Egypt, Islamism is predominant among university students (most student unions have been under Islamic fundamentalist leadership since the mid-1980s), and receives support from government employees, particularly teachers, with a growing influence in the police and the army.[43]

The social roots of radical fundamentalism appear to derive from the combination of successful state-led modernization in the 1950s and 1960s and the failure of economic modernization in most Muslim countries during the 1970s and 1980s, as their economies could not adapt to the new conditions of global competition and technological revolution in the latter period. Thus, a young, urban population, with a high level of education as a result of the first wave of modernization, was frustrated in its expectations, as the economy faltered and new forms of cultural dependency settled in. It was joined in its discontent by impoverished masses expelled from rural areas to cities by the unbalanced modernization of agriculture. As Kepel writes,

> From the outset the Islamist movement was two-pronged. First, it embraced the younger generation in the cities, a class created by the postwar demographic explosion in the Third World and the resultant mass exodus in the countryside. Though poverty-stricken, these young urbanites had access to literacy and some education. Second, it included the traditional God-fearing bourgeoisie, the descendants of mercantile families from the bazaars and souks who had been thrust aside during the process of decolonization. In addition to this devout middle class, there were also doctors, engineers, and businessmen who had gone away to work in the conservative oil-exporting nations and had rapidly become wealthy while being kept outside the traditional circles of political power.[44]

This social mixture was made explosive by the crisis of the nation-state, whose employees, including military personnel, suffered declining living standards, and lost faith in the nationalist project. The crisis of legitimacy of the nation-state was the result of its widespread corruption, inefficiency, dependency upon foreign powers, and, in the Middle East, repeated military humiliation by Israel, followed

42   Data reported by Burgat and Dowell (1993).
43   Hiro (1989); Dekmejian (1995).
44   Kepel (2002: 6).

by accommodation with the Zionist enemy. The construction of contemporary Islamic identity proceeds as a reaction against unreachable modernization (be it capitalist or socialist), the evil consequences of globalization, and the collapse of the post-colonial nationalist project. This is why the differential development of fundamentalism in the Muslim world seems to be linked to variations in the capacity of the nation-state to integrate in its project both the urban masses, through economic welfare, and the Muslim clergy, through official sanction of their religious power under the aegis of the state, as had been the case in the Ummayyad caliphate or the Ottoman Empire.[45] Thus, while Saudi Arabia is formally an Islamic monarchy, the *ulemas* are on the payroll of the House of Saud, which succeeded in being, at the same time, guardian of the holy sites and guardian of Western oil.

Indonesia and Malaysia seemed, for some time, to be able to integrate Islamist pressures within their authoritarian nation-states by ensuring fast economic growth, thus providing some promising prospects for their subjects. However, after the economic crisis of 1997, and the resignation of Suharto, Indonesia discovered the importance of Islamic parties in politics and in society. The growth of a radical, fundamentalist organization, *Jamaah Islamiyah*, led by Abu Bakar Bashir, with suspected ties to *al-Qaeda*, underscored the fragility of state control in Muslim societies when the shocks of globalization reduced the capacity of social integration through economic growth. Thus, early in the twenty-first century, Indonesia appeared to be rejoining other Muslim societies, in which failed modernization contributed to the crisis of nationalism and to the rise of Islamism.

The nationalist projects of Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia, some of the most Westernized Muslim countries, collapsed by and large in the 1980s, thus ushering in social tensions that were predominantly captured by Islamists under moderate (Muslim Brotherhood), radical (*Jamaah Islamiyah)*, or democratic-radical versions (Algeria's FIS).[46] The challenge of Hamas to the proto-Palestinian state constituted around the leadership of Yasser Arafat may constitute one of the most dramatic schisms between Arab nationalism (of which the Palestinian movement is the epitome) and radical Islamic fundamentalism. It is, of course, ironic that the Israeli Mossad helped in the creation of Hamas, at its outset, as a way of undermining the OLP's authority and legitimacy.

When Islamist electoral victories, such as in Algeria in December 1991, were made void by military repression, widespread violence

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45 Balta (1991).
46 Sisk (1992).

and civil war ensued.[47] Even in the most Westernized Muslim country, Turkey, Kemal Atatürk's secular, nationalist heritage came under historical challenge when, in the elections of 1995, Islamists became the country's first political force, relying on the vote of radicalized intellectuals and the urban poor, and formed the government in 1996, before being barred from open political competition under pressure from the nationalist armed forces. Yet, with a revamped political label, and a more moderate program, the Turkish Islamists again became the first party in the elections of November 2002. In an ironic twist of history, pressure from the European Union on Turkey to become a full democracy led the armed forces to authorize the coming to power of an elected government dominated by the Islamic party. It remains to be seen whether Islamists in Turkey can coexist with the principle of secularism, one of the pillars of European democratic states.

Political Islamism, and Islamic fundamentalist identity, expanded in a variety of social and institutional contexts, always related to the dynamics of social exclusion and/or the crisis of the nation-state. Thus, social segregation, discrimination, and unemployment among French youth of Maghrebian origin, among young Turks born in Germany, among Pakistanis in Britain, or among African Americans, induces the emergence of a new Islamic identity among disaffected youth, in a dramatic transference of radical Islamism to the socially excluded areas of advanced capitalist societies.[48] On the other hand, the collapse of the Soviet state triggered the emergence of Islamic movements in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and even the formation of an Islamic Revival Party in Russia, threatening to realize the fears of a spread of Islamic revolutions in Afghanistan and Iran into the former Soviet republics. The war in Chechnya, enacted both on behalf of ethno-nationalism and of Islam, with the support of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and bin Laden, became a fundamental feature of politics in post-communist Russia.[49]

Through a variety of political processes, depending upon the dynamics of each nation-state, and the form of global articulation of each economy, an Islamic fundamentalist project emerged in all Muslim societies, and among Muslim minorities in non-Muslim societies. A new identity is being constructed, not by returning to tradition, but by working on traditional materials in the formation of a new godly, communal world, where deprived masses and disaffected

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47   Nair (1996).
48   Luecke (1993); Kepel (1995).
49   Mikulsky (1992).

intellectuals may reconstruct meaning in a global alternative to the exclusionary global order.[50]

However, political Islamism is confronted with a fundamental contradiction because, as Lawrence writes, "Sunni Islamic fundamentalists want to take over the system [of the nation-state] rather than overthrow it. Fundamentalists can only succeed by adapting to what they oppose."[51] This is what Kepel observed empirically in his thorough and influential analysis of political Islamism in the 1990s, based on his observation of several countries. After studying various processes that ended in repression or cooptation, or a combination of both, he concluded, against the common wisdom, that Islamism in fact failed as a political force in most of the Muslim countries. And, he argues, it is precisely because of this failure that radical and terrorist groups emerged as a desperate alternative to impose their utopia by the violent means of a global revolutionary vanguard, in a twisted historical echo of the early times of communism.[52]

Furthermore, as Khosrokhavar writes:

> When the project of constituting individuals fully participating in modernity reveals its absurdity in the actual experience of everyday life, violence becomes the only form of self-affirmation of the new subject . . . The neo-community becomes then a necro-community. The exclusion from modernity takes a religious meaning: thus, self-immolation becomes the way to fight against exclusion.[53]

In the final analysis, in assessing the impact of radical Islamism on power relationships, it all depends on what we characterize as failure or success. If, by success, in a long tradition of state-centered political analysis, we mean seizing state power, then, by the turn of the millennium, Islamic fundamentalism fell short of its expectations. Even in Iran, the only successful Islamic revolution, there has been an increasing separation between the institutions of the state and the religious power of the ayatollahs, as Iran engaged in a contradictory, yet significant, process of democratization and modernization. However, if the historical outcome of an ideology is not measured in votes or in ministries, or even in organized popular support, but in its capacity to change minds, to challenge dominant values, and to alter global power relationships, then the jury is still out on the actual effects of Islamic fundamentalism as a social movement, as opposed to its expression as a political force.

50   Tibi (1992a, b); Gole (1995).
51   Lawrence (1989: 226).
52   Kepel (2002).
53   Khosrokhavar (1995: 249–50); my translation.

In at least some influential currents of Islamic fundamentalism, political participation in the institutions of the democratic state is contradictory to the principles of Islam that should rule Muslim societies. Thus, al-Zhawahiri, the senior leader of *al-Qaeda*, in his book *The Bitter Harvest*, writes that: "to subscribe to democracy is to subscribe to the idea of granting the right of legislation to someone other than God. The person who endorses this idea is an infidel since anyone who legislates for the people has appointed himself a God and anyone who subscribes to this legislator has taken him to be God."[54] Islamic fundamentalism, in its essence, does not recognize the authority of the state, does not submit God's will to votes and political participation. This is why the measure of its success or failure relates to the battle for minds rather than to the fight over the institutions of the state. Therefore, I will pause here on the study of Islamism as a cultural/religious identity and resume its analysis as a social movement against the dominant global order in the next chapter.

Regardless of our judgment on the matter, what has to be reckoned with is that, through the negation of cultural exclusion, even in the extreme form of self-sacrifice, a new Islamic identity has emerged in a new historical attempt to build the *umma*, the communal heaven for true believers.

God save me! American Christian fundamentalism

We have come into an electronic dark age, in which the new pagan hordes, with all the power of technology at their command, are on the verge of obliterating the last strongholds of civilized humanity. A vision of death lies before us. As we leave the shores of Christian western man behind, only a dark and turbulent sea of despair stretches endlessly ahead . . . unless we fight!

<div align="right">

Francis Schaeffer, *Time for Anger*[55]

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Christian fundamentalism is a perennial feature of American history, from the ideas of post-revolutionary federalists, like Timothy Dwight and Jedidiah Morse, to the pre-millennial eschatology of Pat Robertson, through the 1900 revivalists, such as Dwight L. Moody, and the 1970s reconstructionists inspired by Rousas J. Rushdoony.[56] A society relentlessly at the frontier of social change and individual mobility is bound to doubt periodically the benefits of modernity and seculariza-

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54   Al-Zhawahiri (1999: n.p.).
55   Schaeffer (1982: 122). Francis Schaeffer is one of the leading inspirations of contemporary American Christian fundamentalism. His *Christian Manifesto*, published in 1981, shortly after his death, was the most influential pamphlet in the 1980s' anti-abortion movement in America.
56   Marsden (1980); Ammerman (1987); Misztal and Shupe (1992b); Wilcox (1992).

tion, yearning for the security of traditional values and institutions rooted in God's eternal truth. Indeed, the very term "fundamentalism," widely used around the world, originated in America, in reference to a series of ten volumes entitled *The Fundamentals*, privately published by two businessmen brothers between 1910 and 1915, to collect holy texts edited by conservative evangelical theologians at the turn of the century. While fundamentalist influence has varied in different historical periods, it has never faded away. In the 1980s and 1990s it certainly surged. While the disintegration of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority in 1989 led some observers to announce the decline of fundamentalism (parallel to the end of the Communist Satan whose opposition was a major source of legitimacy and funding for fundamentalists), it quickly became obvious that it was the crisis of an organization, and of a political ploy, rather than that of fundamentalist identity.[57] In the 1990s, in the wake of Bill Clinton's presidential victory in 1992, fundamentalism came to the forefront of the political scene, this time in the form of the Christian Coalition, led by Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed, claiming 1.5 million organized members, and marshaling considerable political influence among the Republican electorate. Furthermore, the ideas and world vision of fundamentalists seemed to find considerable echo in *fin-de-siècle* America. For instance, according to a Gallup poll on a national sample in 1979, one in three adults declared that they had had an experience of religious conversion; almost half of them believed that the Bible was inerrant; and more than 80 percent thought that Jesus Christ was divine.[58] To be sure, America has always been, and still is, a very religious society, much more so, for instance, than Western Europe or Japan. But, this religious sentiment seems increasingly to take a revivalist tone, drifting toward a powerful fundamentalist current. According to Simpson:

> fundamentalism, in its original sense, is a set of Christian beliefs and experiences that include (1) subscription to the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible and its inerrancy; (2) individual salvation through and acceptance of Christ as a personal Saviour (being born-again) on account of Christ's efficacious, substitutionary atonement for sin in his death and resurrection; (3) the expectation of Christ's premillennial return to earth from heaven; (4) the endorsement of such Protestant orthodox Christian doctrines as the Virgin birth and the trinity.[59]

57   Lawton (1989); Moen (1992); Wilcox (1992).
58   Lienesch (1993: 1).
59   Simpson (1992: 26).

Yet, Christian fundamentalism is such a wide, diversified trend that it defies a simple definition cutting across the cleavages between pente-costal and charismatic evangelicals, pre-millennial or post-millennial, pietists and activists. Fortunately, we can rely on an excellent, well-documented, scholarly synthesis of American fundamentalist writings and doctrines by Michael Lienesch, on the basis of which, and with the support of other sources that confirm, in general terms, his record and arguments, I will attempt to reconstruct the main traits of Christian fundamentalist identity.[60]

As Lienesch writes, "at the center of Christian conservative thinking, shaping its sense of the self, lies the concept of Conversion, the act of faith and forgiveness through which sinners are brought from sin into a state of everlasting salvation."[61] Through the personal experience of being born again, the whole personality is reconstructed, and becomes "the starting place for constructing a sense not only of autonomy and identity, but also of social order and political purpose."[62] The linkage between personality and society goes through the reconstruction of the family, the central institution of society, which used to be the refuge against a harsh, hostile world, and is now crumbling in our society. This "fortress of Christian life" has to be reconstructed by asserting patriarchalism, that is the sanctity of marriage (excluding divorce and adultery) and, above all, the authority of men over women (as established in biblical literalism: Genesis 1; Ephesians 5, 22–3), and the strict obedience of children, if necessary enforced by spanking. Indeed, children are born in sin: "it is of great benefit to the parent when he realizes that it is natural for his child to have desire for evil."[63] Thus, it is essential for the family to educate children in the fear of God and in respect for parental authority, and to count on the full support of a Christian education in school. As an obvious consequence of this vision, public schools become the battle-ground between good and evil, between the Christian family and the institutions of secularism.

A bounty of earthly rewards awaits the Christian who dares to stand up for these principles, and chooses God's plans over his/her own, imperfect, life planning. To start with, a great sex life in marriage. Best-selling authors Tim and Beverly La Haye propose their sex manual as "fully biblical and highly practical,"[64] and show, with the

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60   Zeskind (1986); Jelen (1989, 1991); Barron and Shupe (1992); Lienesch (1993); Riesebrodt (1993); Hicks (1994).
61   Lienesch (1993: 23).
62   Lienesch (1993: 23).
63   Beverly La Haye, quoted in Lienesch (1993: 78).
64   Quoted in Lienesch (1993: 56).

support of illustrations, all the joys of sexuality that, once sanctified and channeled toward procreation, are in strict accordance with Christianity. Under such conditions, men can be men again: instead of current "Christianettes," men should look and act like men, another Christian tradition: "Jesus was not sissified."[65] Indeed, the channeling of male aggressive sexuality in a fulfilling marriage is essential for society, both for the control of violence, and because it is the source of the "Protestant work ethic," and thus of economic productivity. In this view, sexual sublimation is the foundation of civilization. As for women, they are biologically determined to be mothers, and to be the emotional complement of rational men (as per Phyllis Schlafly). Their submission will help them to achieve a sense of self-esteem. It is through sacrifice that women assert their identity as independent from men. Thus, as Beverly La Haye writes, "Don't be afraid to give, and give, and give."[66] The result will be the salvation of the family, "this little commonwealth, the foundation on which all of society stands."[67]

With salvation guaranteed, as long as a Christian strictly observes the Bible, and with a stable patriarchal family as a solid footing for life, business will also be good, provided that government does not interfere with the economy, leaves the undeserving poor alone, and brings taxes within reasonable limits (at about 10 percent of income). Indeed, Christian fundamentalists do not seem to be bothered by the contradiction between being moral theocrats and economic libertarians.[68] Furthermore, God will help the good Christian in his business life: after all he has to provide for the family. A living proof is offered, by his own account, by the very leader of the Christian Coalition, Pat Robertson, a noted tele-evangelist. After his conversion, armed with his newborn self-assurance, he went to his business: "God has sent me here to buy your television station," and he offered a sum, based on "God's figure": "The Lord spoke: 'Don't go over two and a half million.'"[69] Overall, it turned out to be an excellent deal, for which Pat Robertson weekly thanked God in his "700 Club" television show.

Yet, the Christian way cannot be fulfilled individually because institutions of society, and particularly government, the media, and the public school system, are controlled by humanists of various origins, associated, in different fundamentalist versions, with com-

65   Edwin L. Cole, quoted in Lienesch (1993: 63).
66   Beverly La Haye, quoted in Lienesch (1993: 77).
67   Lienesch (1993: 77).
68   Hicks (1994).
69   Reported by Pat Robertson and quoted in Lienesch (1993: 40).

munists, bankers, heretics, and Jews. The most insidious and danger-
ous enemies are feminists and homosexuals because they are the ones
undermining the family, the main source of social stability, Christian
life, and personal fulfillment. (Phyllis Schlafly referred to "the disease
called women's liberation.")[70] The fight against abortion symbolizes
all the struggles to preserve family, life, and Christianity, bridging
over to other Christian denominations. This is why the pro-life move-
ment is the most militant and influential expression of Christian
fundamentalism in America.

   The struggle must be intensified, and the necessary political com-
promises with institutional politics must be achieved, because time is
becoming short. The "end of times" is approaching, and we must
repent, and clean up our society, to be ready for Jesus Christ's Second
Coming, which will open a new era, a new millennium of unpreced-
ented peace and prosperity. Yet, there is a dangerous passage because
we will have to go through the atrocious Battle of Armageddon,
originating in the Middle East, then expanding to the whole world.
Israel, and the New Israel (America), will finally prevail over their
enemies, but at a terrible cost, and only counting on the capacity
of our society to regenerate. This is why the transformation of society
(through grassroots Christian politics), and the regeneration of
the self (through a pious, family life), are both necessary and
complementary.

   Who are the contemporary American fundamentalists? Clyde
Wilcox provides some interesting data on the demographic character-
istics of evangelicals, as compared to the whole population, in 1988.[71]
Taking into account the characteristics of the doctrinal evangelicals, it
would seem that they are less educated, poorer, more influential
among housewives, more often residents of the South, significantly
more religious, and 100 percent of them consider the Bible to be
inerrant (as compared to 27 percent for the population at large).
According to other sources,[72] the recent expansion of Christian fun-
damentalism is particularly strong in the suburbs of the new South,
South West, and Southern California, among lower-middle class and
service workers, recently migrated to the new suburbs of fast-
expanding metropolitan areas. This prompts Lienesch to hypothesize
that they may represent "the first modernized generation of trad-
itional people of recent immigration maintaining rural values in a
secular urban society."[73] However, it appears that values, beliefs, and

70   Quoted by Lienesch (1993: 71).
71   Wilcox (1992).
72   Cited by Lienesch (1993).
73   Lienesch (1993: 10).

political stands are more important than demographic, occupational, or residential characteristics in spurring Christian fundamentalism. After reviewing a substantial body of available evidence on the matter, Wilcox concludes that "the data demonstrate that the best predictors of support for the Christian Right are religious identities, doctrines, behaviors, affiliations, and political beliefs."[74] Fundamentalism does not appear to be a rationalization of class interests or territorial positioning. Rather, it acts on the political process in the defense of moral, Christian values.[75] It is, as most fundamentalisms in history, a reactive movement, aiming to construct social and personal identity on the basis of images of the past and project them into a utopian future, to overcome unbearable present times.

But a reaction to what? What is unbearable? The most immediate sources of Christian fundamentalism seem to be twofold: the threat of globalization, and the crisis of patriarchalism. As Misztal and Shupe write, "the dynamics of globalization have promoted the dynamics of fundamentalism in a dialectical fashion."[76] Lechner elaborates further the reasons for this dialectic:

> In the process of globalization societies have become institutionalized as global facts. As organizations, they operate in secular terms; in their relations, they follow secular rules; hardly any religious tradition attributes transcendent significance to worldly societies in their present form . . . By the standards of most religious traditions, institutionalized societalism amounts to idolatry. But this means that life within society also has become a challenge for traditional religion . . . Precisely because global order is an institutionalized normative order it is plausible that there emerges some search for an "ultimate" foundation, for some transcendent reality beyond this world in relation to which the latter could be more clearly defined.[77]

Furthermore, while the communist threat provided ground for identification between the interests of the US government, Christianity, and America as the chosen nation, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of a new global order, create a threatening uncertainty over the control of America's destiny. A recurrent theme of Christian fundamentalism in the US at the turn of the millennium is opposition to the control of the country by a "world government," superseding the US federal government (which it believes complicit in this development), enacted by the United Nations, the International

74   Wilcox (1992: 223).
75   Jelen (1991).
76   Misztal and Shupe (1992a: 8).
77   Lechner (1991: 276–7).

Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization, among other international bodies. In some eschatological writings, this new "world government" is assimilated to the Anti-Christ, and its symbols, including the microchip, are the Mark of the Beast that announces the "end of times." The construction of Christian fundamentalist identity seems to be an attempt to reassert control over life, and over the country, in direct response to the uncontrollable processes of globalization that are increasingly sensed in the economy and in the media.

   Yet probably the most important source of Christian fundamentalism in the 1980s and 1990s was the reaction against the challenge to patriarchalism, issued from the 1960s' revolts, and expressed in women's, lesbian, and gay movements.[78] Furthermore, the battle is not just ideological. The American patriarchal family is indeed in crisis, according to all indicators of divorce, separation, violence in the family, children born out of wedlock, delayed marriages, shrinking motherhood, single lifestyles, gay and lesbian couples, and the widespread rejection of patriarchal authority (see chapter 4). There is an obvious reaction by men to defend their privileges, which are better suited to divine legitimacy, after their diminishing role as sole breadwinners undermined the material and ideological bases of patriarchalism. But there is something else, shared by men, women, and children. A deep-seated fear of the unknown, particularly frightening when the unknown concerns the basis of everyday, personal life. Unable to live under secular patriarchalism, but terrified of solitude and uncertainty in a wildly competitive, individualistic society, where family, as a myth and a reality, represented the only safe haven, many men, women, and children pray God to return them to the state of innocence where they could be content with benevolent patriarchalism under God's rules. And by praying together they become able to live together again. This is why American Christian fundamentalism is deeply marked by the characteristics of American culture, by its familistic individualism, by its pragmatism, and by the personalized relationship to God, and to God's design, as a methodology for solving personal problems in an increasingly unpredictable and uncontrollable life. As if the fundamental prayer were to receive from God's mercy the restoration of the lost American Way of Life in exchange for the sinner's commitment to repentance and Christian testimony.

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78   Lamberts-Bendroth (1993).

Nations and Nationalisms in the Age of Globalization: Imagined Communities or Communal Images?

Only when all of us – all of us – recover our memory, will we be able, we and them, to stop being nationalists.
Rubert de Ventos, *Nacionalismos*[79]

The age of globalization is also the age of nationalist resurgence, expressed both in the challenge to established nation-states and in the widespread (re)construction of identity on the basis of nationality, always affirmed against the alien. This historical trend has surprised some observers, after nationalism had been declared deceased by a triple death: the globalization of the economy and the internationalization of political institutions; the universalism of a largely shared culture, diffused by electronic media, education, literacy, urbanization, and modernization; and the scholarly assault on the very concept of nations, declared to be "imagined communities"[80] in the mild version of anti-nationalist theory, or even "arbitrary historical inventions" in Gellner's forceful formulation,[81] arising from elite-dominated nationalist movements in their way to build the modern nation-state. Indeed, for Gellner, "nationalisms are simply those tribalisms, or for that matter any other kind of groups, which through luck, effort or circumstance succeed in becoming an effective force under modern circumstances."[82]

Success means, both for Gellner and for Hobsbawm,[83] the construction of a modern, sovereign nation-state. Thus, in this view, nationalist movements, as rationalizers of interests of a certain elite, invent a national identity which, if successful, is enshrined by the nation-state, and then diffused by propaganda among its subjects, to the point that "nationals" will then become ready to die for their nation. Hobsbawm does accept the historical evidence of nationalism that emerged from the bottom up (from sharing linguistic, territorial, ethnic, religious, and historical political attributes), but he labels it "proto-nationalism," since only when the nation-state is constituted do nations and nationalism come into existence, either as an expression of this nation-state or as a challenge to it on behalf of a future state. The explosion of nationalisms at this turn of the millennium, in

79   Rubert de Ventos (1994: 241); my translation.
80   Anderson (1983).
81   Gellner (1983: 56).
82   Gellner (1983: 87).
83   Hobsbawm (1992).

close relationship to the weakening of existing nation-states, does not fit well into this theoretical model that assimilates nations and nationalism to the emergence and consolidation of the modern nation-state after the French Revolution, which operated in much of the world as its founding mold. Never mind. For Hobsbawm, this apparent resurgence is in fact the historical product of unsolved national problems, created in the territorial restructuring of Europe between 1918 and 1921.[84]

However, as David Hooson writes, in his introduction to the global survey he edited, *Geography and National Identity*:

> the last half of the twentieth century will go down in history as a new age of rampant and proliferating nationalisms of a more durable nature than the dreadful but now banished tyrannies which have also characterized our century… The urge to express one's identity, and to have it recognized tangibly by others, is increasingly contagious and has to be recognized as an elemental force even in the shrunken, apparently homogenizing, high-tech world of the end of the twentieth century. [85]

And, as Eley and Suny write, in the introduction to their most insightful reader, *Becoming National*:

> Does the stress on subjectivity and consciousness rule out any "objective" basis for the existence of nationality? Clearly, such a radically subjectivist view would be absurd. Most successful nationalisms presume some prior community of territory, language, or culture, which provide the raw material for the intellectual project of nationality. Yet, those prior communities should not be "naturalized", as if they had always existed in some essential way, or have simply prefigured a history yet to come… Culture is more often not what people share, but what they choose to fight over.[86]

In my view, the incongruence between some social theory and contemporary practice comes from the fact that nationalism, and nations, have a life of their own, independent of statehood, albeit embedded in cultural constructs and political projects. However attractive the influential notion of "imagined communities" may be, it is either obvious or empirically inadequate. Obvious for a social scientist if it is to say that all feelings of belonging, all worshipping of icons, is culturally constructed. Nations would not be an exception to this. The opposition between "real" and "imagined" communities is of

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84   Hobsbawm (1992: 173–202).
85   Hooson (1994b: 2–3).
86   Eley and Suny (1996: 9).

little analytical use beyond the laudable effort at demystifying ideologies of essentialist nationalism *à la* Michelet. But if the meaning of the statement is, as it is explicit in Gellner's theory, that nations are pure ideological artifacts, constructed through arbitrary manipulation of historical myths by intellectuals for the interests of social and economic elites, then the historical record seems to belie such an excessive deconstructionism.[87] To be sure, ethnicity, religion, language, territory, *per se*, do not suffice to build nations, and induce nationalism. Shared experience does: both the United States and Japan are countries of strong national identity, and most of their nationals do feel, and express, strong patriotic feelings. Yet Japan is one of the most ethnically homogeneous nations on earth, and the United States one of the most ethnically heterogeneous. But in both cases there is a shared history and a shared project, and their historical narratives build on an experience, socially, ethnically, territorially, and genderly diversified, but common to the people of each country on many grounds. Other nations, and nationalisms, did not reach modern nation-statehood (for example, Scotland, Catalonia, Quebec, Kurdistan, Palestine), and yet they display, and some have displayed for several centuries, a strong cultural/territorial identity that expresses itself as a national character.

Thus, four major analytical points must be emphasized when discussing contemporary nationalism with regard to social theories of nationalism. First, contemporary nationalism may or may not be oriented toward the construction of a sovereign nation-state, and thus nations are, historically and analytically, entities independent of the state.[88] Secondly, nations, and nation-states, are not historically limited to the modern nation-state as constituted in Europe in the two hundred years following the French Revolution. Current political experience seems to reject the idea that nationalism is exclusively linked to the period of formation of the modern nation-state, with its climax in the nineteenth century, replicated in the decolonization process of the mid-twentieth century by the import of the Western nation-state into the Third World.[89] To assert so, as it has become fashionable, is simply Euro-centrism, as argued by Chatterjee.[90] As Panarin writes:

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87   Moser (1985); Smith (1986); Johnston et al. (1988); Touraine (1988); Perez-Argote (1989); Chatterjee (1993); Blas Guerrero (1994); Hooson (1994b); Rubert de Ventos (1994); Eley and Suny (1996).
88   Keating (1995).
89   Badie (1992).
90   Chatterjee (1993).

> The misunderstanding of the century was the confusion of self-determination of people with the self-determination of nation. The mechanical transference of certain West European principles to the soil of non-European cultures often spawns monsters. One of these monsters was the concept of national sovereignty transplanted to non-European soil . . . The syncretism of the concept of nation in the political lexicon of Europe prevents Europeans from making extremely important differentiations touching on the "sovereignty of people", "national sovereignty", and "rights of an ethnos."[91]

Indeed, Panarin's analysis is vindicated by the development of nationalist movements in many areas of the world, following a wide variety of cultural orientations and political projects, toward the end of the twentieth century.

Thirdly, nationalism is not necessarily an elite phenomenon, and, in fact, nationalism nowadays is more often than not a reaction against the global elites. To be sure, as in all social movements, the leadership tends to be more educated and literate (or computer literate in our time) than the popular masses that mobilize around nationalist goals, but this does not reduce the appeal and significance of nationalism to the manipulation of the masses by elites for the self-interest of these elites. As Smith writes, with obvious regret:

> Through a community of history and destiny, memories may be kept alive and actions retain their glory. For only in the chain of generations of those who share an historic and quasi-familial bond, can individuals hope to achieve a sense of immortality in eras of purely terrestrial horizons. In this sense, the formation of nations and the rise of ethnic nationalisms appears more like the institutionalization of "surrogate religion" than a political ideology, and therefore far more durable and potent than we care to admit.[92]

Fourthly, because contemporary nationalism is more reactive than proactive, it tends to be more cultural than political, and thus more oriented toward the defense of an already institutionalized culture than toward the construction or defense of a state. When new political institutions are created, or recreated, they are defensive trenches of identity, rather than launching platforms of political sovereignty. This is why I think that a more appropriate point of theoretical departure for understanding contemporary nationalism is Kosaku Yoshino's analysis of cultural nationalism in Japan:

91   Panarin (1994/1996: 37).
92   Smith (1989/1996: 125).

> Cultural nationalism aims to regenerate the national community by creating, preserving, or strengthening a people's cultural identity when it is felt to be lacking or threatened. The cultural nationalist regards the nation as a product of its unique history and culture, and as a collective solidarity endowed with unique attributes. In short, cultural nationalism is concerned with the distinctiveness of the cultural community as the essence of a nation.[93]

Thus, nationalism is constructed by social action and reaction, both by elites and by the masses, as Hobsbawm argues, countering Gellner's emphasis on "high culture" as the exclusive origin of nationalism. But, against Hobsbawm's or Anderson's views, nationalism as a source of identity cannot be reduced to a particular historical period and to the exclusive workings of the modern nation-state. To reduce nations and nationalisms to the process of construction of the nation-state makes it impossible to explain the simultaneous rise of postmodern nationalism and decline of the modern state.

Rubert de Ventos, in an updated, refined version of Deutsch's classical perspective,[94] has suggested a more complex theory that sees the emergence of national identity through the historical interaction of four series of factors: *primary factors*, such as ethnicity, territory, language, religion, and the like; *generative factors*, such as the development of communications and technology, the formation of cities, the emergence of modern armies and centralized monarchies; *induced factors*, such as the codification of language in official grammars, the growth of bureaucracies, and the establishment of a national education system; and *reactive factors*, that is the defense of identities oppressed and interests subdued by a dominant social group or institutional apparatus, triggering the search for alternative identities in the collective memory of people.[95] Which factors play which role in the formation of each nationalism, and of each nation, depends on historical contexts, on the materials available to collective memory, and on the interaction between conflicting power strategies. Thus, nationalism is indeed culturally, and politically, constructed, but what really matters, both theoretically and practically, is, as for all identities, how, from what, by whom, and for what it is constructed.

At this turn of the millennium, the explosion of nationalisms, some of them deconstructing multinational states, others constructing pluri-national entities, is not associated with the formation of classical, sovereign, modern states. Rather, nationalism appears to be a

93   Yoshino (1992: 1).
94   Deutsch (1953); Rubert de Ventos (1994).
95   Rubert de Ventos (1994: 139–200).

major force behind the constitution of quasi-states; that is, political entities of shared sovereignty, either in stepped-up federalism (as in the Canadian (re)constitution in process, or in the "nation of nation-alities," proclaimed in the Spanish Constitution of 1978, and widely expanded in its practice in the 1990s); or in international multilateral-ism (as in the European Union, or in the renegotiation of the Com-monwealth of Independent States of ex-Soviet republics). Centralized nation-states resisting this trend of nationalist movements in search of quasi-statehood as a new historical reality (for example, Indonesia, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, even India) may well fall victim to this fatal error of assimilating the nation to the state, as a state as strong as Pakistan realized after the secession of Bangladesh.

In order to explore the complexity of the (re)construction of na-tional identity in our new historical context, I will briefly elaborate on two cases that represent the two poles of the dialectic I am proposing as characteristic of this period: the deconstruction of a centralized, multinational state, the former Soviet Union, and the subsequent formation of what I consider to be quasi-nation-states; and the na-tional quasi-state emerging in Catalonia through the dual movement of federalism in Spain and of confederalism in the European Union. After illustrating the analysis with these two case studies, I shall offer some hints on the new historical avenues of nationalism as a renewed source of collective identity.

Nations against the state: the breakup of the Soviet Union and the Commonwealth of Impossible States (Sojuz Nevozmoznykh Gosudarstv)

The Russian people of the cities and villages, half-savage beasts, stupid, almost frightening, will die to make room for a new human race.
Maxim Gorki, "On the Russian peasantry"[96]

The revolt of constituent nations against the Soviet state was a major factor, albeit not the only one, in the surprising collapse of the Soviet Union, as argued by Helene Carrere d'Encausse and Ronald Grigor Suny,[97] among other scholars. I shall analyze (in volume III) the com-plex intertwining of economic, technological, political, and national identity elements that, *together*, explain one of the most extraordinary developments in history, as the Russian Revolutions both opened and

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96   1922, in *SSR vnutrennie protivorechiia*, Tchalidze Publications, 1987: 128, as cited by Carrere d'Encausse (1993: 173).
97   Carrere d'Encausse (1993); Suny (1993).

closed the political span of the twentieth century. Yet, while discussing the formation of national identity, and its new contours from the 1990s, it is essential to refer to the Soviet experience, and its aftermath, because it is a privileged terrain for observing the interplay between nations and the state, two entities that, in my view, are historically and analytically distinct. Indeed, the nationalist revolt against the Soviet Union was particularly significant because it was one of the few modern states explicitly built as a pluri-national state, with nationalities affirmed both for individuals (every Soviet citizen had an ascribed nationality written in his/her passport), and in the territorial administration of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet state was organized in a complex system of 15 federal republics, to which were added autonomous republics within the federal republics, territories (*krai*), and autonomous native districts (*okrag*), each republic comprising also several provinces (*oblasti*). Each federal republic, as well as autonomous republics within the federal republics, was based on a territorial nationality principle. This institutional construction was not a simple fiction. Certainly, autonomous nationalist expressions in contradiction to the will of the Soviet Communist party were ruthlessly repressed, particularly during the Stalinist period, and millions of Ukrainians, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Volga Germans, Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Mesketyans, Ingushi, Balkars, Karachai, and Kalmyks were deported to Siberia and Central Asia to prevent their cooperation with German invaders, or with other potential enemies, or simply to clear land for strategic projects of the state. But so were millions of Russians, for a variety of reasons, often randomly assigned. Yet, the reality of nationality-based administrations went beyond token appointments of national elites to leading positions in the republics' administration.[98] Policies of nativization (*korenizatsiya*) were supported by Lenin and Stalin until the 1930s, and renewed in the 1960s. They encouraged native languages and customs, implemented "affirmative action" programs, favoring recruitment and promotion of non-Russian nationalities in the state and party apparatuses of the republics, as well as in educational institutions, and fostered the development of national cultural elites, naturally on the condition of their subservience to Soviet power. As Suny writes:

> Lost in the powerful nationalist rhetoric is any sense of the degree to which the long and difficult years of Communist party rule actually continued the "making of nations" of the pre-revolutionary period . . . It

98   Slezkine (1994).

thereby increased ethnic solidarity and national consciousness in the non-Russian republics, even as it frustrated full articulation of a national agenda by requiring conformity to an imposed political order.[99]

The reasons for this apparent openness to national self-determination (enshrined in the Soviet Constitution in the right of republics to secede from the Union) lie deep in the history and strategy of the Soviet state.[100] Soviet pluri-national federalism was the result of a compromise following intense political and ideological debates during the revolutionary period. Originally, the Bolshevik position, in line with classical Marxist thought, denied the relevance of nationality as a significant criterion in building the new state: proletarian internationalism was intended to supersede "artificial," or "secondary," national differences between the working classes, manipulated into inter-ethnic bloody confrontations by imperialist interests, as shown by World War I. But in January 1918, the urgency of finding military alliances in the civil war, and in the resistance against foreign invasion, convinced Lenin of the need for support from nationalist forces outside Russia, particularly in the Ukraine, after observing the vitality of national consciousness. The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets adopted the "Declaration of the Rights of Working and Exploited People," transforming the ruins of the Russian Empire into "the fraternal union of Soviet Republics of Russia freely meeting on an internal basis." To this "internal federalization" of Russia, the Bolsheviks added, in April, the call for "external federalization" of other nations, explicitly naming the people of Poland, the Ukraine, Crimea, Transcaucasia, Turkestan, Kirghiz, "and others."[101]

The critical debate concerned the principle under which national identity would be recognized in the new federal state. The Bundists, and other socialist tendencies, wanted national cultures recognized throughout the whole structure of the state, without distinguishing them territorially, since the goal of the revolution was precisely to transcend ancestral bondings of ethnicity and territory on behalf of new, class-based, socialist universalism. To this view, Lenin and Stalin opposed the principle of territoriality as the basis for nationhood. The result was the multilayered national structure of the Soviet state: national identity was recognized in the institutions of governance. However, in application of the principle of democratic centralism, this diversity of territorial subjects would be under the control of the

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99 Suny (1993: 101, 130).
100 Pipes (1954); Conquest (1967); Carrere d'Encausse (1987); Suny (1993); Slezkine (1994).
101 Singh (1982: 61).

dominant apparatuses of the Soviet Communist party, and of the Soviet state. Thus, the Soviet Union was constructed around a dual identity: on the one hand, ethnic/national identities (including Russian); on the other, Soviet identity as the foundation of the new society. *Sovetskii narod* (the Soviet people) would be the new cultural identity to be achieved in the historical horizon of Communist construction.

There were also strategic reasons for the conversion of proletarian internationalists into territorial nationalists. A. M. Salmin has proposed an interesting model for interpreting the Leninist–Stalinist strategy underlying Soviet federalism.[102] The Soviet Union was a centralized, but flexible institutional system whose structure should remain open and adaptive to receive new countries as members of the Union, as the cause of communism would advance throughout the world. Five concentric circles were designed as both security areas and waves of expansion of the Soviet state as vanguard of the revolution. The first was Russia, and its satellite republics, organized in the RSFSR. Paradoxically, Russia, and the Russian Federation, was the only republic with no autonomous Communist party, no President of the republican Supreme Soviet, and with the least developed republican institutions: it was the exclusive domain of the Soviet Communist party. To make this bastion safer, Russia did not have land borders with the potentially aggressive capitalist world. Thus, around Russia, Soviet republics were organized, in the outlying borders of the Soviet Union, so that they would eventually protect, at the same time, Soviet power and their national independence. This is why some ethnically based areas, such as Azerbaijan, became Soviet republics because they were bordering the outside world, while others, equally distinctive in their ethnic composition, like Chechnya, were kept in the Russian Federation because they were geographically closer to the core. The third ring of Soviet geopolitics was constituted by people's democracies under Soviet military power: this was originally the case for Khoresm, Bukhara, Mongolia, and Tannu-Tura, and became the precedent for the incorporation of Eastern Europe after World War II. The fourth circle would be formed by distant socialist countries, such as, years later, Cuba, North Korea, and Vietnam. China was never considered to be a part of this category because of deep distrust of future Chinese power. Finally, allied progressive governments and revolutionary movements around the world constituted the fifth circle, and their potential would depend on keeping a balance between their internationalism (meaning their pro-Soviet stand) and

102   Salmin (1992).

their national representativeness. It was this constant tension between the class-based universalism of communist utopia and geopolitical interests based on the ethnic/national concerns of potential allies that determined the schizophrenia of Soviet policy toward the national question.

The result of these contradictions throughout the tormented history of the Soviet Union was an incoherent patchwork of people, nationalities, and state institutions.[103] The more than one hundred nationalities and ethnic groups of the Soviet Union were dispatched all along its immense geography, according to geopolitical strategies, collective punishments and rewards, and individual caprice. Thus, Armenian-populated Nagorno-Karabaj was included by Stalin in Azerbaijan to please Turkey by putting its ancestral enemies under Azeri control (Azeris are a Turkic people); Volga Germans ended up in Kazakhstan, in whose northern territory they are now the driving economic force, supported by German subsidies to keep them out of Germany; Cossack settlements proliferated in Siberia and in the Far East; Ossetians were split between Russia (North) and Georgia (South), while Ingushis were distributed between Chechnya, North Ossetia, and Georgia; Crimea, taken by Russia from the Tatars in 1783, and from where the Tatars were deported by Stalin during World War II, was transferred by Khrushchev (himself a Ukrainian) to the Ukraine in 1954 to commemorate 300 years of Russian–Ukrainian friendship, reportedly after a night of heavy drinking. Furthermore, Russians were sent all over the territory of the Soviet Union, most often as skilled workers or willing pioneers, sometimes as rulers, sometimes as exiles. Thus, when the Soviet Union disintegrated, the principle of territorial nationality trapped tens of millions of suddenly "foreign nationals" inside the newly independent republics. The problem seems to be particularly acute for the 25 million Russians living outside the new Russian frontiers.

One of the greatest paradoxes of Soviet federalism is that Russia was probably the most discriminated of nationalities. The Russian Federation had much less political autonomy from the central Soviet state than any other republic. Analysis by regional economists showed that, in general terms, there was a net transfer of wealth, resources, and skills from Russia to the other republics (Siberia, which is the most ethnically Russian area of the Russian Federation, was the fundamental source of exports, and thus of hard currency for the Soviet Union).[104] As for national identity, it was Russian history,

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103   Kozlov (1988); Suny (1993); Slezkine (1994).
104   Granberg and Spehl (1989); Granberg (1993).

religion, and traditional identity that became the main target of Soviet cultural repression, as documented in the 1980s by Russian writers and intellectuals, such as Likhachev, Belov, Astafiev, Rasputin, Solukhin, and Zalygin.[105] After all, the new Soviet identity had to be built on the ruins of the historical Russian identity, with some tactical exceptions during World War II, when Stalin needed to mobilize everything against the Germans, including Alexander Nevsky's memory. Thus, while there was indeed a policy of russification of culture throughout the Soviet Union (indeed, contradictory to the parallel trend of *korenizatsiya*), and ethnic Russians kept control of party, army, and KGB (but Stalin was Georgian, and Khrushchev was Ukrainian), Russian identity as a national identity was repressed to a much greater extent than other nationalities, some of which were in fact symbolically revived for the sake of pluri-national federalism.

This paradoxical constitution of the Soviet state expressed itself in the revolt against the Soviet Union, using the breathing space provided by Gorbachev's *glasnost*. The Baltic republics, forcefully annexed in 1940 in defiance of international law, were the first to claim their right to self-determination. But they were closely followed by a strong Russian nationalist movement that was in fact the most potent mobilizing force against the Soviet state. It was the merger of the struggle for democracy, and the recovery of Russian national identity under Yeltsin's leadership in 1989–91, that created the conditions for the demise of Soviet communism and the breakup of the Soviet Union.[106] Indeed, the first democratic election of the head of state in Russian history, with the election of Yeltsin on June 12, 1991, marked the beginning of the new Russia and, with it, the end of the Soviet Union. It was Russia's traditional flag that led the resistance to the Communist coup in August 1991. And it was Yeltsin's strategy of dismantling the Soviet state, by concentrating power and resources in the republican institutions, that led to the agreement with other republics, first of all with the Ukraine and Belarus, in December 1991, to end the Soviet Union, and to transform the ex-Soviet republics into sovereign states, loosely confederated in the Commonwealth of Independent States (*Sojuz Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv*). The assault on the Soviet state was not conducted only by nationalist movements: it linked up with democrats' demands, and with the interests of political elites in a number of republics, carving their own turf among the ruins of a crumbling empire. But it took a nationalist form, and received popular support on behalf of the nation. The

105   Carrere d'Encausse (1993: ch. 9).
106   Castells (1992b); Carrere d'Encausse (1993).

interesting matter is that nationalism was much less active in the most ethnically distinctive republics (for example, in Central Asia) than in the Baltic states, and in Russia.[107]

The first years of existence of this new conglomerate of independent states revealed the fragility of their construction, as well as the durability of historically rooted nationalities, across the borders inherited from the disintegration of the Soviet Union.[108] Russia's most intractable problem became the war in Chechnya. The Baltic republics practiced discrimination against their Russian population, inducing new inter-ethnic strife. The Ukraine saw the peaceful revolt of the Russian majority in Crimea against Ukrainian rule, and continued to experience the tension between strong nationalist sentiment in western Ukraine, and pan-Slavic feelings in eastern Ukraine. Moldova was torn between its historical Romanian identity and the Russian character of its eastern population that tried to create the Republic of Dniester. Georgia exploded in a bloody confrontation between its multiple nationalities (Georgians, Abkhazians, Armenians, Ossetians, Adzharis, Meshketians, Russians). Azerbaijan continued to fight intermittently with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabaj, and induced pogroms against Armenians in Baku. And the Muslim republics of Central Asia were torn between their historic links with Russia and the perspective of joining the Islamic fundamentalist whirlwind spinning from Iran and Afghanistan. As a result, Tajikistan suffered a full-scale civil war, and other republics Islamized their institutions and education to integrate radical Islamism before it was too late. Thus, the historical record seems to show that artificial, half-hearted, acknowledgment of the national question by Marxism–Leninism not only did not solve historical conflicts, but actually made them more virulent.[109] Reflecting on this extraordinary episode, and on its aftermath in the 1990s, several key issues of theoretical relevance deserve commentary.

First of all, one of the most powerful states in the history of humankind was not able, after 74 years, to create a new national identity. *Sovetskii narod* was not a myth, in spite of what Carrere d'Encausse says.[110] It did have some reality in the minds and lives of the generations born in the Soviet Union, in the reality of people making families with people from other nationalities, and living and working throughout the whole Soviet territory. Resistance against the Nazi juggernaut rallied people around the Soviet flag. After the

107   Carrere d'Encausse (1993); Starovoytova (1994).
108   Hooson (1994b); Lyday (1994); Stebelsky (1994); Khazanov (1995).
109   Twinning (1993); Panarin (1994); Khazanov (1995).
110   Carrere d'Encausse (1993: 234).

Stalinist terror subsided, in the late 1950s, and when material condi-tions improved, in the 1960s, a certain pride in being part of a superpower nation did develop. And, in spite of widespread cynicism and withdrawal, the ideology of equality and human solidarity took root in the Soviet citizenry, so that, overall, a new Soviet identity started to emerge. However, it was so fragile, and so dependent on the lack of information about the real situation of the country and of the world, that it did not resist the shocks of economic stagnation and the learning of the truth. In the 1980s, Russians who dared to proclaim themselves as "Soviet citizens" were derided as *Sovoks* by their com-patriots. While *sovetskii narod* was not necessarily a failing identity project, it disintegrated before it could settle in the minds and lives of the people of the Soviet Union. Thus, the Soviet experience belies the theory according to which the state can construct national identity by itself. The most powerful state, using the most comprehensive ideo-logical apparatus in history for more than seven decades, failed in recombining historical materials and projected myths into the making of a new identity. Communities may be imagined, but not necessarily believed.

Secondly, the formal acknowledgment of national identities in the territorial administration of the Soviet state, as well as policies of "nativization," did not succeed in integrating these nationalities into the Soviet system, with one significant exception: the Muslim repub-lics of Central Asia, precisely those that were most distinctive from the dominant Slavic culture. These republics were so dependent on central power for their daily survival that only in the last moments of the disintegration of the Soviet Union did their elites dare to lead the drive for independence. In the rest of the Soviet Union, national identities could not find themselves expressed in the artificially con-structed institutions of Soviet federalism. A case in point is Georgia, a multi-ethnic puzzle constructed on the basis of an historic kingdom. Georgians represent about 70 percent of the 5.5 million population. They generally belong to the Georgian Orthodox Church. But they had to coexist with Ossetians, primarily Russian Orthodox, whose population is split between North Ossetia Autonomous Republic (in Russia) and South Ossetia Autonomous Oblast (in Georgia). In the north-western corner of Georgia, the Abkhaz, a Sunni Muslim Turkic people, number only about 80,000, but they constituted 17 percent of the Abkhaz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, created inside Georgia as a counterpoint to Georgian nationalism. It did succeed: in the 1990s, the Abkhaz, with support from Russia, fought to obtain quasi-independence in their territory, in spite of being a minority of the population. Georgia's second autonomous republic, Adzharia, is

also Sunni Muslim, but from ethnic Georgians, thus supporting Georgia, while seeking their autonomy. Muslim Ingushis are in conflict with Ossetians in the border areas between Georgia, Ossetia, and Chechnya-Ingushetia. In addition, Meshketian Turks, deported by Stalin, are returning to Georgia, and Turkey has expressed its willingness to protect them, inducing distrust in Georgia's Armenian population. The net result of this territorially entangled history was that, in 1990–91, when Gamsakhurdia led a radical Georgian nationalist movement, and proclaimed independence without considering the interests of Georgia's national minorities, and without respecting civil liberties, he triggered a civil war (in which he died), both between his forces and Georgian democrats, and between Georgian forces, Abkhazians, and Ossetians. The intervention of Russia, and the pacifying role of Shevernadze, elected president in 1991 as a last resort to save the country, brought an unstable peace to the region, only to see neighboring Chechnya explode in an atrocious, protracted, debilitating guerrilla war. Thus, the failure of integrating national identities into the Soviet Union did not come from their recognition, but from the fact that their artificial institutionalization, following a bureaucratic and geopolitical logic, did not pay attention to the actual history and cultural/religious identity of each national community, and their geographical specificity. This is what authorizes Suny to speak of "the revenge of the past,"[111] and David Hooson to write:

> The question of identity is clearly the most insistent to have surfaced after the long freeze [in the former Soviet Union]. But it is not enough to treat it as a purely ethnic or cultural question. What is involved here is a re-search for the real regions of cultures, economies *and* environment which mean something (or in some cases everything) to the peoples who inhabit them. The process of crystallization of these regions, beyond the bald and flawed "Republic" boundaries of today, promises to be long and painful but inevitable and ultimately right.[112]

Thirdly, the ideological emptiness created by the failure of Marxism–Leninism to actually indoctrinate the masses was replaced, in the 1980s, when people were able to express themselves, by the only source of identity that was kept in the collective memory: *national identity*. This is why most anti-Soviet mobilizations, including democratic movements, were carried under the respective national flag. It is true, as it has been argued, and as I have argued, that political elites, in Russia, and in the federal republics, utilized nationalism as the

111   Suny (1993).
112   Hooson (1994a: 140).

ultimate weapon against failing communist ideology, to undermine the Soviet state, and seize power in the institutions of each republic.[113] However, the elites used this strategy because it was effective, because nationalist ideology resonated more in people's minds than abstract appeals to democracy, or to the virtues of the market, often assimilated to speculation in people's personal experience. Thus, the resurgence of nationalism cannot be explained by political manipulation: rather, its use by the elites is a proof of the resilience and vitality of national identity as a mobilizing principle. When, after 74 years of endless repetition of official socialist ideology, people discovered that the king was naked, the reconstruction of their identity could only take place around basic institutions of their collective memory: family, community, the rural past, sometimes religion, and, above all, the nation. But the nation was not meant as the equivalent of statehood and officialdom, but as personal self-identification in this now confusing world: I am Ukrainian, I am Russian, I am Armenian, became the rallying cry, the perennial foundation from which to reconstruct life in collectivity. This is why the Soviet experience is a testimony to the perdurability of nations beyond, and despite, the state.

Perhaps the greatest paradox of all is that when, at the end of this historical *parcours*, new nation-states emerged to assert their suppressed identities, *it is unlikely that they could really function as fully sovereign states*. This is, first of all, because of the intertwining of a mosaic of nationalities and historical identities within the current boundaries of independent states.[114] The most obvious issue refers to the 25 million Russians living under a different flag. But the Russian Federation (although currently populated by 82 percent of ethnic Russians) is also made up of 60 different ethnic/national groups, some of which are sitting on top of a wealth of natural and mineral resources, as in Sakha-Yakutia, or Tatarstan. As for the other republics, besides the illustrative case of Georgia, Kazakhs are only a minority in Kazakhstan; Tajikistan has 62 percent of Tajiks, and 24 percent Uzbeks; Kyrgyz make up only 52 percent of Kyrgyzstan's population; Uzbekistan has 72 percent of Uzbeks, and a wide diversity of different nationalities; 14 percent of Moldova's residents are Ukrainian, and 13 percent Russian. Ukrainians account for only 73 percent of the Ukraine's population. Latvians are 52 percent of Latvia, and Estonians 62 percent of Estonia. Thus, any strict defin-

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113   Castells (1992b); Hobsbawm (1994).
114   Twinning (1993); Hooson (1994b).

ition of national interests around the institutionally dominant nationality would lead to intractable conflicts in the whole Eurasian continent, as Shevernadze conceded, explaining his willingness to cooperate with Russia, after his initial hostility. Furthermore, the interpenetration of the economies, and the sharing of infrastructure, from the electrical grid to pipelines and water supply, make the disentanglement of the territories of the former Soviet Union extremely costly, and put a decisive premium on cooperation. More so in a process of multilateral integration in the global economy that requires inter-regional linkages to operate efficiently. Naturally, the deep-seated fears of a new form of Russian imperialism will loom large in the future evolution of these new states. This is why there will be no reconstruction of the Soviet Union, regardless of who is in power in Russia. Yet, the full recognition of national identity cannot be expressed in the full independence of the new states, *precisely because of the strength of identities that cut across state borders*. This is why I propose, as the most likely, and indeed promising future, the notion of the Commonwealth of Inseparable States (*Sojuz Nerazdelimykh Gosudarstv*); that is, of a web of institutions flexible and dynamic enough to articulate the autonomy of national identity and the sharing of political instrumentality in the context of the global economy. Otherwise, the affirmation of sheer state power over a fragmented map of historical identities will be a caricature of nineteenth-century European nationalism: it will lead in fact to a Commonwealth of Impossible States (*Sojuz Nevozmoznykh Gosudarstv*).

Nations without a state: Catalunya

The State must be fundamentally differentiated from the Nation because the State is a political organization, an independent power externally, a supreme power internally, with material forces in manpower and money to maintain its independence and authority. We cannot identify the one with the other, as it was usual, even by Catalan patriots themselves who were speaking or writing of a Catalan nation in the sense of an independent Catalan state . . . Catalunya continued to be Catalunya after centuries of having lost its self-government. Thus, we have reached a clear, distinct idea of nationality, the concept of a primary, fundamental social unit, destined to be in the world society, in Humanity, what man is for the civil society.
Enric Prat de la Riba, *La nacionalitat catalana*[115]

115   Originally published 1906; this edition 1978: 49–50.

If the analysis of the Soviet Union shows the possibility of states, however powerful, failing to produce nations, the experience of Catalonia (or *Catalunya*, in Catalan) allows us to reflect on the conditions under which nations exist, and (re)construct themselves over history, without a nation-state, and without searching to establish one.[116] Indeed, as stated by the current president, and national leader of *Catalunya* in the last quarter of the twentieth century, Jordi Pujol: "*Catalunya* is a nation without a state. We belong to the Spanish state, but we do not have secessionist ambitions. This must be clearly affirmed . . . The case of *Catalunya* is peculiar: we have our own language, and culture, we are a nation without a state."[117] To clarify this statement, and to elaborate on its broader, analytical implications, a brief historical review is necessary. Since not every reader is familiar with Catalonian history, I shall put forward, succinctly, the historical elements that authorize one to speak of the continuity of *Catalunya* as a materially lived, distinctive, national reality, of which the persistence of its language, and its contemporary widespread use against all odds, is a powerful indicator.[118]

Catalunya's official birthday as a nation is generally dated to 988, when Count Borrell finally severed links with the remnants of the Carolingian Empire that, around 800, had taken the lands and inhabitants of this southern frontier of the empire under its protection to counteract the threat from Arab invaders to Occitania. By the end of the ninth century, Count Guifrè el Pelòs, who had fought successfully against Arab domination, received from the French king the counties of Barcelona, Urgell, Cerdanya-Conflent, and Girona. His heirs became counts in their own right, without needing to be appointed by the French kings, assuring the hegemony of the Casal de Barcelona over the borderlands that would be called *Catalunya* in the twelfth century. Thus, while most of Christian Spain was engaged in the "Reconquest" against the Arabs for eight centuries, building in the process the kingdom of Castile and Leon, *Catalunya*, after a period of Arab domination in the eighth and ninth centuries, evolved from its Carolingian origins to become, between the early thirteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries, a Mediterranean empire. It extended to Mallorca (1229), Valencia (1238), Sicily (1282), part of Greece, with Athens (1303), Sardinia

116   Keating (1995).
117   1986; quoted in Pi (1996: 254).
118   For historical sources, see the compendium of Catalan history in Vilar (1987–90); and the special issue of *L'Avenc: Revista d'Historia* (1996). See also Vicens Vives and Llorens (1958); Vicens Vives (1959); Vilar (1964); Jutglar (1966); Sole-Tura (1967); McDonogh (1986); Rovira i Virgili (1988); Azevedo (1991); Garcia-Ramon and Nogue-Font (1994); Keating (1995); Salrach (1996).

(1323), and Naples (1442), including, as well, French territories beyond the Pyrénées, particularly Roussillon and Cerdagne.

Although *Catalunya* had a significant rural hinterland, it was primarily a commercial empire, governed by the alliance of nobility and urban merchant elites, along lines similar to those of the merchant republics of northern Italy. Concerned with the military power of Castile, the prudent Catalans accepted the merger proposed by the kingdom of Aragon in 1137. It was only in the late fifteenth century, after the voluntary merger with proto-imperial Castile, through the marriage of Fernando, king of *Catalunya*, Valencia and Aragon, with Isabel, queen of Castile, that *Catalunya* ceased to be a sovereign political entity. The marriage of the two nations was supposed to respect language, customs, and institutions, as well as sharing wealth. Yet, the power and wealth of the Spanish Crown and of its landowning nobility, as well as the influence of the fundamentalist Church built around the Counter-Reformation, steered the historical course in a different direction, subjugating non-Castilian peoples, in Europe, and in the Iberian peninsula, as well as in America. *Catalunya*, as the rest of Europe, was excluded from commerce with the American colonies, a major source of wealth in the Spanish kingdom. It reacted by developing its own consumer goods industry and by trading in its regional environment, triggering a process of incipient industrialization and capital accumulation from the second half of the sixteenth century. In the meantime Castile, after crushing, in 1520–23, the free Castilian cities (*Comunidades*) where an artisan class and a proto-bourgeoisie were emerging, went on to build a *rentier* economy to finance a warrior-theocratic state with proceeds from its American colonies and from heavy taxation on its subjects.

The clash of culture and institutions accelerated in the seventeenth century when Philip IV, in need of additional fiscal revenues, tightened up centralism, leading to the insurrection of both Portugal and *Catalunya* (where the Revolt of the Reapers took place) in 1640. Portugal, with the support of England, regained its independence. *Catalunya* was defeated, and most of its freedoms were taken away. Again, between 1705 and 1714, *Catalunya* fought for its autonomy, supporting the cause of the Austrians against Philip V, from the Bourbon dynasty, in the Spanish War of Succession. It is a mark of the Catalan character that its defeat, and the entry of Philip V's armies into Barcelona on September 11, 1714, is now celebrated as *Catalunya*'s national day. *Catalunya* lost all its political institutions of self-government, established since the Middle Ages: the municipal government based on democratic councils, the parliament, the Catalan sovereign government (*Generalitat*). The new institutions, established

by the *Decreto de nueva planta*, issued by Philip V, concentrated authority in the hands of the military commander, or General Captain of *Catalunya*.

There followed a long period of outright institutional and cultural repression by central powers, which, as documented by historians, deliberately aimed at the gradual elimination of the Catalan language, which was first banned in the administration, then in commercial transactions, and, finally, in the schools, reducing its practice to the domains of family and Church.[119] Again, Catalans reacted by closing themselves off from state matters, and going back to work, reportedly just two days after the occupation of Barcelona, in a concerted action. Thus, *Catalunya* industrialized by the end of the eighteenth century, and was, for more than a century, the only truly industrial area of Spain.

The economic strength of the Catalan bourgeoisie, and the relatively high educational and cultural level of the society at large, contrasted throughout the nineteenth century with its political marginality. Then, when trade policies from Madrid began to threaten the still fragile Catalan industry, which required protectionism, a strong Catalan nationalist movement developed from the late nine-teenth century, inspired by articulate ideologues, such as pragmatic nationalist Enric Prat de la Riba, or the federalists Valenti Almirall and Francesc Pi i Margall, sung by national poets, such as Joan Maragall, chronicled by historians, such as Rovira i Virgili, and supported by the work of philologists, such as Pompeu Fabra, who codified the modern Catalan language in the twentieth century. Yet, the Madrid political class never really accepted the alliance with Catalan nationalists, not even with the Lliga Regionalista, a clearly conservative party, probably the first modern political party in Spain, created in 1901 as a reaction to the control of elections by local bosses (*caciques*) on behalf of the central government. On the other hand, the growth of a powerful working-class movement, mainly anarcho-syndicalist, in *Catalunya* in the first third of the twentieth century, pushed Catalan nationalists, by and large dominated by their conservative wing until the 1920s, to rely on Madrid's protection against workers' demands, and threats of social revolution.[120]

However, in 1931, when the Republic was proclaimed in Spain, the left-wing republicans (*Esquerra republicana de Catalunya*) were able to establish a bridge between the Catalan working class, the petty bourgeoisie, and the nationalist ideals, and they became the dominant force in Catalan nationalism. Under the leadership of Lluis Com-

119   Ferrer i Girones (1985).
120   Sole-Tura (1967).

panys, a labor lawyer elected president of the restored *Generalitat*, *Esquerra* made a Spain-wide alliance with the Spanish Republicans, the Socialists, the Communists, and the labor unions (Anarchists, and Socialists). In 1932, under popular pressure expressed in a referendum, the Spanish government approved a Statute of Autonomy that re-stated liberties, self-government, and cultural/linguistic autonomy to *Catalunya*. Indeed, the satisfaction of nationalist demands from *Catalunya* and the Basque Country by the Spanish Republic was one of the most powerful triggers of the military insurrection that provoked the 1936–9 Civil War. Consequently, after the Civil War, the systematic repression of Catalan institutions, language, culture, identity, and political leaders (starting with the execution of Companys in 1940, after being delivered to Franco by the Gestapo) became a distinctive mark of Franco's dictatorship. It included the deliberate elimination of Catalan-speaking teachers from schools, in order to make the teaching of Catalan impossible. In a corresponding movement, nationalism became a rallying cry for the anti-Franco forces in *Catalunya*, as it was in the Basque Country, to the point that all democratic political forces, from Christian Democrats and Liberals to Socialists and Communists, were Catalan nationalists as well. This meant, for instance, that all political parties in *Catalunya*, both during the anti-Franco resistance and since the establishment of Spanish democracy in 1977, were and are Catalan, not Spanish, although they are federated in most cases with similar parties in Spain, while keeping their autonomy as parties (for example, the Catalan Socialist Party is linked to the Spanish PSOE; the Unified Socialist Party of *Catalunya* to the Communists, and so on).

In 1978, Article 2 of the new Spanish Constitution declared Spain a "nation of nationalities," and, in 1979, the Statute of Autonomy of *Catalunya* provided the institutional basis for Catalan autonomy, within the framework of Spain, including the declaration of official bilingualism, with Catalan being enshrined as "*Catalunya*'s own language." In the regional elections of *Catalunya*, the Catalan nationalist coalition (*Convergencia i Unio*), led by *Catalunya*'s contemporary leader, an educated, cosmopolitan, medical doctor of modest background, Jordi Pujol, obtained a majority five consecutive times, still being in power in 2003. The *Generalitat* (Catalan government) was strengthened, and became a dynamic institution, pursuing autonomous policies on all fronts, including the international arena. In the 1990s, Jordi Pujol was the president of the Association of European Regions. The city of Barcelona mobilized on its own, led by another charismatic figure, Catalan Socialist mayor Pasqual Maragall, a professor of urban economics, and the grandson of *Catalunya*'s national poet. Barcelona

projected itself into the world, skillfully using the 1992 Summer Olympic Games to emerge internationally as a major metropolitan center, linking historical identity with informational modernity. In the 1990s, the Catalan Nationalist party came to play a major role in Spanish politics. The inability of either the Socialist party (in 1993) or the Conservative *Partido Popular* (in 1996) to win a majority of seats in the Spanish general elections made Jordi Pujol the indispensable partner of any governing parliamentary coalition. He supported the Socialists first, the Conservatives later – at a price. *Catalunya* received the management of 30 percent of its income taxes, as well as exclusive competence in education (which is conducted in Catalan, at all levels), health, environment, communications, tourism, culture, social services, and most police functions. Thus, slowly, but surely, *Catalunya*, together with the Basque Country, was forcing Spain to become, unwillingly, a highly decentralized federal state, as the other regions claimed the same level of autonomy and resources that Catalans and Basques have obtained.

However, in the Catalan elections of 1999, the Catalan Nationalist party maintained a slim majority in parliament, which required its alliance in *Catalunya* with the conservative *Partido Popular* (PP). In addition, in 2000, the PP won an absolute majority in the Spanish election, freeing itself from dependence on the support of Catalan Nationalists in the Spanish Parliament. Then, the PP, and particularly its leader, Aznar, revealed its true centralist nature, and reversed the process of devolution of power to *Catalunya* and to the Basque Country. As a result, tensions ran high in the Basque Country, where the governing nationalist party threatened to engage in a process seeking sovereignty. In *Catalunya*, the Nationalist party distanced itself from the Conservatives; and in 2003 all Catalan parties, except the PP, demanded a new Statute of Autonomy, enhancing Catalan self-government. So, as of mid-2003, months before a new election in *Catalunya*, the question of Catalan autonomy, and the debate on the extent of Spanish federalism, are again at the forefront of Spanish politics. And yet, with the exception of a small, democratic, and peaceful pro-independence movement, mainly supported by young intellectuals, the Catalans, and the Catalan nationalist coalition, reject the idea of separatism, claiming they simply need institutions to exist as a nation, not to become a sovereign nation-state.[121]

What, then, is this Catalan nation, which is able to survive centuries of denial, and yet to refrain from entering the cycle of building a state

121   Keating (1995).

against another nation, Spain, which also became part of *Catalunya*'s historical identity? For Prat de la Riba, probably the most lucid ideologist of conservative Catalan nationalism in its formative stage, "*Catalunya* is the long chain of generations, united by the Catalan language and tradition, that succeed each other in the territory where we live."[122] Jordi Pujol also insists on the language as the foundation of Catalan identity, and so do most observers: "The identity of *Catalunya* is, to a very large extent, linguistic and cultural. *Catalunya* has never claimed ethnic or religious specificity, nor has insisted on geography, or being strictly political. There are many components of our identity, but language and culture are its backbone."[123] Indeed, *Catalunya* was, for more than two thousand years, a land of passage and migrations, between various European and Mediterranean peoples, thus forging its sovereign institutions in interaction with several cultures, from which it became clearly differentiated by the beginning of the twelfth century, when the name *Catalunya* appears for the first time.[124] According to the leading French historian of *Catalunya*, Pierre Vilar, what made Catalans distinctive as a people, from an early time (as early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), was the language, clearly distinct from Spanish or French, with a developed literature already in the thirteenth century, exemplified in the writings of Raimon Llull (1235–1315), using the *Catalanesc*, which evolved from Latin in parallel with Provençal and Spanish.

Language as identity became particularly relevant in the last half of the twentieth century when a traditionally low birth rate among Catalans in modern times, coupled with the differential industrialization of *Catalunya*, led to massive migration from impoverished Southern Spain, thus submerging Catalan speakers, still fighting against the prohibition of their language, with wave after wave of Spanish-speaking workers, who set up their life and families in *Catalunya*, particularly in the Barcelona suburbs. Thus, after *Catalunya* recovered its autonomy under the 1978 Spanish Constitution, in 1983 the Catalan Parliament voted unanimously a "Law of Linguistic Normalization," introducing teaching in Catalan in all public schools and universities, as well as the Catalan language in the administration, in public places, streets and roads, and in public television.[125] The explicit policy was to achieve, over time, the full integration of the non-Catalan population into Catalan culture, so as to avoid the creation of cultural ghettos that would fracture the society probably along class lines.

122   Prat de la Riba (1894), cited by Sole-Tura (1967: 187); my translation.
123   Pujol (1995), quoted in Pi (1996: 176); my translation.
124   Salrach (1996).
125   Puiggene i Riera et al. (1991).

So, in this strategy, the state is used to reinforce/produce the nation, without claiming sovereignty from the Spanish state.

Why is language so important in the definition of Catalan identity? One answer is historical: it is, over hundreds of years, what has been the sign of identification of being Catalan, together with democratic political institutions of self-government when they were not suppressed. Although Catalan nationalists define as a Catalan whoever lives and works in *Catalunya*, they also add "and wants to be a Catalan." And the sign of "wanting to be" is speaking the language, or trying to (in fact, "trying to" is even better because it is a real sign of willingness to be). Another answer is political: it is the easiest way to expand, and reproduce, the Catalan population without resorting to criteria of territorial sovereignty that would then necessarily collide with the territoriality of the Spanish state. Yet, an additional, and more fundamental, answer may be linked to what language represents, as a system of codes, crystallizing historically a cultural configuration that allows for symbolic sharing without worshipping of icons other than those emerging in the communication of everyday life. It may well be that nations without states are organized around linguistic communities – an idea on which I will elaborate below – although, obviously, a common language does not make a nation. Latin American nations would certainly object to this approach, as would the UK and the US. But, for the moment, let us stay in *Catalunya*.

I hope that, after this historical review, it can be conceded that it is not an invented identity. For over a thousand years at least, a given human community, mainly organized around language, but with a great deal of territorial continuity as well, and with a tradition of indigenous political democracy and self-government, has identified itself as a nation, in different contexts, against different adversaries, being part of different states, having its own state, searching for autonomy without challenging the Spanish state, integrating immigrants, enduring humiliation (indeed, commemorating it every year), and yet existing as *Catalunya*. An effort has been made by some analysts to identify Catalanism with the historical aspirations of a frustrated industrial bourgeoisie asphyxiated by a pre-capitalist, bureaucratic Spanish monarchy.[126] This was certainly a major element present in the Catalanist movement of the late nineteenth century, and in the formation of the Lliga.[127] But class analysis cannot account for the continuity of explicit discourse of Catalan identity throughout

126   Jutglar (1966).
127   Sole-Tura (1967).

history, in spite of all the efforts of Spanish centralism to eradicate it. Prat de la Riba denied that *Catalunya* was reducible to class interests, and he was right, although his Lliga was primarily a bourgeois party.[128]

Catalanism has often been associated with nineteenth-century romanticism, but it was also connected to the modernist movement of the turn of the century, oriented toward Europe and the international movement of ideas, and away from traditional Spanish regenerationism, searching for a new source of transcendent values after the loss of the remnants of empire in 1898. A cultural community, organized around language and a shared history, *Catalunya* is not an imagined entity, but a constantly renewed historical product, even if nationalist movements construct/reconstruct their icons of self-identification with codes specific to each historical context, and relative to their political projects.

A decisive characterization of Catalan nationalism concerns its relationship to the nation-state.[129] Declaring *Catalunya* at the same time European, Mediterranean, and Hispanic, Catalan nationalists, while rejecting separatism from Spain, search for a new kind of state. It would be a state of variable geometry, bringing together respect for the historically inherited Spanish state with the growing autonomy of Catalan institutions in conducting public affairs, and the integration of both Spain and *Catalunya* in a broader entity, Europe, which translates not only into the European Union, but into various networks of regional and municipal governments, as well as of civic associations, that multiply horizontal relationships throughout Europe under the tenuous shell of modern nation-states. This is not simply the clever tactics of the present. It comes from the centuries-old, pro-European standing of Catalan elites, in contrast with the splendid cultural isolationism practiced by most Castilian elites in most historical periods. It is explicit also in the thinking of some of the most universal Catalan writers or philosophers, such as Josep Ferrater Mora, who could write in 1960: "The catalanization of *Catalunya* may be the last historical opportunity to make Catalans 'good Spaniards', and to make Spaniards 'good Europeans.'"[130] This is because only a Spain that could accept its plural identity – *Catalunya* being one of its most distinctive – could be fully open to a democratic, tolerant Europe. And, for this to happen, Catalans have first to feel at home within the territorial sovereignty of the Spanish state, being able to think, and speak, in Catalan, thus creating their

128   Prat de le Riba (1906).
129   Keating (1995); Pi (1996); Trias (1996).
130   Ferrater Mora (1960: 120).

commune within a broader network. This differentiation between cultural identity and the power of the state, between the undisputed sovereignty of apparatuses and the networking of power-sharing institutions, is an historical innovation in relation to most processes of construction of nation-states, solidly planted in historically shaky soil. It seems to relate better than traditional notions of sovereignty to a society based on flexibility and adaptability, to a global economy, to the networking of media, to the variation and interpenetration of cultures. By not searching for a new state but fighting to preserve their nation, Catalans may have come full circle to their origins as people of borderless trade, cultural/linguistic identity, and flexible government institutions, all features that seem to characterize the information age.

Nations of the information age

Our excursus at the two opposite extremes of Europe yields some knowledge of the new significance of nations and nationalism as a source of meaning in the information age. For the sake of clarity, I shall define nations, in line with the arguments and elaborations presented above, as *cultural communes constructed in people's minds and collective memory by the sharing of history and political projects*. How much history must be shared for a collectivity to become a nation varies with contexts and periods, as are also variable the ingredients that predispose the formation of such communes. Thus, Catalan nationality was distilled over a thousand years of sharing, while the United States of America forged a very strong national identity, in spite of, or because of, its multi-ethnicity, in a mere two centuries. What is essential is the historical distinction between nations and states, which only came to merge, and not for all nations, in the modern age. Thus, from the vantage point of our perspective at the turn of the millennium, we know of nations without states (for example, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Scotland, and Quebec), of states without nations (Singapore, Taiwan, and South Africa), of pluri-national states (the former Soviet Union, Belgium, Spain, and the United Kingdom), of uni-national states (Japan), of shared-nation states (South Korea and North Korea), and of nations sharing states (Swedes in Sweden and Finland, Irish in Ireland and the United Kingdom, maybe Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims in a future Bosnia-Herzegovina).

What is clear is that citizenship does not equate with nationality, at least exclusive nationality, as Catalans feel Catalan first of all; yet, at the same time, most declare themselves Spanish, and even

"European," as well. So, the assimilation of nations and states to the composite nation-state, beyond a given historical context, is simply contradicted by observation when the record is constructed over the long haul and in a global perspective. It seems that the rationalist reaction (Marxist or otherwise) against German idealism (Herder, Fichte), and against French nationalistic hagiography (Michelet, Renan), obscured the understanding of the "national question," thus inducing bewilderment when confronted with the power and influence of nationalism at the end of the twentieth century.

Two phenomena, as illustrated in this section, appear to be characteristic of the current historical period: first, the disintegration of plurinational states that try to remain fully sovereign or to deny the plurality of their national constituents. This was the case of the former Soviet Union, of the former Yugoslavia, of the former Ethiopia, of Czechoslovakia, and maybe it could be the case, in the future, of Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, and other countries. The result of this disintegration is the formation of *quasi-nation-states*. They are nation-states because they receive the attributes of sovereignty on the basis of a historically constituted national identity (for example, the Ukraine). But they are "quasi" because the entangled set of relationships with their historical matrix forces them to share sovereignty with either their former state or a broader configuration (for example, the CIS, Eastern European republics associated with the European Union). Secondly, we observe the development of nations that stop at the threshold of statehood, but force their parent state to adapt, and cede sovereignty, as in the case of *Catalunya*, the Basque Country, Flanders, Wallonie, Scotland, Quebec, and, potentially, Kurdistan, Kashmir, Punjab, and East Timor. I label these entities *national quasi-states* because they are not fully fledged states, but win a share of political autonomy on the basis of their national identity.

The attributes that reinforce national identity in this historical period vary, although, in all cases, they presuppose the sharing of history over time. However, *I would make the hypothesis that language, and particularly a fully developed language, is a fundamental attribute of self-recognition, and of the establishment of an invisible national boundary less arbitrary than territoriality, and less exclusive than ethnicity*. This is, in an historical perspective, because language provides the linkage between the private and the public sphere, and between the past and the present, regardless of the actual acknowledgment of a cultural community by the institutions of the state. And it is not because Fichte used this argument to build pan-German nationalism that the historical record should be discarded. But there is also a powerful reason for the emergence of language-based nationalism in

our societies. If nationalism is, most often, a reaction against a threatened autonomous identity, then, in a world submitted to cultural homogenization by the ideology of modernization and the power of global media, language, as the direct expression of culture, becomes the trench of cultural resistance, the last bastion of self-control, the refuge of identifiable meaning. Thus, after all, nations do not seem to be "imagined communities" constructed at the service of power apparatuses. Rather, they are produced through the labors of shared history, and then spoken in the images of communal languages whose first word is *we*, the second is *us*, and, unfortunately, the third is *them*.

Ethnic Unbonding: Race, Class, and Identity in the Network Society

See you 100 Black Men...See you jailed. See you caged. See you tamed. See you pain. See you fronting. See you lamping. See you want. See you need. See you dissed. See you Blood. See you Crip. See you Brother. See you sober. See you loved. See you peace. See you home. See you listen. See you love. See you on it. See you faithful. See you chumped. See you challenged. See you change. See you. See you. See you...I definitely wanna be you.
                    Peter J. Harris, "Praisesong for the Anonymous Brothers"[131]

Do *you* want, as well? Really? Ethnicity has been a fundamental source of meaning and recognition throughout human history. It is a founding structure of social differentiation, and social recognition, as well as of discrimination, in many contemporary societies, from the United States to Sub-Saharan Africa. It has been, and it is, the basis for uprisings in search of social justice, as for Mexican Indians in Chiapas in 1994, as well as the irrational rationale for ethnic cleansing, as practiced by Bosnian Serbs in 1994. And it is, to a large extent, the cultural basis that induces networking and trust-based transactions in the new business world, from Chinese business networks (volume I, chapter 3) to the ethnic "tribes" that determine success in the new global economy. Indeed, as Cornel West writes: "In this age of globalization, with its impressive scientific and techno-logical innovations in information, communication, and applied biol-ogy, a focus on the lingering effects of racism seems outdated and antiquated...Yet race – in the coded language of welfare reform, immigration policy, criminal punishment, affirmative action, and sub-urban privatization – remains a central signifier in the political

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131   From Wideman and Preston (1995: xxi).

debate."[132] However, if race and ethnicity are central – to America, as to other societies' dynamics – their manifestations seem to be deeply altered by current societal trends.[133] I contend that while race matters, probably more than ever as a source of oppression and discrimination,[134] ethnicity is being specified as a source of meaning and identity, to be melted not with other ethnicities, but under broader principles of cultural self-definition, such as religion, nation, and gender. To convey the arguments in support of this hypothesis I shall discuss, briefly, the evolution of African American identity in the United States.

The contemporary condition of African Americans has been transformed in the past three decades by a fundamental phenomenon: their profound division along class lines, as shown in the pioneering work of William Julius Wilson,[135] the implications of which shattered for ever the way America sees African Americans, and, even more importantly, the way African Americans see themselves. Supported by a stream of research in the past decade, Wilson's thesis, and its development, points to a dramatic polarization among African Americans. On the one hand, spurred by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, particularly thanks to affirmative action programs, a large, well-educated, and relatively comfortable African American middle class has emerged, making significant inroads into the political power structure, from mayoral offices to chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and, to some extent, in the corporate world. Thus, about a third of African Americans are now part of the American middle class, although men, unlike women, still make much less money than their white counterparts.

On the other hand, about a third of African Americans, comprising 45 percent of African American children at or below the poverty level, are much worse off now than they were in the 1960s. Wilson, joined by other researchers, such as Blakely and Goldsmith, or Gans, attributes the formation of this "underclass" to the combined effect of an unbalanced information economy, of spatial segregation, and of misled public policy. The growth of an information economy emphasizes education, and reduces the availability of stable manual jobs, disadvantaging blacks at the entry level of the job market. Middle-class blacks escape the inner city, leaving behind, entrapped, the masses of the urban poor. To close the circle, the new black political elite finds support among the urban poor voters, but only as long as

132   West (1996: 107–8).
133   Appiah and Gates (1995).
134   Wieviorka (1993); C.West (1993).
135   Wilson (1987).

they can deliver social programs, which is a function of how worrisome, morally and politically, urban poor are for the white majority. Thus, new black political leadership is based on its ability to be the intermediary between the corporate world, the political establishment, and the ghettoized, unpredictable poor.

Between these two groups, the final third of African Americans strives not to fall into the poverty hell, hanging onto service jobs, disproportionately in the public sector, and to educational and vocational training programs that provide some skills to survive in a deindustrializing economy.[136] The punishment for those who do not succeed is increasingly atrocious. Among poorly educated, central-city, black male residents in 1992, barely one-third held full-time jobs. And even among those who do work, 15 percent are below the poverty line. The average net worth of assets of the poorest fifth of blacks in 1995 was exactly zero. One-third of poor black households lives in substandard housing, meaning, among other criteria, "to show evidence of rats." The ratio of urban crime rate over suburban crime rate has grown from 1.2 to 1.6 between 1973 and 1992. And, of course, inner-city residents are those who suffer most from these crimes.

Furthermore, the poor male black population is subjected to massive incarceration, or lives under the control of the penal system (awaiting trial, probation). While blacks are about 12 percent of the American population, in the 1990s they accounted for more than 50 percent of prison inmates.[137] The overall incarceration rate for black Americans in 1990 was 1,860 per 100,000, that is 6.4 times higher than for whites. And, yes, African Americans are better educated, but in 1993 23,000 black men received a college diploma, while 2.3 million were incarcerated.[138] If we add all persons under supervision of the penal system in America in 1996, we reach 5.4 million people. Blacks represented 53 percent of inmates in 1991.[139] The ratios of incarceration and surveillance are much higher among poor blacks, and staggering among young black males. In cities such as Washington, DC, for age groups 18–30, the majority of black males are in prison or on probation. Women, and families, have to adjust to this situation. The notorious argument of the absent male in the poor African American family has to account for the fact that many poor men spend considerable periods of their life in prison, so

136   Wilson (1987); Blakely and Goldsmith (1993); Carnoy (1994); Wacquant (1994); Gans (1995); Hochschild (1995); Gates (1996).
137   Tonry (1995: 59).
138   Gates (1996: 25).
139   See volume III, chapter 2.

that women have to be prepared to raise children by themselves, or to give birth on their own responsibility.

These are well-known facts, whose social roots in the new techno-logical and economic context I shall try to analyze in volume III. But I am concerned, at this point in my analysis, with the consequences of such a deep class divide on the transformation of African American identity. To comprehend this transformation since the 1960s, we must go back to the historical roots of this identity: as Cornel West argues, blacks in America are precisely African and American. Their identity was constituted as kidnapped, enslaved people under the freest society of the time. Thus, to conciliate the obvious contradiction between the ideals of freedom, and the highly productive, slavery-based economy, America had to deny the humanity of blacks because only non-humans could be denied freedom in a society constituted on the principle that "all men are born equal." As Cornel West writes: "This unrelenting assault on black humanity produced the fundamen-tal condition of black culture – that of *black invisibility* and *nameless-ness.*"[140] Thus, black culture, following Cornel West's analysis, had to learn to cope with its negation without falling into self-annihilation. It did. From songs to art, from communal churches to brotherhood, black society emerged with a deep sense of collective meaning, not lost during the massive rural exodus to the Northern ghettos, trans-lated into extraordinary creativity in art, music, and literature, and into a powerful, multifaceted political movement, whose dreams and potential were personified by Martin Luther King Jr in the 1960s.

Yet, the fundamental divide introduced among blacks by the partial success of the civil rights movement has transformed this cultural landscape. But, how exactly? At first sight, it would seem that the black middle class, building on its relative economic affluence and political influence, could be assimilated into the mainstream, consti-tuting itself under a new identity, as African Americans, moving toward a position similar to that of Italian Americans, or Chinese Americans. After all, Chinese Americans were highly discriminated against for most of California's history, yet they have reached in recent years a rather respected social status. Thus, in this perspective, African Americans could become another, distinctive segment in the multi-ethnic quilt of American society. While, on the other hand, the "underclass" would become more poor than black.

Yet, this thesis of a dual cultural evolution does not seem to hold when checked against available data. Jennifer Hochschild's powerful

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140   West (1996: 80).

study of the cultural transformation of blacks and whites in their relationship to the "American Dream" of equal opportunity and individual mobility shows exactly the contrary.[141] Middle-class blacks are precisely those who feel bitter about the frustrated illusion of the American Dream, and feel most discriminated against by the permanence of racism, while a majority of whites feel that blacks are being unduly favored by affirmative action policies, and complain about reverse discrimination. On the other hand, poor blacks, while fully conscious of racism, seem to believe in the American Dream to a greater extent than middle-class blacks, and, in any case, are more fatalistic and/or individualistic about their fate (it always was like this), although a temporal perspective in the evolution of opinion polls seems to indicate that poor blacks, too, are losing whatever faith in the system they had. Still, the major fact that clearly stands out from Hochschild's effort to bring to the analysis a wealth of empirical data is that, by and large, affluent African Americans do not feel welcome in mainstream society. Indeed, they are not. Not only racial hostility among whites continues to be pervasive, but gains by middle-class black males still leave them way behind whites in education, occupation, and income, as shown by Martin Carnoy.[142]

So, race matters a lot.[143] But, at the same time, the class divide among blacks has created such fundamentally different living conditions that there is growing hostility among the poor against those former brothers who left them out.[144] Most middle-class blacks strive to get ahead not only from the reality of the ghetto, but from the stigma that the echoes from the dying ghetto project on them through their skin. They do so, particularly, by insulating their children from the poor black communities (moving to suburbs, integrating them into white-dominated private schools), while, at the same time, re-inventing an African American identity that revives the themes of the past, African or American, while keeping silent on the plight of the present.

In a parallel move, end-of-millennium ghettos developed a new culture, formed out of affliction, rage, and individual reaction against collective exclusion, where blackness matters less than the situations of exclusion that create new sources of bonding, for instance, territorial gangs, started in the streets, and consolidated in and from the prisons.[145] Rap, not jazz, emerged from this culture. This new culture

141   Hochschild (1995).
142   Carnoy (1994).
143   West (1996).
144   Hochschild (1995); Gates (1996).
145   Sanchez Jankowski (1991).

expresses identity, as well, and it is also rooted in black history, and in the venerable American tradition of racism and racial oppression, but it incorporates new elements: the police and penal system as central institutions, the criminal economy as a shop floor, the schools as contested terrain, churches as islands of conciliation, mother-centered families, rundown environments, gang-based social organization, violence as a way of life. These are the themes of new black art and literature emerging from the new ghetto experience.[146] But it is not the same identity, by any means, as the identity emerging in middle-class African-America through the careful reconstruction of the humanity of the race.

Yet, even accepting their cultural split, both sets of identities face what appear to be insuperable difficulties in their constitution. This is, for affluent African Americans, because of the following contradiction:[147] they feel the rejection of institutional racism, so that they can only integrate into the American mainstream as leaders of their kin, as the "Talented Tenth" that Du Bois, the leading black intellectual at the turn of the century, considered to be the necessary saviors of "the negro race," as for all races.[148] But the social, economic, and cultural divide between the "Talented Tenth" and a significant, growing proportion of black America is such that they would have to deny themselves, and their children, accomplishing such a role, to become part of a pluri-class, multiracial coalition of progressive social change. In their superb little book debating this question, Henry Louis Gates Jr and Cornel West seem to think, on the one hand, that there is no other alternative, and yet, they do have reasonable doubts of the feasibility of such an option. Gates: "The real crisis of black leadership is that the very idea of black leadership is in crisis."[149] West:

> Since a multi-racial alliance of progressive middlers, liberal slices of the corporate elite, and subversive energy from below is the only vehicle by which some form of radical democratic accountability can redistribute resources and wealth and restructure the economy and government so that all benefit, the significant secondary efforts of the black Talented Tenth alone in the twenty-first century will be woefully inadequate and thoroughly frustrating.[150]

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146   Wideman and Preston (1995); Giroux (1996).
147   Hochschild (1995).
148   Gates and West (1996: 133).
149   Gates (1996: 38).
150   West (1996: 110).

Indeed, Du Bois himself left America for Ghana in 1961 because, he said, "I just cannot take any more of this country's treatment . . . Chin up, and fight on, but realize that American Negroes can't win."[151]

Will this failure of full integration efforts lead to a revival of black separatism in America? Could this be the new basis for identity, in direct line with the radical 1960s' movements, as exemplified by the Black Panthers? It would seem so, at least among the militant youth, if we were to pay attention to the renewed cult of Malcolm X, the growing influence of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, or, even more so, the extraordinary impact of the 1995 "Million Men March" in Washington, DC, built around atonement, morality, and black male pride. Yet, these new manifestations of cultural–political identity reveal further cleavages among African Americans, and they are actually organized around principles of self-identification that are not ethnic but religious (Islam, black churches), and strongly gendered (male pride, male responsibility, subordination of females). The impact of the "Million Men March," and its foreseeable development in the future, cuts across class lines, but shrinks the gender basis of African American identity, and blurs the lines between religious, racial, and class self-identification. In other words, it was not based on identity but on the reflection of a disappearing identity. How can it be that, while society is reminding blacks every minute that they are black (thus, a different, stigmatized human kind, coming in a long journey from non-humanity), blacks themselves are living so many different lives, so as not to be able to share, and, instead, become increasingly violent toward each other? A yearning for the lost community began to emerge in black America in the 1990s – because perhaps the deepest wound inflicted on African Americans in the preceding decade had been the gradual loss of collective identity, leading to individual drifting, while still bearing a collective stigma.

This is not a necessary process. Socio-political movements such as Jesse Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition," among others, continue to try hard to bring together black churches, minorities, communities, unions, and women, under a common banner to fight politically for social justice and racial equality. Yet this is a process of building a political identity that only if fully successful in the long term could create a collective, cultural identity that would be necessarily new for both whites and blacks, if it is to overcome racism while maintaining historical, cultural differences. Cornel West, while acknowledging a "hope not hopeless but unhopeful," calls for "radical democracy" to transcend both racial divisions and black nationalism.[152] But in the

151   Gates and West (1996: 111).
152   West (1996: 112).

ghetto trenches, and in the corporate boardrooms, historical African American identity is being fragmented, and individualized, without yet being integrated into a multiracial, open society.

Thus, I formulate the hypothesis that ethnicity does not provide the basis for communal heavens in the network society because it is based on primary bonds that lose significance, when cut from their historical context, as a basis for reconstruction of meaning in a world of flows and networks, of recombination of images, and reassignment of meaning. Ethnic materials are integrated into cultural communes that are more powerful, and more broadly defined than ethnicity, such as religion or nationalism, as statements of cultural autonomy in a world of symbols. Or else, ethnicity becomes the foundation for defensive trenches, then territorialized in local communities, or even gangs, defending their turf. Between cultural communes and self-defense territorial units, ethnic roots are twisted, divided, repro-cessed, mixed, differentially stigmatized, or rewarded, according to a new logic of informationalization/globalization of cultures and economies that makes symbolic composites out of blurred identities. Race matters, but it hardly constructs meaning any longer.

Territorial Identities: The Local Community

One of the oldest debates in urban sociology refers to the loss of community as a result of urbanization first, and of suburbanization later. Empirical research some time ago, most notably by Claude Fischer and by Barry Wellman,[153] seems to have put to rest the simplistic notion of a systematic co-variation between space and culture. People socialize and interact in their local environment, be it in the village, in the city, or in the suburb, and they build social networks among their neighbors. On the other hand, locally based identities intersect with other sources of meaning and social recogni-tion, in a highly diversified pattern that allows for alternative inter-pretations. So, where, in recent years, Etzioni sees the revival of community to a large extent on a local basis, Putnam watches the disintegration of the Tocquevillian vision of an intense civil society in America, with membership and activity in voluntary associations dropping substantially in the 1980s.[154] Reports from other areas of the world are equally conflicting in their estimates. However, I do not think it would be inaccurate to say that local environments, *per se*, do

153   Wellman (1979); Fischer (1982).
154   Etzioni (1993); Putnam (1995).

not induce a specific pattern of behavior, or, for that matter, a distinctive identity. Yet, what communalist authors would argue, and what is consistent with my own cross-cultural observation, is that people resist the process of individualization and social atomization, and tend to cluster in community organizations that, over time, generate a feeling of belonging, and ultimately, in many cases, a communal, cultural identity. I introduce the hypothesis that, for this to happen, a process of social mobilization is necessary. That is, people must engage in urban movements (not quite revolutionary), through which common interests are discovered, and defended, life is shared somehow, and new meaning may be produced.

I know something about this subject, having spent a decade of my life studying urban social movements around the world.[155] Summarizing my findings, as well as the relevant literature, I proposed that urban movements (processes of purposive social mobilization, organized in a given territory, oriented toward urban-related goals) were focused on three main sets of goals: urban demands on living conditions and collective consumption; the affirmation of local cultural identity; and the conquest of local political autonomy and citizen participation. Different movements combined these three sets of goals in various proportions, and the outcomes of their efforts were equally diversified. Yet, in many instances, regardless of the explicit achievements of the movement, its very existence produced meaning, not only for the movement's participants, but for the community at large. And not only during the lifespan of the movement (usually brief), but in the collective memory of the locality. Indeed, I argued, and I argue, that this production of meaning is an essential component of cities, throughout history, as the built environment, and its meaning, is constructed through a conflictive process between the interests and values of opposing social actors.

I added something else, referring to the historical moment of my observation (the late 1970s and early 1980s), but projecting my view toward the future: urban movements were becoming critical sources of resistance to the one-sided logic of capitalism, statism, and informationalism. This was, essentially, because the failure of proactive movements and politics (for example, the labor movement, political parties) to counter economic exploitation, cultural domination, and political oppression had left people with no other choice but either to surrender or to react on the basis of the most immediate source of self-recognition and autonomous organization: their locality. Thus, so emerged the paradox of increasingly local politics in a world struc-

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155   Castells (1983).

tured by increasingly global processes. There was production of meaning and identity: my neighborhood, my community, my city, my school, my tree, my river, my beach, my chapel, my peace, my environment. But it was a defensive identity, an identity of retrenchment of the known against the unpredictability of the unknown and uncontrollable. Suddenly defenseless against a global whirlwind, people stuck to themselves: whatever they had, and whatever they were, became their identity. I wrote in 1983:

> Urban movements do address the real issues of our time, although neither on the scale nor terms that are adequate to the task. And yet they do not have any choice since they are the last reaction to the domination and renewed exploitation that submerges our world. But they are more than a last symbolic stand and a desperate cry: they are symptoms of our own contradictions, and therefore potentially capable of superseding these contradictions...They do produce new historical meaning – in the twilight zone of pretending to build within the walls of a local community a new society they know unattainable. And they do so by nurturing the embryos of tomorrow's social movements within the local utopias that urban movements have constructed in order never to surrender to barbarism."[156]

What has happened since then? The empirical answer is, of course, extraordinarily diverse, particularly if we look across cultures and areas of the world.[157] I would, however, venture, for the sake of the analysis, to synthesize urban movements' main trajectories in the 1980s and 1990s under four headings.

First, in many cases, urban movements, and their discourses, actors, and organizations, have been integrated into the structure and practice of local government, either directly or indirectly, through a diversified system of citizen participation, and community development. This trend, while liquidating urban movements as sources of alternative social change, has considerably reinforced local government, and introduced the possibility of the local state as a significant instance of reconstruction of political control and social meaning. I will return to this fundamental development in chapter 5, when analyzing the overall transformation of the state.

Secondly, local communities, and their organizations, have indeed nurtured the grass roots of a widespread, and influential, environmental movement, particularly in middle-class neighborhoods, and in the suburbs, exurbia, and urbanized countryside (see chapter 3).

156   Castells (1983: 331).
157   Massolo (1992); Fisher and Kling (1993); Calderon (1995); Judge et al. (1995); Tanaka (1995); Borja and Castells (1997); Hsia (1996); Yazawa (1997).

However, these movements are often defensive and reactive, focusing on the strictest conservation of their space and immediate environment, as exemplified, in the United States, by the "not in my backyard" attitude, mixing in the same rejection toxic waste, nuclear plants, public housing projects, prisons, and mobile home settlements. I will make a major distinction, which I will develop in chapter 3 when analyzing the environmental movement, between the search for controlling space (a defensive reaction), and the search for controlling time; that is, for the preservation of nature, and of the planet, for future generations, in the very long term, thus adopting cosmological time, and rejecting the instant time approach of instrumentalist development. Identities emerging from these two perspectives are quite different, as defensive spaces lead to collective individualism, and offensive timing opens up the reconciliation between culture and nature, thus introducing a new, holistic philosophy of life.

Thirdly, a vast number of poor communities around the world have engaged in collective survival, as with the communal kitchens that flourished in Santiago de Chile or Lima during the 1980s. Be it in squatter settlements in Latin America, in American inner cities, or in working-class neighborhoods in Asian cities, communities have built their own "welfare states" (in the absence of responsible public policies) on the basis of networks of solidarity and reciprocity, often around churches, or supported by internationally funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs), sometimes with the help of leftist intellectuals. These organized, local communities have played, and continue to play, a major role in the daily survival of a significant proportion of the world's urban population, on the threshold of famine and epidemic. This trend was illustrated, for instance, by the experience of community associations organized by the Catholic Church in São Paulo in the 1980s,[158] and by internationally sponsored NGOs in Bogota in the 1990s.[159] In most of these cases, a communal identity does emerge, although very often it is absorbed into a religious faith, to the point that I would risk the hypothesis that this kind of communalism is, essentially, a religious commune, linked to the consciousness of being the exploited and/or the excluded. Thus, people organizing in poor local communities may feel revitalized, and acknowledged as human beings, by and through religious deliverance.

Fourthly, there is a darker side of the story, concerning the evolution of urban movements, particularly in segregated urban areas, a trend that I foresaw some time ago:

158   Cardoso de Leite (1983); Gohn (1991).
159   Espinosa and Useche (1992).

> If urban movements' appeals are not heard, if the new political avenues remain closed, if the new central social movements (feminism, new labor, self-management, alternative communication) do not develop fully, then the urban movements – reactive utopias that tried to illuminate the path they could not walk – will return, but this time as urban shadows eager to destroy the closed walls of their captive city.[160]

Fortunately, the failure was not total, and the diversified expression of organized local communities did provide avenues of reform, survival, and self-identification, in spite of the lack of major social movements able to articulate change in the new society emerging in the past two decades. Yet, harsh policies of economic adjustment in the 1980s, a widespread crisis of political legitimacy, and the exclusionary impact of the space of flows over the space of places (see volume I), took their toll on social life and organization in poor local communities. In American cities, gangs emerged as a major form of association, work, and identity for hundreds of thousands of youths. Indeed, as Sanchez Jankowski has shown in his first-hand, comprehensive study of gangs,[161] they play a structuring role in many areas, which explains the ambiguous feeling of local residents toward them, partly fearful, yet partly feeling able to relate to the gang society better than to mainstream institutions, which are usually present only in their repressive manifestation. Gangs, or their functional equivalent, are not, by any means, an American graffito. The *pandillas* in most Latin American cities are a key element of sociability in poor neighborhoods, and so are they in Jakarta, in Bangkok, in Manila, in Mantes-la-Jolie (Paris), or in Meseta de Orcasitas (Madrid). Gangs are, however, an old story in many societies, particularly in America (remember William White's *Street Corner Society*). Yet there was something new in the gangs of the 1990s, characterizing the construction of identity as the twisted mirror of informational culture. It is what Magaly Sanchez and Yves Pedrazzini, on the basis of their study of the *malandros* (bad boys) of Caracas, call the *culture of urgency*.[162] It is a culture of the immediate end of life, not of its negation, but of its celebration. Thus, everything has to be tried, felt, experimented, accomplished, before it is too late, since there is no tomorrow. Is this really so different from the culture of consumerist narcissism *à la* Lasch? Have the bad boys of Caracas, or elsewhere, understood faster than the rest of us what our new society is all about? Is the new gang identity the culture of communal hyper-individualism? Individualism because, in a pattern of immediate gratification, only the

160   Castells (1983: 327).
161   Sanchez Jankowski (1991).
162   Sanchez and Pedrazzini (1996).

individual can be a proper accounting unit. Communalism because, for this hyper-individualism to be an identity – that is, to be socialized as value not just as senseless consumption – it needs a milieu of appreciation and reciprocal support: a commune, as in White's times. But, unlike White's, this commune is ready to explode at any time, it is a commune of the end of time, it is a commune of timeless time, characterizing the network society. And it exists, and explodes, territorially. Local cultures of urgency are the reverse expression of global timelessness.

Thus, local communities, constructed through collective action and preserved through collective memory, are specific sources of identities. But these identities, in most cases, are defensive reactions against the impositions of global disorder and uncontrollable, fast-paced change. They do build havens, but not heavens.

Conclusion: The Cultural Communes of the Information Age

The transformation of our culture and our society would have to happen at a number of levels. If it occurred only in the minds of individuals (as to some degree it already has), it would be powerless. If it came only from the initiative of the state, it would be tyrannical. Personal transformation among large numbers is essential, and it must not only be a transformation of consciousness but must also involve individual action. But individuals need the nurture of groups that carry a moral tradition reinforcing their own aspirations.
<div align="right">Robert Bellah et al., Habits of the Heart[163]</div>

Our intellectual journey through communal landscapes provides some preliminary answers to the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter on the construction of identity in the network society.

For those social actors excluded from or resisting the individualization of identity attached to life in the global networks of power and wealth, cultural communes of religious, national, or territorial foundation seem to provide the main alternative for the construction of meaning in our society. These cultural communes are characterized by three main features. They appear as reactions to prevailing social trends, which are resisted on behalf of autonomous sources of meaning. They are, at the outset, defensive identities that function as refuge and solidarity, to protect against a hostile, outside world. They are culturally constituted; that is, organized around a specific set of values

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163   Bellah et al. (1985: 286).

whose meaning and sharing are marked by specific codes of self-identification: the community of believers, the icons of nationalism, the geography of locality.

Ethnicity, while being a fundamental feature of our societies, especially as a source of discrimination and stigma, may not induce communes on its own. Rather, it is likely to be processed by religion, nation, and locality, whose specificity it tends to reinforce.

The constitution of these cultural communes is not arbitrary. It works on raw materials from history, geography, language, and environment. So, they are constructed, but materially constructed, around reactions and projects historically/geographically determined.

Religious fundamentalism, cultural nationalism, territorial communes are, by and large, defensive reactions. Reactions against three fundamental threats, perceived in all societies, by the majority of humankind, at this turn of the millennium. Reaction against globalization, which dissolves the autonomy of institutions, organizations, and communication systems where people live. Reaction against networking and flexibility, which blur the boundaries of membership and involvement, individualize social relationships of production, and induce the structural instability of work, space, and time. And reaction against the crisis of the patriarchal family, at the roots of the transformation of mechanisms of security-building, socialization, sexuality, and, therefore, of personality systems. When the world becomes too large to be controlled, social actors aim to shrink it back to their size and reach. When networks dissolve time and space, people anchor themselves in places, and recall their historic memory. When the patriarchal sustainment of personality breaks down, people affirm the transcendent value of family and community, as God's will.

These defensive reactions become sources of meaning and identity by constructing new cultural codes out of historical materials. Because the new processes of domination to which people react are embedded in information flows, the building of autonomy has to rely on reverse information flows. God, nation, family, and community will provide unbreakable, eternal codes, around which a counter-offensive will be mounted against the culture of real virtuality. Eternal truth cannot be virtualized. It is embodied in us. Thus, against the informationalization of culture, bodies are informationalized. That is, individuals bear their gods in their heart. They do not reason, they believe. They are the bodily manifestation of God's eternal values, and as such, they cannot be dissolved, lost in the whirlwind of information flows and cross-organizational networks. This is why language, and communal images, are so essential to restore communication between the autonomized bodies, escaping the domination of a-historical

flows, yet trying to restore new patterns of meaningful communication among the believers.

This form of identity-building revolves essentially around the principle of *resistance identity*, as defined at the beginning of this chapter. *Legitimizing identity* seems to have entered a fundamental crisis because of the fast disintegration of civil society inherited from the industrial era, and because of the fading away of the nation-state, the main source of legitimacy (see chapter 5). Indeed, cultural communes organizing the new resistance emerge as sources of identity by breaking away from civil societies and state institutions from which they originate, as in the case of Islamic fundamentalism breaking away from economic modernization (Iran), and/or from Arab states' nationalism; or with nationalist movements, challenging the nation-state and the state institutions of societies where they come into existence. This negation of civil societies and political institutions where cultural communes emerge leads to the closing of the boundaries of the commune. In contrast to pluralistic, differentiated civil societies, cultural communes display little internal differentiation. Indeed, their strength, and their ability to provide refuge, solace, certainty, and protection, comes precisely from their communal character, from their collective responsibility, canceling individual projects. Thus, in the first stage of reaction, the (re)construction of meaning by defensive identities breaks away from the institutions of society, and promises to rebuild from the bottom up, while retrenching themselves in a communal heaven.

It is possible that from such communes, new subjects – that is, collective agents of social transformation – may emerge, thus constructing new meaning around *project identity*. Indeed, I would argue that, given the structural crisis of civil society and the nation-state, this may be the main potential source of social change in the network society. As for how and why these new proactive subjects could be formed from these reactive, cultural communes, this will be the core of my analysis of social movements in the network society to be elaborated throughout this volume.

But we can already say something on the basis of the observations and discussions presented in this chapter. The emergence of project identities of different kinds is not an historical necessity. It may well be that cultural resistance will remain enclosed in the boundaries of communes. If this is the case, and where and when this is the case, communalism will close the circle of its latent fundamentalism on its own components, inducing a process that might transform communal heavens into heavenly hells.