He regards it as his task to brush history against the grain.

Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*

Thus from a Mixture of all kinds began,
That Het'rogeneous Thing, *An Englishman*:
In eager Rapes, and furious Lust begot,
Betwixt a Painted *Britton* and a *Scot*:
Whose gend'ring Offspring quickly learnt to bow,
And yoke their Heifers to the *Roman* Plough:
From whence a Mongrel half-bred Race there came,
With neither Name nor Nation, Speech or Fame.
In whose hot Veins now Mixtures quickly ran,
Infus'd betwixt a *Saxon* and a *Dane*.
While their Rank Daughters, to their Parents just,
Receiv'd all Nations with Promiscuous Lust.
This Nauseous Brood directly did contain
The well-extracted Blood of *Englishmen* . . .

From Daniel Defoe, *The True-Born Englishman*

Preface to the Second Edition

Who would have thought that the storm blows harder the farther it leaves Paradise behind?

The armed conflicts of 1978–79 in Indochina, which provided the immediate occasion for the original text of *Imagined Communities*, seem already, a mere twelve years later, to belong to another era. Then I was haunted by the prospect of further full-scale wars between the socialist states. Now half these states have joined the debris at the Angel's feet, and the rest are fearful of soon following them. The wars that the survivors face are civil wars. The likelihood is strong that by the opening of the new millennium little will remain of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics except . . . republics.

Should all this have somehow been foreseen? In 1983 I wrote that the Soviet Union was 'as much the legatee of the prenational dynastic states of the nineteenth century as the precursor of a twenty-first century internationalist order.' But, having traced the nationalist explosions that destroyed the vast polyglot and polyethnic realms which were ruled from Vienna, London, Constantinople, Paris and Madrid, I could not see that the train was laid at least as far as Moscow. It is melancholy consolation to observe that history seems to be bearing out the 'logic' of *Imagined Communities* better than its author managed to do.

It is not only the world that has changed its face over the past

twelve years. The study of nationalism too has been startlingly trans-
formed – in method, scale, sophistication, and sheer quantity. In the
English language alone, J.A. Armstrong's *Nations Before Nationalism*
(1982), John Breuilly's *Nationalism and the State* (1982), Ernest Gellner's
Nations and Nationalism (1983), Miroslav Hroch's *Social Preconditions of
National Revival in Europe* (1985), Anthony Smith's *The Ethnic Origins of
Nations* (1986), P. Chatterjee's *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*
(1986), and Eric Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism since 1788* (1990)
– to name only a few of the key texts – have, by their historical reach
and theoretical power, made largely obsolete the traditional literature on
the subject. In part out of these works has developed an extraordinary
proliferation of historical, literary, anthropological, sociological, fem-
inist, and other studies linking the objects of these fields of enquiry to
nationalism and nation.[1]

To adapt *Imagined Communities* to the demands of these vast changes
in the world and in the text is a task beyond my present means. It
seemed better, therefore, to leave it largely as an 'unrestored' period
piece, with its own characteristic style, silhouette, and mood. Two
things give me comfort. On the one hand, the full final outcome of
developments in the old socialist world remain shrouded in the ob-
scurity ahead. On the other hand, the idiosyncratic method and
preoccupations of *Imagined Communities* seem to me still on the margins
of the newer scholarship on nationalism – in that sense, at least, not fully
superseded.

What I have tried to do, in the present edition, is simply to correct
errors of fact, conception, and interpretation which I should have
avoided in preparing the original version. These corrections – in the
spirit of 1983, as it were – involve some alterations of the first edition, as
well as two new chapters, which basically have the character of discrete
appendices.

In the main text, I discovered two serious errors of translation, at
least one unfulfilled promise, and one misleading emphasis. Unable to
read Spanish in 1983, I thoughtlessly relied on Leon Ma. Guerrero's
English translation of José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*, although earlier

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1. Hobsbawm has had the courage to conclude from this scholarly explosion that
the age of nationalism is near its end: Minerva's owl flies at dusk.

translations were available. It was only in 1990 that I discovered how
fascinatingly corrupt Guerrero's version was. For a long, important
quotation from Otto Bauer's *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozial-
demokratie* I lazily relied on Oscar Jászi's translation. More recent
consultation of the German original has shown me how far Jászi's
political predilections tinted his citations. In at least two passages I had
faithlessly promised to explain why Brazilian nationalism developed so
late and so idiosyncratically by comparison with those of other Latin
American countries. The present text attempts to fulfil the broken
pledge.

It had been part of my original plan to stress the New World
origins of nationalism. My feeling had been that an unselfconscious
provincialism had long skewed and distorted theorizing on the
subject. European scholars, accustomed to the conceit that every-
thing important in the modern world originated in Europe, too
easily took 'second generation' ethnolinguistic nationalisms (Hun-
garian, Czech, Greek, Polish, etc.) as the starting point in their
modelling, no matter whether they were 'for' or 'against' nation-
alism. I was startled to discover, in many of the notices of *Imagined
Communities*, that this Eurocentric provincialism remained quite
undisturbed, and that the crucial chapter on the originating Americas
was largely ignored. Unfortunately, I have found no better 'instant'
solution to this problem than to retitle Chapter 4 as 'Creole
Pioneers.'

The two 'appendices' try to correct serious theoretical flaws in the
first edition.[2] A number of friendly critics had suggested that Chapter 7
('The Last Wave') oversimplified the process whereby early 'Third
World' nationalisms were modelled. Furthermore the chapter did
not seriously address the question of the role of the local colonial
state, rather than the metropole, in styling these nationalisms. At the
same time, I became uneasily aware that what I had believed to be a
significantly new contribution to thinking about nationalism –

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2. The first appendix originated in a paper prepared for a conference held in
Karachi in January 1989, sponsored by the World Institute for Development
Economics Research of the United Nations University. A sketch for the second
appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* of June 13, 1986, under the rubric
'Narrating the Nation.'

changing apprehensions of time – patently lacked its necessary coordinate: changing apprehensions of space. A brilliant doctoral thesis by Thongchai Winichakul, a young Thai historian, stimulated me to think about mapping's contribution to the nationalist imagination.

'Census, Map, Museum' therefore analyses the way in which, quite unconsciously, the nineteenth-century colonial state (and policies that its mindset encouraged) dialectically engendered the grammar of the nationalisms that eventually arose to combat it. Indeed, one might go so far as to say that the state imagined its local adversaries, as in an ominous prophetic dream, well before they came into historical existence. To the forming of this imagining, the census's abstract quantification/serialization of persons, the map's eventual logoization of political space, and the museum's 'ecumenical,' profane genealogizing made interlinked contributions.

The origin of the second 'appendix' was the humiliating recognition that in 1983 I had quoted Renan without the slightest understanding of what he had actually said: I had taken as something easily ironical what was in fact utterly bizarre. The humiliation also forced me to realize that I had offered no intelligible explanation of exactly how, and why, new-emerging nations imagined themselves antique. What appeared in most of the scholarly writings as Machiavellian hocus-pocus, or as bourgeois fantasy, or as disinterred historical truth, struck me now as deeper and more interesting. Supposing 'antiquity' were, at a certain historical juncture, the *necessary consequence* of 'novelty'? If nationalism was, as I supposed it, the expression of a radically changed form of consciousness, should not awareness of that break, and the necessary forgetting of the older consciousness, create its own narrative? Seen from this perspective, the atavistic fantasizing characteristic of most nationalist thought after the 1820s appears an epiphenomenon; what is really important is the structural alignment of post–1820s nationalist 'memory' with the inner premises and conventions of modern biography and autobiography.

Aside from any theoretical merits or demerits the two 'appendices' may prove to have, each has its own more everyday limitations. The data for 'Census, Map, Museum' are drawn wholly from Southeast Asia. In some ways this region offers splendid opportunities for

comparative theorizing since it comprises areas formerly colonized by almost all the great imperial powers (England, France, Holland, Portugal, Spain and the United States) as well as uncolonized Siam. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen whether my analysis, even if plausible for this region, can be convincingly applied around the globe. In the second appendix, the sketchy empirical material relates almost exclusively to Western Europe and the New World, regions on which my knowledge is quite superficial. But the focus had to be there since it was in these zones that the amnesias of nationalism were first voiced over.

Benedict Anderson
February 1991

Introduction

Perhaps without being much noticed yet, a fundamental transformation in the history of Marxism and Marxist movements is upon us. Its most visible signs are the recent wars between Vietnam, Cambodia and China. These wars are of world-historical importance because they are the first to occur between regimes whose independence and revolutionary credentials are undeniable, and because none of the belligerents has made more than the most perfunctory attempts to justify the bloodshed in terms of a recognizable *Marxist* theoretical perspective. While it was still just possible to interpret the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969, and the Soviet military interventions in Germany (1953), Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Afghanistan (1980) in terms of – according to taste – 'social imperialism,' 'defending socialism,' etc., no one, I imagine, seriously believes that such vocabularies have much bearing on what has occurred in Indochina.

If the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia in December 1978 and January 1979 represented the first *large-scale conventional war* waged by one revolutionary Marxist regime against another,[1] China's assault on Vietnam in February rapidly confirmed

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1. This formulation is chosen simply to emphasize the scale and the style of the fighting, not to assign blame. To avoid possible misunderstanding, it should be said that the December 1978 invasion grew out of armed clashes between partisans of the

the precedent. Only the most trusting would dare wager that in the declining years of this century any significant outbreak of inter-state hostilities will necessarily find the USSR and the PRC – let alone the smaller socialist states – supporting, or fighting on, the same side. Who can be confident that Yugoslavia and Albania will not one day come to blows? Those variegated groups who seek a withdrawal of the Red Army from its encampments in Eastern Europe should remind themselves of the degree to which its overwhelming presence has, since 1945, ruled out armed conflict between the region's Marxist regimes.

Such considerations serve to underline the fact that since World War II every successful revolution has defined itself in *national* terms – the People's Republic of China, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and so forth – and, in so doing, has grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the prerevolutionary past. Conversely, the fact that the Soviet Union shares with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland the rare distinction of refusing nationality in its naming suggests that it is as much the legatee of the prenational dynastic states of the nineteenth century as the precursor of a twenty-first century internationalist order.[2]

Eric Hobsbawm is perfectly correct in stating that 'Marxist movements and states have tended to become national not only in form but in substance, i.e., nationalist. There is nothing to suggest

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two revolutionary movements going back possibly as far as 1971. After April 1977, border raids, initiated by the Cambodians, but quickly followed by the Vietnamese, grew in size and scope, culminating in the major Vietnamese incursion of December 1977. None of these raids, however, aimed at overthrowing enemy regimes or occupying large territories, nor were the numbers of troops involved comparable to those deployed in December 1978. The controversy over the causes of the war is most thoughtfully pursued in: Stephen P. Heder, 'The Kampuchean–Vietnamese Conflict,' in David W. P. Elliott, ed., *The Third Indochina Conflict*, pp. 21–67; Anthony Barnett, 'Inter-Communist Conflicts and Vietnam,' *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 11: 4 (October–December 1979), pp. 2–9; and Laura Summers, 'In Matters of War and Socialism Anthony Barnett would Shame and Honour Kampuchea Too Much,' ibid., pp. 10–18.

2. Anyone who has doubts about the UK's claims to such parity with the USSR should ask himself what nationality its name denotes: Great Brito-Irish?

that this trend will not continue.'[3] Nor is the tendency confined to the socialist world. Almost every year the United Nations admits new members. And many 'old nations,' once thought fully consolidated, find themselves challenged by 'sub'-nationalisms within their borders – nationalisms which, naturally, dream of shedding this sub-ness one happy day. The reality is quite plain: the 'end of the era of nationalism,' so long prophesied, is not remotely in sight. Indeed, nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time.

But if the facts are clear, their explanation remains a matter of long-standing dispute. Nation, nationality, nationalism – all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse. In contrast to the immense influence that nationalism has exerted on the modern world, plausible theory about it is conspicuously meagre. Hugh Seton-Watson, author of far the best and most comprehensive English-language text on nationalism, and heir to a vast tradition of liberal historiography and social science, sadly observes: 'Thus I am *driven* to the conclusion that no "scientific definition" of the nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists.'[4] Tom Nairn, author of the path-breaking *The Break-up of Britain*, and heir to the scarcely less vast tradition of Marxist historiography and social science, candidly remarks: 'The theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure.'[5] But even this confession is somewhat misleading, insofar as it can be taken to imply the regrettable outcome of a long, self-conscious search for theoretical clarity. It would be more exact to say that nationalism has proved an uncomfortable *anomaly* for Marxist theory and, precisely for that reason, has been largely elided, rather than confronted. How else to explain Marx's failure to explicate the crucial adjective in his memorable formulation of 1848: 'The proletariat of each country

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3. Eric Hobsbawm, 'Some Reflections on "The Break-up of Britain"', *New Left Review*, 105 (September–October 1977), p. 13.

4. See his *Nations and States*, p. 5. Emphasis added.

5. See his 'The Modern Janus', *New Left Review*, 94 (November–December 1975), p. 3. This essay is included unchanged in *The Break-up of Britain* as chapter 9 (pp. 329–63).

must, of course, first of all settle matters with *its own* bourgeoisie'?[6] How else to account for the use, for over a century, of the concept 'national bourgeoisie' without any serious attempt to justify theoretically the relevance of the adjective? Why is *this* segmentation of the bourgeoisie − a world-class insofar as it is defined in terms of the relations of production − theoretically significant?

The aim of this book is to offer some tentative suggestions for a more satisfactory interpretation of the 'anomaly' of nationalism. My sense is that on this topic both Marxist and liberal theory have become etiolated in a late Ptolemaic effort to 'save the phenomena'; and that a reorientation of perspective in, as it were, a Copernican spirit is urgently required. My point of departure is that nationality, or, as one might prefer to put it in view of that word's multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind. To understand them properly we need to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy. I will be trying to argue that the creation of these artefacts towards the end of the eighteenth century[7] was the spontaneous distillation of a complex 'crossing' of discrete historical forces; but that, once created, they became 'modular,' capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations. I will also attempt to show why these particular cultural artefacts have aroused such deep attachments.

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6. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, in the *Selected Works*, I, p. 45. Emphasis added. In any theoretical exegesis, the words 'of course' should flash red lights before the transported reader.

7. As Aira Kemiläinen notes, the twin 'founding fathers' of academic scholarship on nationalism, Hans Kohn and Carleton Hayes, argued persuasively for this dating. Their conclusions have, I think, not been seriously disputed except by nationalist ideologues in particular countries. Kemiläinen also observes that the word 'nationalism' did not come into wide general use until the end of the nineteenth century. It did not occur, for example, in many standard nineteenth century lexicons. If Adam Smith conjured with the wealth of 'nations,' he meant by the term no more than 'societies' or 'states.' Aira Kemiläinen, *Nationalism*, pp. 10, 33, and 48–49.

CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Before addressing the questions raised above, it seems advisable to consider briefly the concept of 'nation' and offer a workable definition. Theorists of nationalism have often been perplexed, not to say irritated, by these three paradoxes: (1) The objective modernity of nations to the historian's eye vs. their subjective antiquity in the eyes of nationalists. (2) The formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept − in the modern world everyone can, should, will 'have' a nationality, as he or she 'has' a gender − vs. the irremediable particularity of its concrete manifestations, such that, by definition, 'Greek' nationality is sui generis. (3) The 'political' power of nationalisms vs. their philosophical poverty and even incoherence. In other words, unlike most other isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers. This 'emptiness' easily gives rise, among cosmopolitan and polylingual intellectuals, to a certain condescension. Like Gertrude Stein in the face of Oakland, one can rather quickly conclude that there is 'no there there'. It is characteristic that even so sympathetic a student of nationalism as Tom Nairn can nonetheless write that: ' "Nationalism" is the pathology of modern developmental history, as inescapable as "neurosis" in the individual, with much the same essential ambiguity attaching to it, a similar built-in capacity for descent into dementia, rooted in the dilemmas of helplessness thrust upon most of the world (the equivalent of infantilism for societies) and largely incurable.'[8]

Part of the difficulty is that one tends unconsciously to hypostasize the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N (rather as one might Age-with-a-capital-A) and then to classify 'it' as *an* ideology. (Note that if everyone has an age, Age is merely an analytical expression.) It would, I think, make things easier if one treated it as if it belonged with 'kinship' and 'religion', rather than with 'liberalism' or 'fascism'.

In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following

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8. *The Break-up of Britain*, p. 359.

definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.

It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.[9] Renan referred to this imagining in his suavely back-handed way when he wrote that 'Or l'essence d'une nation est que tous les individus aient beaucoup de choses en commun, et aussi que tous aient oublié bien des choses.'[10] With a certain ferocity Gellner makes a comparable point when he rules that 'Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they do not exist.'[11] The drawback to this formulation, however, is that Gellner is so anxious to show that nationalism masquerades under false pretences that he assimilates 'invention' to 'fabrication' and 'falsity', rather than to 'imagining' and 'creation'. In this way he implies that 'true' communities exist which can be advantageously juxtaposed to nations. In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined. Javanese villagers have always known that they are connected to people they have never seen, but these ties were once imagined particularistically – as indefinitely stretchable nets of kinship and clientship. Until quite recently, the Javanese language had no word meaning the abstraction 'society.' We may today think of the French aristocracy of the *ancien régime* as a class; but surely it was

imagined this way only very late.[12] To the question 'Who is the Comte de X?' the normal answer would have been, not 'a member of the aristocracy,' but 'the lord of X,' 'the uncle of the Baronne de Y,' or 'a client of the Duc de Z.'

The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation in the way that it was possible, in certain epochs, for, say, Christians to dream of a wholly Christian planet.

It is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the living *pluralism* of such religions, and the allomorphism between each faith's ontological claims and territorial stretch, nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so. The gage and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state.

Finally, it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.

These deaths bring us abruptly face to face with the central problem posed by nationalism: what makes the shrunken imaginings of recent history (scarcely more than two centuries) generate such colossal sacrifices? I believe that the beginnings of an answer lie in the cultural roots of nationalism.

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9. Cf. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 5: 'All that I can find to say is that a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one.' We may translate 'consider themselves' as 'imagine themselves.'

10. Ernest Renan, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?' in *OEuvres Complètes*, 1, p. 892. He adds: 'tout citoyen français doit avoir oublié la Saint-Barthélemy, les massacres du Midi an XIIIe siècle. Il n'y a pas en France dix familles qui puissent fournir la preuve d'une origine franque . . .'

11. Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change*, p. 169. Emphasis added.

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12. Hobsbawm, for example, 'fixes' it by saying that in 1789 it numbered about 400,000 in a population of 23,000,000. (See his *The Age of Revolution*, p. 78). But would this statistical picture of the noblesse have been imaginable under the *ancien régime*?

everyday life. As with *Noli Me Tangere*, fiction seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the specific origins of nationalism, it may be useful to recapitulate the main propositions put forward thus far. Essentially, I have been arguing that the very possibility of imagining the nation only arose historically when, and where, three fundamental cultural conceptions, all of great antiquity, lost their axiomatic grip on men's minds. The first of these was the idea that a particular script-language offered privileged access to ontological truth, precisely because it was an inseparable part of that truth. It was this idea that called into being the great transcontinental sodalities of Christendom, the Islamic Ummah, and the rest. Second was the belief that society was naturally organized around and under high centres – monarchs who were persons apart from other human beings and who ruled by some form of cosmological (divine) dispensation. Human loyalties were necessarily hierarchical and centripetal because the ruler, like the sacred script, was a node of access to being and inherent in it. Third was a conception of temporality in which cosmology and history were indistinguishable, the origins of the world and of men essentially identical. Combined, these ideas rooted human lives firmly in the very nature of things, giving certain meaning to the everyday fatalities of existence (above all death, loss, and servitude) and offering, in various ways, redemption from them.

The slow, uneven decline of these interlinked certainties, first in Western Europe, later elsewhere, under the impact of economic change, 'discoveries' (social and scientific), and the development of increasingly rapid communications, drove a harsh wedge between cosmology and history. No surprise then that the search was on, so to speak, for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways.

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The Origins of National Consciousness

If the development of print-as-commodity is the key to the generation of wholly new ideas of simultaneity, still, we are simply at the point where communities of the type 'horizontal-secular, transverse-time' become possible. Why, within that type, did the nation become so popular? The factors involved are obviously complex and various. But a strong case can be made for the primacy of capitalism.

As already noted, at least 20,000,000 books had already been printed by 1500,[1] signalling the onset of Benjamin's 'age of mechanical reproduction.' If manuscript knowledge was scarce and arcane lore, print knowledge lived by reproducibility and dissemination.[2] If, as Febvre and Martin believe, possibly as many as 200,000,000 volumes had been manufactured by 1600, it is no wonder that Francis Bacon believed that print had changed 'the appearance and state of the world.'[3]

One of the earlier forms of capitalist enterprise, book-publishing

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1. The population of that Europe where print was then known was about 100,000,000. Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, pp. 248–49.
2. Emblematic is Marco Polo's *Travels*, which remained largely unknown till its first printing in 1559. Polo, *Travels*, p. xiii.
3. Quoted in Eisenstein, 'Some Conjectures,' p. 56.

felt all of capitalism's restless search for markets. The early printers established branches all over Europe: 'in this way a veritable "international" of publishing houses, which ignored national [sic] frontiers, was created.'[4] And since the years 1500–1550 were a period of exceptional European prosperity, publishing shared in the general boom. 'More than at any other time' it was 'a great industry under the control of wealthy capitalists.'[5] Naturally, 'book-sellers were primarily concerned to make a profit and to sell their products, and consequently they sought out first and foremost those works which were of interest to the largest possible number of their contemporaries.'[6]

The initial market was literate Europe, a wide but thin stratum of Latin-readers. Saturation of this market took about a hundred and fifty years. The determinative fact about Latin – aside from its sacrality – was that it was a language of bilinguals. Relatively few were born to speak it and even fewer, one imagines, dreamed in it. In the sixteenth century the proportion of bilinguals within the total population of Europe was quite small; very likely no larger than the proportion in the world's population today, and – proletarian internationalism notwithstanding – in the centuries to come. Then and now the bulk of mankind is monoglot. The logic of capitalism thus meant that once the elite Latin market was saturated, the potentially huge markets represented by the mono-glot masses would beckon. To be sure, the Counter-Reformation encouraged a temporary resurgence of Latin-publishing, but by the mid-seventeenth century the movement was in decay, and fervently Catholic libraries replete. Meantime, a Europe-wide shortage of money made printers think more and more of peddling cheap editions in the vernaculars.[7]

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4. Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, p. 122. (The original text, however, speaks simply of 'par-dessus les frontières.' *L'Apparition*, p. 184.)

5. Ibid., p. 187. The original text speaks of 'puissants' (powerful) rather than 'wealthy' capitalists. *L'Apparition*, p. 281.

6. 'Hence the introduction of printing was in this respect a stage on the road to our present society of mass consumption and standardisation.' Ibid., pp. 259–60. (The original text has 'une civilisation de masse et de standardisation,' which may be better rendered 'standardised, mass civilization.' *L'Apparition*, p. 394).

7. Ibid., p. 195.

The revolutionary vernacularizing thrust of capitalism was given further impetus by three extraneous factors, two of which contributed directly to the rise of national consciousness. The first, and ultimately the least important, was a change in the character of Latin itself. Thanks to the labours of the Humanists in reviving the broad literature of pre-Christian antiquity and spreading it through the print-market, a new appreciation of the sophisticated stylistic achievements of the ancients was apparent among the trans-European intelligentsia. The Latin they now aspired to write became more and more Ciceronian, and, by the same token, increasingly removed from ecclesiastical and everyday life. In this way it acquired an esoteric quality quite different from that of Church Latin in mediaeval times. For the older Latin was not arcane because of its subject matter or style, but simply because it was written at all, i.e. because of its status as *text*. Now it became arcane because of what was written, because of the language-in-itself.

Second was the impact of the Reformation, which, at the same time, owed much of its success to print-capitalism. Before the age of print, Rome easily won every war against heresy in Western Europe because it always had better internal lines of communication than its challengers. But when in 1517 Martin Luther nailed his theses to the chapel-door in Wittenberg, they were printed up in German translation, and 'within 15 days [had been] seen in every part of the country.'[8] In the two decades 1520–1540 three times as many books were published in German as in the period 1500–1520, an astonishing transformation to which Luther was absolutely central. His works represented no less than one third of *all* German-language books sold between 1518 and 1525. Between 1522 and 1546, a total of 430 editions (whole or partial) of his Biblical translations appeared. 'We have here for the first time a truly mass readership and a popular literature within everybody's reach.'[9] In effect, Luther became the first best-selling author *so known*. Or, to put it another way, the first writer who could 'sell' his *new* books on the basis of his name.[10]

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8. Ibid., pp. 289–90.

9. Ibid., pp. 291–95.

10. From this point it was only a step to the situation in seventeenth-century

Where Luther led, others quickly followed, opening the colossal religious propaganda war that raged across Europe for the next century. In this titanic 'battle for men's minds', Protestantism was always fundamentally on the offensive, precisely because it knew how to make use of the expanding vernacular print-market being created by capitalism, while the Counter-Reformation defended the citadel of Latin. The emblem for this is the Vatican's *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* – to which there was no Protestant counterpart – a novel catalogue made necessary by the sheer volume of printed subversion. Nothing gives a better sense of this siege mentality than François I's panicked 1535 ban on the printing of *any* books in his realm – on pain of death by hanging! The reason for both the ban and its unenforceability was that by then his realm's eastern borders were ringed with Protestant states and cities producing a massive stream of smugglable print. To take Calvin's Geneva alone: between 1533 and 1540 only 42 editions were published there, but the numbers swelled to 527 between 1550 and 1564, by which latter date no less than 40 separate printing-presses were working overtime.[11]

The coalition between Protestantism and print-capitalism, exploiting cheap popular editions, quickly created large new reading publics – not least among merchants and women, who typically knew little or no Latin – and simultaneously mobilized them for politico-religious purposes. Inevitably, it was not merely the Church that was shaken to its core. The same earthquake produced Europe's first important non-dynastic, non-city states in the Dutch Republic and the Commonwealth of the Puritans. (François I's panic was as much political as religious.)

Third was the slow, geographically uneven, spread of particular vernaculars as instruments of administrative centralization by certain well-positioned would-be absolutist monarchs. Here it is useful to remember that the universality of Latin in mediaeval Western Europe never corresponded to a universal political system. The

contrast with Imperial China, where the reach of the mandarinal bureaucracy and of painted characters largely coincided, is instructive. In effect, the political fragmentation of Western Europe after the collapse of the Western Empire meant that no sovereign could monopolize Latin and make it his-and-only-his language-of-state, and thus Latin's religious authority never had a true political analogue.

The birth of administrative vernaculars predated both print and the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century, and must therefore be regarded (at least initially) as an independent factor in the erosion of the sacred imagined community. At the same time, nothing suggests that any deep-seated ideological, let alone proto-national, impulses underlay this vernacularization where it occurred. The case of 'England' – on the northwestern periphery of Latin Europe – is here especially enlightening. Prior to the Norman Conquest, the language of the court, literary and administrative, was Anglo-Saxon. For the next century and a half virtually all royal documents were composed in Latin. Between about 1200 and 1350 this state-Latin was superseded by Norman French. In the meantime, a slow fusion between this language of a foreign ruling class and the Anglo-Saxon of the subject population produced Early English. The fusion made it possible for the new language to take its turn, after 1362, as the language of the courts – and for the opening of Parliament. Wycliffe's vernacular *manuscript* Bible followed in 1382.[12] It is essential to bear in mind that this sequence was a series of 'state,' not 'national,' languages; and that the state concerned covered at various times not only today's England and Wales, but also portions of Ireland, Scotland *and France*. Obviously, huge elements of the subject populations knew little or nothing of Latin, Norman French, or Early English.[13] Not till almost a century *after* Early English's political enthronement was London's power swept out of 'France'.

On the Seine, a similar movement took place, if at a slower pace.

France where Corneille, Molière, and La Fontaine could sell their manuscript tragedies and comedies directly to publishers, who bought them as excellent investments in view of their authors' market reputations. Ibid., p. 161.

  11. Ibid., pp. 310–15.

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  12. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, pp. 28–29; Bloch, *Feudal Society*, I, p. 75.
  13. We should not assume that administrative vernacular unification was immediately or fully achieved. It is unlikely that the Guyenne ruled from London was ever primarily administered in Early English.

As Bloch wryly puts it, 'French, that is to say a language which, since it was regarded as merely a corrupt form of Latin, took several centuries to raise itself to literary dignity',[14] only became the official language of the courts of justice in 1539, when François I issued the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts.[15] In other dynastic realms Latin survived much longer – under the Habsburgs well into the nineteenth century. In still others, 'foreign' vernaculars took over: in the eighteenth century the languages of the Romanov court were French and German.[16]

In every instance, the 'choice' of language appears as a gradual, unselfconscious, pragmatic, not to say haphazard development. As such, it was utterly different from the selfconscious language policies pursued by nineteenth-century dynasts confronted with the rise of hostile popular linguistic-nationalisms. (See below, Chapter 6). One clear sign of the difference is that the old administrative languages were *just that*: languages used by and for officialdoms for their own inner convenience. There was no idea of systematically imposing the language on the dynasts' various subject populations.[17] Nonetheless, the elevation of these vernaculars to the status of languages-of-power, where, in one sense, they were competitors with Latin (French in Paris, [Early] English in London), made its own contribution to the decline of the imagined community of Christendom.

At bottom, it is likely that the esotericization of Latin, the Reformation, and the haphazard development of administrative vernaculars are significant, in the present context, primarily in a negative sense – in their contributions to the dethronement of Latin. It is quite possible to conceive of the emergence of the new imagined national communities without any one, perhaps all, of them being present. What, in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between

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14. Bloch, *Feudal Society*, I, p. 98.
15. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 48.
16. Ibid., p. 83.
17. An agreeable confirmation of this point is provided by François I, who, as we have seen, banned all printing of books in 1535 and made French the language of his courts four years later!

a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity.[18]

The element of fatality is essential. For whatever superhuman feats capitalism was capable of, it found in death and languages two tenacious adversaries.[19] Particular languages can die or be wiped out, but there was and is no possibility of humankind's general linguistic unification. Yet this mutual incomprehensibility was historically of only slight importance until capitalism and print created monoglot mass reading publics.

While it is essential to keep in mind an idea of fatality, in the sense of a *general* condition of irremediable linguistic diversity, it would be a mistake to equate this fatality with that common element in nationalist ideologies which stresses the primordial fatality of *particular* languages and their association with *particular* territorial units. The essential thing is the *interplay* between fatality, technology, and capitalism. In pre-print Europe, and, of course, elsewhere in the world, the diversity of spoken languages, those languages that for their speakers were (and are) the warp and woof of their lives, was immense; so immense, indeed, that had print-capitalism sought to exploit each potential oral vernacular market, it would have remained a capitalism of petty proportions. But these varied idiolects were capable of being assembled, within definite limits, into print-languages far fewer in number. The very arbitrariness of any system of signs for sounds facilitated the assembling process.[20] (At the same time, the more ideographic the signs, the vaster the potential

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18. It was not the first 'accident' of its kind. Febvre and Martin note that while a visible bourgeoisie already existed in Europe by the late thirteenth century, paper did not come into general use until the end of the fourteenth. Only paper's smooth plane surface made the mass reproduction of texts and pictures possible – and this did not occur for still another seventy-five years. But paper was not a European invention. It floated in from another history – China's – through the Islamic world. *The Coming of the Book*, pp. 22, 30, and 45.
19. We still have no giant multinationals in the world of publishing.
20. For a useful discussion of this point, see S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, chapter 5. That the sign *ough* is pronounced differently in the words although, bough, lough, rough, cough, and hiccough, shows both the idiolectic variety out of which the now-standard spelling of English emerged, and the ideographic quality of the final product.

assembling zone. One can detect a sort of descending hierarchy here from algebra through Chinese and English, to the regular syllabaries of French or Indonesian.) Nothing served to 'assemble' related vernaculars more than capitalism, which, within the limits imposed by grammars and syntaxes, created mechanically reproduced print-languages capable of dissemination through the market.[21]

These print-languages laid the bases for national consciousnesses in three distinct ways. First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars. Speakers of the huge variety of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper. In the process, they gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that *only those* hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community.

Second, print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language, which in the long run helped to build that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation. As Febvre and Martin remind us, the printed book kept a permanent form, capable of virtually infinite reproduction, temporally and spatially. It was no longer subject to the individualizing and 'unconsciously modernizing' habits of monastic scribes. Thus, while twelfth-century French differed markedly from that written by Villon in the fifteenth, the rate of change slowed decisively in the sixteenth. 'By the 17th century languages in Europe had generally assumed their modern forms.'[22]

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21. I say 'nothing served . . . more than capitalism' advisedly. Both Steinberg and Eisenstein come close to theomorphizing 'print' *qua* print as the genius of modern history. Febvre and Martin never forget that behind print stand printers and publishing firms. It is worth remembering in this context that although printing was invented first in China, possibly 500 years before its appearance in Europe, it had no major, let alone revolutionary impact – precisely because of the absence of capitalism there.

22. *The Coming of the Book*, p. 319. Cf. *L'Apparition*, p. 477: 'Au XVIIe siècle, les langues nationales apparaissent un peu partout cristallisées.'

To put it another way, for three centuries now these stabilized print-languages have been gathering a darkening varnish; the words of our seventeenth-century forebears are accessible to us in a way that to Villon his twelfth-century ancestors were not.

Third, print-capitalism created languages-of-power of a kind different from the older administrative vernaculars. Certain dialects inevitably were 'closer' to each print-language and dominated their final forms. Their disadvantaged cousins, still assimilable to the emerging print-language, lost caste, above all because they were unsuccessful (or only relatively successful) in insisting on their own print-form. 'Northwestern German' became Platt Deutsch, a largely spoken, thus sub-standard, German, because it was assimilable to print-German in a way that Bohemian spoken-Czech was not. High German, the King's English, and, later, Central Thai, were correspondingly elevated to a new politico-cultural eminence. (Hence the struggles in late-twentieth-century Europe by certain 'sub-' nationalities to change their subordinate status by breaking firmly into print – and radio.)

It remains only to emphasize that in their origins, the fixing of print-languages and the differentiation of status between them were largely unselfconscious processes resulting from the explosive interaction between capitalism, technology and human linguistic diversity. But as with so much else in the history of nationalism, once 'there,' they could become formal models to be imitated, and, where expedient, consciously exploited in a Machiavellian spirit. Today, the Thai government actively discourages attempts by foreign missionaries to provide its hill-tribe minorities with their own transcription-systems and to develop publications in their own languages: the same government is largely indifferent to what these minorities *speak*. The fate of the Turkic-speaking peoples in the zones incorporated into today's Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and the USSR is especially exemplary. A family of spoken languages, once everywhere assemblable, thus comprehensible, within an Arabic orthography, has lost that unity as a result of conscious manipulations. To heighten Turkish-Turkey's national consciousness at the expense of any wider Islamic identification, Atatürk imposed compulsory

romanization.[23] The Soviet authorities followed suit, first with an anti-Islamic, anti-Persian compulsory romanization, then, in Stalin's 1930s, with a Russifying compulsory Cyrillicization.[24]

We can summarize the conclusions to be drawn from the argument thus far by saying that the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation. The potential stretch of these communities was inherently limited, and, at the same time, bore none but the most fortuitous relationship to existing political boundaries (which were, on the whole, the highwater marks of dynastic expansionisms).

Yet it is obvious that while today almost all modern self-conceived nations – and also nation-states – have 'national print-languages', many of them have these languages in common, and in others only a tiny fraction of the population 'uses' the national language in conversation or on paper. The nation-states of Spanish America or those of the 'Anglo-Saxon family' are conspicuous examples of the first outcome; many ex-colonial states, particularly in Africa, of the second. In other words, the concrete formation of contemporary nation-states is by no means isomorphic with the determinate reach of particular print-languages. To account for the discontinuity-in-connectedness between print-languages, national consciousness, and nation-states, it is necessary to turn to the large cluster of new political entities that sprang up in the Western hemisphere between 1776 and 1838, all of which self-consciously defined themselves as nations, and, with the interesting exception of Brazil, as (non-dynastic) republics. For not only were they historically the first such states to emerge on the world stage, and therefore inevitably provided the first real models of what such states should 'look like,' but their numbers and contemporary births offer fruitful ground for comparative enquiry.

23. Hans Kohn, *The Age of Nationalism*, p. 108. It is probably only fair to add that Kemal also hoped thereby to align Turkish nationalism with the modern, romanized civilization of Western Europe.
24. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, p. 317.

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Creole Pioneers

The new American states of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are of unusual interest because it seems almost impossible to explain them in terms of two factors which, probably because they are readily derivable from the mid-century nationalisms of Europe, have dominated much provincial European thinking about the rise of nationalism.

In the first place, whether we think of Brazil, the USA, or the former colonies of Spain, language was not an element that differentiated them from their respective imperial metropoles. All, including the USA, were creole states, formed and led by people who shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought.[1] Indeed, it is fair to say that language was never even an issue in these early struggles for national liberation.

In the second place, there are serious reasons to doubt the applicability in much of the Western hemisphere of Nairn's otherwise persuasive thesis that:

The arrival of nationalism in a distinctively modern sense was tied to the political baptism of the lower classes . . . Although sometimes

1. Creole (*Criollo*) – person of (at least theoretically) pure European descent but born in the Americas (and, by later extension, anywhere outside Europe).

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

But the Angel is immortal, and our faces are turned towards the obscurity ahead.

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Census, Map, Museum

In the original edition of *Imagined Communities* I wrote that 'so often in the "nation-building" policies of the new states one sees both a genuine, popular nationalist enthusiasm, and a systematic, even Machiavellian, instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations, and so forth.'[1] My short-sighted assumption then was that official nationalism in the colonized worlds of Asia and Africa was modelled directly on that of the dynastic states of nineteenth-century Europe. Subsequent reflection has persuaded me that this view was hasty and superficial, and that the immediate genealogy should be traced to the imaginings of the colonial state. At first sight, this conclusion may seem surprising, since colonial states were typically *anti*-nationalist, and often violently so. But if one looks beneath colonial ideologies and policies to the grammar in which, from the mid nineteenth century, they were deployed, the lineage becomes decidedly more clear.

Few things bring this grammar into more visible relief than three institutions of power which, although invented before the mid nineteenth century, changed their form and function as the colonized zones entered the age of mechanical reproduction. These three institutions were the census, the map, and the museum: together, they profoundly

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1. See above, pp. 113–14.

shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion – the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry. To explore the character of this nexus I shall, in this chapter, confine my attention to Southeast Asia, since my conclusions are tentative, and my claims to serious specialization limited to that region. Southeast Asia does, however, offer those with comparative historical interests special advantages, since it includes territories colonized by almost all the 'white' imperial powers – Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, The Netherlands, and the United States – as well as uncolonized Siam. Readers with greater knowledge of other parts of Asia and Africa than mine will be better positioned to judge if my argument is sustainable on a wider historical and geographical stage.

THE CENSUS

In two valuable recent papers the sociologist Charles Hirschman has begun the study of the *mentalités* of the British colonial census-makers for the Straits Settlements and peninsular Malaya, and their successors working for the independent conglomerate state of Malaysia.[2] Hirschman's facsimiles of the 'identity categories' of successive censuses from the late nineteenth century up to the recent present show an extraordinarily rapid, superficially arbitrary, series of changes, in which categories are continuously agglomerated, disaggregated, recombined, intermixed, and reordered (but the politically powerful identity categories always lead the list). From these censuses he draws two principal conclusions. The first is that, as the colonial period wore on, the census categories became more visibly and exclusively racial.[3] Religious identity, on the other hand, gradually

2. Charles Hirschman, 'The Meaning and Measurement of Ethnicity in Malaysia: An Analysis of Census Classifications,' *J. of Asian Studies*, 46:3 (August 1987), pp. 552–82; and 'The Making of Race in Colonial Malaya: Political Economy and Racial Ideology' *Sociological Forum*, 1:2 (Spring 1986), pp. 330–62.

3. An astonishing variety of 'Europeans' were enumerated right through the colonial era. But whereas in 1881 they were still grouped primarily under the headings 'resident,' 'floating,' and 'prisoners,' by 1911 they were fraternizing as members of a

disappeared as a primary census classification. 'Hindoos' – ranked alongside 'Klings,' and 'Bengalees' – vanished after the first census of 1871. 'Parsees' lasted until the census of 1901, where they still appeared – packed in with 'Bengalis,' 'Burmese,' and 'Tamils' – under the broad category 'Tamils and Other Natives of India.' His second conclusion is that, on the whole, the large racial categories were retained and even concentrated after independence, but now redesignated and reranked as 'Malaysian,' 'Chinese,' 'Indian,' and 'Other.' Yet anomalies continued up into the 1980s. In the 1980 census 'Sikh' still appeared nervously as a pseudoethnic subcategory – alongside 'Malayali' and 'Telegu,' 'Pakistani' and 'Bangladeshi,' 'Sri Lankan Tamil,' and 'Other Sri Lankan,' – under the general heading 'Indian.'

But Hirschman's wonderful facsimiles encourage one to go beyond his immediate analytical concerns. Take, for example, the 1911 Federated Malay States Census, which lists under 'Malay Population by Race' the following: 'Malay,' 'Javanese,' 'Sakai,' 'Banjarese,' 'Boyanese,' 'Mendeling' (sic), 'Krinchi' (sic), 'Jambi,' 'Achinese,' 'Bugis,' and 'Other.' Of these 'groups' all but (most) 'Malay' and 'Sakai' originated from the islands of Sumatra, Java, Southern Borneo, and the Celebes, all parts of the huge neighbouring colony of the Netherlands East Indies. But these extra-FMS origins receive no recognition from the census-makers who, in constructing their 'Malays,' keep their eyes modestly lowered to their own colonial borders. (Needless to say, across the waters, Dutch census-makers were constructing a different imagining of 'Malays,' as a minor ethnicity alongside, not above, 'Achinese,' 'Javanese,' and the like.) 'Jambi' and 'Krinchi' refer to places, rather than to anything remotely identifiable as ethnolinguistic. It is extremely unlikely that, in 1911, more than a tiny fraction of those categorized and subcategorized would have recognized themselves under such labels. These 'identities,' imagined by the (confusedly) classifying mind of the colonial state, still awaited a reification which imperial administrative penetration would soon make possible. One notices, in addition, the

(white) race'. It is agreeable that up to the end, the census-makers were visibly uneasy about where to place those they marked as 'Jews.'

census-makers' passion for completeness and unambiguity. Hence their intolerance of multiple, politically 'transvestite,' blurred, or changing identifications. Hence the weird subcategory, under each racial group, of 'Others' – who, nonetheless, are absolutely not to be confused with *other* 'Others.' The fiction of the census is that everyone is in it, and that everyone has one – and only one – extremely clear place. No fractions.

This mode of imagining by the colonial state had origins much older than the censuses of the 1870s, so that, in order fully to understand why the late-nineteenth-century censuses are yet profoundly novel, it is useful to look back to the earliest days of European penetration of Southeast Asia. Two examples, drawn from the Philippine and Indonesian archipelagoes, are instructive. In an important recent book, William Henry Scott has attempted meticulously to reconstruct the class structure of the pre-Hispanic Philippines, on the basis of the earliest Spanish records.[4] As a professional historian Scott is perfectly aware that the Philippines owes its name to Felipe II of 'Spain,' and that, but for mischance or luck, the archipelago might have fallen into Dutch or English hands, become politically segmented, or been recombined with further conquests.[5] It is tempting therefore to attribute his curious choice of topic to his long residence in the Philippines and his strong sympathy with a Filipino nationalism that has been, for a century now, on the trail of an aboriginal Eden. But the chances are good that the deeper basis for the shaping of his imagination was the sources on which he was

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4. William Henry Scott, *Cracks in the Parchment Curtain*, chapter 7, 'Filipino Class Structure in the Sixteenth Century.'

5. In the first half of the seventeenth century, Spanish settlements in the archipelago came under repeated attack from the forces of the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, the greatest 'transnational' corporation of the era. For their survival, the pious Catholic settlers owed a great debt to the arch-heretical Protector, who kept Amsterdam's back to the wall for much of his rule. Had the VOC been successful, Manila, rather than Batavia [Jakarta], might have become the centre of the 'Dutch' imperium in Southeast Asia. In 1762, London seized Manila from Spain, and held it for almost two years. It is entertaining to note that Madrid only got it back in exchange for, of all places, Florida, and the other 'Spanish' possessions east of the Mississippi. Had the negotiations proceeded differently, the archipelago could have been politically linked with Malaya and Singapore during the nineteenth century.

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compelled to rely. For the fact is that wherever in the islands the earliest clerics and conquistadors ventured they espied, on shore, *principales, hidalgos, pecheros,* and *esclavos* (princes, noblemen, commoners and slaves) – quasi-estates adapted from the social classifications of late mediaeval Iberia. The documents they left behind offer plenty of incidental evidence that the '*hidalgos*' were mostly unaware of one another's existence in the huge, scattered, and sparsely populated archipelago, and, where aware, usually saw one another not as *hidalgos*, but as enemies or potential slaves. But the power of the grid is so great that such evidence is marginalized in Scott's imagination, and therefore it is hard for him to see that the 'class structure' of the precolonial period is a 'census' imagining created from the poops of Spanish galleons. Wherever *they* went, *hidalgos* and *esclavos* loomed up, who could only be aggregated as such, that is 'structurally,' by an incipient colonial state.

For Indonesia we have, thanks to the research of Mason Hoadley, a detailed account of an important judicial case decided in the coastal port of Cirebon, Java, at the end of the seventeenth century.[6] By luck, the Dutch (VOC) and local Cirebonese records are still available. If the Cirebonese account only had survived, we would know the accused murderer as a high official of the Cirebonese court, and only by his title Ki Aria Marta Ningrat, not a personal name. The VOC records, however, angrily identify him as a *Chinees* – indeed that is the single most important piece of information about him that they convey. It is clear then that the Cirebonese court classified people by rank and status, while the Company did so by something like 'race.' There is no reason whatever to think that the accused murderer – whose high status attests to his and his ancestors' long integration into Cirebonese society, no matter what their origins – thought of himself as 'a' *Chinees*. How then did the VOC arrive at this classification? From what poops was it possible to imagine *Chinees*? Surely only those ferociously mercantile poops which, under centralized command, roved ceaselessly from port to port between the Gulf of Mergui and the mouth of the Yangtze-kiang. Oblivious

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6. Mason C. Hoadley, 'State vs. Ki Aria Marta Ningrat (1696) and Tian Siangko (1720–21)' (unpublished ms., 1982).

of the heterogeneous populations of the Middle Kingdom; of the mutual incomprehensibility of many of their spoken languages; and of the peculiar social and geographic origins of their diaspora across coastal Southeast Asia, the Company imagined, with its trans-oceanic eye, an endless series of *Chinezen*, as the conquistadors had seen an endless series of *hidalgos*. And on the basis of this inventive census it began to insist that those under its control whom it categorized as *Chinezen* dress, reside, marry, be buried, and bequeath property according to that census. It is striking that the much less far-faring and commercially minded Iberians in the Philippines imagined a quite different census category: what they called *sangley*. *Sangley* was an incorporation into Spanish of the Hokkien *sengli* – meaning 'trader.'[7] One can imagine Spanish proto-census men asking the traders drawn to Manila by the galleon trade: 'Who are you?', and being sensibly told: 'We are traders.'[8] Not sailing the seven Asian seas, for two centuries the Iberians remained in a comfortably provincial conceptual fog. Only very slowly did the *sangley* turn into 'Chinese' – until the word disappeared in the early nineteenth century to make way for a VOC-style *chino*.

The real innovation of the census-takers of the 1870s was, therefore, not in the *construction* of ethnic-racial classifications, but rather in their systematic *quantification*. Precolonial rulers in the Malayo-Javanese world had attempted enumerations of the populations under their control, but these took the form of tax-rolls and levy-lists. Their purposes were concrete and specific: to keep track of those on whom taxes and military conscription could effectively be imposed – for these rulers were interested solely in economic surplus and armable manpower. Early European regimes in the region did not, in this respect, differ markedly from their predecessors. But after 1850 colonial authorities were using increasingly sophisticated administrative means to enumerate populations, including the women and children (whom the ancient rulers had always ignored), according to

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7. See, e.g., Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850–1898*, chapters 1 and 2.

8. The galleon trade – for which Manila was, for over two centuries, the *entrepôt* – exchanged Chinese silks and porcelain for Mexican silver.

a maze of grids which had no immediate financial or military purpose. In the old days, those subjects liable for taxes and conscription were usually well aware of their numerability; ruler and ruled understood each other very well, if antagonistically, on the matter. But by 1870, a non-taxpaying, unlevyable 'Cochin-Chinese' woman could live out her life, happily or unhappily, in the Straits Settlements, without the slightest awareness that this was how she was being mapped from on high. Here the peculiarity of the new census becomes apparent. It tried carefully to count the objects of its feverish imagining. Given the exclusive nature of the classificatory system, and the logic of quantification itself, a 'Cochin-Chinese' had to be understood as one digit in an aggregable series of replicable 'Cochin-Chinese' – within, of course, the state's domain. The new demographic topography put down deep social and institutional roots as the colonial state multiplied its size and functions. Guided by its imagined map it organized the new educational, juridical, public-health, police, and immigration bureaucracies it was building on the principle of ethno-racial hierarchies which were, however, always understood in terms of parallel series. The flow of subject populations through the mesh of differential schools, courts, clinics, police stations and immigration offices created 'traffic-habits' which in time gave real social life to the state's earlier fantasies.

Needless to say, it was not always plain sailing, and the state frequently bumped into discomforting realities. Far and away the most important of these was religious affiliation, which served as the basis of very old, very stable imagined communities not in the least aligned with the secular state's authoritarian grid-map. To different degrees, in different Southeast Asian colonies, the rulers were compelled to make messy accommodations, especially to Islam and Buddhism. In particular, religious shrines, schools, and courts – access to which was determined by individual popular self-choice, not the census – continued to flourish. The state could rarely do more than try to regulate, constrict, count, standardize, and hierarchically subordinate these institutions to its own.[9] It was precisely because

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9. See chapter 7, above (p. 125) for mention of French colonialism's struggle to sever Buddhism in Cambodia from its old links with Siam.

temples, mosques, schools and courts were topographically anomalous that they were understood as zones of freedom and – in time – fortresses from which religious, later nationalist, anticolonials could go forth to battle. At the same time, there were frequent endeavours to force a better alignment of census with religious communities by – so far as was possible – politically and juridically ethnicizing the latter. In the Federated States of colonial Malaya, this task was relatively easy. Those whom the regime regarded as being in the series 'Malay' were hustled off to the courts of 'their' castrated Sultans, which were in substantial part administered according to Islamic law.[10] 'Islamic' was thus treated as really just another name for 'Malay.' (Only after independence in 1957 were efforts made by certain political groups to reverse this logic by reading 'Malay' as really another name for 'Islamic'). In the vast, heterogeneous Netherlands Indies, where by the end of the colonial era an array of quarrelling missionary organizations had made substantial conversions in widely scattered zones, a parallel drive faced much more substantial obstacles. Yet even there, the 1920s and 1930s saw the growth of 'ethnic' Christianities (the Batak Church, the Karo Church, later the Dayak Church, and so on) which developed in part because the state allocated proselytizing zones to different missionary groups according to its own census-topography. With Islam Batavia had no comparable success. It did not dare to prohibit the pilgrimage to Mecca, though it tried to inhibit the growth of the pilgrims' numbers, policed their travels, and spied on them from an outpost at Jiddah set up just for this purpose. None of these measures sufficed to prevent the intensification of Indies Muslim contacts with the vast world of Islam outside, and especially the new currents of thought emanating from Cairo.[11]

THE MAP

In the meantime, however, Cairo and Mecca were beginning to be visualized in a strange new way, no longer simply as sites in a sacred

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10. See William Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, pp. 72–4.
11. See Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, chapters 1–2.

Muslim geography, but also as dots on paper sheets which included dots for Paris, Moscow, Manila and Caracas; and the plane relationship between these indifferently profane and sacred dots was determined by nothing beyond the mathematically calculated flight of the crow. The Mercatorian map, brought in by the European colonizers, was beginning, via print, to shape the imagination of Southeast Asians.

In a recent, brilliant thesis the Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul has traced the complex processes by which a bordered 'Siam' came into being between 1850 and 1910.[12] His account is instructive precisely because Siam was not colonized, though what, in the end, came to be its borders were colonially determined. In the Thai case, therefore, one can see unusually clearly the emergence of a new state-mind within a 'traditional' structure of political power.

Up until the accession, in 1851, of the intelligent Rama IV (the Mongkut of *The King and I*), only two types of map existed in Siam, and both were hand-made: the age of mechanical reproduction had not yet there dawned. One was what could be called a 'cosmograph,' a formal, symbolic representation of the Three Worlds of traditional Buddhist cosmology. The cosmograph was not organized horizontally, like our own maps; rather a series of supraterrestrial heavens and subterrestrial hells wedged in the visible world along a single vertical axis. It was useless for any journey save that in search of merit and salvation. The second type, wholly profane, consisted of diagrammatic guides for military campaigns and coastal shipping. Organized roughly by the quadrant, their main features were written-in notes on marching and sailing times, required because the mapmakers had no technical conception of scale. Covering only terrestrial, profane space, they were usually drawn in a queer oblique perspective or mixture of perspectives, as if the drawers' eyes, accustomed from daily life to see the landscape horizontally, at eye-level, nonetheless were influenced subliminally by the verticality of the cosmograph. Thongchai points out that these guide-maps, always local, were

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12. Thongchai Winichakul, 'Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of Siam' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1988).

never situated in a larger, stable geographic context, and that the bird's-eye view convention of modern maps was wholly foreign to them.

Neither type of map marked borders. Their makers would have found incomprehensible the following elegant formulation of Richard Muir:[13]

> Located at the interfaces between adjacent state territories, international boundaries have a special significance in determining the limits of sovereign authority and defining the spatial form of the contained political regions. . . . Boundaries . . occur where the vertical interfaces between state sovereignties intersect the surface of the earth. . . . As vertical interfaces, boundaries have no horizontal extent. . . .

Boundary-stones and similar markers did exist, and indeed multiplied along the western fringes of the realm as the British pressed in from Lower Burma. But these stones were set up discontinuously at strategic mountain passes and fords, and were often substantial distances from corresponding stones set up by the adversary. They were understood horizontally, at eye level, as extension points of royal power; not 'from the air.' Only in the 1870s did Thai leaders begin thinking of boundaries as segments of a continuous map-line corresponding to nothing visible on the ground, but demarcating an exclusive sovereignty wedged between other sovereignties. In 1874 appeared the first geographical textbook, by the American missionary J.W. Van Dyke – an early product of the print-capitalism that was by then sweeping into Siam. In 1882, Rama V established a special mapping school in Bangkok. In 1892, Minister of Education Prince Damrong Rajanuphab, inaugurating a modern-style school system for the country, made geography a compulsory subject at the junior secondary level. In 1900, or thereabouts, was published *Phumisat Sayam* [Geography of Siam] by W.G. Johnson, the model for all printed geographies of the country from that time onwards.[14]

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13. Richard Muir, *Modern Political Geography*, p. 119.
14. Thongchai, 'Siam Mapped,' pp. 105–10, 286.

Thongchai notes that the vectoral convergence of print-capitalism with the new conception of spatial reality presented by these maps had an immediate impact on the vocabulary of Thai politics. Between 1900 and 1915, the traditional words *krung* and *muang* largely disappeared, because they imaged dominion in terms of sacred capitals and visible, discontinuous population centres.[15] In their place came *prathet*, 'country,' which imaged it in the invisible terms of bounded territorial space.[16]

Like censuses, European-style maps worked on the basis of a totalizing classification, and led their bureaucratic producers and consumers towards policies with revolutionary consequences. Ever since John Harrison's 1761 invention of the chronometer, which made possible the precise calculation of longitudes, the entire planet's curved surface had been subjected to a geometrical grid which squared off empty seas and unexplored regions in measured boxes.[17] The task of, as it were, 'filling in' the boxes was to be accomplished by explorers, surveyors, and military forces. In Southeast Asia, the second half of the nineteenth century was the golden age of military surveyors – colonial and, a little later, Thai. They were on the march to put space under the same surveillance which the census-makers were trying to impose on persons. Triangulation by triangulation, war by war, treaty by treaty, the alignment of map and power proceeded. In the apt words of Thongchai:[18]

> In terms of most communication theories and common sense, a map is a scientific abstraction of reality. A map merely represents something which already exists objectively 'there.' In the history I have described, this relationship was reversed. A map anticipated spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent. . . . It had become a

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15. For a full discussion of old conceptions of power in Java (which, with minor differences, corresponded to that existing in Old Siam), see my *Language and Power*, chapter 1.
16. Thongchai, 'Siam Mapped,' p. 110.
17. David S. Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World*, chapter 9.
18. 'Siam Mapped,' p. 310.

real instrument to concretize projections on the earth's surface. A map was now necessary for the new administrative mechanisms and for the troops to back up their claims. . . . The discourse of mapping was the paradigm which both administrative and military operations worked within and served.

By the turn of the century, with Prince Damrong's reforms at the Ministry of the Interior (a fine mapping name), the administration of the realm was finally put on a wholly territorial–cartographic basis, following earlier practice in the neighbouring colonies.

It would be unwise to overlook the crucial intersection between map and census. For the new map served firmly to break off the infinite series of 'Hakkas,' 'Non-Tamil Sri Lankans,' and 'Javanese' that the formal apparatus of the census conjured up, by delimiting territorially where, for political purposes, they ended. Conversely, by a sort of demographic triangulation, the census filled in politically the formal topography of the map.

Out of these changes emerged two final avatars of the map (both instituted by the late colonial state) which directly prefigure the official nationalisms of twentieth century Southeast Asia. Fully aware of their interloper status in the distant tropics, but arriving from a civilization in which the legal inheritance and the legal transferability of geographic space had long been established,[19] the Europeans frequently attempted to legitimize the spread of their power by quasi-legal methods. Among the more popular of these was their 'inheritance' of the putative sovereignties of native rulers whom the Europeans had eliminated or subjected. Either way, the usurpers were in the business, especially vis-à-vis other Europeans, of reconstructing the property-history of their new possessions. Hence the appearance, late in the nineteenth century especially, of 'historical maps,' designed to demonstrate, in the new cartographic discourse,

the antiquity of specific, tightly bounded territorial units. Through chronologically arranged sequences of such maps, a sort of political–biographical narrative of the realm came into being, sometimes with vast historical depth.[20] In turn, this narrative was adopted, if often adapted, by the nation-states which, in the twentieth century, became the colonial states' legatees.[21]

The second avatar was the map-as-logo. Its origins were reasonably innocent – the practice of the imperial states of colouring their colonies on maps with an imperial dye. In London's imperial maps, British colonies were usually pink-red, French purple-blue, Dutch yellow-brown, and so on. Dyed this way, each colony appeared like a detachable piece of a jigsaw puzzle. As this 'jigsaw' effect became normal, each 'piece' could be wholly detached from its geographic context. In its final form all explanatory glosses could be summarily removed: lines of longitude and latitude, place names, signs for rivers, seas, and mountains, *neighbours*. Pure sign, no longer compass to the world. In this shape, the map entered an infinitely reproducible series, available for transfer to posters, official seals, letterheads, magazine and textbook covers, tablecloths, and hotel walls. Instantly recognizable, everywhere visible, the logo-map penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for the anticolonial nationalisms being born.[22]

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19. I do not mean merely the inheritance and sale of private property in land in the usual sense. More important was the European practice of political transfers of lands, with their populations, via dynastic marriages. Princesses, on marriage, brought their husbands duchies and petty principalities, and these transfers were formally negotiated and 'signed.' The tag *Bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube!* would have been inconceivable for any state in precolonial Asia.

20. See Thongchai, 'Siam Mapped,' p. 387, on Thai ruling class absorption of this style of imagining. 'According to these historical maps, moreover, the geobody is not a modern particularity but is pushed back more than a thousand years. Historical maps thus help reject any suggestion that nationhood emerged only in the recent past, and the perspective that the present Siam was a result of ruptures is precluded. So is any idea that intercourse between Siam and the European powers was the parent of Siam.'

21. This adoption was by no means a Machiavellian ruse. The early nationalists in all the Southeast Asian colonies had their consciousnesses profoundly shaped by the 'format' of the colonial state and its institutions. See chapter 7 above.

22. In the writings of Nick Joaquín, the contemporary Philippines, preeminent man of letters – and an indubitable patriot – one can see how powerfully the emblem works on the most sophisticated intelligence. Of General Antonio Luna, tragic hero of the anti-American struggle of 1898–99, Joaquín writes that he hurried to 'perform the role that had been instinctive in the Creole for three centuries: the defense of *the form* of the Philippines from a foreign disrupter.' *A Question of Heroes*, p. 164 (italics added). Elsewhere he observes, astonishingly, that Spain's 'Filipino allies, converts, mercenaries

Modern Indonesia offers us a fine, painful example of this process. In 1828 the first fever-ridden Dutch settlement was made on the island of New Guinea. Although the settlement had to be abandoned in 1836, the Dutch Crown proclaimed sovereignty over that part of the island lying west of 141 degrees longitude (an invisible line which corresponded to nothing on the ground, but boxed in Conrad's diminishing white spaces), with the exception of some coastal stretches regarded as under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Tidore. Only in 1901 did The Hague buy out the Sultan, and incorporate West New Guinea into the Netherlands Indies – just in time for logoization. Large parts of the region remained Conrad-white until after World War II; the handful of Dutchmen there were mostly missionaries, mineral-prospectors – and wardens of special prison-camps for die-hard radical Indonesian nationalists. The swamps north of Merauke, at the extreme southeastern edge of Dutch New Guinea, were selected as the site of these facilities precisely because the region was regarded as utterly remote from the rest of the colony, and the 'stone-age' local population as wholly uncontaminated by nationalist thinking.[23]

The internment, and often interment, there of nationalist martyrs gave West New Guinea a central place in the folklore of the anticolonial struggle, and made it a sacred site in the national imagining: Indonesia Free, from Sabang (at the northwestern tip of Sumatra) to – where else but? – Merauke. It made no difference at all that, aside from the few hundred internees, no nationalists ever saw New Guinea with their own eyes until the 1960s. But Dutch colonial logo-maps sped across in the colony, showing a West New Guinea *with nothing to its East*, unconsciously reinforced the developing imagined ties. When, in the aftermath of the bitter anticolonial wars of 1945–49, the Dutch were forced to cede sovereignty of the archipelago to a United States of Indonesia, they attempted (for reasons that need not detain us here) to separate West New Guinea

once again, keep it temporarily under colonial rule, and prepare it for independent nationhood. Not until 1963 was this enterprise abandoned, as a result of heavy American diplomatic pressure and Indonesian military raids. Only then did President Sukarno visit for the first time, at the age of sixty-two, a region about which he had tirelessly orated for four decades. The subsequent painful relations between the populations of West New Guinea and the emissaries of the independent Indonesian state can be attributed to the fact that Indonesians more or less sincerely regard these populations as 'brothers and sisters,' while the populations themselves, for the most part, see things very differently.[24]

This difference owes much to census and map. New Guinea's remoteness and rugged terrain created over the millennia an extraordinary linguistic fragmentation. When the Dutch left the region in 1963 they estimated that within the 700,000 population there existed well over 200 mostly mutually unintelligible languages.[25] Many of the remoter 'tribal' groups were not even aware of one another's existence. But, especially after 1950, Dutch missionaries and Dutch officials for the first time made serious efforts to 'unify' them by taking censuses, expanding communications networks, establishing schools, and erecting supra-'tribal' governmental structures. This effort was launched by a colonial state which, as we noted earlier, was unique in that it had governed the Indies, not primarily via a European language, but through 'administrative Malay.'[26] Hence West New Guinea was 'brought up' in the same language in which Indonesia had earlier been raised (and which became the national language in due course). The irony is that *bahasa Indonesia* thus

sent against the Filipino rebel may have kept the archipelago Spanish and Christian, but they also kept it from falling apart;' and that they 'were fighting (whatever the Spaniards may have intended) to keep the Filipino one.' Ibid., p. 58.

23. See Robin Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War, The Guerrilla Struggle in Irian Jaya*, pp. 8–9.

24. Since 1963 there have been many bloody episodes in West New Guinea (now called Irian Jaya – Great Irian), partly as a result of the militarization of the Indonesian state since 1965, partly because of the intermittently effective guerrilla activities of the so-called OPM (Organization for a Free Papua). But these brutalities pale by comparison with Jakarta's savagery in ex-Portuguese East Timor, where in the first three years after the 1976 invasion an estimated one-third of the population of 600,000 died from war, famine, disease and 'resettlement'. I do not think it a mistake to suggest that the difference derives in part from East Timor's absence from the logos of the Netherlands East Indies and, until 1976, of Indonesia's.

25. Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War*, p. 2.

26. See above, p. 110.

became the lingua franca of a burgeoning West New Guinean, West Papuan nationalism.[27]

But what brought the often quarrelling young West Papuan nationalists together, especially after 1963, was the map. Though the Indonesian state changed the region's name from West Nieuw Guinea, first to Irian Barat (West Irian) and then to Irian Jaya, it read its local reality from the colonial-era bird's-eye atlas. A scattering of anthropologists, missionaries and local officials might know and think about the Ndanis, the Asmats, and the Baudis. But the state itself, and through it the Indonesian population as a whole, saw only a phantom 'Irianese' (*orang Irian*) named *after the map*; because phantom, to be imagined in quasi-logo form: 'negroid' features, penis-sheaths, and so on. In a way that reminds us how Indonesia came first to be imagined within the racist structures of the early-twentieth-century Netherlands East Indies, an embryo 'Irianese' national community, bounded by Meridian 141 and the neighbouring provinces of North and South Moluccas, emerged. At the time when its most prominent and attractive spokesman, Arnold Ap, was murdered by the state in 1984, he was curator of a state-built museum devoted to 'Irianese' (provincial) culture.

THE MUSEUM

The link between Ap's occupation and assassination is not at all accidental. For museums, and the museumizing imagination, are both profoundly political. That his museum was instituted by a distant Jakarta shows us how the new nation-state of Indonesia learned from its immediate ancestor, the colonial Netherlands East Indies. The present proliferation of museums around Southeast Asia suggests a general process of political inheriting at work. Any understanding of this process requires a consideration of the novel nineteenth-century colonial archaeology that made such museums possible.

Up until the early nineteenth century the colonial rulers in Southeast Asia exhibited very little interest in the antique monuments of the civilizations they had subjected. Thomas Stamford Raffles, ominous emissary from William Jones's Calcutta, was the first prominent colonial official not merely to amass a large personal collection of local *objets d'art*, but systematically to study their history.[28] Thereafter, with increasing speed, the grandeurs of the Borobudur, of Angkor, of Pagan, and of other ancient sites were successively disinterred, unjungled, measured, photographed, reconstructed, fenced off, analysed, and displayed.[29] Colonial Archaeological Services became powerful and prestigious institutions, calling on the services of some exceptionally capable scholar-officials.[30]

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27. The best sign for this is that the anti-Indonesian nationalist guerrilla organization's name, Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM), is composed of Indonesian words.

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28. In 1811, the East India Company's forces seized all the Dutch possessions in the Indies (Napoléon had absorbed the Netherlands into France the previous year). Raffles ruled in Java till 1815. His monumental *History of Java* appeared in 1817, two years prior to his founding of Singapore.

29. The museumizing of the Borobudur, the largest Buddhist stupa in the world, exemplifies this process. In 1814, the Raffles regime 'discovered' it, and had it unjungled. In 1845, the self-promoting German artist-adventurer Schaefer persuaded the Dutch authorities in Batavia to pay him to make the first daguerrotypes. In 1851, Batavia sent a team of state employees, led by civil engineer F.C. Wilsen, to make a systematic survey of the bas-reliefs and to produce a complete, 'scientific' set of lithographs. In 1874, Dr. C. Leemans, Director of the Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, published, at the behest of the Minister of Colonies, the first major scholarly monograph; he relied heavily on Wilsen's lithographs, never having visited the site himself. In the 1880s, the professional photographer Cephas produced a thorough modern-style photographic survey. In 1901, the colonial regime established an Oudheidkundige Commissie (Commission on Antiquities). Between 1907 and 1911, the Commission oversaw the complete restoration of the stupa, carried out at state expense by a team under the civil engineer Van Erp. Doubtless in recognition of this success, the Commission was promoted, in 1913, to an Oudheidkundigen Dienst (Antiquities Service), which kept the monument spick and span until the end of the colonial period. See C. Leemans, *Boro-Boudour*, pp. ii–lv; and N.J. Krom, *Inleiding tot de Hindoe-Javaansche Kunst*, I, chapter 1.

30. Viceroy Curzon (1899–1905), an antiquities buff who, writes Groslier, 'energized' the Archaeological Survey of India, put things very nicely: 'It is . . . equally our duty to dig and discover, to classify, reproduce and describe, to copy and decipher, and to cherish and conserve.' (Foucault could not have said it better). In 1899, the Archaeological Department of Burma – then part of British India – was founded, and soon began the restoration of Pagan. The previous year, the École Française d'Extrême-Orient was established in Saigon, followed almost at once by a

To explore fully why this happened, when it happened, would take us too far afield. It may be enough here to suggest that the change was associated with the eclipse of the commercial–colonial regimes of the two great East India Companies, and the rise of the true modern colony, directly attached to the metropole.[31] The prestige of the colonial state was accordingly now intimately linked to that of its homeland superior. It is noticeable how heavily concentrated archaeological efforts were on the restoration of imposing monuments (and how these monuments began to be plotted on maps for public distribution and edification: a kind of necrological census was under way). No doubt this emphasis reflected general Orientalist fashions. But the substantial funds invested allow us to suspect that the state had its own, non-scientific reasons. Three immediately suggest themselves, of which the last is surely the most important.

In the first place, the timing of the archaeological push coincided with the first political struggle over the state's educational policies.[32]

Directorate of Museums and Historical Monuments of Indochina. Immediately after the French seizure of Siemreap and Battambang from Siam in 1907, an Angkor Conservancy was established to Curzonize Southeast Asia's most awe-inspiring ancient monuments. See Bernard Philippe Groslier, *Indochina*, pp. 155–7, 174–7. As noted above, the Dutch colonial Antiquities Commission was founded in 1901. The coincidence in dates – 1899, 1898, 1901 – shows not only the keenness with which the rival colonial powers observed one another, but sea-changes in imperialism under way by the turn of the century. As was to be expected, independent Siam ambled along more slowly. Its Archaeological Service was only set up in 1924, its National Museum in 1926. See Charles Higham, *The Archaeology of Mainland Southeast Asia*, p. 25.

31. The VOC was liquidated, in bankruptcy, in 1799. The colony of the Netherlands Indies, however, dates from 1815, when the independence of The Netherlands was restored by the Holy Alliance, and Willem I of Orange put on a Dutch throne first invented in 1806 by Napoléon and his kindly brother Louis. The British East India Company survived till the great Indian Mutiny of 1857.

32. The Oudheidkundige Commissie was established by the same government that (in 1901) inaugurated the new 'Ethical Policy' for the Indies, a policy that for the first time aimed to establish a Western–style system of education for substantial numbers of the colonized. Governor-General Paul Doumer (1897–1902) created both the Directorate of Museums and Historical Monuments of Indochina and the colony's modern educational apparatus. In Burma, the huge expansion of higher education – which between 1900 and 1940 increased the number of secondary-school students eightfold, from 27,401 to 233,543, and of college students twentyfold, from 115 to 2,365 – began just as the Archaeological Department of Burma swung into action. See Robert H. Taylor, *The State in Burma*, p. 114.

'Progressives' – colonials as well as natives – were urging major investments in modern schooling. Against them were arrayed conservatives who feared the long-term consequences of such schooling, and preferred the natives to stay native. In this light, archaeological restorations – soon followed by state-sponsored printed editions of traditional literary texts – can be seen as a sort of conservative educational program, which also served as a pretext for resisting the pressure of the progressives. Second, the formal ideological programme of the reconstructions always placed the builders of the monuments and the colonial natives in a certain hierarchy. In some cases, as in the Dutch East Indies up until the 1930s, the idea was entertained that the builders were actually not of the same 'race' as the natives (they were 'really' Indian immigrants).[33] In other cases, as in Burma, what was imagined was a secular decadence, such that contemporary natives were no longer capable of their putative ancestors' achievements. Seen in this light, the reconstructed monuments, juxtaposed with the surrounding rural poverty, said to the natives: Our very presence shows that you have always been, or have long become, incapable of either greatness or self-rule.

The third reason takes us deeper, and closer to the map. We have seen earlier, in our discussion of the 'historical map,' how colonial regimes began attaching themself to antiquity as much as conquest, originally for quite straightforward Machiavellian–legalistic reasons. As time passed, however, there was less and less openly brutal talk about right of conquest, and more and more effort to create alternative legitimacies. More and more Europeans were being born in Southeast Asia, and being tempted to make it their home. Monumental archaeology, increasingly linked to tourism, allowed the state to appear as the guardian of a generalized, but also local, Tradition. The old sacred sites were to be incorporated into the map of the colony, and their ancient prestige (which, if this had

33. Influenced in part by this kind of thinking, conservative Thai intellectuals, archaeologists, and officials persist to this day in attributing Angkor to the mysterious Khom, who vanished without a trace, and certainly have no connection with today's despised Cambodians.

disappeared, as it often had, the state would attempt to revive) draped around the mappers. This paradoxical situation is nicely illustrated by the fact that the reconstructed monuments often had smartly laid-out lawns around them, and always explanatory tablets, complete with datings, planted here and there. Moreover, they were to be kept empty of people, except for perambulatory tourists (no religious ceremonies or pilgrimages, so far as possible). Museumized this way, they were repositioned as regalia for a *secular* colonial state.

But, as noted above, a characteristic feature of the instrumentalities of this profane state was infinite reproducibility, a reproducibility made technically possible by print and photography, but politico-culturally by the disbelief of the rulers themselves in the real sacredness of local sites. A sort of progression is detectable every-where: (1) massive, technically sophisticated archaeological reports, complete with dozens of photographs, recording the process of reconstruction of particular, distinct ruins; (2) Lavishly illustrated books for public consumption, including exemplary plates of all the major sites reconstructed *within the colony* (so much the better if, as in the Netherlands Indies, Hindu-Buddhist shrines could be juxtaposed to restored Islamic mosques).[34] Thanks to print-capitalism, a sort of pictorial census of the state's patrimony becomes available, even if at high cost, to the state's subjects; (3) A general logoization, made possible by the profaning processes outlined above. Postage stamps, with their characteristic series – tropical birds, fruits, fauna, why not monuments as well? – are exemplary of this stage. But postcards and schoolroom textbooks follow the same logic. From there it is only a step into the market: Hotel Pagan, Borobudur Fried Chicken, and so on.

While this kind of archaeology, maturing in the age of mechanical

reproduction, was profoundly political, it was political at such a deep level that almost everyone, including the personnel of the colonial state (who, by the 1930s, were in most of Southeast Asia 90 per cent native) was unconscious of the fact. It had all become normal and everyday. It was precisely the infinite quotidian reproducibility of its regalia that revealed the real power of the state.

It is probably not too surprising that post-independence states, which exhibited marked continuities with their colonial predecessors, inherited this form of political museumizing. For example, on 9 November 1968, as part of the celebrations commemorating the 15th anniversary of Cambodia's independence, Norodom Sihanouk had a large wood and papier-mâché replica of the great Bayon temple of Angkor displayed in the national sports stadium in Phnom Penh.[35] The replica was exceptionally coarse and crude, but it served its purpose – instant recognizability via a history of colonial-era logoiza-tion. 'Ah, our Bayon' – but with the memory of French colonial restorers wholly banished. French-reconstructed Angkor Wat, again in 'jigsaw' form, became, as noted in Chapter 9, the central symbol of the successive flags of Sihanouk's royalist, Lon Nol's militarist, and Pol Pot's Jacobin regimes.

More striking still is evidence of inheritance at a more popular level. One revealing example is a series of paintings of episodes in the national history commissioned by Indonesia's Ministry of Education in the 1950s. The paintings were to be mass-produced and distributed throughout the primary-school system; young Indonesians were to have on the walls of their classrooms – everywhere – visual repre-sentations of their country's past. Most of the backgrounds were done in the predictable sentimental-naturalist style of early-twentieth-century commercial art, and the human figures taken either from colonial-era museum dioramas or from the popular *wayang orang* pseudohistorical folk-drama. The most interesting of the series, however, offered children a representation of the Borobudur. In reality, this colossal monument, with its 504 Buddha images, 1,460 pictorial and 1,212 decorative stone panels, is a fantastic storehouse of ancient Javanese sculpture. But the well-regarded artist imagines the

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34. A fine late-blooming example is *Ancient Indonesian Art*, by the Dutch scholar, A.J. Bernet Kempers, self-described as 'former Director of Archaeology in Indonesia [sic].' On pages 24–5 one finds maps showing the location of the ancient sites. The first is especially instructive, since its rectangular shape (framed on the east by the 141st Meridian) willy-nilly includes Philippine Mindanao as well as British-Malaysian north Borneo, peninsular Malaya, and Singapore. All are blank of sites, indeed of any naming whatsoever, except for a single, inexplicable 'Kedah.' The switch from Hindu-Buddhism to Islam occurs after Plate 340.

35. See *Kambuja*, 45 (15 December 1968), for some curious photographs.

marvel in its ninth century A.D. heyday with instructive perversity. The Borobudur is painted completely white, with not a trace of sculpture visible. Surrounded by well-trimmed lawns and tidy tree-lined avenues, *not a single human being is in sight.*[36] One might argue that this emptiness reflects the unease of a contemporary Muslim painter in the face of an ancient Buddhist reality. But I suspect that what we are really seeing is an unselfconscious lineal descendant of colonial archaeology: the Borobudur as state regalia, and as 'of course, that's it' logo. A Borobudur all the more powerful as a sign for national identity because of everyone's awareness of its location in an infinite series of identical Borobudurs.

Interlinked with one another, then, the census, the map and the museum illuminate the late colonial state's style of thinking about its domain. The 'warp' of this thinking was a totalizing classificatory grid, which could be applied with endless flexibility to anything under the state's real or contemplated control: peoples, regions, religions, languages, products, monuments, and so forth. The effect of the grid was always to be able to say of anything that it was this, not that; it belonged here, not there. It was bounded, determinate, and therefore – in principle – countable. (The comic classificatory and subclassificatory census boxes entitled 'Other' concealed all real-life anomalies by a splendid bureaucratic *trompe l'oeil*). The 'weft' was what one could call serialization: the assumption that the world was made up of replicable plurals. The particular always stood as a provisional representative of a series, and was to be handled in this light. This is why the colonial state imagined a Chinese series before any Chinese, and a nationalist series before the appearance of any nationalists.

No one has found a better metaphor for this frame of mind than the great Indonesian novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer, who entitled the final volume of his tetralogy on the colonial period *Rumah Kaca* – the Glass House. It is an image, as powerful as Bentham's Panopticon, of total surveyability. For the colonial state did not merely aspire to create,

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36. The discussion here draws on material analysed more fully in *Language and Power*, chapter 5.

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under its control, a human landscape of perfect visibility; the condition of this 'visibility' was that everyone, everything, had (as it were) a serial number.[37] This style of imagining did not come out of thin air. It was the product of the technologies of navigation, astronomy, horology, surveying, photography and print, to say nothing of the deep driving power of capitalism.

Map and census thus shaped the grammar which would in due course make possible 'Burma' and 'Burmese,' 'Indonesia' and 'Indonesians.' But the concretization of these possibilities – concretizations which have a powerful life today, long after the colonial state has disappeared – owed much to the colonial state's peculiar imagining of history and power. Archaeology was an unimaginable enterprise in precolonial Southeast Asia; it was adopted in uncolonized Siam late in the game, and after the colonial state's manner. It created the series 'ancient monuments,' segmented within the classificatory, geographic-demographic box 'Netherlands Indies,' and 'British Burma.' Conceived within this profane series, each ruin became available for surveillance and infinite replication. As the colonial state's archaeological service made it technically possible to assemble the series in mapped and photographed form, the state itself could regard the series, up historical time, as an album of its ancestors. The key thing was never the specific Borobudur, nor the specific Pagan, in which the state had no substantial interest and with which it had only archaeological connections. The replicable *series*, however, created a historical depth of field which was easily inherited by the state's postcolonial successor. The final logical outcome was the logo – of 'Pagan' or 'The Philippines,' it made little difference – which by its emptiness, contextlessness, visual memorableness, and infinite reproducibility in every direction brought census and map, warp and woof, into an inerasable embrace.

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37. An exemplary policy-outcome of Glass House imaginings – an outcome of which ex-political prisoner Pramoedya is painfully aware – is the classificatory ID card that all adult Indonesians must now carry at all times. This ID is isomorphic with the census – it represents a sort of political census, with special punchings for those in the sub-series 'subversives' and 'traitors.' It is notable that this style of census was only perfected after the achievement of national independence.

Imagined Communities

Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism

◆

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