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CHAPTER 31

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND EVERYDAY LIFE

YVES DÉLOYE

Introduction

To consider nationalism from the point of view of everyday life is to recognize that the ability of citizens to identify permanently with a nation does not result solely from the work of political nation-builders—educational, symbolic, military, et cetera—or from the actions of nationalist intellectuals. It also, and perhaps especially, depends on a series of social micro-processes of identification that suffuse social and political life and lead ordinary citizens to see themselves, in a commonplace way, as members of what Benedict Anderson has called an 'imagined community', the nation.[1] This line of research owes a great deal to Michael Billig's important work, *Banal Nationalism*. Billig introduced the term 'banal nationalism' to refer to:

> the ideological habits which enable the established nations of the West to be reproduced. It is argued that these habits are not removed from everyday life, as some observers have supposed. Daily, the nation is indicated, or 'flagged', in the lives of its citizenry. Nationalism, far from being an intermittent mood in established nations, is the endemic condition.[2]

This approach, now widely adopted,[3] is based essentially on a study of the rhetoric of the media (in this case, the British press in the 1990s), and it demonstrates the political importance of the way the media presents information to the public. Through the choice of cognitive categories it makes (national versus international, us versus them), by the framing effects it uses in presenting the current political situation, by internalizing 'a textual structure, which uses the homeland's national boundaries, dividing the world into "homeland" and "foreign", *Heimat* and *Ausland*',[4] information conveyed by the mass media powerfully contributes to the normalization of national identity and to

making such identity seem 'natural' to citizens who are induced to reproduce mentally, in an apparently spontaneous way, the territorial and political divisions that reflect the principles on which a world composed of nation states are based. In a way, Michael Billig continues the work of earlier writers like Karl Deutsch or, more recently, Benedict Anderson, both of whom agree that communication plays a central role in the birth and reproduction of the feeling of belonging to a nation. Anderson argues in *Imagined Communities* that the nation has historically succeeded in substituting itself for older forms of community identification because it brings together mentally individuals who do not know each other, and who probably will never know each other, 'yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'.[5] The development of the press and of modern techniques of publication made a decisive contribution to the emergence of this 'imaginative faculty'. By eliciting the same thoughts at the same time among members of a national culture, whose language often delimits its borders, the press provokes a troubling but powerful result:

> The significance of this mass ceremony—Hegel observed that newspapers serve modern man as a substitute for morning prayers—is paradoxical. It is performed in silent privacy, in the lair of the skull. Yet each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion. Furthermore, this ceremony is incessantly repeated at daily or half-daily intervals throughout the calendar. . . . At the same time, the newspaper reader, observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbours, is continually reassured that the imagined word is visibly rooted in everyday life.[6]

In order to demonstrate the heuristic advantage of such a perspective, we will first discuss the theoretical contribution of this routinized approach of the nation, and then introduce the political, but mainly economical and cultural, sources of this national identification that is often compatible with other scales of identity. We will finally present in detail two historical aspects of this banal nationalism: architecture and music.

A Daily Plebiscite

This kind of analysis has the advantage of emphasizing the forms of interactions at the heart of contemporary societies that shape national identifications. As John B. Thompson has shown,[7] the rapid urbanization and substantial geographical mobility that have characterized Western societies since the beginning of the twentieth century have made a major contribution to detaching the individual from certain primary social ties (family, village, religion, et cetera) and exposing him or her to more abstract and changing ways of life. The decline of direct forms of interaction and 'communal patriotism' characteristic of traditional communities is reinforced when they are

replaced by indirect or mediated interactions and identification, which promote the emergence of an 'abstract patriotism', to use Benjamin R. Barber's term.[8] Concern for reciprocity, interdependence, loyalty, organic solidarity, empathy, the valorization of individual sacrifice for the benefit of the national collectivity ('*pro patria mori*'): these are the constitutive elements of this 'abstract patriotism' that unites and connects those who see themselves as participating in the 'everyday plebiscite' ('une plébiscite de tous les jours') to which Ernest Renan so judiciously referred in the famous lecture 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?' ('What is a nation?') that he delivered at the Sorbonne in March 1882.[9] The approach in terms of 'banal nationalism' is therefore an invitation to see nationalism as more than something imposed from above upon a passive and credulous public for ideological and political reasons. To be sure, national narratives have been represented and disseminated on a large scale by novels, operas, paintings, and engravings, historical works scholarly and popular,[10] and in the form of school textbooks, as well as by street names, statues in public spaces, public commemorations,[11] the construction of historical monuments, new festive calendars,[12] et cetera. What matters in this incomplete list is the constant 'advertising' effort that accompanies the promotion of the 'national habitus',[13] especially in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The daily affirmation of national identity, which is revealed in particular by the study of the media of mass communication, becomes *an active social co-production of a commonplace national identity* that combines not only the work of nationalization carried out by nationalist elites but also the everyday activity of identifying, receiving, and reappropriating undertaken by the populations concerned. The concrete, direct, and reciprocal interaction that was characteristic of rural communities in villages and small towns[14] comes to be replaced by mass communications (the press, popular literature, television, et cetera) and the apparatuses of 'exo-education' (public and private schools, military conscription) that today create in individuals the feeling of intimacy, subjectively shared community, and solidarity through the opinions, information, representations, and collective emotions that they disseminate and encourage. It is clear that this process of collective identification does not occur in the same way, at the same speed, with the same intensity, or with the same result in every country; each national group 'imagines itself' differently, notably because of its history, the form and strength of its government,[15] its cultural or religious composition, and the modalities of its involvement on the international scene. Nonetheless, this *bottom-up approach* changes the way we view nationalism and how we study it seriously.

The first decentring of the perspective involves encouraging observers to elaborate a kind of 'micro-physics' of nationalism. Making liberal use of a vocabulary borrowed from Michel Foucault, this chapter will emphasize the multiple *invisible practices* that create the modern national subject. Far from being only the result of the voluntary action of elites, nationalist movements, or the state ideological apparatuses that the latter control, the spread of the feeling of belonging to a nation as the ability to identify with an 'imagined community' proceeds along various, ambiguous lines, based on largely unconscious processes, even often without easily identifiable actors. What is at

stake here is the emergence of a national identification that is on the whole an unintended result. Thus it is not the rare direct experiences connected with national civic membership such as occasional participation in the electoral ritual,[16] the often distanced spectacle of a commemoration or national holiday, physical involvement in a military conflict, et cetera, that are privileged here. Rather the focus is upon a vast set of everyday interactions such as reading a national newspaper; collective participation in sporting events that are often coloured by chauvinism and sometimes by xenophobia;[17] living in a neighbourhood with a national architectural style; treating the landscape as a trope for the nation; repeated visits to an exhibition or special place; intimate contact with material objects bearing the national imprint;[18] listening to a song expressing the 'harmony of peoples'; and so on. It is such interactions and experiences that are capable of anchoring this deep feeling of a 'community of destiny'[19] that constitutes membership in a nation. This 'micro-physics' of nationalism operates in a kind of *perpetual motion*, a play of complex and mobile interactions whose terms are never truly acquired or stabilized. As in the case of Foucault's approach to the question of power,[20] here we are concerned to advocate not so much a new 'theory' of nationalism as an 'analytical' approach to nationalism that makes the *functioning* of national identifications central. Attention needs to be given to these identifications, and to their everyday implementation (not to their institutional or ideological foundation). Thus through a set of ordinary practices,[21] usually diffuse and repetitive, nationalism can increase its symbolic and political efficacy.

A second change in perspective involved in this approach is the priority given to routinized situations of national identification. For Michael Billig, understanding everyday nationalism presupposes a distinction between moments of 'hot nationalism', in which the assertion of national identity 'is extraordinary, politically charged and emotionally driven', and 'cool nationalism', in which identification with the national community results from a series of routine, common behaviours and feelings that are distant from moments of nationalist effervescence and conflict. Whereas with hot nationalism, which is often given priority in scholarly literature, nationalism is perceived as something exceptional, even as a social pathology, with cool nationalism it becomes the rule, the banal result of a constant and often unconscious expression of membership in a nation. This approach fills an important gap in the literature on nationalism: 'All over the world, nations display their flags, day after day. Unlike the flags on the great days, these flags are largely unwaved, unsaluted, unnoticed.'[22] This decentring of the perspective encourages us in particular to qualify an interpretation of nationalism as a kind of 'collective effervescence'—an interpretation proposed by the young Émile Durkheim[23] in 1880, on the occasion of the first time 14 July was celebrated in the streets of Paris as the French national holiday. Durkheim drew the perhaps hasty conclusion that popular enthusiasm is capable of producing, in a punctual and exceptional way, a strong feeling of membership in a collectivity that would give rise to a genuine civic religion of the nation whose roots sank deep into modern French history.[24] Rather than adopt this approach, which focuses on the passionate character of nationalism, it seems preferable to adopt that proposed by

Durkheim's nephew, the anthropologist Marcel Mauss, an author who has unfortunately been neglected in much of the literature on nationalism. In his works on the techniques of the body, Mauss offers a point of view very different from that of his uncle. Drawing on his empirical observations, Mauss notes that the body, by means of the incorporated know-how that constitutes it, is able to analyse effectively the largely interiorized influences that govern the diversity of national affiliations. Because socialization, like communication and imitation, plays a central role in the transmission of ways of being and acting—in short, in the existence of 'social habitus' that is often deeply marked by the national context—it is important to pay attention to the way in which people 'know how to make use of their bodies', to the national *forms* taken by these techniques of the body, and to the body language that reproduces *ad infinitum* ways of being that are strongly influenced by their national imprint. It was especially his experience of the First World War that led Mauss, who had enlisted in the French army, to develop this very useful theory for understanding the deep mechanisms of interiorization and inscription in bodies (at least as much as in consciousness) of affiliations with this or that national entity. Taking as his example the 'British infantry, [whose] march step differs from ours', Mauss recounts an anecdote that reveals the latent qualities and inertias that make any switch from one national technology to another improbable:

> The Worcester regiment, having achieving great feats during the battle of the Aisne alongside the French infantry, requested royal authorisation to have a band of French buglers and drummers. The result was not encouraging. For almost six months . . . I often witnessed the following spectacle: The unfortunate regiment of big Englishman could not march. Everything was off. When they tried to keep pace, the music was out of synch with them. So the Worcester regiment was forced to get rid of its French buglers.[25]

This failure shows in reverse the force of 'national habitus' and still more the capacity of such habitus to diffuse itself into the most ordinary behaviours and gestures, in everyday postures and external bodily manifestations.

Mauss's anthropological analysis converges with the results of some contemporary work in political demography. In an innovative study devoted to pregnancies on the Franco-Belgian border, Morgane Labbé has shown that the geographical distribution of fertility is governed chiefly by a national factor: on each side of a border that is nonetheless largely porous from linguistic, cultural, and historical points of view, fertility still is strongly affected by the administrative division of the two populations into nation states.[26] In other words, the reproduction of 'bodies' is governed by an interiorized state-national logic that asserts itself historically as the nationalization of the two societies grows deeper and leads to a persistent difference between the birth rates in the two countries. In this historical case, the 'political border' was coupled with a 'population border' that attests to the influence of the national factor on family and demographic behaviours in border areas. As the process of nationalization of the Belgian and French societies grew deeper (especially after the First World War), the intranational differences in terms of fertility have faded away (in particular

affecting the Flemish population, historically more fertile than the Walloons), whereas the gaps between the national fertility rates have increased and led to a contrast that is still present today.

Economy, Culture, Politics: The Sources of the Banalization of Nationalism

These two ways of decentring the perspective lead us to qualify the degree to which the process of national identification is politicized. Max Weber argued that this process is based on the ability of the national identity, which he identified with a form of 'ethnic communitarian relations, "to be" subjectively perceived as a common trait'.[27] For Weber, it was not an objective resemblance that provides the basis for the national bond, but rather the actors' perception of the borderline between the similar and the different. More precisely, it is the *feeling* of sharing certain values and representations that grounds the subjective reality of the nation. That is because the nation is the object of an investment of meaning and, frequently, of an intense psychological valorization (which Anthony Giddens later designated as the essential dimension of nationalism),[28] and because it is taken for granted in everyday life. The shift of view Weber carried out is, as we know, particularly fertile. His perspective makes nationalism a phenomenon of *belief* and makes the *sense* of national affiliation an object of analysis. His approach thus accords a central role to the subjective dimension of 'communalization' (*Vergemeinschaftung*). If the nation has no univocal material reality, and still less an essence, it nonetheless exists in the consciousness of those whom it brings together. This perspective led Weber to grant a crucial role to political activity in promoting and, still more, in maintaining this national consciousness, which is often conceived in terms of family relationships and blood: 'All history shows how easily political action can give rise to the belief in blood relationship . . .'.[29] Borrowing his illustrations from the history of ancient Greece and from the contemporary history of the United States, Weber repeatedly refers to the artificial and politically constructed nature of identity-related national cleavages. Like the 'tribe', the nation is only an artificial product of the political community. The arbitrary aspect of such delimitations does not exclude, nonetheless, the existence 'of a strong sense of identity'. Thus 'it is also not rare that families travel from New York to Richmond to make an expected child a "Virginian"'.[30] Although this theoretical formulation is largely in agreement with that proposed by Michael Billig, the approach in terms of 'banal nationalism' has the advantage of qualifying this political origin of the feeling of belonging to the national community. If for Max Weber, 'time and again we find that the concept of "nation" directs us to political power',[31] we must also emphasize here the significant contribution made by other matrices of national communalization. This common way of acting and thinking must also be related to the mechanisms of economic and monetary communalization

that helped 'implicate' citizens when economic modernization was undertaken in European countries from the middle of the nineteenth century. As many works on social history have shown, integration into national networks of monetary and economic exchange strongly promotes the development of a national feeling that is all the stronger for being based on a series of intersecting interests that lead citizens to become economically dependent on each other. This 'implication' (the term is borrowed from the American historian Eugen Weber) leads us to take into consideration the peculiarly material factors that promote national integration and, still more, its banalization: the development of the highway network, starting in the middle of the nineteenth century; the construction of railways; the standardization of time by means of the invention and spread of clockmaking at the end of the eighteenth century; the broad diffusion of material objects bearing the national stamp (furniture, for instance); the rise of sports that encourage the expression and maintenance of the national consensus; the development of means of mass communication (the press, popular literature, radio, et cetera); and integration into a 'market culture'[32] that reinforces the division of labour and financial and economic interdependence. As Eugen Weber has shown in the case of France,[33] the (belated) success of this nationalization of society must be connected with the conjunction of these different innovations that overturned the whole social system, both on the political level and on the cultural and economic levels, although in my view this process is more unpredictable than Weber, who is sometimes imprisoned in a top-down analysis, presents it. When this process of national assimilation was completed, the citizen became aware of belonging to a whole whose borders—although intangible—became just as important as the immediate ones that defined the horizon of his everyday life. It is only at the price of this particular 'implication' that citizens learn to interiorize the abstract borders of national space-time and gradually to project part of their behaviours and opinions into an ideal whole: that of the nation to which they adhere in a way that has become unconscious because it is interiorized.

From this point of view, culture is also an important source of national communalization. Whereas Max Weber's approach attributes to the state a decisive place in the construction of the national community, the approach in terms of 'banal nationalism' also grants an important place to peripheral cultural contributions, to hybrid forms of nationalization, and to makeshift meanings that clearly attest to the *co-produced character* of the feeling of belonging to a nation.[34] Thus Peter Sahlins suggests that the appearance of national identity-related consciousness should be understood not on the basis of the 'political centre', as the main result of the state's public intentions and public actions, but rather in relation to that of the 'periphery', as the effect of local cultural practices of national identity. Taking as his starting point the example of the valley of Cerdanya, which has been shared by France and Spain since the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), Sahlins describes a situation in which the interaction between the local and the national gradually inscribes the border on ordinary culture and political necessity. Far from being a product of the state, the border and the identity-related cleavage that accompanies it are constructed, from the end of the eighteenth into the nineteenth century, in the action and dynamism of local communitarian relationships. In the

framework of local conflicts, national identity becomes, for example, a resource that can be mobilized by villagers to oppose themselves to neighbouring communities. It is in the everyday borrowings and translations involving national identity on each side of the border that the feeling of belonging to the nation crystallizes: 'It appeared less as a result of state intentions than from a local process of adopting and appropriating the nation without abandoning local interests, a local sense of place, or a local identity. At once opposing and using the state for its own ends, local society brought the nation into the village.'[35] The interest of this kind of microscopic view is to encourage us to take into account the diversity of the historical ways in which the feeling of belonging to a nation can emerge; to examine carefully its diverse temporalities (which are not always identical with those of the state and its elites); and thus to remain attentive to the local conditions of the reception of national identity and to locate the differing itineraries (which are sometimes in conflict) taken by the nationalization of societies.

From One Identity to Another: The Strata of the 'Social Habitus'

The two decentrings proposed above offer another heuristic advantage. They lead us to consider the *cumulative* nature of political identities that classical theories of nationalism too often conceive as being in conflict with each other. From this point of view, the most novel analyses are probably those that bear on the functioning (and development) of national identifications in the European Union. To be sure, as we have already said, historians have proposed the hypothesis of a continuity between local identities (the famous 'little homelands' that were so praised in nineteenth-century Europe) and national identities currently under construction. Communitarian integration nonetheless offers an unprecedented example that we can observe and analyse to understand the logic of the functioning and interlocking of scales of identification. Initially, a conflict between identification with the European Union and identifications with its member nations, which were more deeply anchored in memories and habits, was hypothesized, especially for the countries that were the most jealous of their national particularities (France, the United Kingdom, Denmark, et cetera). The most recent comparative investigations tend to refute this hypothetical conflict and to demonstrate the cumulative (though partial) nature of the relationship between identifying with a nation and with the European Union. Just as in everyday life it is possible to reconcile a subnational identity with a national identity, so it is possible to conceive national and European identities on the model of Russian nested dolls. Far from being reducible to a zero-sum game (in which everyday identification at a territorial level would come at the expense of another level of identification), the two levels of belonging might even reinforce each other. As Sophie Duchesne and André-Paul Frognier have clearly shown, there is no 'inverse relationship between European and national

identifications'. Moreover, these authors demonstrate that outside electoral periods, during which Eurosceptics enjoy particular influence, European pride is positively correlated with national pride. That is, for instance, what is indicated by the *Eurobarometer* poll taken in the autumn of 2000 (that is, after the 1999 European elections): of those who are very proud of their nationality, 31.7 per cent are very proud of being European, 36.9 per cent are proud, 15.2 per cent are not very proud, and only 9.6 per cent are not proud at all. Conversely, 2.4 per cent of those who are not proud of their nationality are very proud to be European, 19 per cent are rather proud, 14.8 per cent are not very proud, and 58.7 per cent are not proud of being European.[36] In other words, the prouder people are of their own nation, the more they are proud of being Europeans. Using new questionnaire data on three European Union countries (the United Kingdom, France, and Holland), Michael Bruter has confirmed this hypothesis: there is a positive correlation between the different levels of identification he investigated (local, regional, national, and European). For Bruter, it is clear that these positive correlations are strongest between the closest territorial levels, that is, between European and national identities and especially between regional and local identities.[37] In a complementary way, the broader investigation carried out by Richard Robyn's team (the investigation concerned seven European countries: Germany, Denmark, France, Italy, Holland, the United Kingdom, and Sweden) also demonstrate that national pride is not an obstacle to the emergence of an identification (still relative and fragile) with the European Union—with the notable exception of Germany, where national pride is significantly weaker than in the rest of the European Union. Moreover, this last investigation suggests that Europeans are capable of taking on 'multiple identities'.[38] This cumulative functioning of contemporary identifications attests to the importance of considering 'banal nationalism' as the result of a 'social habitus' composed of several superimposed strata, including one related to the national community. In other words, the ability to identify on a scale of post-national affiliation seems strikingly confirmed by the popularized, naturalized dimension of national identification, which far from being an obstacle to a supranational identification becomes one of its commonplace conditions. Upon reading this research, it seems that people who ordinarily project themselves in a serene, proud way in relation to their national community often find it easier to see themselves as 'European' as well.

Latency and the Social Morphology of Ordinary Nationalism

National and Other Identities

Nonetheless, it remains that identification with Europe still suffers from a certain number of 'drag effects' that have to do in part with the antiquity, diversity, and

latency of social micro-processes of national identification that still ensure a real predominance of the 'community of understanding' (to use Max Weber's term) that constitutes the nation. The notion of 'drag effects' is borrowed from Norbert Elias, for whom communitarian construction must be resituated in a long-term historical perspective that sees the sequence of human interdependencies extending as the process of individualization deepens: 'This structure of relationships demands of the individual a greater circumspection, more conscious forms of self-control, reduced spontaneity in action and speech in the forming and management of relationships.' But Elias immediately adds that this advance of the individual 'has not extinguished the basic human need for impulsive warmth and spontaneity in relationships with other people. It has not caused the desire for security and constancy in the emotive affirmation of one's own person by others, and its counterpart, the desire for the company of people one likes, to disappear.'[39] This 'affective' desire explains in part the 'drag effect' that Elias mentions when he tries to understand the everyday development of the 'national habitus' confronted by this process of extending the sequences of interdependency and the increased individualism to which it leads. There probably resides Elias's main lesson: 'Such changes do not take place overnight. They involve processes that often take many generations.'[40] He reminds us that in Europe, the 'national' layer of social habitus occupies a particular place because of its history and the 'emotional tonality' that is attached to it. Because it is 'very deeply and firmly anchored into the personality structure of the individual', because it results from an ancient and intense politics of 'manipulation of feelings in relation to state and nation, government and political system',[41] the 'national tradition' helps delay the arrival, and still more the awareness, of a supranational level of political and civic inclusion. The approach adopted in this chapter allows us to complete this theoretical perspective by discussing the multiple vectors and processes that provide the emotional anchorage of banal nationalism. Without claiming to make an exhaustive inventory here, it is appropriate at this point to define functional modalities by examining some of their symbolic and memorial frameworks and by analysing some of the routine social and cultural practices that make national identity so intimate and banal that it is often permanently 'embodied' by citizens.

Architecture and Landscape

Architectural style is one of the most interesting vectors for understanding the territorial dissemination of a distinctive feeling of commonplace identification with a nation. If studies on this subject are still rare[42] and often monographic, they nonetheless tend to demonstrate the importance of 'national' architectural styles and 'landscape tropes for the nation' (to adopt the title of François Walter's book) in the development of this 'imaginative faculty' that serves as a base for banal nationalism.[43] And this is so less because in the second half of the nineteenth century these national forms of

architecture were the object of a series of 'identity-related exhibitions' at the time of the Universal Expositions (or World Fairs) and other international expositions that were open to the general public,[44] or because they were theorized, even codified by a technical literature and professional journals that made it easier to disseminate these forms and to make them permanent, than because they succeeded in occupying citizens' visual fields and becoming genuine identity landmarks, veritable 'social frameworks' of national memory.[45] Reproduced in numerous media of communication and education (school textbooks, postcards, tourist posters and guides, postage stamps, et cetera), these national styles succeeded above all in putting a durable imprint on the space citizens lived in and traversed, both in the city and in the countryside. The study of the 'Romanian national style' recently published by Carmen Popescu allows us to describe more precisely the conditions of the social efficacy of this national construction through architecture. Dealing with the period between the proclamation of the Romanian monarchy in 1881 and the end of the Second World War, this study demonstrates the ability of a certain architectural style, which claimed to be a legitimate continuation of traditional Romanian art, to cover the territory of the new state that had been freed in 1878 from the tutelage of the Ottoman Empire. The essential point is that this national architecture did not concern solely the new state's official, symbolic buildings: schools, city halls (notably the Bucharest city hall erected at the end of the nineteenth century), museums, and the palaces of the state archives; but also a whole series of 'typical' houses in both the urban habitat (low-cost housing, villas) and the rural habitat (farmhouses, country houses). An emblem of Romanian identity, 'architecture discovers that it has a privileged role: it affects both the private level (it is a second nature) and the public level (it lays out cities, erects monuments), while at the same time having the power to manipulate symbolic languages'.[46] Such languages are all the more effective among the people because they are neither doctrinaire nor ideological, but aesthetic, and therefore easy to understand. The invariable characteristics of the architectural style also ensure its efficacy: 'a picturesque composition, with a tendency to asymmetry, often realized by the accent provided by towers, the picturesque use of shadow derived from the use of numerous openings treated in decorative ways . . . the frequent use of rustic elements in wood . . .'.[47] Often based on local historical sources, this national style spread all the more rapidly because it developed at a time when the real-estate sector of private homes was undergoing a remarkable economic boom in Romania. This development concerned not only exterior architecture but also interior decoration (chairs, dining tables, beds, et cetera), which was then the object of an ambitious national reflection. A veritable manner of 'living in the Romanian way' spread and helped set its aesthetic and intimate stamp on the framework of Romanian families' everyday lives. This ability to appeal across class lines resulted from the simplification and plasticity of a national style which produced not only masterpieces (for example, those of the Cotroceni Palace in Bucharest) that are now preserved in museums, but also ordinary furniture that incarnates several architects' desires to construct 'Romanian interiors, furniture, and clothes . . .'.[48]—in short, a whole series of familiar material objects capable of referring to 'a way of being

common to many people',[49] and of deeply imbuing the private lives of citizens with banalized references to and markers of national identity. The importance of this spatialization of feeling can be gauged more accurately if we recall the arguments of Maurice Halbwachs about the functioning of the collective memory. The importance he accords to the localization of memories leads him to claim that 'there is no collective memory that does not take place in a spatial framework'. 'A reality that lasts', space anchors images and memories deeply in communal affiliations. In such a perspective, each national group succeeds in persisting because it inscribes its shape on the ground and offers citizens an everyday spatial framework that helps national memory 'immobilize itself'.[50] In a complementary way, we must here mention the 'landscape tropes for the nation', that is, the set of landscape schemes that have historically contributed, and still contribute today, to the creation of a collective sensory experience that, because of the spatial and national stereotypes it deploys, is crucial for the development and maintenance of a routinized feeling of belonging to a nation.[51] It would also be appropriate to mention the important role played by the images on postage stamps—which often reproduce landscapes or architectural figures symbolizing the nation—in the construction of the national narrative, of the collective memory, and of a self-image. Produced on the state's initiative, they are massively distributed in everyday life and reflect historically the transformations of the relationship between the nation and its citizens.[52]

Music

While the visual field is an effective everyday medium for conveying and inscribing on individual memories the distinctive feeling of belonging to a nation, we should also mention the importance of the nationalization of citizens' auditory fields. The development of national schools of music in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the regular use of national anthems in schools, in military barracks, and on the occasion of publicly staged sporting or commemorative events, the instrumentalization of national or ethnic musical themes in films—all these are so many social occasions for federating citizens and making the simultaneous communion of minds heard. More than the 'national' literature, which is often reserved for a literate elite, music—whether popular or classical—'helps reveal what is most secret and least translatable in the collective soul of a people'.[53] Of course, the musical investment in the nation is expressed in different ways, depending on whether we are concerned with a more or less homogeneous state or with a country struggling to gain autonomy. But in many cases, as Halbwachs also noted, music is one of the ordinary frameworks of the collective memory of social and national groups. The phonetic habits of a national group, the memory of a musical sound evoking a system of notes or an assemblage of signs issuing from a convention transmitted from one generation to another, the sensory experience elicited by repeatedly listening to an 'original' popular song: there is an abundance of examples showing

the identity-related effects of playing and listening to music. Naturally, these kinds of 'national music' composed in accord with international aesthetic genres (think of Grieg in Norway, Granados and de Falla in Spain, Dvorak and Smetana in Czechoslovakia, Bartok and Kodaly in Hungary, and so on) take on a colouration of their own, which often relies on reference to popular melodies that are supposed to express 'the national genius'—the importance of which was so strongly emphasized by Johann Gottfried Herder in the eighteenth century—and its versions in culture, history, and landscape. These are so many 'authentic' components that music seeks to inscribe on citizens' auditory memory and thus to root them in the depths of the awareness of belonging. The most interesting European example of this is probably Germany at the turn of the twentieth century. Celia Applegate has shown, for instance, the 'felicity conditions'—to use Max Weber's term—for this affinity between musical creation and the ordinary affirmation of German nationalism. Applegate persuasively argues for the importance of social mechanisms in disseminating national musical standards that gradually left their privileged site of production and spread throughout the society by establishing a set of auditory landmarks that promoted identification with the German nation. This contributed to creating a sense of self-awareness amongst politically fragmented Germans. Like architecture and literature, music gives rise to a veritable aesthetic revolution that had a nationalist impact: 'if German national identity emerged in the salons and singing societies of musically inclined Germans, then we must reposition nationalism in the intersection of a public and a private realm, a male world and a female world. In the end, we may hear the same music, but perhaps we will hear it with a more finely tuned awareness of what it can mean.'[54]

Concluding Remarks

Thus it is in these interstices of social life that we should finally seek, more than the modalities of the formation of nationalism, the 'felicity conditions' of its power of identification. As Max Weber suggested, 'aesthetically conspicuous differences of the physical appearance' are also the most effective ones, because they are 'perceptible differences in the *conduct of everyday life*'.[55] Perhaps this is part of the ordinary mystery of national identity. Far from being only the reflection of an ideology borne by intellectuals or the mechanical result of an instrumental and manipulative policy from political elites, banal nationalism results from a series of social micro-processes of identification that historically lead individuals to identify themselves with the nation just as they feel they are members of other, often closer, human groups. For such an abstract process of identification to happen, national allegiance has to become banal, made concrete—through architecture, music, sport, media, popular literature—so that the individuals make it their own often unknowingly and sometimes unwillingly. In that perspective, the historical formation of the state, the construction of national unity, and the assertion of national civic identity are the result of a complex to-and-fro

movement, which dates back several centuries, between the political and the social, state and society. The purpose of this process remains historically as open today as it ever was.

Notes

1. B. Anderson (1983, 1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London.
2. M. Billig (1995) *Banal Nationalism*, London, 6.
3. A lot of literature uses this approach. See for instance A. Law's critical paper (2001) 'Near and Far: Banal Nationalism Identity and the Press in Scotland', *Media, Culture & Society*, 23, no. 3, 299–317. It was also used to describe mechanisms of infranational identification: K. Crameri (2000) 'Banal Catalanism?', *National Identities*, 2, no. 2 (July), 145–57.
4. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 119.
5. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.
6. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 35–6.
7. J. B. Thompson (1995) *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*, Cambridge.
8. B. R. Barber (1974) *The Death of Communal Liberty: A History of Freedom in a Swiss Mountain Canton*, Princeton, NJ, ch. IX.
9. E. Renan (1882, 1994) 'What is a Nation?', in J. Hutchinson and A. D. Smith (eds.) *Nationalism*, Oxford, 17–18.
10. There is an abundant literature; see in particular S. Berger, K. Donovan, and K. Passmore (eds.) (1999) *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800*, London.
11. J. R. Gillis (1994) *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton, NJ.
12. For a general overview, see A.-M. Thiesse (1999) *La création des identités nationales. Europe XVIIIe–XXe siècle*, Paris.
13. This notion of 'national habitus' is taken from N. Elias (1996) *The Germans: Power Struggles and the Development of Habitus in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, New York, esp. 2–15 and 157–8.
14. Historical literature has studied this process of political transformation in great depth. On the French case, the main source remains E. Weber's (1975) *Peasants into Frenchmen*, Stanford, CA. Weber argued in favour of a late nationalization of French society and of an approach contrasting the centre and the periphery. However, the American historian J. R. Lehning (1995) improved on this thesis in his book *Peasant and French: Cultural Contact in Rural France During the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, where he outlines a process of negotiation on identity between a rural society that remains culturally active and a French national identity open to diversity. O. Zimmer (2003) takes a similar approach in the Swiss case, where he highlights a conflictive process of national affirmation, in *A Contested Nation: History, Memory and Nationalism in Switzerland, 1761–1891*, Cambridge.
15. On the importance of this state-dependent variable, see J. Breuilly (1992) *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester.
16. Like the national flag, universal suffrage brings together—often on an emotional level—people who have little in common, including the political orientation of their vote. The ritualized scenic design of the electoral body as well as its homogenization when the results are proclaimed pertain to the same necessity: to assert the presence of an electoral and national community of destiny. The aggregation of votes on the evening of the election symbolically reveals the existence of a national space of political representation unified by the act of voting. Insofar as it triggers similar thoughts in citizens who cast their vote at exactly the same time, the act of voting becomes a rite of assertion of identity. On this topic, see Y. Déloye (1998) 'Rituel et symbolisme électoraux. Réflexions sur l'expérience française', in R. Romanelli (ed.) *How Did They Become Voters? The History of Franchise in Modern European Representation*, The Hague, 61–5.

17. They are common expressions of nationalism and have been relatively extensively treated in scholarly literature. See Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 119–25, and especially M. Cronin's (1999) research, *Sport and Nationalism in Ireland: Gaelic Games, Soccer and Irish Identity since 1884*, Dublin. For a comparative perspective, see M. Cronin and D. Mayall (eds.) (1998) *Sporting Nationalisms*, London. See also H. Dauncy and G. Hare (1999) *France and the 1998 Word Cup: The National Impact of a World Sporting Event*, London.
18. For a good illustration, see K. M. Guy (2003) *When Champagne Became French: Wine and the Making of a National Identity*, Baltimore, MD.
19. The concept of 'community of destiny' is borrowed from O. Bauer ('Le concept de nation', 1907), who contrasts it with the 'community of character', such as social class, and considers that 'it is only destiny lived in deep reciprocal interaction and mutual rapport that creates the nation', quoted by P. Birnbaum (ed.) (1997) *Sociologie du nationalisme*, Paris, 8.
20. M. Foucault (1990) *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, New York, Part Four.
21. C. Palmer (2000) 'From Theory to Practice', *Journal of Material Culture*, 3, no. 2, 175–99.
22. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 44 and 46.
23. See G. Davy (1919) 'Emile Durkheim', *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 26, no. 2, 188.
24. D. A. Bell (2001) *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800*, Cambridge.
25. M. Mauss (1950) *Sociologie et anthropologie*, Paris, 367.
26. M. Labbé (2000) *La population à l'échelle des frontières. Une démographie politique de l'Europe contemporaine*, Paris, 150–4.
27. M. Weber (1978) *Economy and Society*, Berkeley, CA, 385.
28. A. Giddens (1985) *The Nation-State and Violence*, Cambridge, 116.
29. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 393.
30. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 393.
31. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 398.
32. T. L. Haskell and R. F. Teichgraeber (eds.) (1993) *The Culture of the Market: Historical Essays*, Cambridge.
33. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*.
34. Apart from J. L. Lehning's work cited above, see C. Ford (1993) *Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany*, Princeton, NJ; and D. Reed-Danahay (1996) *Education and Identity in Rural France: The Politics of Schooling*, Cambridge.
35. P. Sahlins (1989) *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, Berkeley, CA, 9.
36. S. Duchesne and A.-P. Frognier (2002) 'Sur les dynamiques sociologiques et politiques de l'identification à l'Europe', *Revue française de science politique*, 52, no. 4, 363–4. See more recently, S. Duchesne and A.-P. Frognier (2008) 'National and European Identifications: A Dual Relationship', *Comparative European Politics*, no. 6, 143–68.

37. M. Bruter (2005) *Citizens of Europe. The Emergence of a Mass European Identity*, Basingstoke, 114–16.
38. R. Robyn (ed.) (2005) *The Changing Face of European Identity*, London, 229.
39. N. Elias (1991) *The Society of Individuals*, Oxford, 204.
40. Elias, *The Society of Individuals*, 229.
41. Elias, *The Society of Individuals*, 209 and 210.
42. See P. Jones's overview (2003) 'Architecturing Modern Nations: Architecture and the State', in G. Delanty and E. F. Isin (eds.) *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, London, 301–11.
43. F. Walter (2004) *Les figures paysagères de la nation. Territoire et paysage en Europe, 16e–20e siècle*, Paris.
44. Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales*, 197–206.
45. S. Daniels (2001) *Fields of Vision: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States*, London; and M. Morgan (2001) *National Identities and Travel in Victorian Britain*, Basingstoke.
46. C. Popescu (2004) *Le style national roumain. Construire une nation à travers l'architecture 1881–1945*, Rennes, 18. For a comparative perspective on this architectural and spatial symbolic frame, see M. Facos and S. L. Hirsh (eds.) (2003) *Art, Culture and National Identity in Fin de Siècle Europe*, Cambridge.
47. Popescu, *Le style national roumain*, 177.
48. Popescu, *Le style national roumain*, 180.
49. Maurice Halbwachs (1950, 1997) *La mémoire collective*, Paris, 195.
50. Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, 209, 232.
51. Walter, *Les figures paysagères de la nation*. There is abundant literature on this: see also T. Cusack (2001) 'A "Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads": Irish Nationalism and the Cottage Landscape', *National Identities*, 3, no. 3 (November), 221–38; and M. Häyrynen (2000) 'The Kaleidoscopic View: The Finish National Landscape Imagery', *National Identities*, 2, no. 1 (March), 5–19. For a stimulating study on how architecture is able to express post-national European identity, see G. Delanty and P. R. Jones (2002) 'European Identity and Architecture', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5, no. 4, 453–66.
52. See recently P. Reanto and S. D. Brunn (2008) 'Picturing a Nation: Finland on Postage Stamps, 1917–2000', *National Identities*, 10, no. 1 (March), 49–75.
53. The phrase is borrowed from a French music critic (René Dumesnil) cited in B. Fournier et al. (2006) *L'harmonie des peuples. Les écoles musicales nationales aux XIXe et XXe siècles*, Paris, 31.
54. C. Applegate (1992) 'What Is German Music? Reflections on the Role of Art in the Creation of the Nation', *German Studies Review*, no. 15, 30.
55. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 390, emphasis by Weber.

Suggested Further Reading

Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London.

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